

Chapter 1

Introduction

Jack Kerouac and Beat Generation

Jack Kerouac (1922-1967) was born into a French-Canadian working class family in the Mill City of Lowell, Massachusetts, USA. Kerouac began writing novels with *The Town and City* (1950). By 1965, he completed fifteen other novels: *On the Road* (1957) to *vision of Cody*, published in 1972. Kerouac decided to become a writer at age seventeen under the influence of Sebastian Sampas, a local young poet. He read the life of Jack London at eighteen and decided to become a lonesome traveler. His early literary influences were Saroyan and Hemingway and later Thomas Wolfe. Kerouac wished, however, to develop his own writing style, which he called "spontaneous prose". He used this technique to record the life of the American traveler and the experiences of the Beat Generation, most memorably in *On the Road*, and also in *The Subterraneans* and *The Dharma Bums*. His other works include *Big Sur*, *Disolation Angels*, a book of poetry called *Mexico City Blues*.

Jack Kerouac was one of the most influential writers of the 1950s, inspiring the misguided and confused youth of the postwar era. Kerouac came onto the literary scene at a time when the world was experiencing change and wanting to discover new things about a world that seemed all too familiar. Kerouac's place in the literary world was secured with the publication of *On the Road*, with which readers were introduced to the life style of what came to be known as the Beat Generation. Some critics predicated that *On the Road* will come to be known as the testament of the Beat Generation.

Jack Kerouac was one of the central figures of Beat Generation. Beat generation refers to the American literary and cultural movement that took root in the post-war America of the 1940s and grew through the fifties and into the sixties. Beat writers, M. H.

Abrams writes in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, "shared a set of social attitudes— antiestablishment, anti-political, anti-intellectual, opposed to the prevailing cultural, literary and moral values, and in favor of unfettered self-realization and self-expression" (21). The label "Beat" suggested not only the beaten alienation of the socially disaffected and the rhythmic celebration of the marginal music of Jazz but also the Beatitude awaiting the rootless wandering pilgrim who sought it at the fringe of conventional society.

Beat members have an instinctive individuality needing no bohemianism or imposed eccentricity to express it. Brought up during the collective bad circumstances of a dreary depression, weaned during the collective uprooting of a global war, they distrust collectivity. But they have never been able to keep the world out of their dreams. The principal Beat writers besides Kerouac were Allen Ginsberg, William Seward Burroughs, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti. The Beat writers were characterized by raw, rhythmic, and improvisational quality. They revolutionized American literature by bringing spontaneity, stark nakedness and particular humanness to poetry and prose. They portray in their works the social outcasts, deviants and marginalized characters Beaten down by the oppressive culture of the time because of their rejection of, or failure to measure up to, the social, religious, and sexual values of American capitalism.

The Beat movement was about non-conformity, the artist working alone on the outer edge of society, all the while confessing to one another the secrets of their souls, and living freely from moment to moment. The Beat writers perceive the world they inhabit as alien and hostile, see purple darkness prevalent in the American society, and find themselves the only responsible intellectual to tear asunder the illusion. Therefore, they stop acting as expected by the society. They willingly go against social conformism in order to be free from the society, they are ready to be "Negro, Mexican, overworked

Japanese” (Kerouac 169) who have human sentiment and are capable of celebrating such emotions. The very name 'Beat' connotes the hostility for revolt against the middle-class values. The name Beat has been variously interpreted as meaning 'Beaten down' and 'Beatific'; members of the group shared an antagonistic attitude toward middle-class values, commercialism and conformity ,and enjoyed the visionary states produced by religions, meditation, sexual experience, Jazz or drugs.

However, the liberty of the Beats is not respected in the conformist American society. They find themselves controlled all the time. In this connection, it is apt to state what Mill writes:

No society in which . . . liberties are not . . . respected is free, whatever may be its form of government; and none is completely free in which they do not exist absolutely and unqualified. The only freedom that deserves name is that of preserving our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it.

(301)

Therefore, committed to liberty the Beats were antagonistic toward middle class values, commercialism and conformity and that created conflict between the Beats and the society.

The society tried to maintain its superiority by imposing its rules, and regulations upon them. Despite the difficulties they remained committed to the free exploration of all things personal and to free individual soul from the destructive effects of commercialism, militarism, sexual repression, technocracy and soulless industrialization. Allen Ginsberg in his poem “Howl” presents a portrait of Beat generation he idolized that as rebels persecuted by a callous society bent on punishing those who refused to conform to rigid standard of behaviors.

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving
hysterical naked,
dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an
angry fix,
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connections to the
starry dynamo in the machinery of night. (1598-99)

Ginsberg points out the problem of the Beat generation and intellectuals. The society's hostility and repression has pushed them to the periphery, wasted the intellectual genius. These intellectuals want to reach to the inherent potential of the world, live the totality of life and society, and obtain equality and complete freedom.

Existential Concerns of the Beats

The Beats and the existentialists addressed the same concerns at roughly the same time. According to Erik Ronald Mortenson, "Beat concerns about living life authentically in the moment closely mirror the work that the existentialists had conducted before them" (42). What makes existentialism so relevant to the Beats is that both groups find themselves in a postwar social situation where living the moment authentically was problematic. Although both the groups have recourse to the literary, the Beats and the Existentialists use literature in different ways. The difference is between reflective and spontaneous forms of writing. Existentialists may try to entice their readers into authenticity with fictional accounts, but their use of literature is almost always based on concretization of abstract, reflective thought. To take, for example, the work of Camus, very often his characters and plot are distillations of existential thought, and his novels thus become a working through of philosophical ideas in another register. Thus *The Plague* is less about creating idiosyncratic characters than demonstrating the range of

human response to the dehumanizing condition of disease and death. Likewise in Sartre's work conflict between humans becomes the lesson of the play *No Exit*.

The Beats' approach of spontaneous prose must be compared with reflective approach here. The Beats seldom pause to reflect on their project. In "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose," Kerouac advises writing "without consciousness in semi-trance . . . allowing subconscious to admit in own inhibited interesting necessary and so 'modern' language what conscious art would censor" (70). Although they experimented with different genres, Beat writers generally placed themselves under the rubric of poets, no matter what format they happened to be working in at the time. This is why Kerouac claims in "Statement" that his fiction is "an endless one-line poem called prose" (76), and Ginsberg retains his particular style and manner even in his essays. The Beats feel that all of their writing was the result of personal exposition spontaneously composed on the page, and thus genre distinctions were superfluous. The Beats do not entice; they demonstrate. An ancillary goal is to get the reader to develop their own brand of authenticity, but their primary goal is to present the authenticity that they have achieved or are trying to achieve to the reader via the written word. While Beats' concrete examples of authenticity might provide a reader with a glimpse of authentic thought existing beyond a reified consciousness, Existentialist philosophers' analytical tools are necessary to critically engage this notion of authenticity. For the Beats authenticity is not simply a personal stance towards a world. It is not enough for the Beats to challenge the status quo of the society; they are writers as well, and want to communicate their achieved authenticity to their readers.

Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* addresses the issues of existence in the confining social environment of the fifties' America bent on conformity and convenience. While most Americans in the post-war decades sought comfort and security, Kerouac would

reject those desires as artificial. *On the Road* is a figure for the 1950s, a haunted, hopeful, doomed decade. Kerouac's novel emerged as a new sense of American national identity was consolidating itself: both internally with respect to the possible full Americanness of black men and women externally with respect to its conflict with the USSR. The novel imaginatively spans the first decade of the American National Security State and of the Civil Rights struggle. In 1949 eleven communist leaders were convicted, and in 1954 Communist Control Act was enforced. The US detonated the first hydrogen bomb at Eniwetok Atoll in November 1952.

On the Road refers to these events indirectly. Dean and Sal pass through Washington on the day of Truman's inauguration in 1949. "Great displays of war might", Sal says, "were lined up along Pennsylvania Avenue as we rolled by in our battered boat. There were B-29s, PT boats, artillery, all kinds of war material that looked murderous in the snowy grass" (128). Old Bull Lee—the character based on William S. Burroughs—points out the government has employed scientists to make bombs when he says they are "only interested in seeing if they can blow up the world" (146). Old Bull Lee also rants about predatory "bureaucracies" and what he calls "the big grab" going on in "Washington and Moscow" (142). Thus "*On the Road* belongs to the era of containment: containment of the USSR without, containment of un-American elements within" (Richardson 221). Kerouac's *On the Road* is troubled by all the essential Cold War questions: What is America? Who are Americans? Are we the chosen or damned? Kerouac does not need to address these questions directly, because the structure of feeling of *On the Road* is tempered by the Cold War, with its restless anxiety, its troubled optimism, its delirium and depression.

