THE BEAT GENERATION IN A SCHOLASTIC ANALYSIS
- literary hipsters and subversive visionaries -

I. Subject and method of analysis

I 1. Introduction of the subject area

1997 was the year of both political changes and cultural shipwrecking in the social and cultural landscape of the U.S.A. The medias were increasingly selling the American dream on nation-wide broadcasting ranges, infiltrating high-hopes and great expectations into Iowa’s bedrooms, Philadelphian malls and New York’s bars, when two of the most controversial and genuine writers, born in, and exiled from this country, were to be deceased 1 + 2. It was to be the last year for those two (together with Jack Kerouac3) mentors of the Beat Generation, who so very intensively were to change the perspectives and concepts of literature and cultural consciousness in the postmodern siècle.

1

April 5, 1997
Web posted at: 5:02 p.m. EST (2202 GMT)

NEW YORK (CNN) -- Poet Allen Ginsberg, whose raw, angry verse epitomized America's "beat" literary movement in the 1950s and '60s, died Saturday. He was 70.

He died at 2:39 a.m. surrounded by family and friends at his New York apartment, said Bill Morgan, his friend and archivist.

On Thursday, it was learned Ginsberg had terminal liver cancer, and doctors had said the poet was expected to live between four and 12 months.


2 William S. Burroughs suffered a heart attack and died at the age of 83 Saturday, August 2, 1997 in the hospital of Kansas City.

For the author of this thesis, 1997 was to be the beginning of a scientific journey into the heart of higher education in Romanian, German and Austrian university institutions, in search for the vast literary heritage of an avantgarde bohemian group of writers, friends, intellectuals from the U.S.A. - the Beat Generation.

Their permanent quest for own special anti-moral and anti-social „new values“ firstly striked my attention, when reading the classic road-novel „On The Road“, which bestly represented the frantic, restless spirit of the beat life.

Now we desire the urgent necessity for reviving and continuing with the „visionary way“ recalled by Ginsberg into our stream of consciousness, democratic and sensitive values bestly pointed out by the great American bard of words - Walt Whitman:\n
„Intense and loving comradeship, the personal and passionate attachment of man to man -- which, hard to define, underlies the lessons and ideals of the profound saviours of every land and age, and which seems to promise, when thoroughly develop'd, cultivated and recognized in manners and literature, the most substantial hope and safety of the future of these States, will then be fully expressed.

It is to the development, identification, and general prevalence of that fervid comradship, (the adhesive love, at least rivaling the amative love hitherto possessing imaginative literature, if not going beyond it,) that I look for the counterbalance and offset of our materialistic and vulgar American democracy, and for the spiritualization thereof. Many will say it is a dream, and will not follow my inferences: but I confidently expect a time when there will be seen, running like a half-hid warp through all the myriad audible and visible worldly interests of America, threads of manly friendship, fond and loving, pure and sweet, strong and life-long, carried to degrees hitherto unknown -- not only giving tone to individual character, and making it unprecedentedly emotional, muscular, heroic, and refined, but having the deepest relations to general politics. I say democracy infers such loving comradeship, as its most inevitable twin or counterpart, without which it will be incomplete, in vain, and

---

4 Allen Ginsberg stated in a conversation with Lucien Carr, Kerouac the “nakedness of soul” as protective solution.
incapable of perpetuating itself.“

It is assumed that US-president George W. Bush will persevere in his 2004 – 2008 administration in the same militarist, inhuman, for-profit policy, without any lenient consider of the 55.557.584 popular votes in favour of the Democratic Candidate John F. Kerry⁶, and it is a dire necessity and my duty – our all duty as intellectuals and peace-loving citizens of this world to oppose the political development in the U.S.A., which undoubtely will effect and telecontrol the European, Asian and African politics, economies and social phenomenas in the same destructively and liberticidal way as it has done in the last four years. Therefore I choose as the subject for my diploma thesis the analysis, elaboration and biographical rendition of the most influential cultural and political countermovement of the 20th century America – the Beat Generation in both cinematographical – the film „Beat Today“ - and scientifical manner – the scholarly part of the diploma thesis.

I. 2. **Modus operandi**

The structure of work is stretched out on two major lines of action:

A: The scientific analysis of the Beat Generation as literary and political countermovement concepted as a literature report on what has been written and published on the Beats. Also I will replenish what their common ground was, and which impact their lifes and works had on contemporary postmodern culture (e.g. Burroughs as the mentor of the Punk Rock/Heavy Metal/Cyber Punk/Grunge

---

⁵ Walt Whitman: „Democratic Vistas“, 1871
⁶ see electoral and popular vote summary on the internet – site: [http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0922901.html](http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0922901.html)
subcultural movements – Ginsberg as the father-figure of the Hippie movement). Also the significance of their central ideas today, with all the aspects it implies will constitute a part of the diploma thesis. Further on I will survolate the nowadays literary production and cultural echo around the world of all the institutions (universities, foundations, archives, medial sources, schools etc.) that deal with the Beat heritage, focusing on the documenting of the beat movement especially in the U.S.A. and Europe.

B: Together with the VHS – tape itself, the film anaytical structure and synopsis of the film „Beat Today“, as the „vivid“ supplement to the scholastic analysis, with its after-effects in European circles of Beat – reception will constitute the second part of this work, also the argumentation for choosing film as the medium of transmission. I will also provide a film script and an „intimate“ self-reflection on the methods, goals, intentions and expectations of the filming process, including comments on the cinematography and dramaturgy. The „intertextuality“ with other beat works, like the movie „Pull My Daisy“ by Robert Frank, or the opera (musical play) „The Black Rider“ by Robert Wilson/Tom Waits/William S. Burroughs, concepted as an hommage to German expressionism will be also elaborated. Last but not least I will enqueue the film „Beat Today“ in the cineaste tradition of experimental-avantgarde-filmmaking, that emerged through the „Cut – Up – School“, which William S. Burroughs initiated together with Brion Gysin/Anthony Balch/Ian Sommerville in Paris during the early sixties, before the huge underground - boom in 1964 brought independent filmmakers on the New York film-scene to impressive top out-put.

These two coexisting bodies of work will provide the desired complexity of both scientifical approach and immanent working - methods in order to point out why the Beat Generation is not extinguished, but very alive and kickin´ all over the globe in terms of countercultural and authentical movement and alternative life-proposal. Over
the last sixty years almost everybody, who became interested in this literary group had the chance to research and read their books, though force-controlled state institutions tried very hard to censor and excoriate these literary innovative works. Nevertheless many independent publishing-houses\(^7\) dared to combat censorship and opened up a substantial forum for the Beat writers, which is being carried on up to the present day. This is what makes my diploma thesis to draw breath in the end of the year of 2004, although many academics and critics would wish to plaster the innovative literary techniques and world-shattering visions writers like B.A. William S. Burroughs, Distinguished Professor Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, B.A. Gregory Corso, Michael McClure, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus Gary Snyder, Ph.D. Lawrence Frelinghetti, Peter Orlovsky, B.A. Philip Whalen, John Clelloon Holmes, Bob Kaufman, Ph.D. Diane DiPrima, LeRoi Jones (later Amiri Baraka), B.A. Philip Lamantia, B. A. Lew Welch, Kenneth Rexroth, Robert Duncan, Jack Spicer, M.A. Ruth Weiss, B.A. Joyce Johnson, B.A. Hettie Jones, Joanne Kyger, Brenda Frazer (Bonnie Bremser), Janine Pommy Vega, B.A. Anne Waldman, Ph.D. Ann Charters, Ph.D. Josephine Miles, James Broughton, Charles Bukowski, Bob Dylan and their muses: Neal Cassady, Herbert Huncke, Lucien Carr, Carl Solomon, Hal Chase, B.A. Carolyn Cassady, Joan Vollmer Adams Burroughs, Edie Parker, Eileen Kaufman brought into being.\(^8\)

3. **The resources situation and the state of research**

This body of work will analyze the current situation of the secondary literature

---

\(^7\) Just some of them to be enumerated here: Olympia – Press (Paris), Hanser – Verlag (München), Flamingo (London), RoRoRo (Hamburg), Grove Press (New York), Fuck You Press (New York), Viking Press (New York), City Moon Press (New York), Holt, Rinehart & Winston (New York), City Lights (San Francisco) etc. I will give a detailed overview of them later on in this work.

\(^8\) Here are listed only the names of the most prominent members of the Beat Generation, though many other artists and friends of the group were gathering around the nucleus of Burroughs-Ginsberg-Kerouac. There wore about 300 Beatniks living in New York by the end of the fifties (see: http://www.uni-protokolle.de/Lexikon/US-)

V
written on the Beat Generation both in books and internet research sources.

A: Academic Libraries

- Library of the University of Klagenfurt, Austria
- National Library of Vienna, Austria
- Central Library of the „Rudolfina“- University of Vienna, Austria
- Specialized Library for English and American Culture Studies Vienna, Austria
- Specialized Library for Contemporary History and Eastern European History Vienna, Austria
- Central Library of the „Philipps“- University of Marburg a.d. Lahn, Germany
- Central Library of the University of Augsburg, Germany
- Central Library of the „Ludwig – Maximilians“ - University of Munich, Germany

B: Internet Research Sources

All the websites which offer an accurate information background on the publications, online-forums, magazines, literary reports, conferences, foundations, projects, biographies, newsgroups, etc. will be listed in the bibliographical notes in the end of this thesis. Also I will provide the country of origin, and the category of origin of the websites. A more detailed disquisition is to be presented in the devolution of the chapter dedicated to the internet research sources I used. This modern research forum represents insofar a convenience, as it proves how many people\textsuperscript{9} use them on a regular basis (or not), which makes it more easy to follow and sum up the persons interested in the Beat Generation today. As many of the sources in the Internet are accessed by both private persons and official institutions the numbers are of approximate engagement.
II. The genesis of the Beat Generation

1. The „rebellious group“ at Columbia University and their „muses“

In between 1944 and 1950, the first six years of literary production by the main figures in the Beat Generation, who first joined forces in 1944 in the city of New York, as Klaus Hegemann is pointing out very clearly in his dissertation „Allen Ginsberg – Zeitkritik und politische Aktivitäten“, a few of the former professors of Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac from their Columbia University – days had to become except the beatniks themselves the first reviewers of their first written texts.

Though the Columbia University was to become somehow the intellectual impulse for dedicating time on the classical canon of English and American literature taught there, authors like William Shakespeare, John Donne, Ben Jonson, T.S. Coleridge, William Butler Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Francis Scott Fitzgerald being lectured, Ginsberg criticized the course of instruction because it did not include writers like: Walt Whitman, Henry Miller, Percy Bysshe Shelley or William Carlos Williams. Also the appearance of the „hombre invisible“ into the group of young bohemiens together with his „personal canon of literature“ he introduced to Ginsberg, Kerouac and Huncke, consisting of

9 Every website presents a register with the number of people accessing it.
10 Lucien Carr’s statement in Barry Miles’: „Ginsberg. A Biography“, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 1989, pg. 47: „In those years at Columbia, we really did have something going. It was a rebellious group, I suppose, of which there are many on campuses, but it was one that was really dedicated to a „New Vision“. It’s practically impossible to define. Maybe it was a term we just sold ourselves. It is trying to look at the world in a new light, trying to look at the world in a way that gave it some meaning. Trying to find values. . . that were valid.“
11 Some of them arrived in the metropolis at the Hudson River in order to incorporate in a study, the others were looking for occasions to enjoy life in the underworld of New York as social outsiders.
12 The constitution of the Beats in New York was made possible by Lucien Carr in February 1944, when he introduced Burroughs to Ginsberg and Kerouac. Author Aaron Latham declared that „Lucien Carr was the father of the Beat Generation, and not Jack Kerouac or Allen Ginsberg or William Burroughs. He was the one who brought the others together.“ see „The Beat Generation. A Gale Critical Companion – Volume 1 Topics“, 2003, pg. 41
13 Hegemann, Klaus: „Allen Ginsberg – Zeitkritik und politische Aktivitäten“, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2000 Zugl. Univ.Diss., Bonn 1999 - pg. 59 (as follows he will be quoted as K.H. - Ginsberg)
14 In between 1943 and 1949 Ginsberg and Kerouac were the students of professors Mark van Doren, Meyer Shapiro and Lionel Trilling, who supported Ginsberg through his literary years.
15 K.H. - Ginsberg, pg. 34
16 This was the name given to WilliamS. Burroughs in Tanger by the locals, because of his ocularily disembodied
writers and philosophers like Aischylos, Oswald Spengler, J. W. Goethe, Arthur Koestler, Friedrich Nietzsche, Fjodor Mijailovich Dostoievsky, Arthur Rimbaud, Isidore Ducasse Lautréamont, Sigmund Freud, Orson Welles, Aldous Huxley or Alfred Korzybski, has changed their conditioned concepts on literature and narrative structures of that time. Their interests in European literature increased enormously, the question arousing why these American writers were much more interested in European literary traditions rather than in the good old writings of their own country?!

One explanation for this curious phenomenon is the lugubrious and existentialist essence of the Russian soulful novels of the 19th century, or the picturesque abundance of escapism and transcendental desires of French symbolist poetry, which fascinated Burroughs, Ginsberg, Kerouac, Chase. They polemized, studying over and over again on the so-called „routines“ in their numerous evenings spent in the 115th street on the Upper Westside, where the first of the Beat-communities was founded. 18 This can be seen as the first „literary studio“ of the beat-movement, where Kerouac and Burroughs were writing on a novel called „And the Hippos Were Boiled in Their Tanks“, inspired by the homicide of David Kammerer, who was stabbed by Lucien Carr in a self-defense act, when Kammerer was trying to convince the young man into „unfair practices“. 19 Another decisive impact in the formation of the beat-group was the pickup-acquaintance of Burroughs on Times Square with Herbert Huncke, a down-and-out pimp. Keroauc described Huncke in his first novel „The Town And The City“, as „a munchkin, dark-skinned, reminding of an Arab man with an oval face and gargantuan blue eyes, ever covered by tired eyelids, the exaggerated big eyelids of a mask. He roved with the silently floating moves of an Arab, his facial expression

appearance. See Barry Miles: „El Hombre Invisible“, 2002

17 The so-called „routines“ were telepathical experiments in which Burroughs, Keroauc, Ginsberg, Joan Vollmer, Edie Parker and Hal Chase extended the „fields of consciousness“ by use of narcotics and psychotherapy. Burroughs was following a hypnoanalysis at Dr. Wolberg, after which he created surreal sketches, using characters that emerged from the therapy. See Barry Miles – Burroughs, pg. 56


19 On the evening of 13. August 1944 Lucien Carr kills David Kammerer in self defense. Kerouac and Burroughs are arrested as material witnesses because they did not initially report the murder. Later, they collaborate on the novel mentioned above based on the events. It was rejected by several publishers at the time and has never been published. See B.M. - Burroughs, pg. 52/53
diligently tired, indifferent, though somehow also astonished, and he was always on the Quivive. He made the impression of a man, who is cordial unhappy in this world. “20 He was to become the principal catalyst of the Beat Generation. Burroughs, Kerouac and Ginsberg being inspired by Huncke’s unconventional street life, and this veteran of the urban drug culture served as their guide into a world that had previously been unknown to them. Herbert Edwin Huncke was first and foremost a hustler, drug addict, and petty criminal, an ethos that Beat writers found irresistibly exotic and, in comparison to middle-class existence during the Eisenhower era, compellingly authentic. Huncke served as the model for characters in several major Beat works, including Kerouac’s „On The Road“ (1957), Burroughs’ „Junky“ (1953) and Ginsberg’s „Howl“ (1956), and it is a commonly-held opinion that Huncke was the originator of the term „Beat“21, or as Ramond Foye points out in the „Huncke Reader“: „The discovery of Herbert Huncke by the Beats in the late 1940’s was something akin to novice explorers’ stumbling upon a great archaeological find. He was the Ur-Beat: Kerouac’s lonesome traveler, Burroughs’ junky, Ginsberg’s angel-headed hipster. Primitive and incipient, Huncke’s life became the Rosetta Stone of Beat sensibility.“22 It was through William Burroughs that Huncke soon met Allen Ginsberg, at that time a Columbia undergraduate, and Jack Kerouac, a recent Columbia dropout who became so unchanted with Huncke’s repeated use of the carny term „beat“, meaning tired and beaten down, that he later used it as his famous label for the entire generation (Kerouac later clouded things by suggesting it was derived from „beatific“).

Another role model for Ginsberg, Burroughs and Co. was Neal Cassady23, who

20 B. M. - Burroughs, pg. 54
21 Huncke’s published writings are comprised of autobiographical sketches and short stories. His prose style, which is similar to Kerouac’s automatic writing method, applies a frequent use of pauses and dashes, mirroring the sense of ephemerality, loss, and weariness that characterized his Bohemien lifestyle. In his later years, Huncke became a frequently consulted source of information on the details of the private lives of Beat Generation notables. Principal works by Herbert Huncke are: „Huncke’s Journal“ (sketches and memoirs) 1965, „Elsie John and Joey Martinez“ (short stories) 1979, „The Evening Sun Turned Crimson“ (short stories) 1980, „Guilty of Everything: The Autobiography of Herbert Huncke“ (autobiography) 1990 and „The Herbert Huncke Reader“ (memoirs, sketches, short stories and letters) 1997.
23 Neal Cassady, legendary folk hero in the Beat movement, was born in Salt Lake City, Utah to a life of hardship, married three times, and was immortalized as Dean Moriarty in Jack Kerouac’s „On The Road“. Cassady was a car thief and minor con-man who spent much of his earlier years in reform schools and juvenile detention centers.
visited New York in December 1946, in order to meet the „intellectual hipsters“ from Columbia University he heard so much about from his friend John C. Holmes. Cassady embodied the image of the restless American, always aspiring for the immediate fulfilling of his desires. His statements about the frantic time spent with the Beats he formulated this way: “I became the unnatural son of a few score of beaten men. I alone, as the sharer of their way of life, presented a replica of childhood.”

