

To a Buddhist Beat
Allen Ginsberg on Politics, Poetics and Spirituality

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What we [the Beats] were proposing was some new sense of spiritual consciousness. We were interested in non-violence, sexual freedom, the exploration of psychedelic drugs and sensitivity. We were aware that the entire government...was corrupt. We were interested in Eastern thought and meditation. We had quite an open heart and open mind...

Allen Ginsberg¹

Every era has to reinvent the project of "spirituality" for itself...In the modern era one of the most active metaphors for the spiritual project is "art"...a particularly adaptable site on which to stage the formal dramas besetting consciousness, each individual work of art being a more or less astute paradigm for regulating or reconciling these contradictions...

Susan Sontag²

Introduction

On May 6, 1972, Allen Ginsberg took the Three Refuges of Buddhism. At a ceremony in the Dharmadhatu Meditation Center in Boulder, Colorado, Ginsberg—disaffected Jew, Beat poet, counter culture eminence, gay spokesman, teacher, itinerant bard, political dissident, prankster—pledged to take refuge in the Buddha, the *dharma* (Buddhist teachings) and the *sangha* (the Buddhist community). In addition he took the Bodhisattva vows which committed him, in the face of inexhaustible obstacles, to work ceaselessly for the liberation of all sentient beings. As part of the ceremony Ginsberg accepted his refuge name of "*Dharma* Lion", bestowed by his Tibetan *guru*, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche.³ This consummated an interest in Buddhism going back to the early 50s. Until his death in April 1997 Ginsberg remained committed to the Buddhist path, and devoted a good deal of his exuberant energies to *dharma* work. For most of the rest of his life he sat in meditation for at least an hour a day and did many extended retreats in which he underwent advanced training in various Buddhist disciplines. He worked

enthusiastically on behalf of several Buddhist organisations, particularly the Naropa Institute in Boulder and, in his later years, the Jewel Heart Centre in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Ginsberg's death occasioned much comment on his role in American letters and in the cultural disturbances of the last four decades but, outside the organs of the American Buddhist community, surprisingly little notice was directed to Ginsberg's engagement with Eastern forms of spirituality. Ginsberg's public career and private life (a somewhat slippery distinction in this case!) have been documented in prodigious detail by two recent biographers.⁴ There is no point in rehearsing that story here; rather, I want to reflect on his encounter with Asian religious forms. Ginsberg's life and work might be seen as an exemplary site on which various convergences and syntheses take place. Most notably perhaps, we can discern a creative fusion of various polarities and categorisations—East and West, the sacred and profane, the religious and the political, the intellectual and the sensual, the spiritual and the aesthetic.

Ginsberg's Spiritual Trajectory

In retracing his own spiritual growth Ginsberg invariably referred to a pivotal experience in the summer of 1948. At the time he was an undergraduate at Columbia, studying under Lionel Trilling and Mark van Doren, and living in East Harlem. He had already met both William Burroughs and Jack Kerouac with whom he spent a good deal of time discussing "new consciousness", smoking dope, and experimenting with literary forms which might best capture "the texture of consciousness" (one of Ginsberg's favourite phrases). He had also embarked on a wide-ranging exploration of the mystical literature of the West, particularly Plotinus, St John of the Cross, St Teresa of Avila, Marvell and Blake. Here is one of Ginsberg's many accounts of the experience:

...on the sixth floor of a Harlem tenement on 121st Street looking out at the roofs while reading Blake, back and forth, [I] suddenly had an auditory hallucination, hearing Blake—what I thought was his voice, very deep, earthen tone, not very far from my own mature tone of voice...reciting a poem called "The Sunflower," which I thought expressed some kind of universal longing for union with some infinite nature...I looked out the window and began to notice the extraordinary detail of the intelligent labor that had gone into the making of the rooftop cornices...And I suddenly realized that the world was, in a sense, not dead matter, but an increment or deposit of living intelligence and action and activity that finally took form...And as I looked at the sky I wondered what kind of intelligence had made that vastness, or what was the nature of the intelligence that I was glimpsing, and felt a sense of vastness and of coming home to a space I hadn't realized was there before but which seemed old and infinite, like the ancient of Days, so to speak.⁵