Kerouac has Sal say, at a crucial moment late in the novel, when Sal and Dean are in Mexico:

Strange crossroad towns on top of the world rolled by, with shawled Indians watching us from under hatbrims and rebozos They had come down from the black mountains and higher places to hold forth their hands for something they thought civilization could offer, and they never dreamed the sadness and the poor broken delusion of it. They didn't know that a bomb had come that could crack all our bridges and roads and reduce them to jumbles, and we would be as poor as they someday, and stretching out our hands in the same, same way. Our broken Ford rattled through them and vanished in the dust. (281-82)

Sal here points out that so called American civilization has caused "sadness and poor broken delusion," and its bomb has threatened the human existence. Hence the "upgoing America" has brought with it the problem of existence.

Kerouac captures the existentialist angst in post-war American psyche. Dread became the inevitable outcome of the World War II. Having been seen the misuse of atomic power in hands of humans, Kerouac felt an enormous threat to human existence and its civilization developed so far. The Cold-War between US and USSR frightened more because both the parties possessed atomic bombs. Thus, the existential angst is encountered in America of the 1950s.

The Cold-War placed the human existence in danger, and society's demand for conformity obstructed individual from discovering self-identity. So the Beats struggled against the repressions of the society. The tradition of Existentialism, which was popularized during the period of Beat revolution, likewise, sought to break free from the alienating aspects of society to achieve a more direct relationship with the world.

According to Daniel Belgrad in *The Culture of Spontaneity*, "Existentialists struggled to live 'authentically', upon to the possibilities of existence, and to avoid enslavement to the dictates of conceptual structures and social norms" (107). The society is littered with conceptual structures and social norms that keep the individual from achieving a true self. Thus, Belgrad observes that "Existentialism encouraged defiance against the conformity of Cold-War anti-communism and the regimented work culture of corporate liberalism" (112). With their attention focused on with the deadly threat of communism abroad or the pleasures afforded by a consumer economy at home, the 1950s American society was unable to fully engage with the actual, material situations that surrounded her. Beat writers and Existentialists, by contrast, were united in their belief that the authentic world was worth striving towards. For them common notions of patriotism, the work ethic, and the American dream were actually hindrances to achieving true relationship to the world.

The revolt against social conformity gets manifested in *On the Road* in various forms. The characters such as Dean, Sal, Carlo, Camille and so on exhibit perverse behavior. They become engaged in taking drugs, drinking to excess, enjoying often sex and jazz, having interracial affairs through the violation of social values, they attempt to create a new vision critical of all social conventions. Sal says:

And I want to all the doors in this manner, and pretty soon I was as drunk as anybody else. Come down, it was my duty to put up the American flag on a sixty-foot pole, and this morning I put it up upside down and went to bed. When I came back in the evening the regular cops were sitting around grimly in the office. (64)

By trespassing most boundaries, moral and legal, they hope to experience a new experience because trampling societal codes, they think would make them free to

experience and create new meaning of life. Their constant conflict with their society may be summarized effectively with what Sal does as a policeman.

In connection to Beats' struggle Sarah Lewis notes:

What the Beats understood and identified with in Jazz was protest against the white middle-class world. As Sal Paradise observes in part one of the novel, "Every single one of us was blushing. This is the story of America. Everybody's doing what they think they're supposed to do". Kerouac intuitively understood that you can't have jazz with out protest, and along with his Beat friends regarded jazz musicians like Charlie Parker and the Lonius Monk as true American geniuses, heroes and rebels. Just as Sal later thinks Dean "look(s) like God", while high on marijuana bumping along the back roads of Mexico, those jazz musicians who can really "blow" are the prophets and shepherds come to the straying but faithful back to "the golden world that Jesus came from". (N. pag.)

Kerouac's characters' fascination with the marginal music of Jazz stands as a means of revolt against mainstream America's conformity.

The search on the road along with violation of societal codes is not easy going.

Kerouac best illustrates this when he writes in *On the Road*:

The American police are involved in psychological warfare against those Americans who don't frighten them with imposing papers and threats. It's a Victorian police force; it peers out of musty windows and wants to inquire about everything, and can make crimes if crimes don't exist to its satisfaction. (130)

Thus it is clear that the society makes best of its efforts to impose social conformism upon the Beat characters. They have to fight with the representatives of the state.

Kerouac points out that repressive America has created only alienation for its citizens. Therefore, his characters do not feel at home in the mainstream society. Sal Paradise feels "so lovely, so sad, so tired, so quivering, so Beat" (78) in LA one of the representative centers of American civilization. The product of capitalist America is that "everybody in America is a natural-born thief" (61). Capitalistic system has compelled its citizens to thieve. Kerouac's discontent with the authority comes forth when he has his character Remi Boncoeur, sarcastically say, "You must know what President Truman said We must cut down on the cost of living"(68). Remi cuts down the cost of living by stealing groceries from his work place. Kerouac implies that sole emphasis on material gain has corrupted and barbarized America. Therefore, "America must [attempt to] find itself in its people" (210) as Douglas H. King writes, and promote human sentiments.

Kerouac's characters are deeply troubled individuals in the post-World War America in which fear had replaced love, making money had replaced compassion, and the use of force had replaced tolerance and understanding as guiding principle of daily life. They ask the big questions about human life and man's place in the universe. Dean and Sal are on the road for the quest. Anna Hassapi rightly points out the whole of Beat generation as searching for some higher truth possible in life. She writes:

. . . Kerouac presents the "Beat generation" as a 'holy' generation: because it was liberated from the peril of ambition, materialism and ideology, and, was in a constant search for some greater truth that life would teach them. Ed Dunkel the tall silent, lost boy is described as "an angel of a man". Dean Moriarty, the personification of the road was a "holy man" with a "holy lightning" gaze. By the end of the novel, Dean achieves so high level of saintliness that "he could not talk any more". (N. pag.)

They are on a genuine spiritual quest motivated by their own intense suffering, as most spiritual seekers are.

In Kerouac's *On the Road* and *The Subterraneans*, the narrator prefers marginal society and its people. They find African American, Mexican, Indians as leading authentic life since they are outside the repressive, rigid mainstream society. Leo in *The Subterraneans* pursues an affair with Mardou—Black, Cherokee, and fragile- as Sal has interracial affair with Mexican girl Terry. Leo knows that having affair with Mardou will make most of American society hostile towards him. But, like Sal's Dean Moriarty, she possesses understanding of human essence though pain-generations of oppression. While oppression has not led to her collapse but to the insight that living is a painful journey toward enlightenment and acceptance. Like Dean, she contains authenticity. In the 1950s culture of conformity, such ethnic differences as Mardou's also ensured one's outsider status. As Dean's, her bitter orphaned childhood and jail stays lead to love of life and its possibilities rather than a crippling cynicism. Thus Kerouac conveys in his novels Beat's respect for the authenticity of outsider life, which stands in sharp opposition to conformism.

Chapter 2

Existentialism: Study of Human Situation

After 1930, and particularly after the Second World War, many writers began to oppose the doctrines that viewed man as the manifestation of an absolute value. Thrown to an incoherent, disordered universe in which individual destinies were obstructed and torn apart by the Second World War and nuclear holocaust, they could not believe in the Christianity. They saw the world totally absurd, not governed by the laws of providence but by the pure chance and contingency. This feeling of an existence without justification became the main proposition of the twentieth century. Man is free of routine and conventions, he is laid bare and face to face with his own destiny. This utter feeling of alienation was the product of the recognition of "death of god" on the one hand and cataclysm of the World War I and II on the other. Not only is God dead as Nietzsche proclaimed but also all the intermediary values connecting God and man declined. Man lost even the certainties and values of his own existence which he had originally received from his belief in God. He is thus a deserted animal in the absurd and overwhelming universe.