The academic background of the Columbia University together with the naturalistic underground of New York, with all it’s subversive „characters“ were to establish a new literary and anti-social consciousness. In 1944 Ginsberg, Kerouac and Carr formulated and discussed „The New Vision“ or „New Consciousness“, a literary manifesto inspired by the works of such authors as Franz Kafka (Burroughs’ favourite author of that time), Fjodor Dostoievsky, Albert Camus and W. H. Auden, „The New Vision“ providing a framework for the Beat aesthetic. It sought knowledge through experience, especially experience from the underside of life.

Jack Kerouac joined Neal Cassady on several road trips across the United States and Mexico, writing about their experiences, sometimes as they were happening, while Cassady generally led the way. These adventures were culminated in the pages of "On The Road". Kerouac included Cassady’s persona in several later novels, such as "Dharma Bums" and "Visions of Cody". Cassady reportedly appealed to Kerouac to teach him how to write fiction, but of all of the prominent Beats of the generation, he was the least prolific. His only book, an unfinished autobiography titled "The First Third", was published by City Lights Books in 1971 a few years after his death. Cassady was found in a coma along a pair of deserted railroad tracks in Mexico in 1968, presumably after a night of partying with alcohol and drugs. He was found wearing only a t-shirt and jeans and it was concluded that he was intent on walking to a town 15 miles away and fell asleep mid-journey. The night was chilling and wet with rain. Cassady remained in a coma until later that day when he passed away. His death came four days before his 43rd birthday and one year before Jack Kerouac’s.

24 John Clellon Holmes is an essayist, poet, and novelist; and was a "sometime member" of the Beat Generation. He was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, March 12, 1926. Less controversial and experimental than Jack Kerouac or Allen Ginsberg, Holmes had the sensitivity to realize that their confused values and poignant ambitions were symbolic of something outside their small universe; and published a novel, 'Go' (1952), which presented characters based on Kerouac, Ginsberg & Neal Cassady years before more famous works like 'On The Road' would be released.

Holmes had met Jack Kerouac at a party, and the two promising young novelists struck up a friendship on the basis of their interest in writing. In 1948, Holmes had pressed Jack Kerouac to describe the unique qualities of his generation, and Kerouac invented the term 'Beat Generation' on the spot. In 1952, after the publication of 'Go,' Holmes wrote an article for the New York Times Magazine, 'This is the Beat Generation,' in which he introduced this phrase to the world (read out in „Beat Today“).

Holmes remained close friends with Kerouac until his death in 1969. There are some poignant stories in Barry Gifford’s oral biography “Jack’s Book” about some of Jack’s last, lonely visits to Old Saybrook to enjoy the domestic pleasures of Holmes’ quieter existence with his wife.

Later in life, Holmes lectured at Yale and gave workshops at Brown University. His final book of poems, Dire Coasts, was published in 1988, the year he died at the age of 62 in Middleton, Connecticut, leaving behind three novels & manuscripts for several books of poetry, essays and memoirs.
2. The literary nucleus of the Beat writers

So the first catenation between Burroughs, Kerouac and Ginsberg accrued through the common contact to Lucien Carr. Ginsberg met Kerouac in the summer of 1944 in the apartment of Joan Vollmer and Edie Parker. Celine Young – a friend of the two women – and Carr used the apartment as a gathering point, while the art student Parker was dating Kerouac. Carr initiated a meeting of his two friends, and an instant „congeniality of nature“ appeared, as Ginsberg later pointed out. Kerouac was watching closely in December 1944 how Burroughs administered morphine to himself. At this time the group was teaming up again in the living community of Parker´s and Vollmer´s. As well as Carr was constituting the copula between Ginsberg, Kerouac and Burroughs, the latter expanded the group by contacts to figures from the red light district of Times Square.

In the outward frame of their „routines“ first literary, dramatic art and scientific realizations were summed up and written down. This is the time when Jack Kerouac started writing on „The Town and the City“, and Allen Ginsberg began to fill up his journal with notes, he later used up in his first volume of poetry: „Howl and Other Poems“. Burroughs was already a graduate from the University of Harvard, sophisticated and elevated in matters of writing and literature, becoming automatically (also because of his advanced age) the mentor of Kerouac and Ginsberg. In Harvard he was an outsider, not connecting with the increasing interest of

---

25 See Website http://www.geocities.com/terry_young/cassady.html „Neal Cassady at the Blue Neon Alley“
26 Like Herbert Huncke Lucien Carr is a liminal Beat figure who is often overlooked in studying the origins of the movement. To the budding authors Burroughs, Ginsberg and Kerouac he was a charismatic and seasoned guide to the New York City Bohemian scene.
28 He studied English literature in Harvard between 1932 and 1936, graduating with a B. A. degree. Later he took courses of medicine at the „Rudolfina“ University of Vienna (1936/37), and attended graduate courses of anthropology at Cambridge and Harvard University (1938/39)
his colleagues for Marxism.\textsuperscript{29} His attitude towards the elite – school was bestly expressed by himself in a later statement: „I didn´t like the whole atmosphere. But I learned how to use a library. I think it´s very valuable for a writer to do a lot of reading. You´ll find that most writers at one time or another have done a great deal of reading . . . If you want to write you should know what´s been done in your field.“\textsuperscript{30}

This self-determining perception of literature as inalienable form of individual commitment was to create a common spirit for the writers to get enacted in the main and only important work: writing literature. If Ginsberg was increasings looking for his personal „literary landscape of the soul“ by clearing the tragic death of his beloved mother Naomi Ginsberg in 1956, a radical communist Jewish actionist, and the relationship to his father Louis Ginsberg, a socialist Jewish teacher and writer, Kerouac was more and more „escaping“ into asketic isolation, aspiring for freedom. By example of his main literary influences by the late 40´s and early 50´s – Arthur Rimbaud, Charles Baudelaire and Thomas Wolfe – he was trying to write himself free from the yoke of syntax and grammatical containments, by finding his own individual language – spontaneous prose. At the same time Burroughs was very much preoccupied with pharmacology, the consolidated findings of Wilhelm Reich, and other matters of the natural sciences. His first concrete textual work will assume a definit form some years later in Mexico, after a leathel gun-shooting „William Tell routine“.

Though these three friends and writers were experimenting with different implements in order to find the new consciousness, an alternative to the norms of traditional society and religion, shunning the reality of everyday life in America, believing that the artist had a central place in the evolution of a better society. They used their writing, with its unstructured style and unconventional language, to convey their opposition to the cultural and aesthetic standards of previous generations.

\textsuperscript{30} William Burroughs quoted by Barry Miles: „El Hombre Invisible“, Virgin Books, 1993, pg. 26
A. William Seward Burroughs — sophisticated, elevated addicted, eccentric and isolated

Described by Jack Kerouac as "Tall, 6 foot 1, strange, inscrutable because ordinary looking (scrutable), like a shy bank clerk with a patrician thinlipped cold bluelipped face," William Seward Burroughs was the grandson of the founder of the Burroughs Adding Machine company, which evolved into the Burroughs Corporation and later merged with Sperry Univac to form Unisys. Born on February 5, 1914 in St. Louis, Missouri, Burroughs grew up in St. Louis, where his upper-class midwestern background did not suit his tastes. A bookworm with strong homoerotic urges, a fascination with guns and crime and a natural inclination to break every rule he could find, there seemed to be no way Burroughs could ever fit into normal society.

He graduated with a B.A. from Harvard in English literature, and in his early thirties traveled to New York. He became a heroin addict quite intentionally, in the process meeting the prototypical junkie drifter and future Beat hero Herbert Huncke. His St. Louis friends David Kammerer and Lucien Carr introduced him to Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and Burroughs' future common-law wife, Joan Vollmer Adams. He was older than them, but they were impressed by his obvious intelligence and worldly cynicism.

By his mid-thirties William S. Burroughs had still not begun to write. At first indifferent to serious literary ideals, Burroughs wrote "Junkie," a heroin-tinged autobiography, and allowed Ginsberg to arrange for its publication as a pulp paperback by Ace Books. Burroughs followed this by a similar study of his homosexuality, "Queer," but this was too much even for the pulps, and would not be published for decades.

By this time Burroughs had already relocated to East Texas to try to live as a farmer. Herbert Huncke and Joan Vollmer Adams joined him, and they all lived

---

31 Burroughs on drug usage: "You become a narcotics addict because you do not have strong motivations in any other direction. Junk wins by default. I tried it as a matter of curiosity.", from William Lee "Junkie", Prologue, Ace, New York 1953. pg. xv
together in a state of drug-addled squalor. Kerouac visited with Neal Cassady and others, and later described the wild scene in "On The Road." Pursued by the law for his drug activities, Burroughs went to Mexico, and it was there that he committed the thoughtless act that would change his life. Trying to show off his marksmanship to a couple of friends, he announced that he was going to do his William Tell act. Joan put a glass on her head, and he killed her with a single shot.  

Burroughs wandered the world from South America to Tangier, Europe to New York. He settled in Tangier where Paul and Jane Bowles also lived, and it soon became a popular literary escape for new American celebrity writers like Ginsberg and Kerouac. Kerouac was impressed by the messy pile of stories Burroughs had been idly writing, and he and Ginsberg helped to type them up. Kerouac also suggested a name for the whole thing - "Naked Lunch," which made Burroughs an underground celebrity, and is widely considered his best work.

The main theme of his about forty novels was to become the opponent fight against controlled force - conditioning emanated from the organs of state: police, military, secret agencies, governments, dogmatics, encrusted institutions and most of all ideological suppressive mass – manipulation through medias and false informations.

In his world wide known statement that „language is a virus“ he pointed out the outer-space origin of the language as an instrument, emphasizing that „we must find out what words are and how they function. They become images when written down, but images of words repeated in the mind and not of the image of the thing itself."

This concept he later developed to a complex writing technique together with

---

33 The episode is explicitly and realistic elaborated in the movie „Beat Today“, 2004
35 See the chapters „Tangier“ and „Naked Lunch“ from B.M. - Burroughs
36 The American artist Laurie Anderson influently adopted this concept in her musical and lyrical performances in the 70’s and 80’s. One of the very many contemporary artists who were influenced by Burroughs, besides underground music groups like Sonic Youth, Psychic TV, Mugwumps, Insect Trust, Patti Smith, Naked Lunch,
Brion Gysin\textsuperscript{37} in Paris. In 1959 the two artists met in the famous Beat Hotel in the Rue Git le Coeur\textsuperscript{38} developing the so called „cut – up & fold - in techniques“. About cut-up's, which establish new connections between images and expands one's range of vision consequently as we have seen lately in video art - as Burroughs himself expected by saying that the cut-up's can be applied to other fields than just writing, such fields like games, film and science. Here’s a statement of his from the novel „The

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image}
\caption{Brion Gysin's work in Paris.}
\end{figure}

Gorilla Tapes, Philipp Lachenmann, Kurt Cobain etc.

37 \textit{Brion Gysin} was born in Taplow, Buckinghamshire on 19th January 1916. He was subsequently to claim that the unusual spelling of his forename was ‘accidental’, though how accidental is open to debate since his views on the significance of ‘accidents’ are well known. He says of his name:

‘\textit{My given name is Brion. My Celtic mother was thinking of one of those insufferable phony kings of Ireland and spelt it with an a: Brian. Official documents took care of that and spelt it Brion, like the famous wine of Bordeaux, Haut Brion. I accepted this gladly and dropped all my other given names when I became an American citizen.}’

Educated in England, at Downside College (1932-34), he moved to Paris where he studied at the Sorbonne. Among those he met at this time are renowned members of the Surrealist group, including Max Ernst, Salvador and Gala Dali and Picasso. Gysin’s work was included in the Surrealist Drawings exhibition in Paris in 1935 (Galerie Quatre).

He first visited the Algerian Sahara in 1938, a journey that was to have a deep and lasting influence on his life. Equally significant to the form of his later giant landscape paintings were the years he spent in New York working as assistant to Broadway stage designer Irene Sharaff (1940-43).

In 1953, having returned to North Africa, Gysin opened the Thousand and One Nights restaurant, where the Master Musicians of Joujouka played an ‘extended residency’. This was his primary location until 1973, although he famously spent a number of years in Paris where, with William Burroughs, he both developed the cut-up technique of writing and experimented with tapes, permutations and the Dreamachine.

In the summer of 1982 he and William Burroughs were the principal artists in the Final Academy show. His paintings are in museum collections in Paris and New York.


Selected Writings:

- Minutes to Go (with William Burroughs, Gregory Corso, Sinclair Beiles) 1960
- The Exterminator (with William Burroughs) 1960
- The Process 1969
- Brion Gysin Let the Mice In 1973
- Soft Need 17 (Brion Gysin Special) 1977
- The Third Mind (with William Burroughs) 1978
- Re/Search 4/5 - William S. Burroughs/Throbbing Gristle/Brion Gysin 1982
- Stories (collection of short stories) 1984
- Here To Go: Planet R-101 (with Terry Wilson) 1982/1985
- Morocco Two (a screenplay) 1986
- The Last Museum 1986
- Chapel of Extreme Experience (John Geiger) 2002
- Brion Gysin: Tuning in to the Multimedia Age (ed. J F Kuri) 2003

38 Ginsberg. Corso. Burroughs. Gysin. Sommerville - A few of the poets, writers, musicians and artists who lived in the "Beat Hotel," a nameless rooming house at 9 Rue Git-le-Coeur run by the formidable Madame Rachou. The "fleabag shrine" as poet Harold Norse called it, was lovingly and penetratingly documented in photographs by Harold Chapman, who took up residence in an attic garret of the Parisian hotel during the 50s and 60s, when the place was alive with the Beat experimentation and the smoke-filled air crackled with creativity.

XV
"The cut-up method brings to writers the collage, which has been used by painters for fifty years. And used by the moving and still camera. In fact all street shots from movie or still cameras are by the unpredictable factors of passersby and juxtaposition cut-up's [...] The method is simple. Here is one way to do it. Take a page. Like this page. Now cut down the middle and across the middle. You have four sections: 1 2 3 4... one two three four. Now rearrange the sections placing section four with section one and section two with section three. And you have a new page. Sometimes it says much the same thing. Sometimes something quite different - cutting up political speeches is an interesting exercise - in any case you will find that it says something and something quite definite. Take any poet or writer you fancy. Here, say, or poems you have read over many times. The words have lost meaning and life through years of repetition. Now take the poem and type out selected passages. Fill a page with excerpts. Now cut the page. You have a new poem. As many poems as you like (...). I have used an extension of the cut-up method I call 'the fold-in method' - A page of text - my own or someone else's - is folded down the middle and placed on another page - The composite text is then read across half one text and half the other - The fold-in method extends to writing the flashback used in films, enabling the writer to move backward and forward on his time track - For example I take page one and fold it into page one hundred - I insert the resulting composite as page ten. When the reader reads page ten he is flashing forward in time to page one hundred and back in time to page one - the déjàvu phenomenon can so be produced to order - This method is of course used in music, where we are continually moved backward and forward on time track by repetition and rearrangements of musical themes - In using the fold-in method I edit, delete and rearrange as in any other method of composition."

It was to become a major innovation in literature, fine arts and cinematography of the time, which multitudinous of artists all over the world used in their newly
recognized experiments. The aroused tradition of Dadaism, Surrealism and Lettrism – authors like Jean Genet, Louis-Ferdinand Céline, Tristan Tzara, Guillaume Apollinaire or Antonin Artaud were closely analyzed – created a whole school of Cut-ups in between 1959 and the 1960’s, with writers like Carl Weissner, Claude Pelieu, Jeff Nuttall, Alfred Behrens, Udo Breger, Jürgen Ploog, Gerhard Hanak, Walter Hartmann, Jörg Fauser, Harald Norse or Mary Beach getting increasingly interested in the „new writing technique“.

At this point we realize Burroughs´ importance as postmodern writer, who developed beyond T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and James Joyce and revealed the ultimate structure of writing, and who acts through his antagonism towards either/or dichotomies and his - not exclusively limited on texts – search for concealed and suppressed meanings as a forerunner of deconstructive philosophy. Cut-ups are seen as possibilities to reflect drug experiences: they are nonlinear, developing irrational and illogical material, being adequate to effectuate – in terms of Rimbaud - “a Dérangement of the senses“, a concept, which Burroughs was interested in since the early fourties. They set the writer free from the tyranny of grammar and syntax.

In his cut-up trilogy „The Soft Machine“40 - „The Ticket That Exploded“41 - „Nova Express“42 Cut-ups are seen as the main weapon used against the forces of control, and he clamps them on maximum: as means to carry over the visual technique of the collage onto literature. Different than automatic writing these are used absolutely aware, there is no unaware element in this method.

Gysin and Burroughs were escalating for a few years on this achievement,

extending this technique to film as well. Together with him, Anthony Balch\textsuperscript{43} and Ian Sommerville\textsuperscript{44} Burroughs then elaborated four experimental avantgarde movies using the same technique: „Towers Upon Fire“, „Guerilla Conditions“, „The Cut Ups“ and „Bill and Tony“. „Towers Upon Fire“ was shot between 1962 and 1963 with a 15 year old De-Vry-Camera in Paris and Gibraltar and was shown together with Tod Browning’s „Freaks“ in 1964 in the „Paris Pullman“ cinema in London. „Guerilla Conditions“ was a serene 23 min. long documentary about the lifes of Burroughs and Gysin, shot in the Beat Hotel in Paris, Chelsea Hotel in New York, Hotel Villa Muniria in Tangier and the Empress Hotel in London between 1961 and 1964. The movie was never finished out of various reasons. The third movie project „The Cut Ups“ was a true Cut-up work: four film reels were cut into 30 cm long pieces and reassembled by a laboratory technician in a rotation process. It was performed in the Cinephone cinema in London in 1966. The third finished movie „Bill and Tony“ was an adaptation of the Burroughs – text „John and Joe“, in which William Burroughs and Anthony Balch are making an appearance as „talking heads“, reading out two texts from a Scientology-Auditing-Handbook.

