

**T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**ON THE ROAD TO HEAVEN:
AN EVALUATION OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKS OF
JACK KEROUAC**

MA THESIS

Cüneyd Atamal

Department of English Language and Literature

Department: English Language and Literature

Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Öz ÖKTEM

Programme: English Language and Literature

January, 2016

**T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**ON THE ROAD TO HEAVEN:
AN EVALUATION OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKS OF
JACK KEROUAC**

MA THESIS

Cüneyd Atamal

Department of English Language and Literature

Department: English Language and Literature

Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Öz ÖKTEM

Programme: English Language and Literature

January, 2016



T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

Yüksek Lisans Tez Onay Belgesi

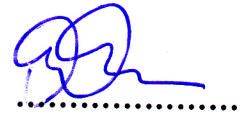
Enstitümüz İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Ana Bilim Dalı İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı Y1312.020044 numaralı öğrencisi **Cüneyd ATAMAL**'ın "ON THE ROAD TO HEAVEN: AN EVALUATION OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKS OF JACK KEROUAC" adlı tez çalışması Enstitümüz Yönetim Kurulunun 08.12.2015 tarih ve 2015/23 sayılı kararıyla oluşturulan jüri tarafından **o.y.b.m.İ.** ile Tezli Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak **ka.t.v.l.**...edilmiştir.

Öğretim Üyesi Adı Soyadı

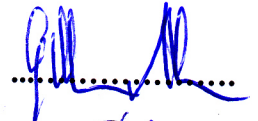
İmzası

Tez Savunma Tarihi :14/01/2016

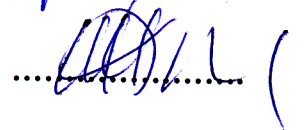
1)Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Öz ÖKTEM



2) Jüri Üyesi : Yrd. Doç. Dr. Gillian Mary Elizabeth ALBAN



3) Jüri Üyesi : Prof. Dr. Veysel KILIÇ



Not: Öğrencinin Tez savunmasında **Başarılı** olması halinde bu form **imzalanacaktır**. Aksi halde geçersizdir.

*To Jack,
for his immense contribution to the literary sphere
and inspiring me to write this thesis.*

“You are not a drop in the ocean.

You are the entire ocean in a drop.”

Mawlānā Jalāl-ad-Dīn Rūmī

FOREWORD

This work which is prepared as Istanbul Aydın University Social Sciences Institute English Language and Literature Department graduate thesis, aims to contribute to the field by examining the novels of Jack Kerouac and his spirituality. During my study, supports of my professor and former advisor, a Beat scholar Gordon J. Marshall were very valuable. And I would like to thank to my advisor Öz Öktem for her endless guidance, support and help in a limited time frame. I should mention also guidance of our head of department Doç. Dr. Turkey Bulut with appreciation.

And I would like to express my deep gratitude to my family for their endless trust, help and inspirations...

January 2016

Cüneyd ATAMAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Page:

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
ÖZET.....	vi
ABSTRACT.....	xi
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. DEFINITIONS, NOTIONS, AND THE BEATS.....	7
2.1 What is the Spirituality and Mysticism.....	7
2.2 Historical Approaches to Spirituality in Western Civilization.....	11
2.3 Romantic Movement in Europe.....	13
2.4 Beat Generation.....	14
2.5 The Meaning of “Beat” or Its Story of the Emergence to the Literary World.....	15
2.6 The Characteristics of the Beat Generation.....	16
2.7 Spirituality and The Beat Generation.....	22
3. ON THE ROAD TO HEAVEN: The Spiritual Book of the Beats: <i>On the Road</i>	25
4. KEROUAC’S SPIRITUAL QUEST: DESOLATION ANGELS.....	48
5. CONCLUSIONS.....	70
REFERENCES.....	77
BIOGRAPHY.....	83

CENNET'İN YOLUNDA:

JACK KEROUAC'IN ESERLERİNDE MANEVİYATIN İNCELENMESİ

ÖZET

Bu tez çalışmasında Jack Kerouac'ın maneviyat anlayışı iki önemli romanında, *Yolda*'da (*On the Road*) ve *Desolation Melekleri*'nde (*Desolation Angels*) incelenmiştir.

Jack Kerouac, açık saçık, ahlakdışı ve değersiz yazılar yazıyor diye suçlanagelmiştir. *Yolda*'nın yayınlandığı zamanlardaki edebiyat eleştirmenleri bu kitaptan da edebi bir eser olarak bahsedilemeyeceğini belirtmişlerdir. *Yolda* hakkındaki bütün değerlendirmeler aşağılayıcı, dışlayıcı ve küçültücüydü. Hiçkimse kitabın yüksek manevi içeriğinden ve yazarın manevi dünyasından bahsetmemiştir. Halbuki *Yolda* oldukça ruhaniydi ve yazarı ailevi ve milli olarak içinde bulunduğu inanç dünyasının dışındaki diğer dini ve tasavvufi değerlerle irtibat halindeydi. Kerouac'ın diğer eseri *Desolation Melekleri* de gel gitleriyle yazarın ruhani yolculuğunun rotasını veren kendisinin derin maneviyat anlayışının bir kanıtıydı. Fakat bu kitap daha sonra, 1965'de basılmıştı ve Kerouac kendi açıklamalarıyla ve yapılan söyleşilerle artık daha çok tanınıyordu ve kendisi hakkında yapılan yorumlar gerçeklerden ve Kerouac'ın inanç dünyasından fazla uzak değildi. Fakat *Yolda* zamanının tam bir günah keçisiydi. Zamanın bütün kötülükleri ya bu romandan geliyordu, ya da romanın yazarının sözde “isyankar” hayat anlayışından kaynaklanıyordu.

Jack Kerouac'ın maneviyat anlayışı belirli bir dine ait olmadığı gibi herhangi bir inanç akımına da uymuyordu. O bütün inanç sistemlerini Hristiyanlık ve Budizm örneğinde olduğu gib birbirleri ile çelişmelerine rağmen kalben kabul etmişti. Fakat birçoklarına göre o katıksız bir Katolikti. Ben bunun da doğru olmadığını bu tezde ispatlamaya çalıştım. Eğer o iddialar doğru olsa idi kendisi diğer dinleri ve manevi değerler sistemlerini araştırmada bu kadar istekli olmazdı. Sadece Katoliklik hakkında söylemler geliştirebilirdi. Ama o sadece sırf Hristiyanlığı içine alacak bir çalışma bile yapmaya yanaşmamıştı. Kendisi daima eksik olan şeyin peşinden gidiyordu ve bu da açıkça anlaşılacağı üzere gerçek manada *maneviyattı*. Diğer bütün uğraşlar birer detaydı veya ikincil meşguliyetlerdi. Esas olan, esas peşinde olduğu maneviyatın ta kendisiydi. Ve Kerouac, bu aradığını romanlarında yazdığı gibi zaman zaman bulmuştu. Bu anlar sadece bir dine ait ruhani anlar değildi. Hatta araştırıldığında Kerouac'ın esas kendi orijinal anlayışının yanında İslami motiflerin de olduğu bir maneviyatın zaman zaman vuku bulduğu görülebilecektir, çünkü yazar kendisinin derin bağlarla bağlı olduğu Katolikliğe rağmen herhangi bir dinin savunucusu değildi. O sadece maneviyatın bir savunucusuydu. Bunun bir kanıtı da *Yoldadır*, çünkü bu kitap basıldığında doğru dürüst bir roman olduğu bile kabul edilmemişti ama içindeki bütün detaylar hep maneviyat çemberinde dönüp duruyordu. Ve bu romana yapılan zamanının kurumsal karşı çıkmaları ve dini itirazları çok açıktı.

Yolda farklı şekillerde gösterildiği gibi başından sonuna kadar yazarın manevi duyguları ile doludur. Bu maneviyat herhangi bir dine bağlı değildir. Fakat *Desolation Melekleri*'nde belirli dinlerin etkileri açıkça görülür. Hristiyanlık ve Budizmin etkileri açık açık görülürken,

İslamiyetin etkisi açıkça belirtilmemiştir. *Yolda* da konu olarak doğrudan maneviyat ile ilgilenmez—tabii ki adı konmamış arayış dışında, ancak kitabın tamamının verdiği duygu, kelimelerin ve yazarın oluşturduğu hava okuyucuyu maneviyat ile sarar. Yazarın girişimleri, kelimelerle birlikte yeryüzünde de başdöndürücü hızla, delice yol almalar, aşknlığın söylemi ile bir anlam ifade etmektedir. Kerouac bunu kelimelerle, imalarla, şive ve ses titreşimleri ile, kelime çeşitliliği ile, sonsuz kelime hazinesi ve bitmek bilmeyen enerjisi ile becerir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Maneviyat, Tasavvuf, Beat Kuşağı, Jack Kerouac*

**ON THE ROAD TO HEAVEN:
AN EVALUATION OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKS OF
JACK KEROUAC**

ABSTRACT

In this thesis study, Jack Kerouac's spirituality is investigated in his two important novels: *On the Road* and *Desolation Angels*.

Jack Kerouac had been accused of writing indecent, obscene, and worthless. The literary critics of the time of publishing of *On the Road*, find the book also not to mention as literary work. All the comments about *On the Road* were derogatory, pejorative and belittling. Nobody mentioned the book's highly spiritual content and the author's thought sphere, philosophy and spirituality and mysticism. In fact *On the Road* was highly spiritual and the author was really in relationship with mysticism and other religions other than his familial and national involvement. And Kerouac's another book, *Desolation Angels* was proof of his deep understanding of spirituality with giving his discourse on notion of his spiritual road with highs and lows. But that book was lately published in 1965 and Kerouac was well known so far with his other explanations and interviews, so the comments were not so far from the reality and then the Kerouac's spirituality. But *On the Road* was scapegoat of its time. All the negativity of the time was emerging from the novel, or the novel's author's so called "rebellious understanding of life".

Jack Kerouac's spirituality is not suitable to a certain religion or a spiritual sect. He had accepted all of them by heart in spite of their paradoxical position as in Buddhism vs. Christianity (at least on reincarnation matter). But many think he was devoted Catholic. I argued also this is not a true comment in this thesis. If that allegation was true he wouldn't so keen to investigate other religions or spiritual thought systems. He could only make some improvisations on Catholicism. Yet he even didn't make any pure investigation solely on body of Christianity. He always searched what he thought was missing, and that was purely *spirituality*. The other concerns were only details, collateral involvements. The core, the essence of his search for was the spirituality itself. And he found that spirituality from time to time as it is written in his different novels. These moments were not only possess certain religion. Then, one could even find some Islamic spirituality, without Kerouac's authentic considerations because he was not an advocator of a certain religion in spite of his deep concern of Catholicism. He was only a champion of spirituality. The proof was also his novel *On the Road* because it is not even accepted as a decent novel at the publication time but all the details in the book rounding around spirituality. And institutional reaction moreover religious rejection was obvious on the face of the current criticism at that time.

On the Road from the beginning to the end filled with author's spiritual concerns which are defined in various ways. This spirituality is not really related to any religion. But in *Desolation Angels* the religious concerns are much visible. The attachment of Christianity and Buddhism is

obvious while effects of Islam are not exposed. *On the Road* is not dealing with spirituality directly—apart from an unnamed quest, but overall tone with aura encompasses the reader with spirituality. The author's attempts, madly mobility with words along with earthly movement make sense with transcending voice. Kerouac makes this by words, connotations, intonations, variations of words, with a brilliant word reservoir, and with his immense energy.

Keywords: *Spirituality, Mysticism, The Beats, Jack Kerouac*



1. INTRODUCTION

The appearance of *On the Road* in 1957 signaled the emergence of a new movement in American literature, soon to be called the Beat Generation (Hopkins, 2005, p. 279). With the emergence of this movement critics of the time started to refuse the novel as a literary artistic product and accepted it as a young rebellious manifesto. Paul Pickrel wrote in *Harpers* (October, 1957) that the young heroes were in revolt and “the revolt of these young men is away from ideas and causes away from the general and abstract...” (p. 1). He admitted their mysticism but added: “Yes they are really religious mystics of a sort, admittedly an odd sort” (p. 2). Their effort in the novel was nonsense for him. Anonymously printed criticism of *On the Road* in *Time* magazine dated September 9, 1957 titled “The Ganser Syndrome” (this syndrome is called also “nonsense syndrome”), questioned the novel’s sincerity, accusing the protagonists of the novel for not being actually mad but only acting like that. In *The Nation* (November 16, 1957) Herbert Gold defined the novel as “proof of illness rather than a creation of art, a novel” (p. 350). He continued: “The hipster’s ideal is to smoke a cigar and study the *Daily News* while having immobile sexual intercourse” (p. 351). As a general opinion Kerouac was not a moral person; his writings were obscene, not acceptable and of course there was no spirituality in his novel at all. The main concern was the writer and his friends’ attempts at making a new discourse in the literary sphere.

In this study I argue that Jack Kerouac was a spiritual person and a writer. An objective, unbiased reading would reveal that he is not a rebel, counterculture; on the contrary he appears as an author full of spirituality. My argument is that Kerouac was an intensely spiritual figure both in his life and in his writings and that he has been misconstrued by literary critics as propagating immoral, counter cultural rebellions against the postwar society. In this study I will also show spiritual considerations of Jack Kerouac. For this purpose I will analyze *Desolation Angels* (1965). *Desolation Angels* is a prominent novel of Kerouac showing his spiritual considerations. *Desolation Angels* was important in many ways. First, in that novel Kerouac weighs his spirituality as in meditation, in pure solitude like a Buddhist monk or a Sufic mystic. Second, and the most important, the book single-handedly was the proof of Kerouac’s spirituality so it was a foundational text that supports my thesis. Thus, this study will examine Jack Kerouac’s spirituality in his novels *On the Road* and *Desolation Angels*, while exploring his

attitudes against different religious and mystical thoughts; namely Christianity, Hinduism-Buddhism, and Islam.

The thesis will be divided into the following sections to better understand and illustrate Kerouac's sense of spirituality. After the introduction I will analyze why and how spirituality affected Kerouac. In the second section I will describe spirituality, religion, and their effects on postwar American people. In short I will make a clear description of what we are dealing with when we talk about “spirituality in literature and in Kerouac’s writings”. I also included a subsection in this part about the Romantic Movement in Europe. This movement is important because it has been followed by Kerouac and his friends, generally *the Beats*. It was a power engine for the whole group. The Romantic Movement relies on some beliefs in Christianity like *second coming*. In the third section I will present a close reading of *On the Road*. I will try to find out evidences of the writer’s spirituality during his journey on the road. In the fourth section I will analyze *Desolation Angels* and figure out how Kerouac described his spirituality. I’ll trace the lines which refer to different philosophies of mysticism and various religions. The last section will be conclusion.

Jack Kerouac was accepted rebellious both as a writer and a character by many critics on the publication date of *On the Road*. However I believe this label is not the real face of Kerouac, because his so called rebellion manifest *On the Road* was a spiritual novel. Yet rebellion is not an obstacle to spirituality, his approach to life and to literature was very unorthodox when we consider, the common understanding of spirituality at that time.¹ Everyone can find this kind of spirituality in all the books of Kerouac and especially in his late novel *Desolation Angels* (1965).²

Johnson says Kerouac’s literary historical significance remains underestimated (2000, p. 22). This is in part because his writing was overshadowed by his mass culture image—his media driven fame for Beat nonconformity, artistic purity, freewheeling living (p. 22). Jack Kerouac’s famous novel *On the Road* is often taken as a manifesto of the rebellious post World War II

¹ Spirituality was synonym of religion and that was very related to Christianity and Christian fundamental principles.

² It was written around mid 50’s, after *On the Road* but not published until 1965.

American literary sphere. Yet, I argue that the novel is a road narrative, full of mysticism, a mystic, prophetic and transcending text. In short, the novel is a spiritual text. Actually it describes a spiritual journey alongside earthly movement. Kerouac's aim is not "rebellion". The physically exhausted post-war generation was metaphysically energetic and was stimulated to take some authentic actions.

From late 1940s and until late 1950s in the United States the Beats were known as a social and literary movement. Together with Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs, Jack Kerouac was the frontrunner of this movement, Johnson calls them "triumvirate of principle male Beat writers" (2000, p. 22). Kerouac's second novel *On the Road* was a kind of manifesto of this movement. At that time this movement was labeled as a rebellion against the American way of life. It was defined as "counterculture", as the Beats' main interest was unconformity, to act contrary to the mainstream's inclinations.

In *On the Road* and *Desolation Angels* Jack Kerouac shows the reader that there is something greater than the concrete world. In *On the Road* he seeks for himself and the meaning of life through a journey. He is like a saint in the novel. He also praises his friend Dean as a holy person. This novel depicts the late 1940's and is autobiographical in character. This is important because it reveals to the reader the author's inner world. The leading characters of the novel seemingly act against social norms, or they seem to be deviated from the norms of the current social life. Sex, drugs, and alcohol were their favorite themes and mediums in that narrative. Yet, I argue that actually Jack Kerouac and his friends do not rebel, but try to find the ultimate reason for their lives.

Jack Kerouac was a good looking, strong built football player and a Columbia University student. His friends were a young Jewish poet who was also a Columbia University student (Allen Ginsberg)³, and a young handsome (as Jack Kerouac described) energetic, ex-con-man (Neal Cassady). Alongside with them we can count also William Burroughs.⁴ So Kerouac's novel *On the Road* was accepted very much against the norms and a rebellious action under the lights of his colleagues and surrounding and publication struggle. He became a symbol of young disillusionment like James Dean the famous actor of 50's. Whatever he wrote was accepted as

³ He would write and read aloud *Howl* in 1955.

⁴ He would write *Naked Lunch* (1959), an unorthodox novel. It was printed in France because of US obscenity laws.

rebellious, whichever he acts accepted as “counter-culture” (Gelfant, 1974, p. 416). During the late 50s and early 60s the Beat movement was taken as commodity by the society and named “Beatnik”. Pseudo-intellectual Beatnik movement got wrongly accepted as Beats.”They were hipsters not Beatniks” says Huddleston for Beat members in her thesis (2012). Also the gap between the road trips (1949) and the publication of *On the Road* (1957) created social and intellectual problems (Marshall, 2009, 4).

On the Road's so-called “rebellious” character can also be related to some extent to its own publication story. The book struggled to survive, yet after its first publication it proved to be a great success and has survived until today. Today the novel is accepted as the counter-culture reference book. Jack Kerouac finished his book after his famous ecstatic writing ritual in 1951⁵, but the book could not find a publisher until 1957. During those six years the book moved back and forth between the author and the editor and the printing house.

The voice that arises from the novel was not a rebellious but transcending voice. The protagonist's loneliness, his inclination to live in nature by himself as in *Desolation Angels* echo the characters in the works of famous American transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Especially Thoreau's *Walden*⁶ is very much like Kerouac's *Desolation Angels*. Kerouac lived almost two months on the Desolation Peak in the fire lookout cabin which was erected by the Forest Service in the 1920's (beatangel.com). Similarly, Thoreau had had a romantic experience which started in the summer of 1845 and took two years, two months, and two days in the forest nearby the Walden Pond. After nearly 100 years of Thoreau's experience Kerouac followed the same path. Actually, working as a fire watchman is known among the Beats as a way for meditation and being with nature like previous experienced members Philip Whalen and Gary Snyder did. Kerouac also hitchhiked and lived mostly in open air and among nature while he wrote in *On the Road*.⁷

Although transcendentalism is generally considered as philosophical and literal movement it has also some roots in Christianity and spirituality. Jack Kerouac acts like, inspired by Emerson's

⁵Kerouac had written the novel in three weeks on a “scroll” which was actually a tracing paper. It was about one hundred and twenty feet long!

⁶ In Old English the word “walden” means “the child of the forest valley”.

⁷ But according to some, in spite of his dream of self-reliance and solitude he lived much connected to his mother, “with other women—with wives, three of his own, and those of Cassady...”(Gelfant, 1974, p. 420).

“Divine Soul” and tried to re-make an American soul or a new approach to an American way of life. Emerson mentioned “Divine Soul” at the end of his famous speech called “Oration Delivered Before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, August 31, 1837”.⁸ Emerson (1837) at the beginning of his speech referred the *American vision* which is more spiritual and “love of letters” rather than “mechanical skill” (p. 3). His advice to study nature to “know thyself” was also a romantic approach: “Thus to him... is suggested, that he and it proceed from one root...what is that root? Is not that the soul of his soul?” (pp. 7-8). The oration ends as follows:

The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defense and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men. (p. 32)

Every writing by Jack Kerouac was an actualization of this very last sentence of Emerson. Kerouac behaved and wrote like he himself was inspired by the Divine Soul. He tried to build his own “pure idea” as Emerson suggested in his famous speech. He never gave attention to popular ideas as Emerson emphasized in the essay “These being his functions, it becomes him to fell all confidence in himself and to defer never to the popular cry” (p. 21). In addition the Beats had many connections with romanticism. Despite the similarities between romanticism and transcendentalism they deeply concerned with romantic writers, poets and philosophers like Shelley, William Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Immanuel Kant, and Walt Whitman. For example Alan Ginsberg’s idol was Blake. He studied Blake’s works throughout his life. Gregory Corso was fond of Percy Bysshe Shelley, who was also a famous romantic poet. Corso was called “urchin Shelley” and buried next to Shelly’s grave after he died.

Jack Kerouac and his friends kept their distance to religion. They did not engage in any religious activities. But Kerouac’s Catholic background never left him. Jack Kerouac’s family was from Quebec and “By the late 19th century the Church was ensconced, both in Quebec and in the Franco national parishes of New England, as protector of the nationality’s heritage” (Sorrell, 1982, p. 40). Among the French Canadians Catholicism was a way of spiritualism in every aspect of daily life, like schooling and social activities. According to Sorrell, Kerouac was not a traditional Catholic “whom the Franco Church elite held up as the ideal” (p. 40). He became

⁸ This title was later named “The American Scholar”.

estranged from the Church even criticized it, and he never returned to his original religion (Sorrell, 1982, p. 41). He and his friends tried Asian philosophies and religions. This inclination to Buddhism and Eastern religions was also a transcendentalist tradition. Thoreau in *Walden* writes: “In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagavat Geeta...”; “...I meet the servant of the Brahmin, priest of Brahma, and Vishu and Indra, who still sits in his temple on the Ganges reading the Vedas...” (1854, p. 222). Likewise, the Beats were ultimately had different understanding of religion than ordinary Americans:

Still the Beats may be considered the vanguard in a significant shift in post-World War II American religious consciousness marked by rejection of intuitional religion, a questioning of Christian values and an affirmation of the possibility of new religious meaning to be found through mystical experience, hallucinogenic drugs and Asian religions” (Jackson, 1988, p. 52).

They seemed not to be so devoutly religious, but ironically they acted and wrote spiritually. Jackson mentions the Beats’ early involvement in eastern religion with an example. The Beat writers had planned a gathering in Six Gallery in San Francisco⁹. Jackson (1988) calls that event as “watershed event” (51). And in that invitation card for this meeting activities were written. Free satori was added along with other activities like; music, wine, serious poetry, and dancing girls. So emphasis on *free satori* is meaningful. Satori is considered as a deep spiritual experience in Zen Buddhism. It opens a new world that is not perceived before. According to Jackson, Asian thought was an essential element in the Beat view of the world (p. 51). That understanding brings spirituality into consideration while exploring the Beats and their leaders (Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and William Burroughs) including Jack Kerouac. Asian thought is not a single religion. The belief systems of the Far East are based on different sources and interpreting these sources is complex work. Within this multi religious far eastern context spirituality and mysticism becomes more prominent for the researchers than any other institutionalized religions. For this reason in the first chapter of my thesis I will concentrate on the definitions of spirituality and mysticism as well as on the western religious history, and the roots of spirituality in literature as in Romanticism.

