

PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY OLOMOUC

FACULTY OF ARTS

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Charles Bukowski - Angry Old Man

**Diploma Thesis**

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Olomouc 2017

UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI

FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Charles Bukowski - Rozhněvaný starý muž?

**Diplomová práce**

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Olomouc 2017

Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci  
Filozofická fakulta  
Akademický rok: 2015/2016

Studijní program: Filologie  
Forma: Prezenční  
Obor/komb.: Anglická filologie - Ruská filologie (AF-RF)

Podklad pro zadání DIPLOMOVÉ práce studenta

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Charles Bukowski - Rozhňevaný starý muž?

TÉMA ANGLICKY:

Angry Old Man

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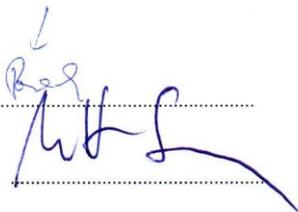
ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:

The aim of my thesis is to build upon my Bachelor's thesis on the literary phenomenon of the Angry Young Men and to compare Charles Bukowski's writings with those of the Angry Young Men - Bukowski was American, whereas the Angry Young Men were British, but they were contemporaries, share some influences, and are alike and differ in interesting ways.

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Podpis studenta:



Datum: 13. 4. 2016

Podpis vedoucího práce:

Datum: 14. 4. 2016

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci na téma *Charles Bukowski - Rozhněvaný starý muž?* vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího práce a uvedla jsem všechny použité podklady a literaturu.

V .....

dne.....

Podpis .....

I would like to thank PhDr. Matthew Sweney, Ph.D. for his help, suggestions, and guidance given while supervising my thesis and Mgr. Robert Hýsek for providing me valuable sources for my thesis.

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## Introduction

The present Diploma thesis, according to the annotation, builds upon the author's previous Bachelor thesis on the literary phenomenon of the Angry Young Men, and the comparison of Charles Bukowski's literary phenomenon with those of the Angry Young Men. The main comparison should deal with the main characters of most significant authors of the previously mentioned British movement of 1950's and Bukowski's ones, namely the character of Henry Chinaski, who is seen as Bukowski's alter ego. The focus of the mentioned Bachelor thesis was on Jimmy Porter from John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, Jim Dixon from Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim*, and Joe Lampton from John Braine's *Room at the Top*.

There were necessary changes after the Second World War all around the world, including United Kingdom and United States as well. The Second World War drove the life conditions of the whole world to a bad level, however differently in each country. Both countries have had to deal with the changed reality in their own way, because each country was included differently in fights.

The diploma thesis is divided into five main parts. Firstly there is a chapter which functions as a historical background for the Angry Young Men's and Bukowski's writing. Next chapter is focused on a brief reminder of the author's bachelor thesis about the literary characters of Angry Young Men. In the next chapter about Charles Bukowski, his life and work; there starts the main body of the present thesis. It is followed by chapter about Bukowski's main character Henry Chinaski, who is often called Bukowski's alter ego. There, at the end of the thesis, is the author's own commentary of the main characters, their comparison in terms of what they have in common and what they do not have in common.

## **1. Historical occurrences connected to America in 1920s-1990s**

The present chapter deals with the historical background relevant to Charles Bukowski's period of life. It comprises of different events of the world wide importance and also just merely American issues of the stated period. As long as these facts are widely known as the basis of everyday knowledge they would be furthermore presented as such.

The First World War started on the European continent in August 1914; however, at first, it was called the Great War. The fighting sides were Allies, consisted of France, Great Britain, and Russia, and Central Powers consisted of Germany and Austria. Although the USA would like to stay apart of the fighting, because they considered the conflict concerning just Europe, they were driven into the conflict for the reason their ships, with supplies and goods for British people, were being sunk by German submarines. The United States declared war on Germany on April 2, 1917. As long as America did not have enough soldiers for fights on the European continent, they had to recruit new ones. This was the time of famous Uncle Sam's poster. Thanks to the American help to Allies, the war was going to be ended. An armistice was signed on November 11, 1918.

American President Wilson wanted a less strict treaty that would not cause their revenge one day, because of the unfair treating after the war. However, the final way of making peace was totally different, though. Clemenceau, the French leader, would like to make the Germany as weak as it was possible. This decision was not of good ones, as appeared later. No matter what, the Versailles Treaty was signed in May 1919 without discussing it with Germany. Irrespective of the fact that the strict reparations of the war consequences were very hard and growing to millions of dollars, the Versailles Treaty has brought something good, the League of Nations. Unfortunately, Wilson never persuaded the Americans to join his ideal organization and as an impact of an exhausting tour to persuade the States his health suffered a lot.

After the war came the “roaring twenties” and hit the USA with Charleston, Charlie Chaplin, gangsters, lots of goods and prosperity of nearly every American. Investments had grown rapidly because rich men had so much money, they could afford to put some of them on other companies as long as their lives were already wealthy without these amounts of money. Shares in the companies meant earnings without much work. On the other hand, approximately half of the States were poor farmers or farm workers, who were barely able to earn as much as they needed for their families not being starving. These people never had the chance to reach the wealthy, funny, “roaring twenties” of the “crème de la crème” people. More or less the standard of living increased and new President Hoover was promising more prosperity and wealthy living for each American family, even the poorest ones, could be able to afford a car and good food.

In the 1920s Hollywood, the suburb of Los Angeles, has become the center of movies, and people started to have interests in filmmaking and watching them too. At 1920s films were silent starring many actors who had become world wide known, however, the films showed totally different world people knew before. It was a dream world, unreachable but promising not just for the foreign audience but also for the Americans themselves.

All the wealth and prosperity was going to be over in few years. Sales of everything rose from year to year in the 1920s and gave rise to profits of firms and the prices of their shares. The shares are amounts of money invested in some company and they were sold as certificates or valuable papers. Most of them were being sold on the New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street. The owners of the shares also shared the profits of the company, or they could buy them when they were at a low price and sell them after some time, when it had risen, because of the company doing well and making high profits. It all looked like easy money to earn and nearly everybody had bought some shares. Even more, the shares could be bought on credit and many people borrowed huge amounts of money in a view they could get rich very quickly.

This hazardous kind of buying and selling shares led to something like a new kind of “gold rush” and prices of shares went up and up again. But as many people know, the true value of the firm is on its profits, and when the profits start to stagnate or even fall a bit, the price of the shares follow the path of the profits. Slow fall of the shares caused slow selling of the shares, but then more and more people sold their shares and the panic was already going on. The Wall Street Crash hit the USA on Black Thursday, October 24, 1929, and ruined many people, especially the loaners who owned money to banks. The real cause of the Crash was way to simplistic because most of the Americans were earning so little to be able to afford all the wealthy goods the firms were producing. Consequently, the fall of the profits was caused by insufficient sales, which became even more desperate after the Wall Street Crash.

Also, the foreign markets were not selling enough, more precisely; they were out, because of the American banks. The European countries had run off the wherewithal and their people often borrowed money from the American banks, however, which asked their debtors to return the borrowed money. As a consequence, American goods were not sold as well as it was before, the goods heaped up in stores and companies were compelled to reduce production, so to reduce the work places. The foreboding circle was closing and the real crisis was to come.

The Depression of the 1930s was really bad, many companies and banks were closed, and production and wages were minimal. The unemployment was varying from 25 to 40 % in different places and even farmers, although they spare no effort to stay out of the troubles, were not saved from the Depression. They had products but no one to sell them to because people were not able to afford it. The ones who were unemployed had to rely on food support in “bread lines”, where they could get not just bread, but also for example canned food. By that time there was no government support for unemployed.

President Hoover was in need to do something, to solve somehow the Depression, but it seemed he was doing nothing with the closed factories and queues becoming longer and longer. And then and there came Democratic candidate, Franklin D. Roosevelt, crippled by polio in the past and giving an impression of bearing in mind the situation of all the ordinary people. Americans saw a potential solution to their desperate situation in him. He promised the whole America "A New Deal" and people chose him in the election. New laws were set up, work was found for many young men, and various organizations "agencies" aroused to hold and distribute the government money to unemployed, to farmers and as well to make wages and prices fair. With new jobs and employed people came the recovery of trade. Furthermore, the Social Security Act from 1935 gave people government pensions and system of unemployment insurance, the money which was from the extra taxes paid by workers and employers.

Although the "New Deal" had many critics, people re-elected Roosevelt again, but this time he had to struggle with the war which was about to come. In September 1939 Germany, with Hitler armies, started the Second World War by occupying Poland. The States was just suppliers at first, what gave job to many other people, however in two years the USA were also driven into the war, by the famous attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and unemployment disappeared, as well as everybody was too focused on war issues to pay attention to potential internal problems. The war not just ruined the European countries out, but also made Roosevelt sick and few weeks before the end, he died and was replaced by his Vice President Harry Truman. Till nowadays he is remembered with respect to his work as a President and as a good man and brilliant politician.

By the US announcing the war to Japan, Germany announced the war to the USA and the firstly Eurasian conflict became the world issue. There were the Allies: Britain, Soviet Union and the USA, on one side and the Axis of Germany and Japan on the other side. Allied armies of Britain and US finally overpowered on the European continent and together with the Soviet troops

they liberated Germany, who capitulated on May 5, 1945, ten days after Hitler's suicide.

Meanwhile in the Pacific, till the summer of 1942 Japan conquered a large part of Southeast Asia. They suffered little setbacks, but the real offensives of American, Australian and British united forces were going to come in June 1943. During the following two years they were getting closer to an invasion of Japan; however, it has never happened. The Allied scientist had invented atomic bombs, which were thrown on the Japanese cities Hiroshima (6<sup>th</sup> August) and Nagasaki (9<sup>th</sup> August) in 1945. Both bombs devastated a large area and killed hundreds of thousands of people. In a few days, Japan capitulated, but the bombing remains a bone of contention till nowadays, although President Truman believed it was a right decision that time, which ended the war more quickly than other means.

European countries with their inhabitants were ruined after the Second World War. That would not be said about America. The people of the States were saved of open fights in their homeland; there were no bombing during the war. Most of the ordinary Americans simply know the war from the newspaper, television or stories. America had three different Presidents from 1945 to 1963, first was Truman, who replaced died Roosevelt, the second was Eisenhower and the third was well known J.F. Kennedy. The post-war years are frequently called "the years of prosperity" in the case of America; however, Europe was slowly getting from the war collapse. Most of Americans were wealthy and had everything they needed for prosperous life in quite a peace.

Although it may felt like peace in America, the so called "Cold War" with its "Iron Curtain" across Europe caused many problems. The secretly "warring" superpowers of the USA and the Soviet Union mistrust each other, but they both feared of an Atomic war so much, they never came into an open clash. However, the American presidents since Truman needed to deal with the communism in Europe. The solution should have been the Marshall Plan, which helped the Western-European countries to get from the post-war crisis, but which did not help in Korea a lot, and cause the division of the country to

American and Soviet parts by 38<sup>th</sup> parallel of latitude and later end up in the Korean War in the early 1950s.

The American fear of Soviets was also increased by the overrunning communist parties in many Eastern-European countries. Americans feared of their dictator Stalin and his will of a transformation of the whole world in one united communist government. After the communist party took over the Czechoslovakia, having the democratic views before, with the help of Soviet government, the Americans started to form a new organization providing help to European countries in 1949. The then newly founded organization is working till nowadays in the name of NATO, which abbreviation consists of North Atlantic Treaty Organization, firstly formed as a support for each of its countries against the Soviet Union.

The stockpiling of both sides of the “Cold War” was a great job for many people and scientist as well. Both countries were ere long ready with not just atomic bombs, but also new types of hydrogen bombs called H-bombs, with much more devastating power than any bomb ever before. The nuclear war came to a bring in the 1950s. Nearly everybody knew the destructive consequences of the potential war between those two countries, so the Stalin’s successor Khrushchev figured out the solution of “peaceful coexistence”, however, the later agreed Paris summit never took the place because an American spy aircraft was shot down over the Soviet area. Despite the concrete Berlin Wall quickly arisen in August 1961, President Kennedy did nothing with it because he was well aware of the consequences of a war and Berlin was separated until 1989.

However, the real crisis was taking place on another side of the world, much closer to the USA, in Cuba, where Castro took over the government in 1959 and started a communist leadership just a short way of the Florida coast. Kennedy’s forces set the offensive against Castro in the Bay of Pigs, but they were soon defeated and Castro asked for the Soviet help, presently granted by great support, besides weapons the missile bases were built in Cuba. America, in fear, started the blockade of any Soviet craft and Kennedy pleaded with Khrushchev to stop the Cuban support and destroy the missile

bases. He also declared that any prospective Cuban attack on the USA would be considered as a Soviet one and Soviets would be repaid for it by long-range missiles. Khrushchev finally decided to destroy the bases and sent the missiles back to the Union and Kennedy afterward stopped the blockade. A nuclear war was averted and Cuba was left alone, even though communists have stayed there in power.

Nevertheless, there were still plenty of poor people in America, some of who were living in slums, in the early 1960s. Kennedy proceeded with the government support for those people, although he either tried to help other groups, e.g. black Americans, he was assassinated sooner than he could really change something. His Vice President Johnson became the new President of America and he got Civil Right Act through the Congress, which helped the African-Americans to improve their position in the society. Johnson also helped establish medical healthcare for old and poor people, however, he was later criticized for involving America in the Vietnam War so deeply that he decided to give up new elections and retired.

The Vietnam War was another problem of deeply rooted hatred of Americans against communism. The communism was brought to Vietnam by Ho Chi Minh, who would like to take over the whole country after defeated French, nonetheless, Americans started to help the southern non-communists against him because they were afraid of communist China taking of the whole Asia. Vietnam was divided into two sections and American help concerned just weapons, money and advisors at first, however, later on, it was clear that the communists were winning, so Johnson ordered American troops to get to Vietnam and try to solve the communist problem. On the other war side the Russian and Chinese troops helped Ho Chi Minh and with his guerrilla Vietcong, they formed an invincible army. Americans were fighting with tears hidden in the sea and many people became angry with the horror and cruelty of the war shown on TV. Nearly the whole world demonstrated against the Vietnam War, America, and its President Johnson.

Nevertheless, President Johnson was replaced by new President Nixon in 1969, who believed that people should be able to help themselves from

hardships and that the government support is bigger than need to be. During the beginning of his second presidential term, he finally got to the ceasefire in Vietnam and consequently brought the American soldiers home. It should look like the last help to South Vietnamese; however, it was a handover of the whole Vietnam to the communist leadership of Ho Chi Minh. Irrespective of kind of praise-worthy things he did to end the Vietnam War, he is remembered in connection with the "Watergate Affair" most of the time. He was involved in an illegal plan to discredit his political opponents, subsequently after the revelation of what Nixon resigned.

However, it was time after he helped establish the situation between the US and the Soviet Union by signing the SALT, slowing the arm race of both superpowers. Later he also improved the difficult situation with China and its communist leader Mao Zedong. Yet the relationships were still lukewarm, many people consider the melting caused by disagreements between those two governments of China and the Soviet Union about land on their frontier. As the Chinese-American relationships grew better the Soviet fear of American capitalism and American fear of Soviet will to spread communism grew as well. Even though they signed the SALT, the Soviets attacked Afghanistan in 1979 during the Jimmy Carter presidential term. Congress stopped the renewing of the SALT and both countries followed in the arm race in fear of being one step behind the other.

