

فلر

IRAQI  
Academic Scientific Journals



العراقية  
المجلات الأكاديمية العلمية



ISSN: 2663-9033 (Online) | ISSN: 2616-6224 (Print)

Journal of Language Studies

Contents available at: <http://jls.tu.edu.iq>

## September 11 as a Terrorist Attack in Lawrence Ferlinghetti's "History of the Airplane"

Zeena Younis Khalif Al-naeemi \*

English Department-College of Education For Women-Tikrit University

E-mail: [zyounis@st.tu.edu.iq](mailto:zyounis@st.tu.edu.iq)

Asst. Prof. Faisal Abdul-Wahhab Hayder Al-Doori

English Department-College of Education For Women-Tikrit University

### Keywords:

- September 11
- terrorist
- attack
- Lawrence Ferlinghetti

### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received: 12-8-2021

Accepted: 30-9-2021

Available online  
23-1-2022

### Abstract

The September 11 attacks, also called the 9/11 attacks, the series of plane hijackings and suicide attacks perpetrated in 2001 by 19 militants connected with the Islamic extremist organizations Al-Qaeda against goals in the United States, are the deadliest terrorist attacks and an extraordinary event on American soil. The attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C. caused widespread death and destruction and sparked a massive United States counter-terrorism efforts.

This study aims to explore the main trend of contemporary American poetry that deals with the topic of the September 11 attacks and to show the impact of September 11, 2001, on contemporary American poets. Many contemporary American poets in the period following the attack on the Twin Towers were influenced by the September 11 attacks. Many of the American poets consider the September 11 attacks a terrorist attack, and these poets are the ones who believe in the theory of terrorism, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti is one of them.

\* Corresponding Author: Zeena Younis Khalif Al-naeemi, E-Mail: [zyounis@st.tu.edu.iq](mailto:zyounis@st.tu.edu.iq)  
Tel: +9647702384525 , Affiliation: Tikrit University -Iraq

## ١١ أيلول كهجمة إرهابية في قصيدة "تاريخ الطائرة" للورنس فيرلينجيتي

زينة يونس خلف

ا.م.د. فيصل عبدالوهاب حيدر

كلية التربية للبنات - قسم اللغة الإنكليزية - جامعة تكريت

<p><b>الخلاصة:</b> تعتبر هجمات ١١ أيلول ، التي يطلق عليها أيضاً "هجمات ١١/٩ أيلول" ، سلسلة عمليات خطف الطائرات والهجمات الانتحارية التي نفذت في عام ٢٠٠١ بواسطة ١٩ متشدداً مرتبطين بجماعة القاعدة الإسلامية المتطرفة ضد أهداف في الولايات المتحدة ، وكانت من أعنف الهجمات الإرهابية وحدثاً استثنائياً على الأراضي الأمريكية. تسببت الهجمات على مدينة نيويورك وواشنطن العاصمة في وقوع قتلى ودمار على نطاق واسع وأثارت جهوداً ضخمة لمكافحة الإرهاب في الولايات المتحدة.</p> <p>تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف الاتجاه الرئيس للشعر الأمريكي المعاصر الذي تناول موضوع هجمات ١١ أيلول وإظهار تأثير ١١ أيلول ٢٠٠١ على الشعراء الأمريكيين المعاصرين حيث تأثر العديد من الشعراء الأمريكيين المعاصرين في الفترة التي أعقبت الهجوم على البرجين بهجمات ١١ أيلول. هناك العديد من الشعراء الأمريكيين يعتبرون هجمات ١١ أيلول هجوماً إرهابياً ، وهؤلاء الشعراء هم الذين يؤمنون بنظرية الإرهاب، ولورنس فيرلينجيتي أحدهم.</p>	<p><b>الكلمات الدالة:-</b></p> <p>- ١١ أيلول</p> <p>- هجوم</p> <p>- إرهابي</p> <p>- لورانس فيرلينجيتي</p> <p><b>معلومات البحث</b></p> <p><b>تاريخ البحث:</b></p> <p>الاستلام: ١٢-٨-٢٠٢١</p> <p>القبول: ٣٠-٩-٢٠٢١</p> <p>التوفر على النت</p> <p>23-1-2022</p>
---	--

### September 11 as a terrorist attack

Terrorism is not a modern phenomenon; to has long been a style of vehement action through organizations and people trying to attain political aims. Effectively, terrorism is not an end, but a mode of operation. Then according to Bruce Hoffman,

All terrorists, however, have one trait in common: they live in the future, for that distant—yet imperceptibly close—point in time when they will assuredly triumph over their enemies and attain the ultimate realization of their political destiny (240).