⁹ October 7, 1955. This event is known the Six Gallery reading.

2. DEFINITIONS, NOTIONS AND THE BEATS

Definitions and concepts are important as Jack Kerouac's spirituality is not an easy and a comprehensible one. He was a drug user, a chronic alcoholic, and a sex addict. Moreover he was not a believer in the classic sense. Thus understanding the notion of spiritual matters at large can give us a more precise picture of Kerouac's spirituality.

2.1. What is Spirituality and Mysticism?

Spirituality in general sense refers to religious activities but deep inside it contains all activities except for the material world. In other words it can be defined as bodiless, unearthly, incorporeal, immaterial, or intangible activities (Webster's pp. 2198-2199). Free dictionary defines the word "spiritual" as: "—of, relating to the nature of spirit, not material, —not concerned with material or worldly things, —of, concerned with or affecting the soul (n.pag). According to Pargament (2013) spirituality is the "search for the sacred" (p. 14).

Body and soul dualism was very formative (in spite of monistic view that sees all the same) in the development of religious doctrines. In *Phaedo*, Plato defines the soul as immortal contrary to the body:

...Cebeus added: Your favorite doctrine, Socrates, that knowledge is simply recollection, if true, also necessarily implies a previous time in which we have learned that which we now recollect. But this would be impossible unless our soul had been in some place before existing in the form of man; here then is another proof of the soul's immortality.

Unlike Plato, Aristotle insisted on the visible world as the ultimate real world. Though what the senses felt is the reality and the soul is shaped under our senses. Plato's understanding is more close to spirituality, which can be based on the soul and other transcending definitions.

So the spirit or the soul is the counterpart of the body. It can also refer to consciousness or the self. In a broader meaning the spirituality of whichever kind tells to individuals a life which is not limited or finite. Spirituality gives man more power hope or meaning in life. Aware of this kind of existence, a man can inspire himself to acquire more knowledge about himself and the

world outside himself. He can get rid of the finite limited lifespan. He acquires an awareness of another kind of existence, which is incomprehensible by others.

So we cannot take spirituality only as religious thoughts and rites. In this thesis spirituality will refer to the broader meaning of the word, as the counterpart of the material world. Yet spirituality arises from all kinds of religious thoughts and this approach brings mysticism into discussion such as the Christian mysticism, Islamic mysticism (Sufism or Tasawwuf), or Hindu mysticism. Even within these mysticisms there are parts or sects like Upanishad, Yogic, Buddhistic, and Bhakti as in Hindu mysticism. In many cases the words spirituality and mysticism are used almost synonymously.

Stace (1960) defines the word “mysticism” as a mystical experience. Mystical experience comes from a mystical idea and the mystical idea is a product of conceptual intellect, whereas a mystical experience is a “nonintellectual mode of consciousness” which according to him refers the irrational mind (p. 9). For Stace, experience and interpretation is important because some may define a white glimmering thing as a “ghost” while another may interpret the same thing as “white flowers among the rocks” in the darkness of the night. Both can be true or false.

Mysticism refers to the experience of mystical union; it is a doctrine or belief that directs the knowledge of God, of spiritual truth, or ultimate reality (Webster’s, 1964, p.1497). Mysticism is based on mystical consciousness differing from the sensory-intellectual consciousness (Stace, 1960, p. 12). That kind of consciousness is described by mystics as ineffable. The visions or voices pronounced by some do not reflect mysticism. Mysticism is : “...apprehension of *an ultimate nonsensuous unity* in all things, a oneness or a One to which neither the senses nor the reason can penetrate. In other words, it entirely transcends our sensory – intellectual consciousness” (Stace, 1960, pp. 14-15). So the Unity or One or God and understanding Him or It, being with Him or It is the central theme in mysticism. There is wholeness in it and there is a comprehension, grasp in it. For example while Jack Kerouac is riding through the continent in *On the Road* he often senses the wholeness of the continent. He sees the faces of the dwellers in this vast amount of land; he wraps all the waters pouring together to Mississippi.

There are ways for the apprehension of the One according to Stace. It could be either “extrovertive” or “introvertive” (pp. 15, 17). So Stace defines the ways of mysticism as the ways by experiencing external world and by investigating bottom of the self. Extrovertive mystic with

his physical senses, perceives the same world of trees and hills and tables and chairs as the rest of us. But he sees these objects transfigured in such manner that the Unity shines through them (p. 15). This kind of mystic is like a transcendentalist in the woods, or a romantic at the top of a hill¹. Introvertive mystics claim that they achieve the apprehension of the One without falling asleep or become unconscious, total suppression of the whole empirical content of consciousness (Stace, 1960, pp. 17, 18). This entirely new consciousness can be named then mystical consciousness. Stace implies here the ways to suppress the usual consciousness as Yoga, or Christian prayers. Muslim prayers, Zen meditations can be counted as other examples of these attempts.

In his book, Stace (1960) talks about Tennyson's special mystical experiences (p. 19). Tennyson's experiences do not need any effort, concentration or ritual. Mystics insist on the "detachment" during the spiritual training and for achievement of progression. Detachment from bodily desires has very much importance in Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism as well as in Christianity. In Islamic mysticism—*Tasawwuf*, seclusion (*halvet*) is a kind of detachment. Forty days in a dark cell with a little food, drink or sleep can be considered as an acute detachment. Rumi sometimes did not eat anything at all for fifteen days (C.Rumi, p. 233). Quoting from Mandukya Upanishad (main religious text of Hinduism) Stace argues that the introvertive mystical consciousness is "beyond the senses, beyond the understanding, beyond all expression... It is the pure unitary consciousness, wherein awareness of the world and of multiplicity is completely obliterated" (Stace, 1960, p. 20). Similarly, *satori* in Zen Buddhism is a mystical experience that can be understood as the grasp of the reality beyond the forms. As Stace (1960) claims every kind of religion or thought system involves the same experience: "We see that the very words of the faithful Catholic are almost identical with those of the ancient Hindu, and I do not see how it can be doubted that they are describing the same experience" (p. 21).

Mysticism is not necessarily a religious phenomenon. If we do not consider its underlying thought system, a mystical experience leaves us only with an "undifferentiated unity" (Stace, 23). Stace asserts that this undifferentiated unity means union with God in theistic religions such

¹ He is very much like the young man in Caspar David Friedrich's painting "Wanderer above the Sea of Fog".

as in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam (p. 23). Yet this is not the experience itself, but it is an interpretation. This undifferentiated unity is interpreted by various authors as Trinitarian, Unitarian, or by Vedantists of Hindu philosophy as a more impersonal Absolute. But Buddhism does not define any kind of God but the Void, or Nirvana (Stace, 24). That “Void” is very much effective on Kerouac in *Desolation Angels*. Apparently Kerouac evaluates and deals with the Buddhist teaching in his isolated area, on the top of Desolation Peak. So mysticism does not have positive correlation with any kind of religion. According to Stace (1960) there can be even an “atheistic mysticism” (p. 24) which is the pure mysticism without a religious cloth on it.

Finally Stace mentions a very important feature of the introvertive mystical experience: “melting away” into the Infinite of one’s own individuality. This kind of phrase can be found in any theistic religion, but in Islam there is a special word for it: “fanā” (Stace, 1960, p. 24). According to Stace this is not a theory but a reality which one can quote this experience from Eckhart², or from the Upanishads³ or from the Sufis. This kind of experience is described by Tennyson as the “loss of personality”, dissolving of individuality and fading away into boundless being (Stace, 1960, p. 25).

Religion is another concept that should be evaluated on the ground of mysticism and spiritualism. Religion stands very close to the word of “spiritualism”. They are sometimes even used reciprocally to the place for each other. Moreover sometimes religion is accepted as “bad”, and spirituality as “good”. But this kind of dichotomy is not scientific or realistic. Both can be good or evil (Pargament, 2013, p. 13). Religion deals with concepts more institutional than spiritualism. Spiritualism seems to show more personal tendencies. Pargament explains this difference in his book called *Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*. Religions are institutional, external, objective, old, structural, fixed and frozen, while spirituality is individual, internal, subjective, new, flexible and dynamic (p. 11). Pargament indicates: “Spirituality more often connotes an individualized, experientially based pursuit of positive values, such as connectedness, meaning, self-actualization, and authenticity” (p. 11). This definition closely resembles the famous, so-called rebellious book *On the Road*. This novel seems the embodiment of this definition. Gordon defines the authenticity in Beat concept as unattainable abstract (2009,

² Eckhart von Hochheim (1260-1328), a German philosopher and mystic, he is also known as Meister Eckhart.

³ Collection of religious texts of Hinduism and Buddhism.

p. 7). Pargament also defines where the religion intersects with spirituality: they are both sacred, involves seeking multidimensionality, and multivalence (both can be constructive as well destructive) (p. 16). Yet they can differ by function and context. Religion has more significant goals and destinations than spirituality. In terms of context religion is more circumscribed than spirituality. Religion is embedded within an established, institutional context, whereas spirituality is embedded in nontraditional contexts (Pargament, 2013, p. 16, Ver Beek, 2000, p. 32). This nontraditional context is very obvious in *On the Road* and *Desolation Angels*. Especially *On the Road* which does not have many references to an established religion particularly suits this kind of context. Spirituality according to Ver Beek (2000): “describes the personal and relational side of those (religious) beliefs, which shape daily life (p. 32).

2.2. Historical Approaches to Spirituality in Western Civilization

Moore says “The great malady of the twentieth century, implicated in all of our troubles and affecting us individually and socially, is ‘loss of soul’” (p. ix). However Western civilization always had a connection with the “soul” since the time of Plato who in his writings such as *Phaedo* discussed the afterlife and immortality of the soul. However after the industrial revolution the place of the Church started to be questioned as indisputable clerical propositions started to be shaken by the concrete physical evidences. (Like the blasphemous discourse of “heliocentrism” as opposed to “geocentrism”). The authoritative place of the church was under attack. With the removal of the authority of the church from the social, political and the psychological life western countries achieved big advancement with the “human made rules and orders” instead of divine orders.

However the advancements in the scientific area and material life brought about fanaticism of materialism. Mass production was followed by mass consumption. Material gains became the ideal and a major war (WWII), with a nuclear attack finishing the scene, shook all humanity. Marshall asserts that the early Beats, Kerouac specifically, romanticized a lost world that ended with the explosion of the atomic bombs in Japan (2009, p.5). “World War II disrupted the rhythm and fabric of American society” says Diggins (1988, p. 22). According to him during the great depression’s hard time people generally could cling together traditionally as neighbors,

friends, and relatives (p. 22). Then war reinforced togetherness but then drove them apart geographically. Diggins (1988) pictures the situation like this: “Many Americans found themselves confused and disoriented in strange surroundings” (p. 23). This interpretation correlates with Marshall’s comments in his thesis where he analyzed the postwar American culture (Marshall, 2009, p. 14).

Redfield (1997) asserts that “the idea of the mystical experience began its journey into the mass consciousness of Western culture in the late 1950’s, chiefly as a result of the popularization of Hindu, Buddhist, and Taoist traditions by such writers and thinkers as Carl Jung, Alan Watts and D.T. Suzuki” (p. 87). We can add to this list Islam with Malcolm X and prominent names especially African-American ones. The reason of investigation of religions other than Christianity lays the blame on Church’s obstacle against scientific explorations and its hostile approaches and racist discourses against other beliefs. The church was blamed of conspiring with the government and not acting against the total annihilation of humanity. The Asian or middle eastern religions were worth investigating in 50’s America. The expectation was peace or reconciliation. People like Paramahansa Yogananda, Jiddu Krishnamurti were famous among the western societies. They all affirmed the existence of an inner mystical encounter that can be experienced individually (Redfield 87) very much like the Romantic way of thinking. This individual approach to mysticism was particularly helpful to Americans as they were burdened with anxiety and the feeling of loneliness as a natural outcome of living in modern society.

Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era (Ed. Murray J, 2004) also mentions the French Revolution as a marking event in the history of religious thoughts (p. 1129). It was considered by many as a sign of Apocalypse that was mentioned in the Bible⁴. We need to take into consideration also Gnosticism if we want to evaluate the Western religious thoughts. Gnosticism has traces from the ancient Greeks and Buddhists and its assertions that suggest the necessity of philanthropy reaching God through poverty and sexual abstinence are partially in parallels with the Beats.

⁴ Boorstin describes the situation: “...many Americans were haunted by fear that in the mushroom cloud over Hiroshima they had conjured a fifth rider of the Apocalypse. Along with Pestilence and War and Famine and Death, was there now a horse reserved for Science?” (Boorstin, 1974, p. 586).

2.3. Romantic Movement in Europe

The Romantic Period spans for about 45 years in British literary history from 1785 to 1830. It is rather a short but at the same time a complex period. Six poets namely Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Percy, Shelley, Keats, and Blake were the renowned Romantic poets of England⁵. They wrote about ordinary people, not about princes or kings. Freedom, justice were their mottos, separation from the tradition was their approach to literature. They wrote with heightened inspiration. In late eighteenth century England the political arena as well as the industrial and agricultural life were very volatile. The French Revolution had an immense impact on England and the entire Western world. Thinkers, writers, philosophers against or pro revolution appeared. Human rights became an important agenda.

The poets and writers of the Romantic period were not called Romantics by their contemporaries. Rather, they got derogatory names as: “Lake School” for Coleridge, Southey, “Cockney School” for Hunt, Hazlitt, “Satanic School” for Byron and Shelley (Norton A. 7). Yet some said there was something different about their time which they called “the spirit of the age”. It was the age of visual arts as well as literary arts. Visual arts were important, because the artists wanted to show the greatness of nature. Under the influence of worries from Apocalypse, the pictures were like one last look to an amazing world. It was the “age of emotions”. Rational thinking left its place to anxiety, horror and awe. Romanticism was like a longing for medieval age’s tranquility. Kerouac’s longing for this kind of tranquility is very obvious in *Desolation Angels*.

The French revolution at first, gave a divine breath to England as the promised events before apocalypse in the Bible. *Norton Anthology* notes. “...Barbauld, Coleridge, Wollstonecraft, and, above all, Blake: all were affiliated with the traditions of radical Protestant Dissent, in which account of the imminence of the Apocalypse and the coming of the Kingdom of God had long been central” (p. 7). So the prophetic writings of the Bible were the initiator of the Romantic Period (alongside the contemporary social events) which had a significant influence on the Beat Generation. While the romantics of the later periods were not related to religion as much as their predecessors the divine understanding of the universe was an important drive for them.

⁵ The first reading of “Howl” by Allan Ginsberg at Six Gallery gathering six poets could be count a meaningful coincidence when we consider the Beat Generation as a romantic literary movement.

Romanticism can also be seen as a revolt against the formality and rationality of the Enlightenment. Inspired consciousness is very much visible in this movement whereas the Enlightenment dwells in the midst of reason. Despair and disillusionment were replaced by hope and inspiration. Being with the Creator was a relieving activity and very common among the Romantics. These solitary behaviors are rooted also in the religion. According to *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era*, Romanticism does not view art, philosophy, and religion as separate, discrete entities (p. 1129). There was always a search of God, in nature, in human and in art. This kind of search is very much like Kerouac's search in *On the Road* and especially in *Desolation Angels*. Solitude and theology have a long tradition in Judeo-Christian thought (the prophet and the mystic) (Murray, p. 1129). This kind of solitude always reminds an individual in dialogue with God. Thus, the solitude, being with the nature, inspiration by nature should be viewed as attempts to connect with God. In short, both Romanticism and Transcendentalism were based on the search of God. This God had different specifications. He could either be a separate entity or be the One with whole of existence. That kind of understanding is also valid for some of Muslim mystics and it is called "Tawhid". Some Muslim mystics considered humans are a part of God. One famous mystic Mansur al-Hallaj says "I saw my Lord with the eye of the heart/ I asked 'Who are you'/ He replied, 'You'" (Rustom, n.d. p. 69). Mansur was blamed for heresy since he said "ana l-haqq—I am The Truth" which means "I am God". He was executed by the orders of Abbasid Caliph. Another famous Muslim mystical poet Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi known as "Rumi" always sought to become union or "Tawhid" with the Creator.

2.4. Beat Generation

After the Second World War, with the ending of the great economic depression (Ferrara, 2013, n. pag.), the old traditional of American life could not fit the modern times. The time was for rapid material change. Hunger for material possession was very obvious. There was also a postwar questioning aimed not at materialism but at spirituality or soul, requiring rational answers. "The prospect of losing a close friend or a family member also took its toll on American nerves" says Diggins (1988) in his book *The Proud Decades* (p. 25). The death of millions and the destructive effects of the war were highly influential on the minds of some writers and thinkers in the US. The best example for this is Allen Ginsberg's poem "America". In this poem Ginsberg (1956)

criticizes his country by saying that he gave everything for his country but gained nothing in return except for tears and a disturbed mind. He curses his country saying: “America...Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb!” (p. 5). His demands are obvious they are not material but emotional:”I’m addressing you/ Are you going to let our emotional life be run by Time Magazine?”(lines 37, 38, 39).

The first connections among the Beats’ were formed in Columbia University around 1947. Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg were the core of this movement. They were critics, not followers of an ideology. They were humanists approaching to the existence around them. In their terminology there was no discrimination or hatred to someone. Kerouac and Ginsberg were friends with Lucien Carr, William Burroughs and Neal Cassady. They were like a homosocial group at the beginning. Everybody was helping or giving ideas to each other on various literary works. They were the first group of the Beat Generation and their original city was New York. Their first meeting point was a bar near Columbia University called “West End”. Kerouac, Ginsberg and Carr were spending hours in that bar. Steve Allen addressed to Kerouac on a TV show in 1959 as the embodiment of this new generation. Allen described the Beat Generation also as a “social movement” not a literary action or movement (0:13-0:19).

2.5. The Meaning of “Beat” and its Emergence in the Literary World:

The word “Beat” has various meanings in English. It is used either as a verb or a noun or an adjective. The term was used to define a group of literary people as the meaning of informal as in “I’m beat” which means “I’m very tired, exhausted”. But this beat has more than that. The term Beat was introduced by Jack Kerouac. He heard this phrase from a street hustler, Herbert Huncke (1915-1996), and this word was an African-American slang. Kerouac defined the term Beat in June 1959 issue of the *Playboy* magazine: “When I first saw the hipsters creeping around Times Square in 1944 I didn’t like them either. One of them, Huncke of Chicago, came up to me and said ‘Man, I’m beat.’ I knew right away what he meant somehow...” (Original pages in *Playboy* are 32, 42). Commenting on Kerouac’s definition in *Playboy* Tamony (1969) says:

What Kerouac seems to be reporting here is *beat* in the sense of ‘tired, worn out’, the state of the corpus usually associated with beating the feet on the ground, plodding on the prowl,

aimlessly-the mystical overlay being induced partly by malnutrition and other irregularities of habit” (p. 275).

At a meeting in Hunter College, Brandeis University Kerouac explained how he coined the word “John Clellon Holmes... and I were sitting around trying to think up the meaning of the Lost Generation and the subsequent existentialism and, and... I said: 'You know John, this is really a beat generation'; and he leapt up and said, 'That's it, that's right!'" (04:04- 04:23). Holmes was a close friend of Kerouac and he wrote an article in the *New York Times Magazine* on November 16, 1952. The article's heading was “This Is The Beat Generation.”

Meanings of the word beat have been a matter of debate as it was defined in various ways many times by Kerouac. However Holmes insisted on the meaning of Beat as weariness. For him more than weariness it implied “the feeling of having been used, of being raw. It involves a sort of nakedness of mind, and, ultimately, of soul; a feeling of being reduced to the bedrock of consciousness” (1952, n.pag.). According to Kerouac the term Beat first and foremost it referred to exhaustion and weariness. This was the idea that originated while Kerouac was talking with Holmes. Then the notion of “beatitude” came to the scene. The Latin origin of the word means happiness. Yet at the same time this word has a sacred connotation and it is very Catholic. This kind of happiness can be biblical happiness according to Kerouac's codes. It is presented by God implying that it is endless referring to other worldly/heavenly bliss. This kind of interpretation of the term Beat is another proof of Kerouac's spiritual considerations. Kerouac also defined Beat as the tempo as in canoeing or as in Jazz music in an interview (1:04-1:20) with Radio Canada in Montreal in 1967 two years before his death. The tempo that Kerouac refers possibly aims their unceasingly geographical movements. All these variations show us that the meaning of Beat is not important rather it defines a group of people, a time period with a special philosophy.

2.6. The Characteristics of the Beat Generation:

The Beat generation is “a postwar generation” as Holmes describes. Briefly, they are literary group defined with their socio-cultural characteristics. It can be said the word of Beat refers to “a

style of literature and living”. Beat Generation shows some parallels with the Lost Generation⁶. Both are popularized by a novelist and both are postwar generations.

Individualism, bohemian lives were their characteristics. They did not believe the collective action which was popularized by the socialist regimes of Russia and China. They were afraid of collective the collective actions of the Soviet Regime yet they were interested in Marx as other philosophers. The annihilating effects of collective actions on individual thinking and understanding frustrated them much.⁷

The Beats expressed their feelings and emotions freely. Like the romantic composer Beethoven who broke the formality of Mozart, they felt free to express their ideas. They believed that feeling needed to be louder and distinguishable as character. They were very different from the formalists of the early twentieth century. Their movement did not involve violence, rage or sharpness and this movement has an unusual character: they were more modern “romantics”. Holmes described the common characteristics of the Beat artists in an article appeared in *New York Times Magazine* in 1957: “Their own lust for freedom and the ability to live at a pace that kills (to which the war had adjusted them), led to black markets, bebop, narcotics, sexual promiscuity, hucksterism, and Jean-Paul Sartre”. Bradley Stiles (2003) describes the members of Beats as the post-World War II generation and claims that unlike the Lost Generation they got alienated to themselves (p. 66). Quoting from Tytell Stiles argues; “members of the Lost Generation suffered mainly from a spiritual malaise that nevertheless left their sense of individual intact” (p. 66). For the Lost Generation one could behave as necessarily and exhibit grace under pressure. But on the contrary the Beats had disillusionment:

...this alienation from the events that determine one’s own life, was the direct result of a devaluation of the individual—a phenomenon that to some may have seemed inevitable, even natural, during the Depression and World War II, but that became nightmarish in the lurid light of McCarthyism and the Cold War. Many intellectuals in America felt disillusionment in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, plagued by a realization that their government was less humane than previously thought. (Stiles, 2003, p. 66)

⁶ Lost generation was also popularized by a writer, a novelist Ernest Hemingway

⁷ The publication of *Atlas Shrugged* in 1957 by Ayn Rand, who was an immigrant from Russia, was not a coincidence in those times. Rand definitely rejects the collective mind, defines *selfishness* as a virtue and advocates a philosophical movement called “Objectivism”.

