

**A Marxist Literary Critical Approach to Allen Ginsberg  
and Akhtar Usman's Selected Poetry**



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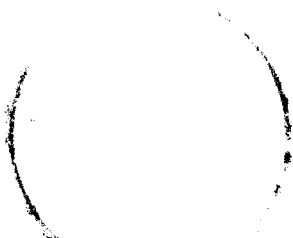
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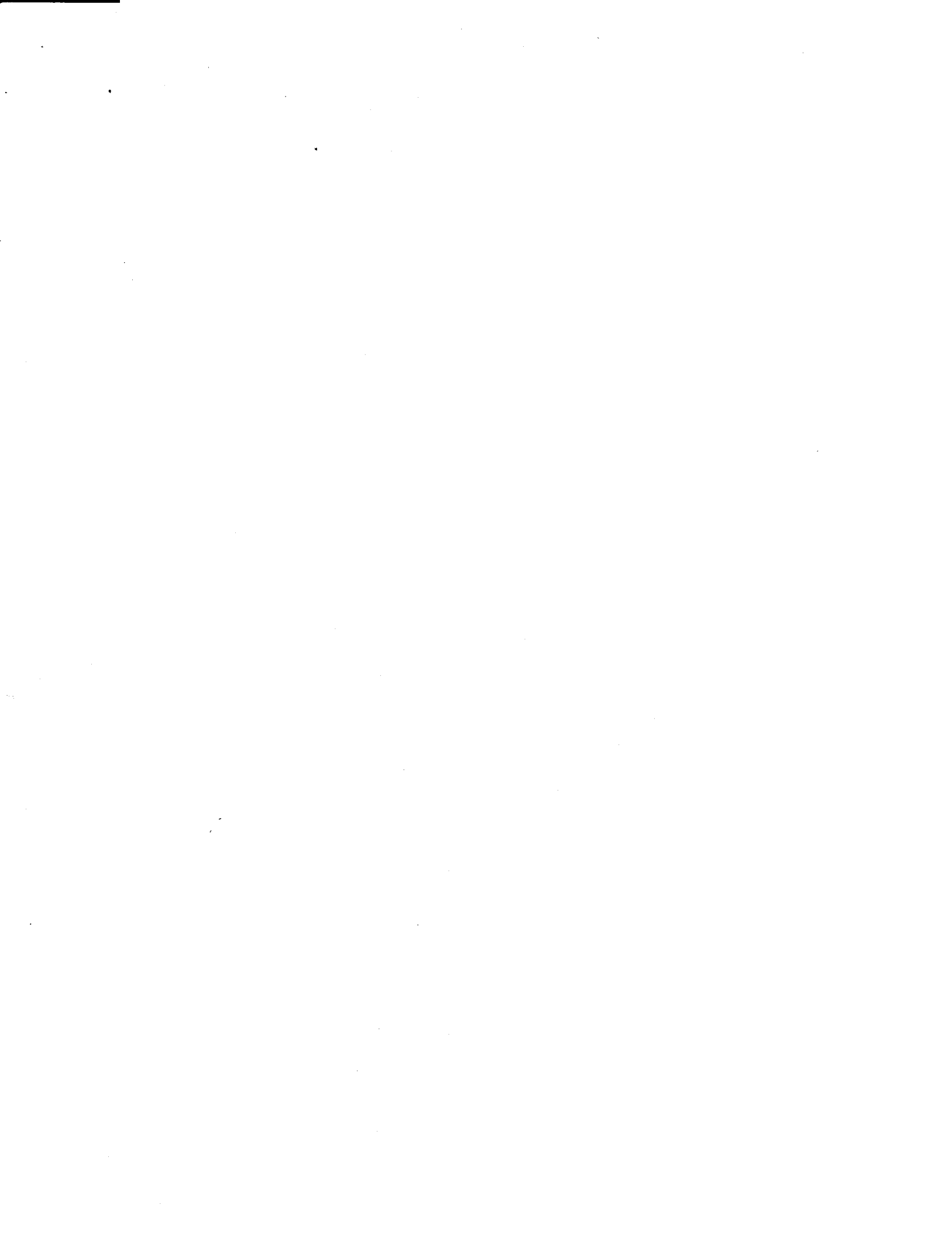
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**DEDICATION**

**With love and prayers to my dear parents....**

## Acceptance by the *Viva Voce* Committee

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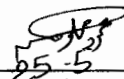
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## ABSTRACT

The present study undertakes comparative thematic analysis of Ginsberg's *Howl* and *America* and Usman's *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* applying Marxist Criticism keeping in view the then socio-economic and political conditions of America and Pakistan. The study is carried out focusing on issues highlighted by Michael Delahoyde that are (i) to examine how do characters overcome oppressions (ii) in what ways does the work serve as propaganda of status quo or does it try to undermine it? (iii) what does the work say about oppression? whether social conflicts are ignored or blamed ? (iv) does the work propose some form of utopian vision as a solution to the problems encountered in the work? For comparative analysis, the study is divided into two sections. Section one consists of similarities comprising themes of identity crises, war, oppression of system and authorities, condition of common man, ethical values, contempt for talent, unfulfilled dreams and hopefulness whereas section two contains dissimilarities that includes themes of sexual references and spiritualism. For collection of themes, close reading of the texts under study was carried out. Comparative analysis was made taking into consideration differences in socio-economic and political background of the two poets. During analysis it was found that despite the fact that the two poets belong to two entirely different cultures and societies, both Ginsberg and Usman portray social oppressions of their societies in much the same way.

## DECLARATION

I, Nayyar Mehmood son of Qazi Ghulam Khan, Registration No.26-FLL/M.Phil-Eng-05, student of M.Phil, in the discipline of English Literature, hereby declare that the matter printed in the thesis “A Marxist Literary Critical Approach to Allen Ginsberg and Akhtar Usman’s Selected Poetry” submitted by me in partial fulfilment of M.Phil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

This work was carried out and completed at International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Dated: July 12, 2012

  
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Signatures of Deponent  
NAYYAR MEHMOOD.



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Peace and Blessings be upon the last of the Prophets, Mohammad (SAW).

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## CHAPTER NO. 1

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Man in the society has been and is a major issue in the world literature. The best literature depicts man entangled in the web of social crises. Since literature is written by a man in the society, for a man in the society, it, therefore, cannot be without social issues. The best writers are those who faithfully and truly represent *the man* in the society, his socio- economic and political problems. As the society grew complex, problems of man got manifold. Be that literature of western or eastern world, it is not devoid of discussing man and his problems in the society.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed horrors of two World Wars, rise and then decline of many isms and finally it ended with the victory of Capitalism all over the world. The unipolar world is categorically ruled by capitalist forces justifying and prolonging their supremacy at all cost. The institutions, having been monopolized by these forces, aim at grabbing the resources and wealth of other nations that has resulted in enslavement of these nations and their masses either through direct or indirect colonization. Be that a man from an advanced country or from a poor nation, he has been affected by the policies fashioned by these capitalist forces. Marxism<sup>1</sup>, a criticism of development of Capitalism as it is, influenced playwrights, novelists and poets all over the world and man in the society has become focus of literary creation. Out of multitudinous definitions of literature

that are as divergent as the range of literature itself is, the approach *every literature is a study of man in the society*, perhaps, is the first unrecognized acknowledgement of Marxist Literary Criticism since it started viewing literature as ‘an integral part of a social structure resting on economic determinants’ (Rice and Waugh, P-123). *Art for the sake of art notion*, still held by many critics, has comparatively less appeal for many others who believe in the idea of *art for life*. Those authors and poets are considered the best who depict[ed] issues relating to common man ‘in the sense that they were [are] involved with humanity in its most abiding and universal character’ (Karandikar, 1997, P-81). Marxism is a material philosophy based on socio-economic and political ideas put forth by Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels in 1848. Marx and Engels did not advocate ‘judging merits of a piece of literature in terms of its political tendencies or using some ready-made formulae’ (Nagrajan, 2006, P-223). Their views about art and literature, instead, ‘seem relaxed and undogmatic’ maintaining that ‘good art always has a degree of freedom from prevailing economic circumstances, even if these economic facts are its ultimate determinant’ (Barry, P-158). It was afterwards that critics started judging literary works making basic concepts of Marxism as touch stone of literary criticism.

Comparative Literature has emerged as an important discipline in the field of literature. Though relatively a new field in literature studies, it has attracted attentions of critics to focus on thematic or stylistic similarities / dissimilarities of two or more texts either by the same author/ poet or different writers/poets. This ‘perceptive ‘ of one text ‘through other such text’ requires ‘multifaceted

awareness' on the part of critic to consider all those factors which have contributed to shape 'all the texts under scrutiny'(Bhatnagar 1999,P-1). Critical analysis of texts by different authors/poets 'rooted in different socio- economic context' (P-2) yields productive result contrary to the study of texts by authors/poets sharing same socio-economic and historical milieu.

The present study undertakes thematic comparative analysis of selected poetry of Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997), an American poet, and Akhtar Usman (1969), a Pakistani poet of Urdu of present era. Poems of Ginsberg selected for comparison are *Howl (1956)* and *America (1959)* and those of Akhtar Usman include *Qalamrau (1993)* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain (2007)* applying Marxist criticism as matrix of study. Marxist critics have put forth various models to study a piece of literature, but the researcher adopts a general approach keeping in view the then socio-economic and political conditions of America that roughly covers the period from 1950 to 1970 and Pakistan from 1980 to 2007. These periods, thus, make social backgrounds during which these two poets wrote their poetry under discussion. This comparative analysis is focussed on studying issues highlighted by Michael Delahoyde (2008) in *Introduction to Literature* for a Marxist critic to mull over while critiquing a literary text. The researcher has followed close textual comparative study method. A close reading of the texts has been carried out with a focus on thematic comparison.

## 1.2 Research Questions:

Research questions for this study are:

- I) In depicting social oppressions of their societies, what thematic similarities and dissimilarities are found in the selected works of Ginsberg and Usman?
- II) Which factors forced them to adopt different approaches appropriate to their societies?

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

The present study aims at finding thematic similarities and dissimilarities of Ginsberg's poem *Howl* and *America* and Akhtar Usman's *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* focussing on socio-economic and political conditions of America and Pakistan applying Marxist criticism. Through this comparative analysis, I want to introduce Akhtar Usman, an Urdu poet of the present age to English speaking community and Allen Ginsberg, an American poet, to Pakistani people. To show how two intellectuals living in two entirely different cultures and societies react to social oppression in almost the like manner is another objective of this study.

## 1.4 Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

To carry out thematic comparative analysis of selected works of two poets, the researcher has applied Marxist Critical Theory. Since Marxist Critical theory is a

vast field and Marxist critics have evolved a number of models<sup>2</sup> to study a literary work, I have adopted a general approach keeping in view the then socio-economic and political conditions of America and Pakistan, while analyzing the texts. The analysis of the selected texts focusses on issues highlighted by Michael Delahoyde in his essay *An Introduction to Literature*. They include, besides considering the issues of money and power, these aspects (i) how do characters overcome oppression (ii) in what ways does the work serve as propaganda of status quo or does it try to undermine it? (iii) What does the work say about oppression? Whether social conflicts ignored or blamed? (iv) Does the work propose some form of utopian vision as a solution to the problems encountered in the work? In order to find answer to these questions and to make the study comparable, it is divided into two broad categories of similarities and dissimilarities of themes as found in the selected texts of Ginsberg and Usman. The section of similarity of themes includes themes of identity crises, war, tyrannies of authorities and system, condition of common man, ethical values, contempt for talent, unfulfilled dreams and hopefulness and that of dissimilarity contains themes of sexual references and spiritualism. I have studied the texts extensively to find out thematic similarities and dissimilarities. Selection of themes is supported by poets' own interviews and writings and remarks of critics. Hence close textual comparative study method is followed. The researcher follows close textual analysis theory and model of comparative literature to carry out this study. While accomplishing close textual study, the researcher focusses on thematic study of the texts. During the analysis of the texts, criticism of Capitalism stays at the background. Delimitation is done by selecting only those



lines of the chosen texts that carry some thematic comparison. As comparative study of literature involves comparison of either style or theme or both, only thematic comparison is carried out in this research, ignoring any comparison of style. English translation of Usman's Urdu poetry and criticism is not available. The researcher has made his own efforts to translate Urdu poetry of Akhtar Usman and criticism of his poetry in English.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study carries a lot of significance. It provides significant material to the readers to consider how two intellectuals living in two different cultures interpret tyrannies of systems through their works. This will also help them study cultures of two countries through literature. The study may prove a step forward in shattering away the propaganda cast by the forces of either side vigorously active for their vested interests. The study will also help bringing harmony among the masses of two nations highlighting that common man, be he from a poor country or from an advanced nation, is tormented by the system in much the same way. On academic level, this will provide a guide line for the students interested in comparative study of literatures. This study is expected to help them appreciate vernacular literature and study it in comparison with any literature of the world.

## **1.6 Plan of Research**

### **1.6.1 Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter presents background of the study and research plan. Objectives of the study, theoretical frame work and research methodology and significance of the study also form a part of the chapter.

### **1.6.2 Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Related literature about criticism of Ginsberg and Usman's selected poetry has been reviewed to develop an understanding of the study.

### **1.6.3 Chapter 3: Analysis of Ginsberg's *Howl* and *America***

This chapter includes analysis of *Howl* and *America* by Ginsberg with focus on finding answer to the questions Michel Delahoyde assigns a Marxist critic to find out during analysis of a literary text. The analysis is carried out with a view to find out various themes like identity crisis, war, tyrannies of authorities, wasted talent, condition of common man, ethical values and hopefulness, sexual references and spiritualism.

### **1.6.4 Chapter 4: Analysis of Akhtar Usman's *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain***

This chapter presents analysis of *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* by Akhtar Usman on the same lines as mentioned above.

### **1.6.5 Chapter 5: Conclusion**

This chapter comprises results of the study. A comparative thematic analysis of selected texts and approach of the two poets is presented in order to investigate the question raised.

### Notes

1. Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German philosopher, and Fredrick Engels (1820-1895), a German sociologist, called their social, political and economic theories 'communism'. They jointly wrote '*Communist Manifesto*' in 1848. It is now called Marxism. Marxism is a very wide field comprising a theory of economics, history, society and revolution. The main aim of Marxism is to bring about a classless society based on common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange. Marxism is a material philosophy and looks for concrete, scientific and logical explanation of the world of observable facts. The simplest Marxist model of society sees it as constituted by a 'base' and 'superstructure'. Economics is the base on which the superstructure of social, political and ideological realities (e.g. ideas, art, religion, law etc) are built. Marx places literature in the super structure of society. The society is said to be divided into Proletariat, the working class and Bourgeoisie, the rich who control the resources and wealth of a nation. History is a class struggle between Proletariat and Bourgeoisie for power. The bourgeoisie subjugates Proletariat. This exploitation results in alienation; a process by which a worker is deskilled and made to perform the tasks, the nature and purpose of which he cannot know. He gives his labor power to the capitalist in exchange of wages and becomes an appendage of a machine. This results in 'reification' a state in which the world of relationships appears as a set of relationship between things. Workers and labor force are thought of a hand. People become

commodities. The power structure can be altered by coming together of the proletariat, forgetting its division. For further details, please see M S Nagrajan's *English Literary Criticism and Theory*, Orient Langman (2006) and Peter Barry's *Beginning theory: An introduction to literary and cultural theory*, Manchester University Press, (1995).

2. David Forgacs in his essay '*Marxist Literary Theory*' has discussed five models. The first model is The Reflective Model that considers literature as reflecting the social reality outside it. The Production Model is the second one developed by French Marxist Pierre Macherey in which literary composition is regarded as productive labour in which materials are turned into end products. Third model is The Genetic Model developed by the Romanian sociologist Lucien Goldmann. This model concerns with the origin of literary works. The Frankfurt School is the fourth model promoted by Theodore Adorno. This view rejects the earlier view held by Lukacs that art is a reflection of objective reality and asserts that art is the essence and image of reality and not its photographic representation. Mikhail Bakhtin and few other Russian formalists developed a language based model that treats literature *as a social practice rather than a form of knowledge*. It asserts that ideology is made of language in the form of linguistic. For further details, please see M S Nagrajan's *English Literary Criticism and Theory*, Orient Langman (2006).

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Literature review on Ginsberg's Selected Poetry

Jonah Raskin, in his essay *Ginsberg's Icon Busting Poem Resonates in the Patriot Act Era (2004)* traces the background and environment in which *Howl* was written. To him, the poem announces the liberation of an entire generation. It was an antiwar, anti-Capitalist poem that condemned FBI and scholars of war. The poem underwent censorship but it was released afterwards. It defied the established order and protested war and intolerance. Raskin pinpoints that *Howl* is a description of causalities of Capitalism, political and social oppression and tyrannies of authorities. Bamber Gascoigne in *Time Search for Books and Writers* narrates the history of the poem and the writer. The trouble with Ginsberg started when he fell in love with fellow student; afterwards he was suspended from university and was ordered to undergo psychiatric counseling. During his stay in Columbia Psychiatric Institute, he met Carl Solomon, another talented and psychiatric patient whom the poem *Howl* is dedicated to. He mainly wrote about American anti drug laws during the period. Commenting upon various themes of the poem, Walter Kirn, in his essay *Howler (2006)* brings forth that the poem is a depiction of talented young men's lives who failed to adjust in the status quo situation and demanded change. They rebelled against commercialism and advocated freedom of press. They protested against tyrannies of authorities.

Gregory Stephenson in his essay *The Day Break Boys (1990)* compares themes of Ginsberg's *Howl* with the themes of romantic poets to whom the concept of transcendence with inherent problems of how to achieve it and where it leaves us is central. While summarizing transcendence and its attendant problems, Gregory Stephenson remarks that the poet for a visionary instant, transcends the realm of actual into the realm of ideal, and then unable to sustain the vision, returns to the realm of the actual. Afterwards, the poet feels exiled from the eternal, the numinous the superconscious. The material world, the realm of the actual seems empty and desolate. The poet starves for heavenly manna. This theme of transcendence is treated in the works of romantics like Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. Gregory Stephenson describes that movement of the *Howl* carries the same theme; it is from pain, protest, outrage, attack and lamentation to acceptance, affirmations, love and vision- from alienation to communion. The poet descends into the underworld of darkness, achieved vision and a sense of union with the human community and with God. The poem carries images of falling and arising, destruction and regeneration, starvation and nourishment, sleeping and wakening, darkness and illumination, blindness and sight and death and resurrection. The first part of *Howl* describes the desperation, suffering and persecution of group of young outcast, including Ginsberg who are seeking transcendent reality. They are starving for heavenly connection but cannot find it. They try to achieve some glimpses through sex, peyote and marijuana. They are misfit in the society and are not accepted by the system. Section II of *Howl* describes the reasons of lack of ecstatic and visionary concept in the American society. This is Moloch, a god whom children are scarified. This Moloch snatches

from people every thing that is humane and holy. The third section is a description of sympathy that the poet shows with a talented man Carl Solomon who did not accept the principles that the society imposed on him and as a result, he was institutionalized. He has been depicted as a savior of humanity and human soul who struggled for individualism. The final images of *Howl* are confident and expansive. All the woes and weaknesses engendered by mental Moloch are ended and human soul emerges in victory, virtue and mercy. Unlike many romantic writers, Ginsberg, after he had come from the journey of splendors, wonders and terrors, does not become sorrowful or dejected. He like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, has returned from this journey with a new vision of human community, a new reverence for life and a hope for human potential and human love. Marjorie Perloff in his essay *Howl and the Language of Modernism (2006)* examines the relationship between modernity of language used in *Howl* and its themes. He referred to Richard Eberhart who wrote that it was a *Howl* against everything in our modernistic civilization which killed the spirit. *Howl* is a war poem and it is a *Howl* against the Moloch of skeleton treasuries, blind capitals, demonic industries and monstrous bomb. In the poem, human beings do not walk but they stagger, drag, leap and chain. They do not talk but burn for heavenly connection. They 'burn cigarettes holes in their arms' and 'bit detectives in the neck' and 'cut their wrists three times successively unsuccessful'. These images are but protest against system. The heroes of *Howl* receive 'shocks of hospitals' and jails and wars. This covers author's claim that it is a modern poem that criticizes the role of America in the affairs of the world. To Gyorgy (2007), *Howl* is a protest poem but resistance is turned inward towards self destruction and madness. *Howl* tried



to seek an alternative of the present culture in the forms of mysticism, drugs and madness. Kerouac's novel *On the Road* depicts disillusionment of the soldiers and people who have come from the war. The author concludes that the same disillusionment will be found in soldiers coming from Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries.

