The Biographic and Poetic Dimensions in Gary Synder’s Green Buddhism Poetry: Cold Mountain, Mountains and Rivers Without End, and Danger on Peaks

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THE BIOGRAPHIC AND POETIC DIMENSIONS IN GARY SYNDER'S
GREEN BUDDHISM POETRY: COLD MOUNTAIN, MOUNTAINS AND
RIVERS WITHOUT END, AND DANGER ON PEAKS

by

Byoungkook Park

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
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in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
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Dr. Daneen Wardrop, Advisor

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From the perspective of ecology, many scholars have examined works of Gary Synder, who is an environmental activist, a peasant-Buddhist, and one of the most beloved and significant poets in the East and West. While his poems have been widely read, they have been rarely articulated from the perspective of East Asian Mahayana Buddhism or, which I would call, Green Buddhism. Considering this, my dissertation focuses on Snyder’s Green Buddhism poetry and delineates the concept of Green Buddhism and how it has emerged in his Green Buddhism poetry over the past fifty years. According to my research, his poetic dimensions should be divided into three, and each dimension is closely related to his biographical stage. Based on this, the concept of Green Buddhism will be discussed at the beginning of my dissertation. Then, each chapter of my dissertation focuses on Snyder’s representative poetry collections by following his biographic and poetic dimensions: Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems (1965), Mountains and Rivers Without End (1996), and danger on peaks (2004). My research points to ways in which Gary Snyder encourages readers to live harmoniously with other living creatures on this planet, Earth.
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Byoungkook Park
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .................................................................................... ii

CHAPTER

I. THE BIOGRAPHIC AND POETIC DIMENSIONS IN GARY SNYDER’S GREEN BUDDHISM .......................................................... 1

Understanding Snyder’s Biography and Poetry ........................................ 7

Exploring Three Biographic and Poetic Dimensions: Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems, Mountains and Rivers Without End, and danger on peaks ................................................................................. 15

II. TRACING SNYDER’S GREEN BUDDHISM THROUGH PASSAGE THROUGH INDIA: SNYDER’S GREEN BUDDHISM ............................................................. 20

The Ethics and Visions of the Historical Buddha and Green Buddhism .......................................................................................... 25

Tow Oldest Major Schools of Buddhism and Their Ecological Practices: Theravada and Mahayana................................................. 39

Meditation School of East Asian Buddhism and Snyder’s Green Buddhism: Chinese Chan, Korean Sŏn, and Japanese Zen................ 48

III. RECONSTRUCTING SNYDER’S “COLD MOUNTAIN POEMS”: POEMS OF HANSHAN IN RIPRAP & COLD MOUNTAIN POEMS ................................................................. 62

Connecting East Asian Poetry to American Poetry: Snyder’s Revitalization of Cold Mountain Poems.................................................. 66

Understanding Chan Buddhism and Taoism in “Cold Mountain Poems”: How to Interpret “Tao,” “HanShan,” and HanShanTao” .................................................................................... 80
# Table of Contents—continued

CHAPTER

Comparing the Poems of Crater Shan to HanShan’s Poems: Shaping the American Pacific Rim Identity in Snyder’s Early Poems.................................................................................................. 91

IV. THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS WITHOUT END: AMERICAN LANDSCAPE IN SHAN-SHU-HUA................................................................................................. 103

Traditional East Asian Paintings and Philosophies Behind Snyder’s Mountains and Rivers Without End: shan-shu-hua, the Paintings of Mountains and Rivers....................................................................................... 109

Snyder’s Endless Streams and Mountains” Behind Chinese Landscape Painting, Streams and Mountains Without End ................................................................. 123

Vision of Emptiness Behind “Finding the Space in the Heart”…… 137

V. BIOGRAPHIC AND POETIC SIMILARITIES BETWEEN GARY SNYDER AND KO UN: GREEN BUDDHISM IN danger on peaks................................................................. 145

The Activism and Ethics in Snyder’s Green Buddhism Poetry: “What to Tell, Still” and “After Bamiyan”................................................................. 150

The Poetic and Spiritual Communion among the Buddhist-Poets: Gary Snyder and Ko Un in danger on peaks................................................................. 158

Korean Activism, Buddhism, and Cosmopolitanism in Ko Un’s Poetry........................................................................................................ 164

VI. GREEN BUDDHISM AND GARY SNYDER’S POETRY .......................... 178

APPENDIX

WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM KATHELEEN KORNELL, THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART.................................................................................................................. 186

ENDNOTES.................................................................................................................. 188

BIBLIOGRAPHY ......................................................................................................... 198

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CHAPTER I

THE BIOGRAPHIC AND POETIC DIMENSIONS IN GARY SNYDER’S GREEN BUDDHISM POETRY

As a leading environmental activist, a Mahayana peasant-Buddhist, a poet, a translator, and an authentic Asianist, Gary Snyder has been widely acknowledged in the East as well as the West for the past five decades through his numerous poems, prose, and translations of East Asian poems. Given that it is quite difficult to distinguish ecological ethics and practices from Buddhism, as Buddhism advocates complex perspectives on nature and humans’ interwoven relationship, I would term Snyder’s ecological activism and ethics as “Green Buddhism,” a term used to allude to the closely interconnected relationship between “Buddhism” and “ecology,” which also echoes essential concepts of East Asian Buddhism and Taoism. As it is true in practicing Green Buddhism, humans, nature, and the communion between humans and other creatures in nature are the most persistent and significant thematic subjects in Snyder’s works and in his life. Green Buddhism may require people to understand its authentic doctrines and practice them, as Snyder has lived in the way for years. Or, it may be a religious philosophy that anyone who is interested in living in harmony with other creatures in this planet can follow. With Green Buddhism, what intrigues me is that
Snyder's poetic dimensions coincide with three distinct stages of his biography since his first poetry publication of *Cold Mountain Poems* in 1958. Therefore, I would like to suggest that Snyder's engagement with Green Buddhism in his poetry be divided into three different dimensions, considering the close relationship between his biography and poetics.

The first stage of Snyder's engagement with the traditional East Asian religious philosophies of Buddhism and Taoism began when he became intrigued with traditional Chinese scroll landscape paintings when he was fourteen years old. Then, he has immersed himself in the study of the magical combination of Chinese painting, poetry, and calligraphy and developed the concept and poetry of Green Buddhism for his life. During this period, Snyder was also seriously absorbed in HanShan's *Chan Buddhism* (禅佛教) poetry, which concerns the spiritual enlightenment that developed through the poet's years of practicing Chinese Chan Buddhism (禅, *Zen* in Japanese and *Sŏn* in Korean). More specifically, Snyder was deeply inspired by HanShan's actual life as well as his poetry, which describes HanShan's spiritual communion with nature in his complete solitude at Cold Mountain², Hantan, China. It is not simple to define and translate "Chan" into English, but a close approximation would be "meditation aimed at controlling the mind and body," an idea that originated from "dhyana" of Sanskrit³. Before his serious commitment to the study of Chinese poetry and the practice of Chan Buddhism, Snyder began to develop his ecological ethics and activism through his.
frequent contact with Mt. St. Helens and Spirit Lake in the Pacific Northwest of America. His valuable experiences, during this period, are constantly portrayed in his poems, and *Riprap* and *Cold Mountain Poems*, *Poets on the Peaks* and *The High Sierra of California* are probably the most representative poetry collections. His “Cold Mountain Poems,” a literary translation of HanShan’s poems into English, first appeared in the *Evergreen Review* in 1958 and it is still accepted as one of the most remarkable translations of HanShan’s poems. The other notable aspect of this period is Snyder’s serious engagement with Buddhism began in 1959, when he went to Japan—instead of China—with his firm determination to pursue East Asian Buddhism and culture. Then, he seriously studied and continuously practiced Buddhism both as a Buddhist monk in Saitoku-ji (大德寺) and as a layperson before returning to his home on what Native Americans call Turtle Island in 1969. During this period, Snyder also studied Chinese and Japanese poetry intensively, and he practiced a Buddhism that expanded upon the tenets that he had originally learned during his study of East Asian meditation school of Buddhism. His profound experiences in Buddhism during this period are described in his poetry collections such as *The Back Country*, *Regarding Waves*, and *Turtle Island*. *Passage Through India* is a very notable memoir of his half year trip to India, the birthplace of Buddhism.

The second stage of Snyder’s engagement with Green Buddhism evolves with his return to Turtle Island, as he became a forerunner in transplanting East
Asian Mahayana Buddhism into American cultural life. One initiative involved developing the activism and ethics of Green Buddhism within American contexts by establishing the bioregional community of Kitkitdizze, Sierra, and narrowing down the cultural differences between East and West in his poems and speaking engagements. During this period, what he had been looking forward to for his entire life, occurred in 1984, when Snyder finally traveled to China with other established American writers such as Allen Ginsberg and Toni Morrison, at the invitation of People’s Republic of China. Perhaps inspired by his firsthand exposure to China, he finally finished Mountains and Rivers Without End in 1994—40 years after he began the work—which is often considered to be the culmination of his poetic career. This long poetic sequence was originally published as Six Selections from Mountains and Rivers Without End in 1965 and later as Six Selections from Mountains and Rivers Without End Plus One in 1977 by adding “The Blue Sky.” In addition to these endeavors, Snyder published No Nature in 1992 which included his new and already published poems. The poems in this collection are also essential in understanding Snyder’s Green Buddhism.

Snyder’s activism, ethics, and practice of Green Buddhism have been persistently reinforced in the current and third stage of his biographic and poetic dimensions. This period is marked by the publication of The Gary Snyder Reader in 1999, which contains the vast bulk of the poems, prose, and translations previously published, and of his continuing expansion of his relationship with
many international (Buddhist) poets, including a significant connection with a Korean poet, Ko Un, once a Buddhist-monk poet and the most remarkable contemporary Korean eco-poet. Ko Un taught Korean poetry as a visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkeley in fall, 1999, and this was when Ko Un and Snyder first met each other. Their communion is specifically described in two poems in Snyder’s latest poetry collection, danger on peaks in 2004 and an essay in his latest prose collection, Back on the Fire in 2007. It is also quite interesting to note that two of Snyder’s prose collections, The Practice of the Wild and A Place in Space, were translated into Korean in 2000 and in 2005. Interestingly, those collections were translated into Korean by Ko Un’s wife, Sang-wha Lee, who teaches American poetry in Korea.

The primary aim of this dissertation is to offer some tentative suggestions for more satisfactory interpretation of Snyder’s Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems (1965), Mountains and Rivers Without End (1996), and danger on peaks (2004) in the process of illuminating his Green Buddhism and Green Buddhism poetry. Snyder’s poetry cannot be fully understood without having experience and knowledge on Buddhism or Green Buddhism and many of his poems echo the essential concepts of Buddhism, which are often understood as ecological ethics among non-Buddhists. To understand Snyder’s poems properly, readers need to consider carefully how Buddhism and ecology are connected and in what ways
their concepts have been interrelated and transformed over time, which means Green Buddhism.

The author of *An Inconvenient Truth*, Al Gore, compares the impact of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* to that of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* while pointing out important differences between the two works. Most of all, Stowe dramatized an issue that was already on everyone’s mind and, in contrast, Carson warned readers of a danger that hardly anyone saw. In the final chapter of *Silent Spring*, “The Other Road,” Carson describes the two choices before us in terms of Robert’s Frost’s “The Road Not Taken,” which is mainly about the one “less traveled by.” She states, “We stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost’s familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster…. The choice, after all, is ours to make.” Just as Carson awakened readers to realizing this crucial importance of living in harmony with other creatures in this planet, so Gary Snyder developed the activism and ethics of Green Buddhism by practicing Buddhism in East Asia. In the same context, I want to claim that Snyder has made a huge contribution in launching the environment movement across the world and developed Green Buddhism for the future of our planet.
Understanding Snyder’s Biography and Poetry

In the previous section, I claim that Snyder’s Green Buddhism poetry divides into three different dimensions, paralleling his engagement with the practice of East Asian Buddhism in his actual life to its portrayal in his poetry. In this section, I would like to explore how literary critics have examined Snyder’s poetry so far, mainly with ecological ethics, within the rubric of the three or four different stages of his biography and poetry.

It is true that many literary critics have examined Snyder’s poems for the past three decades and discussed the tropes of bioregionalism, Native American mythology, and ecology that appear in his poems. The intertwined relationship between ecology and Buddhism has been increasingly observed since the publication of Mountains and Waters Never End in 1996. However, I believe that not enough attention has been paid to the sphere of Buddhism, especially East Asian Mahayana Buddhism, in Snyder’s poetry and its significant connection to ecology. While I argue that East Asian Buddhism is crucial in examining all of Snyder’s poetic output, most critics have mainly explored the first through the second stages of Snyder’s poetry, focusing on the value of Native American heritage and American deep ecology in his poetry. It is also true that Snyder has increased his readership across the world, as more and more cultural exchanges between East and West have been made over the past decade, especially after the
collapse of the former Soviet Union⁶ and the opening of the Chinese Bamboo Gate to the West. Thus, it is not surprising that Snyder turned out to be one of the first American writers invited to The People’s Republic of China in 1984.

According to my research, many notable critics such as Tim Dean, Charles Molesworth, Samuel Paul, Robert Schuler, and Anthony Hunt have illuminated Snyder’s poetry, and their ideas are very helpful in understanding Snyder’s poems. However, critics often examine Snyder’s poems with ecological ideas, not Buddhism. In *Snyder and the American Unconscious: Inhabiting the Ground* in 1991, Dean examines Snyder’s poetry from a geo-psychological perspective, focusing on poems found in *Riprap*, *Myths and Texts*, and *Axe Handles*. Dean concludes that American people and places have been mutually interconnected both consciously and unconsciously since the beginning of the New World from European’s views and that this is a core idea found consistently in Snyder’s works. In *Gary Snyder's Vision: Poetry and Real Work* (1983), Molesworth carefully traces how Snyder achieved his firm ecological activism and deep understanding of Native American mythology. In discovering this connection, he focuses on Snyder’s *Riprap*, *Earth House Hold*, and *Turtle Island*. Recently, Schuler’s *Journeys Toward the Original Mind* (1994) and Hunt’s *Genesis, Structure, and Meaning in Gary Snyder’s Mountains and Rivers Without End* both explore Snyder’s two major long poems, *Myths and Texts* and *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, paying particular attention to the style, form, and mythical themes.
present in these collections and claiming that regaining what Snyder terms "the Original mind" is the key to solving the problems of modern American culture, such as environmental destruction. Schuler claims that "Original mind" refers to a state of consciousness in which the practitioner has been sensually, morally, and spiritually purified through the practice of East Asian Buddhism as well as Vajrayana (Tantric) Buddhism. Hunt also discusses the importance of Tantric Buddhism as well as Japanese Zen Buddhism in understanding Snyder's long poems in the collection. Both Schuler and Hunt provide comprehensive explications of Snyder's two major long poems and emphasize mythological, anthropological, and religious sources.

Among the many Snyder critics, Patrick D. Murphy is probably the most remarkable eco-critic, having published numerous articles and criticism. Murphy has published more than five books on Snyder's poetry in the past decade, *Literature, Nature, and Other: Ecofeminist Critiques* (1995), *Ecofeminist Literary Criticism: Theory, Interpretation, Pedagogy* (1998), *Farther Afield in the Study of Nature-Oriented Literature* (2000), *Understanding Gary Snyder* (1992), and *A Place for Wayfaring* (2000), all of which examine the first through the third stages of Snyder's poetry. In his first two books, Murphy introduces Snyder's poetry with many other nature poems under the thematic idea of eco-feminism. In *Farther Afield in the Study of Nature-Oriented Literature*, he briefly raises the importance of Buddhism in understanding Snyder's poetry by referring to The
Diamond Sutra. More significantly, Murphy illuminates Snyder’s poems, beginning with Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems to Mountains and Rivers Without End, in both his Understanding Gary Snyder and A Place for Wayfaring: The Poetry and Prose of Gary Snyder. Through this work, Murphy examines the first three stages of Snyder’s poetry and focuses on Snyder’s three main subjects: ecology, Native American culture, and Buddhism. Though Murphy has not fully illuminated the intertwining ecology and Buddhism, he is the exceptional critic who understands the importance of these themes to a comprehensive understanding of Snyder’s poetics. Timothy Gray and Eric Todd Smith are also noteworthy. Gray published Gary Snyder and the Pacific Rim: Creating Countercultural Community and Smith published Reading Gary Snyder’s Mountains and Rivers Without End.

Most critics agree that Snyder’s initial engagement of Buddhism and ecology cannot be fully understood without paying attention to his continuously growing attachment to Northwest America’s landscape and what is represented in traditional East Asian landscape paintings, based on his early experiences. Both of which were continuously developed by appreciating the traditional Chinese paintings and reading the Chinese Tang (618-907) poet, HanShan. According to an interview with John P. O’Grady, Snyder clarifies the major influence of these mountain climbing experiences in developing his ecological and poetic senses: “I couldn’t find any other way to express what I was feeling about mountaineering
on the great snowpeaks of the Northwest....That was a powerful teaching for
me....And so I began to write poems." At the end of Mountains and Rivers
Without End, Snyder reemphasized his deep attachment to Northwest American
nature as well as East Asian landscape paintings: "I had been introduced to the
high mountains and peaks of the Pacific Northwest when I was thirteen and had
climbed a number of summits even before I was twenty: I was forever changed by
that place of rock and sky. East Asian landscape paintings, seen at Seattle Art
Museum from the age of ten on, also presented such a space." As this suggests,
Snyder’s poetic imagination and environmental ethics were initially shaped by his
experiences of climbing numerous mountains and crossing rivers as well as by his
deep appreciation of East Asian landscape paintings in his youth. In addition to
this, Snyder’s English translations of HanShan’s poetry project how he was deeply
intrigued by HanShan’s poetry and the way of practicing the meditation school of
East Asian Buddhism, before he went to Japan in 1956.

Influenced by Ezra Pound’s initial contribution in connecting East Asian
poetry to English literature, many American writers began to be interested in
studying East Asian poetry and culture in the 1950s’. Most writers pursued their
studies on Asian affairs by staying in America and it is inevitable to have a certain
limit in their studies. However, beginning with Burton Watson and Gary Snyder,
a group of American writers were seriously involved in studying East Asian
literature and culture by moving in East Asia. Many critics often focus on the fact
that Gary Snyder actually went to Japan to practice East Asian Buddhism and stayed there for years until returning home in 1969. Many critics pay attention to Snyder’s poetry reading (with Allen Ginsberg and a few other poets) at Six Gallery Bookstore in San Francisco, which ignited the so-called “San Francisco Renaissance” and “Poetry Reading Movement” in America. Related to “the Beat Generation Movement,” it is also interesting to note that Jack Kerouac modeled his main character, Japhy Ryder, in *The Dharma Bums* on Snyder. However, it is significant to know that Snyder has always claimed that Japhy is a completely fictional character. When Snyder went to Japan—instead of China—to practice East Asian Buddhism and culture, ironically, this became the period when his poetry drew more and more readers’ attention. In the course of his long and distinguished career, Snyder is acknowledged as one of the most cosmopolitan contemporary poets. While Snyder was in Japan, he published five poetry and prose collections, including *Myths & Texts* in 1960 and *Earth House Hold* in 1969. Snyder was accepted by then as the leading poet of Northwest literature by many critics, rather than as a nationally renowned poet.

The second dimension begins with *Regarding Waves* in 1970 and expands to the forty-year masterwork *Mountains and Rivers Without End* in 1997 and Snyder published eleven poetry and prose collections, the most prolific stage in Snyder’s career as a Green Buddhism poet. More significantly, every one of
Snyder’s poetry or prose collections portrays the subjects of connecting East and West or cross-cultural issues, revitalizing Native American culture in America today, and transplanting Green Buddhism to America, which in general means the movement of connecting ecology and Buddhism. Naturally, numerous critics have examined Snyder’s poetry to shed light on the anthropological, mythological, and religious aspects of Buddhism by focusing on Turtle Island in 1974 and The Practice of the Wild in 1990. Among the many studies on Snyder’s works, Robert Schuler’s Journeys Toward the Original Mind: the Long Poems of Gary Snyder and Anthony Hunt’s Genesis, Structure, and Meaning in Gary Snyder’s Mountains and Rivers Without End are the most distinguished. In his book, Schuler addresses the concept of “the original mind,” defined as “a mind purified of ego-driven impulses and preconceptions” or “the Dharma,”11 and applies it to explain Snyder’s Myth & Texts and Mountains and Rivers Without End. As many other critics do, Hunt also considers Mountains and Rivers Without End as Snyder’s culminating collection and argues that “[o]ne’s relationship to the Goddess,”12 or rebuilding through practicing Buddhism, is the central issue of Snyder’s long poems.

The third phase of Snyder’s creative life has been marked by a prolific output, ranging from the republication of many of his earlier works in The Gary Snyder Reader in 1999 to the newer works, Look Out: A Selection of Writings in 2002, danger on peaks in 2004, and Back on the Fire in 2007. It is not surprising,
then, that critics would need more time to explore these works in depth. However, On Sacred Ground: The Spirit of Place in Pacific Northwest Literature in 2003 and Gary Snyder and the Pacific Rim: Creating Counter-cultural Community in 2006 are noteworthy in understanding Snyder’s works in this period. In On Sacred Ground: The Spirit of Place in Pacific Northwest Literature, Nicholas O’Connell concludes that all of Snyder’s works call for spiritual unity with the environment, noting that “Snyder combines Buddhism, anthropology, and ecology in a unique and powerful aesthetic that highlights the interpenetration of people and place,” an insight that is substantiated by the recent critical studies of Snyder including Patrick D. Murphy, Anthony Hunt, and Eric Todd Smith.

My research has convinced me that while previous scholars have focused on key thematic strains present in Snyder’s poetry, they tend to gloss over the importance of East Asian Mahayana Buddhism, as an essential part of Snyder’s Green Buddhism works. Even though some critics prefer dividing Snyder’s poetry into four dimensions, I want to claim that Gary Snyder’s biographic and poetic world should be divided into three distinct dimensions and this is the rubric that more critics have used to examine Snyder’s poetry. The three dimensions in Snyder’s Green Buddhism poetry are: First, his engagement with East Asian paintings, poetry and his actual practice of Buddhism as it is described in Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems. Second, his engagement with Buddhism and shaping Green Buddhism in America through the emphasis of bioregionalism, derived
from *sangha* in Buddhism or the ecosphere of the planet, as it is described in *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, completed forty years after its initial publication under the title of *Six Selections from Mountain and Rivers Without End*. Third, his expanded engagement with Green Buddhism in collaboration with numerous international Green Buddhism poets, including the Contemporary Korean Buddhist poet, Ko Un (1933 -), as it is described in *danger on peaks*.

*Exploring Three Biographic and Poetic Dimensions: Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems, Mountains and Rivers Without End, and danger on peaks*

In Chapter Two, Gary Snyder’s engagement of Buddhism and Green Buddhism will be discussed by examining his journal of *Passage Through India*. Considering the intertwined connection between Snyder’s biography and poetry, it is important to examine how Snyder has been involved in practicing Buddhism and how Green Buddhism has been developed. The year after Snyder went to Japan, he made a half-year journey to India and it shows how Snyder was determined to know more about the ethics and practices of Buddhism, which eventually led him to develop Green Buddhism. Therefore, the oldest major school of Buddhism, Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, and the meditation school of East Asian Buddhism will be discussed. In addition to this, the ethics of Green Buddhism will be explored by articulating the widely performed nature-
friendly practices of Angue and Bangsaeng among Buddhists. Angue means "living comfortably" or "a comfortable life" and it requires Buddhist monks a three-month period of retreat with the purpose of practicing Buddhism as well as saving themselves from the intentional and unintentional harming and killing of other living creatures. Bangsaeng is a practice for laypeople as ethical beings and it means "liberate a captive living or life," which is a well-known Buddhist practice in East Asia. Basically, it is a traditional practice of buying live animals such as birds, turtles, and fish and releasing them into the field, lake, or river once a month as an act of showing our compassion toward other creatures. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to give readers a clearer concept of Buddhism and Green Buddhism.

In Chapter Three, I will discuss how Snyder’s poems in Riprap and his English translations of HanShan’s poems found in Cold Mountain Poems are significant in understanding the early stages of Gary Snyder’s Green Buddhism. Both collections were combined and published in his Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems in 1965. Those poems are carefully chosen and arranged under the same thematic subject of autobiographical experiences of both Snyder and HanShan as Buddhist poets. Examining the essential concepts of Chinese Chan Buddhism and Taoism in "Cold Mountain Poems" and discussing how to interpret "Tao (道)," "HanShan (寒山)," and "HanShanTao (寒山道)" are crucial in understanding
poems in the collection. It also develops the American Pacific Rim identity in
Snyder's early poems, the first dimension of his Green Buddhism poetry.

In Chapter Four, I will examine the poems in *Mountains and Rivers
Without End*, whose title initially invokes the school of Chinese landscape
paintings and, simultaneously, a specific hand scroll painting called "Painting
School of Mountains and Rivers." I will illuminate how Snyder's Green
Buddhism is represented in the poems. In doing this, I will focus on the relatively
long poems which were originally published in *Selections from Mountains and
Rivers Without End* in 1965 and reprinted in *Mountains and Rivers Without End*
in 1997. For instance, "Night Highway 99" was originally "Night Highway
Ninety-Nine" in *Six Selections from Mountains and Rivers Without End*, and
"The Elwha River" was originally a three-section poem in 1965, which ended up a
one-section poem in 1997. The other three long poems "Bubbs Creek Haircut,
"The Market," and "Journeys" are the same in both publications, meanwhile,
"Hymn to the Goddess San Francisco in Paradise" is dropped in 1997. In addition
to these poems, I will focus on the following three poems: "Endless Streams and
Mountains" which is the opening poem of the entire collection, "The Mountain
Spirit," and "Finding the Space in the Heart" which is the closing poem of the
entire collection. The above three poems are related to Chinese Chan Buddhism
as well as ecological sensibility, and intriguingly, they share the following core
phrase: "Walking on walking / Under food earth turns. / Streams and mountain
never stay the same.” Again, the poems will be explored from the perspective of Chinese Chan Buddhism and Taoism, as they are essential in articulating how Green Buddhism is shaped and developed in this dimension of Snyder’s biography as well as poetry. It is also worthwhile to note that Snyder made a trip to China with other established American writers in 1984 and became more and more enthusiastically engaged in practicing Buddhism and expanding ecological activism and ethics.

In Chapter Five, I will examine how Snyder’s current understanding of Green Buddhism has been established and how he continuously expands his relationship with other internationally well-known Green Buddhism poets, including the Contemporary Korean poet Ko Un (1930 – ). In danger on peaks, I will focus on the nine poems in Part III “Daily Life” and five poems in Part VI “After Bamiyan,” examining how these poems successfully represent Snyder’s Green Buddhism. For example, “What to Tell, Still” shows that Snyder’s never-ending strong resolution as a spokesperson of Nature who is firmly determined to defend Nature from development, emerged from an essential part of Green Buddhism. Both “Strong Spirit” and “Really the Real” portray his meaningful relationship with Ko Un, focusing on the spiritual relationship between two Green Buddhism poets. In addition to this, Snyder clearly presents the consistently occurring interface issue among religions by addressing how Taliban
Totalitarianists demolished Buddhas of Bamiyan, the historical Buddha statue, relating it to another tragedy, that of September 11, 2001.

In Chapter Six, I will briefly review what I have discussed in this dissertation and re-illuminate the concept of Snyder’s Green Buddhism and how it is crucial in understanding his Green Buddhism poetry.
CHAPTER II

TRACING SNYDER'S GREEN BUDDHISM THROUGH PASSAGE THROUGH INDIA¹: SNYDER'S GREEN BUDDHISM²

David Barnhill's Deep Ecology and World Religions (1997) issues readers one of the most significant emerging subjects by asking, "What sense can religions make of a world now colored by an environmental crisis—and of the deep ecological ethical and spiritual response to that crisis?",³ Within the same context, the series of conferences on religions of the world and ecology took place intensively from 1996 through 1998, as described in Mary Evelyn Tucker's Buddhism and Ecology.⁴ Many scholars have contemplated the importance of creatively envisioning the human-earth relationship by re-illuminating the interconnectedness between religion and ecology. It is a newly emerging interdisciplinary field of religion and ecology and introduces a mutually enhancing human-earth relationship. That is, it is one of the most challenging but rewarding tasks today, especially considering the side-effects of global warming, while it aims to spread comprehensive cosmological perspectives and communitarian ecological activism, ethics, and poetics across the world. More interestingly, many scholars elucidate Buddhism as an "eco-friendly" religion with its expanded moral ethics that encompass not just the status of humans but also the status of animals and other living creatures on this planet. However, I want to argue that what is apparently a newly shaped significant interdisciplinary field has indeed

20
been continuously advocated by Gary Snyder through his numerous poems and prose since the middle of the 1950s. By linking the essential ethics of Buddhism to deep ecology, Snyder has developed "American Buddhism," or what I would call "Green Buddhism." What most fascinates me about studying Snyder's poetry are his activism, ethics, and works of Green Buddhism, which have drawn readers' attention in the East and West simultaneously. That is, Snyder is the genuine American Buddhist-poet who has penetrated deeper into the interconnection between Buddhism and ecology than any other poets and shaped Green Buddhism through his works over the past fifty years.