The Beats were from the middle class. They were intellectuals. They had read many literary works. They praised poetry and good writing. Their usual ritual was drinking while reading their poems loudly. Holmes (1952) in *Go* defined their (Kerouac as “Gene” and Ginsberg as “David”) attitudes and standards of life which could be called “willingly denial of the modern world”:

They kept going all the time, living by night, rushing around to “make contact,” suddenly disappearing into jail or on the road only to turn up again and search one another out. They had a view of life that was underground, mysterious, and they seemed unaware of anything outside the realities of deals, a pad to stay in, “digging the frantic jazz”, and keeping everything going. (p. 36)

And by Holmes’ words *how* to live was more important than *why* to live. They were not losing their faith but they were trying to find their faith. Sometimes they were in trance, like Ginsberg, who in 1948 had an auditory hallucination while reading poems by William Blake. Ginsberg claims he heard God’s voice but then he said it was Blake’s. He claimed the hallucination was not caused by drugs. And after this incidence he tried many drugs to experience the same hallucination. Ginsberg stated: "...but that the sky was the living blue hand itself. Or that God was in front of my eyes—existence itself was God" (Hyde, 1984, p. 123) and "...it was a sudden awakening into a totally deeper real universe than I’d been existing in" (Charters, Brothers.138, Hyde 123). This kind of vision is very usual for the Beats. They lived in this awakened position..

For Jack Kerouac the writing was the ultimate goal in the world. All through his life he wanted to write. “Always considered writing was my duty on earth” says in the introduction to his novel *Lonesome Traveler*. Allen Ginsberg claimed his biggest inspiration throughout his life was Kerouac's concept of "spontaneous prose". Ginsberg believed as Kerouac did, literature should come from the soul without conscious restrictions. In that sense they were “modern American Romantics”. Kerouac’s unique talent gave its fruit when he wrote *On The Road* in 1951. His talent was combination of wandering with writing. He took notes between his endless drifts from east to west, from north to south.

Jack Kerouac rarely spoke publicly. There are only a few recorded formal speeches given by him. *In Our Own Words* (1999) includes the speech which Kerouac originally delivered in late 1958 at Hunter College. The speech was based on his notes and began with his criticism on the

misconceptions about hipsters and the Beat Generation (p. 210).⁸ In this speech Kerouac said there were two distinct styles of hipsterism and continued: “the cool today is your bearded laconic sage, or schlerm, before a hardly touched beer in a beatnik dive ...the hot today is the crazy talkative, shining eyed nut who runs from bar to bar, pad to pad looking for everybody, shouting, restless, lushy, trying to “make it” with the subterranean beatniks who ignore him”. According to Kerouac most of the Beat Generation artists belonged to the hot school. He described himself as a hot hipster and how Buddhist meditation cooled him. He claimed that Beat Generation had simply become the slogan or label for a revolution in manners in US. Humphrey Bogart, Peter Lorre was Beat according to Kerouac.

Beats lived in an ambivalent situation, sometimes very proud sometimes very sorrowful. Huddleston (2012) describes the Beat Generation both as a glory and a tragedy; ‘Its leaders experienced triumph due to their creative contributions to American culture and because of the seeds of nonconformity they sowed’ (p. 2). Yet at the same time the Beats were a tragedy: “Either out of ignorance or on purpose, the tragedy was that the Beats were misunderstood and misrepresented by the media” (p. 2). The media transferred the name to new generations as a marketing label without any depth of meaning the original had. Kerouac in many conversations and interviews marked this conjunction which had not any connection with him or with his ideas. He hated the word *Beatnik*; he made fun of this word. For example in an interview with Fernand Seguin, he compared the word beatnik with Sputnik. As a coined word *Beatnik* was most probably inspired by the name of the Russian satellite “Sputnik” launched in 1957. According to Elteren; the black poet Bob Kaufman, co-founder of the important Beat literary journal *Beatitude*, coined the term “Beatniks” to describe the Bohemian enclave in North Beach of bearded, sandaled coffee-house habitués, and their female counterparts (qtd. in Saloy, p. 75). “Scratch a beard... find a Beatnik.... If you’ve got a beard, you’re a Beatnik” says McDarrah (1960) in Charter’s book *Beat Down to Your Soul* (2000, p. 378). The name Beatnik became a commodity rather than a term referring to spirituality. Its usage was not related to literature but clothing, coffee shops, magazines, bars and nightclubs. Charters (2012) asserts that: “‘Beat’ was literary, ‘Beatnik’ was lifestyle” (*Beat D.*, 2001, p. xxi). The movement evolved into a life style which was used by consumers to imitate the Beats without understanding the real emotions of its

⁸ Also this speech in detail appeared in *Playboy* in June, 1959.

original members. Beatniks were wannabes rather than the reals. The original ones had a vision of speed and were mad about life while Beatniks were studiously “cool”—conformists like everyone else (Elteren, 1999, p. 76). Elteren (1999) claims the Beats and beatniks had only one thing in common and that was the rejection of the nuclear family system, which was the bedrock of American society. Even this idea cannot be true as Kerouac mentions his vision about every new girl he meets as a possible and an ideal wife (OR, 2012, p. 105). So the Beatniks were very different from the Beats. Beatniks are defined by Elteren as trend followers of the Beats. They lacked of the essence of the movement which is very much related to “spirituality”. Maybe we can identify them as “Beats without spirituality”.

The major works of Beat writers were *On The Road* by Kerouac, *Howl* by Ginsberg, *The Naked Lunch* by Burroughs. All these three works were accepted as obscene and immoral and went to trial several times at the time of their publication. Even the publication of each book can be considered a separate story. But Kerouac’s own words for them “...woe unto those who think that the Beat Generation means crime, delinquency, immorality, amorality...” (June 1959 *Playboy*, p.42)

Allen Ginsberg in an interview with Allen Gregg prophesied that the Beat artwork would be classic and “long, long time” to be remembered as examples of sincerity or at least candor: (12:00- 12:15):

...my "literary legacy" will be around when I'm..when I kick the bucket, and it will be around still, it's like a radio broadcast that goes on for centuries, and that's alright, and I feel that the work I've done, or Kerouac, or Burroughs, or, Gregory Corso, Snyder, and few others, will all be classic, and will all be around for a long long time as some kind of touchstones of sincerity or candor (if not sincerity, at least candor).

According to Allen Ginsberg, the essential effects of Beat Generation artistic movement could be counted as follows (n.pag.):

Spiritual liberation, sexual “revolution” or “liberation”, black liberation, Gray Panther activism, liberation of the word from censorship, decriminalization of some laws against marijuana, the evolution of rhythm and blues into rock and roll as a high art form (the Beatles, Bob Dylan...), the spread of ecological consciousness, opposition to the military industry, attention to a second religiousness, idiosyncrasy against state regimentation, respect for land and indigenous peoples and creatures as in *On the Road* “The Earth is an

Indian thing” The essence of the phrase "beat generation" may be found in “On the Road” with the celebrated phrase: "Everything belongs to me because I am poor." (Parkins, 2005)

The Beats disliked racial discrimination. Actually they were against all kinds of discrimination. In the US even in the time of war (WW II) there was discrimination against blacks both in the defense industry and in the army.⁹ In *On the Road* Kerouac always mentions his affiliation against African-American people: “...in Denver colored section, wishing I were a Negro...” (p. 163). Maybe this understanding was related to “the Catholic refusal to recognize the inferiority of the Negro in the eyes of God” (Boorstin, 1965, p. 202). Then gradually racial barriers came down. Yet the public never reached the same level of understanding with the Beats in terms of racial tolerance.¹⁰ The Beats were sensitive, vulnerable against every kind of discrimination.

The Beat Generation paved a way for the coming age of sixties’ counterculture. Braunstein and Doyle (2001) assert: “The Sixties counterculture in the US didn’t come from out of nowhere... It was the fruit that had been assiduously cultivated throughout the 1950’s¹¹....The Beats were the first set of cultural dissidents to be associated with this critique” (p.8). The members went on different directions after the fame of *On the Road* and “The Beat Generation both as a group and as a cultural mindset began to fade by the middle of the 1960s” (Marshall, 2009. p.265).

⁹ For example Seattle’s Boeing Aircraft had 41,000 workers and no blacks, Los Angeles Douglas Aircraft employed 33,000 all but ten of them were white, (Diggins, 1988, p. 28).

¹⁰ Mrs. Rosa Parks had not refused to move back to the redesignated colored section seat of a Montgomery, Alabama bus yet when Kerouac wrote *On the Road*. Actually this incidence took place in December, 1955.

¹¹ James Dean in “Rebel Without a Cause” (1955), Marlon Brando in “The Wild One” (1953) were rebellion youth symbols of the fifties. *On the Road*’s main character is named as Dean Moriarty (Neal Cassady) after many censorship movements against the original text. Then Kerouac had to change all the characters’ original names. So the name of Neal (as the product of the writer’s choice) was important as the leading character as well as Kerouac’s. Kerouac named himself as Sal (Salvatore) Paradise—a real spiritual name! Neal was very suitable for the name of Dean (symbol of rebel, attraction and action) because of his uneasy, rebellious spirit. Paradise was clearly noting the spirituality of Jack Kerouac and his final desired destination. Because of this perception, the name of the novel has another significance to Kerouac. According to Sorrel (1982), Kerouac is lifelong obsessed with religion (p. 40). The publication date of *On the Road* parallels with the other rebellion films and very easily adapted in minds as symbol of rebellion novel. Unceasingly wanderings without any future concern, helped to this kind of classification.

The film, *Rebel Without a Cause* was fitting in many ways to Beats. The father figure was as missing person Jim’s (Dean) and Plato’s (Mineia) lives were like Beats. Their *beatness* in their lives correlates with the Beats. The dysfunction or malfunction of traditional American Family depicted with the tenderness to the “weak” as in *On the Road*. Dean Moriarty’s similarities are not restricted by only names and images. James Dean also is known by his fanatic involvement to fast cars and car racing. Moreover James Dean had been worked as a parking lot attendant like Dean Moriarty in *On the Road*, while trying to find a job in Hollywood!

The Beat Generation was more educated than they seemed at first sight. The prejudice against them was led by academia. The Beats would define themselves “as poets in a land of philistines, men seeking spiritual destinies rather than material ones” (Halberstan, 295). They never got any praise from contemporary academic platforms.

2.7. Spirituality and The Beat Generation

Western approaches of to the notion of the soul have generally been seen interpreted through religion. The Church has been considered as the only place for spirituality. If one is not affiliated with a Church she or he immediately falls apart from the spiritual world. So, if one has any feeling for spirituality she or he should be standing close to the Church. Beat members apparently were not conservative or usual church goers but this does not mean they were not spiritual. They were greatly interested in eastern religions, especially Zen-Buddhism. They also have some kind of knowledge about Islam. For example Allen Ginsberg mentions “Mohammedan angles” in “Howl” (line 5) while Jack Kerouac mentions the “Arabian paradise” in *On the Road* (2012, p. 265) and the Thirty Birds from Attar in *Desolation Angels* (1965, p. 405).

Spirituality of the Beats can best be explained by the authors of the movement one is the leader of the movement while the other is the co-founder of the term Beat. Jack Kerouac published an article in *Esquire* where he openheartedly explained what he thought about the roots and the future of the movement. John Clellon Holmes wrote an article in the *New York Times Magazine* in 1952 about philosophy and involvement in literature and in daily life. Kerouac explains their major involvement in spirituality in his article titled “The Philosophy of the Beat Generation” (*Esquire*, March 1958, p. 24). This article deals much about spirituality and mysticism.

According to Kerouac Beat never meant “juvenile delinquents”. “It meant characters of a special spirituality who didn’t gang up but were solitary Bartlebys staring out the dead wall window of our civilization”.¹² Kerouac also defines the beat movement as a new religion: “Even in this late

¹² Bartleby is a character of Herman Melville who was a scrivener, copyist and man of passive resistance. Bartleby is well known by his famous answer “I would prefer not to do”. He also could be the representation of frustration of mankind or depressed modern man. Melville apparently affected by Emerson’s essay “The Transcendentalist”. Bartleby “staring out the dead wall window” emphasis the frustration one more time because Kerouac defines the

stage of civilization when money is the only thing that really matters to everybody, I think perhaps it is the Second Religiousness that Oswald Spengler prophesized for the West... because there are elements of hidden religious significance in the way..."¹³ Kerouac emphasizes spirituality against to the material world and tendencies towards materialism. Spirituality is almost the definition of Beats according to Kerouac's article in *Esquire*. Similarly in his article published in the *New York Times Magazine* Holmes claims that the Beat generation answers the need for spirituality, which was the Lost Generation's legacy: "Lost Generation which was occupied with the loss of faith, the Beat Generation is becoming more and more occupied with the need for it" (p. 10). The Beats were mystiques of bop according to Clellon, the rapid/fast tempo of Bebop held with the tranquility of mysticism (NYT Magazine, 1952, pp. 20, 22).

Clellon claims that they wanted to elude the society which they lived in (Charters, BD, 2001, p. 226). Their existence in society was like altered chords of jazz melodies of Bebop. Their mystical bondage to Jazz reflects their movement's character; as living the moment, improvisation, and tempo. The bondage to the Jazz and Literature asserts their spirituality because they wrote novels and poems and listened to music as if they were worshipping in a religious ritual. The Jazz and the Literature were sacred objects in their lives. We can see an obsessive approach in all those activities. Both literature and music are the means of expressions. So the Beats were trying to define, express and convey their understanding to other people. Music is also a kind of literature which has inspirational features. Spirituality can be heightened by music. Thus the Beats used jazz as other subsidiary means such as alcohol and drugs. They were trying new methods to go to deep inside human understanding. With the findings of their understanding they tried to transfer their experiments, visions and emotions to the others. These expressions were hard to define so they wanted to imitate the atmosphere, the aura. They became successful in spite of the initial degradations by some critics. *On the Road* is a very good example for this kind of treatment. Kerouac knew the insufficiency of the language for defining his and his friends' spirituality. So he tried to write his novel in an ecstatic situation to reflect this spirituality. In *Desolation Angels* he tried to explain their understanding of spirituality.

"our" which means American and in broader sense European civilization has no opening, no way out and no breathable exit.

¹³ According to Oswald Spengler as he prophesized in his famous book called *The Decline of the West* (published in 1918 vol.1, in 1922 vol. 2), that the Western civilization near to end and modern man is proud but tragic figure.

Desolation Angels is about spirituality of the Beats while *On the Road* is the product of Kerouac's own spirituality.



3. ON THE ROAD TO HEAVEN: The Spiritual Book of the Beats, *On the Road*

On the Road is the second novel of Jack Kerouac. Although it was written in early 1950's, it was published in the autumn of 1957. The subject of the novel is Jack Kerouac's cross country journeys in late 1940's. During these expeditions he travelled several times from east end to west end of America. The book has five parts and the first four parts are about these long trips. The first part begins in summer 1947 and includes Kerouac's trip to San Francisco from New York. The second part is about a trip which takes place during the winter of 1949 from New York to New Orleans then to San Francisco and back again to New York. The next part begins in spring 1949 to Denver from New York via San Francisco. The fourth part's journey begins in spring 1950 from New York to Mexico City via Denver.

On the Road begins with the meeting of Dean Moriarty and the narrator Sal Paradise. In the very first sentence of the "original scroll" of *On the Road* (2008) the word "met" is written twice probably by accident. Yet this repetition actually subconsciously tells us the importance of this meeting: "I first met met Neal not long after my father died..." (p. 109). Also in the 1957 novel it is written "my wife and I split up instead of "my father died". Both are very upset situations. Those statements show the reader that the writer is not happy and hopeful at the very beginning of his long journey. The beginning foreshadows that there will be no happy ending and there is no hope.

A mentally and physically disturbed person meets a guy and this meeting flashes in his mind an old idea that he needs to go to West (p. 1). He describes his emotions as "everything was dead". That expression shows actual depression. So even in the beginning the author does not mention any feeling of joy or expedition spirit for his travel plans. When Sal describes Dean's birth on the way of Los Angeles in a jalopy he reveals Dean's past was also not a bright one. Dean comes to the scene with an anecdote from his years in the reform school. His story depicts him to the reader as a con man. Yet Dean apparently is not a shallow guy and demands from Chad (Hal Chase) "to teach him all about Nietzsche and all the wonderful intellectual things that Chat knew" (p. 1). But there is a lamentation about Dean: "...when Dean was not the way he is today,

when he was a young jailkid shrouded in mystery” (p. 1). Dean now has not that kind of mystery and this bothers Sal (Kerouac).

On the very first page his affection to mysterious, legendlike Dean is apparent. When he hears that Dean is in New York, he immediately goes to his “cold water flat”. Dean is like a savior to him: a companion all the way across the country. He has all what a young man wants: a young Gene Autry¹ type who has a young and a beautiful wife. Unlike Sal he has hope and energy full of enthusiasm. When Dean comes to Kerouac’s house in Patterson they cannot speak and drink in front of Sal’s aunt, because she immediately understands that he is a mad man (p. 5). Kerouac at the very beginning pictures the Dean character as a mad man, like a romantic figure who can catch the sublime. Dean is depicted as a child who, at the same time, is a romantic figure. Innocent, uncorrupted, enjoying life with big admiration to nature, Dean appears like the world’s unlimited potentials. Sal says “He was simply a youth tremendously excited with life” (p. 6). He was conning because he wanted so much to live, and get attention from outside. Sal sees in him not only life and excitement to live, but also “his visions” (p. 6) that enlightens him. When referring the meeting with Dean and Carlo, Sal describes Dean as a “holy con-man with shining mind (p. 7). Sal claims “to [Dean] sex was the one and only holy and important thing in life (p. 4). Describing Dean and his actions as “holy” Sal reveals that he actually his understanding from him. He perceives Dean as a saint. And he defines himself as a lout (p. 7). So he has a mystic humbleness.

Sal uses “dinglebodies” for his friends. “Dinglebodies” an invention, coined by Kerouac can be understood as “the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, the one never yawn or say a common place thing” (p. 7). They are like santons of their time. He continues to describe fascinating people for him “...burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes ‘Awww!’ What did they call such young people in Goethe’s Germany?” (p. 7). Here Sal probably refers to Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, written in 1774. It is interesting to note that Goethe produced this work in an intensive writing which took six weeks just like Kerouac’s wrote *On the Road* in three weeks in a kind of delirium. Young Werther is a sensitive and passionate man who is very much disillusioned by life like Sal and his friends. Sal’s claims

¹ A self reliant, singing cowboy, a movie star of the time.

about burning and exploding remind the flies around a fire. They fly tirelessly around a fire and at the end falls into it as inevitable end. Sal describes the essence of life as a flame's blue part. This part is the hottest part and after red and yellow parts the blue part is very near to the center of the flame. Sal's people see the burning essence, essence of life or universe like in a candle, the core of light with blue color. This essence grabs them, and they follow the orders from the light—like flies instinctively going around a fire, knowing the end is burning. Irresistible attraction wraps them around. This attraction could be very identical with Sufi dervishes. They have the same burning, they see the same essence. Işık says: "Men of Tasawwuf feel the manifestation of "God" in their hearts. That is why death is not a disaster for them, but something nice and sweet" (p. 308). Rumi called death as *Shab-i Arus* (i.e. the nuptial night) (Işık, 2013, p. 309). So with his poetic lines beginning with "burn, burn, burn" Sal touches right at the heart of mysticism, the core of spirituality.

When the spring comes, Sal's life in New York has become exhausted and he prophesizes that the things that they will encounter on the road will be too fantastic not to tell (p. 9). Although his aunt warns him about Dean and his relationship with him, Sal wants to take off with him as he sees this expedition as a new call and a new horizon (p. 10).

The journey begins with frustration, it rains heavily, and "God's fear giving thunderclaps" are everywhere. And he was dying for arriving to Chicago. Finally Sal arrives in Chi by bus spending a lot of money. That night under the effect of Charlie Parker Ornithology and other Bebop melodies he feels all his friends around the country in a kind of consciousness of totality, a transcendental unity: "...I thought of all my friends from one end of the country, to the other and how they were really all in the same vast backyard doing something so frantic and rushing about" (p. 13). Then, when he sees "his beloved Mississippi river" (p. 13), he for the first time in his life smells "the raw body of America" (p. 13). He becomes really romantic, and spiritual guy as he defines the river, the air, the smell, and his feelings about himself and the outer world. Then a very strange thing happens in the hotel room:

I woke up as the sun was reddening and this was the one distinct time in my life, the strangest moment of all, when I didn't know who I was... I looked at the cracked high ceiling and really didn't know who I was for about fifteen seconds, I wasn't scared, I was just somebody else, some stranger, and my whole life was a haunted life, the life of a ghost. I was half way across America, at the dividing line between the East of my youth

and the West of my future, and maybe that's why it happened right there and then, that strange red afternoon. (p.15)

The above quote reveals Kerouac's spirituality. He defines himself in the middle point of his journey: East and West: East symbolizes his youth and West his future (p. 16). That moment represents the present or reality and consciousness. He somehow becomes aware of his presence and he realizes the time. This quote also gives the road a spiritual meaning, because he has come the half way of his destination when suddenly feels these strange moments. He claims that strangeness comes because of his dwelling on the half of his road. Suddenly road identifies him as his being on the time; like a marking point in the flowing of time. His nothingness ("a ghost like life") in the course of time becomes apparent by his travelling and he realizes it right in the middle of the road because this junction is like a milestone of his life or at least his spiritual life. He makes an obvious link between his being and the road as he travels and this connection is not only spatial but also spiritual. His youth, his future, his whole life... are now apparent. He defines himself as "somebody else". So this description refers not physical but spiritual understanding of himself.

Sal finds a companion on the way to Denver, Eddie; normally he does not like Eddie because he has awful looks and is a drunk. Still he walks and travels with him. As he thinks that he is interesting and reminds him his cousin-in-law from Bronx. More importantly, Sal's "senses were sharp for any kind of human friendship" (p. 16). He acts in line with the Sufi poet and mystic Yunus Emre's (1240-1320) saying: "I love the created for the sake of Creator". Here again Kerouac does not act like an average American but an old mystic.

For Sal, the most amazing thing during his journey on the flatboard of a truck (a journey which he describes as his "greatest ride" is the truck owners' openness to everyone that they meet on the road: "...the drivers, two young blond farmers from Minnesota, were picking up every single soul they found on the road (p. 22). This generosity, this wide welcoming, this negligence of the material world, and the diversity of the people at the back of the truck excite him. They drive at high speed and there is no stop even for using bathroom: "These guys never stop. Every now and then you have to yell for pisscall, otherwise you have to piss off the air, and hang on, brother, hang on" (p. 22). When Sal asks a couple of his fellow travelers, who are headed for LA what they will do there, they answer: "Hell, we don't know. Who cares?" (p. 22). This kind of

spontaneity and carelessness excite Sal. The humbleness and openness of the people on the vehicle is another spiritual factor that makes Kerouac to define the journey as the “greatest ride” of his life. This openness is actually a mystic acceptance of all the hobos along the way without material concerns, like Rumi’s saying “Come come whomever you are come, come even if you are a dualist, a Zoroastrian or an idolater” (Işık, 2013, p. 309). Yet at the same time Kerouac’s affection and admiration for these people come from their authenticity, their calm attitude despite their poverty and hopefulness despite an uncertain future.

