

Panel Title: Gary Snyder As A Node of Influence: Visible though Philosophy, Invisible though Translation

Gary Snyder is a pivotal figure in the transmission of East Asian thought in the American intellectual tradition. Much ink has been spilled about his translation of Han Shan's *Cold Mountain Poems*. However, there is much still to be gleaned from a comprehensive historical analysis of the influences Gary Snyder received as a student and as a young poet in the Beat and Counterculture movements of San Francisco in the 1950s and 60s. Equally as important are the influences Snyder had on various poets, writers, and translators to come. Through our respective talks, "Converging on the Mountain: Gary Snyder's Nodal Role in the Transmission of East Asian Thought" and "From the Spiritual Wilderness to the Natural Mountain: Gary Snyder as the Node of American Translators of Han Shan's Poetry," a prospectus on Snyder's position of power as a nodal figure in this historical moment will be offered for further engagement and discussion. Snyder plays a key role in solidifying and transmitting the conflation and bundling of Buddhism, Daoism, and wilderness into a singular trend of thought. This trend is the hallmark of the modern American conception of East Asian wisdom. As it has come to be popularized through various self-help books, like those of Benjamin Hoff, and works of popular scholarship, like those of David Hinton, the historical development of this thread of thought is worthy of further investigation.

From the Spiritual Wilderness to the Natural Mountain, Gary Snyder as the Node of American Translators of Han Shan's Poetry

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Gary Snyder, also called the American Han Shan by Jack Kerouac, has had the greatest influence for his translations of the work of Chinese hermit and poet Han Shan. Snyder's

translation of Chinese literature, in particular poetry and Buddhist scriptures, has been instrumental in (reshaping his imagination of the local and the global. As for Han Shan 's poetry, there was Arthur Waley before him who translated Han Shan's poems just as the poems, and Burton Watson alongside him who made Han Shan the idol of the Beat Generation in America after WWII, by identifying and seeking the ecological thoughts and Zen Buddhist tenets in Han Shan's poetry. Bill Porter, Jerome Potter Seaton, Peter Stambler, David Hinton and so on after Snyder went on to develop a unique tradition of Classical Chinese poetry translation defined by their focus on landscape poetry, and Taoist / Chan philosophy.

Snyder, as a poet himself, virtually translates what he advocates. For him, Western civilization has something like what Foucault would call the "rules of exclusion" of discourse (in "Discourse on Language": it will always exclude itself-as-Other, in this case, the very nature out of which civilization built itself. Breaking with the Poundian Imagist conception-and-translation of Chinese culture, Snyder firstly saw and highlighted Chinese notions of "wildness" (ye and "nature" (zi-ran in poetry translation. Therefore, Gary Snyder has a powerful nodal role among Na American translators of Han Shan's poetry in this sense.