In a much earlier account Ginsberg described the voice in these terms: "The peculiar quality of the voice was something unforgettable because it was like God had a human voice, with all the infinite tenderness and mortal gravity of a living Creator speaking to

his son."⁶ Elsewhere he called the experience a "beatific illumination" in which he "saw the universe unfold in my brain".⁷

Several other intense experiences, each linked to one of Blake's poems, ensued in the following weeks. All the while Ginsberg was experimenting with drugs—marijuana, peyote, mescaline, later LSD—though no drug-induced experience left as deep an imprint as "The Sunflower" episode. In his researches into Zen Buddhism in the early 50s Ginsberg was struck by the apparent affinities between his own experience and *satori* as described by D.T. Suzuki and others. In fact, Ginsberg remained preoccupied with recreating this experience for the next fifteen years, only snapping out of what he described as a kind of stupefaction during a meeting in India with Dudjom Rinpoche, head of the Nyingma branch of Tibetan Buddhism. The Rinpoche's adjuration to forego clinging to experiences, whether pleasant or unpleasant, struck home.⁸

In the early 50s Kerouac introduced Ginsberg to several Buddhist texts, singing passages from Sanskrit sutras *à la* Frank Sinatra circa 1952.⁹ Ginsberg's initial reactions to the rudimentary teachings of the Buddha are interesting:

as an ex-Communist Jewish intellectual, I thought his pronouncement of the First Noble Truth, that existence was suffering, was some sort of insult to my left-wing background, since I was a progressive looking forward to the universal improvement of matters...¹⁰

Ginsberg tells us that it took him two years to accept Kerouac's insistence that the First Noble Truth was "a very simple fact". Also crucial to Ginsberg's initiation into the world of Eastern spirituality was his discovery of Chinese painting in the Fine Arts Room of the New York Public Library, an interest in Tibetan iconography (particularly the horrific "deities") and the *Book of the Dead*. This triggered a lot of "new mind and eyeball kicks" and inaugurated a massive reading program which included D.T. Suzuki's seminal *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1934).¹¹

By 1962 Ginsberg—now probably the best-known and certainly the most controversial poet in America—felt the need for a spiritual teacher sufficiently acutely to go on an extended visit to India with his friend and fellow poet Gary Snyder. Although he visited many holy sites and met a range of distinguished spiritual leaders and teachers (including Swami Shivananda, Dudjom Rinpoche, Gyalwa Karmapa, and the Dalai Lama) Ginsberg did not attach himself to any particular *guru* nor commit himself to any specific spiritual method.¹² An eclectic mixture of the Hindu and the Buddhist, haphazard meditation of one kind and another, mantra chanting and more drugs remained the order of the day. It was not until 1970 that Swami Muktananda introduced Ginsberg to a systematic meditation practice. However, it was to be Chögyam Trungpa, met briefly in India in 1962, who was to become Ginsberg's *guru*.

Trungpa was a highly charismatic and controversial figure in American Buddhism. Born in Tibet in 1939, he was identified as a *tulku* (reincarnation of an enlightened

teacher) at thirteen months and underwent the intensive Tibetan training culminating in full ordination in the Kagyu sect at the age of eighteen. After a highly dramatic escape from Tibet following the Chinese invasion, and a period in India, Trungpa had gone to Oxford to study philosophy, comparative religion and fine art before setting up the Samye-Ling Meditation Centre in Scotland. Some years later he moved to America and was the prime mover in establishing the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado.¹³ He was to have a profound impact on Ginsberg—so much so that Ginsberg was later to say that, "he left such an imprint on my consciousness that I in a sense see through his eyes or see through the same eyes of those occasions where he pointed direction to me."¹⁴

After an apparently chance encounter in a New York street in 1970, Trungpa and Ginsberg developed a close and complex relationship—*guru* and *chela*, philosophical sparring partners, drinking buddies, fellow poets, tricksters, kindred spirits. Under the Tibetan's invitation Ginsberg, with Anne Waldman, set up the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics within the Naropa Institute. For many years Ginsberg taught a summer school there which explored the connections between meditation and poetry: "the life of meditation and the life of art," he claimed, "are both based on a similar conception of spontaneous mind. They both share renunciation as a way of avoiding a conditioned art work, or trite art, or repetition of other people's ideas."¹⁵ Under Trungpa's guidance, he also developed his own meditational practice and deepened his understanding of the Vajyana tradition in particular (though he retained an interest in Zen Buddhism and Hinduism, as well as later turning back to the Judaism which was his patrimony). It was Trungpa who persuaded Ginsberg to perform improvisational poetry.