Describing the aimlessly wandering people that he met on the road Kerouac says “...crossing and recrossing the country every year, south in the winter and north in the summer and only because he had no place he could stay in without getting tired of it and because there was nowhere to go but everywhere, keep rolling under the stars, generally the Western stars” (p. 25). Wandering is the result of helplessness. The expression “under the stars” renders Sal a romantic character. Also “stars” evoke open fields. The vast openness gives the sense of freedom and reminds the greatness of the universe. When Kerouac sees the stars he immediately catches the utmost air to any kind of detail of their situation. So Sal from time to time expresses his thoughts about his surroundings. These expressions become more complex when he uses the words connotes the bigness of the universe. And when he expresses of that he possibly refers the insignificant position of man in the midst of the vast universe. Kerouac is like a seer on the face of Sal. He sees the past, the present, even the future. He emphasizes the sense of freedom of the wandering people with admiration. Kerouac is very much interested in people like him: independent, free from the anxiety of making money, simply living. So for example Elmer Hassel (Herbert Huncke) - a street hustler in New York City and a dweller of 42nd street- is praised like an epic hero in the novel: “a travelling epic Hassel“(p. 25). Kerouac glorifies Mississippi Gene along with Hassel when he says: “Although this Gene was white but there was something of the wise and tired old Negro in him” (p. 25). In fifties America no one would glorify, a tired, old and a black guy. So Kerouac once more shows his spiritual, tender, altruist face. Deep inside this understanding, lies moral values that also erupt from Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or such other religious understandings.

In Colorado on his way to Denver he pictures himself in a Denver bar with all the gang: “I would be strange and ragged and like the Prophet who has walked across the land to bring the dark

Word, and the only Word I had was ‘Wow’” (33). Sal sees himself as a kind of messiah, a Christ figure. His prophet is *ragged*. He claims his only Word was “Wow”, a mix of admiration and awe nothing else. The word of “Wow” was enough for the admiration of being and existence. The respect was the key. Being ragged also glorified. The beatific guys do not need any material concerns like old Franciscan friars or like Sal Paradise. The spirit was important. External appearance was not relevant. Having the Word, bringing the Word shows divine inspiration or revelation which all refers high spirituality. And it refers to illumination of all humanity.

Sal’s landing on Denver at Larimer Street is a big event²: “I stumbled along with the most wicked grin of joy in the world, among the old bums and beat cowboys of Larimer Street” (p. 31). These people are like superheroes, pioneers, living legends, mythical characters in flesh and blood. Larimer Street is important because Dean was raised there.³ For Sal everything about Dean is important. Dean’s father was an alcoholic and when Dean was a kid about 6 years old, he used to beg in front of Larimer alleys and sneak the money back to his father who waited among the broken bottles (p. 35). And when he was young, stealing cars and picking up the girls were his expert skills. Dean had not any relatives who liked him, only there were buddies. Dean is defined as a saint: “Dean was a new kind of American saint who had tremendous energy” (p. 35). Sal’s interest to spiritual facts and characteristics shows also his spirituality in his life.

Sal zestfully describes his nights with Carlo (Allan Ginsberg) in Denver streets: “Carlo and I went through rickety streets in the Denver night. The air was soft, the stars so fine, the promise of every cobbled alley so great, that I thought I was in a dream” (pl. 39). He sees promises from the “cobbled alleys”—with historical and cultural connotations, “stars seems fine, the air seems soft”—with transcendental sensations, and he feels in a dream (p. 39). Also the land, the road has spirit, the mountains have spirit: “I wondered what the spirit of the Mountain was thinking” (p.

² Larimer Street is a Beat legacy. It is actually Neal Cassady’s home but became a Beat icon. This fact shows the roots of beat as real American and also a beat culture and has characteristics of fallen and “other”. Campbell refers Larimer Street as Denver’s red-light district and Skid Row (p. 55). Campbell also explains the importance of that street. The old Neal had his time only in this street either in saloons to drink, or to work as a barber but—he spent more time drinking than hairdressing (Campbell, 1999, p. 55) or after his wife abundance Neal and old Neal slept in Larimer’s flophouses among snoring drunks—actually they were doomed by Dean’s mother. So the Larimer Street which bears the name of “General” William Larimer founder of Denver on 17 November 1858, which is named after the governor of the Kansas Territory (Boorstin, 1965, pp. 120-121), has long memories in Jack’s mind.

³ Dean claimed he had stolen 500 automobiles (Campbell, 1999, p. 56), he set a Denver record for stealing cars and reformatory. From 11 to 17 most of the time he was there (OR, 2012, p. 35).

49). Sal has a vision of spirituality. He sees jackpines in the moon, he sees old miners' ghosts (p. 49). Sal mentions also the Word, a sacred word, a divine word: "I guess... an old man with white hair was probably walking toward us with the Word..." (p. 49) referring a saint, a prophet, a messenger from God and this happens only when they were on the west side of America and where they could be on the roof of America—like Moses on Mount Sinai and where they really could yell, scream and shout into the darkness (p. 49) with some kind of ecstasy which makes them more spiritual thinkers than drunken wanderers:

In the whole eastern dark wall of the Divide this night there was silence and the whisper of the wind, except in the ravine where we roared; and on the other side of the Divide was the great Western Slope, and the big plateau that went to Steamboat Springs, and dropped, and led you to the western Colorado desert and the Utah desert; all in darkness now as we fumed and screamed in our mountain nook, mad drunken Americans in the mighty land. We were on the roof of America and all we could do was yell, I guess-across the night, eastward over the Plains, where somewhere an old man with white hair was probably walking toward us with the Word, and would arrive any minute and make us silent. (p. 49)

Sal leaves Denver looking for Dean Moriarty's father unintentionally on Larimer Street: "It seemed to me every bum on Larimer Street maybe was Dean Moriarty's father" (p. 51). He goes to the Windsor Hotel where father and son lived, tracing the old times. Then while leaving he receives a phone call from Dean and realizes that he did not talk with Dean for more than five minutes the whole time (p. 52). I think this realization also proves Sal's spirituality in seeing the world. Actually he is constantly busy with the thought of Dean and his traces, but actually all is his imagination, all is his mind occupied with Dean. He feels connected to him. Every single moment in Denver Sal remembers Dean and his past life in Denver, especially on Larimer Street. Yet, in reality they have contacted only a times and promised each other to meet on the west coast.

After Denver, Sal finds a job as a guard, ironically in the shipyard barracks, with Remi Boncoeur's (Henri Cru) help in Mill City California. He continues to work there for a while and nothing significant takes place expect for few minor and funny incidents. Then he decides to go back to East as he feels his life is becoming monotonous. He has reached to the end of America and there is no place to go further (p. 70). Then suddenly he realizes that east is holier and browner and the west is white and *emptyheaded* (p. 70). He realizes that New York's cloud of dust is attractive to him. The cloud of dust and the brown steam symbolizes the industry in New York. Yet Sal describes the city air on the contrary the Romantic idea as holy, being a bit

Wordsworthian⁴. The whiteness of west symbolizes the emptiness of the big vastness and this emptiness seems boring for Sal. One thing is for sure. He has reached to the end of America and have not met a girl that he can love. It may be this feeling that has triggered the idea of emptiness of the west. He thinks east might be more romantic for him because there he has more connections than those he have in the west. His friends, his family, his aunt and his memories, all were in the east.

Then he plans going back to New York but with stops along the way: “I decided then and there to go to Hollywood and back through Texas to see my bayou gang then the rest be damned” (p. 70). On his way to LA he meets a Mexican girl called Terry. Terry was running away from her husband and she left her child behind. Sal thinks she is the cutest little Mexican girl (p. 73). His relationship with Terry gives Sal more enthusiasm and amusement. There is no more Dean, Carlo, Marylou (Dean’s young wife) or Camille (Dean’s girlfriend and another wife) in his mind. Sal relationship with Terry is pure love and she belongs only to Sal.

Actually his relationship with Terry is a turning point in the novel and this relationship gives Sal the opportunity to know the fellahin lifestyle, the lifestyle of marginalized people which Sal was interested in very much. This life concerns living in tents almost in open air, with very limited money and food under difficult working conditions. But being with the girl he loves, Sal does not mind these hardships. When they first make love in a hotel room Sal describes the situation as “two tired angels of some kind, hang up forlornly in an LA shelf, having found the closest and most delicious thing in life together, we fell as sleep and slept till late afternoon” (p. 76). The relationship is far from sexual desires. It is a pouring of feeling and spirit. The aim is to satisfy their souls’ hunger. The love affair represents Jack Kerouac’s understanding of life full of emotion and mystical spirituality.

Every time Sal expresses his beatness he talks like a mystic, like a Sufi or a Hindu ascetic, full of pain. For example, when he is on his way to LA he feels beaten: “I was so lonely, so sad, so tired, so quivering, so broken, so beat...” (p. 73). Again on the way to New York he says: “I was sick and tired of life” (p. 96). His beatness represents helplessness; it is a state of purity. He is like a saint, a great saint, because his sufferings are high in degree, recalling Saint Ignatius of

⁴ Wordsworth was not so against city and city life like other Romantics like Blake. See “London” by Blake vs. “Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802” by Wordsworth.

Loyola's words: "Do you want to become a great saint? Ask God to send you many sufferings". His life was sad and ragged (p. 76).

In LA Sal suddenly feels sorry though he is with Terry: "I never felt sadder in my life. LA is the loneliest and most brutal of American cities" (p. 77). Then he compares New York with LA and he catches that little "wacky" comradeship in some streets of New York while for him LA is a jungle: "LA is the loneliest and most brutal of American cities; New York gets god-awful cold in the winter but there's a feeling of wacky comradeship somewhere in some streets. LA is a jungle" (p. 77). His soul finds rest only when he is among the people who have some kind of comradeship. Sal is a spiritual guy, but he demands social interaction not only for himself but also for the society. When he sleeps with Terry what bothers him is some sobbing coming from outside the hotel.

He describes the streets of LA: "That grand wild sound of bop floated from beer parlors; it mixed medleys with every kind of cowboy and boogie-woogie in the American night. Everybody looked like Hassel" (p. 77). He identifies the characters one by one: "Wild Negroes with bop caps and goatees came laughing by; then long-haired brokendown hipsters straight off Route 66 from New York; then old desert rats, carrying packs and heading for a park bench at the Plaza; then Methodist ministers with raveled sleeves, and an occasional Nature Boy saint in beard and sandals" (p. 78). These are the ones whom Sal sees. Obviously he is fond of decayed types. These people belong to the working class and suffer from poverty. He might be interested in these people as he sees a similarity between himself and them in terms of poverty but the way he uplifts these characters and his ambition to become acquaintance with them cannot be explained simply with the resemblance of their economic status. However, there is no parallelism between Sal and these characters in terms of intellectual accumulation. His behavior can only be explained with his spirituality, his ability to see what is not seen by the majority and what is not glorified by many. He enthusiastically tells the story of a boy who wants to become a hobo when he grows up. This is Big Slim Hazard's (William Holmes Hazard) story who became a hobo by choice (p. 26). He said to his mother: "Ma, I want to be a ho-bo someday". In Sal's eyes everybody looks like Hassel (Herbert Hunke) the street hustler, junky, hobo, who travels all around America in one breath, jumping from long distance freight trains, lost in crowds, lost his family ties, suffering all the time, a saint.

Sal and Terry cannot find a job, they try their chance in making movies in Hollywood but nothing happens, so they decide to go to Bakersfield and work in vineyards picking grapes. Terry asks everyone for a job but again nothing happens. They buy some wine with the money left and sit over a fire on drawn up crates. The weather is good. “Ah, it was a fine night, a warm night, a wine-drinking night, a moony night, and a night to hug your girl and talk and spit and be heavengoing” (p. 81). Sal is always happy he has no worries, no anger. He has wide comprehension and optimism and he always has in his mind the image of heaven.

In Sabinal, Texas, Terry’s buddy Ponzo’s words express the motto of the penniless workers of the southern hot soils: “today we drink, tomorrow we work, Mañana man, mañana!” (p. 83). They live without money and job for days. Even in their beatness there is hope: “Where we going to sleep tonight, baby?” “I don’t know” (p. 81). Also their friend does not have a place to live: ““where do you live Ponzo?” I asked. ‘Nowhere, man...I’m gonna get my truck and sleep in it tonight’” (p. 85). They are very optimistic about life: “Too late today. Tomorrow, man, we make a lot of money; today we have a few beers” (p. 85). They remain optimistic, as if a big job is waiting for them and they will find many opportunities to earn money, tomorrow. Sal makes a joke about the word mañana “*mañana* a lovely word and one that probably means heaven (p. 85). Actually mañana means tomorrow but also it also means later but later can be a day or a year (Mcmillandictionary.com). So the vague connotations of the future are very attractive for Sal, because he is not sure about what is waiting for him and he has no intention to worry about it. He is a spiritual guy who accepts things as they are he sees the whole. He is a predestinationist. He says: “None of us knew what was going on, or what the Good Lord appointed” (p 84). He is eager to live the moment, improvising, without a plan. Seize the day, *carpe diem*, is Sal’s motto. Actually living according to this motto is not easy. Everybody knows the actions we take today have effects on tomorrow as the actions we took previously effect our life today. Sal acts in accordance with the motto of *carpe diem*. Keeping in mind the philosophy of *memento mori* Sal always remembers that he is a mortal.

As the weather gets colder in October, Sal and Terry understand that they have to leave. They promise to see each other in a month in New York and separate. Terry is supposed to come to New York with her brother a month later, but both Sal and Terry know that she wouldn’t make it. The separation is bitter, yet. Sal is not hopeless: “Well, lackadaddy, I was on the road again”

(p. 92). He is excited being on the road again. He has feelings for Terry but he wants to go to New York and continue writing, he may even go back to college. On his way to New York he stops by Columbia Pictures and picks up his rejected writings. His preparation to return is miserable, he gets a loaf of bread and some salami and makes ten sandwiches to eat on the road. Sal is the monument of impecuniousness, and he is proud of that.

For Sal everything has two meanings; one is earthly like Plato's copies, the other is grand, whole and divine like the Ideas. When he arrives in St. Louis he walks by the Mississippi River and watches the logs. For him they are like grand *Odyssean* logs of his continental dream: "I took a walk down by the Mississippi River and watched the logs that came floating from Montana in the north-grand Odyssean logs of our continental dream" (p. 93). He has a euphoric state of mind maybe that state is induced by drugs. Sal sees in the Mississippi River "Odyssean logs" and in fact he was alone at that time he uses "our" for American people and their vision is called "continental dream" (p. 93). When Kerouac uses Odyssean as an adjective he refers to mythology, history, adventure, long journey and a voyage.⁵ In the novel we see his efforts to grasp whole America as one, and whole people as friends, lovers and beloved ones.

The first part of book ends with the story of the "Ghost of the Susquehanna". This story takes about two pages and it not mentioned again in the novel. It has no connection with the journeys and other parts of the book. Nonetheless this section has spiritual importance, as it exhibits Sal's vision about the east. In the first place the ghost belongs to the east coast. He actually is or it has taken the form of an old veteran travelling up and down ceaselessly, just like the Susquehanna River which drains to Atlantic Ocean, passing through Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York, as the longest river on the east coast (747 km). The Susquehanna ghost has a big achievement on Sal. He has shown Sal that wilderness does not belong to west only: "No, there is a wilderness in the East; it is the same wilderness" (p. 95). Yet, the history of this wilderness is older than west's. Benjamin Franklin (once he was a postmaster), George Washington (he was a soldier in the Indian wars), Daniel Boone (was an American pioneer, explorer and woodsman and founder of Cumberland Gap-a notch in the Appalachian Mountains located near the intersection of Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee), and William Bradford (founder of and governor of

⁵ Homer's epic poem which tells the story of Odysseus who tried to reach his home in Ithaca, after the fall of Troy..

Plymouth Colony) worked hard on the east side of the continent (p. 95). All these refer first American settlement and history of American civilization.

Sal meets the ghost in Harrisburg Pennsylvania. He is a W.W.I veteran, short, and he is about 60 years old. He says everybody offers something to him especially food and he stops by every Red Cross in town. He insists that there is a bridge ahead which they cross but they cannot find it. The ghost is not afraid of traffic. He walks into the traffic and is almost crashed several times. He is unusual an unusual character in the novel.

The ghost wants to go to Canada but always goes towards a wrong direction. The emphasis on his pronunciation of Canada as “Canady” is meaningful. Kerouac had Canadian background and his reference to Canada here is significant. Even the ghost can be representing Kerouac’s himself. The ghost vanishes in the darkness of Allegheny Mountains—which are the part of Appalachian Mountain Range (p. 95). The ghost’s disappearance reinforces the idea of phantasmata. But his east side wanderings represent Kerouac’s engagements on the East side of continent. The ghost shows Sal how to find the American Spirit in the east, among the forests, by the rivers, and on the road. Sal describes as if the ghost is himself and this ghost is like a saint: “I suddenly saw the little hobo standing under a sad streetlamp with his thumb stuck out- poor forlorn man, poor lost sometime boy, now broken ghost of the penniless wilds” (p. 95).

Sal’s overnight sleep in Harrisburg railroad station is interrupted by station masters. He feels then wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. He feels the visage of a gruesome grieving ghost. Sal defines his day as the day of the Laodiceans: “Then comes the day of the Laodiceans, when you know you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, and with the visage of a gruesome grieving ghost you go shuddering through nightmare life” (p. 93). The sentence is taken also from Revelation 3:14-22: “...Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich” (Ritenbaugh, 1993, Christ’s Judgement, n. pag.) responding of God to Laodiceans. So Kerouac uses his spirituality and all his religious background to describe his situation on the road.

He apparently consumes all his energy during this trip. He is hungry and is chewing the cough drops he bought in Nebraska months ago. When he gets home by hitch-hiking he eats everything

in the ice box. Dean was in his aunt when he was on the road, and had left two days before Sal's arrival. Sal says at the end of the first part: "I had also missed Dean" (p. 97). Sal has become dependent on Dean. His connection is spiritual he has no material concerns. Dean all by himself became a close friend. Aristotle says in *Nicomachean Ethics*: "Friendship is based on self-love" (Book IX, chapter 4). Attributed phenomena to Dean from saintliness to sexuality also have some resonance from Sal in the lights of Aristotle.

Sal has not seen Dean for over a year at the beginning of the second chapter. Then when Sal is in his brother's house for Christmas in the winter of 1948 together with his family, Dean appears at the door with a "mud spattered" '49 Hudson (p. 99). Sal's brother is about to move from that house. When Dean hears this he immediately offers help with his brand new car. All the friends seem helpful, generous and good hearted. In this that Sal did not see Dean, Dean has become father. He is with Camille and they live in San Francisco. Yet the purity of the road invites them to mobility: "The only thing to do was go" (p. 108). Sal claims the "bug" was on him while describing the Christmas: "I had been spending a quite Christmas in the country, as I realized when we got back into the house and I saw the Christmas tree, the presents, and smelled the roasting turkey and listened to the talk of the relatives, but now the bug was on me again" (p. 104). The bug was the desire to be on the road and Sal is on the edge of another trip. The companionship is the trigger of these pilgrimages all over the continent. In fact that winter Sal has found a girlfriend and is attending to school and there was no reason to go to a trip. Carlo put it into words in an ecstatic moment at Sal's house in Patterson: "I mean man, whither goest thou? Whither goest thou, America, in thy shiny car in the night?".⁶, "...there was nothing to talk about any more. The only thing to do was go" (p. 108).

When Sal and Dean are left alone for the first time became Deans thinks that he can continue to talk with him for years. There are many things, many concerns, many doubts, many worries, and many philosophies to talk about. Their talk zooms back and forth in time. Their main concern is to understand the time. They try to understand the meaning of happenings. "Everything is fine. God exists, we know time" (p. 108). They are like philosophers who explores God,, themselves and their existence. However their approach to understanding things is spiritual rather being

⁶ This expression is directly quoted from Bible in John 13:36: "Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards".

philosophical or logical. Sal says: “Everything since the Greeks has been predicated wrong. You can’t make it with geometry and geometrical systems of thinking” (p. 108). Also Sal feels that Dean has changed: “I had never dreamed Dean would become a mystic” (p. 109). Everything seems “pure” and clear for them. Dean’s words show his spiritual side:

As we roll along this way I am positive beyond doubt that everything will be taken care of for us – that even you, as you drive, fearful of the wheel’ (I hated to drive and drove carefully) – ‘the thing will go along of itself and you won’t go off the road and I can sleep. (p. 109).

They talk like Zen Buddhist monks. They are enlightened beyond words. Their realization is beyond narration. One can sense that the tremendous word bombardment in this section of the book is probably aimed to reflect the intensity of these transcendental moments. And Dean’s usage of the word “pure” was significant to Sal: “He used the word ‘pure’ a great deal. I had never dreamed Dean would become a mystic” (p. 109).

In addition, their thoughts about women are very different than it may appear. For example Sal says: “All these years I was looking for the woman I wanted to marry. I couldn’t meet a girl without saying to myself, what kind of wife would she make” (p. 105). They find divine side in sexual relationships. Menderes says “When the two bodies coupled each other in full reverence falls into the womb of universe once again, time and space disappear” (2004, p. 24). At that moment man sees his own spirit and the essence of his existence. Deepak Chopra says “Sexual desire is sacred and chaste. The suppression of sexual energy is false, ugly and unchaste. During sexual union, there is union between flesh and spirit”. For Chopra the universe is created by the energy of sex. The same hidden spirituality can be seen in Sal’s and Dean’s understanding of sexual relationship.

Their journey is a humble one and they are like Zen Buddhists. As they move Sal’s brother’s furniture to New York their only concern is the fact that they are on the road again., the rest is only trivial details: “That’s the way Dean wanted it” (p. 104). But they have money problems. Sal, Dean, Ed and Marylou travel together and none of them has enough money to eat properly. But they maintain their calmness and they are lucky enough to find some food by chance. “In Philadelphia we went into a lunchcart and ate hamburgers with our last food dollar. The counterman - it was three A.M. - heard us talk about money and offered to give us the hamburgers free, plus more coffee, if we all pitched in and washed dishes in the back” (p. 105).

All these characters act like saints; they have no worries about what they will eat for their next meal. They have saintly calmness. In a sense they have no earthly pleasures. Still they like sex, they like good poetry, they like good literature and they like to be high. Although these are also earthly desires, sex, drugs and good poetry induce ecstatic moments, which enable them to produce the products which are beyond the human capacity. Their main concern is to produce things, both bodily and mentally but they avoid consumption.

The characters in *On the Road* have extraordinary visions. They sense beyond life. For example one night Sal sees a nightmare in which he is chased by an Arabian figure across the desert and captured by him just before he reaches the “Protective City”. He says: “Something, someone, some spirit was pursuing all of us across the desert of life and was bound to catch us before we reached heaven” (p. 112). They see life as an obstacle to reach in heaven. Worries without reason are hurdles between man and eternal happiness. To some degree Sal and his friends eliminate these obstacles. Sal says:

Naturally, now that I look back on it, this is only death: death will overtake us before heaven. The one thing that we yearn for in our living days, that makes us sigh and groan and undergo sweet nauseas of all kinds, is the remembrance of some lost bliss that was probably experienced in the womb and can only be reproduced (though we hate to admit it) in death. (p. 112)

Like the eighteenth century Romantics Sal associates his earlier life with eternity. Life with all sufferings is like a desert before reaching an oasis. The childhood is closer to the “bliss”. In a sense he praises death. Sal and Dean’s understanding of time is the proof of their internalization of death.⁷ Sal’s association of death with bliss may seem paradoxical. Human beings urge for bliss, heaven, paradise, or eternal happiness, but apparently death is an obstacle for this longing. For Dean death is not a complex problem. As humans will not be in life again there is nothing to do with it. This is an interesting conclusion as it recalls the doctrines of Abrahamic religions. In Hinduism or Buddhism there is belief in reincarnation. Sal agrees with Dean showing his belief about after life.

⁷ This is explained in detail by Mortenson in “Beating Time: Configuration of Temporality in Jack Kerouac’s “On the Road””, but the third part of the novel relates much of this consideration so detailed investigation of their stance against death will be in the further analyses.