In his essay Ginsberg's *Howl: A Counterculture Manifesto*, Golam Rabbani (2008) traces the working of Technocracy in *Howl*. Technocracy mechanizes the human soul and human creativity. It takes away feelings, emotions and creative thoughts and forces human race to depend on technology and mechanized society. It is a manifestation of counter culture that defies any established assumption. *Howl* is a protest against war, bomb, military-industrialist-nationalist complex, exploitation of academies and industries, politics, commercialism and tyrannies of authorities. Ginsberg declares America as nation of madhouses. He foretells fall of Whitman's America and democratic America. The academic oppression is reflected when he unmasks the secret efforts of Columbia University scientists to split up atoms for military power and huge funds were eaten up by the project and no funds were left for other departments like humanities. Apparently Ginsberg is influenced by communism but practically he is against politics of the time that believed in exploitation whether it was politics of left or right. Technocracy is represented as Moloch, a Hebrew god worshipped by idolatrous Israelites. Moloch is ruling America. He feels and eats the very existence of the nation. It turns Americans hungry for dollars, turning children homeless and making the old people lonely. It turns people blind in the mind. The essay *Jack Kerouac's On the*

*Road, Ginsberg's Howl and the American Dream* by Denise Levertov (2007) critically analyses the representation of American Dream. The American dream states that the American social, economic and political system makes success possible for every individual. Something similar is found in the Declaration of Independence that shows equality of all human beings and that they are endowed by their Creator the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Christianity that does not challenge social set of the time was not acceptable by Ginsberg and Kerouac. They both represent Cassady (Kerouac in his novel *On the Road* and Ginsberg in his poem *Howl*) as the hero in contrast to Marlboro Man who is hardworking, clean living, heterosexual, a good father and a faithful Church going husband. Cassady, on the other hand, spends time in movie houses, wandering, drinking and making love with women. He, in a sense, resembles the American dream that has been corrupted. The attainment and fulfillment of American dream is symbolized by the word "IT" in Kerouac's novel *On the Road*. Like American dream, "IT" neither can be defined nor attained. Through description of negroes, hipsters and jazz music, Ginsberg expresses corruption of American dream. He asserts that every thing is *Holy* and therefore it should be included in American dream. The American dream has gone down the river. America has become Moloch that requires conformity and accepts no change. The best minds are suffering because of the system. To reduce their sufferings, they try to take pleasure in sex, peyote, marijuana and jazz music that are considered as sin in contemporary American society and in this way they represent the distortion of American dream. The negroes living in darkness reject mainstream American culture and demand a simpler and more natural life. The academies are

propagating mainstream philosophy ending in war. Drugs are a means to reach American dream. The journeys in Kerouac's *On the Road* are in search of self gratification that end in futility but these journeys are mystical in the sense that they symbolize holiness. Likewise, Ginsberg tries to show that sex, drink, marijuana and negroes all are holy. Ginsberg condemns the way in which American dream has been distorted by the mercantile class. He is not against America but all those things that are misappropriation of America. Interest in eastern religions, drinking, homosexuality, love for negroes, jazz music and use of narcotics against the social norms reflect that Beat Generation intends to make American Dream all inclusive. Denise Levertov at the end concludes that American Dream is like a missing father who does not want to be found.

*An Interview with Allen Ginsberg (8/11/96)* conducted with Ginsberg months before his death, highlights social, economic and political conditions of America and the world and the role Ginsberg played in the affairs of the world. To Ginsberg it was anticommunist movement in America and Europe causing mass killing. C.I.A over threw Mosaddeq in Iran and Jacobo Arbenz, a democratically elected leader, in Guatemala causing 200,000 casualties. America aided France with \$ 40 million a year to pursue war in Chinese section of Saigon and as a result American catholic puppet was appointed as head of the state. False reporting was done. The legends of America like Whitman were ignored. Instead of American culture, British culture was promoted. Literature that promoted communism and condemned capitalism was either banned or censored. Even communist countries like Russia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland inflicted tyrannies on masses.

These countries consumed huge funds for war equipments. Both Russia and America tortured their masses through police and agencies. America exploited African countries by taking away their raw materials and not establishing any industry there. Ginsberg's tour to Prague, Cuba and Czechoslovakia were bitter experiences. He was considered security risk there because he protested war. He was under the watch of Narcotics board as well. Ginsberg declared that police of both western and communist countries was cruel and tyrant. During that period, Beat Generation emerged as a powerful movement with a focus on new culture and new consciousness. Democratically elected government of America took all decisions by itself that related to the destruction of entire nation and the whole human race. False news about war was propagated in the newspapers. The government sabotaged rallies arranged against war and nuclear annihilation. Beat Generation emphasized on promotion of American culture. Interest in Eastern studies, Jazz music and meditation practice were common among the young generation.

The essay *Allen Ginsberg's Howl Fifty Years Later and in its Own Time* by Andras Gyorgy (2007) traces the influence that *Howl* had on different poets of the time. They were attracted to the poet that is Ginsberg, by his poetry as well as personality. The correspondence between Ginsberg and Amiri Baraka, the famous American poet of the time, reflects emptiness and feelings of loss that were peculiar features of the time.

Jason Shinder's book *The Poem that Changed America: Howl Fifty Year Later* is a commentary on different events of Ginsberg's life. Children born to poets and writers belonging to Beat Generation describe their parents' problems and the

effect their attitude had left on their children. It was a post war era and an age of false material promise.

*The Beat and the Boom* is the title of an interview with Ginsberg conducted by Seth Goddard in which Ginsberg narrates Beat Movement, its themes, condition of the movement at the time and influence the Beat Generation had on the coming generation. To Ginsberg, the movement did not have any philosophy but there were ideas, ethos and preoccupations. It was a move towards spiritual liberation from Bourgeois 50's quietism, from mechanization and homogenization of culture, the mechanical assault on human nature. It was a search for new consciousness and it had an effect on other generation called Baby Boomers. Beat Movement was a spiritual war for the soul of America. To Ginsberg, whoever tried to stand for the basic human rights and individual liberty was convicted and considered a jerk to American values and America whether he was Whitman, Kerouac or William Carlos William as none of them followed the mainstream American culture. He distinguished between Boomer Generation and Beat Generation that former showed much anger. The beliefs of Beat Generation got recognition in American society. The literature was liberated considerably and new poetic form was introduced that was Americans. Ecological problems were given importance in literature. Ginsberg thought that situation in 50's was a bit clear. To him, Nixon and Reagan bankrupted the country instead of solving energy problems. Huge funds were consumed by the war and little was left to spend on civic amenities. Press and government did not allow the situation to get better. To him Clinton started well to solve some of the problems. The problems of fifties still persisted in eighties and nineties. The younger generation, to

Ginsberg, should follow spiritual wrath and generosity but not anger. He advises Boomer Generation to read great literature and become aware of their own minds, control their anger and do what they can to relieve the sufferings of humanity. That is the thing Christianity, Buddhism and all primitive religions promote. He believed in continuous and generous efforts regardless of fear or hope. To Ginsberg, if the ship is sinking, one can relief suffering even in this situation.

Richard Kostelanetz's essay *Ginsberg Makes the World Scene* (1965) is a description of Ginsberg's life and influences that helped shape his views of social, political and literary life. To him *Howl* earned name of the poet as it was an antiestablishment and anti-government poem that condemned scholars of the war.

## **2.2 Literature review on Usman's Selected Poetry**

Dr. Rasheed Amjad in his essay *A Poet in the Tradition of Ghalib* (1992) critically evaluates Akhtar Usman's poetry, different themes and resemblances of the poet with great Urdu poet Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib. To Amjad, commitment to classical traditions of ghazal, selfness, search for identity and an endeavor to make a prominent place amongst his peers are found in the poetry of Usman. Technical formation of his verse resembles Ghalib's poetry. He intends to regain historical sense in totality and condemns those who try to hinder him. Depiction of tyrannies of political system of Pakistani society and the countries of the third world is another theme of his poetry. He is fed up with so called political leaders who are puppets in the hands of their masters and implement their policies. He not only intends to establish an ideal society but he also wishes

to escape away from the limits of the world to explore its mysteries. To Rasheed Amjad, such approach resembles Ghalib.

Commenting upon *Qalamrau*, Zia Jalandhary, in his essay *Qalamrau: A Review (1996)* focusses mainly on the artistic skills of the poet that make him a prominent poet in the tradition of great classical poets. He declares the book as commentary on the society and a severe criticism on social and political system. The book brings forth the character of a man who knows well all intricacies of his enemy and is ready to encounter him. He even threatens his leader who thinks of any compromise with the foe.

*Poetry of Akhtar Usman (2001)* by Syed Naseem Taqi Jaafri is a critical essay on the poetry of Akhtar Usman which highlights different themes of his poetry. To Jaafri, Usman's peculiarity is that he has depicted political oppression, social inequalities and inhuman attitude of tyrant in his poetry with so artistic a skill that it does not let his art lose artistic or aesthetic quality. He witnesses social, cultural and political environment with an open eye and concludes that fake and ineligible have taken over. They have flourished a system which is promoting status quo in which worthless are rewarded and capable are being ignored, they are, even, persecuted. In this system, chances for progress are limited to a certain class. Any resistance against the system is not tolerated. To poet, ruling class is the root cause of all the evils. Jaafri declares the anthology as an elegy of the present Pakistani society in particular and the third world in general. To Jaafri, the book is a document that lays open intricacies of the rulers and portrays deprivations and lamentations of the oppressed masses.

The critical essay *Kuch Bachaa Lae Hain* (2010) by Manshayaad, discusses the themes of poetry of Akhtar Usman in a light hearted way. The essay highlights study of the poet and his stance as a poet and a critic. Taken from daily life, the themes relate to social and political life. Controlled democracy and ruling of one family after the other has become a trend in Pakistani society.

To Malik Mehr Ali (2000), Akhtar Usman is a poet who considers poetry a means to bring about change in the society for the betterment of man and humanity. Mujtaba Haider Sherazi comments on Akhtar Usman's standard to declare right and wrong to judge anything. Nasir Zafar considers Akhtar Usman as his counter part who is making people aware of their rights not only through poetry but through his character as well. To him, this is a commitment to an ideology in the real sense.

Declaring Akhtar Usman as a rebel who revolts against the system, Abrar Ahmad in his essay *Ghazal of the Last Decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (2002) declares Usman a poet who rebels against the system. In Akhtar Usman, he finds out that anger, protest and struggle are directed inward at one stage but at the second stage they are focussed on the social oppression. His topics vary from internal clash to break the shackles of authorities. These chains of society and a sense of limitation of his hopes disturb him and he, then, for a time being, goes beyond the tangible world and lives in his world of ecstasy. Rana Saeed Doshi in his short essay *A Poet of High Standard* finds Akhtar Usman a poet who never forgets the earth while making a flight of imagination.



To Shaheen Abbas (2005), poetry of Akhtar Usman depicts social issues at one level and it regains lost and forgotten history and civilization on the other. Waseem Kashafi (2002) in his analysis of Akhtar Usman's poetry concludes that Akhtar Usman's poetry springs out from inner turmoil and it encounters the world outside. Akhtar Usman's Inaugural Address to Halqa-e-Arbaab-e-Zauq Khor (2005) is a thought provoking treatise. He mourns over the worth of literature being produced and asserts the audience to study the purple work of classicists to know their real worth. He also laments the loss of literary heritage at the time of partition. The British Colonizers took away with them the literary wealth in order to oblige the masses of the sub-continent by writing forewords afterwards. The West, in the name of homogenization of culture, is trying to mar the beauty and distinct quality of classical literature. He critically analyses new linguistic trends introduced and promoted by critics of western and colonial countries to prevent any alliance against Capitalism. To him, the phrase 'The author is dead' is coined by the western critics to negate any consensus on different issues so that the third world may not confront the capitalist forces as a binding force. He regrets blind follow of western writers and poets without understanding their works and philosophy behind them. The western writers and critics are promoting Capitalism through their works. In an interview with Hameed Malik and Ashfaq Aamir (1999), Akhtar Usman speaks of standard and worth of literature and criticism in Urdu in Pakistan. The interview reflects his vision of a poet, a writer and a critic. He advises the young scholars of Urdu literature to read Urdu Classicists as well as classical writers of Persian to know real merits of classical writers of these languages. To Akhtar Usman, unless the writers and critics of his society get

awareness of purple work of their ancestors and their cultural values that depict their cultural richness, they cannot make a worthwhile contribution to the literature of the world. Akhtar Usman encourages the trend of benefiting from the western literature but a blind follow of this trend without taking into account cultural differences is what he condemns. To him an Urdu writer as well as a critic should first benefit from the literature of the world and then he should develop know how of subjects of other areas like psychology, politics, economics, computer and philosophy so that he can depict the real life. Developing critical faculties helps a writer produce better literature. He offers severe criticism to the works of renowned Urdu critics. On the other hand, he defends role of the writer of his time. To him, a writer of the present era is fighting on many fronts. He is simultaneously in contact with past, present, international literature and the generations to come. In an essay *Yousuf Hassan: A Polymath of Emphatic Knack* (2006), Akhtar Usman appreciates Yousuf Hassan for his uncompromising stance for Progressive Writers Association and a Marxist literary critic of a high standard. When others took shelter in compromise or under NGO's umbrella, Yousuf Hassan stood firmly for mass loving ideology in true sense. To him Yousuf Hassan has translated treacheries of Capitalist Imperialism through literature and he is one of the few real Marxist writers who believe in all sided human emancipation. To Akhtar Usman, hopes of a classless society have eradicated with the fall of Soviet Russia. *Post Modernism: a Capitalist Expedition* (2006) by Akhtar Usman is an essay that unmasks treacheries of Capitalist Imperialism. The essay introduces us a man who is well aware of the deceitfulness of the enemy and brings before us one by one all his treasons be

they in the field of literature, economics, culture or science. Advantages of big scientific discoveries are limited to a certain class. Intellectuals of the western countries are enticing the third world countries through market rhetoric and linguistic web to grab the sources and wealth of these countries. Structuralism, a weapon in the arsenal of Postmodernism, carries the reader away from the pivotal point. In the name of homogenization of cultures, capitalist forces try to distort the individual literature and music by mixing it with the western literature and music, producing a new amalgamation alien to vernacular literature and music. The poetry of Waris Shah and Mian Muhammad Bukhsh, to Usman, is being sung in western and Greek tunes quite alien to local masses.

The essay 'A Story Unmasking Imperialism' (2006) by Akhtar Usman, basically a critique of Punjabi short story by Malik Mehr, highlights troubles faced by the people of the sub-continent under the British dominion. Came as traders, the British Colonizers took over the rule. They first put the subjugate masses suffer from identity crises and then, in the name of enlightenment, created ethnic, religious and language based differences among the inhabitants that were living quite peacefully before. This alienation was further grafted when feudal lords were awarded to fulfill the imperialist agenda. To Usman, the Post Partition writers, to reveal the treacheries of Capitalist Imperialism, unmasked socio-political and economic condition of the sub-continent. Later allegory and symbolism were introduced to cope with the social oppression. 'Of Progressive Movement' (2006) is another essay by Akhtar Usman in which he traces history of the movement and its founder Syed Sajjad Zaheer. He proposes future agenda for the movement to cope with the future challenges of Capitalist Imperialism. He

urges to develop sound infrastructure and deep rooted ideology to face the challenges. To Usman, freedom movements all over the world sprang under the influence of the Russian Revolution. In the sub-continent, the writers, under the flag of Progressive Writers Association, started focussing on socio-economic and political condition of the country to smash away not only feudalism but also British Imperialism. Sajjad Zaheer, the first secretary general of the association whose ideological views were strengthened and chiseled in Europe, worked tirelessly for the association. 'Reflection' (2006) is another essay by Akhtar Usman that critically evaluates Yousuf Hassan's presidential address to the Halqa-e-Arbaab-e-Zauq's Annual Meeting. He first playfully states the damage done by colonial masters to indigenous literary values and classical poetry. He laments that writers and critics of Pakistan followed the principles laid by western critics without evolving a methodology of their own. But Yousuf Hassan has tried to compensate the loss. To Usman, Yousuf Hassan has critically analyzed the western and colonial critical theory and has contributed a good deal in Urdu criticism. Influenced by Marxist Literary Criticism, Yousuf Hassan elaborated Realism and Anti realism movement in South Asia especially in sub-continent. Different trends of Modern and Non modern schools of Realism and Anti-realism were against Capitalist Imperialism. After the independence, worn-out antirealism was patronized and now most modernism-antirealism and capitalist liberalism/realism are being mushroomed. Akhtar Usman urges Yousuf Hassan to turn to post-modernism and unmask the motives of capitalist forces behind the movement. 'Linguistics and Crime' (2007) is another essay by Akhtar Usman that exposes hidden motives of modern linguists and linguistics to negate and

discourage working class ideology. The essay, basically a commentary on an essay by Diana Celia Hodges in her book *The Falling Scholar: Essays in the Outside*, Usman critically evaluates works and philosophies of leading linguists Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Max Horkheimer and Louis Althusser and concludes that their 'philosophies confuted Marx and cast aspersion on his worker- loving ideology. Akhtar Usman critically evaluates these linguistic philosophies in these lines: 'The philosophies are actually the emblems of pooped subjective individualism, for it is western linguistics that dampened the movement of working class in the consumer society'.

## CHAPTER 3

### ANALYSIS OF GINSBERG'S *HOWL* AND *AMERICA*

This chapter presents analysis of *Howl* and *America* by Ginsberg with a focus to find out similarities and dissimilarities of themes.

#### 3.1 Similarities of Themes

This section provides themes of identity crises, war, oppression of authorities and system, condition of common man, ethical values, wasted talent, unfulfilled dreams and promises and hopefulness as investigated while examining the two poems.

