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Visualization and Gary Snyder's Translation of Cold Mountain Poems

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Abstract

Visualization is Gary Snyder's unique translation method used in translating the Tang hermit-poet Han Shan's poems. This consists of four steps: remembering, visualizing, writing and checking, and it emphasizes a visual process of the mind, which is very similar to Ezra Pound's translation principle of *phanopoeia* and Snyder's own poetic production method. The mastery of visualization makes a translated poem sound like an English poem, although some distortions are inevitable in the translation process because of the reworking. Thus, selection and adaptation principles appear to be more important for a translator before and after the visual activities in his mind and it is these which largely determine the quality of translation.

This article thoroughly examines Snyder's twenty-four translations of the Cold Mountain poems, and compares them with Arthur Waley's translations. It demonstrates that Snyder's success is not separate from his personality, cultural taste and mountain experiences influencing his visualization. Snyder's direct treatment of diction, style and form is in accordance with Han Shan's vernacular language and Chinese Chan poetic aesthetics. His selection and adaptation principles present Han Shan as an old mountain hermit in self-forgotten joy on Cold Mountain, a place of seclusion which becomes synonymous with Chan enlightenment. With regard to Snyder's inaccuracies, three aspects should be considered: first, errors caused by his misunderstanding of the original; second, deliberate naturalization of exotic terms; and third, unconscious replacement of the Chinese mountain scenery with his American wilderness. Therefore, the article contends that while

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> Snyder's visualization provides a good paradigm for some poet-translators, it is not a method to be followed by all translators.

"Visualization" as a poetic production method was much embraced by the 1950s American Beat writers and San Francisco Renaissance poets, such as Jack Kerouac (1922–69), Allen Ginsberg (1926–97), William Burroughs (1914–97) and Gary Snyder (1930–). On the one hand, they were influenced by William Blake's visionary poetics, Ezra Pound's revolutionary poetic slogan, "Make it new" and D. T. Suzuki's aesthetic transmission of Japanese Zen; on the other hand, they practised and discovered both Buddhism and the hallucinatory effects of LSD or peyote as means of achieving spiritual enlightenment and poetic excitement. This generation's poetics can, to some extent, be read "in almost a Blakean sense of shared visionary poetics": "colloquial language, visionary, use of vernacular — all of that kind of thing." (Arthur and Kit Knight 1987: 6)

Among contemporary American poets, Snyder may be the first to put forward overtly his translation method termed "visualization" and put it into practice with great success when translating Han Shan's poems. Han Shan (c. 720s–820s?) was a mysterious Chinese hermit-poet of the Tang Dynasty (618–907). Most of his poems are concerned with Chan enlightenment and his secluded life when he resided on Cold Mountain. Han Shan is remembered for his isolated mountain life and his vernacular Han Shanian style with its unique nature-Chan images, a specific type of nature imagery with implications of basic Chan teachings. Snyder only translated twenty-four of Han Shan's poems and they first appeared in *Evergreen Review* entitled "Cold Mountain Poems" (Snyder 1958: 68–80). They were later compiled together with his first book of lyric poems *Riprap*.

This article aims to examine the translation method, the selection and adaptation principles involved in his translation of Han Shan's poems. Arthur Waley's "Twenty-seven Poems by Han-shan" (Waley 1954: 3–8; 1961/1989: 105–11) will be used as a frame of reference.

1. The Selection Principle and the Translation Method

Snyder began translating Han Shan's poems in 1955 when he was studying Chinese at the University of California, Berkeley. His teacher Professor Chen Shih-hsiang suggested that Han Shan should meet his

need for undertaking some translations of Chinese vernacular Buddhist poems. The manuscript kept in the Kent State University Library shows that Waley's translation was formative for Snyder when the latter was making his own translation (Leed 1984: 186). Waley's brief introduction to his translation states that "[the] Cold Mountain is often the name of a state of mind rather than of a locality." (Waley 1961/1989: 105) Similarly, such words produced an echo in Snyder's introduction — "[w]hen he [Han Shan] talks about Cold Mountain he means himself, his home, his state of mind." (Snyder 1969/1999: 35) In other words, both Waley and Snyder realized that Cold Mountain is not only a location of seclusion for Han Shan, but also a state of mind.

However, their selection principles appear to be quite different in the process of choosing Han Shan's poems. Of Waley's twenty-seven translations, Nos. 1 and 2 are about Han Shan's happy family life; 3, 4 and 5 are about Han Shan's miserable, solitary life after his failure in governmental officialdom; 6, 7, 8 and 19 are concerned with the journey to Cold Mountain; 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 26 deal with Han Shan's life on Cold Mountain; 11 is about the Buddha Mind; 13 concerns Han Shan's spiritual quest for Daoism; 16 comments on the poet Han Shan; 20, 21, 23 and 24 express Han Shan's sadness concerning the shortness of life; 22 and 25 affirm his love of life; and 27 talks about life and death.[1] Snyder's twenty-four translations concentrate on Han Shan's enlightenment on Cold Mountain. Snyder's selection is a panoramic view of Cold Mountain, where the mythical hermit Han Shan received enlightenment and became a sage. They form a circle: Han Shan's retreat to Cold Mountain (12); Han Shan's spiritual quest for Cold Mountain (1, 2, 6, 8 and 9); Han Shan's early life on Cold Mountain (3); Han Shan's forgotten joy after becoming enlightened on Cold Mountain (5, 7, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22 and 23); Han Shan's feelings concerning Cold Mountain (10) and Han Shan's enlightenment as a sage on Cold Mountain which confounds the ordinary people (15, 18, 20 and 24). Only No. 4 describes Han Shan's feeling about the death of ordinary people before his retreat to Cold Mountain and it acts as a prologue to Han Shan's spiritual quest for Chan enlightenment. This short elegy depicts ordinary people's failure to find Daoist physical immortality and it is this which causes Han Shan to pursue spiritual immortality as a hermit in the mountains. Waley's twenty-seven translations give a picture of Han Shan's whole spiritual life as a Confucian, a Daoist, a Buddhist and a Chanist. Snyder's twenty-four translations only delineate

Han Shan's spiritual quest for Chan enlightenment on Cold Mountain. Waley's translation presents Han Shan as an ordinary person to the reader, but Snyder treats Han Shan as a mythical figure in the Chinese hermit tradition.