On the background of such fragmented situation many writers and philosophers sought at least to reduce, if not to alleviate, the condition of modern man. Existentialism is probably the most dynamic and appropriate philosophical movement to define and interpret the anxiety and the uncertainties of the human existence. By existentialism we mean a doctrine which makes human life possible and in addition, declares that every truth and every action implies a human setting and a human subjectivity. According to *Encyclopedia International* the existentialism is near to life and death of people, instead of concentrating on logic or science existentialism is primarily concerned with "human existence, especially with man's most extreme experience: the confrontation with death,

anguish and anxiety, despair and guilt" (Kaufmann 6: 589). J. A. Cuddon lays stress on the fact that the connotation of existence is something active in philosophy and he associates it with the Latin root "ex 'out' + sister from 'stare' to stand" (310). Thus, the meaning of existence is to stand in the world that is incomprehensible. "The term now applies a vision of the condition and existence of man, his place and function in the world, and his relationship, or lack of one with God" (Cuddon 310). The theses of existentialism found a particular relevance during the World War II when Europe found itself threatened by material as well as spiritual decay. The negative aspects of human existence such as pain, frustration, sickness, and death became for existentialists the essential features of human reality. As the doctrine emerged worldwide, the existentialist thinkers also differed greatly in various ways.

Existentialism does not lend itself to a single definition, for its principal theorists did not adhere to a common body of doctrines. For example, some existentialists were atheists, like Jean Paul Sartre, or some omitted God from their thought, like Martin Heidegger, and others like Karl Jaspers, believed in God but not in Christian doctrines, still others, like Gabriel Marcel and Nikolai Berdyaev were Christian and Martin Buber believed Jew. However, it may be said that with the existentialists, the problem of individual is central and that they stress man's real, authentic existence, his uncertain nature, his personal freedom, and his responsibility for what he does and makes himself to be.

Authentic existence

Existentialism represents a certain attitude particularly relevant to modern mass society. The existentialists have a shared concern for the individual and for personal responsibility. They are suspicious or hostile to the submersion of the individual to the larger public groups or forces. Thus, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche both attacked 'the herd',

and Heidegger distinguished 'authentic existence' from mere social existence. Sartre emphasized the importance of free individual choice regardless of the power of the other people to influence and coerce our desires, beliefs and decisions. For these philosophers, there are certain essentials for true, authentic existence. They believe that only through lived existence can we come to make sense of the world. Each philosopher has their own conception of authenticity. Heidegger conceives of it as an acknowledgement of death, Kierkegaard as choosing certain way of life, Nietzsche as defying mere mediocrity and conformity, Sartre as a project freely chosen and Camus as rebellion against absurdity. But for all of these philosophers, what is most important is that the individual become fully conscious of their existence within the present moment.

Kierkegaard: Subjective Truth and Choice of Way of Life

Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher, belongs to one of the spiritual precursors of the modern existential mode. Kierkegaard rejected the Hegelian system as an attempt to put man in place of God and emphasized the concept of the individual, of choice, of subjectivity, of dread, and of anguish. He supported the idea that the self-realization of a human being comes when the individual takes full responsibility of his or her life. Thus, the individuality and its related notion of subjective truth are the core of his philosophy. Like other existential philosophers, Kierkegaard also provides the life-defining decision to individual human being for authentic survival.

According to Kierkegaard, the individual makes life bearable by choosing one way of life over others, especially choosing 'spiritual' over 'aesthetic' or 'ethical' life. In *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, in "Kierkegaard," Robert Solomon sees no alternative of religious life in Kierkegaard and writes, "in choosing the religious life, for example . . . there are no alternately rational reasons for doing so, only subjective or personal necessity and passionate commitment" (224). There is a kind of linear movement in the

aesthetic, the ethical and religious stages for the personal salvation. If the movement is other way round there is eternal perdition instead of salvation.

The religious life is characterized by faith, which is always a dreadful certainty i.e. a hidden relationship with God. Walter Lowrie and his co-writer in *Soren Kierkegaard: The Point of View* suggest that:

Kierkegaard presents only one great choice: Either the aesthetic mode of life, whether it be a life of pleasure, despair or religious and metaphysical contemplation or the ethical mode of life culminating in Christianity.

People must choose both to make aesthetics and to explain everything in that way or religious. (67-88)

The choice itself is decisive for the content of the personality, through the choice the personality immerses itself in the thing chosen. In making choice, the individual overcomes the afflictions that life is nothing. For Kierkegaard, the highest truth is that human beings are God's creature and can approach God by making a passionate commitment to him. Robert Solomon also presents the same idea, when he asserts "it is necessary to passionately commit oneself, to make a 'leap of faith' in the face of an objective certainty. One cannot know or prove that there is a God. One must simply choose to believe" (224). Kierkegaard's true philosophical quest is subjective experience acquired by an individual in the process of choosing a way of life.

Kierkegaard gave the concept of existence and insisted on the importance of subjective truth in opposition to the rationalist philosophy, Hegelianism in particular. "Existence", according to Solomon, for Kierkegaard, "is not just being there but living passionately, choosing one's own existence and committing oneself to a certain way of life" (224). Emphasizing subjective truth Kierkegaard writes, "the important thing is to understand what I am destined for, to perceive what the 'Deity' wants me to do" (qtd. in

Kaufmann, *Owl and the Nightingale* 174). The point is to find the truth which is the truth for an individual, to find that idea for which one is ready to live and die.

"The important thing" for Kierkegaard, Solomon argues, "is not merely intellectual and ill-conceived challenge to prove that God exists, but the subjective truth of one's own existence in the face of objective uncertainty" (142). For Kierkegaard, to exist is to face the uncertainties of the world and commit oneself passionately to a way of life. His notion of subjective truth was formulated in opposition of to the idea that all choices have a rational or objective resolution. Regarding the subjective truth Solomon writes:

The notion of subjective truth does not mean as it may seem to mean a truth that is 'true to me'. It is rather a resolution in the face of an objective uncertainty--for example, the existence of God, or, as in Kant, the ultimate commensuration of virtue, happiness--for which there is no adequate argument or evidence. (224)

Glicksberg in *The Tragic Vision* connecting subjective with reality writes, "It was all together absurd to believe in God objectively" (19). Faith is immediacy, subjectivity is truth and truth is subjectivity.

Kierkegaard, like Matthew Arnold in "Dover Beach", deplores the ebb of faith in an age of civilization and sees that "The great misfortune of the 'Christendom' and 'the present age' is that people have 'forgotten what it means to exist'" (Evans 406). He uses the word "to exist" says Evans "to refer to human existence". In this sense, God is said not to exist, even though God has "eternal reality" (406). Kierkegaard describes human existence as an unfinished process in which an individual must choose passionately.

Nietzsche: Superman

Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher and critic attempted to unveil the root motives that underlined the traditional western thought which for him are the main obstacles of the authentic existence. He announced war upon them on the ground that they are faulty and untenable. O. Levy in *Chambers Encyclopedia* evaluates Nietzsche as "the transvaluator of all values" (34). Being persuaded by the non-rational character of the world Nietzsche acknowledged that life is not governed by any rational principle. There is no readymade meaning in life except that man himself gives. There exist no absolute standards of good and evil, whose truth can be evaluated and demonstrated by reason. "There is only naked man" assess Perry and his co-writer "living in the godless and absurd world" (634). They again give their opinion that to overcome Nietzschean nothingness and absurdities individuals must define life for themselves and celebrate it heroically.

Unlike many other philosophers and thinkers before him, Nietzsche was openly hostile to various forms of morality and religious thought. He especially denounced Christianity and Christian morality because ". . . religion provides crutches and weapons for the weak. Religion and morality too are the legacy of a 'slave morality' that prefers safety and security to personal excellence and honor" (Solomon 142). Nietzsche points out the traditional philosopher's favor of some other 'true' world and 'God hypothesis' as the indication of declining life, culture and even civilization.

Nietzsche was convinced of the untenabilities of God's world and all religious and metaphysical interpretation of world and the living creatures. He was aware of the fact that the possibility of the affirmation of life was at risk. Nietzsche "required", Robert Audi adds in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, "more than the mere abandonment of all lies and fictions"(533). According to Nietzsche, when we deny the

theological foundations and approve the traditional morality, then only a pervasive sense of meaninglessness and purposelessness would remain. Nietzsche claimed that every person's basic drive is the will to power. Reese L Williams in *The Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion* relates Nietzschean will to power to the essential life force and writes, "The pure form of the will to power is man's will to bring to perfect fruition of all capacities. It is the will to be creative rather than merely creaturely" (391-92). But for Nietzsche, the Christian otherworldliness undermined individual's will to control the world.