As very early Anglo-American experimental movies these works are of a very significant importance, because they were shot before the underground-movie-boom from the U.S.A. In 1964, and because they were much more vanguard than the underground filmmakers from New York. The movie „Beat Today“, closely analyzed in the second part of this work, was shot in the same low(now)-budget tradition like the movies mentioned above, representing the same countercultural cinematographic relevance. Later will also be pointed out an „intertextuality“ between „Beat Today“ and another avantgarde work by Robert Frank from the year 1958.

Besides his innovative Cut-ups and Fold-ins, or his Nagual Art\textsuperscript{45} Burroughs

\textsuperscript{43} Anthony Balch was born in England in 1938 and learned film craft in the advertising industry during the mid-1950s. He subsequently worked as an editor, distributor, exhibitor, and director. He died in 1980.

\textsuperscript{44} B. M. - Burroughs, pg. 197 - 199

\textsuperscript{45} In the Carlos Castaneda books, Don Juan makes a distinction between the tonal universe and the nagual. The tonal universe is the everyday cause-and-effect universe, which is predictable because it is pre-recorded. The nagual is the unknown, the unpredictable, the uncontrollable. For the nagual to gain access, the door of chance must be open.
developed the anti-textuality and anti-cultural perception by the genesis of his masterpiece „Naked Lunch“. This novel has been variously regarded by critics as either incomprehensible and pornographic or as the inspired work of a literary genius. Burroughs commented on his work in its final chapter as follows: „Naked Lunch is a blueprint, a How-To Book . . . Black insect lusts open into vast, other planet landscapes . . . Abstract concepts, bare as algebra, narrow down to a black turd or a pair of ageing cajones . . . How-To extend levels of experience by opening the door at the end of a long hall . . . Doors that only open in Silence from The Reader. Otherwise he is taking his own pulse . . .“

His unconventional narrative techniques have inspired both positive and negative critical assessments of the effectiveness of the end result. Ihab Hassan has stated that there is a certain order and method behind even the more bizarre elements of Burroughs´ style. Hassan contends that the cut-up method is used very skillfully, juxtaposing language in a way that creates unexpected meaning of significant value. John Tytell calls Burroughs „the most experimental of the Beats“ and finds his novels to be characterized by a „labyrinthine density“. David Lodge, however, views Burroughs as „deeply confused“ and judges „Naked Lunch“ to be a „very indecent book“ and „Nova Express“ a „very tedious book“. Several critics have pointed out the frequency with which Burroughs employs metamorphosis as a metaphor and central theme in his work. Hassan characterizes the mutations of characters, both human and

---

46With anti-textuality and anti-cultural perception I mean the deconstruction of the technical traditions of writing and mass perception in cultural terms. Burroughs realized the manipulative, oppressive and destructive force of language and consciously devitalized it by use of experimental collages of texts.
47 William Burroughs: „Naked Lunch“, Flamingo, 1993, pg. 177
50 David Lodge: „Objections to William Burroughs.“ Critical Quarterly 8, no. 3 (autumn 1966): 203 - 212
non-human, in Burroughs´ works as a „process of disintegration“. Marry McCarthy⁵¹
(the only critic Burroughs stated as „understanding what IT really is about“⁵²) claims
that such metamorphoses are used as punishments and that Burroughs himself is
essentialy a reformer, albeit one whose message gets lost in the depth of his pessimism
and the bizarre quality of his satire. Referring to Naked Lunch McCarthy concludes: „
The book is alive, like a basketful of crabs, and common sense cannot get hold of it to
extract a moral“⁵³. Tytell shares this preception of Burroughs´ fiction , referring to the
author’s „cruel pessimism and the absolute lack of hope“. Duncan Wu⁵³, however,
views Burroughs as a writer in the tradition of William Wordsworth, who was also
fascinated with the process of metamorphosis. In addition, according to Wu, both
Burroughs and Wordsworth believed in paradise or a promised land, and thus
Burroughs´ writing are „essentially moral“⁵⁴. Perhaps most at odds with the evaluations
of other critics is Wu´s contention that „Burroughs has always been an optimistic
writer“, a trait which he claims can be traced to the writer´s ability to recover from his
heroin addiction.

Despite the many differences among scholars, the fact remains that although
Burroughs´ most famous work was produced more than forty-five years ago, it
continues to inspire heated academic discourse. Geoff Ward⁵⁴ believes that Burroughs´
significance endures because he, alone among the Beat writers, remained unregenerate
and „incorruptibly deviant“.

Burroughs spent fifty years with the exploration of his various disguises,
debunking and analyzing systematically his many names and countless procedures. His
literary work is being defined by the identification of control - systems and the
excogitating of methods for the destruction of the monitoring systems. He always
fought for the absolute freedom – independency from every form of control, hostile

⁵¹ Marry McCarthy: „Burroughs Naked Lunch.“ In William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959 –
⁵² B. M. - Burroughs, pg. 134
infiltration of alien forces, religion, sexual oppression, from the American Way of Life and from the traditional family values; autonomy from conditioning by the mass medias, from the subliminal significance of language itself; the eliberation from all the Isms: nationalism, communism, fascism. He really creates a *naked* lunch, „the frozen moment when everyone sees what is on the end of every fork.“ 55

Here are to be listed some of his major works I strongly recommend to everybody who is interested in subversive literature:

- „The Naked Lunch“ - novel, 1959
- „Nova Express“ - novel, 1964
- „Exterminator“ - novel, 1973
- „Port of Saints“ - novel, 1973
- „The Third Mind“ - essay (with Brion Gysin), 1978
- „The Place of the Dead Roads“ - novel, 1984
- „Queer“ - novel, 1985
- „The Western Lands“ - novel, 1987

55 William Burroughs: „Naked Lunch“, Introduction, pg. 7

XXI
B. **Irwin Allen Ginsberg – visionary, orgiastic, anarchistic, orientalistic, psychedelic, activist hippie - bard**

Born in Newark, New Jersey, on the 3. of July 1926, Ginsberg suffered an emotionally troubled childhood that is reflected in many of his poems. His mother, Naomi Ginsberg (born Livergant, later changed to Levy\(^56\)), suffered from various mental illness and was periodically institutionalized during Ginsber’s adolescence. She was an active member of the Communist Party and other associations of the radical left. She took young Alle to the meeting of the Communist Party at a very early age, which left an enduring impression on him: “America when I was seven momma took me to Communist Cell meetings they sold us garbanzos a handful per ticket a ticket costs a nickel and the speeches were free everbody was angelic and sentimental about the workers it was all so sincere you have no idea what a good thing the party was . . .”\(^57\). Contributing to Ginsberg’s confusion and isolation during these years was his increasing awareness of his homosexuality, which he concealed from both his peers and his parents until he was in his twenties.

First introduced to poetry by his father Louis Ginsberg, a high school teacher and poet, Ginsberg’s interest deepened through his association with William Carlos Williams, who became a mentor to the young poet. Lionel Trilling and Mark Van Doren, who had Ginsberg in their classes at Columbia University, further shaped his literary influences. More important though to Ginsberg’s future as a poet were the social interactions he pursued in college.\(^58\) It was while attending Columbia that he significantly established friendship with writers Jack Kerouac, William S: Burroughs

---

56 Michael Schumacher:”Dharma Lion“, St Martin Press, New York, 1992. pg. 4  
58 See chapter II. 1. and II. 2. of this thesis.
and Neal Cassady. This group, along with several West Coast writers that included Kenneth Rexroth and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, among others, would form the core of

59 Kenneth Rexroth is perhaps one of the most accessible writers to have gained prominence during the Beat movement. He was born in South Bend, Indiana in 1905 and died on June 6, 1982 in Montecito, California. In addition to being a writer, translator, essayist and philosopher, Rexroth also helped found the San Francisco Poetry Center. He received the California Literature Silver Medal Award in 1941 for his book, *In What Hour*. Rexroth became a prolific painter and poet by the age of seventeen. He soon gained reputation as a radical by associating with various labor groups and political anarchists. When the second renaissance of the 1920's occurred in Chicago, Rexroth was there. He later became involved in the Beat movement, attempting to elevate common consciousness. He was later given the title, "Godfather of the Beats" because of his involvement with the readings and events at the Cellar jazz club.

Poetry

*In What Hour* (1940)
*The Phoenix and the Tortoise* (1944)
*The Art of Worldly Wisdom* (1949)
*The Signature of All Things: Poetry, Songs, Elegies, Translations, and Epigrams* (1950)
*The Dragon and the Unicorn* (1952)
*In Defense of the Earth* (1956)
*Homestead Called Damascus* (1963)
*Sky, Sea, Birds, Trees, Earth, House, Beasts, Flowers* (1971)
*Complete Poems* (2003) edited by Sam Hamill and Bradford Morrow

Essays

*Bird in the Bush: Obvious Essays* (1959)
*Assays* (1961)

Drama

*Beyond the Mountains: Four Plays in Verse* (1951)

Auto/Biography

*An Autobiographical Novel* (1966)

60 Recognized as one of the most influential and important poets of the Beat movement, Lawrence Ferlinghetti was born in Yonkers, New York on March 24, 1919. Shortly after his birth, Ferlinghetti's mother was committed to an asylum for the insane and the young boy was sent to France to be raised by a female relative. It wasn't until his return to America, at the age of five, that this future poet learned to speak English. Ferlinghetti also began writing poetry during his years at boarding school in the late 1920's. After his graduation from high school, Ferlinghetti attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he enjoyed works by Hemingway, Faulkner, Dos Passos and Wolfe. He even began writing a novel inspired by *Look Homeward, Angel*. In 1952, Ferlinghetti became acquainted with Kenneth Rexroth. Rexroth had already established himself as a notable West Coast writer, artist and political activist. After meeting Peter Martin, the publisher of City Lights magazine, the two planned to open a bookshop by the same name. The City Lights bookstore of San Francisco soon became a mecca for writers and artists, many of them well established in the field of contemporary literature. The movement was catapulted by readings from writers such as Michael McClure, Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder and became known as the "Beat" period.

Poetry

*Pictures of the Gone World* (1955)
*Her* (1960)
*Unfair Arguments with Existence* (1963)
*Routines* (1964)
the Beat movement.

In 1956 Ginsberg’s first major work, „Howl and Other Poems“\textsuperscript{61}, achieved notoriety when it became the subject of an obscenity trial.\textsuperscript{62} Prosecutors in the case unsuccessfully attempted to convict Ferlinghetti, whose imprint, City Lights Books, published the work. „America“\textsuperscript{63} is the poem which best expresses Ginsberg’s ambiguous feelings towards his home country, written in Berkeley on January 17, 1956:

„America I've given you all and now I'm nothing.
America two dollars and twenty-seven cents January 17, 1956.
I can't stand my own mind.
America when will we end the human war?
Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb
I don't feel good don't bother me.
I won't write my poem till I'm in my right mind.
America when will you be angelic?
When will you take off your clothes?
When will you look at yourself through the grave?
When will you be worthy of your million Trotskyites?
America why are your libraries full of tears?
America when will you send your eggs to India?
I'm sick of your insane demands.
When can I go into the supermarket and buy what I need with my good looks?
America after all it is you and I who are perfect not the next world.
Your machinery is too much for me.
You made me want to be a saint.
There must be some other way to settle this argument.
Burroughs is in Tangiers I don't think he'll come back it's sinister.
Are you being sinister or is this some form of practical joke?
I'm trying to come to the point.
I refuse to give up my obsession.
America stop pushing I know what I'm doing.
America the plum blossoms are falling.
I haven't read the newspapers for months, everyday somebody goes on trial for murder.
America I feel sentimental about the Wobblies
America I used to be a communist when I was a kid and I’m not sorry.
I smoke marijuana every chance I get.
I sit in my house for days on end and stare at the roses in the closet.
When I go to Chinatown I get drunk and never get laid.
My mind is made up there's going to be trouble.
You should have seen me reading Marx.
My psychoanalyst thinks I'm perfectly right.
I won't say the Lord's Prayer.
I have mystical visions and cosmic vibrations.
America I still haven't told you what you did to Uncle Max after he came over from Russia.

I'm addressing you.
Are you going to let our emotional life be run by Time Magazine?
I'm obsessed by Time Magazine.
I read it every week.
Its cover stares at me every time I slink past the corner candy store.
I read it in the basement of the Berkeley Public Library.
It's always telling me about responsibility. Businessmen are serious. Movie producers are serious. Everybody's serious but me.
It occurs to me that I am America.
I am talking to myself again.

Asia is rising against me.
I haven't got a chinaman's chance.
I'd better consider my national resources.
My national resources consist of two joints of marijuana millions of genitals an unpublishable private literature that goes 1400 miles and hour and twentyfivethousand mental institutions.
I say nothing about my prisons nor the millions of underprivileged who live in my flowerpots under the light of five hundred suns.
I have abolished the whorehouses of France, Tangiers is the next to go.
My ambition is to be President despite the fact that I'm a Catholic.

America how can I write a holy litany in your silly mood?
I will continue like Henry Ford my strophes are as individual as his automobiles more so they're all different sexes
America I will sell you strophes $2500 apiece $500 down on your old strophe
America free Tom Mooney
America save the Spanish Loyalists
America Sacco & Vanzetti must not die
America I am the Scottsboro boys.

America when I was seven momma took me to Communist Cell meetings they sold us garbanzos a handful per ticket a ticket costs a nickel and the speeches were free everybody was angelic and sentimental about the workers it was all so sincere you have no idea what a good thing the party was in 1935 Scott Nearing was a grand old man a real mensch Mother Bloor made me cry I once saw Israel Amter plain. Everybody must have been a spy.
America you don't really want to go to war.

XXV
America it's them bad Russians.

Them Russians them Russians and them Chinamen. And them Russians.
The Russia wants to eat us alive. The Russia's power mad. She wants to take our cars from out our garages.

Her wants to grab Chicago. Her needs a Red Reader's Digest. her wants our auto plants in Siberia. Him big bureaucracy running our fillingstations.

That no good. Ugh. Him makes Indians learn read. Him need big black niggers.

Hah. Her make us all work sixteen hours a day. Help.

America this is quite serious.

America this is the impression I get from looking in the television set.

America is this correct?

I'd better get right down to the job.

It's true I don't want to join the Army or turn lathes in precision parts factories, I'm nearsighted and psychopathic anyway.

America I'm putting my queer shoulder to the wheel."

Through both his writings and his personal life, Ginsberg served as an inspiration to those who sought alternatives to convention. In the 1960’s he generated national media attention for his political activism. He helped organize protests against the Vietnam War and advocated „flower power“, a strategy in which antiwar demonstrators would promote positive values like peace and love to dramatize their opposition to the death and destruction caused by the war. In his poems „Wichita Vortex Sutra“ (1966) and „The Fall of America: Poems of these States, 1965 – 1971“ (1972) Ginsberg comments on the times of difficulty and militarism during the Vietnam War.

Ginsberg also became actively engaged in Eastern philosophy, meditation, and yoga during the 1960’s, helping to popularize Zen Buddhism ideology in America. A fellow writer and soul-brother, who was to become his leaguer in bringing the „Beat Zen“ into American consciousness was Gary Snyder.

64 K. H. - Ginsberg, chapter XI. „Die Rolle Ginsbergs in der Friedensbewegung: das „Gathering of the Tribes“ und das „Festival of Life“, pp. 158 - 163
65 Zen – Buddhism recurrences very strong on the inwardness and personal feelings of the individual. Everything – the soul, the psyche, the heart – is holy and divine.
66 Gary Snyder was born on May 8, 1930 in San Francisco, California and is well known not only for his association
The interplay between Beat-ideology and Buddhism continued intensively in San Francisco. Philip Whalen\(^67\) and Gary Snyder were part of the group of poets, who participated in the first „Howl“ - reading in 1955, reciting their works in the Six Gallery (San Francisco). By that time, when religion was basically „hip“, but the institution church very „square“, Snyder tried to define the „Beat – religion“. He pointed out three characteristics, which could be observed in a parallel to each other:

1. Vision and illumination-seeking. This is most easily done by experimentation with narcotics. . . .
2. Love, respect for life, abandon, Whitman, pacifism, anarchism, etc. . . partly responsible for the mystique of „angel’s“, the glorification of skid-row and hitchhiking, and a kind of mindless enthusiasm. . . .
3. Discipline, aesthetics, and tradition . . . its practitioners settle on one traditional religion, try to absorb the feel of its art and history, and carry out whatever asceticism is required.\(^68\)

The Buddhist view of the entity of the universe helped the Beats to recognize an answer to the dualistic world of the Cold War and its structures and to overbear it.

with the Beat writers, but for his advocacy of community living and ecological concerns. Much of his writing demonstrates the influence of the respected American poets, Walt Whitman and Ezra Pound, as well as intimations of mysticism exemplified in Far Eastern forms. His experiences as a logger and ranger in the Pacific Northwest were inspirations for his first two collections of poetry: Riprap (1959) and Myths and Texts (1960). Many of his later works focus on alternatives to city living and show a reverence for nature and a deep interest in the philosophies of the East. The latter is a characteristic that seems an almost ubiquitous attribute possessed by many other Beat writers. Perhaps this quality respect and toleration for the world around oneself are what make these writers as interesting as they are accessible. Snyder won the Pulitzer prize for his collection Turtle Island in 1975. In addition to the mentioned works, Snyder’s other volumes include: The Black Country (1967), Regarding Wave (1969), Axe Handles (1983) The Old Ways (1977) and No Nature: New and Selected Poems (1992). Currently, Snyder is a faculty member at the University of California at Davis.