Various definitions of terrorist have appeared to reflect the political world-view of the determiner. The same act of abuse is categorized differently, depending on the

identity of the perpetrators. Cohorts who participate in identical behavior regarded by their sympathizers as liberty are fighters, and by their foes as terrorists. Michael Walzer, an American political philosopher, has written: "Terrorism is the deliberate killing of innocent people, at random, to spread fear through a whole population and force the hand of its political leaders" (130). An American scholar, Bruce Hoffman:

has noted that it is not only individual agencies within the same governmental apparatus that cannot agree on a single definition of terrorism. Experts and other long-established scholars in the field are equally incapable of reaching a consensus (34).

Terrorism is a *modus operandi* (mode of operating) in which intentional vehemence against civilians is used to achieve political aims. In this respect, it is the deliberate maleficence to civilians, which is at the center of terrorism that renders this *modus operandi* illegal, even though, *prima facie* (at first view), it is intended to fulfill justified goals. This definition creates a distinction between a work intentional at harming civilians and another work intending to harm security and military forces. The latter is acquainted with a guerrilla or rebel works, although the perpetrator can use the same mode of operation (suicide bombing, shooting, or rocket fire). Thus, in seeking to attain the same political aims, an organization or group might implement a 'terrorist' offensive once one occasion and a "guerilla" is offensive on another. In addition, even the political aim of an organization can shift as it participates in guerrilla warfare or acts of terrorism. To accomplish economic, social, or national aims, such as an independent state or national liberation, attacks are often performed (Shapira and Hammond 13).

The world awoke to a new risk on September 11, 2001: global *jihadi* terrorism of an unexpected scale. The attacks marked a transmutation in international terrorism, both in terms of scope and motive: religious grievances prompt these attacks. The message communicated by the attacks to the public was that no area is safe. No state, not even a powerhouse such as the United States, is immune. In an international terrorism, the September 11 attacks reflected a new fact. In the aftermath of these attacks, the international community found itself apparently in unparalleled danger, which has transformed the face of international terrorism. Yet, the global *jihadi* terrorism movement has origins and consequences that go back many years. State terrorism indicates to works of terrorism performed by a state against its own people or against another state (Aust 265).

Before 9/11, it was appropriate for numerous states and world leaders to turn a blind eye to the unfolding threat, as long as they were not its immediate casualties or its centric focus. Indeed, the radical Islamic movement initially focused not assault on western targets, but on conquering the minds and hearts of Muslim populations around the world through educational, social, religious, and welfare activities, defined as 'dawah' (calling people for Jihad) activities. These works were based on the movement's dogmatic radical views, which praised the use of violence in 'defense of Islam.' However, the principle remained rhetorical in most circumstances, and the call to vehemence never appeared itself as a concrete work of violent terrorist activity. These dogmatic radical views made it possible for world leaders, and even appropriate, to underestimate the bluster. On September 11, the killing of almost 3,000 victims, the demolition of the World Trade Center towers, and the devastation of parts of the Pentagon building forced the international community to consider the potential threat of terrorism, particularly the American people and the US administration. Since then,

the founders of the global Jihadi network have not dithered to use a style of recent terrorism that has been confirmed more effectively than any other, namely, suicide offensive (Shapira and Hammond 17).

Policymakers were quick to announce transnational extremism as the next terrorist threat to global security in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Some also articulated the idea that 9/11 altered the world radically by framing the tussle between the West and Islamist violence as 'World War IV,' a permanent state of conflict between Islamic Extremism and the West. Others also placed attacks of September 2001 within the wider historical sense of terrorism. Furthermore, just as the end of the Cold War heralded a transmutation from nationalist, separatist, and often leftist ideologies, throughout the phenomenon of terrorism, 9/11 represents a move to the religious and fundamentalist sphere in the primary motive for terrorism (Blomberg; Gaibulloev and Sandler 443).

