

On Gary Snyder's Tradaptation of *Cold Mountain Poems* and its Spiritual Salvation and Literary Enlightenment in Postwar America

Hu Anjiang

Sichuan International Studies University

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Recommended Citation

Anjiang, Hu. "On Gary Snyder's Tradaptation of *Cold Mountain Poems* and its Spiritual Salvation and Literary Enlightenment in Postwar America." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 25.2 (): <<https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.3937>>

This text has been double-blind peer reviewed by 2+1 experts in the field.

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CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and CultureISSN 1481-4374 <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb>>
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Volume 25 Issue 2 (September 2023) Article 10**Hu Anjiang,****"On Gary Snyder's Tradaptation of *Cold Mountain Poems* and its Spiritual Salvation and Literary Enlightenment in Postwar America"**<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol25/iss2/10>>

Contents of **CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 25.2 (2023)**<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol25/iss2/>>

Abstract: *Cold Mountain Poems (CMPs)*, which have been neglected in the history of Chinese literature for ages, captured the attention of most Americans immediately after its being translated into America by the American poet Gary Snyder in 1950s, however. It is Snyder that reconfigured and recreated a sagacious Chinese Chan Buddhist poet Han-shan (literally, Cold Mountain), the acknowledged author of *Cold Mountain Poems*, in his translation for the postwar Americans in the midst of varied social problems and cultural identity crisis after World War II. Snyder eventually found in his translation of *Cold Mountain Poems* a back-to-nature remedy of spiritual salvation and literary enlightenment for the beat generation and even the entire American literary community at large then and after, by means of his delicate transcreation of Han-shan images in line with American expectations at the time as well as by means of his skillful tradaptation of the realistic elements of self-expression, self-identification and self-actualization in *Cold Mountain Poems* and also by means of his profound exploration of the Chan Buddhism aesthetics and philosophical mediation in classical Chinese landscape poems and Chinese hermit culture

Hu ANJIANG

On Gary Snyder's Tradaptation of *Cold Mountain Poems* and its Spiritual Salvation and Literary Enlightenment in Postwar America

A translated text by and large can be received—albeit not always the case—in three different ways when it travels far across into the host culture: first, it may be rejected and abandoned by the host culture; secondly, it may be assimilated by the host culture and lose its true nature; thirdly, it may be integrated into the cultural system of the host country and fused into its ideological and cultural tradition. Regarding the translation and adaptation of Gary Snyder's *Cold Mountain Poems* (CMP) in postwar American contexts, it is safe to say that it was integrated into the American culture successfully and began to impact tremendously the host culture in every respect since 1950s. As Robert Kern puts it, "Cold Mountain Poems becomes a more universal text, or, at least—and quite literally—a cross-cultural one, as Snyder introduces his T'ang dynasty poet into a contemporary American context in the interest of bringing about a fusion and thus an expansion of horizons for his reader" (232). As regards its influence on contemporary American culture, Kern continues, "Ancient Chinese spirituality thus becomes, in effect, a contemporary American possibility, while Snyder's American speech is shown to be a vehicle fully adequate to the transmission of Han-shan's attitudes and experience" (233). While the comment above is spiritually and philosophically put in terms of the attitude and experience of a Tang poet towards Americans' ways of living, Snyderian tradaptation—a contraction of "translation" and "adaptation"—of Cold Mountain Poem, however, has unarguably far-reaching effects on US-American cultural values and literary traditions, particularly, Snyder found a back-to-nature remedy of spiritual salvation and literary enlightenment for the beat generation and even the entire American literary community at large then and after.

1. Han-shan: from a Chinese Literary Outcast to an American Beat Icon

About Han-shan (Cold Mountain, 寒山), a legendary monk-poet in Chinese Tang Dynasty (618-907), Bill Porter once said in the preface of his translation:

If China's literary critics were put in charge of organizing a tea for their country's greatest poets of the past, Cold Mountain would not be on many invitation lists. Yet 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. And when Jack Kerouac dedicated *The Dharma Bums* to him in 1958, Cold Mountain became the guardian angel of a generation of Westerners as well." (3)

Interestingly, however, even the title given to him at the beginning of this article is academically questionable. Whether he was actually there is still undecided, not to mention the historicity of his life experience and the controversial CMP attributed to him. Therefore, from the very beginning, the mysterious identity of Han-shan and CMP seems to have decided their roles as outcasts in Chinese literature.