Then came the next Republican president, Ronald Reagan, who brought the same policy about the poor as Nixon, because he also wanted to re-make Americans into a people of self-helping individuals, not dependent unemployed. He would like to have a strong nation, who could compete with its old rivals Soviets in a space competition, new way of "war", which has been taking place outside in disputed territory belonging to nobody and everybody at the same time. It was also the time of real melting of the relationships between America and Soviets with their leader Gorbachev, both ready to a treaty based on destroying medium and short range nuclear missiles.

Reagan's other aim was also investing in the weapon production; although being controversial it gave jobs to many people and improved their lives. Together with his well-mannered behaving, surely connected with his previous experience as a film actor, this brought him popularity through his both presidential terms, although he was criticized for involving in the Nicaragua issue and support of the counter-revolutionaries there.

In general, America involved in the Latin American issues a lot, providing explanations in order not to let the communism spread there or in order to help the locals to improve their living conditions. This was just half true, however not a kind of white lie, because the US actually helped to improve especially health care conditions then and there during their earlier occupations. The time of aid was also the case of Kennedy's presidential term, during which the roads, hospitals, and schools were being built. Whatever the real reasons were for the support of Latin America, the dictators of its countries used more guns than enthusiasm and many people saw no difference between Soviet force way of governing the neighboring countries and American supporting way full of money, work and help. Both ways were just ways of controlling an attractive part of the world and keeping close the strategic partners.

The switch of President Reagan by President George H.W. Bush was the time of big changes in foreign policies; specifically, the Soviets left Afghanistan in 1988 during the last year of Reagan's presidency. A year later in 1989, when the US were already under the leadership of Bush, crushed the system of communist governments all over the Eastern Europe with its symbolic fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunion of the city. Both superpowers hoped for better future with better relationships between them. By 1991 the Soviet Union was over and divided into fifteen independent parts, although the fall of the firm hand governing caused minor problems between the countries, being held for years under the Soviet supremacy.

The world seemed free but not stable and American was and still has been involving in nearly every issue which was concerning terrorism and has been imposing sanction on every country accused of being sponsoring it, stockpiling

of mass human destruction weapons or abuse of civil rights. Bush's presidential term is connected with US invasion of Panama and the Gulf War, a response to Iraq invasion of Kuwait, led by Saddam Hussein, sometimes also called First Iraq War, but having secret names of two operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The USA were in deficit and Bush had to sign higher taxes because of the Congress, on the top of the situation America had come to another recession, these and many other things brought him unpopularity and he, not elected again, was replaced by a new election winner, Bill Clinton, in 1993.

Clinton presided for two terms and was highly appreciated politician even after his presidential retirement, although he was accused of scandal with Monika Lewinsky three years before ending the second term. His terms were peaceful for Americans, governmental deficits were reduced a bit and economic rose. One of his main aims as a president were concerning the welfare and healthcare, including e.g. an allowance of employees to go to an unpaid left on the grounds of pregnancy or serious medical problems, however, the vision of the central health care system finally failed. Another important thing to be appreciated during his presidency was his signing of NAFTA aka North American Free Trade Agreement, allowing eliminate tariffs on trades between the US, Canada, and Mexico. Clinton is likewise connected with the Army policy of "Don't ask, don't tell", allowing gay people serving military forces if they do not reveal their orientation, otherwise they would be fired out of the Army. Homosexual orientation was still an issue among Americans, however, after all the years of likely freedom.

Although all of these above mentioned events are widely known facts of basic everyday knowledge and they were presented here as such, there is a book which served as loose inspirational publication in order to keep the events moving according to chronology. The book was written by Denis Brynley O'Callaghan, under the name *An Illustrated History of the USA*, other information see below in the Bibliography section.

## **2. Post-War time in Britain and Bukowski's contemporaries Angry Young Men aka a mention of the author's previous Bachelor Thesis**

*"At the end of the Second World War Britain with the Allies won, however, she was empty, full of hopeless and worn-out of her base. In order not to be defeated, Britain had to change a lot and everybody was forced to get used to these changes."* (Řehouňková 10)

These are the two first sentences of the bachelor thesis *Angry Young Man of Angry Young Men*<sup>1</sup> written by the author of the present diploma thesis sometime before and they perfectly summarize the very beginning of the Britain's recuperation after the war harshness. The policy of the British government was strict but simple; they just kept the engine going in order not to stay out of the world important businesses.

Some of their acts were straightaway cure aiming the wound, e.g. those concerning social and medical help. One of the most important acts of those times was the Educational Act from 1944, which allowed much more students to get their desired education and working-class children had opportunities to get on universities after the high school education.

The arts went blooming as well, as the political more or less harmony came. Music, poetry, and novels were formed by a new generation of people and specifically, in the case of literature, it was impressive creating which gave birth to a group of Angry Young Men. They revolted against the old system of social layers which was formerly impervious to moving from the lower layers to the upper ones, but which soon had to be broken because of the nondemocratic privileges for the graduates of Oxford and Cambridge.

The angry youth of 1950's developed their antihero of the novels, who was just like them, graduate, yet not working on a worth place with a worth wage, because of the red-brick-university diploma, something under valuable. This

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<sup>1</sup> The mentioned bachelor thesis will be summarized or paraphrased in this chapter by the author herself.

antihero could be seen not just in novels but also in the theatre of the 1950s, determined by the same atmosphere of disillusionment.

One of the main “heroes” of the then theatre was John Osborne with his masterpiece *Look Back in Anger* an autobiographical play concerning the society’s antihero Jimmy Porter. As it is mentioned already in Řehouňková from 2014: “... [I]t was completely new drama, with its unrepeatable main character Jimmy Porter. So it is impossible to do not agree with Inness’ claim that it was a sociological phenomenon, more than any other single work in the century. As theatre historians pointed out, its production in May 1956 ‘marks the real break-through of “the new drama” into the British theatre’, and swept away Terence Rattigan’s problem plays and Noel Coward’s later comedy... The inflammation of Osborne’s dialogue and intentionally unglamorous portrayal of everyday urban life established fresh criteria for authenticity and contemporary relevance.” (Řehouňková 22) <sup>2</sup>

The protagonist is disillusioned and angry with the world order, however, he vents his anger on his innocent wife. His “...verbal force and energy is the product of a nervous strain within the character...” as it is mentioned on the 25<sup>th</sup> page of the bachelor thesis. No matter what was the real cause of Jimmy’s anger he burst it onto the most incapable person he could, yet it just approves his inability to live the real life, to improve the bad living conditions of his family. He probably knows how to better it, being quite well educated, however, he is rather hesitant and just angry on everything and everybody. What an eye-opening message of the postwar generation to the world or snobbish upper-classes.

*“[A y]oung hero of this play, Jimmy Porter, who came from a working-class background, could have absolved a university, thanks to a governmental scholarship. But he did not find and sufficient job in the privileged society. His stand with candies and poor attic flat, where he lived with his wife Alison, are both symbolic witnesses of his social degradation. Jimmy ventilate his helpless angry as violent assaults against Alison’s townish family and whole*

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<sup>2</sup> The passage cited from Řehouňková (2014) was originally inspired by Christopher Innes’ *Modern British Drama: The Twentieth Century* (2002)

*British empire, which is in decline in convulsion caused by Suez crisis. Although Jimmy can not see any particular solution and does not solve anything at all (except for his affair with the friend of his disappeared wife), he ignites the listener's longing and will name themselves the problems, which were breached by him. It is because the play still looks fresh and up to date."* The author of the thesis agreed already earlier, in 2014, with this Prof. Stříbrný's statement and it is inevitable to remind it again because it very well summarizes and explains the protagonist of the play *Look Back in Anger*.<sup>3</sup>

Among the novelists of the same decade of the 1950s, the author of the bachelor thesis chose two of them, Kingsley Amis and John Braine. The first mentioned, Amis, was one of the most known Angry Young Men, although he was not a graduate from red-brick-university, yet from the Oxford's St. John's College. He also served in the Second World War and then became a university lecturer, both perfectly satisfied prerequisites for writing a marvelous Campus Novel.

His first novel *Lucky Jim* was a success at the outset after publication in 1954 and set the precedent for incoming writers of the late generations, turning its protagonist Jim Dixon into humoristic and satiric yet realistic figure, showing the typical mood of the provincial universities. *"[Jim] is unforgettable comic of awkwardness. Step by step he is successful to parody the pomposity, hypocrisy, sham, and snobbery of university establishment. Nevertheless, he can survive in this environment thanks to his light cynicism and non-disguised selfishness."* (Řehouňková 35)<sup>4</sup>

Although it may seem that Jim has not much luck, the exact opposite reveals to be true at the end of the novel. Despite his initial outwardly calm and willingness to fulfill any desire of his supervisor at the university, later on, it is clear that he hates him and makes fun of him as much as it is possible, yet just in private. There we come again to Prof. Stříbrný's commentary, mentioned in the author of the thesis's previous Bachelor thesis, this time

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<sup>3</sup> The passage concerning Prof. Stříbrný's statement was originally based on his *Dějiny Anglické Literatury 2* (1987)

<sup>4</sup> The passage cited from Řehouňková 2014 was originally based on Eva Oliverusová's *Antologie Anglické Literatury* (1984)

about Jim Dixon: *“Simply he is some kind of a modern clown and angry young man, but in a comic way, together. He goes through farcically grotesque situations, which reach the top when he is about to present a public speech. Because the success of the speech is connected to his promotion, nervous Jim encourages himself by whiskey. He drinks too much, insults all of the university and town honors. He is fired, but nearly immediately he is given more advantageous position by an eccentric London millionaire. However, what is most important, he wins affection, or even love, of millionaire’s niece, [with] whom he fell in love and at first he thought that it would be impossible to be with her”* (Řehouňková 36)<sup>5</sup>

However, not to beat about the bush, it is necessary to admit that both Jimmy Porter and Jim Dixon were kinds of similar protagonists of the same decade. They were both incapable of changing their lives, yet they each solve it in their own way and Jim Dixon, in contrast to Jimmy Porter, finally successfully promoted to upper classes of the society, although we do not know if it makes him happy. Irrespective of the possibility that such a happy ending was real it was needed in the post-war decade when become strongly attached to hopes was one of a few possibilities to hold out.

Next at the last writer mentioned in the author’s previous bachelor thesis is John Braine, a specific Angry Young Men novelist. Despite the fact he was a prolific author, his very first novel *Room at the Top* from 1957 is most remembered work of him. As it is stated in Řehouňková, *“Few writers had such a sensational overnight success with a debut novel, but that was what happened to John Braine with Room at the Top... The book’s genius was to hack into the mood of the 1950s’ in Britain when old attitudes were waning and working-class people wanted to join the middle-classes.”*<sup>6</sup>

Its protagonist Joe Lampton is another representative of the 1950s decade and Angry Young Men as well, and although he is behaving not ethically most of the story he promotes on the social scale and gets a gorgeous wife too. He

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<sup>5</sup> The passage concerning Prof. Stříbrný’s commentary was again originally based on his *Dějiny Anglické Literatury 2* (1987)

<sup>6</sup> This passage from Řehouňková (2014) was originally based on article “John Braine’s fall from the top” published on The Yorkshire Post webpage and paraphrased on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2014

represents the third vertex of the triangle made together with Jimmy Porter and Jim Dixon. Joe is more tenacious in anger towards the upper classes, yet the same time also in getting there too, 'no matter what it costs'. People like this would be called careerists and it perfectly fits Joe, because he rather seduce and impregnated a young beautiful girl in order to get a well-paid job and status from her father, all at the expense of his older mistress, whom he really loved and whose chooses the death instead of living without him. Self-seeking and greedy behavior gets him where he wants to be, however, unfortunately where he is disappointed and not happy, as it is later depicted in sequel novel *Life at the Top* from 1962.

Joe Lampton's character was very convincingly described in Petra Fikejzová's *Bachelor Paper: Anger on John Braine, John Wain*, which was also used as one of the sources by the author of the present thesis in her previous bachelor thesis. "*Joe longs for property and money and he knows that the quickest way how to gain it is to marry a rich girl. He is very ambitious, cynical, innocent and wide-eyed. He exactly knows what he wants and does anything to penetrate to the upper-class society. Joe Lampton has single-mindedness, a beautifully brutal simplicity of purpose that is not characteristic of the heroes of other contemporary novels.*" (Fikejzová 12-13)

To conclude Joe's depiction it is important to mention again the conclusion of the author's 4<sup>th</sup> chapter in the previous Bachelor thesis, concerning an overall conclusion of the protagonist. The author mentions there how to divide Joe's behavior and attitudes as the story evolves. She also expresses her own mind about the dreadful things he did, mentioning the betraying beloved mistress just because, she is married and with not much wherewithal, who rather choose to commit suicide because of his behavior towards her. (Řehouňková 47)

The final conclusion of the author's previous bachelor thesis starts with the statement, that: "*Findings of the thesis claim absolutely clear that it is not possible to identify or even analyze any work without its historical background.*" and she still would like to insist on it. The whole world has been in ceaseless development since the Second World War and many people had

used to a new era. Political and cultural spheres are intertwined and influence each other a lot that is the explanation of the author's above-mentioned statement. The triangle of our different protagonists, Jimmy Porter, Jim Dixon and Joe Lampton, show some similarities, specifically the inspiration by their authors' lives and a decade in which they were living. The then anger with the governmental and social systems could be felt in nearly everything and everybody, yet different people solve their frustrations in different ways. We have there in those three protagonists the three different ways what people did in the post-war period. Some of them hold up with their anger "at home", some people were lucky enough to live the era up and promote to desired society, yet not always happily or even with a clear conscience.

### **3. Charles Bukowski**

#### **3.1. Life**

Henry Charles Bukowski Jr. (16 August 1920 - 9 March 1994) was an American poet, short story writer, and novelist of German origin, famous mostly for his semi-autobiographical writing. He was born as Heinrich Karl Bukowski in Andernach, Germany, but his family moved to the USA when he was two years old. He grew up in Los Angeles and lived there for the majority of his life. Howard Sounes, the author of his thorough biography, wrote: *“The author lived virtually his whole life in LA, ... , he wrote about life in Los Angeles from the working-class perspective, or perhaps more accurately from the viewpoint of the city’s underclass.”* (Sounes xiii)

During the lifetime he published books of prose and poetry, all of which have been translated into many languages. Novels such as *Factotum*, *Ham on Rye*, *Post Office* and *Women* made him famous and his fame reached the point in the movie *Barfly*.

There should not be omitted the family roots as the author of the thesis considers them as not just a good starting point of the Bukowski’s biography but also as the undisputable source of his personality. That is because of a well-known fact that the personality of any human could be most easily and most effectively formed until the age of 7, subsequently, the young Bukowski’s personality seemed to be finished before his famous being barfly time. More or less it can be true or not, the childhood and growing up to adulthood is an important time if not the most important of everybody’s life.

##### **3.1.1. Family roots and first two years in Germany**

Charles’ grandfather Leonard emigrated from Germany to the United States in the 1880s after the war of 1870, the defeat of Napoleon III. After marriage with Emilie Krause, who was also of immigrant origin, they settled in Pasadena. Leonard started his own construction company in 1904, after many years as a carpenter. He did very well and built a large two-storeyed home for his family.

They had six children, John was the oldest one, Charles was second and Hank's father Henry was the third. Then come two daughters Emma and Eleonor, and the youngest son, Ben.