\(^67\) Philip Whalen was born on October 20, 1923 in Portland, Oregon. He grew up just south of Portland and during WW II, he served in the US Army Air Corps. He attended Reed College on the GI Bill and received his B.A. In 1951. Whalen is generally considered one of the pioneering forces behind the San Francisco Poetry Renaissance of the mid-1950s. The author’s work differs from much Beat writing in its reverential treatment of the mundane, its self-deprecating humor, and its generally apolitical tone. Dictionary of Literary Biography essayist Paul Christensen writes: "Whalen’s singular style and personality contribute to his character in verse as a bawdy, honest, moody, complicated songster of the frenzied mid-century, an original troubadour and thinker who refused to take himself too seriously during the great revival of visionary lyric in American poetry." Whalen was ordained a Zen Buddhist priest in 1973 and became head monk, Dharma Sangha, in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1984. His books include, Canoeing up Cabarga Creek: Buddhist Poems 1955-1986 (Parallax Press, Feb 1995), Two Novels (Zephyr Press, Jan 1986), Off the Wall: Interviews with Philip Whalen (FourSeasons Foundation, Jan 1978), Enough Said: 1974-1979 (Grey Fox Press, Nov 1980), and Heavy Breathing: Poems, 1967-1980 (Four Seasons Foundation, Jan 1983).

\(^68\) Gary Snyder: „Note on the Religious Tendencies“, in Liberation v. Juni, 1959, pg. 11
The interest of Ginsberg in Buddhism increasingly became a major part of his religious belief, culminating with his conversion to Zen-Buddhism and his helping to start a Buddhist Institute in Colorado in the 1970's. His spiritual journey began early on with spontaneous visions, and continued with an early trip to India and a chance encounter on a New York City street (they both tried to catch the same cab) with Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, a Tibetan Buddhist meditation master of the Vajrayana school, who became his friend and life-long teacher.

Though his political dissident opinions were not to be extinguished by his religious beliefs. The only way to a revolution in America against the military-industrial complex and the aggressive language was for Ginsberg the palming off of the control of anger as official policy and the demand of a development of a new cerebration: „There is some prescription for public utopia thru education in inner space. There is more prescription here for the individual: as always, the old command to free ourselves from social conditioning, laws and traditional mores. And discover the guru in our own hearts.“

Ginsberg main theme became thus the transformation of consciousness, the transmutation of negative spiritual energy in positive one. As a rebell he wanted to plead by means of his poetry for a sanctified and healthy society, without declining it as a whole.

Commentators have been sharply divided in their opinions of his work. While a vocal minority have virtually dismissed it as willfully obscene and obtuse, others acknowledge Ginsberg’s contributions to experimental poetry and hail his unique forms of expression. Whatever their opinion of his work, most critics agree that Ginsberg played a pivotal role in the Beat movement and that much of his writing reflects the values associated with the Beats. Many commentators, including Paul Zweig and Darryl Pinckney, remark on the similarities between Ginsberg and

69 Allen Ginsberg: „Public Solitude“, Speech Manuscript of the Lecture in the Arlington Street Church in Boston, 12.11.1966, Stanford University: Special Collection Division
70 See Michael Schumacher – „Dharma Lion.“, pg. 135
71 Paul Zweig, an early collaborator in the founding of Poets House is a poet, philosopher and literary critic. He died in Paris in August 1984. The bequest of his personal library began the Poets House collection.
72 Educated at Columbia University and a former Hodder Fellow at Princeton University, Darryl Pinckney is the
Whitman, particularly in the use of long, free verse lines but also in the use of homosexual imagery. Much of the commentary on Ginsberg’s poetry analyzes the spiritual and philosophical aspects of his work. Some critics, such as John Tytell, maintain that the poet’s spirituality comes from both his Jewish background, as evidenced in „Kaddish“ (Jewish Mourner’s Prayer), and from Eastern philosophies, as evidenced in such works as „Planet News“. Critics such as Paul Carroll cite the similarity of Ginsberg’s poetry to a mantra, in his author’s attempts to change the world through repetitive, chant-like language, while Thomas S. Merrill and others


74 Allen Ginsberg: „Kaddish“ in „Kaddish and Other Poems. 1958-1960“, City Lights Books, San Francisco, 1961. Dedicated to the poet’s mother, Naomi Ginsberg, the poem is a narration and a lament arising from Ginsberg’s memories, three years after Naomi’s death, of her life and of his life with her. This long poem is subdivided into 5 sections that address the dead woman directly. Ginsberg himself wrote on this poem: “I saw my self my own mother and my very nation trapped desolate...and receiving decades of life while chanting Kaddish the names of Death in many mind-worlds the self seeking key to life found at last our self.”
75 Allen Ginsberg: „Planet News“, City Light Books, San Francisco, 1968. Collecting seven years’ Poesy scribed to 1967 begins with electronic politics disassociation & messianic rhapsody TV Baby in New York, continues picasque around the globe, elan perceptions notated at Mediterranean, Galilee & Ganges till next breakthrough, comedown Poem at heart & soul last days in Asia The Change 1963; tenement doldrums & police-state paranoia in Manhattan then half year behind Socialist Curtain climaxed as Kral Majales May King Prague 1965, same years’ erotic gregariousness writ as Who Be Kind To for International Poetry Incarnation Albert Hall London; next trip West Coast thru center America Midwest Wichita Vortex Sutra...at last across Atlantic Wales Visitation promethian text recollected in emotion revised in tranquility continuing tradition of ancient Nature Language mediates between psychedelic inspiration and humane ecology & integrated acid classic Unitive Vision with democratic eyeball particulars-book closes on politics to exorcise Pentagon phantoms who cover Earth with dung-colored gas.
76 Editor and poet Paul Carroll was born in Chicago in 1927, and earned his M.A. from the University of Chicago in 1952. He was the editor of "Big Table" magazine from 1959 to 1961, and then worked as a book editor.

Works:
- New and Selected Poems (1978)
- The Poem in its Skin (1968)
- Poems (1988)


XXIX
emphasize Ginsberg’s affinity with Existentialism and other twentieth-century philosophical movements. A great deal of critical commentary focuses on the biographical details of Ginsberg’s life as they relate to his poetry; critics interpret his poetry using details of specific events and experiences in his personal life, in particular Ginsberg’s family life, his mother’s illness, his sexual orientation, his interest in mind-expanding drugs, political activism, and spiritual pilgrimages.

All these experiences and realizations he wrote down in his 32 volumes of poetry, 13 collaborative efforts, 7 assorted prose writings and other poetry collections, letters, journals, recordings, interviews, lectures, and his play „Kaddish“ (1972). Here are to be listed some of his principal works, if only for the reawaken of the readers curiosity:

**Volumes Of Poetry / Poetry Collections**:

- „Howl and Other Poems“, 1956
- „Siesta in Xbalba and Return to the States“, 1956
- „Empty Mirror: Early Poems“, 1961
- „Wichita Vortex Sutra“, 1966
- „Planet News“, 1968
- „The Moments Return: A Poem“, 1970
- „Open Head“, 1972
- „The Fall of America: Poems of These States, 1965-1971“, 1972

**Letters:**

• „The Yage Letters“ (with William Burroughs), 1963
• „As Ever: The Collected Correspondance of Allen Ginsberg and Neal Cassady“, 1977
• „Straight Hearts’ Delight: Love Poems and Selected Letters“ (with Peter Orlovsky), 1980

**Assorted Prose:**

• „Notes after an Evening with William Carlos Williams“, 1970
• „Declaration of Independence for Dr. Timothy Leary“, 1971
• „The Fall of America Wins a Prize“, 1974
• „The Dream of Tibet“, 1976

**Journals:**

• „Indian Journals: March 1962 - May 1963; Notebooks, Diary, Blank Pages, Writings“, 1970
• „Journals: Early Fifties, Early Sixties“, 1977

**Plays:**

• „Kaddish“, 1972
Gisberg’s criticism of society couldn’t fundamentally change the capitalistic system of America, but had it noticeable „quake“. The critic of the Beats, which especially came from Ginsberg questioned the state authority and the credibility of the state institutions. Over and over again Ginsberg tried to offer resistance against the state, when he saw the law of liberty not being warranted. His weapon was the word, which he could implant due to his popularity in many domains and in front of a big public. For this reason he achieved to disclose the antagonism of American authorities, which deliberately oppressed and manipulated the citizens. Ginsberg went further especially in his writings, but also particularly through his lifestyle into the depths, so that way to lay bare the double standard, which manifested in the American society. This way he remained an uncomfortable critic, who loved the U.S.A. in his own special way, but who was permanently affected by the self elevated leitmotif: „America I’m putting my queer shoulder to the wheel“, or like J. D. McClathy wrote in the „Yale Review“: „Like Whitman, he was a bard in the old manner – outsized, darkly, prophetic, part exhuberance, part prayer, part rant. His work is finally a history of our era’s psyche, with all its contradictory urges.“

C. Jack (Jean - Louis Lebris de) Kerouac – angelic, lonely, vulnerable, martyr of the be-bop saints

< DID I CREATE THAT SKY ? YES, FOR IT WAS
ANYTHING OTHER THAN A CONCEPTION IN MY MIND
I WOULDN ’ T HAVE SAID „SKY“ - THAT IS WHY I AM THE

Jean-Louis Lebris de Kerouac was born on March 12, 1922 in Lowell, Massachusetts. Jack, as he was later called, spoke no English until he was around six years old. At home, his family spoke a French dialect called joual. Leo and Gabrielle Kerouac, Jack’s parents, were both descendants of French-Canadian immigrants who settled in New England. Life in Lowell during Jack’s childhood was not easy. While it had once been an important industrial town, businesses were on the decline and the Great Depression hit Lowell’s economy hard. Many families, including the Kerouacs, had trouble making ends meet. Gabrielle worked in factories off and on throughout

6.4.1997
80 Joul is the name given by some to a working-class sociolect of Quebec French that was spoken in Montreal, after its pronunciation of the word cheval. Its most important trait ws the amount loanwords from English. The term is said to have been coined by journalist André Laurendeau. Joual was traditionally spoken on the streets of working-class Montreal, but was popularized in the mid-20th century by authors such as Michel Tremblay and songwriters such as Robert Charlebois.

Common joual words and their standard French equivalent:

- toé -- toi
- moé -- moi
- chu -- je suis
- ché -- je sais
- pis -- puis
- y -- il
- ouais -- oui
- y'a -- il y a
-
Jack’s lifetime. Jack’s father worked as a newspaper reporter, eventually owning his own printing business until a devastating flood hit Lowell and he was forced to sell it. After this failure, Jack’s father turned to gambling and never regained financial success.

Leo and Gabrielle had two children older than Jack: Gerard, born in 1917 and Caroline (nicknamed Nin), born in 1920. Gerard’s health was fragile due to a heart condition. After months of suffering in 1926, Gerard succumbed to a rheumatic fever at only nine years old. Jack had loved and idolized his older brother81, and at only four years old, could not understand Gerard’s death. It had a continual impact on Jack’s imagination and thoughts, and perhaps caused adults to perceive Jack as a quiet, brooding child.

From a very early age, Jack was very creative and artistic. He drew cartoon scripts and acted his own “silent movies” in the family’s parlor. Later in his childhood, Jack began to create his own magazines, in which he drew the pictures and wrote the texts.82 Although he was quiet, he had many friends and companions as a child. He was educated in French-speaking Catholic parochial schools until he reached junior high, when he began his first experience learning entirely in English at the public schools in Lowell. Once Jack learned English, he began to read everything he could get his hands on, from conventional novels to pulp mysteries.83

In high school, Jack became a local football star. He was so talented as a halfback, in fact, that he won a scholarship to play for a college education at Columbia. Before entering the university, the scholarship provided that Jack take a

---

81 Physically, the two were opposites - Jack, burly and strong, Gerard, frail and pasty. His aliases in Jack’s books are: „Doctor Sax“ - Gerard Duluoz / „The Town and the City“ - Julian Martin / „Visions of Gerard“ - Gerard Duluoz.

82 Around the age of twelve, Kerouac began writing long, secret stories about his personal life. Oftentimes, these writings would be followed by ritual masturbation sessions. Biographer Steven Watson claims that, even from the beginning, writing was a 'self-stimulating process’ for Kerouac.

83 Back in those days he was reading a lot of Thomas More’s novels: „Look Homeward, Angel, A Story of the Buried Life“(New York, C. Scribner's Sons 1929); „Of Time and the River;a Legend of Man's Hunger in His Youth“ (New York, C. Scribner's sons, 1935);„The web and the rock.“ (New York, Harper & brothers, 1939); „You can't go home again“ (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1940), and French classic novels.
year at Horace Mann, an academy in the Bronx, which enabled him to take some math and French classes before beginning college. Jack went to Columbia in 1940 to begin playing football, but broke his leg early in the season and was benched. After a disagreement with his coach the next fall, Jack quit football and Columbia and hit the road back to Lowell.

Jack landed a job as the sports reporter for the `Lowell Sun`, where he worked for several months. He decided that sports writing in Lowell was not for him, and moved briefly to Washington, D.C. then to Boston, working various temporary jobs in construction and food service. The United States was just entering into World War II, and Jack decided to join a ship as a sailor in the Merchant Marine in early 1942. The passage to Greenland and Nova Scotia on the `S.S. Dorchester` was quite difficult, and when Jack got home he returned briefly to Columbia. Jack then joined the Navy for a time, but was honorably discharged a few months later on psychological grounds. The authorities had thought he was insane because he did not submit to the authority of his military superiors and questioned him extensively before admitting him briefly to the psychiatric unit. He rejoined the Navy after being discharged and sailed to England and back on the `S.S. George Weens`.

When he returned from England, Jack and sometime girlfriend Edie Parker began to meet friends that would prove very influential and important in Jack’s life: Lucien Carr and the writer Allen Ginsberg, who were Columbia students at the time, the writer William S. Burroughs and Neal Cassady, the companion to Jack’s legendary cross-country wanderings in his famous novel „On the Road“. This circle, along with a few other friends, became known as the center of the “Beat” movement. Jack and his friends were very interested in and influenced by the popular jazz and bop music of the

85 A member of New England Newspapers, Inc
86 The S.S. Dorchester was one of three identical ships built in 1926 for the Merchants and Miners Transportation Company. She was the largest ship launched on Saturday, 20 March, by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, in what was called „The most unique multiple-launching in the noteworthy history of American Shipbuilding“.
time. Jack coined the phrase “Beat Generation” in a conversation with the writer John Clellon Holmes, when he described his contemporary generation as having an attitude of “beatness” or “weariness” with the world.

After some involvement as an accessory in an incident that left Lucien Carr in prison for manslaughter, Jack married Edie in 1944. The marriage only lasted a matter of months, however, and the couple divorced in 1945. Jack’s father Leo died later that same year of stomach cancer, and Jack began work on his first and most conventional novel, „The Town and the City“, which was published in 1950.

In 1949, Jack took a road trip from the East Coast to San Francisco with Neal Cassady and his ex-wife Luanne. Jack would cross America and Mexico several times in the next decade, sometimes driving with Neal Cassady in a car, sometimes hitchhiking. These cross-country trips comprised much of the content for Jack’s most famous work, „On the Road“.

The next year, Jack married his second wife, Joan Haverty. Joan became

---

88 **Bebop** or **bop** is a form of jazz which uses a fast tempo and complex improvisational techniques. It was introduced in the 1940s. Many bebop tunes were based on chord progressions (also called chord changes) from popular songs. The chord changes to the song “I Got Rhythm” by George Gershwin were so often used that they get their own name, “rhythm changes”. Jazz solos had always been improvised over song chords, but entirely new compositions based on chord changes was an innovation. The typical bebop combo consisted of bass, drums, and piano, with two horn players up front. The classic 1940s bebop combo was Charlie Parker on alto sax, Dizzy Gillespie on trumpet, Max Roach on drums, Percy Heath on bass, and Bud Powell on piano. The name **bebop** (briefly called **rebop**) is an imitation of a characteristic quick two-note phrase that was played together by the lead instruments to introduce a solo or end a song. The centric bop-scenes were in New York („The street“ - 52nd Street, between Broadway and 5th Avenue – subterranean clubs like „Onyx“, „Famous Door“, „Three Deuces“, „Britwood“, „Savoy Ballroom“, „Monroe’s Uptown House“, „The Village“, „Yeah Man“, „Big Apple“ in the 11th Street, „Victoria Smalls”“, „101 Ranch“ in the 139th Street, „Dicky Well’s“ or „Murrain’s“ in Harlem) and San Francisco, also Paris and Cuba.

Other notable musicians identified with bebop: Miles Davis, trumpet / Chubby Jackson, bass / Dexter Gordon, tenor sax / Thelonious Monk, piano

89 The actual term "Beat Generation" was coined in 1948, after Kerouac had finished his first novel, ‘The Town and the City’. He met another aspiring writer in New York City named John Clellon Holmes, who shared his love for bop music and enjoyed theorizing about social trends and cultural changes. In November 1948 they sat up late drinking beer and talking into the night in Holmes’s Lexington Ave apartment. As Holmes recalled the conversation, Kerouac replied, "It's a kind of furtiveness .... Like we were a generation of fugitives. You know, with an inner knowledge there's no use flaunting on that level, the level of the "public," a kind of beatness - I mean, being right down to it, to ourselves, because we all really know where we are - and a weariness with all the forms, all the conventions of the world .... So I guess you might say we're a beat generation,' and he laughed a conspiratorial, the Shadow-knows kind of laugh at his own words and at the look on my face."

