

PERFORMING ANCIENT RELICS AS AN EVOCATION OF SPIRITUAL AND ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN ALLEN GINSBERG'S "PLUTONIAN ODE" AND GARY SNYDER'S "LOGGING 12" & "LOGGING 14"

Henrikus Joko Yulianto
English Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts
State University of Semarang
Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia
henrikusjy@gmail.com

Abstract-the Beat Generation stands as a "subterranean" group of writers in the United States in the postwar era who engaged themselves with a spiritual vision countering against individual's material engrossment. They express their "underground" literary activism through jazz and Buddhist poetics that signify ecological views. Furthermore, their non-conformism to materialism reveals their spiritual views as Beat vision. This embodies the insight into the nature of phenomena, the interdependent relation between any form of life, and the evocation to conserve ecological resilience. Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder are two Beat poets from the East and West Coast America who communicate their ecological views through the interrelatedness between one's spiritual and material entities. This Beat insight evokes individuals to control their penchant for extravagant material goods since this overconsumption would only wreak havoc on the natural environment. Ginsberg and Snyder's poetics of mythologizing plutonium and forest accordingly encourage anyone to respect any form of life in one's reliance on goods to fulfill his/her daily necessities.

Keywords: the Beat Generation, Beat vision, interdependent relation, ecological resilience

I. INTRODUCTION

Myths serve as materials and tradition that modern writers outlast in their works (Eliot, 37-39). A poet of the Beat Generation, Allen Ginsberg for instance, interweaves Gnosticism with Buddhism in his poems such as "Howl" and "Wichita Vortex Sutra." In like manner, Ginsberg's comrade, a San Franciscan poet, Gary Snyder uses Buddhist nuances

in many of his poems. Snyder expresses this myth in his poems "Logging", "Hunting", and "Burning" (*Myths & Texts* 1978). Mythic aspects in their poems not only immortalize their legacy, but also substantiate perennial natural landscapes and minerals. In terms of their ancient qualities, these myths correspond with layers of human's unconsciousness and with the meaning of the term "beat" as "a feeling toward a bedrock of consciousness" (Holmes, 22). I argue that the meaning of "bedrock of consciousness" here embodies ecological and spiritual aspects in terms of the interconnectedness between "bedrock" as an ecological object and "consciousness" as a spiritual aspect. In a word, the phrase suggests the unconsciousness (one's spiritual realm) or the very rawness or 'wildness' of the unconscious world (Snyder, 9-12).

The Beat Generation is a group of "wayward" young American writers in the 1950s. The group originated from an informal talk of young students of Columbia University, New York in the early of 1940s. Since the group began in New York City, it was called the East Coast Beats (Charters, 1-7). But the group further amalgamated with West Coast writers during the mid-1950s and became an all-around American group (Ibid., 187-190, 227-231). The East Coast Beat progenitors include Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and Lucien Carr. Their friend a student at Harvard University, William S. Burroughs joined them and they together commenced a subterranean life against the mainstream

Americans. Another figure named Herbert Huncke, a Times Square hustler introduced them to the word “beat”. This term was actually popular among jazz musicians and hustlers in the era as a slang that means “down and out, or poor and exhausted.” Kerouac felt enchanted by the “melancholy sneer” Huncke pronounced the word *beat* so that he used it to name his group, *Beat Generation*. The word no longer meant *exhausted* and “at the bottom of the world” but rather “characters of a special spirituality who didn’t gang up but were solitary Bartlebies staring out the dead wall window of our civilization.” They meant to create what they called a “New Vision of art”, which suggests “one’s way of looking at the world in a new light, to look at the world in a way that produces some meaning, to find values (Ginsberg, 25-30; Charters, xvii-xviii). Jack Kerouac as the originator of the group along with Ginsberg and Carr (see Charters, 565-573) compares the word *beat* with *beato*, an Italian word for *beatific* or “to be in a state of beatitude or in “a state of beatitude, like St. Francis who tried “love all life; to be utterly sincere with everyone, practising endurance, kindness cultivating joy of arts (Ibid., 562-565). Kerouac’s notion exemplifies the Beats’ vision of any form of life in the natural environment.

The term *beat* also corresponds with rhythm of bebop as a modern jazz in the 1940s and early 1950s. It is the music that revolutionized commercialized music of the earlier swing big bands (Charters, 555-559). Ginsberg, Kerouac, and other Beat writers both male and female from the East and West coasts were all fascinated with bebop as the new jazz (Charters, 227-231; 555-559; Grace & Johnson, 55-70; Allen, 36-40; Rexroth, 59-61; Ginsberg, 31-42). Ginsberg, Kerouac, and the other Beats were enchanted with the fast tempo and dissonant tone of the music that suggest spontaneity. The spirit of this spontaneity signifies a revolution against more conventional and rhythmic pattern of earlier swing jazz. It also reacted against commercialism of the music and consumerism of mainstream Americans in the postwar era (see Waring, 3-5; DeVeaux, 1-31; Belgrad, 179-195). Ginsberg and his friends similarly referred to the notion of spontaneity in Buddhism as an Eastern religion and spirituality in their search for a new vision (see Fields, 195-224; Prothero, 1-20; Charters, 565-573). In view of Buddha-dharma or religious principles, this notion correlates with a bodhisattva’s insight into the essence of phenomena as being empty of self-nature (Fields, 210-211; Goddard, 247-249).