##### 3.1.1 Identity Crises

After the World War-II, when American society got stability, a race for material gain started. To gain more luxuries of life became a driving force in the social life of American people. For Ginsberg and his friends of Beat Generation, this situation was not acceptable. Looking for a new set of values after getting sick of the existing system and values, they were out cast in the society running after materialism, devoid of any humane value. They are in a sense of loss in these circumstances.

a lost battalion of platonic conversationalists jumping down the stoops  
 off fire escapes off windowsills off Empire States out of the moon,  
 (*Howl*, line 41-42)

Members of Beat Movement expressed profound dissatisfaction with the contemporary American society and advocated an alternate set of values. *Howl* is a description of efforts of these young men to find their identify in the society that regrets any visionary experience.

So it (the movement of Beat Generation) was then either a revival of an old consciousness or the search for a new consciousness....I don't think we (Ginsberg and Kerouac) had it clearly defined, but we were looking for something, as was Burroughs, as a kind of breakthrough from the sort —of hyper-rationalistic, hyper-scientific, hyper- rationalizing of the post-war era.  
 (Goddard, P-2).

These angelheaded seekers are misfit in the society, which has its own recognized principles and values. Follow the established norm is the order of the day. But these scholars have their own way of life. Their views are not accepted and they are mentally tormented and tortured. The first section of *Howl*, in particular, describes the conditions of these young men. This part reveals the difficulties that poets, visionaries and seekers have in the society. These difficulties involve first the social disgrace attached to certain states of soul, the second is confrontation with a society which is going in a different direction, the third one being an awareness how to feel human and holy and not like a mad man in a world which is rigid and materialistic and all caught up in the immediate ecstasies. Stephenson, (1990) explains the sufferings of these individuals in theses lines:

The anguish of the visionary in exile from ultimate reality and desperately seeking reunion with it is intensified by a society which refuses to recognize the validity of the visionary experience and maintains a monopoly on reality imposing and enforcing a single, materialist- rationalist view. (Stephenson, 1990)

Failing to find any recognition and acceptance in the society, Ginsberg's angelheaded seekers try to identify themselves with the medieval flagellants through alcohol, sexual excess, peyote, marijuana and Benzedrine.

with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares, alcohol and cock and endless balls, ( Howl, 22-23)

Stephenson has pointed out the efforts of these youngmen to find their identity.

And through these means they achieve occasional epiphanous glimpses, angels on tenement roofs highlighting in the mind, illuminations, brilliant insights, vibration of the cosmos, gleaming of supernatural ecstasy, visions hallucinations, they are crowned with flames, tantalized when the soul illuminated its hair for a second. (Stephenson, 1990).

In this situation these young scholars are desolated, alienated and exiled in the society.

### 3.1.2 War

To take control of resources of the world and to introduce their policies all over the world, capitalist forces started colonizing the rest of the world. Trade and movements of enlightenment were two amongst many other strategies that the colonizers used. Having known the real motives behind the seemingly

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vainglorious slogans of civilizing the barbarians, the natives, if ever, started any resistance, the colonizers waged war against the *rebels* to bring them under control. Capitalist forces, be they in the form of British Imperialists, French Colonizers or American Neo-colonizers, brought about huge devastation through wars. Capitalist imperialism is so advanced in science, technology and in war weaponry that it has no parallel. Large scale mass Killing in Africa, Asia (Sub continent, Gulf War) and war against terrorism is the result of these harmful weapons. War brings destruction to war waging country as well as to the country it is waged against. Marxists all over the world oppose war because of the destruction it causes to humanity.

Allen Ginsberg is against all types of war. Not only he actively participated in the protests against Vietnam War, but he tried to save the humanity in the expected atomic war during cold war period. Ginsberg spread his anti- war belief during the fear and tension of the cold war period through *Howl*. *Howl* fought for enlightenment from the war and a hope for an end to all forms of it.

One important feature of Beat Movement was its hostility to war. Beat writers, for the most part, share the same antiwar feelings. They are typically against all sorts of armed conflict and also the oppression that war causes everyone. Ginsberg became a very familiar face at protests against Vietnam War. Beat writers protested their country's excess on front lines. They were not only against war itself, they were against war against humanity.

Large scale destruction of human and other resources was the result of the Second World War. Millions of people lost their lives. The end of the war did not bring any comfort to the people of the world either. It, on the other hand, caused cleavage between USSR led by social philosophy of Karl Marx and USA influenced by Capitalism. After the war, tension between these two blocks increased so much that the world was at the point of occurrence of World War-III. The masses of the world suffered much during cold war. During the period, arms manufacturing industry was in full swing. 'The scholars of war' promulgated the idea of this arm race and ultimately the people of the world in general and America and Russia in particular suffered. The tension between USSR and USA held everybody in terror. Ginsberg has pointed out this in an interview. To Ginsberg, America was one of the main Judases of the contemporary world. Ginsberg considered America and socialist countries of the world as mirror images of each other that were bent on world destruction. To promote peace and stop war in Vietnam, Ginsberg participated in the marches against war.

The government and bureaucracy created threat of Russia in the mind of the people of America to legitimize war preparations and asserted that America did not intend to start war. It was Russians and Chinese that forced them to do so. In his poem *America* Ginsberg has ironically pointed out this.

America you don't really want to go to war.  
 America it's them bad Russians.  
 Them Russians them Russians and them Chinamen. And them  
 Russians. (*America*, line 77-80)

The threat to be eaten up by Russia was a stimulating factor in the speedy preparation of costly war equipments after the World War – II. It was but to justify the huge war expenditure against which the public was very critical. Ginsberg has ironically stated this situation in his poem *America*.

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. (*America*, line 81-84)

During the war, young people were recruited to army against their will. Their relatives suffered from troubles. The army men suffered in the battlefields while their dear ones in their homes. Ginsberg has portrayed this in part-II of his poem *Howl*.

Children screaming under the stair ways! Boys sobbing in armies!  
Old men weeping in the parks! (*Howl*, line 225-226))

To socialists and Marxists, war against terrorism that the Capitalist Imperialism has started as a reaction to the 9/11 incidence, is but an effort to safeguard its interests and to counter all endeavors against capitalism. Critically viewing the hectic efforts of the then Bush Government for a worldwide war, a document published by the Executive of Socialist Alternative, the US section of CWI, in Oct, 2001 indicates:

The present course of Bush administration is a full-fledged, imperialist, military-political-economic offensive to restore the Empire's shattered prestige and invulnerability. They are preparing the ground to extend that offensive to all present and future challenges to imperialism and capitalism from workers, peasants and youth, the anti-capitalist movement, Labor and the left, domestically and abroad. (*Three Fronts of Bush War*, 2001)

Like before, socialists tried to save humanity from war and they protested it.

### 3.1.3 Oppressions of System and Authorities

The 'angelheaded hipsters' of *Howl* are in a quest for spiritualism and individualism. They are looking for a new set of values as the present system does not correspond to their visions and ideas. Their going against the norms of the social values and the system is not tolerated and thus they are tormented.

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving  
hysterical naked, (*Howl*, line 1-2)

The reference is to Ginsberg's mother Naomi Ginsberg and his friend Carl Solomon who were convicted by the system. They both died in psychiatric institutions.

The authorities in power intended to maintain status quo and thus any effort to destabilize the system was not tolerated. Socialists or anti-capitalist workers were maltreated. In his poem *America*, Ginsberg has expressed this:

America free Tom Mooney  
America save the Spanish Loyalists.  
America Sacco & Vanzetti must not die  
America I am the Scottsboro boys. (America, line 66-69)

An American political activist and labour leader, real name of Tom Mooney was Thomas Joseph (1882-1942). Alongwith Warren K. Billing, Tom Mooney was persecuted of the famous San Francisco Preparedness Day Bombing of 1916. Many believed that Mooney was convicted unjustifiably of the crime he did not commit. He remained in the prison for 22 years. In 1939, after worldwide agitation for his release, Mooney was pardoned.

Spanish Loyalists is a reference to the prisoners of Spanish civil war fought from 1935 to 1939 between army of the state called Loyalists and those of Nationalists who fought under the leadership of General Francisco Franco. Nationalists, aided by Italian military troops and aerial weaponry alongwith German technical staff of war, eventually gained victory over the Loyalists. After the war, many of Loyalists were penalized through military courts for killing nationalists. The most notorious of the trials was that of Julian Besteiro. A socialist leader and president of Cortes, Besteiro had been a professor of Philosophy in Madrid University in 1931. On the charge of teaching doctrines that caused disorder and rebellion among the masses, death penalty was demanded in his case. He was, however, given 30 years imprisonment.

Sacco-Vanzetti Case, a controversial murder case in Massachusetts that lasted from 1920 to 1927. Nicola Sacco, a shoe worker and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, a fish peddler were two Italian immigrants in America. In April 1920, they both were

charged by the state with the murders of a paymaster and a guard and the theft of more than \$15,000 from a shoe factory in South Braintree, Massachusetts. The trial was conducted in Dedham. On the basis of inadequate evidences, contradictory testimony from witnesses and biased attitude of Judge Webster Thayer, verdict of guilty was pronounced against the accused. This caused worldwide protest from radicals, socialists and intellectuals who claimed that the judgment was given only because the two were immigrants and outspoken anarchists. New trial based on fair proceedings was demanded in protest rallies but this demand was not given any consideration and both the accused were electrocuted in August 23, 1927. Later, Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts in 1977 proclaimed that Sacco and Vanzetti were convicted wrongly on the basis of faulty trial. He, later on, cleared their names.

Scottsboro boys is a reference to arrest and then persecution of nine blacks on the charge of raping two white girls, in Scottsboro, Alabama in 1931. What many thought insufficient proof that consisted evidence of two girls, one out of the two eventually withdrew, eight out of nine accused were sentenced to death. The ninth one, a boy of mere 13 years, was given life imprisonment. The intellectuals and advocates considered the verdict given on radical bias. Many organizations all over the world supported the Scottsboro boys and their case got worldwide recognition. Through trials, during which US Supreme Court declared mistrials, five of the accused were declared innocent. The remaining four received long imprisonment. All, except Patterson, were pardoned in 1946.

Whenever the angelheaded hipsters of *Howl* happened to protest this tyrant attitude of the authorities, they were either dispersed through violence or arrested.

who crashed through their minds in jail waiting for impossible criminals  
with golden heads and the charm of reality in their hearts who sang  
sweet blues to Alcatraz, ( *Howl*, line 169-170)

Ginsberg himself narrates the story of one of such protests.

So the folks who don't have that historical memory should remember that very important thing: the sabotage of the Government during the political conventions, during the large be-ins, during the anti-war marches, the deliberate sabotage of the left, which was more extensive than just on the street: it was like street manipulations to discredit and make misinformation campaigns about them. ( *An Interview With Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96*)

Fair proceedings and justice was not provided to them.

who demanded sanity trials accusing the radio of hypnotism & were left  
with their insanity & their hands & a hung jury, ( *Howl*, line 176-177).

Ginsberg, while depicting the restrictive cold war atmosphere of fifties remarked.

So many, many seeds of Karmic horror: mass death, mass murder, were planted in those years, including very consciously for me. ( *An Interview With Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96*)

Political supremacy in the affairs of the world is one of the major aims of capitalist imperialism. Overthrowing the local governments either through war or

through political treacheries and establishment of governments of their own or their perpetrators were and even now are common means.

You had invasion of political world in the Middle East, in Central America and Africa, I presume and in Asia, again with secret police"... (An interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96)

Allen Ginsberg, an activist for freedom and liberty as he was throughout his life, wrote against as well as actively opposed capitalist plan of invasion both direct and indirect. He openly spoke against American policy of subverting political governments in other countries. American government tried to crush Communism everywhere it tried to emerge.

And I remember that year (i.e. 1953), very vividly, that Mosaddeq was overthrown in Iran, in Persia, because it was suspected that he might be neutral, or left, though he wasn't but he really wanted to nationalize the oilfields, which the Shah did later anyway. And I remember CIA overthrew Mosaddeq and he wept in court, and we've had Karmic troubles and war troubles with Iran ever since. That was the seed of all the Middle East catastrophe we're facing now. (An Interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96)

In the same year, the same calamity befell upon the people of Guatemala when the government of politically elected leader Arbenz was overthrown for the interests of the blue eyed party United Fruits. This was followed by three to four decades of persecution of the Guatemalan people with the death of thousands of them. The American government funded wars in different areas of the world but when her purpose was served, she withdrew aid and the partisan was to arrange the expenses at its own end. Ginsberg remarked this is an interview.



Now the Americans had been sending France \$40 million a year to pursue that war (in Indochina), and then the Americans cut off the funds, so the French didn't have funds, But as Bernard Fall points out, and many others General Salan and others maintained the war through the proceeds of opium sales in Chelan, the Chinese section of Saigon, and the war was funded by them. (An Interview With Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96).

In those days every natural man was considered a threat to the society and the system even 'Walt Whitman was considered a jerk, and William Carlos Williams was considered a jerk'.

The same held good for art and literature. Literature against Capitalism was not tolerated and the artists, poets or writers having communist bent of mind were convicted and their literature or work of art was seized by the authorities. It happened with Ginsberg himself when his poem *Howl* was banned by the authorities and he was forced to appear before the court. He was expelled from the Columbia University on the charge of obscene poetry alongwith other reasons:

who were expelled from the academies for crazy & publishing obscene  
odes on the windows of the skull, (*Howl*, line 14 -15)

In the name of obscenity, literature by different writers was banned. It contained anti-imperialist and antiestablishment themes. Ginsberg expressed the situation while elaborating his cold war experience.

And so there was censorship, particularly censorship of literature towards.... It was not like unconsciously or inadvertently, the things that were censored were the anti-war anti -macho, anti-imperial texts, whether the beginnings of Burroughs's *Naked Lunch* in the Fifties, Kerouac's *Vision of Cody*, which could not be printed in those days, lady Chatterley's *Lover*, Henry Miller. So we had D.H Lawrence banned Catullus banned.

(An Interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96)

The oppression was extended to students association as well. There were subversion of student activity and a blanketing of student protest. The rebellions and demonstrations against status quo in early sixties were suppressed by CIA.

Like all other institutions in the society, educational establishment also became a tool to promote the policies of the government and to perpetuate a system of oppression that led to war. Expressing the problems of wasted talent Ginsberg describes these 'best minds'.

who passed through universities with radiant cool eyes hallucinating,  
Arkansas and Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war,  
(Howl, line 12 -13)

Describing the then situation, Levertov remarked:

The educational establishment is thus condemned as simply perpetuating the mainstream philosophies and sexual morality that underpin Ginsberg's observation of a distorted American dream. The reference to Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war states directly that academies are perpetuating a system of oppression and subservience to a set of ideals that will inevitably lead to war. (Levertov)

The press was influenced by the authorities in power. What the government tried to do, it was projected through press. The press published news that bore no truth especially news about different leaders who, to the authorities, were a threat to the system. The journalists who reported faithfully what they saw in the war were criticized by the authorities. Ginsberg remarked it in an interview while describing the position in Saigon War when he met with American journalists present there to report the war news. He, then, got the real idea about the situation of war.

They (all the journalists in Saigon reporting for America) said that war could not be won. There was no light at the end of the tunnel. (An Interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96)

But their reports and views about war were twisted into something that reflected a better and encouraging position of War.

and Ambassador Loge's reports to the president were false, or hyper-optimistic and misleading. (An Interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96)

The press of the state on the other hand did not report truly what was being done in Iran and Guatemala by CIA.

But to go back to the fifties what was ..... it felt like in the fifties- given all these Karmic violent errors that the CIA was making in Iran, in Latin America, the real problem was that none of this was clearly reported in the press. (An Interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96).

On the other hand, the media in general, became the mouth piece of CIA and the government. It reported what was dictated by the authorities.

It was reported with apologies or with nationalization or with the accusation that Arbenz (the elected leader of Guatemala) was a communist or that Mosaddeq (the president of Iran) was a communist.

*(An Interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96)*

### 3.1.4 Condition of Common Man/ Class Difference

Human love, liberty and welfare of humanity at large are hallmarks of Ginsberg's life and poetry. Out of his love for lower classes, he intended to become laborer lawyer at an early time of his career. A study of his life and poetry depicts his love for humanity. In his poem *Howl*, Ginsberg has portrayed condition of common man in the capitalist society. *Howl* Portrays the dissatisfied young men of his age:

who walked all night with their shoes full of blood on the snowbanks  
docks waiting for a door in the East River to open to a room  
full of steam heat and opium, (*Howl, line 119-121*)

.....

who ate the lamb stew of the imagination or digested the crab at  
the muddy bottom of the rivers of Bowery, (*Howl, line 125-126*)

This describes condition of common people who were not provided jobs and they could find no resources to sustain their lives. The society neither could provide them employment nor resources of life.

hungover with heartless Tokay and horrors of Third Avenue iron  
 dreams & stumbled to unemployment offices,  
 (*Howl, line117-118*)

But failing to find anything to eat they ate rotten flesh.

who cooked rotten animals lung heart feet tail borsht & tortillas  
 dreaming of the pure vegetable kingdom,  
 who plunged themselves under meat trucks looking for an egg,  
 (*Howl, 135-137*)

Ginsberg criticizes economic exploitation of people in the capitalist society.

Ginsberg realizes that it is his democratic duty to show the country  
 that it strays from its democratic path. He will rescue the nation  
 from the edge of precipice, which will be an act of poetic  
 patriotism. Allen Ginsberg wants to recognize the working class,  
 vanquish fascism and change the world. (*Rabbani, 2008*)

In *Howl* one finds images of poverty depicting lower classes like 'negro streets'

who poverty and tatters and hollow-eyed and high sat up smoking  
 in the supernatural darkness of cold-water flats floating across the  
 tops of cities contemplating Jazz, (*Howl, line7-9*)

The American people struggled hard for freedom from the British Colonialism.  
 This independence meant liberty, equality and equal chances for everyone. But  
 after freedom, none of them was provided to them.

Visions! omens! hallucinations! miracles! ecstasies! gone down the American river!  
 Dreams! adorations! illuminations! religions! the whole boatload of sensitive bullshit. ( *Howl*, line 256-259 )

The extract reflects that visions and dreams of common man did not come true. Howl offers a miserable study of the then American society through depiction of those who are neglected by the system. Negroes and hipsters that constitute main characters of the poem are culturally and economically oppressed minority. In his poem *America* Ginsberg has also represented troubles of common man.

America I've given you and now I'm nothing.  
 America two dollars and twentyseven cents January 17, 1956.  
 I can't stand my own mind. ( *America*, line 1-3 )

Ginsberg also condemns a race for economic prosperity neglecting human values. People who are left behind in this race have no footings and say in the society.

It's always telling me about responsibility. Businessmen are serious. Movie producers are serious. Every body's serious but me. ( *America*, line 47-48 )

Mercantile and business class earned profit at the cost of others. In the capitalist society, a particular class monopolizes the norms of trade leaving little chances for the ordinary people to earn their livelihood. Ginsberg narrated this fact in one of his interviews:

It's almost as W.E. Dubious, the great black philosopher, said that the problem was not merely race, but that people who were prosperous were willing to enjoy their prosperity at the expense of the pain, suffering and labor of other people. (An Interview with Allen Ginsberg 8/11/96).

