A FOUCAULDIAN STUDY OF POWER, SUBJECTIVITY, AND CONTROL IN THE BEATS' LITERATURE AND LIFE

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Abstract

According to Foucault's ideas, power produces discourses and the clash of discourses leads to the change of subjectivities or consciousnesses and also to the internalization of a particular discourse. In other words, it is via creation of subjectivities that power dominates human beings. The Beats knew that the subjectivity that people assign to themselves is imaginary and illusory; it has been given to them by their culture or society and accordingly, they define themselves and only imagine that they are that sort of persons independently and take it as 'truth'. This paper strives to show that the Beats were completely cognizant of this process and through resisting the power, subjectivity, and control that society had imposed upon themtried to create new and different subjectivities, as Foucault had recommended.

Keywords: Beats, control, Foucault, power, subjectivity

Introduction

Foucault enunciates that power and subjectivity are very closely related. Power is exercised in order to create subjectivities that guarantee the continuation of the status quo or the existing social order and above all, resistance occurs through subjectivity, too. The clash of discourses in a society leads to the change of subjectivities and internalizing a particular discourse, the individual revolts against the other. In other words, power dominates human beings via creation of subjectivities that mutually perpetuate the distribution of power. Power creates discourses and discourses in turn operate in a manner that make power relations and operations invisible and moreover, persuade people, subject to those relations, that the status quo or existing organization is natural and will be of great benefit to them. Fromm, too, believes that power, as an essential part of modern life, has become "*anonymous*, *invisible*, *alienatedauthority*" and poses the questions "Who can attack the invisible? Who can rebel against Nobody?" (148). Foucault indicates that although we cannot escape power, resistance to it is not impossible. Discourses restrict people's freedom and do not give them a range of different things from which to choose. As an example, Marcuse stresses a major problem of modern life. He complains that the educated classes have isolated themselves from practical affairs and therefore have rendered themselves impotent in their dealings with reshaping of society and have fulfilled themselves in a realm of religion, philosophy, art, and science. This realm has become for them the 'true reality' and they do not think of "the wretchedness of existing social conditions." Additionally, Marcuse continues, this realm has replaced truth, beauty, happiness, goodness, and most important, the critical temper that of course, cannot be turned into social channels. As a result, culture has become something necessarily idealistic and deals with the idea of things rather than with the things themselves; freedom

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of thought has become more important than freedom of action, morality than practical justice, and inner life than the social life of man (*Reason* 15). For Marcuse the Beats were no exception; they were tangled in this discourse and consequently, were not practical enough to change the existing situation and therefore, contributed to the established institution. Of course, this paper strives to show that the Beats resisted or, at least in their works, protested against the power, subjectivity, and control that society tried to impose; but whether this resistance was really successful is another matter and there are positive and negative views about it. Technical progress that Marcuse mentions could be another example. This discourse has dominated and coordinated the whole system in the West and creates forms of life and of power which in the name of the historical prospects of freedom from domination and toil seems to reconcile the forces that oppose the system. According to Marcuse, the most singular achievement of advanced industrial society is this containment of social change (*Dimensional* xlii). Marcuse believes that advanced industrial society, in fact, is a system of countervailing powers that tends to contain qualitative change, combat historical alternatives, and extend the established position (*Dimensional* 54). Like Marcuse, the Beats had recognized this strong discourse and were dead set against it and testified that it was technology that had led to the invention and use of nuclear weapons that in turn, had caused a lot of anxiety amongst people and came to the conclusion that advanced industrial society was not rational at all.

Resisting the established discourses automatically brings about new and different discourses. Reading *On the Road*, as an example, one realizes that its dealings with the marginalized groups like Mexicans or African Americans are completely different and aim at attacking the established institution and the book actually tries to create a different subjectivity in readers. Ginsberg's *Howl*, too, offers a discursive strategy for dealing with capitalism. In other words, the Beats tended to produce countervailing discourses in order to negate the present discourses of their time. As opposed to Marxism, Foucauldian power is not special to the established institution or the powerful ruling class or is not a top-down model and is not always repressive; hence, "Foucault's interest in locating the production of power less in macro-institutions like the state and more in micro-interactions like the priest-penitent relationship" or bottom-up model (Ortner 8). A lot of discursive sites throughout society produce different discourses that are productive and have the capability of challenging, opposing, or even changing the privileged or dominant ones. In an interview that Rabinow mentions, Foucault enunciates that if power were never anything but repressive, if it did anything but to say no, nobody would obey it. If it is held good and accepted, that is simply because it produces discourse, induces pleasure, and forms knowledge (*Reader* 61). In addition, opposing Marxism, Foucault does not consider human beings as passive slaves of the dominant power; they can actively challenge or resist the dominant discourse's prescriptions. In other words, "individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application (McHoul 89); individuals are the place where power is enacted and also where it is resisted (Mills 35). The Beats repeatedly spoke of Big Brother, secret police, and lack of freedom in America, and especially when sent to