Han-shan and his poems in reality have long been in such a marginal status in the history of Chinese poetry. In 1958, nevertheless, when Gary Snyder published his 24 translated CMP in the fall issue of *Evergreen Review*, a journal of the beat writers, the poet from remote China soon became the spiritual leader of the then younger American generation. CMP, which had long been marginalized in the Chinese literary system, became dramatically an instant classic among the Beats of the San Francisco Renaissance. In that American context, Snyder's Han-shan, a Tang poet and a "mountain madman" has turned into the limelight of nearly every household in America: "[He] becomes a Beat hero and countercultural role model, as well as, to borrow Davidson's phrase, an 'oppositional sign', (27) while Cold Mountain Poems itself, like *Cathay* in Kenner's view of it as a war book, becomes a Cold War book" (Kern 237). If Han-shan at this time was just an exotic cultural symbol of mass carnival, then the 24 CMP translated by Snyder being selected into Cyril Birch's *Anthology of Chinese Literature: from Early Times to the Fourteenth Century* in 1965 signalled that it soon to be accepted by mainstream American literature or the dominant poetics in the American context. Chung Ling wrote with cogency in 2018: "Surprisingly, Cold Mountain Fever has not subsided in the American cultural community over the past three decades. ... while Han-shan's image is localized in the United States, it has been built up a new cross-cultural profile, which is connecting the past and the present, and also connecting the two continents of the Pacific Ocean" (Chung, *Deep* 123).

It is known that, to be included in the literature anthology of a renowned scholar like Birch, Dean of Department of Oriental Language and Literature at UC Berkeley, and to be taught in the university class across the United States, have all the symbolic significance of canonical construction. Additionally and unprecedentedly, the first complete English translation of CMP was published in America in 1983, followed by a second complete and annotated translation still in America in 1990. If the influence of CMP at this time merely remained within the academia, it then made its way to the community and the general public when its name and verses were inscribed on the "poetry path" in Berkeley. From marginalization in Chinese literary history to the canonization in American translated literature, Han-shan's incredible literary fame is attained mostly through Snyder's ingenious tradaptation as well as the concerted efforts of varied patronage forces, which made Han-shan, a Tang poet, being recognized as an American cultural icon, whose philosophical wisdom profoundly consoled, warmed and inspired the beat generation as a whole and particularly most miscellaneous American writers like New York poets and the San Francisco group on both spiritual and ideological levels. Snyder's tradaptational rewriting, however, has deeply carved the Chinese influence in American poetry linguistically and poetologically.

2. Snyder's Tradaptation in American Contexts

The term "tradaptation" was employed by the French Canadian theatre director Robert Lepage to "convey the sense of annexing old texts to new cultural contexts" (cf. Upton 17). It is a re-perception, re-locating, re-working and re-thinking of the original text; the term "is increasingly being used in adaptation studies to refer to the kind of translation, rewriting, and adaptation processes" (Gentzler 169). For all practical purposes, in the short preface of his translation, Snyder addressed Han-shan as "a ragged Chinese hermit." He further argued that CMP were all written in the simple and fresh Tang idioms, which were inundated with thoughts from Taoism, Confucianism and Chan Buddhism. At the end of this preface, Snyder said that "[t]hey became Immortals and you sometimes run onto them today in the skidrows, orchards, hobo jungles, and logging camps of America" (Snyder, *Riprap* 33). The intentional image reconstruction and spatiotemporal transformation of Han-shan as a hippie-like hermit and a back-to-nature Chinese Buddhist sage in American contexts, to a greater extent, enhanced the spiritual resonance and shortened the psychological distance between this elaborately tradaptated Chinese poet and the American younger generation. Additionally, the meticulously-chosen 24 out of 326 CMP focused solely on those of philosophical wisdom and misanthropic ideology, rather than the large quantity of secular, helped arouse some sort of readerly affinity, and therefore paved the way for the successful reception of Han-shan and his poems in postwar American contexts. Actually, it is not difficult to detect from the preface and even the well-chosen poems that Snyder has rendered a Chinese poet so hippie-like that Eliot Weinberger wrote, "Snyder has limited the number of translated works, but his translation of selected Han-shan's poems published in 1958 is surely a colloquial classic, in which he has transformed a monk into an American hippie" (Weinberger xxiv). Accordingly, target recipients seem to be express interest in this transformed Americanized Han-shan. In terms of expectancy of translation norms, Snyder's tradaptation is definitely a great success.