Indeed, these narratives resort to be consistent with the opinion that the world is more fickle and unsettled than it has been in the past, an interpretation that folk media outlets frequently uphold. A *New York Times* report in 2016 states that the number of deaths due to terrorism in North America and Europe rose dramatically in 2015. The article further adds, that more than three-quarters of all terrorism casualties over the past five years have occurred in six countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Nigeria, Yemen, and Syria, all areas ravaged by civil strife. Terrorism is a technique sometimes used by insurgents in civil wars for different reasons. Additionally, terrorism will act as a spoiler for peace processes (Findley and Young 1115).

The 9/11 tragedy was different since the terrorist attack occurred on the soil of the United States of America, the only post-Cold-War era, superpower that directly impacted American lives and shattered a sense of internal stability and prosperity, and it dealt a severe blow to American prestige and its economy that had existed for at least a decade (Cox 274).

In contextualising September 11, it has been discovered that not only the terrorist offensive is a human tragedy, but also a political crisis. It might be more significant than ever today to investigate and respond to the political nature of a crisis, for it found little and less time and chance to do so. The annihilation of place by time condenses the mechanism of political resolution-making into an ever-shortened era. It is only an insignificant opportunity for contemplation before turning to action. William Connolly specifies out convincingly how our capacity to conduct democratic consultations on military intervention has been jeopardized by growing rapidity of war across the globe. It is important to simplify complicated political and ethical cases so that suitable military and political action can be taken in a shortened period of time. This case is especially after an incident such as 9/11, where enormous popular compression points not only to instant military intervention, but also to politics of revenge. In addition, traditional intelligence analysts, who typically do not think the built-up aspects of threats, caution of the risks entailed in such a scenario. Before the events of 9/11, Ashton Carter and former United States Secretary of Defense William Perry emphasized that the period of panic and hysteria that immediately accompanies an act of "catastrophic terrorism" is the wrong moment to take action (Carter and Perry 125).

In the years after the terrorist attack on America on September 11, 2001, poets and readers have tended to turn for poetry to make sense, including of the destruction and

tragedy of that day. This paper includes the poet who used his poetry and poem to express the terror of 9/11, the grief, and the lament that occurred to the American citizens during this hard political event.

### **Lawrence Ferlinghetti: A Biographical Note**

Lawrence Monsanto Ferlinghetti (born 1919- 2021) is a poet, painter, editor, social activist, playwright, and co-founder of City Lights Booksellers and Publishers in the United States. He is the writer of poems, translations, prose, plays, the critique of art, and narration of films. Ferlinghetti is best famous for *A Coney Island of the Mind* (1958), his first collection of poems, that has been translated into nine languages and has sold over one million copies. In March 2019, Ferlinghetti turned 100, causing the city of San Francisco to announce his birthday, March 24 "Lawrence Ferlinghetti Day" (Laughlin 184).

He went to Riverdale Country Day School, Mount Hermon, a preparatory academy in Massachusetts, and the University of North Carolina, where he majored in journalism. He enrolled in the United States Navy after graduation. After his discharge, Ferlinghetti used the G.I. Bill to pursue his schooling. Ferlinghetti graduated from Columbia University with a master's degree in English Literature in 1947, with a thesis on John Ruskin and the British painter J. M. W. Turner. He continued his studies in Paris after graduating from Columbia, receiving a doctorate in comparative literature with a dissertation titled "The City as Emblem in Contemporary Poetry: In Search of a Metropolitan Heritage." (Hemmer 99). He then relocated to San Francisco, California, where he had been instrumental in sparking the city's literary rising in the 1950s and was fundamental to the foundation of the subsequent Beat movement. He was called San Francisco's first Poet Laureate in 1998 and worked for two years (Ibid 101). In 1946, Ferlinghetti met his wife, Selden Kirby-Smith, granddaughter of Edmund Kirby-Smith, on a ship en route to France. They were both on their way to the Sorbonne in Paris to graduate. He married Selden Kirby-Smith in 1951 (Ibid 100).

Regarding poetry, Lawrence Ferlinghetti says:

If you would be a poet, create works capable of answering the challenge of apocalyptic times, even if this meaning sounds apocalyptic.