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psychiatric hospitals, they spoke of the doctors who "are in control and have the means to persuade even the most recalcitrant" (qtd. in Raskin 93). At last, they came to the conclusion that America was as much of a military dictatorship as Russia; especially Ginsberg: "No hope Communism no hope Capitalism Yeah/… The bloody iron curtain of American Military Power/Is a mirror image of Russia's red Babel-Tower" (Schumacher 109). Ginsberg boggled at "computerized police state control of America" (146) and he most of the time addressed the question of "How escape centralized control of reality of the masses by the few who want and can take power" (123).

Power and Subjectivity

Foucault is especially amenable to the Beats because he was basically interested in and sympathized with people excluded by mainstream or dominant standards. It is reputed that his attention was attracted by Roussel, a literary figure who was not successful in his career and was classified as mentally ill at his own time. So, as Gutting emphasizes, he was committed to oppose "the normative exclusions that define our society" (*Introduction* 6). Foucault models his modern disciplinary power on 'panoptic prison' designed by Jeremy Bentham. With a minimal staff, panoptican guarantees maximum control of the inmates. In this kind of prison each inmate is in his own separate cell and quite invisible to other prisoners. The prison is built in the form of a semi-circle at the centre of which there is a tower with large windows from which all the cells could be seen by the observer whereas the inmates cannot see the observer. So, as Foucault describes "They are like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible" (*Discipline* 200). Even if the observer is not present the architectural apparatus works miracle and so effectively operates. The inmates cannot see and make certain whether the observer is present and keeping them under surveillance; so, they imagine that the observer is always present and looking at them and as a result, they have to behave precisely in accordance with the rules of the prison. That is to say, they are under constant close surveillance day and night, in order, as Foucault says, to "induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (*Discipline* 201). The prison's surveillance mission is of course, conducive to its primary purpose which is docility. As Rabinow quotes Foucault, "They did not receive directly the image of the sovereign power; they only felt its effects-in replica, as it were on their bodies, which had become precisely legible and docile" (*Reader* 199). Because power, according to Foucault, does not have a single centre and could be found everywhere "indeed what Bentham proposed to the doctors, penologists, industrialists and educators was just what they had been looking for. He invented a technology of power designed to solve the problems of surveillance" (Gordon 148). As a matter of fact, for Foucault power is not "Power – with a capital P – dominating and imposing its rationality upon the totality of the social body. In fact, there are power relations. They are multiple; they have different forms, they can be in play in family relations, or within an institution, or an administration" (qtd. in Jones 96). He

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eventually poses this interesting question "Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?" (*Discipline* 228).

In this way, the inmates are in fact, disciplined. For Foucault, discipline is a "set of strategies, procedures and ways of behaving which are associated with certain institutional contexts and which then permeate ways of thinking and behaving in general" (Mills 44) and as Hook explains, in disciplinarity power is internalized (29). As a result, this internalization makes the inmate become:

> subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. By this very fact, the external power may throw off its physical weight; it tends to the non-corporal; and, the more it approaches this limit, the more constant, profound and permanent are its effects: it is a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation and which is always decided in advance (*Discipline* 202-203).

The inmate then takes the observer's responsibility and always tries to behave in accordance with his standards. As Foucault reiterates, the techniques of Bentham's prison which led to the internalization of discipline permeated all levels of society and were used to produce docile individuals: "We have seen that, in penal justice, the prison transformed the punitive procedure into a penitentiary technique; the carceral archipelago transported this technique from the penal institution to the entire social body (*Discipline* 298). In Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* an agent becomes cognizant of being watched and accordingly, he starts seeing himself through the other's eyes and so, identifies with the observer and accepts his standards (Auestad 75). Burroughs who, Irwin indicates, all his life was a critic of power (Elkholy 271), in *Naked Lunch* shows a prison-society in which everybody has taken on the police's responsibility and behaves accordingly; therefore, it does not matter even if the police are not in evidence in such a society: "Remember the Bismarck Archipelago … A *functioning* police state needs no police" (23). In *On the* Road Dean wishes to have his own way of life and does not want to live according to other people's standards because he is aware of Foucault's warning that "The gaze is alert everywhere" (*Discipline* 195). He desires to become an old bum because in this case "You spend a whole life of noninterference with the wishes of others, including politicians and the rich, and nobody bothers you and you cut along and make it your own way" (Kerouac 146).

