

**Lilley, Kate**, University of Sydney, Australia

### **Ginsberg's 'Kaddish' and the Psychogeography of Mourning**

In 'Kaddish', Ginsberg's 'big elegy' for his mother Naomi (1894-1956), the poet returns to the 'sunny pavement of Greenwich Village' and the downtown precincts he had recently sublimed in 'Howl' (1955/6), to recast Manhattan as a scene of diasporic mourning at once apocalyptic and everyday, dystopic and cosmopolitan. What emerges is a transnational *visio* or prophetic dreaming of the aftermath of the Holocaust, the Bomb, and what Ginsberg later called the 'Fall of America'. Delivered as an Anniversary, three years after Naomi's death in a psychiatric hospital, and framed in part as a belated Kaddish performed at her graveside in Long Island, Ginsberg's elegy narrates a crisis of coming out and coming after as diasporic family romance and exilic schizo-analysis: the story of his own and America's queer, immigrant invention.