You are Whitman, you are Poe, you are Mark Twain, you are Emily Dickinson and Edna St. Vincent Millay, you are Neruda and Mayakovsky and Pasolini, you are an American or a non-American, you can conquer the conquerors with words. (Ferlinghetti, 2007, 3).

Ferlinghetti published for several Beat poets and is a Beat poet himself. Yet, Ferlinghetti does not believe himself a Beat poet, as he notes in the documentary Ferlinghetti in 2013: *Rebirth of Wonder*: "Don't call me a Beat. I was never a Beat poet" (Gold 1). Much of Ferlinghetti's early poetry was penned in the vein of T. S. Eliot. Jack Foley, a poet, and, was told by Ferlinghetti, "Everything I wrote sounded just like him." Nonetheless, even in his Eliot-inspired poems, including such Ferlinghetti's, "Constantly Risking Absurdity," Ferlinghetti, ever the populist, compared the poet first to a circus trapeze artist, then to a "little Charley Chaplin man" (Varner 62).

Critics observe that Ferlinghetti's poetry often occupies a very visual remoteness as befits this poet who is also a painter. Ferlinghetti painted for 60 years in addition to selling and publishing books, and much of his art was exhibited in museums and galleries across the United States. According to poet and critic Jack Foley, Ferlinghetti's poems "tell little stories, make 'pictures'" (Foley Pa. 16). As a poet, Ferlinghetti creates colorful imagery of his words, capturing the ordinary American experience. Ferlinghetti explains the "suffering [of] humanity" that Goya depicted through the brush in his paintings in the first poem in *A Coney Island of the Mind* entitled, "In Goya's Greatest Scenes, We Seem To See" (Ibid Pa. 42).

Ferlinghetti takes a distinguishing populist approach to poetry, focusing throughout his work "that art should be accessible to all people, not just a handful of highly educated intellectuals" (Poochigian 1). His poetry attracts readers, challenges popular political movements, and reflects the impact of American term and modern jazz. Larry Smith observes in *Lawrence Ferlinghetti: Poet-at-Large* that the author "writes truly memorable poetry, poems that lodge themselves in the consciousness of the reader and generate awareness and change. In addition, his writing sings, with the sad and comic music of the streets" (Felver 9). Smith noticed that, from his earliest poems onward, Ferlinghetti writes as "the contemporary man of the streets speaking out the truths of common experience, often to the reflective beat of the jazz musician" (Ibid 10). Those emotions found an appreciative and receptive audience between young people in the mid-twentieth century who were aching over the Cold War politics and arms race. *New Page's* contributor John Gill emphasized that reading an act by Ferlinghetti "will make you feel good about poetry and about the world—no matter how mucked-up the world maybe" (Ibid 12).

Ferlinghetti's poetry often engages with many non-literary artistic styles, most notably jazz music and painting, to reflect his wide aesthetic interests. William Lawlor confirms that much of Ferlinghetti's free verse try to capture the fictional creativity and spontaneity of modern jazz; the poet is also known for integrating jazz accompaniments into public readings of his action (Lawlor 313).

Ferlinghetti encountered poet Kenneth Rexroth, whose philosophical anarchism affected his political development, shortly after arriving in San Francisco in 1950. He identifies himself as a philosophical anarchist, regularly related to other anarchists in North Beach, and at the City Lights Bookstore, where he sold Italian anarchist newspapers (Brown Para. 32). A critic of United States foreign policy, Ferlinghetti had taken a stand against war and totalitarianism. (Woods 2).

Ferlinghetti's work defies the concept of art and the artist's turn in society and the world. He urges the poets to be engaged in the country's political and cultural life. In his book *Populist Manifesto*, he writes: "Poets, come out of your closets, open your windows, open your doors, You have been holed-up too long in your closed worlds." (Daly and Insinga 196).

