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UNDERSTANDING THE BEAT MIND: WILLIAM BURROUGHS AND NEW ROMANTICISM

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as "Understanding the Beat Mind: William Burroughs and New Romanticism" has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resourses in the reference list. I verify all these with my honour.

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ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis

Understanding the Beat Mind: William Burroughs and New Romanticism

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The Beats, among the most renowned ones Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and Willliam Burroughs, are the countercultural figures in the 1950s and the 1960s of America. Actually, they are the followers of the American transcendentalists, especially of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman, who is also regarded as one of the New Romantics. Like the American transcendentalists, they give value to individualism and self reliance in search of the truth. Nevertheless, they rejected any kind of restriction imposed by the society. While Kerouac bear great parallels to Emerson in the manner of giving value to individuality and self-reliance, Ginsberg and Burroughs function as Whitman of their day in terms of their having democratic consciousness and embracing individual differences. Besides, Ginsberg, like Whitman, celebrates bodily pleasures and he reflects it in his poems. Nevertheless, Ginsberg and Burroughs also differ from Whitman in the manner of lamenting for the post-war American society and rejecting all the institutions of it and this is also reflected in the two novels of Burroughs's *Naked Lunch* and *Junky*. Besides, the depictions of bodily pleasures in Burroughs's two novels *Naked Lunch* and *Junky* point towards the deterioration of an individual and a society both in physical and mental sense in contrast to Whitman's welcoming attitude toward bodily pleasures and the positive descriptions of an individual and a society. As a consequence, Burroughs's descriptions of bodily pleasures and the society in

his two novels *Naked Lunch* and *Junky* differ from Whitman's welcoming attitude toward bodily pleasures and his depictions of developing society.

Keywords: William Burroughs, Walt Whitman, deteriorated society, deteriorated individual, bodily pleasures.

ÖZET

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Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg ve William Burroughs'un önde gelen isimler olduğu Beat'ler 1950 ve 1960'ların Amerika'sının karşıt kültürünü yansıtır. Beat'ler, Amerikan transcendentalist düşünce geleneğinin, özellikle Ralph Waldo Emerson'ın ve aynı zamanda Yeni Romantik akımın en önemli temsilcilerinden olan Walt Whitman'ın takipçileridir. Onlar gibi Beat'ler de, gerçeği arama yolunda toplumun koyduğu sınırlamalara karşı koyarak bireyselleşmeye ve salt kendine inanmaya değer verirler. Özellikle Jack Kerouac bireyselleşme ve salt kendine inanma ilkelerini benimsemesi açısından Emerson'la benzerlikler taşırken, Allen Ginsberg ve William Burroughs demokratik düşünceyi ve bireysel farklılıkları kucaklaması prensipleri açısından zamanının Walt Whitman'ı olan yazarlarıdır. Bunun yanı sıra Ginsberg, Whitman gibi bedensel zevkleri ön plana çıkarır ve bunu şiirlerindeki tasvirlere yansıtır. Ancak aynı zamanda Ginsberg ve Burroughs Amerika'nın savaş sonrası değerlerini yitirdiğini toplumu için ağıt yakar ve toplumun bütün kurumlarını reddeder. Özellikle Burroughs, bedensel zevklerin bireyin ve toplumun çöküşüne işaret ettiği romanları *Çıplak Şölen* ve *Junky*'de bu tavrını bilmeyerek yansıtır. Her ne kadar zamanının Whitman'ı rolünü almış olsa da, Burroughs'un bu romanlarındaki bireyin ve toplumun çöküşüne işaret ettiği tasvirleri, Whitman'ın şiirlerindeki bedensel zevkleri kucaklayan ve ilerlemekte olan birey ve toplum tasvirleriyle çelişmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: William Burroughs, Walt Whitman, bedensel zevkler, kötüleşen toplum ve birey

UNDERSTANDING THE BEAT MIND: WILLIAM BURROUGHS AND NEW ROMANTICISM

CONTENTS

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE	ii
DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
SUMMARY	vi
CONTENTS	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	
AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM AND BEAT GENERATION	
1.1. AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM	4
1.2 BEAT GENERATION	11
CHAPTER TWO	
THE BIOGRAPHY AND THE LANGUAGE OF WILLIAM BURROUGHS AND *NAKED LUNCH*	
2.1. THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BURROUGHS	23
2.2. LANGUAGE OF WILLIAM BURROUGHS AND NAKED LUNCH	29
CHAPTER THREE	
JUNKY	
CONCLUSION	66
REFERENCES	72

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a study on the impact of New Romanticism in the selected novels of the American author William Burroughs, who is a preeminent figure of the Beat Generation in the 1950s and the 1960s. The study, which consists of three main chapters, aims to analyze the main themes in William Burroughs's two novels *Naked Lunch* and *Junky* from the perspective of Walt Whitman, who is also a leading figure of the American Transcendentalists and the New Romantics and has a great impact on the Beat Generation, especially Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs. The thesis asserts that William Burroughs's depictions of addiction and sexuality in his *Naked Lunch* and *Junky*, despite his being Walt Whitman of his day, indicate the downfall of an individual and a society in contrast to Walt Whitman's welcoming depictions of bodily pleasures and developing society in his poems.

The first chapter of this dissertation explains the main tenets of American Transcendentalism by analyzing the essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson, a prominent American Transcendentalist, and the poems of Walt Whitman, a representative of the New Romantics. It is because the American Transcendentalists greatly influenced the Beat Generation, especially the leading Beats—Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs. While the tenets of Ralph Waldo Emerson significantly mark on Jack Kerouac, Walt Whitman does on Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughsg. Although Ginsberg and Burroughs act as Whitman of their time, they still differ from him in terms of lamenting for the post-war American society and pointing to the deterioration and loss of moral values of the individual and the society.

The tenets of American Transcendentalism are basically framed by Ralph Waldo Emerson. In fact, American Transcendentalism originates from Kantian transcendence, which asserts that people can find the truth not with their experiences but with their intuitions. In this regard, Emerson acts as Kant of his time. The basic tenets of American Transcendentalism are looking for the truth at present moment rather than in the past, sacredness of nature and its equivalence to God, acting with intuitions and self-reliance, and society's being an obstacle to our perception of truth. Jack Kerouac, one of the prominent Beats, just as Emerson does, believes that one should act with his intuitive feelings to find the truth. Besides, he also thinks that society impedes one to find the truth; and for this reason, one should look at nature rather than books and society. In this regard, Kerouac and Emerson bear resemblances to each other. Just as Kerouac has an Emersonian trait of his own time, Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs also bear traces of Walt Whitman in terms

of embracing diversity and multivocality in the American society and cherishing bodily pleasures. However, they also differ from him in one aspect: While Walt Whitman's America is a perfect place and offers a hopeful future for the society, Ginsberg and Burroughs laments for the post-war American society for it has already lost its moral values and got decayed. Apart from this, Burroughs's welcoming attitude toward the experiments with drugs and sexuality, like Whitman's celebrating attitude toward bodily pleasures in his poems, gives its place to the descriptions of an individual's and society's deterioration and loss of moral values in his novels *Naked Lunch* and *Junky.*

The second chapter of this study gives a short biography of William Burroughs and analyzes his *Naked Lunch* in terms of the autobiographical clues, the language he uses and the themes. These three aspects of the chapter correlate with Burroughs's descriptions indicating the moral decline and deterioration of an individual and a society in contrast to Walt Whitman's developing society.

First of all, most of the scenes in *Naked Lunch* bear traces of William Burroughs's own life. Therefore, there is a close relationship between the life of William Burroughs and the scenes of *Naked Lunch.* In fact, this aspect of the novel reflects Burroughs's out-of-joint life pointing to his physical and mental deterioration and opposes Walt Whitman's welcoming attitude toward bodily pleasures. The second aspect analyzed in this chapter is the language of the novel, which also points to Burroughs's own mental and physical decline resulted from heavy drug use and experiments with sexuality. The third aspect is the themes: addiction and sexuality. The former is used as both in real sense and a metaphor, in the novel. The depictions of drug addiction point to one's decline of health and moral values. Addiction as a metaphor refers to the manipulated society whose individuals' freedom and progress are hindered; and as a result, they get deteriorated. Therefore, the theme of addiction in the novel also points to the decay and downfall of an individual and a society. Apart from the theme of addiction, William Burroughs uses the theme of sexuality, the depictions of which are quite obscene and pointing toward moral decline and degradation of an individual and a society in contrast to Walt Whitman's welcoming descriptions of hedonic pleasures in his poems.

The third chapter of this thesis studies William Burroughs's second novel *Junky,* in terms of the same aspects discussed in *Naked Lunch:* autobiographical clues, the language and the setting of the novel, and the themes of addiction and sexuality. All these three aspects suggest the moral decline and deterioration of an individual and a society.

Burroughs, just as he does in *Naked Lunch,* extensively uses autobiographical clues in the Prologue of the novel. This aspect of the novel, as it does in *Naked Lunch,* indicates

the gradual decline of William Burroughs both in physical and mental sense. Therefore, this aspect of the novel also contradicts with Walt Whitman's developing individual. The second aspect is the setting and the language of the novel. In contrast to *Naked Lunch*, the language and the setting of *Junky* are quite clear. Therefore, despite his pleasurable depictions of drug use and sexuality in *Junky*, he inadvertently points to his own deterioration and decay both in physical and mental sense. Apart from autobiographical clues and the language, there is another aspect: the themes of addiction and sexuality. Just as Burroughs does in his *Naked Lunch*, in *Junky*, he uses the theme of addiction both in real sense and a metaphor. On the one hand, the theme of addiction in real sense refers to the physical and mental decline of an individual and a society. On the other hand, as a metaphor, it indicates illegal relationship of the addicts with the doctors, which has in itself turned to a kind of addiction. Therefore, this kind of relationship also points to the deterioration of the characters.

Consequently, the dissertation, which consists of three chapters, aims to contradict Burroughs's unpleasant descriptions of drug addiction and sexuality signifying the deterioration of an individual and a society in *Naked Lunch* and *Junky* with Whitman's descriptions of bodily pleasures and developing society.

CHAPTER ONE
AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM AND BEAT GENERATION

1.1. AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM

American Transcendentalism is a kind of belief and ethical guide to the American nation, which demonstrates itself as an extension of the 19th century European Romanticism. The main literary figures which shape the idea of American Transcendentalism are Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman. These American writers and poets considerably contributed to the shape of basic tenets of American Transcendentalism. Among its chief characteristics are the superiority of intuition over reason, the individual over society, and a challenge to any kind of restriction imposed by society.[1] It cannot be regarded as a religion since it lacks the belief in a unique God, an afterlife and the consequences of worldly life to the afterlife.[2] Rather than that, it is a belief in the essential unity of all religions and the ability to find divinity via intuition rather than pure reason.

In this regard, the Transcendental idealism found its roots in Kantian transcendence. Immanuel Kant asserts that people can interpret life experiences relying on their own mind and intuitions even though they may not have experienced them before. According to Kant, human beings are born with their intuitions and they can shape their perceptions with the help of these intuitions, and as a result, obtain knowledge through their life experiences.[3] Therefore, Kant rejects what John Locke states about the way of obtaining knowledge. John Locke declares that the human mind is like a blank slate called *Tabula Rasa*. He thinks that people can obtain knowledge only through his own experiences. He does not believe that human beings are born with innate ideas. Knowledge can only be obtained through experiences. Pertaining to Kantian transcendence, American Transcendentalism tries to find out the essence of our existence through intuitions and innate principles. It seeks the

[1] Rod W. Horton, Herbert W. Edwards, **Backgrounds of American Literary Thought**, New York University Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey, 1953, p.116.
[2] Paul P. Reuben, "Chapter 4: American Transcendentalism"**,** archieve.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/chap4/4intro.html, 28.04.2016.
[3] Age of The Sage, "New England Transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Kantian or Transcendental Idealism", www.age-of-the-sage.org/transcendentalism/emerson/idealism_kant.html, 20.04.2016.

problem of existence beyond words and rational thinking. Therefore, there is a close relationship between Kantian "transcendence" and the American Transcendentalism. The American transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson, is especially influenced by him.

Ralph Waldo Emerson frames the basic principles of Transcendentalism in his essays *Nature, Self Reliance* and *The American Scholar.* He has a significant place in shaping the American Transcendentalism and a great influence on the Beats, especially Jack Kerouac, in terms of the principles he asserts in his essays. He declares the superiority of the self and nature over the institutions and society in these essays.

One of the tenets that he states in his essays *Nature* and *The American Scholar* is that man should look for the truth not in the past but at the present moment. Looking at present correlates with looking at nature. The truth is in nature not in books, traditions and history because they refer to the past. The truth is given by means of language in books and traditions. Language breaks the truth into pieces; that is why, the truth here is symbolic and man-made, and so in language it is impossible to see the essential wholeness that resides in nature. However, the truth in nature is whole and obtained by intuitions. Emerson states it in his essay *Nature* as such:

> *Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs? Embosomed for a season in nature, whose floods of life stream around and through us, and invite us by the powers they supply, to action proportioned to nature, why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe? The sun shines today also. There is more wool and flax in the fields. There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship.* [4]

As it is clear from these lines, man should participate in the joy of the moment and redefine the truth not with the help of the knowledge of the past but nature. One should rely on his intuitions in search of the truth rather than getting lost in the "dry bones of the past." Nature hides everything in its bosom; that is

[4] Robert S. Levine and Arnold Krupat, **The Norton Anthology American Literature,** Norton and Company, New York, p.1110.

why, there is no need to apply to books and laws. Emerson criticises his generation for getting too much dependent on books. In his essay *The American Scholar* he explains it as such:

> *Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world of value, is, the active soul, -- the soul, free sovereign, active. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men, obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth; and utters truth, or creates.*[5]

As it is obvious from these lines, it is much better to see books as a source of inspiration than the truth itself. Emerson rejects being perverted by books and adds that man should be involved in the process of finding the truth by himself. This is because of the fact that nature represents macrocosm while man represents microcosm and they have a reciprocal relationship. Since man and the universe are in harmony, they form a perfect system, so it is not acceptable to search the truth outside this system. Therefore, one should look at the present moment and seek the truth in nature rather than looking at the past.

The second premise of the American Transcendentalism is the sacradness of nature and its equivalence to God. One should search the truth in nature because God is omnipresent. In the Transcendentalist's writings, the self and the universe embrace each other. Every single ordinary event related to the self has also its own universal trait. Actually, the truth can only be obtained by how we perceive nature. Man can reach the universe or the Over-soul, in Emerson's terms, by understanding nature. Emerson states it in his *Nature*, as such:

> *The presence of a higher, namely, of the spiritual element is esssential to its perfection. The high and divine beauty which can be loved without effeminancy, is that which is found in combination with the human will, and never separate. Beauty is the mark God sets upon virtue. Every natural action is graceful. Every heroic act is also decent, and causes the place and the bystanders to s hine. We are taught by great actions that the universe is the property of every individual in it. Every rational creature has all nature for his dowry and estate*.[6]

As it can be seen in these lines, nature and its beauty are beset by the virtue of God. Every event taking place in nature is sacred and is also a part of the self. The

[5] Levine and Krupat, p.1141.
[6] Levine and Krupat, p.1116.

self and the universe can not be separated from each other and the universe, also called the Over-soul, can only be reached by means of the individual. The Over-soul is a term which combines the human psyche and universal psyche. Actually, it refers to God in Emerson's terms. Since every object is a reflection of the universal psyche, the Over-soul is not independent from the self. The Over-soul is actually the origin of other individuals and is the spiritual center of the universe. God can be perceived through the light of the human psyche. Therefore, the universe can be explained through the self. The structure of the universe is the duplication of the structure of the self. Therefore, God can be perceived through nature.

The third tenet of the American Transcendentalism is intuition and self-reliance. Ralph Waldo Emerson states that man should trust himself to find the truth in nature. He states it in his *Self-Reliance* as such:

> *Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine Providence has found for you; the society of your contemporaries, the connexion of events. Great men have always done so and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the Eternal was stirring at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not pinched in a corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but redeemers and benefactors, pious aspirants to be noble clay plastic under the Almighty effort, let us advance and advance on Chaos and the Dark.* [7]

As it was stated before, man should not look at books and traditions to understand the truth. Instead, he should look at the present, and seek the truth in nature. Books should only be the source of inspiration. Man should rely on himself and his intuitions like a child because he is divine and has the intuitive ability to distinguish between right or wrong. Since man and the universe and God have a mutual (microcosm-macrocosm) relationship, man has the power to find the truth by himself so there is no need to learn the truth from books, laws or traditions.

The last but not least, one significant principle of the American Transcendentalism is the society's being an obstacle to our perception of truth. Man is very close to nature and has the power to find the truth with the help of his intuitions. However, his individuality is killed and he is drifted into conformity by society. Therefore, he is deprived of having the ability to survive in nature. Ralph Waldo Emerson states it *in* his *Self-Reliance* as such:

[7] Levine and Krupat, p.1164

> *Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. Its progress is only apparent, like the workers of a treadmill. It undergoes continual changes: It is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioriation. For every thing that is given, something is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch a pencil, and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat, and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under. But compare the health of the two men, and you shall see that his aboriginal strength the White man has lost. If the traveller tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad axe, and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white his grave.* [8]

As it can be seen in these lines, the gains of civilization do not help man win a victory over the savage. Although being civilized is thought to be a progress on the surface, it is not, indeed. While society gives on the one side, it takes on the other. The civilized man is vulnerable to nature while the savage can survive. The transcendentalist view asserts that one can only find the truth through intuitions and self-reliance. Therefore, man should rely on himself and his intuitions rather than society. The truth is not in science but in nature.