Snyder's selection reflects his own interests and personality. His first encounter with Chinese landscape paintings took place when he visited the Seattle Art Museum in childhood. He recalled, "It looks just like the Cascades. The waterfalls, the pines, the clouds, the mist looked a lot like the northwest United States. The Chinese had an eye for the world that I saw as real." (Snyder 1980: 93–94) What Han Shan depicts on Cold Mountain looks much like Snyder's early life in America's western mountains: "being able to see Mount Rainier far off to the east on a clear day or to climb the bluff of the hill to the west and look out over Puget Sound and the islands and see the Olympic Mountains." (Snyder 1980: 93) Many years later, when he translated Han Shan's poems, it was this early "fusion of horizon" that encouraged him to pick up Han Shan's Chan poems on Cold Mountain. Before translating these poems, Snyder was already a Chan Buddhist and had taught himself *zazen* ("meditation practice"). As a Chan Buddhist, Han Shan's Chan enlightenment on Cold Mountain produced an echo deep in Snyder's mind. As a poet, influenced by Pound's ideogrammic method, Snyder was exploring his own mythopoetic style. The story of Han Shan and his poems provided Snyder with a mythical model within the Chinese tradition. Thus, through his selection, Snyder's translation can be seen to mirror his own spiritual quest for Cold Mountain.

Unlike other Western poet-translators, Snyder sticks to his own translation method—visualization, emphasizing the visual process in his mind. As early as 1965, in his letter to Dell Hymes, Snyder explained:

> the problem, in a sense, is not one of "writing" but one of "visualizing." I have found this to be very true of Chinese poetry translation. I get the verbal meaning into mind as clearly as I can, but then make an enormous effort of visualization, to "see" what the poem says, nonlinguistically, like a movie in the mind, and to feel it. If I can do this (and much of the time the poem eludes this effort) then I write the scene down in English. It is not a translation of the words, it is the same poem in a different language, allowing for the peculiar distortions of my own vision — but keeping it straight as possible. If I can do this to a poem the translation is uniformly successful, and is generally well received by scholars and critics. If I can't do this, I can

> still translate the words, and it may be well received, but it doesn't feel like it should. (Snyder 1980: 177–78)[2]

Two years later, in his letter to Herbert Fackler, Snyder pointed out the importance his mountain experience played in the visual process of translation and summarized this method into four steps:

> My sense for the scene was indeed enhanced by the fact that I am a mountaineer and regular mountain-dweller; not the Rockies however, but the Cascades and Sierra. With this kind of background the visualization of the poems is made much easier for the translator. My method of translation is — first, to understand the poem thoroughly on a linguistic level. Second, by an effort of concentration to project the "picture" of the poem inside my mind, like a movie — to see what's happening. Third, to write down, in my own language, what I see happening. Fourth, to check that back against the original language and be sure they line up. (Leed 1986: 178)

In an interview with *The New York Quarterly* in 1973, Snyder mentioned his translation method again:

> Now the way I did the Han-shan translations was very much like what I described earlier. I stumbled on it, you know, that you could read what the Chinese said and then visualize what the Chinese, what the poem was, what the, quote, "poem" was, as Robert Duncan would say, the poem that's back there, and see that clear enough to then write down the poem in English directly, then look at the English and check it again against the Chinese and — to make sure that they really weren't too out of line. (Snyder 1980: 39)

Snyder's remarks quoted above indicate that the process of his visualization can be divided into four steps: remembering, visualizing, writing and checking. The second step—to visualize it in the mind "like a movie"—is the most important; it determines the quality of the translation. The fourth step hints at the role of a poet, and involves the poet's taste in poetic aesthetics and his use of poetic techniques. Snyder thinks that the visual process can be easily achieved where a translator can draw upon similar experiences. The success of his translation of *Cold Mountain Poems* mainly derives from his real experience as a "mountaineer and regular mountain-dweller". Snyder himself has a strong attraction to mountains. "When I was young, I had an immediate, intuitive, deep sympathy with the natural world which was not taught me by anyone. In that sense, nature is my 'guru' and life is my sadhana." (Snyder 1980: 92) Snyder also holds that after visualization, some

peculiar distortions are only to be expected in the translation due to the translator's reworking in another language.

Snyder's translation method is, to some extent, related to the composition of his original poems. He stated:

> The first step is the rhythmical measure, the second step is a set of preverbal visual images which move to the rhythmical measure, and the third step is embodying it in words […] I don't put it on the page until it is ripe — because otherwise you simply have to revise on the page. So I let it ripen until it's fully formed and then try to speak the poem out, and as a rule it falls right into place and completes itself by itself, requiring only the smallest of minor readjustments and tunings to be just right to my mind. (Snyder 1980: 32)

In this respect, his twenty-four translations of *Cold Mountain Poems* may be seen as another small book of poems in his spiritual journey to Cold Mountain, using the mask of Han Shan as his persona. Through visualization, Snyder merged his own mountain experiences of the American wilderness into his translation. Critics such as Chung Ling have already recognized "some peculiar distortions" in his translations. From the point of view of standard translation practice, Chung Ling does present cogent remarks,[3] who criticized Snyder's selection and his translation in her article.