In the second part of the book Sal feels lost: “Everything was being mixed up and all was falling” (113). With Lucille he has no future, he knows it. Even though he wants to marry her, he does not have enough money to divorce Lucille from her husband. Also Sal has many interests and feels confused. He thinks Lucille would never understand him. He describes his position as: “I like too many things and get all confused and hung-up running from one falling star to another till I drop...I had nothing to offer anybody except my own confusion” (p. 113). So Sal confesses that he has fallen to pieces and is emotionally confused. Life has disappointed him. Although he has good intentions, obviously this is not enough to take action.

While Sal is in such a psychological situation he attends to enormous parties which gather hundreds of people in basement apartments (p. 114). These parties are wild and frantic. Dean is an admirer of Rollo Greb (Alan Ansen) and he suggests that if anyone behaves in life like him he would get “IT” (p. 115). The word “it” is used several times in capital letters referring to higher meanings. “IT” can mean the essence of life, the meaning of life, God, union with God, or a mystic experience. And this word, written with capital letters, shows Kerouac’s implication of the meanings beyond the appearances otherwise how to show it other than writing in Capital. This is also another indicator of his consideration of spirituality.

Both Sal and Dean often lose themselves in jazz beats. When they watch a jazz musician performing, they see a divine creature, not a performer. When they listen to jazz melodies they feel strong emotions. They sweat, shout and feel excited. They act like madmen. Referring to the musician Shearing’s empty seat before the piano Dean says: “God’s empty chair” (p. 116). And Sal continues: “God was gone”. Obviously, he shares Dean’s idea about Shearing. Listening to jazz music and smoking marijuana is their means to reach Nirvana. Sal says “I suddenly realized it was only the tea we were smoking” (p. 116). The effects were amazing on Sal: “It made me think that everything was about to arrive – the moment when you know all and everything is decided forever” (p. 116).

For Sal and his friends road means purity. When they travel, they feel excited, free from worries. On their way to visit Old Bull Lee in the South Dean says: “...everything is fine and there is no need in the world to worry...” They talk warmly about the goodness and joy of life (p. 121). Their main goal is to live the moment. They want to leave conflicts in the past. The road is pleasurable and “holy” (p. 125) and journey is a “pilgrimage” for them: “We got out of the car

for air and suddenly both of us were stoned with joy to realize that in the darkness all around us was fragrant green grass and the smell of fresh manure and warm waters” (p. 125). So the road has a spiritual meaning for them. As they proceed to south they get even more excited. When they drive along the Gulf of Mexico they are joyful: “We saw New Orleans in the night ahead of us with joy”, “Oh, smell the people”, “Ah! God life!”, “The air was so sweet in New Orleans” (p. 127). These journeys are like spiritual rejuvenation for the characters in the novel especially for Sal and Dean. Sal defines his gang as “sad Americans” and says: “...members of our sad drama in the American night kept popping out to find out where everybody was” (p. 134). This sadness, their broken hearts, their unfulfilled joys show their need for spirituality.

In addition joy and excitement, the journey awakens the narrator’s understanding of his surrounding like a transcendental writer. He depicts Mississippi as a melting pot. With his depiction he reshapes America. Actually he reevaluates the meaning of America. He says: “On rails we leaned and looked at the great brown father of waters rolling down from mid-America like the torrent of broken souls – bearing Montana log and Dakota muds and Iowa vales...” (p. 127) and “Great beautiful clouds floated overhead, valley clouds that made you feel the vastness of old tumbledown holy America...” (p. 136). He continues his description of Mississippi: “What is the Mississippi River? - a washed clod in the rainy night, a soft plopping from drooping Missouri banks, a dissolving, a riding of the tide down the eternal waterbed, a contribution to brown foams, a voyaging past endless vales and trees and levees, down along...” (pp. 141-142). Lott’s (2004) assertion that the idea of interconnectedness arising from the Buddhism (p. 171) resonates in these lines. Idea of interconnectedness also finds embodiment in Emerson’s (1841) transcendentalist expressions:

...the heart in thee is the heart of all; not a valve, not a wall, not an intersection is there anywhere in nature, but one blood rolls uninterruptedly an endless circulation through all men, as the water of the globe is all one sea, and truly seen, its tide is one (The Over Soul, p. 299).

After Old Bull Lee Dean, Marylou, and Sal decide to go to LA via New Mexico, they are broke as they were on the road to El Paso. They try every possible option but they have no money at all. They go to the travel bureau where “shifty characters were waiting with battered suitcases” to share gas, they go the bus station and try to get some passengers to ride with them and give some money for gas. They want to get some money from casual hitchhikers but they can not find any.

One of these hitchhikers is a seventeen year old boy and he promises to give some money when they reach his destination. They all know that such promises are never kept yet again they do not leave the hitchhiker on the road and take him in the car. They have saintly compassions and are tenderhearted. Then they change their route to borrow five dollars from an old friend of Sal. All these indicate their desperate situation. All they want is some money which will be enough to support them while they are on the road. After their journey from the cold days of New York (1949) to warmer days of San Francisco is completed and they separate. More correctly Dean leaves Marylou and Sal in a hotel room without money. Marylou cries: "You see what a bastard he is" (p. 154). Sal admits that Dean have some irregularities in character. Actually Sal depicts his last week in San Francisco as "the beatest time of his life" (p. 155). They even visit some old drunken seamen that Marylou knew before and they try to get some money to buy food, but they end up only with some whisky (p. 155).

Finally also Marylou leaves Sal and he remains all by himself with his hunger and sufferings and loneliness. He is on the road of sainthood. Sal picks up some butts on the street and smokes them. Some pass-byers are terrified with his looks and beatness. Sal is in a different realm. He thinks every water, every street in America or on the world are the same. They look all the same to him, "universal water" (p. 156). He says: "I was delirious" (p. 156). He sees his grandmother in England, he finds himself in the year of 1750. In the beatest mood of his whole life Sal reaches absolute ecstasy that he always wanted to reach. This is important because this moment has come after his utmost sufferings. And the fact that he "always" has desired this ecstatic state shows the reader the narrator's intention and ambition. We understand that Sal's journey had a grand purpose. With his looks, his desire and his living conditions Sal becomes a Christ like figure and is betrayed by his closest friend like Jesus was betrayed by Judas. He describes his p saying:

And for just a moment I had reached the point of ecstasy that I always wanted to reach, which was the complete step across chronological time into timeless shadows, and wonderment in the bleakness of the mortal realm, and the sensation of death kicking at my heels to move on, with a phantom dogging its own heels, and myself hurrying to a plank where all the angels dove off and flew into the holy void of uncreated emptiness, the potent and inconceivable radiances shining in bright Mind Essence, innumerable lotus-lands falling open in the magic mothswarm of heaven. I could hear an indescribable seething roar which wasn't in my ear but everywhere and had nothing to do with sounds. I realized that I had died and been reborn numberless times but just didn't remember especially because the

transitions from life to death and back to life are so ghostly easy, a magical action for naught, like falling asleep and waking up again a million times, the utter casualness and deep ignorance of it. (pp. 156-157)

The above quote is the evidence of his Sufic existence. His narration becomes a kind of Zen or Sufic literature. In fact *On the Road* is a reflection of Tao itself. Tao which means path, way, or route in the context of spirituality and religion, belongs to Far Eastern cultures. By all means Sal's situation is the highest level of spirituality and that ecstatic moment has different names in different religions and cultures. He tastes the famous—as widely expressed “to become One”, or “union of One” experienced in a blessed position. He is now a holy man or a saint, at least a mystique who has numberless innate abilities.

With Sal's sad departure from San Francisco to New York the second part of the book comes to end and in the spring of 1949 after many disappointments Sal decides to settle down in Denver without any of his companions. Sal's choice to settle down in Denver is meaningful. Dean was raised in Denver and his old drunken father still lives in Denver. AS he wanders in Denver he sees Dean and Marylou everywhere (p. 164). His desire to see them and to talk with them is irresistible. Once more time he sets on the road to meet Dean in San Francisco. On his way as he crosses the Colorado-Utah border he sees God himself: “I saw God in the sky in the form of huge gold sunburning clouds above the desert that seemed to point a finger at me and say ‘Pass here and go on, you're on the road to heaven’” (p. 165). This is a clear announcement of Sal's main concern. Sal feels sad and describes him with Dean as “two broken-down heroes of the Western night” (p. 173). Sal and Dean promise not to leave each other again though it is a futile and a fruitless effort. When Galatea blames Dean as “just goofing all the time” (p. 176) Sal comments on him “HOLY GOOF”. Even in their goofiness there is holiness and also Dean is a holy con-man: “The holy con-man began to eat” (p. 194). Their journey is like one of their previous drifts. The sense in these journeys is summarized as: “Bitterness, recrimination, advice, morality, sadness –everything behind him and ahead of him was the ragged and ecstatic joy of pure being” (p. 178).

In the third part there is an important section which reveals Dean's views about the others and the world. Dean says: “...we know what IT is and we know TIME and we know that everything

is really FINE” (p. 189) like being capable of the meaning and secret of life and he whispers to Sal revealing his ultimate secret:

...they have worries, they’re counting the miles, they’re thinking about where to sleep tonight, how much money for gas....how they will get there...and they will get there anyway, you see. But they need to worry and betray time with urgencies false and otherwise purely anxious and whiny; their soul really won’t be at peace unless they can latch on to an established and proven worry...” (p. 189)

IT, with the capital letters in the novel may mean the longing for either a better past or a different present. IT may also refer as Grace (2002) discusses in his essay when she criticizes a book about Beat’s religious views; the moment that microcosmic wall is obliterated between the individual and the universe (p. 813).

Dean and Sal knows IT. Maybe the key element of all the transcending effect is this. IT can be closely related with time, as in the novel it is emphasized that they know it and they know the time. Mortenson (2001) explains the concept of time and its meaning for the main characters of *On the Road* and their attitudes labeled as an “attack” against corruption of time by capitalism (p. 52). Capitalism corrupts human understanding of time with its huge hegemony over human life, such as fast flow of the happenings, long working hours. Beats were all against these kind of enforcement. The deeper meaning is very important for the understanding time, as they continuously act against time in the novel. Their understanding of time and how they indirectly relate it to other concepts are not similar to the ways that other people think. Mortenson explains this as abandonment of the continual present, or internalization of death. Here Mortenson refers to Heidegger’s conception of the inauthenticity of time, which people can run away from their idea of mortality. People do this either by acting as immortals or pretending death is not absolute. The best example of this kind of behavior is becoming famous, making philanthropic contributions or accumulating amazing wealth according to Mortenson (p. 57). But Sal and Dean live in the moment. They avoid Heidegger’s idea of inauthentic time. According to Mortenson Dean—and for me also Sal, avoid inauthentic time. They live in the moment realizing that the life will end. They seemed to be maximizing their understanding the moment in which they live. The other resistance to inauthenticity of time was to be a Beat. The Beat lifestyle rejects fame, fortune, and earthly gains which possibly are the means of the desire of immortality. Mortenson asserts:

Dean realizes that the material and social glories of the world are nothing but obstructions to viewing life. Focusing exclusively on the unfolding moment, Dean avoids the trap of seeing the present as anything but what it really is- the final and ultimate reality. (p. 57)

So they are the heroes of a myth standing up against the absolute end, death. They looked into the eyes of death like mythical heroes and they live their lives in full with the ultimate self-consciousness in the realm of truth.

In Part four, Dean works in New York and Sal meets him from time to time. For Dean, life seems slower than before. But for Dean, life also continues as simple as before and lives in a cold-water flat but he has become a home guy. His biggest dream is a big house full of kids (p. 228). But for him: “you get older troubles pile up” (p. 228) and one can easily end up being an “old bum” (p. 229). It is praise worthy to end up like that. “There is no harm ending that way” says Dean and continues “you spend a whole life of non-interference with the wishes of others, including politicians and the rich, and nobody bothers you and you cut along and make it your own way”. There were many roads in life and Dean asks: “What is your road, man” (p. 229). According to Sal Dean almost reached Tao. Dean and Sal are now getting older, wiser and calmer. Dean sees his inevitable end like Sal. Sal dreams: “All I hope Dean, is someday we’ll be able to live on the same street with our families get to be a couple of oldtimers together” (p. 231).

Sal sees the picture of Dean’s children. He learns from Dean that the pictures were taken by Ed Dunkel. Sal remarks that Dunkel’s efforts to take the pictures of kids spending a day is a “compassion” but this compassion is like the compassion of Saints, as Dunkel never shows up (p. 231). But for Sal the pictures are “Pitiful forms of ignorance” because when the children grown up and looked at those pictures they will never realize the truth underneath (p. 231). There lie hundreds of realities that bother Sal:

I realized these were all the snapshots which our children would look at someday with wonder, thinking their parents had lived smooth, well-ordered, stabilized-within-the-photo lives and got up in the morning to walk proudly on the sidewalks of life, never dreaming the raggedy madness and riot of our actual lives, our actual night, the hell of it, the senseless nightmare road. (p. 231)

Without Dean, Sal leaves New York and begins his last trip of the novel. This happens for the first time and it shows the aim of Sal was not Dean only pure road. This also shows that Sal has

become a mature person. When it is time to leave Dean, the narration becomes sadder, unimaginably pitifully: “Pitiful forms of ignorance” (p. 231). When the bus sets off Sal says: “I gaped into the bleakness of my own days” (p. 232). Then comes Dean within a jalopy and they set off again to Mexico where a beer is ten cents. Dean’s description by Sal is magnificent:

...burning shuddering frightful Angel... , approaching like a cloud, with enormous speed, pursuing me like the Shrouded Traveler on the plain... , I saw his huge face over the plains with the mad, bony purpose and the gleaming eyes; I saw his wings; I saw his old jalopy chariot with thousands of sparking flames shooting out from it; I saw the path it burned over the road; it even made its own road and went over the corn, through cities, destroying bridges, drying rivers. It came like wrath to the West. (p. 236)

Here Dean is depicted like an epic hero. There is much romanticism with passion. Sal sees him as an ideal man of his thoughts. Dean is going to Mexico with them. Sal, Dean and Stan set off to Mexico. They are gay and the journey is enjoyable. But his memories sometimes offend Sal: “I was crisscrossing the old map again; same place Marylou and I had held hands on a snowy morning in 1949, and where was Marylou now” (p. 246). On the border the officials treat them in friendly, relaxed manner: “Thassall...Welcome Mehico. Have good time. Watch you money... Don’t worry. Everything fine...” (p. 250).

They left their previous lives; they forgot everything about their earlier life. They finally found the magic land at the end of the road (p. 251). Mexico is a magic land in contrast to 50s America with its wealth and high standards. This elevation shows their understanding of life. American wealth and luxury mean nothing to them. They are not fond of mechanical lives. Sal regains his visions in Mexico: “I had to struggle to see Dean's figure, and he looked like God” (p. 259), “I saw streams of gold pouring through the sky and right across the tattered roof of the poor old car, right across my eyeballs and indeed right inside them; it was everywhere.” (p. 260). This scene contrasts significantly with how Sal felt in Denver in the spring of 1949: “At lilac evening I walked with every muscle aching among the lights of 27th and Welton in the Denver colored section, wishing I were a Negro, feeling that the best the white world had offered was not enough ecstasy for me...” (p. 163). In both lines the apparent mode is spirituality. This spirituality gets higher through the last pages:

We had reached the approaches of the last plateau. Now the sun was golden, the air keen blue, and the desert with its occasional rivers a riot of sandy, hot space and sudden Biblical tree shade. Now Dean was sleeping and Stan driving. The shepherds appeared, dressed as

in first times, in long flowing robes, the women carrying golden bundles of flax, the men staves. Under great trees on the shimmering desert the shepherds sat and convened, and the sheep moiled in the sun and raised dust beyond. "Man, man," I yelled to Dean, "wake up and see the shepherds, wake up and see the golden world that Jesus came from, with your own eyes you can tell!" (p. 273)

In the final part Sal returns and finds his "pure and innocent dear eyes" that he always searched for so long (p. 278). Sal and Laura plan to move to San Francisco. But Dean comes to New York and meets them: "I wanted to see your sweet girl and you –glad of you- love you as ever" (p. 279). But they separate strangely and sadly, and the last paragraph comes like an elegy for Dean. The novel ends with Dean Moriarty's name. The first sentences of the novel contains Dean's name for once, but it ends with the repetition of Dean Moriarty three times, emphasizing how important and significant character he has become for Sal:

So in America when the sun goes down and I sit on the old broken-down river pier watching the long, long skies over New Jersey and sense all that raw land that rolls in one unbelievable huge bulge over to the West Coast, and all that road going, all the people dreaming in the immensity of it, and in Iowa I know by now the children must be crying in the land where they let the children cry, and tonight the stars'll be out, and don't you know that God is Pooh Bear? the evening star must be drooping and shedding her sparkler dims on the prairie, which is just before the coming of complete night that blesses the earth, darkens all rivers, cups the peaks and folds the final shore in, and nobody, nobody knows what's going to happen to anybody besides the forlorn rags of growing old, I think of Dean Moriarty, I even think of Old Dean Moriarty the father we never found, I think of Dean Moriarty. (p. 281)

4. KEROUAC'S SPIRITUAL QUEST: DESOLATION ANGELS

Desolation Angels is a later novel by Kerouac written after *On the Road*. Jack Kerouac (Jack Duluoz in the novel) as the protagonist of the novel flies over his spiritual world from one end to the other. The novel begins with Kerouac's journals which are written by him during his summer job as fire lookout on Desolation Peak (North Cascade Mountains, Washington). Maloff (1965) describes the novel as follows: "There is lyricism, sodden with simulated mysticism, hilarious with solecisms" (n. pag.). The novel is not only a text but also a literary art because the novel has unique shape and content. There are a lots of apostrophes which are not common in a novel, use of vernacular languages, sound pronunciations, abbreviations, original and unusual names and lots of religious and spiritual quotations and even meaningless scribbles. According to Maloff (1965) the novel is the sacred book of the Beat Movement and is a canonical work. He says: "Here we are told of the legendary time he went up into the mountain as a fire-watcher, there to confront the All-in-One--and all in a chanting lyricism, sodden with simulated mysticism, hilarious with solecisms" (n. pag.).

Desolation Angels has a spiritual name. Both "Desolation" and "Angels" have connotation of spirituality with mysticism. Angel in Abrahamic religions has spiritual meaning. "Angelus" in Latin, "melek" in Arabic, "malakh" in Hebrew, "angel" in English is a supernatural creature, celestial being. Angels are messengers of God. They are manifestations of God. Desolation comes from isolation and abandonment. It means beatness, grief, misery, devastation, dereliction, emptiness, hopelessness, loneliness and broken heart. Desolation is depressing as a word, as a concept. So the name of the novel by itself has spiritual connotations.

Jack Duluoz, in his absolute loneliness tries to find out the reality of existence, the universe, and tries to understand the nature's language. In this silent, solemn and desolated atmosphere, he listens, feels, understands, and involves in his spirit (inside) and his exterior world (outside). This image drawn by Kerouac is Christlike, "Kerouac's solitude atop Desolation Peak is comparable to Christ's solitude" (Beat Culture ed. Lawlor, 2005, p. 299). After absolute quarantine he jumps

into the West's jungle, San Francisco¹. He makes a pilgrimage one more to Mexico during his voyage to Europe as he did in his previous novel *On the Road*. Then he returns to New York, after Tangier, London, and Paris.

The novel is segmented. It consists of two books one is *Desolation Angels* and *Passing Through*. *Desolation Angels* has two parts as "Desolation in Solitude", "Desolation in the World". *Passing Through* has four parts; "Passing Through Mexico", "Passing Through New York", "Passing Through Tangiers, France and London", "Passing Through America Again". The novel's main concerns are death, investigation of Zen Buddhism and sensuality; in short spirituality. Kerouac's numerous highs and lows are obvious throughout the text. The text evaluates various religions and beliefs. In one sense Duluoz weighs those beliefs one by one, trying to find out what they mean and which one is suitable for him. Being isolated from the world helps him for meditations, the basics for the Buddhist enlightenment. Meditation is also a required practice in Abrahamic religions, especially in Islam and in Christianity yet the concepts and the manner of meditation are different. For example Buddhism suggests the drain out the contents of the brain, while Christianity recommends to fill the mind with passages from the Bible.

Desolation Angels begins with a very long sentence which consists of 39 lines. Jack talks about his lazy afternoons on Desolation Peak (3) and says that in the beginning there was the Void. In a way he sees the Void as an omnipotent creator instead of God. This kind of definition of a great Creator can be understood as a religious thought without an Abrahamic religious definition of God, as all three Abrahamic religions namely, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, have a concrete image of God. This God is omnipotent; he is the creator, the ruler and the punisher. God has no gender; he has all identities in it. All are monotheistic religions, but Christianity has the doctrine of Trinity. Yet none of the Abrahamic religions define God as void or nothingness. Only for a Buddhist the experience with the undifferentiated unity is the Void or Nirvana (Stace, 1960, p. 24) the same experience for a Muslim or a Christian or a Jew, means union with God. Buddhism has no Supreme Being. Creator God has no place in Buddhism. Jack sees in *Desolation Angels* the Void on the face of Hozomeen which he considers is the "most beautiful mountain he has ever seen (p. 6). Hozomeen clearly explains his understanding of Void. He compares the "Void"

¹ San Francisco was the Beat generation's center in the West during 50's.

to a big black appearance at night. The mountain looks like a big emptiness at nights. So for Jack, that big emptiness means the “Void” and that is only a mountain.

Jack’s idea about the “Void” parallels with the concept of void. This is emptiness, abyss. Void starting with the capital letter refers to God, the cause of everything, while the other refers to emptiness. We understand this from the following statements:

It’s me that’s changed and done all this and come and gone and complained and hurt and joyed and yelled, not the Void’ and so that every time I thought of the void I’d be looking at Mt. Hozomeen...until I realized ‘Hozomeen is the Void—at least Hozomeen means the void to my eyes (p. 3).

He weighs the basic Buddhist thoughts and writes down his arguments. Buddhism refers to the intrinsic factors that enable the ending of suffering. It does not mention God or seek help from God. Jack suddenly realizes that the cause of his complaints, pains, joys is God (Void) but himself. Then he describes void with a metaphor: “Hozomeen is the void”. He is in between, a nonbeliever and a Buddhist. He wants to believe all the causes are coming from him and there is no external provider. And even if there is an external power he names it as Void.

He has the idea of “finding God” before going to his fire lookout job on that Desolation Peak. He expects to become aware of “all the sufferings’ and existence’s meaning” as a result of coming to face to face with God or Tathāgata² (p. 4). He uses Buddhistic terminology to explain what he was thinking and this renders the novel as a criticism of Buddhism. He confesses that only finding was “himself”.³ He openly confesses that all troubles come from him and whatever happens Hozomeen or the Void is not bothered. He expresses doubt that the Void cannot be his God. Then he says: “The void is not disturbed by any kind of ups or downs, my God look at Hozomeen, is he worried or tearful?” (p. 5). Then he states Hozomeen’s limited lifespan “Even Hozomeen’ll crack and fall apart, nothing lasts, everything is passing through” (p. 5). He compares himself to the Void: “Why not I be like the Void, inexhaustibly fertile, beyond serenity, beyond even gladness, just Old Jack...” (p. 5).

² Tathāgata is a Sanskrit word, refers Buddha himself and means he is beyond everything, beyond all coming and going.

³ This finding parallels with Attar’s *Mantik-ut Tayr* (The Conference of the Birds). After long journey of the world’s birds to find the legendary Simorgh, their finding was only a lake in which they see their own reflections.

