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**Mystic Visions and Eastern Echoes: Indian Influences on Allen Ginsberg's Poetics**

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**Abstract**

The present paper examines the impact of Allen Ginsberg's journey to India (1962-1963) on his poetic vision. Infusing and reshaping his work with mystical themes, Hindu and Buddhist philosophical views, and a deep engagement with Indian aesthetics and spiritual practices. His engagement with Hinduism and Buddhism, encounters with Indian sages, practice of mantra chanting and meditation reshaped his poetic sensibilities. He projected Indian themes and experiences in his work like *Indian Journals* (1963), and travelled in and about the country three times. His literary output post-India like "Stotras to Kali Destroyer of Illusions," "Describe: The Rain in Dasaswamedh Ghat," "The Change" and "Sunflower Sutra" would be examined in this paper. These poems reflect a shift towards introspection, mystical themes, and a deeper spiritual awareness. This paper further explores how India influenced Ginsberg's poetic form, thematic preoccupations, artistic evolution, and personal philosophy.

Poetics refers to the theory and principles of literary creation, especially poetry. It involves the study of how literature particularly poetry is structured, how it functions, and the techniques and devices it employs. Aristotle's *Poetics*, for example, is one of the earliest foundational texts on dramatic theory and the nature of tragedy. This paper will discuss eastern influences on Ginsberg's Poetics. The Beat Generation, characterized by a deep dissatisfaction with American materialism and a search for alternative spiritual paradigms, were drawn to Eastern philosophies. Jack Kerouac, Gary Snyder, and William S. Burroughs all explored Eastern spirituality, but it was Ginsberg who undertook the most sustained engagement with Indian thought and practice. As he states in a letter to his friend, the poet Gregory Corso: "India will change your whole consciousness. It is a bath in Time" (*Indian Journals* 45). Ginsberg's attraction to India stemmed from a long standing interest in mysticism and altered states of consciousness, first sparked by his reading of William Blake and later solidified through his engagement with psychedelic experiences. However, his sojourn in India deepened this inclination, introducing him to direct spiritual practice and blending his poetry with elements of Eastern mysticism.

Ginsberg translated the poetry of anonymous rickshaw pullers in Benares, and in Calcutta he influenced Jibanananda Das's poetry which he translated freely. Ginsberg's *Indian Journals* records the transcendence of the hungry body and soul in India, the colonised land, about whose suffering he understood much. Prior to his visit, he had read the *Bhagvad Gita*, the essence of Hindu spiritual life, Ramakrishna Paramahansa's *Table Talk* (1882-86), portions of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, the Indian epics, and the list grew when he began his trip to India. Among them were the *Jataka tales* and sections from the *Upanishads*. These are familiar texts from India, most of which were translated by Richard Burton, Christopher Isherwood and others. He read Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography and other books on Indian culture. Allen Ginsberg arrived in Bombay on February 15, 1962. As Allen wrote to Jack: "I never saw a place more convenient for wandering and travelling" (Schumacher 369). Years later, he told Suranjan Ganguly in "The Telegraph" (Calcutta) interview:

By 1961 I was more interested in going beyond the traditional expatriate role or voyage, of wandering out in the east, particularly India as most rich and exquisite and aesthetically attractive culture. And also least expensive.... (Ganguly 11)

Ginsberg's *Indian Journals* is a significant departure from all other works, viz., *Howl and Other Poems* (1956), *Kaddish and Related Poems* (1958-60), and other scattered prose pieces. It is a queer collage of notebook, diary, blank pages, writings, tracts, stanzas and poems. Sometimes it is chronological and at other times it breaks the narrative thread to such an extent that the structure of writing composition, paragraphs, poems, sentences along with time and history get upside down. However, there is method in the writing and it directly borrows from William Carlos Williams. Williams' influence in this phase of literary creation is directly related to composition, which Ginsberg practiced in life and directly took to his journal. Like his other rebellions, his rebellion with form too became significant. Similarly, a composition also has to rebel for its independent structure:

There's no reason why ever line must begin at the left hand margin. A silly habit, as if all the thoughts in the brain were lined up like a conscript army. No, thought flows freely thru the page space. Begin new ideas at margin and score their development, exfoliation, on the page organically, showing the shape of the thought, with space-jumps to indicate gaps and relationships between thinks, broken syntax to indicate hesitations and interruptions, – GRAPHING the movement of the mind on the page, as you would graph a sentence grammatically to show the relation between subject verb and object in primary school – the arrangement of lines on the page spread out to be a rhythmic scoring of the accelerations, pauses and trailings-off of thoughts in their verbal forms as mouth-speech. (*Indian Journals* 40-41)

