

The Fall of Walt Whitman's "I Hear America Singing" Ideals in Allen Ginsberg's "Howl"

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study is an attempt to illustrate two opposing concepts and themes from two poems written in various eras. Walt Whitman's poem "I Hear America Singing" celebrates the American ideals in the late 19th century such as democracy, freedom, and the common people of the working class. Contrary to Whitman's poem, Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" protests the fall of the values and ideals celebrated in Whitman's poem because of the new values of the mid-20th century in America such as militarism, capitalism, materialism, and lack of self-expression. America and the Americans are represented in the works of these two poets contradictorily, therefore, this paper aims to depict the fall of the American ideals and values celebrated by Whitman's "I Hear America Singing" in Ginsberg's "Howl." Throughout the paper, the researcher presents Walt Whitman's avid belief in the inherent goodness of humanity and the potential for societal improvement through collective consciousness. Nevertheless, the paper also depicts Ginsberg's "Howl" as a stark departure from Whitman's ideals, portraying the disillusionment, loneliness, and hopelessness that pervaded post-World War II America. The significance of this thematic study lies in the analysis of the subtle changes in ideology that happened over a century. It investigates how the poet's views on people, society, and the possibility of societal progress are shaped by the shifting periods and occurrences. Thus, the researcher attempts to show the contrasting views of the two poets regarding American ideals. A qualitative approach is employed since the researcher studies the poems thematically.

KEY WORDS: Allen Ginsberg, Beat Generation, Howl, Ideals, I Hear America Singing, Walt Whitman.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Literary texts usually capture the social, political, and cultural situation of the era in which they are produced. Scholars can learn about the ideas, attitudes, and issues of diverse historical eras by studying works from different centuries. This aids in comprehending how cultures have changed through time and how literary works have been impacted by historical occurrences. Analyzing literary texts from various ages offers a wealth of possibilities. Researchers can look at how writers respond to the works of their predecessors, how literary traditions evolve over

time, and how comparable issues are handled differently in different historical eras. Hence, the researcher tackles two poems from different centuries.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892) was an American poet, novelist, and journalist. He was a humanist. He inspired many poets such as Ezra Pound (1885-1972), William Carlos Williams (1883-1963), Simon Ortiz (1941), and Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997). Whitman's poems are notable for their appreciation of the natural world, the human body, democracy, individualism, and the idea that all people are connected. He frequently wrote in a free-form style without following conventional rhyme or meter, using lengthy lines. Walt Whitman had a huge impact on American poetry and literature. He set the standard for modernist and free verse poetry with his unconventional style. He is regarded as a forerunner of

Koya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (KUJHSS), Volume 7, Issue 1, 2024.

Received 14 Feb 2024; Accepted 18 Mar 2024,

Regular research paper: Published 25 Jun 2024

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the Beat Generation, an American literary and cultural movement (Reynolds 314).

Twenty-four years after the death of Whitman, an American writer was born who wrote quite differently from Whitman, although he was highly influenced by Whitman. The poet's name is Irwin Allen Ginsberg. Ginsberg, alongside his friends from his time at Columbia University William S. Burroughs and Jack Kerouac, was the pioneer and writer of the Beat movement who were a group of angry authors whose works explored and influenced American culture and politics in the post-war era in the 1950s. Allen Ginsberg was highly against militarism, sexual repression, and capitalism. His views of drugs and openness were considered extreme and needed censorship in his time. According to Jonah Raskin, his poems symbolized various aspects of the counterculture that was common among the Beat writers. His style was influenced by William Carlos Williams and Walt Whitman (25).

In this paper, two poems are tackled, one by Walt Whitman and another by Allen Ginsberg. Whitman's "I Hear America Singing" is an ode to many voices and many identities that come together to make up the melting pot that is the United States. The poem portrays the diverse laborers in American society, each of them lending their special skills and contributions to the larger good. The poet uses vivid imagery to capture the spirit of American life and culture. Whitman's poem, which was produced during a pivotal juncture in American history, captures the vigor and optimism of the national spirit. However, Ginsberg's "Howl" gives the readers entirely different feelings and thoughts about America. Readers are still drawn to the seminal American poetry piece "Howl" because of its brutal candor, audacious examination of the human mind, and visionary vision. The masterwork of Allen Ginsberg is still evidence of the ability of art to inspire, provoke, and go beyond the bounds of language and custom.

