
Ecopoetry as Method: Reading Gary Snyder as a Cultural Mediator between China and the World

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Volume 25 Issue 2 (September 2023) Article 4**Winnie L.M. Yee,****"Ecopoetry as Method: Reading Gary Snyder as a Cultural Mediator between China and the World"**<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol25/iss2/4>>

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

Abstract: Ecocriticism is a field that is inherently cross-cultural, and poetry is an art form that creates bonds across cultural communities. This paper focuses on Gary Snyder, a prominent poet in his own right, who is famous for his translation of the works by Chinese poet Han Shan. His attraction to Chinese classical poetry and Eastern civilization offers an alternative to the Western developmental paradigm, and the ecopoetry he espouses is pertinent to today's environmental debates. His references to nature do not function merely as reminders that nature should be respected but as an impetus to reflect on the coexistence of multiple temporalities and agencies. This paper examines Chinese poetry's inspirational effect on Snyder and analyzes his translations of Han Shan's poetry. Snyder's ecocritical insights have had a wide influence, particularly on the work of Hong Kong poet Xi Xi. This circulation of poetry offers a means of bridging Western and Eastern cultures. The mutual enrichment achieved by such cultural translations provides a means of transcending the simplistic dichotomies of the East and West.

Winnie L.M. YEE

Ecopoetry as Method: Reading Gary Snyder as a Cultural Mediator between China and the World

Introduction

Ecocriticism has become an important field both in the academic world and among the general public. Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old girl who has just been named Person of the Year (2019) by *TIME*, has focused global attention on the importance of environmental protection, given the continued and extreme destruction caused by overdevelopment, urbanization, and the irresponsible extraction of natural resources, particularly in the developed world. The imminent risks of this situation have become more prominent now that we are witnessing abnormal changes in seasonal habitats, the rapid extinction of species, and increasingly uncontrollable natural disasters. While the social reality continues to be dominated by images of destruction, the arts offer opportunities to provoke critical awareness, express mutual affection between human and the natural world, and inspire ethical behavior. Nature poetry is one of the literary forms that attempt to promote environmental awareness. It has a long tradition, spanning classical pastoral poetry, 18th century landscape poetry, and the poetry of the Romantics (Johns-Putra 271).

Ecocriticism is a field that is inherently cross-cultural; poetry, similarly, is an art form that facilitates dialogue between humans and nature, and creates bonds across cultural communities. This paper focuses on Gary Snyder, a prominent poet in his own right, who is famous for his translation of the works by Chinese poet Han Shan. His attraction to Eastern poetry offers an alternative to the Western developmental paradigm, and the ecopoetry he espouses is pertinent to today's environmental debates. The increasingly wide circulation of ecopoetry has led to cross-cultural fertilization: cultures look to each other for inspiration in the face of the current environmental situation. Snyder's translation of Han Shan offers a means of bridging Western and Eastern cultures. Inspired by Chinese wisdom and poetic style, Snyder's works deconstruct the progressive model of capitalism and, at the same time, suggest the possibility of mutual cultural translation: drawing his inspiration from Asia has resulted in inspiration for Asia. The Hong Kong writer Xi Xi has argued that Snyder's work is not merely a technical, but a cultural, translation. An Asian perspective on nature becomes the starting point of a cultural dialogue. In this paper, I examine how the circulation of Snyder's ecopoetry enriches, and transcends the simplistic dichotomies of Eastern and Western cultures.

Gary Snyder and Ecopoetry

"As poet I hold the most archaic values on earth. They go back to the upper Palaeolithic: the fertility of the soil, the magic of animals, the power-vision in solitude, the terrifying initiation and rebirth, the love and ecstasy of the dance, the common work of the tribe" (Snyder 1978, viii).

Born in 1930 and achieving international fame in the 1960s, Snyder has distinguished himself as a mediator and translator of Chinese culture. His first poetry collection, *Riprap* (collected in the edited volume: *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems* (1969)), records his personal experience as a mountain scout from 1952 to 1956. This work calls into question the monuments to Western modernity and emphasizes the important influence of the non-human world on culture and civilization. Snyder is famous for his dedication to environmental protection, his critique of Western modernization, and his cross-cultural appreciation of local and indigenous cultures. Leonard Scigaj observes that Snyder's ecopoetry "persistently stresses human cooperation with nature conceived as a dynamic, interrelated series of cyclic feedback systems" (qtd. in Murphy 63).