The places he visited were Bombay, Jaipur, Haridwar, the group travelled to Almora, the Punjab, and Pathankot and climbed the Himalayas to enjoy the panoramic beauty. Ginsberg with the group went to Jaipur. He was deeply fascinated by the Buddhist stupas. First, they visited the stupas at Sanchi. They were amazed by the enormous stone domes and ancient Buddhist carvings hewn into the rock. In a letter, he wrote to Jack Kerouac:

The great rock cut cave temples of Ellora, where the Great Glory of Indian art really is, makes Michelangelo's look western little. I mean they got great dancing Shivas balanced with ten arms doing cosmic dances of creation 20 feet tall and fantastically Kalis invoking nightmare murders in another yuga, thousands of statues dancing all over huge temple built like Mt. Kailash, the Himalayan abode of Shiva- And Ganesh with fat belly and elephant head and snakehead belt and trunk in a bowlful of sweets riding on his vehicle, a mouse- How can Da Vinci beat an elephant on a mouse? - anyway all the statuary's endless and there are thirty caves full of it at Ellora". (Schumacher 375)

After nearly two months of nonstop travel, Ginsberg and company returned to Bombay. Ginsberg wanted to settle down to taking notes or attend to his correspondence and regain his bearings before he moved on to his planned visit to Calcutta and Benares. Calcutta and Benares proved to be his spiritual capitals which truly destroyed his materialistic demons and charged him with rare holiness of spirit. He was absorbing the quintessence of Indian **Culture, as Michel Schumacher observes in his *Dharma Lion*:**

Fully immersed in his study of Indian culture, he read voluminously on Hinduism, Buddhism, Tibetan Yoga, Indian literature, and Eastern philosophy; he familiarized himself with classic Indian poetry, music and mythology. He had been impressed by his meeting with the Dalai Lama, and he studied Tibetan Buddhist texts, concluding that the Tibetans came up with as far as I can see the greatest culture on earth, bar none, something unique that could never flower elsewhere. (Schumacher 375)

Ginsberg was happy for India was loosening him up. In the famous ode "Ode to the Nightingale", John Keats wishes: "O for a draught of vintage that hath been Cooled a long age in the deep delved earth/Tasting of Flora and the country green....."and a stanza later Keats declares:

Away! Away! for I will fly to thee  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards  
But on the viewless wings of Poesy. (Keats 189)

Poesy was a better substitute for Keats than wine, India for Ginsberg was a better substitute than drugs. India made him realise, what Keats realised; "Thou was not born for death, immortal Bird!" (Keats 190). No Moloch could "tread thee down" to quote Keats again. If not anything, India restored his confidence, self-dignity, desire to live and

realisation that “sriyantu viswe amritasya putra”: “Man is the child of ambrosia or nectar or the divine”. (*Rig Veda* 10.13.1). Allen wrote to Jack Kerouac:

The subjective result on me of India has been to start dropping all spiritual activity initiated since Blake voice days and all mental activities I can discard and stop straining at heaven’s door, and all that mysticism and drugs and cut-ups and gurus and fears of hell and desire for God and such, as result and in sum, I feel better and more relaxed and don’t give a shit and sometimes sit in a cafe downtown Bombay... and my brain does get empty and filled with big thrilling cosmic Indie Persian Gulf sunset xx Century. (Schumacher 377)