Gary Snyder was not purely affiliated with Beat writers since the group originally came from New York City (McKenzie, 141-143). In the mid-1950s, Snyder went to Japan to study Buddhism and

lived in Rinko-in Shokoku-ji monastery in Kyoto. Therefore, he was not completely within the circle of the Beats though he kept doing regular correspondence with them (McKenzie, 140-157; Suiter, 192-194; Schneider, 51-95). Being born in San Francisco and grew up in Oregon in the West Coast (Snyder, 611), Snyder is used to living in vast natural landscapes. Accordingly, he tends to write poems about the landscapes and natural life. Though being somewhat distant from the Beats scholarship with its bohemian but spiritually robust and ecologically visionary, Snyder’s poems reflect this spiritual and ecological shrewdness as Beat vision.

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper discusses Allen Ginsberg’s poem “Plutonian Ode” and Gary Snyder’s “Logging 12” & “Logging 14”. The analysis is focused on their use of mythic images that I call “ancient relics” in these poems. The reason why I select Ginsberg and Snyder’s poems rather than other Beat writers’ is that their poems especially “Plutonian Ode” and “Logging 12” & “Logging 14” are some poems that exemplify mythic “relics”, and these *myths* articulate ecological and spiritual views. The word *relics* here is analogous with “artifacts” or historical objects, which refer to Ginsberg’s use of plutonium as long-standing mineral, of names of Gods and Goddesses. Snyder portrays this mythic relic through natural objects such as forests personified as Gods and Goddesses. There are two questions that this paper discusses: **first**, how does Ginsberg and Snyder’s use of mythic images in their poems signify Beat vision of spiritual empowerment?; **second**, how do Ginsberg and Snyder’s Beat poetics through their poems substantiate an evocation of ecological awareness? I carried out this data analysis on the poetic texts and some books related to Beat scholarship and Buddhism.

III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder’s Use of Mythic Images as Beat Vision of Spiritual Empowerment

There are many scholarly works that discuss writings of the Beat Generation. Yet, there is only a few that examines Ginsberg’s “Plutonian Ode” and Snyder’s “Logging 12” & “Logging 14”. Some of them that are worth mentioning are *The Poetry and Politics of Allen Ginsberg* by Eliot Katz (2016) and *A Place for Wayfaring: The Poetry and Prose of Gary Snyder* by Patrick D. Murphy (2000). Meanwhile,

two scholarly works *Genesis, Structure, and Meaning in Gary Snyder's Mountains and Rivers Without End* (Hunt, 2004) and *A Sense of The Whole: Reading Gary Snyder's Mountains and Rivers Without End* (Gonnerman, 2015) scrutinize Snyder's poems from his collection *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. Two scholarly articles that discuss Ginsberg and Snyder's ecological views in general are "Modernist Looking: Surreal Impressions in the Poetry of Allen Ginsberg" (Jackson, 2010) and "The Shaping of Gary Snyder's Ecological Consciousness" (Takahashi, 2002). Yet, none of these scholarly works particularly confers about spiritual and ecological vision of Ginsberg and Snyder's poems.

a. Allen Ginsberg's Use of Mythic Images in "Plutonian Ode" as a Revelation of Beat Vision of Spiritual Empowerment

Ginsberg wrote this poem in the 1970-s when America was under the governance of President Jimmy Carter. It was the era of social and environmental unrest. America had an energy crisis so that the government encouraged its people to build more power plants to produce more electrical energy (Horowitz, 2005). They also endorsed the building of nuclear power plant such as that of Rocky Flat Power Plant in Boulder, Colorado. Meanwhile, environmental activists including Beat writers especially led by Allen Ginsberg did not agree with the plan. They had a protest against the plan by blocking and sitting on the railway tracks that would transport nuclear fuels to other places (see Schumacher, 628-632; Katz, 176-183).