From the early 70s onwards Ginsberg could properly be described as a serious Buddhist practitioner: as one observer noted in 1976, "classical Buddhist practice has become the core of Ginsberg's life".¹⁶ Three years after Trungpa's death in 1986 Philip Glass introduced Ginsberg to another Tibetan master with whom he also developed a close relationship—Kyabje Gelek Rinpoche of the Gelugpa sect, based at the Jewel Heart Centre in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Ginsberg himself has noted how the intense devotion and desire which he had previously directed to his literary heroes, friends and multifarious lovers—often to no very good effect—was now largely transferred to the *dharma* and the *guru*.¹⁷

Some of the attractions of Buddhism for one of Ginsberg's temperament and experience are plain enough. Buddhism offered a spiritual therapy which could address his deep psychic wounds. Buddhist teachings and meditational practice certainly helped Ginsberg to at least partially heal some of the deep-seated confusions and anxieties, "elements of resentment, aggression and dead-end anger" which were the legacy of a painful and traumatic childhood. He never lost his sharp sense of life's absurdities but increasingly understood the pain and pathos of the condition to which the Buddha's First Noble Truth alerts us. The form of Buddhism espoused by Trungpa was pragmatic and

experiential in method, doctrinally "open", and free of any disabling associations with either conservative politics or puritanical moralism. Buddhism's non-theistic metaphysic appealed to Ginsberg's anti-authoritarian personality ("there is no Central Intelligence Agency in the universe") and provided a vocabulary in which he could better understand the hierophanies of his student days.¹⁸

By way of an aside we might note that Ginsberg's various involvements with Tibetan Buddhist organisations in the 70s and 80s, and the controversies and tensions in which he often found himself involved—most notably the "Naropa Poetry Wars"¹⁹—illuminate several aspects of the "Americanizing" of the Vajjarana. Jack Kornfield has identified democratization (the disassembling of patriarchal and authoritarian power structures, and the move from a monastic to a lay orientation), feminization (the inclusion of women at all levels of practice and leadership), and integration (the adaptation of Buddhist practice to the exigencies of everyday lay life in late 20th century America) as the three key changes in this process.²⁰ Another conspicuous motif in the development of American Buddhism is the rapid emergence of what has come to be called "engaged Buddhism"—one dynamically and directly concerned with the most pressing socio-political issues of the day.²¹

Of the many ceremonies that marked Allen Ginsberg's death the Jewel Heart Memorial Service at Ann Arbor was especially poignant. The religious service included both Tibetan and Jewish chants and prayers, and was followed by a concert of poetry and music, read or sung by Ann Waldman, Bob Rosenthal (Ginsberg's personal secretary), Natalie Merchant and Patti Smith, and including works by Ginsberg, Kerouac and Bob Dylan. The San Francisco ceremony at the Temple Emmanuel included tributes from Snyder, Diane Di Prima, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Robert Hass, Joanne Kryger and Andrew Schelling.²²

Politics, Poetics and the Western Encounter with Eastern Spirituality

Several questions arise. As the old song has it, "What's it all about Alfie?" How did this encounter with Buddhism impact on Ginsberg's politics, his aesthetics and his worldview generally? In the context of American cultural transformations what might Ginsberg's experience exemplify? What might we learn from this engagement about the nature of the American experience of Tibetan Buddhism in the second half of the 20th century? What kind of "divides" did Ginsberg traverse and wherein lies the significance of his spiritual migrations? I do not wish to essay answers to these questions in any very systematic or exhaustive way but rather to offer a few observations which touch on them at various points.

