

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with the portrayal and criticism of American society in the poetic works of twentieth and twenty-first century poets, namely Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Amiri Baraka and Chen Chen, focusing predominantly on the style of the depiction and issues addressed in the selected poems. The objective of this thesis is to determine some of the principal topics of their social critique and show the impact the historical context had in the composition of their poems and on the commentary contained therein. Selected poems of each author are analyzed separately to point out the notions that are unique to their portrayal and to show that despite differences in personalities and historical periods, certain issues of the United States are discussed and continue to be discussed by poets from both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The thesis demonstrates, however, that specific social and racial circumstances, together with historical context, inform each poet's writing, showing that the poets of the twentieth century pose different questions from the poets of the twenty-first century even as their opinion of American society as a whole remains critical.