Moreover, Snyder, in order to find a new model or a timely remedy for American literature and postwar American society, tried to infuse the characteristics of oriental culture into American contexts through his translated poems. Firstly, the hermitic and back-to-nature temperament on Han-shan was carefully transferred and amplified. According to Chung Ling and Hu Anjiang, the introduction of this hermit model into American contexts seems indispensable for American literature in the process of the self-renewal of its culture (Chung, *American* 143), and for American society in the course of the self-remaking of its national identity (Hu, *Cold* 210), both of which have been evidenced by postwar rise of environmentalism and ecological nature-writing. It is justifiably noticeable that "Existentialism, the modern pacifist-anarchist movement, the current interest of Occidentals in Chan Buddhism, are all part of that trend" (Snyder, *A Place* 13). Secondly, Chinese poetics was delicately introduced and explored. The poems selected and translated by Snyder blended surrealist transcendence with lived reality, which provided some sort of American possibility of assimilation of mass culture and high art, and which introduced "a new poetics implied not only formal innovation but also discovery of alternative social forms" (Davidson xi). The following examples demonstrate these literary-and-sociological innovative traits. "Most T'ien-t'ai men/Don't know Han-shan/Don't know his real thought/& call it silly talk" (多少天台人/不识寒山子/莫知真意度/唤作闲言语). The last two lines in the original poem, if translated literally, could be translated as "No one appreciate his insightful opinions/but treats them as words of petty importance." Snyder however rewrote "真意度" (literally, insight) and "闲言语" (literally, words of petty importance) as "real thought" and "silly talk," which implies that though Han-shan is an insightful person, his unconventional conduct and personality that were out of tune with mainstream culture were still not

understood and welcomed by the people around, and his words and deeds were even scorned and criticized. That resonated with the mocked and misunderstood beats in the American when they read these verses here. In this sense, it is not difficult to understand why they refer to Han-shan as their exotic blossom friend.

Snyder, as a consequence, highlighted and amplified in his translating the counter-cultural and oppositional part in Han-shan's poems in order to keep accord to both the cynic ideology of the host culture and the expectation from his American readers: "Tried drugs, but couldn't make Immortal;/Read books and wrote poems on history" (鍊药空求仙/读书兼咏史). Snyder purposefully tradapted "鍊药" (literally, refining/making elixir of life) into "tried drugs," which reminds his readers of their daily standby of "Marijuana along with cheap red wine", furthermore, his never fortuitous appropriation of Han-shan's "reading and writing poems" is what exactly the poets, writers and intellectuals in postwar American contexts noticeably enjoyed: "Poets are everywhere, and most of them are pretty good. One is tempted to say, like Elizabethan England or the mid Tang dynasty" (Snyder, *A Place* 16), all of which were the then standard lifestyle. In any event, Snyder's tradaptation greatly highlighted the prevailing cultural ideology at that time. Similarly, in the second translated poem: Go tell families with silverware and cars/"What's the use of all that noise and money?" (寄语钟鼎家/虚名定无益) "钟鼎家" (literally, families with bells and cauldrons), a signal of wealthy Chinese families, is skilfully replaced by "families with silverware and cars," the latter of surely being the marker of the middle class from where most beat tramps escape. In this fashion, Snyder adapted and manipulated the source text so ingeniously that his tradaptations, according to Kern, are "not only linguistic but also formal and even cultural, so that the end-product is more often a domestication or familiarization of the text, in the sense of an appropriation of it in terms of the translator's own culture, rather than a translation properly speaking, which is to say, the result of an attempt to find English equivalents for Chinese words" (Kern 163). Take the 15th translated poem as another example:

There's a naked bug at Cold Mountain
With a white body and a black head.
His hand holds two book-scrolls,
One the Way and one its Power.
His shack's got no pots or oven,
He goes for a walk with his shirt and pants askew.
But he always carries the sword of wisdom:
He means to cut down senseless craving.

寒山有裸虫 身白而头黑
手把两卷书 一道将一德
住不安釜竈 行不齋糧械
常持智慧剑 擬破烦恼贼

Snyder however deliberately adjusted "行不齋糧械" (literally, do not prepare food and clothes when traveling) as "He goes for a walk with his shirt and pants askew." In this way, how can one tell Han-shan from a contemporary American hippie in terms of the appearance? (Hu, *Research* 134). More importantly, this translated poem integrates Han-shan's philosophy of behaviorism, Taoist classics (*The Way and Its Power*, the title of which was translated by Arthur Waley), Buddhist wisdom (the sword of wisdom) and Confucian lifestyle (His hand holds two book-scrolls) into an organic whole, and an enchanting and sagacious Chinese cultural image is presented almost omnipresent, which coincides with the Beat and San Francisco Renaissance writers' understanding of poetry and life philosophy at that time. These writers, according to Snyder, "take poetry very seriously" and they held that poetry should combine "the highest activity of trained intellect and the deepest insight of the intuitive, instinctive, or emotional mind" (Snyder, *A Place* 14).

When it comes to the poetics under the manipulation of mainstream ideology during that time, Kern wrote: "As a translator of Chinese poets, Snyder is superior to Pound in terms of the 'concise and specific' principles of imagism" (Kern 238). In effect, Snyder himself more than once claimed it was Pound and Arthur Waley that had brought him into the fascinating world of Chinese poetry. In these 24 translated poems, the syntactic traits of condensed words and proficient use of image juxtaposition could be traced easily to the compound influence of both the imagist and classical Chinese poetics. What Snyder had contrived to do was to translate CMP in the form of a de facto free style. Particularly, his omission of meters and rhymes, connectives and even the predicate verbs, occasional replacement of predicate verbs by participles, as well as frequent usage of colloquial language, monosyllabic words and acronyms,

were entirely justified by the poetic tradition of imagism and the Chinese poetic aesthetics of clarity, simplicity and subtle elegance.

The path to Han-shan's place is laughable,
A path, but no sign of cart or horse.
Converging gorges—hard to trace their twists
Jumbled cliffs—unbelievably rugged.
A thousand grasses bend with dew,
A hill of pines hums in the wind.
And now I've lost the shortcut home,
Body asking shadow, how do you keep up?

可笑寒山道 而无车马踪
联谿难记曲 叠嶂不知重
沾露千般草 吟风一样松
此时迷径处 形问影何从

In terms of poetic style, Snyder here put the meters and rhymes of the original poem aside, omitted conjunctions and predicate verbs in the second, third and fourth line, and even replaced verbs with participles in the eighth line. This form of translation or stylistic appropriation was surely influenced by the poetic tradition of plain tone and direct statement of both classical Chinese poetry and the imagist poetry from where he and his counterparts inherited. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the line "I spur my horse through the wrecked town/The wrecked town sinks my spirit/High, low, old parapet-walls/Big, small, the aging tombs" (驱马度荒城/荒城动客情/高低旧雉堞/大小古坟茔). Snyder here adopted a neatly word-for-word or interlinear approach in translating the last two lines, and followed the poetic tradition of image juxtaposition and simplicity principle in the third and fourth line, which conforms to the aesthetic principles and prosodic methods of Chinese poeticality. This echoes Snyder claim that the plain tone and direct statement had "a strong effect on occidental poets tired of heroics and theologies" (Snyder, *A Place* 91). Chinese prosody, along with the poetic model of hermit and nature, which run counter to the motif of western heroes and theology, has significant effect on American poets and American literature at large.