> His choice is not only indicative of his bias, but is also convenient for the process of his translation. […] Snyder's attempt is not to transfer the Chinese language into English in a word-for-word fashion, but to capture a pre-verbal living experience. In creating this mental picture of living experience, it is inevitable that ingredients from Snyder's own life, especially his experiences of mountain life and religion, are thrown in. (Chung 1977: 101–02)

However, Jacob Leed felt that Chung Ling's criticism was "unwarranted". This is because "[h]is Han Shan is meant to be as much in harmony with the ruggedness of a Sierra-like landscape as the Han Shan of the original poems was in harmony with the gentler mountainscape that Chung Ling refers to." (Leed 1986: 179) Leed makes a good point here; there is an internal consistency in Snyder's translation and an attempt to reach a deeper level of authenticity that deserves recognition. Herbert Fackler compared three English versions of Han Shan's poems by Arthur Waley, Gary Snyder, and Burton Watson. He praised Snyder's translations highly and stated that they possessed "a structural unity, a high degree of imagery effectiveness, and a universal relevance which

makes it the best poetry of the three versions." (Fackler 1973: 270) One has to agree with Fackler that the translations represent the essence of Han Shan's Chan poems without losing the main poetic features of either Chinese or English poetry. Robert Kern has convincingly pointed out that Snyder's visualization has "all but guaranteed a relatively minor role for translation in his work" and that "his approach will be difficult to put into practice." (Kern 1996: 241)

2. A Comparative Study of Snyder's and Waley's Translations

Both Waley and Snyder chose to translate the same six poems: Nos. 6, 8, 9, 10, 17, and 24 in Snyder's collection are respectively Nos. 6, 8, 7, 24, 17, and 16 in Waley's. Interestingly enough, these six shared poems are concerned with Han Shan's spiritual journey to Cold Mountain, Han Shan's enlightenment on Cold Mountain and the sage Han Shan. The manuscript demonstrates that Snyder followed Waley at the very beginning. A typescript of Waley's translation was presented in his original draft and three poems, 6, 8, and 17, were selected from his translation in the same order. Snyder acknowledged that "I read Ezra Pound's and Arthur Waley's translations of Chinese poetry, a translation of the *Tao Te Ching*, and some texts of Confucius." (Snyder 1980: 94–95) Waley had already established himself as a translator of Chinese poetry and critic of Chinese art. From 1917 to 1955, Waley had translated sixteen books of Chinese poetry and had published extensively on Chinese art. He tried to translate Chinese poetry into free verse. Nevertheless, Snyder soon abandoned Waley's methodology in favour of Pound's. This might have resulted from his dissatisfaction with the fact that Waley "never strays too far from the mainstay of conventional English poetry, the iambic pentameter line." (Kern 1996: 233)

Pound put forward three concepts in his translation standard — *melopoeia* ("the musical property"), *phanopoeia* ("the visual imagination"), and *logopoeia* ("the dance of the intellect among words"), of which only *phanopoeia* can be "translated almost, or wholly, intact." (Pound 1960: 25) Hence, in Pound's view, a translator should deal with an image in his translation. In the composition of poetry, Pound in his imagist manifesto (Pound 1960: 25), emphasized "direct treatment of 'the thing' whether subjective or objective". It can be said that Snyder's visualization encompasses Pound's *phanopoeia*. An image, the basic

meaningful unit in Chinese poetry, comprises nouns or verbs without connectives. As Ernest Fenollosa observed, "[t]he eye sees noun and verb as one: things in motion, motion in things." (Fenollosa 1936/1964: 10) Both Pound and Snyder accentuated visual images in translation and in poetic production as well. The main features of Chinese poetry are to be found in its laconism (a short, end-stopped line with three, four, five or seven Chinese characters), conciseness (monosyllabic words), compactness (a tight structure often with four lines in a poem), simplicity (natural language or style), directness (fresh comparison), vitality (elastic, elaborate images) and flexibility (asyndetic, loose grammar, free combination of words). All of these features help to create *yijing* ("a poetic world"), where in a short poem there is enough space for the visual imagination to play a part.

Snyder and Waley adopted different selection principles and methods in their translations and, therefore, achieved quite different effects. "Direct treatment of 'the thing'" in their translations, such as "寒山" as "Cold Mountain" or as "the Cold Mountain" also reflects the discrepancies in their understanding of Han Shan's poems and Chan aesthetics. "Cold Mountain" refers both to "nature in the world" and "nature in the mind", a typical two-fold concept of "nature" in Chan aesthetics. So, "the Cold Mountain" as a proper name loses its implied Chan meaning in Waley's translation. The following discussion of their translations of the same poems by Han Shan will help readers understand Snyder's visualizing techniques better.

Example 1

人問寒山道，寒山路不通。夏天冰未釋，日出霧朦朧。似我何由屆，與君心不同。君心若似我，還得到其中。[4]

Waley's translation (No. 6):

I am sometimes asked the way to the Cold Mountain;
There is no path that goes all the way.
Even in summer the ice never melts;
Far into the morning the mists gather thick.
How, you may ask, did I manage to get here?
My heart is not like your heart.
If only your heart were like mine
You too would be living where I live now.

Snyder's translation (No. 6):

> 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.