When asked about his primary reason for leaving America for Japan in 1956, instead of going to China, Snyder always responds to the question without hesitation by saying, "To study Zen Buddhism." As part of his larger visit to Japan to practice Buddhism, Snyder spent the winter of 1962 and summer of 1963 in India, based on his desire to see the heartland of the historical Buddha's teachings. Then Snyder published his experiences in Now India (1972), which was later published as Passage Through India (1983) and it illuminates how Snyder was seriously involved in practicing Buddhism from his early career as a Buddhist-poet. More specifically, Snyder introduces himself as "a peasant Buddhist," which means "a Buddhist who believes in all of the local spirits and gods as well." Snyder has persistently claimed that Buddhism is an idea for anybody, including himself, who wants to be both planetary and local at the same
time, to have roots in a place and still have a sense of planetary cosmopolitanism. As a notable example, in his poem “O Waters,” Snyder compares our planet to *sangha*, the Buddhist religious community, by describing: “great/ earth/ sangha.” Snyder considers the ecosphere of the planet and *sangha* to be completely interchangeable. David Barnhill also examines the above line of the poem and articulates the two characteristics of Snyder’s thoughts by noting “a creative extension of both Buddhism and ecology by seeing each in terms of the other, and an overriding concern with community.” Snyder clearly emphasized the significant connection between Buddhism and ecological ethics more than four decades ago. Through continuous development of our ecological activism, ethics, and movement, we now value all organisms as parts of a larger biotic web, network, or community whose interests govern humans’ as well as other living creatures’ interest in this planet, conceiving Green Buddhism. As Snyder has consistently noted in his poetry and prose collections, East Asian culture and ethics, with its Buddhist ethics emphasized, is based on coexistence between humans and other living creatures, and humans are always part of nature.

Indeed, Buddhist perspectives on humans’ relationships with other creatures on this planet do have a complex, sophisticated, and long history, starting from the establishment of Buddhism in the fifth century B.C. The main ideas of the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, are crucial to understanding Snyder’s activism, ethics, and poetry of Green Buddhism. However, much
attention has been paid to Snyder’s poems mainly from the perspective of Western ecology, not from the religious philosophy of Buddhism. This is why an acute problematic issue arises when we try to discern the differences and similarities between Buddhism and the ecology of the poet. By studying the origins and developments of Buddhism we can begin to understand a bigger picture of Snyder’s “Green Buddhism,” which has been transformed over the past fifty years, as I use the term in this paper.

As people’s interest in the intertwined relationship between Buddhism and ecology continuously grows, many leading ecological writers such as George Sessions, Mary Oliver, and Wendell Berry, also continuously claim that Buddhism has made a significant contribution to elevating American environmental ethics by directing humans to have a more responsible attitude toward the natural environment and to accept nature as community. In other words, nature is now considered a community we are part of, and its value is intrinsic, and this is what Snyder has persistently described in his poems and prose. According to Wendell Berry Snyder’s revolutionary concept of Green Buddhism sums up with the human “house hold” and “bioregionalism,” and it is driven by two passionate questions: “How can we best live the domestic and communal life that specifies us as humans? And how can we secure the companionship and the varied help of our fellow creatures?”9 Berry discerns how the human-earth relationship is critical in understanding Snyder’s works, as is also bioregionalism, a concept deeply rooted
in Buddhism. In other words, we can see Snyder working at the interconnected concept of Buddhism and ecology, which from my perspective is Green Buddhism.

Working from this premise, this chapter addresses three main concerns. First, the origins of Buddhism will be discussed by examining the ethics and visions of the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, and how his ideas took the essential role in founding Buddhism by enhancing the mutually respectful human-earth relationship. We cannot overemphasize the significance of Siddhartha Gautama's ecological doctrines in understanding the origins and developments of Buddhism and Snyder's Green Buddhism, whether we accept him as a human being or an enlightened superhuman being who constantly awakens humans with ecological consciousness and activism. Secondly, the two oldest major schools of Buddhism, Theravada and Mahayana, and the traditional ecological practices of Angue in Korean (安居, AnChu in Chinese, AnGo in Japanese) and Bangsaeng in Korean (放生; BangSeung in Chinese, HoJo in Japanese) will be elucidated. As Buddhism has developed, varying perspectives arise in understanding the concept of the historical Buddha and his ideas. The Theravada and Mahayana schools prevailed mainly in Southeast and East Asia respectively, and continuously spread ecological ethics and practices. Finally, the East Asian meditation school of Mahayana Buddhism will be carefully examined to illuminate the activism, ethics, and Green Buddhism of Snyder's poetry. Heavily influenced by Taoism of Chinese origin, the meditation school of Buddhism was uniquely transformed in
China, Korea and Japan, and it is distinguished as the major school of East Asian Buddhism by suggesting meditation as the primary tool for elevating ecological consciousness and activism. The ultimate goal in this chapter is to give readers a cornerstone for capturing how East Asian Meditation Buddhism and ecology are closely interconnected and essential to understanding Snyder’s Green Buddhism poetry.

The Ethics and Visions of the Historical Buddha and Green Buddhism

"Mind deepened, widened, and saddened by the lessons of India"¹⁰

According to his essay collection Back on the Fire (2007), Gary Snyder explored Buddhism by reading English translations of Buddhist sutras and he notes this by saying, “beginning to read (Henry Clarke) Warren’s translations from Pali Buddhism.”¹¹ It is believed that Snyder read Buddhism in translations, passages selected from the Buddhist sacred books and tr from the original Pali into English (1896) and Buddhism in Translations: Abridged issue, containing only the Life of Buddha (1922), and these translations helped him to find interconnectedness between his early developed American ecological ethics and the Asian religious philosophy of Buddhism. In the same essay, Snyder elucidates what deep ecology is about and how deep ecology is closely linked to Buddhism by pointing out, “The ethics of concern for all beings including the nonhuman,
incidentally, are not just some invention of 'new agers,' Norwegian philosophers, or Native American academicians, but are ancienfly and deeply rooted worldwide, going back for millennia. Buddhism and much of Hinduism put this ethic at the top of their list of precepts.\textsuperscript{1,2} From his perspective, we humans are always natives to this earth and we should be the people of the land or people of the place by accepting nature as part of our community. That is, living harmoniously with other creatures together on this planet should be one of the ultimate goals of our life, as it is suggested in many Buddhist sutras.

According to what the historical Buddha, numerous Buddhas and Buddhist sutras have conceived, from the moment when we are born, we humans naturally become egocentric and greedy by developing our strong attachment toward our own lives and numerous objects in this world. In the process of making efforts to stay alive and to pursue more and more objects, we easily commit transgressions and it is the fundamental reason why we are suffering. In other words, we instinctively value our lives and possessions but often ignore those of other people and animals. More specifically, Theravada Buddhists believe that their attachment even to their families prevents them from achieving their enlightenment and this is the primary reason why they build their own monastic community, which is \textit{sangha}. In the process of self-denial and learning detachment from their own family, they are able to devote themselves to continuously practicing Buddhism. Once they significantly expand their compassion over other creatures on this
planet, they are believed to escape from the circle of endless birth and death, which means *samsara*. Then, they reach the ultimate stage of Buddhists—the complete detachment from the numerous illusions of this material world and becoming a Buddha. Allen Ginsberg, one of the most significant countercultural poets and serious Tibetan Tantric Buddhists, passed away in 1977 and the way Gary Snyder responds to his lifelong friend’s death enables us to understand the essential concept of Buddhism: “He had NO attachments. He was ready to GO.” Whether he reached the ultimate stage of Buddhism or not, Allen Ginsberg continuously and seriously practiced and lived by Tibetan Tantric Buddhism while Snyder has lived by the Mahayana Buddhism, which has been widely practiced in East Asia.

A hesitation and uncertainty prevail in exploring the biography and concept of the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, but a brief introduction is necessary before examining the ethics and visions of the historical Buddha, relating them to deep ecology and Green Buddhism. Siddhartha literally means “one whose aim is enlightened or who accomplished his objectives,” and he was born as a member of the Gautama clan, which explains the appellation Siddhartha Gautama. Besides his actual name, he was also often referred to as Sakyamuni Buddha in numerous Buddhist literary works, as Sakyamuni means “the sage of the Sakya tribe.” Therefore, Siddhartha Gautama is used when we describe the Buddha before his enlightenment or becoming the historical Buddha, while
Sakyamuni Buddha or the historical Buddha is used to describe the enlightened super-human Buddha. However, what concerns me more is the teachings of the historical Buddha than the actual life of Buddha, while the historical Buddha is the object of worship among many Mahayana Buddhists. The etymological discussion of what Buddha means is very helpful in following the concept of the historical Buddha and what it means to be a Buddha, though Theravada and Mahayana schools feature quite different ideas. Buddha basically comes from the Sanskrit root "budh," meaning to awaken or enlighten and those who have awakened the true nature of things by practicing four noble truths in Buddhist doctrines. Whether "budh" means "awakening" or "enlightenment" in an etymological sense, it is often understood as "the attainment of the perfect knowledge of one's mind and body" and spread limitless compassion toward other living creatures.

Simultaneously, a Buddha is simply a human being who has undergone a profound spiritual transformation in Theravada Buddhism. By contrast, in Mahayana Buddhism a Buddha is seen as a cosmic being who manifests himself in human form. Various Buddhist sources in Pali, Sanskrit, and other translations convince us that Siddhartha Gautama's father was king of the city of Kapilavastu, located inside the southern border of present-day Nepal, and this is the place where Siddhartha Gautama was born. The most significant place for Buddhists is Bodh Gaya, where Siddhartha Gautama became the historical Buddha, and this is where many Buddhists, including young Gary Snyder, make their pilgrimages.
With the same desire of making his pilgrimage, Snyder visited Bodh Gaya and the Bodhi tree—the historical place where Siddhartha Gautama became the superhuman Buddha. Snyder describes “Bodh Gaya as the place where Sakyamuni Buddha achieved enlightenment” and continues by saying, “Bodh Gaya is part normal Hindu village, and part archeological site cleaned up by the Indian Government, with the Hinayana and Tibetan pilgrim throngs camped around it.” In the above quotation, Snyder hints that Theravada and Vajrayana Buddhists also deeply worship the historical Buddha by adopting the concept of God in Hinduism, whereas Mahayana Buddhists cling more to the teachings of the Buddha and the historical Buddha as well. Buddhists believe Gautama achieved his spiritual awakening at the age of thirty-five after continuous practice of Buddhism under a Bodhi tree, which literally means “awakening” or “enlightenment.” Naturally, Snyder also described how he responded to the tree, saying directly, “The last morning before we left I got up early and went and sat behind the Bodhi tree a while.” What Snyder tried to do reminds us of what Siddhartha Gautama did to achieve his spiritual enlightenment about 2,500 years ago. As other Buddhist pilgrims did, Snyder also went to the tree with an expectation of getting religious inspiration and probably poetic inspiration, even though he knew that the tree was not the real one but “the descendant of the original Bodhi tree.” With Bodh Gaya, the other Buddhist holy site is Sarnath. It is believed to be the place where Sakyamuni went to find his old fellow-ascetics.
and tell them what he had found out after achieving his enlightenment at Bodh Gaya. In other words, Sarnath is the place where the historical Buddha began to form his Buddhism by establishing his religious community of Sangha. Based on this historical fact, regardless of different schools of Buddhism, numerous Buddhists make pilgrimages to Bodh Gaya.

Pali and Sanskrit are the two main sources of Buddhist doctrines. Sanskrit is the mother tongue of the Northern Mahayana Buddhists, while Southern Buddhists claim that the Pali alone should be the authoritative language. There have been biographical records of the historical Buddha in Pali and other languages; however, it is impossible to determine exactly when Siddhartha Gautama was born, or when he turned into a Buddha or an enlightened superhuman being. That is, we cannot be sure when Siddhartha Gautama attained nirvana, which means the idealistic stage of no more cyclic existence of samsara. The deficiency in historical records on the Buddha is due to the fact that Buddhism was originally accepted in a limited area, primarily in Northeastern India, during the first two centuries of its developing period. More crucially, there were no direct records on the biography and ideas of the historical Buddha. Still, some Pali and Sanskrit sources are available in Theravada Buddhism and they are decisive in drawing a reliable conclusion about the historical Buddha’s biography and the origins of Buddhism. More specifically, Pali Buddhist sutras of Sri Lanka offer us a partial biography of the historical Buddha as well as sufficient
materials on the formation of early Buddhism. Using Sri Lankan historical chronicles and materials associated with the life of the historical Buddha, the earlier scholars put the birth of the Buddha at 563 BCE and his death at 483 or 484 BCE.\textsuperscript{22} Including Donald S. Lopez's \textit{Buddhist Scriptures}, which is mainly based on \textit{The Chronicle of the Councils (Sangityavamsa)} written in Pali, and Carl Olson's \textit{Original Buddhist Sources}, which is mainly based on \textit{Asvaghosa}, modern scholarship places the long life of Siddhartha Gautama in the fifth century BCE.

According to a Buddhist legend, the historical Buddha was seriously concerned about possible misinterpretations of how he achieved his enlightenment and what he preached to his followers, considering the belief that our language is incomplete while our minds are boundless and limitless. The following anecdote between the historical Buddha and Kashyapa, one of his followers, explicates how the deficiency of our languages was acknowledged in the historical Buddha's mind and those of later Buddhists. "The historical Buddha was seated before a large assembly of people who wanted to learn how to achieve enlightenment. The Buddha, remaining silent, took up a flower he had been given and quietly held it in his hand. Everyone in the congregation was puzzled by his silence and his deliberate gesture with the flower except one disciple, Kashyapa, who softly smiled. In his special inward smile the historical Buddha read Kashyapa's understanding of that which goes beyond description or 'the doctrine of thought transmitted by thought.'\textsuperscript{23} Later, Kashyapa became, at the Buddha's behest, the
first of those twenty-eight Great Patriarchs who culminated in the missionary monk of the fifth century, Bodhidharma.

Snyder learned about Buddhism by reading English translations of Buddhist sutras and practiced the East Asian meditation school of Buddhism, which represents Mahayana Buddhism. After practicing Buddhism in Japan for over ten years, Snyder transferred his Buddhism to America by building his religious community of Kitkitdizze, San Juan Ridge, in this Turtle Island and it is the beginning of his American Buddhism or Green Buddhism. As each school of Buddhism in Asia features its own characteristics, American Buddhism also has its own strong uniqueness. According to Snyder, the revolutionary aspect of American Buddhism is “its wide-openness toward women” and it is clearly noted in his interview by Peter Barry Chowka (1977): “The single most revolutionary aspect of Buddhism practice in the United States is the fact that women are practicing in it. That is the one vast sociological shift in the entire history of Buddhism. From the beginning, women essentially had been excluded, but in America, fully fifty percent of the followers everywhere are women.”24

Considering the male-dominated history of the world, Snyder’s claim is persuasive and Buddhism cannot be the exceptional one. However, from the beginning of Buddhism, there have been female Buddhists who are called “Buddhist nuns” or bhikṣuṇī (比丘尼), who have continuously practiced Buddhism and sometimes made their own religious communities or saṅgha. According to a Buddhist legend,
the aunt of the historical Buddha became the first female Buddhist and she made a
great contribution in expanding Buddhism to more women. While the Buddhist
nuns in the Theravada Buddhism continue a life that does not permit marriage,
Buddhist nuns in particular Tibetan and Japanese schools of Mahayana Buddhism
are permitted to marry. The *sangha* for only Buddhist nuns is also a unique part of
the Korean school of Mahayana Buddhism. *Sunwoon* temple (神雲寺), one of the
most distinguished Korean Buddhist temples, was built in 577 and it has been one
of the temples for Buddhist nuns over the past one thousand five hundred years.

The earliest and major schools of Buddhism, Theravada and Mahayana,
show different ways of approaching the doctrines and practices of Buddhism. The
Theravada Buddhists claim that the continuous practice of Buddhism by
repeatedly reading sutras and joining a Buddhist monastic community is the
orthodox way of achieving enlightenment, which sets us free from any attachment,
concerns, and hurting other creatures. The Mahayana Buddhists believe that every
human already has his or her own Buddha-nature and is able to achieve his or her
own enlightenment whether they join the monastic community or not. Regardless
of different schools of Buddhism, the first of the basic Buddhist precepts is to
avoid destroying life, and one of the most popular Buddhist scriptures, the
*Mettasutta*, urges Buddhists to “develop loving-kindness for the entire world.”
Every individual living being, whether animal or human, has an innate sense of
self and, stemming from it, every living creature has the Buddha-nature of
accepting each other as part of this world. This ethical teaching, reinforced by a worldview that emphasizes the interdependence of all beings and the immanence of the sacred, generates much interest in Buddhism in the time of environmental crisis. As Snyder discusses the Buddhist's ethics in terms of environmentalism in his Back on the Fire, "avoid harm to all beings" is the top of the precepts among Buddhists. The Buddhist ethics teach us not to harm and kill other creatures, as far as reasonably possible. These ethics are from the Buddhist teaching of *ahimsa* or nonharming and nonviolence, have had a profound effect on all of us.²⁵

Theravada and Mahayana schools also feature two different concepts of the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama. In Theravada Buddhism, the historical Buddha is understood to have been a remarkable human being who went through a profound spiritual transformation through the years of his own practice and finally attained enlightenment. Theravada Buddhists prefer "arhat" to "Buddha" in describing an awakened human being. In other words, Theravada Buddhists' ultimate goal in practicing Buddhism is to be an arhat, one who would be accepted as a Buddha among Mahayana Buddhists. On the other hand, Mahayana Buddhism develops the concept of the Buddha in various ways and often focuses on the historical Buddha's superhuman aspect rather than his human one. It is believed that Siddhartha Gautama attained his own enlightenment at the age of thirty-five after six years of continuous practice of Buddhism under a Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, India. That is to say, Mahayana Buddhists pay more attention to the
supernatural power of the historical Buddha after he attained perfect control over
his unified mind-body (見性即佛性) and his boundless compassion toward other
beings. This is how he often becomes an object for worship among Mahayana
Buddhists, while in contrast, enlightenment is understood to be the self-interested
pursuit of perfect liberation or nothingness among Theravada Buddhists. Both
Theravada and Mahayana Buddhists firmly believe that there were many Buddhas
(or arhats), who became enlightened before the historical Buddha did, and there
have been many Buddhas (or arhats) since the historical Buddha, Siddhartha
Gautama. These different aspects of the historical Buddha, by which I mean the
human-Buddha, and the superhuman Buddha are essential concepts in
understanding the origins of Buddhism.

Many Buddhist scholars, including Richard Gombrich, claim that the
primary impetus to expanding the territory of Buddhism was achieved by the
famous Buddhist ruler King Asoka Maurya, who ruled India from ca. 274-236 B.C.
According to a Buddhist legend, Asoka was one of the children who played
happily with the historical Buddha, and plastered a corner of the historical
Buddha’s room with mud. From this merit, in his next life, the boy was born as
Asoka and became a great king of India.26 In addition to preserving the valuable
historical and chronological information about the ancient Indian Buddhism, King
Asoka established many significant monuments and sites related to the life of the
historical Buddha. More importantly, King Asoka provided a favorable climate
for the acceptance of Buddhist ideas and he is remembered for his actions as “protector and purifier” of the Sangha, the community of assembled monks and nuns. It is believed that King Asoka’s spreading Buddhism in his territory had the political goal of reinforcing his divine kingship. That is, under the concept of “divided Buddhism kingship,” the king sought to legitimize his rule not only through descent from a royal family tree but also by supporting and earning the approval of the Buddhists. In spite of King Asoka’s immeasurable contribution, the deficiency of records on the historical Buddha as well as on pristine Indian Buddhism is an undeniable fact and it is one of the reasons why the origin of Indian Buddhism is still obscure.

With the imperfection of our languages suggested by the historical Buddha, the deficiency of records on pure Buddhism and the historical Buddha is one of the most consistently discussed issues among Buddhist scholars. The remarkable Sinologist, Kenneth Chen approaches the subject in his Buddhism: “We shall probably have to blame the lack of historical sense among Indians.” That is to say, he asserts that Indians did not value the importance of records such as dates of historical events, and did not value highly the names of the authors of the important literary works. In contrast, the Chinese highly value the exact and minute records. Considering the fact that some original Buddhist sutras in either Sanskrit or Pali are no longer available but have come down to us only in translations of Chinese or Tibetan, Chen’s idea needs to be seriously considered.
On the other hand, Indian Buddhist scholars often defend themselves by claiming, “Europeans and Chinese place too much emphasis on the historical treatment of ideas and art, that in a piece of literature, what matters is whether or not the ideas presented are true to human experience.”

Considering the multiple interpretations and dynamic transformations of Buddhism, what Indian scholars claim is also very persuasive. While we value the original texts written in both Pali and Sanskrit, we also learn about the message the historical Buddha meant to deliver from the many textual variants written in different languages such as Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese, and Korean.

Buddhism spread continuously to other parts of Asia over the past 2,500 years, while the original Buddhism of India disappeared steadily without clear reasons. However, a few following reasons are very persuasive in understanding the development of Buddhism. First, the successive incursions by foreign powers are accepted as one of the primary reasons. More specifically, the Arabic and Islamic Empire prevailed over India from the north through the whole country between the 7th and 13th centuries. In fact, the culture and religion of the Islamic empire advanced to India as well as to the middle of China, during the expansion of Islam, and it is still pervasive in India and the west borderline of China. Unlike other foreigners who were usually absorbed into the traditional Indian culture and religion of either Buddhism or Hinduism, the Arabic and Islamic successfully transplanted their culture and religion to India from the north to south and even to

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the west of China. However, a complicated web of internal factors in India was also the crucial reason for the decline of Buddhism in India. In other words, the religious dominance of Hinduism in India, even before Buddhism was introduced, was strong and it has persistently expanded its territory in spite of the Caste system. Besides this, the continuously expanded Buddhist religious community of *sangha* was an economically problematic burden to the royal family of India. That is, the king could not collect taxes from his people once they joined the Buddhist monastic life. This is how Hinduism regained its dominance and ancient Indian Buddhism was completely eliminated by the end of the twelfth century. It is a historical irony that Buddhism has been more and more established in Asia, Europe, and even North America, by mutually enhancing the humans-earth relationship; whereas purely Indian Buddhism no longer exists in India. From my perspective, Snyder's activism, ethics, and poetry have clearly re-envisioned the ecosphere of the planet by which I mean the intertwined extension of Buddhism and ecology. In other words, the whole planet is a closely webbed human-earth community as it is presented in his poem, "O Waters": "great/ earth/ sangha." "Earth House Hold" is the most consistent and significant subject of his poetry and Green Buddhism.
Two Oldest Major Schools of Buddhism and Their Ecological Practices: Theravada (小乘佛教) and Mahayana (大乘佛教)

The first and the most valuable percept in Buddhism is “Do Not Kill,” as it is emphasized in one of the most popular Buddhist scriptures, the Mettasutta. The precept of “loving-kindness for other creatures and the entire world” is based on the premise that every single being has an innate sense of self and its own reason of life, and nonviolence is not merely a legalistic prohibition but a realization of our affinity with other living creatures on this planet. In his “A Tibetan Buddhist Perspective on Spirit in Nature,” Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, describes the earth as our home and writes, “It is my dream that the entire Tibetan plateau should become a free refuge where humanity and nature can love in peace and in harmonious balance.” He explains that the transformation of Tibet into a peace sanctuary in Asia would fulfill its historical role as a peaceful Buddhist nation. Taking care of the planet is just like taking care of our own house and it is nothing special or sacred; since we have no other planet, no other house, except this one. According to Buddhist legend, the historical Buddha taught his disciples to communicate to animals their wishes for peace and happiness. This is reminiscent of how Native Americans harmonized with other living creatures on this Turtle Island that we now call America. Beginning with the first precept, many doctrines and practices of Buddhism illuminate how Buddhism holds a great
respect for and gratitude toward nature. This is why Buddhist religious communities of sangha have been widely established in the middle of mountains where Buddhists are able to concentrate on their practices. Snyder was fascinated by these precepts and practices of Buddhism from the early stage of his life and built his own place, Kitkitdizze, in the San Juan Ridge. The concept and place of Kitkitdizze echoes sangha and this is the place where Snyder has developed his activism, ethics, poetics, and Green Buddhism over the past forty years by becoming a person of the land, Turtle Island. That is, Snyder began to develop his Green Buddhism by settling down in one place and developing an intimate awareness and love of the place where he chose to live. This is how Snyder has become a spokesperson for our planet by speaking not only for our own interests but also for those of the land, water, trees, and creatures that do not have speech.

Explicating the sub-schools of Buddhism often becomes arguable and seemingly meaningless. Among the various schools of Buddhism, Theravada and Mahayana are the two oldest major schools of Buddhism, originating from India, and they were established over differences in understanding the concept of the historical Buddha and approaching the regulations of the monastic community, doctrine, and nature of scriptures (or sutras). These are quite essential issues to Buddhist monks and laypeople in practicing Buddhism, regardless of their different sub-schools. However, the different perspectives and practices of the above issues cannot prove that there is a fundamental divide between Theravada
and Mahayana schools or between monks and laypeople. Considering the history of Buddhism, it has happened quite often that a fully ordained monk returns to a secular life, or that a lay-person becomes a monk for a certain period. Therefore, both Theravada and Mahayana should be understood as reciprocal schools, in the same way that monks and laypeople are interchangeable and essential in Buddhism. Theravada Buddhism is believed to have originated from Sthaviravada Buddhism of India, and Theravada literally means “The way of the elders” or “the Lesser Vehicle,” as opposed to Mahayana, which means “the Greater Vehicle” or “ferry boat.” Initially, Ceylonese (currently Sri Lanka) Buddhists played a major role in the early development of Theravada Buddhism, and Theravada prevailed in Southeast Asia by the third century B.C.

In contrast to Theravada, Mahayana was originally established in Northern India and exported to Central Asia and East Asia along the Silk Road and sea routes through Southeast Asia. The origins of Mahayana Buddhism are obscure but Etienne Lamotte’s idea is very persuasive. He claims, “Mahayana can be traced to the activities of the layity, a lay revolt against the arrogance and pretensions of the monks.” That is, laypeople were completely excluded from full religious activities. These were performed by Theravada monks, who lived within the monasteries and followed the historical Buddha’s teaching. Being dissatisfied with the dominance of monks in Theravada, the laypeople made an initial and crucial contribution in shaping the Mahayana school. This is why
Mahayana is often referred to as the school of Buddhism for the proletariat. Theravada is considered to be more conservative. In addition to these two major schools, Central Asian Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhism, which includes Tibet and the Mongol area, is considered one of the oldest schools of Buddhism. However, Tibetan Tantric Buddhism is too complex and controversial to understand easily, as it mixes religious and political concepts and replaces the role of the historical Buddha with the honorific title of Dalai Lama, which means “ocean of wisdom.”

Carl Olson compares the oldest major schools of Buddhism in his *Original Buddhist Sources* and explains that the Theravada tradition is often called the southern tradition because it includes such countries as Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Burma, and Thailand, whereas Mahayana is called the northern school because it includes such countries as Tibet, China, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. Vietnam belongs to Southeast Asia geographically but, in terms of Buddhism, it shares the East Asian Mahayana Buddhism. Interestingly, Olson describes East Asian Mahayana as Northern Mahayana but, nowadays, many people often detach Tibetan Buddhism from East Asian Mahayana Buddhism and describe it as Vajrayana Buddhism, which literally means “Diamond Vehicle.” Simply speaking, the orange-robed Buddhist monks represent the idea of Theravada Buddhism and they are always seen in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia; whereas traditionally gray-robed monks represent the idea of Mahayana Buddhism as they
are seen in Korea and Japan. As Snyder articulates Tibetan Tantric Buddhism by describing, “the dark red Tibetan robes as his understanding of Buddhism deepened,” Tibetan monks wear robes of heavy-duty maroon cloth.