Snyder is one of the key translators of Han Shan, a poet of Tang dynasty. The recent translations of Han Shan's poetry have inspired cross-cultural discussions of the Chinese view of the cohabitation of humans and nature. Many have praised Snyder for his commitment to ecology and openness to Eastern approaches. The way time is represented in Snyder's translations can be seen as a challenge to the modern discourse of linear temporality. Snyder's poetry embraces the transcendental vision of time characteristic of Chinese poetry. Classical Chinese poets usually do not attribute actions to one specific agent and or restrict them to one particular time; instead, agency and time take multiple forms. The Chinese perspectives on nature and on time provide a new angle for the reimagination of our relationship with nature. As a result of this cultural inspiration, Snyder has become an active force in offering solutions to today's climate crisis and encouraging ethical actions.

Adeline Johns-Putra notes that ecopoetry "can be distinguished from traditional nature poetry by its emphasis on the interconnectedness of human and nonhuman life in a time of unprecedented anthropogenic environmental damage" (271). Referencing scholars such as J Scott Bryson and Terry

Gifford, Johns-Putra observes that the key characteristic of ecopoetry is to maintain "an ecocentric perspective that recognizes the interdependent nature of the world" (272). Timothy Clarke, another ecocritic, focuses on poetic form: nature, he argues, encourages poetry to reflect on its form. Clarke maintains that poetry's self-reflexive nature – its testing of the limits of language and representation – inspires a critique of the destructive effects of modernity. He argues that "one can say that poetry becomes here an art of the human limit or border. Language and thought become defamiliarized precisely as they move towards experiences beyond the human scales and norms which they usually express" (Clarke 62). This stress on limits can have an ecocritical application: it draws attention to the urgent need to reflect on the limits of human civilization and human action in today's environmental debates. Snyder is well aware of the limits of modern Western traditions, and he has turned to the East for inspiration. Jennifer Feeley has observed that Snyder's thoughts and word choices are informed by Chinese poets and thinkers (72). His works illuminate cross-cultural translation, not simply the translation of words but the translation of cultures in the exchange of ideas and images.

Ecopoetry can be conceived as not merely a literary form but as a means of cross-cultural understanding that will broaden the scope of environmental discussion. While the environment is usually assumed to be neutral and disinterested, this conventional understanding does not take into account the ways that cultural preconceptions limit the ways the natural world is imagined. In order to understand nature more fully, one has to be receptive to the insights afforded by various cultures. Ecopoetry demonstrates the importance of cross-cultural dialogues because it celebrates the interdependence and coexistence of the human and the natural world, and of Asian and Western wisdom. Celebrating wholeness and interdependence, and rejecting any simple dichotomy between the human and natural worlds, Snyder uses ecopoetry as a means to facilitate cross-cultural understanding and communication. It offers a way to conceive alternatives to the global conditions that have resulted from urbanization, developmentalism, and globalization.

Ecopoetry as Method and Cultural Translation

Before embarking on a textual analysis of Snyder's work and examining the ways it effects a cultural exchange, it is important to draw attention to the implications of ecopoetry as a method. To turn a subject into a method is an enterprise that is currently the focus of much scholarly interest. What should one do to understand the function and significance of a method? Following the lead of Japanese scholar Takeuchi Yoshimi's study of "China as method," Kuang-hsin Chen pursued the study of "Asia as method" in order to understand the interconnectedness of various Asian regions and to displace the West as the center of reference. One of Chen's primary aims is to suggest alternative ways of understanding modernity. In a similar vein, Snyder has turned to ecopoetry as a method of inter-referencing: it is a platform where cultural exchanges can be undertaken and ethical responses can be solicited. His poetry encompasses many perspectives and cultural references: traditional Eastern attitudes, reflections on Western modernity, and reactions to the contemporary scene.

"The potential of Asia as method is this: using the idea of Asia as an imaginary anchoring point, societies in Asia can become each other's points of reference, so that the understanding of the self may be transformed, and subjectivity rebuilt" (Chen 212). Commenting more specifically on translation, Chen notes that it is "not simply a linguistic exercise but a social linguistics, or an intersection of history, sociology, and politics" (244). Taking this notion further, a poem could be understood as a translation of social, historical, political, and cultural linguistics into a unique art form. This is particularly applicable to the works of Snyder, who not only turns to the philosophy of Asian cultures for inspiration but also adopts Chinese words and poetic forms to reconnect with nature. Inspired by both Chinese philosophy and literature, Snyder liberates the narrow understanding of nature as the object of literary study and presents it as a vehicle of thought and culture that penetrates and influences people's lives in both the East and the West.