### 3.1.5 Ethical Values

Ethical values, religious restraints and moral teachings become secondary things in a society that values worldly possessions. In these circumstances, matter not man becomes the focal point on which philosophy of life is based. This gives impetus to survival of the fittest notion to survive in the society which results in exploitation of the weaker by the stronger, inferior by superior and unprivileged by the privileged. All policies in such a society are formulated first to enhance and then to protect this exploitation. Ethical values of any kind, in these circumstances, have no appeal for people in such a society.

Living in the society dominated by Capitalism, Ginsberg reacted against this human degeneration. Beat Generation was a movement that rejected the then American values and advocated spiritual liberation. *Howl* has been declared as a lament over Americans too much devotion to wealth and power both as individual and as a nation. Ginsberg condemns this attitude where humanity loses its inviolability. A lust for power and wealth deprives the whole nation of any human loving ideology.

What sphinx of cement and aluminum bashed open their skulls and ate up their brains and imaginations? (*Howl*, line 222-223)

The questioning tone is significant to highlight lack of imagination and creativity in the society monopolized by industrialists. Ginsberg appears to provide answer to the question in the subsequent lines declaring Moloch as the sole entity responsible for human disintegration.

Moloch! Solitude! Filth! Ugliness! Ashcans and unobtainable dollars!  
Children screaming under the stairways! Boys sobbing in armies! Old  
men weeping in the parks!. (Howl, line 224-226)

This Moloch represents technocracy, as it mechanizes the human soul and human creativity. The emotions, feelings, random combinations of creative thoughts from human mind are taken away by technocracy and it makes the human race depend on technology and mechanized society. This extract reflects the truth of America. The Moloch is ruling American social life. It is ugly as it is turning the Americans hungry for dollars, leaving children homeless, forcing the young boys to join army for war purpose and making the old people lonely. Counterculture or Beat Movement was, thus, a protest against technocracy.

The prime strategy of technocracy is to level life down to a standard of so called living that technical expertise can cope with and then, on that false and exclusive basis, to claim an intimidating omni competence over us by its monopoly of experts. Technocracy's absorbent power is its capacity to provide satisfaction in a way, which generates submission and weakens the rationality of protest (*Rabbani, 2008*)



This Moloch or technocracy is deprived of any human consideration. This technocracy is god that requires human sacrifice. Though it may not kill human beings in a society physically, it may kill them mentally and spiritually.

Moloch! Moloch! Nightmare of Moloch! Moloch the loveless! Mental

Moloch! Moloch the heavy judge of men, (*Howl, line 227-228*)

.....  
Moloch whose mind is pure machinery! Moloch whose blood is running  
money!.....

(*Howl, line 233-234*)

Human values and human emotions fail to find any place in the society being run by technocrats.

Technocracy mechanizes the mind of human beings, makes them to run after money. It turns the people blind in mind, makes them wander through fog in the quest of finding nothingness. The society of technology and machines injects in human mind the fantasy but in reality it turns humans into sexless men. It brings nightmares turning people fanatical. (Rabbani, 2008)

### **3.1.6 Contempt for Talent / Wasted Talent.**

For talent to groom an environment is required in which freedom of thought, liberty to act and equal chances for progress are provided. In a system that is based on material possession and worldly gain, little chances for individuals are left to chisel their talent. Only those who kowtow the requirements of the system get success. Those who fail to adjust themselves to the needs of system, become

failure. In the society of status quo, those who do not respond positively to its needs are labelled as rebels and a threat to the established order. Beat Generation was basically a movement against the status quo. The young writers of America and Europe did not accept any established order and they demanded change. They were against any sort of exploitation and advocated freedom of expression and action.

Ginsberg's *Howl* is a description of the 'best minds' of his generation who were neglected by the society. The opening lines of the *Howl* narrate the story.

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked, (*Howl line1-2*)

The reference is to Ginsberg's mother Naomi Ginsberg. His mother, a paranoid schizophrenic, was an active member of the Communist Party of America. This mental illness might be partly because of her disease and partly because of the tyrannies inflicted by authorities in America on communist leaders and workers.

Like Ginsberg's mother, Carl Solomon also died in a psychiatric institute. He can be declared as a victim of the society. Ginsberg identifies him with his mother:

I'm with your in Rockland  
where you imitate the shade of my mother. (*Howl, line271-272*)

and

Carl Solomon! I'm with your in Rockland.  
Where you're madder than I am, (*Howl, line 267-268*)

The reference is to Ginsberg's commitment in Rockland psychiatric institute in Columbia where he first met Carl Solomon whom the poem is dedicated to. I'm with you in Rockland becomes the repeated phrase to indicate that it has become the general condition to institutionalize talented people. These minds are martyrs because they do not surrender to the callousness of the society. The treatment provided to these seekers did not prove helpful because it could not cure their madness rather it enhanced their insanity. Instead of giving these talented seekers freedom of expression and action that could cure them, they were, instead, given the treatment:

and who were given instead the concrete void of insulin metrasol  
electricity hydrotherapy psychotherapy occupational therapy  
pingpong and amnesia, (Howl, line 182-184)

Carl Solomon and Naomi Ginsberg, mother of Ginsberg, are two examples that signify the conditions of talented people in the malevolent society.

The piteous and brave cry of Solomon from the Rockland Mental hospital is the essence of the poem's statement; his is the Howl of anguished and desperate conviction. (Stephenson, 1990)

Apart from these two, *Howl* reveals conditions of other *mad people*. Part-1 of *Howl* is a description of the working of the minds of *mad generation*. They may not be mad in real sense but system declares them insane because they do not conform to the status quo. Ginsberg is, thus, a witness to the destruction of the best minds of his generation by madness.

He is writing, we'll remember, of his friends, whose varied failures to adjust to cold war social norms (and whose amped-up ambitions to discover new norms) had seen them jailed, institutionalized and otherwise humbled by folks in authority who seemed just as whacked. (Kirn, 2006)

These young people had talent and worth but they were not accommodated partly because of their ideas so fatal to the system and partly because of their not accepting the system.

who passed through universities with radiant cool eyes hallucinating  
Arkansas and Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war (*Howl, line 12-13*)

The scholars of war did not accept any idea that may challenge their views about war. The rebellious fellows tried to promote freedom of thought which could not be granted and as a result, they were expelled from the academies.

who were expelled from the academies for crazy & publishing obscene odes on the  
windows of the skull, (*Howl, line 14-15*)

The reference is to Ginsberg's expulsion from Columbia University. These angelheaded hipsters, after having been neglected by the system, are in a miserable state. To get rid of the mental torture they involve themselves in the activities like drinking, drugs, sex and balls.

with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares, alcohol and cock and endless  
balls, (*Howl, 22-23*)

*Howl* is a document of sufferings of talent that was wasted in the society where only those who surrender to its requirements get prominent place and success. Anyone defying the status quo will be persecuted how genius he may be.

### 3.1.7 Unfulfilled Dreams and Promises

The Americans struggled hard for freedom from British Colonialism. They gathered at one platform to free their country from foreign rule to live a life free from oppression, having all necessities of life and securing future of their forthcoming generations. All agreed on a manifesto called Declaration of Independence. This Declaration of Independence of 1776 states that:

*All men are created equal.....endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights.....life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*

The Collins English Dictionary defines the American Dream as:

The notion that the American social, economic and political system makes success possible for every individual (Collins, 1985 'American Dream')

To Beat writers and especially to Ginsberg, America deviated from this declaration resulting in distortion of American Dream. In *Howl*, Ginsberg has pointed out this to highlight that negroes, black and resourceless are being neglected in the society controlled by capitalist forces. Denise Levertov analyzes thus:

The best minds of Ginsberg's generation are starving hysterical naked. They are burning for ancient heavenly, connection. They are floating across the tops of cities contemplating Jazz as a mystic experience. They are naked to symbolize the rejection of sexual oppression. Nudity and innocence are associated, giving the beatific, inherent in the Beat's spirituality, a sexual and homo sexual context. In this way, Ginsberg identifies with the dissatisfied youth of America and the distortion of the American Dream. (Levertov, 2007)

Negros and common people suffer much. They gave sacrifice but in return, they did not get what was promised.

America I've given you all and now I'm nothing.  
 America two dollars and twentyseven cents January 17, 1956.  
 I can't stand my own mind. (*America*, line 1-3 )

The condition of hipsters in *Howl* is depicted in these words,

who cooked rotten animals lung heart feet tail borsht & tortillas dreaming of the  
 pure vegetable kingdom,  
 who plunged themselves under meat trucks looking for an egg,  
 (*Howl*, line 135-137)

Devise Levertov has highlighted the conditions of oppressed and negroes.

In *Howl*, Ginsberg offers a bleak observation of contemporary American Society and the illusiveness of the American Dream. He does so by highlighting the plight of those who cannot aspire to it. Negroes are symbolic of a culturally and socially oppressed minority, like hipsters. (Levertov, 2007)

Ginsberg uses Neal Cassady, one of his friends, as a representative of Beat Generation. Ginsberg refers to Cassady obliquely.

N.C. *secret hero of these poems.....*  
(*Howl, line 109*)

Neal Cassidy lives a life of his own, not following the mainstream American culture. American dream became unobtainable. The hipsters including Cassady walk here and there to find American Dream but they fail to find it.

hungover with heartless Tokay and horrors of Third Avenue iron  
dreams & stumbled to unemployment offices. (*Howl line 117-118*)

Denise Levertov highlights this:

The dreams of Americans, Cassady's especially, are no more than moving pictures that can become the nightmare of unemployment in a big city. The dreams within which Cassady shifts, and to Ginsberg, as a hero, are the only way that Cassady will experience the American dream. (Levertov, 2007)

In part two of *Howl* there is a direct reference to dreams, which also feature in part one. These references support the arguments that *Howl* is concerned with American Dream. Towards the end of part two which links America to Moloch, the poem tells :

Visions! omens! hallucinations! miracles! ecstasies! gone down the American  
river!  
Dreams! adorations! illuminations! religions! the whole boatload of sensitive  
bullshit. (*Howl, line 256-259*)

The extract highlights that visions and dreams of American people ended in nightmare. Like American Dream, they remained unfulfilled and as a result, the American people represented by angelheaded hipsters, became dissatisfied with the whole system. They did not follow what was imposed on them and thus they showed their abhorrence for the mainstream American culture. They started self medication to liberate themselves from all this:

dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an  
angry fix, ( *Howl*, line line3-4 )

Ginsberg believed that the American government backed out of the promise of freedom, liberty and prosperity. To Ginsberg the wasted talented signifies distortion of American dream.

Ginsberg identifies with the disaffected youth of America and the distortion of the America Dream. In *Howl* they are in search of drugs form which they will gain a new spiritual insight, rather than be condemned and committed as insane. They are also seeking treatment of their own through self-medication.  
(Levertov, 2007)

These hipsters suffer because of corruption of the American Dream.

angel-headed hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo  
in the machinery of night. ( *Howl*, line 5-6 )



Dense Levertov puts it:

For Ginsberg, they are “Beat” in the sense of crushed by the corruption of the American Dream and its products that emerged from the Second World War. They exist in dark, living at night.(Levertov, 2007)

The American Dream was corrupted and distorted by the Moloch of the society as pointed out in Part-II of the poem. In part-II Ginsberg pinpoints the harms done by this Moloch. He declares that mercantile class subverted the American Dream.

Moloch whose love is endless oil and stone! Moloch whose soul is electricity and banks!  
Moloch whose poverty is the specter of genius! ( *Howl, line 240-241* )

Denise Levertov highlights this in his essay:

Ginsberg in *Howl* condemns the way in which the American Dream has been subverted by the mercantile class, in the image of Moloch. He argues that American society suppresses the individual and cultural works that do not conform to an ideal as espoused by the mercantile class, through the mouths of elected officials like McCarthy. (Levertov, 2007)

Howl, in a sense, is a depiction of distorted American Dream.

### **3.1.8 Hopefulness**

Michael Delahoyde pinpoints the questions that a Marxist critic keeps in mind while critically analyzing a literary work. One of the tasks that he assigns to

Marxist literary critic is to find a utopian vision as proposed by the writer / poet in the work as a solution to the problems encountered in the work.

Keeping this in mind when one studies Ginsberg's *Howl* one finds a message of hope and good future is given by the poet if not utopian vision.

After describing destruction caused to the American society by Moloch in Part two of *Howl*, Ginsberg offers a cure for this social illness in Part four. He gives hope in *Footnote to Howl*. *Footnote to Howl* is actually another poem written by Ginsberg but it was added at the end of *Howl* after a friend of Ginsberg advised him to do so.

The world is holy! The soul is holy! The skin is holy! The nose is holy!

(*Howl*, line 322)

Gregory Stephenson points out in his essay:

The last section *Footnote to Howl*, actually a separate poem, offers a cure for the social illness represented by Moloch in part two. (Stephenson. 1990)

According to Ginsberg we are born free, in a state of natural ecstasy but we are overpowered by the mental Moloch and it snatches away our natural ecstasy.

To Gregory Stephenson, Ginsberg shows us a way to liberate ourselves from the clutches of this mental Moloch.

We can regain that celestial, ecstatic vision of life 'Heaven which exists and is everywhere about us' by emerging from the belly of Moloch the monster that has devoured us, who 'ate up....(our) brains and imagination'. We can wake up in Moloch. (Stephenson. 1990)

The poem *Howl* is dedicated to Solomon, a friend of Ginsberg who was a victim of psychiatric methods. In part three of *Howl* which is dedicated to Solomon, Ginsberg is hopeful. He pays tribute to Carl Solomon

I'm with you in Rockland  
where you will split the heavens of Long Island and resurrect your living human Jesus  
from the superhuman tomb (*Howl*, line 301-303)

To quote Stephenson:

The imagery of crucifixion (Cross in the void fascist national Golgotha) reemphasizes Ginsberg's view of the visionary as sacrificial redeemer. Such images culminate in the poet's hope that 'Solomon will split the heavens.....and resurrect your living human Jesus from the superhuman tomb', I understand this to mean that Solomon will discover internal messiah, liberate himself from Mental Moloch (Whose ear is smoking tomb) and attain spiritual rebirth. (Stephenson, 1990)

An overall analysis of the poem with reference to its parts will reveal that it starts from protest, pain and outrage attack (part-1) then the poet comments over the situation (part-II), afterwards the poet accepts all this when he sympathizes with Carl Solomon (Part-III) and finally the poem ends with a note of love and vision.

Stephenson says:

The movement of *Howl* (including Footnote to Howl) is from protest, pain, outrage attack, and lamentation to acceptance, affirmation love and vision...from alienation to communism. The poet descends into an underworld of darkness, suffering, and isolation and then ascends into spiritual knowledge blessedness, achieved vision, and a sense of union with the human community and with God. (Stephenson, 1990)

The poem points the way towards a new and better existence, chronicling the pilgrimage of the *Mad Generation* towards a reality that is timeless and placeless, holy and eternal.

Golam Rabbani writes:

Despite his sense of despair and his ingrained gloominess he (Ginsberg) wants to be cheerful, even joyful and to believe that utopia is possible. The task of the poet of democracy is not only or simply to speak well of the society or to simply praise the masses. Ginsberg realizes that it is his democratic duty to show the country that it strays from its democratic path. He will rescue the nation from the edge of precipice, which will be an act of poetic patriotism. (Rabbani, 2008)

Ginsberg struggled hard to free man from all sorts of oppressions throughout his life. He gained success in some of his plans but most of the time he was convicted, exiled and even jailed. In spite of all this, he was hopeful and optimist.

In an interview when Ginsberg was asked 'Do you feel hopeful'? He replied, 'I don't think hope or fear is important. I think the main thing is a continuous generous activity, exuberant activity, no matter what's happening. Even if the ship is sinking, you can relieve suffering in any situation. (Goddard)

## 3.2 Dissimilarities of themes

This section presents dissimilarities of themes discovered in the poetry of Allen Ginsberg while comparing with the themes of Usman's selected works.

### 3.2.1 Sexual References

Allen Ginsberg, because of social and cultural differences, indulged in certain activities like homosexuality. His openness about homosexuality is often considered his most significant and controversial contribution. Ginsberg was an early advocate of freedom for men who loved men. Peter Orlovsky was his life long companion and his spouse. He was first introduced to the experience through his friend Lucien Carr when Ginsberg was in Columbia University. This is perhaps the reason we find references of homosexual and heterosexual men frequently in his poetry. Ginsberg indirectly refers to Neal Cassady.

N.C. secret hero of these poems, cocksman and Adonis of Denver-  
joy to the memory of his innumerable lays of girls in empty lots &  
diner backyards, .....(*Howl, line 109-111*)

### 3.2.2 Spiritualism

Beat Generation was a movement against Americans' too much devotion to materialism. Beat writers and poets protested this mammon worshipping attitude

of society at the utter neglect of human values. Commenting upon the philosophies of Beat Generation, Ginsberg once said:

I would say the primary thing was a move towards spiritual liberation, not merely from Bourgeois' '50 quietism or Silent Generation, but from the last centuries of mechanization and homogenization of cultures, the mechanical assault on human nature and all nature culminating in the bomb.  
(Goddard, P-1)

As he was influenced by spiritualism, Ginsberg's *Howl* contains references of spiritualism.

angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection  
to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night,  
(*Howl*, line5-6)

The extract reflects that these young people, owing to much material inclination of the society, found nothing worth humane in the society. They were forced to look up to the age old belief when their connection with the heavens i.e. religious belief was firm.

The spiritual reference is obvious here. They (angelheaded hipsters) seek enlightenment. (Levertov, 2007)

These 'seekers' reject mainstream American culture so they are labelled as rebels. This attitude of the society leads to their insanity. These 'best minds' of Ginsberg's generation do not accept non-spiritual view of life. Their madness consists of their refusal to accept a non-spiritual view of the world, in their

'burning for ancient heavenly connection' in the civilization that has pronounced God dead. From his early life, Ginsberg developed interest in spiritualism. Ginsberg's spiritual journey began early on with his spontaneous visions and continued with an early trip to India. He, later in his life, was influenced so much that he joined different organizations promoting spiritualism. This spiritual yearning led him develop interest in Hinduism and Buddhism.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF USMAN'S *QALAMRAU* AND *KHUCH BACHAA LAE HAIN*

This chapter presents analysis of *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* by Akhtar Usman with a view to find out similarities and dissimilarities of themes.

#### 4.1 Similarities

Themes of identity crises, war, oppressions of authorities and system, condition of common man, ethical values, wasted talent, unfulfilled dreams and promises and hopefulness have been discussed in this section keeping in view the texts of *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain*.

##### 4.1.1 Identity Crises

The experience of British Rule in the subcontinent was bitter and painful for the masses of the subcontinent especially for Muslims. Old values and traditions were questioned and judged at the standards of British culture. The colonizers not only plundered and caused destruction to the local economy and wealth but they also put the local culture at stake. The inhabitants of the subcontinent, under these circumstances, were forced to undermine their culture. To establish superiority of their culture over the subject nation, the colonial imperialists tried to prove the



local culture as substandard, outdated and imperfect. Without this propaganda, they could not claim supremacy of their culture over the native culture. Then they introduced their culture. As it happens with the subjugated nation, this alien culture was taken with awe by the subject nation. Thus language, literature, art and music of the subjugated masses were influenced rather undermined in the name of modernism. Civilizing the other nations may be regarded as a noble cause that the Colonizers claimed to aim at to justify their colonizing the rest of the world but doing this at the cost of local culture is something worth denouncing.