2. THE IDEALS AND VALUES IN "I HEAR AMERICA SINGING" BY WALT WHITMAN

"I Hear America Singing" is a poem that appeared in the 1867 edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* which is a poetry collection in which each poem is loosely connected, and it represents the celebration of his philosophy of life and humanity. This collection of poetry does not follow the traditional rhyme scheme and

Whitman writes in free verse. Because of its overt sensuality and glorification of the human body, it was controversial in its day. Whitman broke with the lyrical traditions of his day, and he received equal attention and criticism for his candid assessments of sexuality, religion and spirituality (Miller 57).

The historical context in which the poem was composed is particularly interesting. It was a period in which America was beginning to identify itself as different from every other country, especially in Europe. While reading the poem, readers can identify the idea that America is made up of all diverse kinds of people and yet each one of them is significantly important and every voice is valued and mattered. Whitman uses the voices of the working class to capture the beauty of America in this poem. He highlights the songs of mechanics, carpenters, masons, boatmen, shoemakers, hatters, woodcutters, ploughboys, mothers, young wives, and more, embracing the multiplicity of jobs. Everyone adds his special and vital melody to the country's overall harmony. The United States underwent tremendous social and economic changes in the middle of the 19th century, including abolitionist activism and fast industrialization. Whitman wrote "I Hear America Singing" in response to the shifting national consciousness against this background. It captures the spirit of individuality and growing optimism of the westward expansion and economic growth.

Whitman's cataloguing approach and use of free verse give the poem a song-like beat. The lack of a set meter or rhyme system mimics the unpredictability and natural flow of life. Whitman gives the poem a feeling of immediacy by using rich sensory imagery that enables readers to fully immerse themselves in the colorful landscape of American labor. Furthermore, the refrain "I hear America singing" is repeated, which functions as a rhetorical device to reaffirm the poem's main idea and give it an enchanted quality. This refrain serves as a connecting thread between the various voices in the poem and reflects the varied chorus of the country.

The poet sets himself in the position of a listener and an observer in the first line of his poem. The repetition of "I hear" attempts to assert the value of the speaker's position in the poem. The poem is defined by the author, and his awareness of its meaning. Furthermore, the first line presents the controlling metaphor of the poem, "I Hear America Singing." The poet also describes what he hears in the various songs. Hence, they are different songs by

different people that the listener hears (Napierkowski and Ruby 151-152).

The speaker then starts to chronicle different characters or individuals who are singing. While each of them is characterized by his occupation, they often chant and express their specific qualities. Every individual is from the working class, and they display their jobs throughout the day. While the poem reveals the ideal of democracy as by and for the people, American examples are restricted to those of the working class. At the beginning, the speaker presents the mechanics and the carpenter, "Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong / The carpenter singing his, as he measures his plank or beam" (Whitman, lines 2-3). Whitman then describes the mason, "singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work" (Whitman, line 4). The mason starts his day joyfully with singing. The boatman and the deckman both are singing while they are at work and they are cheerful, "The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand/ singing on the steamboat deck" (Whitman, lines 5-6). Moreover, the shoemaker and the hatter both are singing their happy songs, "The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands" (Whitman, line 7).

Whitman also focuses on time, apparently, it is the whole day they are singing, and he has depicted this through these two verses, "The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or noon/ intermission, or at sundown" (Whitman, lines 8-9). There is no time in which they are not singing. They sing when the day starts, noon and when the sun sets down. Then, female characters are embodied in the poem, "The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or o the girl/ sewing or washing/ Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else" (Whitman, lines 10-12). Women are mentioned here as equal beings. The men work outside, and they are singing, the ladies are home and singing while doing their chores. Additionally, Whitman explains time once more, this time he uses both day and night and he also emphasizes on the young people that they are happy and singing, "The day what belongs to the day – at night the party of young fellows robust/friendly/ Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs" (Whitman, lines 13-15).

As David Mudd claims, various voices are heard while singing, starting with the mechanics and then the carpenter, the mason, the boatman, the deckhand, the

shoemaker, the hatter and the wood-cutter. All these occupations are of the working-class people. However, the idea of "singing" is highly significant. To sing while working portrays joy. The individuals are happy, and they have the same opportunity of work and happiness. (10).

Interestingly, the poet has included women in his poem and even as equal as other men and workers as she is also singing, "The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or o the girl/ sewing or washing" (Whitman, lines 10-11). The difference, however, is that they work at home as they are either "sewing" or washing." Therefore, Whitman gives women their proper place in the working class and honors their importance to the American society and culture when women still did not have the right to vote. The poem anticipates an American ideal far like that currently held in contemporary days, where women are regarded and valued for their essential efforts.

