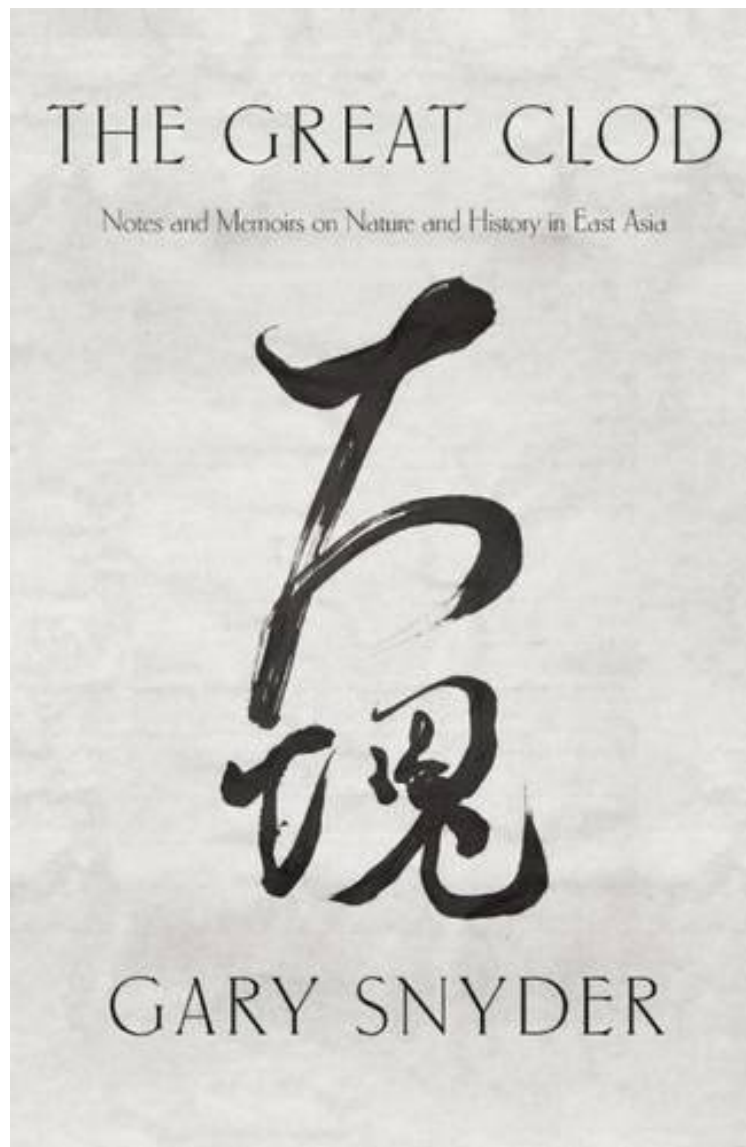


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## The Great Clod: Notes and Memoirs on Nature and History in East Asia

*Gary Snyder*

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**Gary Snyder : The Great Clod: Notes and Memoirs on Nature and History in East Asia** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Clod: Notes and Memoirs on Nature and History in East Asia:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. DryBy Edward C. CarpenterWhile I respect Snyder greatly and have

much interest in the subject of these essays, I was disappointed by this book. There were as stated by another reviewer some fine passages but much of the content was written in a fragmented manner as could be expected of notes Snyder had made for himself. A few themes interwove themselves throughout, the most interesting being the realization that East Asians -- for all their nature-oriented culture -- have acted much like the rest of humanity in abusing the Earth. The remaining themes involved urban growth out of a more original grounded society, geological aspects of China and Japan, and how these played into poetic and pictorial arts. I don't believe I'll find this book especially memorable. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Look a mountain top, a stream oh life By CustomerAgain Gary has given us a wonderful painting with words. Having been in some of the parts of China recently that he writes about it was like taking my trip down the Yancey river again. I highly recommend this book to all. A poetic painting of an extraordinary place. Thank you sensei. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Joe O'Laughlin More thoughtful than an "Area Studies" course on China, Japan and Korea.

For the full course of his remarkable career, Gary Snyder has continued his study of East Asian culture and philosophies. From the Ainu to the Mongols, from Hokkaido to Okinawa, from the landscapes of China to the backcountry of contemporary Japan, from the temples of Daitokoji to the Yellow River Valley, it is now clear how this work has influenced his poetry, his stance as an environmental and political activist, and his long practice of Zen. Growing up in the Pacific Northwest, Asia became a vocation for Snyder. While most American writers looked to the capitals of Europe for their inspiration, Snyder looked west to the East. American letters is profoundly indebted to this geographical choice. Long rumored to exist, *The Great Clod* collects several published in *The Coevolution Quarterly* almost forty years ago when Snyder briefly described this work as *The China Book*, and several others, the majority, never before published in any form. *Summer in Hokkaido*, *Wild in China*, *Ink and Charcoal*, *Wolf-Hair Brush*, these essays turn from being memoirs of travel to prolonged considerations of art, culture, natural history and religion. It is filled with Snyder's remarkable insights and briskly beautiful descriptions.

His newest book of prose, *The Great Clod* is a series of essays on Asia's ecological history, combining culture and politics in a way that is, unsurprisingly, poetic and graceful. *The Great Clod* may be slim but its scope is immense. The Japan Times Classical poetry, calligraphy, the best source of temple incense all figure in the text, which has something of the feel of a valediction. Elegant and thoughtful, with much to read between the lines in commentary on a long life's work. Students and admirers of Snyder will be enchanted and intrigued. Kirkus Each essay furnishes a graceful, very conversational (sentence fragments and all), but keenly well-informed enticement to pursue its subject further. This kind of friendly, even compassionate, mode of instruction comes, of course, from the American arguably most responsible for spreading appreciation of East Asia among North Americans. If this little book should prove Snyder's last word on East Asia, it is wonderfully enough. Booklist "Snyder is an elder statesman of the natural world and the tribal unions of poetry. He has a body of work as original as predecessors Williams Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens." *The Bloomsbury* "His greatest strength a quiet and profound elegance, an ability to write a simple phrase that seems to have been echoing through human consciousness for three or four thousand years." *Lewis MacAdams, California Magazine* "This poet's great gift has always been perfect visual clarity...and, needless to say, derives from Snyder's vision in the larger sense." *Paul Berman, Village Voice* "What thoughtful beauty! How skillfully Gary Snyder interfuses the practical knowledge of an animal sense with story, language, and song. True teachers in American are now an endangered species. I learn so much from this good man's perception, humor, discipline, and love for this world." *James Hillman*