Waley's "寒山" as "the Cold Mountain" fails to grasp the deep meaning of Chan enlightenment. In Chinese poetry, the pronoun "I" is often omitted. In particular, in Chan poetry, when the individual becomes enlightened, he/she often disappears into a state of self-forgotten enlightenment. The first line in Waley's translation puts Han Shan and others in a secular world, whereas Snyder's translation places Han Shan as an enlightened master on Cold Mountain, a result of visual activities of the mind. Although both of them use end-stopped lines, Snyder's lines are shorter than Waley's and appear much more laconic compared with Waley's formal patterns, such as "There is …". In Waley's translation, the last couplet with the formal subjunctive mood, "If only your heart were like mine…", suggests that others were unable to reach enlightenment. This contradicts the basic Chan teachings, that is that every sentient being possesses the Buddha Nature and can attain self-enlightenment. Snyder's translation uses the past tense "was", not the subjunctive "were", to indicate the individual's own experience. As an enlightened Chan master, Han Shan tells unenlightened Chanists that the best way to self-enlightenment is to "get it and be right here". The word "here" is close to the original, much better than "where I live now", for it stresses the narrative position of the individual on Cold Mountain. The third couplet is like a *koan*. Snyder only uses five words ("How did I make it?") to translate it, but Waley uses ten, adding the parenthesis, "you may ask", which fails to achieve the fundamental riddle effect of a *koan* in a pithy phrase. Han Shan's poems are vernacular, so the language is colloquial. It is important for a translator to retain the original style of the poem. For example, the fourth line, "日 (sun) 出 (rise, come out) 霧 (fog, mist) 朦朧 (hazy, unclear)", is made up of two images in motion: "The sun rises and mists are hazy." Waley has failed to translate "日出"; he has added "far into the morning". This

is a descriptive sentence. Waley's translation, "the mists gather thick", shows a dynamic action in a specific scene. Chung Ling has also pointed out that "there should be no 'swirling' motion of the fog" (Chung 1977: 100) in Snyder's translation. Waley's diction in this translation also fails to match Han Shan's colloquialism. Typical examples are: "manage to get", "no path that goes all the way". In comparison, Snyder's "make" and "no through trail" appear more colloquial and direct. This technique is also in accordance with Snyder's contention that scenes/things should be visualized in a chain of small images, like instant pictures or montage used in a movie. Critics such as Chung Ling, Kern and Fackler think that Snyder's translations are more accurate than Waley's in diction, style, structure and poetic aesthetics. So far, however, few critics have noticed that, in the translation of Chan poetry one has to pay special attention to its consistency with basic Chan teachings and aesthetics. *Koans* and enlightenment should be taken into consideration in translation. Otherwise it will lose its effectiveness.

Example 2

登陟寒山道，寒山路不窮。溪長石磊磊，澗闊草濛濛。苔滑非關雨，松鳴不假風。誰能超世累，共坐白雲中。[5]

Waley's translation (No. 8):

I make my way up the Cold Mountain path;
The way up seems never to end.
The valley so long and the ground so stony;
The stream so broad and the brush so tangled and thick.
The moss is slippery, rain or no rain;
The pine-trees sing even when no wind blows.
Who can bring himself to transcend the bonds of the world
And sit with me among the white clouds?

Snyder's translation (No. 8):

Clambering up the Cold Mountain path,
The Cold Mountain trail goes on and on:
The long gorge choked with scree and boulders,
The wide creek, the mist-blurred grass.
The moss is slippery, though there's been no rain
The pine sings, but there's no wind.

Who can leap the world's ties
And sit with me among the white clouds?

Leed uses Snyder's translation of this poem as an example to "call attention to the nature of the manuscript and trace the changes that brought Poem #8 to its final form" (Leed 1984: 185), including his brief discussion of the changes of this poem quoted in Jack Kerouac's novel *The Dharma Bums*. Leed's findings show that most of the poems in Snyder's manuscript consist of three parts before the final form: the five-word version, the first version, and the second version. Readers may easily find that the second step, "to visualize like a movie", is a mental activity between the first and the third step. It is actualized after the translator remembers what the original says in the poem, so a word-for-word translation of the original is normally required at its initial stage. Take the third line for example:

original line:	溪	長	石	磊	磊
five-word version:	Gorge	long	stones	stony	stony
first version:	The long gorges — stones: stony, stony				
second version:	The long gorge, choked with boulders and talus				
final form:	The long gorge choked with scree and boulders				

This line is a vivid description of the natural scenes on Cold Mountain. The original Chinese "磊磊" is a reiterative used to describe "a pile of stones". The Chinese reader can respond to the visual quality spontaneously by recognition of the ideogram "磊", a character signifying three-piled stones. Waley translates it as "the ground so stony", which fails to convey its original visual beauty. Snyder's translation "choked with scree and boulders" seems better, for the image of "scree and boulders" can re-create the ideographic visual effect of "磊磊", "a heap of stones". The changes in Snyder's original draft indicate that the four steps of visualization are normally carried out step by step. The five-word version refers to the first step of visualization, that is, to remember what the original says on the linguistic level; whereas the first version is the result of the second step, in which the translator used "stones: stony, stony" to record his visual imagination of the Chinese ideogram "磊". In order to avoid repetition, the translator changed his expression into "choked with boulders and talus" in the second version. The checking process is completed after a minor readjustment is made in the final form.

Like Poem No. 6, Waley's adoption of "I" in the first line not only violates the main principle of understanding the subject in classical Chinese poetry, but also fails to capture the dimension of Chan enlightenment. In Snyder's translation, the present participle "clambering" hints at the action from the subject "I". The disappearance of "I" helps to dissolve the gap between subject ("I") and object ("Cold Mountain"). Another shortcoming in Waley's translation might be due to his poor understanding of Chan aesthetics. The third couplet uses two nature-Chan images to express the ineffable basic Chan teaching, that is, "no dependence upon words". One cannot depend upon others from the outside to see one's inherent Buddha Nature. In that respect, the moss is slippery not because of rain, and the pine is singing not because of the wind. Waley fails to grasp this implied Chan meaning by translating "rain or no rain". In other words, "rain or no rain" means that "the slippery moss may be caused by rain or may not be caused by rain". But the basic Chan teaching is to instruct the novice to attain self-enlightenment without depending on others.