From the Nietzschean perspective, the idea of God is just the projection of man's unhealthy conscience, and as a result he has developed a desire for self-torture. The God is man's own creation. Nietzsche maintained that " 'God is dead', killed by the uncompromising will of man himself to discover the facts" (Fern 535). With the death of God, the Christian morality also died leaving a void that modern science could not fill. Since the God is dead, we must be able to live with other alternatives, create new values and achieve self-mastery.

Nietzsche's hero, Zarathustra, sought to direct our effort to the emergence of higher humanity called 'superman'. But to be superman is not an easy task because, according to Zarathustra, the distance between the superman and the ordinary man is greater than that of an ordinary man and an ape. Kathleen Higgins defines superman as

. . . a new, atheistic gospel aspiration towards greatness. This aspiration is embodied in the figure of superman, a new and superior type of human being; who rejects existing morality, who overturns existing values by affirming the positive value of earthly life and of active, creative individual, and who undertakes the creation of his own life in the way artist creates his works. (292)

In this way, unlike other people, superman dares to be himself. He transcends boundaries of good and evil.

Ted Honderich declares in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Superman, the modern existential hero, "knows that life is meaningless but lives it laughingly, instinctively and fully" (621). The superman grasps that the most fundamental desire in man is his drive for power. "The will to power", according to Nietzsche, "is a universal drive found in all men. It prompts the slave who dreams of a heaven from which he hopes to behold his master in hell no less than it prompts the master" (Kaufmann 199).

Kaufmann in *The Owl and the Nightingale* again proceeds on comparing his basic force with Freud's sexual desire. He puts forward his opinion when he writes, "He does not endorse the will to power any more than Freud endorses sexual desire" (199). But he thinks we shall be better off if we face the facts and understand ourselves than if we condemn others hypocritically, without understanding. As the "God is dead" and man ceaselessly strives for power, the Superman, who lives dangerously, is the goal of every human being.

Nietzsche did not preach, paradoxically enough that one must abstain the evil and pursue the path of virtue in order to be a higher man. Instead, he is of the opinion that whether fair or fault one should act and strive for power. Some scholars make it clear by endowing the negative emotion such as wholly devoid of sympathy, ruthless, cunning, cruel, concerned only with his power to his Superman. Nietzsche sees no objection to the suffering of ordinary man if it is necessary for the production of a great man. Nietzsche is of the opinion that trivial people suffer trivially, great men suffer greatly, and sufferings are not to be regretted because they are noble. The superman for whom we are to prepare is the man who has developed by any means, his will to power in an authentic manner.

Nietzsche's concept of the evolution of the superman is not like that of the religious thinker's concept of evolution or "Nirvana," rather his concepts are inherited by the offspring from parents. For Nietzsche, individuals of the superior race and their descendants are more likely to be noble in Nietzsche's sense. They will have strength of will, more courage, more impulse towards power, less sympathy, less bear and less gentleness.

To be superman, the man must be able to transvalue the all accepted values of society and innovate the "master morality" as opposed to the Christian morality that Nietzsche condemned as the "slave morality". Nietzsche declared that Superman, a new breed of nobles, will rule the planet safely.

Heidegger: Being

The German philosopher Martin Heidegger presents the problem of Being and existence. He maintains that there is no pre-given human essence. So, man himself is the author as well as the reader of his own life. Like Sartre, Heidegger insists that human 'self-interpreting being' just are what they make themselves in the course of their active life. For Heidegger, man is not completely captivated and defined by things but he is apart from them because he is "no-thing". Man dwells in a world and continues to be there until his death. Being thrown into things, he falls away and is on the point of being drowned into things. *Encyclopedia Britannica* evaluating human behavior in Heideggerian world writes:

Man is continually a pro-ject (*Ent-wurt*); but periodically, or even normally, he may be submerged in things in such a degree that he is temporally absolved (*Aufgehen in*). He is then nobody in particular; and a structure that Heidegger calls *das man* (the they) is revealed . . . that

stresses man's "other directedness", his tendency to measure himself in terms of his peers. (8: 740)

Thus, Heidegger emphasizes on each man's responsibility to define himself, rather than having any fixed essence.

'The Dasein', his term for 'existence' or 'being there', is not a constant phenomena but is rather 'the happening' of a life course stretched out between birth and death. According to *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* "The being of entities in the world is constituted by the framework of intelligibility or disclosedness opened by Dasein's practices. Our own being as agents of specific types is defined by the world into which we are thrown" (Guignon 318). Heidegger's 'Dasein' is connected with death because every moment of life is dying; everything man does is but a vain effort to escape from the ignominious destiny of death. He pronounces that Dasein is revealed by the deep engagement with the world. The individual in Heideggerian world has to face the problems of Being to determine one's own existence. Man characterizes his existence authentically when he faces the world in all particularities and concreteness. The painful human condition, in which accomplishment is a mere illusion and happiness an evasion, permits the chance to face the human existence and thereby feeling of dread or angst. But the feeling of dread or angst in reality is the priori form of human personality because this constitutes the subjective being of man.

According to Heidegger, the angst manifests the freedom of man to choose himself and to take hold of himself. In anxiety all entities (*Seiendes*) sink away into a 'nothing and nowhere', man hovers in himself existing being nowhere at home. He faces nothingness (*das Nichts*); and all average, obvious everydayness disappears and this is good, since he now faces the potentiality of authentic being. Gin-Inari Lake in

Everyman's Encyclopedia sees the possibility of both victory and defeat in the struggle against dread:

The problem whether a man shall be or shall not be is an event that takes place in the experience of dread. The struggle with this dread determines whether man shall annihilate nothingness and thus perceive its other side that is being; or whether nothing shall annihilate man. (6:394)

Thus, it is clear from the above statement that the feeling of anxiety and the confrontation with death leads man to real 'Being'. People struggle to transcend the feeling of dread or angst in existential crisis for authentic living.

Human being, Heidegger finds, displays three fundamental aspects, all however, constitutes one internally unified structure. These aspects as expressed in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* are "Facticity", "Existentiality" and "Forfeiture" (Edwards 3:450). Facticity, for him, means that human being is always already in the world. "I am always already in the world, in a sense in which my world is my world, it could no more be a world without me than I could be myself without it" (3:460). The term existentiality refers again not to existence in the sense in which the stone or the house exists, but to the personal existence, the existence of Being. The process of existing is always dynamic not static. Human situation is a succession of unique confrontations demanding unique response. In the process of being in the world the individual cannot cross itself the boundaries. So, the projection of the being is "projection *in* and *of* and *with* the world" (3:460). "Existentiality" is thus the understanding of the world completely in its real sense. 'Forfeiture', the third fundamental attribute of human being means that we forget "Being" for particular beings. In other words, human beings in everyday mode are promiscuously public, it is life with others and for others in alienation from the central task of becoming itself.

Sartre: Nothingness, Freedom and the Bad Faith

French novelist, playwright and exponent of Existentialism, Jean-Paul Sartre, acclaimed the freedom of the individual human being. He is of the opinion that the forlorn individual, in the threat of anguish and despair', learns to confront the existence in the world without God. Having written his defense of individual freedom and human dignity, Sartre defined himself as an atheist and saw existentialism as a means of facing the consequences of a godless universe. According to Sartre, existence comes first. Each man, however, circumscribed by his historical and environmental situation, is the author of his own life. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Sartre claims, "Man makes himself what he is by his choices, choices of . . . particular actions" (4:631-32). Unlike Kierkegaard and other theistic existentialist, Sartre insisted that existentialism (atheistic) begins with the treatment of an individual and not with God, a pre-established ethic or a universal conception of divine nature.