According to Mahayana Buddhism, every living creature—whether he or she practices Buddhism, follows a monastic life and reads Buddhist sutras or not—already has its own Buddha nature, and awakening this nature is the way to become a Buddha. Therefore, to become a monk it is not required to be enlightened and this is why Mahayana is called the proletarian school of Buddhism. Besides this, there is a fundamental linguistic difference between the two schools. That is, Theravada Buddhist sutras are written in Pali, and Mahayana Buddhist sutras are in Sanskrit and a lot in many different translations such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Tibetan. Based on these linguistic preferences of the two major schools of Buddhism, Theravada Buddhists claim the authentic value of their sutras and put great emphasis on reading the sutras repeatedly, whereas, Mahayana Buddhists emphasize the seriousness of practicing Buddhism and living by the sutras.

Theravada is characterized by faithfulness to the Pali Canons, which is the earliest complete set of Buddhist scriptures and is believed to deliver the historical Buddha’s original ideas. Based on this belief, Theravada Buddhists emphasize the importance of reading Pali Buddhist sutras and living in sangha, a monastic community. That is to say, they claim that reading Pali sutras repeatedly—even
reciting them from memory—and practicing Buddhism under a monastic life is the only way to become enlightened. Even today, the ordination ceremony provides an extraordinary opportunity to understand the richness of Theravada as an essential component in Southeast Asian Buddhism as well as culture. It is a historical fact that for two millennia the Pali canon has served as the primary language of Theravada Buddhism and it is the learned language of Southern Buddhist monks; meanwhile, Mahayana sutras have mainly been preserved in their original Sanskrit and translations in Chinese and Tibetan. Since Theravada Buddhists put heavy emphasis on the Pali canons, they are criticized as being too literal-minded and conservative, clinging closely to the letter rather than to the genuine spirit of the historical Buddha’s teachings as emphasized by Mahayana Buddhists. According to Theravada Buddhism, only Buddhist monks practiced to learn Pali and only they could read sutras and become enlightened. In other words, Buddhism was only for the Buddhist monks who followed the monastic life and it could not satisfy laypeople who also practiced Buddhism seriously. Therefore, Theravada Buddhism was frequently criticized as being spiritually narrow and individualistic. Both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhists pursue their enlightenment. However, the ideal Theravada arhat practices Buddhism primarily for his or her own self-enlightenment and the ideal Mahayana Bodhisattva does it for his or her awakening as well as for enlightening others. Again, the ferment of dissatisfaction with Theravada Buddhism stimulated the
other major school of Buddhism, Mahayana or “Great Vehicle.” Based on
different doctrines and monastic rules about the way to achieve enlightenment, the
Theravada school emerged first and the Mahayana school emerged around 150
B.C.E. and 100 B.C.E.\textsuperscript{45}

Among the many nature-friendly practices of Buddhism, the following two
practices of \textit{AnGue} (安居, \textit{AnChu} in Chinese, \textit{AnGo} in Japanese) and \textit{BangSaeng}
(放生; \textit{BangSeung} in Chinese, \textit{Hojo} in Japanese) are most remarkable in
understanding the interconnectedness between humans and other creatures and
between Buddhism and ecology or Green Buddhism. Some sources in Pali claim
that the practice was followed, even before the historical Buddha included it as
part of the practice of Buddhism. Whether we consider the practices as part of
Buddhism or Hinduism, these are primary examples to show us how humans and
other creatures are mutually interdependent on this planet.

First, \textit{Angue} is a traditional Buddhist practice for Buddhist monks who live
in their \textit{sangha} and it reveals how humans are closely connected to other living
creatures with high ethical morality. It literally means “living comfortably” or “a
comfortable life” and is a three-month period of retreat for Buddhist monks with
the purpose of practicing Buddhism as well as saving themselves from the
intentional and unintentional harming or killing of other living creatures.\textsuperscript{46} It is
usually held two times a year, once in summer and again in winter, and the starting
and ending days of the practices are different, depending on the weather. In East
Asia, "Summer Angue" (夏安居) is between the 15th of April and the 15th of July and "Winter Angue" (冬安居) is between the 15th of November and the 15th of February. The starting day of Summer Angue is when every creature feels the vitality of their lives and begins to get outside to the world, when spring begins after a long winter; whereas the starting day of Winter Angue is when every creature begins to collect their food for winter and hibernation. During this three-month period, Buddhist monks are not allowed to venture out of the grounds or sangha without permission and are expected to spend more time on personal cultivation, meditation, copying Buddhist scriptures, attending lectures, and other activities of this kind. The primary goal of this practice is to emphasize the importance of living harmoniously with other creatures as an ethical creature on this planet. This is practiced only by Buddhist monks, not laypeople. The origin of Angue is controversial but it is believed that Summer Angue is originated from Indian Buddhism and Winter Angue is from Chinese Buddhism. Whether Angue originated from India or China, the Buddhist view suggests a much closer kinship between species on earth, whereby different forms of life are interrelated in a profound way with mutual respect toward each other, as it is often claimed within the ecological movement and Snyder's works.

The other essential practice to understanding the interconnectedness between humans and other creatures and between Buddhism and ecology or Green Buddhism is Bangsaeng. If the practice of Angue is for Buddhist monks as moral
beings, Bangsaeng is a practice for laypeople as ethical beings. Bangsaeng literally means “liberate a captive living or life” and it is a well-known Buddhist practice across the world. Basically, it is a traditional practice of buying live animals such as birds, turtles, and fish once a month or a year and releasing them into the field, lake, or river as an act of showing our compassion toward other creatures. It is another Buddhist practice to illuminate how Buddhism originated from deep compassion (karuna in Sanskrit) toward other living creatures. As it is articulated, the primary precept of Buddhism is not to take a life, which encourages us to make efforts to save other creatures. Being based on these Buddhist ethics, practicing Angue and Bangsaeng are often understood to be the most rewarding practices for monks and laypeople.

Many Buddhist scholars recently relate such Buddhist practices of Angue and Bangsaeng to the animal rights movement and it intrigues many people who want to elevate human morality and protect animal rights. In his Buddhist Ethics, Damien Keown also explores this issue, relating it to vegetarianism among Buddhists (especially, monks) and the East Asian Mahayana school: “The Mahayana categorically denounce the eating of meat. The eighth chapter of the Lankavatara Sutra is a good example of the various reasons often cited in support of vegetarianism by the Mahayana.” More specifically, he notes the issue by saying, “The meat-eating causes terror to living beings, acts as a hindrance to liberation, and causes personal distress, such as producing bad dreams. An appeal
is also based on the cycle of transmigration, such as that the animal to be slaughtered may have been one’s mother, father, or other relative in another lifetime.\textsuperscript{48} Among the early Buddhist sutras, the Jivaka Sutta of the Digha Nikaya sheds some light on the subject of vegetarianism. Whether we approach the issue from Buddhist perspectives or not, this discussion draws readers’ attentions to the inhumane process of slaughter. Besides this, in his \textit{Contemporary Buddhist Ethics}, Damien Keown examines the relation between Buddhism and animal rights and concludes that the Buddhist tradition is clearly concerned with the nature, status and treatment of other living things.\textsuperscript{49} Developing the harmonious relationship between humans and other living creatures has been essential in Buddhism, ecology, and Green Buddhism and it is in the interests of all living creatures, not just humans, on this planet.

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Gary Snyder, a self-proclaimed peasant Buddhist, arrived in Japan in late May 1956, determined to pursue the meditation school of East Asian Buddhism studies—as a serious layperson, not a Buddhist monk. According to Philip Yampolsky, Snyder was invited by Mrs. Ruth Sasaki to The First Zen Institute of
America in Japan and he was mainly involved in translating important Buddhist works into English. Coincidentally, Snyder worked for the project and his practice of Buddhism with Burton Watson, the eminent translator of Chinese and Japanese who later translated the poems of HanShan into English. More specifically, Snyder was to prepare an English translation of the Chinese Chan classic, Lin-chi-Lu, which is Rinzai-roku in Japanese. These are recorded sayings of the Chinese Tang Chan Buddhism master who gave his name to Rinzai, one of the two major sects of the Japanese Zen school of Buddhism. The Japanese term Zen, meaning "meditation," and the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese word Chan (禪), are well-known to Americans but meditation has never been exclusively practiced in any one school of Buddhism. The word can be traced to the Sanskrit dhyana, meaning "meditation," and meditation is heavily emphasized by a certain group of Mahayana Buddhists. Buddhism reached China as early as the first century A.D. but the meditation school of Buddhism was introduced in East Asia around the fifth century by the legendary Indian Buddhist monk, Bodhidharma.

The India-born Buddhism transferred slowly across Asia and the impact of Buddhism on East Asia is immeasurable, since Buddhism transformed the imperial Confucianism-centered East Asian society and minds into nature-friendly meditation Buddhism-dominated ones. We cannot clarify exactly when Buddhism spread into China but many scholars, including Kenneth S. Chen and Arthur F. Wright, claim that Buddhism came to China during the early second century B.C.
and many of the royal family were practicing Buddhism as early as 65 B.C. More significantly, the wealth of documents and materials from the Tun-huang (敦煌) caves are indispensable evidence that Buddhism was widely established in China by the end of the fifth century. In addition to this, the legendary Indian Buddhist monk, Bodhidharma made a huge contribution in establishing the meditation school of Buddhism in East Asia, rooted in the Sanskrit word “dhyana.” He was born around the year 440 in Kanchi, the capital of the Southern Indian kingdom of Pallava, and arrived in Southern China around 475. Bodhidharma alone is credited with introducing the meditation school of Buddhism to China and he has been treated as an object of worship as much as the historical Buddha has been among the East Asian Mahayana Buddhists. It is not an exaggeration to say that East Asian Buddhism is represented by the meditation school of Buddhism, combined with the nature-friendly Chinese Taoism and even Confucianism. The school is often understood as Chinese “Chan,” Korean “Sŏn,” Japanese “Zen,” and Vietnamese “Thien” Buddhism, while those countries describe the school using the Chinese character “禅佛教.” There are various subsects in the meditation school, depending on how meditation is intensively emphasized, and the meditation school of Buddhism has been understood as the dominant school of Buddhism in East Asia.

The geographical path of the transmission of Buddhism to China is as vague as the timeline for the arrival of Buddhism in China. It is often believed
that Buddhism reached China from Central Asia along the Silk Road, which connects China with the great markets of the Mediterranean world, and in due course passed from China to Korea and Japan. Transmission of Buddhism via the Silk Road would explain the many historical presences of Buddhist heritages in Northern China. The most notable of these is the Tun-huang caves, which were discovered in 1909. However, the idea that Buddhism traveled to China by sea routes through Southeast Asia—most likely from the area now known as Vietnam—has gained more credence among contemporary historians. Gary Snyder also made a trip to India from Japan by sea. The primary reason for preferring the sea route is that the traditional overland route of China was often blocked by the Huns, who were fearless barbarians from the Chinese perspective. Based on the same reason, Bodhidharma is believed to come to Southern China by sea with other Indian monks. Whether it was mainly by the Silk Road or the sea routes, Buddhism was introduced into China by Indian Buddhist monks and they brought many sutras written in Sanskrit to China and translated them into Chinese. Like the historical Buddha, Bodhidharma also found few disciples despite the sudden popularity of the meditation school of Buddhism in China.

In his *Original Buddhist Sources*, Carl Olson claims that the collapse of Chinese Han (25-220 C.E.), the Confucianism dynasty, accelerated Mahayana Buddhism's spread eastward to China and adjacent countries:
Beginning around the first century B.C.E., its advance in China was hastened by the fall of the Han Dynasty (25 C.E.-220 C.E.). From China, Buddhism spread to Campa (Vietnam) around the third century C.E., and it possibly reached Siam as early as the first century C.E. By 372 C.E. Buddhism was introduced into (the Three Kingdoms of) Korea, from which it spread to Japan around 552. By the sixth century, Buddhism was brought to Tibet after its king married Nepalese and Chinese princesses who practiced the religion.  

Whether Buddhism was first introduced to China around the first or third century, it spread rapidly, penetrating the upper-class in north China, and was transmitted to Japan via Korea. There was a historical continuity between developments of Buddhist schools in China, Korea, and Japan, because the latter continuously imported from the former while they mutually influenced each other. However, it is important to note that Chinese Chan Buddhism is not identical to Japanese Zen and Korean Sŏn of East Asian Buddhism. In other words, the Chan Buddhist strand has its own independent doctrine, history, and mode of practice, while other schools of East Asian Buddhism have coexisted and shared the original influence of Chinese Chan Buddhism.

Examining how the meditation school of Buddhism has developed in East Asia is more important than the timeline for the arrival of Buddhism in East Asia. Mixed with the nature-friendly Chinese Taoism, the Chinese Chan Buddhism was
widely accepted throughout the Chinese Tang (618-907) and Sung (907-1125) dynasties, and Buddhist ritual became an integral part of state and imperial observances. One of the notable Sinologists, Arthur F. Wright, claims in his *Buddhism in Chinese History*, “By the eighth century, Buddhism was fully and triumphantly established through China. Its canons were revered, its spiritual truth unquestioned.” Throughout the Tang and Sung dynasties, among the various schools of Buddhism, three major schools of Chinese Buddhism flourished. Those schools are “Pure Land, Tien tai,” “Hua-yen,” and “Chan,” and these are shaped mainly depending on which sutras are advocated. Again, Buddhism in China cannot be discussed without the huge contribution of Bodhidharma, who introduced the meditation school of Mahayana Buddhism to China. The Chinese word Chan (禪) is a transliteration of the Sanskrit work dhyana, meaning “meditation aimed at controlling one’s mind.” or “contemplation leading to a higher state of consciousness,” considering its historical genesis. The school of meditation was one of the most influential schools, with a particular appeal to the Chinese elite, who were traditionally Confucians, as well as to Taoists who practiced the harmonization of humans and nature.

In his *Back on the Fire*, Snyder describes Korea as “the lesser known country between China and Japan that partakes of both cultures and does their high styles extremely well, but also keeps its own archaic heritage with all its influence: stubborn and strong, proud, elegant, gritty, bold, and deeply
conservative.”57 In terms of Buddhism, he continues to say, “In the Buddhist mountain monasteries, nominally Sŏn, they still engaged with the “Flower Wreath Sutra,” Queen of Sutras, almost forgotten everywhere else in the world.”58

“Flower Wreath Sutra” (華厳經, Avatamsaka-sutra) is one of the most distinguished Mahayana Buddhist sutras and is also known as HuaYen in Chinese, Kegon in Japanese, and Hwaom in Korea. As Snyder notes it, the Korean poet Ko Un retold a part of the sutra in Korean. This is how Koreans, not necessarily only the Korean Buddhists, read the books and still understand the sutra.

Buddhism was transferred into Korea via China, when there were Three Kingdoms of Koguryo (37 BC—AD 668), Paekche (18 BC—AD 660), and Silla (57 BC—AD 935) in the Korean peninsula, and Buddhism was formally acknowledged in Korea. Due to the geographical connection between Koguryo and Northern Wei, Buddhism was introduced and officially accepted in Koguryo first. Then, it arrived in Paekche and Silla respectively. In his The Different Paths of Buddhism, Carl Olson articulates the introduction of Buddhism in Korea by noting, “Buddhism was introduced into Korea in 372. From Korea, it was transmitted to Japan around 552.”59 What he means by saying “Korea,” is Koguryo, the dominant one of the three Korean kingdoms in that period. In his Korea—A Religious History, James H. Grayson also claims Buddhism was already established in Korea even before the dates of official acceptance of Buddhism in 372 C.E.: “Liang Kao—seng chuan (Lives of Eminent Monks in English, written
in the Lian Dynasty, c. 519) mentions the fact that the fourth-century Chinese monk Chih Tun (314-66) carried on a correspondence with a monk from Koguryo. That is, it implies the presence of monastic communities in Koguryo prior to 372. He also claims that 384 is the official year of accepting Buddhism in the Paekche kingdom, considering the historical record that Mahananda, an Indian monk (317-420), came to the capital of Paekche, and the King of Paekche listened to the monk’s sermon in 384.

As East Asian Buddhism coexisted and mutually developed, there were no distinctive religious differences among the many sub-schools of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Buddhism. Nonetheless, Korean Buddhism portrays its own unique features as both Chinese and Japanese Buddhism do. First and foremost, ever since its establishment in Korea, two major schools of Korean Buddhism have dominated: Chogye-Kyojong (敎宗) or “the school of doctrinal and textual Buddhism” and Hwaom-Sunjong (禪宗) or “the school of meditative Buddhism.” Kyo literally means “teaching” and it emphasizes the importance of reading and reciting Buddhist sutras repeatedly as a doctrinal school. It is very much like Theravada rather than the Mahayana school of Buddhism. According to Damien Keown, Korean Sun is characterized by its attention to scriptural, doctrinal, ritual, and philosophical matters as well as to the practice of meditation. In other words, Korean Sun Buddhism emphasizes the symmetrical balance between the practice
of meditation and studying doctrines and it is often understood to be an example of East Asian Mahayana, which is called “for proletarians.” Sun Buddhism became the orthodox school of Buddhism in Korea and East Asia, during the Unified Silla (676-918). Originally, there were five different schools of Kyojong and nine different schools of Sunjong in Korea. The five schools are Yulchong (Lu-tsung in Chinese), Hwaomjong (Hua-yen sect in Chinese), Popsangjong (Fa-hsiang sect in Chinese), Yolbanjong (Nieh-pan tsung in Chinese) and Haedongjon, an indigenous sect established by the respected Buddhist monk, Wonhyo, in Silla. The nine different schools of Sungjong are Silsang-san by Hongchok, the Tongni san by Hyechol, Kaji-san by Chejing, Songju-san by Muyom, Togul-san by Pomil, Saja-san by Toyun, Pongnim-san by Hyonuk (787-870), Huiyang-san by Pomnang and Sinhaeng, and Hyongye-san by Chison. Because the schools had their temples in the mountain ranges, the name of each school ends with “san,” which means “mountain” in English. Interestingly, Kyojong was dominant when each kingdom was stabilized socio-politically and Sunjong grew dominant when each kingdom lost its socio-political power. That is, when the social and political scene looked bleakest, Buddhist monks went to the temples in mountains and focused on their individual practice. On the other hand, when the ruling class held the political power, Buddhist monks helped their royal patrons by educating people with Buddhism. Korean Buddhism continuously prevailed and a key development of
Korean Buddhism was possible under the monk Chinul, known as PojoKuksa (1158-1210), during the Koryo period (935-1392). Trained in Korean Sun Buddhism, the most significant contribution of Chinul was to establish a Buddhist doctrine and practice that could embrace the many scholastic teachings with the anti-textual Sŏn Buddhism. By combining the meditation of Sŏnjong and the careful studies of sutras of Kyojong, Chinul unified the Sŏn and Kyo schools into the Chogye school of unique Korean Buddhism and it remains the main meditation school of Korean Buddhism to this day.

Among the Three Kingdoms in Korea, Paekche had the most influential impact on Japan culturally and religiously by transferring Chinese characters as well as Buddhism around the sixth century. Coming from this cultural exchange, Zen is the Japanese way of writing and speaking the Chinese word “Chan.” Traditionally, Rinzai and Soto are two representative schools of Japanese Zen Buddhism and both essential schools were founded in the early Kamakura period (1185-1333) in Japan, initially and continuously influenced by Chinese Chan Buddhism (禪佛教). Rinzai Zen is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese characters “Lin-chi Chan,” one of the two major schools of Chinese Chan Buddhism. Japanese monk Eisai (or Yosai, 1141-1215) brought the sect of Chan Buddhism into the Japanese cultural context and founded Rinzai Zen Buddhism, after traveling to China and practicing it in both China and Japan. Soto Zen is the
Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese characters “Tsao-tung Chan,” the other major school of Chinese Chan Buddhism. Dozen (1200-1253) developed Soto Zen as the transmission of the Tsao-tung school of Chinese Chan Buddhism into a Japanese cultural context. It is interesting to note that Dozen, the founder of Soto Zen in Japan, was the pupil of Eisai who founded Rinzai Zen in Japan. This illustrates why the sects are closely connected and even interchangeable. In his *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*, Damien Keown examines the two major schools of Japanese Zen Buddhism by noting, “Soto and Rinzai are the two primary schools of Zen Buddhism in Japan, and their difference is generally characterized in this way: whereas Soto emphasizes the practice of ‘just sitting (and meditating)’ in the conviction that human beings are already possessed of an enlightenment nature that needs only to be realized, Rinzai actively pursues the goal of enlightenment through the use of tools such as *koan* and strenuous practice.”

Originally, *koan* comes from Chinese characters (話頭) and it is often referred to as “Zen riddles.” In general, *koan* is a oral practice of continuous questions and answers for the questions, to penetrate meaning and achieve Buddhahood, while the Soto school of Zen Buddhists keeps focusing on sitting-meditation as a more direct experience of achieving Buddha-mind. However, Rinzai school and koan practice have been constantly criticized for encouraging mere cleverness and wordplay than continuous and serious practice of Buddhism. In other words,
Rinzai Zen is "koan Zen" and Soto Zen is "seated meditation Zen." However, it is believed that the distinction between Rinzai and Soto sects was less clear and Buddhist monks as well as laypeople actually practiced both "koan" and "sitting and meditating" interchangeably for centuries.

As a serious Buddhist layperson, Gary Snyder practiced initially the Rinzai school of Japanese Zen Buddhism, a sub-school of East Asian Mahayana Buddhism. As a distinguished translator and Sinologist, Burton Watson pinpoints in his essay in Gary Snyder: Dimensions of a Life, to practice Buddhism continuously and seriously was the main reason why Snyder came to Japan in late May 1956. In 1959, Snyder returned to Kyoto with his determination to practice the Rinzai school of Zen Buddhism as a Buddhist monk under Oda Sesso Roshi at Daitoku-ji, a temple in the northern part of Kyoto. From the perspective of a practitioner of Buddhism, the Rinzai school of Zen Buddhism was a natural choice for Snyder. That is, Snyder could work with his poetry as a poet while he practiced the Rinzai school of Japanese meditation Buddhism by focusing on wordplay and wisdom. After practicing Rinzai Zen Buddhism for a few years in Japan, Snyder felt a deep desire to explore the homeland of Buddha’s teachings.

As a part of his longer visit to Japan to practice Buddhism, Gary Snyder spent the winter of 1962 and summer of 1963 in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, based upon his desire to see the homeland of the historical Buddha’s teachings. His trip to the birthplace of Buddhism is precisely portrayed in his Passage...
Through India. The text was originally meant to be a journal that recorded specifics about his travels, but Snyder also used it as a site to consider the philosophical aspects of his religious progress. As he notes, “One thing I learned: religion isn’t necessarily art; the vulgarity of modern Indian religious iconography does not really detract from its seriousness. Japanese Buddhism is 9/10ths aestheticism.”67 From Snyder’s perspective, the numerous artistic but sensual iconographic statues of India were not the genuine aspects of pure Indian Buddhism. This passage, written in the earlier phrases of Snyder’s career, suggests how Theravada and Mahayana schools had developed in different directions. In addition to this, Snyder conclusively evaluates his trip, noting that, “minds deepened, widened, and saddened by the lessons of India.”68 The crucial reason why his Buddhist mind was saddened was mainly because India was already no longer a place where the original Indian Buddhism was alive.

Across the different subschools of Buddhism, the first and most essential discipline or moral code in Buddhism is to respect every single living creature and not to hurt other living creatures. At the opening of his Buddhist Ethics, Damien Keown also claims, “Morality is woven into the fabric of Buddhist teachings and there is no major branch or school of Buddhism that fails to emphasize the importance of moral life.”69 Among the ten non-virtuous actions in Buddhism, killing is the first one we should not commit. Naturally, in Buddhism, one of the most consistently recommended ways of cultivating our virtue is to save other
creatures and not to kill other creatures. The primary rule among Buddhists continuously motivates people to live in harmony with other creatures on this planet. Noting this cause and practice, many ecologists claim that Buddhism is an eco-friendly religion. Buddhists accept widely that Buddhism originated from “deep compassion” (karuna in Sanskrit) toward other living creatures. Literally, all living creatures on the planet are connected, re-incarnated, and should live together. Among the many practices to achieve peace among numerous creatures, Angue and FangShang are the most distinguished practices among Buddhists, regardless of the different schools of Buddhism, as I articulated. So far, the origin, development, and basic concepts of Buddhism have been discussed as a basis for examining Snyder’s Green Buddhism poetry, although his Green Buddhism goes beyond any one specific school of Buddhism.
CHAPTER III

RECONSTRUCTING SNYDER’S “COLD MOUNTAIN POEMS”:
POEMS OF HANSHAN IN RIPRAP & COLD MOUNTAIN POEMS

Gary Snyder, the self-claimed peasant-Buddhist poet, is one of the most distinguished translators in terms of translating HanShan’s poems into English, compared to other translators of Cold Mountain Poems such as Burton Watson, Red Pine, and T.H. Barrett. Snyder connected East Asia to America by professionally translating twenty-four poems of the Chinese Tang poet, HanShan, who has been accepted as one of the most enigmatic countercultural icons. “Cold Mountain Poems,” Snyder’s English translations of HanShan’s poems, were first published in the Evergreen Review (1956) while he was in his twenties, and later reprinted in Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems (1965). Snyder also translated eighteen poems of Miyazawa Kanji (1896-1933), the Japanese poet, in The Back Country (1969). Recently, Snyder published sixteen Tang poems in his The Gary Snyder Reader (1999). His translations have continuously expanded the concept of Asia beyond India and the Middle East to Far East Asia and narrowed the gap between Asia and America. However, readers’ responses to these translations are quite different: “Cold Mountain Poems” became a phenomenon and the poems were popular among the Beat writers and readers, and have been accepted as classics of English translation from Chinese literature, whereas his English
translations of Miyazaki's poems and Tang poems have rarely attracted readers' interest. Why have many readers been intrigued by "Cold Mountain Poems," especially Snyder's translations, and others translated into English over the past fifty years? How are Snyder's translations different from other translations and are his translations valid as genuine poems and English translations?

In his "Reflections on my translations of the Tang poet HanShan," Gary Snyder notes the importance of the translator's genuine creativity and the intercommunion between a poet and a translator by saying: "A truly artistic translation of a poem may require an effort of imagination almost as great as the making of the original. The translator who wishes to enter the creative territory must make an intellectual and imaginative jump into the mind and world of the poet, and no dictionary will make this easier." He continues clarifying how he connected to the poetic world of HanShan by recollecting his own experiences of translating the poems of HanShan into English: "I have had a powerful sense of appreciating auras of nonverbal meaning and experiencing the poet's own mind-of-composition in working with the poems of HanShan." We cannot fully understand what "apprehending auras of nonverbal meaning" and "poet's own mind-of-composition" mean unless we experience the complex process of translation. Presumably, it means that any translation always leaves room to be improved since something cannot be transferable from one language to another, and a strong attachment and poetic connection between a poet and a translator is
required to produce a translation. More specifically speaking, our linguistic understanding of both the original and the translated poems of HanShan is not enough to interpret and translate the deep and profound meanings of the poems without having a solid level of understanding of the Chinese religious philosophies of Chan Buddhism and Taoism. Snyder’s “apprehending auras of nonverbal meaning” could be understood as a deeply genuine communion between Snyder and HanShan, two deep Chan-Buddhist poets.

The poems of East Asian Chan (禪) Buddhist- and Taoist-poets offer inspirational ideas to their readers and help them ultimately to touch what Chan Buddhists and Taoists achieved from their continuous practices and studies of traditional East Asian Buddhism and Taoism. Among the many significant Chan Buddhist and Taoist-poets, HanShan is one of the most enigmatic ones revived in the twentieth century. Whether we read the original or translated poems of HanShan, the initial difficulty of approaching “Cold Mountain Poems” begins with the interpretations of “HanShan” (寒山), which literally mean “Cold Mountain” in English; “Han (寒)" means “cold” and “Shan (山)" means “mountain(s).” As Snyder clarified it in his “Cold Mountain Poems,” “HanShan” takes his name from where he lived. When the poet talks about “Cold Mountain” in his poems, it often presents “the poet” himself who lived, we believe, from 627-650 A.D. although other Sinologists like HuShih date him as living from 700 to 750 A.D. “Cold Mountain” also names the locality or “the place,” where he lived.
In addition to this, it means “the state of mind” or “the spiritual quest for enlightenment” in Chan Buddhism and Taoism. Therefore, how to interpret the meaning of “Cold Mountain” is one of the essential issues that we need to examine to fully understand the poems. “Cold Mountain Poems” have been constantly translated into English since “Twenty-seven Poems by Han-shan” by Arthur Waley, the British Sinologist and translator, in Encounters (1954). However, Snyder is the Buddhist-poet and translator who revitalized “Cold Mountain Poems” and this is why his translations have been continuously beloved and have intrigued more and more readers.