In line 12, the speaker clarifies that people do not infringe on one another's personal space or violate one another's rights to liberty, all that they are concerned with is their work and life, nothing else "Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else" (Whitman, line 12). The poem ends with yet another strong and musical tone, "Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs"(Whitman, line 15).

To sum up, "I Hear America Singing" is an idealized and celebrated vision of America. After reading the poem, it becomes clear that in America there are "varied carols," in which all are equal, and they sing their songs. A strong picture of America is drawn that the individuals are confident and cheerful in what they are doing. America is depicted as a land of chances, jobs, and happiness for all, one cannot find a single negative description in the poem. Besides, the word "singing" is repeated several times throughout the text which has made the poem a lyric melody, ultimately establishing America as a beautiful song that is sung by many voices. "I Hear America Singing" is essentially a celebration of the vibrancy and diversity of American labor. Whitman depicts a chorus of voices that stand in for many professions, such as mechanics, masons, boatmen, and carpenters. Every lyric pays homage to the value of hard work and the unity of American civilization. The refrain of the poem, "Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs," highlights the harmony of these many

voices as a whole and represents unification in the midst of variety.

3. THE FALL OF AMERICAN IDEALS AND VALUES IN "HOWL"

"Howl" was written in 1955 and published in 1956. It is the epitome of the Beat Movement. The rebellious and angry spirit of the Beat is best embodied in the poem. The poem, which has three sections, is renowned for its intense language and rich imagery. "Howl" is interpreted as a commentary on the ideals and conventions of the day as well as a mirror of Ginsberg's personal experiences. Christopher Beach declares that due to its graphic language and subject, "Howl" was challenged in court; the ensuing obscenity lawsuit raised awareness of the poem and its countercultural message. But as time went on, it was acknowledged as a potent and significant piece that encapsulated a generation's attitude (190).

In the United States, a literary and cultural movement known as the Beat Generation first appeared in the 1950s. It was distinguished by a rejection of conventional wisdom, an appreciation of spontaneity, and a disapproval of popular culture. Author Jack Kerouac first used the term "Beat" in a discussion with fellow novelist John Clellon Holmes. It was used to express how post-World War II American society's materialism and conformity had left one feeling defeated and worn out. The Beat Movement was a literary movement initiated in the post-war American society by a group of angry authors, poets in particular, who protested the cultural and political aspects of America after the aftershocks of the first and second world wars. Allen Ginsberg was an influential member of this movement.

One of the defining poems of the Beat Generation, "Howl" by Allen Ginsberg, is a classic piece of American literature. The poem is a comprehensive, passionate, and frequently contentious examination of the human condition, society conventions, and the search for spiritual significance in a post-war, industrialized America. A howl is something that is to be heard; it is loud, wild, animal-like, and thus somewhat instinctive and coming out of the very nature of the one who screams it. By declaring that the poem is a howling, Ginsberg symbolically takes a place in which he shouts aloud about something raw, crude, unrefined and almost unconscious, that emerges profoundly inside him.

Through William Carlos Williams' description of Ginsberg's poetry, one can expect his poem to be horrific in terms of the portrayal of the harsh reality. Williams states: "Hold back the edges of your gowns, Ladies, we are going through hell" (Williams 8). The "hell" to be expected is due to the actual hell that they were dwelling in America.

The titles of the two poems are contrasting and readers expect opposite ideas. In Whitman's poem, there is a positive word "singing" while Ginsberg has chosen "howl" to indicate crying and wailing. The content of the poem explains what the creative angry artists are howling at. As Jonah Raskin describes "Howl" and indicates:

Howl is a quintessentially American poem of the mid-twentieth century. It is a scream that woke the country, shocked it, and reminded it of its dreams, possibilities, and joys. It still has the power to provoke profound emotional responses, to make readers think about their own secrets, their own nakedness, and their own madness. (224).

The poem is written in free verse and consists of three parts. The first part starts with the hopelessness felt by the Americans and the artists of American society and culture. One thing that is common between "Howl" and "I Hear America Singing" is the style that is written in long lines of free verse. It is ironic how Ginsberg was influenced by Whitman, yet he was totally in contrast with him. Both poems are dedications to the American people, but one poem in praising and describing the greatness of the people whilst the other displays the creative minds and artists who are degraded, hurt, and have gone mad.