90 Joan Haverty was Kerouac's second wife. She had previously been involved with Bill Cannastra. The marriage lasted just a few months, from November 1950 to early 1951. Her aliases in „On the Road“ is Laura.
pregnant with a daughter\textsuperscript{91}, and the couple separated the next year. Jack wrote the original version of „On the Road“ in 1951. The next few years were to be his most productive. He worked on „Visions of Cody“ and „Dr. Sax“ the next year while on trips to visit Neal Cassady in San Francisco and William Burroughs in Mexico City. He also wrote „Maggie Cassidy“ in 1953 about Mary Carney, a girl he had been in love with as a teenager, in addition to „The Subterraneans“. Although he was writing prolifically during this period, Jack had still not had a book published since „The Town and the City“ in 1950.

Over the next few years, Jack traveled often, hitchhiking across America, visiting Cassady, Ginsberg and Burroughs at their residences in various parts of the country and taking occasional jobs. Jack became interested in Buddhism and went alone to Mexico in 1955 to meditate. There, he composed a body of poetry called „Mexico City Blues“ and began a novel about a woman he met there called Tristessa. In early 1956, he began working on other novels: „Visions of Gerard“, about his older brother’s death, „The Scripture of the Golden Eternity and Old Angel Midnight. “

After years of delays and revisions, „On the Road“ was finally published in 1957\textsuperscript{92} and Jack began to taste fame. The book began to enjoy tremendous success, and Jack appeared in Mademoiselle magazine, among others. Ginsberg and some of the other famous Beats were already well known writers and performers, and Jack’s new book made a splash on the scene they already inhabited. After a brief respite to Tangier with Ginsberg and Burroughs, and a trip to London just after „On the Road“ was published, Jack returned to New York a celebrity. Jack had become the

\textsuperscript{91} Jan Michelle Hackett (1952-1996) was Jack Keroac’s daughter. Despite the fact that she only met her famous father twice, Hacett’s life and her writing were strongly influenced by the Kerouac legend. She left home at an early age and experimented with drugs, traveled extensively in the United States and abroad, making her way through a wide variety of off jobs along the way. She published two novels under the name Jan Kerouac „Baby Driver: A Story About Myself“ (1981) and „Trainsong (1988)“. Jan was working on a third „Parrot Fever“, when she died.

\textsuperscript{92} When Viking Press published On the Road in 1957, the New York Times gave it a rave review and the book rose to number seven on the best-seller list. In his New York Times review, Gilbert Millstein announced that the book’s publication was a “historic occasion.” Millstein accurately predicted that many other critics would not agree. Indeed, the critics were divided; some, like Millstein, thought the book was extraordinarily original. Others, like Norman Podhoretz, claimed that the novel was an adolescent, even incoherent, work. There were also critics somewhere in the middle who believed that although Kerouac exhibited flashes of true talent in the book, the novel as a whole had too many weaknesses to be considered a masterpiece.
representative of the Beat generation, to his chagrin. Fans lauded him and critics derided him as an advocate for the excesses and world-weariness of the Beat generation.

As a follow up to „On the Road“, Jack wrote his last novel for four years to follow, „The Dharma Bums“. More of Jack’s previous works were being published, including „The Subterranea‘ns“, „Dr. Sax“, „Mexico City Blues“ and „Tristessa“. Joining his Beat friends, Jack began to do poetry and prose readings at clubs in New York, accompanied by jazz musicians such as Steve Allen, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn and David Amram. He often wrote columns for magazines such as Playboy, Swank, Holiday, Escapade and Esquire.

The much-awaited years of fame were not happy for Jack. He had battled problems with alcoholism, which had worsened with his increasing fame. Jack was unhappy in his newfound celebrity status, as the critics denounced him for his unique “spontaneous prose” form of writing as well as for being a proponent of a lifestyle that he did not necessarily advocate.

Jack moved to Bixby Canyon in Big Sur, California in 1961 and wrote his final novel, the dark, semi-autobiographical „Big Sur“. In the last years of his life, Jack lived with his mother. He had remained a dedicated and caring son and lived with her periodically throughout his adult life as she moved to different locations in New York and Florida. He married childhood friend Stella Sampas in 1966, and the couple moved to St. Petersburg with Gabrielle. Jack’s fame dwindled toward the end of his life, and alcoholism had deteriorated his health considerably. On October 20, 1969, Jack died from internal bleeding caused by cirrhosis of the liver. He was only 47 years old. Stella and Gabrielle held a small wake in St. Petersburg, Florida, and another wake in Lowell. His funeral was held at the St. Jean Baptiste Church in Lowell that Jack had attended as a little boy, and he was laid to rest in the Sampas family plot in Lowell’s `Edson Cemetery‘.93

93 The Town of Edson owns two Cemeteries: the Edson Cemetery, and the Glenwood Cemetery. The Edson Cemetery is located at SW 5-28-53-17 W5M and is retained as a public cemetery although the cemetery is not
Nevertheless we witnessed an adorable recurrence of his spirit in the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics\(^{94}\), which Allen Ginsberg and Distinguished Professor of Poetics Ann Waldmann\(^{95}\) co-founded at Trungpa’s\(^{96}\) Naropa University\(^{97}\) presently being used for interments.

\(^{94}\) Naropa University's Department of Writing and Poetics aspires to the classical Greek academia, a "grove" of learning where elders and students meet to explore traditional and innovative technique and lore in the literary arts. The programs emphasize traditional and experimental approaches to creative writing in verse and prose within a variety of genres. Also emphasized is the development of competent critical writing in this literature courses and in the Critical Thesis requirement of the student's Final Manuscript. The Jack Kerouac School was founded at Naropa in 1974 by Allen Ginsberg and Anne Waldman. The school comprises the Summer Writing Program and the Department of Writing and Poetics, which administers the MFA in Writing and Poetics, the MFA in Creative Writing (low residency program), and the BA in Writing and Literature. (read more at: http://www.naropa.edu/writingandpoetics/index.html)

\(^{95}\) Anne Waldman is an internationally known poet, performer, professor, editor, with strong personal links to the New York School, the Beat Literary Movement, and the experimental strands of the New American Poetry. She has also extended performance to new dimensions with her “modal structures” as in the celebrated "Pieces of An Hour" (for John Cage). She is the author of over 30 books including, most recently, „Vow To Poetry: Essays, Interviews & Manifestos“, Coffee House Press, 2001) „Marriage: A Sentence“ (Penguin Poets, 2000) the 20th anniversary edition of Fast Speaking Woman City Lights Books), „Iovis: All Is Full of Jove: Books I & II“ (Coffee House Press), „Kill or Cure“ (Penguin Poets). She is also the editor of The Beat Book (Shambhala Publications), and co-editor of Disembodied Poetics: Annals of The Jack Kerouac School (University of New Mexico Press). She was an Assistant Director (1966-1968) and the Director of the St. Mark's Poetry Project (1968-1978) and edited „The World Anthology", „Another World and Out of This World", compendiums of writing from The Poetry Project which included writings by three generations of cutting edge, and culturally active poets and writers.

\(^{96}\) Born in Tibet in 1940, Naropa's founder, Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, was a lineage holder of both the Kagyu and Nyingma Buddhist traditions. In 1959 after the Chinese invasion, he escaped Tibet through the Himalayas to northern India. Like His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other exiled teachers, he continued to teach and transmit the wisdom of the Buddhist dharma. In 1963, he received a Spaulding sponsorship to study comparative religion, philosophy, and the fine arts at Oxford University where he became fluent in English and conversant with the particular needs of Western students. In 1970, he began presenting Buddhist teachings in the United States. During the next 17 years, he taught extensively, and founded meditation centers throughout North America and Europe. A scholar and artist as well as meditation master, he became widely recognized as one of the foremost teachers of Buddhism in the West. With the founding of Naropa University in 1974, he realized his vision of creating a university that would combine contemplative studies with traditional Western scholastic and artistic disciplines. In 1977 he founded Shambhala Training, an international network of centers offering secular meditation programs designed for the general public. After his death in 1987, Trungpa Rinpoche left a legacy of teachings and writings. Among his many publications are Born in Tibet, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism, The Myth of Freedom, and Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior.

\(^{97}\) Naropa University is based on Nalanda University. Established under the auspices of Mahayana Buddhism, Nalanda flourished in India from the 5th to the 12th centuries. At Nalanda University, Buddhist philosophy and the discipline of meditation provided the environment in which scholars, artists and healers from many Asian countries and religious traditions came to study and debate. Nalanda was known for its joining of intellect and intuition, and for the atmosphere of mutual appreciation and respect among different contemplative traditions. This has become the ongoing inspiration for the development of Naropa University. The University takes its name from Naropa, the 11th century Abbot of Nalanda University and a great Buddhist scholar, teacher and practitioner. He was renowned for bringing together scholarly wisdom with meditative insight.
in Boulder, Colorado, in 1974. Many of the nowadays Beat poets and prose writers have graduated\textsuperscript{98} from this university under the tutelage of the Core Faculty members: Keith Abbott, Reed Bye, Bobbie Louise Hawkins, Anselm Hollo, Laird Hunt, Bhanu Kapil, Andrew Schelling, Eleni Sikelianos, Steven Taylor, Anne Waldman, and the guidance of Faculty Chair Steven Taylor.

Kerouac viewed his novels as comprising a series of interconnected autobiographical narratives in the manner of Marcel Proust’s „À la recherche du temps perdu“\textsuperscript{99}. The novels that compose „The Legend of Dulouz“ as Kerouac called the totality of his works include „Visions of Gerard“ (1963), which depicts the author’s childhood as overshadowed by the death of his beloved brother Gerard at age nine; „Doctor Sax: Faust Part Three“ (1959), a surrealist portrait of Kerouac’s boyhood memories and dreams; „Maggie Cassady“ (1959), a fictional account of Kerouac’s first love; and „Vanity of Duluoz: An Adventurous Education, 1935-1946“ (1968), which chronicles Kerouac’s years of playing football at prep school and Columbia University. „Visions of Cody“, viewed by many critics as a late revision of „On the Road“, retells the story in spontaneous prose. Kerouac wrote about his love affair in 1953 with an African-American woman in „The Subterraneans“ (1958), and his adventures on the West Coast learning about Buddhism from Gary Snyder are delineated in „The Dharma Bums“ (1959). „Desolation Angels“ (1965) covers the years just prior to the publication of „On The Road“, while „Big Sur“ (1962) displays the bitterness and despair Kerouac experienced in the early 1960’s and his descent into alcoholism.

\textsuperscript{98} See: http://programs.gradschools.com/graduate-schools/Naropa-University-CO.html

\textsuperscript{99} Valentin-Louis-Georges-Eugène-Marcel Proust (10\textsuperscript{th} July 1871 – 22\textsuperscript{nd} November 1922) wrote between 1913 and 1927 In Search of Lost Time (À la recherche du temps perdu), a cycle of seven novels, spanning ca. 3,200 pages and teeming with more than 2,000 characters, undoubtedly one of the greatest achievements of Western imaginative literature. Proust’s multifaceted vision is enthralling. He was a satirist and a nanoscopic analyst of introspective consciousness, a chronicler and theorist of Eros, exploring nuances of human sexuality, a wise and ethical writer. He was the creator of more than forty unforgettable characters who continue to resonate in the world’s literary consciousness. Above all, Proust’s central message is the affirmation of life. Contrary to the opinion voiced by some of his contemporaries and critics, Proust’s great work teaches that life’s “purpose” is not to be sought in artistic artefacts: life is not fulfilled when a painting or a novel is completed, but when it is transmuted, in the very course of quotidian living, into something “artistic” or spiritually mature and wise.
When his major work „On The Road“ was first published, it was rejected by many as a morally objectionable work. Kerouac, through his first-person narrator, Sal Paradise, enthusiastically describes the adventures that make up the book’s narrative, including stealing, heavy drinking, drug use, and sexual promiscuity. To many critics in the time and world in between Jack’s book was negatively welcomed, out of the double moral standards of the „Major League“, bestly represented in the executive of the main American newspapers like „Times“, „Post“ or „News“. Though sell-outs of the narrative work since 1957 outclassed by far the umpty millions of exemplars world – wide. To many critics of that time, Kerouac’s novel signaled the moral demise of a generation. However, several reviewers disagreed with this assessment, nothing the spiritual quest theme that permeates the novel and arguing that such themes made „On The Road“ a descendent of American „road literature“ as represented by such works as Mark Twain’s „Adventures of Huckleberry Finn“. Although „On The Road“ was once commonly considered to have inspired the peripatetic hippie generation of the 1960’s, later evaluations have paid greater attention to the narrator’s disillusionment with the life of the road at the conclusion of the novel.

When a student asked his professor back in 1966 at Stanford University how a writer of reputations and scientific knowledge would be like in the past present, the tutor answered: „He would probably jump on the next freightliner, smoke pot and camp in the outskirts of town“ Some commentators now view „ON The Road“ as depicting the conflicting appeal of a contemplative, inner-directed life on the one hand, and an unexamined, outgoing existence on the other. More recent critical studies also evidence considerable interest in Kerouac’s „spontaneous prose“ method, viewing it as an extension of the „stream – of – consciousness“ technique used by Rimbaud, Joyce or the Surrealists.

100 Viking Press, New York, 1957
101 The headlong style of the narrator underlines the description of lifestyle based on beauty, alcohol, jazz, sex, drugs, and mysticism. Kerouac wrote the book, at his kitchen table on West 20th Street, over a period of just 20 days on a single roll of telegraph paper. In the process he reinvented “automatic writing”, which marked the writings of Surrealistic circles in Paris in the 1920s. Kerouac presented a new, spontaneous, unpolished style, the ‘sound of the mind’, similar to almost theatrical performance. It appealed subculture folksingers, hipsters, mystics, and writers.
Jean-Louis Lebris de Kerouac’s writings exist everywhere, invoking the spirit of the Beatniks, word by word and letter by letter. If almost all of his prose was to be presented already, the intentions of the author consist in poetry and diaries, letters and autobiographical written documentations, journals which a few have been not even today been published:

- The Town and the City“ (novel, 1950)
- „Mexico City Blues“ (poetry, 1959)
- „The Scripture of the Golden Eternity“ (poetry, 1960)
- „Tristessa“ (novel, 1960)
- „The Book of Dreams“ (diaries, 1961)
- „Satori in Paris“ (novel, 1966)
- „Pic“ (novel, 1971 p.)

III. **The literature report on the „common ground“ of the Beat Generation**

The Beat Generation of the 1950s was essentially a literary movement of American origin combining writers and poets from both the East and West coasts. It

102 Joyce Johnson „Minor Characters“, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1983, pg. 147
followed an earlier American group known as the "Lost Generation" of the 1920s which included American writers such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Kay Boyle, Gertrude Stein and Robert McAlmon. They flocked to London and Paris at the end of World War I to escape "puritanism, philistinism, Prohibition and President Harding."\(^\text{103}\)

There has been considerable confusion about the term, as well as the word "beat" itself, but there is no disagreement that there has been a phenomenon known as the Beat Generation writers. This shared experience for the Beat writers was historical and political, based on the tumultuous changes of their times: the historic events that began with America's dropping the atomic bomb on Japan to bring World War II to an end, and the political ramifications of the ensuing Cold War and wave of anti-Communist hysteria that followed in the United States in the late 1940s and the 1950s.

As F. Scott Fitzgerald once stated, the postwar literary movement was shaped by "the madmen and the outlaws of the generation before."\(^\text{104}\) The early Beat writers deliberately selected as their models such unlikely "Secret Heroes" (as Ginsberg stated) as the bop musicians Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, the French poet Arthur Rimbaud, the Welsh performer-poet Dylan Thomas, the California anarchist poet Kenneth Rexroth, and others outside the canon of acceptable Anglo-American literary models.

The Beat Generation had "its own leaders and spokesmen, "the early members of the cluster, writers like Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and Gary Snyder, who exemplified what Cowley\(^\text{105}\) called "new

\(^{103}\) American poet Gertrude Stein actually coined the expression "lost generation." Speaking to Ernest Hemingway, she said, "you are all a lost generation." The term stuck and the mystique surrounding these individuals continues to live on. Looking back to his own 'Lost Generation' and the Jazz Age, Fitzgerald said that what he meant by a 'generation' was a reaction 'against the fathers' - the sort of thing, he suggested, that seemed to occur about three times in a century - and that what the new generation does is to draw, in a modified form, on the ideas of 'the madmen and the outlaws of the generation before'.

\(^{104}\) See www.lostdfitzi.com

\(^{105}\) Malcolm Cowley
born Aug. 24, 1898, Belsano, Pa., U.S.
died March 27, 1989, New Milford, Conn.

American literary critic and social historian who chronicled the writers of the “Lost Generation” of the 1920s and
standards of conduct, a distinctive life style that was soon adopted by others of the group." While they drew into orbit "those born just before it and just after," the other writers participating in the literary generation were hardly less defiant.

The discovery of the word "beat" was essential to the formation of a sense of self-definition among the earliest writers making up the cluster that would later call itself members of a "Beat Generation." The word "beat" was primarily in use after World War II by jazz musicians and hustlers as a slang term meaning down and out, or poor and exhausted.

_The jazz musician Mezz Mezzrow combined it with other words, like "dead beat" or "beat-up," when he used it with humorous exaggeration in his book Really the Blues (1946)_: "Things went from bad to worse, and kept right on travelling. I was dead beat, troubled with the shorts; not penny one did I have, and I prowled around town in the only suit I had to my name, a beat-up old tuxedo with holes in the pants where I sat, and my hair so long that Louis Armstrong got the impression I was a violin player."