Keeping the above primary ideas in mind, this chapter examines three main concerns to illuminate Snyder as a significant Sinologist and translator. First, it examines the English translations of HanShan’s poems by comparing Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems” to other translations, especially, Burton Watson’s Cold Mountain: 100 poems by T’ang poet Han-shan (1962). Considering Ezra Pound’s contribution in connecting East and West, his translations will be also discussed briefly. Second, it illuminates “Cold Mountain Poems” more specifically by focusing on how “HanShan (寒山),” “HanShan Tao (寒山道),” and ‘Tao (道)” — the three most frequently used words in the collection—have been translated into English and should be understood. It will give readers inspirational ideas in understanding “Snyder’s auras of nonverbal meaning” that he experienced in the process of translating “Cold Mountain Poems.” In doing this, I will mainly compare Snyder’s Cold Mountain Poems to Red Pine’s The Collected Songs of...
Cold Mountain 寒山詩 (2000), which delivers both the original Chinese and the English translations together. Third, it examines how Snyder’s spirituality and HanShan’s are extraordinary and identical by comparing Snyder’s poems in *Riprap* to “Cold Mountain Poems” in *Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems*. It will give readers helpful ideas in following HanShan and Snyder’s profound mind-of-composing in “Cold Mountain Poems.” If Pound introduced East Asian poetics to American literature, Snyder connected them by deepening his understanding on East Asian languages, poems, religious philosophies, and translating “Cold Mountain Poems.” Based on this, I want to argue that Snyder is the first American Buddhist-poet and translator, who internalized the original texts into his mind and transformed them into English.

Connecting East Asian Poetry to American Poetry: Snyder’s Revitalization of Cold Mountain Poems

In his essay, “Reflections on My Translations of the T’ang Poet HanShan,” Snyder claims that our contemporary idea of HanShan is the creation of the East Asian Meditation Buddhism tradition and the Chinese delight in eccentrics. His poems are much loved in East Asia and the mountains and caves that are associated with HanShan are still visited by many Cold Mountain readers regularly. It is obvious that many words of Cold Mountain poems directly reflect
the enlightened Buddha-mind and old sayings of Buddhist literatures. Another renowned Sinologist and translator, Burton Watson, also describes HanShan as the master of Cold Mountain and claims that anyone familiar with Chinese or Japanese arts and poetry has undoubtedly at some time seen pictures and poems of HanShan, whereas “no one knows where HanShan came from and who he (or she) is.” 5 Nothing is clear about the biography of HanShan but more than three hundred Cold Mountain poems are collected, originally written on bamboo, wood, stones, and cliffs. Red Pine also elucidates how HanShan is highly accepted in East Asia by saying, “No other poet occupies the altars of China’s temples and shrines, where his statue often stands alongside immortals and bodhisattvas. He is equally revered in Korea and Japan.” 6 In the introduction of Peter Hobson’s Poems of Hanshan, T. H. Barrett describes the popularity of HanShan’s poems in East Asia by saying, “The poems collected under his name (HanShan) have had an immense impact in East Asia, especially among Zen (Chan) Buddhists, and have been translated many times into Western Languages.” 7 HanShan, as a Chinese Chan Buddhist- and Taoist-poet, and his poems have been greatly appreciated and distinguished, especially during the Chinese Tang period (617-908). Many images and terms of Cold Mountain Poems are drawn from the Buddhist sutras and sayings of Chinese Chan school of Mahayana Buddhism. However, the poems on the mutual communion between humans and nature had developed under the influence of China-originated Taoism even before the Chan school of Mahayana
Buddhism was introduced in East Asia. That is, Taoism was established in China during the Han period (BC 206–AD 220) and the Chan school of Mahayana Buddhism was introduced during the Chinese Tang period.

The interaction between nature (自然) and humans (人间) has always been the primary subject in traditional East Asian poems, and these poems often reflect the Taoism dominant East Asian religious philosophy. Even before the Chan school of Mahayana Buddhism was introduced in the area, this nature-friendly thought prevailed in East Asia and the idea was portrayed in many traditional East Asian poems and paintings. Since East Asia was already dominated by Taoism before its official acceptance of Buddhism, when Buddhism first came to China, it was initially misunderstood as a different sect of Taoism. That is, emphasizing the deep communion and interconnection between humans and nature was a key concept of Taoism, whereas the human relationship among people is highly valued in Confucianism, the other dominant philosophy in East Asia. The nature-friendly idea was also characterized in many pictographic Chinese characters, especially, those characters describing the elements of nature such as “tree, mountain, river, sun, moon, and water.” In his Key Concepts in Chinese Philosophy, Zhang Dainian articulates the word of “nature,” reaching back to the concepts used before the oracle bones (1350-1100B.C.), and notes that the term “zi ran (自然),” which is “nature” in English, is composed of two characters, the first meaning “self” and the second “what is so.” Together they
may be translated as “what is so of itself.” In simpler English, one could say “spontaneous.” The term is also translated “nature.”

In his Chinese Calligraphy, a Sinologist, Edorado Fazzioli, traces back the origin of character, “zi (自),” and approaches it with the focus on the pictographic image. Then, he says, “A child wanting to indicate himself or herself will point to his or her nose. This is probably the origin of this character.” He continues saying that “The Chinese believe that the nose was the starting point for the human body’s development in the womb and therefore the origin of the individual... The ancient Chinese believed that breath came from the heart and emerged out of the nose, completing the cycle of life by returning through the nose to the heart.” The Chinese character of “nature” connotes the “self-functioning” of nature and this planet, Earth.

Gary Snyder has acknowledged the profound concept of Chinese characters for nature in his The Practice of the Wild (1990) and elucidates that the Chinese “zi-ran” literally means “self-thus” in English. More interestingly, he also argues how the early Taoists love and respect nature by saying, “Although the Chinese and Japanese have long given lip service to nature, only the early Daoists might have thought that wisdom could come of wilderness.” In other words, Snyder penetrates how the early Taoists deepened their friendly relationship with nature. Snyder continuously articulates how the words—nature, wild, and wilderness—have different connotations through their focus on nature and says, “The word *nature* is rooted from Latin *natura*, ‘birth, constitution, character,
course of things’—ultimately from *nasci*, to be born. So we have nation, native, pregnant.”

What is equally intriguing, he approaches Buddhism with the same perspective to nature in his *Earth House Hold*. Snyder claims, “Buddhism holds 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.”

He continues his discourse on Mahayana Buddhism, specifically the Chan school of Buddhism, by saying, “Mahayana Buddhism has a grand vision of universal salvation and the actual achievement of Buddhism has been the development of practical system of meditation.” The word “nature” has an innate linguistic connotation in both East and West and the concept links to ecology. In his *Ecology: The Link Between the Natural and the Social Sciences*, James D. Ebert also articulates what ecology means etymologically by saying, “The term *ecology* is derived from the Greek root, ‘oikos’ meaning ‘house,’ combined with the root ‘logy,’ meaning ‘the science of’ or ‘the study of.’ Thus, literally ecology is the study of the earth’s “households” including the plants, animals, and microorganisms, and the people that live together as interdependent components.”

As I have articulated the connection between Buddhism and ecology in the previous chapter, understanding the interdependence among creatures on this planet is the essential concept of Gary Snyder’s activism, ethics, poetics, and “Green Buddhism.” From my perspective, rising global interest on
ecological issues is another reason why Cold Mountain Poems are continuously appreciated by more and more readers in the East and the West.

As Ling Chung claimed in his essay “Gary Snyder’s Seventeen T’ang poems: An Anti-Climax After his ‘Cold Mountain Poems’?,” the popularity of “Cold Mountain Poems” in the 1950s and 1960s in America owes much to their timely arrival during the Beat Generation and Countercultural movement. In his autobiographical fiction, The Dharma Bums (1958), Kerouac describes in detail how Japhy Ryder translated the Cold Mountain Poems into English and how both Cold Mountain, or HanShan, and Japhy are great dharma bums. After the publication and the publicity of The Dharma Bums, the apparently carefree reclusive lifestyle and Chan Buddhism coincidentally met the spiritual need and imagination of Beat writers and readers. Ling Chung continues to claim that HanShan is canonized in America, being featured in several important anthologies of classical Chinese literature in translation, and that HanShan gained “a status he did not attain in China during the course of a millennium.” From my perspective, the popularity of “HanShan” and “Cold Mountain Poems” in the 1950s owes much to Snyder’s fine translations of “Cold Mountain Poems” rather than Jack Kerouac’s The Dharma Bums. The eccentric characteristics of HanShan and Japhy Rider became gurus of the younger generations in the late 1950s and on. Whether it was intended it or not, many readers have often identified Japhy Rider with Gary Snyder. However, Japhy Rider is a fictional character and he should
not be compared to the actual poet-translator, Gary Snyder, while Snyder and HanShan do share many similar characteristics as Buddhist-poets. Snyder also clarifies the issue by noting, “Japhy Ryder, in Kerouac’s Dharma Bums, is a fictional character. It is a novel, not journalism. Some of the action in the novel is modeled after events of the fall of 1955, and much of it is fictionally invented. What I usually tell people is, ‘I am not Japhy Ryder. Ryder is a character modeled in some ways on how Jack saw me.’ This is basically the truth, whatever else has been said.”18

Although HanShan’s poems were first translated into English by Arthur Waley in “Twenty-seven Poems by Han-shan” in Encounters (1954), his translations of HanShan’s poems have rarely been recognized by Sinologists and readers in America, including Snyder. However, Ezra Pound, who is a fervent admirer of Chinese esthetics, poetics, and poetry, contributed a direct and great effect on Snyder’s East Asian studies. According to Snyder, when he studied at Reed College, he read Ernest Fenollosa’s Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art and the book gave him further guidance into Asian art. Naturally, Fenollosa’s text led Snyder to Pound’s English translations of East Asian poems.19 Pound produced his first volume of English translations of East Asian poems by publishing Cathay in 1915, and this collection is still appreciated by many sinologists both in East and West. As T. S. Eliot once noted, “Pound is the inventor of Chinese poetry for his time.”20 Under the impact of Pound’s Cathay, there arose a vogue of imitating
East Asian poetry in the late 1910s and early 1920s. As Fenollosa was intrigued by the esthetics of East Asian paintings, Pound was also interested in the esthetics of East Asian paintings before he was intrigued by East Asian poetics and poetry. For example, according to the Sinologist Zhaoming Qian, one of the British Museum Oriental Collections most frequently visited, the Buddhist art from “Dunhuang Cave of the Thousand Buddhas,” fascinated Pound and it is described in Pound’s epic poem “Canto 80.” Pound made his transition from East Asian aesthetics to East Asian poetics by continuously working on his inspirational materials, the Fenollosa manuscripts, and editing The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry.

American readers’ genuine interest in reading and studying HanShan’s poems was ignited with “Cold Mountain Poems” in 1958 by Gary Snyder. Snyder translated twenty-four “Cold Mountain Poems.” Then Watson translated one hundred of HanShan’s poems into English and published them, entitled Cold Mountain 100 Poems by the T’ang poet Han-shan in 1962 by Grove Press. According to his autobiographical essay “Kyoto in the fifties,” Watson finished the first draft of his Cold Mountain poems in 1958, the year when Snyder published his “Cold Mountain Poems” in the Evergreen Review. Since Watson came to Kyoto in 1951 and Snyder did not talk to him about his publication of “Cold Mountain Poems,” Watson did not know that Snyder had already published “Cold Mountain Poems” in America. When Watson finished the first draft of
“Cold Mountain Poems,” he asked Snyder to look over the English translations while they were together in Kyoto, Japan. Instead of directly commenting on Watson’s translations, Snyder arranged for the poet, Cid Corman, to examine the translations. Corman criticized Watson’s draft on the grounds of bad and sloppy English. Watson still recollects that this was how he revised his drafts and translated the biggest collection of “Cold Mountain Poems.” Up until Robert G. Herricks published The Poetry of Han-Shan in 1990, Watson’s translations remained the largest collection of “Cold Mountain Poems” and had been beloved by the people of both Chinese literature and Buddhism studies. Beyond the above major English translations, Peter Stambler provided both original Chinese and English translations in his Encounter with Cold Mountain in 1996. About forty years after Watson’s translation, Red Pine translated three hundred and seven of HanShan’s poems into English and published them with the original Chinese characters in his The Collected Songs of Cold Mountain (2000). Most recently, Peter Hobson translated one hundred and six of HanShan’s poems in his Poems of Hanshan in 2003. In America, beginning with Snyder’s English translations of “Cold Mountain Poems,” each translation has made a unique contribution by constantly increasing readers’ interests in studying East Asian poetry and religious philosophies. The continuing English translations of HanShan’s poems show how “Cold Mountain Poems” intrigue and challenge many Sinologists and translators.
Just as Ezra Pound and Arthur Waley worked with each other in London during the similar period, so Snyder and Watson worked in East Asian studies together and were stationed in Japan during the 1950s'. Snyder worked by practicing East Asian Buddhism and Burton worked on translating HanShan's poems into English. Snyder's engagement with studying Chinese characters, East Asian poetics, and translating HanShan's poems into English began with his East Asian language study at the University of California at Berkeley between 1953 and 1955. On the 5th of November 2006, in his poetry reading "Gary Snyder: Poet of Peace" at The Art Institute of Chicago, Snyder recollected how he started studying Chinese characters and translating East Asian poems into English and commented that, "I began to study Chinese characters as a graduate student at the East Asian language program even before the CIA secretly supported college students' studies of Chinese characters in the 1960s." Whether he intended to say it or not, Snyder was one of the first American poets and professional translators who seriously studied Chinese characters, poetics, poetry, and religious philosophies of Buddhism and Taoism. Watson began to study Chinese language and poetry at Columbia University in 1950 and translated a few early works of Chinese history for his M.A. thesis project. According to John Balcon’s "An Interview with Burton Watson," Watson notes that his English translations of Chinese poems were done in 1954 by translating Kanshi, or poems written in Chinese by Japanese poets, into English. As Snyder was initially influenced by
Pound’s works, Watson was also greatly influenced by his relationship with Pound and sent Pound his own translations. After reading Watson’s English translations of Chinese poems, Pound kindly encouraged Watson to get his translations published. The Fenollosa-Pound venture into East Asian aesthetics and poetics without having enough knowledge on Chinese characters evolved into Snyder-Watson’s work in translating East Asian poetics and poems into English with profound knowledge and understanding of Chinese characters and Chan Buddhism and Taoism. This is how “Cold Mountain Poems” were introduced to American readers in the 1950s and 1960s.

Snyder originally intended to go to China to study Buddhism and Chinese characters, but the political situation between America and China made this impossible. Instead of China, Snyder went to Japan in 1956 as it is described in his poems and prose. Since Snyder and Watson stayed in Japan during an overlapping period, they helped each other in translating HanShan’s poems and in their studies of East Asian poetics. The influence in the process of translating the poems of HanShan into English was mainly from Snyder to Watson rather than vice versa. Recollecting fifty years of his studies of East Asian poetics as a professional sinologist and translator, Watson explains in a recent interview how his friends, especially Snyder, helped him to translate “Cold Mountain Poems” by saying, “I have gotten much friendly, or sometimes unfriendly, advice from friends and/or poets to whom I have shown my work, such as Cid Corman, Allen
Ginsberg, and Gary Snyder.” More specifically, in terms of Snyder’s influence on his English translation of HanShan’s poems, Watson notes that “Over the years, Gary was very helpful in giving me copies of his books and works of other poets. When I did the first draft of my HanShan translations, I asked Gary to look it over. I did not know at the time that he had translated a selection of HanShan poems, and he didn’t mention the fact.” Watson was continuously absorbed in his studies from the time of his arrival in Japan in 1951, and this was why he did not know of Snyder’s publication of “Cold Mountain Poems.” Instead of directly criticizing Watson’s draft of HanShan’s poems by himself, Snyder arranged a meeting for Watson with poet Cid Corman. Corman was a similar age to Watson and he tore Watson’s translations apart on the grounds of bad or sloppy English. However, Watson recollects it as an extremely valuable experience, in his recent interview in Translation Review. In fact, this is the way to produce authentic translations and it is a very important issue that young translators need to remember. Any translations require genuine efforts to produce something new and even better while they remain faithful to the original texts. Based on what I have discussed, we can safely conclude that Snyder translated HanShan’s poems into English between 1953 and 1958 and Watson did between 1954 and 1968.

Burton Watson’s sophisticated philosophy and skillfulness in translation, related to his experiences of translating Cold Mountain poems (and other poems),
is inspiring to many translators:

The translations still leave much to be desired, and I’ve always regretted I
didn’t have more practice in translating poetry before I tackled Han-shan.
Perhaps I wasn’t quite ready for him, but then most of us translate texts not
when we are “ready” for them, however that is judged, but when they first
attract our interest. Ideally, I suppose, one should translate the text once in
order to acquire the proper readiness, and then, when one comes to the end,
go back and translate it all, over again.28

Watson’s remark on translation instructs and inspires us to tackle the most
troublesome difficulty in translation by practicing it constantly going back and
forth with endurance, while it reminds us of how it is demanding to produce a
desirable translation in our minds. A renowned Korean translator, Jaihiun Kim,
who translated Modern Korean Poetry (1994) and Meditative Poems by Korean
Monks (2002), also notes the importance of genuine translations by saying, “If you
translate well, you will be just a translator. If you translate badly, you will be a
traitor.”29

The mystic life of the Chinese Tang Buddhist and Taoist poet, HanShan,
was accepted as the symbolic embodiment of East Asian Chan Buddhism and
Taoism, and his poems have been considered as the primary source of inspiration
among many countercultural writers, notably Jack Kerouac and Allan Ginsberg, in America. HanShan is widely considered as a visionary poet and the English translations of his poems continuously motivate countercultural and cross-cultural poets in East and West, while his biography is literally unknown. As it is described earlier in this chapter, English translations of "Cold Mountain Poems" became a phenomenon, during the 1950s and 1960s, and the poems have been repeatedly translated into English by remarkable poets and professional translators. Influenced by his meeting with Gary Snyder, who was absorbed in translating HanSahn’s poems into English, Jack Kerouac wrote his biographical novel The Dharma Bums (1958). The fiction also performed a crucial role in spreading Cold Mountain poems in America by igniting the huge popularity of HanShan among the Beat generation writers and readers. Red Pine notes that “When Jack Kerouac dedicated The Dharma Bums to him (HanShan) in 1958, Cold Mountain became the guardian angel of a generation of Westerners as well.”30 However, Gary Snyder’s translations of twenty four of HanShan’s poems are more significant to our understanding of the Chinese Tang Buddhist and Taoist poet, HanShan’s poetic world. What is equally interesting to me is that Snyder’s actual life and poems truly echo those of HanShan, as these are described in his poetry collection, Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems.
Understanding Chan Buddhism and Taoism in “Cold Mountain Poems”:
How to Interpret “Tao (道),” “HanShan (寒山),” and “HanShanTao (寒山道)”

Originating from traditional Chinese poems, traditional East Asian poems were written in Chinese characters and about communion between humans and nature. In addition, the poems were often the products of a symmetrical combination of calligraphy, painting, and poetry. That is, a poem written calligraphically within a painting makes the painting more artistic, dynamic, and valuable and the skillfulness of a painter-and-poet can produce a sense of perfection. As a painting is a genuine product of painters’ practices for years, a well-written Chinese poem is also a product of the continuous practice of calligraphy. Especially since the Chinese Tang (617-960) and Song (960-1279) periods, Chinese poets have continuously refined their calligraphies, and the traditional East Asian paintings often include poems. This is how paintings are appreciated by the illiterate and literati whereas calligraphically-written poems are appreciated by literati. Or, considering the pictographic and ideographic characteristics of early Chinese characters, both the illiterate and literati can appreciate the beauty of paintings and poems with different levels of understanding in many ways. From my perspective, paintings and poems become like the essential concepts of Taoism, $yin$ and $yang$, which signify the complementary halves to make a perfection and wholeness of Taoism. The
traditional East Asian paintings without poems cannot be fully appreciated by their observers.

In general, many readers understand that Chinese characters are pictographic or ideographic. However, many sinologists know that this is a fallacy, initially introduced by Ernest Fenollosa through his *The Chinese Written Characters as a Medium for Poetry*. In the book, Fenollosa articulates how Chinese characters are a suitable medium for poetry. However, his premise lacks validity due to his shallow understanding of Chinese characters. He takes a mere “twelve characters” to articulate his idea that Chinese characters are pictographic or ideographic. Fenollosa emphasizes the primitive pictorial nature of a very limited number of the most basic Chinese pictograms and ideograms to support his ideas and this is why his views are far from being credible and persuasive from the beginning. Consequently, his understanding and poetics on Chinese poetry have been continuously criticized by more and more sinologists; meanwhile, his ideas have been widely accepted among the non-sinologists who have no discretion on the characteristics of Chinese characters. Based on this crucial weakness of the text, George Kennedy once called *The Chinese Written Characters as a Medium for Poetry* “a small mass of confusion.” In his *The Art of Chinese Poetry*, one of the most remarkable sinologists, James J.Y. Liu, also criticized Fenollosa’s fallacy concerning Chinese characters saying,
There is a fallacy still common among Western readers outside sinological circles, namely, that all Chinese characters are pictograms and ideograms... In his essay ‘The Chinese Characters as a Medium for Poetry,’ Fenollosa stressed his misconception and admired Chinese characters for their alleged pictorial qualities.... The Fenollosa approach is, to say the least, seriously misleading.³¹

To clarify how the Chinese characters have been made over the past thousands of years and how the pictographic and ideographic characters make up but a small portion of Chinese characters, Liu articulates “The Six Graphic Principles,” namely: Hsiang-bsing or ‘Imitating the form,’ Chib-sbib or ‘Pointing at the Thing,’ Huei-yi or ‘Understanding the Meaning,’ Hsieb-sbeng or ‘Harmonizing the Sound,’ Chuan-chu or ‘Mutually Defining,’ and Chia-chib or ‘Borrowing.’³² Whether we consider Chinese characters monosyllabic or alphabetic, translating and understanding Chinese poems into the alphabetic language of English causes translators and readers many linguistic difficulties. Basically, the original small number of early Chinese characters are pictographic and ideographic but many more characters have been constantly added by following the six disciplines.

In terms of semantics and syntax, both translators and readers often cannot conclude which character is subject and verb in a sentence. Oftentimes, it is literally self-transforming, depending on context. For instance, the six characters of the first line from the Lao-Tzu’s Tao Te Ching, “Tao called Tao is not Tao
(道可道非常道)” has been understood in various ways and translated into English as well. It may be translated word for word in English as follows: 道 way /  can-be / 道 way or tell / 非 not / 常 always or enduring / 道 way. In his Tao Te Ching, Stephen Addiss introduces “ten different translations” by ten renowned Sinologists while it delivers the same basic meaning, “The Way that cannot be told of is not an Unvarying Way.” In the Chinese characters, the profound meaning of “Tao” in Taoism cannot be easily captured and, therefore, translated into English even though it is now so often used in English and translated “the Way.” In addition, the characters can be understood and translated from the last character to the first one, by which I mean: “If the way is not always the way, the way is not the way.” In addition to this, Chinese characters do not clarify whether it is a singular or plural noun and readers are supposed to intuitively acknowledge it once they understand the meaning. More interestingly, the literal interpretation of each word, phrase, and sentence very much depends on readers’ linguistic knowledge, experiences, and perspectives in approaching them. In this sense, the modern readers’ response theory is perfectly applied to examining Chinese poems.

One of the most primary issues of translating HanShan’s poems into “Cold Mountain Poems” is closely related to how to interpret “HanShan 寒山,” which appears sixteen times in Snyder’s twenty-four translations of “Cold Mountain Poems.” They are the most frequently used Chinese characters in the whole Cold
Mountain poems and they have initially three different meanings. That is, HanShan denotes the name of the Chinese Tang poet who is eccentric and mysterious, the place where the poet actually lived for over thirty years of his life, and the state of a poet’s mind, which echoes the mind of a Chan Buddhist and Taoist. In the attempt to interpret the literal meaning of HanShan which oftentimes connotes more than one simple meaning, the interpretation of “HanShanTao 寒山道”—“The Way of/to HanShan” into English—is challenging and various, while “Tao” is already too complex and sophisticated to interpret even in its original Chinese characters. “HanShanTao” appears fours times and “Tao” appears three times in Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems.” More specifically, depending on the meaning of “Tao” and “HanShan,” “HanShanTao” delivers even more complex metaphysical meanings. It can be easily interpreted as “the visible and tangible way or road to Cold Mountain,” which leads people to the place where the poet physically stayed. Or, it signifies “the spiritual way of (becoming like) the poet,” Cold Mountain, who practiced Chinese Chan Buddhism and Taoism during his life. As readers, we have to draw a precise meaning of “Tao,” “HanShan” and “HanShanTao,” after considering the whole context of “Cold Mountain Poems.” This leads us to more dynamic and intriguing interpretations of HanShan’s poems. Without discovering the genuine and interconnected meaning of each word, phrase, and sentence in the whole collection, we cannot produce
mutual understanding between a poet and a reader and the “Cold Mountain Poems” turn out quite ambiguous.

A group of Western scholars has often claimed that binary thoughts or dichotomies dominate Westerners’ minds and the symmetrical balance between yin and yang of Taoism is dominant in Easterners’ minds. However, we cannot ignore the fact that binary thoughts have been available among Easterners, even to Chan Buddhists’ and Taoists’ minds. Traditionally, they seem to believe that living in nature and becoming a part of nature is the way of achieving their spiritual enlightenment since our human society links to the chaotic dimensions, which echo the uncertainties of our lives and often make our lives more complicated and seemingly meaningless. This is why Chan Buddhists and Taoists often prefer secluding themselves among mountains and rivers, symbolically higher to the moon in the sky, and want to live far away from our human society. This is why, traditionally, “the world under the moon” or “lunar world” connotes human society, which is often chaotic. “The world above moon” is the place where a peaceful mind can be genuinely achieved and where only enlightened people like the true Chan Buddhists and Taoists are entitled to stay. As I articulated, there has been a stereotypical distinction between the popular culture for us and the world for the serious Chan Buddhists and Taoists and presenting an inspiration on how to make a transition from one dimension to the other is always treated as the main subject in traditional East Asian poems. Understanding
“HanShanTao” or “the way of Cold Mountain” is essential in following the profound way and the spiritual world which is often said to exist above the moon.

One of the most beloved and sophisticated Cold Mountain poems is about what “Cold Mountain” and “The Way of Cold Mountain” mean. The following English translations of HanShan’s poems are by Snyder, Watson, and Red Pine and they show how the binary thoughts between two worlds are intrinsic in “Cold Mountain Poems” by presenting the dominant ideas of Chan Buddhists/Taoists:

Men ask the way to Cold Mountain / Cold Mountain: There’s no through trail.
In summer, ice doesn’t melt / The rising sun blurs in swirling fog
How did I make it? / My heart’s not the same as yours.
If your heart was like mine, / You’d get it and be right here.3 4

People ask the way to Cold Mountain / Cold Mountain? There is no road that goes through.
Even in summer the ice does not melt; /
Though the sun comes out, the fog is blinding.
How can you hope to get there by aping me? / Your heart and mind are not alike.
If your heart were the same as mine, /
Then you could journey to the very center!3 5

People ask the way to Cold Mountain/ but roads don’t reach Cold Mountain
In summer the ice doesn’t melt/ and the morning fog is too dense.
How did someone like me arrive/ our minds are not the same.
If they were the same/ you would be here.36

From my perspective, the initial issue is how to interpret the five characters, “A(person) P u j(ask) A i i  i(Cold Mountain) il(Way),” of the first line of the poem and this is crucial to understanding the thematic idea of the whole poem. Snyder, Watson, and Red Pine unanimously translated the first line into English, “People/Men ask the way to Cold Mountain,” and their translations are completely faithful to the original characters by leaving the interpretations of “Cold Mountain” open to their readers. That is, “Cold Mountain” is more likely understood as either “the place” or “state of poet’s mind” rather than the poet, himself. The second line is translated as “Cold Mountain: There’s no through trail,” “Cold Mountain? There is no road that goes through,” and “but roads don’t reach Cold Mountain,” respectively, in slightly different ways. The translators seem to unanimously conclude that HanShanTao means the “tangible and visible way which leads people to the place which is called Cold Mountain.” Intended or not, the translations seem to exclude the possible interpretation that it means “the spiritual way to reach the HanShan’s state of mind,” or leaving the possibility of understanding it completely to readers. From my perspective, HanShanTao should be understood as either “the tangible and visual way” to reach “the geographical place where Chinese Tang poet HanShan lived” or “the spiritual and metaphysical
way” to reach “the state of the enlightened poet, HanShan, Chan Buddhist and Taoist.” In addition, HanShanTao can be a combination of both. However, translators do not leave room for multiple interpretations and I believe it is mainly due to the following lines three and four, which relate “Cold Mountain” to seasonal circumstance. That is, the lines conclusively describe HanShan as well as HanShanTao as “the physical/tangible road and place.” However, the rest of the poem leaves the meaning of Tao, HanShan, and HanShanTao wide open. Lines five and six—especially line six which says “My heart is not the same as yours”—increase the chance of reading HanShanTao as “the spiritual way of the poet, HanShan.” In other words, we can see the spiritual strength and the exploration of the wild mind from the poet, HanShan, who lived in the mountains for more than thirty years. The poem ends by saying, “If your heart was like mine, / You’d get it and be right here.” This distinguishes the speaker’s mind from others, not the geographical place where he lives from the place where other people live. Based on this, I want to claim that understanding the meaning of “HanShan” and “HanShanTao” is crucial in understanding Cold Mountain Poems and the way of Chán Buddhists/Taoists, as Chinese literati have claimed the importance of understanding the meaning of “Tao” or “the Way” in Taoism.