Along with Ralph Waldo Emerson, another significant name writing in the tradition of trancendentalist view in literature is Walt Whitman. Whitman is a renowned nineteenth century American poet. Since he introduced a prominent way of thinking and an authentic style to American poetry, he affected most of the writers and poets from the 1850s to the present. The 1960s are the years when the literary tradition of the Beats started to take shape. Walt Whitman was one of the preeminent figures of the American poetry and had a significant impact on the Beats. Actually, he had a leading role in shaping the ideology not only of his own time but also the twentieth century. He contributed a lot to the democratic consciousness of American society and caused many groups of people to take action for democracy. The main subject of his writings is America and the American identity. He analyzes the daily life of the American people and uses American historical themes in his poetry. He has an extremely important role in redefining the American cultural values. He both probes into the diversity in American society and also the idea of " unity" prevails in his poems. He prefers to write about the ordinary lifestyle of the American without criticising it. Although it seems that he is a national writer because of the themes he

[8] Levine and Krupat, p. 1178

uses, he is regarded as a universal poet because his writings embrace all times rather than a specific moment. He trusts people rather than books and social institutions. For Whitman, as for Emerson, experience is of great importance and preferred to the information acquired by books and traditions. He is like a modern-day preacher without any pretensions or social masks. He uses a preaching style in his poems, which is one of the profound aspects of the prophetic discourse. As William Douglas O'Connor[9] describes him, he is also " a good gray poet," who avoids defining "the wrong" and "the right" and has a plain style in his writings. He states in one of his poems called " Song of Myself"[10] that he sees in all people his own individual self due to the fact that the self and the universe have a reciprocal relationship. As for Emerson, for Whitman, too, in order to understand the self, one ought to look at nature or, in more extended terms, the universe. Rather than separating the self from the universe, it is of great significance to see the interaction between them. The second half of the nineteenth century is also the time when Romanticism was replaced by post-romantic inclinations and the very beginnings of Realism. Hence, Whitman has a transitional discourse from Romanticism to the early years of Realism. He combines two different beliefs called Pantheism and Unitarianism. It is a kind of composite which Emerson also embraces. Not only did Whitman influence his own century but he also had a remarkable impact on the New-Romantic generation of the 1950s. He is an inspirational poet for the Beat Generation in their rebellion against conformism and stereotyped social values and the institutions representing the authority. [11]

Whitman also appreciates body and bodily pleasures, including sexuality, as well as spiritual experiences. He regards the human body as sacred and believes that spiritual experiences can only be perceived through bodily pleasures; for this reason, he also features sexuality to be enlightened spiritually. In one of his poems called *I Sing the Body Electric,* he states as such:

> *The love of the body of man or woman balks account, the body itself balks account,*

[9] Jerome Loving, The Good Gray Poe: Poe's Reburial and William Douglas O'Connor's Forgotten Tri bute, American Poet and Author, p.18, http://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1977104.htm, 20.04.2 016

[10] Levine and Krupat, p.2210

[11] Yeşim Başarır, **Walt Whitman Profetik Söylem ve Amerikan Yazın Geleneğinde Epik Tarzın Güncelleştirilmesi,** Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Yayınları, İzmir, 1995.

That of the male is perfect, and that of the female is perfect. [12]

The human body is obviously of great importance in Whitman's poems. In his poems, the human body and sexuality are means of reaching spirituality. In fact, the depictions of sexuality and bodily pleasures go beyond spirituality and turn out to be almost tangible in his poems. It is to such an extent that some physical descriptions come into prominence. To illustrate, in another poem called *A Woman Waits for Me*, he states as such:

A woman waits for me, she contains all, nothing is lacking,
Yet all were lacking if sex were lacking, or if the moisture of the right man were lacking.
Sex contains all, bodies, souls,
Meanings, proofs, purities, delicacies, results, promulgations,
Songs, commands, health, pride, the maternal mystery, the seminal milk,
All hopes, benefactions, bestowals, all the passions, loves, beauties, delights of the earth,
These are contain'd in sex as parts of itself and justifications of itself.
Without shame the man I like knows and avows the deliciousness of his sex,
Without shame the woman I like knows and avows hers. [13]

As the lines above testify, sexuality goes beyond spirituality; and as a result, physical depictions become prominent. As Whitman states, sexuality includes all the earthly experiences and senses, so it is not a reason of embarrasment, and both man and woman should joyfully experience it. Therefore, in Whitman's poems, body and bodily pleasures are welcomed. In this sense, the Beats, especially Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs, are greatly influenced by him. In fact, they can be regarded as an extension of Walt Whitman in the sense that they also cherish bodily pleasures in their writings.

Nevertheless, unlike the positive tone in Walt Whitman's poems, in his books *Junky* and *Naked Lunch*, William Burroughs describes the downside of bodily pleasures and experimentations with sexuality especially as resulted by drug abuse. While Walt Whitman celebrates bodily pleasures and sexuality and depicts them as the means to reach spirituality, William Burroughs's description inadvertently points towards a loss of moral values and physical health.

[12] Walt Whitman, "I Sing the Body Electric", http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/45472, 11.04.2016.
[13] Walt Whitman, "A Woman Waits for Me", https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/woman-waits-me, 19.04.2016

1.2 BEAT GENERATION

A group of writers called the Beats whose literary works date back to the 1950s and the 1960s had a remarkable impact on literature and wrote about the notable cultural change in the USA. Although they did not have any specific and uniform political thought, they had a significant impact on politics since they protested all the political and civil institutions. They could survive till the 1970s, which were the years for their followers called Hippies. They defended what has come to be called the Beat values against the Academy and the subculture against the institutions. In this manner, they presented a countercultural lifestyle. These New Bohemians had some common properties with the previous 1920s Bohemians. They protested the American pseudo- ethics and values. However, what distinguishes them from their antecedants is that they had a more rebellious attitude in rejecting all types of civilization and defending primitivism and instincts. They were also called "the Beatniks" and sometimes "the Beat Generation."

Actually, the term "beat" is very convenient to be used for them. "Beat" means "tired"[14] or "down and out". The term "beat" signifies the subculture where all the outlaws, drug addicts and different sexually-inclined people exist. To give an example, Jack Kerouac, one of the most prominent Beats, had an attitude of "mind-your-own-business" and adopted the values of "poor, down and out, deadbeat, on the bum, sad, sleeping in the subways."[15]According to John Clellon Holmes, another figure of the Beats, the Beat Generation was "lost," "black" and "wild" and coursed its way "toward the deepest corner of the night."[16] Since almost all the Beats were involved in crimes and aberrant behaviours, they are also called non-conformists. Despite all of these deviant traits of the Beats, they were still in a quest of spirituality. As Holmes states, their inclination was questioning the idea of "faith" rather than being obsessed with having a certain one or not having one.[17] One might question why all of these creative writers intentionally chose to use such elements of

[14] Freeman Champney, "Beat-up or Beatific? On the Road by Jack Kerouac: The Subterranneans by Jack Kerouac: The Dharma Bums by Jack Kerouac" pp. 114-121, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4610135, 01.03.2016.
[15] Edward Halsey Foster, **Understanding the Beats**, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1992, p.7.
[16] Foster, p.11.
[17] Foster, p.11

"underworld" in their writings. Indeed, it is owing to the fact that they had a strong desire to understand the spirituality of the world and believed that they could reach that kind of realization by using "non-conformist" elements and by being at the bottom of the world. They all watched the world from the bottom. Actually, the Beats chose to be at the bottom intentionally since they felt beaten.

Interestingly, some of the Beat writers did not like to be labelled as "beats." They even could not understand the meaning of the term. As for instance, Gary Snyder, who is a Beat writer, expanded the meaning of the term ascribing it to a public event. Edward Halsey Foster explains it in his book called *Understanding The Beats* as such: "Beat could be used in talking about the overall social phenomenon, but as a poet I belong to the San Francisco Renaissance; I am not a Beat poet" (2). Lawrence Ferlinghetti, a publisher from the period, made similar explanations like Gary Snyder. To him, the term "beat" referred to a group of writers who had nothing in common; however, they all denied the prevailing academic writing. They had an avantgarde style of writing. Likewise, Philip Whalen, one of the Beat writers, did not regard himself as a member of this group. According to him, it was such a group of writers which germinated in the very center of New York City, and the main authors constituting this group were Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso and William Burroughs. Philip Whalen had a right to locate the seeds of "The Beats" in the city of New York, for the most famous Beat writers mentioned above met in that city long before they released their works. Although they were friends, they differed from each other. That is why, it may seem as if the beat event itself was a "fantasy," not a "real" cultural event at all. However, disagreeing with this, Foster explains it as such:

> *These four writers are in many ways so distinctively individual that at times it may seem as if the entire beat phenomenon were nothing but a journalist's or a critic's fantasy. Nonetheless, when one puts the fiction and poetry of the Beats next to, for example the work of John Updike, Saul Bellow, William Bronk, William Gaddis, John Barth, Robert Lowell, Anne Sexton, or even Gary Snyder and Michael McClure, among other writers who emerged as major figures between the end of World War 2 and the mid-1960s it is clear that the Beats do* ***compromise*** *a seperate group, not only because they strongly encouraged and influenced each other aesthetically but also they shared a particular attitude,*

largely urban and Eastern in origin, about what they felt had gone wrong with America. [18]

As it can be seen in these lines, despite their individual differences and varieties, the Beats shared common traits in terms of rejecting the lifestyle that American society imposes. They were all discontent with the situation in America. Therefore, although they seem to differ from each other individually, they had a "particular attitude" towards the conformist America, and as a result, it is right to call them "Beat." Actually, the Beat phenomenon results from some crucial events in the American society and all over the world.

As it was mentioned before, the meetings of the Beats were followed by some public events. The 1950s were important years during which some significant changes in American society took place after the World War II. Actually, the postwar era caused an unsafe atmosphere and people tried to develop a national consciousness to create a unity. As a result, the inheritance of individualism gave its way to collectivism. Besides, the bomb dropped on Japan caused a great fear and people acknowledged the power of technology. It is because of the fact that people were aware of possible destructive results of the nuclear explosion. Tytell explains it in his book called *Naked Angles* as such:

> *Foundlings of the fifties, the Beats were like a slowly burning fuse in a **s**lient vacuum. The postwar era was a time of extraordinary insecurity, of profound powerlessness as far as individual effort was concerned, when personal responsibility was being abdicated in favor of corporate largeness, when the catchwords were coordination and adjustment, as if we had defeated Germany only to become [good Germans] ourselves. The nuclear blasts in Japan had created new sources of terror, and the ideology of technology became paramount; science was seen as capable of totally dominating man and his environment. And the prospects of total annihilation through nuclear explosion, of mass conditioning through the media, only increased the awesome respect for scientific powers*[19]

Although the post-war era brought about some anxiety and panic among American people, it also came with its wealth. With the development of technology, Americans were introduced to the new inventions such as automobile, television, and refrigerator and started to move to big houses in the suburbia. Television was a big controlling power on society and contributed a lot to create a unique national

[18] Foster, pp. 4-5.
[19] John Tytell, **Naked Angles Kerouac, Ginsberg, Burroughs and The Lives and Literature of the Beat Generation**, Oneworld Publications, Oxford, 2008, p.5.

conciousness. This is because of the fact that there was a limited number of channels and people were made to watch the same programmes. Hence, the Beats appeared when this national consciousness was already formed against all the world especially the Soviet Union.[20] The post-war era caused a great social bond among the people; however, it abolished the inherited American value—individualism. As a consequence, the diversity in the American identity was ignored.

The culture which was fostered by the Beat writers was underpinned by the prevailing culture called "hip" culture. The world of the hipster started to be formed at the end of the World War II. Actually, a hipster is such a person who goes beyond the limits of his energy without having plans for the future and memories related to the past; instead, the moment he lives permeates into his body. Foster explains it in *Understanding the Beats* as such:

> *The hipster, in Norman Mailer's classic definition, set out* **"***to encourage the psychopath in oneself, to explore that domain of experience where security is boredom and therefore sickness, and done exists in the present, in that enormous present which is without past or future, memory or planned intention, the life where a man must go until he is beat, where he must gamble energies through all those small or large crisis of courage and unforeseen situations which beset his day, where he must be with it or doomed not to swing.*[21]

The hipster, in other words, gambles with life until he is "beaten." To a hipster, the "New Vision," which refers to a new way of understanding the world, ends up with new victories over the conventional norms of society. They had a discernable effect on the society from their way of dressing to their music called "jazz". One of the most significant conflicts which the hips have is about the chance of keeping themselves away from the materialistic world. Although the hipster seemed to keep his hands off the materialistic world, it was still not possible to do it completely. Foster explains it as such:

> *Although the hipster's enemy was the materialistic American, even the 'cool' hipster was rarely so ascetic or austere as to cut him or herself totally off from the world. Hip culture was itself in some ways deeply commercial (or commercialized) and materialistic. Holmes saw that his generation was obsessed with spritual questions but depended on the capitalistic economy it despised in order to spread the new ideas and values. Records, radios, cars,*

[20] Christopher Gair, **The Beat Generation A Beginner's Guide**, Oxford, 2008, pp.12-13
[21] Foster, pp.5-6.

clothes, and boks were all ways in which the hipster could Express his her ethic and identify those who shared it.[22]

In fact, the Beats and the American Transcendentalists shared some common points, especially the ones mentioned in the first part. As it was stated before, the American transcendentalists puts an emphasis on self-reliance and intuitions. Likewise, the Beats were individualists who waged war against collectivism and finding the truth in nature relying on their own intuitions rather than books, traditions and laws. Individuality, the quest for the "self" along with some spiritual experiences were the main issues of the period. Nevertheless, what distinguishes them from their Transcendentalist antecedents, especially Ralph Waldo Emerson, is that they used obscenity and drugs as mediums to reach the truth. In this regard, they are much closer to Walt Whitman's conceptualization of the human body as sacred and welcoming bodily pleasures. Moreover, they are called "deviant" writers because they also experiemented with different sexual orientations.

Like The American transcendentalists, they were against any religious instititions, and had sympathy for the Oriental religions. Among the most renowned Beat writers, Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg had a great enthusiasm for Oriental religions, particularly Buddhism and Zen Buddhism.[23] It was in 1953 when Keroauc discovered Buddhism and studied Asian religious traditions and then left to go to San Jose to enlighten Neal Cassady.[24] However, Cassady espoused a different type of faith blended with "Christian metaphysics, clairvoyance, reincarnation, and karma."[25] William Burroughs, one of the prominent Beats, had a distinctive trait compared to the other Beat writers. In contrast to his fellows, he did not precisely feel close to the Oriental religions although it was he who introduced Buddhism to them. In fact, he did not bear virtually any traces from the Oriental spirituality in his writings. Moreover, he really reflects the full definition of the term "beat" in his writings in terms of his way of using obscenity and drugs as well as using a different technique called cut-up, which lacks a setting and linear narration.[26]

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[22] Foster, p.12.
[23] Stephen Prothero, "On the Holy Road: The Beat Movement as a Spiritual Protest" pp.205-222 http://www.jstor.org/stable/4610135, 01.03.2014.
[24] Prothero, p.213.
[25] Prothero, p. 217
[26] The technique will later be explained in the chapter called *Naked Lunch*

Despite having different types of faith, the Beats became an echo of the soul which was deprived of spirituality. They protested the "civilized" and welcomed the primitive[27] because, like Ralph Waldo Emerson, they thought that the poor and the primitive were close to nature and so were close to the truth, so they believed that ancient religions, not Abrahamic religions, would help them get close to nature and understand the truth. Because the poor and nonwhite people lived in closer proximity to nature, they respected "the poor and the racially marginal and the socially inferior."[28] They were also involved in meditation and "mantra chanting" along with drugs and different sexual experimentations to feel close to God.[29]

Interestingly, the historians of American religion showed almost no interest in the Beat spirituality. As a result, the spiritual world of the Beats was not included in the studies. The ones who had already studied their spiritual tendencies discerned that the Beats had an inclination toward Zen; however, their practice of it was distinguished from the "real" Zen and Zen Buddhists. That is why, Alan Watts contended that the Beats did not totally practice Zen.[30] Nevertheless, it is obvious that this new way of spirituality refused the prevalent religious norms of the society because the Beats could not explain the reason why God had already abondoned America so finding God in their own spirituality is the only way out. Any form of institutionalized faith in America was in decay and this also called attention to the death of early post-war American values: collectivism and a unique American consciousness. In this regard, the Beats are also the representatives of apocalyptic mind.[31]

Additionally, there are many common points between the Puritans; the antecadents of the American Transcendentalists, who make a pilgrimage from England to the New World, and the Beats. As it is obviously known that Puritans were a group of people growing discontent about the religious doctrines of the Church of England. They can also be called conservative revolutionists because they revolted against the main religious instituiton of England and worked for moral and religious reforms although they did not perform it in a real sense. They took a

[27]Prothero, p. 206.
[28] Prothero, p. 220
[29] Prothero, 220
[30]Prothero, p.207-208
[31] Prothero, p.209

journey to the New World, America, to accomplish this aim. In this regard, Puritans can be regarded as the Pilgrims of the Oriental religions. In the Oriental religions, Pilgrims take a spiritual journey as well. The Beats headed their way to the margins like the Pilgrims did to the "sacred shrines"[32] of the world. Like the Pilgrims, the Beats permeated into the moment and travelled from one city to another spontanously. By practicing Zen Buddhism, they meditated, used different types of drugs and experimented different sexual inclinations to find spirituality. They stressed the holy essence of the human relationships and denied "the pragmatic functionality of social structure."[33] As Stephen Prothero suggests; "The Beats lived both on the road and at the edge. For them, as for Pilgrims, transition was a semipermanent condition" (211). Nevertheless, there is also a difference between the Pilgrims and the Beats. Whereas the Pilgrims had a target to arrive in a place, the Beats had no "geographical goal."[34] They coursed their way to an undefined search of spirituality, however, without an exact purpose of arriving but they travelled. What was sacred while travelling was living the moment and taking pleasure in this sacrality of the moment. Therefore, the Beats can also be regarded as strolling writers who travelled the earth without having an aim to have a rest.[35]

Hence, the Beats and the American transcendentalists bear paralells to each other. In fact, the Beat literary tradition can be traced back to the American Transcendentalism. Like Ralph Waldo Emerson, the Beats valued intuition and feeling on the transcendental level and tried to reflect just a part of what they had experienced into their writings.[36] They tried to find out ways to escape from the conformist society and expressed it in their writings. One common point between the American transcendentalists and the Beats is that they preferred to live very close to nature and aware of the fact that God's presence is everywhere in nature, not in churches, synagogues and mosques. That is why, they seek the truth in nature like the American transcendentalists and nakedness (both in literary and real terms) is important to be close to nature. The Beats believed that they could liberate themselves so long as they went beyond their limits; that is why, obscenity in their

[32]Prothero, p. 210
[33] Prothero, p. 211
[34] Prothero, p. 211
[35] Prothero, pp. 210-211
[36] Prothero, p. 220

writings was an important component of freedom. In fact, there is a strong relationship between their inclination of embracing Oriental religions and using the element of obscenity. In Oriental religions, in contrast with Christianity and its different creeds, materialism has of no importance and it is such a thing that we should dispose in order to realize the mystery of the universe. Hence, the Beats preferred "to dress like bums" [37]since the clothes wrapping the body limit the realization of the mystery of the universe. They made a great emphasis on nakedness and used it as an indispensable element of the Beats' works. It is used as a literary medium especially in Jack Kerouac's works. Not only in Kerouac's but also in Allen Ginsberg's works, especially in his poems, can the element nakedness be found. In the poem "Kaddish," in which Ginsberg is exposed to his cultural roots down the periphery. The element of nakedness is expressed as a form of purity and simplicity. As well as Kerouac and Ginsberg, William Burroughs also used the element "nakedness" as a resistance to hide the evil aspects of drug addiction. However, nakedness is more than an element for the Beats. Tytell explains it as such:

> *But for the Beats nakedness did not simply exist as an aesthetic standard, it was to become a symbolic public and private stance, making art and action inseperable: Thus Allen Ginsberg disrobed at poetry readings, and Kerouac once wrote that he wanted to be like the medieval Tibetan scholar- monk Milarepa who lived naked in caves- and as a supreme final statement Neal Cassady was found naked and dead near a railroad track in Mexico.*[38]

In the Beat literature, nakedness embodied rebirth and the restoration of identity.[39] Along with nakedness, they even went beyond their limits so as to realize the mystery of the universe. They were strongly tended to have different sexual orientations, which were not welcomed by the conformist American society at that time. Hence, they used the elements of nakedness and sexuality in their writings recurrently. By using these elements creatively, they gained a distinctive place in literature. They were also called "Bohemian hedonists" as they all deliberately chose to be a "non-conformist; " although they all came from so-called "good" families. One striking trait of the Beats is that they are all involved in tasting every "belonging-to-the-world" experience so as to reach a spiritual understanding. As well as all the points mentioned above, the Beats also regarded themselves as hoboes.