In 1944 the word "beat" was used by a Times Square hustler named Herbert Huncke came to the attention of William Burroughs, whom Huncke had introduced to heroin. Through Burroughs, the word was passed on to the young Columbia College freshman Allen Ginsberg and his friend who shared interest in writing Jack Kerouac, a Columbia dropout serving during the war as a merchant marine seaman based in New York. As Ginsberg remembered first hearing the word "beat," the "original street usage" in Huncke's speech meant "exhausted, at the bottom of the world, looking up or

---

106 "Really the Blues"
Author: Mezzrow, Mezz
New ed; Paperback
420 pages
Published: September 1999
Canongate Books Ltd
ISBN: 086241959X
Kerouac was fascinated by the tone of the word "beat" as Huncke said it hunched over a cup of coffee in a Times Square cafeteria. Kerouac heard a "melancholy sneer" in the sound of Huncke's voice that Kerouac later insisted "never meant juvenile delinquents" despite its use by drug addicts, but rather "meant characters of a special spirituality who didn't gang up but were solitary Bartlebies staring out the dead wall window of our civilization." Kerouac's insistence that the word possessed deeper allusive qualities and meant something mysterious and spiritual, suggestive of Herman Melville's story more than a century before about the archetypal American nonconformist "Bartleby the Scrivener," grew out of his conversations with Ginsberg and Ginsberg's friend Lucien Carr. Ginsberg and Carr were only eighteen-year-old college students at the time, but they were drawn to literature and were using drugs like Benzedrine and marijuana in their dormitory rooms near the Columbia campus to inspire them to create what they called a "New Vision" of art. They were attempting to follow the example of French poet Arthur Rimbaud, whom Carr introduced to Ginsberg as the ideal poet. Their efforts were the earliest attempts of the group later labelled "Beat-writers" to define a philosophy.

The actual term "Beat Generation" was coined a few years later, in 1948, after Kerouac had finished his first novel ‘The Town and the City'. He met another aspiring writer in New York City named John Clellon Holmes, who shared his love for bop music and enjoyed theorizing about social trends and cultural changes. In November 1948 they sat up late drinking beer and talking into the night in Holmes's Lexington

---

108 l.c., pg. 58
109 "Bartleby the Scrivener" is now one of the most famous short stories of the nineteenth century. In 1852, Melville was asked by Putnam's magazine to contribute a work of short fiction. He began by writing a story about a young wife named Agatha who waits seventeen years for news from her husband, who left to seek work. As Melville conceived the story, the mailbox was an essential symbol: as time passes, the unused mailbox rots and falls apart. Word never comes. This story, though appealing for its symbolism, proved unworkable as fiction. Melville abandoned it, although the forlorn mailbox and the absent mail reworked themselves into the Dead Letter Office at "Bartleby’s haunting ending. "Bartleby the Scrivener" was published in 1853, to not much fanfare. As with all of Melville's good work, complexity alienated his readers.
Ave. apartment. When the term "Beat Generation" began to be used as a label for the young people Kerouac called "hipsters or beatsters" in the late 1950s, the word "beat" lost its specific reference to a particular subculture and became a synonym for anyone living as a bohemian or acting rebelliously or appearing to advocate a revolution in manners. Other writers had their favourite label for the cultural change. Mailer's term was the "Hip Generation," Ginsberg used the name "The Subterraneans," Kerouac also referred to the "Bop Generation."

Kerouac's stories about the Times Square junkies, the Fifty-second Street bop musicians, and the "wild kids" he'd met on his cross-country trip the previous year to visit a Denver friend named Neal Cassady, fascinated Holmes. He felt Kerouac's stories "seemed to be describing a new sort of stance toward reality, behind which a new sort of consciousness lay." Holmes responded to the "restless exuberance, the quality of search" that he sensed in Kerouac's descriptions, and he urged Jack to characterise the new attitude by trying to define it in a phrase or two. In Kerouac published a sketch titled "Jazz of the Beat Generation" in the paperback anthology New World Writing series that achieved some notice for its exuberant, experimental prose style. But it wasn't until the publication of his novel "On the Road" in 1957, following on the heels of the well-publicized censorship trial in San Francisco of Ginsberg's book "Howl and Other Poems", that the Beat Generation and the Beat literary group became a national phenomenon. Kerouac was dubbed the spokesman for the Beat Generation, and he was besieged with requests to explain it.

As Holmes recalled the conversation, Kerouac replied, "It's a kind of furtiveness .... Like we were a generation of furtives. You know, with an inner knowledge there's no use flaunting on that level, the level of the "public," a kind of beatness - I mean, being right down to it, to ourselves, because we all really know where we are - and a

---

One way Mailer made a "change in the given" was to found the Village Voice, one of the country's first counterculture weeklies, with Dan Wolf and Ed Fancher in 1955. In 1957 Mailer published the essay, in which he introduced his conception of the hipster, the rebel who chooses to live outside of society rather than to suffocate within it. In that essay, Mailer argues that the hipster has an obligation to rebel against a conformist corporate society even though he will be perceived as amoral.
weariness with all the forms, all the conventions of the world .... So I guess you might say we're a beat generation,' and he laughed a conspiratorial, the Shadow-knows kind of laugh at his own words and at the look on my face."111

Holmes characterized the Beat Generation as a cultural revolution in progress, made by a post-World War II generation of disaffiliated young people coming of age into a Cold War world without spiritual values they could honor. Instead of obeying authority and conforming to traditional middle-class materialistic aspirations, these young people dealt as best they could with what Holmes called their "will to believe, even in the face of an inability to do so in conventional terms." Holmes's early published articles112 and his novel „Go“ 113 stirred what he called "a ripple of curiosity."

The Beat Generation as a cultural revolution or a literary movement didn't seem evident to many readers, despite the fact that two other novels published along with „Go“ in 1952 also reflected aspects of what Holmes had characterized as the new Beat consciousness - Chandler Brossard's „Who Walk in Darkness“114, about a young disaffiliated Greenwich Village writer, and George Mandel's „Flee the Angry Strangers“115, about a rebellious middle-class white teenager's addiction to heroin. The original Beat nucleus was a small, tightly knit group of friends, and Brossard and Mandel, although part of the New York scene, weren't part of their inner circle, didn't share their sense of total cultural rebellion, and soon distanced themselves from the group.

In "The Philosophy of the Beat Generation," which he wrote for Esquire magazine in March 1958, Kerouac made clear that the group that originated the idea of a "Beat Generation" was short-lived, consisting only of a few friends in the 1940s such

112 John Clellon Holmes' article „This Is The Beat Generation“, New York Times, November 16, 1952 was the first journalistic announcement of the Beat Generation. Also see „Beat Today“, min. 3.50
115 George Mandel: „Flee the Angry Strangers“, IN Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., Indianapolis, 1952
as Ginsberg, Carr, Burroughs, Huncke, and Holmes, who had scattered and left New York years before.

But after the Korean War, in the early 1950s, according to Kerouac, the "postwar youth emerged cool and beat, had picked up the gestures and the style; soon it was everywhere, the new look... the bop visions became common property of the commercial, popular cultural world .... The ingestion of drugs became official (tranquilizers and the rest); and even the clothes style of the beat hipsters carried over to the new rock 'n' roll youth... and the Beat Generation, though dead, was resurrected and justified." 116

The English magazine "X" 117 preferred to champion the work of "pure" writers like James Joyce and Samuel Beckett rather than treat the Beats as anything more than what its editors called "an amusing phenomenon" that had "no more connection with literature than the men in the moon." But England also had its own cluster of young writers who were challenging postwar social values and conventions in their country, a group called "The Kitchen-Sink Writers" or "The Angry Young Men." 118 In the late 1950s this group of controversial writers, which included the playwright John Osborne 119 and the novelists Colin Wilson 120, John Wain 121, and John Braine 122, was often linked with the American Beats. Unlike the Beat writers, the English writers' identity as a group was short-lived. Their literary interests led them to take different paths in the development of their separate careers.

In 1955 Ginsberg wrote "Howl", which was in part influenced by Kenneth

118 See footnote 103
119 John James Osborne (December 12, 1929 - December 24, 1994 ) was a British playwright and screenplay writer, the first of the „Angry Young Men“ of the 1950’s.
120 Born June 26, 1931, the British writer Colin Henry Wilson published novels like „The Outsider“ (1956) or „The War Against Sleep: The Philosophy of Gurdjieff“ (1980)
121 John Barrington Wain, May 14 1925 - May 24 1994 ) was a poet, critic and Professor of Poetry, associated with the literary group “The Movement”. For most of his life, he worked as a freelance journalist and author, writing and reviewing for newspapers and the radio. Novels: „Hurry On Down“ (1953), „Strike the Father Dead“ (1962),“Young Shoulders“ (1982).
Rexroth's conversation and poetry. Shortly after its composition he decided to organise a poetry reading on October 7, 1955, at the Six Gallery, a cooperative art gallery in San Francisco. The reading featured himself and the four young West Coast poets Michael McClure, Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen, and Philip Lamantia\(^\text{123}\). Jack Kerouac, who was visiting Ginsberg at the time, was unwilling to read with the others, but Kenneth Rexroth agreed to be master of ceremonies. Ginsberg's "Howl" delivered the necessary "voice" and "vision" on that particular day with the now famous opening words:

"I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness**."

The "Six Poets at the Six Gallery" reading was the catalyzer that dramatically revealed what Ginsberg later called the "natural affinity of modes of thought or literary style or planetary perspective"\(^\text{124}\) between the East Coast writers and the West Coast poets.

Michael McClure later described the atmosphere he felt the night of the reading in 1955: "As artists we were oppressed and indeed the people of the nation were oppressed. We knew we were poets and we had to speak out as poets. We saw that

---

\(^{123}\) Philip Lamantia was born in San Francisco on October 23, 1927, the son of Sicilian immigrants. He began writing poetry in elementary school and was briefly expelled from junior high for "intellectual delinquency" when he immersed himself in the work of Edgar Allan Poe and H.P. Lovecraft. At age sixteen, after being introduced to surrealism by the Miro and Dali retrospectives at the San Francisco Museum of Art, he began to write surrealist poetry, realizing that "the purely revolutionary nature" of surrealism "even before my knowledge of Surrealist theory, was part of my own individual temperament." Shortly afterward, Lamantia left home to join the Surrealists in York City and was welcomed by Andre Breton as "a voice that rises once a hundred years". Lamantia's poems were published in 1943 by Andre Breton as VVV. His first book, "Erotic Poems", was published in Berkeley in 1946. His second book, "Ekstasis", appeared after the Six Poets at the Six Gallery reading, and City Lights published his Selected Poems 1943-1966. "High", "The Night is a Space of White Marble", I Have Given Fair Warning" and "There is the Distance Between Me and What I Seek" are from that volume. Like the work of many of his Beat colleagues, Lamantia's poetry demonstrates the tension between what his biographer calls "the exultation of reality and an omnipresent sense of the pain and terror inherent in life". Lamantia is the only American poet of his generation to embrace fully the discoveries of Surrealism, and is a contributing editor of "Arsenal: Surrealist Subversion".

---


XLIX
the art of poetry was essentially dead - killed by war, by academies, by neglect, by lack of love, and by disinterest. We knew we could bring it back to life. We could see what Pound had done - and Whitman, and Artaud, and D. H. Lawrence in his monumental poetry and prose . . . We wanted to make it new and we wanted to invent it and the process of it as we went into it. We wanted voice and we wanted vision." 125

The 150 people in the audience cheered Ginsberg on to the poem's conclusion. As McClure realised, everyone knew "at the deepest level that a barrier had been broken, that a human voice and body had been hurled against the harsh wall of America and its supporting armies and navies and academies and institutions and ownership systems and power-support bases." 126

The poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti, who was in the Six Gallery audience that night, sent Ginsberg a telegram after the reading offering to publish "Howl" as a volume in the Pocket Poets Series recently started by his publishing company <City Lights>. In May 1957, a few months after its publication, „Howl and Other Poems“, number four in the series was seized by San Francisco customs officers. Ferlinghetti strongly defended “Howl”, saying that "it is not the poet but what he observes which is revealed as obscene. The great obscene wastes of “Howl” are the sad wastes of the mechanized world, lost among atom bombs and insane nationalisms .... " 127

The “Howl” - trial in San Francisco was a widely publicised event, bringing national attention to Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti, and sales swelled into the tens of thousands. The Beats, as represented by Ginsberg, had joined forces with the San Francisco poets, as represented by Ferlinghetti, and the Beat Generation literary cluster was ready to go into orbit.

The media tumult and controversy surrounding the word "beat" and the idea of a Beat literary movement climaxed in the years immediately following the publication of Kerouac's „On the Road“ and Ginsberg's „Howl“. Three anthologies of Beat writing

125 Michael McClure: „The Mad Cub“, Bantam, New York, 1970
126 l. c. footnote 125
127 Lawrence Ferlinghetti: „Horn on Howl“, in Lewis Hyde (ed.) Ann Arbor: „On the Poetry of Allen Ginsberg“, The
were published in New York in 1960: „The Beats“, edited by Seymour Krim; „The Beat Scene“, edited by Elias Wilentz, and „Beat Coast East: An Anthology of Rebellion“, edited by Stanley Fisher. For the introduction to his book, Fisher walked the streets of Greenwich Village and asked the "beatniks" he met there what they thought the word "beat" meant:

- a formal desperation which became a rebellion against all political and literary forms.
- a new concept instinctively arrived at a personal attitude that isn't in our vocabulary.
- very tired people - tired of living before one has started living, not being corny . . . cool.

Kerouac's efforts to convince magazine editors and television interviewers that his concept of the Beat Generation included a spiritual dimension were unavailing, but the readers of his books, which sold widely, understood him and his contribution to the cultural changes underway in America. The literary establishment was hostile, but the first small group of Beat writers in New York had found its most important supporters a few years before the hullabaloo over 'On the Road' and 'Howl' in 1957.

The fiction and poetry by Beat writers like Kerouac, Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, Snyder, and McClure probably offended more Americans than it found readers over thirty years old who agreed with its attack on such cherished institutions as capitalism, consumerism, the military-industrial complex, racism, and ecological destruction. Like the work of the radical writers of the 1930s (but without their specific political agenda), Beat poetry and fiction was an alternative literature by writers who were sweeping in their condemnation of their country's underlying social, sexual, political, and religious values. Earlier modernist poets like Ezra Pound or Lost Generation writers like Ernest Hemingway had attacked the system from the safeguard of their life abroad as expatriates, but the Beat Generation writers protested their country's

excesses on the front lines. They advocated personal and social changes that made
them heroes to some readers, and heretics to others. Once started, the Beat
movement had a momentum of its own and a world-wide impact. In fact, the intelligent
conservatives in America saw this as a serious threat to their position long before the
Beat writers saw it themselves - a much more serious threat, say, than the Communist
party. The Beat literary movement came at exactly the right time and said something
that millions of people of all nationalities all over the world were waiting to hear. You
can't tell anybody anything he doesn't know already. The alienation, the restlessness,
the dissatisfaction were already there waiting when Kerouac pointed out the road:

“Artists to my mind are the real architects of change, and not political legislators, who
implement change after the fact. Art exerts a profound influence on the style of life, the
mode, range and direction of perception. Art tells us what we know and don't know
that we know.”

Certainly ‘On the Road’ performed that function in 1957 to an extraordinary
extent. There's no doubt that we're living in a freer America as a result of the Beat
literary movement, which is an important part of the larger picture of cultural and
political change in this country during the last forty years, when a four letter word
couldn't appear on the printed page, and minority rights were ridiculous.

At the beginning of the 1960s the Beat Generation writers were solidly
established as a literary cluster with the publication of several anthologies and a stream
of books by individual authors over nearly a decade. Included were:

Allen Ginsberg - Howl (1956) and Kaddish (1961)


John Clellon Holmes - *Go* (1952) and *The Horn* (1958)

Lawrence Ferlinghetti - *Pictures of the Gone World* (1955) and *Coney Island of the Mind*
Gregory Corso - *Bomb* (1958)

Michael McClure – *Peyote Poem* (1958) and *Dark Brown* (1961)

John Wiener - *The Hotel Wentley Poems* (1958)

Diane DiPrima - *This Kind of Bird Flies Backwards* (1958) and *Dinners and Nightmares* (1961)

William Burroughs - *Junky* (1953) and *Naked Lunch* (1959)

Gary Snyder - *Riprap* (1959) and *Myths & Texts* (1960)

Philip Whalen – *Self-Portrait from Another Direction* (1959) and *Like I Say* (1960)


After the publication of 'Howl' and 'On the Road', many American experimental writers felt their political or spiritual affinities with the East Coast Beats and the San Francisco Renaissance poets. Scores of "fellow travellers" in New York, Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, and other cities and towns throughout the United States, started their own magazines or sent off their manuscripts to be published in the proliferation of small presses during the heyday of the movement. Writers expressing the "new consciousness" had found a way "to produce out of the society we have to live in, a vision of the society we want to live in." (Northrop Frye)

The Beat Generation did less well for its women. Reflecting the sexism of the times, the women mostly stayed on the sidelines as girlfriends and wives. The writing of the exceptional Diane DiPrima flourished, but most women living with or married to
the Beats, for example Carolyn Cassady, Bonnie Bremser (Brenda Frazer), and Hettie Jones, took care of the children, worked to support the family and did little writing, mostly memoirs years later.  

Within the diversity of expression in the "new consciousness" literature there was often a recognisable "Beat" quality that distinguished it from other experimental poetry and fiction of the time. The Beat literary aesthetic welcomed experimentation and advocated what Gregory Corso characterised as "the use of mixtures containing spontaneity, 'bop prosody,' surreal-real images, jumps, beats, cool measures long rapid vowels, long long lines, and the main content, soul."

Beat literature reflected the brash assertiveness of the postwar years, insisting that the idealism of the American dream could be put to the ultimate test. Evolving naturally out of their cultural tradition, the writers reflected the staunch individualism of the nation's past, and its prosperity and optimism at mid-century.

As the 1960s progressed, the number of dissident writers and small press publishers swelled in the development of an American "counterculture". In this time of disruptive social changes the complacency of the 1950s evaporated as the civil rights movement took on a new militancy in the South, the resistance to war in Southeast Asia grew when United States troops were sent to Vietnam, students protested adult authority on college campuses across the nation, LSD became more readily available than Peyote as a "consciousness expander," and rock music developed as an art form from earlier folk roots and black rhythm and blues. At the end of the sixties the term "Beat Generation" was nearly obsolete. "Beatniks" had been replaced by the "hippies" as representatives of an alternative American culture.