Another important issue is HanShan’s exaggeration, hyperbole and figurative language in describing natural phenomena and his complex mind in Cold Mountain Poems. As a specific example, the speaker says, “In summer the
ice doesn’t melt / and the morning fog is too dense” and a similar description is repeated throughout “Cold Mountain Poems.” However, the cave in Hantan where HanShan actually lived cannot be that cold in summer or even in winter. Red Pine also examines it and says the place where HanShan lived was not actually Cold Mountain but “cliff or cave.” He says, “In fact, the place where he lived was never called Hanshan, but rather Hanyen, or Cold Cliff.”37 It is not possible that ice does not melt in summer in HanShan’s cold cliff in Hanyen, which is located not in a high place. Based on this, I want to claim that “HanShan” in the poem should be understood as the symbolic significance of “the state of mind” of “Cold Mountain,” a Chan Buddhist and Taoist, rather than a simple locality of “a cold place.”

The following lines from “Cold Mountain Poems” also cause me to believe the versatile interpretations of “HanShan” and “HanShanTao,” while both words more directly signify the Cold Mountain’s state of mind: “I have lived at Cold Mountain/ These thirty long years”38 by Snyder, “I came once to sit on Cold Mountain/ And lingered here for thirty years”39 by Watson, and “Once I reached Cold Mountain/ I stayed for thirty years”40 by Red Pine. Snyder’s and Watson’s translations of “Cold Mountain” seem more like “a place” where Cold Mountain lived for thirty years, whereas Red Pine’s “Cold Mountain” implies “the state of mind” of a Taoist and Chan Buddhist. According to Snyder, Cold Mountain is traditionally believed to have lived between 627 and 650, although HuShih dates
Cold Mountain between 700 and 780. Therefore, "Cold Mountain" could be understood as "state of mind" and "thirty years" as the period that Cold Mountain practiced Taoism and Chan Buddhism. However, Snyder's translations more explicitly link "HanShan" and "HanShanTao" to Chan Buddhism and Taoism. This is obvious in the following lines: "Some critic tried to put me down—"/"Your poems lack the Basic Truth of Tao" by Snyder and "Someone sighed Cold Mountain sir! your poems possess no sense" by Red Pine. Snyder's translation directly describes to readers how "Cold Mountain" and "Cold Mountain Poems" are linked to Taoism and its essential principles while Red Pines' ascribes "Cold Mountain" to the poet and "Cold Mountain Poems" to something senseless and even insane. One of the most intriguing parts of Snyder's "Cold Mountain Poems" is the last line of the last poem in the collection: "Try and make it to Cold Mountain," which is also interestingly translated in Watson's and Red Pine's, "Try coming to Cold Mountain sometime!" and "visit Cold Mountain sometime" respectively. As we can tell by now from the above three different translations, "Cold Mountain" is rather "the state of mind" which reflects Chinese Taoism and Chan Buddhism rather than the place where the eccentric Chinese Tang poet, HanShan, once lived.

Gary Snyder, Burton Watson, and Red Pine are the preeminent translators of East Asian poems and translated "Cold Mountain Poems," after spending more than a decade studying East Asian culture, literature, and philosophies in East Asia.
This is how these poet-translators made progress in their works and motivated many young sinologists and translators through their remarkable translations. Among the three distinguished figures, Gary Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems” stands out and Snyder has become the most phenomenal poet-translator by continuously bridging the gap between East and West over the past half century. With the concept of “Tao” in China-originated Taoism, “HanShan” and “HanShanTao” are complex and profound ideas and understanding the ideas is quite essential in understanding the whole collection of “Cold Mountain Poems.” This is why Cold Mountain poems, especially Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems,” have been beloved by more and more readers. From the beginning of his career as a professional translator in the 1950s, Snyder translated “Cold Mountain Poems” into English by experiencing the poet’s (HanShan’s) own mind-of-composition, based on his deep understanding of Chinese language and the East Asian religious philosophies of Taoism and Chan Buddhism.

Comparing the Poems of Crater Shan46 to HanShan’s Poems: Shaping the American Pacific Rim Identity in Snyder’s Early Poems

Gary Snyder translated twenty-four of HanShan’s poems into English and three hundred seven of HanShan’s poems have been so far collected and translated into English. Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems” was originally published in the
Evergreen Review in 1958, a year before his first poetry collection, Riprap, was published. Later, those two collections were combined in Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems in 1965, and a new edition with an afterword by Snyder was published in 1990. In the new edition, the ampersand in the title was changed to “and” and it has become Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems. The poems and “Cold Mountain Poems” in the collection reflect the determined orientation of Snyder as a genuine American nature poet and “a peasant Buddhist-poet,” as he has name himself. That is, the poems in the collection persistently describe how Snyder developed his American ecological activism and ethics which later turned into American Green Buddhism. Basically, the poems show how Snyder elaborated his deep attachment to the American landscape, its consciousness, and the meditation school of East Asian Buddhism between the early 1950s and 1965. The landscape and consciousness of the Pacific Rim already had become an essential part in shaping Snyder’s ecological ethics and poetics, even before he practiced the meditation school of East Asian Buddhism. However, his poems are quite similar to the traditional East Asian poems which consider the continuous interactions between humans and nature as the primary subject, as it is in “Cold Mountain Poems.”

The poems in Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems illustrate to readers how Snyder developed his strong attachment to the American wilderness from his
youth and practiced the meditation school of Buddhism in his youth. Among the
twenty-three poems in the collection, nineteen poems describe how Snyder
cultivated himself as a spokesperson of North America and the other four poems
are directly about Snyder’s practice of the Rinzai school of Japanese Zen
Buddhism in Kyoto. Snyder also claims that the poems are about North American
wilderness by saying, “Riprap is entirely North American, with just a trace of
Chinese flavor, and it is actually NOT a play of Chinese poetics, which is formal,
rhymed, strict, parallelistic and elegant.” In other words, the major body of the
collection focuses on his experience as a fire lookout in the North Cascades, a trail
crew member in Yosemite, and practicing the meditation school of Buddhism in
America. Whether Snyder intended it or not, a few similarities between Snyder’s
poems and the traditional East Asian poems, more specifically, his “Cold
Mountain Poems,” are distinctive. As primary examples, the first poem of the
collection, “Mid-August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout,”
and “Piute Creek,” feature the typical structures of traditional Chinese poetry and
the crafts of minimalism and parallelism of traditional Chinese poets within
American contexts.

The poems depict traditional Chinese linguistic and poetic aspects and
suggest to us how the early stage of Snyder’s poems is related to traditional East
Asian meditative poems. Both poems are based on Snyder’s experience as a fire
watcher in the summer of 1952 and as a trail crew member in Yosemite in 1955,
respectively. The poems introduce his use of the simplified forms, rhymes, and fewest essential words, echoing traditional Chinese poems. As the first example, the two-stanza poem, “Mid-August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout,” stands out. It has five lines in each stanza and about five words in each line. The whole structure of the poem portrays a juxtaposition, one of the most frequently used crafts in Chinese poems:

Down valley a smoke haze
Three days heat, after five days rain
Pitch glows on the fir-cones
Across rocks and meadow
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.⁴⁸

Apparently, the first stanza describes “the place,” where Snyder stayed and the second stanza is about his experience as a fire lookout. In fact, the poem is more about his communion with American nature and wilderness, while the tone of the
poem reverberates that of Cold Mountain poems. As "HanShan" and "HanShanTao" are the thematic ideas in "Cold Mountain Poems," "America" and "American consciousness" are the ideas in this poem. The structure of the poem initially echoes the Chinese verse, which often has five characters in a line and is usually a two-stanza poem. This reminds readers of many "Cold Mountain Poems," whether written in Chinese characters or English. Snyder also clarifies his poems' connection to Chinese poems by saying, "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." Traditionally, making a line of four characters by adding two characters to two characters and making another line of four characters was the classic meter of the earliest Chinese Tang poems. Later, the basic meter variously developed into five or seven characters by adding two characters to three characters or three characters to four characters, respectively, in each line and doubling it to make a stanza. Including HanShan's poems, many Chinese Tang poems are structured in these ways. Most of HanShan's poems are structured with four lines of five characters, which adds two characters to three characters in each line. In this way, the structure and tone of "Mid-August At Sourdough Mountain Lookout" mirror those of "Cold Mountain Poems."
In “Mid-August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout,” another distinctive aspect is the speaker, who describes the natural phenomenon in both objective and subjective ways. As it is often seen in a traditional East Asian poem, the whole poem is like a symmetrical combination of “a poem, painting, and Chinese calligraphy.” That is, reading stanza one is like appreciating a landscape painting, whether it is American or Chinese. As the Chinese language rarely uses the singular subject “I” in colloquial speech and poems, the speaker “I” does not appear until it shows up two times at the beginning of stanza two: “I cannot remember things I once read.” This is the way to let readers cultivate the power of visualization and eventually see the communion between nature and humans, in the style of “Cold Mountain Poems.” Many of HanShan’s poems in Chinese have no speaker at all. This allows readers to more closely attach themselves to the speaker and the poem. In other words, unifying the speaker of the poem and the readers of the poem is often expected in order to fully understand “Mid-August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout,” as it compares to “Cold Mountain Poems.” The other intriguing aspect of this poem is a sense of identification between the speaker or Gary Snyder, and HanShan, the Chinese Tang Buddhist- and Taoist-poet. Both speakers care more about their spiritual dimensions and stabilities rather than circumstantial situations.

The second stanza begins by revealing the first-person speaker and shows the dualistic views between living in nature and living in human society by
contrasting lives in mountains to those in cities. Eventually, the poem ends with spiritual communion between the speaker and the consciousness of nature by setting the speaker in the observational position on the top of the mountain, using “Looking down for miles, through high still air.” The line may lead us to see how the speaker determines to distance himself from human society and develop his love of nature by continuously practicing his Way. Katsunori Yamazato suggests a similar idea in his *Seeking a Fulcrum* and notes that “the reader feels behind the poem the solitary figure of the young Snyder who ... is deeply engaged in adjusting the way in which he absorbs the world, his mechanism of perception.”

The poem’s conclusion fills the speaker with the meditative serenity promoted by the wilderness of Sourdough, which reminds us of the traditional East Asian poems, specifically, HanShan’s meditative poems.

“Piute Creek” and “The Sappa Creek” are also Snyder’s nature poems, based on his experience in Yosemite high country in 1955. These poems mirror the tone and main ideas of “Cold Mountain Poems.” Both poems describe the mutual communion between humans and the American wilderness by portraying humans as temporary visitors and nature as a permanent host. “Piute Creek” intrigues me more since the poem is more like “Cold Mountain Poems” by describing the communion between humans and nature. The first stanza describes the magically-webbed various elements of nature, in seemingly endless

97
continuation, without human presence, by using works such as “One granite
ridge,” “A tree,” “a rock,” “a small creek,” “Hills beyond hill,” and “Sky over
endless mountains.” The various aspects of nature are intertwined and these
variations of nature appear dynamic and energetic throughout the poem.
Surprisingly, the first stanza ends by comparing “words and books” to
“evaporating water” as it follows: “Words and books/ Like a small creek off a high
ledge/ Gone in the dry air.” What humans believe valuable and timeless,
including what the speaker considers immortal, turns out to be momentarily
evaporating, compared to the timelessness of nature. What is equally interesting is
that the second stanza presents bioregional ethics and spiritual communion
between the speaker and animals by introducing “we” and “Cougar and Coyote,”
as the main subjects of the entire poem. Animals observe the speaker until he
leaves the place and the territory belongs to them, “Cougar and Coyote.” From
humans’ perspective, animals are always the objects to be watched by us and we
are the observers until they are taken care of. However, their status is switched in
the poem as it says, “Back there unseen/ Cold proud eyes/ Of Cougar and Coyote/
Watch me rise and go.” Linked to “Cold Mountain Poems,” the key concept of
the poem is to feature the interchangeable and transforming relationship between
humans and animals, as it is often described in Native American folktales and
mythologies.

“Thin Ice” is another primary example that shows how humans’ interaction
with nature always inspires us to learn something valuable, while nature remains
always as the major inspirational source. The poem suggests how our life is full of uncertainties and how nature warns us to realize our limited appreciation toward it. In this sense, this poem clearly echoes “Cold Mountain Poems.” The poem begins by introducing a speaker who begins to feel natural piety and vitality in February: “Walking in February/ A warm day after a long freeze.” The poem culminates in the speaker’s figurative speech to his friend, “Like walking on thin ice—/ I yelled back to a friend,/ It broke and I dropped/ Eight inches in.” The speaker warns his friend to walk on the ice with more caution and, simultaneously, the speaker warns readers to be prepared to face any unexpected incidents in our lives. Ironically, the moment when the speaker dropped eight inches in the water is when the speaker realized his deep appreciation of nature and the lessons to be learned there.

Among the four poems about Snyder’s experience of practicing Buddhism in Japan, “TOJI” describes how he seriously focused on his practice of the meditation school of Buddhism. If Cold Mountain practiced his Chinese Chan Buddhism and Taoism in the middle of mountains, Snyder did Rinzai school of Japanese Zen Buddhism in the middle of downtown, Kyoto. In the first and second stanza, the speaker describes “stillness” in Shingon temple in Kyoto and his seriousness in practicing Buddhism beyond East Asian Buddhism by extending it to Tibetan and Indian Buddhism. The third stanza reads: “Loose-breasted young mother/ With her kids in the shade here/ Of old Temple tree/ Nobody bothers you
in Toji;/ The streetcar clanks by outside."57 In the stanza, the speaker overlaps motherhood with tranquilized Buddha-mind and portrays how the two worlds peacefully coexist: Buddhist monks focus on their practices within their temple and people live outside of a temple without disturbing each other. This poem inspires us to overcome any dualistic ideas and emphasizes the importance of overcoming the borderline between “One” and “the Other” and maintaining “the peace of mind,” as HanShan did in his “Cold Mountain Poems.” In other words, the speaker realizes the significance of controlling one’s mind beyond any locality or place where the body physically stays, and it mirrors the key theme of “Cold Mountain Poems.”

As the collection begins with “Mid-August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout,” based on Snyder’s deep communion with American nature and wilderness, it ends with “Riprap,” which is also about his effort to make connections between nature and humans by doing riprap. “Riprap” basically means “a cobble of stone laid on steep, slick rock to make a trail for horses (or people) in the mountains”58 and this title poem, “Riprap,” tells readers how the speaker writes a poem by choosing words carefully, as riprap crew members also do their jobs carefully. In other words, the poem genuinely embodies Snyder’s poetics, echoing East Asian poetry and work ethics by comparing the careful process of writing a poem to the work of riprap. Again, this poem reminds readers of a traditional East Asian poem or a painting, which is a balanced and dynamic
combination of both arts, like "Cold Mountain Poems." In the poem, the speaker magically interrelates the process of writing a poem and the process of riprapping and compares them to "an endless four-dimensional Game of Go." The metaphysical structure of the poem also reminds us of a typical technique of traditional Chinese poetry by continuously juxtaposing the two main subjects of how to write a poem and do a riprap. It is distinguished by using a verbal parallelism, which is also essential in Chinese poems. It begins by clarifying how the speaker parallels writing a poem to building a riprap by saying, "Lay down these words/ Before your mind like rocks." Putting stones in the right places is closely related to choosing words carefully for a poem and it cannot be completely understood by visualizing what is going on in the poem. Poems are understood as endless four-dimensional worlds and, throughout the whole poem, there is no borderline between writing a poem and building a riprap. More significantly, the poem ends by directly suggesting the speaker's epiphany that humans as well as the world endlessly transform themselves into something else in their thoughts and in realities by saying, "all change, in thoughts,/ As well as things." That is, it ends with an emphasis on the recognition that everything constantly changes, as writing a poem and doing a riprap are perfectly interchangeable to the speaker's mind.

The collection of Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems is arranged into two sections, Snyder's poems and translations of "Cold Mountain Poems." The poems in "Riprap" are also arranged into two sections by subject matter: his
intercommunion with American nature and wilderness, and his experience of practicing the Zen school of Buddhism in Japan. Considering how Snyder has carefully arranged each of the poems, we may question why Snyder translated exactly “twenty four” “Cold Mountain Poems” and put them after twenty-three of his own poems. Each number has its own connotation in a different culture. We have twenty four hours in a day universally while there are twenty four different time-periods in a year in an East Asian lunar calendar, which also has eight different periods in each season, respectively. However, after asking Snyder by email, I realized that he had no such intention at all when he arranged the poems in the collection. Snyder says, “In answer to your query, my answer is a definite no. I had no such complicated and abstractly intellectual notions at all. I was just writing some poems, and translating some poems.” This valuable experience allowed me to freely explore Snyder’s poems and “Cold Mountain Poems.”
CHAPTER IV

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS
WITHOUT END: AMERICAN LANDSCAPE IN SHAN-SHU-HUA

Gary Snyder’s development of ecological ethics, poetics, and Green Buddhism evolved from his early experiences of climbing mountains on the Pacific Northwest and appreciating traditional East Asian landscape paintings, more specifically, \textit{shan-shu-hua} or the paintings of mountains and rivers. If Snyder’s poems in \textit{Riprap} mainly describe his early attachment to the American wilderness when he worked as a fire watcher by spending the summer of 1952 on the remote, 8,129-foot Crater Mountain, the poems in \textit{Mountains and Rivers Without End} portray his continuous appreciation of the American wilderness, East Asian landscape paintings, and fully shaped Green Buddhism. In the long poetic sequence of the volume, Snyder interweaves his memories of the American wilderness and his continuous appreciation of East Asian landscape paintings and produces Green Buddhism by linking Buddhism to ecology. That is, Snyder connects a painting and a writing via calligraphy, as traditional East Asian paintings are the combination of a painting, a poem, and calligraphy. In addition to his early attachment to America’s wilderness in the Pacific Rim where he grew up, Snyder’s instantaneous and deep appreciation of traditional East Asian landscape paintings remains significant throughout in developing his self-taught,
lifelong ecological activism, ethics, poetics, and Green Buddhism, and these are pivotal subjects in Mountains and Rivers Without End. He elucidates the impact of his childhood experiences within the American wilderness and of Chinese landscape paintings on his works repeatedly, as shown in his early interview by Peter Barry Chowka:

As soon as I was permitted, from the time I was thirteen, I went into the Cascade Mountains, the high country, and got into real wilderness. At that age I found very little in the civilized human realm that interested me:

When I was eleven or twelve, I went into the Chinese room at the Seattle Art Museum and saw Chinese landscape paintings; they blew my mind.”¹

Both his early attachment to American wilderness and his first encounter with the traditional East Asian landscape paintings were the authentic force to complete this poetic sequence. Snyder continues to clarify the similarities between American wilderness and East Asian landscape paintings and how their momentum made an impact on him by saying, “It looks like the Cascades. The waterfalls, the pines, the clouds, and the mist looked a lot like the northwest United States. The Chinese had an eye for the world that I saw as real.”² In traditional East Asian landscape paintings, he discovered the American landscape that he had been familiar with and it stuck in his mind. After that epiphany, he envisioned the interconnectedness between East and West and wrote the long
poetic sequence, *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. The sequence was originally published as *Six Sections from Mountains and Rivers Without End* in 1965 and it includes six long poems. Then Snyder extended the collection by adding “The Blue Sky” and published *Six Sections from Mountains and Rivers Without End Plus One* in 1977.

After constantly working on the collection for more than forty years, Snyder published *Mountains and Rivers without End* in 1997 with four parts of thirty-nine sequential poems. Some poems of the final sequence were not previously published and others were significantly revised. At the end of the final sequence, “The Making of *Mountains and Rivers Without End,*” Snyder indicates that his conception of the poem changed over the years. Snyder seems not to have had a full understanding of the poem’s overall design and structure when he first began to work on the sequence and even after the publication of *Six Sections from Mountains and Rivers Without End Plus One.* However, in “The Making of *Mountains and Rivers Without End,*” Snyder sums up again the crucial influences of his early experiences on this sequence by noting, “I had been introduced to the high snow peaks of the Pacific Northwest when I was thirteen and had climbed a number of summits even before I was twenty: I was forever changed by that place of rock and sky. East Asian landscape paintings, seen at the Seattle Art Museum from the age of ten on, also presented such a space.”

The impact of the American wilderness and traditional East Asian landscape paintings on Snyder’s ecological
ethics, poetics, and Green Buddhism is immeasurable and it remains as a consistent and profound vitality in this sequence. We can better understand the poems in *Mountains and Rivers Without End* by developing our understanding of the influence of the American wilderness and East Asian landscape paintings, especially in the following three poems, “Streams and Mountains Without End,” “The Mountain Spirit,” and “Finding the Spirit in the Heart.”

*Mountains and Rivers Without End* is one of the most distinguished works to represent Snyder’s ecological ethics, poetics, and Green Buddhism. The title of the poetry collection echoes a number of East Asian landscape paintings, especially the *shan-shu-hua*, paintings from the Chinese Tang (618-906) and Sung (960-1279) dynasties, and it reminds readers of the universal concept of correspondences and interconnection among numerous beings on the planet. The geometrically interconnected endless mountains and rivers signify the essential concept of Snyder’s Green Buddhism in that everything is connected to everything else in this world. The poems are apparently about “the landscape” of America or the universe, which is discovered in traditional East Asian landscape paintings. However, the precise reading of each poem in the sequence tells us that the poetic sequence is about the mutually interwoven relationships among the numerous beings, as it is presented in East Asian Buddhism and Taoism. Snyder also portrays the idea by observing, “The poems are about the very close correspondences between the external and internal landscape and rediscovering
"the structure of the primitive whole mind, from countless ground through the
unconscious and conscious."4 Mountains and rivers look separated but, in fact,
they are interconnected by filling up the emptiness and space on this planet in the
same way that our consciousness and unconsciousness are related individually and
collectively. By realizing this interconnectedness and interdependence among
beings, we see that we are dependent on each other. In the same context, Snyder
once told Katherine McNeil that, "I'm writing about the complementarity of
mountains and rivers, but that's really the planet, taking that on,"5 and it sheds
light on Mountains and Rivers Without End and his Green Buddhism. Snyder's
lifelong efforts to make beings correspond to each other is what is thematically
presented in this whole sequence.

The concepts of emptiness and fullness are interchangeable and mutually
transforming to each other, like the yin and yang of Taoism. This is one of the
most essential ideas as it is represented in shan-shua-hua and Mountains and
Rivers Without End. That is, emptiness and fullness are two halves, like yin and
yang, to make a representation of perfection and, without one, the other is
incomplete and meaningless. In Empty and Full: The Language of Chinese
Painting, Francosi Chen claims that the idea of emptiness and fullness has existed
from the beginning of Chinese thought and developed as a principal school of
Chinese thought, during the Warring Kingdoms period (403-222 B.C.), as it is
recorded in the seminal Book of Changes.6 Chen also observes that emptiness is

107

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not something vague or nonexistent, in the Chinese perspective, but is linked with
the idea of vital breaths and with the principle alternation of yin and yang. In
addition to this, emptiness offers humans the possibility of approaching the
universe at the level of totality and perfection. The concept of emptiness is quite
essential in understanding Chinese thought and it emerges as pivotal to the way
the Chinese conceive this planet and the universe.

Keeping in mind the impact of Snyder’s early and persistent experiences of
American nature and East Asian landscape paintings, this chapter examines three
main subjects to give readers a clearer concept of Snyder’s Green Buddhism. First,
it articulates the origin and development of traditional East Asian landscape
paintings by specifically focusing on shan-shu-hua (山水画), “the school of
paintings on mountains and rivers or mountains and water.” Shan-shu-hua is a
unique school of traditional East Asian landscape paintings, which prevailed
throughout the Chinese Tang (618-906) and Sung (960-1279) periods. The school
of painting and East Asian religious philosophies of Chan Buddhism and Taoism
mutually influenced each other. Second, the opening poem of the poetic sequence,
“Endless Streams and Mountains” will be examined to illuminate how the Chan
school of Buddhism and Taoism play a major role in a hand scroll painting.
Streams and Mountains Without End. The painting is a shan-shu-hua from the
Chinese Sung period and this specific painting motivated Snyder to complete the
poem, “Endless Streams and Mountains.” Third, the ending poem of the sequence,
"Finding the Space in the Heart," is explored to articulate how Snyder intermingles what is portrayed in traditional East Asian landscape paintings with the American wilderness. Mountains and Rivers Without End is composed of four sections, containing nine poems, ten poems, ten poems, and ten poems, respectively. The first and last poems are the essential parts in that they feature the thematic ideas more than any other poems in the whole sequence. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to provide readers a more lucid concept of Snyder's Green Buddhism and Green Buddhism poetry.

Traditional East Asian Paintings and Philosophies Behind Snyder's Mountains and Rivers Without End: Shan-shu-hua, the Paintings of Mountains and Rivers

"Wherever there are mountains, there are rivers. Wherever there are mountains and rivers, there are spirits." 

Traditional East Asian culture, philosophy, and poetry always have taught Asianists to believe that humans are able to cultivate their visions and fulfill their lives through continuous interactions with nature. In other words, nature has preserved its eternal vitality, and understanding the law of nature is the way to have a better understanding of what we are. This is an essential idea of Chan Buddhism and Taoism. This is why the intercommunion between humans and
nature is constantly projected as the primary subject and theme in traditional East Asian paintings and poems. The concept of “Gaia,” the Greek word used for the Earth Goddess, also shows us the close connection between humans and other living creatures in the Western hemisphere. In *The Ages of Gaia*, James Lovelock claims that the concept of Gaia is closely linked with the concept of life and Gaia theory enforces a planetary perspective. In other words, Earth is self-activating and has the power of self-control like a living animal. Respecting nature and the expectation of being respected by nature is one of the universal human beliefs in East and West. European colonialism weakened the mutual connection between humans and nature by portraying the ethnocentric belief that the morals and values of the colonizer were superior to those of the colonized. During the process of colonization over the world between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, humans have labeled nature as the unknown world and have been constantly encouraged to explore nature. Nature is accepted as the ultimate object to be cultivated and tamed by humans.

In East Asian culture, nature, which is symbolically identified with soil, has been traditionally understood to be the place where humans come from, and to which they eventually return. That is, nature is the place where humans can find the inspiration to understand life, and achieve spiritual enlightenment. This thematic idea has been continuously embodied in the interchangeable artistic forms of paintings and poems with nature-enhancing imagination and vision, as it
has been practiced by Chan Buddhists and Taoists. For example, we cannot look at any Buddhist paintings and Taoist paintings without finding the deep communion between humans and animals or plants. This is what Chan Buddhists and Taoists have practiced and their paintings and poems have played an important role in shaping their minds in that way. Wen Fong points out how landscape paintings played a crucial role in filling Chinese people’s minds with eco-friendly thoughts by noting, “Indeed, throughout Chinese history, in times of both war and peace, landscapes of ‘rivers and mountains’ (hill, chiang-shan) have nurtured and reinvigorated the Chinese spirit.”10 The colloquial expressions of both “rivers and mountains (hill)” and “mountains and rivers or mountains and water (水)” represent Chinese landscapes as they often are used as the titles for paintings and poems, including Snyder’s Mountains and Rivers Without End.

