

A Study of Gary Snyder's Eco-Ethic Thoughts

陈小红 著

加里·斯奈德的生态伦理思想研究

深层生态学桂冠诗人加里·斯奈德的生态伦理思想



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Preface

This book, from its subject selection to its material collection, to its shaping of thought and, to its final version, has directly benefited from my doctor's tutor Prof. Ou Hong's careful supervision. In the three years' staying in Sun Yat-sen University, I have been enlightened much by him in enlarging my knowledge, in establishing my outlook and in enriching my life. He has built a spiritual home for us—EPSI, and held regular seminars twice a month for three years. These seminars made me wander in the sea of poetry and appreciate the endless profundity and charm of poetry. He has led us to join in many seminars, such as the “Foreign Literature and Native Perspectives” Seminar held by *Foreign Literature Review* in Su Zhou in July, 2004, and The First Pearl River International Poetry Conference jointly sponsored by four universities of Guangzhou in June, 2005, and furthermore, the Annual Guang Dong Youth Academic Seminars held by my tutor himself. He always showed his deep concern for the students who needed most, just as a father did to his children. When I first intended to do a research into Gary Snyder, he presented me all his collections without reservation and, corrected and guided all my course papers with care. I can hardly find any words to show my thanks to him. So all that I can only do is to say to him in the most common way: “Thank you, my dear teacher.”

My deep thanks also go to Mr J. H. Prynne, who answered our

many questions and donated so many invaluable books to our EPSI, from which many notes in this book have come mainly.

My sincere thanks also go to all the members of EPSI, who offered me so much generous help. Their sincere friendship made my life more beautiful and thus, the days of over one thousand spent with them will be the most memorable and cherished of my life.

Furthermore, I would like to express my special thanks to my respected tutor Yu Jianhua, whose constant devotion to American literature sets a good example to me, to all his other students. And his humor and his love for his students leave a great impression on me. Grateful acknowledgements are also due to Professor Zhang Dingquan, Li Weiping, Zhang Tingquan in Shanghai International Studies University, where I am taking up my postdoctor's research. Their help to me is immense and their concern about my postdoctor's proposal is a great enlightenment for me.

Finally, I'd like to express my deep thanks to my family. During these years, my parents have been looking after my little daughter so that I could devote more time to my research work. The love from my husband and daughter has encouraged me at all times to exert myself utmost to focus on my research.

Abstract

This book aims to probe into Gary Snyder's eco-ethic thoughts, who is the Poet Laureate of deep ecology.

The Introduction gives a brief account of the ecocriticism, the present global ecological problems, especially the ecological predicaments in China, then points out the motives and social significance of selecting Snyder as a case study. Besides, it sums up the general studies on Snyder and refers to the novelty of this book.

Chapter 1 analyzes Snyder's wilderness ethics. Snyder inherits but further develops Thoreau's view of wilderness. He puts forward the three concepts as "wild", "wildness" and "wilderness", and stresses humans' "sense of place", i. e. "sense of nativeness" embodied in culture. Enchanted with wilderness so much, he longs for an ideal state that the wild, good and sacred can be combined into an integral unity. Besides, he proposes his wilderness ethics and suggests that such ethics shall not only apply to humans but nonhumans. Snyder regards himself as the spokesman of the wilderness and the wilderness, in turn, as his constituency.

And Snyder's view of civilization is dealt with in Chapter 2, which includes two sections: the criticism of industrial civilization and construction of eco-civilization. While criticizing the present industrial civilization, Snyder is more worried about the dilemma brought by

industrial civilization. This is fully explored in the following three aspects: (1) Far away from the earth: humans are leaving farther and farther away from the soil where they grow up, but they must be aware that the earth is home of all beings. (2) Anthropocentrism: humans' desire for conquering nature is unprecedented, for they hold the distorted idea that "man is the soul of all things", and that "man is the measure of all things". (3) Overexploitation: Overexploitation results from humans' insatiable desire for materials and the increase of population, especially in the underdeveloped countries. Overexploitation destroys the ecological cycle, and makes the ecological system hard to keep a sustainable development, and leads to such a result that the economic growth is inversely proportional to the ecological growth, and that the wealth distribution is extremely unfair. The notorious "Lifeboat Theory" is such a case in point. In solving this problem, besides controlling the birth rate, we should diminish our insatiable pursuit of material enjoyments. Man's greediness is admittedly an important factor of excessive exploitation of natural resources. To be true, the global wealth can satisfy everyone's needs but not his greediness.

The construction of eco-civilization refers to the solutions raised by Snyder to solve the ecological problems of the present civilization. Having affirmed the great achievements of human civilization, Snyder provides some feasible plans and ideas for constructing eco-civilization. Obviously, Snyder turns out to be a constructive and objective poet. Differentiating himself from other poets of the "Beat Generation" (BG), overthrowing and rejecting everything, Snyder draws his attention to healing and recuperation, and his appeals rise from benediction. No wonder, he is regarded as "the unbeaten BG poet".