The cultural attack was the worst set back the colonized suffered. The generation that came after the roots of British colonial rule were firm and established, had but little idea of their culture and civilization. They were brought up in an unfamiliar cultural background and did not have any idea of their own culture. Akhtar Usman has highlighted in these lines:

#### Transliteration

Mera maqam kahin aur tha pe lagta ha  
Kisi ne rau main kahin aur dhar dia ha mujhe.

#### Text

مرا مقام کہیں اور تھا ، پہ لگتا ہے  
کسی نے رو میں کہیں اور دھر دیا ہے مجھے  
(Usman, 2007 P-15)

#### Translation

My place was somewhere else but it seems that  
Someone has misplaced me in the going.

Akhtar Usman's generation was misplaced mindfully by *someone*. Music, literature and art of the great artists which constitute the cultural make up of any

nation were either forgotten by the young generation or they were forced to ignore their ancestors in the name of modernism. Under dominion of capitalist epoch, efforts are also made for a homogenized culture by mixing eastern and western cultural ingredients. This effort, apparently aims at winning favors of the subject masses but in its real sense it is an endeavor to merge the culture of the subject nation. Akhtar Usman has pointed out this:

For instance, the mystic poetry of Mian Muhammad Bukhsh, Waris Shah, Shah Husain, Bhulley Shah, Sultan Bahoo and Khawja Farid is our cultural heritage sung in a ritual mode. This cultural rhythm is our mark but it is regrettably stated that due to these tunes (Greek to us) composed by western Fuddy-duddies, we are hardly left with even the slightest impression on our minds. The disharmonized compositions have marred and minced the essence of poetry and message, ruining even Iqbal and Rumi's purple works. (Usman, 2006)

The British Colonizers took away with them cultural heritage in the form of great books of the ancestors of Usman and tried to keep the young generation of the colonized away from their heritage and identity. Akhtar Usman has described the situation in these lines.

#### Transliteration

Main apni pehchan bhi ajaib gahron main dekhoon  
Aadoo ke ghar main mere hawalay paray hooway hain.

#### Text

میں اپنی پہچان بھی عجائب گھروں میں دیکھوں  
عدو کے گھر میں مرے حوالے پڑے ہوئے ہیں

(Usman 2007, page-88)

#### Translation

Should I now look for my identity in the museum?

For my references are lying in my foe's home.

In this situation, the young generation is forced to look up to the colonial masters to trace its identity. These masters tell distorted history that suits their plans. The British Imperialism has thus snatched identity from the subjugate nation that is Muslims. The new generation in this situation, finds itself without a cultural identity of its own. Akhtar Usman, like *platonic conversationalists* of *Howl*, is looking for his identity.

#### Transliteration

Kisi bhi khitay mein paai na apni booy khameer  
Meray wojoood ki mitti hai kin tagharon mein

#### Text

کسی بھی نخلے میں پائی نہ اپنی بوئے خمیر  
مرے وجود کی مٹی ہے کن تغاروں میں

(Usman, 2007 P-31)

#### Translation

In no region did I find the smell of my clay  
I wonder in which lime pit the earth of my existence lay?

#### 4.1.2 War

Akhtar Usman has indirectly depicted devastations of war both in his poetry and essays. The masses of the sub-continent suffered local as well as foreign invasion. Bilateral battles between the heirs of king for the sake of throne were common. Meanwhile British Imperialists invaded the sub-continent. The local government, with its outdated weapons, could not withstand sophisticated weaponry and advanced war technology possessed by the British and the local were doomed to face defeat. Akhtar Usman has pointed out this in one of his essays.

The British colonialism, having learnt colonial gimmicks from its progenitor, France, invaded several parts of the world. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Indian land experienced the pain of alien hooves. Contrary to the Mughal Empire, Victorians were gifted with modern technology. Guised as traders, the English monopolized more or less all the norms of trade. The native empire had already endured the endless chain of foreign attacks by the intruders of its own belief so the white invasion was taken lightly. (Usman.2006)

Whether it is local or foreign invasion, children are the most effected part of the population. Men are killed in the war, women are abducted and children are made slaves.

#### Transliteration

#### Text

Naiay salaar se Zindan main Bachay poochtay hain

نئے سالار سے زنداں میں بچے پوچھتے ہیں

Hamray shehar ke fateh hamara kia banay ga.

ہمارے شہر کے فاتح ہمارا کیا بنے گا!

(Usman, 2007 P-59)

#### Translation

Children in the prison, enquire their new lord,

“What will, o our conqueror, be our lot?”

Children are future of any generation. This future is captivated and trained according to the plans of imperialists that aim at obliterating the entire culture of the colonized. This has everlasting influence on the culture of the subjugated nation. Future generations find themselves devoid of a unified culture and suffer from identity crises. Akhtar Usman highlights this:

## Transliteration

Hamara ghar to pehlay hi wahan garwi para tha  
 Hamaray zehan bhi us ke hawaalay ho gaiay hain

## Text

ہمارا گھر تو پہلے ہی وہاں گروی پڑا تھا  
 ہمارے ذہن بھی اس کے حوالے ہو گئے ہیں

(Usman, 2007 P-45)

## Translation

Our home already he had in mortgage

Our minds he, too, captured and tamed.

Akhtar Usman has highlighted this:

Under the unending duress, the age-old inhabitation was doomed to watch the black comedy of its own errors. They had to go through the inevitable crises of identity and the aliens ironically defaced their values and effaced their normality.( Usman, 2006).

#### 4.1.3 Oppressions of Authorities and System

Belonging to a nation that has been and, in a sense, still, is a colony of (neo)colonial powers, Akhtar Usman has depicted tyrannies of system and authorities in his poetry and essays on socio- political and economic issues.

Instead of depicting oppression and political tyranny directly, Akhtar Usman has endeavored to make us experience the feelings that are the result of this oppression. (Amjad, 1992)

Zia regime that lasted for more than a decade (1977-1988) was more ruthless for Communism than any other era in Pakistan. Freedom of expression and respect

for human rights were no more observed. Opponents were convicted and persecuted. Follow the ruler was the order of the day.

Akhtar Usman has pointed out:-

| Transliteration   | Text  |
|---|---|
| Hum loag to wabasta-e-yak tar-e-nazar thay<br>Maaloom nahin iss ke siwa bhi koi lau thi | ہم لوگ تو وابستہء یک تارِ نظر تھے<br>معلوم نہیں اس کے سوا بھی کوئی کو تھی |
|   | (Usman, 2007 P-61)  |

#### Translation

We were attached to the light of one eye only  
And didn't know whether there was any other source of light.

This depicts the picture of the then prevailing circumstances. This rule that is, Martial law, snatched basic rights of the people. Willingly or unwillingly people had to follow the orders of the ruler. Ideas for innovation, change and betterment of people had no value. Usman comments over the situation in these lines:

| Transliteration   | Text   |
|---|--|
| Yahan ek umr din pe raat ka saya raha ha<br>Yahan ke loag iss doraan kaalay ho gaey hain. | یہاں اک عمر دن پہ رات کا سایہ رہا ہے<br>یہاں کے لوگ اس دوران کالے ہو گئے ہیں |
|   | (Usman, 1993 P-23)   |

#### Translation

The night here has cast its shadow for a long while  
For the people of this land have turned black in the meanwhile.

This explains the after effects of martial laws that lasted for a long period of time in Usman's society and left people dumb. Their faculties and talent could not groom. People were helpless against the tyrant. Belief in human potential was shaken and the standard changed.

The poetry of Akhtar Usman is a lamentation of the present era. Akhtar is well aware that the present system and its regulations have distorted our values and truth about life. Hypocrisy, roguery and pretence have disfigured bright and pretty face of life. Corruption of people in power has destroyed the whole system. (Jaafri, 2001)

The system under control of corrupt monarchs protects the interests of these people and anyone out of the system has no place in the society. The poor and resourceless have no chance to make progress. On the other hand only those are awarded who follow the orders of the authorities without questioning them. Values have changed altogether. Akhtar Usman has put it: -

#### Transliteration

Hamaray samnay pasti bulandi ho rahi hai  
Bhajokon ki yahan dastaar bandi ho rahi hai

#### Text

ہمارے سامنے پستی بلند ہو رہی ہے  
بجوکوں کی یہاں دستار بندی ہو رہی ہے

(Usman, 1993 P-48)

#### Translation

To loftiness, meanness is raised  
Crowned are worthless and praised.

Though democratically elected they may be, the rulers of Usman's society continue the policies of their predecessors that is dictators and for the masses only the faces change and the system remains unaltered. When one particular ruler fails to come up to the expectations of his neo-colonial masters, he is removed and another one willing to win the favors of patronizing masters is nominated. Any hope attached with the new ruler by the masses ends in utter disappointment, as he proves more hostile as compared to his forerunners. So the masses have to under go constant sufferings. In this situation Akhtar Usman's poetry is a reflection of the current political scenario of the people of Pakistan.

Current social and political scenario is the base of Akhtar Usman's modern sensibility. He is an ideologically committed poet. His poetry reflects tyrannies of political oppression of Pakistan and the third world. (Amjad, 1992)

These rulers are mere puppets to implement the agenda of their colonial masters and to suppress the people. They are absolute authority in the country they rule. They have laws for them that protect them. The court gives verdict in their favor.

These worthless rulers have got so much strength with the aid of their patronizing masters that the whole system runs with their consent. Their liking and disliking have become the law. The wealth and resources are confined to a restricted elite class and the rest are starving. Opportunities are available for ruling class and public is finding hard to earn bread. (Jaafri, 2001)

These rulers lack the political will to implement their own policies and to free their people and country from the colonial masters. Instead of fashioning their own independent policies, they follow instructions of foreign masters.



## Transliteration

## Text

Hamara ghar to pehlay hi wahan garwi para tha

ہمارا گھر تو پہلے ہی وہاں گروی پڑا تھا

Hamray zehan bhi us ke hawaalay ho gaiay hain

ہمارے ذہن بھی اس کے حوالے ہو گئے ہیں

(Usman, 2007 P-45)

## Translation

Our home already he had in mortgage

Our minds he, too, captured and tamed.

Akhtar Usman holds policy makers responsible for all this. The political system has collapsed. Because of intrigues, democratic institutions have deteriorated. This has resulted in failure of political governments. Having no policy of its own, the political system of Usman's society runs with the consent of neocolonial masters. It is regretted to say that these rulers have started thinking what their masters wish them to think. These neo-colonial masters intentionally keep the economy of subject nations under check. Ultimately, the rulers of neo-colonized nation look up to their masters for economic aid without which they may not be able to run the affairs of the states. In return to this aid, they control all policies of the subjugated nation. Akhtar Usman has put it in these lines:

## Transliteration

## Text

Meri zameen yaqeenan kahin pe garvi pari ha

میری زمین یقیناً کہیں پہ گروی پڑی ہے

Yunhi to koi kisi ko madad nahin deta.

یونہی تو کوئی کسی کو مدد نہیں دیتا

(Usman, 1993 P-54)

### Translation

My land surely rests in pawn with someone

As none gives aid without reasons.

All the visits of these rulers to other countries aim at taking more loans.

### Transliteration

Hum se hi aam hooi sanat-e-darwiza gari

Hum ne poshak-e-safarat mein sawaali bhajay.

### Text

ہم سے ہی عام ہوئی صنعتِ دروازہ گری  
ہم نے پوشاکِ سفارت میں سوالی بھیجے

(Usman, 2007 P-137)

### Translation

Begging we promoted in the world

We sent beggars in the guise of ambassadors.

Rasheed Amjad points out this,

One of the basic drawbacks of this political system is to get loan at the cost of our nation, its ego and honor. Akhtar Usman has metaphorically depicted torture of national ego in his poetry (Amjad, 1992)

This approach of the rulers has blotted their identity and honor and they have turned into civilized beggars.

The British Colonizers came to the sub-continent as traders. After they have acquired power, they created separation among the masses. To fulfill their

purpose and to execute their policies effectively, the British colonizers created a sub-ordinate class. This class was chosen from feudal lords, industrialists and bureaucrats. Usman has unveiled this in these lines.

Entwined with the colonialism, capitalism created alienation among the classes a wide cleavage between the haves and have-nots or to be more true between the human-wrongs and rights. Since such wrongs are always vindicated from any stigma and the rights suffer severe blows so there was no any foolish question of collective values that could withstand any willful forfeiture. Consequently, feudal, the industrialists and bureaucrats were baited and patronized for utilitarianism only needed these ingredients and for the rest 'Only on the sweat of thy brow, thou shall eat thy bread' (Bible). (Usman, 2006)

The British Imperialists took away not only the material wealth but cultural wealth in the forms of invaluable books of great writers and poets. All these efforts, to Usman, were to force the younger generation to look up to the western critics to understand its great classicists and accept their interpretation of these classicists. He hinted the same in these lines:

Once we were alive (we had our own identity and culture). We did not need Brown, Gilchrist, Garcia, Distaste and many others to understand our own cultural text. Who is Nicholson to teach us Arabic history and Iqbal? But it is pity that we are forced to turn to Fitzgerald to understand Khayyam, Titus Burkhart for Ibn-ul-Araby and Anne Meri Schimall for Hafiz and Rumi.  
(Malik & Amir 1999)

Akhtar Usman endeavors to find out historical continuity and criticizes those who try to deter his way.

A continuity of tradition in Akhtar Usman is not confined to artistic references but it is present with its cultural understanding. He intends to regain his historical sense. He not only expresses his grief and disappointment but also condemns those elements that hinder his way in finding out this continuity.

(Amjad, 1992)

Usman has pointed out these elements that check his way in tracing out his identity.

#### Transliteration

Meray urooj ki taareekh kia murattab ho  
Koi challawa meri dastaan badalta ha.

#### Text

میرے عروج کی تاریخ کیا مرتب ہو  
کوئی چھلاوہ میری داستان بدلتا ہے

(Usman, 1993 P-39)

#### Translation

History of my ascension can't be recorded

An ignis fatuus alters the tale.

The story is willfully altered by the colonial masters and Usman perceives it well.

The artistic mastery with which British Colonial oppression and its efforts to disfigure Islamic thought has been narrated, is a part of our history. Akhtar Usman has converted all these endeavors of British Colonialism into questions that are still before us.

(Amjad, 1992)

The British Colonizers, with the aid of their trained scholars, tried to prove that the purple works of classicists like Ghalib, Rumi, Hafiz, and Iqbal had no appeal for the people of current age and their works do not withstand modern critique and modern sensibility. Akhtar Usman pointed out this in one of his essays.

Poaching on our lands, the white invaders defaced our literary values and attacked our classical poetry, labeling it as an unnatural stuff. (Usman, 2006)

On the other hand, these forces, aided by their well trained intellectuals started introducing new terminology and methods of literary criticism to support Capitalism and to suppress any movement against this system. As it happens to a subject nation, the terminology and methodology was adopted by literary critics and intellectuals of the sub-continent without knowing real purpose behind this endeavor. Akhtar Usman highlighted this:

These pseudo intellectuals barely know that the western intellectuals are deliberately propounding felicitous phrases like liberalism, structuralism, modernism, construction, globalization, free market and post modernism. (Usman, 2006)

He further elaborates:

It is something nerve racking that Altaf Hussain Hali and Muhammad Hussain Azad helped them (white invaders) out in mauling their polymath predecessors. Instead of paving new ways the modern Urdu critics suffered a relapse and started borrowing everything, even methodology, from the west. (Usman, 2006)

To Usman, methodology introduced and propagated by the western intellectuals, is but to counter any effort against Capitalism on literary and intellectual fronts.

He states in one of his essays:

The post modernism is individual based attitude denying centrality / centeredness and giving impetus to decentralization. Structuralism, being its essential element, carries the readers away

from the pivotal point. Although the basic drive of a writer in any poem, essay or book is to conduct the consensus. The uniformity of opinion, so fatal to capitalism, is obnoxious to capitalists lest the people should challenge its inhuman gimmicks. The discussions of constructions and deconstructions on the one hand and the discourse on the other hand, on structuralism and post structuralism, actually, propagate the schemata of post modernism. (Usman, 2006)

The British Colonialism in the sub-continent was all encompassing. It affected every sphere of life. This colonial era left ineradicable marks on the memory of the masses. They were unable to think clearly after the colonialism was over.

Akhtar Usman has pointed out the same thing in these lines:

| Transliteration                               | Text                                   |
|---|--|
| Abhi zahn-o-nazar zangaar ke zair-e-asar hain | ابھی ذہن و نظر زنگار کے زیر اثر ہیں    |
| Koi pehloo nahin ha daikhnay ka sochnay ka.   | کوئی پہلو نہیں ہے سوچنے کا ، دیکھنے کا |

(Usman, 2007 P-93)

#### Translation

Sight and mind are quiescent at present

No way out to see and to think.

#### 4.1.4 Condition of Common Man/Class Difference

Influenced by Communism, Akhtar Usman believes in all sided human emancipation and he rejects any obstacle in the way. All his efforts and struggles are focussed on breaking shackles of the system that have entrapped humanity. Through his essays on socio-economic and political issues, he has tried to

highlight problems of common man under the domination of Capitalist Imperialism. His collection of verse *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* invite the attention of reader to socio economic and political conditions of the people of Pakistan and the third world.

### Transliteration

Yahaan aa kar bhi zor awar wohi hain  
Wohi qaabaz hooway amlaak par bhi.

### Text

یہاں آ کر بھی زور آور وہی ہیں  
وہی قابض ہوئے املاک پر بھی

(Usman, 2007 P-114)

### Translation

Here too they got the power  
Here too they usurped the estates

And also:

### Transliteration

Yahaan aa kar mila ha tohfa-e-khana badoshi  
Manaadi thi ke hum ghar baar waalay ho gaey hain.

### Text

یہاں آ کر ملا ہے تحفہ خانہ بدوشی  
مناوی تھی کہ ہم گھر بار والے ہو گئے ہیں

(Usman, 2007 P-45)

### Translation

Itinerant here too we are rewarded with  
It was proclaimed that we became landlord.

These two lines reflect the condition of common man after division of the sub-continent. The division of the sub-continent was promised to bring comfort,

peace, equality and chances for the downtrodden but all their hopes ended up in mirage. Feudal lords and bureaucrats took over after the era of British Imperialism was over. These local perpetrators proved more hostile to the masses as compared to their imperial masters. The poor were thrown into lurch.

The emergence of Pakistan tempted the downtrodden to heave their sighs of relief. Where there is idealism there is a tragedy. This is what I have learnt from the rituals to the reality.  
(Usman, 2006).

Syed Naseem Taqi Jaafri has analyzed this:

Under this rule (of worthless rulers) wealth is confined to a limited class and the poor are starving. Chances are restricted to one particular class and those who have no resources, have no chance to make progress in the life. (Jaafri, 2001)

*Noha* is a poem by Akhtar Usman written to commemorate the death of a progressive laborer Muhammad Shafique who died in a roadside accident.

#### Transliteration

#### Text

Phati topi purani pant pehnay phir naheen paltaa  
Wo jis ke haath, chehra aur kapray un ginat  
rangon ke dhabon se mozzayan thay  
Wo aa jata to behtar tha  
Ke us ke har brush kay baal jur kar jam gaey hain

پہنی ٹوپی، پرانی پینٹ پہنے پھر نہیں پلتا  
وہ جس کے ہاتھ، چہرہ اور کپڑے ان گنت رنگوں کے دھبوں سے مزین تھے  
وہ آ جاتا تو بہتر تھا، کہ اس کے ہر برش کے بال جو کر جم گئے ہیں

(Usman, 1993 P-176)



## Translation

Wearing shabby cap and tattered pant he never returned

His hands, face and clothes were blotted with

Countless spots of different color

Better if he had come

Because hair of his every brush have stuck together.