Ginsberg’s pre-India poetry, especially “Howl”, was marked by frenetic energy and an apocalyptic vision of America’s decline. However, post-India visit, his poetry shifted towards a more meditative, philosophical mode. Here, Ginsberg’s use of repetition, lament, and moral urgency resonates with the ethical call of *karuṇā* (compassion) in Buddhist philosophy. The formal qualities of Ginsberg’s poetry post-India visit reveal distinct influences from Indian literary and spiritual traditions. These include repetitive and Chant like structures. He describes his initiation into mantra chanting: “First OM I heard seemed to travel outward and disappear in blackness. Then I started hearing Om all around me, reverberating in space, repeating in my own head.” (Schumacher 290). This immersion in spiritual practice translated into his poetic techniques. Ginsberg’s later poetry incorporated the rhythmic and repetitive qualities of mantra, as seen in his poem “Wichita Vortex Sutra”, where he evokes the Buddhist chant of “Om Ah Hum” as a counterforce to war and violence. Many of Ginsberg’s later poems mimic the incantatory quality of Sanskrit hymns and Buddhist chants. In his poem “Mugging” “Om Ah Hum” is repeated many times. It is structured as a prolonged chant, merging language with spiritual practice. He uses imagery rooted in Indian Aesthetics like Indian landscapes, deities, and spiritual symbols replete his poetry. For instance, in his poem “Guru”, he writes: “In lotus posture, my Guru sits, / breathes in, breathes out, the cosmic wheel turning” (*Collected Poems* 35). Ginsberg’s encounter with Advaita Vedanta and Buddhist doctrines reshaped his metaphysical outlook. He experimented with the idea of poetry as a form of *sadhana* (spiritual practice), where the act of composing verse became an extension of meditation and self-purification. The fluid, spontaneous, and unstructured quality of his poetry, reminiscent of the oral tradition of Hindu hymns and Buddhist sutras, can be attributed to this influence.

In “Kaddish”, a poem mourning his mother, Ginsberg employs a style akin to the Indian epic tradition, using long, incantatory lines and repetitions that mimic the rhythm of Vedic chants: “O mother / what have I done to you / what have I done to myself / what have I done to my father / what have I done to my own soul” (*Kaddish* 64). This layering of grief, self-inquiry, and cosmic despair mirrors the existential concerns often found in Hindu and Buddhist philosophical texts.

This section of the paper will discuss and examine the Indian influences on the themes, poetic styles and techniques by taking four poems, namely “Stotras to Kali Destroyer of Illusions”, “Describe: The Rain in Dasaswamedh Ghat”, “The Change” and “Sunflower Sutra”, in detail. He began a long poem “Stotras to Kali as Statue of Liberty”. Later it appeared as “Stotras to Kali Destroyer of Illusions” in “Planet News”. The overbearing presence of Kali in *Planet News* is as demanding as the presence of Moloch in “Howl”. Like the statue of Liberty she reigns supreme, head and shoulder above in a world inhabited by miserable people, struck by poverty, disease and war. The two Kali poems namely “Stotras To Kali Destroyer of Illusions”, and “Describe: The Rain in Dasawamedh” compare and contrast two cultures, the Oriental and the Occidental, as represented by Kali and the Statue of Liberty.

In “Stotras” Ginsberg shatters the American illusion about the woman of Liberty as saintly and compassionate. She is represented as blood thirsty, as one who has devoured countless armies and is yet insatiable. Like Kali, she too has ten arms as symbols of her destructiveness:

In thy nether left the corpse of Edgar Poe, in front right hand hanging the skull of Roosevelt with grey eyeballs and left-hand George Washington histonguehangingoutlikeafishYour huge goddess eye looming over his severed head your bottomlessthroatopenwith great machinery roars inside teeth made of white radios & mountainous red tongue licking vast bubbles of atomic gum left eye.  
(*Planet News* 45)

The image of Kali may be considered as an extension of Moloch, both being powers of destruction. Like Moloch, Kali’s power also originates from money :

. . . hast formidable eyebrows of spiritual money  
and beareth  
United Nations in your hair (47)

The destructive image of Kali coalesces in the poem with “Statue of Liberty Spouse of Europa”, and becomes “Destroyer of Past Present Future”(48). But in the companion poem “Describe : The Rain in Dasaswamedh Ghat”, Ginsberg takes a more spiritual view of Kali, and tries to draw the contrast between the two cultures, Indian and American. In Ginsberg’s opinion, Indian spirituality is deep-rooted, and underneath the poverty and squalor of Indian life, there is peace, which stands in sharp contrast to the spiritual darkness of the war-crazy American life. In this poem Kali comes back, not as a mythological figure to destroy America with its multiple images, but as a human figure to live a ghetto-life. In “Describe: the rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat” Ginsberg, the narrator of the poem, rents a cheap house in the holy city of Benares, and observes the everyday activity of the common people. The poem, like a painting, where everything happens at the same time, provides a detailed image of multiple human characters. Kali Ma is presented as a blind woman who is on her way finding a place,

to urinate finally “to piss on a broom”; the broom is accidentally left by the stone cutters who “last night were shaking the street with Boom”.(50) Both the progressive modern humans and the colonized poor negotiate the space and have a share of their own. The blind man who rents the road at night as a habitat is shaken as several trucks unload stones, and his sex-life is destroyed. The open habitat of the poor is further shared by animals who rent it for different purposes, the cows and the dogs living a street life, the donkeys and the camels taking the burden of human movements, the elephants serving marriage processions with drummers, tourists and bathing devotees crowding the place, and lepers on their begging movements all representing modern life come to be displayed in Ginsberg’s poetic sketches. Then comes Ginsberg, as he witnessed poverty in America, to sketch the life of the suburban Indian poor.