[37] Prothero, p. 210.
[38] Tytell, p. 4.
[39] Tytell, p. 4.

They were forced to live in an exile within an inimical culture. They were the angels of holocaust.

Especially, of the Beat writers, Jack Kerouac bears exact parallels to the American transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson's concept of the "self" and tendency to the Oriental religions correspond with Jack Kerouac's idea of the "self" and his inclination to the Oriental mysticism. Kerouac's longing for America which was "invested with wild-self believing individuality" can obviously be seen in his writings. Edward Halsey Foster explains it as such:

> *Kerouac traced the Beat Generation back to that time when America was invested with wild self-believing individuality. By the 1940s, however, America seemed to have little use for "wild self-believing individuality". The frontier era was long-past, and the labor movement, which had portrayed the worker as defiant and independent, had become respectable and middle-class. The laborer lived nearly as well as the Professional, and no one needed a Eugene Debs and Daniel Boone any longer. The self reliant hero had survived in the Depression songs of Woodie Guthrie and the novels of John Steinbeck and had been transformed into the GI during World War II, but young men returning from Europe and the South Pacific were not told to brave frontiers but to get an education (at government expense under the GI bill), a family, and a home*[40]

Since Kerouac thinks that American culture had already lost sight of the idea of "wild self-believing individuality," the society tied itself to the institutions. He thinks that middle class life is boring, uneasy and without purpose. Moreover, he thinks that there is not enough exuberance to go on in this conformist society.[41] Although he is disturbed by this stifling conformity, he has no ability to find out any answers to the problems of living in a modern society. Nonetheless, he is of the opinion that the modern society will always be there as a challenge to be beaten and escaped from.[42] Before the 1940s, America used to have a strong belief of self-reliance. However, by the 1940s, America's idea of self-reliance and "wild self-believing individuality" lost whatever remains existed of its value since the brave frontier of America had long before died out. They no longer needed a Daniel Boone who fearlessly explored the early American frontier. Likewise, the labor movement which depicted the laborer as daring and independent, became respectable and middle-class. In the following years, The New Frontiersman, shaped by the

[40] Foster, s.7.
[41] Champney, p.115
[42] Champney, p. 119

governence of John F. Kennedy, becomes a man stripped off any personal and emotional properties. He has become the so-called a logical man.[43] Foster explains it as such; "Men were expected to be logical, efficient, and cool-headed, organizing their lives according to their employers' needs" (8). Therefore, it is impossible to see any excitement or any exuberance in American society anymore since the emphasis on individuality is undermined by the authorities. The so-called self-reliant man unfortunately can only be seen in the movies and popular fiction. However, there is a real discontent about the new male ideal which was introduced in John F. Kennedy's era. The so-called "juvenile delinquints" who were involved in petty crimes are the most important evidence of this unhappiness. They dissented from the adolescent ideal male in their clothes and life styles for they preferred to wear leather jackets and use motorcycles. This in fact also held a promise for the rise of the quintessential American spirit of self-reliance. Hence, Kerouac believed that the America he valued revived again after the World War II with the emergence of hip culture. Each individual had to rely on himself and free himself from any of the interference of the government, the church, a ruling class, or any other organized authority. By doing this, one could eliminate the hegemony of institutions and free himself from authorities. It created a free atmosphere where the emphasis was on the freedom of "individuals." That is why, Kerouac put much emphasis on the freedom of individuals and declared that he stood by all the people against civilization. Prothero explains it in *On the Holy Road: The Beat Movement as Spritual Protest* as such:

> *'Beat,' Kerouac asserted, stood not for 'beat down' but for 'beatific.' 'I want to speak for the things,' he explained. 'For the crucifix, I speak out, for the Star of Israel I speak out, for the divinest man who ever lived who was German (Bach), for sweet Mohammed I speak out, for Buddha I speak out, for La-Tse and Chuang-tse I speak out.'* [44]

Apart from the parallels between Emerson and Kerouac in terms of giving value to individuality, the Beats are also the precedents of Walt Whitman who defended the idea of individual differences and freedom against the society which was the supporter of order in the previous century. The revolt of the Beats was a cultural revolution and the attempt to struggle with the conformist ideologies of the 1960s. However, Whitman differs from the Beats in the manner of giving

[43] Foster, pp. 7-8
[44] Prothero, pp.206-207.

importance to leading American spirit since it is the main starting point of the social development. Regarding this, Whitman does not have the rebellious feelings of the Beats. While Whitman writes about an America, which offers a hopeful future for all its people, the Beats laments the already lost idea of being a democratic country. The revolt of the Beats was the mood of anxiety and desparation. The "individual" in the Beats tries to stand out against the conformism. It is a reaction to the technological images and the limitations of the authority. As a result, the Beat proceeds as an apocalyptic character since it rebels against all these restraining factors.

Among the Beats, Allen Ginsberg bear great resemblances to Walt Whitman. Like Whitman, Ginsberg also had a prophetic discourse in his poems and was in pursuit of forming a unity out of the diversity in the American society. Both of them wrote about the modern American society and the "individual" in the confessional mode. Additionally, Whitman's and Ginsberg's conceptualization of body and bodily pleasures are almost alike in their poems. As it is stated before, Whitman's depictions of body and bodily pleasures go beyond spirituality, and become virtually concrete in his poems. As for Ginsberg, the descriptions of sexuality and nakedness are stripped off spirituality and displayed themselves almost touchable. As it is stated before, Ginsberg even performed nakedness at his poetry readings.

However, the American society reflected in the poetry of Whitman and Ginsberg differ from each other. In Ginsberg's America, the society is in decay and the people become estranged to each other. He writes about the failure behind the American success not only wildly but also sensitively. Ginsberg tries to depict America with its faults and deformity. The industrialization, the urbanization and the technological objects stifle the "individual" and cause it to be annihiliated. The "individual" is restricted to the stereotyped behaviours in modern times. In contrast to Ginsberg, Whitman's America is a perfect place and offers a hopeful future. While Whitman celebrates industrialization, urbanization and technological progress, Ginsberg refutes them. The crowds of Whitman's people are satisfied and hopeful in contrast to Ginsberg's people becoming isolated. Hence, whereas Whitman depicts an American character welcoming the crowds, Ginsberg withdraws him from the contemporary society and becomes critical of it. In fact, Ginsberg has a bitter voice of America in his poems.

Apart from Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs could also be regarded as the extension of Walt Whitman in the 1960s. Burroughs, like Whitman, welcomes the individuality and the diversity of people. His distinguished writing technique, cut-up and his non-linear narration lacking a definite setting and a plot prove the fact that he celebrates polyvocality. He wants to get out of the ordinary writing style to reflect the diversity. Especially, in his novel, *Naked Lunch*, he uses various narrators and the cut-up technique, which will be discussed in the following part. In his novel *Junky* as well, he jumps from one character to another to reflect the diversity although he uses first person naration, a setting and a plot.

Despite all these resemblances to Whitman like Ginsberg, the society in Burroughs's two novels *Naked Lunch* and *Junky* is in decay and deterioration because of the experimentations with various drugs and sexuality in contrast to Whitman's pleasurable depictions of sexuality and developing society.

CHAPTER TWO
THE BIOGRAPHY AND THE LANGUAGE OF WILLIAM BURROUGHS AND *NAKED LUNCH*

2.1. THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BURROUGHS

William Burroughs is one of the most outstanding countercultural figures of the Beats. He has an eminent role in shaping the Beat mind. He wrote many books such as *And The Hippos Boiled in Their Tanks (with Jack Kerouac, 1945), The Exterminator (1960), The Soft Machine (1961), The Ticket That Exploded (1962), The Yage Letters (with Allen Ginsberg, 1963), Nova Express (1964), The Wild Boys (1971)* and *Queer (1985).* [45] He is renowned for his books called *Naked Lunch* and *Junky* (or *Junkie*) which extraordinarily disclose drug culture and the world of addiction. He had different sexual orientations and got married twice. His works partly reflect his extraordinary life, and sexual identity choices. His second wife was shot by him accidentally. He was extremely misogynistic and a heavy drug addict. Yet it was these characteristics that caused him to have a distinguished place among the Beats and in American letters. Allen Ginsberg, especially, admired him a lot and regarded him as a distinctive intellectual and spiritual man of the time. Burroughs can also be called an anarchist in a cultural and political sense. He has a great contribution to the development of subcultures—Beats and Hippies. In addition, he was also the "Godfather of Punk". He also has an impact on the subsequent music bands like Nirvana and Nick Cave. [46]

Burroughs was born on February 5, 1914 in St. Louis in Missouri. He was named after his grandfather, who invented the adding-machine technology in accounting in business. He received education in a boarding school called The Los Alamos Ranch School in New Mexico. The school's fundamental principle was to raise strong cultures of manhood. While studying in this school, Burroughs kept a journal which revealed his platonic feelings for another male student. However, he had to hide his sexual inclination due to the oppressive environment of the school;

[45] Biography, "William S. Burroughs Biography", biography.com, 02.03.2016.
[46] William S. Burroughs, "Biography", www.biography.com/people/william-s-burroughs-9232376, 03.01.2016.

that is why, he destroyed the journal afterwards. He would later reveal his sexual orientation in his literary career. Since he was using drugs in those years, he was expelled from the school. He went back to St. Louis to complete his high school education. He studied English literature at Harvard University in 1932. While studying at the university, he explored the subcultures of New York, where some people had unconventional sexual experimentations. After completing his education at Harvard, he made up his mind to travel to Europe. He scouted the people with different sexual inclinations in Austria and Hungary. He got married to Ilse Klapper, who tried to escape from the Nazi suppression. He enabled her to enter in the US; however, after a while, they got divorced in New York. His mental health got worse upon returning back to the USA. In 1942, Burroughs became an infantry in the US army; however, this career depressed him since he wanted to be classified as an officer.[47] "Burroughs thought, if I'm going into this thing, I'm going in as an officer, not as a fuckin' private. He liked the idea of danger and combat, but he wanted to be giving orders, not taking them. He wanted to be wearing stripes and getting a lot of respect" (Morgan, 88). His mother managed to release him from the military service using his psychological disorder as an excuse. After that, he went to Chestnut Lodge with the help of David Rioch, a Washington neurologist, to get a psychological treatment there. He was conscious that he had a psychic wound (88). However, he did not continue his treatment since he knew that it would last at least one year. "As he thought of it later, it was the road not taken. Had he been treated, the wound might have healed, but who knows? Benefits are not always benefits…he might never have become a writer" (Morgan, 89). After his short treatment, he went to Chicago and had different jobs there including being an exterminator. He liked this occupation because he could meet new people and make his own hours (Morgan, 90). However, he returned to New York with his friends David Kammerer and Lucien Carr. He met the other Beat writers such as Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac in the mid 1940s. Ginsberg explains it in his interview with Jennie Skerl as such:

> *Burroughs and I had a very close relationship back in the forties. And then he came to New York in '53 and we were also very close in the early fifties. So Kerouac and I were both encouraging him to write. At the time he was not writing and he was not thinking of himself as writer –namely—in the late*

[47] The European Graduate School, "William Burroughs" www.egs.edu/library/william-burroughs/biography, 01.02.2016

> *forties. He began sending me materials that composed Junkie and also the Yage Letters. Also some letters that later became the manuscript called Queer.*[48]

The seeds of the Beat Movement would germinate here in those years. The Beats were against all forms of the establishment, including the Academy and their movement fostered the untraditional and free expressions in American literature. Besides, in the mid 1940s, Burroughs and Keraouc worked on a book called *And The Hippos Boiled in Their Tanks.* It was about a case of murder, the murder of David Kammerer by Lucien Carr. At first, the title of the book was meant to be *I Wish I Were You* which points to the fact that Kammerer wanted to be like Lucien. However, Kerouac and Burroughs changed the title. Ted Morgan explains the story of the new title and the case of murder as such:

> *The novel is a more or less factual account of the 118th Street circle and the events leading up to the murder, with Kerouac contributing some good descriptions of his attempts with Lucien to find a ship, and Burroughs walking away with the best lines, as in, [People in bars are always claiming to be boxers, hoping thereby to ward off attack, like a blacksnake will vibrate its tail in leaves and try to impersonate a rattlesnake.*[49]

The publishing of the book was waited for a long time because Kerouac and Burroughs witnessed this murder and did not want to reveal the murderer. It is because of the fact that they wanted to violate their legal responsibilities. They even disposed of the evidence of this murder to hide it. As a result, Burroughs could not start his career as a writer with this book. In those years, Burroughs had a relationship with Joan Vollmer and they got married in 1945. However, he did not end his unconventional sexual experimentations, which is reflected in his works recurrently. He was also addicted to drugs. First, he started with opiates and then he ended up as a heroin addict. He was also enthusiastic about guns and this enthusiam led him to accidentally kill his wife, Joan Vollmer. He was not imprisoned for a long time, however, that event badly influenced his psychology. Morgan includes different accounts of Joan Vollmer's murder by different people in his book, of which Burroughs's was the most outstanding:

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[48] Allen Ginsberg and Jennie Skerl, "Ginsberg on Burroughs: An Interview" p. 272-273 www.jstor.org/stable/3194907, 01.02.2016

[49] Ted Morgan, **Literary Outlaw The Life and Times of Willam S. Burroughs**, Norton and Company, New York, 2012, p.119.

> *Let's see, Joan was sitting in a chair, I was sitting in another chair across the room about six feet away, there was a table, there was a sofa. The gun was in a suitcase and I took it out, and it was loaded, and I was aiming it. I said to Joan, "I guess it's about time for our William Tell act." She took her highball glass and balanced it on top of her head. Why I did it, I don't know, something took over. It was an utterly and completely insane thing to do. Suppose I had succeeded in shooting the glass off her head, there was a danger of glass splinters flying out and hitting the other people there. I fired one shot, aiming at the glass.*[50]

Although his way of explaning the event seems to be gruesome and unfeeling, it was the chief event which caused him to repent for the rest of his life and to be a turning point in his literary career. Morgan explains it as such; "After Joan's death, Burroughs knew that the rest of his life would be a form of atonement for that one inexplicable moment, not only for the wife he had killed but for the havoc he had brought to those closest to him, his son and his parents" (211). What is really interesting in this event is that Burroughs did not believe it was an accident; rather, the inimical forces and the evil spirit caused her death. However, Morgan comments on the writer's pscychology in a different way:

> *The inimical force that had caused him to kill Joan, Burroughs believed quite literally, was an evil spirit that had possessed him. This was a concept more medieval than modern, although whether the evil spirit is seen as coming from within or from without, the result is the same. A divided personality with a capacity for wickedness can look for a psychological explanation, or can believe that he is possessed by malignant forces. Both explanations are metaphors for the nature of evil, which religion and the "ologies" do not satisfactorily define.*[51]

Whatever the situation is, the death of his wife affected him and he would later reveal it in his famous work called *Naked Lunch*, in which the autobiographical clues are included. [52]

After Joan's death, the first book of Burroughs' called *Junky* was released in 1953 under the pseudonym, William Lee. With this book, Burroughs regarded himself as a real writer. Why he wrote it under a different name was to hide the fact of being a drug addict from his parents because it is about drugs and, as it can be

[50] Morgan, p.208.
[51] Morgan, p.212.
[52] It will later be explained with reference to *Naked Lunch.*

expected, it contains allusions to Burroughs' life. He chose to write about the drug addiction and the subculture because he wanted to reflect the subculture of addicts that he was involved in. Although Borroughs seems to have a positive tone of the effects of drugs on the body, and states that "drug addicts are no worse than so-called normal society," he inadvertently points a morally- declined and deteriorated society caused by drug addiction**.** Morgan explains it as such:

> *On the surface, Junky appears to be an objective slice-of life document on the subculture of addicts. But in the context of Burroughs' alienation, the book is about finding a place to belong. It is a sequel to Burroughs' favorite childhood book, Jack Black's You Can't Win. By taking drugs, Burroughs gained admittance to an outlaw society which he found morally no worse than so-called normal society. The addicts were sorry a lot, with their thieving and their whining for credit and their apathy, but the citizens of straight society were no better—informers, corrupt cops, and hypocrite doctors, with a sprinkling of Johnsons, or decent folk, on both sides. The narcotics agents is "the focal point for a hostile intrusive force. You could feel him walk right into your psyche and look around to see if anything was there he could make use of.*[53]

Hence, the book also reflects Burroughs' out-of-joint life and caused him to be scrutinized by the police. While he was under close surveillance by the police, he had difficulty to get heroin, therefore, he decided to move to Texas and then Louisiana with Joan Vollmer and his son. In New Orleans, the police seized the letters between Ginsberg and Burroughs which were about the delivery of marijuana. Hence, Burroughs made up his mind to travel to Mexico City with his family for the last time. Since the accidental shot of his wife had a drastic influence on him, he decided to go on travelling and went to Tangier. Tangier was one of the most significant cities in Burroughs' literary career because it was a cosmopolitan one with heavy drug and gun trafficking and Burroughs reflected these elements in his writing.[54] The city was the home of evil indeed. Morgan explains this fact as such:

> *Tangier being by definition a place where everything was freely bought and sold, it gained a reputation for wickedness. In his widely syndicated column, "As I was saying," Robert Ruark wrote in 1950 that 'Sodom was a church picnic and Gomorrah a convention of Girl Scouts] compared to Tangier, which [contained more thieves, black marketeers, spies, thugs, phonies, beachcombers, expatriates, degenerates, characters, operators, bandits, bums, tramps, politicians, and charlatans' than any place he'd ever visited. (254)*

[53] Morgan, p.222.
[54] It will later be explained referring to *Naked Lunch.*

What attracted Burroughs to Tangier was the abundance of drugs and the boys to fight off and people's involvement in magic in daily life. (As Burroughs was an addict, he acted psychically in his daily life and gave credit to evil spirits, especially after the death of Joan Vollmer). He started to use apomorphine there, and after a while, his financial situation worsened because of his heavy drug use. Hence, he decided to go to London to get treatment for his addiction.