I

1 What new element before us unborn in nature? Is there a new thing under the Sun?

At last inquisitive Whitman a modern epic, detonative, Scientific theme

First penned unmindful by Doctor Seaborg with
poisonous hand, through the sea beyond
Uranus

whose chthonic ore fathers this magma-teared
Lord of Hades, Sire of avenging Furies,
billionaire Hell-King worshipped once

5 with black sheep throats cut, priest's face averted
from underground mysteries in a single
temple at Eleusis,

Part I of this poem has 45 strophes; the following Part II has 12 strophes; the last Part III has 8 strophes. So the poem as a whole contains 65 strophes. The word "strophe" here refers to "the first

of a pair of stanzas as the base of the structure of a poem" (*The American College Dictionary*; Miles, 154). Each strophe is composed of a somewhat similar interlocking lines to those in "Howl" (Ginsberg, 1959). This typography represents blues' call-and-response (Wald, 2), in which the fixed base serves as 'call' and the indented or dangling lines as 'response' (Morgan, 138-139). The blank spaces after each of the lines or between one image and another such as that of the third strophe of Part I of this poem – "for Death's planet", function as pauses in jazz choruses for a musician to take a breath. Each strophe articulated in apostrophe represents improvised jazz phrases since it has no period but only some commas. This serves as a musician's lingering blowing in improvising his phrases. Mythic images certainly reveal the content of this poem since each image points to a certain meaning and an idea. Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams as the Beats' inspiring predecessors postulate their credo of "no idea but in things" (Allen & Tallman, 36-48). This notion encourages readers to focus more on images than their meaning. But in fact each image denotes something and a certain meaning. In a word, there is in fact an interconnected symbiosis between image and idea though the imagists such as Pound and Williams do not highlight this (Allen & Tallman, 36-48).

The mythic images that I mean also deal with ordinary phrases written in upper-case letters pointing toward plutonium. For instance, in the third strophe the poet uses initial capital letters for 'Doctor Seaborg' as an ordinary person who has a tremendous power since he is the one who firstly produced plutonium (Bernstein, 158-159). A next similar example is the phrases "the Great Year" in strophe 11 and "Baptismal Word" in strophe 14 that also mythologize the phrases as being urgent related to the first invention of plutonium. In strophes 6 & 7, the poet metaphorically compares the formation of uranium with Greek goddess and gods, Persephone and Demeter, and their daughter "stored in salty caverns" –

Spring-green Persephone nuptial to his inevitable
Shade, Demeter mother of asphodel weeping
dew,

Her daughter stored in salty caverns under white
snow, black hail, gray winter rain or Polar
ice, immemorable seasons before

The strophes quoted above compare the formation with the gods and goddesses in their ancientness. But the formation itself is much older than the existence of gods and goddesses, as he says in strophes 8 to 10

–

Fish flew in Heaven, before a Ram died by the
starry bush, before the Bull stamped sky
and
earth
or Twins inscribed their memories in cuneiform
clay or Crab'd flood
10 washed memory from the skull, or Lion sniffed
the lilac breeze in Eden –

In which the repetition of 'before' followed with certain mythic events (all the images with upper-case letters such as "Fish", "Heaven", "Ram", "the Bull", "Twins", "Crab'd flood", "Lion" and "Eden" serve as allegories that figuratively suggest spiritual allusions related to the poet's aesthetic process). These allegorized images sanctify the very origin of uranium as natural mineral that has existed long before any living creatures. In strophe 16, the poet mentions the names of Hebrew gods that he describes to represent uranium's ancient quality "Sabaoth, Jehova, Astapheus, Adonaeus, Elohim, Iao, Ialdabaoth, Aeon, which are regarded being born "in an Abyss of Light" (Ginsberg, 710). The name "Sophia" in strophe 17 in the Gnostic tradition refers to an embodiment of human and divine femininity. This also represents a figure who helps to create the material world (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophia>). The line "Sophia's reflections glittering thoughtful galaxies, whirlpools of star-spume silver-thin as hairs of Einstein!" exemplify extended metaphors that compare "Sophia's reflections" with "glittering thoughtful galaxies" and "whirlpools of star-spume silver-thin as hairs of Einstein." The analogy between the mythic gods and goddesses and plutonium (and forest in Snyder's poems) suggest an idea that the history of natural resources was as ancient as that of humans beings.

The mythic images become aesthetic and spiritual "relics". Each material object embodies an eternal quality and certain power when it is denominated with mythical names. The use of names of Greek and Gnostic gods proves the quality of uranium as a perennial mineral. The use of Buddhist mantra eulogized uranium having an anthropogenic nature. This means that the uranium has its formidability through human's realization of its properties rather than the uranium as a self-defining material –

25 I enter your secret places with my mind, I speak
with your presence, I roar your Lion
Roar with mortal mouth.
One microgram inspired to one lung, ten pounds
of heavy metal dust adrift slow motion
over gray Alps
the breadth of the planet, how long before your
radiance speeds blight and death to
sentient beings?
Enter my body or not I carol my spirit inside you,
Unapproachable Weight,
O heavy heavy Element awakened I vocalize your
consciousness to six worlds

In the strophes, the poet interweaves materiality of uranium with spirituality of one's consciousness in realizing the existence of the material through his perception. The images written in upper-case letters "Lion Roar", "heavy Element", and "Unapproachable Weight" rhapsodize about the material as revealing "devoid entities" in view of Buddhist teachings.