Discourse is a set of rules that distribute or circulate particular statements and utterances and keep other statements outmoded and therefore out of circulation. Disciplines that are produced by discourses have two aspects: theoretical and practical. Foucault calls the theoretical aspect 'discursive formations' that "have particular rules about how they 'form groups of objects, enunciations, concepts or theoretical choices' and include or exclude material" (qtd. in O'Farrell 12). He calls the practical aspect 'discursive practices,' "a complex set of practices which try to keep them [statements] in circulation and other practices which try to fence them off from others and keep those

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other statements out of circulation" (Mills 54). As mentioned above, some people believe that the Beats, fulfilling only the theoretical aspect, did not resist but escaped from the scene and avoided the reality of their time; Kerouac went 'on the road' and Burroughs went to and lived in other countries like Mexico. Simultaneously, some others like Holmes reiterate that the same 'movement' was a search for new meanings of life (Elkholy 5) or Adamo enunciates that personal liberty that the Beats pursued could be found only by belonging to no place, it could be reached by being in constant movement (Elkholy 40); so, they fulfilled the practical aspect, too. Because discourse should be "conceived as an autonomous determinant of cognitive and social practices" and it "organizes … all social practices and historical epochs" (Prado 22), here, we quote Tytell who tries to stipulate that in the late 1940s and '60s, at the time of the Beats, a counter-discourse was being produced to devalue the old consciousness or subjectivity and bring about a new one:

> because of the Depression and the anticipation of the war . . . a great fissure had occurred in the American psyche, an uprooting of family relationships, of the sense of place and community that was compounded by a fear of imminent devastation. It was a shared premonition that the entire society was going to be changed in a major way, and that young men were to be particularly sacrificed … the emergence of the new postwar values that accepted man as the victim of circumstances, and no longer granted him the agency of his own destiny: the illusion of the free will, the buoyantly igniting spark in the American character, had been suddenly extinguished (9).

Social psychologically speaking, 'fear of imminent devastation' by nuclear war and the changes taking place caused the Beats and many others to get into groups and organize a counterculture in order to propagate their consciousnesses. At that time, American interior and exterior policies were brutal and hypocritical. The Vietnamese, as an example, were resisting imperialism and African Americans inside the country were resisting racism. In general, Americans were fighting for peace and justice. The atmosphere was revolutionary and American democracy had failed and the situation was leading to rising social unrest. Many national values and norms were seriously criticized and thrown into question; sexism, racism, imperialism, and commercialism were in direct contradiction to the principles of democracy. According to the FBI and the CIA many people, including Ginsberg, were suspects and therefore, under surveillance; these two institutions collaborated to ruthlessly smother all opposition. Churchill speaks of "the FBI's program of defaming opposition leaders" (57) and reports that in 1947, following President Harry Truman's Executive Order according to which disloyal persons had to be detected within the United States government, the FBI placed hundreds of groups—including the Committee for Negro Arts, the Committee for the Protection of the Bill of Rights, the League of American Writers, the Washington Bookshop Association—on the proscription list (32). This was in fact a cold war mentality which led to McCarthyism, too. The individual had become powerless and insecure. Adjustment and coordination instead of individuality, were the buzzwords of the time. The nuclear explosion in Japan had proved that this kind of technology could totally annihilate man and his environment.

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Yet, unlike the Beats, people respected technology more and more. Americanism had replaced individuality; homogeneity which was against the grain of the country's character was replacing heterogeneity and difference and above all, Americans were losing the mentality that had always questioned authority.

Like Foucault, Burroughs, too, was interested in power relations. In his *Junkie* for example, he describes the relationship between the pusher and the addict in terms of power. In the following excerpt from *Naked Lunch* Burroughs shows that there is a master-slave relationship between the pusher and the addict:

> The pyramid of junk, one level eating the level below (it is no accident that junk higher-ups are always fat and the addict in the street is always thin) right up to the top or tops since there are many junk pyramids feeding on peoples of the world and all built on basic principles of monopoly:
> 1 Never give anything for nothing.
> 2 Never give more than you have to give (always catch the buyer hungry and always make him wait).
> 3 Always take everything back if you possibly can.
> The pusher always get it back. The addict needs more and more junk to maintain a human form … Junk yields a basic formula of evil virus: *The Algebra of Need*. The face of evil is always the face of total need (3-4).