Jack spends long afternoons sitting and watching Hozomeen, listening to the silence of the bushes, eating quick meals, watching forest fires, and daydreaming about what he would do when he goes back to city life. He recaptures his whole life, digs in every detail of what he remembers and takes notes. In one of his recollections he remembers the sweet days at home, when he was 15 or 16. He remembers even the kitchen curtains and his cat licking his forepaw (p. 7). He is now an old bum, alone and sad. He compares himself to Hozomeen. Like him, Hozomeen is alone and has inaccessible fortress parapets. Sitting in the nature alone on a mountain top, he has mystic experiences. He investigates his spirituality through his experiences and thoughts besides his knowledge of on Catholicism and Buddhism. The sunsets become “mad orange fools” (p. 8) which for many souls are tools of inspiration. This madness also lies in those afternoons; those sunsets that they were forerunners of the darkness. The sunsets were in Jack’s mind as “mad fool events” which means they don’t have any inspirational echoes. They remain in his mind as some spots of meaninglessness rather than as sweet remembrances. They might be the consequence of his hopelessness in life. The nights always recalls of death for Jack Duluoz.

During nights he sees the North Star right on the top of the Hozomeen According to Jack the mountain has the ability to move if one can really induce him. The mountain seems now alive (p. 8). The North Star appears in different colors like pastel orange, iron orange, pastel green, etc. Nature becomes more alive in Jack’s eyes. But the colors seem unusual, as if they have strange unnatural tones. He sees everything more vividly than ever before. And of course there are childhood memories which accompany Jack Duluoz’s lonely nights. Then he feels like floating over time: “My life is a vast and insane legend reaching everywhere without beginning or ending like the Void—like Samsara⁴ (p. 12). This moment reminds us Jack’s remarks in *On the Road* when “he was half way across America, at the dividing line between the East of his youth and the West of his future” feeling he has “a haunted life” or “the life of a ghost” (*On the Road*, 2012, p. 15). Then he starts visioning sexual fantasies and claims “My life is a vast inconsequential epic with a thousand and a million characters—here they all come, as swiftly, we roll east, as swiftly the earth rolls east” (p. 13). “Rolling east” may have several connotations here. First east is the root of mystic religions. Rolling east is to understand man and his position in the universe at least in the solar system. He identifies his life as an epic but also ridicules his

⁴ Sanskrit word means the world, wandering through as reincarnation, cyclic existence, relates to Hinduism and Buddhism

life by calling it “inconsequential”. That word also claims Jack’s gains from life and life’s meaning has nothing to do with logic and meaning. Search for the meaning of life becomes more visible with these lines: “My life is a vast and insane legend reaching everywhere without beginning or ending, like the Void—like Samsara” (p. 12), “My life is a vast inconsequential epic with a thousand and a million characters—here they all come, as swiftly we roll east, as swiftly the earth rolls east” (p. 13). He presents to the audience his life with a million characters and happenings. He also expresses among those vast amount of characters and happenings there is no meaning and comprehensible relation.

Jack describes the scene from mountain as “Zen drawing on silk” (p.18). The scene is elegant and intangible and there is emphasis on eastern spirituality:

On foggy days the view from my toilet seat is like a Chinese Zen drawing in ink on silk of gray voids, I half expect to see two giggling old dharma bum, or one in rags, by the goat-horned stamp, one with a broom, the other with a pen quill, writing poems about the Giggling Lings in the fog—saying, “Hanshan, what is the meaning of the void?” (p. 19).

He always has sad memories even in early morning hours, like Blue Mondays in city life. But he is on the top of a mountain. He goes to antiquity across the Atlantic to Aegean coasts and comes back to the Pacific. He compares his mop drying on the rocks to Queen Hecuba, the wife of Priam: “I wake up in the morning at seven and my mop is still drying on the rock, like a woman’s head of hair, like Hecuba forlorn” (p. 18). He seeks the meaning of the Void in a comic scene which involves two dharma bums (Zen Monks): Hanshan and Shihte.⁵ Hanshan constantly asks: “what is the meaning of Void?” (p. 19). Shihte makes fun of that question. Hanshan wrote poems like Jack, in solitude and on top of the mountains. Hanshan means “Cold Mountain”. Hanshan was writing Zen poems approximately a thousand years ago. Then suddenly come King’s Men then Hanshan vanishes. Then Jack Duluoz suddenly sees Hanshan in front of him standing and showing the direction, pointing to the East. Duluoz looks east and he sees only Three Fools Creek. By this description Duluoz refers the meaninglessness of the poets’ involvement in his spiritual life

Jack’s work place is called “mountaintop trap” (p. 19), showing his dissatisfaction with his job. He makes plan to go to his friends and eating along the road: “...roam down that road, on 99, fast, mebbe a filet mignon on hot coals in a riverbottom some night, with wine, and on in the

⁵ Hanshan and Shihte (Shide) are 9th. Century Buddhist monks and poets. They are accepted as Bodhisattva.

morning—to Sacramento, Berkeley, go up to Ben Fagan’s cottage and say first off this Haiku: Hitch hiked a thousand/miles and brought/You wine...” (p. 19, 20). He is familiar eastern tradition even in literature. He is so familiar with eastern culture and he shows this background almost in every sentence.

He refers the Buddhist or Taoist enlightenment in further pages. He is a rain drop in an ocean and he is awakened by somebody who has a “cloudy bell, a mighty supramundane gong” (p. 21). He says that: “You have been assigned to wake up, this is the golden eternity...” (p. 22). So he pursues eternity. These statements refer to Buddhistic enlightenment. For Buddha wisdom is like a great ocean. Similarly Jack refers to wisdom as the “Bright Ocean of Infinitude”. He alludes to reincarnation and thus Buddhism when he says “—Believe ye shall live forever— Believe that ye have lived forever” (p. 22).

Duluo visits many places in his dreams and when he gets up he is amazed the mountains are still in the same place (p. 27). He wonders if the mountains dream. He eventually concludes that all nature is alive, they have lives like humans. However their existence has another qualification when compared to human beings. Their existence lasts longer and their much slower motions and their spirit is not comprehensible to humans. Duluo’s consideration of nature reminds the great Mahayana Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. Zimmerman (1951) refers to this deity as “the sound of a general thunder, rose in all the worlds. The great being knew that this a wail of lament uttered by all created things—the rocks and stones as well as the trees, insects, gods, animals, demons, and human beings of all the spheres of the universe...” (p. 383)

On a soft August evening he sits cross legged and prays to Awakener Avalokitesvara⁶ for immortal understanding. He is not trying to be ridiculous; he is truly seeking the spirit of Buddha. He is keen on finding an answer or any answer. Then the idea of that life is sleeping when one dies he wakes up again to the Eternal Ecstasy, comes to his mind: “Life is a baby’s dream” (p. 31). That is the result of his meditation. It is relieving but the question “why some has the knowledge others are ignorant?” bothers him. The magnificence of nature is only a reminder of golden eternity. He looks around through new eyes. It seems amazing. Everything is a reflection of the Power. He now knows the final route. And this is really relaxing. He says

⁶ Sanskrit. Lord, looks down who has compassion and mercy and has gender of ambivalence, male or female.

“...the ecstasy of the golden eternity is all we’re going back to, to the essence of the Power—and the Primordial Rapture, we all know it—I lie on my back in the dark” (p. 31). He realizes that there is no awakener and there is no awakening. That is his first awakening (p. 32). He defines the Power as selfless self⁷ (p. 31). Only one thing is sure for Jack that was the “recent world” (p. 31) which does not belong to primordial memory. The visible world is the recent cycle of creation by the Power (p. 31). Jack is again on the edge of the two beliefs one Buddhist and the other Abrahamic. Sunday memories from his childhood reinforce his Catholic background on his current meditations and thinking. Sunday looks sacred, privileged, and exclusive for Duluoz (p. 33). But immediately reveals his under ego: “Mostly Sundays I’m bored”

He loves his mother and family and “always in early Sunday mornings he remembers home in his Ma’s house in Long Island” (p. 33). But those precious memories get gloomy because of the recalls of those Sundays. For Jack, there is no holiness on Sundays: “For normal peasants Sunday is a smile, but us black poets, ahg—I guess Sunday is God’s lookingglass” (p. 34). In fact as a Catholic he could have reflected on the sacredness Sunday. Instead he plays with its connotations and talks about its implication on human body and mind. In the end the “presaging the ghostly day when industrial America shall be abandoned and left to rust in one long Sunday Afternoon of oblivion” (p. 34) maybe refers the emptiness of the day. This emptiness is insulting Jack. For Jack Sundays are not worthy because of it means only a nonworking day for the workers. But Jack likes to be in the crowds of a living city. He becomes alive among the crowds.

Then Duluoz plunges into Kantian philosophy describing “noumenon” and “phenomenon”. They are like Plato’s Ideas and copies. Duluoz defines very simply: “Noumena is what you see with your eyes closed, phenomena is what you see with your eyes open” (p. 37). After several attempts to meditate, Duluoz tries to see the world in terms of Kantian concepts. From the very beginning his main concern is to understand the world, the meaning of life, the universe, the moment. He explores his surrounding, nature, and the outer world. He tries possible theories and practices. He mixes, digs in all noumena and phenomena while he is in his shack. The twenty sixth chapter begins with a sentence that proves this argument: “Remembering, remembering, that sweet world so bitter to taste—the time when I played Sarah Vaughan’s Our Father on my

⁷ This definition is like Derrida’s structure which he defined in an essay called “Structure, Sign and Play in the course of the Human Sciences”, presented in 1966 at John Hopkins University. That structure has a center. But the center is not the center. It is a part of structure but not inside of it.

little box in Rocky Mount and the colored maid Lula wept in the kitchen”. After a while he continues: “At night at my desk in the shack I see the reflection of myself in the black window, a ragged faced man” (p. 40). His reflection was just with all behind it the void of 70 million light years of infinite darkness, proving the phenomena have effects on him with all noumena:

At night at my desk in the shack I see the reflection of myself in the black window, a rugged faced man in a dirty ragged shirt, need-a-shave, frowny, lipped, eyed, haired, nosed, eared, handed, necked, adamsappled, eyebrowed, a reflection just with all behind in the void of 70 000 000 000 light years of infinite darkness riddled by arbitrary limited-idea light, and yet there’s a twinkle in my eye and I sing bawdy songs about the moon in the alleys of Dublin, about vodka hoy boy, and then sad Mexico sundown-over-rocks songs about amor, corazón, and tequila— (p.40)

He then introduces readers a famous Buddhist text, one of the world’s earliest texts, Diamond Sutra which was put to writing in 868 A.D. after sung orally for centuries since Buddha (around 500 BC). Diamond means to cut precisely, and sutra means discourse in Sanskrit. This diamond cuts the illusions of the world and shows the individual that all phenomena are illusions: “All conditioned phenomena/ Are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble, a shadow,/ Like dew or a flash of lightning;/ Thus we shall perceive them.” (ctzen.org, The Diamond of Perfect Wisdom Sutra, chapter 32). In his sleeping bag Duluoz repeats the lines from Diamond Sutra the lines from Diamond Sutra fearing that a lightning might hit him or he might have a heart attack curled up the fear of God (p. 42). He is really in between a Christian God and Buddhistic enlightenment. Then he understands the words of Diamond are true. The result is: ”For all this phenomena, that which shows, and all noumena that which shows not, is the loss of the Heavenly Kingdom, a dream, a phantasm, a bubble...” (p. 42).

Duluoz paraphrases Diamond Sutra. In another section of the novel he refers to these notes: “Raphael has been reading the Diamondcutter of Wise Vow that I paraphrased on Desolation, has it on his lap” (p. 168). Together with Raphael (Gregory Corso), Irwin (Allan Ginsberg) and Sonya, Penny and Lazarus they are reading the part which advices to leave the frustrating desires aroused by beautiful sights, pleasant sounds, sweet tastes. The text is significant and valid from the beginning until end of the novel. However Duluoz does not clearly follow the teachings of Buddha. He is more like an observer. He simply evaluates the validity of the text for himself and for his friends.

Duluoz sometimes has erotic dreams in his loneliness. He dreams women, women in slips. He experiences different sexual relations in those dreams, but when he returns to his reality in the shack he feels happy: “I wake up glad to find myself saved in the wilderness mountains” (p. 46). It is better to have relations with women in dreams than in reality. Another concern has about women is motherhood. Both women and angels have affinity with motherhood: “Some lambs are female, some angels have woman-wings, it’s all mothers in the end...” (p. 46).

He underrates the current education system. He blames the system for functioning only for the privileged. The use of the word “dew” in this section has some implications in terms of Buddhism. The word is first used in the following sentence: “I see (college boys) on campuses in the mornings of September with their fresh cashmere sweaters and fresh books crossing dewy swards...” (p. 51). Later it is used for a second time on the same page: “Little Alpine firs at 7 A.M. don’t care about such things, they just exude dew”. In this section Jack observes the regular college guys walking with their fathers who are dentists or successful retired professors and reflects on the common acceptance of life on earth. He compares himself to them. He cannot remember when he last attended class. He still wakes up at 3 p.m. and remembers how he had set a new record at Columbia for cutting classes. He realizes that there is no difference all the behaviors on earth remembering Buddha’s sayings that claims whole life is a dew, emphasizing the transiency of life: “all conditioned phenomena are like dream... like dew or a flash of lightning...” (Diamond Sutra, All Phenomena Are Illusions, ctzen.org. n.d.). The efforts are nonsense for Duluoz. The net gain is nothing in both cases. The proof of this argument is himself. With all frustrations he accomplished in literature. He got fame and money in spite of his lack of attention on academic education and career. Thus he makes his theories clear. Few pages later he names himself as the greatest artist: “I am the greatest writer in America” (p. 53) while speaking with a bar mate. His claim also bears the humbleness and transiency of dew. He states his argument on an insignificant occasion to an insignificant person whose response is that he is “the greatest jazz pianist in America” (p. 53). But he states his desire in life is more than that and also this claim shows that his statement about being the best writer in America is not an arrogant claim: “Lord now I’m ready for more”. He promises: “This time I won’t whine”. He is looking for something other fame and money. That is the spirituality, inner accomplishment, restfulness of his soul.

On page 55 Jack digs into the meaning of the word “maya”. According to Lott (2004) Kerouac finds comfort and fortitude in the Buddhist idea of “maya”, which he interprets as “the world and the individual soul didn’t really exist and that life was a dream” (p. 171). Maya refers to different concepts according to the context yet the meaning that matters to Jack have some connections with eastern religions and especially with Buddhism. Jack informs the reader in Sanskrit maya means wile. Maya means illusion or magic, which appears real. His struggle with illusions arises during meditation, and he needs some help and he uses immediately the necessary text:

“Surangama Sutra”. This text is originally Chinese and talks about Dharma (cosmic law) and the strategies against delusions during the meditations. Duluoz understands his delusions through this text: “the little imaginary blossoms of sight discussed in the Surangama Sutra whereby I know it’s all an ephemeral dream of sensation” (p. 55). Delusions are the result of our genes. Always we fooled even we know it is not real. The critical answer is “the energy of habit”: “why do we go on being fooled even when we know it? Because of the energy of our habit and we hand it down from chromosome to chromosome to our children” (p. 55). Then he gets his enlightenment: “The simplest truth in the world is beyond our reach because of the complete simplicity, i.e. its pure nothingness” (p. 56). He denies all of his beliefs with the help of Surangama Sutra. He concludes that there is no Buddha, no enlightenment and all is illusion:

Even if suddenly 400 naked Nagas came solemn tromping over the ridge here and say to me “We have been told the Buddha was to be found on this mountaintop—we have walked many countries, many years, to get here—are you alone here?”—“Yes”—Then you are the Buddha” and all of the prostrate and adore, and I sit suddenly perfectly in diamond silence—even then, and I wouldn’t surprised (why be surprised?) even then I would realize that there are, there is no Buddha, no awakener, and there is no Meaning, no Dharma, and it is all only the wile of Maya. (p. 56)

He further goes on like this even the day after. For him there is no Desolation in Solitude, not even words: “there’s not even a Desolation in Solitude, not even this page, not even words, but the prejudiced show of things impinging on your habit energy” (p. 57). It sounds like he is exhausted to live on a top of a mountain or he really gets something spiritually by some mystical experiences. He calls out as a messiah: “O ignorant brothers, O ignorant sisters, O ignorant me! there’s nothing to write about, everything is nothing, there’s everything to write about” (p. 57). He is like a messiah, an enlightened man, a savior. Maybe he was not an Abrahamic messiah but he certainly becomes a spiritual man.

On page 57 in *Desolation Angels*, Jack's writing goes crazy. It becomes more and more senseless. It echoes the screams of a madman. Several lines on this page are written with capital letters "...TO MA NI CO SA PA RI MA TO MA NA PA..." (p. 57). Then five equilateral triangles come in the same page. Following lines look like lines of a poem but they really are free verse lines and have no sense! This is Kerouac's free flowing prose, "spontaneous prose" which he described in "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose". These strange lines are the sketch of Kerouac's abstract art.

The following page (p. 59) is another example of bursting words, resulting from spontaneous prose style "...paring off part of the bark, mark blanch, whiten, par-out a way or path in this manner, boil, parboil, and skin, as almonds, mark made by parking bark from grow white, a tree, white spot on the face of white, a horse or cow, pale, blancmange, blazon..." A single sentence is made up of many lines breathlessly, drawing an abstract picture, showing his natural inborn spirituality, a concept explained by Diggory in "What Abstract Art Means in *Pull My Daisy*" (Skerl, 2004, 135-149)⁸.

He watches the moon during nights. The moon reminds him a girl with "big sad eyes" (p. 60). For Duluoze the moon has a blemish jaw, and pocky face. He uses the word "lugu", when drawing a picture of the moon with words: "what a round old moon lugu face it is..." (p. 60). Lugu is not a familiar word in the western languages. But in Indonesian it means simple, unadorned (wordhippo.com. n.pag.). Kerouac uses every means to draw a definite and romantic picture of his environment as well as his inner world. Far eastern idioms and names seem to him more spiritual and more epideictic.

The moon always similes at Kerouac. He compares the clouds to a veil, covering the moon. They are "light fire-latent lavender veil" and "violent black purple is the west as her veil spreads" (p. 61). Kerouac writes like a romantic poet, deeply concerned with nature. He uses symbols taken from daily life and uses colors to awaken different, vivid insights and images. He ends his "moon" section saying: "The moon is a piece of me" (p. 61). He becomes one with nature. Like

⁸ Diggory explains Ginsberg's "mental eye" and Kerouac's "the eye within the eye" on writing styles and defines these eyes as central trope of Romanticism. He thinks that the Beats art arises from the derivation of "spiritual abstraction". Harold Bloom finds this in Romantic poetry and names it "a new type of visibility" (p. 144).

being in union with God, he feels great nature as a part of him. There is wholeness in that understanding. There is also an underlying transcendentalist perception of nature in these lines.

On his last day on the Desolation Peak, Duluoz tries to vision the city life that is waiting him. He reviews his plans on the beginning of his journey to the desolation and his aims. As he thinks how many Americans go hiking and wear rucksacks he cuts loose and says: “rucksack revolution” and “million of Dharma bums” (p. 69). In his last afternoon, counting the last hours ticking on he feels inside a lust to roar, but with the fear of insulting little birds around him he holds his breath. Glancing all around he says goodbye (p. 70). He finds his wastes have reached about the height and size of a baby and makes a joke: “that’s where women excel men—Hozomeen doesn’t even raise an eyebrow...” (p. 71). He describes his departure using lines from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*: “I glide off ‘with Tarquin’s ravishing strides’ into the gloom of the foreknown globe” (p. 72). He compares himself to the last emperor of Antique Rome⁹ who raped Lucretia and his departure from the mountain top signals his future unsatisfied behaviors. Duluoz knows that the world below is a place of “gloom of the foreknown globe”. Both Lucius Tarquinius Superbus and Macbeth show tendencies of human mind and its passions and weakness. The world is like hell for Duluoz but it should be lived with full energy. He finds himself cunning like the last Roman emperor or he might be referring to his inner demons and his spirituality.

Part two, *Desolation in the World*, tells the events after the fire lookout mission. Duluoz is no more in an isolated area and he is not an isolated man. He joins his friends with great joy, but their impassiveness bothers him: “the very first thing I noticed as I arrived in S.F. with my pack and messages was that everybody was goofing” (p. 73). He maybe wants they all much alerted, and interested in on his spiritual and enlightenment efforts. His love for all creatures is out of ordinary. He is like a Sufi mystic. He confesses his ideas about others:

I only know one thing: everybody in the world is an angel, Charley Chaplin and I have seen their wings, you don’t have to be a seraphic little girl with a wistful smile of sadness to be an angel, you can be broadstriped Bigparty Butch sneering in a cave, in a sewer, you can be monstrous itchy Wallace Beery in a dirty undershirt, you can be an Indian woman squatting in the gutter crazy, you can even be a bright beaming believing American Executive with bright eyes, you can even be a nasty intellectual in the capitals of Europe¹⁰

⁹ Lucius Tarquinius Superbus- 495 BC

¹⁰ I think Kerouac thinks they are really far from that angelic vision!

but I see the big sad invisible wings on all the shoulders and I feel bad they're invisible and of no earthly use and never were and all we're doing is fighting our deaths. (p. 74)

One thing, in the shack bothers Duluoz: the killing of a mouse. This was the first time he killed a living creature and it is ironic that it happened when he was in desolation and during his spiritual quest. Apparently that was a very annoying event for him as he says: "it looked at me with 'human' fearful eyes" (p. 74). He kills another one and then when the third comes he says "enough"...He realizes that Buddha wouldn't fear a tiny rat, Jesus wouldn't fear a tiny rat even John Barrymore (a celebrity, a stage actor in the beginning of the twentieth century) would not fear a rat as he had a pet mouse in his room (p. 76). This event horrifies Duluoz and he feels "abdicated his position as a holy angel from heaven who never killed" (p. 76). With this event he understands who his real spiritual leaders are: Buddha and Jesus. Kerouac's spiritual ambivalence is much visible with this irrelevant event. After killing he goes on the Buddha's way thinking. According to a Buddhist theory the life on earth continues because of the killings. Under this theory we can say he is sent again to the world. Because in his previous life he was a murderer and he has been sent again to the world as a punishment. Now he feels dirty and does not feel impeccable and divine anymore (p. 76). He really feels that he is a murderer. And he speaks to the gibbers: "Don't laugh—a mouse has a little beating heart, that little mouse I let live behind the cupboard was really 'humanly' scared..." (p. 76).

Then he returns to the Catholic faith. St. Francis was right according to Duluoz (p. 77). He voices the encounters of St. Francis: "supposing someone had gone to St. Francis in his cave and told him some of the things that are said about him today by nasty intellectuals... 'Francis you're nothing but a scared stupid beast hiding from the sorrowing world, camping and pretending to be so saintly and loving animals..." (p. 77). Then Duluoz confesses "I love St. Francis of Assisi" (p. 77).

When dealing with the problematic of killing of an animal and the problem of the necessities of being a saint and an angel Duluoz immediately remembers St. Francis. St. Francis was well known for his poverty and love of animals. St. Francis left all his clothes that belonged to his previous wealthy life in front of his father and wears a cloak and a girdle he got from a friend. From that time onwards all Franciscan friars wear a tunic (a plain brown robe with a hood), a cord fastened around the waist and sandals or shoes (capuchin.org, 2015, n.pag.). Clothing and

poverty habits of Franciscans and their view of life are similar to Duluoz's. Like Duluoz St. Francis knew that killing animals meant murder (p. 76). This mouse killing event is a touching and important event and reveals Jack's spirituality and his love for all living things.