The swear words with the exclamation marks written in upper-case letters are not addressed to the uranium, but to the humans who have more authority to rule over any material entity in the phenomenal world. For instance, the phrases "Destroyer of lying Scientists", "Devourer of covetous Generals", and "Incinerator of Armies & Melter of Wars" do not condemn uranium as dreadful material, but more especially censure humans who experimented on it or those who pursued it for personal interests. The use of upper-case letters for these and other phrases in the following strophes metaphorically anthropomorphizes uranium referring to human's traits rather than uranium as a self-regulating material. The use of apostrophe and swear words as Buddhist and Beat poetics is meant to evoke human's awareness of controlling the unlimitedness of one's power in dealing with material phenomena (see Trigilio, 81-84; Goddard, 439-440). The last two strophes imply a Buddha-dharma of "dependent origination" (*pratītya-samutpāda*), which means an interconnection between any physical phenomena and one's consciousness –

I dare your Reality, I challenge your very being! I
publish your cause
and effect!
I turn the Wheel of Mind on your three hundred tons!
Your name enters
mankind's ear! I embody your ultimate powers!

The way the poet addresses uranium as a very hazardous material at the same time implies human's sovereignty over external phenomena rather than the phenomena themselves as self-governing objects. The phrase "the Wheel of Mind" and the lines "I publish your cause and effect!" and "I embody your ultimate powers!" exemplify this human interiorization of plutonium as well as his attachment to it.

In Part II of this poem, the poet describes the history of plutonium as a material derived from uranium bombardment and from some uranium plants in the U.S. In Part III, the poet entreats each individual to meditate through his mind and to realize the essence of uranium as being empty of self-nature. The strophes in these parts similarly feature several phrases written in upper-case letters that mythologize major images related to Buddhist major teachings, human's anthropocentrism, and the polemical plutonium. At the same time, the illustration of plutonium also functions as metaphor for material phenomena in general as well as the poet's search for a new vision through his poetic expressions. The poet's use of plutonium as the metaphor for his poetic scenes signifies Beat vision in interweaving "subterranean" aesthetic aspects with spiritual and ecological perspectives.

b. Gary Snyder's Use of Mythic Images in "Logging 12" & "Logging 14" as Beat Vision of Spiritual Nourishment

In Introduction of his work *Myths & Texts*, Snyder told that he wrote poems in the work around 1952 to 1956 based upon his previous experiences working as a lookout

for the Warm Springs Lumber Co. The title itself was inspired by the works of Sapir, Boas, Swanton, and of American Indian folktales, which signify myths since the phrase means a perpetuation of any previous similar phrase and ancient cultural heritage. He defined the phrase as "two sources of human knowledge", namely "symbols and sense-impressions." To embody "the most archaic values on earth" in his poems, he refers to "the upper Palaeolithic: the fertility of the soil, the magic of animals, the power-vision in solitude, the terrifying initiation and rebirth, the love and ecstasy of the dance, the common work of the tribe" (Snyder, vii-viii; 58-81).

These aspects all pertain to nature's evolution, human's cultures that last from ancient to modern times. Originally, Snyder entitled his poems in *Myths & Texts* only with numbers such as 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. But I add "Logging 12" and "Logging 14" to ease discussion in this paper. The use of numbers instead of words for the titles represents a sequence of jazz chorus. This also exemplifies interconnected myths of nature's symbols and human's sense-impressions –

"Logging 12"	"Logging 14"
<p>A green limb hangs in the crotch Of a silver snag, Above the Cats, the skidders and thudding brush, Hundreds of butterflies Flit through the pines, "You shall live in square gray houses in a barren land and beside those square gray houses you shall starve." ---Drinkwater. Who saw a vision At the high and lonely center of the earth: Where Crazy Horse went to watch the Morning Star,</p>	<p>The groves are down cut down Groves of Ahab, of Cybele Pine trees, knobbed twigs thick cone and seed Cybele's tree this, sacred in groves Pine of Seami, cedar of Haida Cut down by the prophets of Israel the fairies of Athens the thugs of Rome both ancient and modern; Cut down to make room for the suburbs Bulldozed by Luther and Weyerhaeuser Crosscut and chainsaw</p>

& the four-legged people, the creeping people, The standing people and the flying people Know how to talk. I ought to have eaten Whale tongue with them.	squareheads and finns high-lead and cat-skidding Trees down Creeks choked, trout killed, roads.
--	--