In an interviewBurroughs points out to the relationship between police and addicts: "Many policemen and narcotics agents are precisely addicted to power, to exercising a certain nasty kind of power over people who are helpless. The nasty sort of power…" (Skerl 77). Foucauldian power is not absolute; that is, it is not entrusted to a single person totally. In other words, everyone is caught in power structure; those who are subjected to it and those who exercise it as there are many pushers, many policemen, and many addicts. So, power is everlasting and could not be effaced as Foucault himself has pointed out: "Power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus, not reconstituted "above" society as a supplementary structure whose radical effacement one could perhaps dream of" (During 129).

It was mentioned that Foucauldian power changes subjectivity or gives new subjectivity to subjects. In actuality, it is power that defines and shapes subjects and subjectivity and therefore, 'constitution of subjectivity' and 'forms of subjects' are important issues in Foucault's works. We saw how in panoptican the observer creates a new subjectivity in the inmate and brings about docility in him and turns him into a servant of the institution. Studying subjectivity we should scrutinize "that tension between choice and illusion, between imposed definitions and individual interrogations of them, and between old formulae and new responsibilities" (Hall 2). People usually define themselves but that definition is an illusion and not a matter of choice because it has been given to them and they only imagine that they are that sort of persons independently. Rabinow quotes Foucault: "I would say that if I am now interested in how the subject constitutes himself in an active fashion, by the practices of self, these practices are nevertheless not something invented by the individual himself. They are models that he finds in his culture and are proposed, suggested, imposed upon him by his culture, his

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society, and his cultural group" (*Essential* 291). As Rabinow reports, it is not accidental then that Foucault stipulates that this kind of subjectivity must be refused:

> Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of [a] political 'double bind,' which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures. The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to try to liberate the individual from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization which is linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through refusal of this kind of individuality which has been imposed on us for several centuries (*Reader* 22).

The Beats of course, all their lives strived to get themselves rid of the State and its individualization. Or as Foucault would say, they promoted new forms of subjectivity through the denial of those individualities and subjectivities that society had imposed upon them (Schneiderman 75). Burroughs interestingly repeats the same: "New concepts can only arise when one achieves a measure of disengagement from enemy conditions" (Schneiderman 82).

In *Cosmopolitan Greetings* Ginsberg recommends that we should "Stand up against governments" (Schumacher 88) and perhaps the subjectivities that they distribute. He also indicates that "I have no notion of future state or government possible for man" (Schumacher 123). It is very interesting that when Sal Paradise is employed as a cop in *On the Road*, one day he symbolically puts "the American flag upside down on a government pole" (41). In *Naked Lunch* Burroughs shows how a person has to accept the government's definition of himself. Carl Peterson, a journalist, is requested to meet Doctor Benway in the Ministry of Mental Hygiene. The Doctor who has been keeping Carl under surveillance wants him to take a medical examination to determine whether he is sexually deviant. Carl reiterates that he has always been interested in girls and now he has a steady girl whom he plans to marry. The Doctor answers that this is not a proper reason because many homosexuals marry. At last, the examination is taken and the result is negative. The Doctor asks him whether during his military service—because he was deprived of the facilities of the fair sex—he had a pin up girl. Carl's answer is yes. Doctor Benway assures him that some of these girls are really boys in drag and asks him how many times and under what circumstances had he been indulged in homosexual acts? Carl confesses that when doing his military service some queers propositioned him and sometimes he had sexual relations with them. In this way, Doctor Benway makes Carl realize that he has not always been a well-adjusted person and inculcates a sense of guilt in him. So, according to Foucault, as Rabinow quotes him, Doctor Benway, as the representative of a power structure, has possessed two things simultaneously; the means of "surveillance, of course, but also knowledge of each inmate, of his behavior, his deeper states of mind, his gradual improvement" (*Reader* 216). Accordingly, Skerl truly believes that even homosexuality, as described by Burroughs, is a metaphor of power relationship (50). Johnson reports that in *Desolation Angels* Kerouac "recounts the coercive power of