Still Jack knows that all beings will be destroyed and will be eaten by the same dirt. "Dirt doesn't discriminate" says Jack when he realizes that there will be no difference when everything is dissolved in the endless void, and that the void does not and will not care. The thought of the disintegration of earth into atomic dust makes no sense to him and makes everything seem irrational and meaningless (p. 77). The only remaining thing he says is the "smile of void" and Jack Duluoz sees this smile everywhere and in everything (p. 77). This shows his spirituality is at the highest level. This is like finding the meaning of life. This is like becoming one with God. This is the highest level of enlightenment.

These inspirations are meaningful in the Sufic contexts alongside Buddhism and other Zen teachings. In Islamic path, mystiques like Ibn Arabi and Rumi who were the forerunners of the idea of "Oneness of Being" (wahdat al-wujud) propounded the idea of being one with God and being a part of God (Rustom, 74). According to Ibn Arabi universe together with its whole content is God. Duluoz's vision of universe seems to fit better in Sufism rather than Buddhism. Duluoz confirms this argument when he declares: "I've fallen in love with God—Whatever happens to me down that trail to the world is all right with me because I am God and I'm doing it all myself" (p. 80). This is exactly what Mansur means when he says: "I am the Truth" (Ana l-Haqq)¹¹.

Going down seems easy business to Duluoz, who swings his arms and let himself down to the mountain. His mind is constantly preoccupied with old Chinese poets and eccentric happenings as it always used to on the top of Desolation. Jack cites Chinese Poet Hanshan's verses: "Happy with a stone overhead let heaven and earth go about their changes" which refers to the simplicity is or should be essential in life. His mind is always busy with Buddhist ideas: "How can the universe be anything but a Womb? And the Womb of God or the Womb of Tathāgata, it's two languages not two Gods— And anyway the truth is relative, the world is relative— Everything is relative" (p. 88). Kerouac concludes the difference is between languages not gods.

¹¹ This expression was the end of Mansur because he condemned to death by hanging. His death date was 922 (A.D.). Duluoz's expressions are exactly the same.

He believes both Christianity and Buddhism. His spirituality is in between. Yet believing in a Christian or Abrahamic God diffuses the idea of Buddha because Buddha's main concern was that God or gods couldn't be remedy for his grief. So, in practice Kerouac's belief that there is only one God is correct from his spiritual perspective in *Desolation Angels* but in theory it cannot be acceptable for by the followers of Buddhism.

When Duluoz offers his help to Pat down the road, he declares that Diamond Cutter of the Wise Woe is his Bible (p. 94). Finally he gets on the road for Seattle, route 99¹², Mount Vernon then San Francisco. He wants to buy a pair of new shoes on the way. At a bank he gets he traveler's checks. The girl who works behind the desk at the bank is interested in Duluoz. But Duluoz was in a hurry to catch his friends. She had a great body and sweet eyes. Duluoz regains his consciousness again. Then he decides to drink a beer in a saloon. After two beers he helps an old man to get his beers. His behavior to others has changed since his return from desolation He has become more helpful, more sensational. He decides two beers are enough: "I realize there's no need for alcohol whatever in your soul" (p. 107) and goes out from the saloon to buy the shoes. He buys a pair of canvas shoes instead of his old clod-hopper as he faces now right down to the south where he could find sea and sun. And walking in them is "walking like in heaven" (p. 107).

Down the road, he stops by hotels, bars, motels, girls, women, he drink and gets drunk. Dizzy with alcohol he sees all the prophets, sacred persons sitting together "Jesus on the Cross, Buddha sitting neath the Bo Tree and Mohammed in a cave" along with important persons like "Akkadian-Sumerian antiquities and early sea-boats carrying courtesan Helens..." (p. 122). He is not a fanatic follower he is a guy full of spirituality. He sees no difference between them. He has no hostility any of them. He loves to be a believer. He believes in another reality dwelling in secret other than visible world. So he tries to see that reality in his every action. Mad nights with nasty girls make him get excited. Yet when he hits the outside night of Seattle he looks up to the stars and once more realizes that everything is in transition: "I look up, there are the stars, just the same, desolation, and the angels below who don't know they're angels— And Sarina (a showgirl whom Duluoz admired very much) will die—And I will die, and you will die, and we all will die, and even the stars will fade out one after another in time" (p. 123).

¹² Main highway on the West Coast from Canada to Mexico during fifties.

Understanding this fact seems unbearable to him. He suffers the ultimate understanding of humanity and its destination, its inevitable end. When he dreams a waiting girl for him he gets excited for a moment: “Ah, I think, but somewhere ahead in the night waits a sweet beauty for me, who will come up and take my hand... I’ll sing to her and be pure again and be like young arrow...” (p. 124). Yet then realizes that he is no longer that young. He notices the footsteps of the angel of death. All his friends “growing old” and “ugly” and “fat”, and he too, and nothing but expectations don’t pan out (p. 124). He gives a direct advice to the reader: “Praise Lord, if you can’t have fun turn to religion” (p. 124).

He also thinks that the earth can become a paradise one day. Kerouac calls these future days “the Days of Perfect Nature” referring to the control of an ultimate power. Until then he commits himself to wandering around naked (clothing in poverty or ordinary, humble, travelling by hitchhiking and in jalopies, not having big real estates), kissing in the gardens (casual love affairs) ...”Until then, bums—Bums—Nothing but bums— (p. 124).

During his breakfast he watches empty streets, and sees a man in fine suit and shoes. Duluoz admires his neatness, and says: “Ah, there’s a happy man...” (p. 126). In fact he covets the man’s ignorance. For Jack everywhere is desolation. He concludes that “desolation aint so bad” (p. 126). The world’s order is always disturbing him. “The world wouldn’t exist if it didn’t have the power to liberate itself...Dog is God spelled backwards” (p. 129). Dog is God, so the way you look is what really counts.

When he arrives in San Francisco he is stumped. “Wow” he says fronting to an entirely different scene, with its promissory appearance. He can see friends, acquaintances, girls everywhere. Irwin (Allen Ginsberg) compares Greyhound Company to “Mohammedan Angels” sending precious cargos to everywhere (p. 131). Again there is a reference to an Islamic figure, a spiritual being. This comparison exhibits the two Beat authors’ familiarity with distant cultures and foreign religions and shows that any detail of daily life can inspire them in terms of spirituality.

Daily life with its seriousness hurts him badly: “all these serious faces’ll only drive you mad, the only truth is music—the only meaning is without meaning—Music blends with the heartbeat universe and we forget the brain beat” (p. 132). Accepting the universe has heartbeat the result of accepting the universe as a living matter. But, heartbeat also refers to love, inspiration and brain

beat to rational thinking. For Jack everything that exists has a spirit and he accepts every substantial being as a living creature, like stones, rocks, and mountains.

Listening to jazz is a big event for Jack and his friends. The band is always holy for Jack as in his novel *On the Road*. Like for Dean or Sal and in *On the Road*, for Duluoz in *Desolation Angels* jazz has spiritual meaning. For example when he describes the band he portrays drummer as “heavenly” (p. 137): “the heavenly drummer who looks up in the sky with blue eyes, with a beard, is wailing beer-caps of bootles and jamming on the cash register and everything is going to beat..” (p. 137). In this sentence “beat” refers the rhythmic motion of life and can be explained *as tempo*. It is used in the context of a jazz event and the drummer. If one considers the whole life from the beginning, everything is in beat. For example the earth is always revolving around the sun. It should be in a rhythmic way. No other option is valid. Likewise life on earth necessitates a rhythmic motion. Vegetation has a rhythmic life in line with the earth’s rhythmic motion. Every biological existence has its own rhythm. The human life has rhythmic sets from the beginning. The days of human life has a rhythm in spite of all the irregularities. Even in chaos or in irregularities there is a rhythmic behavior. So beat is the essence of life, but for Duluoz it means more: His generation, is named by him as the “Beat”, and there has been beat since ancient civilizations when “the slave boatmen rowing galleys to a beat” (p. 137).

Richard de Chili (Peter Du Peru) is featured as one of the best friends of Duluoz. When describing him Duluoz refers to his piles of books, strange esoteric books (p. 141). For Duluoz, de Chili is the “most intelligent person” he knows in the world. His portrayal of de Chili as an intelligent man shows Jack’s respect to the spirituality. Otherwise who would take esoteric books seriously?

Another instant of the spirituality is seen in the silence of an old French guy who probably has some difficulty in hearing his interlocutor. His muteness accepted by Duluoz as sweet Buddha-blankness. The old man’s age was about 75 and he was walking and speaking completely bent over: “with a few dewdrop sweet years and they’ll bury him all bent in his tomb” (p. 143). Jack always speculates on death and always considers the ephemerality of time and always deals with the Asian spirituality and Christianity. In fact, here the dewdrop resonates Far Eastern spirituality very much. He maintains the spiritual mood as he falls asleep:

In my room invisible eternal golden flowers drop on my head as I sleep, they drop everywhere, they are Ste. Terese's roses showering and pouring everywhere on the heads of the world...even on the least her roses shower, perpetually- We all know that in our sleep. (p. 144)

Duluoz meets with Irwin Garden (Allan Ginsberg) in San Francisco. Irwin's appearance reminds Jack of old time prophets. Irwin's look, style of talk invoke the sense of a saint: "I suspect he's Jesus of Nazareth, sometimes I get mad and think he's only Dostoevsky's poor devil in poorclothes...An early idealistic hero of my days" (p. 145). They plan to go to Europe together. In a gathering with old timers Cody (Neal Cassady) shows up with a redheaded girl behind. Duluoz agitatedly cries: "Cody! Aye! Sit Down! Wow! Everything's happening!" (p. 147). The gatherings are the most important events in Duluoz's circle. Jack finds among his friends a great vibration of joyfulness and poetry runs through them (p. 149). Cody declares he has a new God: Edgar Cayce Institute. Edgar (1877- 1945) was a seer, a mystic, a healer, a medicine man (although he never learned medicine). Both Duluoz and his friends have deep spiritual concerns. In real life many of them were Buddhists (like Mill Valley, Kevin McLoch), some were interested in esoteric sciences, some were affiliated with some mystics. At the end of the night Cody and Duluoz drive together and Duluoz feels "the same emptiness" he felt when he was in desolation (p. 154).

The silver crucifix that Raphael (Gregory Corso) wears attracts Duluoz's attention. Raphael gives the item to Jack making him happy. Raphael tells him that he is reading Diamond Cutter of the Wise Vow (Diamond Sutra), which Duluoz paraphrased when he was on the Desolation Peak (p. 168). Duluoz's comment on these scripts reveals the significance he attributed to them: "Do you understand it Raphael? There (Diamond Sutra scripts) you'll find everything there is to know" (p. 168).

Wearing the crucifix occupies Jack's mind all the time. This indicates his concern with Christianity. Deep inside he has feelings for his natural, familial religion, Catholicism. He feels ashamed of wearing the crucifix while acting against its rules: "What would Catholics and Christians say about me wearing cross to ball and to drink like this?" (p. 169). Yet he also feels close to Jesus, he even imagines speaking with Him: "what would Jesus say if I went up to him and said 'May I wear Your cross in this world as it is?'" (p. 169). He has many questions about his belief and Christianity: "...are there many kinds of purgatories not?" (p. 169). Jesus Christ's

crucifixion has a deep impact on him. For Duluoz that kind of end can only be explainable with Karma: "Jesus Christ comes down and his Karma is to know that he is the Son of God assigned to die for the sake of the eternal safety of mankind" (p. 173). Christianity was hand in hand with Buddhism in Duluoz's mind although actually they are conflicting religions. Karma is a doctrine in Hinduism and Buddhism, or more correctly in all religious systems that believe in reincarnation. Wearing the crucifix might also be wrong for Cody; he is not a religious person. Yet for Duluoz, Cody was again in the faith of Christianity. Duluoz comments for Cody as a deep believer: "he was back in the groove of his religion, believing on Jesus Christ" (p. 177).

The horse races are Cody Pomeray's (Neal Cassady) hobby. Raphael and Cody are gambling and Jack is reasoning about the winnings of Cody: "as Cody wins he really loses, as he loses he really wins, it's all ephemeral, all is hurt" (p.187). Then he realizes as a non-gambler he even wouldn't gamble on heaven, but Cody was the earnest Christ whose imitation of Christ is in the flesh before you... (p. 187). And Raphael admits that Cody is like Jesus:"Pomeray, you're sincere you really wanta win I believe you I know you're Jesus Christ's contemporary frightening brother" (p. 188). When Duluoz sees that Cody (Neal Cassady) and Raphael (Gregory Corso) are completely in agreement on everything he is pleased and remembers the two months he spent in Desolation. "I've succeeded in my wait to see them patch up and be friends" (p. 189). He realizes that something remained from his days in Desolation: "I'm in an excited state because I've been in an airy dungeon for two months and everything pleases and penetrates me, my snowy view of light particles that permeate throughout the essence of things, passes right on through—I feel the Wall of the Emptiness" (p. 189).

Duluoz sometimes speaks to his readers directly: "I suffer, we all suffer, people die in your arms, it's too much to bear yet you've got to go on as though nothing was happening, right?, right?, readers?" (p. 190). These moments are the result of his immense helplessness against to death. Raphael's childhood and his sufferings without a mother make Duluoz become sensible too.

In fact they are all sensible guys. For example, after Cody leaves them in Chinatown on the way of home, Raphael and Duluoz see some chickens in crates in a Chinese store. Raphael cries: "look, look, they're all gonna die...How can God make a world like that?" (p. 189). They see little white doves behind them which are also to be killed. Duluoz and Raphael feel really sorry for them. Duluoz arrives in his hotel room he writes a poem on the wall: "The Holy Light is all

there is to see, / The Holly Silence is all there is to hear, / The Holly Odor is all there is to smell, / The Holly Emptiness is all there is to touch, / The Holy Honey is all there is to taste, / The Holy Ecstasy is all there is to think..." (p. 192). One thing is for certain: there is a need in Jack's mind to see or hear or taste or think any kind of "holiness". He is thirsty for spirituality.

Jack's behaviors, thoughts and writings as a Buddhist cannot be understood properly by his friends. According to Duluoz if Cody is the Preacher David D'Angeli (Philip Lamantia) is the priest (p. 206). Also David does not accept Jack's Buddhism: "Your Buddhism is nothing but the vestiges of Manichaeism J-a-a-ck, face it—after *all* you've been baptized and there's no *queshtion*, you see" (p. 207). For David Jack's efforts are simply "Buddhist negatives" (p. 209). Finally Duluoz admits that he is not a Buddhist anymore. He emphasizes his emptiness: "I am not anything anymore" (p. 209). For David being baptized is important and he is a spiritual person too. He says: "You've been baptized; the mystery of the water has touched you, thank God for that" (p. 209).

David is a fanatic Christian. He has friends among monks; he spend time in monasteries and also he is a poet. Duluoz acknowledges the differing thoughts of his friends. When he meets them he realizes that conflicts are meaningless. For him, all humanity needs is love. All the hatred and all the killings are unnecessary. Even the notion of enemy should not exist: "...Stop hating— Stop mistrusting—"(p. 221) he cries, and asks "Aren't you going to die?" He imagines a world without the need to kill for food. Factories that run by atomic energy, producing synthetic chops and butters which are "unbearably delicious" would be promising for mankind's future. He says: "Were all friends and enemies, now stop it, stop fighting, wake up, it's all a dream, look around, you dream..." (p. 221). And advises butchers not to work in slaughterhouses. He is a romantic, sensible, and religious man who longs for eternal piece not only for himself but also for all beings in the universe. His dream is a total bliss like Buddha's ultimate enlightenment. His final resolution is that death is a reward just as mentioned in Sufic visions.

Both Duluoz and his friends are always busy with poetry. Even when they are travelling by taxi, they do not forget to advice "the poor black cabdriver" (p. 226) to read some poems. Then the driver asks frankly to Jack: "where do I get these books?" (p. 226). The reading poems is the most important activity in their lives. Raphael says: "You've got to read poetry! You've gotta dig

beauty and truth! ...Keats said it, beauty is truth and truth is beauty and you're a beautiful man, you should know these things." (p. 226).

Desolation in the World ends with Jack's departure for Mexico. Although Raphael insists on him to keep the crucifix, Jack gives it back to him and Raphael gives him his sunglasses. Simon kisses Jack on the cheek "like a brother", Jack feels sad. He notices "the blur of time in their eyes" (p. 237). Cody gives him a ride to the San Jose rail yards. Then Jack buys a bus ticket and moves on to Mexico via Arizona.

Book two *Passing Through* contains various journeys to different places. Now it is the time to explore the feelings of people and life for Jack. Jack is like a scientist although he calls himself an "artist" (p. 245). He can be considered as a new kind of artist, an original one whom we may call a *scientific artist*. In every scientific research some studies take place in laboratory and these researches are repeated in totally different circumstances. Likewise Duluoz evaluates his spirituality in totally different areas: Like passing through from an absolute loneliness into a place of people's jungle. Like an artist he searches for peace. His motto is do nothing or *Wu Wei* as called in Taos. He notes all the happenings around him. This is his duty on earth. There is no aim to publish or to sell (p. 256) because he is an idealist. He calls himself an "oddball", like Rembrandt (p. 246). The possible answer "philosophy of solitude, there is no other way" (p. 246). His main goal is a life dedicated to contemplation for the sake of art. He says: "I wanted to be a Man of Tao" (p. 246). Poverty, solitude, freedom are the basics of his life alongside with spirituality. In the middle of a desert at 2 A.M. when police asks him "where are you going?" his answer meant nothing to them: "Looking for peace" (p. 247). His friends in San Francisco call him "Zen Lunatic" (p. 255).

After Mexico, Duluoz continues with journeys to New York, then to Tangiers, France and London. The shortest part of the travel is Paris-London trip. It takes only about 6 pages in the 400-page book. Even the travel in Tangiers is told in 28 pages. The main concern for Duluoz is writing about his feelings in America and the American way of life.

Not surprisingly the ending is not different than the ending of *On the Road*. Like the previous novel, *Desolation Angels* ends with Cody Pomeroy (Neal Cassady) who is featured as Dean Moriarty in *On the Road*. This coincidence also shows Duluoz's deep concern for Cody. Cody is

his hero, a saint, an inspiring guy with his thoughts, with his wives and kids and way of life. In this final scene the new printed advance copies of *On the Road* have just arrived when Duluoz sees Cody together with the desolation angels standing under the golden lights of the sun (p. 404). Duluoz consecrates that moment: "It's one of the several occasions in my life when a meeting with Cody seems to be suffused with a silent golden light....altho I don't even know what it means, unless it means that Cody is actually some kind of angel or archangel come down to this world and I recognize it" (p. 404). He describes his dear friend as suffusing "a silent golden light". Cody in Kerouac's words is some kind of angel or archangel come down to this world.

Kerouac shows his affinity with Islamic mysticism once again at the very end of the book. He refers to the story of Farid ud-Din Attar, *The Conference of the Birds*. In this philosophic story, written in 1177, only thirty birds survive in the quest for finding Simurgh. They crossed seven valleys each symbolizing different levels or categories in mysticism. The sixth one was "bewilderment", and the last one was "oblivion in God" or "evanescence". In the end the survived birds look around excitedly and they see only themselves as their reflections in a lake. That ending shows the ultimate truth is only reflection and this reflection is ours. Or in Kerouac's words:"Like the thirty birds who reached God and saw themselves reflected in His Mirror" (p. 405). Kerouac compares himself and his friends to these birds: "the thirty Dirty Birds". He finds himself and his friends dirty (a usual mystic characteristic) yet despite their sins and wrongs they are "the thirty birds" who reached (Jack claims that they never made it across "the Valley of Divine Illumination" (p. 406)) at the ultimate end, the final stop, the incomprehensible existence. Duluoz is not sure of "the transcendental mystery of existence" but again he believes in that mystery. He says: "Maybe I'm wrong and all the Christian, Islamic, Neo Platonist, Buddhist, Hindu and Zen Mystics of the world were wrong about the transcendental mystery of existence but I don't think so" (p. 405).

5. CONCLUSION

Jack Kerouac is defined by Allan Ginsberg (1956) as a “new Buddha of American prose” on the dedication page of his book *Howl*. This description shows how a writer can spiritually exist in literary world. This description signals not only personal spirituality of Kerouac but also his spirituality in his prose as in this thesis argued. Kerouac’s spirituality finds its destination with prose. Or in another words, his spirituality can be seen more precisely in his prose. Speculations can be numerous but one thing is sure; Kerouac definitely is a spiritual author as is seen in *On the Road* and in *Desolation Angels*.

Jack Kerouac had been accused of writing indecent, obscene, and worthless. The literary critics of the time of publishing of *On the Road* find the book also not to mention as literary work. All the comments about *On the Road* were derogatory, pejorative and belittling. Nobody mentioned the book’s highly spiritual content and the author’s thought sphere, philosophy, spirituality and mysticism. In fact *On the Road* was highly spiritual and the author was really in relationship with mysticism and other religions other than his familial and national involvement (Catholicism). And Kerouac’s another book; *Desolation Angels* was proof of his deep understanding of spirituality with giving his discourse notion of his spiritual road with highs and lows. But that book was lately published (in 1965) and Kerouac was well known so far with his other explanations and interviews so the comments were not so far from the reality and then the Kerouac’s spirituality. But *On the Road* was a scapegoat of its time. All the negativity of the time was emerging from the novel, or the author’s so called “rebellious understanding of life”.

Jack Kerouac was not a rebel. On a TV show named “Buckley, Kerouac, Sanders and Yablonsky discuss Hippies” in 1958, Kerouac responds to a question about Beat’s involvement hippies and communism: “I believe order, tenderness and piety” (8:45- 8:48). He remained loyal to his mother and to the memory of his father (Sorrel, 1982, p. 42). For Sorrel Kerouac’s actions accepted wrongly as rebel: “...ambivalence is the key to understanding him rather than rebellious rejection” (p. 42). His ambivalence was not only in spirituality but also it was evident in his relations with society as a member of a Franco family. Malcolm (1999) emphasizes Kerouac’s

family roots and defines him as an “outsider” and an “alienated white” (p. 98). Kerouac was from Canada and his national identity was in need of a definition with a Christian sect of Catholicism. Ted Berrigen had a chance to make an interview with Jack Kerouac and that is printed in summer 1968, in the issue of Paris Review (No. 43). That was Jack’s last year of his relatively very short life and he mentions his lifelong concern about religion: “I’m reading Blaise Pascal¹ and taking notes on religion”.

There remains a confusing spot’s of history, the connivance and negation of *On the Road* and its author at the beginning of his career. American social norms had different codes such as conservatism at that time. That is a reasonable cause. But denying of Jack’s spirituality the nation has also shown paradoxically its own conservativeness. Their real concern had been based on deep inside orthodoxy in spite of Kerouac’s orthodoxy in religious thoughts. The real difference was the Jack’s openness to everybody, to everything except the alienated people of his time and space.

Kerouac was not a buffoon. He had always run away public talks, big talks, and interviews. If he could he would say to his interviewer “I don’t want to talk about anything”. He was a humble man. He was not running after fame. But his fame after *On the Road* is blazed up. After 1957 he had been taken more seriously but again in spite of his all novel’s religious or more correctly spiritual content, the efforts were on his writing style or his life style. But the novel’s touching contents were taken only fiction. Nobody dig Kerouac’s spirituality truly in *On the Road*. While that was, his spirituality, the only and one source of his thoughts. This spirituality had a divine inspiration. His restless heart, his strong energy comes from of this involvement.