This feeling of gray urban movement will be continued by Ginsberg in the first part of "Howl" since it forms an essential theme for this work. The 20th century changed the American environment entirely, and the emerging urban industrial society became a significant turning point in the distribution of the population. For the first time in history, more people lived in cities than in the country and so the bulk of the artistic and poetic activities, like the revolt of the "best minds," took place in urban settings, primarily promoting vivid art, music, and literary scenes. San Francisco is the best example, the location where Allen Ginsberg first read the poem.

It is the starting line of "Howl," which lays down the momentum and theme for the whole poem and is also a very clear topic that is recurring in the entire part, "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness,

starving hysterical naked" (Ginsberg, lines 1-2). The best minds walk with difficulties "dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for/ an angry fix" (Ginsberg, lines 3-4). The best minds are linked with "negro streets" to identify them with the idea of being marginalized like the black. Those "best minds," like Ginsberg himself and other bohemians, "with hollow-eye[s] and high," outcast associates, are those that have been rejected by society because they did not fit into the societal and religious norms. They are the ones who are "expelled from academies for crazy and publishing obscene odes" (Ginsberg, lines 16-17). The poet further describes the "best minds" who are drug addicts "who got busted in their pubic beards returning through Laredo with a belt of marijuana for New York" (Ginsberg, lines 21-22). Unlike Whitman's characters, the characters presented in "Howl" are lost and homeless "who wandered around and at midnight in the railroad yard wondering where to go" (Ginsberg, lines 59-60). According to Timothy Yu, this implies a lack of focus or intention. The people in the poem are portrayed as wandering or drifting without a specific destination in mind. This physical and metaphorical roaming may be a reflection of a more general sense of dislocation or estrangement from society at large (24).

Ginsberg stresses those people's desire for cosmic enlightenment as furious and hysteric due to the cultural suppression, he also implies they reflect a sort of hope for the rest of America by suggesting that the bohemian underground of the outcasts, outlaws, revolutionaries, mystics, sexual deviants, junkies, and others are the "best minds of my generation." He names these people "angel-headed hipsters" (Ginsberg, line 5) and he claims they are "burning for the ancient heavenly connection with a starry dynamo in the machinery of night" (Ginsberg, lines 5-6). The "best minds" in "Howl" are the victims of their own culture. Nevertheless, one of the most underlying differences between the two poems is that Walt Whitman listed normal people with ordinary professions while Ginsberg's characters are quite abnormal.

As Nick Selby argues, the holy madness of the "best minds of my generation" is continued in further lines. Considering the personal orientation and inclinations of Ginsberg, it is not shocking that sexual activity would become a revolt toward the government, and of course, the sex life of beats was not traditional in any way. Their inclusion in "Howl" was a significant challenge at a time

of still condemned homosexuality, with even personal sexuality tightly regulated under laws in marriage (66).

"I Hear America Singing" explains idealized and cheerful descriptions where everyone happily coexists, while "Howl" is loaded with sordid images. For example, the best minds described in "Howl" are sick and homeless who do not have ordinary professions. They rather compose meaningless poetry, "scribbled all night rocking and rolling over lofty incantations which in the yellow morning were stanzas of gibberish" (Ginsberg, lines 147-8). There is no sense of the significance of time in "Howl" as the individuals throw "their watches off the roof" (Ginsberg, line 152). However, in Whitman's poem, the people work and sing during the day and at night they celebrate, and they enjoy their time, in "Howl," however, it is during nighttime that "the best minds" dwell, get drunk and howl at the futility of post-war America.

Unlike the cheerful tone of Whitman's poem, there is a lot of pain in this poem, and this misery is in certain respects intimately related to the notion of faith sought by heroes in "Howl." They struggled because they were unable to adapt themselves to the American mainstream. Ginsberg still saw holiness, unlike the poem of Whitman where everyone has a place and everyone sings what belongs to him in a society where everyone works, in Ginsberg's as it can be noticed not everyone has a place in society which is one of the arguments, he conveys through "Howl" to fight and give them a place they belong to. As John Tytell asserts that Ginsberg turns his characters, "the best minds," to martyrs of their days who, mostly through self-destruction, are punished and even dead for upholding the cause of protesting against their society's norms (636-46).