In Tangier, he wrote his famous book called *Naked Lunch* with the help of Jack Kerouac and Ginsberg. The narrator of the book, William Lee, who also appears in *Junky*, continues his terrible journey. The purpose of the journey is to try different kinds of drugs. The book has a non-linear narrative style, and its satirical narrative style includes the components of metamorphosis and sadomasochism. Because of its obscene language and experimental narrative style, it was not welcomed by the Academy and was not published until 1960s in the US. The work is ignored by the establishment and William Burroughs became a looked-down-on figure at that time. While writing *Naked Lunch,* he became interested in cut-up technique, which randomly combines lines from different pages to create a non-linear narration and which can be perceived as a metaphor for a psychedelic mind and his anarchist attitude against the Academy. [55] Actually, this technique reflects his out-of-joint and deteriorated lifestyle which was caused by drug use.

In 1959, he decided to move to the Latin Quarter in Paris because Paris was the center of lost-generation at that time, and he started to live in the "Beat Hotel." It was called "Beat Hotel" because a number of famous Beat writers such as Peter Orlovsky, Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso and Harold Chapman stayed there. It was an unusual type of hotel with its rooms and hosting style. Morgan explains this as such:

> *Burroughs arrived in Paris in mid-January 1958, and Allen found him a room in the Beat hotel, which he liked. The room smelled of dust and Gauloise cigarettes, and you could do pretty much what you wanted, nobody bothered you. Nobody came bursting in pour faire la chambre, they didn't care whether they made the chamber or not. You could paint on the walls and bring your own furniture in, and in the bar, a glass of wine was cheaper than a cup of coffee.*[56]

[55] The cut-up techniques will later be explained in the part of *Naked Lunch* in a detailed way.
[56] Morgan, p.300.

In 1966, he went to London to receive a heroin treatment. He also attended the Church of Scientology; however, with the loss of his trust to this Church, he departed from there. Morgan explains this as such:

> *After taking the advanced clearing course in Edinburgh, Burroughs left Scientology, impressed by the auditing techniques but disgusted by the authoritarian organization and the stupidly fascistic utterances of L. Ron Hubbard. The aim of Scientology, complete freedom from past conditioning, was perverted to become a new form of conditioning. He had hoped to find a method of personal emancipation and had found instead another control system. Scientology roped you in and bound you. It was like a state, with its own courts and its own police, its own rewards and penalties, and its own ludicrous jargon.*[57]

In 1974, he got an instructional position at the City College of New York with the help of Allen Ginsberg; however, he disliked the position and decided to leave it. After leaving, he made contact with the other countercultural figures from different art branches of the time such as John Giorno, Lou Reed, Patti Smith, Susan Sontag and Andy Warhol.

In 1981, he moved to Lawrence, Kansas. Two years later, he was accepted to be a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts. He worked with the renowned musicians of the time such as Throbbing Gristle, Tom Waits, Sonic Youth and Nick Cave.

In 1997, he died from a heart attack in Lawrence, Kansas. Therefore, what can be inferred from his out-of-joint lifestyle is that he cannot stick to an exact place and is drifted from one place to another proceeding to his gradual self- deterioration caused by the experimentations with drugs and sexuality.

2.2. LANGUAGE OF WILLIAM BURROUGHS AND *NAKED LUNCH*

As it was mentioned before, Burroughs wrote *Naked Lunch* with a different technique called cut-up. Burroughs had no intention of offering the reader a linear narration or setting. He breaks up the language with the help of cut-ups for he fictionalizes such a world that embraces hidden ambitions and "less noble ends." [58] Burroughs's transition from a positive tone to a gruesume one in *Junky* and *Naked*

[57] Morgan, p.470.
[58] Foster, p.151

Lunch could distinguishably be seen in his language and style of narration. In *Junky,* he uses linear narration including a setting and a plot because he uses a positive tone while depicting the world of drugs although he inadvertently points to one's and society's moral decline and deterioration. Nevertheless, in *Naked Lunch,* he uses the cut-up technique and non-linear narration lacking an exact setting and a plot because the positive tone gives its place to a gruesome one and Burroughs portrays a decayed and morally-declined society caused by experimentations with various drugs and sexuality.

According to Burroughs, we perceive the world through language. Language is a system of rules and it limits our perception of the world like all the systems. We should get out of the limitations of language and observe what is happening outside the language that we use. For this reason, as Stephenson Gregory states in his book called Essays on the Literature of the Beat Generation The Daybreak Boys, Burroughs opted to write with the technique; cut-up:

> *Burroughs' premises for his theory of the cut-up are these: language is a system that carries implicit patterns of perception and thought that are largely unconcious in the user of the language; these patterns are the assumptions of the system; and all patterns, all systems are reductive. We experience ourselves and the world through language, but language limits our experience to its implicit patterns. Our life within the limits of our language is our reality. If we wish to discover what other realities may exist outside of the patterns of our language reality, then we must break out of our language.*[59]

What language does is abolishing the diversity of our perception of the world. On the contrary, cut-up method helps us to get out of our solid reality and restructure it. By restructuring our reality, we can go into a multiform universe where all of the realities cross. Stephenson explains it as such:

> *For Burroughs the cut-up method is a tool of escape from language reality into a multiverse. The cut-up can release us from the discreteness, the exclusiveness of an either/or universe into a multivalent infinity where all sets intersect. By cutting the world lines we can restructure our reality, our consciousness.*[60]

Bringing diverse forms of reality together requires unifying time, identity and perception[61]. Past, present and future are combined, and the identity vanishes since it

[59] Gregory Stephenson, **Essays on the Literature of the Beat Generation The Daybreak Boys**, Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale, 1990, p.63.
[60] Stephenson, p.63.
[61] Stephenson, p.64

is a limitation to our perception of the other patterns of the world. As such, the individual or the self embraces the "other." Stephenson explains it as such:

> *For Burroughs the cut-up is not primarily an act of destruction but an act of creation. The cut-up creates by permitting multiple connections and by unifying. Specifically, the cut-up unifies time, identity, and perception. In the multiverse of the cut-up all time is simultaneous. The past, present, and future are exploded as arbitrary and artificial. Distinctions. Events occur in what scientists call Absolute Elsewhere. The ego identity is likewise discovered to be an arbitrary and nonexistent limit. Self and other and it melt and merge in the cut-up. The modes of sense perception overlap and fuse into synaesthesia. Thus, the cut-up provides Access to a new clarity, a new lucidity.*[62]

Actually, Burroughs wanted to save the reader from the suffocating atmosphere of the linear narration which offers a sequence of time and place. In the very beginning of the Atrophied Preface in *Naked Lunch,* he raises a question about why he has chosen to write nonlinearly:

> *Why all this waste paper getting The People from one place to another? Perhaps to spare The Reader stress of sudden space shifts and keep him gentle? And so a ticket is bought, a taxi called, a plane boarded. We are allowed a glimpse into the warm peach-lined cave as She (the airline hostess, of course leans over us to murmur of chewing gum, Dramamine, even Nembutal.*[63]

Using this technique, Burroughs brought the words in *Naked Lunch* in an arbitrary order to give any reader the chance of arranging the sentences as he wishes. In the "Atrophied Preface" to *Naked Lunch*, Burroughs unravels the riddle of the novel in his own way and explains why he used such an obscure type of narration and language:

> *You can cut into Naked Lunch at any intersection point… I have written many prefaces. They atrophy and amputate spontaneous like the little toe amputates in a West African disease confined to the Negro race and the passing blonde shows her brass ankle as a manicured toe bounces across the club terrace, retrieved and laid at her feet by her Afghan hound…*[64]

As Burroughs points out above, it is a novel woven with a type of narration which "jumps from one place to another." That is why, a reader can start reading the novel at any "intersection point." Hence, the novel aims at offering the reader the chance of "weaving" and "folding" its elements in various ways.[65]

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[62] Stephenson, pp.63-64.
[63] William Burroughs, **Naked Lunch The Restored Text,** Grove Press, New York, 2010, p.182
[64] Burroughs, p.187.
[65] Timothy S. Murphy, "Intersection Points: Teaching William Burroughs' Naked Lunch", College Litarature, p.29, http://www.jstor.org/stable/22112497, 01.02.2016.

For the reader unused to such novelties, the novel presents difficulties. The perpetual change of setting (time and place) disables his capacity to make sense of the text.[66] There are diverse ways of gathering the non-linear elements of narration, nonetheless; the title of the book suggests only one point: the naked reality stripped off any disguises. Burroughs explains it in his Naked Lunch how he gave the title of the novel:

> *I awoke from the Sickness at the age of forty-five, calm and sane, and in reasonably good health except for a weakened liver and the look of borrowed flesh common to all who survive The Sickness…. Most survivors do not remember the delirium in detail. I apparently took detailed notes on sickness and delirium. I have no precise memory of writing the notes which have now been published under the title Naked Lunch. The title was suggested by Jack Kerouac. I did not understand what the title meant until my recent recovery. The title means exactly what the words say: NAKED Lunch – a frozen moment when everyone sees what is on the end of every fork.*[67]

Hence, the "naked" reality "on the end of the fork" is unconvered before the reader's eyes, so the possible interpretations of the novel are left to him. As the depictions of Burroughs's world of drugs and addicts suggest, "naked" is presumably the reality about deteriorated self and society. In fact, Burroughs doesnot impose any meaning to the reader; rather, the reader makes sense of the meaning by himself. Burroughs went through a "psychic process" as a result of heavy use of drugs for twelve years and wrote about his own experiences during this process. "This is not a novel" he says in one of the letters he wrote to Irving Rosenthal.[68] This is because of the fact that he did not intend to write a linearly narrated novel. Actually, he did not intend to write a novel. Burroughs states it in *Naked Lunch* as such:

> *There is only one thing a writer can write about: what is in front of his senses at the moment of writing… I am a recording instrument… I do not presume to impose "plot" "continuity… Insofar as I succeed in Direct recording of certain areas of psychic process I may have limited function… I am not an entertainer.*[69]

Consequently, *Naked Lunch* is not such a novel that is written in a sequence of time, place, and that includes a plot or continuity. It is rather like a "labyrinth leading the reader through twists and curves of narrative and observation, then

[66] Murphy, p.28
[67] Burroughs, p.199.
[68] Burroughs, p. 249,
[69] Burroughs, p. 184,

doubling back and starting over again."[70] In fact, the book is comprised of a pile of scenes which refers to the life of Burroughs. As it was mentioned before, Burroughs is heavily addicted to the drugs and the book contains the notes and the scenes during his withdrawal period. That is why, *Naked Lunch* was written while the author was in a delusive mode. However, the world which William Burroughs reflects in the book defines a reality rather than a fiction. The book contains autobiographical clues from Burroughs's life and the narrator of the book, William Lee, is the "persona" in Burroughs's own dream world. In fact, the narrator, William Lee is Burroughs himself. Richard Kostelanetz explains this in his article called *From Nightmare to Seredipity: A Retrospective Look at William Burroughs* as such:

> *In essence, Naked Lunch is a report of the hallucinatory madness Burroughs experienced during withdrawal from heroin addiction; and in structure, the book is a collection of scenes, gathered (and perhaps edited and revised) from notes he jotted down while undergoing withdrawal shock, notes whose contents were not remembered afterwards. The narrator is identified as William Lee; but since Burroughs used that name as a non-deplume for his earlier, first novel Junkie (New York, Ace, 1953), one assumes that Lee is Burroughs himself, a persona in his own dream world.*[71]

Although the reader who is not preinformed about Burroughs's life cannot detect the autobiographical clues in the book, Burroughs strews every page of the book with his own experiences. The society which is reflected in the book is the society of the countries that he explored at that time. Besides, some of the words and lines in the book bear the traces of his own life.[72] Burroughs states in one of the lines of the book: "'Grassed on me he did,' I said morosely. (Note: Grass is English thief slang for inform)" (4). "Grassed" is an English slang word referring to one of his friends, Paul Lund who is a gansgter in Tangier. "Eager beaver wooing him much too fast" (4) is also another line from a World War II song and it was the time when Burroughs tried to serve as an officer in the US army. Another line "He's a character collector, would stand still for Joe Gould's seagull act" (5) conjures up the Greenwich Village where Burroughs lived at his forties.[73] One of the most striking

[70] Foster, p.161
[71] Richard Kostelanetz, "From Nightmare to Seredipity: A Retrospective Look at William Burroughs" p. 123, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4610135, 01.02.2016
[72] Morgan, p:375
[73] Morgan, p:375

autobiographical clues from the book is the sentences referring to his second wife's death, Joan Vollmer:

> *So he is putting down junk and coming on with tea. I take three drags, Jane looked at him and her flesh crystallized. I leaped up screaming [I got the fear!] and ran out of the house. Drank in a little restaurant—mosaic bar and soccer scores and bull-fight posters—and waited for the bus to town.*
> *A year later in Tangier I heard she was dead.*[74]

As the lines above also testify, Burroughs did not take full responsibility of his wife's death; instead, he blamed the evil force for Joan's death. Nevertheless, both his rejection of responsibility and the nervousness he feels about the event are strongly felt in the sentences above.[75]

Although *Naked Lunch* does not have a proper plot, a general summary of the book can be given. The novel opens up with a drug dealer and an addict William Lee fleeing from the police. He travels across the country with a number of friends. As the events go by, they split up and Lee proceeds to Mexico down through Central America and South America. Since he is a drug addict, he gets involved in the subculture of addicts in the locations he visits. He gets prescriptions from the local doctors for drugs. He also meets up with the other drug dealers called the agents. Throughout his journey, he visits three fictional locations. The first one is Annexia which threatens its citizens with unexpected punishments since it has a random bureaucracy. The second is Freeland where the governer is Dr. Benway. The third is Interzone which includes a common Market in which all types of drugs are on sale. In all of these zones, many types of socially unacceptable behaviors are common and are accepted as normal. It is most probable that all of these imaginary places are results of the hallucinations of the drug addicted William Lee. The first chapter of the book titled as "And Start West" opens up as such:

> *I can feel the heat closing in, feel them out there making their moves, setting up their devil doll stool pigeons, crooning over my spoon and dropper I throw away at Washington Square Station, vault a turnstile and two flights down the iron stairs, catch an uptown A train… Young, good looking, crew cut, Ivy League, advertising exec type fruit holds the door back for me. I am evidently his idea of a character. You know the type: comes on with bartenders and cab drivers, talking about right hooks and the Dodgers, calls the counterman in Nedick's by his first name. A real asshole. And right on time this narcotics dick in a white trench coat (imagine tailing somebody in a white trench coat. Trying*

[74] Burroughs, p.18-19.
[75] Murphy, p.13

to pass as a fag I guess) hit the platform. I can hear the way he would say it holding my outfit in his left hand, right hand on his piece: [I think you dropped something, fella.[76]

As it can be seen from the opening of the chapter, the narrator, William Lee, runs away from the "stool pigeons," which means spies from the police. Lee is not only a drug addict but he also has unconventional sexual behaviour and orientation. The beginning of the chapter is a foreshadowing for the following events in the book as beginning gives some clues about how the rest of the chapters will be like. Addiction and sexuality are the main themes of the book. It is an account of the protagonist's hedonic sexual experiences enabled by part by drugs. Lee will always find himself escaping from the law and order. It is an escape into the subculture of addicts and people having different sexual experimentations. In fact, the novel, as Burroughs did in *Junky* as well, challenges the misconceptions about drug addiction and different sexual experimentations. While *Junky* depicts the element of addiction and sexuality with a little taste of pleasure; but still inadvertently pointing towards one's deterioration and loss of moral values, *Naked Lunch* analyzes these elements as a reflection of the feeling of bitterness, which is also connected to Burroughs's critique of American society. Like Ginsberg, who laments for the post-war American society in decay in his poem *Howl*, Burroughs feels the pitiable condition of the addicts and the people who have different sexual inclinations reflect the decay of American society. In this regard, Burroughs as well as Ginsberg, albeit in their against-the-grain attitudes and positions, functions as Whitman of their day.

The first theme used in *Naked Lunch* is addiction. In fact, it is used both as a theme and a metaphor in the novel. As a theme, it is portrayed as the addiction to drugs and its impacts on the body. As a metaphor, it is depicted as people's addiction to state politics and bureaucracy.[77] First, the novel includes some characters who deteriorate both bodily and socially as a result of addiction.