Ferlinghetti paired up with Peter D. Martin as a partner to establish City Lights in 1953, just two years after access in San Francisco. Martin and Ferlinghetti founded the City Lights Pocket Book Shop on the outskirts of Chinatown to subsidize the publication. It became a popular grouping for poets, avant-garde writers, and painters in San Francisco. The bookstore's diffusion arm, the City Lights Pocket Poets series, created a venue for Beat writers such as Kenneth Patchen, Allen Ginsberg, and Gregory

Corso. The first book in the series was Ferlinghetti's slim volume *Pictures of the Gone World* (1955) (Felver 10). Poets Kenneth Rexroth, Philip Whalen, and Allen Ginsberg, as well as the novelist Jack Kerouac, were among Ferlinghetti's friends by 1955. Ferlinghetti was in the public at the watershed 1955 poetry reading "Six Poets at the Six Gallery" when Ginsberg premiered his poem "Howl" (Parini 584).

Ferlinghetti instantly confessed it as a classic, and the first edition of *Howl and Other Poems* was published in 1956 as part of the Pocket Poets series. The series was soon sold out, and the second shipment of the book was confiscated by US customs then being released, resulting in the notorious Howl trial. Ferlinghetti was arrested by the San Francisco Police Department on an accusation of printing and selling indecent material and lewd. Ferlinghetti shared the American Civil Liberties Union for his defense and welcomed his court issue as a test of freedom of expression. On October 3, 1957, he won the suit. The propaganda generated by the issue energized the San Francisco Renaissance and Beat case, and was vital in founding specific principles to the diverse movements often disparate goals (Richardson 370).

*Endless Life: Selected Poems* (1981) and *These Are My Rivers: New and Selected Poems, 1955-1993* are two other collections of Ferlinghetti's poetry that offer insight into the writer's general style, development, and thematic approach. The poems in *Endless Life* mirror the effects of E.E. Cummings, Kenneth Rexroth, and Kenneth Patchen, and are interested in contemporary topics, such as the antiwar and antinuclear movements. In *Western American Literature*, John Trimbur observed that Ferlinghetti writes "public poetry to challenge the guardians of the political and social status quo for the souls of his fellow citizens" (Ibid. 11). In *The New York Times Book Review*, Joel Oppenheimer lauded him, saying that he "learned to write poems, in ways that those who see poetry as the province of the few and the educated had never imagined." In *These Are My Rivers*, Ferlinghetti concentrates on present political and sexual issues (1993). As Rochelle Ratner observed in *Library Journal*, the poems are experimental in technique, often lacking common poetic instruments such as stanza breaks, and they show in unusual ways on the page, "with short lines at the left margin or moving across the page as hand follows the eye." Ashley Brown, who, in *World Literature Today*, called Ferlinghetti "the foremost chronicler of our times," comments, "Ferlinghetti writes in a very accessible idiom; he draws on pop culture and sports as much as the modern poets whom he celebrates" (Wilson Company 705). Ferlinghetti's surrealist plays, which are typically short, have been staged in San Francisco theaters, and his paintings and sketches have been seen in several galleries. He lives in San Francisco, where he has a street named for him (Morgan 93).

The *Los Angeles Times'* Robert Kirsch Award, the National Book Critics Circle's Ivan Sandrof Award for Contribution to American Arts and Letters, the BABRA Award for Lifetime Achievement, and the ACLU's Earl Warren Civil Liberties Award are numerous awards Ferlinghetti has received. He won the Premio Taormina in 1973 and has received the Premio Flaiano, Premio Camaiore, and Premio Cavour, among other Italian awards. In 2003, he was conferred Robert Frost Memorial Medal, as well as the Author's Guild Lifetime Achievement Award and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He won the inaugural Literarian Award from the National Book Foundation in 2005 conferred for outstanding service to the American literary society. He was named Commander of the French Order of Arts and Letters in 2007 (Ferlinghetti, para. 8). The *Career Award* was granted on October 28, 2017, at the XIV edition of the *Premio di Arti Letterarie Metropoli di Torino in Turin* (Collins and

Skover 155). On February 22, 2021, at the age of 101, Ferlinghetti died of interstitial lung disease at his San Francisco home (Brown Para. 1).

### **"History of the Airplane"**

One of Lawrence Ferlinghetti's most important poems is his poem "The History of the Plane", which shows how the plane caused the devastation of the American people on that tragic and fateful day, on September 11th. "History of the Airplane," a poem in broad free verse that covers anything from the Wright Brothers' powered flight in 1903 to Hiroshima and 9/11, ponders whether the invention of the airplane actually brought 'peace on earth,' or whether it solely gave war the leg-up it wanted. "History of the Airplane" begins as precisely that idea. Then, Lawrence Ferlinghetti uses an almost prophetic eloquence when he charts the tale of the dream and evolves of flight from the fabrication of the airplane to the moment when two airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center.