Suicide was, in fact, a very common occurrence in Ginsberg's life, since many of his acquaintances and companions took their own lives. By 1955, he heard of at least a dozen people who wanted to commit suicide. He also had suicidal thoughts and the American society was self-destructive. William Lawlor believes that the beat writers were mostly alcoholic and used drugs to escape from the repressed culture of their society as a sort of "spiritual enlightenment," as they could not find such enlightenments in their realities. The idealized America of Whitman is refuted by Ginsberg (86).

Again, for Ginsberg, the mad "best minds" are the most dedicated, and beloved humans in the world. He believes that what he writes "might be left to say after in time after death" (Ginsberg, lines 235-236). Besides, their voices will

"reincarnate in the ghostly quotes of jazz" (Ginsberg, line 237), and "blew in the suffering of America's naked mind"(Ginsberg, line 239). This is a powerful metaphor for the existential sorrow and psychic wounds that Ginsberg uses to describe American culture in "Howl." It encapsulates the poet's intelligent understanding of human nature and his ambition to challenge and alter the prevailing awareness of his era.

Whitman shows positive images of America where everyone is safe while Ginsberg presents a negative America "ah, Carl, while you are not safe I am not safe, and now you're really in the total animal soup of time" (Ginsberg, lines 220-21). America is described as a place where it always imprisons and tries to tame the uncontrolled. It is the system that considers Solomon to be insane, ultimately it represents anyone who thinks and behaves like Solomon "the best minds." It perfectly captures Ginsberg's examination of the human condition and the existential challenges that people face in the contemporary world. In this context, "time" could allude to both the unstoppable march of time and mortality. Carl's immersion in the turbulent currents of life and history is emphasized by the speaker when he refers to Carl as being "in" this soup of time.

In Whitman's poem, no evil characters are illustrated while Ginsberg presents a ruthless character called Moloch. The second part of "Howl" is a lengthy description of Moloch and shaping its character. It begins with Ginsberg's friend's death, Bill Cannasta who fell out of a train window and died, the poet states, "What sphinx of cement and aluminum bashed open their skulls and ate up / their brains and imagination?" (Ginsberg, lines 243-244). Ginsberg associates this incident with the evil power of Moloch which has the power to throw "the best minds" away and overlook them from life. Moloch represents an "evil" force that is the destroyer of imagination and creativity.

The second part of the poem is called the monster of consciousness that preys on those whom Ginsberg valued. The anxiety and the tension of the Cold War, impacted by materialistic greed and what Ginsberg later calls the "lacklove," (Ginsberg, line 267) was symbolized by a demon named Moloch. This part is a song of phrases all starting with Moloch, an idol or god of fire which the Canaanites were obliged to sacrifice their children to him. Moloch symbolizes the merciless post-war society of America. Ginsberg's view of America is based on this image of a child-eating parent. Being an American in the

Moloch system means being a sacrificed child, unable to get rid of the elder's preferred rules. Moloch is the view of the mechanical and inhumane world. The Moloch country is the hatefully created culture of America. It is machinery, cruelty, mass manufacturing, and war.

The second line of part two starts more angrily than the first line, "Moloch! Solitude! Filth! Ugliness! Ashcans and unobtainable dollars! Children screaming under the stairways! Boys sobbing in armies! Old men weeping in the parks!" (Ginsberg, lines 245-247). Moloch can be destructive economically and it does not target one group of people, it harms all "Children...boys...Old men" (Ginsberg, lines 246-247). In other words, it serves capitalist ideology. Thus, the working-class people do not have the luxuries of life and Moloch despises them. The reason for its derision is that the poor do not share the values of capitalism, and they are trodden on. The poet, as a communist, stands against this and represents the monstrous Moloch which has become a "heavy judger of men" (Ginsberg, line 249). On the other hand, Tony Trigilio believes that the working people described by Whitman are completely different and they are all respected and valued. Moloch kills that artistic imagination of the artists due to its industrial nature (145).

The urbanized and the industrial cities were one of the main concerns of the Beat writers. In "Howl," Allen Ginsberg points out the fact that the city is full of sky-high buildings with no joyful spirits in them, a lifeless city "Moloch whose eyes are a thousand blind windows! Moloch whose skyscrapers/ stand in the long streets like endless Jehovahs!" (Ginsberg, lines, 258-259). It is another description of Moloch which represents the industrialized cities and usually, such cities demand rich citizens, and it shuns the poor. It is again another capitalist value that causes the city and ultimately the country to be a prison. The poet continues the topic of capitalism and industrialization. He now explains how "electronics and banks" which are two major elements of manufacturing and business just to give more examples of creating a dull city, "Moloch the incomprehensible prison. "Such a destructive description is never found in Whitman's America. Another description of America's materialism and industrialism is expressed in the lines, "Moloch whose mind is pure machinery! Moloch/ whose blood is running money" (Ginsberg, lines 254-255). This destroyer grinds anything which is not materialist. It highlights how modern society loses human values and

emotions for material gain since it is motivated by profit and mechanization.