Snyder recently told me by email that “East Asian intellectuals always put a fancy spin on their idea of why and how people live in the mountains.”11 His statement means to me that East Asian Taoists, Chan Buddhists, and literati overstate their reason and satisfaction of living in nature, while American scholars of East Asian culture in general may believe a fantasy about the lives and philosophies of traditional East Asian Taoists, Chan Buddhists, and literati. Many East Asians develop their communion with nature by following the Chan school of Buddhism and Taoism. However, their physical interactions with nature are not always voluntary decisions. East Asian history tells us that people leaving human
society and secluding themselves to be part of nature sometimes is a result of sociopolitical instability in the process of endless wars. Complete unrest and turmoil follows, especially when the power transition happens from one dynasty to another. Following Confucianism, literati and government officials could not serve two different emperors in two different dynasties. This was the primary reason why many Confucians chose to live in secluded hermitages, or settled down in temples by becoming Buddhists or drifted from place to place by becoming Taoists. More specifically speaking, serving the one emperor (忠臣不事二君) was the golden rule to follow to be a faithful Confucian; otherwise, death is an honor and better than living and serving two different emperors. After the fall of each Chinese dynasty, many scholars retreated to the mountains to become Chan Buddhists and Taoists. In this way, they attended to their spiritual needs, practicing their religious philosophies, calligraphy, paintings, and spiritual quest for understanding the laws of nature and the whole universe.12

A good number of Chan Buddhist-poets and Taoist-poets were the victims of endless wars and the totalitarian Emperorship in East Asia. That is, they wanted to find a way of avoiding the violence of killing each other, and securing what they believed to be right during the dismantling periods. This was why many Buddhists and Taoists retreated to the tops of mountains or tranquil rural settings. Snyder suggests to readers how the sociopolitical instability deprived people of their hometowns by pointing out one of the poems written by Tu Fu (712-770),
one of the most beloved Chinese poets. During the spring of 757, the capital of the Tang dynasty, Chang-an, was filled with the Tartar troops of the rebel, An Lu-shan. It looked as though the whole dynasty had been overthrown. Tu Fu described the devastation by composing, “Though the nation is lost, the mountains and rivers remain.”

Mountains and rivers remain forever and this is the real, physical country that people live in, from Snyder’s perspective. When Chang-an fell to An Lu-shan, Tu Fu, a middle-aged minor civil servant, was absent from the capital and secluded himself and could stretch his mind by writing poems. As readers can see in Tu Fu’s case, paintings and poems let people escape from their realities and expand their spiritual world boundlessly. Considering this, Snyder’s illumination of the East Asian intellectuals’ idea of living in the mountains is quite persuasive. Instead of maintaining the fantasy of East Asians’ becoming recluses voluntarily and enjoying their spiritual journey within nature, we need to examine more carefully the traditional relationship between humans and nature in East Asia. Any misconception on either side will increase the gap between East and West.

Some observers criticize traditional East Asian landscape paintings since the paintings seem to look alike in their opinion, and others are incapable of appreciating the paintings. Whether we recognize it or not, Chinese painting is distinct in its forms and in technique, and this is especially true of the hand scroll paintings. East Asian landscape paintings depict the intriguing multiplicity and vastness of all elements in this planet and universe, and each brush stroke of a
painter has a different level of proficiency and significance. In East Asia, especially in China, painting and poetry together traditionally occupy the supreme artistic position among all the art forms. Peter Swann, an art historian, also notes this saying, "The Chinese consider painting to be the only real art." William Cohn also claims, "For a long time, the Chinese have considered the pictorial art as one of the most elevated manifestations of the human creative genius, and their painting is a total expression of their conceptions of life." With poetry, the other pinnacle of Chinese culture, the pictorial art is considered a sacred practice and it represents both practical and spiritual ways of life for putting artists' philosophies into practice. In Empty and Full: The Language and Chinese Painting, Francois Cheng writes that traditional Chinese paintings are essential in understanding the relationship between humans and nature or the universe by saying, "The basis of Chinese painting is a fundamental philosophy that holds precise views of cosmology, of human destiny, and of the relationship between the human being and the universe." East Asian esthetic thought always envisions the ultimate beauty in its relationship with nature, and painting has undergone continuous development throughout East Asian history. It creates its own transformation by following the religious current, which is either Chinese Taoism or East Asian meditation Buddhism.

In "Nature's Writing," Snyder elucidates the origin and characteristics of pictorial Chinese characters by observing, "In very early China diviners heated
tortoise shell over flame till it cracked and then read meanings from the design of the cracks. It is a Chinese idea that writing started from copying these cracks. Every kind of writing relates to natural materials.\textsuperscript{17} Then, he continues to explain how Chinese calligraphy developed:

The current form of Chinese characters with their little hooks and right angles came about when Han Chinese shifted from incising signs with a stylus on shaved bamboo staves to writing with a rabbit-hair brush dipped in a pine soot ink on absorbent mulberry-fiber paper. The Chinese character forms are entirely a function of the way a brush tip turns when it lifts off the page. Lifting a brush, a burin, a pen, or a stylus is like releasing a bite or lifting a claw.\textsuperscript{18}

The close relationship between humans and nature is already inherent in the earliest pictographic Chinese characters and it has been the timeless subject of traditional East Asian paintings and poems. Many different schools of painting have emerged and disappeared in East Asia. However, \textit{shan-shu-hua} has been admired as it made its own progress within the establishment of Chan Buddhism and Taoism over the past two thousand years.

With silks and papers, the Chinese brush and ink are the essential elements not only for paintings but also for calligraphy and writing poems in East Asia. It is widely acknowledged to say that the extraordinary pictographic or ideographic
characters and variety of brushes are the most sensitive and potent instruments for
East Asian paintings and calligraphy. In general, a brush is made of the hairs of
rabbit, goat, fox, wolf, and other animals, and any brush is made in two parts: a
core or “kernel,” and an outer layer in one or more layers. The outer layer has
longer hairs than the core and thus forms the pliant point. In his *Chinese
Calligraphy and Painting*, Laurence Sickman articulates the features of brushes
more specifically by saying: “All brushes are one of two types, either the *shui-pi*,
“water brush,” or the *kan-pi*, “dry brush.” The former is more absorbent of ink
and has a soft, highly pliant point; the latter, because it has a stiffened core,
absorbs less ink and its tip is less yielding. The soft-pointed brush is used for
flowing, modulated strokes or delicate lines of even width, while the stiff-pointed
brush is employed for a more bold, rugged, and “calligraphic” line.”¹⁹ He explains
two major styles of brushwork in the broadest kind of classification by stating,
“There are two divisions of brushwork style: the free, spontaneous, and
‘calligraphic’ manner called *bsieb-i*, and the careful, meticulous, and often highly
detailed style known as *kung-pi.*”²⁰ Some paintings are based on one of the two
styles and others are based on both styles. The other essential element of Chinese
calligraphy, painting, and writing is ink and it is of great importance. In general,
the ink is made from pine soot and glue mixed into a paste, which is formed into
sticks or cakes of various shapes by allowing it to dry in molds carrying carved
designs and inscriptions. The ink is prepared by rubbing or grinding the hard stick,
in combination with water, on an inkslab, which was made of metal and later of pottery or special kinds of stone. Traditionally, this has been the way to produce a pure, lustrous black and various shades up to the palest, mist-like gray, when it is diluted with water. Consequently, the brush and ink are the two vital factors in determining the nature of paintings and writings before artists and poets draw or write their works on absorbent silks or papers. According to Sickman, assiduous practice with brush and ink is required in painting and writing and the individual character of the painter's brushwork must be faltering, unfaltering, and sustained. Among the many schools of paintings, the following three schools are most consistently developed: the school of human figure paintings (人物畫) by drawing the pictures of major ruling class and government workers, the school of religious paintings (宗教畫) by representing the doctrines and rituals of Buddhism and Taoism, and the school of landscape paintings (風景畫) by describing the endlessly interwoven mountains and rivers. James Cahill also groups Chinese paintings into three categories, which are "the paintings of figures, secular or religious, and landscapes." Cahill verifies that the schools of "human figures" and "landscape" painting originated in the Tang period (618-906). He also claims that the school of landscape painting is the primary characteristic product of Sung (960-1279) dynasty painting and remained dominant from the tenth century onward with the continuous development of Buddhism and Taoism. Before the Tang period, poetry had been understood as the most
important form of Chinese writings but painting established its position as the primary artistic form of art throughout the Sung dynasty. Robert E. Harris also notes this, saying, "When Northern Sung literati began to conceive of paintings as the equivalent of poetry, they extended the rhetorical and interpretative assumptions of one art to the other, seeking out and, indeed, expecting to find a painting by a scholar-artist, just as they would find in his poetry."²⁴ Throughout the Sung period, Chinese literati treat paintings and poetry as the primary ways to reflect the events of their life.

The specific school of landscape painting, *shan-shu-hua* (山水画) in Chinese, is one of the most distinguished and widespread schools in East Asia. This school flourished with the development of the East Asian mediation schools of Buddhism and Taoism. *Shan-shu-hua* literally means "paintings of mountains and rivers" and many Chinese scholars claim that it occurred during the Chinese Six dynasties era (220-589). According to Wen Fong, "paintings of mountains and rivers" were first developed as illustrations for narratives and poetry. Then, the paintings of trees or rocks became an independent genre during the late Tang period (618-906).²⁵ It continuously flourished with the development of East Asian meditation Buddhism and Taoism throughout the Sung (960-1279) and Yuan (1279-1368) dynasties. More specifically, Wen Fong continues, monumental landscape painting had become the official idiom of a rich and abundant culture by
the mid-eleventh century.26 Paintings arose as the dominant form of art like poetry, and both paintings and poetry are interwoven via calligraphy.

In “The Making of Mountains and Rivers Without End,” Snyder indicates how his resolution of writing a long poem called “Mountains and Rivers without End” began by his realization of the deep connection in the practice of Buddhism, calligraphy, and writing poetry. In the winter of 1955 and 1956, Snyder attended the lectures of Saburo Hasegawa, an artist and calligrapher from Japan. Hasegawa spoke of East Asian landscape paintings as a meditative exercise and Snyder began to understand the landscape paintings as an aspect of becoming a deep Zen Buddhist. On April 8, 1956, which is coincidently the historical Buddha’s birthday, Hasegawa talked at length about the great Japanese Zen monk-painter, Sesshu. Snyder, hearing this, resolved to write a long poem that would be called Mountains and Rivers Without End.27 Snyder also clarifies how he expanded his understanding of the paintings and how one specific reference to a landscape hand scroll painting helped him to arrive at the title of the whole poetic sequence. Snyder notes, “In museums and through books I became aware of how the energies of mist, white water, rock formations, air swirls—a chaotic universe where everything is in place—are so much a part of the East Asian painter’s world. In one book I came upon a reference to a hand scroll (shou-chuan) called Mountains and Rivers Without End. The name stuck in my mind.”28 Throughout his long quest of East Asian landscaping paintings, Snyder penetrates the
interconnectedness between traditional East Asian poems and paintings, especially in *shan-shu-huas*.

Throughout the Five dynasties (907-960), landscape became the foremost subject in paintings, and it is believed that *shan-shu-hua* became specialized into two major sub-schools, *JinKyung shan-shu-hua* (真景 山水畫) and *YiSang shan-shu-hua* (理想 山水畫) by the eleventh century. *JinKyung shan-shu-hua* is a product of the Northern Sung (960-1126) paintings and *YiSang shan-shu-hua* is a product of the Southern Sung (1127-1279) paintings. The differences between these two schools grew distinct by the late Sung period. The first sub-school portrayed mountains, rivers, rocks, and trees realistically, and it became the mainstream of *shan-shu-hua* during the Northern Sung period (960-1126). In general, the Northern Sung painters were deeply committed to reality and they explored the appearance of the real world. This school of painters presented nature in its more intimate and comforting aspects, portraying mountains and rivers as not remote or forbidding. The other sub-school is characterized as “a magnificent and powerfully unnatural” description of nature and it is often considered as “the romantic cult of nature” by Chan Buddhist and Taoist-painters. I believe this was how their paintings illustrated their personal response to nature by the end of the eleventh century and on. In other words, the Northern Sung painters were concerned with producing paintings by capturing the detailed beauties of nature but as time went by metaphysical conceits occupied painters’
minds. Thus, the Southern Sung painters made some modifications by eliminating
details and their paintings became the products of their imagination rather than the
actual landscape. James Cahill also notes new school of painting:

By the eleventh century, however, a rather different view had evolved. In this new
concept, the subject of the painting was of much less importance in determining its
expression and import; instead, the personal nature of the artist, and his mood at
the moment he paints, are what the painting communicates to the viewer. Visual
phenomena served as “raw material” to be transformed, charged with individual
feeling through the means of style and brush technique.30

The mind of the painter became the real subject of his paintings, and the paintings
were endowed with his deep scholarship and admirable character. This was how
many *shan-shu-hua* were painted by Chan Buddhists, Taoists, and scholars. Both
the literati painters and a number of Chan Buddhist and Taoist artists painted the
same subjects in more or less the same way and formed their schools of “the
literati” and “the Chan Buddhists.” Whether the landscapes in their paintings
represent an actual view of nature or a conceptual vision of nature, transformed by
the painters, they always illustrate profound philosophical ideas to help observers
to understand themselves and the universe. That is, the paintings symbolically
embody the deep communion between nature and humans—
whose relationship is continuously circular, dynamic, and transformational—by echoing the ethics of Buddhists and Taoists. Ching Hao, a remarkable Chinese scholar, introduces a similar idea by noting, “The emblems of the mountains and rivers are mutually generative, their breath forces causing each other to grow.”

In other words, he emphasizes the generating and regenerating forms and forces in paintings that inspire both painters and observers. These aspects of East Asian landscape paintings continuously attract people to the paintings, specifically _shan-shu-hua_, which motivated Snyder to write his poetry collection, _Mountains and Rivers Without End_.

All the various elements of East Asian landscape paintings and poems reinforce one another to create a unity of symmetrical beauty and perfection. That is, the aesthetic quality of the painting and writing is a significant manifestation of the literati-painter’s self-cultivation and moral development, being enhanced by elegantly designed and well-placed poems and seals. This is why traditional East Asian landscape paintings and poems are frequently understood as the essential landmark of East Asian culture and both paintings and poems are accepted as the symmetrically combined product of aesthetic representation of calligraphy, poetic imagination, and paintings. In this context, Gary Snyder practiced Chinese calligraphy, paintings, and poems, after he was deeply intrigued by East Asian landscape paintings. As the title of the poetic sequence suggests, to say “landscape painting” in China is actually to say “the paintings of mountains and
rivers or mountains and water.” In other words, the Chinese ideograms for landscape are interchangeably translated as “mountain and river,” “mountain and stream,” or “mountain and water,” yet Chinese landscape painting captures the essence of life.

Snyder’s “Endless Streams and Mountains” Behind Chinese Landscape Painting, Streams and Mountains Without End

“Unsurprised enlightenment is a painting. The entire phenomenal universe and the empty sky are nothing but a painting.”

“Endless Streams and Mountains” is the opening poem of Snyder’s Mountains and Rivers Without End in 1996. The poem did not appear in the previously published poetic sequences, Six Sections from Mountains and Rivers Without End in 1965 and Six Sections from Mountains and Rivers Without End Plus One in 1977. “Endless Streams and Mountains” is an interwoven verbal and visual landscape poem, and it is the single most significant poem in understanding the theme of the whole sequence and the characteristics of shan-shu-hua. With the English title, Snyder presents the Chinese for the title, Chi Shan Wu Chin, which is also known as “Xi Shan Wu Zhing.” The first character means “streams,” which are smaller than rivers” and the second character means “mountains.” The third
and fourth characters are combined to mean “endless or limitless.” Therefore, the title literally means “endless or limitless mountains and streams.” Comparing Snyder’s title of the poem, “Endless Streams and Mountains,” to Streams and Mountains Without End, the title of the hand scroll painting, we can see already which is a more faithful to the original meaning of Chi Shan Wu Chin and how Snyder carefully translates each word into English. As it is articulated in the previous section, traditional East Asian landscape painting had a profound impact on Snyder in his youth. His profound aesthetic sensibility was the major force to motivate him to complete Mountain and Rivers Without End. Snyder was inspired by Streams and Mountains Without End, a specific Chinese landscape painting in the hand scroll format at the Cleveland Museum of Art. This hand scroll painting was made between 1127 and 1150 A.D. and it is one continuous visual narrative, which probably belongs to the Southern Sung paintings. This hand scroll painting features the metaphysical conception of nature by symbolizing the painter’s psyche, rather than describing nature as detailed and realistic as the Northern Sung paintings do. “Endless Streams and Mountains” basically describes how Snyder evoked his feeling for and inspired by the painting, while his practice of East Asian Chan Buddhism and Taoism elevated him to have a more sophisticated understanding of East Asian landscape paintings. As he has done in many poems, looking into nature he carefully studies the world around him, and looking into himself he seeks his own response to nature. Considering this, Snyder’s “Endless
Streams and Mountains vividly echoes many Chan Buddhist paintings and poems during the Southern Sung period.

Traditional East Asian landscape paintings are often the product of the perfect harmony between “space” and “emptiness.” As the fulfilled space in a painting is minutely elaborated by the painter with his brush, so the empty space in a painting is also delicately created by the painter. Considering this, observers need to penetrate why the fulfilled space is presented and why the empty space is also presented, and this is the way they are able to understand the entire picture completely. Both emptiness and fullness in a painting are carefully created by a painter and the empty space is as significant as the fulfilled space in the realm of East Asian landscape paintings. The notion of emptiness is no less essential in the system of Chinese thought than the complementary ideas of *yin* and *yang*, Taoism. In other words, emptiness and fullness are interchangeable in East Asian Buddhism and Taoism, and Snyder’s opening poem, “Endless Streams and Mountains,” demonstrates this correspondence and interconnectedness among many beings. The poem echoes the concept that emptiness is pivotal to the way the Chinese conceive the universe.

When Todd Smith interviewed Snyder about what the title of the sequence signifies, Snyder responded to the question by writing a Chinese character, “Kung 空”, which basically means “emptiness, space, the void.” The sense of “kung” permeates the whole poem and the interconnected notion of space and emptiness
are everywhere in “Endless Streams and Mountains.” However, “emptiness, the void” are not the perfect word choices for the Chinese “Kung” if readers cannot evoke their experiences and understanding of the continuous interrelationship between yin and yang. In short, the representation of yin and yang is symbolically presented by the mountains and rivers and their interrelationship is everywhere in the poem. Readers find this idea on the poetic sequence’s first page by noting an epigram: “The notion of Emptiness engenders Compassion.” This saying is from the ancient sage, Milarepa, who is a renowned figure of Tibetan Buddhism and lived roughly from 1025 to 1135. His observation compresses the essential idea of Mahayana Buddhism. In the Mahayana school of Buddhism, “emptiness” or “nothingness” suggests that everything in the universe is connected to everything else and thus all things are related to each other. This is what Milarepa probably means to share by addressing “Emptiness engenders Compassion,” and this is the primary concept in Snyder’s “Endless Streams and Mountains” and Green Buddhism. In fact, Snyder’s concept of space always includes the possibility of Buddhist enlightenment, where one comprehends the true nature of things by knowing that the entire universe is emptiness, including oneself. Traditionally, the Buddhist concept of the “void” and “emptiness” is neither pessimistic nor nihilistic at all because the world of emptiness is not separate from the world of phenomena but inheres in it. Our talk of “the void” and “emptiness” can be accepted only in metaphorical terms but, simultaneously, it is real. For example,
the white or empty spaces in *shan-shu-hua*, whether they are left empty by the painter or represented as visible cloud and misty air, work as metaphors for the viewers and the painter as well. This wisdom and transformation of emptiness and fullness permeates all the poems in Snyder’s *Mountain and Rivers Without End*, especially in “Endless Streams and Mountains,” and in his practice of Green Buddhism.

The poem has two integral parts of which the first describes Snyder’s appreciation of the hand scroll painting, *Streams and Mountains Without End*, and the second delivers Snyder’s impressions of the colophons as part of the painting. In other words, the first part is about the pictorial painting and the second part is about interpreting the colophons, which were inscribed once in a while over the past one thousand years before the painting came to America. As the long and horizontal hand scroll is never shown in its whole length but is revealed foot by foot, the poem is also unfolded section by section, and each section is full of vivid images and spirituality. The poem begins by introducing how the clear-minded speaker is involved in the created space, which seems to me the imaginary world in the painting as the remote place where only a recluse lives. In the poem, the space is more specifically described as the place where waters and rocks coexist. The described mountains and rivers are the symbolic representation of Taoist and Chan Buddhist painters’ romantic cult of nature as illustrated in the school of *YiSang shan-shu* rather than that of *JinKyoung shan-shu*. The historical fact that
the painting, *Streams and Mountains without End*, is the product of the late Sung dynasty also indicates that the mountains and rivers are less realistic than imaginary, an emotive response to nature. Identifying the speaker as a man in a boat who is coasting by and appreciating the natural scenery from far away, also increases the possibility that what is described is not necessarily factual and real. The observer of the painting identifies with the speaker of this poem and their interrelationship mirrors the core concept of the whole poem: mutual correspondence and interconnectedness. The readers are involved in their interrelationship by becoming part of the triangular relationship between the reader, speaker, and observers of the *shan-shu-hua*. The poem opens,

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 a boat on a lake
or a broad slow river
coasting by.\(^{35}\)

Although the landscape described in the above lines is probably a product of the Chinese painter's imagination, readers cannot ignore the probability that the mountains, hidden in cloud much of the year, are much like the verifiable
Cascades of Washington and the Olympic ranges that Snyder often climbed. That is, the endlessly connected mountains and streams appear to Snyder as a real reflection of the kind of mountains with which he grew up, the mountains of the Pacific Northwest. Although the mountains and rivers by the Chinese artist are not the real but the imaginary Chinese landscape, “mountains and rivers” have a powerful influence on this entire poem and on Snyder. He transforms them into the real territory in this poem. Snyder’s sophisticated perception of the mountains and rivers in shan-shu-hua reminds readers of Dozen’s observation about the painting, titled “Painting of a Rice Cake.”36 It is introduced as an epigraph for Mountains and Rivers Without End, and states, “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.” As the respected Japanese Buddhist monk Dozen implies, with the correspondences and interrelatedness between two worlds in the above example of koan, Snyder has the insight of transforming what is imaginary to real and vice versa. In the same context, the “created space” in the poem is in one sense the scroll and simultaneously the space cleared in the mind of a painter, poet, and observer.

The following lines of the poem describe how the place is remote from human society by stating, “no farms around, just tidy cottages and shelters, / gateways, reststops, roofed but unwalled work space, / —a warm damp climate.”37 The
description of the place suggests that the space is open for everyone but not for permanent stay. That is, the place is a resting place for wanderers like Taoists and Chan Buddhists who travel around the world to have a better understanding of themselves by corresponding with nature physically and spiritually. Whether a “roofed but unwalled work space” exists in reality or only exists in this Chinese painting as an imaginarily idealistic place, the space reinforces the interconnected relationship between emptiness and fullness or yin and yang. Being occupied and empty, alternatively, the space interweaves the emptiness and fullness and mirrors the empty space and filled space in East Asian landscape paintings. The poem continues unfolding its story, as the actual hand scroll painting continuously unrolls its images,

The trail goes far inland,
   somewhere back around a bay,
lost in distant foothill slopes
   & back again
at a village on the beach, and someone’s fishing.38

As readers visualize the scene easily, the man-made trail gets lost in faraway foothills. Observers are supposed to be curious about where it ends while villagers get to their village without exposing the way. Certainly, the image and words of this section echo the issue of interpreting “HanShan” and “HanShanTao” in
Snyder's translations of the "Cold Mountain Poems." That is, "someone" who is fishing exemplifies the life of the nature-friendly recluse or stereotypical Taoist, who develop his complex observations on mountains and rivers, while it is very much like the actual life of Snyder in the Sierra mountains and rivers, Nevada.

The poem moves on exactly as the hand scroll painting unfolds and both "Endless Streams and Mountains" and Streams and Mountains Without End make a parallel evolution. As the hand scroll opens as far as the middle of the painting, so does the poem. It introduces a person who rides a horse and a person who walks to cross a bridge together. If this pair of a horse rider and a walker symbolizes the travelers who return to the place from which they originally came, after accomplishing their journey, another pair heads toward the unknown place far inland:

Another horse and a hiker,
the trail goes up along cascading streambed
no bridge in sight—
comes back through chinquapin or
liquidambars; another group of travelers.
Trail's end at the edge of an inlet
below a heavy set of dark rock hills.39
The trail ends with no bridge but travelers continue to take their journey without leaving traces. The above lines suggest to readers the profound concept of "the Way" of Taoism and Chan school of Buddhism, as it is fully discussed in the previous chapter on Snyder's "Cold Mountain Poems."

In both the poem, "Endless Streams and Mountains," and the hand scroll painting, *Streams and Mountains Without End*, some sections focus on the humans in the middle of nature while the other sections describe elemental scenes of the continuously interrelated mountains and streams, the physical aspects of nature and wilderness. We cannot, however, find any binary thoughts or dualistic ideas between humans and nature throughout the poem or the painting, since humans voluntarily become a part of nature. The mountains and rivers are the subjects that stay forever, while humans are temporary beings. What is more significant is that both humans and nature harmonize with each other. This is the core notion of this poetic sequence and Snyder’s practice of Green Buddhism. The whole poem deals with the same relationships and correspondence, which is the universal process of transformation of mountains and rivers. This is how each scene of the poem should be understood—a dimension that is complemented and developed by the others. That is, through the richness of their content, mountains and rivers become the principal figures of this planet and represent the universal process of transformation.
The entire poem is full of circularity, dynamics, and vitality in its exploration of the multiple images of the painting. The poem ends with a description of the endless interwoven mountains and streams and echoes the beginning of the poem: “Hills beyond rivers, willow in a swamp, / a gentle valley reaching far inland.” Mountains and rivers boundlessly stretch themselves as they symbolically represent the essential idea of Taoism, the interchangeable concepts of yin and yang, and the mutual correspondences and interconnectedness of Buddhism. While the actual painting ends in this way, Snyder adds one more line to awaken readers from their journey. That is, the last line reminds readers of the beginning of the poem: the closely connected triangular relationship between the speaker of the poem, the observer of the hand scroll painting, and the man in a boat who is unidentified. The first part of the poem ends by saying, “The watching boat had floated off the page.” No one knows if the boat actually disappears at the end of the scroll painting or only appears at the beginning. However, Snyder adds the line to motivate both the readers of the poem and observers of the painting to anticipate another journey. This is how Snyder motivates readers to move on to the next sequence.

As poetry represents the Chinese Tang period, painting does the Sung period, which includes both the Northern Sung (960-1126) and the Southern Sung (1127-1279). The Sung painters elevated Chinese pictorial art to a degree of perfection never before attained and shan-shu-hua is the representative school of
Chinese landscape paintings. According to Francois Cheng, painting with Indian ink became established and the art of color also underwent marked evolution during the Tang period. In addition, the rules of composition tended toward increasing rigor and complexity in the art of the fresco and in painting on silk in the same period. Cheng articulates the development of *shan-shu-hua* during the Sung period, by stating, “Mountains-water is a synecdoche, in which a representative part stands for the whole. Mountain and water constitute, in the eyes of the Chinese, the two poles of nature, and they are charged with rich meaning.” As Snyder describes it in “Endless Streams and Mountains,” mountains and waters illustrate the principal figures in the universal process of transformation since they have an interconnected relationship of reciprocal becoming like *yin* and *yang*. Related to the second part of “Endless Streams and Mountains,” Cheng addresses the origin and development of the colophons which are confined to the sheets of paper at the end of the hand scroll. He states that this practice was inaugurated as early as the Tang period and became a constant near the end of the Northern Sung period. He continues:

The poem inscribed in the blank space of a picture is not just an artificially added commentary. It truly inhabits the space by introducing into it the living dimensions of time. Within a painting characterized by three-dimensional space, the poem, through its rhythm and its content, reveals the process by which the painter’s thought process arrived at the picture.
By the echo that it arouses, the poem extends the picture further.43

The colophons, the inscriptions in a painting, allow a painter and observers to exist together within the context of the painting. Thanks to the inscribed poem, the careful combination of fullness and emptiness in *shan-shu-hua* helps the painting produce a more profound and reminiscent significance.

The colophons and seals occupy another essential space of the painting, *Streams and Mountains Without End*, and they become the main subjects of the second part of the poem, “Endless Streams and Mountains.” The second part begins, “At the end of the painting the scroll continues on with seals and poems. It tells a further tale.”44 Traditionally, colophons are written by the owner of the scroll painting or by friends and recognized experts to certify the painting. Snyder’s interpretations of the colophons begin with Wang Wen-wei’s comments in 1205. Wen-wei states, “Mountains and rivers / are spirit, condensed. / ... Who has come up with / these miraculous forests and springs? / Pale ink / on fine white silk.”45 The suggested idea in this inscription reminds readers of Chan Buddhism and Taoism within the epigraph “Painting of a Rice Cake” written by Dozen.

What makes the painted “reproduction of mountains and rivers” illusory and the actual “mountains and rivers” real is the human’s intellectual transformation of “One” to “the Other,” neither the reproduction nor the mountains and rivers. That is, human perception is what makes it substantial or not. T’ien Hsieh of Wei-lo’s
inscription also stands out and it reassures readers of the interconnectedness between rivers (or water) and mountains. It says, "...The water holds up the mountains, The mountains go down in the water..."46 This assures the readers of the interchangeable emptiness-fullness relationship in the poem, sequence, and East Asian religious philosophies of Chan Buddhism and Taoism. Unless there is an empty space between the mountains and water, they would stand in a relationship of rigid disconnection. The painter creates the image and sense that the mountains could virtually enter the emptiness by considering it as intermediary; and that inversely, the water, by the way of the emptiness, could rise up into the mountains, as it has been discussed.

