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**THE POETICS OF LEARNING IN THE TEXTS OF GARY SNYDER**

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Abstract

The aim of this dissertation is to explore how the poetics of Gary Snyder constitute a valuable source of learning transmitted through performance and orality. The ethnopoetic approach specifies the way learning occurs in the mythic and poetic universe of Snyder. Preparation for a hunt becomes a proposal for alternative education, while the function of the shaman-protopoet broadens the scope of learning in every dimension of the world, both on the realistic and the supernatural planes. Snyder demonstrates the passing on of the practice through a grand performative parable of a father-to-son instruction which is realized in constant dialogue with the old masters, for the betterment of the community. There is a personal dimension of learning that takes place as a result of enlightenment, based on the poetic physiognomy of tools on the one hand, and physical work with work rhythm, on the other hand. The performance of the nature facilitates the transfer of learning and provides a multiplicity of remarkable levels of consideration regarding its ability to generate essential knowledge. Moreover, learning is not withheld, but is transmitted back to the community that needs it, in order to define the “the how to be” on this planet. Finally, applying the ecocritical approach I comment on the significance of “old song and tale,” which constitutes the inexhaustible reservoir of inspiration, the great literary “compost” in the American poetic tradition. The poet becomes a seeker of learning in the flux of natural events, which he studies as a kind of performative, ever-fresh text. The challenge for the poet, as this thesis describes, is to become worthy of the apocalyptic knowledge nature offers to the adept seekers of the learning that inhabit the realm of wild landscape of the earth and the human mind.