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media recognition which functions as a regulating agent analogous to the police" (Myrsiades 47). Johnson continues that the novel shows how coercive surveillance, this time through the mass media of course, produces a docile individual who internalizes his own surveillance, monitors himself, an modifies his behaviour as society wants; the way Duluoz as a dissident writer transforms himself into a conformist individual. He quotes the following excerpt from the novel that depicts "the media and police conspiracy" to transform the protagonist:

> The cops stopped me in the Arizona desert that night when I was hiking under a full moon at 2 A. M. to go spread my sleepingbag in the sand outside Tuscon—when they found I had enough money for a hotel they wanted to know why I sleep in the desert … I was a hardy son of a sun in those days, only 165 pounds and would walk miles … Nowadays, after all the horror of my literary notoriety, the bathtubs of booze that have passed through my gullet, the years of hiding at home from hundreds of petitioners for my time (pebbles in my window at midnight, "Come on out get drunk Jack …") … I got to look like a Bourgeois, pot belly and all, that expression on my face of mistrust and affluence … it was now the cops were stopping me … They surrounded me with two squad cars. They put spot lights on me standing there in the road in jeans and workclothes … and asked: "Where are you going?" which is precisely what they asked me a year later under Television floodlights in New York, "Where are you going?"—just as you cant explain to the police, you cant explain to society "Looking for peace." (qtd. in Myrsiades 47-8).

So, the gaze is everywhere and the protagonist has no alternative but to conform. As Johnson truly comments, the protagonist, when he is not famous, is assailed because he has ignored trespass and vagrancy laws and when he has become famous, he is assailed because celebrity and literary notoriety are, in fact, considered as punishment for nonconformity (Myrsiades 48). In every situation the protagonist is doomed to be kept under surveillance.

Control

Speaking of control societies, we should be reminded of Orwell's Winston Smith in *1984* or especially more compatible with our discussion, Kesey's McMurphy in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. The Big Nurse is the agent of control in this novel: "then her hand reaches out to the control panel in the steel door, clacks on the speaker in the day room: "Good evening, boys. Behave yourselves."" (78) and "She uses all the power of control that's in her" (99-100). She even controls the TV; the patients should watch whatever she wants or allows:

> she gets up and goes to the steel door where the controls are, and she flips a switch and the TV picture swirls back into the gray. Nothing is left on the screen … "You're committed, you realize. You are . . .under the *jurisdiction* of me . . .the staff." She's holding up a fist, all those red-orange fingernails burning into her palm. "Under jurisdiction and *control*—" (143-44).

The Beats believed that the control system was destroying America and were really anxious about it and strived to avoid complicity with the system and social psychologically

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speaking, the terrible situation that they experienced led to a kind of madness that destroyed the best minds of their generation as Ginsberg pointes out to it in *Howl*. Among them Burroughs is very interested in the issue of control and in most of his novels paints a picture of a struggle between control and freedom. After killing his wife, Burroughs held the belief that he had been possessed and controlled by an 'Ugly Spirit' and the murder was its result and accordingly, decided to allocate his art of writing to a fierce struggle against all types of possession and control. The same thing is referred to in *Queer*: "I live with the constant threat of possession, and a constant need to escape from possession, from Control" (6). In *Queer*, Lee really believes that control is destroying America: "Automatic obedience, synthetic schizophrenia, mass-produced to order. That is the Russian dream, and America is not far behind. The bureaucrats of both countries want the same thing: Control. The superego, the controlling agency, gone cancerous and berserk" (91). So, control imposed itself not only on individuals but also on society. As Miles mentions, Burroughs' interest in control systems basically appeared very early. His first published work, *Personal Magnetism*, published in 1929, was about 'how to control others at a glance' (*Call* 33). Again in *Queer* Burroughs strives to have control over Allerton: "Think of it: thought control. Take anyone apart and rebuild them to your taste. Anything about somebody bugs you, you say, 'Yage! I want that routine took clear out of his mind.' I could think of a few changes I might make in you, doll" (89). As for Foucault sexuality is another system of control, Carl Peterson excerpt in *Naked Lunch* shows that sexuality plays the same role in Burroughs, too.