Every individual is alone in the world devoid of any absolute power like God. Like other many traditional religious thinkers, when we believe God as a creator, he is generally regarded as a superior sort of craftsman. Sartre argues when God creates the man in his own image, He knows exactly what He is creating. Thus, the concept of man in the mind of God is similar to the concept of art in the mind of an artisan. Following certain techniques and conception, God produces man just as an artisan does. But for Sartre, God no longer exists and therefore, man comes from nothing. There is no God's will from which man discovers the appropriate value and principle for his life as guiding force. Since the world is empty and devoid of any ethical values, we must choose our own ethics, define ourselves and create ourselves. According to *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, "One is never free of one's 'situation', Sartre tells us, though one is always free to deny ('negate') that situation and try to change it. To be human, to be conscious, is

to be free to imagine, free to choose, and responsible for one's lot in life" (Solomon 710). Man's freedom thus, is inescapable and manifests itself in each of the choices he makes. Freedom is what one is, even though it functions always within the given situation. In Sartre's world where freedom plays central role, people are bound to be characterized by an awesome degree of liberty. Paradoxically enough, Sartre comments man's freedom as a kind of condemnation because he didn't create himself yet, in other respect is free, because once thrown into the world, he is responsible for everything he does.

The Platonic concept of the ideal world and the relevant notion of reality disappeared along with Nietzsche's declaration of the death of the God. Therefore, there could no longer be the priori good and evil, reward and punishment, or heaven and hell. Everything is permissible if God does not exist and as a result man is forlorn because neither within him nor without does he find anything to cling to. Everything in the human condition remains problematic, the existential hero, in the quest of freedom, is doomed to failure. But the remarkable thing here is that the failure justifies his struggle if not compensates. If the external world offers no consolation, then the people must be able to make a decisive choice in order to make authentic existence.

Thus man's freedom is absolute, but one cannot escape responsibility and anguish. Since people are not determined by anything else, the responsibility of their being and deeds rests highly on their shoulder. People's responsibility is very great, because in making any kind of choice, they are choosing for the whole world. Every possible choice is open to an individual but the mere passive choice cannot help his existence rather there should be deep involvement and commitment too. A man should be involved in life, as a result he would be able to leave the impression on it and outside of that there is nothing else than total sum of his undertakings.

In *The Tragic Vision*, Glicksberg, in this regard, evaluates man in terms of his action:

The existentialist hero has definite possibilities to choose from, but his range of freedom is cruelly curtailed by his vision of nothingness and the dread that this vision calls for. If the existentialist hero is to exhibit any greatness of soul in his encounter with nothingness, he must judge himself in terms of what he does. (100)

If the conception of God, the father, is discarded, then there should be someone to replace god like Nietzsche's superman, and invent new values necessary for an individual as well as for all humanity. Sartre consequently endows his power to individual to invent the value of his own. Life has no prior meaning at all, but acquires it in the course of living.

Sartre makes a clear distinction between being- in- itself (*en-soi*) and being-for-itself (*pour-soi*). En-soi applies to things, a thing exists in itself. This means a thing is basically what it is. If this is the case, then the axiom about 'existence preceding essence' cannot be applied to an inanimate object. In the case of man, existence precedes essence; so man is '*pour- soi*' not '*en-soi*'. Man projects himself to the distant goals and values. His life is the movement to become something that he is not.

No God is needed to account for his being. If there is no divine consciousness, there is nothing to support the objective realm. They require the denial of objective value. In this sense, Sartre connects existentialism with humanism, not in the sense of regarding man as the creator of all values.

Sartre states that throughout our life we are free to face new possibilities to reform ourselves and to reinterpret our relation to the world outside us. This indeterminacy is that we can never be anything and when we try to establish ourselves as something particular we are in bad faith. According to *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, "Bad

faith is incorrectly viewing ourselves as something fixed and settled, but it is also bad faith to view ourselves as a being infinite possibilities and ignore the always restrictive facts and circumstances within which all choices must be made” (Solomon 711). Thus for Sartre, the heart of existentialism is not gloom and hopelessness but a renewed confidence in the significance of being human.

Camus: Rebellion against Meaninglessness

After the great devastation of the World War I and II, people confronted the age of anxiety, despair and crimes. The external supports in which public belief rested in the past were religious in character. Albert Camus writes in *The Myth of Sisyphus*:

A world that can be explained even with bad reasons is a familiar world. But on the other hand, in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a Promised Land. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, is probably the feeling of absurdity. (13)

Thus the decline of religious belief in modern period compelled people to realize the plight of Sisyphus. For Camus, the condition of modern man is like that of an insane crying inside the closed glass vessel.

Man lives with certain aims or plans for future before encountering the absurd situation, but after that freedom to be does not exist. Death is there as the only reality. Camus argues that the transcendence of the absurd is achieved only through an intense struggle, not through the passive acceptance of the situation.

He writes in *The Rebel*:

I continue to believe that this world has no ultimate meaning. But I know that something in it has meaning and that is man, because he is the only creature to insist on having one. This world has at least the truth of man, and our task is to provide its justification against the fate itself. (18)

The existents have to discover some principle of justification for life. He writes, "One must imagine Sisyphus happy" (111). Sisyphus is happy "by virtue of his scorn and defiance of the gods and by virtue of a rebellion that refuses to give in to despair" (Solomon102). Though the life is devoid of meaning in this world, man at least makes sense through his own attempt.

Camus believed that rebellion is one of the essential dimensions of mankind. He found the possibility and principle of authentic existence in rebellion. Distinguishing rebellion with revenge he further writes:

Actually, rebellion is more than an act of revenge, in the strongest sense of the word. Resentment is very well defined by Scheler as an auto intoxication, the evil secretion, in a sealed vessel, of prolonged impotence. Rebellion on the other hand, removes the seal and allows the whole being to come into play. It liberates stagnant waters and turns them into a raging torrent. (*The Rebel* 23)

Rebellion is a philosophical process and it has a different meaning than that of revenge.

Revenge is personal human emotion whereas the rebellion or revolt is universal.

Knowing the valuelessness of life man must root himself in the life of this earth and accept the challenges of the absurd. Man himself, not the god, bears the full responsibility of his destiny in a universe, which offers no justification for his aspirations or his commitments.

Camus insists that the realization of the freedom itself is god in which man can choose and create his own values. From the consciousness of freedom, he argues, begins everything and nothing counts except it. The tragedy of modern man is not due to the absurdity or the feeling of it but with the awareness of oncoming death. When a man has consciousness that he will die, he begins to feel the pang of that consciousness until his death. He will be helpless in front of death. Therefore, the present that is precarious is all a man can hope and enjoy.

The transcendence of the absurd, according to Camus, is not achieved without intense struggle. The only way to make life meaningful is the revolt against the meaninglessness. This attempt at least helps man to recognize his situation. Man is free to choose but he meets obstacles of an external order that is indifferent to his needs, and these warring forces can not easily be reconciled. In such a condition of unfulfillment, the fact of purposelessness emerges. If the demands are not fulfilled and the life is incomprehensible, then it is necessary to bring meaning into the world and thus affirm the birth right of human freedom. In this sense, Glicksberg comments, "the absurdist hero is thus transformed into a metaphysical rebel who dedicates himself to life not death, to affirmation not denial" (61). Thus, taking upon himself responsibility for creating values in the absurd universe is the way to overcome absurd.

Camus develops the idea of the rebellion against meaninglessness in his book *The Rebel* as:

I proclaim that I believe in nothing and that everything is absurd, but I cannot doubt the validity of my own proclamation and I am compelled to believe, at least, in my own protest. The first and the only datum that is furnished in me, within absurdist experience is rebellion. Stripped of all knowledge, driven to commit murder or to consent to it, I possess this

single datum which gains great strength from anguish I suffer. Rebellion arises from the spectacle of the irrational coupled with an unjust and incomprehensible condition. (116)

In his opinion, to rebel is to exist authentically. Sisyphus rebelled against the absurdity of the situation, so he existed happily.

Chapter 3

Quest for Authentic Existence

Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957), the representative novel of the Beat movement, addresses the problem of living the moment authentically in a highly inauthentic postwar America. According to existential philosophers, to give in to the social conventions or what majority demands without considering possibilities is the condition of inauthenticity in so far as one conforms to what 'they' does and thinks, he is not his own individual self, but the 'they-self'. Existence is inauthentic in so far as one does things simply because that is what one does. It is authentic in so far as one makes up his own mind, is his own person, or true to his own self.