And Snyder's Indian Complex is discussed in Chapter 3. Snyder has been fascinated by primitive culture, especially American Indian culture, which fully and highly shows the ecological wisdom. Ecologically, American Indians are noble savages. Their totemism confirms them in the belief that winds, clouds, trees, grasses and waters compose a unity; that the life of stones and grasses looks as beautiful as Einstein's life; that democracy shall extend to nonhumans, that swimming people, creeping people, standing people and flying people shall be included in the councils of government. As Snyder's initiators, American Indians reveal a civilization of another stage. They believe that the earth is a living organism, which is deeply reflected in Gaia Hypothesis, and firmly convinced by Snyder. In view of this, Snyder strongly objects to the "Progress", "Manifest Destiny". While admiring primitive ecological wisdom, Snyder especially engrosses himself in primitive arts.

Chapter 4 deals with Snyder's reconstruction of eco-utopia. Snyder sketches a beautiful picture of eco-utopia, that is, the harmony of man and nature. Man should learn to think as a mountain thinks, to feel as a river feels, and to allow his life to go forward just as a brook flows freely. Snyder brings up a set of ecological concepts, sets up a holistic ecological consciousness, and emphasizes the harmony of all things on earth. Snyder believes the supreme law of nature lies in the maintenance of beauty, integrity and stability of the ecological system. Only in this way can man follow the timeless path of love and wisdom, in affectionate with the sky, lands, winds, clouds, trees, waters, animals and grasses.

Chapter 5 involves Snyder's eco-poetics and relates how his ecological outlook permeates through his poetic style in ten aspects. (1) Snyder's poetry focuses on a striking ecological consciousness. Most of

his poems are not concerned over middle-class but the survival of all beings, especially nonhumans. (2) In Snyder's opinion, "The real work" is real life, and it reflects the original chaotic status of the universe. Poetry doesn't merely belong to intellectuals, but to laboring people, and to all other things as well. (3) In writing his poetry, Snyder consistently carries on William Carlos Williams' "No ideas but in things" and Wallace Stevens' "No ideas about the thing but thing itself". Under the guidance of these ideas, Snyder draws his own conclusion that a good poem represents the world in an objective way instead of imposing the poet's own subjective intention and logic on readers. Snyder's poetry is characterized by its straightforwardness, simplicity and indistinction between subject and object, so readers can enjoy his poetry from different perspectives and interpret his poetry from multiple dimensions. Anyway, a poet must learn to let the poetry talk by itself. (4) In his poems, Snyder seldom uses personal pronouns, which hints the disappearance of subject, and reveals the striking characteristics of his ecopoetics. The characteristics originate from the view of "no self" in nonanthropocentrism. (5) Snyder's poetry is deceptively simple rather than superficially simplistic. This deceptively simple implies deep connotations, that is, a new return to original purity and simplicity after a cycle. (6) Snyder's view of language appears to be unique. He emphasizes that language is not the only gift for humans. Language is biological as well as cultural. It is the ideal for the poet to use fewer words to convey more meanings, which agrees with this ecological maxim: "Do more with less." One of the peculiarities of his poetry is his experienced mixture of "real" (words) and "empty" beyond literal texts. "Real" is used to better reflect "empty", which in return

embodies the tension of poetry, the essence of poetry, i. e. conveyance of meaning beyond expressions. A successful poet can learn how to break away from the prison house of language. (7) In his poetry, Snyder frequently uses participles and infinitives to avoid using tense, for time is impermanent, and space is boundless in his eyes. In fact, it is meaningless to impose an artificial mechanical concept of time on the real world. (8) Snyder's poetry is quite different from the traditional poetry. In most of his poems, he adopts a loose enjambment structure rather than the western analytic and logic structure. This characteristic can be traced back to the influence of Chinese classical poetry on him and his ecological view of the chaotic nature. (9) Snyder lays stress on oral tradition, therefore, his poetry appears simple, colloquial and readable. Snyder shows particular interest in Han Shan's poetry for the sake of the latter's colloquial vernacular poetic style. Snyder's poetry is full of rhythms that tally with those of Jazz music. Moreover, he considers the rhythms of poetry have an intrinsic coincidence with the poet's peripheral geographic environment and the movements of nature. All these ensure the beauty of music and rhythms of his poetry. (10) Snyder proposes cultivating eco-culture. He thinks that culture should focus more on the harmony between humans and nonhumans, between society and nature. He advocates ethno-poetics and cultural pluralism against cultural chauvinism and discourse monopoly, and this idea has close connections with the biodiversity and communionism in ecology.