As it was mentioned before, *Naked Lunch* contains diverse narrators; however, the most recurrent narrator of the book is William Lee since all the events take place in his own hallucinatory world. In the excerpt from the opening of the book below, there is another man who is "young, good-looking, crew cut, Ivy

[76] Burroughs, p.3.
[77] Murphy, p.93

League[78], advertising exec type fruit." The depiction of the character from the perspective of William Lee is of great interest. Although the character is a gay drug addict like Lee, he does not trust this young man. This is because addiction erodes the trust one feels in people, isolating the addict from everyone around him.[79] Such lack of trust mark Lee's description of another character called Willy the Disk who is a drug dealer. He is depicted in the eye of Lee as such:

> *Well, the fuzz has my spoon and dropper, and I know they are coming in on my frequency led by this blind pigeon known as Willy the Disk. Willy has a round, disk mouth lined with sensitive, erectile black hairs. He is blind from shooting in the eyeball, his nose and palate eaten away sniffing H, his body a mass of scar tissue hard and dry as wood. He can only eat the shit now with that mouth, sometimes sways out on a long of ectoplasm, feeling for the silent frequency of junk. He follows my trail all over the city into rooms I move out already, and the fuzz walks in on some newlyweds from Sioux Falls.*[80]

As it is apparent in the excerpt belove, Willy the Disk is the person who "dropped a dime" on Lee; therefore, Lee does not trust him. Although drug dealers and addicts are in contact with each other, they do not have a reliable relationship. Hence, the subculture of addicts has deteriorated relationships. In this sense, Burroughs depicts the subculture of addicts as filled with internal as well as external hostilities, as an environment in which one cannot trust any other person.

Such deteriorations are first observed in the psyches and bodies of the addict characters in the novel. Throughout the book, a number of characters who are heavily addicted to drugs are subjected to metamorphosis both in the period of withdrawal and after the inhalation or injection of the drugs. The character, Vigilante, is depicted in the book as such:

> *I saw it happen. Ten pounds lost in ten minutes standing with the syringe in one hand holding his pants up with the other, his abdicated flesh burning in a cold yellow halo, there in the New York hotel room… night table litter of candy boxes, cigarette butts cascading out of three ashtrays, mosaic of sleepless nights and sudden food needs of the kicking addict nursing his baby flesh… The physical changes were slow at first, then jumped forward in black klunks, falling through his slack tissue, washing away the human lines… In his place of total darkness mouth and eyes are one organ that leaps forward to snap with transparent teeth… but no organ is constant as regards either function or*

[78] Ivy League is a term which refers to the highly-qualified universities in the North-eastern part of the USA: Harvard, Yale, Pennsylvania, Princeton, Columbia, Brown, Darthmouth and Cornell. (Burroughs, William S., Çıplak Şölen, Sel Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2014.)
[79] Kostelanetz, p.40
[80] Burroughs, pp.7-8.

position… the entire organism changes color and consistency in split-second adjustments…[81]

The body of the character changes both during the periods of deprivation and drug usage. When he loses weight, it means that he has appeased the need of drugs. However, when he gets heavier, it means that he is deprived of drugs. Either in the case of injection or deprivation, he loses all his human appearance and turns into a monstrous and misshapen creature character. Like him, the typical character belonging to the subculture of addicts presents obnoxious and evil properties in their appearances. Since he is subjected to metamorphosis perpetually, he loses all his human appearance and becomes a beast-like creature.

To give other instances from the characters who are subjected to metamorphosis are the Sailor, the Mugwumps and the Reptiles. The Sailor is depicted when he is deprived of drugs as such:

He laughed, black insect laughter that seemed to serve some obscure function of orientation like a bat's squeak. The Sailor laughed three times. He stopped laughing and hung there motionless listening down into himself. He had picked up the silent frequency of junk. His face smoothed out like yellow wax over the high cheekbones. He waited half a cigarette. The Sailor knew how to wait. But his eyes burned in a hideous dry hunger. He turned his face of controlled emergency in a slow half pivot to case the man who had just come in. [Fats] Terminal sat there sweeping the cafe with blank, periscope eyes. When his eyes passed the Sailor he nodded minutely. Only the peeled nerves of junk sickness would have registered a movement.[82]

The Sailor, who "picks up the silent frequency of junk" ceases laughing, which is a humanly behaviour and listens to himself. His depiction of face, like all the addicts, starts to mutate since he gets deprived of junk. Although he seems to be waiting patiently for the junk, his eyes reveal the fact of the need of drugs. The situation of the character after the injection is also depicted:

…He pulled the pen out and broke it like a nut in his thick fibrous, pink fingers. He pulled out a lead tube. He cut one end of the tube with a little curved knife. A black mist poured out and hung in the air like boiling fur. The Sailor's face dissolved. His mouth undulated forward on a long tube and sucked in th black fuzz, vibrating in supersonic peristalsis, disappeared in a silent, pink explosion. His face came back into focus unbearably sharp and clear, burning yellow brand of junk searing the grey haunch of a million screaming junkies.[83]

[81] Burroughs, p.9.
[82] Burroughs, p.44.
[83] Burroughs, p.45.

Hence, it is evident that the addict undergoes another change after the injection of the drug: he distorts reality in his perception. The narrator's observations of the metamorphosis of the characters supersede what can be realistically observable and provable. In the same chapter, he describes other addicts as hallucinatory creatures: The Mugwumps and The Reptiles. The Mugwumps are depicted as such:

> *On stools covered in white satin sit naked Mugwumps sucking translucent, colored syrups through alabaster straws. Mugwumps have no liver and nourish themselves exclusively on sweets. Thin, purple-blue lips cover a razor-sharp beak of black bone with which they frequently tear each other to shreds in fights over clients. These creatures secrete an addicting fluid from their erect penises which prolongs life by slowing metabolism. (In fact all longetivity agents have proved addicting in exact ratio to their effectiveness in prolonging life.) Addicts of Mugwump fluid are known as Reptiles. A number of these flow over chairs with their flexible bones and black-pink flesh. A fan of green cartilage covered with hollow, erectile hairs through which the Reptiles absorb the fluid sprouts from behind each ear. The fans, which move from time to time touched by invisible currents, serve also some of communication known only to Reptiles.*[84]

The Mugwumps and the Reptiles are mutated creatures. Of great interest are the Mugwumps' eating habits and their mutated organs. They have no livers and "thin purple-blue lips" which cover their "razor-sharp beaks." The Reptiles are addicted to feed on the Mugwumps' bodies, so they have an unusually interdependent relationship.[85] Their connection to each other resembles the one between a drug dealer and an addict. Their bodily features are also striking. They have "flexible bones" and "black-pink flesh." Their "green cartilage" absorbs the fluid from the Mugwumps. Besides, it serves as a type of communication among the Reptiles when it vibrates. Hence, the Sailor, the Mugwumps and the Reptiles, portrayed as evil creatures with mutated properties, have no human forms.

One of the outstanding characters of the book is also the Rube, with whom Burroughs unravels the subculture of drug addicts and their destructive and self-destructive behaviour due to their drugs. Rube's destructive behavior is made visible in the scene where he is put into the prison with the other addicts in Philedephia. He causes safety problems among the other addicts. Burroughs explains it as such; "The

[84] Burroughs, p.46.

[85] This relationship is called "The Algebra of Need" by Burroughs. "Few reach the Plaza, a point where The Tanks empty a tidal river, carrying forms od survival armed with defenses of poison slime, black flesh-rotting fungus, and green odors that sear the lungs and grab the stomach in twisted knots… Because Fats' nerves were raw and peeled to feel the death spasms of a millon cold kicks… Fast learned The Algebra of Need and survived…"(172). The Reptiles survive by sucking the fluid from the Mugwumps so it is a kind of dominating and dominated relationship.

Rube is a social liability with his attacks as he calls them. The Mark Inside was coming up on him and that's a rumble nobody can cool; outside Philly he jumps out to con a prowl car and the fuzz takes one look at his face and bust all of us" (9). "The Mark Inside" is a term which is used to describe rattle. Therefore, the Rube gives away not only himself but also the others when he is on the rattle, which also causes his own death. Burroughs explains it as such:

> *I decided to lop him off it meant a smother party. (This is a rural English custom designed to eliminate aged and bedfast dependants. A family so afflicted throws a "smother party" where the guests pile mattresses and lush themselves out.) The Rube is a drag on the industry and should be "led out" into the skid rows of the world. (This is an African practice. Official known as the "Leader Out" has the function of taking old characters out into the jungle and leaving them there.) The Rube's attacks become an habitual condition. Cops, doormen, dogs, secretaries snarl at his approach. The blond God has fallen to untouchable vileness. Con men don't change, they break, shatter—explosions of matter in cold interstellar space, drift away in cosmic dust, leave the empty body behind. Hustlers of the world, there is one Mark you cannot beat: The Mark Inside…*[86]

Because the Rube is an addict who puts the other ones into trouble, Lee plans to kill him. Lee mentions a rural tradition called "smother party" which is done to get rid of the old members of the family, so he makes an analogy to rationalize his act of killing the Rube. The following lines describe how Lee murders the Rube:

> *…I left the Rube standing on a corner, red brick slums to the sky, under a steady rain of soot. [Going to his croaker I know. Right back with that good pure drugstore M… No, you wait here—don't want him to rumble you.] No matter how long, Rube, wait for me right on that corner. Goodbye, Rube, goodbye kid… Where do they go when they walk out and leave the body behind?*[87]

The depiction of the Rube's murder is so cold-blooded that it demonstrates how the addict is stripped off his humanity. In short, Burroughs, as he did in *Junky* as well, depicts the addict as an abject character who gradually proceeds to his own decay. As a consequence, Burroughs portrays a deteriorated society in contrast to Walt Whitman's developing society.

In the novel, the theme of addiction is also woven as a metaphor for the society in decay whose individuals are controlled by some mechanisms and made addicted to it on purpose. The most striking character of the novel related to the metaphor of addiction is Dr. Benway. He is depicted as such:

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[86] Burroughs, p.10-11.
[87] Burroughs, p.10-11.

> *Dr. Benway had been called in as advisor to the Freeland Republic, a place given over to free love and continual bathing. The citizens are well adjusted, cooperative, honest, tolerant and above all clean. But the invoking of Benway indicates all is not well behind that hygienic façade: Benway is a manipulator and coordinator of symbol systems, an expert on all phases of interrogation, brainwashing and control. I have not seen Benway since his precipitate departure from Annexia, where his assignment had been T.D.- Total Demoralization. Benway's first act was to abolish concentration camps, mass arrest and, except under certain limited and special circumstances, the use of torture.*[88]

Dr. Benway runs Freeland by manipulating people's behaviour by means of different medical treatments rather than physical punishments. In his hands, medical treatments become tools of manipulation. His (mis)treatments capitalize widely on the guilts he creates in his patient-citizens. Burroughs explains it as such:

> *'I deplore brutality,' he said. 'It's not efficient. On the other hand, prolonged mistreatment, short of physical violence, gives rise, when skillfully applied, to anxiety and a feeling of special guilt. A few rules or rather guiding principles are to be borne in mind. The subject must not realize that the mistreatment is a deliberate attack of an anti-human enemy on his personal identity. He must be made to feel that he deserves any treatment he receives because there is something (never specified) horribly wrong with him. The naked need of the control addicts must be decently covered by an arbitrary and intricate bureaucracy so that the subject can not contact his enemy direct.'* [89]

The depiction of the citizens in Freeland is sarcastic because they conjure Dr. Benway to receive a treatment although they do not have a real disease. In fact, they are made to think that "there is something horribly wrong with" them. As a result, they become "control addicts." In this way, people can be manipulated easily and made to do whatever the control mechanisms want. Hence, the society portrayed in Annexia is in decay, and its members do whatever the control mechanisms want. This aspect of the novel contradicts with what Walt Whitman suggests about the burgeoning of American society. While Burroughs describes a society in decay and loss and becoming addicted to control mechanisms, Whitman draws a more hopeful picture of the society embracing its institutions.

In Annexia, on the other hand, people are treated with unreasonable punishments by the police, which Dr. Benway was against; however, the menace of torture manage successful consequences for those who exert them because it may

[88] Burroughs, p.19.
[89] Burroughs, p.19.

arouse a feeling of despair in its victims and gratefulness in those who are not yet touched by it. Dr. Benway explains this situation as such:

> *While in general I avoid the use of torture—torture locates the opponent and mobilizes resistence—the threat of torture is useful to induce in the subject the appropriate feeling of helplessness and gratitude to the interrogator for withholding it. And torture can be employed to advantage as a penalty when the subject is far enough along with the treatment to accept punishment as deserved. To this end I devised severa forms of disciplinary procedure. One was known as the Switchboard. Electric drills that can be turned on at any time are clamped against the subject's teeth; and he is instructed to operate an arbitrary switchboard, to put certain connections in certain sockets in response to bells and lights. Every time he makes a mistake the drills are turned on for twenty seconds. The signals are gradually speeded up beyond his reaction time. Half an hour on the Switchboard and the subject breaks down like an overloaded machine.*[90]

It is of great interest that Dr. Benway is tolerant with the torture only if it is accepted as a "deserved punishment," and he develops a machine called "Switchboard" to discipline the person. The machine controls the person's behaviour. Whenever he makes a mistake, the electricity is transmitted into his teeth and its level is increased in coordination with the length of the person's reactions and his brain "like an overloaded thinking machine breaks down." This system of controlling people's behaviour resembles Ivan Pavlov's[91] experiments with animals. That is why, the people in Annexia are controlled like animals. The people are made to be addicted to control by creating temporary behaviour with the help of machines. They act like hallucinated creatures rather than free agents.

After explaining the function of the machine "Switchboard" as controlling and conditioning the people's behaviour in Annexia, Burroughs jumps into "Western man" revealing himself "in the form of gadgets" (22). In fact, the society in Annexia becomes the author's metaphor for criticizing the Western society where individuals have lost their agency and subjecthood and turned into parts of a machine that in fact manipulates and enslaves them. In this sense, this case explains that the society which is presented by Burroughs is in decay in contrast to Walt Whitman's developing society.

Burroughs correlates the impact of machine "Switchboard" with the effect of drug "C" on the addicts. Dr. Benway explains it as such:

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[90] Burroughs, p.22

[91] A Russian physiologist. He controls behaviours of the animals with a machine. The animals are conditioned to exhibit the terminal behaviour. It is called "Classical Conditioning".

'Ever pop coke in the mainline? It hits you right in the brain, activating connections of pure pleasure. The pleasure of morphine is in the viscera. You listen down into yourself after a shot. But C is electricity through the brain, and the C is yen is of the brain alone, a need without body and without feeling. The C- charged brain is berserk pinball machine, flashing blue and pink lights in electric orgasm. C pleasure could be felt by a thinking machine, the first stirrings of hideous insect life. The craving for C lasts only a few hours, as long as the C channels are stimulated. Of course the effect of C lasts only a few hours, as long as the C channels are stimulated. Of course the effect of C could be produced by an electric current activating the C channels…'
'So after a bit the channels wear out like veins, and the addict has to find new ones. A vein will come back in time, and by adroit vein rotation a junky can piece out the odds if he don't become an oil burner. But brain cells don't come back once they're gone, and when the addict runs out of brain cells he is in a terrible fucking position…' [92]

At first, the effect of "C" arouses the feeling of pleasure in the brain. Although it triggers life-like "stirrings" via pleasure, it causes irreparable damages in the brain. The addict can recover only if "he don't become an oil burner." "Becoming an oil burner" means being a heavy addict. Like "an overloaded machine," the body of the drug addict is severely damaged and he can not speak properly since his "speech centers are destroyed." In fact, they are like idiots. Hence, the drug of "C" and the machine "Switchboard" bear resemblances to each other in terms of creating an irretrievable effect in the brain and body. As a result, the people act like inhuman creatures and this also points out the society in decay.

Dr. Benway continues to give other drug instances which destroy the addict's body and mind, however, cause the addict not to realize the act of attack on his own personality and made to be addicted to the control:

...Scopolamine is often effective in dissolving resistence, but it impairs the memory: an agent might be prepared to reveal his secrets but quite unable to remember them, or cover story and secret life info might be inextricably garbled. Mescaline, harmine, LSD6, bufotenine, muscarine successful in amny cases. Bulbocapnine induces a state approximating schizophrenic catatonia… instances of automatic obedience have been observed. Bulbocapnine is a back-brain depressant probably putting out of action the centers of motion in the hypothalamus. Other drugs that have produced experimental schizophrenia—mescaline, harmine, LSD6—are back-brain stimulants. In schizophrenai the back brain is alternately stimulated and depressed. Catatonia is often followed by a period of excitement and motor activity during which the nut rushes through the wards giving everyone a bad time. Deteriorated schizos sometimes refuse to move at all and spend their lives in bed. A disturbance of the regulatory function of the hypothalamus is indicated as the [cause] (causal thinking never yields accurate description of metabolic process—limitations of

[92] Burroughs, p.22.

existing language) of schizophrenia. Alternate doses of LSD6 and bulbocapnine—the bulbocapnine potentiated with curare—give the highest yield of automatic obedience. [93]

There are various types of drugs mentioned by Dr. Benway. Each of them has different impacts on the addicts. For instance, Scopolamine makes the addicts reveal all the secrets of his own personality, however, the addict can stray between what is real and what is delusive. That is why, he may tell an unreal story. Bulbocapnine, another type of drug is completely successful in revealing the hidden identity of the addict and causes him to obey the control mechanisms completely. Meskalin, harmin and LSD6 damage "the function of hypothalamus." As a matter of fact, "the causal thinking" resulting from the restrictions of language is also damaged and it results in schizophrenia. In this way, the addict can reveal the secrets of his personality and can be made to be obedient. Therefore, all the types of drugs mentioned above have an irreparable effect on the bodies and minds of the addict like the machine "Switchboard" and the addicts are made to obey the control mechanisms. Thus, this also points out a society in decay.

In the part called *Ordinary Men and Women*, Dr. Benway appears again and states his ideas about democracy and its bureaus:

The end result of complete cellular representation is cancer. Democracy is cancerous, and bureaus are its cancer. A bureau takes root anywhere in the state, turns malignant like the Narcotic Bureau, and grows and grows, always reproducing more of its own kind, until it chokes the host if not controlled or excised. Bureaus cannot live without a host, being true parasitic organisms. (A cooparative on the other hand can live without the state. That is the road to follow. The building up of independent units to meet needs of the people who participate in the functioning of the unit. A bureau operates on opposite principle of inventing needs to justify its existence.) Bureaucracy is wrong as a cancer, a turning away from the human evolutionary direction of infinite potentials and differentiationand independent spontaneous action to the complete parasitism of a virus. [94]

Dr. Benway thinks that democracy is cancerous and its cancer is bureaus. If a bureau grows uncontrollably, it can act against the state; so, it interrupts its working properly. A bureau's survival is based on the principle of "inventing needs;" that is why, it restricts free-will of its people. However, cooparatives are the independent units based on the principle of meeting needs of the people "who participate in the functioning of the unit;" therefore, the people act with their free-will contrary to

[93] Burroughs, p.23.
[94] Burroughs, p.112.

bureaus. Therefore, Burroughs, through Dr. Benway, criticizes bureaucracy, because the people in such a system can not act with their free-will; rather, they are controlled by the system. In this regard; by criticizing such a system, Burroughs also points towards a society in decay in contrast to Whitman's developing society.