The last colophon in the paintings is written by Wang To in the mid-seventeenth century and the poem explains how the painting came to America by saying, "Now it is at the Cleveland Art Museum, which sits on a rise that looks out toward the waters of Lake Erie."47 Then, Snyder develops his own colophon by describing how he felt about the scroll painting. In it he observes:

Step back and gaze again at the land:

it rises and subsides—

ravine and cliffs like waves of blowing leaves—

stamp the foot, walk with it, clap! Turn,
the creeks come in, ah!

Strained through boulders,
mountains and walking on the water,
water ripples every hill.\textsuperscript{48}

While the painting has been fixed in ink and silk, the scroll painting as a whole transforms continuously since more colophons are always possible. Snyder's colophon makes the painting and his poem more closely interrelated by re-analysis of the whole painting, turning it into another poem within "Endless Streams and Mountains," which was inspired by the \textit{shan-shu-hua, Streams and Mountains Without End}. 

Vision of Emptiness Behind "Finding the Space in the Heart"

"O, ah! The awareness of emptiness brings forth a heart of compassion!"\textsuperscript{49}

The opening poem of \textit{Mountains and Rivers Without End}, "Endless Streams and Mountains," closes with a set of lines in italics:

\textit{Walking on walking,}

\textit{Under foot earth turns.}

\textit{Streams and mountains never stay the same.}\textsuperscript{50}
The lines suggest the continuous transformation of endless mountains and rivers, as humans, in the individual and the collective sense, are ever mutually correspondent, evolving, and reciprocal beings. This intriguing set of lines is repeated in two other poems, "The Mountain Spirit" and "Find the Space in the Heart," which are also about the interchangeable relationship between emptiness and fullness. By closely connecting the opening and ending poems, Mountains and Rivers Without End completes a circular structure that presents the endless connections between the beings of this planet. As "Endless Streams and Mountains" deals with transforming the relationship of complementarity and contrast into the relationship of reciprocal becoming, so "Find the Space in the Heart" unquestionably deals with correspondence and the same reciprocal becoming of mountains and rivers. In other words, each one is perceived as a state that is constantly attracted to and complemented by the other, like yin and yang in Taoism. This is the essential idea in the poem and the whole sequence. Snyder also speaks of the poem and sequence, as having "very close correspondences between the external and internal landscape, moving back and forth." If "Endless Streams and Mountains" is mainly about examining East Asian landscape through shan-shu-hua, "Find the Space in the Heart" is about Snyder's direct experiences with the American landscape over the course of four decades, between 1956 and 1996, while both territories are metaphysically and spiritually interconnected in his perspective. Basically, the poem is about constant
correspondences between space and the heart of visitors, including the speaker. It is divided into four parts that describe his experiences of the same place with different loving people in the sixties, seventies, eighties, and nineties, respectively. More specifically, the locale for the poem is a vast geological playa in northwestern Nevada known as the Black Rock Desert. Snyder takes a journey to rediscover his regional and global community with his readers by recollecting his visits to this locale.

"Finding the Space in the Heart" begins with the speaker’s recollection of his first encounter with the open space of the dry east side of the ranges by saying, "I first saw it in the sixties, / driving a Volkswagen camper / with a fierce gay poet and a / lovely but dangerous girl with a husky voice."52 "It" in the poem indicates Black Rock Desert and the Reno area in Nevada, where Snyder made his long backpack trip with his lifelong friend, Allen Ginsberg, in September 1964. The wild places such as this playa, the Grand Coulee, Alvord desert, Pyramid Lake, Blue Mountains, and Smoke Creek on the east side of the ranges feature the geographical uniqueness of America and inspire the speaker to develop his spiritual communion with American nature. That is, the choice of the "east side of the ranges" allows Snyder to focus on the geological dynamics of the American landscape, while it corresponds to that of East Asia landscape paintings. The wonders of American wilderness fills the speaker’s mind and it is described, "then/ follow a canyon and suddenly open to/ silvery flats that curved over the
The natural piety and vastness surprise the speaker and it is imprinted in his mind.

As Snyder observes it, the poem is about the mutual correspondence and interconnectedness between the external and internal space; the poem is about the interconnectedness of all beings: "O, ah! The awareness of emptiness brings forth a heart of compassion!" This line mirrors the saying of the ancient Mahayana Buddhist monk, Milarepa, in epigraph, who lived for many years in total solitude in ice caves high in the Himalayas, wearing only a cotton cloth: "The notion of Emptiness engenders Compassion." Initially, Milarepa’s saying instructs us in the importance of "having nothing" or "no possession." In Mahayana Buddhism, the concept of “Emptiness” suggests that everything in the universe is connected to everything else and thus all things are correspondent and compassionate to each other. This compassion prevails beyond humans and animals to include every creature of this planet. This is illustrated by the playful communion between humans and wilderness in the later part of the poem. The first part ends by implying that the San Francisco Renaissance and Countercultural Movement of the fifties and sixties was forming: "The next day we reached San Francisco/ in a time when it seemed/ the world might head a new way." In this line, “we” means “Snyder and Ginsberg” and the line illustrates how they are optimistic about the future.
Snyder’s second visit to the place was in the seventies by himself and this passes by in five lines. The visit to the place happened spontaneously: “I recklessly pulled off the highway / took a dirt track onto the flats / got stuck—scared the kids—slept the night / and the next day sucked free and went on.”55 The words, “recklessly,” “stuck,” “scared” and “sucked free” make the tone of the poem “confusing and disoriented” and suggest the speaker is disoriented. However, his communion with nature was continuously growing deeper and more profound, as long as his trip “went on,” and this is why the seventies seem neither optimistic nor pessimistic in this section of the poem. Considering Snyder’s activism, ethics, and Green Buddhism, his second visit is a symbolic representation of the seventies which makes Americans think of Vietnam War and the Post Vietnam War Period. In other words, in the vast emptiness associated with the wild spaces of the desert what Snyder gained is boundless compassion to other beings through his practice of Buddhism. In exploring this poem, Anthony Hunt also notes that our interconnectedness and dynamism is literally geographical and to recognize one’s own “emptiness” is to become aware of one’s ongoing dynamic interconnection with the Other.56 This corresponds with Snyder’s vision. To know the true meaning of emptiness is to recognize how all being are closely interconnected in time and space. This describes the primary activism and ethics of Snyder’s Green Buddhism and his works.
Snyder’s third visit to the area was with his lover, presumably his then-wife Masa Uehara, in the eighties and it is the climax of the poem. It takes almost half of the poem and begins with, “Fifteen years passed. In the eighties / With my love I went where the roads end.”\textsuperscript{57} The poem continues by speculating what the speaker achieved: “The best things in life are not things.”\textsuperscript{58} It echoes Milarepa’s concept of comprehending the “emptiness” and “nothingness.” In fact, the title of the poem signifies this thematic idea lucidly. For Buddhists, including Gary Snyder, who is a self-claimed peasant Buddhist, the “heart” of the title of this poem has immediate associations with one of the most well-known Buddhist sutras, the Heart Sutra. In this sutra, the reciprocal correspondence between emptiness and form conveys the profound concept of inter-being, in which both emptiness and form take neither fixed shapes nor spaces. More specifically, the second half of this part is closely related to the Heart Sutra and Mahayana Buddhism in that it exemplifies the core concept of the sutra, the interchangeable emptiness and fullness:

no waters, no mountains, no
bush no grass and
because no grass
no shade but your shadow.
No flatness because no not-flatness.
No loss, no gain, So—
nothing in the way!
—the ground is the sky
the sky is the ground,
no place between

Snyder's fourth visit to this place was in the nineties with his friends and family. This section is full of the mutual correspondence and interconnectedness of beings. Children and adults intermingle in the desert night. It begins by introducing his lover who has come to be his wife, Carole Koda: "Now in the nineties desert night /—my lover's my wife. / old friends, old trucks, drawn around;" Whether or not this is the new world that people of the sixties dreamed of, kids play together in the darkness and they taste grasshoppers roasted in a pan: "They all somehow swarm down here—/ sons and daughters in the circle/ eating grasshoppers grimacing." Snyder introduces "the roasted grasshoppers," an unusual food for American readers. In fact, it is one of the most common foods for children in East Asia and it symbolizes how East and West become closer and more connected. This is what the following lines suggest by saying, "—the wideness, the/ foolish loving spaces,/ full of heart." Again, the "heart" cannot be understood without connecting it to Milarepa's concept of comprehending the "emptiness" and "nothingness," the core concept of the Heart Sutra, and Snyder's Green Buddhism. Before Snyder finishes the poem, he repeats one of the most profound expressions,
like a colophon, and it comprises the theme: Snyder’s endless journey is like limitlessly transforming steams and mountains.

*Walking on walking,*

*Under foot earth turns.*

*Streams and mountains never stay the same.*

By connecting the ending poem to the opening poem or making the ending poem and opening poem interchangeable, the structure of the whole sequence becomes perfect. In other words, there is no beginning or end to appreciating the poems in this sequence because every one of thirty-nine poems is circular and limitlessly interrelated. Finally, the poem ends by directing readers’ attention to the opening poem of the sequence: “The space goes on. / But the wet black brush / tip drawn to a point, lifts away.” Again, it reminds readers of the opening poem, “Endless Streams and Mountains,” which was inspired by *shan-shu-hua, Streams and Mountains Without End.* Although poems are written on papers in characters, what is carried in the poems continuously self-transforms and diffuses as East Asian hand scroll paintings do. As I have asserted, poems and paintings are interwoven in traditional East Asia paintings and the endless self-transformation and variation of the numerous beings of the planet is the core idea of “Endless Streams and Mountains,” “Finding the Space in the Heart,” and Snyder’s Green Buddhism.
CHAPTER V

BIOGRAPHIC AND POETIC SIMILARITIES BETWEEN GARY SNYDER AND KO UN: GREEN BUDDHISM IN danger on peaks

—Spirit for the spirit, bright poet gone, then pass the cup among the living—

Gary Snyder has published nineteen poetry and prose collections, each of which has been dedicated to one of his family members or friends, except his first poetry publication of Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems in 1965. Dedicating each poetry collection to a specific person does not mean that all the poems in each poetry collection are directly related to that person, but knowing to whom each collection is dedicated suggests a lot about Snyder’s biographic and spiritual relationships with others, especially at the time the poems were written. For example, The Back Country was published in 1968 and dedicated to Kenneth Rexroth, a significant poet and translator. He was one of the leading figures in the San Francisco Renaissance and motivated Snyder to study East Asian poetry in the 1950s. Turtle Island in 1974 was dedicated to his mother, Lois Snyder Hennessy, who had a vital role in educating Snyder to be a poet. Mountains and Rivers Without End in 1997 was dedicated to his four children, Gen, Kai, Mika, and Kyung-jin Snyder. Snyder dedicated two of his collections to his wife, Carole Koda, who recently passed away from cancer, and these collections illuminate
many aspects of his personal life. The first one is a prose collection, *The Practice of the Wild*, published in 1990, and the work has evoked readers’ interests in the practical knowledge and experience of living with the American wilderness and nature. The other one is *danger on peaks* in 2004, which is Snyder’s first collection of new poems since *Mountains and Rivers Without End* in 1996. More specifically, the collection is dedicated to his wife, Carole, and the title of the collection, *danger on peaks*, is also from the poem, “For Carole”:

I first saw her in the zendo
at meal time       unwrapping bowls
heard forward folding back the cloth
    as server I was kneeling
to fill three sets of bowls each time
    up the line
      Her lithe leg
    proud, skeptical,
  passionate, trained
    by the
  heights by the
danger on peaks.²
Carole Koda was born on October 3rd, 1947 and married Gary Snyder in April 1991. As the first part of the poem suggests, Carole practiced Buddhism, focusing on both the Pure Land and Zen Schools, as Snyder has practiced it. More interestingly, as the second part of the poem describes, she regularly hiked and climbed in the Sierra Nevada and was a rock climber in Yosemite Valley. Besides this, Carole also walked the entire John Muir Trail, which runs through land of 13,000-foot and 14,000-foot peaks, of lakes in the thousands, and of canyons and granite cliffs, according to Pacific Crest Trail Association. Carole and Snyder traveled to Alaska, Nepal, the Mount Eberst region, and trekked to the Base Camp of Sagarmatha, Mount Everest, before her death on June 29, 2006. danger on peaks in 2004 was dedicated to Carole and Snyder put much of his emotion and experiences with her into these poems, which were written during her long illness.

danger on peaks illustrates various styles and subjects of Snyder’s poetry and his half centennial poetic life culminates in this collection. The collection has six sections but it can be combined into three parts. The first section, “Mount St. Helens,” sets the tone of the whole collection by introducing Snyder’s first ascent of Mount St. Helens in 1945, and describing how the mountain areas have been cultivated by humans ever since that climb when he was thirteen years old. The poems in this section echo the poems in Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems in 1965. The poems in the second section, “Yet Older Matters,” through the fifth section, “Dust in the Wind,” are very confessional and retrospective in describing his
personal relationship with his family, friends, and cross-cultural relationship with other international poets. More specifically, “For Carole,” “Summer of ’97,” and “One Thousand Cranes” are about the relationship between Snyder and his late wife, Carole; “Glacier Ghosts,” “Claws/Cause,” and “For Philip Zenshin Whalen” are about the relationship between him and his lifelong friends, Allen Ginsberg and Philip Zenshin Whalen; “Icy Mountains Constantly Walking” is for Seamus Heaney; and “Strong Spirit” and “Really the Real” are about his newly developed relationship with a Korean poet, Ko Un. The last section, “After Bamiyan,” reinforces his “Green Buddhism poetry” by addressing the interfaith issue among different religions—Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism—and mutual correspondences among the numerous beings on the planet.

As it is discussed in Chapter One, the biographic and poetic sphere of Gary Snyder is divided into three dimensions. The first dimension is before he practiced East Asian Buddhism in Japan, the second between his return home to America and the publication of Mountains and Rivers Without End in 1991, and the third from Mountains and Rivers Without End until now. In every sense, danger on peaks represents the third of Snyder’s biographic and poetic dimensions. Compared to other works in the previous dimensions, one distinguishing feature of the current dimension and danger on peaks is that it expresses his personal feelings and experiences with his family and friends by introducing poems on his
relationship with a specific person, while his ecological activism, ethics, and
Green Buddhism stay as the main subjects of his poems. Based on these
dimensions, this chapter has three main subjects. First, it examines Snyder’s
persistent vision to encourage his readers’ interest in the harmonization with other
beings on this planet, which is “Green Buddhism.” In illuminating this, “What to
Tell, Still” and “After Bamiyan” will be carefully examined. From Snyder’s
perspective, we must work on a long time frame in protecting ourselves and our
planet, and a forest plan of a few centuries is insufficient and must be extended to
“a thousand-year forest plan.” Second, it explores Snyder’s cross-cultural and
cosmopolitan relationships with Allen Ginsberg and Ko Un by examining Ko Un’s
“Allen Ginsberg” and Snyder’s “Strong Sprit.” It is interesting to see how
Ginsberg, Snyder, and Ko Un are intertwined through their actual lives and poetic
worlds. Third, the poetic world of Ko Un will be articulated as a way to illuminate
his biographic and poetic similarities to Snyder. As we often call Snyder a
spokesperson of our planet, so Snyder calls Ko Un “not only a major spokesperson
for all of Korean culture, but a voice for Planet Earth Watershed as well.”

Without understanding Snyder’s meaningful correspondences with many other
poets, especially those who have been involved in cross-cultural movement and
spreading cosmopolitan ideas, it will be impossible to capture the whole picture of
Green Buddhism and the ongoing cross-cultural movement.
The Activism and Ethics in Snyder's Green Buddhism: “What to Tell, Still” and “After Bamiyan”

“The destruction of the World Trade Center and the sudden loss of thousands of lives are, realistically, not a historical anomaly.”

Snyder has emphasized the importance of bioregionalism or cultivating a sense of place over the decades and has diagnosed that Americans have to settle down and “Don’t Move.” This is the way to expand our understanding of the relationship between ourselves and the land. Snyder believes that we need to settle down and know the place where we and our descendants will live for a thousand years or more. It is also a well-known concept that cultures are different in accordance with the differences of their bioregional landscapes. For example, Snyder had a firsthand experience of the differences between two regional landscapes and cultures when he went to Japan in 1956. He illustrates this by saying, “Once I had arrived in Japan by freighter in 1956 it was instantly clear to me that the climate and landscape was not at all like the Pacific Northwest. It is much like Virginia or North Carolina.” Since Snyder settled down in the Yuba River country of the Sierra Nevada, he often states that his perception of “differences” between the Northwest and California have to do with plants, smells,
climates, and landscape, while in contrast the borderlines between two states in this country were originally determined by the first colonialists of this land with their political convenience and rulers. “What to Tell, Still,” the opening poem of section three, “Daily Life,” is the poem to awaken readers to the importance of saving our planet by preserving nature as it is with a one-thousand-year forest plan.

The two-part poem, “What to Tell, Still,” originally appeared as a concluding poem in Look Out: A Selection of Writings in 2002. The poem expresses Snyder’s reasons for being a spokesperson of nature. The general tone of the poem is nostalgic but consistent and firmly resolved. The first part recollects when the speaker was young and how he was engaged in East Asian studies and the second part reinforces the speaker’s resolution of saving a forest against a government’s short-sighted plan of destroying it and developing the land for other use. The poem begins with the speaker’s recollection of how he was intrigued by Ezra Pound and East Asian studies:

At twenty-three I sat in a lookout cabin in gray whipping wind
at the north end of the northern Cascades,
high above rocks and ice, wondering
should I go visit Pound at St. Elizabeth’s?

And studied Chinese in Berkeley, went to Japan instead.⁶
As it is discussed in a previous chapter, Snyder was one of those American poets who was influenced by Ezra Pound and more seriously engaged in studying East Asian studies and practicing Buddhism. In Poets on the Peaks, Snyder remembers how he studied Chinese calligraphy and practiced Buddhism, especially when he worked as a Crater Mountain LOOKout: “I had a daily schedule which included certain periods of meditation. I did zazen (Zen sitting meditation) certain hours, and then calligraphy practice, and then I would study a text, then zazen again, and then I’d go melt snow and bring it up and cook, and have tea and write some haiku and then do some more calligraphy practice and some more zazen, and the days just flew by.”7 From an early age, Snyder has continuously practiced East Asian Buddhism and Chinese calligraphy.

Beginning with the second part of the poem, the speaker’s firm determination to transfer a healthy natural environment to the next generation is revealed, as the speaker identifies himself as a sixty-three-year-old man. In the process of making a transition from part one to part two is an implication that the traditional East Asian culture and philosophy is nature-friendly. Part two begins:

I’m 63 now & I’m on my way to pick up my ten-year-old stepdaughter
and drive the car pool.
I just finished a five-page letter to the County Supervisors
dealing with a former supervisor,
now a paid lobbyist,
who has twisted the facts and gets paid for his lies. Do I
have to deal with this creep? I do.⁸

After reading the poem, what stands out immediately is the repeated expression of
"I." It shows readers the strong will of the speaker and narrows the gap between
the reader and the speaker and even identifies them as one voice, unless they have
different views on the issue. In other words, this section projects the speaker’s
determination to deal with an unpleasant paid lobbyist. The speaker emphasizes
the importance of an individual’s effort to practice bioregional activism and ethics.
This section literally mirrors what Snyder claimed in his Back on the Fire, by
saying, “Do not place too much faith in government.”⁹ In addition, Snyder often
talks about “a Thousand-year Forest Plan,” as he did during his poetry reading at
Fullerton Auditorium, The Art Institute of Chicago, on November 5, 2006. He
talked to the five-hundred members of the audience about how he has felt about
living in the midst of mountains and rivers in the Sierra, Nevada, after reading the
following “Cold Mountain Poem”: “I have lived at Cold Mountain / These thirty
long years. / Yesterday I called on friends and family: / More than half had gone to
the Yellow Springs. / Slowly consumed, like fire down a candle; / Forever flowing,
like a passing river. / Now, morning, I face my lone shadow; / Suddenly my eyes
are bleared with tears.”¹⁰ Considering his loss of his wife, Carole, in May 2006,
Snyder’s reading was quite touching. More impressively, he related the poem to
preserving our American wilderness and introduced his wish for the Sierra Nevada Forest. That is, he wished the remarkable diversity of the forest to survive and flourish into the far future and, more importantly, that we make sure that our descendants will be there a thousand years from now. In the same context, Snyder claimed that a plan of a few hundred years is not enough and it should be a plan for “one thousand years.” In his recent publication of Back on the Fire in 2007, Snyder introduces the concept more specifically:

Someday there will be a Thousand-year Forest Plan. If talking about “one thousand years” seems unimaginably long, we should remember that the Department of Energy and the whole nuclear establishment are planning for a repository of spent but thoroughly dangerous radioactive material to be placed underground at Yucca Mountain in Nevada, and it will need to be overseen and guarded for at least one thousand years. They have assured us that they will look after it for all that time.”11

The poem ends with the speaker’s monologue to his readers: “Then, I think, / what do I know? / About what to say / or not to say, what to tell, or not, to whom, / or when, / still.” The choices that we make in regard to our natural environment and our society should be more deliberate and accepting of nature, where numerous creatures reside, as an essential part of our community. Snyder’s bioregional ethic is something that he has repeatedly emphasized over the decades. When Michael

154

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Helm interviewed him in early 1979, Snyder clarified his bioregional ethic and activism by saying, “The ecological benefit of rootness is that people take care of a place because they realize that they are going to live there for a thousand years or more. They know that they are not going to be forever moving around. We are really now at the end of that American-Anglo mobility process.”

The core idea of bioregionalism or ethics is to maximize the mutual interconnectedness between community and people by accepting every representation of nature as an important part of the community. Snyder suggests that one of the oldest and most universal requirements of wild manners is to always express gratitude for what you take, to say thanks, at the least. He exemplifies this by describing how Native American logging crews take trees down: “The fallers would often smoke some sacred tobacco—usually Lucky Strikes—and say a little prayer before taking a big pine down. They meant it, and it makes all the difference in the world.” Snyder continues by describing how Native Alaskans living in the Yukon take the lives of deer, “After you have done with a deer, do not scatter the bones out for the dogs or the other animals. Wrap them up, drop them in the river, and say ‘thank you’ one more time. If you do not do that, the deer will not want to come back and die for us again.” Snyder introduces his firsthand experience to suggest another rule of etiquette, to give something back, besides saying “Thank you.” In the fall of 2000 Snyder visited the “Cloud Gate” Korean Sun Buddhist Nunnery deep in the mountains of Korea.
He saw a huge old pine tree with low outstretched limbs extending over many hundreds of square feet and a wooden sign in Korean calligraphy. He asked a passing nun what this said and she replied: "'It says this is a noble and honorable elderly tee, which has been here from the beginnings of the temple.' Then she told me it was honored once a year by having many gallons of Korean rice alcohol poured carefully around the entire drip line. I said, 'Honored?' And she said, 'Yes, and to cheer it up.'"15

"After Bamiyan" is about the Bamiyan statues, which were destroyed by the Taliban in March 2001. Snyder relates this event to the World Trade Center tragedy on September 11, 2001. According to Britannica, the Buddhas of Bamiyan were two monumental statues of standing Buddhas carved into the side of a cliff in the Bamyan valley of central Afghanistan, situated 230 km (143 miles) northwest of Kabul at an altitude of 2,500 meters (8,202 feet). Built during the 6th century, the statues represented the classic blended style of Greco-Buddhist art.16 From the speaker's perspective, the tragedies of the Bamiyan statues and the World Trade Center are world issues and not something new. The correspondences between the speaker's friend and the speaker constitutes the main part of the poem, which begins by saying: "Well, yes, but, the manifest Dharma is intra-samsaric, and will decay. —R."17 Then, Snyder's response follows, "Ah yes…impermanence. But this is never a reason to let compassion and focus slide, or to pass off the sufferings of others because they are merely impermanent beings."18 In Buddhism,
it is true that Buddha statues are just another representation of the historical
Buddha or Buddha-mind and what really matters is not to worship the statues but
to keep practicing Buddhism. However, the speaker considers the statue as the
cultural landscape and archaeological remains of the Bamiyan Valley, which is a
UNESCO World Heritage site, and says, “Buddhism is not on trial here. The
Bamiyan statues are part of human life and culture, they are works of art, being
destroyed by idolators of the book. Is there anything ‘credulous’ in respecting the
art and the religious culture of the past?” As I have discussed the activism and
ethics of Snyder’s Green Buddhism in the previous chapters, to increase mutual
communication among people, especially those who have different religions, is the
best possible way of rebuilding our collective sense of humanity.

The speaker ends the poem by connecting the essential concept of
Buddhism, “空,” which is “emptiness” or “the void” in English, to the victims of
September 11 and the Buddhas of Bamiyan by stating:

September 2001

The men and women who
died at the World Trade Center
together with the
Buddhas of Bamiyan,
Take Refuge in the dust.

157
Throughout history there have been various world disorders such as earthquakes, floods, huge fires, plagues, endless wars, and global warming issues. However, the sudden loss of thousands of lives and the destruction of the World Trade Center became unforgettable historical anomalies. What is interesting is that Snyder enlightens readers that what was to have been known as “New World Disorder” has continuously existed in East and West: “Disorder is nothing new in the human world. East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, and Europe have all gone through cycle after cycle of violent change—oppression at home, exploitation abroad, and bloody warfare.”21 Then he concludes that various combinations of fantastic ideological beliefs, whipped-up nationalisms, and institutionalized greed are the main reasons for this worldly queer state.

The Poetic and Spiritual Communion among the Buddhist-Poets: Gary Snyder and Ko Un in danger on peaks

Snyder has expanded his understanding on various subjects of East Asia since his ten-year sojourn in Japan between 1959 and 1969. However, his interest in Korea was quite limited until he began his relationship with a contemporary Korean, Ko Un, via Allen Ginsberg. It is interesting to see how Ginsberg and Ko Un write about their first meeting. According to one of Ko Un’s poems from his poetry collection Ko Un, “Allen Ginsberg,” their meeting first happened when
Ginsberg visited Korea during the Summer Olympic Games in 1988 at Seoul, Korea. Then, they together hosted a poetry reading, "Night of Poetry Recital by Ginsberg and Ko Un,"22 in Korea in 1990. In the Foreword of Ko Un's Beyond Self: 108 Korean Sun Poems, however, Ginsberg notes that their poetry reading in Korea was in 1989, not 1990. Considering the fact that Koreans use their lunar calendar and Americans use their solar calendar, we can conclude that their poetry reading was between January and February and this is why they claim two different dates about their poetry reading and meaningful union. While the first meeting between Ginsberg and Ko Un is ambiguous, the date of the meeting between Snyder and Ko Un is authentic. In the poem, "Allen Ginsberg," Ko Un describes that they first met in November 1997 at the University of Berkeley when Ko Un taught at the school as a visiting scholar. Ever since Ginsberg and Ko Un were mutually impressed by their ethics and poetry, they began to develop their poetic relationship. Then, a lifelong friend of Snyder, Ginsberg recommended that Ko Un and Snyder should meet each other. Ko Un's poem, "Allen Ginsberg," describes it very lucidly:

Summer 1988

Allen Ginsberg in Seoul
told me
to meet with Gary Snyder.
Time passed.

In November, 1997, at Berkeley
I met Gary Snyder.

He told me,

"Allen wanted me to see you."23

Compared to the lifelong relationship between Snyder and Ginsberg, since their historical poetry reading at Six Gallery in 1955, the relationship between Ko Un and Ginsberg is about ten years. The relationship between Ko and Snyder has just reached a decade and, interestingly, it began the year that Ginsberg passed away. However, the meeting between Ko Un and Snyder was possible through Ginsberg, as it is described in the continued poem:

The dead poet
tied two living poets.

Two is not enough

the dead poet

revived to join our communion.24
Ko Un and Snyder have practiced the meditation school of Buddhism for over five decades and Ginsberg practiced Tibetan Tantric Buddhism. Even though they practice different schools of Buddhism, it is natural to accept that there is no borderline between living and death and the three poets rejoiced over their poetry reading. That is, death and life are literally connected and repeated until we are enlightened and become Buddhas. The last part of the poem expresses the indescribable joy of their meeting and reading:

Following Allen's old harmonium

two poets recite their poems.

in Korean

in English

three poets performed the poetry reading together.  