And the Wright brothers said they thought they had invented  
something that could make peace on earth  
(if the wrong brothers didn't get hold of it)  
when their wonderful flying machine took off at Kitty Hawk  
into the kingdom of birds but the parliament of birds was freaked out  
by this man-made bird and fled to heaven. (ll. 1-6)

Lawrence Ferlinghetti's poem "The History of the Airplane" is a reaction to 9/11. Furthermore, it tells lamentable the all-too-familiar tale of dreams turned into nightmares. The poem is about the Wright brothers and how they invented the first successful airplane that began it all. The poem tells the story of the airplane's development. Airplanes increased in size and speed, and they started to carry bombs and guns. The Wright brothers intended their invention to bring peace to the world as their "wonderful/ flying machine took off" into "the kingdom of birds." However, the "parliament of birds" was afraid of this man-made bird, and fled to heaven. The poet mentions the Kingdom of Birds, and this idea is a hint and a connection with the Persian Sufi poem *The Conference of Birds*, by Farid ud-Din Attar. It is a symbolic poem that deals with the struggles and tribulations that the soul must face. Where birds begin their journey to find the legendary bird Simorgh, provided they cross the Seven Valleys "Valley of the Quest, Love, Knowledge, Detachment, Unity, Wonderment, Poverty, and Annihilation". Birds must cross seven valleys in their quest, each representing different experiences that one must go through to realize God's true nature. When birds hear the description these valleys, they bend their heads in distress; Some even die of fear at that time and place. However, despite their fears, they start on a great journey. When the Group of thirty Birds finally arrives at Simorgh's abode, all they find is a lake in which to see the reflection of their own image. Birds know that they are the same Simorgh. Ultimately, she realizes that what she is looking for is inside them, not outside. Their pursuit symbolizes the human soul searching for its true reality, which is ultimately itself. As a result, the poem's oppositions are speedily established: the dream of flight and its destructive reality, a state of peace connected with actual or mythical birds, and the reality of war correspond with what mankind has mostly achieved with its newly found capacity to ascend above mother earth, but things took a turn for the worse and led the world to war and ruin.



And then the famous Spirit of Saint Louis took off eastward and  
flew across the Big Pond with Lindy at the controls in his leather  
helmet and goggles hoping to sight the doves of peace but he did not  
Even though he circled Versailles. (ll. 7-10)

In line 7, "And then the famous Spirit of Saint Louis took off eastward," the poet shows from the verses of the poem how the invention of the plane developed. In addition, how the "Spirit of St. Louis" was the custom-built, single-engine monoplane, is launched by Charles Lindbergh during May 20-21, 1927, the "Spirit" was built by Ryan Airlines (Redd 1). Lindbergh circling above Versailles, the site of the peace conference after the First World War, hoping "to sight the doves of peace" but failing to do so (Ibid 5).

And then the famous Yankee Clipper took off in the opposite  
direction and flew across the terrific Pacific but the pacific doves  
were freighted by this strange amphibious bird and hid in the orient sky  
And then the famous Flying Fortress took off bristling with guns  
and testosterone to make the world safe for peace and capitalism  
but the birds of peace were nowhere to be found before or after Hiroshima. (ll.  
11-16)

Then, the famous Yankee clipper taking off in the opposite direction toward the gorgeous Pacific Ocean, but "the pacific doves," were freighted by this exotic amphibious bird and hid in the sky of the Orient. Between 1938 and 1941, the Boeing airplane company produced the world's largest aircraft, the Boeing 314 Clipper was the perfect flying boat. This is what most people think of when remembering the era when Foyen flourished as a hub of aviation activity between Europe and North America (Warner 3). People understood that they had the technology to defend themselves and battle the enemy by this time, but the Yankee Clipper was insufficient; they wanted to go for something bigger, stronger, and faster. The Boeing airplane corporation produced a four-engine heavy bomber aircraft for the military forces in 1930. Boeing had a contract to build and develop 200 bombers. The "Famous Flying Fortress" is setting off full of testosterone and guns to make the world safe for peace and capitalism. The planes that destroyed Hiroshima and the birds of peace were not present anywhere before or after Hiroshima.