Hank's parents met when Henry Bukowski was a sergeant in the American army of occupation after the defeat of Germany in 1918. Sergeant Henry Bukowski had an office job; Hank referred to him as a typist, but he had an advantage over most of the other American troops because he spoke fluent German. There he got to know Heinrich Fett, the manager of the canteen for American troops, and they became friends, as well as he had good relationships with his family. He had already glimpsed Heinrich's sister Katherine, but they were not able to talk until he was invited to dinner with the whole family. Henry and Katherine had an affair which quickly resulted in her pregnancy. Though Bukowski junior often claimed that he was born out of wedlock, this was not so. Henry and Katherine were married on 15 July 1920, after Henry's demobilization, and a month later, on 16 August, Heinrich Karl Bukowski was born.

There has been some speculation about Katherine Fett's background as her mother's maiden name was Nanette Israel, which suggests that she might have been Jewish. This would have made Hank Jewish as the transmission is through the maternal line. As Bukowski is also likely to be a Jewish name, Hank's flirtation with Hitler and Nazism in the 1940s was particularly unfortunate and he later claimed that it was just for the sake of being opposite to the majority.

Henry senior might have settled in Germany, unless the post-war inflation, largely caused by the after-war reparations, brought the economy near the collapse. Unable to make a living, Henry decided to take his family to the USA and in 1923 they sailed to Baltimore on the SS *President Fillmore*. They spent some months in Baltimore, but then they moved to Pasadena to join Charles' paternal grandparents, Emilie and Leonard, who were, however, living separated, because of Leonard's drinking. (Miles pgs 6-7)

### 3.1.2. Childhood

A very good source of Bukowski's childhood is his novel *Ham on Rye*, which is being considered by the author of the thesis as one of the best sources for the chapters concerning his growing up until the time he started his own life not living with parents. Nevertheless, the experiences were depicted in a lot of his different poems and other works. An author of his biography, Howard Sounes has written in the preface to it: "*Bukowski edited and often exaggerated his life story to make works of fiction. Sometimes he changed his story quite considerably,...*" (Sounes xi) In spite of this opinion of his, the author of the thesis still would like to use the Bukowski's novel as an unrepeatably source of the writer's opinions, points of view and memories.

One of his first memories concerns his hiding under the table: "*The first thing I remember is being under something. It was a table, I saw a table leg. I saw the legs of the people, and a portion of the tablecloth hanging down. It was dark under there. It must have been in Germany. I must have been one or two years old. It was 1922. I felt good under the table. Nobody seemed to know that I was there.*" (Ham on Rye 1)

And here it comes, straight from the beginning of his semi-autobiographical book the reader has to struggle with half-truths. Further, on the same page Hank mentions the name of his grandmother Emily, who definitely should not be in Germany because she was living in the USA, so it seems that the first memory is not from Germany, but more likely from the USA. Although he himself said, that ninety-three percent of his work was autobiography and the remaining seven percent was 'improved upon', as mentioned in Sounes p. 7, nearly all the Bukowski's readers would like to know if it is so, or if are his own stories perfectly braided mixture of truths and fictions to be more readable.

That is why Sounes has felt the reason for writing Bukowski's biography and verify all the facts he considered being in need of it. He is asking himself why to write Hank's biography and brings this answer: "*Bukowski did tell his own story and did so brilliantly of course, but by manipulating his experiences to create adventures for Henry Chinaski the biographical truth of Bukowski's life*

*becomes tantalizingly obscure. Many of Bukowski's readers, therefore, develop a curiosity to find out the literal truth of the man's life... Far from being crap, such biographical facts are the skeleton of memory and history. And because Bukowski made his art from his experience and those of his family and friends, there is very good reason to unravel his anecdotes, name the names, fix dates and put the author's life in correct chronological order."*

This simple explanation prevails the author of the present thesis to use Sounes work as one of the key publications for her own work.

Henry and Kate Bukowski tried as hard as they could, but Henry was just delivering milk, so their incomes weren't as high as they wish to. Hank's upbringing was strict, but Hank was as true as he could be in his writings, about the childhood part of his life. Sounes, for example, mentions Bukowski's own words: 'A twisted childhood has fucked me up, but that's the way I am, so I'll go with it.'

Before kindergarten, he wasn't allowed to play with other children from the neighborhood because 'snobbish' parents consider them poor and not good for their son's friendship. On the top of it, he was not allowed to alone, because of his clothes, he could make them soiled. Unsurprisingly, he was unable to interact with other children in the kindergarten. He did not understand their ball games and how they behaved to each other. His feeling of being an outsider might arouse in these silly little misunderstandings. (Miles 12)

### **3.1.3. Elementary School**

Elementary school was not easy for Bukowski as well. Sounes attached importance of Hank's loneliness to dyslexia. Later Bukowski himself wrote a poem education concerning this problem and his mother's reaction to it.

'education'

at that small inkwell desk  
I had trouble with the words  
"sing" and "sign."  
I don't know why  
but  
"sing" and "sign":  
it bothered  
me.

the others went on and learned  
new things  
but I just sat there  
thinking about  
"sing" and "sign."  
there was something there  
I couldn't  
overcome.

what it gave me was a  
bellyache as  
I looked at the backs of all those  
heads.

the lady teacher had a  
very fierce face  
it ran sharply to a  
point  
and was heavy with white  
powder.

one afternoon  
she asked my mother to come  
see her  
and I sat with them  
in the classroom  
as they  
talked.

"he's not learning  
anything," the teacher  
told my  
mother

"please give him a  
chance, Mrs. Sims!"  
"he's not *trying*, Mrs.  
Chinaski!"

my mother began to  
cry.

Mrs. Sims sat there  
and watched  
her.

it went on for some  
minutes.

then Mrs. Sims said,  
"well, we'll see what we  
can do ..."

then I was walking with  
my mother  
we were walking in  
front of the school,  
there was much green grass  
and then the  
sidewalk.

"oh, Henry," my mother said,  
"your father is so disappointed in  
you. I don't know what we are  
going to do!"

father, my mind said,  
father and father and  
father.

words like that.

I decided not to learn anything  
in that  
school.

my mother walked along  
beside me.  
she wasn't anything at  
all.  
and I had a bellyache  
and even the trees we walked  
under  
seemed less than  
trees  
and more like everything  
else.<sup>7</sup>

(The Boylan Blog)

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<sup>7</sup> Part of a book of poems *You Get So Alone at Times That It Just Makes Sense*

Hank's father Henry did not get on well with his siblings, more precisely, it can be said, he hated each of them. Although that fact, little Hank remembers his experiences of visiting father's brother, Ben, in sanatorium and family of the second father's brother, John, with some extra food for his wife and two daughters. These two memories are connected with Sunday trips in Model-T Ford when grandmother Emilie did not visit them. In Bukowski's own words: *"She (Emilie) visited us often after we came to America, taking the red trolley in from Pasadena to Los Angeles. We went to see her occasionally, driving out the Model-T Ford."* (Ham on Rye 2)

Bukowski wrote few memories about his grandmother Emilie. As mentioned above, she was German, as well as his mother Katherine. Because Katherine knows little English, she spoke German together with Emilie, so it is not surprising, that Hank himself admitted in his novel that German was his first language, however, he lost it soon. That can not be told about his German accent in English, with which he struggled a lot. And on the top of it, although his father Henry cared about anglicising his family, he sometimes spoke German to his wife Katherine too. (Miles 11)

Although Hank's parents were strict at him, father more than the quiet mother, he has a quite peaceful childhood. He did not have many friends, for some unknown reason the others hated him openly. He was not good at any sport, however, he would like to play, especially baseball which he liked a lot. But the other boys did not like him and thought of him badly, so he was not allowed to play with them at all, or just for some time until he was purposefully outed. The things got a bit better after Hank's first, and last, homerun. The boys still hated him, but now in a different way. Football was not a success as well because Henry was angry and did not catch the rules, so he was sent out of the football game to volleyball, which was shameful for him. The author himself remember the end of his playing like this: *"I just stood in the center of the field where nobody was playing. I was the only one who would not play anything. I stood there each day and waited through the two recess sessions, until they were over."* (Ham on Rye 27-29)

Hank's troubles with the other boys were waiting at the doorway. One day he was hit by the ball and consequently, he started the fight with the kicker. In the end, the teacher came and Henry was blamed for bullying the classmate. He was sent home with a note of principal for his parents, after a horrifying talk with him. That note was the start for more horror at home. Father beat him for that note of principal and more beating was to come. Henry remembers the beating in eighth chapter of his autobiography novel *Ham on Rye*. The father was for him like *"the dark covering the sun"*. Henry senior changed their bathroom into a beating room, something like a chamber of torture. *"He reached and took down the razor strop which hung from a hook. It was going to be the first of many such beatings, which would recur more and more often. Always, I felt, without real reason."* (*Ham on Rye* 33-35)

One of the reasonless times for beating little Henry was after every Saturday cutting of grass. Hank's job was to cut the grass so perfectly that his father could not be able to find any 'hair' left. Henry senior triumphed each time and found some, what immediately meant that Hank had to go to the bathroom and was beaten. All of it became an unchanging part of Bukowski's childhood.

Henry junior hated his father, not just for the beating, but because he believed that everything belongs to his father, not him. He was humiliated and even beaten not just by the boys of his age, but on top of it, by his own parents. He also dislikes mother, although she never did him anything, she was resistant and allowed the father's violence. Little Henry was disappointed by that fact and disillusioned with his mother. Nevertheless, he had some affection left for his mother Kate (Catherine) because he was ready to help her, when she was beaten by his father Henry. (Sounes 11-12)

The reason for beating her was as terrible as the reason for beating Hank after cutting grass. Henry senior had mistresses, even he took Hank with him on a milk route and stop at the house of his mistress in order to take the money she owed him for the milk. Henry stayed with her long time, although he knew Hank was waiting for him in the milk car and left her house disheveled and one day Hank came home to a really awkward situation:

*"I was to see that woman again. One day I came home after school and she was sitting on a chair in the front room of our house. My mother and father were sitting there too and my mother was crying...."*

*'Your father says he loves this woman,' she [mother] said to me.*

*'I love both of you! Now get that kid out of here!'*

*I felt that my father was making my mother very unhappy.*

*'I'll kill you,' I told my father.*

*'Get that kid out of here!'*

*'How can you love that woman?' I asked my father. 'Look at her nose. She has a nose like an elephant!'*

*'Christ!' said the woman, 'I don't have to take this!' She looked at my father: 'Choose, Henry! One or the other! Now!'*

*'But I can't! I love you both!'*

*'I'll kill you!' I told my father.*

*He walked over and slapped me on the ear, knocking me to the floor. The woman got up and ran out of the house and my father went after her...*

*My father walked back... 'Everybody into the house!' We went inside and my father locked me in the bedroom and my mother and father began arguing. It was loud and very ugly. Then my father began beating my mother. She screamed and he kept beating her. I climbed out a window and tried to get in the front door. It was locked. I tried the rear door, the windows. Everything was locked. I stood in the backyard and listened to the screaming and the beating. Then the beating and screaming stopped and all I could hear was my mother sobbing. She sobbed a long time. It gradually grew less and less and then she stopped." (Ham on Rye 49-50)*

As was written above, Hank had not has many friends and first few grades at the elementary school were not easy. Although he met a boy, whom he is remembering in the *Ham on Rye*, they were strange by their own way. It started with David, "cross-eyed and pigeon-toed" boy, who just came to Hank during one lunch break and stayed around him as something like a friend. Both were outsiders, but Hank thought that David, being his unwanted friend, is disparaging his rather poor position among other boys, as described in the sixth and seventh chapters of the *Ham on Rye*.

Hank had another friend, Red, one-armed, red-headed boy living in the neighborhood of Bukowski's house. Although handicapped, he was

unbelievably good at football and his thrown balls were “like bullets”, according to Bukowski/Chinaski in the fifteenth chapter. He became a good friend of Hank, however more or less he was a strange case for him. Buk was fascinated by his fake arm on his left arm and especially by the stub under it ending by an elbow with three or four little fingers. There any reader can see him being ashamed by investigating his own friend’s private thing, even though it was really a exciting thing for him. However, unfortunately, it was not one of the long friendships because Red’s family moved out quite quickly. (Ham on Rye 59-65)

As Hank was growing older, a few new friends came; however, they were kind of the outsiders like him. If any boy was kicked out of the main gang, Henry junior had a chance to get a new friend of him. That was the case of Frank, firstly and sometimes also lately a member of boys group in Hank’s neighborhood. They had good times together, but sometimes it seemed that Hank was not able to tolerate a kind of violence the boys were enjoying. There are two “beautiful” scenes described in the twentieth chapter of the *Ham on Rye* when Hank became angry with the boys. The first is the scene with spider going to eat a fly. Suddenly without warning, Hank kicked the spider with the fly out of the web and other boys became angry with him. He never wrote the reason to did it, but it might be a feeling of shame for the humans who are so cruel, what is also connected to the second scene in the same chapter. (Ham on Rye 89-90)

However, to get to the situation, a reader should have known the overall situation of the Depression in America that time. Most of the fathers lost their jobs and, as a result of it, exclusive rights as breadwinners. Some men could not stand it and rather choose the death and like Frank’s father, they committed suicide. By the way, that was the reason why Hank lost another good friend because he had to move out of the house with his mother after father’s suicide. As the economic situation was getting worse people became angry and cruel, so as the boys, who one day came up with a “brilliant” idea to let the bulldog kill a small cat. From the Bukowski’s point of view, it was a arranged murder of the white kitten and he hated the boy for that so much he

was thinking of helping the cat to be free, what revealed his kind part of the personality:

*“I felt like kicking him [Chuck’s bulldog Barney] in his stupid ass but I figured he would rip my leg off. He was entirely intent upon the kill. The white cat wasn’t even fully grown. It hissed and waited, pressed against the wall, a beautiful creature, so clean....*

*Why did the guys need this? This wasn’t a matter of courage, it was just dirty play. Where were the grown-ups?...*

*I thought of rushing in, grabbing the cat and running, but I didn’t have the nerve. I was afraid that the bulldog would attack me. The knowledge that I didn’t have the courage to do what was necessary made me feel terrible. I began to feel physically sick. I was weak. I didn’t want it to happen yet I couldn’t think of any way to stop it.*

*I heard a slight sound behind us and looked around. I saw old Mr Gibson<sup>8</sup> watching from behind his bedroom window. He wanted the cat to get killed too. just like the guys. Why?... Old Mr Gibson was one of the few men in the neighborhood with a job but he still needed to see the cat killed...*

*I couldn’t watch the kill. I felt a great shame at leaving the cat like that. There was always the chance that the cat might try to escape, but I knew that they would prevent it. That cat wasn’t only facing the bulldog, it was facing Humanity.*

*I turned and walked away...”* (Ham on Rye 92-94)

### **3.1.4. Junior High School and High School**

Hank started his 7<sup>th</sup> grade on a Junior High School with other boys from his previous Grammar School, and all of them were bigger and stronger than older boys from different neighborhoods, although the Bukowski’s same-age boys were the Depression Children with bad food and even with not enough of it at all. That was the time when he found out about masturbation and about the size of his balls, which were bigger than other boys’. And of course that

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<sup>8</sup> Mr Gibson was the owner of the house with the back yard, where the boys arranged the bulldog-cat fight.

was Hank's first time of tasting wine, and alcohol at all, thanks to his new friend Baldy and his father's wine cellar. That left in him a great memory of the world went perfect, which may later end in his pleasure in drinking:

*"I got under another barrel, opened it and took a swallow. I stood up. I was beginning to feel good.*

*'Hey, Baldy,' I said, 'I like this stuff.'*

*'Well, shit, try some more.'*

*I tried some more. It was tasting better. I was feeling better...*

*...Never had I felt so good. It was better than masturbating. I went from barrel to barrel. It was magic. Why hadn't someone told me? With this life was great, a man was perfect, nothing could touch him...*