He writes;

theleper...emerge dragging his buttocks on the gray rainy ground by the glove-banded stump so hands, one foot chopped off below knee, round stump-knob wrapped with lackrubberpushing a tin can shiny size of his head with left hand (from which only a thumb emerged from leprous swathings). (52)

The poet spends his time in a ghetto to understand the effect of forgotten colonialism. A cultural renaissance is envisioned, for freedom of mind . The powerful gods and goddesses have turned humans and possess no power. Kali Ma, representing a blind woman now, presents the life of an imbecile and vanishes; a dog barks at a mad man with dirty and wild hair:

...who rag round his midriff and water pot in hand  
 stopped in midstreet turned round and gazed up at the balconies, windows,  
 shops and city stagery filled with glum activity  
 Shrugged and said *Jai Shankar!* To the imaginary audience and Me’s  
 While a white robed Baul Singer carrying his one stringed dried pumpkin  
 Guitar

Sat down near the cigarette stand and surveyed his new scene, just arrived. (52)

In India all forms of life thrive together in a kind of dirty harmony, and Ginsberg has his own way of describing the spectacle of suffering in India. The poem thus becomes “a stark, disturbing homage to the street people”( Schumater 387) ; lepers, homeless beggars and emaciated sanyasis. Nonetheless, Ginsberg esteems Indian spirituality as nobler than the sham American Christianity.

O Statue of Liberty Spouse Europa Destroyer of Past present and Future  
 They who recite this Anthem issuing from empty skulls the stars and stripes,  
 Certainly makes a noise on the radio beauteous with the  
 Twilight. (*Planet News* 55)

Kali is symbolic of the female aggression that destroyed all evil which threatened humanity. Kali is naked with a garland of skulls of smothered monsters around her neck. She

strode on the earth in a menacing manner charged by the desire to destroy Evil. She was untameable and uncontrollable. Lord Shiva, her husband lay on the road to calm her down. Kali was about to tread upon the lying Shiva. She was shocked. Came out the Holy tongue as a bewildered and baffled expression. Ginsberg has splendidly captured this wonderful Hindu myth with American myth making it a confluence of myths. This is probably the confluence of East and West in the poetry of Allen Ginsberg.

O freedom with gaping mouth full of cops whose throat is adorned with skulls of  
 Rosen bergs  
 Whose breasts spurt Jazz into the robot faces of thy worshippers grant that recitation  
 Of this Hymn will bring them abiding protection money and dance in White House  
 For even a dope sees Eternity who meditates on thee raimented with Space cross  
 eyed  
 Creatrix of Modernity whose waist is beauteous with a belt of  
 numberless Indian scalps. (*Planet News* 56)

Ginsberg is so deeply moved by the omnipotent, the aggressive, the creative powers of Kali that he completely surrenders to Kali for an emotional cleansing, for his writerly redemption. Kali is taken as the creator of the world. It is Kali, who has given birth to the Steel age, Hydrogen Age and Cobalt Age. Then Kali is compared with the Statue of Liberty. This marks the acme of Ginsberg's creativity under the Indian influence. But Ginsberg comes back to Kali and prays that he shall not be reborn as American. This time he completely surrenders for his salvation:

O Liberty Image wife of mankind of thy Mercy show thy favor toward each  
 Me everywhere helpless  
 Before thy manifest destiny by grace may I never be reborn American I and all Is  
 Neither Russian Peruvian nor Chinese Jew never again reincarnates outside Thee  
 Mother  
 Democracy 0 Formless One takes me beyond images and reproductions spouse  
 Beyond disunion  
 Absorbed in my own non-Duality which art Thou". (59)

However, he continued to pay homage to Lord Kali in poem after poem. Ginsberg equates the political massacre of America with that of the destructive goddess Kali who fights demons against the atrocities inflicted upon them. In the backdrop, Ginsberg's mother driven by madness would not be able to give him the real comfort and would be destructive in approach. All his life Ginsberg carried that suffocation, envisioned Kali as the destructive mother, who would destroy American supremacy and re-create a universe for the imbecile:

Kali's insatiable blood thirst caused by eating  
 too many Armies (Asura whose blood  
 drops formed innumerable Asuras)  
 Killed him with a spear & drank drips of blood .  
 Black, half naked . Claws . Tusks . Garland  
 of skulls, red tongue & mouth dripping blood  
 Siva = Destruction devouring time = white  
 Kali triumphs over white time – “abysmal void”  
 Dance madness . Stepping on Shiva she comes  
 down again –there's nothing left to dance on  
 Kali as Statue of Liberty starts moving with ten arms [sic] . (65)

It is indeed astounding how experiences and memories had a deep and abiding effect on his mind. “Dasaswamedh Ghat” shows his debt to India. The poem is a fitting tribute to the city of Benares, where he used expressions like “Jai Shankar”.

The poet continues to draw heavily from Indian myths and legends like “Bimbisara”, “Napoleon Buddha” in a poem called “Vulture peak: Gridhakuta Hill”. He remembers the Beat boys as:

Pale youths and virgins shrouded with snow  
 Chanting OM Shantih all over the world'  
 The hills undulating and roads speeding  
 Around me in the valley  
 Till when I stopped the earth  
 Moved in my eyeballs  
 Green bulge slowly  
 And stopped. (Mailer, sec. IV)

In the poem “Patna-Benares Express”, his heart is gushing with compassion for the poor and the deprived. As Ginsberg moved from one city to another, he was struck by the heart of India's eternal myth. He saw Calcutta with all its pornography as well as spirituality. He talks about Calcutta's obsession with poets like Rilke, and his quest for nirvana, which started in America and has moved to the East.

Ginsberg's journey to India (1962-63) deeply influenced his poetry, as he was exposed to Hindu and Buddhist philosophies that emphasized detachment, inner transformation, and transcendence. In his next poem “The Change”, he reflects on spiritual metamorphosis, mirroring Hindu concepts of samsara (the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth) and moksha (liberation from this cycle). The title “The Change” itself suggests a spiritual transformation, reminiscent of the Hindu belief in rebirth and self-realization. The poem expresses a yearning to transcend material existence, a theme commonly found in the Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita, which emphasize self-awareness and the illusion of worldly

attachment (maya). Ginsberg contrasts the meditative mind (aligned with Indian spirituality) with mechanized, Western civilisation that lacks depth. He writes “O Future of visions and mechanicalwoe,

O torn forms of the present meditation...” (*Planet News* 84). Here, Ginsberg describes the spiritual tension between mechanised modernity and meditative awareness. The phrase “mechanical woe” critiques the West’s obsession with technology and materialism, while “meditation” aligns with the Hindu approach to spiritual awakening.

Hindu deities often symbolise different aspects of the cosmos and the self. In “The Change”, Ginsberg directly invokes Shiva, the god of destruction and transformation. Shiva is not just a destroyer but also represents dissolution as a necessary step toward renewal. Shiva’s destruction is symbolic of spiritual change one must destroy the false ego to achieve enlightenment. Ginsberg’s poetic plea to Shiva to “destroy” his body suggests his desire to dissolve his individual self and merge into a higher spiritual consciousness. His references to Shiva mirror his personal experience in Varanasi (Kashi), the sacred city of Shiva, where cremation rituals signify the impermanence of life. “Shiva the God of divine Destruction and Lust Embrace me! Destroy this body!” (*Planet News* 86). This invocation reflects a Tantric interpretation of Shiva, where both destruction and sexual energy are forces of spiritual renewal. The mention of lust aligns with Tantric traditions that see sexual energy as a means of divine union.

One of the most profound Indian influences in *The Change* is Ginsberg’s fascination with death rituals at Varanasi’s Manikarnika Ghat, the holiest cremation site in Hinduism. According to Hindu belief, dying in Varanasi grants moksha (liberation from the cycle of rebirth). The burning pyres symbolize the impermanence of human existence, a theme central to both Hindu and Buddhist thought. Ginsberg observed these cremations first hand and incorporated their imagery to explore mortality, transformation, and transcendence. “I saw the burning pyres of dead men glowing in the river” (*Planet News* 87). This image reflects both horror and enlightenment—the flames consume the body, but in Hindu belief, the soul transcends the flesh. The river (Ganges) symbolizes purification, washing away sins and leading the dead toward the afterlife. The burning bodies also function as a metaphor for personal transformation, where the poet’s past self is metaphorically burned away to make space for a new, spiritually awakened self.