Repying to Ko Un's request to join a poetry reading in Korea, Snyder visited Korea in 2000 for the first time and stayed a few days at Ko Un's house in AnSung. In the following year, Snyder invited Ko Un and his wife, Sangwha Lee, to his home at San Juan Ridge, Sierra, Nevada, in October 2001. "Strong Spirit" and "Really the Real" are based on the visit of Ko Un and his wife, Sangwha Lee, to Snyder's place for a week. "Strong Spirit" has two main sections, the first describing how the speaker anticipates hosting Ko Un, a friend from five thousand miles away: "Working on hosting Ko Un great Korean poet./I was sitting on the
floor this morning in the dark/ At the Motel Eco.” What is described at the beginning of the poem shows readers how much the speaker anticipates seeing his friend, Ko Un, who has led a very similar life and written similar poetics. The following lines describe how the speaker and other poets work together to welcome Ko Un:

I’m on the phone and on the e-mail working all this out
Students and poets to gather at the Care California
the Korean graduate student too.
His field is Nineteenth Century Lit and he’s probably Christian,
But says he’ll do this. Delfina, wife of Pak, a Korean Catholic,
Looks distasteful at the book and says
Ko Un’s a Buddhist!—I don’t think she’ll come to the reading.

The speaker pinpoints how the Korean Buddhists and Christians have lived with chronic tensions. The tone of the speaker sounds clear and confident, not cynical.

The second section of the poem is about the mutual communion among three poets: Snyder, Ko Un, and Ok-ku Kang Grosjean, who died in October 2000. Since it is mainly about the spiritual communion between two living poets, Snyder and Ko Un, and the dead poet, Ok-ku Kang Grosjean, this poem echoes Ko Un’s “Allen Ginsberg,” which is about the spiritual relationship between Snyder, Ko Un,
and Ginsberg. The poem addresses another reason for Ko Un’s visit to America:

Now to pay respects to our friend.

Poet, translator, Ok-ku died last fall

her grave on the ridgetop near the sea.

Straight up a hill due west

Walk a grassy knoll in the wind,

Ko Un pouring a careful trickle of soju on her mound,

us bowing deep bows.28

Ok-ku, also spelled Ok-koo, was a noted Buddhist-poet and translator who
translated into Korean from English. She is best known in Korea for translating
Snyder’s No Nature and the author of her own poetry collection, a hummingbird’s
dance. She also translated into Korean the works of Robert Hass, Michael Palmer,
Dalai Lama, and Thich Nhat Hanh. Ok-kook Kang and Ko Un worked together to
bring democracy to Korea before she immigrated to American in 1963.

Apparently, it is unusual to place a grave “on the ridgetop near the sea… due
West.” Considering her homesickness, however, it is natural to have her grave
there, facing her home country across the Pacific Ocean. That is, putting her to
rest on the hilltop which faces her homeland, Korea, expresses her eagerness to
return to the place where she was born and where her parents were buried, as is
traditional in East Asian culture.
Finally, the poem ends with the speaker’s monologue, which brings an ambiguity by saying, “—spirits for the spirit, bright gone/ then pass the cup among the living—/ strong.” Initially, it seems unclear who really has the strong spirit but the poem describes a clear identity. The plural form of “Spirits” directs Snyder and Ko Un and, therefore, the singular form of “the spirit” directs Ok-ku Kang Grosjean. Again, the singular form of “bright poet” means Ok-ku Kang Grosjean and “the living” mean Snyder and Ko Un. Still, the questions “who is strong?” and “what does the title, ‘strong spirit’ signify?” remain. By approaching the issue with a collective sense, the subject of “strong spirit” could be easily understood as “poets” or “Snyder, Ko Un, and Ok-ku Kang Grosjean,” who are the Buddhist-poets. This is how many of the poems of Snyder and Ko Un reflect Green Buddhism, as it has been discussed in the previous chapters.

Korean Activism, Buddhism, and Cosmopolitanism in Ko Un’s Poetry

The flower
seen as I went down—as I was coming up
I couldn’t see it.
내려갈 때 보았네.
올라갈 때 못 본
그 꽃.

164
The contemporary Korean poet Ko Un has published more than one hundred poetry and prose collections, many of which have been translated into Asian and European languages over the past two decades. He was short-listed for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2002 and at the 2003 conference entitled “Ko Un’s Poetic World,” at Stockholm University, Sweden, Jesper R. Matsumoto Mulbjerg characterized Ko Un as “very much Korean—very much a human being.” On the 5th of October, 2006, the Korea Institute at Harvard University presented a “Poetry Reading and Talk with Ko Un” which was subtitled, “The Meeting of Two Literatures, South and North (Korea).” Thus, despite his coming from “a hermit nation” which is surrounded by three such powerful countries as China, Japan, and Russia, Ko Un has attracted the interests of American scholars who are particularly interested in his treatment of East Asian Mahayana Buddhism, especially Korean Sŏn Buddhism (禪佛教), and the sociopolitical progress of Korea, since its political independence from Japan in 1945. Compared to Southeast Asian Theravada Buddhism, which is often considered as conservative and less involved in activism, East Asian Mahayana Buddhism is intensively committed to the sociopolitical movement, and this is reflected in Ko Un’s actual life as well as his poetic world. While he led the resistance movement against Korea’s military dictatorship during the 1970s, Ko Un was imprisoned four times, including the life sentence for his third imprisonment in 1980. For this reason, many people have been intrigued by Ko Un’s poetry collections, beginning with
The Sound of My Waves (1996) and Beyond Self: 108 Korean Sun Buddhism Poems (1997), which are translated by Brother Anthony of Taize and Young-moo Kim. More recently, Ko Un’s 20 volumes of poetry sequence collection, ManInBo, was translated into English as Ten Thousand Lives (2005). This collection had a huge impact on readers by directing their interest toward Korean Buddhism, sociopolitical activism, and what I’d term the “cross-cultural cosmopolitanism” of Ko Un’s poetry. In 2006, he published two more poetry collections in English, The Three Way Tavern, with a dazzling foreword written by Gary Snyder, and Flowers of a Moment.

In his native land, Ko Un is probably the most beloved, controversial, prolific, and significant contemporary poet, and his poems oftentimes echo the countercultural voices that are discovered in the poems of the mystical Chinese Tang poet HanShan (寒山, 700-780), the Japanese Buddhist-monk poet Ryokan (1758-1831), and the contemporary American Buddhist poet Gary Snyder (1930 - ). As HanShan’s Cold Mountain poems had a huge influence on Ryokan’s poems in the 18th century, so HanShan’s poems had a great influence on the Beat Generation and the San Francisco writers—the writers of the American countercultural movement—once most of the poems were translated into English by Gary Snyder35 and Burton Watson36 in the 1950s and the early 1960s. Coincidentally, Ko Un and Gary Snyder were also influenced by HanShan’s poems, and both poets’ biographical and poetic relationship has been fully
established over the past ten years. Initially, when Seoul, Korea, hosted the 1988 Summer Olympic Games, Allen Ginsberg came to Korea and developed his poetic relationship with Ko Un. Ginsberg, who was a lifelong friend of Snyder, constantly encouraged Snyder to meet with Ko Un; meanwhile, Ginsberg also encouraged Ko Un to meet with Snyder, before their actual meeting in November 1997. Ko Un came to University of California at Berkeley as a visiting scholar and Snyder visited Ko Un. This was how their long-awaited but meaningful, poetic, and spiritual communion was ignited. Both Ko Un and Snyder practiced East Asian Mahayana Buddhism, focusing on Korean Sun and Japanese Zen schools respectively for many years, and they were continuously and enthusiastically involved in countercultural and cross-cultural movements over the decade.

Ko Un’s biographic and poetic dimensions are often divided into three key periods: The first period is the Buddhist-monk poet and nihilistic poet period between 1952 and 1973. This stage is characterized by many poems and essays in which Ko Un advocated revitalizing traditional Korean Sun Buddhism, differentiating it from Japanese Zen Buddhism which dominated Korean Buddhism between 1910 and 1945. After living as a Buddhist monk poet between 1952 and 1962, he returned to our “chaotic lunar world (月下)” and his nihilistic life continued until 1973 when he transformed himself into a sociopolitical activist poet. The second dimension is the period when Ko Un became enthusiastically
involved in sociopolitical movements and took the forefront in street
demonstrations for democracy, justice, and peace in Korea between 1973 and
1987. The poet himself also defines this stage of his poetic life by commenting
that, "[t]here were some changes introduced to the world of my literature in the
1970s. Before then, no political and social issues found space inside the poetic
nihilism in which I was trapped. However, I finally realized that literature could
never be separated from reality."37 The second and third stage partially overlap,
but it is safe to conclude that the third dimension began around the early 1990s,
one a civilian government replaced the military government through a peaceful
presidential election in Korea. If the second dimension of Ko Un's poetic world
mirrors the countercultural movement of the 1950s and 60s in the U.S., which
reminds us of the Beat Generation and the San Francisco Renaissance writers, the
ongoing third dimension of Ko Un's poetic world is cross-cultural and
cosmopolitan. He explains his current poetic dimension by clarifying his
definition of a poet, noting that, "a speaker in a poem should not be the poet
himself/herself but should be a shaman who can build a bridge between spirits of
different people."38 Considering the disturbing homogeneity that characterizes
cultural, psychological, and sociopolitical thoughts in East Asia—especially, that
deeply rooted in Chinese Han (漢), Korean, and Japanese thought—Ko Un's
ethical and poetic vision is greatly inspiring, unique, and significant.
As I have discussed briefly, Ko Un's biographic and poetic world should be divided into three distinctive stages and the poems in each period feature the main issues. Keeping these distinctive biographic and poetic dimensions in mind, I would like to examine a few poems from the newly published *Ten Thousand Lives* (2005), *The Three Way Tavern* (2006), and *Flowers of a Moment* (2006). Consequently, this essay is an overview of Ko Un's ongoing focus on Korean Activism, Buddhism, and Cosmopolitanism in his poetic world. Since discussing the origin and development of East Asian Mahayana Buddhism is so important to Ko Un's poetic vision, it will be briefly examined.

Originating in India, Buddhism spread toward the Far East of China, Korea, and Japan over the past 2,500 years, and it has developed into two major subschools: Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. Theravada Buddhism is often called Southeast Asian Buddhism, which is practiced in Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Burma, and Thailand; whereas Mahayana Buddhism is called Northern (or East Asian) Buddhism and is practiced in China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and Tibet. Basically, Theravada Buddhists put more value in engagement with the monastic community and their own individual enlightenment through the continuous reading of sutras and practice, while Mahayana Buddhists believe in spontaneous enlightenment through the various practices and, after achieving their enlightenment, in helping other people to achieve theirs by letting them realize their intrinsic Buddha nature. It is not false to say Southeast Asian Buddhism is
mainly for Buddhist monks and East Asian Buddhism is for Buddhist monks as well as laypeople, and this is why Mahayana Buddhism is often called the "Proletarian Buddhism." East Asian Buddhism features an historical continuity between the development of Buddhist schools in China, Korea, and Japan, since the latter was imported from the former. That is, the schools of East Asian Buddhism coexisted and mutually influenced each other, and many Buddhist scholars claim that there was an intertwined relationship between the Korean, the Chinese, and to a somewhat lesser extent, the Japanese Buddhist traditions. However, depending on different monastic doctrines and rituals, Korean Buddhism shaped its own unique schools of Buddhism, as did the Chinese and Japanese.

During the Unified Silla period (676-918) in the Korean peninsula, the five orthodox schools of doctrinal Buddhism, referred to as “O-gyo” in Korean, and the nine orthodox schools of meditation or East Asian Chan Buddhism, referred to as “Ku-san,” were established. Throughout the Koryo period (935-1392), two major schools of Korean Buddhism have dominated Korean Buddhism: Kyojong (敎宗) or “doctrinal and textual Buddhism” and Sunjong (禪宗) or “meditative Buddhism.” Kyo literally means “teaching” and it emphasizes the importance of reading and reciting Buddhist sutras repeatedly as a doctrinal school. It is very much like the Theravada rather than the Mahayana school of Buddhism. Sŏn is the Korean pronunciation of Chinese Chan (禪), which
originated from dhyana in Sanskrit, which simply means “meditation.” However, according to Damien Keown, Korean Sun is characterized by its attention to scriptural, doctrinal, ritual, and philosophical matters as well as to the practice of meditation. In other words, Korean Sun Buddhism emphasizes the symmetrical balance between the practice of meditation and studying doctrines. Ever since Buddhism was introduced into Korea, many sub-schools of Korean Buddhism have developed over the past two thousand years of the Silla (57 B.C.E.-918), Koryo (935-1392), Chosun (1392-1910) and Korea (1945-) periods. Today, there are estimated to be about nine thousand Buddhist temples with thirteen million Buddhists in South Korea.

In 1952, during the Korean Civil War, Ko Un entered a Korean Sun Buddhist monastery and threw himself into the rigors of Korean Sun practice as a novice monk under Hyech’o’s guidance. Later, he became the recognized disciple of the great Korean Sun Buddhist monk, HyoBong, and received the Buddhist name, “Mu ($£)” which literally means “emptiness” or “nothingness.” For the next eleven years, he practiced Korean Sun Buddhism and traveled the whole country, living by alms. During his monastic life in the 1960s, he published his first poetry collection, PeeAnGye, which was later translated into English as Other World Sensibility. With its publication, he became quite a well-known Buddhist monk poet, not only in Buddhist circles but also in literary ones in Korea. In 1962, he extended his notoriety when he made a surprising announcement, declaring a
Resignation Manifesto and leaving the Buddhist monastic community. After his return to this lunar world, he led a nihilistic life marked by daily heavy drinking; he suffered from severe insomnia, practiced self-torture, and attempted suicide. Ko Un reflects upon this period in his poem, “Destruction of Life” (1974):

Cut off parents, cut off children!
This is that and this not that
and anything else as well
cut off and dispatched by the sharp blade of night.
Every morning heaven and earth
are piled with dead things.
Our job is to bury them all day long
and establish there a new world.41

The contemporary American poet Robert Hass examines this poem, observing that, “This has, to my ear, the tough-mindedness of Korean Buddhism and the kind of raggedness and anger I associated with American poetry in the 1950s and 60s, the young Allen Ginsberg or Leroi Jones.”42 The tone of the poem sounds nihilistic and pessimistic, as it is evidenced by word choice such as “cut off, dispatch, night, dead things, bury them.” However, the last line of the poem, “establish there a new world,” turns the tone of the whole poem in an optimistic direction, as it suggests potential optimism and transformation. That is, at the end of the poem,
we see the speaker move from the Korean Buddhist monk, who has completely detached himself from the outer world, to his embrace of sociopolitical activism. He returns to chaotic human society with the mission of building a better world. Simultaneously, Ko Un’s increased outward turning reflects the fact that the speaker is not necessarily an individual voice; he represents the collective voices of those Koreans who were questioning their society during the period. ChungHee Park, the ex-President of Korea who was finally assassinated, amended the Constitution and allowed himself a third term in presidential office. It is a historical irony that the sociopolitical instability saved Ko Un from his nihilistic life; he rejected his reputation as a spokesperson for Nihilism. In the early 1970s, he became a militant nationalist poet actively involved in modern activism by writing poems about the anti-military dictatorship.

The following poem, “Tavern Justice,” from *The Three Way Tavern* (2006) reveals the oppressed days, during the Cold War period in South and North Korea:

In 1975 / South Korea

and North Korea had the same standard of living.

Since then the North has lagged/ further and further behind……

I heard North Korea is not such hell. / The words made him

a suspected spy / and got him sentenced a year in a cell
for violating the anticommunist law. / The appeals court gave him eight months....

After WWII, only two countries—Korea as North and South, Germany as East and West—were divided into two parts but East and West Germany reunified on October 3, 1990. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, in the cause of defending South Korea’s democracy and capitalism from North Korea’s communism, whatever the government did was justified as supporting the tenuous status quo. During this period, Ko Un distinguished himself as a key figure of the Korean democracy movement, which led to his sentence to thirty years of imprisonment. Simultaneously, he became a very prolific writer by writing and publishing many poetry and essay collections such as Going into Mountain Seclusion, Selected Poems of Tu Fu, and Critical Biology of the Poet Yi Sang. Some Korean poetry critics have criticized Ko Un for his attachment to political activities, since they believe in “art for art’s sake”; however, “People’s Literature” was not a new stream shaped by Ko Un but has been continuous in Korea. Yet, Korean Buddhists in general often claim that being involved in activism was neither in a true Buddhist’s character nor in that of a poet. However, considering the historical fact that South and North Korea have shared the same culture and language over the past thousands of years and have been divided into two different
countries only over the past sixty years, it is clear that Ko Un’s protest gets at the heart of the sociopolitical reality of his times and places him in a long global tradition, also exemplified by his colleague, Gary Snyder.

In the 1992 presidential election, a civilian government replaced the military government in Korea, which has been controlled by three successive army generals. A more epoch-making political event occurred when the opposing political leader, Kim Daejung, became the Korean President through a peaceful presidential election in 1997. It is a surprising fact that South Korea still remains the only country in Asia which has made a major political power shift from one regime to another peacefully through an election with no bloodshed. This political shift enabled Ko Un to receive his passport in the early 1990s and to become an increasingly cross-cultural and cosmopolitan poet through his international experiences. Among numerous poems, here is a primary example of this trend, taken from *Flowers of a Moment* (2006):

You might well call it the paradox of paradoxes / Truly I tell you
Ask poor people about today / Ask poor countries about tomorrow
Ask Native Americans / or Somalian women
about the new century / Not rich Americans.

On the surface, the tone of the speaker is cynical and criticizing about America’s place in the world. However, considering the global political climate that has
emerged since America's invasion of Iraq, it is clear what the main sociopolitical
and cosmopolitan message of the poem is: peace and justice, a sane and necessary
path, the sole way of easing the spontaneously global outburst of anti-
Americanism. Today's anti-Americanism can be understood as cultural and
psychological negative views of America and even Americans, whether it is biased
or not. Around the world, not just in the Middle East, when terrible things happen
there is a widespread tendency to blame America for those tragedies. Considering
thirteen million Korean Buddhists' ethics and 35 years of a painful Japanese
colonial period in Korea, the poem embodies the post-colonial context. More
specifically, given reports that three million North Korean children are starving
and cannot get three meals a day; and that Native Americans want to build up their
own independent state on this "Turtle Island," Ko Un reminds readers that the
American Empire is losing its moral leadership at the dawn of the 21st century.
Throughout the poem, we see how the sociopolitical engagement of Ko Un is
developed into the universal stage.

Allen Ginsberg is one of the most significant countercultural American
poets and he was one of the closest American poets to Ko Un. During the 1988
Summer Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea, Ginsberg came to Korea and met with
Ko Un. Their friendship and poetic relationship remained strong until the death of
Ginsberg in the summer of 1997. In the foreword to Beyond Self: 108 Korean Sun
Poems, Ginsberg introduced Ko Un by saying, "a magnificent poet, combination
of Buddhist cognoscente, passionate political libertarian, and natural historian."46

Ginsberg was also instrumental in furthering the friendship of Ko Un and Gary Snyder – the latter a good friend of Ginsberg from their poetry reading days at Six Gallery in San Francisco. As an environmental activist and a remarkable contemporary American poet, Gary Snyder describes Ko Un as “not only a major spokesperson for all of Korean culture, but a voice for Planet Earth Watershed as well.”47

I have examined three distinctive dimensions—Korean Activism, Buddhism, and Crosscultural Cosmopolitanism—of Ko Un’s poetic world by focusing on several poems from recently published poetry collections of Ko Un. I would like to conclude this paper with one of Ko Un’s most recently published poems. Titled, “Kangaroo,” it was published in *The Three Way Tavern* (2006):

> When the British landed in Australia / they asked an aborigine.
> 
> “What’s that thing leaping up and down?” / The native replied.
> 
> “I don’t know, / Kangaroo, I don’t understand you.”

The name stuck.

Ah, how much grander not knowing is / than knowing.48
CHAPTER VI
GREEN BUDDHISM AND GARY SNYDER’S POETRY

“The plan to keep our American nature as it is for two hundred years is not enough.
It’s gotta be a plan for at least two millennium years.”

Gary Snyder has always reminded us of how humans have been captured by our egocentric homocentrism. More importantly, his works inspire us to realize that it is time to see what we can give back to our home, Earth, and it is one of the most essential concepts of Snyder’s Green Buddhism. The numerous creatures on this planet are mutually interdependent and we humans alone cannot survive, unless we treat other creatures on this planet with compassion. For example, wherever there are mountains, there are rivers. Wherever there are mountains and rivers, there are spirits. Humans are creatures of spirits as much as other creatures are. According to Snyder, Buddhism, with its astringent skepticism toward the power of deities, finds itself dealing with nature spirits from the old days. As I have articulated, understanding the interdependence among creatures is the key concept of Snyder’s activism, ethics, poetics, and Green Buddhism. From my perspective, Snyder’s Green Buddhism and poetry will be continuously appreciated by more and more readers in the East and the West.
APPENDIX
WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM KATHELEEN KORNELL,
THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
Byoung,

Yes, as long as it is only a couple of copies for university record and not a formal publication. I will mail you the invoice for the photos. You can also contact the curatorial assistant for the Asian Art department to see if arrangements can be made to view the work in storage. It is currently not on view due to the museum renovation. Her name is Nancy Grossman and her email address is ngrossman@clevelandart.org.

Kathleen

-----Original Message-----
From: Byoung Kook Park [byoung.park@wmich.edu]
Sent: Friday, March 09, 2007 4:12 PM
To: Kathleen Komell
Subject: Request for study photograph IV

Dear Kathleen,

I guess I am allowed to reproduce "Streams and Mountains Without End" for my dissertation at this point and I bet I will make a formal request to reproduce the painting for my future publications--My understanding goes that the painting is no longer displayed for public and this is why I want to buy the photographs asap.
Thank you for your help again and send an invoice, please.

Peace,
Byoung, WMU

"One Earth, One Chance."
Chapter I. The Biographic and Poetic Dimensions in Gary Snyder’s Green Buddhism

Poetry


2 “Cold Mountains” has at least three different meanings: First, the literal meaning of Chinese Tang Poet, HanShan; second, the mind-state of Chinese poet, HanShan; third, the actual place where it is cold and covered with snow.


6 The Soviet Union was divided into many countries in 1991.

7 The Diamond Sutra is one of the most essential sutras of Buddhism and I consulted mainly Red Pine’s English translation, The Diamond Sutra (New York: Counterpoint, 2001). In addition to this, I consulted Korean translation with Chinese characters.


10 The following is from an email from Gary Snyder to Byoung K. Park about this issue: “Japhy Ryder, in Kerouac’s Dharma Bums, is a fictional character. It is a novel, not journalism. Some of the action in the novel is modelled after events of the fall of 1955, and much of it is fictionally invented. What I usually tell people is, ‘I am not Japhy Ryder. Ryder is a character modelled in some ways on how Jack saw me.’ This is basically the truth, whatever else has been said.” (Monday, October 9, 2006).


14 Snyder, Gary. Mountains and Rivers Without End. 9, 143, 144, 152.
Chapter II. Tracing Snyder’s Green Buddhism Through Passage Through India: Snyder’s Green Buddhism

2 It is a term already used in many works of ecological writers, including Ralph Abraham’s “The Ancient Roots of Green Buddhism.”
6 Ibid, 315.
10 Snyder, Gary. Passage Through India. ix.
12 Ibid, 97.
13 Ibid, 134.
18 Ibid., 38.
19 The historical Buddha led his life in the fifth century BCE, which is 2,500 years ago, but the current Bodhi tree is believed 1,500 years old.
20 It literally means “flowing on” in Pali and is often understood as “the repeated birth and death that individuals undergo until they attain nirvana.” It is written as 輪回 in Chinese characters.
21 Sanskrit and Pali are the two fundamental languages of Buddhism: In general, Theravada Buddhism sources are written in Pali and Mahayana Buddhism sources in Sanskrit as well as Chinese translations of Sanskrit.
“The divine Buddhist Kingship” is very similar to Japanese Buddhism during the Edo period in the sense that the absolute rulers controlled the Buddhist monks, laypeople, and temples and they were protected by their rulers.
Chapter III. Reconstructing Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems”: Poems of HanShan in Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems

2 Ibid, 233.
10 Ibid, 29.
12 Ibid, 8.
14 Ibid, 90.
17 Ibid, 55.
18 When I brought Snyder this issue, he responded to me with the above email on Monday, October 9, 2006.
20 Ibid, 65.
21 The collection was later reissued in 1970 by Columbia UP.
23 The 17th annual festival, Peace and War: Facing Human Conflicts, invited Gary Snyder and he gave one-hour poetry reading to his audience at The Art Institute of Chicago on November 5, 2006.
26 Ibid, 10.

192

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Jaihun Joyce Kim, one of the most remarkable and significant Korean translators, has translated more than five-thousand Korean poems into English and published more than thirty poetry collections over the past forty years.

Snyder spent the summer of 1952 on remote, 8,129-foot Crater Mountain in a one-room fire lookout and named himself “Crater Shan.” He took “Crater Shan” as his name by writing it as his return address on letters to his friends, as it is noted in many of his books, including Poets on the Peaks by John Suiter. (Washington D.C.: Counterpoint, 2002) 23-30.

Originated in China, Go is played by two players alternately placing black and white stones on the vacant intersections of a 19x19 rectilinear grid and very popular in East Asia.

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Chapter IV. The Origin and Development of Mountains and Rivers Without End: American Landscape in Shan-Shu-Hua

2 Ibid, 94.
7 Ibid, 35-40.
10 Ibid, 72.
11 This is part of an email from Gary Snyder to Byoungkook Park on Thursday, February 22, 2007.
15 Ibid, 149.
16 Ibid, 1.
18 Ibid, 66.
20 Ibid, 22.
21 Ibid, 21.
23 Ibid, 5.
25 Fong, Wen C. Beyond Representation: Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy 8th-14th Century. 72.
26 Ibid, 83.
28 Ibid, 153.
31 Ibid, 77.
34 Snyder, Gary. Mountains and Rivers Without End. 1.
36 As it is articulated in Chapter Two, Soto and Rinzai are the two major sub-schools of Japanese Zen Buddhism and Dozen is the founder of the Rinzai school. Snyder practiced the Rinzai school when he was in Japan.
37 Snyder, Gary. Mountains and Rivers Without End. 5.
38 Ibid, 5-6
39 Ibid, 6.
40 Ibid, 6.
41 Cheng, Francois. Empty and Full: The Language of Chinese Painting. 6-8.
42 Ibid, 87-88.
43 Ibid, 96.
44 Snyder, Gary. Mountains and Rivers Without End. 7
46 Ibid, 7.
48 Ibid, 8.
49 Snyder, Gary. Mountains and Rivers Without End. 149.
50 Ibid, 9.
52 Snyder, Gary. Mountains and Rivers Without End. 149.
53 Ibid, 149.
54 Ibid, 1.
55 Ibid, 150.
57 Snyder, Gary. Mountains and Rivers Without End. 150.
58 Ibid, 150.
59 Ibid, 151.
60 Ibid, 151.
61 Ibid, 9.
62 Ibid, 152.
Chapter V. Biographic and Poetic Similarities Between Snyder and Ko Un: Green Buddhism in danger on peaks.

2 Ibid, 74.
4 Ibid, 22.
5 Ibid, 7.
6 Snyder, Gary. danger on peaks. 41.
7 Snyder, Gary. Poets on the Peaks. 29-30.
8 Ibid, 41.
9 Ibid, 8.
14 Ibid, 42.
15 Ibid, 42.
19 Ibid. 102.
20 Ibid, 102.
21 Ibid, 22.
22 Ko Un's homepage: www.koun.co.kr
23 Ko, Un. Ko Un. Seoul: Literature and Theory Publisher, 2003. 244. The poem is translated into English by Byoungkook Park
24 Ibid, 244.
25 Ibid, 244.
26 Snyder, Gary. danger on peaks. 43.
27 Ibid, 43.
28 Ibid, 43.
29 Ibid, 44.
31 Except the poet, Ko Un, many Koreans have been thirsty for or even obsessed with the Nobel Literature Prize over the decades.
32 Ibid., 98.
33 Nineteenth century Western traders referred to Korea as the “Hermit Kingdom,” as an epithet referring to Korea’s attempts to keep Western powers out by sealing its borders.
Korean Sŏn Buddhism is one of the major sub-schools of East Asian Buddhism and it is called “Chan” in Chinese, “Zen” in Japanese, and “Thien” in Vietnamese. Geographically, Vietnam—especially, Northern Vietnam—links to Southeast Asia but, religiously, it links to East Asian Mahayana Buddhism.


Ko Un’s homepage: [www.koun.co.kr](http://www.koun.co.kr)

Ibid., [www.koun.co.kr](http://www.koun.co.kr)


Koreans have lived under one united country as one homogeneous people since the unified Silla Kingdom (676-978).


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