Ecopoetry as method attempts to articulate the process of cultural translation. References to nature do not function merely as reminders that nature should be respected but as an impetus to reflect on the coexistence of multiple temporalities and agencies. The stress on multiple temporalities challenges the dominance of progressive time espoused by the developmental model. The circulation of poetic awareness – from an exploration of the East by the West (Snyder's translation of Han Shan) to one of the West by the East (Xi Xi's reading of Snyder) – reminds us of the cycles of nature. Snyder's poems are succinct in both content and form, but they highlight the longevity of ecological visions. This discussion will focus on his earliest edited work *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems* (1969), with references to other related works.

Robert Tsai, one of the foremost critics of Snyder's work, notes that Snyder is perceived as a critic of modernity: "His anti-Americanization, anti-Europeanization, and anti-Westernization, his aversion to

any centrist approach to literature and the arts, and his critical view of expansionist and imperialist culture, led Snyder to turn to Asian cultures, particularly Chinese culture" (Tsai, *Gary Snyder* 605). Chinese culture appeals to Snyder from both a philosophical and a literary perspective. Philosophically, it stresses the harmony between man and nature, which is reflected in Snyder's works in which "the primitive mode of perception of Nature is concrete, viewing things (w)holistically self-complete... it was a state of total harmony between man and nature before polarization" (Yip, "Aesthetic" 236). Describing the significance of Chinese classical poetry and its influence on Snyder, Wai-lim Yip observes, "The Taoist aesthetic at work in Chinese landscape poetry is the restoration of the original mode of perception, returning to things their own status and their natural function" (236). Such a restoration is particularly important for Western readers as it challenges the Western conventions of poetic writing, which rely on events and the passage of time. Taoist philosophy encourages one to live and function according to nature. The relationships among landscapes, the ideology of nature, and humans' affective responses to their environment preoccupy Chinese poets. The Taoist aesthetic – with its emphasis on the cyclical and relational – poses a multi-layered challenge to the human desire for progress. From a literary perspective, Chinese poetry appeals to Snyder because it deals with both temporal and spatial, rather than simply temporal, relationships. As Yip notes, Chinese poetry is drawn to images that coexist in space in order to "form an atmosphere or environment, an ambience, in which the reader may move and be directly present, poised for a moment before he himself becomes a part of that atmosphere, an atmosphere that evokes (*but does not state*) an aura of feeling (in this case, grief), a situation in which he may participate in completing the aesthetic experience of an intense moment, the primary form of which the poet has arrested in concrete data" (Yip, "Classical" 26). Such an atmosphere can be found in Snyder's first collection of poems.

For Snyder, nature has many aspects: it is not the "standing reserve" that Western culture portrays. As Martin Heidegger (1954) remonstrated, this rendering of natural elements as resources for human society completely ignores the interdependency of human and the non-human world and deprives nature of its capacity to adapt and change. In his discussion of the globalization of capitalism, Harry Harootunian observes that concept of time has been similarly oversimplified: "In this regard, capitalism has managed to fix a standard of measurement – world time – produced by a "single global space of co-existence," within which action and events are subject to a single, quantifiable chronology. But because different social practices remain outside this abstract measure, capitalism has not "unified" history" (49).

Nature challenges this globalized model. Snyder shows nature in its many facets, which are free of human control. His first edited collection, *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, offers a good introduction to the intriguing temporality of his poetic world.

In Snyder's poem "Piute Creek," time takes multiple forms: instant movement, lengthy history, and permanence. To give a sense of these various forms, time is spatialized, as it is in traditional Chinese landscape poetry. Although the poem begins with a static fixed image – "One granite ridge" – it quickly fills up with multiple possibilities:

The mind wanders. A million
Summers, night air still and the rocks
Warm. Sky over endless mountain. (6)

The poem starts with stillness and stasis, and then moves to the recurrent patterns of nature. The cycle of seasons – the recurrence of summer – is replete with a prolonged feeling of tranquility and warmth. Only nature can afford this kind of stillness and openness. The poem continues, "Word and books/ Like a small creek off a high ledge/ Gone in the dry air." Language and civilization can fail humans and be gone in time. The contrast between endless nature and time-bound civilization is essential to Snyder's philosophy. The motif of harmony takes many forms in Snyder's works, from nostalgia for a pre-modern world to the existential musings that accompany an unrepeatable individual life. In order for humans to coexist with nature harmoniously, it is necessary that they respect and understand their interdependence with nature, and that they be humble. This stress on harmonious coexistence is an aspect of Chinese wisdom that is often articulated in Snyder's works.