For Kerouac's characters, there is no predetermined system of values upon which they can rely. The characters find themselves in a postwar social situation where systems building have irrevocably broken down. In *The Age of Doubt*, William Graebner describes two variations of contingency in postwar America: "One was the contingency of existence . . . The other, a moral and ethical contingency, was characterized by the growing sense that it was more difficult than ever to ground one's conduct in a stable system of values" (19). In this void created by world war and atomic bomb, the Beats in order to make sense of their lives, opt for a more personalized, spiritual response rather than accepting any prescribed values. Kerouac's Beat characters attempt to discover meaning in a supposedly meaningless world.

In the absence of any known predetermined absolute values, the characters try to create individual values. According to John Clellon Holmes in his essay "This is the Beat Generation," (1952) the Beat "lust for freedom, and 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" (Charters 224). Thus the Beats are in

constant search for value in their lives, and will try anything if they think it will provide an answer. Norman Mailer in his essay: "The White Negro: Superficial Reflections on the Hipster," shares the same view. Equating the "white Negro" with "existential hipster," Mailer writes, for this "American existentialist" life must have a purpose: "A life which is directed by one's faith in the necessity of action is a life committed to the notion that the substratum of existence is the search, the end meaningful but mysterious" (587). Kerouac's characters search for meaning in the world, even if that meaning is difficult to attain and perhaps ultimately "mysterious." In the end, meaning is contained in the search itself.

Kerouac's Dean Moriarty is an existentialist hero struggling to lead an authentic existence. His is the existential search that presupposes an individuated and idiosyncratic relationship to the world. Therefore, Dean's authentic striving must break through the postwar American social order based on conformity. He insists on individual meaning-creation that runs directly counter to the postwar demand for conformity to the social order. In *Containment Culture* Alan Nadel writes that "it was a period, as many prominent studies have indicated, when conformity became a positive value in and itself. The virtue of conformity - to some idea of religion, to middle-class values, to distinct gender roles and rigid courtship rituals - became a form of public knowledge" (4). Yet this conformity also produced anxiety for those unable or unwilling to live within its bounds. As an existentialist, Dean would not accept society's dominant codes and ready-made modes of living.

According to existentialist philosophers, authentic meaning cannot be grasped unless an individual's activities become practically and bodily engaged with the real world. They believe that only through lived experience can we come to make sense of the world. For these philosophers, what is most important is that the individuals become fully

aware of their existence within the moment. The world Kerouac's characters inhabit is that of industrial society that hinders one from living in the authentic moment. Kerouac's "Mill City" (59) serves as a good example allowing us to see what life working for a mill was like. Erik Ronald Mortenson in "Existentialism and the Beats" writes about the mill life:

The Mill owned time, and the activities that took place within it. Workers arose not when they were rested, but when a bell demanded it. Basic human activities such as eating were strictly regulated, leading to a system governed by the clock instead of the body. . . . As with time, the mills controlled space, telling workers where exactly they will be at any given moment in the day . . . mills present a changing of the guard, a transition from an older tradition of individual craftsmanship and control to a new society highly controlled and rationalized. (25)

The industries imposed upon its workers temporal and spatial constraints. In such a situation, an authentic existence is impossible unless one breaks free from constraints that deviate one from the real, authentic world.

Kerouac's characters see these constraints as barrier to discovering a truer, authentic version of oneself since they possess existential awareness. Christopher O. Griffin points out in "Bad Faith and Existential Action," "The contingent, random absurdity of individual existence, once realized, prohibits the individual from seeing life through established conventions" (180). As Sal Paradise admits, "nobody knows what's going to happen to anybody . . ." (291). In this regard, Dean Moriarty and other characters reject traditional values so as to attain the condition of authenticity.

Non-conformity: A Revolt against Capitalistic Values

Kerouac's characters in *On the Road* disregard middle-class work ethics in order to avoid temporal and spatial control. For them, like the mill work, all kinds of job imposed control with rigid time tables and spatial itineraries. Only few characters hold a job, and those who do usually work only temporarily. Even while at work, Dean and Sal skip out at various times unconstrained by schedule or routine. Sal and Eddie "found a man in the markets who agreed to hire both of [them]; work started at four in the morning and went till six p.m." but for them "there were so many other interesting things to do" (47). When Sal stays with Remi Boncouer in Mill City, he gets a job as a guard but does not take his job seriously. Sal drinks while on guard with the people he is supposed to be guarding. Even worse, he and Remi actually steal from the barracks that they are supposed to protect.

Dean gets a job demonstrating a new kind of pressure cooker in the kitchen of homes in San Francisco. The sales man gives him piles of samples and pamphlets. The first day Dean works with full energy, but the next day he gives up working. The way he responds to the salesman reveals his attitude toward the job:

'Have you been trying to sell these?'

'No,' said Dean, 'I have another job coming up.'

'Well, what are you going to do about all these samples?'

'I don't know.' (166)

Kerouac's characters become engaged in idiosyncratic actions and behaviors, rather than being controlled, so as to counter the capitalistic reification of life.

On the Road confronts reification in a more specific manner, through the character of Dean Moriarty. Early in the novel Sal travels to Denver to see his friends and asks Carol Marx "What's the schedule?" explaining that "there was always a schedule in

Dean's life" (43). Sal then makes it to Dean's apartment, where Dean promptly treats the reader to an example of his schedule making. He explains to Camille that he must go. She in turn replies:

"But what time will you be back?"

"It is now" (looking at his watch) "exactly one fourteen. I shall be back at exactly three-fourteen, for our hour of reverie together. . . . So now in this exact minute I must dress, put my pants, go back to life, that is to outside life, streets and what not. . . . It is now one-fifteen and time's running –"

"Well, all the right, Dean, but please be sure and be back at three."

"Just as I said, darling, and remember not three but three- fourteen". (44)

What is most striking in this passage is the detail in which Dean points out his actions. Dean's calculation of time is exact to the minute, that he insists on three-fourteen, not simply three p. m. Such detailed division of time seems consistent to capitalistic rationalization of time. In fact, Dean's account seems over rationalized since not even capitalism functions with such minute-by-minute efficiency. Dean's conception of time is hyper realized. Even as he is exiting the door he realizes that "it is now one fifteen and time is running, running". Of course by taking capitalistic rationalization to the next step, he is calling attention to the degree to which rationalized time has gained currency. Yet Dean's antagonism resides not so much in the increasing mechanization of time but in rather how that time is employed.

Capitalist mode of production employs time to subjugate workers to its own set of laws and rules, thereby robbing workers of their individuality. But Dean's use of time is not related to the capitalist mode of production. Erik R. Mortenson in "Beating Time:

Configurations of Temporality in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*" writes on how Dean makes use of time:

While the reification process has perverted time in order to constrict space and dominate the worker, Dean uses his time to serve his own ends. Thus Dean is able to retain the agency that is denied the worker; the space he will inhabit will be his own. Time may still be subsumed by space, but it is a space that Dean is free to configure according to his own wishes. Time does not employ Dean—he employs time (54).

Thus, his sense of time is personal and idiosyncratic.

Similarly, Dean's actions are directed towards ecstasy and avoiding capitalist production. Finding a girl for Sal, making plans to go to the midget auto races, having sex with various women, and getting drunk with his friends are all activities that focus on the fulfillment of desire rather than materialist production. He claims that "I haven't had time to work in weeks" (45). Thus, Dean is able to avoid the production of commodities, which ultimately destroys the worker, and replace it with personal experience.

Dean's use of time is bound up with movement, not stasis. He runs from one place to another constantly and gets involved with activity and change. Through continual motion, Dean is able to avoid remaining in a fixed place that would render him susceptible to control. Dean's rejection of fixed place is emblematic of Beat emphasis to escape a spatial control that becomes intertwined with temporal constraint. Thus Dean's need to constantly "go" to perform "our one and noble function of the time, move" (27) as Sal says needs to be understood as a desire for both spatial and temporal movement.

Living Life in the Moment

Erik Ronald Mortenson in "Existentialism and Beats" writes:

What Beats were after was a return to a moment overflowing with personal freedom and spontaneous action. Time ruled not by clock, but by desire and circumstance. Space governed not by boundaries, but by openness and mobility. The factory floor and the mindset associated with it jarred one out of present, and the Beats felt it was to be lived to its fullest. (27)

Dean's rejection of conventional notion of time, therefore, is his attempt to live his life completely based in the movement.