In Burroughsian mythology, the representatives of this struggle, as Stephenson explains, are often introduced as the Nova Mob and the Nova Police. The former represents single vision, authority, and limit while the latter aims at the restoration of heterogeneity and the liberation of consciousnesses. Mr. Bradly Mr. Martin who is the head of the Nova Mob has occupied earth for thousands of years. Stephenson adds: his agents "on earth are all the authorities and all the establishments and all the systems-the military, the police, business and advertising, religion, and such individuals as customs inspectors, con artists, politicians, pushers, all those who coerce and con, anyone in a position to impose and enforce a reality on another" (62). The Nova Mob, Stephenson continues, controls through image and language; that is, manipulating word and image, the Nova Mob creates and maintains an illusory reality. Burroughs refers to this reality as the Reality Film (62). In fact, the Nova Mob, as viruses coming from outer space, require human hosts and they can usually gain entry because of addiction or sex; hence, addiction and sex as systems of control in *Naked Lunch*. Doctor Benway is of course, another representative of control in *Naked Lunch*: "a manipulator and coordinator of symbol systems, an expert on all phases of interrogation, brainwashing and control" (17). In *Naked Lunch* Burroughs presents a caricature of the situation in America:

> Every citizen of Annexia was required to apply for and carry on his person at all times a whole portfolio of documents. Citizens were subject to be stopped in the street at any time; and the Examiner, who might be in plain clothes, in various

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> uniforms, often in a bathing suit or pajamas, sometimes stark naked except for a badge pinned to his left nipple, after checking each paper, would stamp it. On subsequent inspection the citizen was required to show the properly entered stamps of the last inspection. The Examiner, when he stopped a large group, would only examine and stamp the cards of a few. The others were then subject to arrest because their cards were not properly stamped. Arrest meant "provisional detention"; that is, the prisoner would be released if and when his Affidavit of Explanation, properly signed and stamped, was approved by the Assistant Arbiter of Explanations. Since this official hardly ever came to his office, and the Affidavit of Explanation had to be presented in person, the explainers spent weeks and months waiting around in unheated offices with no chairs and no toilet facilities (17).

Burroughs continues: "No one was permitted to bolt his door, and the police had pass keys to every room in the city" (17). This of course, had already become a reality in America—akin to what had happened to Kerouac in Arizona—and reveals that why Burroughs abhorred the police in *Naked Lunch*: "south of Texas, nigger-killing sheriffs look us over and check the car papers" (14). In fact, in real life of America, it is the police who is the representative of control. And this is Burroughs' clear idea of control: "*You see control can never be a means to any practical end …. It can never be a means to anything but more control*" (81). Wonderfully, he has detected Americans' personality disorder: "Americans have a special horror of giving up control, of letting things happen in their own way without interference" (107).

Ginsberg, too, did not trust especially the secret police: "… the invisible police-cop-secrecy masters Controlling Central Intelligence—do they know I took Methedrine, heroin, magic mushrooms, & lambchops & guess toward a Prophecy tonight?" (313). Kerouac had also some bad experiences in dealing with the cops. Once in *On the Road* Dean, Sal, Dunkel, and Marylou who were in a car were stopped by a police officer and taken to the police station. After a lot of investigations one of the cops

> fined Dean twenty-five dollars. We told them we only had forty to go all the way to the Coast; they said that made no difference to them. When Dean protested, the mean cop threatened to take him back to Pennsylvania and slap a special charge on him.
> "What charge?"
> "Never mind what charge. Don't worry about *that*, wiseguy." …
> It was just like an invitation to steal to take our trip-money away from us. They knew we were broke and had no relatives on the road or to wire to for money. The American police are involved in psychological warfare against those Americans who don't frighten them with imposing papers and threats. It's a Victorian police force; it peers out of musty windows and wants to inquire about everything, and can make crimes if the crimes don't exist to its satisfaction (81).

Dean complains about the cops: "Oh, they're always interfering" (97). As mentioned above, Burroughs hated the police and Kerouac in *On the Road* refers to it: "His chief hate was Washington bureaucracy; second to that, liberals; then cops" (85). In addition to what was mentioned earlier, Baker quotes Burroughs to show his abhorrence of the police: "you couldn't stop the police barging into your house and taking your letters away; it was too much" (56) or "the recurrent cop of my dreams . . . who would rush in when I was about to take a shot or go to bed with a boy" (56). It is not accidental

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that William Lee revels in his imaginary killing of two police officers, Hauser and O'Brien in *Naked Lunch*.

Neal Cassady, Dean Moriarty in *On the Road*, in a letter to Kerouac paints a picture of his first-hand experience of dealing with the repressive, fascistic authority of the police:

> I recall as I passed the State Police barracks two stern troopers left its well-lit interior and crunched their swank boots on the gravel driveway for brief seconds before they piled me into their radio-dispatched car with automatic motions of tough efficiency. This flashing glimpse of their hand gestures and unslack jaws, clamped so tightly against the grim upper lip, and their faces immobile as steel emphasizing the sheen of their merciless eyes glittering with zeal to perform their duty made me shudder (qtd. in Tytell 164).