This indicates conditions of lower classes. Muhammad Shafique was educated from Russia. The society in which privileged class is exploiting the lower class, educated young men cannot get jobs worth their talent. They are forced to take ordinary jobs to earn their livelihood. To see all this Akhtar Usman gets tormented. Akhtar Usman's poetry is a reflection of deprivations and hopes of majority of the population. Therefore he harmonizes with the frequency of their longings and life that is melting away. He cries out in protest.

The advantages of all discoveries and inventions were confined to the upper class and the working class was thrown into the lurch. Now, the capitalist imperialism has clutched the working class to the extent that the working class finds it hard to breathe.

(Usman, 2006)

British colonizers, after having taken over the control of the sub-continent established their residences in cantonment areas. Those were, facility wise, in contrast to local population. One area of population having all amenities of life but the other had nothing worth mentioning facility. The British colonizers kept an unbridgeable distance between them and the local inhabitants. There was no question of mixing up with the indigenous population.

These colonizers could not rule over the native people without the aid of homegrown agents. The masses have neither access to their foreign lords nor to local rulers who took over after the British Colonizers finally left. The privileged class lost in luxuries and started enjoying blessings of unassailable rule having no idea whatsoever of the conditions and problems of the oppressed class.

#### Transliteration

Teri nighah ki nami mujh tak aae bhi kaisay  
Hawa ki saans kaheen darmyan sookhti ha.

#### Text

تری نگہ کی نمی مجھ تک آئے بھی کیسے!  
ہوا کی سانس کہیں درمیان سوکھتی ہے

(Usman, 2007 P-50)

#### Translation

How can reach me the moisture of your glance  
The breath of air pines away somewhere in between.

This class difference, deliberately created by the British imperialists to rule over the sub-continent without much trouble, was further strengthened by the local rulers after independence from the foreign rule.

In the name of enlightenment, the peaceful co-existence was sliced into factions that were further grafted into the religious, ethnic and language based classes. Entwined with the colonialism, the capitalism grafted alienation among the classes a wide cleavage between the haves and have-nots or to be more true between the human-wrongs and rights. (Usman, 2006)

#### 4.1.5 Ethical values

Usman's poetry is 'an elegy of the present era' (Jaafri) and depicts the picture of present society. His poetry reveals deprivations, miseries and compulsions of the poor and treacheries and tyrannies of the rulers. Ethical values are dying out in a system that values wealth and power. Social and moral teachings cannot gain acceptance in such a society.

#### Transliteration

Jadeed Ehd mein ulta ha irtaqaa ka safar  
Ajab nahin ha phir insaan janwar ban jae.

#### Text

جدید عہد میں الٹا ہے ارتقا کا سفر  
عجب نہیں ہے پھر انسان جانور بن جائے  
(Usman, 2007 P-54)

#### Translation

Reverse is the evolution of man in the modern era  
No wonder an ape if he turns into again.

A lust for material gain has deprived man from his humane qualities.

Akhtar Usman observes his cultural, political and social environment with open eyes and he concludes that worthless and false have taken over. Because of their wrong policies, apolitical attitude and immature thinking, they have flourished a system that has disfigured our political and social set up. Our values altered altogether. Worthless have got prominent places. Ignorant have become scholars; darkness has been named as light; noble men are finding hard to protect their dignity. The whole system has turned up side down. (Jaafri, 2001)

Much devotion to power and material has left little place for any other philosophy of life to flourish and to make its way. Devotion to spiritualism or any other ideology has weakened.

| Transliteration                                 | Text                                  |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Qareeb tar hai wo ehad-e-zian naseeb ke jab     | قریب تر ہے وہ عہد زیاں نصیب ، کہ جب   |
| Bashar basher na rehay aur khuda khuda na rehay | بشر ، بشر نہ رہے اور خدا ، خدا نہ رہے |
|   | (Usman, 2007 P-18)                    |

#### Translation

That age of ill-fate is quite at hand

When man may not remain a man and God not God.

Commitment to moral and religions teachings, that was once an important aspect of human life, is losing its hold and one does not know what this too much devotion to science and material gain will bring about.

To me, *Qalamrau* is a document of present era. On one hand it entails deprivations and groans of masses and treacheries, lustfulness and tyrannies of the rulers on the other hand.  
(Jaafri, 2001)

To provide all necessities of life and to guard rights of its inhabitants are basic principles on which a society is based. A capitalist society, on the other hand, may target its own people when its own interests are at stake.

## Transliteration

## Text

Waqt par jae to apnay khoon se bujhti hai payaas  
Bhook bar jae to apna maas bhi khata hoon main

وقت پر جائے تو اپنے خون سے بجھتی ہے پیاس  
بھوک بڑھ جائے تو اپنا ماس بھی کھاتا ہوں میں

(Usman, 2007 P-124)

## Translation

When the occasion arises, my thirst is quenched with my own blood

In case of increased hunger, I even eat my own flesh.

#### 4.1.6 Contempt for Talent / Wasted Talent

The social environment of Usman does not provide chances to talented people to thrive their abilities and to make progress. Like *Seekers of the Howl*, these talented youngmen in Akhtar Usman's poetry suffer in the society of status quo.

The social environment is very strict.

## Transliteration

## Text

Itni tang faza mein mere johar kaise jagein  
Mere aage gadroon apni poori pertein khole

اتنی تنگ فضا میں میرے جوہر کیسے جاگیں  
میرے آگے گردوں اپنی پوری پرتیں کھولے  
(Usman, 2007 P-109)

## Translation

In such a suffocating atmosphere how can my skills be roused?

The heaven may unfold all its stratum before me.

There are sanctions on human liberty, freedom of expression and freedom of action. The rule of inefficient monarchs who have taken over as a result of conspiracy is making life difficult for people. They have flourished a system in which only those are awarded who follow the orders of their rulers without questioning their authority and supremacy. Those who do not follow them, they remain deprived.

Akhtar Usman has explained it in his essay *A story unmarking imperialism*. The essay is a critique of a Punjabi short story *Taahang* by Malik Maher Ali. The old man narrates a story of birds and the time.

The birds say to the time if anyone of us tries to fly with pride suffers nets of the hunters. The caged birds are trained to harmonize their chirps according to their masters. Those who learn the language are colored and are set free. The rebellions too are colored but with their own blood. (Usman, 2006)

Like Ginsberg's platonic conversationalists, these *rebels* have the ability to bring about change and they can overthrow the tyrant.

#### Transliteration

#### Text

Thujay nakheel-e-falak se patakha na doon aakhir

تجے نکیل فلک سے پتکھ نہ دوں آخر

Teray samait gira hi na doon machaan ko main

ترے سمیت گرا ہی نہ دوں مچان کو میں

(Usman, 2007 P-13)

#### Translation

In the end I may not throw you down from the palm tree of the sky

I may not hurl you down alongwith podium.

These endowed men are a threat to the system. They can change the situation if they find a chance. But the authorities cannot tolerate all this. To nip the evil in the bud, the authorities and the system persecute these *rebels* before this threat is materialized.

### Transliteration

Abhi to par bhi nahin tola urtan ko main  
Bila jawaaz khataka hoon asmaan ko main.

### Text

ابھی تو پر بھی نہیں تولتا اُرتان کو میں  
بلا جواز کھاتا ہوں آسمان کو میں

(Usman, 2007 P-12)

### Translation

I'm yet to take the flight  
To heavens yet I do fright

Syed Naseem Taqi Jaafri remarks:

The ignis fatuuses are running our system with magic powers.  
They cannot tolerate even the slightest effort that can disfigure the  
system that they have implemented for their interest. (Jaafri, 2001)

The system tries to bring them under its control by forcing them to follow its rules and regulations. But owing to their natural instinct, these rebels do not yield.

### Transliteration

Mazaq-e-bait-e-dunia to umr bhar na raha  
Hamara haat zamanay ke haat par na raha

### Text

مذاق بیعت دنیا تو عمر بھر نہ رہا  
ہمارا ہات زمانے کے ہات پر نہ رہا

(Usman, 2007 P-29)

## Translation

Never in my life, had I bent for following the world  
Since I never remained in harmony with my age.

It is very difficult to take a stand against the system and only these rebels can do this. When they challenge the system, no one stands with them.

### Transliteration

### Text

Main wo rah rau hoon jo ham aahang kisi se na hoowa  
Mera saya bhi juda ho gia dar kar mujh se.

میں وہ رہو جو ہم آہنگ کسی سے نہ ہوا  
میرا سایہ بھی جدا ہو گیا ڈر کر مجھ سے

(Usman, 2007 P-129)

## Translation

A traveler am I who homogenized with none  
Even my shadow left me for fear.

Ultimately, these rebels have to pay the price of all this. They are victimized like Carl Solomon. Usman has highlighted it in these lines:

### Transliteration

### Text

Hum bhi thay unhi mein jo zubaan se na phiray thay  
Phir khalq ne dekha ke sar-e-daar thay hum bhi.

ہم بھی تھے انہی میں جو زباں سے نہ پھرے تھے  
پھر خلق نے دیکھا کہ سردار تھے ہم بھی

(Usman, 2007 P-34)

## Translation

We were also amongst those who backed out not  
Then the world beheld us on the gallows.



This is the treatment of system with talented people. But like Carl Solomon of *Howl*, these rebels embrace death rather to conform to the society. Akhtar Usman is well aware of the universal fact that one has to scarify his own life to uplift truth but he does not hesitate. On the contrary, he is ready to give his life for this noble cause.

To go against the wind is his (Akhtar Usman's) favorite hobby. To find out new ways and to tread on them with courage and determination is the sole aim of his life and for this he never hesitates to give his own life. To him, to embrace death for achievement of greater and nobler human cause is but pinnacle of human life. (Jaafri, 2001)

*Mad generation of Howl* is institutionalized and perished in the asylum while *sar phiray* (crazy men) of *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* are persecuted in the gallows. The system is intolerant of these young men how capable they may be.

#### **4.1.7 Unfulfilled Dreams and Promises**

Like American masses, people of Pakistan were promised liberty, equality, justice and equal chances for everyone. For this they struggled hard for a separate homeland. When they achieved a country of their own, they were sure to materialize their dreams and wishes. But when a separate country was established, problems and sorrows of people remained unsolved and situation did not change. The privileged class continued enjoying all the luxuries of life which they used to enjoy before independence rather they were now free to exploit the poor. Akhtar Usman has pointed out this in these lines.

## Transliteration

Yahan aa kar bhi zor awar wohi hain  
Wohi qabaz howay amlaak par bhi.

## Text

یہاں آ کر بھی زور آور وہی ہیں  
وہی قابض ہوئے املاک پر بھی

(Usman, 2007 P-114)

## Translation

Here too they got the power

Here too they usurped the estates.

They have become *Moloch* of society who has taken control of everything. They have built their mansions and common people have nothing to live in. Dreams of home and shelter ended in mirage. Akhtar Usman has put it:

## Transliteration

Ab tak rona hai wohi ghareeb-ul-watani ka  
Ab tak falak aasaar mahallat hein un ke.

## Text

اب تک وہی رونا ہے غریب الوطنی کا  
اب تک فلک آسار محلات ہیں ان کے

(Usman, 2007 P-83)

## Translation

Still we are mourning at homelessness

Sill they possess palace like abodes.

Exploitation of this dream of Pakistani people by the ruling and privileged class is explained by Jaafri.

These worthless have become so powerful that they have controlled the whole system. They decide the fortunes of others. Their liking and disliking have become the law of the country. The poor are becoming penniless and the rich are grabbing more wealth. Under their rule chances of progress are limited to a particular class; the poor have no chance to make progress. All doors are closed for them. (Jaafri, 2001)

Referring to one of Yousuf Hassan's excerpts, Akhtar Usman writes:

After the independence the tribalism and feudalism were preserved in Pakistan and there was no chance for capitalist democratic revolution. (Usman, 2006)

Freedom for common people after independence from foreign rule did not bring them happiness and liberty that they expected to enjoy. Akhtar Usman puts it:

| Transliteration                                | Text                                    |
|--|---|
| Yhan aa kar mila hai tohfa-e-khana badoshi     | یہاں آ کر ملا ہے تحفہ خانہ بدوشی        |
| Manadi thi keh hum ghar baar wale ho gai hain. | منادی تھی کہ ہم گھر بار والے ہو گئے ہیں |
|  | (Usman, 2007 P-45)                      |

Translation

Itinerant here too we are rewarded with

It was proclaimed that we became landlord.

This is a demonstration of the post partition condition of Pakistani people. The down trodden gave sacrifices to secure their future and future of their generations. But after the separation, it revealed to the downcast that the liberty for which they

struggled hard was but a dream. Only their masters changed and their condition did not change. Jaafri narrates:

Akhtar Usman declares rulers responsible for all that. They are the policy makers. The intrigues and wrong policies of these rulers have disfigured our political system, resultantly, our political institution have deteriorated. (Jaafri, 2001)

Akhtar Usman witnesses all this with dejection. The masses are still being tormented by the rulers for the promise of paradise. Akhtar Usman is not ready to be tortured or exploited any more. He has comprehended their treacheries and he calls out:

#### Transliteration

Naheen qabool mujhay koi bhi nai hijrat  
Kataoon kyon kisi balway main khandaan ko main.

#### Text

نہیں قبول مجھے کوئی بھی نئی ہجرت  
کٹاؤں کیوں کسی بلوے میں خاندان کو میں!

(Usman, 2007 P-13)

#### Translation

No other exodus now I accept  
Slaying my kith in riot I not intend.

#### 4.1.8 Hopefulness

Socio-economic and political system of Akhtar Usman's society is controlled by landlords, bureaucrats and businessmen. The forces already in power do not let others share their power and authority. If someone endeavors to challenge their

authority, these forces, be they rivals on political front, come together to protect their vested interests to crush any such effort with all their might and resources. In all these circumstances there are little chances left for anyone who tries to change the system. Akhtar Usman knows this well. His power and resources are but nothing when compared with the rivals he is confronted with. This he confesses in one of his essays when he talks about the power and authority of rival forces:

We had been in the clutches of the capitalism since we made flesh.  
The years are uncountable; we began to role the stone of  
progressive ideology, with no avail. Perhaps, we need to chisel it,  
but do we have any time for genuflection? The progressives must  
remember that there is no plinth remaining to stand on. Unless a  
mass-lover ideology unveils its fruitfulness to the people, it is  
nothing but megalomania. (Usman, 2006)

But he is not disappointed and hopeless. He suggests the measures for remedy to make progressive movement more fruitful. He proposes 'the essence should be to redeem the mistakes and theorize an ideology that can really cope with the new challenges of the capitalist world ahead'.

This hope and optimistic approach one finds in his poetry too. Knowing that it is very difficult to challenge the authority and change the system, he does not lose hope and he is sure that a time will come when this exploitation will come to an end.

## Transliteration

## Text

Zaroor aae ga ab koi guftagoo karnay  
Main us ke aanay se pehlay ka shor-e-mehfal hoon.

ضرور آئے گا اب کوئی گفتگو کرنے  
میں اُس کے آنے سے پہلے کا شورِ محفل ہوں  
(Usman, 2007 P-117)

## Translation

Some one will surely come to converse  
A tumult am I before he comes.

Akhtar Usman knows that though it is not easy to take stand against the system and only few will join him, yet he is sure that these rebels will bring change in the society.

## Transliteration

## Text

Ugaaen gay jo basti mein nai sochon ka sooraj  
Hawa ne aisay aisay sar phiray rakhay hooway hain.

اگائیں گے جو ہستی میں نئی سوچوں کا سورج  
ہوا نے ایسے ایسے سر پھرے رکھے ہوئے ہیں

(Usman, 2007 P-138)

## Translation

The wind has in its possession such rebels who will  
Raise the slogan of new thoughts in the town.

Akhtar Usman is very optimistic and he is sure that it will not take long to change the system as the signs of change are visible and quite discernable.

## Transliteration

## Text

Teh-e-caharaagh ha ye tergi sehar ki daleel  
Ek aftaab hai zulmat ke saae se paray

تہ چراغ ہے یہ تیرگی سحر کی دلیل  
اک آفتاب ہے ظلمت کے سائلے سے پرے

(Usman, 2007 P-68)

## Translation

The darkness beneath the lamp testifies the dawn

The sun awaits beyond the darkness.

When this revolution will take place, happiness will rule. The tyrants will be punished and all woes and troubles would come to an end.

### Transliteration

### Text

Ab us ki sangsaari ka zamana aa gya ha

اب اس کی سنگساری کا زمانہ آگیا ہے

Wo jis ne roshni ke saath moon kaala kia ha.

وہ جس نے روشنی کے ساتھ منہ کالا کیا ہے

(Usman, 2007 P-141)

## Translation

The moment of his lapidation has arrived

The one who brought disgrace to the light.

## 4.2 Dissimilarities of themes

This section presents dissimilarities of themes discovered in the poetry of Akhtar Usman in comparison with the themes of Ginsberg.

### 4.2.1 Sexual References

In the poetry of Usman, homosexual or heterosexual references are not found because of the social and cultural background he is living in. In the society of Usman, illicit relation between a man and a woman out of marriage is considered

as sin. Similarly homosexuality is strictly prohibited. This is the reason that we do not find homosexual or heterosexual references in the poetry of Usman.

#### 4.2.2 Spiritualism

Usman's poetry does not carry spiritual theme. He belongs to the society wherein religious belief holds tightly the lives of people. *We do what we are ordained to do by the Providence* sort of attitude has slackened people. This approach prevents them to challenge the tyrant and to free themselves from his cruelty. They think that when Providence likes, their doleful days would come to end. Akhtar Usman condemns this attitude.

#### Transliteration

Mitti bhi muyyasar thi hamein chaak bhi Akhtar  
Iss par bhi tamannai thay aawaaz-e-kun ke.

#### Text

مٹی بھی نیسرتھی ہمیں چاک بھی اختر  
اس پر بھی تمنائی تھے آوازہ کن کے

(Usman, 2007 P-83)

#### Translation

Clay we had and potter's wheel too  
Yet we yearned the call of occurrence.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

During the analysis of Ginsberg's *Howl* and *America* and Usman's *Qalamrau* and *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* thematic similarities have been found out. Similarities of themes contain these themes:

- i) Identity crises
- ii) War
- iii) Oppressions of system and authorities
- iv) Condition of common man/ class difference
- v) Ethical values
- vi) Contempt for talent/wasted talent
- vii) Unfulfilled dreams and promises
- viii) Hopefulness

Dissimilarities of themes, on the other hand, comprise the following themes.

- i) Sexual references
- ii) Spiritualism

Before to present thematic comparative analysis of selected texts, answers to the questions that Delahoyde assigns to a Marxist critic are presented here.