On the Road provides ample evidence of Dean's concept of time based in the present moment. Arriving at the doorstep of Sal's relatives in Virginia, Sal describes an altered Dean:

'Cause *now is the time* and we all know time! . . . He roared into the downtown Testament, looking in every direction and seeing everything in an arc of 180 degrees around his eyeballs without moving his head. . . . He had become absolutely mad in his movements: he seemed to be doing everything at the same time. (109-10)

Dean is frenetically living in the moment, trying to stay within the "now". Dean accepts the belief that life must be lived in the present and practices this knowledge by filling each of these moments with as much activity as possible, attempting "to do everything at the same time". What Dean wants to avoid by living in the present is what Heidegger refers to as "inauthenticity".

According to Charles B. Guignon in *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Heidegger sees inauthenticity "as a sign that we are fleeing from the fact that we are

finite beings who stand before death," and our inability to "face up to our being toward-death (319). Then, inauthenticity means to avoid facing the knowledge of one's own death and looking beyond death, or to act like an immortal. People often attempt to avoid contemplating the final end of their existence by positing that they will somehow live on through fame, philanthropic contributions, or amassing wealth. Such attempts, however, distract one from the present, which is the real basis of our life.

Erik R. Mortenson in "Beating Time" points out ways in which Dean avoids Heidegger's idea of "inauthentic" time:

The most obvious is Dean's attempt to live in the moment. By residing in the present, he locates himself within the Heideggerian notion of "authentic" time. Realizing that life will end, he seeks to make the most of it by maximizing his understanding of each moment. Second, his "Beat" lifestyle disavows fame, fortune, and other attempts at personal aggrandizement that are the "means" to supposedly transcend finite human life. (57)

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 being the present as anything but what it really is—the final and ultimate reality.

Dean believes that the moment is the site where life is to be lived, where humans encounter one another and their environment is an immediate way. What he deplores is the covering up that existentialists like Heidegger examine, the reification of society that forces its citizens out of the present moment. Dean's emphasis on direct and unmediated experience is an attempt to recover an authenticity within the moment.

On the Road also provides examples of inauthentic experience. On their way from San Francisco to New York, Sal and Dean ride in a car with a man and a tourist couple headed for Kansas. Dean explains to Sal the separate notions of time the tourist couple have and how authenticity is destroyed:

Now you just dig them in front. They have worries, they're counting the miles, they're thinking about where to sleep tonight, how much money for gas, the weather, how they'll get there—and all the time they will get there anyway, you see. But they need to worry and betray time with urgencies false and otherwise, purely anxious, whiny their souls won't be at peace unless they can latch on to an established and proven worry. (196-97)

The tourist couple needs "worries". It gives them a false sense of security in an otherwise meaningless world. Worrying about "money", "gas" and "weather" takes the couple out of the present moment, allowing them to live in an always-retreating future that never arrives since there will always be a new worry to replace it. As long as they worry, they blind themselves to the inevitable fact of death which could allow them to live in an authentic temporal existence.

By focusing on the future problems, the couple is able to leave Heidegger's "authentic" time and move into infinity. According to Heidegger in *Being and Time*, anxiety is positive since it helps to bring Dasein to an authentic understanding of its Being, one that is based on the finality of existence. Anxiety "throws Dasein back upon that which it is anxious about—its authentic potentiality—for –being-in-the-world" (*Being and Time* 232). Yet the couple is showing a different *anxiety*—that of the "they". Contrarily, Dean's authenticity resides in his knowledge that we will all "get there anyway" and therefore there is no necessity but to simply experience the moment as it unfolds. Because the couple does not allow themselves to be free in the present moment,

they "betray time" and will never achieve the direct physical and mental relationship with the world that is the hallmark of authenticity.

Although Sal seems to share Dean's essential revelry in the moment, his belief differs from that of Dean's. Early in the novel, Sal feels haunted, and ultimately realizes that "Naturally...this is only death: death will overtake us before heaven. The one thing that we yearn for in our living days . . . is the remembrance of some lost bliss that was probably experienced in the womb and can only be reproduced . . . in the death" (118-19). While previously mentioned tourist couple use worries and fears to leave the present, Sal seems to look in both past and future that removes him from present time.

Sal's notion of transcendence is embodied in a Shrouded Mysterious Traveler, a figure who pursues Sal throughout his journey. He thinks, ". . . It was myself, wearing a shroud. . . . some spirit was pursuing all of us and bound to catch us before we reached heaven" (118). Then, Sal is aware of the Heideggerian notion of existential angst associated with the dread of death. But, unlike Dean, he remains focused to move into heaven. Sal relates his feelings to Dean, "who would have nothing to do with it" because "we're all of us never in life again" (119). In keeping with Heideggerian view point, Dean realizes that since death is our final act, it makes sense to enjoy the moments of life that we are given.

Although Sal agrees with Dean's view to live in the moment and forget death, Sal cannot escape his fixation. Later in the novel, Sal has a vision:

And for just a moment I had reached the point of ecstasy that I always wanted to reach, which was complete step across chronological time onto 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 angels

dove off and flew into the holy void of uncreated emptiness . . .
innumerable lotus-lands falling open in the magic moth swarm of heaven.
(163-64)

Thus, Sal's notion of transcendence involves death, but rather than a Heideggerian acceptance of death as a means to live life, Sal's destination is always heaven.

In *Being and Time* Heidegger declares that "if 'death' is defined as the end of Dasein—that is to say, of Being-in-the world—this doesn't imply any ontical decision whether 'after death' another Being is possible" (292). The belief in the after life abstracts the believer out of the world. Yet, Sal's vision, though inauthentic, provides a means of escape from oppressive notions of time. Dean does not believe in after life. So he replies Sal's question, "What's going to happen when we die?" as "When you die you're just dead, that's all" (137). Therefore, Dean's is the life affirming philosophy, a belief that life should be lived to the fullest in every moment, while Sal's is focused on death and destruction.

Spiritual Revolution

On the Road demonstrates existentialist animosity towards the religious conformity required by the masses. It advocates a spiritual revolution, one which knows neither creed nor denomination. In his essay "The Philosophy of Beat Generation" (1958) Holmes explains, "To be Beat is to be at the bottom of your personality, looking up; to be existential in the Kierkegaard, rather than in the Jean-Paul Sartre, sense" (229). Viewed in this light, Kerouac's Beat characters are searching for spirituality free from the trappings of institutionalized church and state. Dean is "a new kind of American saint" desirous of human-to-human relationships (42). Human-to-human relationship is not traditional religious doctrine, but a more essential connection that exists between human beings. Kerouac talks about such religiousness as the concern of the Beat project in

"Aftermath", claiming that "the existentialists . . . represent an even deeper religiousness . . . bursting like weeds through the sidewalks of stiffened civilization" (50). "Stiffened civilization" of conformist America is lacking spirituality which Beats are attempting to achieve.

Dean Moriarty believes in the God, but his belief is different from that of the public or the masses. According to Kierkegaard, as Jostein Gaarder writes in *Sophie's World*, "it [is] not enough to believe that Christianity is true. Having a Christian faith mean[s] following a Christian way of life," and "Christianity was both so overwhelming and irrational" (378). For Dean, "God exists. . . . Everything since the Greeks has predicated wrong. You can't make it with geometry and geometrical systems of thought" (115). Dean's position stands in opposition to the established, rationalized, established religiosity of the public devoid of passion and commitment. Spirituality resides in acknowledging fellow human's dignity unmediated by any external measures, and treating exclusively as human beings. Thus, Dean's spirituality is directed towards defining the intrinsic worth of human.

Dean attempts to stand as the heroic defender of human dignity by his adherence to Beat lifestyle based on disregard to work ethic that regards material gains as the ultimate goal of life. His lifestyle resists inter-human alienation brought about by modern consumer society in which man is subordinated to such abstract values as labor, commodity and money. This resistance is revealed in Dean's refusal to participate in mercantile activities and by his annihilation of the sense of accumulating property. By struggling to delineate himself, he hopes to achieve an authentic connection with other people, a connection that is purged of self-interest. This struggle unfolds as Dean talks of his ideas about man woman relationship.

Dean explains to Sal reasons for misunderstanding between Marylou and himself:

"I've pleaded and pleaded with Marylou for a peaceful sweet understanding of pure love between us forever with all hassles thrown out—she understands; her mind is bent on something else—she's after me; she won't understand how much I love her, she's knitting my doom."