In terms of form, “Logging 12” and “Logging 14” have asymmetric typography that simulate jazz dissonant tone and phrasings. The blank spaces before and after each line exemplify pauses for a jazz musician to take a breath before continuing blowing his horn. The way the poet illustrates the scenes by mentioning one image after another epitomizes sketching method as Kerouac suggested in his “Belief & Technique for Modern Prose” (Charters, 58-59). This sketching similarly embodies jazz dissonant tone, spontaneous rhythm, and one’s spontaneous mind. This also represents a natural freedom through the “irregularity within regularity” of the lines that suggest the “wildlife”, “Mother Nature”, or “the wilderness” as Snyder ever posited (Snyder, 3-26). In terms of content, like Ginsberg’s “Plutonian Ode”, the two poems feature some phrases written in upper-case letters that emphasize significance of the mythic images. Instead of names such as Han Shan [a mythic Chinese poet – emphasis added] and other personas in “Logging 14”, the poet presents several phrases in upper-case letters, such as “the Cats”, “Crazy Horse”, “Morning Star”, “Ravens”, which serve as images, metaphor, and allegory. The phrase “the Cats” for instance stand for “a tractor trademark with continuous chain treads”, while “Crazy Horse” refers to “Tashunca-Uitco or Sioux leader who resisted the encroachment of whites in the Black Hills and joined Sitting Bull at the Battle of Little Bighorn” (*The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 228, 333). The name *Han Shan* inspired Snyder and other Beat poets in terms of the ancient poet’s spiritual and ecological views (Suiter, 161-163). The phrases “the Cats” and “Hundreds of

butterflies” stand for Beat argots since the former suggests hipsters or jazz musicians (Charters, 555-559). While, the latter might refer to “beatniks” as the followers of the Beats (McDarragh 197-206). As a psychological image, the word “butterflies” figuratively signifies “human’s transformation from physical, earthbound sensation to inward and spiritual passage” (Chetwynd, 404; Flowers, 44-85). In regard to Buddha-dharma, this inward passage correlates with one’s insight (*prajñā*) into the true nature of phenomena. Lines 12 and 13 imply this state of one’s enlightenment in his and her panoramic awareness (Tonkinson, vii) of the phenomena – “Who saw a vision at the high and lonely center of the earth:” (13). The following line written in quotation mark “You shall live in square gray houses in a barren land and beside those square gray houses you shall starve” also seems to quote from a previously existing notion or “floating verses” (Wald 113). In “Logging 14”, the poet uses mythic names such as Ahab (King of Israel and husband of Jezebel), Cybele (a Greek goddess of nature), Seami (might refer to the name of a Japanese playwright), Haida (a member of a Native American people inhabiting the Queen Charlotte Islands of British Columbia), Luther and Weyerhaeuser (might be the name of a lumber company), Jehovah (a religious denomination founded in the U.S. during the late 19th century) (sources: *The American Heritage College Dictionary* & <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Zeami>). All these names reveal humans and their behavior toward the natural environment both in cherishing and despoiling manners.

2. Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder’s Beat Poetics as an Evocation of Ecological Awareness

Ginsberg’s “Plutonian Ode” and Snyder’s “Logging 12” and “Logging 14” exemplify Beat poems with spiritual and ecological views. The phrase *Beat*

poems here refers to some features of poetry that interweaves spontaneity of jazz rhythm with that of Buddhist principles. Mythic images in these poems

not only aestheticize natural objects such as plutonium and lumber in forests, but also anthropomorphize the objects as animate subjects. This way of eulogizing the non-human relics suggests what Joseph Campbell calls “apotheosis” (1949). Campbell especially correlates this notion with Buddhist principles that spiritualize any form of life (being) as possessing inherent values (Buddha Nature) (150-151; Fuchs, 2000). The term “apotheosis” means “exaltation to divine rank or stature” (*The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 67), and this correlates with the way Ginsberg equates plutonium with several gods –

I guess your birthday in Earthling Night, I salute your
dreadful presence lasting majestic as
the Gods,
Sabaot, Jehova, Astapheus, Adonaeus, Elohim, Iao,
Ialdabaoth, Aeon from Aeon born
ignorant in an Abyss of Light, (710)

which means to apotheosize plutonium to have
formidable power just as the immortal gods. In
“Logging 12” Snyder mythologizes the natural
environment and all non-human creatures to raise
one’s awareness of their anthropomorphous qualities
–

--- Drinkswater. Who saw a vision
At the high and lonely center of the earth:
Where Crazy Horse
went to watch the Morning Star,
& the four-legged people, the creeping people,
The standing people and the flying people
Know how to talk. (13)

Snyder’s way in anthropomorphizing the creatures
means to evoke one’s consciousness to respect non-
human beings as his and her brothers (Barnhill, 194-
195). This understanding corresponds with his
learning of Native American myths, Shamanistic, as
well as Buddhist spiritual values (Ibid., 194-195;
Snyder, 10-20). In “Logging 14”, Snyder associates
trees and forests with some gods, goddesses, and with
a Native American tribe, Haida. While, he mentions
“the prophets of Israel”, “the fairies of Athens”, and
“the thugs of Rome” as metaphors for industrialists
and people in power in this recent era who
perpetrated deforestation that causes drought and
demise of living creatures and forest habitats –