Of course, this brutality is only one side of the story. Although Foucault believes that "a police apparatus" is one of the means by which disciplinary mechanisms are diffused throughout the social body (Smart 83), he reiterates that the function of this apparatus changes over time. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Rabinow explains, there was the idea that a police apparatus could manage to regulate, penetrate, stimulate, and eventually render all the mechanisms of society almost automatic; but as soon as the manipulation of society, modelled on panopticism, started, one could not "consider it completely penetrable by police" (*Reader* 242) and above all, as Rabinow quotes Foucault "if one governed too much, one did not govern at all" (*Reader* 242). As a result, the American citizen internalized the police officer and this change according to some people like Burroughs is a calamity; so, it is not accidental that he growls in *Naked Lunch* that "A *functioning* police state needs no police" (23). Therefore, the mechanism of social control was no longer external, but internal and this new kind of power which was in fact, hidden from sight created a new subjectivity in the individual according to which the behaviour that served the existing order was normal, natural, and to the benefit of both society and its members and this was, of course, considered as 'truth'. As a matter of fact, the new kind of power instead of repressing or crushing subjectivity, produced or promoted it. Workhouses, mad houses, and prisons were instituted to change the subjectivity of those who did not contribute to society and replace it with new ones. As Gutting explains Foucault, facing the power that imposes its truths on individuals and attaches its identity to them, we should in addition to refusing what we are, invent and not discover who we are by nurturing, cultivating, and promoting new forms of subjectivity (*Companion* 155). And this is perhaps what the Beats did in their lifetime.

Burroughs was interested and dabbled in the cinema. In his view, film becomes "a metaphor for total control, a 'reality studio' which must be challenged and subverted" (qtd. in Sterritt 80). As we know, there is no real reality; as a matter of fact, false realities in which we believe, according to Burroughs, are made and permeated by power centres just like films which are made in studios to control the world. To subvert and challenge false realities, illusions, or discourses that dominate life Burroughs suggests: "Storm The Reality Studio. And retake the universe" (qtd in Skerl 106). Addiction, as mentioned above, is another system of control used by the Nova Mob to gain entry to human hosts;

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but paradoxically, in *Naked Lunch* it becomes a means of escaping control, too, because although "A dope fiend is a man in total need of dope" (4) when it goes "Beyond a certain frequency need knows absolutely no limit or control" (4). In other words, when an addict comes within such a scope, no control system can affect him: "You would lie, cheat, inform on your fiends, steal, do *anything* to satisfy total need. Because you would be in a state of total sickness, total possession, and not in a position to act in any other way. Dope fiends are sick people who cannot act other than they do (4). It is without junk that an addict "would be immobilized" (107) not when it is available. Martinez comments that "human nature … cedes control to something other than itself … Heroin thus acts as a defense against the need to cede control to either the communal or the bureaucratic "virus"" (56) and as a result, guarantees individuality. In general, "Heroin addiction provides Burroughs with the metabolic model of control" whose trace could be seen in other models of control that he uses (Ayers 225). Foucault transcends all this and believes that even social work is a system of control (Wormer 37). Saari illuminates that in general, Foucault's discipline enforces social control through three processes: hierarchical surveillance, normalizing judgment, and the examination (93-4). Hierarchical surveillance is when, as we discussed it in panopticism, those who possess more power have oversight of others. This oversight is of course, continual and inescapable. In normalizing judgment the behaviour of the subject is evaluated and classified. The examination combines the two former processes and eventually decides whether the subject should be sent to a hospital or a penal institution. According to Foucault, these three processes exist in both penal institutions and social work including psychotherapy as we can see in Kesey's novel.

As Rabinow quotes Foucault, since the nineteenth century, control has been used in the name of "the population's welfare" (*Reader* 21-22). Control, then, is not repressive and harsh; it has become gentler and psychological because modern society, as Foucault contends, wants "not to punish less, but to punish better; to punish with an attenuated severity perhaps, but in order to punish with more universality and necessity; to insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body" (*Discipline* 82). Doctor Benway in *Naked Lunch* has the same idea:

> "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 control addicts must be decently covered by an arbitrary and intricate bureaucracy so that the subject cannot contact his enemy direct (17).