Ginsberg was deeply interested in Tantric and yogic traditions that view the body as a site of spiritual transformation. Tantra, especially within Kashmir Shaivism, teaches that sexual energy (kundalini) can lead to divine realization. Kundalini, represented as a coiled serpent at the base of the spine, rises through chakras toward enlightenment when awakened. The poem references sexual energy as a transformative force, much like Tantric philosophy where erotic desire is not sinful but a path to spiritual awakening. He writes, “Sexual lightning fills my forehead, Oh Kali!” (*Planet News* 88). Here, “Sexual lightning” represents

the rise of kundalini energy, moving toward the forehead (third eye chakra), the seat of enlightenment in yogic traditions. By calling upon Kali, Ginsberg acknowledges the destructive and creative power of sexuality, aligning with Tantric ideas that embrace physicality as part of divine experience.

The poem “Sunflower Sutra” written by Ginsberg in 1955, carries a profound Indian influence, both thematically and structurally, which aligns with his engagement with Eastern spirituality, particularly Hinduism and Buddhism. This influence can be observed in: The Title: “Sutra” and its Buddhist Connotations. The term sutra originates from Sanskrit, meaning “thread” or “discourse,” commonly associated with sacred Buddhist and Hindu texts. By incorporating this term, Ginsberg frames his poem as a spiritual revelation akin to Buddhist sutras, which are teachings meant to guide practitioners toward enlightenment. The “Sunflower Sutra” thus emerges as a poetic meditation on industrial decay and spiritual redemption, drawing from the Buddhist idea that reality is impermanent and that enlightenment comes through direct perception, Hindu-Buddhist Symbolism of the Sunflower. The sunflower in the poem serves as both a decayed industrial object and a symbol of spiritual transcendence, which resonates with Indian philosophical themes. Hindu and Buddhist traditions often use the lotus as a symbol of spiritual purity emerging from the mud. Similarly, Ginsberg reclaims the polluted, industrialized sunflower and reinstates its spiritual vitality, reflecting the Eastern idea that enlightenment arises even in the midst of suffering. “Look at the sunflower, he said, there was a dead gray shadow against the sky, big as a man, sitting dry on its stalk...” (*Howl and Other Poems* 45). Here, the sunflower initially appears corrupted by industrial waste “a dead gray shadow.” However, Ginsberg later transforms it into a symbol of spiritual resilience:

We're not our skin of grime, we're not dread bleak dusty imageless locomotives,  
 we're golden sunflowers inside, blessed by our own seed & hairy naked  
 accomplishment, bodies growing into mad black formal sunflowers in the sunset,  
 spied on by our eyes under the shadow of the mad locomotive riverbank sunset Frisco  
 hilly                    tincan                    evening                    sitdown                    vision.  
 (*Howl and Other Poems* 46)

This echoes the Hindu and Buddhist concept that true selfhood is beyond the material form akin to the Vedantic notion of the *ātman* (inner self) being untouched by the external world's corruption. Advaita Vedanta and the Illusion of Materialism. The poem's critique of industrial society aligns with Indian spiritual critiques of materialism. Advaita Vedanta, a non-dualistic school of Hindu philosophy, teaches that the material world (*Māyā*) is an illusion, and true reality lies beyond. Ginsberg contrasts between the sunflower's industrial grime and its spiritual core mirrors this distinction. The industrial wasteland of America—described with “locomotives,” “oil,” and “machinery”—is a false reality that blinds people

from seeing their inner spiritual essence. The sunflower's transformation symbolizes a realization of this deeper truth, much like the enlightenment described in Vedantic thought. Thus, Ginsberg's Indian sojourn was more than a geographical journey; it was a transformative pilgrimage that redefined his poetic vision and spiritual outlook. His immersion in Hindu and Buddhist thought led to a radical shift in his poetics, where mantra, meditation, and Indian philosophy became central elements. The influence of India on Ginsberg's work is not merely thematic but structural, altering the rhythm, imagery, and ethical concerns of his poetry. As Ginsberg himself reflected in an interview written *Dharma Lion*: "India showed me the void, but also showed me compassion—the two go together" (44). Through this synthesis of Eastern and Western poetics, Ginsberg forged a new literary path that resonated with the countercultural movements of the 1960s and beyond.

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