Groves of Ahab, of Cybele

Pine trees, knobbed twigs
thick cone and seed
Cybele’s tree this, sacred in groves
Pine of Seami, cedar of Haida
Cut down by the prophets of Israel
the fairies of Athens
the thugs of Rome
both ancient and modern;
(15)

The jazzy typography of Ginsberg and Snyder’s
poems and their ecological views evoke one’s
understanding of precariousness of the natural
environment and its living creatures. This concern
becomes relevant when humans do not really care
about the ways they consume and extract material
goods from the physical environment. This
negligence may result in excessive activities that
bring forth ecological havocs. Ginsberg for instance
tries to raise this awareness through his mantra to
control one’s relish of overconsuming material goods
–

Magnetize this howl with heartless compassion,
destroy this mountain
of Plutonium with ordinary mind and body
speech,
Thus empower this Mind-guard spirit gone out, gone
out, gone beyond,
gone beyond me, Wake space, so Ah! (713)

The line “destroy this mountain of Plutonium with
ordinary mind and body speech” propounds the
vision that it is one’s mind rather than plutonium as a
material object that has to control itself from desiring
to gain more and more material fulfillment. Then the
repetition “gone out” suggests an evocation of going
beyond one’s attachment to material phenomena. In
“Logging 12” Snyder evokes this ecological
awareness by re-envisioning a mythic Chinese poet,
Han Shan –

Han Shan could have lived here,
& no scissorbill stooge of the
Emperor would have come trying to steal
his last poor shred of sense. (13)

The lines aim to resurrect the figure of Han Shan as a
metaphor for the poet’s entreaty of one’s spiritual and
ecological awareness. This means to encourage
anyone to conserve forest sustainability in his logging
activity. In “Logging 14”, Snyder again evokes one’s

cognizance of the impacts of excessive logging that not only devastate forest habitat but also release carbon dioxide to the atmosphere as a global warming phenomenon—

Sawmill temples of Jehovah.
Squat black burners 100 feet high
Sending the smoke of our burnt
Live sap and leaf
To his eager nose. (15)

Like the name “Han Shan”, the name “Jehovah” also serves as a mythic figure suggesting an ironic tone since the image *Jehovah* is attributed to the owner of lumber factory that does the excessive logging. Then the phrase “the smoke of our burnt Live sap and leaf” points toward the impact of the forest clearing and burning that connotes the emission of smoke containing carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. This line then embodies Snyder’s vision to encourage anyone to be mindful in extracting natural resources in forest land to preserve their sustainability.

IV. CONCLUSION

Mythologizing plutonium and lumber substantiates their essence as indispensable materials for humans as ancient as the history of human beings. The gods and goddesses that Ginsberg and Snyder portray as metaphors for the plutonium and lumber basically signify human personas rather than purely divine and non-corporeal spirits. This mythic illustration reveals the fact that the natural environment and its resources have existed long before the first human creatures inhabited the natural world. Simultaneously, this sketching of the mythic personas discloses another fact that natural despoliation had lasted in the ancient time in the epoch of the celestial gods and goddesses. This means that the figures were basically ordinary corporeal beings from the ancient time. Re-envisioning them as mythic figures who live in the present time through their metaphorical embodiment in the plutonium and severed lumber serves as reminders of the perennial history of natural relics. Ginsberg and Snyder’s ecological vision through their critiques and views of natural resources then substantiates an entreaty of cherishing the natural environment, its resources, and its biodiversity (living species). Their vision evokes human’s awareness of the values of material goods and the natural resources as interdependent phenomena. This human’s cognizance of the nature of phenomena

helps to control one’s propensity to overconsume material goods. A proportional consumption of the goods will accordingly be a great benefit to keep ecological sustainability and biodiversity. Aldo Leopold, an American ecologist, environmentalist, scientist, and writer proposes his notion of land ethic and biotic community to describe the interdependent relation between humans and the physical environment. By the land ethic, he means the community that includes soils, waters, plants, animals, and the land (2013). Borrowing Leopold’s notion in reading Ginsberg and Snyder’s poems, the ways they eulogized plutonium and lumber as co-existent rather than discrete entities substantiate the biotic community in terms of human’s interaction with the land both physically and spiritually. The mythic allusions similarly evoke a sense of ancestral earthly artefacts that one will respect for their merits. But these myths similarly caution humans against concomitant hazards when one neglects ecological ethics in his/her daily activities.