Chapter 6 relates the ecological mosaic, that is to say, the cultural influences upon the poet, including Buddhism, Japanese culture, Chinese culture, sense of nativeness, and American Indian culture (hereafter in a special section). All these factors have permeated

through each other and organically formed his unique ecological outlook. And I emphatically relate the influences of the Chinese classical poetry and Chinese landscape paintings on Gary Snyder's poetry. Moreover, I am making a deep exploration into how he absorbs the heterogeneous cultures and inherits his own native traditions, and how he holds both of them together. Here I employ the theory of "Sense of Nativeness" put forward by the Chinese scholar Professor Ou Hong. These analyses will contribute to the foreign literary study in a globalization context. It reminds the researchers in studying foreign literature that they should set foot on his native land, and face up to the world.

In conclusion, Snyder's ecological outlook contains rich and deep connotations. His eco-ethic thoughts are relatively objective, sound, ideal and thoroughgoing, and he fully deserves the title of the Poet Laureate of deep ecology. And most commendably, Snyder puts his ideas into practice, and spends most of his life in mountainous areas and lives as a primitive man. After the publication of Jack Kerouac's *Dharma Bums*, his life style has been a legend for the modern society. However, there are some limitations to his eco-thoughts, that is, he shows his concern for long-term policies rather than immediate ones, namely, his transcendental consciousness seems less manageable. But I think, in the future, this defect may be just the value and charm of his eco-ethic thoughts.

内 容 提 要

本论著拟研究深层生态学桂冠诗人加里·斯奈德的生态伦理思想。

导论。首先简要介绍了生态批评、目前全球面临的生态问题，尤其是中国所处的生态困境，并说明本书写作的动机及其社会意义，然后介绍了选择斯奈德作个案研究的缘由，最后综述与其有关的研究状况，指出论著新意所在。

第一章探讨斯奈德的荒野伦理。斯奈德继承和发展了梭罗的荒野观，但其观点比梭罗更加彻底。他提出了“狂野”、“野性”、“荒野”三个基本概念，尤其强调人的“位置感”，在文化领域内则体现为“本土意识”。斯奈德对荒野情有独钟，他渴望这样一种状况：野性、美好、神圣能三位一体，而且建立了他的荒野伦理观。荒野伦理已不再是人类社会的伦理，它已经扩及到非人类。斯奈德将自己定位为荒野代言人，将荒野当做自己的活动阵地。

第二章介绍斯奈德的文明观。这一章分成两节：批判工业文明和建设生态文明。在对工业文明进行批判的同时，斯奈德尤其担忧目前工业文明所面临的困境。此节主要从三个方面进行论证：（1）远离地球：人们越来越脱离其生长的土壤。人类一定要明白：大地是万物共同之家。（2）人类中心主义：人类对自然的控制欲空前膨胀。人类认为：人是万物的灵长，人是万物的尺度。（3）过度开采：过度开采是由于人性的贪婪和人口膨胀，尤其是第三世界国家的人口增长过快造成的。生态系统无法实现可持续性发展，生态循

环遭受破坏，经济和生态成反比例增长，世界分配极度不均衡，臭名昭著的“救生艇”理论就是一典型例子。当然，除了人口问题外，人类也应该减少对物质享受无限制的追求。人类的贪婪是资源开采过度的重要原因之一。的确，世界上的财富可以满足每个人的需要，却无法满足每个人的贪婪。

建设生态文明是指斯奈德对工业文明进行批判的同时，也肯定了其带来的进步，并提供了建设生态文明的一些可行性方案和理念。不难看出，斯奈德是一个客观的建设性诗人。不同于其他垮掉派诗人，主张打倒和否定一切，他关注治疗与康复，他的呼喊是在祝福的基础上起飞的。难怪，他被称为“没有垮掉的垮掉派诗人”。

第三章是斯奈德的印第安情结。斯奈德热衷于原始文化，尤其是印第安文化，因为印第安文化集中体现了高度的生态思想。在生态方面，印第安人是高贵的野蛮人。印第安的图腾崇拜使他们坚信：风云树木水草是一家；石头小草的生命和爱因斯坦的生命一样美丽；民主应该扩及到非人类，游泳的人们、爬行的人们、站立的人们、飞行的人们都应被纳入政府的议程。印第安人是斯奈德的启蒙老师，他们向诗人展示了另外一个阶段的文明。印第安人相信地球是一个生命有机体，盖娅假说就是这种理念下的一个产物。斯奈德反对“进步说”、“命定说”，对盖娅假说深信不疑。除了崇敬原始的生态智慧，他还特别钟情于原始艺术。