To illustrate another character for the theme of addiction as a metaphor, the leader of the Nationalist Party can be given. In the part called *Ordinary Men and Women*, he is depicted by Lee as such:

> *Luncheon of Nationalist Party on balcony overlooking the Market. Cigars, scotch, polite belches… The Party Leader strides about in a djelleba smoking a cigar and drinking scotch. He wears expensive English shoes, loud socks, garters, muscular hairy legs—overall effect of successful ganster in drag.*
> *P.L. (pointing dramatically): 'Look out there. What do you see?'*
> *Lieutenant: 'Huh? Why, I see the Market'*
> *P.L.: 'No you don't. You see men and women. Ordinary men and women going about their ordinary lives. That's what we need…'* [95]

As the lines above testify, the Party Leader wants "ordinary" people because he wants to take control of them. Contrary to the "ordinary" people in the Market, he wears quiet expensive clothes, smokes cigars and drinks scotch, which points to his luxurious lifestyle and looks down upon the people in the Market. Lee depicts the Party Leader as humiliating and the society is ruled with manipulation. Therefore, Burroughs, through Lee, depicts the society as proceeding to its own deterioration contrary to Whitman's developing society.

There are also some parties in the Interzone controlling the people in various ways. The first party mentioned is the Liquefactionists: "The Liquefactionists are much given to every form of perversion, especially sadomasochistic practices…" (136) As it can be realized from the lines, the Liquefactionists are the members of an absurd party who want to manipulate its citizens with every aberrant behaviour including "sadomasochistic practices." The Liquefactionists think that all the people have "protoplasmic cores," (140) and the messages to control people's brains can be transmitted through these protoplasmic cores. Therefore, the party illustrates one of the control mechanisms which has a desire to take control of the people in absurd ways, which also points to the deterioration of the society.

The second absurd party in the Interzone is called the Senders. The Senders are portrayed as such:

[95] Burroughs, pp.101-102

> *Liquefactionists in general know what the score is. The Senders, on the other hand, are notorious for their ignorance of the nature and terminal state of sending, for barbarous and self-righteous manners, and for rabid fear of any fact. It was only the intervention of the Factualists that prevented the Senders from putting Einstein inan institution and destroying theory. It may be said that only a very few Sendersknow what they are doing and these top Senders are the most dangerous and evilmen in the world…*[96]

The Senders, like the Liquefactionists, send messages to the brains of the people to control their minds; however, they are unaware of the fact that the process of sending is fatal. Besides, they are complacent and brutal because they deny any facts in nature in contrast to the Factualists. Therefore, Burroughs describes this absurd party acting more malignantly than the Liquefactionists to control the minds of the people. One of the examples about how they do it is given in the following lines: " B'Shortly after birth a surgeon could install connections in the brain. A miniature radio receiver could be plugged in and the subject controlled from State-controlled transmitters' "[97]. The people can also be controlled with transmitters by the state. These transmitters are delivered by means of drugs or "other processing"[98]. Therefore, drugs have a significant function to control the brains of the people, and this aspect of the novel also points towards a society' decline.

The third absurd party is the Divisionists, who "cut off piece of their bodies to regrow replicas of themselves."[99] Lee explains it as such:

> *…They cut off tiny bits of their flesh and grow exact replicas of themselves in embryo jelly. It seems probable, unless the process of division is halted, that eventually there will be only one replica of one sex on the planet: that is one personin the world with millions of separate bodies…Are these bodies actually independent, and could they in time develop varied characteristics? I doubt it.*[100]

Lee states that it is most probable to have only one sex with separate bodies via the method of the Divisionists in the future; so this will impede variety among the people. Therefore, Burroughs, in contrast to Whitman's developing society, depicts the society of the Divisionists as deteriorated and decayed whose individuals lose their essential individuality and get the same as each other.

[96] Burroughs, p.136.
[97] Burroughs, p.136
[98] Burroughs, p.137
[99] Burroughs, p.137.
[100] Burroughs, pp.137-138.

The last party in the Interzone is the Factualists. They reject everything which is not factual. They are depicted as such: "The Factualists are Anti-Liquefactionist, Anti-Divisionist, and above all Anti-Sender."[101] The Factualists deny all the other parties' ideas. To illustrate, they state their ideas about the Divisionists as such:

> *'Bulletin of the Coordinate Factualist on the subject of replicas: 'We must reject the facile solution of flooding the planet with desirable replicas. It is highly doubtful if there are any desirable replicas, such creatures constituting an attempt to circumvent process and change. Even the most intelligent and genetically perfect replicas would in all probability constitute an unspeakable menace to life on this planet…' [102]*

The Factualists think that the replicas grown out of the organs of the Divisonists are really dangeorous for the planet because they tend to stop every development and change. Therefore, the lines suffice to prove that the Factualists are not against development and support human beings' intelligence. They are also against the Liquefactionists: "T.B.- Tentative Bulletin-Liquefaction: "We must not reject or deny our protoplasmic core, striving at all times to maintain a maximum of flexibility without falling into the morass of liquefaction…"[103] Although the Factualists accept protoplasmic core, they still think that human-beings shouldnot fall into the trap of the Liquefactionists. It is probably because the Liquefactionists control people with every aberrant behaviour ncluding sadomasochism, of which the Factualists do not approve. Apart from being anti-Divisionists and anti-Liquefactionists, they also reject the ideas of the Senders. They state their ideas about the Senders as such:

> *Tentative and Incomplete Bulletin: 'Emphatically we donot oppose telepathic Research. In fact, telepathy properly used and understood could be ultimate defense against any form of organized coercion or tyranny on the part of pressure groups or individual control addicts. We oppose, as we oppose atomic war, the use of such knowledge to control, coerce, debase, exploit or annihilate the individuality of another living creature. Telepathy is not, by its nature, a one-wayprocess. To attempt to set up a one-way telepathic broadcast must be regarded as an unqualified evil…' [104]*

As the lines above testify, the Factualists donot oppose telepathy as long as it is used to stop any kind of compulsion and torture on the individuals. Therefore, the Fctualists are also against any barbarous behaviour contrary to the Senders. They

[101] Burroughs, p.140.
[102] Burroughs, p.140.
[103] Burroughs, p.140.
[104] Burroughs, p.140.

also think that telepathy is a reciprocal process. If "a one-way" telepathic broadcasting exists, it serves to the malignant purposes. Therefore, the Factualists oppose the idea of one-way telepathic broadcasting. Although the Factualists seems to deny all the control mecahanisms, they still think that people have "human-virus;" and "its symptoms are poverty, hatred, war, police - criminals, bureaucracy, insanity"[105]; that is why, it should be "isolated and treated"[106]. Nevertheless, the Factualists donot state an idea about how to prevent this virus and seem to be an obscure party. In this regard, they can also be regarded as one of the control mechanisms as well.

Apart from the theme of addiction used both as in real sense and a metaphor, there is also another theme: sexuality. In contrast to *Junky,* Burroughs intensely weaves the pages of *Naked Lunch* with the theme of sexuality and the depictions of sexuality point towards the gradual deterioration and moral decline of the society contrary to Whitman's pleasurable depictions of sexuality pointing to hedonic pleasuresfff. Infact, most of the scenes of sexuality are depicted as really absurd and obscene, which also points to the deterioration and decay of the society. As Burroughs does in his *Junky*, the addicts donot have the desire to have an affair with a partner when they use drugs because drug use prevents him to socialize with people. To illustrate, Lee introduces a man called NG Joe who has an illness called "Bang-utot":

> *He decided to visit a colleague, NG Joe, who got hooked during a Bang-utot attack in Honolulu. (Note: Bang-utot, literally, 'attempting to get up and groaning…' Death occurring in the course of a nightmare… The condition occurs in males of Southeast Asiatic extraction… In Manila about twelve cases of death by Bang-utot are recorded each year.* [107]

The meaning of "Bank-utot" is really allegorical that it refers to the erected male organ and this illness is the fear of desire for sexuality and results in death. It is a Southeast Asian illness and frequently seen in Manila. The following lines refer to the illness of NG Joe:

> "NG lived in constant fear of erection so his habit jumped and jumped. (Note: It is awell known tiresome fact, it is a notoriously dull and long winded fact, that anyone who gets hooked because of any disability whatever will be presented, during the periods of shortage or deprivation [such a thing as too

[105] Burroughs, p.141.
[106] Burroughs, p.141.
[107] Burroughs, pp. 60,61.

much fun you know], with an outrageously padded, geometrically progressing, proliferating account.)"[108]

As it is also mentioned in *Junky,* when an addict stops using drugs, his desire for sexuality increases; for this reason, NG Joe uses drugs to prevent "Bank-utot," a kind of illness which stimulates the desire for sexuality. In *Naked Lunch,* as it is the same as in *Junky,* there is a close relationship between drug addiction and sexuality. Drug use stops an addict to have an affair with a partner, which is a very essential human need; and as a result, prevents him to socialize with people. Therefore, Burroughs, as he does in *Junky* as well, points to one's self-deterioration caused by heavy drug use.

As it was mentioned before, the absurdity and the obscenity of the scenes of sexuality are at its greatest point in *Naked Lunch* compared to *Junky,* which also signifies the moral-decline and deterioration of the society in contrast to Whitman's developing society. In the part *Hassan's Rumpus Room,* the scene is depicted as such:

> *Gilt and red plush. Rococo bar backed by pink shell. The air is cloyed with a sweet evil substance like decayed honey. Men and women in evening dress sip pousse-cafes through alabaster tubes. A Near East Mugwump sits naked on a bar stool covered in pink silk. He licks warm honey from a crystal goblet with a long black tongue. His genitals are perfectly formed-circumcised cock, black shiny pubic hairs. His lips are thin and purple-blue like the lips of a penis, his eyes blank with insect calm. The Mugwump has no liver, maintaining himself exclusively on sweets. The Mugwump pushes a slender blond youth to a couch and strips him expertly.*[109]

Although the place where the people meet to have an affair with each other is portrayed as attractive with "gilt and red plush," it still signifies the decay and deterioration of the society. It is because the description of the air and the character Mugwump gives the feeling of gruesomeness. As for an instance, the smell of the air in the bar reminds of "a sweet evil substance like decayed honey." Therefore, it may indicate the amount of the drug and alcohol use; and as a result how rotten people are because of the high amount use of them. The other example is the description of the people and the monstrous creature, the Mugwump. The depiction of the dressing style of the people and the appearance of the Mugwump in the bar points to their unconventional sexual behavior and inclinations, and as aresult their loss of moral

[108] Burroughs, p. 61.
[109] Burroughs, p.63.

values. For this reason, Burroughs, with the theme of sexuality as well, depicts a deteriorated and decayed society in contrast to Whitman's developing society.

Consequently, William Burroughs, as he inadvertently does in *Junky* as well, depicts the themes of drug addiction and sexuality as a sign of both an individual's and a society's deterioration including loss of moral values, and analyzes them with a feeling of bitterness connected to his critique of post-war American society.

CHAPTER THREE

JUNKY

William Burroughs, embellishes the opening of the book, *Junky*, with scenes from his own life more than he does in his *Naked Lunch.* Throughout the Prologue of *Junky*, the narrator William Lee reveals some early life scenes, which bear exact parallels to Burroughs's own life. He states "I was born in 1914 in a solid, three story, brick- house in a large Midwest city. My parents were comfortable"[110]. Like the pratoganist, William Lee, William Burroughs was also born to a wealthy family in 1914 in St. Louis in Missouri. Lee adds that he goes to a private suburban high school and reveals a fact about his school years, his affair with another male student at school: "I formed a romantic attachment for another boy and we spent our Saturdays exploring old quarries, riding around on bicycles and fishing in ponds and rivers.[111]" Likewise, Burroughs, in his early school years in The Los Alamos Ranch School in New Mexico, had platonic feelings for another male student. Lee continues to reveal some facts about his years at university:

> *I went to one of the Big Three universities, where I majored in English literature for lack of interest in any other subject. I hated the University and I hated the town it was in. Everything about the place was dead. The university was a fake English set-up taken over by the graduates of fake English public schools. I was lonely. I knew no one, and strangers were regarded with distaste by the closed corporation of the desirables.*[112]

As the protagonist William Lee did, Burroughs studied English literature at Harvard University in 1932. Although he did nothing embarrasing at Harvard, he was not accepted by the other students. Ted Morgan, in his *Literary Outlaw The life and Times of William S. Burroughs*, explains it as such:

> *Billy wasn't rebellious at Harvard, he wasn't placed on probation, and his parents did not receive embarrassing letters from the dean of students. But he soon began to hate the place. There was an "in" crowd made up of boys from Eastern prep schools, and they never accepted him. Once again, he had the*

[110] William S. Burroughs, **Junky: The Definitive Text of "Junk"**, Penguin Books, New York, 2008, (Junky), p.37.
[111] Burroughs, Junky, p. 38.
[112] Burroughs, Junky, p. 39.

sense of not belonging and adopted an attitude of passive resistence. 'If Harvard doesn't bother me, I won't bother Harvard...' [113]

As it can be realized from the lines above, Burroughs, like Lee, felt alone and isolated himself from the crowds of people, but it did not kick up a fuss for him as long as "Harvard bothered him." Therefore, Burroughs's countercultural personality started to take shape in his school years at Los Alamos and Harvard, and he predominantly reflected this in his novel *Junky.*

Parallels between Lee and Burroughs continue. Lee adds that he goes on a cruise around the world during his university years. He states that he meets a group of wealthy people who have unconventional sexual inclinations. Although he admires them at first, he notices that they are, "jerks;" that is why, he starts to cool off [114]. Similarly, Burroughs took a ship from Malta to Algeria meeting poeple who had different sexual inclinations. After graduating from the university, Lee travels around Europe because he has a small amount of income from his family and hardly has a chance to find a job in the Depression years. Upon travelling around Europe, he notices that the continent is devastated after the war. He states that: "Remnants of the post-war decay lingered in Europe. U.S. dollars could buy a good percentage of the inhabitants of Austria, male or female. That was in 1936, and the Nazis were closing in fast."[115] Hence, he realizes that the situation is much worse there than in the USA. Like Lee, Burroughs took a journey around Europe to explore the post-war continent. He met some people with different sexual orientations in Austria and Hungary. Hence, Burroughs leads an out-of-joint life to his own destruction extending from different sexual experimentations to drug use and reflects this in his book *Junky.*

Lee also states that he applies to the army as an officer; however, he is rejected five times on physical reasons. Despite joining the army later, he thinks that he will not like the position. For this reason, he decides to drum himself out of the army by bringing forward a reason:

...I'd once got on a Van Gogh kick and cut off a finger joint to impress someone who
interested me at the time. The nut-house doctors had never heard of Van Gogh. They put me down for schizophrenia, adding paranoid type to explain the upsetting fact that I knew where I was and who was President of the U.S. When

[113] Morgan, p. 61.
[114] Burroughs, Junky, p. 39.
[115] Burroughs, Junky, p. 39.

the Army saw the diagnosis they discharged me with the notation, 'This man is never to be recalled or reclassified.' [116]

Lee's being discharged from the army and his Van Gogh incident bear exact resemblances to Burroughs' own life. As it is stated in the previous chapter, Burroughs wanted to join the army as an officer; however, he became an infantry, instead. For this reason, he wanted to depart from the army by using his psychological disorders as an excuse. Long before he attended the army, he had a finger incident like Lee. He cut his finger on purpose because he wanted to catch the attention of his boyfriend and called this incident "Van Gogh Act"[117]. Therefore, Burroughs's experiences from his early years to his youth also indicate his gradual deterioration, and it is reflected in the book, *Junky* with the help of the protagonist, Lee.

In addition to all the points mentioned above, Lee's and Burroughs's occupations bear exact parallels. Lee states that he has had various occupations after leaving the army: "I worked as private detective, an exterminator, a bartender. I worked in factories and offices. I played around the edges of crime"[118]. Lee had all these different jobs not because he had an urgent need for money—for he had income from his family—but because he wanted to meet different groups of people including the ones from the world of crime, from that of the underdogs and the poor. Once he gets involved in the world of drugs, he feels he has to earn more money in order to meet the high expenses of drug use. Likewise, Burroughs also had many jobs including being an exterminator although he was not in need of money because he wanted to meet various people and observe their filthy world. Hence, Burroughs' getting involved in such unprestigious and unsanitary jobs also marks his self-destruction and this component is also reflected in his book *Junky.*

To summarize the plot of the novel, the protaganist of the novel William Lee, under the pseudonym, Bill, meets the subculture of drug addicts and starts to use drugs periodically; however, he ends up as a heavy addict after a while. He gets involved in petty crimes and drug-dealing, and as a result, he finds himself escaping from the police traveling from one city to another: Texas, New Orleans and Mexico City subsequently. While travelling, he does not cease his habitual use of drugs. The

[116] Burroughs, Junky, pp. 39-40.
[117] Morgan, pp. 80-81
[118] Burroughs, Junky, pp. 40.

novel starts around 1945 when Bill starts to use morphine. As time goes by, he tries myriad junk forms and becomes a heavy user of junk. He encounters the subculture of addicts in New York and engages in petty crimes and drug- dealing in the filth-ridden parts of the city. Although it is not often exposed, his wife and children also escort him while experiencing these events. As he deeply embroils in the subculture of addicts, he gets deeper into a life of crime and drugs. As a result, he starts to travel incessantly from one city to another fleeing from the police. After New York, he inhabits the Brownsville area for a short time where he stops his habit of junk. After travelling to New Orleans, he starts to have different sexual experimentations, where his old addiction arises and stops having affairs and he experiments with sex, gets involved in petty crimes including drug-peddling, and fluctuates between periods of heavy drug abuse and withdrawal. He is eventually arrested by the police, but after a while he is released and goes back to Texas while his trial is continuing. He decreases his use of drugs in Texas and spends time reading newspapers in cafes and having sexual affairs with new partners. Upon coming across new drug addicts, his drug addiction is stimulated again, and he will not be able to stop his habit which he continues after his recovery. He uses Benzedrine which deteriorates his physical and psychological health. Nevertheless, he recovers from his illness and stops using drugs. In New York, he meets new drug addicts, where his wife abandons him. Upon his wife's leaving, he becomes interested in a new junk which can be found in South America: Yage. It is such a drug that promises telepathic powers. As a consequence, the novel ends up with his journey to South in pursuit of yage.