Example 3

杳杳寒山道，落落冷澗濱。啾啾常有鳥，寂寂更無人。淅淅風吹面，紛紛雪積身。朝朝不見日，歲歲不知春。[6]

Waley's translation (No. 7):

Long, long the way to the Cold Mountain;
Stony, stony the banks of the chill stream.
Twitter, twitter — always there are birds;
Lorn and lone — no human but oneself.
Slip, slap the wind blows in one's face;
Flake by flake the snow piles on one's clothes.
Day after day one never sees the sun;
Year after year knows no spring.

Snyder's translation (No. 9):

Rough and dark — the Cold Mountain trail,
Sharp cobbles — the icy creek bank.
Yammering, chirping — always birds
Bleak, alone, not even a lone hiker.
Whip, whip — the winds slaps my face

Whirled and tumbled — snow piles on my back.
Morning after morning I don't see the sun
Year after year, not a sign of spring.

Snyder's translation of this poem is less accurate than Waley's. With regard to effectiveness, there are two different opinions. Chung Ling censures Snyder's, saying that "Snyder substitutes the original with many descriptive words for rougher connotation, which result in an antagonistic relationship between the persona and his environment." (Chung 1977: 102) Analysing the same poem, Lawrence Kwan-chee Yung observes that "Snyder follows the original syntax and diction closely. In the first two lines he follows the Chinese sentence structure by omitting the verb to be and substituting it with a dash." (Yung 1998: 221) The discrepancy in the translation of this poem may result from the use of reiterative locutions in the original poem. There are a large number of *chongdie* compounds ("reiterative compounds") or *dieyin* words ("reiterative-sound words") in Han Shan's poems. Both *chongdie* compounds and *dieyin* words consist of the same form with a combination of two of the same Chinese characters. The difference between them is that a monosyllable has no meaning unless combined with a second word in a *dieyin* word, whereas each monosyllable is meaningful in a *chongdie* compound. For example, the first two words of the first line "杳杳" make up a reiterative compound, for the monosyllable "杳" means "deep, distance". But the first two words of the third line "啾啾" make up a reiterative-sound word, for the monosyllabic "啾" has no meaning unless combined with another "啾", so that we have "啾啾", meaning "the sound of small birds". In some sense, *dieyin* words in Chinese are equivalent to onomatopoeia in English. The use of reiterative locutions can help to add rhyme and to achieve a musical effect (Pound's *melopoeia*) in a poem. The original is a typical five-character Chinese poem with a reduplicated syllable at the beginning of each line. Except for "啾啾" and "淅淅" ("the sound of the soft wind"), all the others are reiterative compounds, such as "杳杳" ("deep", "distant"), "落落" ("deserted"), "寂寂" ("silent", "quiet"), "紛紛" ("in succession", "one after another"), "朝朝" ("every morning") and "歲歲" ("every year"). Compared with the original poem, the reader may discern that Snyder's translation presents a ragged, bleak and hostile landscape with words that suggest force and violence, such as "whip", "slap", "whirled", "tumbled", and "yammering". This scene is a far cry

from Han Shan's steep, tranquil, and chilly place. Inaccuracy is Snyder's biggest shortcoming in the translation of this poem due to memories of his own wild mountain experience. "落落" is a descriptive word which means "deserted" and "isolated". Snyder translates it as "sharp cobbles", while Waley renders it as "stony, stony". Chung Ling criticises Snyder's "sharp cobbles", but mistakes it for "the abundance of boulders" (Chung 1977: 102). To deal with this parallelism, Waley uses duplicated words and alliteration in his translation to render the Chinese grammar. But these words appear redundant and sound boring, as is the case with "long, long", and "stony, stony". This poem depicts the hermit's state of mind before exposure to some nature-Chan images. The last couplet indicates the difficulty of the spiritual quest for Chan enlightenment. From the Chan perspective, then, Snyder's unenlightened "I" is better than Waley's "one". When reading this poem, the Chinese reader knows that there is a pause or caesura after these reiterative words. When rendered into English, Snyder uses a dash or a comma to achieve this effect and tries to avoid duplicating the same syllable. Another felicity in Snyder's translation is his successful direct treatment of Chinese parallelism. In classical Chinese poetry, perfect parallelism strictly requires antithetical or contrasting words in the same category such as noun vs. noun, verb vs. verb, colour vs. colour, and number vs. number within one couplet. For example, the first couplet of this poem:

杳杳	/ 寒	/ 山	/ 道	Rough and dark — / the	/ Cold	/ Mountain	/ trail		
reiterative	adj.	n.	n.	adj.	adj.	art.	adj.	n.	n.
落落	/ 冷	/ 澗	/ 濱	Sharp cobbles — / the	/ icy	/ creek	/ bank		
reiterative	adj.	n.	n.	adj.	n.	art.	adj.	n.	n.

Compared with Waley's translation, apart from the inaccuracy of certain words, Snyder's translation is closer to Chinese syntax.

Example 4

時人見寒山，各謂是風顛。貌不起人目，身唯布裘纏。我語他不會，他語我不言。為報往來者，可來向寒山。[7]

Waley's translation (No. 16):

> The people of the world when they see Han-shan
> All regard him as not in his right mind.

His appearance, they say, is far from being attractive,
Tied up as he is in bits of tattered cloth.
What we say, he cannot understand;
What he says, we do not say.
You who spend all your time in coming and going,
Why not try for once coming to the Han-shan?