Ginsberg's *persona* and his place in the collective American psyche probably has as much to do with his role as a political gadfly as poet—and indeed he would not have

separated the two. From the early Columbia days right down to his death Ginsberg was a burr under the saddle of conservative America, constantly mocking bourgeois values and scandalizing the burghers, puncturing uncomfortable hypocrisies and exposing corruption in the body politic. With his own inimitable mixture of insouciance, *outré* charm, moral gravity and impassioned eloquence he championed causes such as the protection of free expression, gay rights, the ending of the Vietnam War, ecological awareness, the unmasking of American imperialism. All of this is quite unexceptional. What *is* interesting in this context is the way in which Ginsberg's career fuses spiritual and political values, and creates a style and vocabulary of political critique which owes much more to the prophets of ancient Israel, Blake, and Thoreau than to, say, Marx, Bakunin, Goldman—or indeed to Mill, the Webbs or G.B. Shaw. He had little time for the confrontationist and angry slogans of the SDS and the Weathermen and believed that the rather facile politicisation of youth much in evidence in the 60s had somewhat undermined the Beat impulses towards spiritual liberation.²³

Interviewer: Kenneth Rexroth deemed you "a poet of revolt"...are you still?

Ginsberg: I never have been a poet of revolt, Never never never. That's saying you want to become wiser by becoming dumber, you want to become more peaceful by getting angry. ... *My interest is in alteration in consciousness, in new vision...*[this] goes back to 1945 conversations with Kerouac. Revolt of consciousness, ok.²⁴

Interviewer: How have you been active in fighting for gay rights?

Ginsberg: I don't believe in fighting.²⁵

European radicalism since the 18th century has been, in the main, fiercely secular and militantly atheistic. Institutional religion has been seen, more often than not, as an oppressive and reactionary force and notions of the "spiritual" and "mystical" have been variously stigmatized as superstition, obscurantism, alienation, cowardice and neurosis. It is no surprise that Ginsberg should align himself, emotionally and intellectually, with the one significant group of political radicals who did *not* accept the materialistic, positivistic and progressivist assumptions of the Enlightenment, namely the Romantic poets. Nor is it an accident that Romantic values should have figured so largely, though often in caricature, in the counter culture of the 60s. What the counter culture offered was, in Theodore Roszak's words, "a defection from the long-standing tradition of skeptical, secular intellectuality which has served as the prime vehicle for three hundred years of scientific and technical work in the West."²⁶ Ginsberg's principal role as counter-cultural figure was as a "vagabond proselytizer" of a this-worldly mysticism, "an ecstasy of the body and the earth that somehow embraces and transforms mortality... a joy that includes... the commonplace obscenities of our existence".²⁷

Ginsberg's "beatific illuminations" and his subsequent immersion in Indian, Tibetan and Japanese spirituality gave him a perspective and a metaphysic which certainly did not blunt his political radicalism but which provided a certain distance, a sense of

proportion, and a scale of values which moved him past an adolescent rage at the cultural wasteland of Ike and Dale Carnegie and Lassie, and the "single vision" of a materialistic gospel of progress, and beyond the narrow, antagonistic dichotomies of Marxist rhetoric and the easy sentimentalities of Utopianism in its manifold guises. Increasingly his political stance, and indeed his poetry, seemed to derive less from the impulse to mockery, from hatred and alienation, and more from a sense of compassion—remembering that in the Buddhist context compassion (*karuna*) is inseparable from wisdom (*prajna*) of which it is actually the dynamic aspect. Ginsberg's later interviews often evince the non-combative and compassionate values which lie at the heart of the Buddhist tradition.

In a larger context we might ponder the significance of the changes whereby the iconic figures of the secular left (say Lenin, Emma Goldman, Trotsky, Joe Hill) have lost a good deal of their lustre whilst those whose radicalism is governed by a "politics of eternity" (say Gandhi, Martin Luther King, the Dalai Lama) take on a new aura. This answers to something much deeper than the whimsies of political fashion. It is tempting to believe that a new paradigm of socio-political transformation is still being fashioned—one drawing on the European post-Enlightenment, radical mainstream but discarding its one-dimensional materialism and utilitarian rationality (and the scientific ideologies from which they derive), and much more receptive to the spiritual messages of both our own largely-forgotten tradition and of non-Western cultures alike.