In Snyder's "A Stone Garden" (21-3), a poem divided into four sections, the portrayal of human destruction and the reliance on the East for inspiration are more striking. In Section 1, Snyder explores the complex connotations of wildness, which evoke "nature as process rather than as product or commodity – because 'wild' is a name for the way that phenomena continually actualize themselves. The poet has woven together moments of existential experience of change (in nature) and repositioned the enchanted garden in the wider destiny of humanity. Seeing this also serves to acknowledge the autonomy and integrity of the nonhuman part of the world, an 'Other' that we are barely beginning to

be able to know" (Snyder, "Unnatural" 260). The narrator of the poem travels in time and in dreams. Japan is personalized as a female:

A horde of excess poets and unwed girls
And I that night prowled Tokyo like a bear
Tracking the human future
Of intelligence and despair (21)

The "human future" is conceived as a chaotic combination of construction and destruction, while nature is perceived as equally complex and irreducible to any simple interpretation in the poem.

Nature is portrayed as a process in Section 1. A cacophony of sounds harmoniously coexists:

Echoes of hoes and weeding,
Centuries of leading hill-creeks down
To ditch and pool in fragile knee-deep fields.
Stone-cutter's chisel and a whanging saw,
Leafy sunshine rustling on a man
Chipping a foot-square rough hinoki beam. (21)

While sound is featured in Section 1, movement and touch are the focus of Section 2. In Section 3, there are reflections on the process of writing, and Section 4 deals with the concept of home. The four sections form a cohesive whole: Eastern civilization offers this vision of an ideal home that unites the natural and literary spheres. Nature is not presented as a means of objectifying direct experiences; instead, it is used to reflect on the possible ending of things – both human and non-human. Rather than merely serving as cultural inspiration, nature engages in an animated dialogue with human and non-human elements, and with the conventions of traditional landscape poetry. This sense of an ending encourages the reader to be aware of the shared destiny of the human and non-human world, and to transcend the anthropocentric point of view.

"Without an inward wail of sorrow and dismay / Because impermanence and destructiveness of time / In truth means only, lovely women age." (21-2) The destruction wrought by time and the fact that humans and civilizations age – everything "growing up and burning down" – disrupts the peace of nature. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's discussion of ecology provide an interesting gloss on these lines. In "Following the Rats: Becoming-Animal in Deleuze and Guattari," Leonard Lawlor explores the ramifications of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of subjectivity and uses their discussion of "becoming-animal" to highlight the challenges facing people in the modern world. Self-affirmation is based on self-presence (Descartes's "I think therefore I am") and auto-affection (e.g., my ability to hear myself speak at the moment I speak). Such affirmation has provided humans with a justification to dominate other species. Philosophers such as Deleuze and Guattari, however, question such essentialism and the hierarchy it presumes. The images of aging and time in the poem "A Stone in the Garden" (21-3) may remind us that "the fundamental ethical bond we have with non-human animals resides in our shared finitude, our vulnerability and mortality as 'fellow creatures'" (Wolfe 23). The poem encourages the reader to view nature as home to civilization, and to embrace and cherish that home.

Ecopoetry is a method of intervening not only in environmental issues but also in cultural understanding. Snyder's poetry suggests that ecopoetry can follow two paths: one is to provide instances of the harmonious coexistence of humans and the natural world expressed through poetic forms, and the other is to look at the circulation of ecopoetry as a means of continual cross-cultural fertilization. In both cases, ecopoetry is a method that promotes environmental concerns.