*... We sat on a park bench and chewed the gums and I thought, well, now I have found something, I have found something that is going to help me, for a long long time to come."* (Ham on Rye 99-102)

Not just Bukowski's writings are full of doing sex, thinking about sex, talking about sex and similar stuff, also his growing-up seems to be full of sex of different kinds. For an inattentive reader, it may look like he was a sexual maniac who started with it a little early, however, to find the truth could much more difficult and a kind of investigation too. According to the tenth chapter of *Ham on Rye*, his first "sexual" experience was sometime during the first six years of Grammar School with a next door girl of the same age. The whole act was more or less comical, because both were kids, and, although Hank said her to do "it", he himself was not quite sure what the "it" means, yet being sure that there must be something more at the same time. (38-40)

In the 43<sup>rd</sup> chapter of *Ham on Rye* Hank got a real chance to sleep with a woman, when he was attending high school and his friend Jim invited him home to drink some beer. Although Jim was able to steal as much beer as he can during his part-time working in a grocery store, he was not used to drinking it more. However, that can not be said about Hank because it seems he was enjoying beer from the very beginning. Jim got drunk quickly, vomited and soon he had enough and fell asleep in his bedroom. Drunken Hank waited for his mother Clare and tried to persuade her to show him what she

has under her skirt. Nobody knows it was exactly just like that, but Hank seemed horrified by the view and chickened out of the situation and the apartment. His virginity still kept waiting for his first time. (206-212)

As mentioned above, during growing up he got to know about masturbation and started to do quite regularly and soon with picturesque fantasies concerning his classmates, young teachers, and neighbors. He did not even hesitate to snoop on every possible woman, that he considers being sexy. But before any real action could come he broke out with acne. Somebody can say that it is a normal part of growing up, but Bukowski's version of the skin problem was much more awful. Hank felt miserable because his hoped-for time crashed again and although being strong he backed once more on the fringe of his peers. Yet the peak was to come not in Junior High school but the High School. (Ham on Rye 99-134)

And there comes another trouble with the verification of the name of the schools. Bukowski as Chinaski named his Junior High School Mt Justin Jr High although Sounes have found it was Mount Vernon Junior High (Sounes 13), and then Bukowski wrote about Chelsey High, however, Sounes again disabuse the readers of his Bukowski's biography by stating that he had to attend Los Angeles High. (Sounes 16) The only thing which is true both with Hank's writing and Sounes' biography is the fact that Hank was made to attend it by his father. It was elite school consisted of elite children, which even more humiliated Hank's self-esteem. However, the author of the present theses has not found if the change was purposeful or a matter of chance. Either way, it could be considered as Bukowski's artistic intention not to mention the real made-up places.

Turning back to previously mentioned Bukowski's skin problems, the ones to whom he and his life are well known might say that his diagnosis of Acne Vulgaris turned him into the person he was. Something like that is also stated in Sounes by Bukowski's cousin Katherine Wood. (13) Because of the Acne, Hank decided not to take PE at the High School and he had better choose

ROTC<sup>9</sup> instead of it. On PE he would have been forced to change his clothing to a gym suit together with other boys, what was unbearable for him being ashamed of his boils of a walnut size. The military training had disadvantages too, but it was like choosing between a hell and a purgatory, and there in the hell is better to be thanks to the warmth. He had to wear a woolen uniform and trained with a rifle, which both caused him bursting and leaking of his boils. After some time it was clear that it would not just quit, but rather it would get worse and worse. By the end of the first term on the High School, it was so serious that he had to be taken off the school and medically treated. (Ham on Rye 135-137)

Both Hank's parents being unemployed that time, they chose the home treating at first, which was alongside an opportunity for his sadistic father to torture him. After all, he was sent to LA County Hospital, diagnosed and painfully treated by electric needle, pursuing and an ultraviolet lamp. It was a hospital for the poor, achievement of the late 1930s. (Ham on Rye 137-163 and Sounes 13-17) Yet Bukowski himself vividly describe the atmosphere of a hospital like this:

*"..., but when I began to think about it, I decided that everything that they were doing for me was useless. I figured that at best the needle would leave scars on me for the remainder of my life. That was bad enough but it wasn't what I really minded. What I minded was that they didn't know how to deal with me. I sensed this in their discussions and in their manner. They were hesitant, uneasy, yet also somehow disinterested and bored. Finally, it didn't matter what they did. They just had to do something - anything - because to do nothing would be unprofessional.*

*They experimented on the poor and if that worked they used the treatment on the rich. And if it didn't work, there would still be more poor left over to experiment upon."* (Ham on Rye 148)

After a few rigmaroles, he was still not cured, but something different happened in his life, not mentioning the obvious crush he developed on his caring nurse because: *"She was the kindest person I had met in eight years."*

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<sup>9</sup> Reserve Office Training Corps - a kind of military trainings

(Ham on Rye 148) The change in Hank's life was his father's new job, but it rather disappointed Hank because he had to stop attending the hospital, since one of his parents had a job, and he could not see his nurse Miss Ackerman again. What was even worse, the egoistic father and his time were back and he decided to get Hank back at school in order to make him an engineer. On the top of it, he had to drink a carrot juice, which some doctor advised them on his acne, yet which had no noticeable curing effect. (Ham on Rye 162-164)

Be that is it may, it was also a time of discovering a public library with books and literature at all. Hank literary started to drink in all those novelists like Lawrence, Lewis, Dos Passos, of course, his beloved Hemingway, and also some Russian ones. For the author of the thesis is very difficult to be out of keeping with Sounes statement: *"The books which first excited Bukowski influenced his literary tastes for the rest of his life."* (Sounes 15) According to her, she noticed the similarity of the used simple language of Bukowski's and Hemingway's works.

The other important milestone of Hank's life was graduation from the High School in 1939 and, especially, the Prom, where he did not go officially but was just staring at his decked out classmates from the outside. Initially, he adored all of his peers, so well dressed and having fun, but suddenly it turned to hatred:

*"But then it got to be too much for me. I hated them. I hated their beauty, their untroubled youth, and as I watched them dance through the magic colored pools of light, holding each other, feeling so good, little unscathed children, temporarily in luck, I hated them because they had something I had not yet had, and I said to myself, I said to myself again, someday I will be as happy as any of you, you will see."* (Ham on Rye 215)

### **3.1.5. First Job and College**

Straightly after high school, Hank started his first low paid job as a storeman, however, he was not able to stay there more than few days, although the real reason they fire him was that of the fight with his former classmate, their customer. The longing happiness of "someday" were not coming and he was

trying to find any job and hanging around the town days and nights. Despite still living with parents, he was attending bars quite regularly and developed a fondness for drinking. His time came mostly in nights when parents were asleep, he climbed out of the window and after the night outside he climbed back over the bushes and through the window to his bedroom and fell asleep.<sup>10</sup> Bukowski remembers this time in Chinaski's thoughts this way: *"When I had a few coins I'd go to the underground bar beneath the big movie house. I was 18 but they served me. I looked like I could be almost any age. Sometimes I looked 25, sometimes I felt 30."* (Ham on Rye 243) However more surprisingly Bukowski did not mention in his novel anything like this situation because he later used it as memory in *Factotum* (11<sup>th</sup> chapter). This way it is mentioned and commented by Sounes in his biography:

*"One night he was too drunk to get back in through his window, so he came to the front door. His parents were horrified at his condition and refused to let him in, so Bukowski burst the lock. He staggered into the living room and vomited on the rug. Henry came up behind him and pushed his head down.*

*'Do you know what we do to a dog when it shits on the rug?' he asked, forcing the boy's head lower. 'We put his nose in it.'*

*Bukowski had never retaliated before, but warned his father to stop. Henry continued to push his face down into the sick, so Bukowski spun round and punched him.*

*'You hit your father! You hit your father!' Kate exclaimed, clawing his face with her nails. Apparently it was OK for the father to beat the child, but not the other way round."* (Sounes 16)

Even though many people would consider the attack on a father by his child as an opportunity to let the child leave the house and live on its own, in Bukowski's case it was something different. Yet there happened many things before he would be thrown out of the parent's house. Subsequently, after the firing from his first low-paid job, he struggled to find a new one, but that was a kind of never-ending story in those times of late 1930s after Depression, when even more qualified and capable men were unemployed. Lack of

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<sup>10</sup> The way Hank was leaving the house is e.g. described in Ham on Rye pgs. 255-261

opportunities, and maybe even a bit of Hank's own inability to find a work, caused that he was exposed to more of his father's insults and jokes at Hank's expense. Then it somehow happened he was made into attending the LA City College, however, more or less because of his father being ashamed for an unemployed son. (Ham on Rye 245-246)

According to his novel, it seems he enjoyed the college, yet in a different way than normal students wanting to learn something new and promote their careers. He was calm and bore the responsibility, yet about which he did not care a fig and enjoyed drinking and friends. Becker was his new friend met on the Uni, with whom he had a similar dream to write and become a writer, although Becker was keener on writing and, according to Hank's own words, even better than him. (Ham on Rye 253-255) Despite all the "facts" in Bukowski's novel, Sounes found out he was put on 'scholarship warning' and later even on 'scholarship probation' (Sounes 19) It all brought the author of the thesis to a confidence, that the Uni was just a place where Bukowski could hole up from the working world and the future awaiting for him.

The schoolmates and perhaps not just they should be shocked by his sympathizing with Hitler and Nazism. To someone it may seem reasonable, he was German, his mother was German, about whom Sounes wrote, that she openly adored Hitler. Sounes also interviewed Bukowski's former partner FrancEyE, who said, that Buk was attracted by Hitler. He himself wrote about his affection for the dictator and distrust of American government and all the American values and reasons for fighting the Nazism. There in the 52<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the *Ham on Rye* it is described and explained the reason:

*"...with all the instructors being anti-German I found it personally impossible to simply agree with them. Out of sheer alienation and a natural contrariness I decided to align myself against their point of view. I had never read Mein Kampf and had no desire to do so. Hitler was just another dictator to me, only instead of lecturing me at the dinner table he'd probably blow my brains out or my balls of if I went to war to stop him."* (Ham on Rye 262-263)

Not just the opinions of Hitler, but also of Roosevelt and college education seem valuable and interesting at the same time too. This could even consider praising the President: *"I liked Franky because of his programs for the poor during the Depression. He had style too. I didn't think he really gave a damn about the poor but he was a great actor, great voice, and he had a great speech writer. But he wanted us in the war. It would put him into the history books... In some other country he would have made a powerful dictator."* (Ham o Rye 298)

Yet these opinions could not be sufficient foundation for throwing him out of the parents' house. The last straw on the camel's back was his father finding and reading Bukowski's short stories, after what all the Buk's belongings were thrown out of the house and had to find some accommodation. (Ham on Rye 232-234 and Sounes 20) And here comes the very beginning of the Bukowski's famous times as a barfly, manual worker and then as a brilliant writer of short stories, poems, and novels. Too disillusioned and lost straightly at the beginning of the independent, yet unsupported life, that was him, Charles Bukowski, the hero of the thesis author's teenage readings. He was disappointed by his parents and education as well, and his opinion of the college system is commented in his unrivaled novel *Ham on Rye*:

*"Education also seemed to be a trap. The little education I had allowed myself had made me more suspicious. What were doctors, lawyer, scientists? They were just men who allowed themselves to be deprived of their freedom to think and act as individuals."* (307)

### **3.1.6. Adulthood aka Barfly, Manual Worker, Punter, Womanizer and a Writer Time**

According to Sounes' findings, Bukowski left the college in June 1941 and then worked manually for a half a year. He was saving money to leave the town and find out the inspiration for writing in real America. Then he took a bus to New Orleans and started a completely new life. (20) The life of a barfly, manual worker, punter, womanizer and of course writer. The life during which he met a lot of different people, whom they liked, loved, hated or who did not

bother him. Many of them felt the obligation to say or write something about the relationship they had with Buk, many others scented the opportunity to line their pockets with him, either way, there are many books concerning Hank, his drinking, writing, and friends. His own writings would be still the most valuable sources of his wandering the States and writing, considers the author of the present thesis.

Christy in a book called *Buk Book: Och Charles Bukowski* commented Hank's left of LA.<sup>11</sup> Hank just had a cardboard case, no illusions and disillusionments too, he was just going somewhere. There was no aim for him, he was not reckoning to earn a lot of money, he was not wandering just for the sake of the feeling free, it was just a matter of doing something. (Christy 19-20)

Briefly and clearly expressed, that Bukowski was a mixture of calmness and angeriness. To a fond reader of him, it is somehow clear, that this combination forced him during his whole life. Also to the author of this thesis, it is clear, nonetheless more things are evident and one of them is that the novel *Factotum* concerns Bukowski's years full of different cities and low paid jobs. The first is New Orleans:

*"I ARRIVED IN New Orleans in the rain at 5 o'clock in the morning. I sat around in the bus station for a while but the people depressed me so I took my suitcase and went out in the rain and began walking. I didn't know where the rooming houses were, where the poor section was.*

*I had a cardboard suitcase that was falling apart. It had once been black but the black coating had peeled off and yellow cardboard was exposed. I had tried to solve that by putting black shoe polish over the exposed cardboard. As I walked along in the rain the shoe polish on the suitcase ran and unwittingly I rubbed black streaks on both legs of my pants as I switched the suitcase from hand to hand.*

*Well, it was a new town. Maybe I'd get lucky.*

*The rain stopped and the sun came out."* (Factotum 1)

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<sup>11</sup> Jim Christy is described as: "a literary vagabond with few peers" by an Anvil Press on their websites [www.anvilpress.com](http://www.anvilpress.com)

Henry Chinaski quickly found a room across the bar, cheap café with big breakfasts and even a job for a magazine publisher; it may look like too ideal for an outcast like him. So a few days later he quit his job and find another one in the composing room of some newspapers. Five days left and he was fired out again, because of hanging around out and not being at the workplace. (Factotum 1-8) However, surprisingly Sounes have found out that he was working in a warehouse until he had enough to stay at his place, live on candy bars and write. Bukowski described the bar he was attending there in his poem “drink” published posthumously in a book of poems *Betting on the Muse*.<sup>12</sup> (Sounes 20-21)

He then lived in the city Atlanta, which appeared to be a nearly killing place for him. In order to write as much as he can and trying his luck with sending stories, he decided not to eat at all. On the brink of starvation, he asked his father for money in the letter, yet Henry senior refused and Hank was ready to kill himself, but fortunately, he was distracted by the margins of some newspaper and he rather wrote. (Sounes 21) It was a kind of worldwide luck because in just a blink of an eye we would lose one of the best writers ever and even just before he got to be known.

Then he was working with a group of railroad workers, by which he gets back to Los Angeles and visited his parents at home. There Buk uses his memory of a drunken fight with parents after a whole night drinking and getting home sick. (Factotum 15-16) But to move on a bit quicker we had to “follow” Hank through El Paso, San Francisco, St Louise, New York, and get to Philadelphia. It was just haphazard flipping from one place to another, from one lost job to another. However, his first short story *Aftermath of a Lengthy Rejection Slip* was published during his stay in St Louise by Whit Burnett, who probably took it because it was a daring depiction of an editor refusing Hank’s short story. Another quite important event during this time of wandering the states was also Buk’s registration for the draft for the Second World War, which only brought him an excuse because of his poor psychiatric test. (Sounes 21-22)

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<sup>12</sup> First published in 1996

After some time Hank came to Philadelphia, he was arrested and suspected as a draft-dodger and imprisoned, however, he did not pass another psychiatric test and was released, yet with the first experience with the prison, which he used many times afterward.