Mark Linenthal has claimed, persuasively enough, that Ginsberg, "more than any other writer changed what a whole generation thought a poem should or could be."²⁸ Our interest here is not so much in the literary upheaval unleashed by the first public reading of "Howl" (1955)—the "most widely sold, read, and discussed poem of the decade"²⁹—but rather in the inter-relationships of aesthetics, politics and metaphysics in Ginsberg's life/work. Clearly the "alteration in consciousness" of which he so often spoke encompasses all of these dimensions. Ginsberg once defined classical poetry as "a 'process', or experiment—a probe into the nature of reality and the nature of the mind."³⁰ How easily the definition fits Buddhism itself. Ginsberg repeatedly talks of "new consciousness" as providing the emergent Beat writers with their focal point and as impelling their interest in writers such as Blake, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, and Yeats ("our great grandfathers among hermetic poets and philosophers"³¹). Of course, since time immemorial poetry has been the medium in which the religious sensibility most readily and fully expresses itself—think of Homer, the Psalms, the rhapsodies of the Vedic rishis.³² "Poet is Priest", as Ginsberg puts it in the first line of "Death to Van Gogh's Ear".

The Beats' search for new consciousness and for new poetic forms, their rejection of the General Motors/Walt Disney version of the American Dream, their impulse to escape the grip of Urizen (Blake's mythical personification of "Single Vision"—

instrumentalist rationality, the Human Imagination petrified, Newton's Pantocrator) were all of a piece:

We didn't have what you would call a philosophy. I would say there was an ethos, that there were ideas...themes...preoccupations...*the primary thing was a move towards spiritual liberation*, not merely from Bourgeois, 50's 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...the search for new consciousness...I don't think we had it clearly defined, but we were looking for something...as a kind of breakthrough from the sort of hyper-rationalistic, hyper-scientific, hyper-rationalizing of the post-war era.³³

As Michael McClure put it in his memoir *Scratching the Beat Surface*, "None of us wanted to go back to the gray, chill, militaristic silence, to the intellective void—to the land without poetry—to the spiritual drabness. We wanted to make it new...We wanted voice and we wanted vision."³⁴ Here indeed were "angelheaded hipsters burning for ancient heavenly connection"! In this context it is no surprise that a good many of the Beat circle developed a serious and sustained interest in aspects of Eastern religion, art and philosophy—Kerouac, Snyder, Kenneth Rexroth, Philip Whalen, Anne Waldman amongst them.

The whole literary experiment of the Beats, at least for Ginsberg (and certainly for Kerouac and Snyder) was impelled by a spiritual rather than an aesthetic aspiration. Or, to put it differently, the new literary forms emerged out of the explorations of consciousness rather than out of any coherent aesthetic theory, and certainly not out of any blind iconoclasm. As is so often the case with *avant-garde* movements in whatever domain, theory *followed* practice. As Ginsberg himself succinctly characterized the Beat movement: "a spiritual revolution that took form in the changes in the literary method...".³⁵ Or again, to put the point differently, poetry, for Ginsberg, became a form of spiritual practice—and one nicely attuned to the spiritual economy of Buddhism with its pervasive concern with "the texture of consciousness", underpinned by a metaphysic of "emptiness" or "voidness" (*sunyata*) which, far from constituting a nihilistic negation, provided the basis for what Ginsberg called "continuous generous activity, exuberant activity", without hope or fear, non-attached and compassionate—in short, for *karuna*.³⁶ Ginsberg repeatedly foregrounds the intersections of meditational practice and the writing of poetry: in each case it is a matter of "noticing my thoughts, noticing that I'm noticing it, observing what's there, then realizing what is really there...being a stenographer of your own mind...scanning your mind and observing your thoughts, and what forms arise and flourish."³⁷ Thus "there's a natural affinity between non-theistic practice and up to date modern and post-modern American poetic practice".³⁸