3. Influence of CMP on American Literature

Snyder's translation was published around the same year as Kerouac's *The Dharma Bums*. In 1958, *Evergreen Review* also published a Viking Press advertisement for *The Dharma Bums*. On the title page of the book, the words "dedicated to Han-shan" were inscribed distinctly; his name appears nineteen times in the book. It was justifiably sensational that an American avant-garde writer dedicated his work to a Tang poet who had been believed to be dead for more than a thousand years. It is also conceivable that the reason Jack Kerouac chose Han-shan as his venerable object of representation was that the image of Han-shan created by Snyder was so well-accepted.

In the third chapter of the book, Kerouac wrote about Han-shan's escapism, "Han Shan you see was a Chinese scholar who got sick of the big city and the world and took off to hide in the mountains" (Kerouac 20), which once again struck a chord with American hippies at that time. Furthermore, in the chapter 34, Kerouac, who goes by the pseudonym Ray Smith, and Japhy Ryder, who is based on Snyder, also discuss the unworldly character of Han-shan, the Chan Buddhist temperament and the exquisite tradaptation of CMP. At the end of the book, Ray Smith climbs a mountain in search of his ideal hero, Han-shan, and says "suddenly it seemed I saw that unimaginable little Chinese bum standing there, in the fog, with that expressionless humor on his seamed face. It wasn't the real-life Japhy of rucksacks and Buddhism studies and big mad parties at Corte Madera, it was the realer-than-life Japhy of my dreams, and he stood there saying nothing" (Kerouac 243). This portrayal of a "tramp" and "mad mountain man" has evidently Americanized Han-shan, who was then an ideal copy of the American tramp Kerouac described in his 1957 household-famous book *On the Road*, which was revered as the beat's Bible. Thus, *The Dharma Bums* soon became widespread together with the rapid circulation of Snyder's translation. This sagacious and otherworldly "Chinese recluse" and counter-cultural pioneer has become an instant exotic cultural token in the American public.

If the transcreated Tang poet had the instant impact on the beat writer Jack Kerouac who was best known as a novelist, the poetic tradition in America was also influenced by CMP. Although the American New Poetry Movement had gone through its most glorious years by 1922, the influence of Chinese classical poetry on American poets and modern American poetry continues. Kenneth Rexroth once said:

"for a large proportion of American poets today, the influence of the far east is greater than that of French poetry in the 19th or 20th century and certainly greater than that of American poetry in the 19th century or English poetry...It is difficult for them not to think in the mode of Chinese or Japanese." (Zhao 2) Snyder's own poetry creation as well as his syntactic idiosyncrasy was greatly influenced by the back-to-nature and hermitic model and the philosophical implication of CMP.

In 1959, Snyder published his first poetry collection *Riprap*, and in 1965, he combined CMP with *Riprap* and republished them under the title of *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*. *Riprap*, according to Patrick Murphy, speaks of "how to live as well as how to write and read poetry" (Murphy, *Understanding* 62). Actually, the 21 poems in *Riprap* "record a rite of passage, a quest for a personal vision and world understanding, ... and the arrangement of the poems in *Riprap* both reflects and prefigures the actual journey of Snyder's life from the early 1950s to 1968" (44), which is dramatically similar to Han-shan's life course depicted in CMP. Regarding this, Pauline Yu once commented, "Like its Western lyric counterpart, Chinese poetry was regarded as an important means of individual self-expression, but it also served as "useful knowledge" and as an important index of a person's likely utility in the public sphere" (218). Interestingly, both poets initially felt a sense of isolation, and both describe themselves atop a mountain far from civilization, "And now I've lost the shortcut home," as Snyder put it (*Riprap* 37). But gradually both of them began to experience a process of self-identification and self-actualization, until they finally found a way to interpret the world, and a world "by which to learn the way" (Murphy, *Understanding* 63). Regarding the prosodic and poetic relation between them, Tim Dean writes:

"Although it will be interesting to consider the relation between *Cold Mountain Poems* and *Riprap* which occasioned their link and which produces additional meaning for both sets of poems via the technique of juxtaposition, the principal hold on our attention must derive from the short, descriptive, partially meditative, undisguisedly autobiographical poems of the first third of the book, and from the statement of aesthetic intent whose significance is partially evident from its lending its name to the volume as a whole." (95)

More importantly, the themes of both collections are closely centered around nature, ecology, everyday life and philosophical meditation. In terms of the chronological order and thematic similarity as well as prosody rules, aesthetic intent, poetic imagery, artistic conception, and poetic content between writing and translation, it is hard to say that Snyder's poetry collection was not influenced by his translation of CMP.

Furthermore, the syntactic idiosyncrasy in Snyder's translation of CMP was constantly adapted and appropriated into Snyder's own poetry creation. Just as Murphy noted, "there does seem to be a grammatical influence from Chinese and Japanese on Snyder's use of English, as in the dropping of articles, the frequency of participles and infinitives, and the use of sentence fragments. Snyder builds in the early poems of *Riprap* to a unique syntax, which unavoidably was influenced by his study of the Chinese and Japanese languages" (Murphy, *A Place* 45). As a matter of fact, Snyder studied a large number of Tang and Song poetry after his translation of CMP, from which he was inspired. He assimilated some stylistic expressions as well as poetic prosody of classical Chinese poetry into his own English poetry writing, forming an artistic style complementary to its epistemology. He once confessed, "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" (cf. Allen 420-21). Take Snyder's "Late October Camping in the Sawtooths" as an example for the way the syntactic traits of the classical Chinese poetry influenced his poetry:

Sunlight climbs the snowpeak
glowing pale red
Cold sinks into the gorge
shadows merge .
Building a fire of pine twigs
at the foot of a cliff,
Drinking hot tea from a tin cup
in the chill air—
Pull on sweater and roll a smoke .
a leaf
beyond fire
Sparkles with nightfall frost.

In classical Chinese poetry, personal pronouns are often omitted, and the experience of personal perception is often expressed in the way of no self. In this way, the image becomes an independent way of expression, and meanwhile, the experience is freed from the limitation of personal vision, allowing the reader to move in and feel directly in his own way. In this poem, there are no personal pronouns. People climb up, disappear into the woods, and shine with the frost of the evening, just like "sunlight," "cool air," "leaves" and so on. That Chinese verbs do not change tenses makes it possible for the Chinese language to transcend the spatial-temporal limitations and make the perception of the moment become a constant experience. In this poem, Snyder, influenced by the Chinese prosody, eliminates the mechanical segmentation of experience by the logical order of space and time, through the use of simple present tense with independent nominative structure without distinct time mark. It is undeniable that his skillful depiction of nature is learned and appropriated from his translation of CMP.

Moreover, Snyder's familiarity and experience with classical Chinese poetry allowed him to quote expertly Chinese verses or historical allusions or even Chinese characters in his own writing. Take "The Uses of Light" as an example:

It warms my bones
say the stones
I take it into me and grow
Say the trees
Leaves above
Roots below

A vast vague white
Draws me out of the night
Says the moth in his flight—

Some things I smell
Some things I hear
And I see things move
Says the deer—

A high tower
on a wide plain.
If you climb up
One floor
You'll see a thousand miles more.
禪