According to Theodore Roszak, Ginsberg explains Moloch as nothing but all the evil powers in America. He cannot bring himself and his colleagues to live in such a place where one must follow the destructive routines of Moloch. Thus, the speaker of "Howl," along with other "best minds" chooses to leave. This departure does not mean a physical immigrating to another country, it rather means deviating from society's mainstream and being outcasts by being alcoholic, homosexuals, and having a beatnik and unconventional life in general. If America had been as ideal as Whitman's description, no one would have to leave (5).

The third part of Ginsberg's "Howl" was dedicated to Carl Solomon whom Ginsberg had met in 1949 at the Rockland State Psychiatric Institute in New York. Ginsberg shows his loyalty and love to Salomon and everyone likes him, "I'm with you at Rockland" (Ginsberg, line 292). Leerom Medovoi declares that Rockland is the name Ginsberg gave this mental asylum in the poem and it is repeated as a refrain. Ginsberg's disappointment of America was based in the poem on Whitman's vision in "I Hear America Singing" (247).

"I Hear America Singing" has no protagonist or antagonist as everyone is equal and they do not have any problem to solve or any deprived rights or liberty to fight for. On the other hand, in "Howl" there is a protagonist and an antagonist. The former can be identified with Carl Solomon and the latter is Moloch. Accordingly, Solomon is the tragic hero who cannot even rescue himself. He, as the representative of "the best minds," fights against the brutalities and the ugliness caused by Moloch.

Whitman's poem contains no sickness while Ginsberg's poem has many illnesses, especially a mental one. In the third part of "Howl," he clarifies the inhumane treatment mental patients used to receive in the US mental institutions, Ginsberg says "the soul is innocent and / immortal it should never die ungodly in an armed madhouse" (Ginsberg, lines 320-321). It represents the situations of all the Carl Solomon types of people who are tortured by society's system. Solomon as a mental patient did not receive treatment, he rather became worse as the institution never intended to cure him in the first place "fifty more shocks will never return your soul to its body again from its pilgrimage to a cross in the void" (Ginsberg, lines 324-325). James Breslin easily notices that there is no physical or mental illness in Whitman's poem.

Having a healthy and happy society is contested in "Howl" by presenting social physical and mental illness (105).

To summarize, with themes including the dehumanizing effects of industrialization, the stifling conformity of mainstream culture, the struggles of marginalized people, and the search for personal and spiritual meaning in a materialistic world, the poem is a potent and unapologetic critique of 1950s American society. "Howl" frequently has a passionate, agonizing, and combative tone. Ginsberg's vocabulary, which captures the unrest and volatility of his generation, is direct and emotional.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Walt Whitman and Allen Ginsberg offer different perspectives on America through their poems "I Hear America Singing" and "Howl" respectively. Whitman's depiction emphasizes harmony and contentment while radiating optimism and celebrating the diversity of the country. On the other hand, Ginsberg's "Howl" presents a sharp indictment of American society's decline and the Beat Generation's sense of disappointment. Though Ginsberg draws heavily on Whitman's poetry form, his themes are exceptionally different. He presents a dissident viewpoint that illuminates the intricacies and paradoxes of the American experience. Additionally, Walt Whitman shows a remarkable America where individuals are free and pleased. Ginsberg, however, tries to demonstrate how America's founding principles have been twisted around. Ginsberg and his peers protested what has been pictured America as a country of respected ideals and values. Hence, it can be argued that Ginsberg largely shaped his worldview opposite to Whitman's model. Moreover, in "Howl," Ginsberg criticizes his country's disguise and attacks the American mainstream and its social ills. In other words, the beautifully depicted America by Whitman is negatively portrayed by Ginsberg. Whitman's rhetoric is open and expansive, evoking a sense of solidarity and togetherness among America's diverse population. On the other hand, Allen Ginsberg responded to the post-World War II American social and cultural landscape with "Howl" by focusing on the Beat Generation's disenchantment with traditional society. Ultimately, Whitman views America as a place of opportunities; Ginsberg, on the other hand, challenges

ideas of American exceptionalism by exposing the country's darker side.

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