Later Bukowski "*claimed that for the next ten years of his life he abandoned writing to become a drunk, a barfly, but the truth is he continued to work on short stories and submitted successfully to magazines*" (Sounes 25) It was also the time when he discovered writing poetry and straightly from the beginning he was accepted by magazines. One of his short stories brought into existence a protagonist named Chelaski, very similar name as Chinaski, his hero and alter ego of the later writings. Moreover, he returned home for some time in July 1947 and according to photographs he was even happily living with parents and looked "handsome". (Sounes 24-27) So, the readers may ask what the truth was, and although it would be very daring of Buk just to stop writing out of the blue and dedicate himself being a drunkard and lazing around, the truth was revealed thanks to indisputable evidence in form of photographs.

Back in Los Angeles his success in publishing continued, yet his father nastily took advantage of him and his writing by telling his coworkers that it is his work, gaining a promotion by it. However, that fact that his father strutted in borrowed plumes, in fact, helped him because in a bar, sweeping away the grief, he had a chance to meet his partner and muse Jane Cooney Baker, who became character women protagonists alongside his alter-ego Henry Chinaski. She got into his novels as Betty in *Post Office*, as Laura in *Factotum*, and mostly he named her Wanda. That was also the name of the female protagonist of the movie *Barfly*, on which screenplay he later co-worked. (Sounes 27-28) Barry Miles also claimed in the Introduction to the novel *Women* that the period concerning the relationship between Jane and Charles and their joint living in cheap accommodations was the main source for *Barfly* movie. (Women vi)

Henry Chinaski described the night when he met Laura (Jane) in the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter of *Factotum*:

*“I walked along until I came to an inviting bar and went in. It was crowded. There was only one seat left at the bar. I sat in it. I ordered a scotch and water. To my right sat a rather dark blonde, gone a bit to fat, neck and cheeks now flabby, obviously a drunk; but there was a certain lingering beauty to her features, and her body still looked firm and young and well-shaped. In fact, her legs were long and lovely. When the lady finished her drink I asked her if she wanted another. She said yes. I bought her one.” (47)*

Their relationship was a stormy one full of ups and downs, fights, drinking and as well Hank's jealousy. However, more or less it was a try to set a normal home like average people, although she was 11 years older than him. With Jane also came regular sex, something totally new for Hank, who, according to Christy, knew just one night stands or prostitutes. He was a rookie concerning the sexual issues because he lost virginity approximately three years before meeting Jane, who could be his second sexual experience. There are different opinions who was the lady, with whom he had lost his virginity, Christy (22) is talking about a fat woman Hank met in a bar in Philadelphia, yet Sounes (29) mentions her as being prostitute in the same city. Either way, it is obvious he could not be a sex maniac in practice.

### **3.1.7. Jane switched by Barbara and later vice versa**

In the year of 1950, he started another important period in his life; the post office accepted him as a Christmas part-time worker. After a nearly year and a half they changed it to a full-time job and surprisingly he stayed there for three years and most of the 50s he dedicated to working for them, getting himself an unrepeatably basis for his first novel *Post Office*, published two decades later.

One day he was so sick he had to quit earlier, his health was getting poorer and poorer with the years of drinking eating cheap unhealthy food and of course vomiting during hangovers, all this together caused him a bleeding ulcer and put him into a charity hospital. (Christy 23) He was again on the brink of death, he was nearly about to kicked the bucket and according to Sounes, the only thing saving his life was his father's blood credit at the same hospital because you had to have your own blood donated to any hospital to

have a blood credit for future. (33) He was strongly recommended not to drink anymore, yet he preferred to get a beer as soon as he was released from the hospital. (Christy 24)

Then he left the job in the post office and tried his luck on horses, which system of betting was familiar to Jane. Explaining to him the system was one of the last things she had done for him, not mentioning the lifelong opinion of women she left in him because of her loose behavior he expected every other woman to be the same kind of “prostitute” as Jane, as his later wife Linda King remembered in *Soues*. (32)

The break up with Jane is colorfully, yet most probably fictionally, described in *Post Office*: “It was a good life. Then, one night, Betty, my love, let me have it, over the first drink:

*‘Hank, I can’t stand it!’*

*You can’t stand what, baby?’*

*‘The situation.’*

*‘What situation, babe?’*

*‘Me working and you laying around. All the neighbors think I am supporting you.’...*

*...‘God damn the neighbors!’...*

*...‘No, Hank, it’s over. I can’t stand it!’*

*I got up and walked over to her.*

*‘Now, come on, baby, you’re just a little upset tonight.’*

*I tried to grab her. She pushed me away.*

*‘All right, god damn it!’ I said.*

*I walked back to my chair, finished my drink, had another.*

*‘It’s over,’ she said, ‘I’m not sleeping with you another night.’*

*‘All right. Keep your pussy. It’s not that great.’*

*‘Do you want to keep the house or do you want to move out?’ she asked.*

*‘You keep the house.’*

*‘How about the dog.’*

*‘You keep the dog,’ I said.*

*‘He’s going to miss you.’*

*‘I’m glad somebody is going to miss me.’*

*I got up, walked to the car and I rented the first place I saw with a sign. I moved in that night.” (Post Office 33-34)*

As long as he broke up with Jane and tried to send his works to as many places as he was able to, he finally got in touch with and Editor Barbara Frye. Progressively they developed a taste to each other and after all, they made up a decision to meet and eventually to get married. Although Hank described Barbara, by words of Chinaski, that: “*She was a looker, and everytime I got back to my seat there would be some jerkoff sliding closer and closer to her.*” (Post Office 34)<sup>13</sup>, he never mentioned there, that she had a deformed neck being missing two vertebrae since her birth. That was the reason why she looked strange, even though having a really nice face, long blond hair, and slim figure, yet there was no neck. (Sounes 37)

They married in Las Vegas, and although her family did not approve it, Buk wrote in *Post Office* that they visited them and lived together for a while in Texas, which was not the whole truth. They lived in a little house in the suburb and both had to have a job because she needed to show the wealthy relatives she is able to live on her own without their millions of dollars. They were rich ranchers and even one cousin invented plane and another successfully trained pilots. There in LA Hank and Barbara were co-editing *Harlequin* where he published his poetry. Firstly he started to work at Graphic Arts Centre and then he came back to post office. Barbara was dreaming about family, yet Hank was strictly against and started to be afraid of Barbara forcing him into it, what developed into many fictionalized stories concerning her as a nymphomaniac. After a miscarriage and both of them thinking it was Hank's fault, Barbara found a lover, filed for divorce and her prospective millions were gone. Buk later commented in his poem ‘*The Day I Kicked Away a Bankroll*’. (Sounes 38-41)

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<sup>13</sup> Barbara was named Joyce in the *Post Office* novel

*The Day I Kicked Away a Bankroll*

*and, I said, you can take your rich  
aunts and uncles  
and grandfathers and fathers  
and all their lousy oil  
and their seven lakes  
and their wild turkey  
and buffalo  
and the whole state of Texas,  
meaning, your crow-blasts  
and your Saturday night boardwalks,  
and your 2-bit library  
and your crooked councilmen  
and your pansy artists---  
you can take all these  
and your weekly newspaper  
and your famous tornadoes,  
and your filthy floods  
and all your yowling cats  
and your subscription to Time,*

*and shove them, baby,  
shove them.  
I can handle a pick and ax again (I  
think)  
and I can pick up  
25 bucks for a 4-rounder (maybe);  
sure, I'm 38  
but a little dye can pinch the gray  
out of my hair;  
and I can still write a poem  
(sometimes),  
don't forget that, and even if  
they don't pay off,  
it's better than waiting for death and  
oil,  
and shooting wild turkey,  
and waiting for the world  
to begin.*

(The Rooming House Madrigals 74)

Being divorced in 1958 and free he aimed at writing. Meanwhile, the situation with his parents became serious and although he was seeing rarely, he visited his mother Kate in the Rosemead Rest Home, placed there because of her cancer. His father Henry decided not to inform him about mother's condition so he missed her death one day before the 1956 Christmas Eve. His father followed a little less than two years after mother, yet he succeeded to get engaged to another woman, she was the one who found him death apparently after a heart attack. Sounes wrote in his biography, that: "...*the death of the father was positively a cause for jubilation. '...he's dead dead dead, thank God,' he wrote.*" (Sounes 43-44) The only thing Hank had to solve after parents' deaths was his inheritance of their house, thanks to it and many other things he inherited a big fortune of \$15,000 in 1959 at last. Even though he claimed he spent them on drinks and bets, his friends could remember Hank having thousands of savings and Sounes found out that from this time he started to care about his money. (45) So, from then it seems that Buk

somehow reached the maturity, but it may be true just about the money saving or more precisely about his will not to stay impecunious.

Here is his poem about the above described father's death:

*"father, who art in heaven –  
my father was a practical man.  
he had an idea.  
you see, my son, he said,  
I can pay off this house in my lifetime,  
then it's mine.  
when I die I pass it on to you.  
now in your lifetime you can acquire a  
house  
and then you'll have two houses  
and you'll pass those two houses on to  
your  
son, and in his lifetime he acquire a house,  
and when he dies, his son –  
I get it, I said.  
my father died while trying to drink a  
glass of water. I buried him.  
solid mahogany casket. after the funeral  
I went to the racetrack, met a high yellow.  
after the races we went to her apartment  
for dinner and goodies.*

*I sold his house after about a month.  
I sold his car and his furniture  
and gave away all his paintings except one  
and all his fruit jars  
(filled with fruit boiled in the heat of  
summer)  
and put his dog in the pound.  
I dated his girlfriend twice  
but getting nowhere  
I gave it up.  
I gambled and drank away the money.  
Now I live in a cheap front court in  
Hollywood  
and take out the garbage to  
hold down the rent.  
my father was a practical man.  
he choked on that glass of water  
and saved on hospital  
bills.*

(Burning in Water Drowning in Flame 191)

Concerning publication of his writings he was still stuck with the little magazines, yet in 1960 released his first chapbook *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail* made by a minor editor Griffith. Another press was also significant for his beginnings; this one was the Jon and Louise 'Gypsy Lou' Webb's. Their famous journal *The Outsider* published famous beats together with Bukowski's poems. Irrespective of the little successes Bukowski was drinking heavily, developed hemorrhages and returned to suicidal attempts. He was seeing Jane again from time to time, regrettably, she had become a serious alcoholic and one day she was driven to a hospital, where they found that her body was filled with cancer and before long she died on 22 January 1962. He mourned

her very long time and also wrote grief poems, one of which was named *for Jane, with all the love I had, which was not enough*-. (Sounes 45- 51)

### **3.1.8. The only child of him**

After more than a year of mourning Jane, working at the post office, writing and other usual stuff he contacted a fan of his writings and invite her to come as soon as possible. The woman was FrancEye, his future partner, and mother of his only daughter Marina. After their first night together they started to see each other commonly and FrancEyE even took her own flat in LA. She was not a drinker of Jane's type and Bukowski was not so much in love as he used to be with Jane. However, as it is mentioned in Sounes: "*FrancEye explains this by saying Bukowski had difficulty expressing love. 'He wrote about the negative emotions more,' she says. 'He used to be really embarrassed by positive feeling.' This was not limited to feelings for her, but extended to all human relationships.*" (Sounes 61)

Since they were not using any contraception method, mainly because Bukowski could not stand condoms and also for the reason FrancEyE considers herself being too old in her early forties to have a baby, they were soon expecting their daughter. She thought that he would get angry, instead of which he asked her to marry him. However, that never happened, yet they decided to live together as a family. (Sounes 65)

Bukowski himself wrote not much about FrancEyE, yet he created a character of Fay, a partner of Henry Chinaski in the *Post Office* novel. Chinaski called his partner quite often as the gray-haired woman, old gal, writer, the mother, and others. Marina Louise Bukowski, their daughter was born on 7 September 1964 and as FrancEyE said Sounes, Hank was a really good father taking care of her since the very beginning. (Sounes 69)

Thanks to the Webs Hank got in touch with a young poet and publisher Douglas Blazek, who helped him with the publication of his short stories. Blazek started to print them on his magazine *Ole* and soon after he arranged to publish a whole book of Bukowski's short stories *Confession of a Man Insane Enough to Live with Beasts* where the name of Henry Chinaski was

heard probably for the first time. Blazek was interviewed by Sounes on 7 June 1997 and he wrote it down: “‘*Confessions* became a dry run for his first novel, *Post Office*, and from on I think he duplicated himself,’ says Blazek. ‘*Ham on Rye*, all of that, was regurgitated. All his previous stuff was just a dry run for the more substantial works that John Martin published at Black Sparrow Press.” Sounes also compares these passages from *Confession of a Man Insane Enough to Live with Beasts* and later novel *Factotum* concerning Jane Cooney Baker and uses it as a proof how much Buk manipulated Jane’s story. (Sounes 74-75)

The 1965<sup>th</sup> year was the year of Hank and FrancEye’s break up and her moving out of their house. He was a reliable father, whenever the girl and her mother needed something he fulfills their desires. Moreover, Marina’s words said to Sounes in their interview are so beautiful they need to be reproduced here: “*I didn’t have any unhappy memories of that...How my father raised me and how my mother raised me was pretty unconventional, just the fact that they weren’t together was one piece of the puzzle, but I always felt a really strong connection to him. He let me know both by his actions and his words that he loved me more than anything, so I always took that for granted as a child. It is something that is so basic and so important and it just made everything in the world OK.*” (76)

More or less Buk and FrancEye were getting on well with each other, yet he later wrote a provocative poem *I can’t stay in the same room with that woman for five minutes* concerning how much they thought differently, it could be said oppositely. The poem was published as a part of a book of poetry *Burning in Water Drowning in Flame* in 1988.

### **3.1.9. Roaring life of a writing star and then the rest of Bukowski’s life with Linda Lee**

The mid 1960s brought about success in publishing because after *Confession of a Man Insane Enough to Live with Beasts* followed later very well-known book of short stories *All the Assholes in the World Mine* (1966). Most of the

texts published in them were not matured students' work, yet ones like that might be as clumsy as they were, because young authors may be clumsy. Although Bukowski was forty-five, he was young as an author. (Christy 32)

Christy also mentions that Harold Norse, a beat poet, wrote that there were two kinds of Bukowski, who were separated by the fifth o'clock. Before the time he was shy lamb, yet after that time he was full of tartness, mockery and desire destroy the others. He was never tired of boasting and attracting attention to himself. (38)

John Martin started to build the Black Sparrow Press, in which most of the Bukowski's works were published, upon publishing minor poets and writers. Bukowski felt like being on the stairway to literary Heaven because of the translations of his works started to be published in Germany and because of Martin's Press giving him some "pocket money". (Christy 33-39)

Thanks to John Bryan's newspaper *Open City* Buk became read more common by more people as a result of his weekly column *Notes of a Dirty Old Man*<sup>14</sup>. Bukowski himself wrote a foreword for the book version of the same name and admits in it that Bryan was a "strange idealist and romantic". He also mentions that if Bryan was not fired out Herald-Examiner, because of his strong objection against rubbing baby Christ's balls and penis, he would not be able to offer Hank his regular column.