Regardless of his masterly poetic prosody and imagery construction, the last three lines are undoubtedly an American version of the Chinese verses "欲穷千里目，更上一层楼" (literally, if you want to see a thousand li, you'd better climb one more floor in "Climbing Stork Tower" (登鹳雀楼) written by Wang Zhihuan (688-742) of the Tang Dynasty. Even more interesting is that Snyder ends his poem with a Chinese character "禪" (literally, Chan Buddhism). In a nutshell, his English poetry is characterized by a strong Chinese flavor and a deep sense of Chinese Chan Buddhism; particularly, the influence of the classical Chinese landscape poems and hermit culture have imprinted on him so drastically that Snyder himself once admitted: "I love Japanese literature and Japanese poetry too, but I feel a deep resonance with Chinese poetry" (Snyder, *The Gary* 328). In terms of translations, apart from Han-shan, Snyder has also translated the works of Chinese poets Meng Haoran (孟浩然), Du Fu (杜甫), Wang Wei (王维), Wang Changling (王昌龄), Bai Juyi (白居易), Du Mu (杜牧), Su Shi (苏轼) as well as Chinese Chan master Baizhang Huaihai (百丈怀海).

It is worth noting that, through the absorption and transformation of Chinese Chan Buddhism, Taoism as well as Confucianism, the translation and adaptation of classical Chinese poetry and the inheritance from traditional American Indian culture, Snyder has developed his own unique holistic consciousness of environmental protection, which he takes as the consistent theme of his poetry creation. He is best known as a "back-to-nature" poet or "Poet Laureate of Deep Ecology," and as a "popular artists and cultural figures". He played important roles in the campaign to preserve wilderness areas, especially in the American West (Spears 69). For Snyder, poetry can function as "a way of probing the natural world that surrounds" (Quetchenbach 86). Regarding this, Snyder is blunt: "From the fourth to the fourteenth centuries, the poetry of China reached far (but selectively) into the world of nature. Contemporary occidental poetry has been influenced by that aspect, too" (Snyder, *A Place* 92). Judging from his

achievements in ecological poetry over the years, it is no exaggeration to say that he has made important contributions to the prosperity of American eco-literature and the flourishing of environmental protection movement in the United States. Undeniably, all his outstanding achievements are largely due to the tremendous potential influence of classical Chinese poetry, especially the influence of Han-shan and his tradaptation of CMP.

4. Conclusion

Snyder's preference in classical Chinese poetry and nature writing was largely influenced by his experience of translating CMP and his own consciousness of holistic ecological protection, while classical Chinese poetry, especially CMP, in turn contributed to the development and maturity of his environmental philosophy as well as his poetic aesthetics. In Snyder's environmental philosophy, the environment is more than just a place—the context in which humans and animals live. "Like a mirror, a place can hold anything, on any scale. I want to talk about place as an experience." (Snyder, *The Practice* 25) Han-shan was like a mirror, which reflected all sorts of literary and even social problems in the "place" of America at that time, moreover, the sagacious Tang poet also prescribed highly targeted prescriptions for postwar American literature, American culture and even the American society at large. His love for nature and his hermitic and philosophical thinking brought a complete exotic cultural experience to the beat generation in the postwar American context, the oriental wisdom of which has provided a new possibility for the American society at such a cultural turning point. In a nutshell, through tradaptation of the realistic elements of self-expression, self-identification and self-actualization in CMP and exploration of the Chan Buddhism aesthetics and philosophical mediation in classical Chinese landscape poems and Chinese hermit culture, Snyder found a remedy of spiritual salvation and literary enlightenment for the beat generation and even the entire American literary community at large then and later, namely, back-to-nature is the realistic way of spiritual redemption and literary innovation.

Acknowledgment: This research is funded by Research Project of Sichuan International Studies University: Literature Collation and Translation Studies on the Overseas Dissemination of *Cold Mountain Poems*.

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Author's profile: Hu Anjiang is a professor at Sichuan International Studies University in Chongqing, China. He received his Ph.D degree from Sun Yat-sen University in China. His research interests include translation history, comparative literature and literary translation studies. His recent publications are on tradaptation/transcreation, cultural identity and the role of translators in literary translation. His most recent monograph is *Cold Mountain Poems: text travel and canon construction*. New York: Routledge, 2024. Email: <1251524220@qq.com>