REFERENCES

- [1] Allen, Donald (Ed.) *Improvised Poetics. Allen Ginsberg Composed On The Tongue – Literary Conversations, 1967-1977.* San Francisco, CA: Grey Fox Press, 2001
- [2] ----- (2001). *First Thought, Best Thought.* Ibid., San Francisco, CA: Grey Fox Press.
- [3] ----- (1977). *On Bread & Poetry: A Panel Discussion with Gary Snyder, Lew Welch, & Philip Whalen.* Bolinas, CA: Grey Fox Press.
- [4] Ball, Gordon (Ed.) (1974). *Allen Verbatim – Lectures on Poetry, Politics, Consciousness.* Ed. by Gordon Ball. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
- [5] Barnhill, David Landis. (1997). *Great Earth Sañgha: Gary Snyder’s View of Nature as Community. Buddhism and Ecology – The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds.* Eds. Mary Evelyn Tucker & Duncan Ryuken Williams. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- [6] Belgrad, Daniel. (1998). *The Culture of Spontaneity – Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- [7] Berliner, Paul F. *Thinking in Jazz – The Infinite Art of Improvisation.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- [8] Bernstein, Jeremy. (2007). *Plutonium – A History of The World’s Most Dangerous Element.* Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press.

- [9] Beum, Robert & Shapiro, Karl. (2006). *The Prosody Handbook – A Guide To Poetic Form*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.
- [10] Bielefeldt, Carl. (2015). *Buddhism in Mountains and Rivers Without End. A Sense of the Whole – Reading Gary Snyder's Mountains and Rivers Without End*. Ed. by Mark Gonnerman. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint.
- [11] Campbell, Joseph. (1949). *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*. New York: MJF Books.
- [12] Chandrakirti. (2002). *Introduction to the Middle Way – Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara, commentary by Jamgön Mipham, transl. The Padmakara Translation Group*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.
- [13] Charters, Ann. (Ed.) (1992). *The Best Minds of A Generation. The Portable Beat Reader*. New York: Penguin Books.
- [14] ----- *Variations on a Generation. The Portable Beat Reader*.
- [15] ----- (2007). *The Portable Jack Kerouac*. New York: Penguin Books.
- [16] Carter, Jimmy. (2005). *The Energy Problem*. (Speech delivered on April 18, 1977). Jimmy Carter and the Energy Crisis of the 1970s – The "Crisis of Confidence" Speech of July 15, 1979. Ed. Daniel Horowitz. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- [17] Coupe, Laurence. (2007). *Vision Music: Bob Dylan via Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg and 'Mantra Rock': the Beatles via Allen Ginsberg. Beat Sound, Beat Vision – The Beat Spirit and Popular Song*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press. 106-108.
- [18] DeVaux, Scott. (1997). *The Birth of Bebop – A Social and Musical History*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- [19] Eliot, T.S. (2011). *The Collected Works of T.S. Eliot*. New York: A & L eBooks, Kindle Book.
- [20] ----- (1975). *Tradition and The Individual Talent. Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*. Ed. and Intro. by Frank Kermode. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- [21] Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2018). Zeami: Japanese Playwright. [Online]. Available: www.britannica.com/biography/Zeami [2018, October 12].
- [22] Fields, Rick. (1992). *How The Swans Came to The Lake – A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.
- [23] Flowers, Betty Sue. (Ed.). (1991). *Joseph Campbell: The Power of Myth with Bill Moyers*. New York: Anchor Books.
- [24] Gillespie, Dizzy. (1996). *Be-Bop & Groovin' High. The Birth of Bebop*. Charly Records. CD.
- [25] ----- *Good Bait. The Birth of Bebop*. Charly Records: 1996. CDs.
- [26] Ginsberg, Allen. (2006). *Collected Poems 1947-1997*. New York: HarperPerennial.
- [27] ----- (1959). *HOWL And Other Poems*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books.
- [28] ----- & Corso, Gregory. (2006). *First Reading at the Six Gallery, October 7, 1955. HOWL Original Draft Facsimile, Transcript, and Variant Versions, Fully Annotated by Author, with Contemporaneous Correspondence, Account of First Public Reading, Legal Skirmishes, Precursor Texts, and Bibliography*. Ed. by Barry Miles. New York: HarperPerennial.
- [29] McDarrah, Fred W. (1985). *The Anatomy of a Beatnik*. Ed. by Fred W. McDarrah. New York: William Morrow & Company.
- [30] Morgan, Bill (Ed.). (2000). *Deliberate Prose Selected Essays 1952-1995*. Foreword by Edward Sanders. New York: HarperCollins.
- [31] Glotfelty, Cheryll. (1996). *Literary Studies in An Age of Environmental Crisis. The Ecocriticism Reader – Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Eds. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, xv-xxxvii.
- [32] Goddard, Dwight. (Ed.) (1994). *A Buddhist Bible*. Foreword by Robert Aiken. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 3-4.
- [33] Grace, Nancy M. & Johnson, Ronna C. (2004). *Breaking The Rule of Cool – Interviewing and Reading Women Beat Writers*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- [34] Holmes, John Clellon. (1985). *This is the Beat Generation. Kerouac and Friends – A Beat Generation Album*. Ed. Fred W. McDarrah. New York: William Morrow & Company.
- [35] Hunt, Anthony. (2004). Chapter 2: *Composing the Space & Chapter 3: Inhabiting the Landscape. Genesis, Structure, and Meaning in Gary Snyder's Mountains and Rivers Without End*. Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press.
- [36] Katz, Eliot. (2016). *The Poetry and Politics of Allen Ginsberg*. UK: Beatdom Books.
- [37] Kernfeld, Barry. (1996). *Jazz. The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- [38] Jackson, Brian. (Fall 2010). *Modernist Looking: Surreal Impressions in the Poetry of Allen Ginsberg*. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Fall 2010) [Online]. Available: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40928069> [2017, November 12]. pp. 298-323.
- [39] Leopold, Aldo. (2013). *The Land Ethic. Aldo Leopold – A Sand County Almanac & Other Writings on Ecology and Conservation*. Ed. Curt Meine. New York: The Library of America.
- [40] Maitreya, Arya. (2000). *Buddha Nature – The Mahayana Uttaratantra Shastra*. Written down by Arya Asanga, commentary by Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé "The Unassailable Lion's Roar," explanations by Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, trans. by Rosemarie Fuchs. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications.