*"Then one day after the races, I sat down and wrote the heading, NOTES OF A DIRTY OLD MAN, opened a beer, and the writing got done by itself. There was not the tenseness or the careful carving with a bit of a dull blade... Nor was there any need to simply tap out a flat and careless journalism... There seemed to be no pressures. Just sit by the window, lift the beer and let it come."* (Notes of a Dirty Old Man 6)

Due to it, he got in touch with Neal Cassady, who belonged among the few beat poets Buk hold in esteem. They met and had a curious time together just a few weeks before Cassady died in Mexico. (Sounes 91-92) This part of the

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<sup>14</sup> Later reprinted as collection of stories by City Lights Books under the same name

biography makes things clear for the author of the thesis; there was even more foolish drunkard than Bukowski himself.

The original *Notes of a Dirty Old Man* consisted of just 40 of his “hundreds of works he submitted under the “Dirty Old Man” rubric”. Then came out collections of the other stories like: *Erections, Ejaculations and Other Tales of Ordinary Madness* (1972), *South of No North* (1974), and *Hot Water Music* (1983), as well the posthumous volumes *Portions from a Wine-Stained Notebook* (2008) and *Absence of the Hero* (2010), followed by *More Notes of a Dirty Old Man in 2011*. (More Notes of a Dirty Old Man 227-228)

Going back to John Martin’s faith in Buk, he proved it by offering him monthly paid money for writing. That was something totally new to Buk and it gave him the opportunity to save his own face by leaving the post office job just before the firing. This way Hank dedicated himself to the career of writer and with the beginning of 1970 started to write his first novel inspired by the long years of the post office, which was ready in approximately three weeks. Meanwhile a month earlier he let his friend Peter Edler persuade him on the public reading, his very first one. (Sounes 101-103) No matter that he could be still considered as a rookie, he was an unbelievably creative author. Writing a novel needs a talent; however, writing a novel in three weeks needs not just talent and luck, but also courage, impudence, and self-esteem.

In 1970 was also coming another femme fatal of Bukowski’s life, the sculptures Linda King. She was not struck by him from the beginning because she said Sounes, that when she met him for the first time, he was pretty ugly, however, she made a crush on him during modeling a sculpture of his head, although it took some time they started to sleep with each other. It was the most important thing of meeting her, that she dug him out of his deep depression. The following year 1971 was going to be more successful, after a year of preparation the novel *Post Office* was released. His now partner Linda took care of his health cutting him of sleeping drug Valium and alcohol together with persuading him to diet and exercise, in consequence of which he slimed. (Sounes 111-114)

It was so nice of her, trying to improve his health and living conditions, according to views of the author of the thesis, however, as it reveals further on, they were like chalk and cheese, or more precisely like water and oil trying to be mixed as inseparable as propane-butane. Unlikely the need they felt in being with each other, their mutual presence was an explosive one, full of ups and downs, jealousy, fighting and constant break-ups and reunions.

Even though he was known for the deep love to Linda there was also a lump of hatred of all women, which intertwined with his relationship with Linda and which is perfectly depicted by a letter to his friend Steve Richmond<sup>15</sup>:

*“...don’t wait for the good woman. she doesn’t exist. there are women who can make you feel more with their bodies and their souls but these are the exact women who will turn the knife into you right in front of the crowd. of course, I expect this, but the knife still cuts. the female loves to play man against man. and if she is in a position to do it there is not one who will not resist. the male, for all his bravado and exploration, is the loyal one, the one who generally feels love. the female is skilled at betrayal. and torture and damnation. never envy a man his lady. behind it all lays a living hell.”* (cited in Sounes 119)

After some time their relationship started to be unbearably full of Bukowski’s accusations Linda of having affairs with nearly each man around her, yet on the other hand, he was flirting with all the women around him. It is a kind of unfair behavior, you might think, but it seems she was the same as well. After a year a bit more Linda finally left him and went to her family in Utah. (Sounes 114-121)

Buk did not loaf around and replaced Linda by his column colleague from *Open City* and *LA Free Press* Liza Williams soon after Linda’s leave. They had a great time together, yet Buk’s heart was still stuck to Linda and they get back again and they started to live together in Silver Lake. Furthermore, he stopped drinking for some time and they had there his daughter Marina and her children Gaetano and Clarissa. Linda said Sounes that: “He was nice

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<sup>15</sup> Richmond wrote a book of memories of him after Bukowski’s death.

when he was sober. I think his true self was when he was sober. But when he was drunk it was like a demon took him over - Bukowski the Bad.” (Sounes 122-130) This refers us back to thoughts if he had a split personality, which could be rooted in his necessity to use Henry Chinaski as an alter ego. The author of the thesis is wondering he was kind of similar to Chinaski in whatever situation, yet it is more likely to see Chinaski as the worse of them two, because of not much sober stories concerning him.

Linda gave Buk hint what to write next talking about home much he did not understand women. So he decided to collect material and write a new novel, *Women*. Barry Miles, the author of Bukowski’s autobiography, wrote in his introduction to *Women* that: *“Bukowski was in his fifties when he wrote it and it reveals a thirties mentality towards women...a pre-hippie, certainly pre-PC view of women.”* (Women viii) He also points out there the resemblances of the novel with *The Decameron*, being segmented into 104 parts, exactly one more than the mentioned *The Decameron*. (Women ix)

Miles also commented there Hank’s need to have complicated relationships like this: *“In fact, he liked the rocky road: he needed the screaming rows, the broken glass, his books and clothes strewn all over the yard. His strict emotionless childhood had turned him into what he called ‘the frozen man’. It took a lot to get through to him. All the bar fights and drinking were an attempt to actually feel something. His relations with women had to be tempestuous in order to be real. But when he fell in love, he fell deeply.”* (Women viii)

Buk also searched for material to *Women* in Utah with Linda, who was a basis for the protagonist of Lydia on the novel. A very funny event happened to him there, which he used also as the 30<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel, dealing with him lost in the woods. *“I walked up to the mountain spring... I kept walking... Suddenly it hit me: I was LOST... What a way for a writer to die! I could see it in the newspaper:*

**HENRY CHINASKI, MINOR**

**POET, FOUND DEATH IN**

**UTAH WOODS”** (Women 84-85)

Lydia/Linda finally found him and made fun of him being a townie and got lost in the countryside.

Bukowski was slow and sure in getting famous, and thereby he met a lot of new people. He was giving public readings during the 1970s and on, the first took place already in 1969, as well and being the contemporary of the Beats, he was quite often mistaken as one of them. Although the Beats knew him and kind of appreciated him, he hated the mere sight of joining their “club”.

Yet, who were the Beats? According to a Foreword made by Allen Ginsberg in Waldman’s *The Beat Book* the very name of the whole literary phenomenon of the Beats is based on Kerouac’s statement uttered during a chat between him and John Clellon Holmes “*Ah, this is nothing but a beat generation,*” although he would rather to unnamed it then give it a definition. Later on, Holmes used the appellation as a heading of his article. (xiii)

The utterance: “I’m beat,” could mean different things starting from being without money or place, going through being tired because of the whole night party, to being open to new things and visions. Either way, Beat generation as a literary movement is most of the time referred as: “*a group of friends who had worked together on poetry, prose, and cultural conscience from the mid-forties until ...the late fifties.*” (The Beat Book xiii-xiv)

Barry Miles, the author of Bukowski’s autobiography, who also wrote an Introduction to *Women*, ponders upon the fact that Buk lived contemporaneously with the Beat Generation. Although being of the different background Buk is sometimes classified together with them thanks to “*his tough, uncompromising attitudes: no subject matter is taboo, no matter how embarrassing, indelicate, or personal.*” (Women vii)

Anyway, as Hank was getting famous he met a lot of different people, with whom they considered being friends of each other, and who later on used their relationship as a basis for poetry, stories, anecdotes or even book of memories, just like Gerald Locklin, for example. According to his later book of memories *Bukowski: A Sure Bet* he met the writer thanks to a public reading taking place at the university where he was teaching and although not

knowing Buk he was asked to contact him what resulted in their longtime friendship, which they interwove talks about women, literature, and life at all. (Bukowski: Zaručený tip 5-22)

Although Hank was naturally kind of solitary, friends too became another important part of his life and career, mostly because he was searching for a good material from any source anytime. Besides this he had a lot of crazy material providing by himself and Linda King being both jealous and mad, and *Women* are full of stories about their quarrels and fights, specifically one needs to be pointed out, it was the one after Linda's miscarriage (she even did not know if the baby was Hank's) and it was the last fight, after with they finally broke up just a nick of time before they could kill each other. (Sounes 154-156)

Hank was not mourning Linda's leaving at all and the reason had red hair and 38 D chest. He met Pamela Miller aka "Cupcakes" already some time before the final broke up with Linda King and he wildly fell in love with that young woman dedicating her later a whole book *Scarlet*. However he was madly in love with her, he was still having other women including a bunch of fans too. Among the usual screaming fans wanting to sleep off with Buk, there was an interesting woman, Linda Lee Beighle, the owner of a health food restaurant. Ere long they were seeing each other, yet still without making love, maybe because he was still involved in other acquaintance with Cupcakes and he also saw Linda King again, the really last time. After some hard times, Hank finally understood and stopped seeing other women in order to make something more out of his the then friend Linda Lee. (Sounes 152-172)

Bukowski once came to the place of his friend Steve Richmond with Linda Lee in 1983, and he told Buk that it is the right woman for him, and not surprisingly Buk married her two years later.<sup>16</sup> Richmond was really happy for him finding such a good woman and he was thinking about Buk's of poetry *Burning in Water Drowning in Flame*. He knew Linda has been Scorpio, the water

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<sup>16</sup> for the wedding announcement card of Linda Lee Beighle and Charles Bukowski see further appendix

element and Hank was Lion, the fire element, it seems like he was burning in her water and she was drowning in his flame. (Richmond 106)

Hank and Linda flew to Germany together in order to visit the country of his birth, he underwent a public reading and meet Bukowski's only translator to German Carl Weissner, the man who brought his writings fame on the European continent. Also Bukowski's maternal uncle Heinrich Fett was listed among the scheduled holiday because they were just irregularly writing each other with Hank and never had a chance to talk eye to eye. (Sounes173-180) Bukowski afterward wrote a book of stories including the German holiday named *Shakespeare Never Did This*.<sup>17</sup>

Back in the States Buk and Linda Lee searched for their new home finally settling in very nice house with a garden in San Pedro, where Hank had a writing room just for himself, which looked like a small cheap renting rooms he used to live in the past, as Mickey Rourke referred to it in Sounes when he visited Bukowski for the first time before filming *Barfly*. (213) However, Bukowski was rather reluctant to Barbet Schroeder's request, the fact, that he was contacted by this film director was to be one of the most important events in his life, yet after all, he persuaded Buk to appear in a French discussion program. With his specific drunkard style, he ruined and scandalized his appearance there, even though some people appreciated it. (Sounes 181-183)

The year of 1980 was another milestone of Buk's writing career, mainly for the sake of the signed contract dealing with writing a screenplay to Barbet Schroeder's film about Buk's life. As Sounes pointed out in his biography the screenplay of *Barfly*: "*was an amalgam of the years Bukowski lived in Philadelphia, hanging out at the bar... and also when he lived with Jane in Los Angeles,*" and which was already finished a year before the signing of the contract. Yet discussions went on and on without any particular solution, Schroeder started to film documentary of the evenings with Bukowski talking about his life. After series of rigmroles, Sean Penn, that time just Bukowski's

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<sup>17</sup> *Shakespeare Never Did This* (Black Sparrow Press, 1995) was a travelogue describing Bukowski's two trips to Europe in 1978, illustrated with black and white photographs by Michael Monfort, who was there along with Bukowski and Linda Lee. (Sounes 292)

admirer, offered to fulfill the part of Henry Chinaski, but wanted another director; at the end, fortunately, Mickey Rourke took the part. Initially, he had problems with the theme of alcoholism, because of the same problems in his family through the generations. Rourke also suggested Faye Dunaway as his part partner, Schroeder scraped together money and the filming may start. (Sounes 192-213)

Meanwhile, of the struggles with getting money for filming *Barfly*, Marco Ferreri from Italy set to a film *Tales of Ordinary Madness*, which had its first night in 1981. (Sounes 195-196) Also, one of the Bukowski's most popular novels *Ham on Rye* was released in 1982, dealing with his above-mentioned childhood and growing up, for the depiction of which the novel is widely used by the author of the present thesis there in the relevant chapters.

Buk tried to be near the filming cast during the whole procedure of making the film and on the top of it, he appeared in a small part of a barfly of the bar where Wanda and Chinaski meet. After all, *Barfly* was released in 1987 and it, even more, boosted Buk's writing career and fame and he subsequently started writing his next to last novel inspired by the filmmaking of *Barfly* and named *Hollywood*, which was finished in three-quarters a year and published in 1989, despite his very poor health. (Sounes 213-218)

It is not surprising that Hank had health problems, the nearly whole-life drinking, smoking and poor food had to have consequences, nobody is immortal. Sounes commented on Buk's poor health in his biography too and points out there that he was initially wrongly diagnosed, even the vet of his cat was able to advise him and Buk was diagnosed tuberculosis. He had to initially quit the drinking and then he drank less than before the illness, he was even taught that he could write and live without the alcohol. (Sounes 219)

Later on, he also suffered from leukemia, yet irrespective of that he stayed prolific nearly until his last days. During the time of recovering from the first attack of cancer he wrote his last novel *Pulp*, which is the only one not based on his life, but a kind of detective story. Towards the end of his life he decided to definitely quit drinking and smoking as well, and as long as he was willing to

try nearly anything to help him recover and started practicing meditation and alternative treatments of Deepak Chopra. But cancer returned again in 1993 and suddenly he knew the death was coming. Both his wife Linda Lee and daughter Marina talked with Sounes about Buk's state of health during the last days of his life: *"That was terrible to see - the mind was there, but he couldn't do anything because the body gave up, [t]he body shut down."* Said Linda to Sounes and Marina added: *"They kept him in there. They kept him alive, injecting this stuff with the catheters sticking in all over the place. Dreadful! Horrible! And he was the bravest soldier."* And finally his last battle came and although he was fighting tooth and nail the Death was stronger rival and seventy-three years old Charles Bukowski died *"at 11.55 a.m. on Wednesday 9 March 1994"* (Sounes 234-241)

Family and friends were miserable because of the left of their loved one, however, a part of him remained with them and still remains with us all in his writings and in his still living and vividly depicted alter ego of Henry Chinaski.

### 3.2. The summary of Bukowski's novels, poetry and short stories

Charles Bukowski was an unbelievably prolific writer, despite his real writing career started quite late in his life. Among his most known books should be surely listed his six novels: *Post Office* (1971), *Factotum* (1975), *Women* (1978), *Ham on Rye* (1982), *Hollywood* (1989), *Pulp* (1994)

*Ham on Rye* covers his life since his first memory to the age 21 (1941) and it was widely used as a source in above-mentioned chapters about his childhood and growing up.

*Factotum* covers his wandering of the country during the 40s. As Neeli Cherkovski wrote in his Introduction to this book in 2009, "Factotum is a tone poem to a certain era in Bukowski's life." Following the main character Henry Chinaski, Bukowski's alter ego, since his arrival to New Orleans; through any opportunity of a job, no matter what, the reader comes to the fact that Chinaski is himself a "factotum". On the top of all the things, he has a strong survival sense and as Cherkovski wrote: "*It is what keeps him going against the odds.*" (Factotum pg. V)

*Post Office* covers the time of his job for the post office during the 50s and 60s. Barry Miles also points out on the fact that *Post Office* was written unbelievably quickly in 21 days because of the Buk's fear of insecurity after leaving the job there at the post office. (Introduction to *Women* vii)

The novel *Women* covers the 70s when Charles was fifty, wealthy and roaring life full of parties, drinking and of course women. Barry Miles wrote about the novel: "*He treats the traditional American male view of women and sex with considerable irony...*" (Introduction to *Women* ix) Sounes also notes that Buk was not treating kindly neither women nor men there creating the men "*almost all weak, dishonest and sexually insecure.*" Furthermore according to Gay Brewer paraphrased in Sounes: "*the Henry Chinaski of Women is far from being a virile he-man figure; he is frequently impotent with drink, made to look foolish, spurned and mocked and cuckolded by young women who are clearly his superiors.*" (Sounes 187)

The next to last novel of him *Hollywood* covers the 80s, specifically the filmmaking of *Barfly* movie.