Snyder's translation (No. 24):

When men see Han-shan
They all say he's crazy
And not much to look at
Dressed in rags and hides.
They don't get what I say
And I don't talk their language.
All I can say to those I meet:
"Try and make it to Cold Mountain."

In Snyder's twenty-four translations, four present the portrait of Han Shan. No. 15 describes Han Shan as a Buddhist at his early stage on Cold Mountain: "But he always carries the sword of wisdom: / He means to cut down senseless craving." No. 18 is a typical colloquial four-line poem which depicts Han Shan as a madman: "Most T'ien-t'ai men / Don't know Han-shan / Don't know his real thought / And call it silly talk". No. 20 tells of Han Shan's response to these attacks on his poetry. This poem is Snyder's last in his translation of *Cold Mountain Poems*. Its deliberate positioning in the collection hints at Han Shan's deep enlightenment. That Han Shan has completed his spiritual quest for Chan enlightenment is shown by his appearance and his language. Though "dressed in rags and hides" and behaving crazily, Han Shan, at this moment, is not only an enlightened Chan Buddhist, but also a Chan master: "They don't get what I say / And I don't talk their language." So Han Shan instructed the unenlightened people, encouraging them to "[t]ry and make it to Cold Mountain". Cold Mountain becomes a place for transcendence, pacification and enlightenment. The third couplet is the key sentence, suggesting that Han Shan has attained self-enlightenment. In the original poem, the pronoun "我" ("I") refers to Han Shan, while "他" ("he"), though singular, refers to the unenlightened people.

我 / 語 / 他 / 不 / 會
I / speak / he (they) / not / understand
(They cannot understand what I say.)

他 / 語 / 我 / 不 / 言
he (they) speak / I / not / say
(When they talk, I never say any word.)

Waley changed "I" to "we", and "they" to "he" (Han Shan) in his translation. This change, or error, put "we" into the leading place and has the effect of presenting Han Shan as an insane, ordinary person and not as a Buddhist sage. In Waley's translation, the pronoun "we" represents the sane people, and "he" is excluded from "our" group; it is the persona "we" that dominates the narration of the discourse. In Snyder's translation, the persona "I" denotes the enlightened Chan master, so "they", the unenlightened people, cannot understand "what I say". When they talk, "I" can understand what they say, but "I don't talk their language." Here, in Snyder's translation, it is the persona "I" that dominates the narration. The change of narration determines whether it is the narrator or the persona that has attained Chan enlightenment. In addition, Snyder's version retains the five-character Chinese syntax which gives prominence to Han Shan. In Chan Buddhism, particularly in the Southern School, Chan masters often use simple but odd *koans* to instruct novices. The last couplet expresses Han Shan's Chan teachings to novices, adopting the tone of a Chan master. What Chan Master Han Shan teaches is to "[t]ry and make it to Cold Mountain" and to attain enlightenment by oneself. In Waley's version, Cold Mountain is translated as "the Han-shan", the question "Why not …?" reduces the sacred and mystic sense of Cold Mountain. The pronoun "you" in the line, "You who spend all your time …", signifies worldly activities and the religious dimension is lost. The original line refers to unenlightened people on the spiritual way to Cold Mountain. Waley's version has failed completely to convey the Chan meaning of the original poem.

3. The Adaptation Principle

Snyder's adaptation principle in translation is consistent with his contention that a translated poem should be "the same poem in a different language". This makes his translation sound like English poems, but inevitably leads to some distortions of the source text. Of course, some of the distortions are deliberately made for the sake of exoticism and the poet's personal taste, which appear to be internal integrity in translation. Through his adaptation principle, and following

Pound's ideogrammic method and the *phanopoeia* approach, Snyder, like an artist, focuses on "a concept of energy in language" (Gentzler 1993: 19) created by white space, punctuation marks and dynamic words to emphasize the main characteristics of Chinese ideograms, "things in motion, motion in things". In order to maintain the colloquial tone of Han Shan's vernacular poems, Snyder adopts typical Chinese structures in most cases: asyndeton, end-stopped lines of five or seven words, the omission of subjects, informal words, and antithetic or contrasting words. He employs participles, phrases and punctuation marks, such as the dash, the comma, and the colon, to achieve the effects of ellipsis, caesura, and juxtaposition without departing from normal English idiom. Snyder is not only adept at keeping the colloquial tone of Han Shan's poems, but also at capturing the ethos of Han Shan's Chan aesthetics — "an elegant plainness" (Johnson 1991: 8) in Snyder's words. Snyder's selection presents a nature-Chan world to his readers. Through his peculiar juxtaposition of nature images and direct treatment of Chan jargon, the ineffable Chan is fully expressed in his translation. The above discussion has shown some remarkable features of Snyder's version. Here are some further examples to show how his adaptation principle works and how his visual imagination distorts the original poems.

In Poem No. 1, the second couplet describes rivulets and cliffs on Cold Mountain:

聯	/ 溪	/ 難	/ 記	/ 曲，
joined	rivulet	hard	remember	winding
adj.	n.	adv.	v.	adj.

(Since many rivulets meet together, it is hard for one to remember the winding places.)

叠	/ 嶂	/ 不	/ 知	/ 重
piled	cliff	not	know	overlapped
adj.	n.	adv.	v.	adj.

(Since many cliffs stand together, one cannot know how overlapped they are.)