Jack Kerouac’s spirituality was not suitable to a certain religion or a spiritual sect. He had accepted all of them by heart in spite of their paradoxical position as in Buddhism vs. Christianity or Islam (at least on reincarnation matter). But many think he was a devoted Catholic. I also argued this is not a true comment in this thesis. If that allegation was true he wouldn’t so keen to investigate other religions or spiritual thought systems. Especially when we consider Pascal’s conversion in his last years and Kerouac’s big affection to his works on his last years; we can surely say he was not so sure of his Catholicism. If he was a devoted Catholic, he

¹ Blaise Pascal was a 17th. Century French mathematician, physicist and Christian philosopher.

could only make some improvisations on Catholicism. Yet he even didn't make any pure investigation solely on body of Christianity. He always searched what he thought was missing, and that was purely spirituality. The other concerns were only details, lateral involvements. The core, the essence of his search for was the spirituality itself. And he found that spirituality from time to time as it is written in his different novels. These moments did not possess only a certain religion. Then, one could even find some Islamic spirituality, without Kerouac's authentic considerations because he was not an advocator of a certain religion in spite of his deep concern of Catholicism. He was only a champion of spirituality. The proof was also his novel *On the Road* because it is not even accepted as a decent novel at the publication time. And institutional reaction and moreover religious rejection was obvious on the face of the current criticism at that time. One of them was a well known Catholic magazine *Commonweal*.

Commonweal was founded in 1924 by Michael Williams (1877–1950) and the Calvert Associates. *Commonweal* is the oldest a Christian sect of Catholic journal in the United States. The *Commonweal*'s criticism is very important in various ways. First of all it is the view of this magazine would show the contemporary religious institutes' opinions about "*On the Road*" and Jack Kerouac—with Neal Cassady two Catholic members of the Beats, and in totality how the criticism about these unusual ecstatic behaviors could be voiced. For example Sal's relationship with Terry explained like following: "He meets a Mexican girl, Terry, who has just left her husband and baby. (One must remember that traditional morality is not a norm in *On The Road*.)..." He right here justifies his prejudice on the work. So they are like the rest of the usual American citizens. There can't be any different voice at all. There is a clear prejudgment and church shows its strict position against the different voices. And who was Kerouac? He had no fame, no name in intellectual arena.

"Everything Moves, But Nothing Is Alive" titled article by Thomas Curley claims: "*On the Road* is a mirror of the American roadway, a representation of our obsession with time and with movement, a song of our restless soul" (p. 4). Curley continues commenting on Kerouac's understanding time and he finds all characters in the novel were not alive. He means that *On the Road*'s understanding of nonconformity is not realistic only imaginable, fiction. He explains his idea with American atomic era was not "a place but a time" and claims that Kerouac knows that reality. He says man does not control time, time controls man. Curley's comment shows he

cannot imagine such people as Kerouac and their behavior in an ordinary life. But it happened beside him and them. He defines Dean as a “monster” which is not unusual and acceptable for a religious obviously a Catholic magazine. But he cannot imagine beyond that portrait because of his established, institutionalized frames. Although Kerouac never denies his Christianity and Catholicism—with some criticism, his writings and lifestyle does not fit them. His situation is in between William Blake and William Wordsworth. Blake was against the church and hated city life and he was a champion of free sex movement, Wordsworth was seeing the city as a mark, a natural spot on a landscape and had an optimistic view on life. Kerouac with his appearance in the novel once more shows his romanticism resulting with love, tenderness, sensibility along with protests and resistances.

The commentator claims the part of *On the Road* which is about the trip to Los Angeles with Terry and Sal’s return to his trip as “the book’s major flaw” which is actually very romantic part. But he is not so sure with his idea, immediately after this he continues on the contrary with contradicting himself: “The episode itself is one of the best parts of the book...”. But after this he confesses “I got tired and I wanted to finish that book”. So Curley is in a situation with his hesitation in between admiration and hate. Moreover from his comments one can get his pejorative tone easily. But at the end Curley admits Kerouac’s unique talent: “Indeed he is a natural writer...” (n.pag.). He finds the book not serious. For Curley, Kerouac was using his talent for hyperbole to burlesque his narrator’s feverish emotions. Curley also does not love the words “God”, “holy”, “soul”, “saint”, and “love” from the mouth of Sal Paradise, actually Jack Kerouac. His comment is a proof of the institutionalized religion’s view. His comment is a proof of also how much Kerouac was right on his own path which one could be more moral, more faithful by himself alone than in the formality of a social frame. Also this comment lightens the reason that lies under the blame of rebellion, countercultural attachments.

Kerouac’s and his circle’s central idea was in the novel (*On the Road*) to discover open fields of America and live with friends in different environments and ambiance with joy and excitement and also to collect some material for his writings. They were aware of each others’ past, present and “future”. So they were in close relationship. During fulfilling this target Kerouac and his friends try to earn enough money to travel or to be on the road and this was another side performance in the novel. During these journeys their experiments are very vividly described

and depicted in the novels. The moments of ecstasy, the moments of ultimate pleasure are felt from time to time on the course of the novels. This is a mystic journey. Again their journey was not an exploration of earthly excitements or discovering new sites. Their journey was a spiritual innovation. Prothero argues that: "Like any spiritual innovation, this new vision included a rejection of dominant spiritual norms and established religious institutions" (p. 209). This kind of objection can be acceptable because of the genes of the movement. There has to be some kind of originality if not, how can they reach their ultimate happiness among the established walls of their circle? For example Cresswell is defining the movement of *Beat Generation* as resistance. He argues Kerouac and his novel *On the Road* is the face of resistance. He continues:

This resistance, I suggest, is ambiguous in that it rebels against ideals of family and home at the same time as it reproduces the established American mythology of mobile, male outlaws. This interpretation is placed in the context of the counter-culture of the nineteen fifties and nineteen sixties in the United States - a period when many young people were striking out against the presuppositions of rootedness, family values and the "American Dream" (p. 249).

He also adds his idea about *On the Road*: "Kerouac's novel is clearly an example of a rebellious 'popular culture'" (p. 251). Apparently Prothero's "spiritual innovation" has been taken as rebel by many. Scott uses the word of *Beat* to define the rebel, "...the Beat rebellion..." He takes his place among the critics or writers who define *the Beats* as the rebellions (p 159). But Jackson's approach is different: "Obviously, the Beat movement may be approached from a number of perspectives - most narrowly, as a literary rebellion which championed "spontaneous prose..." (p.53) and "Their rebellion against middle-class values extended to middle- class religious preferences" (p. 68). So in some extent Jack Kerouac with religious preferences falls to category of rebel. Certainly many authors and critics have accepted the Beats as a generation of rebellion. McDowell says: "... the beats were united in their rebellion" (p. 413), "...they rejected the trappings of a settled bourgeois lifestyle and were geographically mobile.", "Thus, the beats' rebellion took many different forms, as well as geographic movement" (p. 415).

Sal several times refers the purity of the road (p. 121) in *On the Road*. Dean also emphasizes the importance of the road for many times in the novel. The road becomes in the novel or in the life of Jack Kerouac, a mere target, an aim rather than a facility. This road is shaped by the user. The road is defined by Dean: "It's an anywhere road for anybody anyhow" (p. 229). Dean asks: ""What's your road, man?-holyboy road, madman road, rainbow road, guppy road, any road" (p.

229). There is a kind of sacralization of the road in the novels. The mobility on the road turns to pilgrimage of a spiritual search. The sacred space for Kerouac was especially America but in one sense whole world seems holy. This definition finds the finite definition in the lines of Ginsberg's Howl "Everything is holy! everybody's holy! everywhere is holy! everyday is in eternity! Everyman's an angel! (Footnote to Howl, 1955). According to Eliade (1957) every sacred space implies a hierophany (p. 26), such as "the road" in *On the Road*. Eliade (1957) asserts that if the world is to be lived in, it must be founded (p. 22). The homogeneity of cosmos or structure disturbs the religious man. He establishes sacred space for his existence: "...sacred space possesses existential value for religious man...The discovery or projection of a fixed point—the center—is equivalent to the creation of the world" (Eliade, 1957, p. 22). So the center for Kerouac was merely the road. And being on the road every time exposes the sacred to the author. This is a kind of definition of Eliade: "... their labor was only repetition of a primordial act, the transformation of chaos into cosmos by the divine act of creation" (p. 31). The definition is a kind of cosmogony. Thus repetitions of Kerouac's trips from east to west find much meaning with the spirituality. Without such definition they remain (the trips) senseless juvenile explorations instead of embodiments of experiencing sacred, finding ultimate goal of the life on earth. Sal's vision on the Colorado-Utah border was the result of this sacredness. The road which he was in, was leading to heaven. God says to Sal in the forms of huge clouds: "Pass here and go on, you're on the road to heaven" (*On the Road*, p. 165). The road which leads to Heaven should be accepted really sacred, holy and pure. If the life's meaning is going to Heaven at the end, than Kerouac had found the meaning of life.

Beat Generation especially on the face of Jack Kerouac showed open transgression of the limits of that time's, boundaries which are accepted by many as American standard of life style. Their involvement in transgression is not limited as life style but also their visions, beliefs, treatment of Other are also transgressed the limits. But media transferred them wrongly. As Marshall (2009) states they were parallel rather than *a counter culture* (p. 17). Because many people were restlessly questioning after the World War II, American way of life or American Dream (Marshall, 2009, pp. 16-17). And they acted as according to existing codes and they lived in a community within a community (Marshall, 2009, p. 17).

On the Road from the beginning to the end is filled with author's spirituality which I have defined in various ways. This spirituality is not really related to any religion. But in *Desolation Angels* the religious concerns are much visible. The attachment of Christianity and Buddhism is obvious while effects of Islam are not exposed. *On the Road* is not dealing with spirituality but overall tone with aura encompasses the reader with spirituality. The author's attempts, madly mobility with words along with earthly movement make sense with transcending voice. Kerouac makes this by words, connotations, intonations, variations of words, with a brilliant word reservoir, and with his immense energy. Lott (2004) argues Kerouac's ties to Buddhism and Catholicism and describes him as "a French-Catholic American who was deeply moved by Buddhism" (p. 179). She is not mentioning any connotations Sufic approaches which at least one is obvious in "thirty birds" passage in *Desolation Angels* (p. 405). Her comments about Kerouac show one more time Jack Kerouac's deep spirituality openly:

Perhaps Kerouac is not "the new Buddha of American prose" but an Emersonian poet-prophet of the twentieth century telling us that in the midst of chaos there is hope; there is peace; there is forgiveness; there is compassion; there is life; there is suffering; and there is death. (p. 184)

REFERENCES

- Attar, F.** (n.d.). *Mantık-ut Tayr*. Ed. İlhan Bahar. İstanbul. Kum Saati Yayınları.
- Boorstin, D. J.** (1965). *The Americans: The National Experience*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Braunstein, P. and Doyle, M.** (2002). Ed. *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960's &70's*. New York, London, UK: Routledge.
- Burroughs, W. S.** (1985). *The Adding Machine: Selected Essays*. New York, NY: First Arcade Paperback.
- Burkert, W.** (1985). *Greek Religion*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- “Celaledin-i Rumi”** (1992). *Evliyalar Ansiklopedisi*. İstanbul: İhlas.
- Campbell, James.** (1999). *This is the Beat Generation: New York, San Francisco, Paris*. Berkely and Los Angeles, California: Univ. of California Press.
- Charters, Ann and Samuel.** (2010). *Brother Soulds John Clellon Holmes, Jack Kerouac, and the Beat Generation*. Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi.
- Charters, Ann.** (2001). *Beat Down to Your Soul. What was the Beat Generation? Poems, Essays, Memoirs, Notes, Protests, Attacks, and Apologies—from the Beat Explosion that Rock the World*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Derrida, J.** (1967). *Writing and Difference*. Trans. By Alan Bass. London and New York.
- Diggins, J. Patrick.** (1988). *The Proud Decades. America in War and in Peace. 1941-1960*. New York, London: Norton & Co.
- Eliade, M.** (1957). *The Sacred and the Profane*. Trans. Williard R. Trask. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and World.
- Emerson, R. W.** (1838). *An Oration Delivered Before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, August 31, 1837*. Boston, MA: James Munroe and Company.
- Gove, P.B.** (1964). *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* Unabridged. Springfield: G&C Merriam Company.
- Greebalt, S.** (2006). ed. *Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. Vol. 2. New York, London: Norton.

- Halberstam, D.** (1994). *The Fifties*. New York, NY: Ballantine.
- Holmes, C.** (1952). *Go*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Huddleston, D.M.** (2012). "The Beat Generation: They Were Hipsters Not Beatniks." Department of History seminar paper, Western Oregon University.
- Hyde, L.** (1984). *Underdiscussion On the Poetry of Allen Ginsberg*. Michigan: Univ. of Michigan Press.
- Işık, H. H.** (2013). *Islam and Christianity*. Istanbul: Hakikat.
- Kerouac, J.** (1965). *Desolation Angels*. New York, NY, Riverhead Books.
- , **J.** (2012). *On the Road*. London: Penguin Books.
- , **J.** (2008). *On the Road. The Original Scroll*. London: Penguin Books, Print
- Lott, D. E.** (2004). 'All things are different appearances of the same emptiness': Buddhism and Jack Kerouac's 'Nature Writings', in Skerl J. (ed.), *Reconstructing the Beats*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 170-185.
- Marshall, G.J.** (2009). "A Fragile Frame?: The Beat Generation and the Development of Postwar Culture in America, 1945 – 1965", PhD thesis. State University of New York at Buffalo.
- Menderes, I.** (2004). *Sex, Çikolata ve Ruhaniyet*. İstanbul: Galata.
- Moore, T.** (1992). *Care of the Soul. How to Add Depth and Meaning to Your Everyday Life*. London: Piatkus.
- Murray, J.** (2004). ed. *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760–1850*. New York, London: Taylor&Francis Group.
- Pargament, K.** (2013). *APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*. Washington D.C. American Psychological Association.
- Redfield, J.** (1997). *The Celestine Vision. Living the New Spiritual Awareness*. New York: Warner Books.
- "Religion, The Beats and"** (2005). *Beat Culture. Icons, Lifestyles, and Impact*. Ed. William T. Lawlor. Santa Barbara, Denver, Oxford: ABC-CLIO.
- Shakespeare, W.** (1992). *Macbeth*. Folger Shakespeare Library. Ed. Barbara Movat and Paul Werstine. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney: Simon&Schuster Paperbacks.

Skerl, J. (2004). *Reconstructing the Beats*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stace, W. T. (1960). *The Teachings Of The Mystics. Selections From The Great Mystics And Mystical Writings Of The World*. New York: Mentor.

Stiles, B. J. (2003). *Emerson's Contemporary's and Kerouac's Crowd. A Problem of Self-Location*. Cranbury: Associated University Press.

Willians, J. (1912). *The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature. Being The Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered in 1901-1902*. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co.

Zimmer, H. (1951). *The Way of the Bodhisattwa. Philosophies of India (Bolinggen Series XXVI)*, ed. Joseph Campbell. New York: Princeton University Press.

INTERNET RESOURCES

“Allen Ginsberg Interviewed by Allan Gregg 1997.” (2012). Allen Ginsberg Projection. Blogspot. Date of access: 01/04/2013, address:
<http://ginsbergblog.blogspot.com/2012/01/allen-ginsberg-interviewed-by-allan.html>

“America responds to On the Road: Reviews from Across the Nation” (n.d.). Taking On the Road For a Ride. Date of access: 01/04/2013, address:
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ug00/lambert/ontheroad/response.html>

Aristotle. (350 B.C.E). *Nichomachean Ethics*. Trans. W. D. Ross. *The Internet Classics Archive*. Web Atomic and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Daniel C. Stevenson (1994-2000), Web Atomics.Web. Date of access: 01/06/2015, address:
<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>

“Beat Angel. The Spirit of Kerouac on Desolation Peak”. (2008). Beatangel com. Beat Angel Production. LLC. Date of access: 22/06/2015, address:
<http://www.beatangel.com/Desolation.html>

Berrigan T. (2015). “Interviews, Jack Kerouac, The Art of Fiction No. 41”. *The Paris Review*. The Paris Review. Date of access: 12/06/2015, address:
<https://beatpatrol.wordpress.com/2012/06/29/>

“Buckley, Kerouac, Sanders and Yablonsky discuss Hippies”. (1968). *YouTube*. YouTube. 17/5/2011. Date of access: 12/06/2015, address:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaBnIzY3R00>

- Chopra, D.** (2011). "Insight into Sex and Spirituality" *Huffpost Healthy Living*. Posted 06/23/2010. AOL Lifestyle. 10/07/2015. Date of access: 10/07/2015, address: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/deepak-chopra/kama-sutra-insights-into_b_623177.html
- Elteren, M.** (1999). "The Subculture of the Beats: A Sociological Revisit" *Journal of American Culture*. 22, 3 71-99. *Wiley Online Library*. Date of access: 22/06/2015, address: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.1999.2203_71.x/abstract
- Ferrara, P.** (2013). "The Great Depression Was Ended by the End of World War II, Not the Start of It". *Forbes com*. n.p.. Date of access: 22/06/2015, address: http://www.forbes.com/fdc/welcome_mjx.shtml
- "Frequently Asked Questions"**. (2015). *Capuchin Franciscans, Province of St. Mary*. The Province of St. Mary of the Capuchin Order. Date of access: 21/07/2015, address: http://www.capuchin.org/vocations/BeginningtheDiscernment_process/faq
- Gelfant, H. B.** (1974). Jack Kerouac. Kerouac: A Biography by Ann Charters. *Contemporary Literature*. 15(3), 415-422: University of Wisconsin Press. Date of access: 17/11/2011, address: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1207750>
- Grace, M. N.** (2002). Seeking of the Spirit of Beat. The Call for interdisciplinary Scholarship Kerouac, the Word and the Way: Prose Artist as Spiritual Quester by Ben Giamo: The Bop Apocalypse : The Religious Visions of Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Barroughs by John Lardas. *Contemporary Literature*. 43(4), 811-821. Date of access: 04/04/2014, address: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1209045>
- Holmes, J. C.** (1952) "This Is The Beat Generation". The New York Times Magazine, November 16, 1952. Retrieved from Literary Kicks Web site by Levi Asher. Date of access: 20/03/2015, address: <http://www.litkicks.com/ThisIsTheBeatGeneration>
- "Jack Kerouac on The Steve Allen Plymouth Show (1959)"**. (2014). Online video clip. YouTube, 13/11/2008. Date of access: 22/06/2014, address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IB-CvM2U6KY>
- Jackson, C.** (1988) The counterculture looks east: beat writers and asian religion. *American Studies* 29(1), 51-70. Date of access: 22/06/2014, address: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40642254>
- "John 13:36"** (2015). *The Official King James Bible Online*. King James Online.. Date of access: 10/07/2015, address: <http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-13-36/>
- Kerouac J.** (2013). "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose". *Essentials of Spontaneous Prose* Jack Kerouac. n.p.2013. Date of access: 20/07/2015, address: <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/kerouac-spontaneous.htm>

- “Live From New York: It's Jack Kerouac Talking About What A Beat Is (And Isn't) In 1958”**. (2012). *Gothanist com*. Gothamist LLC.2003-2015. Date of access: 22/06/2015, address:
http://gothamist.com/2012/04/10/hear_jack_kerouac_speak_about_the_o.php
- Maloff, S.** (1965).“A Line Must Be Drawn” *The New York Times On the Web*. The New York Times Company. May 2. Date of access: 11/07/2015, address:
<https://www.nytimes.com/books/97/09/07/home/kerouac-angels.html>
- Mortenson, E.** (2001). Beating Time: Configuration of Temporality in Jack Kerouac’s “On the Road”. *College Literature*. 28(3), 51-67. Date of access: 06/03/2013, address:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25112602>
- Parkins, K.** (2005). Beat Generation. (n.pag.). Date of access: 09/07/2015, address:
<http://www.heureka.clara.net/art/beat-generation.htm>
- Plato.** (n.d.). *Phaedo*. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. N.p: Gutenberg, October 29, 2008. N, pag. Date of access: 06/03/2013, address:
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1658/1658-h/1658-h.htm>
- Prothero, S.** (1991). On the Holy Road: The Beat Movement as Spiritual Protest. *The Harvard Theological Review*. 84(2), 205-222. Date of access: 20/11/2010, address:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1509800>
- Ritenbaugh, J. W.** (1993). “The World, the Church and Laodiceanism” *Churh of the Great God. cgg.org*. Date of access: 09/07/2015, address:
<http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/CGGBOOKLETS/k/452/World-Church-Laodiceanism.htm>
- Rustom, M.** (2013) “Rumi’s Metaphysics of the Heart”. mohammedrustom.com. Apache Server. Date of access: 30/05/2015, address:
<http://www.mohammedrustom.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Rumis-Metaphysics-of-the-Heart-MRR-1-2010.pdf>
- “Spirituality”** (n.d.). Def. 1,2,3. (Cited from: Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary). thefreedictionary.com. the free dictionary by farlex. Date of access: 03/07/2015, address:
<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/spirituality>
- Sorrel, R. S.** (1982). Novelists and Ethnicity: Jack Kerouac and Grace Metalious as Franco-Americans. *Melus*. 9(1), 27-52. Date of access: 17/11/2012, address:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/467594>
- “Suffering “** (n.d). Quotes.WhiteLilyofTrinity.com. Date of access: 22/06/2015, address:
http://whitelilyoftrinity.com/saints_quotes_suffering.html

Tamony, P. (1969). Beat Generation: Beat: Beatniks. *Western Folklore*. 28(4), 274-277.
Date of access: 22/06/2015, address:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1499225>

“The Diamond of Perfect Wisdom Sutra”. (n.d.). Trans. *Chung Tai Translation Committee*.
Chung Tai Zen Center of Sunnyvale. Chung Tai Zen Center of Sunnyvale. Date of access:
19/07/2015, address:
http://ctzen.org/sunnyvale/enUS/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=141&

Thoreau, H.D. (2004). *Walden or, Life in the Woods*. Walden Pond: The Internet Bookmobile,
(org. published in 1854). Date of access: 22/06/2015, address:
<http://www.eldritchpress.org/walden5.pdf>

Toricell, R.G and Carrol, A. (1999). *In Our Own Words. Jack Kerouac, in a Rare Public Appearance, Describes What the “Beat Generation” Is---and Is Not*. Kodansha
New York. (210-215). *Google Books*. Date of access: 20/03/2015, address:
<https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=zruXZHUbdk0C&pg=PA210&lpg=PA210&dq=In+Our+Own+Words.+Jack+Kerouac>

BIOGRAPHY



Name Surname: Cüneyd Atamal

E-mail: atamal@hotmail.com

Cüneyd Atamal is a postgraduate student in English Language and Literature at Istanbul Aydın University. Atamal received his BA degree in English Language and Literature from Boğaziçi University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences with Honors Certificate in 2013. He began his postgraduate study at İstanbul Aydın University in 2014 and he successfully defended his M.A.thesis in 2016, titled “On the Road to Heaven: An Evaluation of Spirituality in the Works of Jack Kerouac”.

His favorite areas are Beat Generation, Shakespeare’s plays and Balkan cultures.

PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS ON THE THESIS:

Atamal, C. 2014. On the Road as an American Myth. *Literature and Cultural Studies Conference: Myth Making Accross Boundaries*. 22-24 October, 2014. Ege Universtiy, ADİKAM. Izmir, Turkey.