And however his very last novel, and the only one not being autobiographic, *Pulp* was published in 1994, it was already posthumous publication.

Furthermore, Bukowski wrote piles of poems having been published in many different formats and sometimes even more than once. The author of the thesis used just two of them *Burning in Water Drowning in Flame* and *The Rooming House Madrigals*, but nearly all the publications of Black Sparrow press would belong among the Buk's best works, having been carefully selected by John Martin.

Concerning the short story collections again the publications of Black Sparrow Press could be a good choice. However, the earlier collections are still likely to be in favor of the readers, as long as they were the very first Bukowski's works found out by the author of the thesis during her grammar school. Particularly they are *All the Assholes in the World and Mine* of 1966, *Notes of a Dirty Old Man* of 1969 and *Erections, Ejaculations, Exhibitions and General Tales of Ordinary Madness* of 1972, which was later on divided into *Tales of Ordinary Madness* and *The Most Beautiful Woman in Town*. (based on Sounes 285-291)

## 4. Henry Chinaski

*“Henry Chinaski, an outcast, a loner and a drunk, drifts around America from one dead-end job to another, from one woman to another and from one bottle to the next. Uncompromising, gritty, hilarious and confessional in turn, his downward spiral is peppered with black humour.”* (New York Times Literary Supplement - printed on the back of Factotum 2009 edition)

The here presented picture of Bukowski's most important protagonist is assembled according to above-mentioned findings from different sources. All the mentioned Bukowski's writings created an unrepeatable mix together with the memories of his friends or facts from the biographies.

Henry Chinaski and Charles Bukowski are sometimes so stuck together they could not be separated because most of the Chinaski's stories are based on Bukowski's life experiences, yet the fiction of the books is changed. Chinaski went through the life with Bukowski together, they were laughing at the same things, horrified or amazed by the same things etc., yet to make it short, they were like Siamese twins, so similar, yet different personalities, so stuck together, yet on living in the real world and the other in the fictional literary world. Or even more Charles saw the world by Henry's eyes and he was talking by his voice going out of his mouth.

As long as Henry Chinaski is Charles Bukowski's alter ego, they coexisted in one body and one soul, yet they were not similar because Chinaski was made up by Bukowski's mind. Similarly, all the anecdotes he was the protagonist of were made up. Of course, they were nearly fully based or inspired by Bukowski's life, yet there was still some space left for the fantasy, simply reality “remelted” into literary fiction.

Henry Chinaski is a prototypical outsider, member of the working class and underclass, the one who is revolting against the unfairness of the world around by his own way of being an angry drunkard and moderate phlegmatic together. That seems to be a daring mixture, which has been probably attracting so many readers worldwide, and especially young ones as it was in

the case of the author of the thesis. According to her, Henry Chinaski is himself joining all the possible male personalities, possibly to be met by a young woman, from moderate gentlemen to drunken boors and foul mouths.

According to a prominent translator of Bukowski into Czech, Rober Hýsek, Buk's strong point was not just dirty minds and insults, yet in the development of the story and also in the great mixture of viciousness and gentleness. (Zápisky starého prasáka 205) The idea of Chinaski being mixed of two opposing attitudes is not rare in the present thesis because also the author of it considers Chinaski being an extraordinary mix of boor and gentleman.

The above-mentioned mixture seems to the author of the thesis as the mysterious thing attracting flocks of readers of different ages to read the immortal stories of an outsider, drunkard, and boor. It has been working for decades and probably it will work on and on because people like ordinary heroes. However, on the top of it, the mixture of ordinariness with rough language willing to shock the reader was something that attracted the author of the present thesis and persuaded her to read such a talented writer.

## **5. Agreements and disagreements of “Angry Young Men” and “Angry Old Man”**

It would be widely taken as granted that if two writers coincide in their active careers, it does not mean they will be writing in the same or similar way. Yet, there could be seen many hits of resemblances between Angry Young Men and Charles Bukowski, the findings and personal attitudes mentioned above have shed some light on those issues.

All of the issued writers were born in the decade of 1920s and started to contribute to literary canon approximately about the same time of 1950s. They all were speaking against the old established orders, yet each of them his own way.

John Osborne, Kingsley Amis, and John Braine are the British beams of balance and they are usually referred together as Angry Young Men, who were most of the time rebelling against the social stratification disadvantageous for the newly aroused middle-class. Even though the results of their literary assaults were different, creating above mentioned triangle of their protagonists, they were still somehow united in the way of the intellectual revolt, most of the time not solving the initial problems. The three different protagonists, Jimmy Porter, Jim Dixon and Joe Lampton creates three vertexes of the triangle of post-war “anger” and three different possible ways how to deal with the post-war. One way is to hole up the anger “at home”, another way to try the luck and promote to desired society, yet with different consequences of being satisfied and happy there or not having a clear conscience and suffer from rootlessness.

On the other hand, Bukowski was an American opposite of the Angry Young Men, not being intellectual by nature and being despised by the educational system at all. He himself rather choose to be a drunkard who goes from one low paid job to another and who knows the lowest social lawyers and likes to be a part of them. There can be seen an inevitable difference between the typical protagonist of the Angry Young Men and of Bukowski. Angry Young Man typically longs for a prosperous life in the higher society with a wealthy

wife and an excellently paid job. Whereas Bukowski himself chose the life of the underclass and outsider, yet longing for the money, he was not determined to work more than necessary. He and entirely his most know protagonist Henry Chinaski both were determined just to get as much as is needed to pay off their room rent and have enough left to drink.

The rootlessness of the protagonists is their very strong similarity, yet they were dealing with it in different ways. Angry Young Men longed to fill in the gaps, aroused with the loss of working-class roots and not having any connection to upper-classes, however having nearly the same higher level of education. They thought that promotion to upper classes would help them to get their long desired basis of roots. Though Bukowski had an initial basis in his parents, he rather chose to take care of himself and lost all the roots intentionally in order to start right from the bottom of the society and had the chance just to go further up, because of no down.

It is more than probable that the historical events had also influenced the differences in attitudes towards the social promotion in Angry Young Men's works and those of Bukowski. Great Britain was touching the economic bottom exactly after the WWII, yet the States were in its worst depression during the 1930s, before the WWII.

## **Conclusion of the Thesis**

To bring the present thesis to its conclusion, it is necessary to admit again, that literature simply could not exist without history, yet the author of the thesis could not imagine history without literature as well.

The literary phenomena of Angry Young Men and Charles Bukowski are miscellaneous, despite being contemporaneous. Surprisingly, although, having different approaches to revolt against society, the above-mentioned writers John Osborne, Kingsley Amis, John Braine and Charles Bukowski and afterward their protagonists, were unitary in revolting against the old establishment and its orders. Angry Young Men revolution was in choosing a new kind of protagonist, the member of the newly aroused middle-class who was struggling to get higher in order to gain his lost roots.

Bukowski rather chose the reverse way and went to the bottom of the society, most probably because there was a kind certainty in not falling down from the high. He and subsequently his protagonist Henry Chinaski revolts against the whole society by rough language and even more rough images of fiction in order to shock the audience of readers and in order to keep the freedom of writing what he would like to.

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All further used photographs are from: Sounes, Howard. *Charles Bukowski: Locked in the Arms of a Crazy Life*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books Ltd, 2010

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## Appendix



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*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



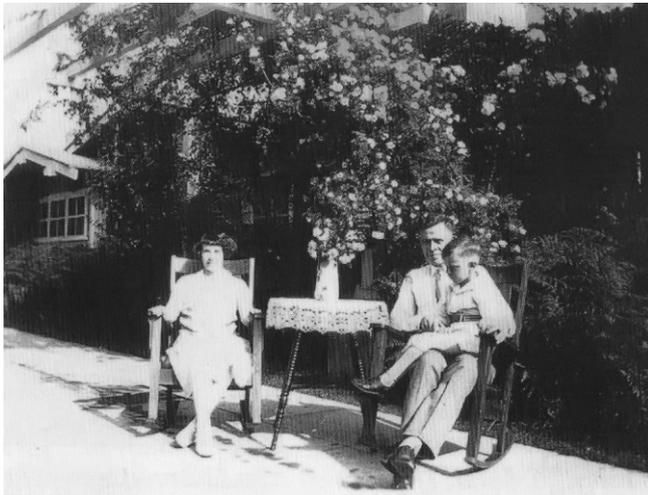
Photograph #2  
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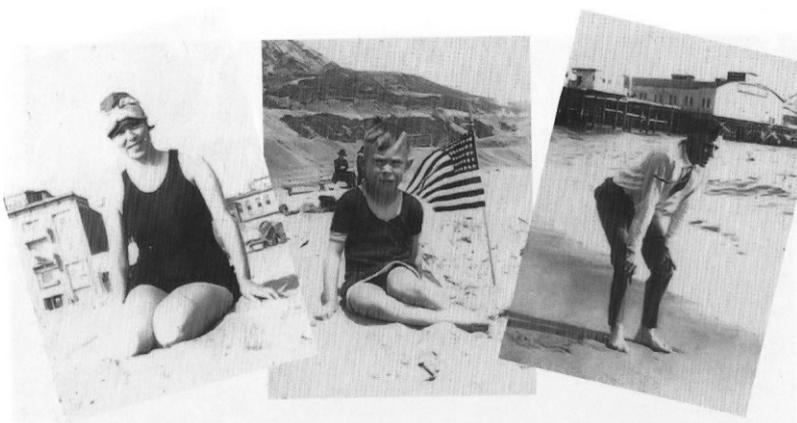
Photograph #3  
Bukowski's parents lived in  
apartment in this building in  
Andernach, Germany.  
*(picture taken by Howard Sounes)*



Photograph #4  
This is the postcard Bukowski's mother sent to her parents from the decks at Bremerhaven, Germany.  
*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



Photograph #5  
In 1924 Bukowski's mother sent this photograph of herself her husband and their son...  
*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



Photograph #6  
The infant Bukowski looks thoroughly glum on a day out with his parents at Santa Monica beach, California.  
*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



Photograph #7  
Henry and Kate's  
goldschatz, their golden  
boy, in his new home town  
of Los Angeles in the mid-  
1920s.

*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



Photograph #8  
The bungalow at 2122  
Longwood Avenue, Los  
Angeles, as it was when  
the Bukowski family lived  
there inn the 1930s.

*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



Photograph #9  
Bukowski and his father  
pose in the family model-  
T Ford...

*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



Photograph #10  
 Class photograph at  
 Mount Vernon Junior  
 High School. The boy  
 on the left part is 'Baldy'  
*(courtesy of Mount  
 Vernon Junior High  
 School)*



Photograph #11  
 Bukowski (centre) looks  
 older than 18 in his Los  
 Angeles High School  
 year book photograph for  
 the graduating class of  
 summer, 1939.  
*(courtesy of Los Angeles  
 High School)*



Photograph #12  
 Sgt Henry Bukowski Jnr in  
 his ROTC uniforma along  
 with school friends  
 Bloomer Cavanaugh and  
 Corbeil  
*(courtesy of Los Angeles  
 High School)*



Photograph #13  
 Jane Cooney Baker, the great love od  
 Bukowski's life who inspired so much of his best  
 work.  
*(courtesy of Roswell High School)*



Photograph #14  
Taken at his parent's  
Longwood Avenue home  
in July, 1947.  
*(courtesy of Karl Fett)*



Photograph #15  
A rare glimpse of Bukowski,  
relaxing with his 'magic dog'.  
*(courtesy of Special Collections,  
The University of Arizona  
Library)*



Photograph #16  
Barbara Frye's physical  
deformity is clear in this  
photograph taken at the  
Frye Ranch in Wheeler,  
Texas, in 1954.  
*(courtesy of Leah Belle  
Wilson)*

Photograph #17  
Bukowski and his first  
wife, Barbara Frye.  
*(courtesy of Leah Belle  
Wilson)*





Photograph #18

FrancEyE and Bukowski were man and wife in all but name she was the mother of his only child.

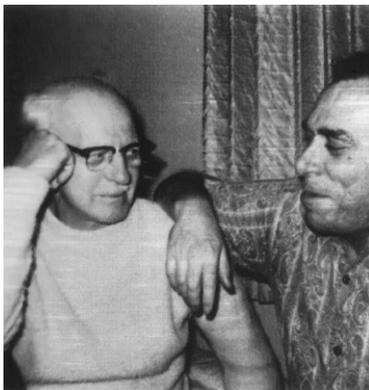
*(courtesy of FrancEye)*



Photograph #19

The Terminal Annex building in downtown LA where Bukowski worked for many years as a mail clerk.

*(picture taken by Howard Sounes)*



Photograph #20

Bukowski with his publisher and friends John Webb.

*(courtesy of 'Gypsy Lou' Webb)*



Photograph #21

Bukowski and 'Gypsy Lou' Webb at Bukowski's bungalow in Hollywood in August, 1964.