Snyder's translation:

> Converging gorges — hard to trace their twists
> Jumbled cliffs — unbelievably rugged. (1969/1999: 39)

The original couplet consists of a perfect parallelism, adjective vs. adjective, noun vs. noun, adverb vs. adverb, and verb vs. verb. Without subjects and connectives, each line has two units that express a relationship of cause and effect. The first two characters as one unit constitute a nature image, and the last three characters form another unit which explains that image. Snyder follows the same pattern of antithesis in his translation. The dash, "—", not only imitates the caesura in each line, but also spells out the subject without any distortion of natural English idiom. Participles function in such a way as to indicate cause and effect. Such direct treatment is employed to deal with parallelism, asyndeton and laconism.

Snyder's choice of poems helps to present Han Shan as "a mountain madman in an old Chinese line of ragged hermits" (Snyder 1969/1999: 35). Accordingly, his translation often uses words relating to mountain life. For example, "草庵" (No. 13) refers to "a thatched hut" on a mountain or in a remote place. Snyder translates it as "straw shack". "山果" (No. 17) refers to "mountain fruit", but Snyder uses "mountain plants and berries". "布裘", meaning "coarse cloth", has become "rags and hides" in Snyder's version. Here, his direct treatment obviously exaggerates the original meaning through his visual imagination.

In the process of reification, Snyder has inevitably made some mistakes. For example, in Mahayana Buddhism, "大千" means "the huge universe of 1,000,000,000 worlds (1,000 × 1,000 × 1,000)". The word "galaxies" in Snyder's translation No. 23 has narrowed the Buddhist meaning. In Poem No. 15, "釜灶" refers to "kitchen utensils", such as kettles, woks, pots, and stoves, while "衣裓" refers to "a monk's robe" or "a long cloth askew on a monk's shoulder". Snyder used modern language to translate them: "pots or oven" for "釜灶" and "shirt and pants" for "衣裓". Nevertheless, his treatment of exoticism has produced some positive effect in some cases, for example, "伽陀藥" (No. 21) rendered as "Immortal-medicine", and "鐘鼎家" (No. 2) as "families with silverware and cars". In Buddhism, "伽陀藥" refers to "catholicon" used to eradicate all poisons or to cure every illness. In ancient China, "鐘鼎家" refers to "big, rich families". Servants used to cook with a big caldron ("鼎") and to strike the bell ("鐘") to call all family members to dinner. Referring to this translation technique, Snyder, in his letter to Fackler, frankly acknowledges that "[t]here are a few substitutions, i.e. 'silverware and cars' for equivalent but culture-bound symbols of affluence in the T'ang dynasty." (Leed 1986: 177)

Another phenomenon cannot be neglected in the treatment of some exotic culture-bound terms in Snyder's translation as he unconsciously links the 1950s American culture and his own experience with Han Shan's life in Tang times. For example, Poem No. 12 is a summation of Han Shan's spiritual quest for Cold Mountain and describes his unsuccessful seeking in the Confucian and Daoist traditions and his determination to retreat to Cold Mountain. Let us compare the translations of the third couplet:

煉 (make) 藥 (herb) 空 (vain) 求 (seek) 仙 (immortal)，
讀 (read) 書 (book) 兼 (and) 咏 (recite) 史 (history)。

Tried drugs, but couldn't make immortal;
Read books and wrote poems on history. (Snyder 1969/1999: 50)

I brewed potions in a vain search for
life everlasting,
I read books, I sang songs of history (Watson 1962/1970: 56)

Refining drugs, in vain I thought to become an immortal;
I read books and wrote poems on historical themes. (Henricks 1990: 400)

In the Tang Dynasty, "煉藥" means "make Daoist elixirs" or "refine pills of immortality", methods used by alchemists and called "*waidan*" ("external alchemy") in religious Daoism. It is usually depicted as a mixture of herbs and minerals burned in a cauldron to concoct elixirs. In the above selected translations, Watson and Henricks obviously capture the original meaning of "煉藥" in that the Chinese character "煉" is a verb, an action performed by an agent. Both of their translations ("brewed potions", "refining drugs") stress the procedure of boiling the mixtures in a cauldron. "藥" literally means "medical herbs" in ancient China. But when it goes together with the verb "煉", it inevitably takes on a Chinese cultural connotation, referring to the method of refining pills of immortality patronised by the Royal court and the elite. However, Snyder translates "煉藥" as "tried drugs", suggesting that the actor is more interested in the finished product "drugs", rather than the personal involvement in "making drugs". Snyder's unconscious change of the action "brewing" or "refining" to "trying" has, in some sense, produced ambiguity, reminding the reader of the peculiar phenomenon of America

in the 1950s. At that time, a group of young American writers and poets tried peyote, *LSD*, or heroin to experience hallucination and gain some imagination for their creative writing in the hope of "making it new" and "being absolutely modern".

Therefore, with regard to Snyder's inaccuracy in his translation, three situations should be considered: first, errors caused by his misunderstanding of the original; second, deliberate naturalization of exotic culture-specific terms to "equivalent but culture-bound symbols" (in Snyder's words); and third, unconscious replacement of the Chinese mountain scenery with his American wilderness. Ambivalent sympathy for his translation among his critics or readers stems from the third situation. In general, Snyder has changed Han Shan's tranquil Cold Mountain to his own harsh American wilderness with a violent or powerful yoke. This appears to have been a result of his experiences working in combination with his particular translation method. His "visualization", "like a movie", has a pre-verbal motion in mind which is unavoidably or unconsciously immersed in his deep sympathy for his own mountains — the wild but beautiful Sierras and Cascades. The following examples show his direct treatment of descriptive lines in his translation.