The first issue is to consider how do characters overcome oppression? This question mainly relates to a play or a novel that contains characters and a plot. This, however, can be applied to the poetry of Ginsberg and Usman. In Ginsberg's *Howl*, the characters that are the angelheaded hipsters, having been tormented by the system and its regulations, try to find solace and comfort through sex, narcotics and endless balls. They do not surrender to socio-economic and political oppressions and status quo. In the like manner, *sar phiray* (crazy men) in Usman's poetry undergo constant sufferings because of social oppression. They, in turn, are ready to confront the foe, stronger he may be in might and resources. They even threaten their leader to death who thinks of any compromise with the enemy. They are, in their way to uplift the flag of liberty, freedom and truth, ready to face death in the gallows like Carl Solomon. To overcome social oppression, angelheaded hipsters and *sar phiray* are ready to give their lives rather to come to any compromising terms with the status quo thus leaving an example for others to follow and to continue their efforts against the social oppression. The second question that Delahoyde imputes to a Marxist critic to find answer is whether the work serves as propaganda to the status quo or does it try to undermine it? Both Ginsberg and Usman have condemned status quo through their works. What does the literary work under discussion say about social oppression? Whether social conflicts are ignored or blamed elsewhere? These are other questions that, to Delahoyde, a Marxist critic is required to mull over while analyzing a literary work critically. Social oppression has been highlighted by Ginsberg and Usman through their works. Their works offer a severe criticism of social oppression of their respective societies. Social conflict is

not between characters but it is between the individuals and the society. The society, as an antagonist, tries to persecute the individuals who do not conform to its requirements. Does the work propose some utopian vision as a solution to the problems encountered in the work? This is another question that, to Delahoyde, a Marxist critic should consider while studying a literary text. Ginsberg and Usman have given a message of hope. They have expressed their confidence that as a result of sacrifices of angelheaded hipsters and *sar phiray*, social oppression will come to an end in the long run and all problems that humanity is facing at present, will be solved in near future.

After having discussed the issues Delahoyde ascribes a Marxist to consider during analysis of a text, a thematic comparative analysis of Ginsberg and Usman's selected work is presented here to find answers to research questions.

Ginsberg and Usman both are influenced by Communism. Allen Ginsberg was introduced to Communism in his early life when his mother, who herself was a communist, took him and his brother to party meetings.

America I used to be a communist when I was a kid I'm not sorry.

(*America*, line31)

This might be the reason that he developed sympathy and love for the lower classes and this infused in him a desire to become a laborer lawyer in early career of his life. The glimpses of this love and sympathy can be seen in his poetry.

who poverty and tatters and hollow-eyed and high sat up smoking in the  
 supernatural darkness of cold-water flats floating across the tops of  
 cities contemplating jazz.... (*Howl* line 6-8)

But later in his life, after experiences, especially his visits to China, Czechoslovakia and Cuba and the role of Russia in the Cold War era, he was dissatisfied from Communism and his sympathies for communist block were weakened. Ginsberg himself was never a communist. He openly ridiculed policies of countries of communist block. On the other hand, Akhtar Usman was attracted to Communism through literature. Progressive Writers Association, established by late Sajjad Zaheer – a communist of the first rank- is a forum for literary figures having sympathies for Communism and striving for a classless revolution based on philosophy and principles of Karl Marx. Usman joined the movement early in his career. Karl Marx is his ideal. All sided human emancipation is dream of his life. He is a devout communist and detests neo-communism or other versions of communism that, to him, contradict basic philosophy and principles of Karl Marx and Engel. Commenting on the philosophies of linguists Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Marx Horkheimer and Louis Althusser, Akhtar Usman remarked:

It is something meaningful that all of these philosophers confuted  
 Marx and cast aspersions on his worker-loving ideology.  
 (Usman, 2006)

Unlike Ginsberg, Usman does not become hostile to communism. To him, world can find peace and prosperity only through communism.

Globalization created identity crises among the *lost battalion of platonic conversationalists* of *Howl* and *sar phiray* (crazy men) of *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain*. Ginsberg's angel headed seekers are at a loss against Bourgeois'50 quietism and status quo. After having fed up with the materialistic approach of the age, they are yearning for spiritualism but finding no way out, they lose themselves in sex and narcotics. On the other hand, *sar phiray* (crazy men) of *Khuch Bachaa Lae Hain* are trying to find their identity in a culture established by the British Colonizers to undermine the native culture. The colonizers took away all the worth and valuable heritage and left the natives suffer from inferiority complex. This policy of the colonizers worked and masses of the sub-continent were left in a state of bewilderment searching for their cultural roots. Search for identity in Usman's works appears to be more intense as compared to Ginsberg because of cultural exploitation of the British Colonizers.

War is another common theme of Ginsberg and Usman's poetry. Colonization appears to be inseparable from war. Akhtar Usman's society is directly affected by devastations of the war be it between local war lords or waged by the British Colonizers to establish imperialism. Being a subject of a colonized nation, Usman's protest against war and its devastations appears to be surprisingly weak. Ginsberg, though indirectly influenced by the war, speaks out more loudly against obliteration of war then waged by America on other counties like Vietnam than does Usman. As a member of Beat Movement, he participated and sometimes led marches against war. Protest against war, overthrowing of politically elected

governments by America and nuclear annihilation are marked features of Ginsberg's poetry and personality. Where Akhtar Usman simply highlights devastations of war through his works, Ginsberg actively protested war besides criticizing it severely and condemning its destructions through his works. Exposing political treacheries of colonizers to overthrow politically elected governments and to bring in power their beloved ones is another important theme of poetry of Ginsberg and Usman. Ginsberg daringly spotlights negative role of America in the politics of the world and he considers America as root cause of Middle East catastrophe. Akhtar Usman mourns over the socio-economic conditions of the people of Pakistan who are suffering as a result of policies of capitalist forces. He portrays the helplessness of dummy rulers whom their masters refuse to give loan. This refusal entails more demands from the subordinates.

Ginsberg spotlights causes of troubles of people of the third world who are suffering because of policies of capitalist forces. Usman, on the other hand, highlights these deprivations and troubles of people of Pakistan and the third world. Here, Usman's stance appears to be weaker as compared to Ginsberg because of social oppressions of the society he is living in.

Depiction of tyrannies of authorities and system is another theme that Ginsberg and Akhtar Usman share in poetry. Both the poets have depicted afflictions of individuals, social and political oppressions of system and authorities in their poetry. In the works of Ginsberg, sufferings of individuals and censorship are

comparatively dealt with in detail. This might be the result of the fact that Ginsberg himself experienced the same in his life more as compared to Akhtar Usman. His mother Naomi, his friends Carl Solomon and Cassady and he himself suffered much because of the system. His poem *Howl* underwent censorship and he had to appear before the court. In the poetry of Usman, socio-economic and political oppressions appear to be more prominent as compared to Ginsberg. The reason could be that in Ginsberg's society which is comparatively educated and liberal, socio-economic and political oppression is relatively lesser in its intensity as compared to the society of Usman. The system in Usman's society has been controlled by the rulers who act as agents of capitalist forces to implement policies of their masters to oblige them and to protect the rule from being taken over. Therefore in such a society, question of socio-economic and political liberty of the masses does not carry much weight. In a capitalist society, common man suffers much. Influenced by socialism, both Ginsberg and Usman have brought to light plight of common man in their works. Ginsberg struggled for the rights of common man besides focussing on his problems in his poetry. Usman artistically brings before us deprivations of common man in his poetry. He does not appear to be much open in his advocacy for common man as does Ginsberg because of suffocating social environment of his society.

In the society where status quo is the order of the day, talented people fail to prove their worth, as they do not conform to the needs of the system. Ginsberg and Usman have highlighted this wasted talent in their poetry. Carl Solomon and Naomi could not utilize their talent or to be more true, the system could not

benefit from their talent. This tormented them mentally and ultimately they perished in psychiatric institutes. Ginsberg himself was once admitted in an asylum for psychiatric treatment. Insanity of talented people is an important theme of *Howl*. Usman's atmosphere is oppressive. He criticizes sanctions on human liberty and expression of thoughts that do not allow the talent to groom and to flourish. Ginsberg laments over the talent that was wasted because of the system. Ginsberg here seems to be more distinct and louder as compared to Usman because Ginsberg himself witnessed and experienced the situation.

Portrayal of unfulfilled dreams and promises is another common theme of Ginsberg and Akhtar Usman's poetry. Freedom from the same colonizer that is the British Colonizer by America and Pakistan promised liberty, equal chances and welfare of all regardless of their status. But after independence from foreign dominion, these promises remained mere slogans. Usman's depiction of unfulfilled dreams and promises appears to be more forceful as compared to Ginsberg because disappointment in Pakistani masses is more because of social, political and economic oppression.

Bitter and gloomy they may become while depicting their societies under the dominion of Capitalism, this does not make Ginsberg and Usman pessimist. They are hopeful that all this will come to an end and humanity will achieve freedom from all oppressions. Ginsberg's message of hope brings equality, happiness and freedom for everyone whether he is a tyrant or oppressed, master or slave, privileged or unprivileged. *Howl* ends with a happy note that everybody is holy.



Akhtar Usman's message of hope, on the other hand when it brings happiness, freedom and peace for the oppressed, it brings punishment, bloodshed and catastrophe for the oppressor.

Despite the fact that Ginsberg and Akhtar Usman share common features in poetry and person, they differ in some respects. Belonging to two different societies and cultures, their poetry does reflect the same. In *Howl* frequent sexual references are found but in the poetry of Akhtar Usman a reader does not find such references. To Ginsberg, spiritual element is losing its importance in the lives of American people because of much devotion to material gain. Ginsberg in his poem *Howl* laments this lack of spiritualism. 'Angel headed hipsters' of *Howl* are 'burning for ancient heavenly connection'. In Usman's society, religious fervor is dominant. Unlike Ginsberg, instead of yearning for spiritualism, Usman appears to rectify the concept of God and fate held by his people. He tries to instigate them to leave the fate stricken attitude that has snatched them the will to act.

Through the analysis of the selected texts of Ginsberg and Usman, it can be said that in depicting socio-economic and political problems of man in the society, writers and poets, though coming out of entirely different cultures and societies, share some common features.

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## APPENDIX-I

*Howl, 1956*

by Allen Ginsberg

For Carl Solomon

1

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving  
 hysterical naked,  
 dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry  
 fix,  
 angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the  
 starry dynamo in the machinery of night,  
 who poverty and tatters and hollow-eyed and high sat up smoking in the  
 supernatural darkness of cold-water flats floating across the tops of  
 cities contemplating jazz,  
 who bared their brains to Heaven under the El and saw Mohammedan angels  
 staggering on tenement roofs illuminated,  
 who passed through universities with radiant cool eyes hallucinating Arkan-  
 sas and Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war,  
 who were expelled from the academies for crazy & publishing obscene odes  
 on the windows of the skull,  
 who cowered in unshaven rooms in underwear, burning their money in  
 wastebaskets and listening to the Terror through the wall,  
 who got busted in their pubic beards returning through Laredo with a belt  
 of marijuana for New York,  
 who ate fire in paint hotels or drank turpentine in Paradise Alley, death, or  
 purgatoried their torsos night after night  
 with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares, alcohol and cock and  
 endless balls,  
 incomparable blind streets of shuddering cloud and lightning in the mind  
 leaping toward poles of Canada & Paterson, illuminating all the mo-  
 tionless world of Time between,  
 Peyote solidities of halls, backyard green tree cemetery dawns, wine drunk-  
 enness over the rooftops, storefront boroughs of teahead joyride neon  
 blinking traffic light, sun and moon and tree vibrations in the roaring  
 winter dusks of Brooklyn, ashcan rantings and kind king light of  
 mind,  
 who chained themselves to subways for the endless ride from Battery to holy  
 Bronx on benzedrine until the noise of wheels and children brought  
 them down shuddering mouth-wracked and battered bleak of brain  
 all drained of brilliance in the drear light of Zoo,  
 who sank all night in submarine light of Bickford's floated out and sat  
 through the stale beer afternoon in desolate Fugazzi's, listening to the  
 crack of doom on the hydrogen jukebox,  
 who talked continuously seventy hours from park to pad to bar to Bellevue  
 to museum to the Brooklyn Bridge,  
 a lost battalion of platonic conversationalists jumping down the stoops off fire  
 escapes off windowsills of Empire State out of the moon,  
 yacketayakking screaming vomiting whispering facts and memories and  
 anecdotes and eyeball kicks and shocks of hospitals and jails and wars,  
 whole intellects disgorged in total recall for seven days and nights with  
 brilliant eyes, meat for the Synagogue cast on the pavement,  
 who vanished into nowhere Zen New Jersey leaving a trail of ambiguous  
 picture postcards of Atlantic City Hall,  
 suffering Eastern sweats and Tangerian bone-grindings and migraines of

China under junk-withdrawal in Newark's bleak furnished room,  
 who wandered around and around at midnight in the railroad yard wonder-  
 ing where to go, and went, leaving no broken hearts,  
 who lit cigarettes in boxcars boxcars boxcars racketing through snow toward  
 lonesome farms in grandfather night,  
 who studied Plotinus Poe St. John of the Cross telepathy and bop kabbalah  
 because the cosmos instinctively vibrated at their feet in Kansas,  
 who loned it through the streets of Idaho seeking visionary indian angels  
 who were visionary indian angels,  
 who thought they were only mad when Baltimore gleamed in supernatural  
 ecstasy,  
 who jumped in limousines with the Chinaman of Oklahoma on the impulse  
 of winter midnight streetlight smalltown rain,  
 who lounged hungry and lonesome through Houston seeking jazz or sex or  
 soup, and followed the brilliant Spaniard to converse about America  
 and Eternity, a hopeless task, and so took ship to Africa,  
 who disappeared into the volcanoes of Mexico leaving behind nothing but  
 the shadow of dungarees and the lava and ash of poetry scattered in  
 fireplace Chicago,  
 who reappeared on the West Coast investigating the FBI in beards and shorts  
 with big pacifist eyes sexy in their dark skin passing out incompre-  
 hensible leaflets,  
 who burned cigarette holes in their arms protesting the narcotic tobacco haze  
 of Capitalism,  
 who distributed Supercommunist pamphlets in Union Square weeping and  
 undressing while the sirens of Los Alamos wailed them down, and  
 wailed down Wall, and the Staten Island ferry also wailed,  
 who broke down crying in white gymnasiums naked and trembling before  
 the machinery of other skeletons,  
 who bit detectives in the neck and shrieked with delight in policecars for  
 committing no crime but their own wild cooking pederasty and  
 intoxication,  
 who howled on their knees in the subway and were dragged off the roof  
 waving genitals and manuscripts,  
 who let themselves be fucked in the ass by saintly motorcyclists, and  
 screamed with joy,  
 who blew and were blown by those human seraphim, the sailors, caresses of  
 Atlantic and Caribbean love,  
 who balled in the morning in the evenings in rosegardens and the grass of  
 public parks and cemeteries scattering their semen freely to whom-  
 ever come who may,  
 who hiccuped endlessly trying to giggle but wound up with a sob behind  
 a partition in a Turkish Bath when the blond & naked angel came to  
 pierce them with a sword,  
 who lost their loveboys to the three old shrews of fate the one eyed shrew  
 of the heterosexual dollar the one eyed shrew that winks out of the  
 womb and the one eyed shrew that does nothing but sit on her ass  
 and snip the intellectual golden threads of the craftsman's loom.  
 who copulated ecstatic and insatiate with a bottle of beer a sweetheart a  
 package of cigarettes a candle and fell off the bed, and continued  
 along the floor and down the hall and ended fainting on the wall with  
 a vision of ultimate cunt and come eluding the last gyzym of con-  
 sciousness,  
 who sweetened the snatches of a million girls trembling in the sunset, and  
 were red eyed in the morning but prepared to sweeten the snatch of  
 the sunrise, flashing buttocks under barns and naked in the lake,  
 who went out whoring through Colorado in myriad stolen night-cars, N.C.,  
 secret hero of these poems, cocksman and Adonis of Denver--joy to

the memory of his innumerable lays of girls in empty lots & diner  
 backyards, moviehouses' rickety rows, on mountaintops in caves or  
 with gaunt waitresses in familiar roadside lonely petticoat upliftings  
 & especially secret gas-station solipsisms of johns, & hometown alleys  
 too,  
 who faded out in vast sordid movies, were shifted in dreams, woke on a  
 sudden Manhattan, and picked themselves up out of basements hung-  
 over with heartless Tokay and horrors of Third Avenue iron dreams  
 & stumbled to unemployment offices,  
 who walked all night with their shoes full of blood on the snowbank docks  
 waiting for a door in the East River to open to a room full of steam-  
 heat and opium,  
 who created great suicidal dramas on the apartment cliff-banks of the Hud-  
 son under the wartime blue floodlight of the moon & their heads shall  
 be crowned with laurel in oblivion,  
 who ate the lamb stew of the imagination or digested the crab at the muddy  
 bottom of the rivers of Bowery,  
 who wept at the romance of the streets with their pushcarts full of onions  
 and bad music,  
 who sat in boxes breathing in the darkness under the bridge, and rose up to  
 build harpsichords in their lofts,

who coughed on the sixth floor of Harlem crowned with flame under the  
 tubercular sky surrounded by orange crates of theology,  
 who scribbled all night rocking and rolling over lofty incantations which in  
 the yellow morning were stanzas of gibberish,  
 who cooked rotten animals lung heart feet tail borsht & tortillas dreaming  
 of the pure vegetable kingdom,  
 who plunged themselves under meat trucks looking for an egg,  
 who threw their watches off the roof to cast their ballot for Eternity outside  
 of Time, & alarm clocks fell on their heads every day for the next  
 decade,  
 who cut their wrists three times successively unsuccessfully, gave up and  
 were forced to open antique stores where they thought they were  
 growing old and cried,  
 who were burned alive in their innocent flannel suits on Madison Avenue  
 amid blasts of leaden verse & the tanked-up clatter of the iron regi-  
 ments of fashion & the nitroglycerine shrieks of the fairies of advertis-  
 ing & the mustard gas of sinister intelligent editors, or were run down  
 by the drunken taxicabs of Absolute Reality,  
 who jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge this actually happened and walked  
 away unknown and forgotten into the ghostly daze of Chinatown  
 soup alleyways & firetrucks, not even one free beer,  
 who sang out of their windows in despair, fell out of the subway window,  
 jumped in the filthy Passaic, leaped on negroes, cried all over the  
 street, danced on broken wineglasses barefoot smashed phonograph  
 records of nostalgic European 1930s German jazz finished the whis-  
 key and threw up groaning into the bloody toilet, moans in their ears  
 and the blast of colossal steamwhistles,  
 who barreled down the highways of the past journeying to the each other's  
 hotrod-Golgotha jail-solitude watch or Birmingham jazz incarnation,  
 who drove crosscountry seventytwo hours to find out if I had a vision or you  
 had a vision or he had a vision to find out Eternity,  
 who journeyed to Denver, who died in Denver, who came back to Denver  
 & waited in vain, who watched over Denver & brooded & loned in  
 Denver and finally went away to find out the Time, & now Denver  
 is lonesome for her heroes,  
 who fell on their knees in hopeless cathedrals praying for each other's salva-

tion and light and breasts, until the soul illuminated its hair for a  
 second,  
 who crashed through their minds in jail waiting for impossible criminals  
 with golden heads and the charm of reality in their hearts who sang  
 sweet blues to Alcatraz,  
 who retired to Mexico to cultivate a habit, or Rocky Mount to tender Buddha  
 or Tangiers to boys or Southern Pacific to the black locomotive or  
 Harvard to Narcissus to Woodlawn to the daisychain or grave,  
 who demanded sanity trials accusing the radio of hypnotism & were left with  
 their insanity & their hands & a hung jury,  
 who threw potato salad at CCNY lecturers on Dadaism and subsequently  
 presented themselves on the granite steps of the madhouse with  
 shaven heads and harlequin speech of suicide, demanding instantane-  
 ous lobotomy,  
 and who were given instead the concrete void of insulin Metrazol electricity  
 hydrotherapy psychotherapy occupational therapy pingpong & am-  
 nesia,  
 who in humorless protest overturned only one symbolic pingpong table,  
 resting briefly in catatonia,  
 returning years later truly bald except for a wig of blood, and tears and  
 fingers, to the visible madman doom of the wards of the madtowns  
 of the East,  
 Pilgrim State's Rockland's and Greystone's foetid halls, bickering with the  
 echoes of the soul, rocking and rolling in the midnight solitude-bench  
 dolmen-realms of love, dream of life a nightmare, bodies turned to  
 stone as heavy as the moon,  
 with mother finally \*\*\*\*\* , and the last fantastic book flung out of the  
 tenement window, and the last door closed at 4 a.m. and the last  
 telephone slammed at the wall in reply and the last furnished room  
 emptied down to the last piece of mental furniture, a yellow paper  
 rose twisted on a wire hanger in the closet, and even that imaginary,  
 nothing but a hopeful little bit of hallucination--  
 ah, Carl, while you are not safe I am not safe, and now you're really in the  
 total animal soup of time--  
 and who therefore ran through the icy streets obsessed with a sudden flash  
 of the alchemy of the use of the ellipse the catalog the meter & the  
 vibrating plane,  
 who dreamt and made incarnate gaps in Time & Space through images  
 juxtaposed, and trapped the archangel of the soul between 2 visual  
 images and joined the elemental verbs and set the noun and dash of  
 consciousness together jumping with sensation of Pater Omnipotens  
 Aeterna Deus  
 to recreate the syntax and measure of poor human prose and stand before  
 you speechless and intelligent and shaking with shame, rejected yet  
 confessing out the soul to conform to the rhythm of thought in his  
 naked and endless head,  
 the madman bum and angel beat in Time, unknown, yet putting down here  
 what might be left to say in time come after death,  
 and rose reincarnate in the ghostly clothes of jazz in the goldhorn shadow  
 of the band and blew the suffering of America's naked mind for love  
 into an eli eli lamma lamma sabacthani saxophone cry that shivered  
 the cities down to the last radio  
 with the absolute heart of the poem of life butchered out of their own bodies  
 good to eat a thousand years.