The parallels between Burroughs and the protagonist of *Junky* continue in the setting. As for the the setting of the novel, it can be said that it is fictionalized noteworthily. Although the same protagonist appears on both Burroughs's novels, the clearly defined and specific setting of *Junky* differs greatly from *Naked Lunch* in which the setting is totally unclear. In the very beginning of the novel, Lee explains when and how he is introduced to drugs, which does not exist in Burroughs's *Naked Lunch:*

> *My first experience with junk was during the War, about 1944 or 1945. I had made the acquaintance of a man named Norton who was working in a shipyard at the time. Norton, those name was Morelli or something like that, had been*

discharged from the peacetime Army for forging a pay check, and was classified 4-F for reasons of bad character.[119]

As it is stated in the lines above, Lee is introduced to drugs with the help of a man called Norton in 1944 or 1945. Actually, the protagonist, Lee in *Junky,* and *Naked Lunch* notably differ from each other. As it was stated before, Burroughs was in search of a new type of drug called yage after his wife, Joan's death; which is also mentioned at the end of his novel, *Junky,* and he wrote about his experiences with yage in *Naked Lunch.* As it was stated before, Yage is a type of drug which arouses telepathic powers; that is why, *Naked Lunch* was written in a delusive mode and it does not include a linear type of narration and a setting. Additionally, it was written with the cut-up technique. In contrast to *Naked Lunch,* the book *Junky* contains a setting and the first-person narration because Burroughs wrote about his early drug experiences with the help of the narrator, William Lee and his mind seems to be much clearer while writing this book. Actually, Burroughs takes a journey to his gradual self-destruction in a group of petty criminals and drug users from *Junky to Naked Lunch.* Hence, his gradual self- destruction can be observed between these two novels.

William Burroughs, as he does in *Naked Lunch,* introduces the same themes in *Junky* drug addiction and sexuality. As for the theme of addiction, it is both used in a real sense and a metaphor just as it is in *Naked Lunch.* In real sense, it is depicted as the addiction to drugs and its effects on the body. As a metaphor, it represents the unhealthy and illegal interdependence of the people from the world of drugs, which has in itself turned to a kind of addiction. Firstly, Burroughs wants to eliminate the misconceptions about drug addiction in the eye of the protagonist, Lee in the prologue as such:

The question is frequently asked: Why does a man become a drug addict? The answer is that he usually does not intend to become an addict. You don't wake up one morning and decide to be a drug a addict. It takes at least three months' shooting twice a day to get any habit at all. And you don't really know what junk sickness is until you have had several habits. It took me almost six months to get my first habit, and then the withdrawal sympstoms were mild. I think it no exaggeration to say it takes about a year ansd several hundred injections to make an addict. [120]

[119] Burroughs, Junky, p.1.
[120] Burroughs, Junky, p.40.

Although Burroughs depicts drug use as a casual addiction at the very beginning of the novel, he continues to describe it as a means to one's self-deterioration throughout the novel. As the lines above testify, one does not voluntarily become a drug addict, for it is not a consciously-made decision. It takes really a long time to be a drug addict, "at least three months' shooting twice a day to get any habit at all." Lee's becoming an addict takes a lot more time: six months. Lee adds that it will not be far too wrong to say it takes a year after at least many hundred injections to become an addict. In fact, this optimistic description of the world of drugs gives its place to a pessimistic one throughout the novel. Lee continues to write about adopting the drug habit. He states: "You become a narcotics addict because you do not have strong motivations in any other direction. Junk wins by default. I tried it as a matter of curiosity. I drifted along taking shots when I could score. I ended up hooked.[121]" Then it would not be wrong to suggest that Lee starts to become a drug addict just because of curiosity and as a result of the emptiness he feels in his life. Thus, although his initial trial of drug seems to depend on innocent reasons, his addiction disastrously turns out to be his mere purpose of life, which leads him to his self-destruction. Lee continues to describe what drug addiction is like:

> *I have never regretted my experience with drugs. I think I am in better health now as a result of using junk at intervals than I would be if I had never been an addict. When you stop growing you start dying. An addict never stops growing. Most users periodically kick the habit, which involves shrinking of the organism and replacement of the junk-dependent cells. A user is in continual state of shrinking and growing in his daily cycle of shot-need for shot completed.*[122]

Lee tries to psychologically justify his drug addiction. He states that he never regrets using drugs because he owes his physical health to his drug addiction. Nevertheless, he also unconsciously admits that a drug addict dies if he does not increase his drug use. If he stops, his junk-dependent cells increase, which stimulates his greed for more drugs. Hence, although Burroughs regards drugs as a medium for good health, he still acknowledges that an addict dies if he stops increasing his dose. For this reason, Burroughs also covertly depicts a drug addict's deterioration via the character, William Lee.

[121] Burroughs, Junky, p.40.
[122] Burroughs, Junky, pp.40-41.

Lee goes on comparing a drug addict's condition with a worm deprived of food. He states that a drug addict's life gets longer when he is in need of drug as a worm's life does when it is deprived of food. He also has an assumption about a drug addict's age: "Perhaps if a junkie could keep himself in a constant state of kicking, he would live to a phenomenal age[123]" As these lines testify, Lee correlates a drug addict's good health with stimulating his drug habit. In fact, by pitifully likening a drug addict to a worm, Burroughs, through Lee, points to his pitiful condition and his self-deterioriation as well. At the end of the Prologue, Lee continues to describe drug addiction as such:

> *Junk is a cellular equation that teaches the user facts of general validity. I have learned a great deal from using junk: I have seen life measured out in eyedroppers of morphine solution. I experienced the agonizing deprivation of junk sickness, and the pleasure of relief when junk-thirsty cells drank from the needle. Perhaps all pleasure is relief. I have learned the cellular stoicism that junk teaches the user. I have seen a cell full of sick junkies silent and immobile in separate misery. They knew the pointlessness of complaining or moving. They knew that basically no one can help anyone else. There is no key, no secret someone else has that he can give you. I have learned the junk equation. Junk is not, like alcohol or weed, a means to increased enjoyment of life. Junk is not a kick.*[124]

As the lines above testify, drugs are the most crucial thing in the life of a drug addict. An addict cannot survive without drugs. When he is deprived of drugs, he will try to quench his thirst for drugs in any way possible and will be relieved as soon as he injects the drug. Hence, it will not be far too wrong to state that addiction to drugs surpass one's need for basic needs such as food and drink, because unlike the former, drugs promise more than survival; they are "means to increased enjoyment of life" rather than to mere survival.

The theme of drug addiction in real sense is woven with a group of characters from the world of drugs, who are themselves testimonies to the moral destruction addiction can effect in an individual's life. Their depiction reveals them to be seriously deteriorated individuals. In the setting of the novel, Lee states that he is introduced to drugs through an addict called Norton. Norton is depicted by Lee as such: "Norton was trying to improve his English and achieve a smooth, affable manner. Affability, however, did not come natural to him. In repose, his expression

[123] Burroughs, Junky, p.41.
[124] Burroughs, Junky, p.41.

was sullen and mean, and you knew he always had that mean look when you turned your back.[125]" Obviously, Norton was depicted not as a friendly man, for his expression on his face was always "sullen and mean." Lee also adds that: "Norton was a hardworking thief and he did not feel right unless he stole something everyday from the shipyard where he worked. ... One day he called me up and said he had stolen a Tommy gun.[126]" Lee's lines demonstrate another vice caused by drug addiction: its ability to give birth to other crimes. Norton's drug addiction results in another addiction: theft. Norton foreshadows Lee's forthcoming moral decline since he is the man to introduce him to drugs at the very beginning of the novel. Hence, Burroughs depicts a drug addict, through Lee, as an improper and deterioated man.

To illustrate the destructive effect of drugs on the body, Lee draws another character's profile, Jack. As in *Naked Lunch*, the drug addicts in *Junky* are subjected to a moral and physical metamorphosis. Jack is depicted in *Junky* as such:

> *...He had a clean-cut, healthy country face, but there was something curiously diseased about him. He was subject to sudden fluctuations in weight, like a diabetic or a sufferer from liver trouble. These changes in weight were often accompanied by an uncontrollable fit of restlessness, so that he would disappear for some days.*
> *...The effect was uncanny. You would see him one time a freshfaced kid. A week or so later he would turn up so thin, sallow and old-looking, you would have to look twice to recognize him. His face was lined with suffering in which his eyes did not participate. It was a suffering of his cells alone. He himself—the conscious ego that looked out of the glazed, alert-calm hoodlum eyes—would have nothing to do with this suffering of the nervous system, of flesh and viscera and cells.*[127]

As the lines above testify, once he becomes an addict, a person's whole body system turns upside down. For example, Jack loses weight when he is deprived of drugs and he looks healthy only after he injects drugs. As Lee explained before, a drug addict feels relieved after he "drank from the needle"[128]. Hence, Jack suffers from junk sickness and becomes unrecognizable when he is deprived of drugs, a fact that suffices to prove a drug addict's self-destruction.

One more character who is subjected to such kind of metamorphosis is Mary. She is portrayed in *Junky* as such:

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[125] Burroughs, Junky, p.1.
[126] Burroughs, Junky, p.1
[127] Burroughs, Junky, pp.2,3
[128] Burroughs, Junky, p.1

> *She went on to tell me how her days were numbered by a rare disease. "Only twenty-six cases on record. In a few years I won't be able to get around at all. You see, my system can't absorb calcium and the bones are slowly dissolving. My legs will have to be amputated eventually, then the arms. There was something boneless about her, like a deep-sea creature Her eyes were cold fish eyes that looked at you through a viscous medium she carried about with her. I could see those eyes in a shapeless, protoplasmic mass undulating over the dark sea floor*[129]

Drug addiction has given Mary an unhealthy body caused by a rare disease resulting from calcium deficiency; as a result, her skeleton system will disfunction in a few years. Lee's description of her is filled with striking images and metaphors. She has "cold fish eyes" that have no shape "protoplasmic mass undulating over the dark sea floor" and which look at somebody "through a vicious medium" as fish look through water. Actually, the depiction of her eyes indicates that she has a diseased face, which characterizes drug addicts. Therefore, the lines above also prove a drug addict's gradual deterioration.

Lee also mentions a character called Subway Mike. His depiction is also noteworthy to realize a drug addict's devastated condition:

> *Subway Mike had a large, pale face and long teeth. He looked like some specialized kind of underground animal that preys on the animals of the surface. He was a skillful lush-worker, but he had no front. Any cop would do a double-take at sight of him, and he was well-known to the subway squad. So Mike spent at least half of his time on the Island doing the five-twenty-nine for jostling*[130]

As it can be seen from these lines, Subway Mike, like the other drug addicts, has an unhealthy face. He is actually likened to an "underground animal that preys on the animals of the surface." Preying on possible addicts, he is most probably a drug peddler, suggested also by his easy recognition by the police. Therefore, this character also testifies a drug-addict's deteriorated moral and physical condition.

Lee continues further to introduce a group of addicts whom he met at 103rd Street in Broadway. He starts to describe old drug addicts:

> *...The 103rd Street boys were all oldtimers-thin, sallow faces; bitter twisted mouths stiff-fingered, stylized gestures. (There is junk gesture that marks the junkie like the limp wrist marks the fag: the hand swings out from the elbow stiff-fingered, palm up.) They were of various nationalities and physical types, but they all looked alike somehow. They all looked like junk. There was Irish,*

[129] Burroughs, Junky, p.11.
[130] Burroughs, Junky, p.9.

George the Greek, Pantopon Rose, Louie the Bellhope, Eric the fag, the Beagle, the Sailor, and Joe the Mex.[131]

The description of these people demonstrates how deterioriated the world of drugs is. Their appearances are unhealthy and they are united in their difference from the non-addicts although they are all from different nationalities. Their posture reveals their being a drug addict; "their hands swing out from the elbow stiff-fingered, palm up." Hence, the depictions of the old drug addicts also point towards one's deterioration of the physical health.

One particular character from 103rd Street is Joe the Mex. He is depicted in *Junky*, as such:

Joe the Mex had a thin face with a long, sharp, twitchy nose and a down-curving, toothless mouth. Joe's face was lined and ravaged, but not old. Things had happened to his face, but Joe was not touched. His eyes were bright and young. There was a gentleness about him common to many old time junkies. You could spot Joe blocksaway. In the anonymous city crowd he stood out sharp and clear, as though you were seeing him through binoculars.[132]

The description of Joe the Mex's face suffices to prove the disastrous effect of drugs on the body despite Lee's positive tone about Joe the Mex's physical condition. Lee states that his eyes are still as vivid as a youngster although he has a "ravaged and lined" face and a toothless mouth. Lee continues further to justify his being in a good physical condition. He claims that drugs only have an impact on his face not on his body. He adds more about his personality that he is a kind man like all the other old drug addicts. Therefore, Lee also tries to depict him as an acceptable person. However, in the following lines, Lee states that he is a liar, and as a result making up many stories like all the liars[133]. Therefore, Lee also gives an important clue about his deteriorated personality despite all his effort to depict him as a favourable person.

Another character from the same street is Louie. He is also described by Lee as such:

Louie was a shoplifter who had lost what nerve he ever had. He were long, shabby, black overcoats that gave him all the look of a furtive buzzard. Thief and junkie stuck out all over him. Louie had a hard time making it. I heard that at one time he had been a stool pigeon, but at that time I knew him he was generally considered right. George the Greek did not like Louie and said he was

[131] Burroughs, Junky, p.25.
[132] Burroughs, Junky, p.25.
[133] Burroughs, Junky, p.26.

just a bum. Don't ever invite him to your him, he'll take advantage. He'll go on the nod in front of your family. He's got no class to him. [134]

As it can be seen from the lines above, Louie is also an immoral and deteriorated character caused by drug use. Like all the other addicts, his addiction gives birth to another one: shoplifting and being a stool pigeon. Hence, he is also depicted both as a thief and a hypocrite. Although he is described as an unacceptable man, Lee still tries to defend him. He states that he is generally an acceptable man. Nevertheless, he adds that another man called George the Greek warns him not to trust Louie because he is not a right person and will try to benefit from Lee. Therefore, Louie's depiction is also noteworthy to see an addict's moral decline.

The description of another character called the Fag from 103rd Street is also striking:

The Fag was a brilliantly successful lush-worker. His scores were fabulous. He was the man who gets to a lush first, never the man who arrives on the scene when the lush is lying there with his pockets turned inside out. A sleeping lush—known as a "flop" in the trade—attracts a hierarchy of scavangers. First come to the top lush-workers like the Fag, guided by a special radar. They only want cash, good rings and watches. Then come the punks who will steal anything. They take the hat, shoes, and belt. Finally, brazen, clumsy thieves will try to pull the lush's overcoat or jacket off him. [135]

The lines above also testify that the Fag is also a corrupted character. He always works on lushes and steals their precious possessions such as cash, rings, and watches. The punks follow him to steal the lushes' other possessions such as hat, shoes and belt. Eventually, ordinary thieves come and steal their jackets or overcoats. Therefore, there is a hierarchy among the addicts and the criminals as well, which points one's superiority over another. The Fag is the most superior one over the others. In the following lines, Lee continues further to depict his appearance and personality in a positive tone. He states as such: "He always dressed well, usually in tweed sport coats and gray flannals. A European charm of manner and a slight Scandinavian accent completed his front.[136]" What Lee tries to do is that he wants to

[134] Burroughs, Junky, p.26.
[135] Burroughs, Junky, p.27.
[136] Burroughs, Junky, p.27.

depict these addicts and criminals as valuable by ranking them. Nevertheless, he also inadvertently points to their deterioration and moral decline.

As it was stated before, drug addiction is also used as a metaphor in Junky. It points to the reciprocal relationship of the people from the world of drugs and the doctors, which has in itself turned to a kind of addiction, and this kind of relationship causes their deterioration and hypocrisy. The most striking characters which illustrate this kind of relationship are hypocritical doctors. One of the doctors that Roy sends Lee to obtain drugs is depicted as such:

> *The doctor's office was in junk territory on 102nd, off Broadway. He was a doddering old man and could not resist junkies who filled his office and were, in fact, his only patients. It seemed to give him feeling of importance to look out and see an office full of people. I guess he had reached a point where he could change the appearance of things to suit his needs and when he looked out there he saw a distinguished and diversified clientele, probably well-dressed in 1910 style, instead of a bunch of ratty-looking junkies come to hit him for a morphine script.*[137]

The lines above suffice to prove the fact that the doctors are also hypocritical and need addicts to survive. Although the person Roy sends Lee seems to have a respectable job—being a doctor—he prescribes drugs to the addicts because he is old and doesnot have as many elegant patients as he did in the past. For this reason, he needs drug addicts to earn money since his office is in the region of addicts. What is noteworthy about the doctor is that he regards the addicts as respectable people wearing clothes in 1910 style although he knows that they are not, so this fact proves that he is hypocritically doing his job. Another doctor Roy meets in Brooklyn proves how hypocritical the doctors are: "…This croaker would go three scripts a day for as high as thirty tablets a script. Every now and then he would get dubious on the deal, but the slight of money always straightened him out.[138]" Therefore, when most of the doctors feel that they can have money from the addicts, they prescribe as many drugs as the addicts want them. The other doctors are described by Lee as such:

> *There was an oldtime doctor who lived in Victorian-Brown stone in the West Seventies. With him it was simply necessary to present a gentlemanly front. If you could get into his inner office you had it made, but he would write only three prescriptions. Another doctor was always drunk, and it was a matter of catching him at the right time. Often he wrote the prescription wrong and you had to take it back for correction. Then, like as not, he would say the*

[137] Burroughs, Junky, p.8.
[138] Burroughs, Junky, p.17.