In Poem No. 2, the line "重 (overlapped) 岩 (cliffs) 我 (I) 蔔 (select) 居 (place)" was translated as "In a tangle of cliffs I chose a place" in Snyder's version. "重岩" means "overlapped cliffs" and is used to describe the layers of cliffs. But the word "tangle" drags the reader into a jumbled, harsh condition. The line "白 (white) 雲 (clouds) 抱 (embrace) 幽 (dark green) 石 (rock)" is a vivid descriptive sentence used to depict a tranquil, harmonious scene. The typical cold colours "white" and "dark green" in Han Shan's nature-Chan image produce an effect of quiet and harmony. These two colours form a sharp contrast in brightness, but the word "抱" ("embrace" or "cling to") dissolves the gap and harmonises them as one. Snyder's "White clouds clinging to vague rocks" reduces this peaceful relationship in nature to a blur; "vague" means "indistinct". The image "vague rocks" conveys a sense of roughness and harshness.

In Poem No. 3, the line "叠 (piled) 嶂 (cliff) 恒 (forever) 凝 (congealed) 雪 (snow)" consists of two images of stillness: piled cliffs and clotted snow. But in Snyder's version, the verb "snow" in the "Jagged scarps forever snowed in" emphasizes dynamic motion. The "piled cliffs" in Han Shan's serene Cold Mountain has become "jagged scarps" in Snyder's "wild" mountain.

In Poem No. 13, the word "銜" in the line "旭 (morning) 日 (sun) 銜 (hold, bear) 青 (green, blue) 嶂 (peak, cliff)" is a static verb literally meaning "holding in the mouth". The whole line is an exquisite description of "the morning sun over bluish green peaks" achieved through the juxtaposition of two nature images. Snyder's verb "drive" enhances the dynamic effect of his translation — "Morning sun drives over blue peaks".

In Poem No. 14, the line "月 (moon) 照 (shine) 水 (water) 澄澄 (clear)" describes a tranquil natural scene: when the moon shines, the water is clear. As in all other descriptive sentences, this is translated into a dynamic scene: "When the moon shines, water sparkles clear." The verb "sparkle" renders the whole poetic picture vibrant. The line, "杌 (branchless) 木 (tree) 雲 (cloud) 充 (act as) 葉 (leaf)", is translated as "On the dead stump, leaves of mist", which is clearly an overstatement. "杌木" refers to "branchless tree or naked tree"; hence, "clouds" are taken as "leaves". In Snyder's version, "branchless tree" has become "dead stump", and "leaves of clouds" has turned into "leaves of mist". Watson's version seems closer to the original: "Clouds in place of leaves for the naked trees." (Watson 1962/1970: 63)

Snyder's consistency in his treatment of these descriptive lines demonstrates that his deep sympathy for American wilderness is consciously or unconsciously embedded in his translation of *Cold Mountain Poems* as a result of his power of visualisation. It is not surprising that the persona "I" in his translation is inevitably imbued with his own mountain spirit. The reader can easily see how Han Shan's *dao*-Chan hermit-poet merges with Snyder's eco-poet of the American wilderness. In Poem No. 7, the original line "任 (let) 運 (fate) 遁 (escape, flee, retreat) 林 (woods) 泉 (springs, waters)" depicts the poet's *dao*-Chan enlightenment — complete letting-go of life in the mountains and waters, a combination of Daoist *wuwei* ("non-action") and Chanist nonduality. But in Snyder's translation — "Freely drifting, I prowl the woods and streams" — the enlightened "I" plays an active role in creating this self-forgotten joy. The verb "prowl" points to his activity as he "roams stealthily", which is widely different from the original "遁" ("flee", "escape", "retreat"). "遁" in Chan indicates the sudden *satori*. Snyder's version overemphasizes the landscape's ruggedness. His mythologising the vitality of Han Shan's enlightenment on Cold Mountain cannot be simply dismissed as the result of mistakes in the translation.

From the preceding comparison and analysis, we can safely draw some conclusions about Snyder's twenty-four translations of *Cold Mountain Poems*: Snyder's "direct treatment of 'the thing'" accords, in most cases, with Chan aesthetics, Han Shanian poetics and, the main features of classical Chinese poetry. Snyder's translations not only retain the colloquial tone of Han Shan's vernacular, but also confirm the translatability of Han Shan's meaning and style. The selection constitutes one continuous sequence which presents the enlightened Han Shan on the sacred Cold Mountain, a mystic hermit with Chan wisdom which is not beyond one's reach. In some sense, Han Shan's complete letting go and his *dao*-Chan enlightenment anticipate a relationship between the human and the non-human in one harmonious ecosystem.

Notes

1. Waley's twenty-seven translations are arranged without numbers. This article marks them with numbers only for convenience of comparison with Snyder's twenty-four translations.
2. This letter was first published in *American Anthropologist* in 1965 and was then collected in Snyder's book, *The Real Work: Interviews & Talks 1964–1979*. See Dell Hymes (1965). "Some North Pacific Coast Poems: A Problem in Anthropological Philology". *American Anthropologist* 67, 335–36.
3. In an e-mail to the researcher dated August 21, 2004, Snyder acknowledged that "as Chung Ling has cogently said, perhaps I imposed some of my own West Coast mountain experiences on Han Shan rather than the other way around."
4. Qian Xuelie, "9", in *HSS* (*Hanshan shide shijiaoping*), 114. Waley, "6", in *CP* (*Chinese Poems*), 107. Snyder, "6", in *RCM* (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*), 44. Hereafter the abbreviations will be used.
5. Qian Xuelie, "28", in *HSS*, 136. Waley, "8", in *CP*, 107. Snyder, "8", in *RCM*, 46.
6. Qian Xuelie, "31", in *HSS*, 140. Waley, "7", in *CP*, 107. Snyder, "9", in *RCM*, 47.
7. Qian Xuelie, "221", in *HSS*, 356. Waley, "16", in *CP*, 108–09. Snyder, "24", in *RCM*, 62.

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