The Pulitzer Prize winner poet Gary Snyder stated "it would be from sometime in the early fifties up until the mid-sixties when jazz was replaced by rock and roll and marijuana by LSD and a whole new generation of youth jumped on board and the name beatnik changed to hippie.

Cineastique analysis from a historical point of view
of the movie “BEAT TODAY”

Thus we write the year of 2005, the very beginning of another consciousness – probably cultural (of both artistical and historical interest); and of course we witness the rebirth of a meanwhile raised to classical canon countermovement (in matters of literature particularly) which gave itself the name of Beat Generation all around the world, especially among the young and restless academics and beatnicologists abroad, and the fraction left from the original nucleus formed in New York City in 1944 by destiny.

IV. 1. Self – reflective approach to the film “Beat Today”

The movie “Beat Today” implies the scientific research and documentation in the libraries of special American Culture Studies in the universitary libraries of Marburg, Augsburg, Munich, Klagenfurt and Vienna. For no other reason than scientifical and cineastical this odyssee started for us in 1997. Without the dire necessity to understand the reasons for this obsessive analyze of what’s left of Beat

---

129 The term was coined during the legendary conversation in New York between Jack Kerouac and Hal Chase.
130 Controversial and misunderstood statement by the medias.
gestures today, the only acceptable approach is to combine science and art.

The idea to do a film in the first place was honestly mentioned by the tutor of this diploma thesis – Prof. Dr. Heinz Tschachler, who grasps my intentions to write about the Beats in no chronological or particular order. All the equipment needed for the outside – scenes filmed on the hills of Vienna, with the participants in this project, who offered their help and altruist support for the whole duration of the film – progress, were made possible by the Youth initiative for Vienna (Zieglergasse).

The reenactment of Kerouac at his writing suggests another nostalghia, rather than the influences of the writer himself with the legendary pacefull scroll – paper writing down of “ON The Road”, a novel which bares the whole American spirit of Western discovery, expansion and adventure. While the photographic left top picture implies documentary character of the person itself, the quote written down on the white cloth derives from Arthur Rímbaud’s “Une Saison en enfer“ undermines the romantic spirit of total immanent defamiliarization of ancient moral prejudices of puritanical French origin. The first paragraphs read out from the novel in off-voice with the enstrangement – effects of tone/sound bestly express the dire importance of writing as cultural heritage for future generations. By choosing the very beginning part of the Penguin edition, which will be written down as followed, we created an opening intellectual space for the viewer, so he can get inspired with the roadish spirit. The off-voice in the Kerouac – universe reads out:

< I first met dean not long after my wife and I split up. I had just gotten over a serious illness that I won´t bother to talk about, except that it had something to do with the miserably weary split-up and my feeling that everything was dead. With the coming of Dean Moriarty began the part of my life you could call my life on the road. Before that I´d often dreamed of going West to see the country, always vaguely planning and never taking off. Dean is the perfect guy for the road because he actually was born on the

---

131 French Symbolist Poetry, British Classic Standards, American Transcendentalists

LVI
road, when his parents were passing through Salt Lake City in 1926, in a jalopy, on their way to Los Angeles. First reports of him came to me through Chad King, who’d shown me a few letters from him written in a New Mexico reform school. I was tremendously interested in the letters because they so naively and sweetly asked Chad to teach him all about Nietzsche and all the wonderful intellectual things that Chad knew. At one point Carlo and I talked about the letters and wondered if we would ever meet the strange Dean Moriarty. This is all far back, when Dean was not the way he is today, when he was a young jailkid shrouded in mystery. Then news came that Dean was out of reform school and was coming to New York for the first time; also there was talk that he had just married a girl called Marylou.

One day I was hanging around the campus and Chad and Tim Gray told me Dean was staying in a cold water pad in East Harlem, the Spanish Harlem. Dean had arrived the night before, the first time in New York, with his beautiful little sharp chick Marylou; they got off the Greyhound bus at 50th Street and cut around the corner looking for a place to eat and went right in Hector’s, and since then Hector’s cafeteria has always been a big symbol of New York for Dean. They spent money on beautiful big glazed cakes and creampuffs.

All this time Dean was telling Marylou things like this: “Now, darling, here we are in New York and although I haven’t quite told you everything that I was thinking about when we crossed Missouri and especially at the point when passed the Booneville reformatory which reminded me of my jail problem, it is absolutely necessary now to postpone all those leftover things concerning our personal lovethings and at once begin thinking of specific worklife plans . . .” and so on in the way that he had in those early days. >

The three reflections on the writers represented in an trigometric order (Burroughs – Kerouac – Ginsberg), especially in it’s minimalistic décor (at least the
production factors) don’t transpass the financial possibilities of the intention, to keep a
NO – Budget to the process of shooting “Beat Today”.

William S. Burroughs / Mathias Illigen – concept: new

Together with Franz Kafka’s passage from his “Amerika” – novel:

< Dann würde ich am liebsten mit diesen beiden Händen, mit denen ich das Papier halte und beschreibe, auffangen und hochheben ... gerade Dich. >, dubbed by Tom Wait’s song from „The Black Rider“ - 'T Ain’t No Sin’, sang out by Burroughs himself\(^{132}\) demonstrates the European traditions and literary influences that he has had, particularly infusionated by Bill Burroughs’ mentor-position in the group.

With the opening and closing frame, showing seven young friends meditating, talking, gesticulating and sitting on a yin – yang coloured cloth in black and white; centered - a phallus – symbolistic water pipe; its round perspective implies one universal concept of the human race as perpetuing species on one hand, and the biological origin of us in matters of biological origin on the other. The film creates it’s own homogeneity and compactness symbolised by the life-circle-form. The symbolic suggestion of the number seven is derived from tale narrative techniques, suggesting mythical importance. Opening in rotation form from the center point outwards and vice versa, the ring reflects their own spiritual condition – beat, frantic, united and beatific – bohemians in search for the ultimate truth. The prelude with the stranger typing the beginning of the script for this movie, researching in the field of beatnik literature and the title prepares the viewer for the excursion in the world of poetry and literary dedication.

All the photograpies showing Ginsberg, Snyder, Corso & Co. provide the desired background for the non-beatnikologists among the interested readers and viewers. As musical accompaniment – Charlie Parker’s Chicago session from 1953

---


LVIII
along with the jump-cuts and collages shown in the raw-cut order prove the actuality of their literary heritage, translated and published all over the world during the last century. The red typewritten letters of the title don’t evoke only nostalgia for the 1950’s, but also define the term “love”, later written out in the Burroughs line (his last words written in his journal before dying):

\textit{LOVE ? What is IT ? The MOST natural \textbf{PAIN} killer what there is. LOVE ! ;}

was probably his last attempt for redemption ?!?

The next scene – with young Allen, Jack Joan, Peter, Cheruto and Bill sitting in a loft somewhere in the world today, lost in theirselves, defining a transcendental, visionary new consciousness – preparing for the quest inside their own minds and unisoul. The famous Ginsberg – words, bestly recited by Philipp Riccabona in off-voice: “\textit{The point of Beat, man, is that you get beat down to a certain nakedness, where you actually are able to see the world in a visionary way . . . , which, by words of us, is the classical understand of what happens in the dark night of the soul ”} bestly reveal a classical understanding of the old bards of American poetry: Yeats/Whitman/Eliot/Stein/Dos Passos – avantgardish writers, who during a harsh, violent time of the world constituted to a generous group of intellectuals - The Lost Generation which defined itself by means of Dadaist, Surrealist freedom of personal expression.

The interpretation of the term beat by Kerouac and Ginsberg in their dialogue (in the whole process of the movie an essential milestone) already invokes the documentary working-style of both camera – movement and excerpts from their recorded conversations.

All the other participants – Peter Orlovsky (Daniel Ramirez ) and his boyfriend Allen, Joan Vollmer Adams Burroughs alias Lalis and Bill Burroghs’ ecliptic anti-relationship, Valerie and Angela as sensual ambiguous girls to conquer the viewers’ eyes and hearts – revive the authentic atmosphere of the legendary routine – gatherings
in the loft of Joan and Edie Parker’s in the 115th Street New York, where they experimented with hallucinogenic substances and role-plays, in order to pronounce on a psycho-analytical level, what Wilhelm Reich called “the functionality of orgasm in the subconscious”.

As regards the style of photography and camera movement in this frame, as in most of the other, semi-technique was used (standard). It is to be reminded, how the young hipsters act in the epic drama – tradition, performing their roles from the Beat Generation group, at the same time staging theirselves, offering the chance for the viewer to not become part and identify with the level of the movie, but step outside and realize the fictional character of the film. Also the amateurlike unexperience of the participants was tremendously authentic, creating a natural time-space-concept, which can be determined only as beat today – in the present day situation somewhere in the world, deconstructing the dialectical and regional topographical particularities of other Beat – movies, which mainly focused on original locations in the U.S.A. or abroad. The interaction in matters of body language and dialogue between them reveals unprepared presentation in matters of a timetables - schedule. Their spiritual condition is expressed by the silent Chinese music in the back (Xi Huang Hu).

Kerouac´s definition and transcendence to a present day beat condition < . . . you might say we´re beat, well . . . , beat today ! > makes a reception of his statements in the press about the term coined later in different variations, to the collective voice of the young generation today, 50 years later, which defines itself as the new stream of a conscious and new liberal concept – beat today in matters of counterrevolutionary and unpolitical, in search for spiritual salvation (undogmatic) worldview.

Alternatives or solutions are not pointed out in the beginning of the movie, though some memories of the 50´s and 60´s in matters of cultural spirit, cinematography at its very early infiltration in the classical canon of written art, without assimilating literature, or literary reception too much.

Generating with proves of archive materials and documentary footage like
Robert Frank’s “Pull My Daisy” or interviews from Radio stations (www.ginzy.com), recordings with Kerouac reciting poems or Burroughs numerous taped public appearances. For no reasons at all, Mathis Illigen, Philipp Riccabona, Tilman Otto Wagner, Andreea Măriuca Lupea, Daniel Ramirez Turecek, Angela Cheruto, Dr. Willie, Stephan Uggowitzer, Elena Riccabona, Fuzzi, Jonathan Parisot – Baumgartner – friends and soul brothers and sisters, were to be infiltrated into this insane odyssey, which durated three and a half weeks in the city of “Vinata”, in December 2003.

The production costs were approximately 300 Euros, which were supported mainly by the co-producer Monsieur Philipp von Riccabona and myself, the producer: Tilman Otto von Wagner. The lavishly to be organized technical equipment in matters of cameras, recording machines, lights, tapes and other technical utilities are here to be regarded with a big thank to the Youth initiative for Vienna (Zieglergasse), which kindly offered help.

The camera – men: Filipku Hirschegger und Lukas Tagwerker, two very motivated talents in the “domain of camera – stipulation”, proved by their so friendly collaboratory work, that filmmaking is possible in the Third Millenium even without financial money, or pragmatic sacrifices. Even though they had no preparatory time, or a copy of the script, both managed to do a perfectionistic “frame-construction” in the so very short time we had for the whole production. My very huge thanks to them should be here honored and appreciated.

And of course to be reminded to the readers of these lines, all exclusive costs for the elaboration of the film were supported by the youth-fraction for soul –healing-academies from Vienna. And for that reason our sincerest thanks go out to all the people involved in the shooting of the film: the family Parisot – Baumgartner, the family Wagner, the family Lupea. If there have been omitted some of the other benefactors, a humble excuse should apologize this rudeness.

Concerning the musical score of “Beat Today”, various compositions from Chinese to African, American and European sources were used for purposes of
“stylistic enrichment” and enstrangement. As regards the authentical jazz-live-recordings by the be-bop-soundmakers from the 50’s like Charlie Parker, together with nature-sounds like rain, thunder or wind, serve for means of symbiosing popular recordings with ancient values of acoustical origin. Artists like Tom Waits, The Dandy Warhols, Johann Sebastian Bach, Kroke reveal the synthetic music-industry from the last centuries, though their efforts in the field of musical compositionis is to be humbly recognized. The intention to play the songs as a sound-VE is parodistic, but like a personal musical redemption. Thanx!

Musical score and sound were digitally mixed by Filipku Hirschegger, with a little bit of my personal support. Other sounds were chosen by means of emotional harmony in pictures and mise-en-scene. The only intention to combine classic music with popular one is the need to prove how this turn of centuries determines a new cultural spirit, out of the beat spirit into the New Age-neo-post-modernism.

In the next scene – same order of people, split – image, we find a similar situation, but Joan & Bill are in the centre of interaction – intellectual/mutual verbality disputes, both burnt out and desperately in search for piece of mind and personal realization. The excerpt from “Naked Lunch” is the key-metaphor for their relationship, not married, very bohemian and decadent. The passage read out in the off-voice by Mathias Illigen in the Burroughs-take, is as follows:

Every citizen of Annexia was required to apply and carry on his person at all times a whole portfolio of documents. Citizens were subject to be stopped in the street at any time; and the Examiner, who might be in plain clothes, in various uniforms, often in a bathing suit or pyjamas, sometimes stark naked except for a badge
pinned to his left nipple, after checking each paper, would stamp it. On subsequent inspection the citizen was required to show the properly entered stamps of the last inspection. The Examiner, when he stopped a large group, would only examine and stamp the cards of a few. The others were then subject to arrest because their cards were not properly stamped. Arrest meant “provisional detention”; that is, the prisoner would be released if and when his Affidavit of Explanation, properly signed and stamped, was approved by the Assistant Arbiter of Explanations. Since this official hardly ever came to his office, and the Affidavit of Explanation had to be presented in person, the explainers spent weeks and months waiting around in unheated offices with no chairs and not toilet facilities.

Documents issued in vanishing ink faded into old pawn tickets. New documents were constantly required. The citizens rushed from one bureau to another in a frenzied attempt to meet impossible deadlines.

All benches were removed from the city, all fountains
turned off, all flowers and trees destroyed. Huge electric buzzers on the top of every apartment house (everyone lived in apartments) rang the quarter hour. Often the vibrations would throw people out of bed. Searchlights played over the town all night (no one was permitted to use shades, curtains, shutters or blinds).\textsuperscript{133}

Enchantment transposes their journey inside the loft, light and abundance of emotions bestly reflecting how beatniks spent time, when they were off the road. The article by John Clellon Holmes “This Is The Beat Generation” defines the beat significance as countercultural movement in journalistic terms in the year of 1952. The off-voice reads out passages from this essay, accompanied by jazz-bop, underlining the importance of scientifical approach to the topic, what was going on in the United States in the leftish underground.

An avantgarde spirit which dubbed itself sacred was brought into life. Our interpretation of it, with the intensiveley focused and agitated camera-motion, was to offer a preparation for viewers to sink down into the awareness of the early fifities. With such a vast oeuvre those writers have had been leaving behind highly to be appreciated innovations both in narrative structures and main-epic-schemes, techniques of experimenting with langauge, expanding traditional encrusted writing-styles (classic canons were tought at the Universities of Columbia, UCLA, Harvard, Princeton, NYU Stanford, when the Beats were students there) into modern, experimental alternatives – as is the bop-prose or the cut-up/fold-in method.

Without neglecting any ommited paragraphs or lines, the creative rather than academic movie project proved one more time how irreversible the lost of interests for cultural and literary artefacts would be if literary production would stop. Nevertheless,

\textsuperscript{133} William Burroughs: Naked Lunch, Flamingo, 1993, pg. 31

LXIV
latest publications in Europe and abroad (see list attached at the end of this thesis) prove, how increasing interests in matters of reception and lecturing is in Beat literature today, in the year of 2005.

When analyzing cinematography with frantic delight, works by filmmakers like Jean-Luc Godard, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Michelangelo Antonioni, Andrei Tarkovsky, Stanley Kubrick, Jean Cocteau, Fritz Lang, Wilhelm Friedrich Murnau, Francois Truffaut, Sergeij Michailovitsch Eisenstein, Maya Deren, Wim Wenders, Luis Bunuel, Bernardo Bertolucci, Orson Welles, Jim Jarmush, David Lynch, Roman Polanski, Andrei Wajda, Ingmar Bergman or Akira Kurosawa being of major inspiration, it is not to be overseen, that young filmmakers, who try to establish innovative techniques of postproduction, mise-én-scene, or camera work, have very rarely the chance to not even by far explore the undiscovered depths of cinematography. And sometimes even long lost forgotten desires and expectations pass by the world of restless beat-cineasts.

The traditional working methods (HALBTOTALE – JUMP/CUT - SPLIT SCREEN) were used in the making process of the film “Beat Today”, also of inspiration were the other beat-movies: “Naked Lunch” (David Cronenberg), “Pull My Daisy” (Robert Frank), “The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg” (Jerry Aronson), the Gysin/Burroughs cut-up-films “Towers Upon Fire”/“Bill and Tony”, “Drugstore Cowboy” (Gus Van Sant), “Commissioner of Sewers” (Klaus Maeck, 1991), “Chappaqua” (1966, USA), “Destroy All Rational Thought” (Burroughs and Gysin in Dublin), “Point of Order!” (Emile de Antonio), “The Atomic Café” (Kevin Rafferty, Jayne Loader, and Pierce Rafferty), “Heavy Petting” (Obie Benz), “Before Stonewall” (Greta Schiller, Robert Rosenberg, and John Scagliotti), “The Beat Generation: An American Dream” (1987) Janet Forman. Film, color, sound; 87 minutes. A sociological overview of the Eisenhower years, containing archival film footage and more recent interviews with major Beat figures, being overbroken by means of curiosity and scientific duty. Interests of valoric order were totally omitted during the script-writing, going through the materials with the kind support of Andreea Măriuca Lupea,
who more than starred, co-wrote the script, archive-collaborative efforts are to be highly appreciated, she co-developed the movie, and without her support “Beat Today” have not been made possible.