2

What sphinx of cement and aluminum bashed open their skulls and ate up  
 their brains and imagination?



Moloch! Solitude! Filth! Ugliness! Ashcans and unobtainable dollars! Children screaming under the stairways! Boys sobbing in armies! Old men weeping in the parks!  
 Moloch! Moloch! Nightmare of Moloch! Moloch the loveless! Mental Moloch! Moloch the heavy judger of men!  
 Moloch the incomprehensible prison! Moloch the crossbone soulless jailhouse and Congress of sorrows! Moloch whose buildings are judgment! Moloch the vast stone of war! Moloch the stunned governments!  
 Moloch whose mind is pure machinery! Moloch whose blood is running money! Moloch whose fingers are ten armies! Moloch whose breast is a cannibal dynamo! Moloch whose ear is a smoking tomb!  
 Moloch whose eyes are a thousand blind windows! Moloch whose skyscrapers stand in the long streets like endless Jehovahs! Moloch whose factories dream and croak in the fog! Moloch whose smokestacks and antennae crown the cities!  
 Moloch whose love is endless oil and stone! Moloch whose soul is electricity and banks! Moloch whose poverty is the specter of genius! Moloch whose fate is a cloud of sexless hydrogen! Moloch whose name is the Mind!  
 Moloch in whom I sit lonely! Moloch in whom I dream Angels! Crazy in Moloch! Cocksucker in Moloch! Lacklove and manless in Moloch!  
 Moloch who entered my soul early! Moloch in whom I am a consciousness without a body! Moloch who frightened me out of my natural ecstasy! Moloch whom I abandon! Wake up in Moloch! Light streaming out of the sky!  
 Moloch! Moloch! Robot apartments! invisible suburbs! skeleton treasuries! blind capitals! demonic industries! spectral nations! invincible mad houses granite cocks! monstrous bombs!  
 They broke their backs lifting Moloch to Heaven! Pavements, trees, radios, tons! lifting the city to Heaven which exists and is everywhere about us!  
 Visions! omens! hallucinations! miracles! ecstasies! gone down the American river!  
 Dreams! adorations! illuminations! religions! the whole boatload of sensitive bullshit!  
 Breakthroughs! over the river! flips and crucifixions! gone down the flood! Highs! Epiphanies! Despairs! Ten years' animal screams and suicides! Minds! New loves! Mad generation! down on the rocks of Time!  
 Real holy laughter in the river! They saw it all! the wild eyes! the holy yells! They bade farewell! They jumped off the roof to solitude! waving! carrying flowers! Down to the river! into the street!

3.

Carl Solomon! I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where you 're madder than I am  
 I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where you must feel very strange  
 I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where you initiate the shade of my mother  
 I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where you've murdered your twelve secretaries  
 I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where you laugh at this invisible humor  
 I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where we are great writers on the same dreadful typewriter  
 I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where your condition has become serious and is reported on the radio

I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where the faculties of the skull no longer admit the worms of the  
 senses

I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where you drink the tea of the breasts of the spinsters of Utica

I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where you pun on the bodies of your nurses the harpies of the Bronx

I'm with you in Rockland  
 where you scream in a straightjacket that you're losing the game of  
 the actual pingpong of the abyss

I'm with you in Rockland  
 where you bang on the catatonic piano the soul is innocent and  
 immortal it should never die ungodly in an armed madhouse

I'm with you in Rockland  
 where fifty more shocks will never return your soul to its body again  
 from its pilgrimage to a cross in the void

I'm with you in Rockland  
 where you accuse your doctors of insanity and plot the Hebrew  
 socialist revolution against the fascist national Golgotha

I'm with you in Rockland  
 where you will split the heavens of Long Island and resurrect your  
 living human Jesus from the superhuman tomb

I'm with you in Rockland  
 where there are twentyfive-thousand mad comrades all together  
 singing the final stanzas of the International

I'm with you in Rockland  
 Where we hug and kiss the United States under our bedsheets the  
 United States that coughs all night and won't let us sleep

I'm with you in Rockland  
 where we wake up electrified out of the coma by our own souls  
 airplanes roaring over the roof they've come to drop angelic bombs  
 the hospital illuminates itself imaginary walls collapse O skinny  
 legions run outside O starryspangled shock of mercy the eternal war  
 is here O victory forget your underwear we're free

I'm with you in Rockland  
 in my dreams you walk dripping from a sea-journey on the highway  
 across America in tears to the door of my cottage in the Western  
 night

#### 4 FOOTNOTE TO HOWL.

Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy!  
 Holy! Holy! Holy!

The world is holy! The soul is holy! The skin is Holy! The nose is Holy!  
 The tongue and cock and hand and asshole Holy!

Everything is Holy! Everybody's Holy! Everywhere is Holy! Everyday is in  
 Eternity! Everyman's an angel!

The burn's as holy as the seraphim! The madman is holy as you my soul  
 are holy!

The typewriter is holy the poem is holy the voice is holy the hearers are  
 holy the ecstasy is holy!

Holy Peter holy Allen holy Solomon holy Lucien holy Kerouac holy  
 Huncke holy Burroughs holy Cassady holy the unknown buggered  
 and suffering beggars holy the hideous human angels!

Holy my mother in the insane asylum! Holy the cocks of the grand-  
 fathers of Kansas!

Holy the groaning saxophone! Holy the bop apocalypse! Holy the

jazzbands marijuana hipsters peace & junk & drums!  
 Holy the solitudes of skyscrapers and pavements! Holy the cafeterias  
 filled with the Millions! Holy the mysterious rivers of tears under the  
 streets!  
 Holy the lone juggernaut! Holy the vast lamb of the middleclass! Holy  
 the crazy shepherds of rebellion! Who digs los angels IS Los  
 Angels!  
 Holy New York Holy san Francisco Holy Peoria & Seattle Holy Paris  
 Holy Tangiers Holy Moscow Holy Istanbul!  
 Holy time in eternity holy eternity in time holy the clocks in space  
 holy the fourth dimension Holy the fifth International  
 Holy the sea holy the desert holy the railroad holy the locomotive holy  
 the vision holy the Hallucinations holy the miracles holy the eyeball  
 holy the abyss!  
 Holy forgiveness! mercy! charity! Faith! Holy! Ours! Bodies! Suffering!  
 magnanimity!  
 Holy the supernatural extra brilliant intelligent kindness of the soul!.

## APPENDIX-II

### *America*

#### **Allen Ginsberg – 1959**

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 right in my 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 I can 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 make 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 in 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 candystore.  
 I read it in the basement of the Berkley 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 millions of underprivileged who live in my  
 flowerpots under the light of five hundred suns.  
 I have abolished the whorehouses of France, Tangiers is next to go.  
 My ambition is to be Whresident 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 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 will free Tom Mooney  
 America will 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 cost 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 1953 Scott Nearing  
 was a grand old man a real mensch Mother Bloor made me cry I once saw the  
 Israel Amter plain. Everybody must have been a spy.  
 America you don't really want to go to war.  
 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 the 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.

### APPENDIX-III

#### Urdu Poetry of Akhtar Usman Selected for Comparative Analysis.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ابھی تو پر بھی نہیں تو لتا اُڑان کو میں<br>بلا جواز نکلتا ہوں آسان کو میں          | 1 |
| مقاہت نہ سکھا دشمنوں سے اے سالارا!<br>تری طرف نہ کہیں سوز دوں کمان کو میں          | 2 |
| مری طلب کی کوئی پھیرش جہت میں نہیں<br>ہزار چھان چکا ہوں تری ڈکان کو میں            | 3 |
| ہلو، کہ بعد میں شاید یہ سلسلہ نہ رہے<br>یہ رنگ دگل نہ رہیں، صہب مہاند رہے          | 1 |
| قریب تر ہے وہ عہد زیاں نصیب، کہ جب<br>بشر، بشر نہ رہے اور عہد اء عہد اند رہے       | 2 |
| وہاں بھی راہ بچھاتی ہے اپنے لفظ کی نو<br>چراغ چشم جہاں گل ہو، راستہ نہ رہے         | 3 |
| جب دُور ہیں تجھ سے تو یہ اُٹنا دہی آئے<br>طوفان شہپ دشت میں تو یاد بھی آئے         | 1 |
| حیران ہے اس بات پہ انبوہ اسیراں<br>پر کھلنے کی تقریب میں میا دہی آئے               | 2 |
| یہاں آ کر ملا ہے تھنہ خانہ بدوشی<br>منادی تھی کہ ہم گھر بار والے ہو گئے ہیں        | 1 |
| ہمارا گھر تو پہلے ہی وہاں گروی پڑا تھا<br>ہمارے ذہن بھی اُس کے حوالے ہو گئے ہیں    | 2 |
| بھنور، برہم ہوا میں، گم گناہ، کیا بنے گا<br>دریدہ باد ہاں اپنا سہارا کیا بنے گا    | 1 |
| بڑوں پر مشکشف تھی ہل انگاری ہماری<br>ہمیں اجداد کہتے تھے "تمہارا کیا بنے گا!"      | 2 |
| ابھی سے خال و خدر روشن ہوئے جاتے ہیں اس کے<br>کبھی جو چاک پر آیا تو گارا کے بنے گا | 3 |

- 1 شعور فاصلہ خیر و شر دیا ہے مجھے  
تری نگاہ نے تبدیل کر دیا ہے مجھے  
2 مرا مقام کہیں اور تھا، پہ لگتا ہے  
کسی نے تو میں کہیں اور دھر دیا ہے مجھے  
3 بس اک گلہ ساتری چشم نیم باز سے ہے  
کہ اُس نے وقت بہت مختصر دیا ہے مجھے!

- 1 مذاق بیعت دنیا تو عمر بھر نہ رہا  
ہمارا ہات زمانے کے ہات پر نہ رہا  
2 نظر میں شعلہ شمع شعور تھا اختر  
کسی قدم پہنکنے کا کوئی ڈر نہ رہا

- 1 وہ بھی نہ کھلا، بستہ بندارتے ہم بھی  
خاموش تھا وہ، صورت دیوار تھے ہم بھی  
2 حد بندی احساس رہی عمر معین  
اور دائرہ کار میں پرکارتے ہم بھی  
3 اے نرگس وا چشم اترے آوج کے دن ہیں  
تیری ہی طرح دیدہ بیدارتے ہم بھی

- 1 کہاں یہ خون میں لٹ پٹ کمان سُکھتی ہے  
جو دیکھتے ہی پرندوں کی جان سُکھتی ہے  
2 مجھ ایسا شخص اگر تفتلی اہل دقا  
رقم کرے تو قلم کی زبان سُکھتی ہے  
3 تری نگہ کی نمی مجھ تک آئے بھی کیسے!  
ہوا کی سانس کہیں درمیان سُکھتی ہے

- 1 جہان بھر سے جدا، اہل راستے سے پرے  
رداں دواں ہوں زمانے کے قافلے سے پرے  
2 یہ چراغ ہے یہ تیرگی سحر کی دلیل  
اک آفتاب ہے ظلمت کے سلسلے سے پرے  
3 ہم اک جناب کے پیچھے تو دیکھ سکتے ہیں  
مگر وہ خواب، جو موجود ہے پرے سے پرے!

- 1 خاک اُڑتی ہے چار سواے دوست  
جانے کس دشت میں ہے تو اے دوست!
- 2 بھرو ہی میں گزیدہ محفل  
بھرو ہی تیری آرزو اے دوست
- 3 مجھ سے سلجی نہیں ہے زلف خیال  
ذہن الجھتا ہے مو پہ مو اے دوست

- 1 دل و دماغ سے اُس کا خیال اگر نکلے  
یہی ہے ایک رو اعتدال، اگر نکلے
- 2 نلا کاروگ ہے تہہ داری تجس بھی  
سوال اور اٹھیں اک سوال اگر نکلے
- 3 زمیں پہ جس نے نلا یاد کھا کے دانہ و آب  
ستم ہے اُس کی بغل سے بھی جال اگر نکلے

- 1 میں اپنی پہچان بھی عجائب گھروں میں دیکھوں  
عدو کے گھر میں مرے حوالے پڑے ہوئے ہیں
- 2 گھر میں صحرانورد سا یہ ساگت میں ہے  
اسی لئے تو گھروں پہ تالے پڑے ہوئے ہیں
- 3 تولے کے تارے پلک جھپکتے ہی بچھ گئے ہیں  
فلک پہ اختر کو جاں کے لالے پڑے ہوئے ہیں

- 1 کیا پھیلائے پر اور پاؤں، کیونکر بانہیں کھولے!  
جو بجنرے کا ہنسی ہو، بجنرے میں آنکھیں کھول
- 2 اتنی تنگ فضا میں میرے جوہر کیسے جاگیں  
میرے آگے گردوں اپنی پوری پرتیں کھولے
- 3 کیا پسائی، کون رسائی، خواب سُر اپا تالا  
اب تو اپنے سُر کا سودا ہی دیواریں کھولے

- 1 طرح طرح کے مسائل میں ایک مسائل ہوں  
کھلا کہ میں کسی لا حاصلی کا حاصل ہوں
- 2 ہے اختیار بجائے خود ایک صورت جبر  
میں اس رہائی میں بھی بستہ سلاسل ہوں
- 3 مرے خیر میں گوندھا ہوا ہے ذوق سُر  
یہی بہت ہے کہ نا آشنائے منزل ہوں
- 4 ضرور آئے گا اب کوئی گفتگو کرنے  
میں اُس کے آنے سے پہلے کا شور محفل ہوں

- 1 ہم ایک عمر سے ہیں روگ لگائے ہوئے  
 زمانہ بیت گیا قہر لگائے ہوئے  
 2 یہ کچھ لگائے ہیں ہم نے پے نمائش عام  
 کچھ اور پھول ہیں دل میں جڈا لگائے ہوئے

- 1 اک طعنہ خلقت کہ بہر گام تھا حاصل  
 پر ہم بھی غرض دار تھے چلنے رہے سُن کے  
 2 اب تک وہی رونا ہے غریب الوطنی کا  
 اب تک فلک آثارِ محلات ہیں اُن کے  
 3 مٹی بھی میسر تھی ہمیں چاک بھی اختر  
 اِس پر بھی تمنا کی تھی آواز سُن کے

- 1 تجھے پھر سے سُر کو تمنا دیکھنے کا  
 ذرا سا بھی نہیں امکان ایسا دیکھنے کا  
 2 ابھی ذہن و نظر زنگار کے زیر اثر ہیں  
 کوئی پہلو نہیں ہے سوچنے کا، دیکھنے کا

- 1 مری آنکھیں ہیں ایسی خاک پر بھی  
 جو روشن ہے ترے افلاک پر بھی  
 2 اگر ہے تو زمیں پر بھی اُتر آ  
 کبھی آنکھ ادراک پر بھی  
 3 یہاں آ کر بھی زور آدروہی ہیں  
 وہی قابض ہوئے املاک پر بھی

- 1 پتھروں کو خلعتِ احساس پہنا تا ہوں میں  
 کارائینہ گری میں ٹوٹا جاتا ہوں میں  
 2 میں کہ اک مدت سے ہوں غوطہ زن بحرِ فنا  
 دیکھے اُبھرے پہ آخِر کیا گہر لاتا ہوں میں  
 3 مائل معدومی ہستی ہوں جیسے ریگِ مال  
 دُسرود کے زنگ پر گھستا چلا جاتا ہوں میں  
 4 وقت پڑ جائے تو اپنے خون سے بھتی ہے پیاس  
 بھوک بڑھ جائے تو اپنا ماس بھی کھاتا ہوں میں



- 1 یوں ندائے نستران اندام! حذر کر مجھ سے
- 2 مہنول میں ہاس اترتی ہے سنور کر مجھ سے  
ہو کے خود رفتہ و بے خود کسی دریا کی طرح
- 3 آ، کسی شام کوئل، مجھ میں اتر کر مجھ سے  
میں وہ ہر وجود ہم آہنگ کسی سے نہ ہوا  
میرا سایہ بھی جڈا ہو گیا ڈر کر مجھ سے

- 1 یہ اور بات ہے کہ ہم آزاد ہو گئے  
اُڑنے کا ذکر چھوڑیے، اُڑنا پروں سے ہے

- 1 ہم سے ہی عام ہوئی صعوبت در پوزہ گری  
ہم نے پوشاک سفارت میں سوالی بیجیے
- 2 اُس نے اس بار تو حد کر دی ہے اختر عثمان  
اُس نے اس بار تو کھول بھی خالی بیجیے

- 1 اب اُس کی سنگساری کا زمانہ آ گیا ہے  
وہ جس نے روشنی کے ساتھ منہ کالا کیا ہے