*(courtesy of 'Gypsy Lou' Webb)*



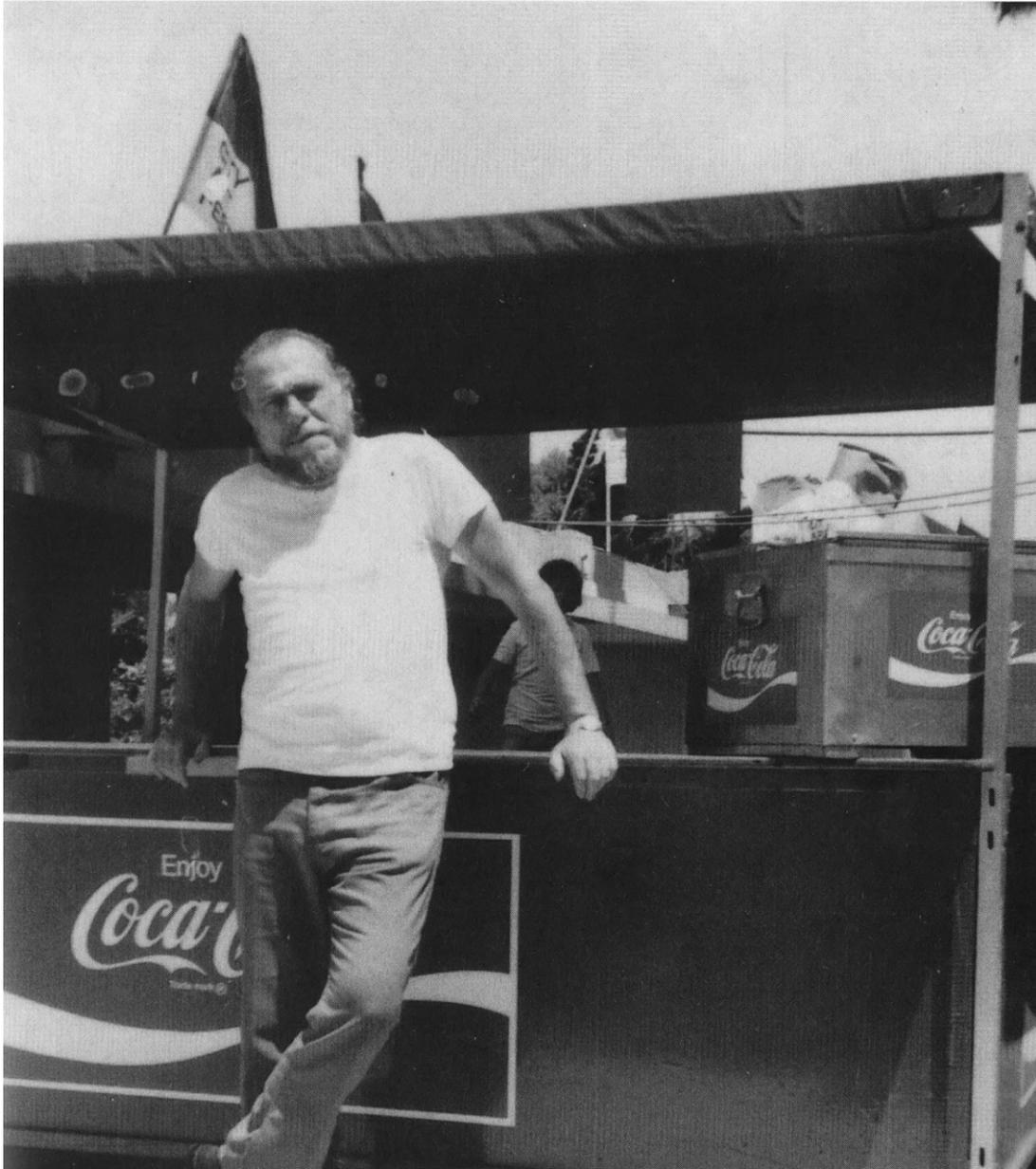
Photograph #22  
Bukowski poses proudly,  
in February, 1971, with  
the head sculpted by  
Linda King.  
*(courtesy of Linda King)*



Photograph #23  
Linda King, the young sculptress  
Bukowski met and fell in love with in  
1970.  
*(courtesy of Linda King)*

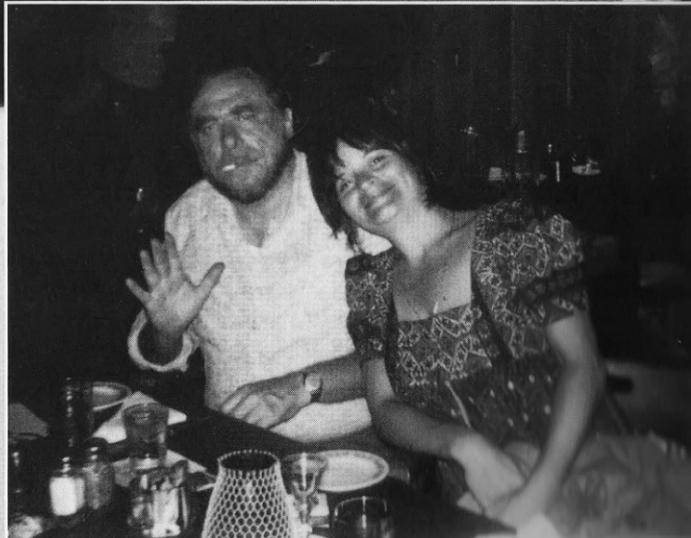


Photograph #24  
Linda King at Flo's Palce,  
a bar she worked in on  
Sunset Boulevard.  
*(courtesy of Linda King)*

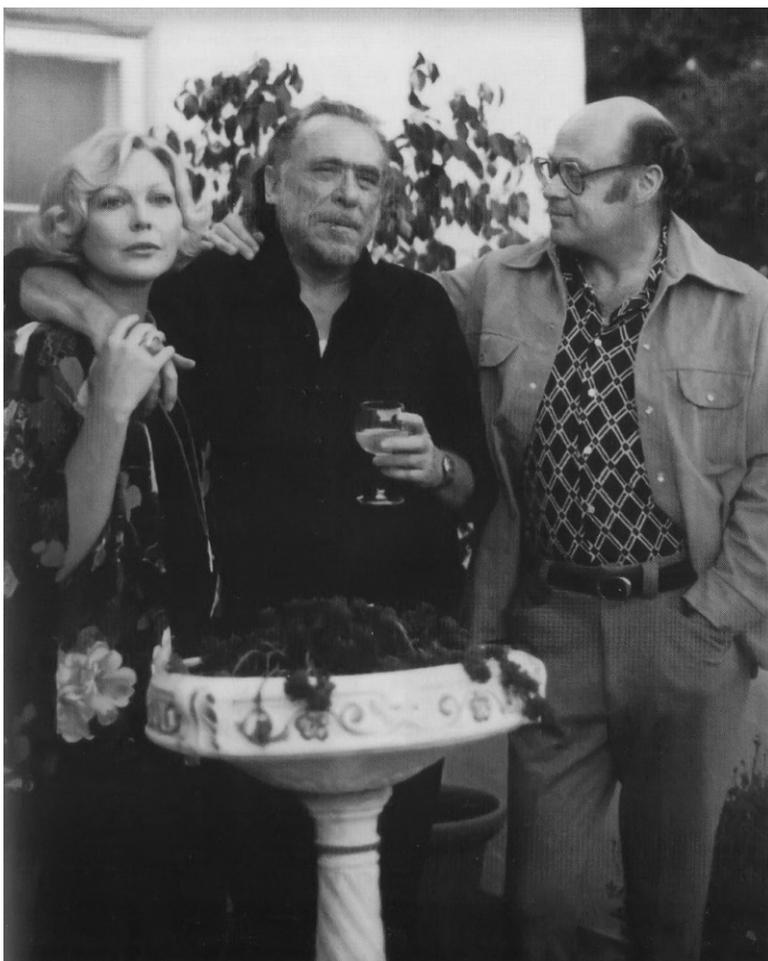


Relaxing in Barnsdall Park, Hollywood, in 1972, aged fifty-two and free from the post office at last. (courtesy of Linda King)

In July, 1972, Bukowski went on a rare vacation to the island of Catalina, just off the coast of California. With him was record company executive Liza Williams whom he was dating after a break-up with Linda King. (courtesy of Liza Williams)



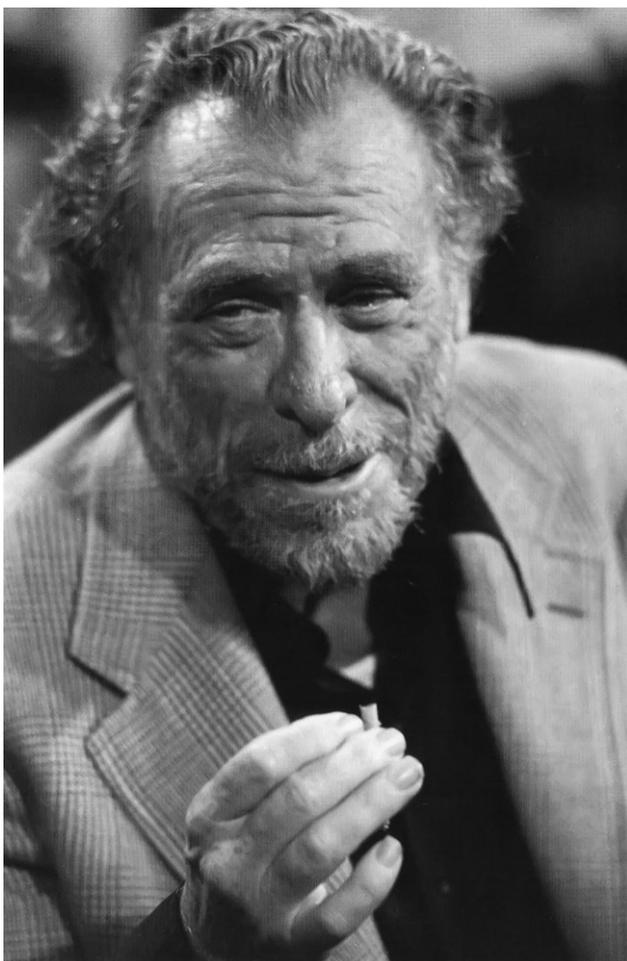
Photograph #25



Photograph #26  
In Santa Barbara with his  
editor-publisher John  
Martin and John's wife  
Barbara.  
*(courtesy of John Martin)*



Photograph #27  
Pamela Miller, aka Cupcakes, the  
redhead Bukowski fell mandly in  
love with when her met in 1975.  
*(taken by Howard Sounes in 1997)*



Photograph #28  
Taken before the  
Apostrophes talk show  
with Bernard Pivot, 22  
September 1978.  
*(© Ulf Andersen / Solo)*



Photograph #29  
With Linda Lee  
In August, 1985, when Bukowski  
was sixty-five, he married for the  
second time.  
*(taken by Eric Sander, © Frank  
Spooner Picture Agency)*



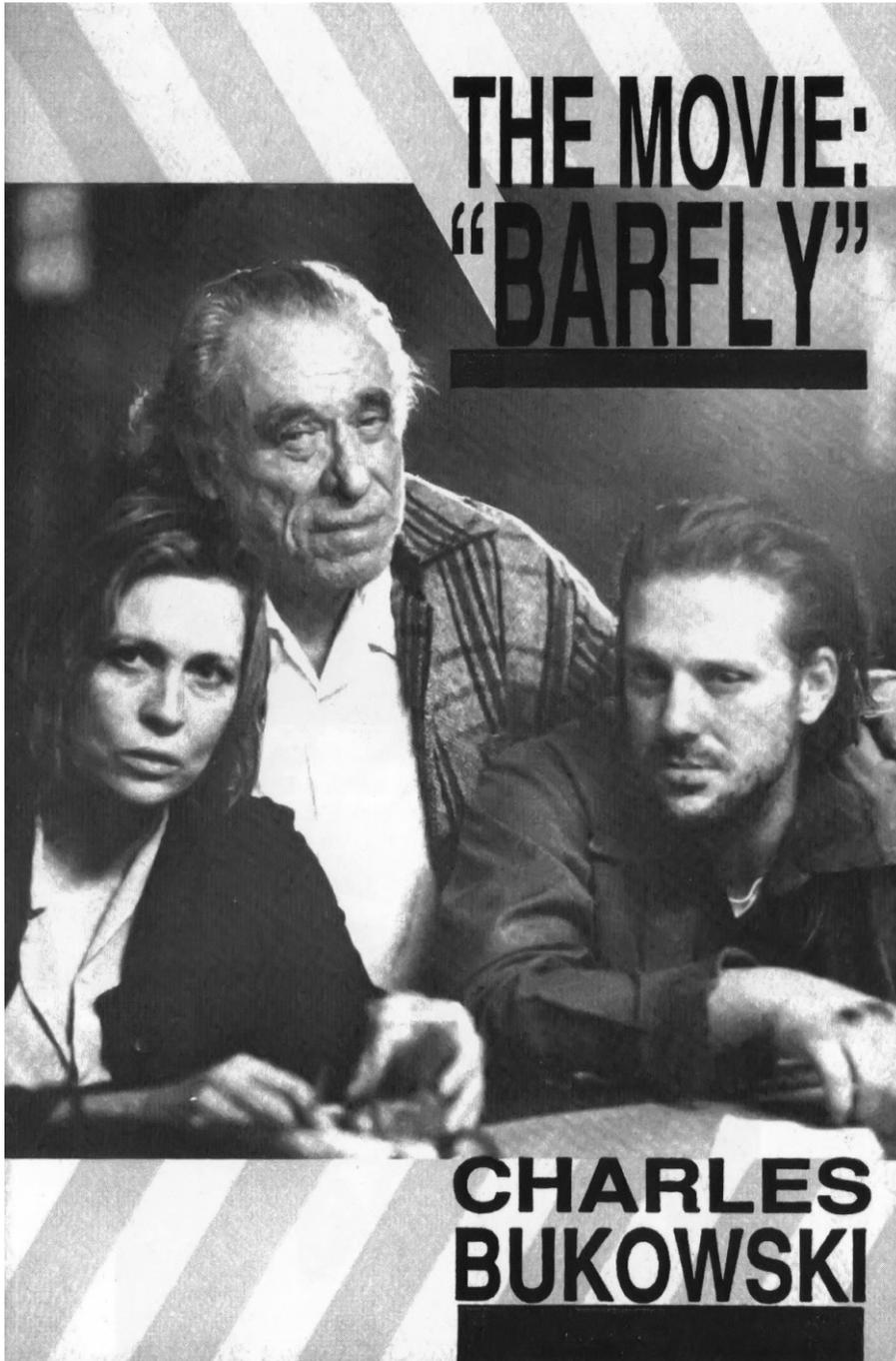
Photograph #30

When the actor Mickey Rourke visited Bukowski's San Pedro home to talk about making movie, Barfly, he noted that the house was very neat and suburban expect the upstairs work room where Bukowski wrote his stories. The work room was like a 'piece of shit dive'



Photograph #31

Reunited with his cousin Katherine Wood (left) and her sister Eleanor (right) at his San Pedro home in August, 1988. (courtesy of Katherine Wood)



Photograph #32

In the movie Barfly, which was released in 1987, Mickey Rourke played the Bukowski-like character of Henry Chinaski.

*(The Movie: "Barfly" published by Black Sparrow Press, 1987)*



Photograph #33  
Bukowski's grave at the  
Grre Hills Memorial  
Park, south of Los  
Angeles.  
*(taken by Howard  
Sounes)*



Photograph #34  
In July, 1977, three  
years after Bukowski's  
death, Marina gave birth  
to her first child,  
Bukowski's grandson.  
*(courtesy of FrancEye)*

## **Annotation**

Author: Bc. Kateřina Řehouňková

Department: Department of English and American Studies

Name of thesis: Charles Bukowski - Angry Old Man

Supervisor: PhDr. Matthew Sweney, Ph.D.

Number of pages: 84

Number of appendices: 34

Language of thesis: English

Keywords: Angry Young Men, John Osborne, Kingsley Amis, John Braine, Charles Bukowski, Henry Chinaski

Abstract: The thesis builds upon the author's previous Bachelor Thesis on the literary phenomenon of the Angry Young Men. It concerns the life and work of Charles Bukowski and compares his main character of Henry Chinaski with those main characters of Angry Young Men, Jimmy Porter, Jim Dixon and Joe Lampton. Bukowski was American, whereas the Angry Young Men were British, but they were contemporaries and are alike and differ in interesting ways.

## **Anotace**

Autor: Bc. Kateřina Řehounková

Katedra: Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Název práce: Charles Bukowski - Rozhněvaný starý muž?

Vedoucí práce: PhDr. Matthew Sweney, Ph.D.

Počet stránek: 84

Počet příloh: 34

Jazyk práce: Angličtina

Klíčová slova: rozhněvaní mladí muži, John Osborne, Kingsley Amis, John Braine, Charles Bukowski, Henry Chinaski

Abstrakt: Práce navazuje na autorčinu předešlou bakalářskou práci, která se zabývala postavami mladých rozhněvaných mužů v dílech Johna Osborna Ohlédni se v hněvu, Kingsleyho Amise Šťastný Jim a Johna Braina Místo nahoře. Práce se zaměřuje na život a dílo Charlese Bukowského a porovnává jeho hlavní postavu Henryho Chinaskiho s hlavními postavami výše zmíněných rozhněvaných mladých mužů, Jimmym Porterem, Jimem Dixonem a Joem Lamptonem. Bukowski byl Američan zatímco rozhněvaní mladí muži byli britové, ale byli to současníci a shodovali se lišili zajímavým způsobem.