Circulation of Ecopoetry as Method

Snyder is openly and deeply indebted to Chinese classical poetry in his own widely praised work, and he has gained equal repute for his translation of the works of the Chinese poet Han Shan. Han Shan stands apart from other poets – "a mountain madman in an old Chinese line of ragged hermits" (Snyder, *Riprap* 33) – and his portrayal of nature inspired Snyder to embrace the Chinese philosophy that "Nature and human are one." In Chinese, "Han Shan" means Cold Mountain. *Cold Mountain* is also the title given to his collection of poetry – a title that evokes both the poet and the place. As Tsai observes, "Snyder's literary and cultural translation of traditional Chinese literature, mostly classical poetry and Zen-Buddhist texts, helps Western readers to see that their horizon of expectations is too narrow and that they need a much wider and more encompassing cultural-environmental imagination" (Tsai 2009, 67). For Han Shan, immersion in nature is the best way to survive: "In a tangle of cliffs I chose a place – /

Bird-paths, but no trails for men" (38). Such a place surpasses the homes of those who crave material things. "What's the use of all that noise and money?" the narrator asks in Section 2 of Snyder's translation of *Cold Mountain*. For the narrator, long years of living in the mountain have provided moments of revelation:

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In my first thirty years of life
I roamed hundreds and thousands of miles.
Walked by rivers through deep green grass
Entered cities of boiling red dust.
Tried drugs, but couldn't make Immortal;
Read books and wrote poems on history.
Today I'm back at Cold Mountain:
I'll sleep by the creek and purify my ears. (48)

Snyder notes that, for the narrator, Cold Mountain "means himself, his home, his state of mind" (Snyder, *Riprap* 33). This state of mind can be related to the narrator's connection with nature, which makes him feel peaceful and calm, and inspires him to meditate on the passing of time and civilizations. This view of nature as one's real home and the need to attune one's mind to nature is evident in Snyder's own poems as well. In the poem "Riprap," Snyder seems to be following the same path as Han Shan:

In choice of place, set
Before the body of the mind
in space and time:
Solidity of bark, leaf, or wall
Riprap of things:
Cobble of milky way,
Straying planets,
These poems, people,
lost ponies with
Dragging saddles -
And rocky sure-foot trails. (30)

The above lines reinforce the interconnectedness of state of mind and natural spaces. Human footprints must follow the paths of animals and other natural elements. Snyder is always eager to credit the influence of Han Shan in his works, and the cross-cultural exchange that inspired his ecopoetry: "This too is a form of cultural translation, one through which the hidden meanings of an 'impossible' nature may be spelled out, articulated, interpellated, and translated" (Tsai, "Translating Nature" 161-2). For Snyder, there is not just an awareness of the East as different or the Other; there is the need to embrace the otherness as part of ourselves, just as nature is part of human civilization.

The cultural exchange does not stop there: Snyder, himself, has become an object of study and an inspiration for Hong Kong poet Xi Xi. Snyder's lyrical dialogues with Chinese classical poetry have, in turn, influenced contemporary Hong Kong poetry. Xi Xi's poetry evokes a utopian future where cosmopolitan values and the principle of harmonious human and non-human relations usher in a new type of city. Snyder's poetry decries the aim of mastering nature and attempts to curb the political, cultural, and material exploitation of non-human "others." As responses to an unjust global and post-colonial reality, Xi Xi's poems, under Snyder's influence, encourage a different approach towards life, particularly urban life, while charting the effects of history, community, and post-colonialism.

Xi Xi is the pseudonym of writer Zhang Yan (b. 1938), who is one of the most important writers in Hong Kong and the recipient of 2019 Newman Prize for Chinese Literature. Jennifer Feeley, who has studied Xi Xi's poems, notes a very interesting series of cross-cultural translations, beginning with the Taiwanese scholar Chung Ling's reading of Snyder, followed by Xi Xi's readings of Chung Ling's translations, and later by Feeley's translations of Xi Xi's readings. Lawrence Venuti's discussion of intertextual relations in translation, which looks at the relationships between the source text and other texts, between source texts and translations, and between translations and other connected texts, is instrumental to Feeley. She proceeds to "lay out some of the cultural aspects and considerations involved in transporting the poem from Chinese into English and the various loops of transpacific exchange...encountered in the process" (Feeley 72). The various translations inspire a range of readings, given the Eastern and Western contexts, the Chinese and English languages, and the translators' interpretations. While Feeley's readings draw attention to the rich complexities of translation and cultural exchange, the discussion is drawn to the environmental implications of such a process.

In Xi Xi's poem "Written on the Flyleaf of a Gary Snyder Poetry Collection," (Xi Xi, *Not Written Words* 136-9) Snyder is portrayed as a unique figure, outside the European tradition: "You refuse to distort the landscape to adorn your violent lyricism / The wilderness has the dignity of wilderness / You're not a shaman chanting spells for the nightingale or the rose / You're the neighbour who speaks to us, says good morning and good night." (137) Rather than elevate Snyder to mythic dimensions, the narrator appreciates his ordinariness, which reflects his respect for others, both human and non-human. The poem praises Snyder for his recognition of Asian civilization and his respectful and admiring attitude towards cultural differences.