> *prescription was a forgery and tear it up. Still another doctor was senile, and you had to help him write the script. He would forget what he was doing, put down the pen and go into a long reminiscence about the high class of patients he used to have. Especially, he liked to talk about a man named General Gore who once said to him, "Doctor, I've been to the Mayo Clinic and you know more than the whole clinic put together." There was no stopping him and the exasperated addict was forced to listen patiently.*[139]

As it can be seen from the lines above, the doctors portrayed by Lee seem to do their work illegally; however, they also inadvertently deny what they do. The description of the first doctor is quite remarkable that he writes prescriptions to the addicts and limits the number, though: up to three prescriptions. Furthermore, he inhabits in a quite wealthy property— "in Victorian-Brown stone in the West Seventies" —and the addicts should get elegantly dressed if they want to have drugs from him. Therefore, the doctor seems to be hypocritical because he is disguised as a respectable doctor although he writes presciptions to the addicts. The second doctor doesnot properly do his job as well for he has an alcohol problem and writes incorrect prescriptions to the addicts. When an addict takes it back, he will deny having written such a prescription before. Therefore, what can be inferred from the doctor's action is that he also does his work hypocritically. The third doctor also illustrates well how hypocritical the doctors are. He talks about his old elegant patients in the past while writing prescriptions to the addicts. Therefore, he seems to be doing this work involuntarily, which points to his being hypocritical.

To illustrate the hypocrisy of the doctors, Lee continues further to portray another doctor:

> *All croakers pack in sooner or later. One day when Roy came for his script, the doctor him, "This is positively the last, and you guys had better keep out of sight. The inspector was around to see me yesterday. He has all the R-xes I wrote for you guys. He told me I'll lose my licence if I write any more, so I'm going to date this one back. Tell the druggist you were too sick yesterday to cash it. You guys gave some wrong addresses on those scripts. That's a violation of Public Health Law 334, so don't say I didn't warn you. For God's sake, cover up for me if they question you. This could mean my whole professional career. You know I've always been right with you boys. I wanted to stop months ago. I just couldn't leave you guys stranded. So give me a break. Here's the script and don't come back.*[140]

[139] Burroughs, Junky, p.7.
[140] Burroughs, Junky, p.20

The doctor is aware of the fact that it is illegal to write prescriptions to the addicts; however, he has written many of them since he needs the addicts to make money. When he is warned not to write prescriptions anymore by the police, he begs the addict not to reveal the fact about illegal presciptions. Therefore, he continues his relationship with the addict although he knows that it is illegal; and as a result, this proves his hypocrisy.

The last but not least, the doctors in Mexico City also illustrate the doctors' deterioration and hypocrisy. Lee describes them as such:

> *Mexican croakers are not like Stateside croakers. They never pull that Professional Man act on you. A croaker who will write at all write without hearing a story. In Mexico City, there are so many doctors that a lot of them have a hard time making it. I know croakers who would starve to death if they didn't write morphine scripts. They don't have patient one, unless you call junkies patients.*[141]

The Mexican doctors are completely soaked in hypocrisy and deterioration although Lee tries to depict them as more honest than the Stateside doctors because they donot listen to any made-up stories by the addicts to write prescriptions. They need money and the addicts need the drugs; so they write prescriptions. Therefore, the unhealthy and illegal interdependence of the doctors' and the addicts' turns out to be a kind of addiction in itself, which results in not only the addicts' but also the doctors' deterioration.

Besides the theme of addiction used as both in real sense and a metaphor, there is another theme: sexuality. The destructive effect of using drugs can also be seen in the theme of sexuality. Although the pages of the novel are not woven with this theme as much as Burroughs does in his *Naked Lunch,* it is still worth to mention for it is the secondary theme in *Junky.* Actually, there is a close relationship between drug addiction and sexuality. Burroughs explains it as such:

> *Junk short-circuits sex. The drive to non-sexual sociability comes from the same place sex comes from, so when I have an H or M sooting habit I am non-sociable. If someone wants to talk, O.K. But there is no drive to get acquainted. When I come off the junk, I often run through a period of uncontrolled sociability and talk to anyone who will listen.*[142]

Lee states that the stimuli for getting sociable with people comes from the same place where sex comes from. For this reason, he has no will to socialize with people

[141] Burroughs, Junky, p.98.
[142] Burroughs, Junky, p.104.

in terms of both sexual and non-sexual drives in the periods of using drugs. Therefore, drugs also have a disastrous effect on the very essential human need: sexuality and getting close with people.

Lee also portrays the people with different sexual inclinations in the French Quarter as such:

> *In the French Quarter there are several queer bars so full every night the fags spill out on to the sidewalk. A room full of fags gives me the horrors. They jerk around like puppets on visible strings, galvanized into hideous activity that is the negation of everything living and spontaneous. The live human being has moved out of these bodies long ago. But something moved in when the original tenant moved out. Fags are ventriloquists' dummies who have moved in and taken over the ventriloquist. The dummy sits in a queer bar nursing his beer, and uncontrollably yapping out of a rigid doll face.*[143]

As the lines above testify, Lee seems to have some prejudices about the people with different sexual orientations for he has kept himself away from the people because of his addiction. Nevertheless, he goes to such bars where the people with different sexual inclinations visit and takes alcohol because he quits taking drugs and has to replace them with new things. He likens them to the ventriloquist's puppets because they donot act like human-beings. For this reason, Lee finds them horrifying. However, he still goes to the bars where such people frequently visit because he inadvertently wants to get to know these people and have an affair with them. He continues to depict them as such: "Occasionally, you find intact personalities in a queer bar, but fags set the tone of these joints, and it always brings me down to go into a queer bar.[144]" Lee is really disturbed to be with such people although he finds such places enjoyable. For this reason, he really takes the idea for granted that such people are disturbing. In one of such bars he meets a "red-haired kid" and accounts for the moment as such:

> *…One night, I got lobotomized drunk in Frank's and went to a queer bar. I must have had more drinks in the queer joint, because there was a lapse of time. It was getting light outside when the bar hit one of those sudden pockets of quiet. Quiet is something that does not often happen in a queer joint. I guess most of the fags had left. I was leaning against the bar with a beer I didn't want in front of me. The noise cleared like smoke and I saw a red-haired kid was looking straight at me and standing about three feet away*[145]

[143] Burroughs, Junky, p.60
[144] Burroughs, Junky, p.60
[145] Burroughs, Junky, p.60

Lee hangs out at such bars although he doesnot like the people with different sexual inclinations. He biasedly thinks that such bars are normally noisier because of these people; that is why, he reasons that all such people must have already gone out. Hence, this is also sufficient to prove how prejudiced he is about gay people. One of the kids at the bar surprisingly attracts his attention because he thinks that this kid is not from one of them. He states it as such: "He didn't come on faggish, so I said, "How you making it?" or something like that. He said: "Do you want to go to bed with me?" I said, "O.K. Let's go. [146]" In fact, he unconsciously knows the fact that the kid is also from one of these people, and Lee wants to have an affair with him. Since Lee stops using drugs, he feels the need to replace it with new things; so he is also curious about such people although he has many prejudices about them. Therefore, the depictions of sexuality in *Junky*, also indicates an individual's and the society's loss of moral values and deterioration.

Consequently, While Walt Whitman welcomes the bodily pleasures and describes a hopeful society in his poems, William Burroughs, in his *Junky*, inadvertently portrays the themes of addiction and sexuality as the cause of deterioration and moral-decline of the self and society. In this regard, Burroughs, albeit his against-the-grain-attitude and position, functions as Whitman's of his day.

[146] Burroughs, Junky, p.60.

CONCLUSION

The Beats, whose eminent figures are Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs, are a number of influential writers who take a stance against the post-war American values and political thought in the 1950s and the 1960s; and as a result, are regarded as the countercultural figures of their time. Regarding the values they defended, they can also be accepted as the followers of the American transcendentalists and the New Romantics.

Like the American transcendentalists, the Beats valued the superiority of the individual over society, intuition over reason and stood against any kind of restriction imposed by the society. Like the American transcendentalists, they were in search of the self and the spirituality and felt close to the Oriental religions. Nevertheless, the Beats differ from the American transcendentalists in one aspect: They used nakedness and obscenity, both in literary and real terms, as mediums to reach spirituality. In fact, Jack Kerouac and Ralph Waldo Emerson, who is one of the leading figures of the American transcendentalists, bear resemblances to each other in terms of favoring intuition and self-reliance over reason and nature over society. Actually, Kerouac lamented for the post-war American culture because it already lost the sight of wild-self believing individuality; instead, it tied itself to the institutions. For this reason, Kerouac has an Emersonian trace of his own time. Apart from the relationship of Keroauc and Emerson, there is also a link between the other prominent Beats, Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs, and one of the New Romantics and an extension of the American Transcendentalists, Walt Whitman. Just as Walt Whitman does in his poems, both Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs defended the idea of individual differences and freedom against the society which was the supporter of order and conformity. Besides, they cherish the body and bodily pleasures both in literary and real terms like Whitman does in his poems. In this sense, they act as Whitman of their day. Nevertheless, they still differ from Whitman in one aspect: While Whitman embraces the institutions and offers a hopeful future for the American society in his poems, Ginsberg and Burroughs laments for the post-war American society in decay, which already lost the idea of democratic conciousness and individuality. In this sense, they have the rebellious feelings toward

the American society in contrast to Whitman. Besides, Burroughs's depictions of bodily pleasures in his selected novels *Naked Lunch* and *Junky* inadvertently point to the deterioration and moral decline of an individual and a society in contrast to Whitman's pleasurable depictions of bodily pleasures in his poems.

Regarding this, William Burroughs's novel *Naked Lunch* signify one's and society's downfall and decay in many aspects. First of all, the life of William Burroughs and the experiences of the protagonist, William Lee, bear parallels to each other and this denotes Burroughs's out-of-joint life resulting in his deterioration both in physical and mental sense. This aspect of the novel contradicts with Walt Whitman's progressive individual welcoming bodily pleasures. The protagonist Lee is a drug addict escaping from the police and travels from Mexico to South America with a number of addicts. During his journey, he meets a number of addicts with unconventional sexual behaviour and inclinations. In fact, the plot of the novel greatly correlates with the life of William Burroughs. One of the most striking autobiographical clues is the death of his wife, Joan Vollmer. There is a persona called Jane murdered by a pimp trombone player and her murder resembles with Burroughs's second wife's murder, Joan. Apart from the aspect of autobiographical clues, the language and the technique used in the novel also points to Burroughs's own mental and physical deterioration caused by heavy drug use and experiments with unconventional sexuality. William Burroughs uses an unconventional technique called cut-up, which dismantles language and lacks a linear narration, plot and setting. Although the main narrator of the novel is William Lee, there are also other narrators. Besides, Burroughs does not use an exact setting and a plot, which renders the novel obscure for the reader. Actually, dismantled use of the language in the novel also signify William Burroughs's own mental and physical deterioration caused by heavy drug use and experiments with unconventional sexuality, which contradicts with Walt Whitman's progressive individual cherishing bodily pleasures in his poems. Third aspect of the novel is the themes of addiction and sexuality, which also signifies the downfall and decay of an individual and a society in contrast to Whitman's progressing individual and society. In fact, the theme of addiction is used as both in real sense and a metaphor in the novel. Addiction in the real sense refers to the characters' physical and mental deterioration. In this sense, the

characters are subjected to changes, in other words, metamorphosis both in the period of withdrawal and after the injection of the drugs. When they lose weight, it means that they have appeased the need of drugs; however, when they put on weight, it means that they are need of drugs. In either cases, they lose all their human appearance and turn out to be monstrous creature characters. Besides, the depictions of metamorphosis indicate that the addicts pervert reality in their minds, which renders them hallucinatory creatures. As for an instance, the Mugwumps and the Reptiles are depicted as hallucinatory creatures in the mind of the persona Lee. Their organs and eating habits testify that they have lost their human appearances. Apart from the mutated creatures, the theme of addcition in real sense also marks the unreliable relationship of the addicts. To give an example for this aspect, there is a character called the Rube who always puts the other addicts into trouble when he is deprived of junk. For this reason, he is cold-bloodedly killed by Lee, which also testifies the deterioration and moral decline of the addicts. The theme of addiction is also used as a metaphor in the novel. It stands for the relationship of the society and the control mechanisms. The people are made addicted to the control mechanisms on purpose and they cannot act with their free-will. This aspect of the novel also testifies a society's degradation and decline in contrast to Walt Whitman's developing society. As for an instance, the most stunning character symbolizing one of the control mechanisms is Dr. Benway. He is the governer of Freeland and he uses some medical treatments to manipulate people in Annexia. In contrast to the other control mechanisms, he is against physical torture unless it is necessary. Whenever a person deserves physical torture, he uses a machine called "Switchboard," which controls the brains of the people. The experiments of Dr. Benway with the patients conditioned by "Switchboard" resembles the experiments of Ivan Pavlov, who is a Russian physiologist, with the dogs. In this regard, the people are controlled by the machine like animals, which points to one's and society's decay and degradation as well. Apart from Dr. Benway, there are also other control mechanisms such as the Nationalist Party Leader, the other parties in the Interzone called the Liquefactionists, the Senders, the Divisionists and the Factualists. They manipulate people in many absurd ways including sadomasochism, cutting pieces of their organs to grow replicas, sending messages into their protoplasmic cores and abolishing

human virus. Since they all want to control people with aberrant behaviour, they are the cause of gradual degradation of the society. For this reason, this aspect of the novel also correlates with what has been put forward in this dissertation: While Burroughs's depictions of the society demonstrates its decay in *Naked Lunch*, Whitman's depictions of the society mark its development. Apart from the theme of addiction, there is another theme: the theme of sexuality. Most of the scenes of sexuality are depicted as obscene and absurd, which also signify one's and society's out-of- joint lifestyle. Besides, there is a close relationship between the them of addiction and sexuality in the book. When an addict stops using drugs, he is stimulated to have an affair with a partner but most of the time he is inclined to have an affair with a male. However, when he uses drugs, he has no desire for sexuality, which also points to his reluctance to socialize with people. For instance, there is a character called NG Joe who stimulates drug use not to catch an illness called Bang-utot. It is a kind of illness which is seen among the Southeast Asiatic males and causes them to have an affair with males. In this regard, the character are inclined to experiment with sexuality, which also causes their physical moral decline. This aspect of the theme also indicate one's deterioration caused by experimentations with drugs and sexuality. Apart from this, the depictions of the other scenes of sexuality point towards one's and society's deterioration and moral decline.

Apart from *Naked Lunch*, the depictions of Burroughs's second novel *Junky* also inadvertently points to the downfall of an individual and a society in contrast to Whitman's developing individual and society. As it is the same as in *Naked Lunch*, the three aspects of the novel; the autobiographical clues, the language and the setting of the novel and the themes of addiction and sexuality, demonstrate the gradual decline of an individual and a society. First of all, there are great parallels between the life of Burroughs and the protagonist, William Lee. In fact, the Prologue of the novel is embellished with the scenes of Burroughs's own life. As for an instance, Lee states that he goes to one of the best three universities and studies English literature there; however, he cannot have a close relationship with the others at the university and the town he lives in. This scene of the novel bears great resemblance to the the years Burroughs spent at the university. Like Lee, Burroughs went to Harvard and studied English literature; however he never felt close to people

at the university. Another example is the cruise Lee goes on around the world during his university years. He meets a lot of people with different sexual orientations, which also correlates with Burroughs's own life. Like Lee, Burroughs also goes on a cruise from Malta to Algeria and met some people with unconventional sexual behaviour. Therefore, the examples show that this aspect of the novel points to Burroughs's self-deterioration and moral decline in contrast to Whitman's individual in progress. The second aspect of the novel is the language and the setting used in the novel. While Burroughs uses cut-up technique in Naked Lunch, which obstructs the understanding of the plot and continuity and lacks setting, he uses linear narration in Junky, which includes an exact setting and continuity. In the setting, Lee gives an exact time when he meets a man called Norton, who introduced him to the drugs. Therefore, the setting of Junky differs from the one in Naked Lunch It is because the novel is partly an account of Burroughs's early experiments of drugs and sexuality; that is why, his mind seems to be much clearer. Actually, Burroughs proceeds to his gradual downfall with a number of petty criminals and drug users from Junky to Naked Lunch. The third aspect of the novel is the themes of addiction and sexuality. As it is the same as in *Naked Lunch,* in *Junky,* the theme of addiction is used as both in real sense and a metaphor. The theme of addiction used in real sense refers to the physical and mental decline of the addicts although Burroughs tries to depict them as physically and mentally healthy. First of all, Burroughs tries to eliminate the misconceptions about the drug addiction. In fact, he wants to depict drug use as a casual addiction; however, the descriptions of the characters show that it causes a total deterioration of the characters. Besides, just as it is in *Naked Lunch,* the characters are subjected to metamorphosis during the deprivation and injection of drugs, which also points to an addict's loss of physical health. To illustrate, there is a character called Jack who loses weight when he is in need of drugs and he looks much healthier when he injects drugs. Actualy, he suffers from junk sickness, which points to his gradual physical decline. The theme of addiction as a metaphor in *Junky* points to the reciprocal relationship of the people from the world of drugs and the doctors, which has in itself turned to a kind of addiction and this kind of relationship causes their deterioration and hypocrisy. The doctors illegally prescribe drugs to the addicts although they know it is illegal, so they act hypocritically. This aspect of the

novel also points to the decayed individual and society caused by the illegal relationships of the people. Another theme used in *Junky* is sexuality. Just as it does in *Naked Lunch*; however inadvertently, the depictions of the theme points to the moral decline of the individual and the society. Although the pages of the book are not woven with this theme as much as it is done in *Naked Lunch,* the descriptions are noteworthy. As it is the same in *Naked Lunch,* when an addict stops using drugs, he has a desire for having an affair with a male partner. In *Junky*, the protagonist has many prejudices about gay people; however, he has experimentations with different sexual inclinations. It is because *Junky* is the first novel that Burroughs writes about his experimentations with sexuality and drug use. Nevertheless, the descriptions of the theme also signify Burroughs's deterioration and moral-decline.

Consequently, Burroughs's descriptions of bodily pleasures in his two novels *Junky* and *Naked Lunch* point to the moral decline and deterioration of the society in contrast to Walt Whitman's welcoming depictions of bodily pleasures and developing society.

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