Ginsberg, like other artists and intellectuals who have turned Eastwards, also had a role to play in what Mircea Eliade has called the "deprovincializing" of Western culture

in a "crepuscular era".³⁹ The epoch of self-contained and more or less homogeneous civilisations is, of course, long since gone. As Lyotard remarked of the "postmodernist" condition, "One listens to reggae, watches a western, eats McDonald's food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wears Paris perfume in Tokyo and 'retro' clothes in Hong Kong."⁴⁰ He might have added something about mantras, mandalas, mudras or maharishis! The cultural fabric itself becomes a Barthesian text, "a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture".⁴¹ In Ginsberg's case it was a matter of a disaffiliated American Jew of Russian background careering around America chanting Hindu mantras, reciting Blake and Whitman, playing an Indian harmonium and Aboriginal song sticks, expounding Tibetan metaphysics, quoting Milarepa, Jewish mystics and the Sixth Patriarch.

On one level one might suppose that a good deal of the Beat/counter-cultural infatuation with the exotic, the "oriental", the "mystical" and "magical" was indeed of a sentimental and fashionable order. Doubtless, there was a good deal of counterfeit spirituality peddled by false *gurus*, by charlatans and hucksters, as there is today under the canopy of New Age-ism. But, no question, the interest in Eastern spirituality met some deep yearning for *a vision of reality* deeper, richer, more adequate, more attuned to the fullness of human experience, than the impoverished worldview offered by a scientifically-grounded humanism. In short, the Beats and the hippies said "no way José!" to the "grand narrative" of the Enlightenment, and turned to other sources for the wellsprings of wisdom and individual/collective well-being — the religious traditions of the East, the beliefs and practices of indigenous cultures, the quasi-mystical experiences apparently offered by drugs, the mythology and mystical literature enshrined in the pre-Renaissance traditions of the West, and the like.

A serious American engagement with Eastern religions goes back at least to Emerson and Thoreau: the Beats counted the Transcendentalists amongst their progenitors.⁴² Other obvious precursors include the theosophists of the late 19th century and the Vedantists of the inter-war period (the latter originating in the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893). The Beat and counter-cultural involvement in Eastern spirituality was not without precedent; nor was it either ephemeral or trivial and, indeed, it is still bearing fruit. The adherence of a rapidly growing and highly significant portion of the Western intelligentsia—artists, writers, philosophers, social activists prominently—to Eastern religious forms (most notably from the Tibetan and Japanese branches of Buddhism), and the assimilation of Asian modes of spiritual experience and cultural expression into Western forms, is one of the more remarkable cultural metamorphoses of the late 20th century, one as yet barely recognised let alone understood. More particularly, the impact of the Tibetan diaspora on the West, especially the USA, demands more serious attention.