And so then clever men built bigger and faster flying machines and  
these great man-made birds with jet plumage flew higher than any  
real birds and seemed about to fly into the sun and melt their wings  
and like Icarus crash to earth. (ll. 17- 20)

In Line 17, the poet explains how intelligent men invented flying machines at that time, likening them to the great birds that were originally man-made and had jet engines and that they fly higher than any real birds. Jets are flying faster higher, and carrying weighty weaponry. During World War I, fighter planes were manufactured in 1914. Fighter Planes are armed aircraft designed mainly for air-to-air combat over other fighter jets designed exclusively to battle of wars. The period, between World Wars I and II, witnessed aircraft technology progression and rapid development at a breakneck rate. The aircraft from the twin aircraft made of wood and cloth to the aerodynamic monoplane made of aluminum. This revolutionary development may have started for

military reasons, but commercial aviation undoubtedly benefited enormously from it. After the end of World War II, the United States of America began building factories that could manufacture aircraft at prices that would allow them to be used in civil aviation.

In line 19, “real birds” that “seemed about to fly into the sun and melt their wings/ and like Icarus crash to earth;” the writer shows, after the launch of the plane, he warns of its proximity to the sun, which causes its wings to melt and crash like Icarus 'in Greek mythology.' Icarus was the son of Daedalus, the Labyrinth's creator and master craftsman. Icarus and Daedalus tried to get-away from Crete employing wings that Daedalus built from wax and feathers. Daedalus warned and instructed him not to fly too low or too high, lest the dampness of the sea clogged his wings or the heat of the sun melt them. Icarus disregarded Daedalus' warning to stop flying too close to the sun, which dissolved the wax in the wings of Icarus. He plummeted from the atmosphere, fell in to the sea, and drowned. As a result, sparking the idiom "don't fly too close to the sun" was sparking (Panek 15).

And the Wright brothers were long forgotten in the high-flying  
bombers that now began to visit their blessings on various Third  
Worlds all the while claiming they were searching for doves of  
Peace

And they kept flying and flying until they flew right into the 21st  
century and then one fine day a Third World struck back and  
stormed the great planes and flew them straight into the beating  
heart of Skyscraper America where there were no aviaries and no  
parliaments of doves and in a blinding flash America became a part  
of the scorched earth of the world. (ll. 21- 29)

The Wright brothers, the fabricators of the first-ever airplane perfectly forgotten in all of this war and devastation. They believed that their manufacture would bring peace and boom to the world. Hoping to get peace but it was never found. The poem "The History of the Airplane" has a serious tone and a certain sadness in it. The poem starts by explaining the Wright brothers' invention of the machine that would rise into the sky and heavens, but then expound on to illustrate the tragic consequence of their invention. The devastation and chaos that came with that invention. The disastrous and terrorist attack on the twin towers at 9/11 event, New York murder the lives of many people in their state, a wind of ashes blow across the land, and in a blinding flash, America became a part of the scorched earth of the world. They feel their defeat is a victory for the terrorists, which inspired Lawrence Ferlinghetti to write this poem. The poem evokes deep feelings and an expression of a cry of pain. The main cause of the tragic disaster was terrorism and the vicious characters who flew the plane and terrorized the United States.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that contemporary American poetry was deeply affected by the tragedy of the September 11 attacks, as many contemporary American poets wrote their poems under the influence of the events of this world. Poetry was everywhere in the days after September 11, 2001. There are different waves and opinions of poets that appeared in that period, including the phenomenon of terrorism, which is considered

one of the oldest human phenomena that people have suffered from, because of the destruction and fear it causes in the hearts of people. The events of September 11, 2001, are the main reason for the internationalization of the phenomenon of terrorism, and the beginning of what is known as the global war on terrorism led by the United States of America. The impact of September 11 on poetry is characterized by the emergence of a view that the September 11, were a terrorist attack, and the poet considered it terrorism in his poem "The History of the Airplane."