“Beat Today” is one of the last artefacts for the existence of naturally born interest for filmmaking, exploration and defining of new techniques: defamiliarization, enchantment of lavishly used light, two different cameras (Mini DV + HI 8), positioned Ca – still, Cb – in permanent motion. The angle of juxtaposing, the range of inter-action between non-visible camera-men and the actor performing the camera-man is a V-effekt, serving the purpose of dissolving the illusion of film and reality. Permanently transpassing this time bridge – line 1953-2003 – made the making to become a challenge of almost unbearable order.

After the introductory sequels were focused on theme, topic, characters, title and journalistic definition of the non-narrative, we return to the more detailed presentation of the Beats, with their permanent debates and discussions. As regards the sexual tensions upraised by their bisexuality, no scandals at all were talked and written about in the medias during the last decades. Ginsberg´s and Orlovsky´s more than 45 years lasting liaison d´amour proved how affective and respectable queer people could enlight the puritanical state of mind which was en-vogue in the fifties. No explicit sexual desires were shown in this scene, though sensibility and fragile disasters are pointed out by the split-image, a technique usually used in cinematography to show two different actions, that take place in different locations at the same time. We reversed this process, presenting different perspectives in one frame.

After a few dozens of intensive hours spent on the documentation about the Beat-literature, with endless of hopeful journeys of intellectual and individualistic appreciation, to get to the extense of almost total assimilation with Kerouac & Co., without neglecting originality and the neo-post-modern conditions of the epic drama.
Not only did the Stanislawskij – Tschechov – Brecht – Beckett – Strindberg – Ibsen – Ionescu dramatic backgrounds inspire and determine Eastern European cinematography like the works of Makavejev, Kiezlowskij, but also avantgarde – filmmakers like Jonas Mekas, who rediscovered the American experimental underground filmmaking in the early 60’s, gathering around Warhol’s “Factory” and other independent filmmakers, so as: Věra Chytilová, Jerzy Skolimovski, Nedeloko Dragić, Andrej Tarkowskij, Mikló Jancsó\textsuperscript{134} - artists, who only proved one more time, that cinematography is the only complex form of art, that can both replace the fine arts and install another concept of the ancíent philosophic view of the functionality of culture, art en detail.

The image of the American cinéma varieté, which established itself in the 60’s Frenchish cinematografia moderna, was bestly described by Mr. Vogel himself, as:

“a mass-manipulation concern, which not only collaborates with the main economical & political institutions, but also sells it’s audience as stupid, oversaturating the daily necessities and overdubbing the aesthetic possibilities of this form of artistic expression” (Amos Vogel: Film als subversive Kunst, RoRoRo: Vorwort), which fortunately enough does not impact that intensive European filmmaking.

“Beat Today” is the proof for an existing interest in Austria and the rest of Europe in film as art and not commercial “brain masturbatory products.”

With no financial possibilities at all, outlawed and illegally resided in Vienna, highly debted in almost every city of the good old Austria, both on private sector and public enterprise level, the only way to show my personal appreciation to my tutors at the University of Klagenfurt, was to start doing a movie project in Vienna (Winter 2003), as Prof. Dr. Heinz Tschachler so gently purposed at our last meeting. Especially as my Romanian citizenship does not allow any social or cultural

\textsuperscript{134} The contribution of these independent filmmakers to the Eastern – European Renaissance, which constituted the dissident, countersystematic anti-propaganda against the Sowjet reign of terror and dictatorship and later found an avantgarde platform in New York by the unique effort of Amos Vogel and his wife, who constituted the “Cinema 16”, after II. World War.
implication in the “9.00 – 17.00 – infrastructural – routines”, both my hands being chained to the existentialist wall, sometimes even wondering why I am not jailed yet for all the “illegal crimes” I have committed in the European Union and abroad during the last six years. But, with the intellectual support of filmmaker’s and their stories – I have succeeded in continuing this ”long-life – fin de siecle – tradition of l’art et l’amour pour ciné”, all European and ancient Roman socio-cultural influences being a big help. Though nouvelle vague and the “Godard – trois” developed from Roman-Catholic l’art pour l’art background, and Godard’s “Un fémme est un fémme” – the unique portrait of Kerouac’s domestic days in the States, gives immortality to Beat “francophonie” influences, Spanish Surrealists emerging to the Beat-heritage more often than shown in movies like: “Simon in the desert”, “Lé Discrèt Chârme de la Bourgeoisie” etc., and Austrian 50’s experimental poetry (Wiener Gruppe, Grazer Autorengruppe, Vienna School of Poetry) was strongly influenced by especially Ginsberg’s early poetry and William Carlos Williams poems.

Burroughs’ Harvard education and interest in Anthropology and Aztec/Mayan/Inka-culture, Anthroposophy divulges the British/French colonial intrudery and cultural submimination by means of semantic and economical “force controlled assimilation”. Nevertheless philosophy and opera, Greek and Roman mythology reached the American subcultural awareness after II. World War, in a gloomy social condition, when the left-overs from Gertrude Stein & Co. were to be redirectioned in the late 40´s.

Out of the ordinary, cryptic as it is, this movie reveals never before stated out informations about the biographies of them Beats (Ginsberg and Orlovsky’s relationship), their religious interests, sexual disorder created by uncontrolled energies; Wilhelm Reich’s sexual discoveries, the Wilhelm Tell accident as it happened in Mexico City – informations which could only be included and performed in this film, because it was not censored by the economical mainstream – institutions of the film
industry, like all the other Beat – movies, which lost some of their original/initial intentions, because of their absurd production factors.
A Conversation with Jack Powers
On the Late Gregory Corso
by Doug Holder

Gary Snyder  Zen Poet

LeRoi Jones

John Clellon Holmes
And suddenly the good old Beat – times forget those fifties desires, with Le Roi Jones or Charlie Parker contributing with Afro-American rhythmic poetry and free-jazz to the fulfillment of appropriate beat gestures. Also not to be forgotten those cultural transpassings from African to American tribal opportunities, in order to enrich US-settlements and economical encreasement. In the post-war situation black people got their one and only chance to jump out of the gutter by obtaining sport-scholarships for basketball and baseball-high-school-teams, acting roles in Hollywood productions; when the black eliberation-movements (Black Panthers, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X) stood up against the mass-manipulation and explotation of blacks, al the US-services opposed and opressed their ambitions, counterfighting the only chance they had to fight for equal rights (labour, religious independence, cultural heritage, education, medical health-care-system ) and equal significant votes and power in the political institutions. Therefore, I saw the immanent necessity to portrait the role of (especially) black women in the beatnik community, creating an indefinite, but aware and awaken character – black beat woman desire in the angel-headed face of an African girl – Angela Cheruto, who in her own special way pronounced the cryptic Suahilian pain, suffering and exploation of black women in Africa. Her role in the film is of crucial order, because she is the only non-European participat, who´s intentions are not of ornamental origin, but redemptive interest. Though she is one of the choen interprets of African dialectics, and not a single fictional intention to portrait her as a “Mardou Fox” (Jack Kerouac “The Subterraneans), or another black protagonist from the writings of the Beats, but to be outlined in the rather nonnarrative plot of the circle-, and party-scene, where all the young restless friends gather for a “beat” – session in their intact loft. The significance of Angela´s role in the film is of multiculturality, her being a symbol for especially Allen Ginsberg´s restless life-time struggle and opponence against the W.A.S.P.- dominated American society of the 50´s. The intention is not to portrait the life-story of just one internal immigrant in the European Union, but to make the citizens believe, that racial tolerance, one of the main interests of the Beats, is still a matter of both political acceptance and social
ambivalent flexibility. In contrast to Angela was to be portraited the second beat woman desire – Valerie, who deliberately participated without questioning the “nature of cinematography” in the film, and whom we highly appreciate. Both extras were invited to join the group of friends, though we couldn’t give importance to a financial stimulation. Also for reasons of feminine counterbalance – after all, women were the permanent inspiration and source of temptation for them Beats, and nevertheless in a very small number present among them – it was obligatory to have four female “actors”\(^{135}\), in order to reach the desired expectations of scientific exhuberation.

Though, for any other reason than only scholastic, Prof. Tschachler’s support and belief in the making of this movie project, which at it’s very early beginnings, in the summer of 2003 (script writing), firstly achieved shape, when my intensive research in the library of the University of Klagenfurt (summer 2002) lead me to major secondary literary sources of Beat anthologists. Here are to be listed some of the books, I have been studying on during the early phase of the preparatory reading:


The three micro-cosmatic sequels, presenting menthors Burroughs, Ginsberg and Kerouac in semi-frames serve the purpose to reflect on possible alternatives. The

\(^{135}\) None of the four extras were experienced with film-appearances, their routined behaviour in front of the lense
music suggests the roots of harmony and melodic reflections, both symbiotic and arbitrary, as regards the excerpts from texts like Ginsberg’s poem “Howl”, Peter Orlovsky’s “Snail Poem” and Gary Snyder’s “Makings”.

V. FILM SYNOPSIS

“Beat Today” is an experimental documentary: non-narrative, biographical, subversive film-project and hommage to the Beat movement in still/photographic and moved pictures. The duration of 59 min. presents a fragment from the lifes of the young Beat – writers, while transposing a 50 years time-bridge (1953-2003) as instrument of authenticity and neo-post-modern time document.

What occurred in the year of 1997, when two of the most significant American writers Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs passed away, was being taken as a nostalgic dedication to their literary heritage, mainly as a research study on the cultural movement during the post-war America, and the current interest in Beat appropriate gestures on socio-cultural scale.

As regards the importance of this film as a cinematic experiment – traditional and innovative film techniques have been applied. If intercinextuality and references to other Beat – works like Robert Frank’s “Pull My Daisy”, or the French Cut-Up & Fold-In methods of Brion Gysin & Bill Burroughs, the representative works “Naked Lunch”, “On The Road” and “Howl” proving the necessity in edging out the thin red borders of cinematography and literature, transpassing the frame of projected and

though was tremendously impressive.
written form of artistic and scientific efforts into the symbiosis film “Beat Today” and science.

The classical methods of both mise en scene and editing process were applied:

- fade to picture, fade to white, fade to black, additive and dissolving
- semi-framed picture
- jump-cuts
- associative cut-technique
- dogma camera style
- photographs, pictures, articles, essays, text excerpts – documentary
- slow motion and paced motion

From a cine-historical point of view, “Beat Today” includes itself in the tradition of all the subversive works of art, which Amos Vogel collected in his “Cinema 16” - New York, movies with a unique originality, especially in matters of cineastique anti-system interruption with the conditioned tabus in film. It is to be seen also as the documentary proof of an existing Beat-movement all around the world, in matters of seminars, conferences, poetry-readings, lectures, performances and concerts and of course numberless publications, critics, receptions, essays, anthologies and internet sources. Without knowing any of the Big Beats in person, I tried to discover for myself the world of their values and interests, which can be stated as follows:

##### some notion of spiritual liberation (away from force conditioned, brainwashed hypocritical politics and institutionalized education)

+++ eastern religion, meditation, Zen – Buddhism, free love

------- experiments with psychotropic plants and expansion of consciousness

LXXVIII
womens liberation, feminist propaganda

+++/ gay liberation, homosexual marriages

++++++++ bio-regional politics instead on military, drawn on the map – militarist politics

+++++ sacred role of art – redemption, angelic status of artist in society

+++ sensitivity to nature, pantheistic world-view

+++ combat racism, xenofobism, hypocritical opportunism
IN CONCLUSION

What there is to be written down this very beginning of the new year 2005, after dedicating eight years to this field of scientific research in the domain of American Culture Studies – the Beat Generation, seems to be a neverending theme of analyze, revealing never before known informations to the readers eyes, a portrait of the young bohemians, literary artefacts of their talent and dedication to the continuity of the cultural heritage of the English language and literature on the American continent, fifty years after the genesis of the major counter-social literary group of the 20-th Century. Every single day of my life spent off-US-continent, though dedicating time to the Amerikanistik – study with passion for literary interests, was a unique chance to recognize the talent and visionnary ambitions of writers like Mark Twain and his adventurous characters, Hery & Arthur Miller with their subversive dramatic intuition, The Lost Generationed Ernest Hemmingway, Gertrude Stein & James Joyce, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, Walt Whitman – Allen Ginsberg transcendental poetry, Kerouac´s breathless bop – prose, Burroughs William Seward´s dedication to experiments with language, the absurd novels of the 60´s with the gathering around the Merry Pranksters – Anthony Burgess, Ken Kessey, Norman Mailer and Hunter S. Thompson, and those other neo-post-modern writers from the English – speaking world. The movie “BeaT ToDAy” is the first part of the final scientific exam, along with it I will hand in a standard diploma thesis, with no corrections of semantic order needed. This piece of work hopefully contributes to the analytical interested students around, who find the magic of Beat literature, without condemning the lifes and biographies of their literary originaters. If not for purposes of science, this movie and work would have not been
possible, and of course my own special thank goes to the tutor of this thesis – Prof. Dr. Heinz Tschachler – teacher at the American Culture department in the “Adria” university.
Primary Works:

1. Burroughs, William Seward: naked lunch
2. Burroughs, William Seward: junky
3. Burroughs, William Seward: the ticket that exploded
5. Corso, Gregory: The Happy Birthday of Death (1960)
7. Corso, Gregory: Long Live Man (1962)
12. Ginsberg, Allen: Howl & Other Poems
13. Ginsberg, Allen: Kaddish
14. Ginsberg, Allen: Reality Sandwiches
15. Ginsberg, Allen: Planet News
18. Jack (Jean-Louis Lebris de) Kerouac: The Dharma Bums
19. Jack (Jean-Louis Lebris de) Kerouac: On The Road
20. Jack (Jean-Louis Lebris de) Kerouac: The Subterraneans
21. Jack (Jean-Louis Lebris de) Kerouac: The Town and the City
24. Snyder, Gary: on haiku poetry
25. Synder, Gary: makings
26. JONES, LEROI / AMIRI BARAKA: Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note, 1961
27. Orlovsky, Peter: Snail Poem
28. Orlovsky, Peter: Dear Allen: Ship will land
Secondary Works:

General Books


**Essay Collections (INTERNET SOURCES)**

- *The Daybreak Boys: Essays on the Literature of the Beat Generation*  
  by Gregory Stephenson. 218 pgs.

- *Mad to Be Saved: The Beats, the '50s, and Film*  
  by David Sterritt. 260 pgs.

- *The Holy Barbarians* (includes "Biography of Three Beats," "The Loveways of the Beat Generation," and more)  
  by Lawrence Lipton. 328 pgs.

- *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe* (includes "On the Road to Suburbia: Urbanists and Beats")  
  by Russell Jacoby. 298 pgs.

- *Cold War Correspondents: Ginsberg, Kerouac, Cassady, and the Political Economy of Beat Letters, in Twentieth Century Literature*  
  by Oliver Harris. 22 pgs.

- *San Francisco in Fiction: Essays in a Regional Literature* (includes "Jack Kerouac and the Beats in San Francisco")  
  by David Fine, Paul Skenazy. 243 pgs.

- *Kerouac, Artaud, and the Baroque Period of The Three Stooges, in Mosaic (Winnipeg)*  
  by David Sterritt. 40 pgs.

- *Dialogue With an Audience* (includes "Epitaph for the Dead Beats")  
  by John Ciardi. 322 pgs.

- *Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs, Vol. 1 (includes a section on the Beat Generation)*  
  by Jean-Charles Seigneuret. 690 pgs.

- *Historical Dictionary of the 1950s*  
  by James S. Olson. 362 pgs.

- *The Sullen Art* (includes a chapter on the beat writer Allen Ginsberg)  
  by David Ossman. 96 pgs.

- *A Profile of Twentieth-Century American Poetry* (includes information the Beat Generation in "The 'Forbidden Planet' of Character: The Revolution of the 1950s")  
  by Jack Myers. 302 pgs.

- *The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Poetry in English*  
  by Ian Hamilton. 606 pgs.
Anthologies


Articles, Essays, Receptive Writings


7. "Bam; Roll on With Bam," *Time* 74 (September 14, 1959), 28.


28. Frederick Eckman, "Neither Tame Nor Fleecy," *Poetry* 90 (September 1957), 386-397.

29. "Every Man A Beatnik?" *Newsweek* 53 (June 29, 1959), 83.


34. "Fried Shoes; Beatniks," *Time* 73 (February 9, 1959), 16.
42. S. Hynes, "Beat and Angry," *Commonweal* 68 (September 5, 1958), 559-561.


80. Karl Shapiro, "Romanticism Comes Home," *Prairie Schooner* 31 (Fall 1957), 182-183.


89. Donald Sutherland, "Petronius and the Art of the Novel," *Denver Quarterly* 13, No. 3 (1978): 7-16.


Cineastical Inspirations

Pull MY Daisy  dr. Robert Frank / Alfred Leslie 1959

Towers Upon Fire  dr. William S. Burroughs / Anthony Balch 1963

Chappaqua  dr. Conrad Rooks 1966

The Cut-Ups  dr. Anthony Balch 1966

The Beat Generation :
An American Dream  dr. Janet Forman 1987

Drugsore Cowboy  dr. Gus Van Sant 1989

Thanksgiving Prayer  dr. Gus Van Sant 1991

Commissioner of Sewers  dr. Klaus Maeck 1991

Naked Lunch  dr. David Cronenberg 1991
The Junky’s Christmas  dr. Nick Donkin / Melodie McDaniel  1993

Destroy All Rational Thought  
1998

The Source  dr. Chuck Workman  1999

The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg  dr. Jerry Aronson  2004

Beat Today  dr. Mr. Black White  2004