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- ¹ Interview with Henry Tischler, "Allen Ginsberg—Journals Mid-Fifties: 1954-1958", <http://www.authorsspeak.com/ginsberg> [all subsequent Website references are <http://www>].
- ² Susan Sontag, "The Aesthetics of Silence" in *A Susan Sontag Reader* ed. E. Hardwick (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), p. 181.
- ³ See Barry Miles, *Ginsberg: A Biography* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1989), p. 446.
- ⁴ As well as the Miles biography already cited there is Michael Schumacher's *Dharma Lion: A Critical Biography of Allen Ginsberg* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992). For a detailed list of critical and biographical work on Ginsberg see "Writings about Allen Ginsberg", www.charm.net/~brooklyn/Biblio/GinsbergBiblio.html.
- ⁵ Allen Ginsberg, "The Vomit of a Mad Tyger", *Shambhala Sun*, July 1995, shambhalasun.com/ginsberg.html (this source hereafter "Tyger")
- ⁶ B. Miles, *Ginsberg*, p. 99. The most detailed account of this experience is to be found in Ginsberg's interview with Tom Clark in *Paris Review* 37, Spring 1966.
- ⁷ Ginsberg, quoted in Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969), p. 127.
- ⁸ B. Miles, *Ginsberg*, p. 104.
- ⁹ Allen Ginsberg, excerpt from *Disembodied Poetics: Annals of the Jack Kerouac School*, naropa.edu/ginsbuddhist2.html. Kerouac himself had first turned to these texts in reaction against Neal Cassady's preoccupation with Edgar Cayce—whom Ginsberg later described as a "crackpot".
- ¹⁰ "Tyger"
- ¹¹ B. Miles, *Ginsberg*, p. 153.
- ¹² For Ginsberg's account of his experiences in India see *Indian Journals, March 1962-May 1963* (San Francisco: City Lights Books & Dave Haselwood Books, 1970). See also B. Miles, *Ginsberg*, Chapter 11.
- ¹³ For a detailed narrative of Trungpa's part in the spread of Buddhism in America see Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America* (Boston: Shambhala, 1992 rev. edit.). For Trungpa's own story of his early life see *Born in Tibet* (Shambhala: Boston, 1995—first published 1966).
- ¹⁴ Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, "Interview with Allen Ginsberg", myna.com/~davidck/giinsb~1.htm
- ¹⁵ Allen Ginsberg, "Meditation and Poetics" in *Spiritual Quests: The Art and Craft of Religious Writing* ed. William Zinsser (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), p. 163.
- ¹⁶ Peter Barry Chowka, "This is Allen Ginsberg?", the 1976 *New Age* Interview, members.aol.com/pbchowka/ginsberg76.html
- ¹⁷ "Allen Ginsberg: Anxious Dreams of Eliot", *The Boston Book Review* Interview with Harvey Blume, 1995, www.bookwire.com/bbr/interviews/v2.7/ginsberg.html
- ¹⁸ See "Tyger".

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- ¹⁹ See B. Miles, *Ginsberg*, pp. 466-482.
- ²⁰ See Jack Kornfield, "Is Buddhism Changing in North America?" in *Buddhist America* ed. Don Morreale (Sante Fe: John Muir Publications, 1988).
- ²¹ See Fred Eppsteiner ed., *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1988).
- ²² For information about tributes, ceremonies, remembrances and the like, see: tricycle.com/ginsberg.html
- ²³ See Seth Goddard, "The Beats and Boom: A Conversation with Allen Ginsberg", pathfinder.com/@@kPiSQwQAOXm@6@3B/Life/boomers/ginsberg.html
- ²⁴ "Allen Ginsberg interviewed by Jeffrey Goldsmith" (emphasis mine).
- ²⁵ "Allen Ginsberg interviewed by Jeffrey Goldsmith".
- ²⁶ Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, p. 141.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- ²⁸ "San Francisco Says Goodbye to a Bard", *San Francisco Chronicle*, Monday April 21, 1997, p. A1.
- ²⁹ Daniel Hoffman ed., *Harvard Guide to Contemporary American Writing* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1979), p. 519.
- ³⁰ Allen Ginsberg, "Meditation and Poetics", p. 145.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- ³² On this subject see Bede Griffiths, *The Marriage of East and West* (London: Collins, 1982), pp. 47ff.
- ³³ Seth Goddard, "The Beats and Boom: A Conversation with Allen Ginsberg" (*italics mine*). See also "Allen Ginsberg interviewed by Jeffrey Goldsmith" where Ginsberg says, "My own idea is that the origins of beat writings were (*sic*) in some kind of spiritual revolution."
- ³⁴ Steve Silberman, "How Beat Happened", ezone.org:1080/ez/e2/articles/digaman.html
- ³⁵ Seth Goddard, "The Beats and Boom: A Conversation with Allen Ginsberg".
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ Jim Moore, "Public Heart: An Interview with Allen Ginsberg", bookwire.com/hmr/REVIEW/moore.html
- ³⁸ Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, "Interview with Allen Ginsberg".
- ³⁹ See Mircea Eliade, *Autobiography II: 1937-1960, Exile's Odyssey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 152-153, and *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 62-63.
- ⁴⁰ Jean-François Lyotard quoted in Todd Gitlin: "Style for style's sake" in *The Weekend Australian* January 21-22, 1989, Weekender p. 9.
- ⁴¹ Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author" in *Image Music Text* selected and trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), p. 146.

⁴² See Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America* Chapter 4, pp. 54-69.