## Work Cites

- Aust, Anthony. *Handbook of International Law*. Cambridge University Press. 2010.
- Blomberg, Brock; Gaibullov, Khusrav and Sandler, Todd. "Terrorist group survival: Ideology, tactics, and base of operations". *Public Choice*, vol. 149 no. 3-4, 2011.
- Brown, Emma. "Lawrence Ferlinghetti, literary citadel of San Francisco, dies at 101". *The Washington Post*, 2021.  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/lawrence-ferlinghetti-dead/2021/02/23/37b2a134-edd5-11df-abf5-a1622994c5f5\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/lawrence-ferlinghetti-dead/2021/02/23/37b2a134-edd5-11df-abf5-a1622994c5f5_story.html)
- Carter, Ashton and Perry, William. "Countering Asymmetric Threats", in Carter, Ashton and White, John eds, *Keeping the Edge: Managing Defense for the Future*. Cambridge, Mass, 2001.
- Collins, Ronald and Skover, David. *The People v. Ferlinghetti: The Fight to Publish Allen Ginsberg's Howl*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.
- Cox, Michael. "American Power before and after 11 September: Dizzy with Success?" *International Affairs*, vol. 78, no. 2, 2002. p.274.
- Daly, Selena and Insinga, Monica. *The European Avant-Garde: Text and Image*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. 2012.
- Felver, Christopher. *Ferlinghetti: A Rebirth of Wonder*. First Run Features. 2009.
- Ferlinghetti, Lawrence. "History of the Airplane". *Exquisite Corpse - A Journal of Letters and Life*, 2002.  
[http://www.corpse.org/archives/issue\\_11/manifestos/ferlinghetti.html](http://www.corpse.org/archives/issue_11/manifestos/ferlinghetti.html)
- Ferlinghetti, Lawrence. *Poetry as Insurgent Art*. New Directions book, 2007.
- Findley, Michael and Young, Joseph. "Terrorism, spoiling, and the resolution of civil wars". *The Journal of Politics*, vol., 77, no. 4, 2015. p. 1115.
- Foley, Jack. "Old Italian Living: On Ferlinghetti". *Poetry Flash*, 2021.  
[https://poetryflash.org/archive/?s=features&p=FOLEY-Old\\_Italian\\_Living](https://poetryflash.org/archive/?s=features&p=FOLEY-Old_Italian_Living)
- Gold, Daniel. "A Beat Generation Star Who Won't Answer to that Name". *The New York Times*, 2013.
- Hemmer, Kurt. *Encyclopedia of Beat Literature*. Facts On File, Inc. An imprint of Infobase Publishing, New York, 2007.
- Hoffman, Bruce. *Inside Terrorism*. Columbia University Press, New York. 2006.
- Lawlor, William. *Beat Culture: Lifestyles, Icons, and Impact*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2005.
- Laughlin, James. *New Directions in Prose and Poetry 35*. New Directions book, New York, 1977.
- Morgan, Bill. *The Beat Generation in San Francisco: A Literary Tour*. City Lights Books, San Francisco, 2003.
- Panek, Richard. *The Trouble with Gravity: Solving the Mystery Beneath Our Feet*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (Boston, New York, 2019).
- Parini, Jay. *The Columbia History of American Poetry*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1993.

- Poochigian, Aaron. *Lawrence Ferlinghetti: Poet of the People*. InsideSources, 2021.
- Redd, Nola. Charles Lindbergh and the First Solo Transatlantic Flight. Space.com. 2019. <https://www.space.com/16677-charles-lindbergh.html>
- Richardson, Mark. *The Cambridge Companion to American Poets*. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2015.
- Shapira, Shmuel and Hammond, Jeffrey. *Essentials of Terror Medicine*. Springer Science & Business Media, New York, 2009.
- Varner, Paul. *Historical Dictionary of the Beat Movement*. Scarecrow Press, 2012.
- Walzer, Michael. *Arguing About War*. Yale of University Press, 2004.
- Warner, Guy. "The flying boats of foynes". *Inland Waterways News*. vol. 28 n. 4, 2001. P. 3.
- Wilson Company. *Book Review Digest, 90*. H.W. Wilson Company, 1994.
- Woods, Gioia. "*Reinvent America and the World: How Lawrence Ferlinghetti and City Lights Books Cultivated an International Literature of Dissent.*" *European journal of American studies*, vol.12, no. 2, 2017.