- [41] McKenzie, James. (1988). *An Interview with Allen Ginsberg. Kerouac and The Beats: A Primary Sourcebook*. Ed. Arthur & Kit Knight. New York: Paragon House.
- [42] -----(1977). *Moving The Worlds A Millionth Of An Inch: An Interview with Gary Snyder*. The Beat Diary. Eds. by Arthur & Kit Knight. California: The Unspeakable Visions of the Individual.
- [43] Morgan, Bill. (2010). *The Typewriter Is Holy – The Complete, Uncensored History of The Beat Generation*. New York: Free Press.
- [44] Murphy, Patrick D. (2000). *A Place for Wayfaring – The Poetry and Prose of Gary Snyder*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press.
- [45] Olson, Charles. (1973). *Projective Verse. Poetics of The New American Poetry*. Ed. Donald Allen and Warren Tallman. New York: Grove Press, Inc.
- [46] Orr, David W. (1992). *Two Meanings of Sustainability. Ecological Literacy: Education and the Transition to a Postmodern World*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- [47] Pound, Ezra. (1973). *A Retrospect & Arnold Dolmetsch. Poetics of The New American Poetry*. Eds. Donald Allen & Warren Tallman. New York: Grove Press, Inc. 36-48.
- [48] Prothero, Stephen. (1995). *Introduction. Big Sky Mind: Buddhism and The Beat Generation*. Ed. Carole Tonkinson. New York: Riverhead Books.
- [49] Rexroth, Kenneth. (1985). *Jazz and Poetry. Kerouac & Friends: A Beat Generation Album*. Ed. Fred W. McDarragh. New York: William Morrow and Company.
- [50] Schneider, David. (2015). *Kalyanamitra: Whalen and Snyder & Reed's Fine College: 1946-1951. Crowded By Beauty: The Life and Zen of Poet Philip Whalen*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- [51] Schumacher, Michael. (1992). *Dharma Lion: A Critical Biography of Allen Ginsberg*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- [52] Snyder, Gary. (1999). *The Gary Snyder Reader: Prose, Poetry, and Translations*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint.
- [53] ----- (1990). *The Etiquette of Freedom. The Practice of the Wild*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint.
- [54] ----- (2007). *The Myth. He Who Hunted Birds in His Father's Village: The Dimensions of a Haida Myth*. Foreword by Robert Bringhurst and a New Afterword by Gary Snyder. Bolinas, CA: Grey Fox Press.
- [55] ----- (1978). *Myths & Texts*. New York: A New Directions Book.
- [56] Suiter, John. (2002). *Poets on the Peaks: Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen & Jack Kerouac in the North Cascades*. New York: Counterpoint.
- [57] *The American Heritage College Dictionary (4th Edition)*. (2007). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- [58] Takahashi, Ayako. (2002). *The Shaping of Gary Snyder's Ecological Consciousness. Comparative Literature Studies, Vol. 39, No. 4, East-West Issue*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40247362>. [2017, November 12]. pp. 314-325.
- [59] Tresidder, Jack. (2008). *The Watkins Dictionary of Symbols*. London: Watkins Publishing.
- [60] Trigilio, Tony. (2007). *Allen Ginsberg's Buddhist Poetics*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- [61] Wald, Elijah. (2010). *The Blues: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [62] Waring, Charles. (2011). *The Music That Inspired A Revolution – Beat Generation Jazz*. Chrome Dreams. CDs.
- [63] ----- (2011). *"The Music That Inspired A Revolution Beat Generation Jazz."* Booklet on CD. Surrey, UK: Chrome Dreams. The Beat Generation Boxed. Enlightenment. CDs.
- [64] ----- "Jack Kerouac – The Complete Collection." (2011). Booklet on CD. Surrey, UK: Chrome Dreams.