Unlike the Beat Generation poets who looked for inspiration from "the savages you once scorned" in the East and came to "realize that the other side is also civilized," Snyder is capable of a much more empathetic exchange:

I heard you have dark brown hair, dark brown
Skin, like to eat rice, love a good soy sauce
Have been to Hong Kong, survey the mainland from Lok Ma Chau
As though that vast expanse were your native land (139)

Xi Xi appreciates the degree to which Snyder enters into the experience of the locals and laments the changes due to modernization as if China were his home: "All logged, the land of melted snow and ice / Is parking space for 50,000 trucks. Ah, poet / Your concern for our country is more than just embracing our Han Shan." (139) The poem dwells on Snyder's distress in the face of Asia's irresponsible urbanization, particular in fast-growing mainland China, which during the Tang Dynasty was a model of a harmonious relationship with nature. By portraying Snyder's appreciation of Asian philosophy, the poem is a powerful reminder of our abandonment of cultural wisdom. It acts as both a medium of cultural exchange and as an eco-poem, reminding us of the destructive effects of globalization.

In Xi Xi's poem "Moon," (110-1) references to the classics are used to draw attention to the cultural exchanges afforded by poetry and by nature:

To Li Bai, Du Fu, Du Mu, Li Shangyin
Since ancient times, the ageless moon has seen
Countless reflections and refractions
A cascading hall of mirrors, just as figs
Quietly reproduce by parthenogenesis until the giant
Compound eye overflows, unable to bear rainwater and sunlight
As for the sun, who's to say it's not a love-hate relationship?
Only the moon adores the poets above all, and the poets
Feel the same: America's E. E. Cummings
And of course, China's Su Shi. (111)

The references to the well-known Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE) poets confirm Xi Xi's intention to follow Snyder's example and return to Chinese classical poems and wisdom for insights into environmental problems. What is more interesting is the mention of "reflections and refractions," which suggests the cross-cultural communications effected by eco-poetry. It is through the reflection of translation and the refraction of circulation that cultural exchanges about nature and modernity can be achieved. Snyder's reputation and his contribution to ecocriticism provide a platform for further discussion of the ways in which Chinese wisdom is reflected and refracted through poetry translation and cultural re-readings.

Conclusion

Ecopoetry has become an important means for critiquing the irresponsible human behavior that has led to the over-development and the exhaustion of natural resources, and for acknowledging the intimate relationship between nature and humans. In order for this environmental awareness to be effective, it must be shared across cultures. This paper begins with an examination of Gary Snyder's works, which reveal his admiration of the insights conveyed in classical Chinese poetry. In my discussion of Snyder's translation of Han Shan we see how the poet adapted both the subject matter and the Chinese poetic form for Western readers. The mutual fertilization of cultural exchange continues in the works of Hong Kong poet Xi Xi. Snyder's celebration of Asian wisdom has also drawn attention to the need for environmental protection.

Snyder's own poetry and his translations have provided readers with alternative visions of the relationship between the human and non-human world. They engage in a dialogue with seasons, mountains, plants, and animals; they encourage the reader to explore multiple layers of sounds, images,

and meanings; and they present time in all its multiplicity and heterogeneity. His poems advocate a temporality that transcends the modernist progressive model and an ecopoetics that is premised on the interdependence of humans and nature. In showing how the existential experience of harmony can transcend cultural boundaries, the poems undermine the assumption that the goal of enlightened humanity is to master nature.

In today's increasingly globalized world, where the dangers of climate change and other environmental issues have become imminent, Asian readers and writers look for inspiration from Snyder, who was initially inspired by Asian civilization. This circular connection challenges a view of time as progressive and linear development, rather than interlaced temporalities. It is the complex temporalities of nature, such as those portrayed in Snyder's poetry, that offer an alternative image of nature and its role in cross-cultural communication. Through the cross-cultural dialogues of Han Shan, Gary Snyder, and Xi Xi, it is evident that ecopoetry has become an important means of cultural inter-referencing, which has elicited powerful responses in today's increasingly globalized world where the ethics of our treatment of the environment matter more than ever.

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