Premodern punishment was external and led to inner transformation of the subject. But modern punishment is internal and the subject's soul is pervasively and intrusively controlled which is, in turn, as Foucault argues, conducive to control of the body:

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> it is not that a real man, the object of knowledge … has been substituted for the soul, the illusion of the theologians. The man … we are invited to free is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself. A 'soul' inhabits him and brings him to existence, which is itself a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body … the soul is the prison of the body (*Discipline* 30).

Foucault even counts confessional and autobiographical writing, including the Beats' literature,as a system of control because just like you go to the Christian Church to confess, you must speak about your past actions to an authorized person if you want them to be atoned for (Mills 86).

The Beats resisted the American system of control. Expounding on their resistance, Bolton argues that because they were alienated, the Beats failed not only to connect with their surrounding but also with themselves adequately. He claims that self-division and detachment, resulted from alienation, could be advantageous because they contributed to the resistance to control structures. The Beats' estrangement from society resulted in an estrangement from their sense of self via increasing feelings of disintegration and fragmentation. This condition, Bolton continues, did not lead to the dissolution of the self or to psychosis but to resisting the systems of control and oppression that seriously menaced to destroy the possibility of autonomous subjects. For Burroughs especially, as Bolton says, the possibility of freedom was brought about by disintegration rather than unity. Society's power structure subjugated those subjects who were definable, and oppressed fixed and stable identities. Consequently, Burroughsian characters never succumb to stable, distinct identities. Conventional autonomy, Bolton contends, needs a continuity of an integrated identity and coherence of perceptions. Burroughs does not provide such a continuity and therefore does not allow his characters to adopt any fixed identity or perspective. For Burroughs, Bolton believes, autonomy of a character is established not by continuity but by multiplicity of identity and this flux of identity is, of course, vital to the characters' freedom (Elkholy 67). Lee in *Naked Lunch* and in his trilogy Mr. Bradly Mr. Martin whose name makes it clear that he d œs not possess a fixed identity are such characters.

Counting sexuality, addiction, and film as systems of control and power illuminates that Burroughs' ideas have close affinity with Foucault's. Like Foucault, he does not place power in the State only. Both believed that resisting control, we should avoid reproducing and enforcing other forms of control. We should, instead, bring about new consciousnesses and subjectivities as it was the Beats' purpose, too. It is reputed that the Beats even consumed different kinds of drugs to alter their old consciousness and gain new ones and hotly encouraged others to do the same.

For Burroughs it is axiomatic that "New concepts can only arise when one achieves a measure of disengagement from enemy conditions.

On the other hand disengagement is difficult in a concentration camp is it not?" (qtd. in Schneiderman 82). He also enunciates that all systems of control strive to make control one hundred percent but they do not succeed because if they do there will be nothing left to control and this is very akin to Foucault who submits that everywhere

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there is power, there is resistance, too, and a society of control creates "its own perforations and undermine its own aspirations to totality" (Schneiderman 84). Burroughs believes that government control leads to a full-blown dictatorship: "Increased government control leads to a totalitarian state. Bureaucracy is the worst possible way of doing anything because it is the most inflexible and therefore the deadest of all political instruments … The present day union is simply a branch of government bureaucracy …" (qtd. in Tytell 43-4). In the talking asshole excerpt in *Naked Lunch*the asshole represents a union or bureau that gradually increases its control, occupies the whole body which is in fact, its host and eventually chokes it and takes complete control of it. So, he concludes: "*control can never be a means to any practical end…. It can never be a means to anything but more control*" (81).

Conclusion

The Beats really resisted the mechanical consciousnessand social conformity that the capitalist establishment was going to impose on every individual. They knew that the subjectivity created by the power structure in American society turned people into organization men devoid of individuality and deprived them of their unique consciousness, visions, illusions, and in general inner freedom. Subjectivity is important in Foucauldian theory because on the one hand, it guarantees the continuation of the status quo or the existing organization and on the other, it brings about resistance, too. The Beats, negating the imposed subjectivity and knowing that it was not the only truth, had actually cultivated a different subjectivity that did not render them passive slaves of the dominant power and instead, enabled them to challenge or resist it. Believing that control destroys societies, the Beats teach us lessons: we should liberate ourselves from the state and the kind of false subjectivity or individualization that it imposes upon us; we should cultivate in ourselves new forms of subjectivity via refusal of the one imposed upon us by the state or other powers; we should repeatedly refuse what we are. Only in this way, according to Foucault and the Beats, we can guarantee our humanity, keep our individuality, and assure ourselves that we are human beings not robots.

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