

## Gary Snyder and His Life Writing

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### Abstract

In his 1983 book *Gary Snyder's Vision: Poetry and the Real Work*, Charles Molesworth insightfully observes that Snyder's concept of history is a "critical" one. This essay, based not only on Molesworth's Nietzschean reading of history but also on Jon Halper's *Gary Snyder: Dimensions of a Life* as well as Gary Snyder's poetry, prose, and interviews, attempts to retrace the interrelations between Snyder's philosophical apprenticeship—especially during his college years and early trips to Japan—and his (early and later) literary productions. Those formative years helped to reshape Snyder's ecological vision, that is, his environmental imagination. The last part of this essay focuses on Snyder's Zen Buddhism and, more generally, his attraction to Asian religious wisdom in the light of his early studies in Japan.

**Key Words:** Gary Snyder, Charles Molesworth, life writing, Jon Halper, Zen-Buddhism