第四章是生态乌托邦的重构。斯奈德勾勒了一幅生态乌托邦的美好画面。天人合一，人和自然和谐相处。人类应该学会像山一样地思考，像河一样地感觉，生活像溪水一样地自由奔流。斯奈德提出了一系列的生态名词，建立了一种整体论的生态保护意识，这种意识偏重万物之间无碍的与融会贯通的关系。斯奈德认为自然界的最高法则是维持生态系统的美丽、完整和稳定。只有这样，人类才能依着永恒无尽的爱与智慧，与天地风云树木水草群生。

第五章是生态诗学。这章从十个方面论述了斯奈德诗歌中的生态思想。(1) 斯奈德诗歌的主题基本上都关注生态。它们关心的不再是中产阶级的问题,而是关于万物的生存问题,更多关注非人类。(2) 斯奈德认为真正的作品是实实在在的生活,世界的本来状态。诗歌不只属于知识分子,也属于劳动人民,属于世界万物。(3) 在诗歌创作中,斯奈德一直推崇威廉姆斯的“不表现观念,只表现事物”和斯蒂文斯的“不在事物理念而在于事物本身”的诗学观。这些观点强调在写诗时不要强加诗人本身的理念和逻辑,应该让事物直接呈现。直接素朴的诗风就是斯奈德诗歌的最显著特色。在他的许多诗歌中,主体和客体不分,这有助于读者多角度地欣赏诗歌,而不拘泥于一个预设的视角,让诗歌自己说话。(4) 斯奈德的诗歌不同于其他传统诗人的诗歌,他很少用人称代词,这也是“无我”的生态思想在其诗风中的体现。主体的消失是其诗歌一个明显特色,这源自于他的非人类中心主义生态观。(5) 斯奈德的诗歌表面简单,实质上是深奥的简朴,是回归后的简朴,是终点又回到起点的返璞归真。(6) 斯奈德的语言观十分独特。他强调语言并非人类所特有的天赋,语言不仅是文化的,更是生理上的。语言的最高境界是意犹未尽,用尽可能少的语言表达更为丰富的内涵。这个理念与生态学中的“投入少,产出多”那句格言吻合。他诗歌最妙之处是语言文本之外所延伸的虚实结合,而“实”之外的“虚”更能体现诗歌的张力和诗歌的本质。“实”的出现只是为了更好地体现“虚”,从而达到“不着一字,尽得风流”。(7) 斯奈德在其诗歌中,常用分词和不定式,很少采用动词时态。因为他认为:时间是非永恒的,空间是无限的。我们平时所划分的时间是人为而机械的,没有任何实际意义。(8) 与传统的诗歌不同,斯奈德的诗歌反西方的智性、逻辑,呈现松散的并置结构,这种诗风既受中国古典诗歌影响,又与诗人的生态思想密切相关。世界原初的浑

沌，在斯奈德的诗歌中得到了充分体现。(9) 斯奈德强调口头传统。其诗歌简单，口语化，读起来朗朗上口。他尤爱寒山诗，因为寒山是用白话文口语体创作。他自诩其诗歌的节奏与爵士乐的节奏相吻合，但更与周边的地理环境、自然律动相吻合。所有这些确保了斯奈德诗歌的节奏美和音乐美。(10) 斯奈德倡导生态文化。文化应该更多更好地关注人和非人类，社会和自然的和谐共处。他主张种族诗学，主张文化多元论，反对文化沙文主义，话语垄断。这些观点出自于他所强调的生态多样性和生态共生主义的生态伦理思想。

第六章是生态马赛克。叙述了诗人所受到的各种文化影响。包括佛教、日本文化、中国文化、本土意识、印第安文化的影响，其中印第安文化在第三章中有介绍。所有这些影响相互渗透，有机结合，形成了独特的斯奈德生态观。本章重点介绍了中国古典诗歌以及中国山水画对斯奈德诗歌风格的影响，对斯奈德如何吸收异质文化以及如何继承本民族传统的“本土意识”做了深入探讨。这里我采用了中国学者区銛先生 1988 年提出的“本土意识”理论来分析。这些分析有助于外国文学研究者们在全球化语境下的外国文学研究中，既要有强烈的“本土意识”，又要具备全球视野。

结论。斯奈德的生态思想有着极其丰富的内涵。作为深层生态学的桂冠诗人，他是当之无愧的。他的生态观较为客观、健康、理想和彻底。最难能可贵的是，斯奈德的生态意识不仅仅停留在思想上，而且还付诸于他一生的社会生活实践。他一生的大部分时间都在山区度过，像原始人那样地生活，当克鲁亚克的《达摩流浪汉》出版后，他的生活方式便成为一个现代社会的传奇。当然，他也有其局限性，由于关注比较长远，所以现实可操作性不是很强。然而我认为，在将来，这缺陷可能也是其生态思想最富魅力之处。

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