(117)

Dean wishes Marylou love him as Dean the man. But she wants him as a man of profession, which would render him incapable of "pure love. What Dean expects from her is that she regard his intrinsic value irrespective of his achievements.

If alienation occurs when the relationship between men is perverted by the mediation of such extra-human categories as money and property, then by freeing himself from the desire to produce, own, spend, Dean helps to remove these extra-human obstacles and, accordingly, to restore human bond to its unmediated form. Later Dean portrays Walter's wife as an ideal woman: "Now you see, man, there's a real woman for you. Never a harsh word, never a complaint or modified; her old man can come in any hour of the night with anybody and have talks in the kitchen and drink the beer and leave any old time" (192). It becomes now obvious that what Dean dreams of is a milieu, in which he can treat the others and be created by the others not as a means but as an end, and in which his naked humanity will be affirmed and valued. Therefore, Dean advises Sal, to "spend a whole life of non-interference with the wishes of others . . . And nobody bothers you cut along and make it your own way" (237).

Dean's spirituality is based on honesty and openness to experience. He tells about the adventures and deprivations of childhood on the street, about his highly unconventional sex life, and about the pain and isolation of his lonely condition. In so

doing he helps other men come out of themselves as well. As the last road trip of *On the Road* begins, Dean, Sal and their friend Stan Shephard hurtle south from Denver toward Mexico. Kerouac shows how Dean helps other men bring their inner lives into the open:

We all decided to tell our stories, but one by one, and Stan was first.

“We’ve got a long way to go,” preambled Dean, “and so you must take every indulgence and deal with every single detail you can bring to mind—and still it won’t all be told. Easy, easy,” he cautioned Stan, who began telling his story, “You’ve got to relax too.” Stan swung into his life story as we shot across the dark. He started with his experiences in France but to round-out ever-growing difficulties he came back and started at the beginning with his boyhood in Denver . . . Stan was nervous and feverish. He wanted to tell Dean everything. Dean was now arbiter, old man, judge, listener, approver, nodder. “Yes, yes, go on please.” (253)

For Dean, revealing self and soul to another man can establish essential connection among human beings. Thus *On the Road* exposes a new kind of spirituality based on human relationships in which human dignity and worth is defended against a dehumanizing material culture.

Existential Awareness

Dean's harsh childhood experiences stands as a major influence in the emergence of his keen existential self-awareness. The narrator, Sal Paradise, tells us about Dean's childhood:

Dean was the son of a wino, one of the most tottering mums of Larimer Street. . . . He used to plead in court at the age of six to have his father set free. He used to beg . . . and sneak money back to his father, who waited among broken bottles He set a Denver record for stealing cars. . . .

From the age of eleven he was usually in reform school. (39-40)

Nevertheless, according to Jean Paul Sartre, these same conditions surround all humanity rendering all isolated by conflict. Cranston supports this reading of Sartre, agreeing that "existentialists by great stress on the isolation, the solitude, the 'abandonment' of individual" (qtd. in *Griffin* 180). Once such condition of human existence is realized, the individual no longer views the life through prescribed conventions. As Dean admits, "everything is perfect and fine" (Kerouac 185). Having undergone through harrowing childhood experiences, Dean possesses the awareness of potential brutality of existence and the contingency of humankind's civility.

Dean's rejection to follow conventional codes and his belief in living life in the moment irrespective of its inherent uncertainty and danger reveal his existential vision and heighten its clarity by contrasting it with the above mentioned tourist couple and other characters. Such a vision is experienced in the truth of subjectivity. Sartre, however, argues that all individuals are aware of the reality of existence. Yet most practice a form of self-deception or self-delusion that keeps the harsh truth of existence at bay. For Sartre, the difference that separates those with authentic existential perspective from those without it involves the latter groups "bad faith", defined by Cranston as "culpable

self-deception, by means of which certain people evade their moral responsibility" (27). In bad faith, an individual denies the harsh brutality of existence choosing instead methods of evasion such as abstracted thought or belief in conventional value systems. Such evasion, claims Sartre, is immoral. One must choose to confront one's existence, acknowledging one's past for what it is and then choose to throw oneself forward, to project oneself, to be creating for oneself an essence involving authentic commitment and action rather than continued inauthentic, self-deceived flight.

Dean's existential ethic is demonstrated in his choice of Beat lifestyle, seeking after adventure, the life of spontaneity and impulse, and non-conformity. Dean is both the embodiment of suffering and honest love of life in one man. His acceptance of brutality of existence has not extinguished his love for life. Sal thinks, "Dean just raced in society, eager for bread and love", and is "starving" for the essentials of existence (14). Sal follows him to understand and partake of the purity of his authentic existence won by hardship.

From the opening lines of *On the Road*, when Sal Paradise reveals himself as "having just gotten over a serious illness that I don't bother to talk about, except that it had to do with . . . my feeling that everything was dead" (7), it is clear that he has come face to face with the reality of existence, he is restless and depressed with his current situation. But he seems unable to take an existential action and only "with the coming Dean Moriarty began the part of my life you could my life on the road" (7). He follows Dean because he finds Dean "wanted so much to live and to get involved with people", and "mad to live, mad to talk . . . desirous of everything at the same time" (10-11). In his journey to the West Coast to meet Dean, he happens to stay in a gloomy inn where he realizes the absurdity and contingency of human existence as an individual:

I woke up as the sun was reddening; and that was the one distinct time in my life, the strangest moment of all, when I didn't know who I was—I was far away from home, haunted and tired with travel, in a cheap hotel room . . . I looked at the cracked high ceiling and really didn't know who I was for about sixteen strange 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. (19-20)

Sal's self- realization leads him towards living a life of authenticity.

Search on the Edge of Society

Sal's search for authentic life takes the form of a search among the people on the fringes of society for the signs of authenticity. Talking about Beat project Steve Wilson in "Buddha Writing" writes that "the life of the outsider was for them the last place where authenticity survived in the manufactured world of America" (303). Sal surrounds himself with the lives of those beyond the bounds of normal American society. He lives with hobos, befriends criminals and drug users and has interracial affairs with Mexican and Native American women—all this is the confining social environment of postwar America when conformity was seen as a civic good.

The outsiders could not fit into mainstream America because of their race, their criminal records, their economic status, and their sexual orientations. However, far from being a difficulty, this was a benefit to their spiritual development. For example, Kerouac felt that African American Culture—Jazz, for instance—encouraged the authenticity because it valued intense moment over tradition, intuition over reason shaped by education. Having been lived a life outside an Anglo world view, stressing the evils of the body; ensured Blacks would stay in touch with a certain essential humanness. As a

result of these opinions, Kerouac's narrator Sal Paradise searches for truth by "digging" lives of the dispossessed, embracing that which mainstream seeks to avoid.

Then, it is not difficult to see why Sal follows Dean. He finds him as a guide for his own journey towards meaning: "[Dean's] dirty work clothes clung to him so gracefully, as though you couldn't buy a better fit from the Natural Tailor of Natural Joy, as Dean had, in his stresses" (13). Dean has a long history of jail-stays, and as a young boy lived on the streets of Denver with his father. Though his life is that of hardship and suffering, this has turned not into bitterness. But rather, Dean has learned about Natural Joy from "his stresses". Dean holds this essential key to existence, and in search of clue to the essence of life, Sal runs after Dean abandoning mainstream society.

The love affair between Sal and Terry is worth examining here. Terry is the Mexican girl Sal meets in a bus station in Bakersfield, California. Sal is at first attracted to Terry because she was "the cutest little Mexican girl in slacks" (78). His two-week affair with her allows him access to a life among migrant farm workers, the outcast, and the destitute. Sal is introduced to Terry's world. Her brother "Ricky always had three or four dollars in his pocket and was happy-go-lucky about things" (88). And like Dean, Terry and Ricky come from the lowest of economic backgrounds. To support his newly acquired family, Sal obtains a job picking cotton, something he has never done before. They live in tents beside the fields, beside other migrant families, and though the work is backbreaking and the pay abysmal, Sal thinks he has found his life's work.

During this experience, a transformation in Sal occurs through which he comes to see himself as one of the social outcasts whose group he has joined:

I was a man of the earth. . . . One night Okies went mad in the roadhouse and tied a man to a tree and beat him to a pulp with sticks. I was asleep at the time and heard about it. From then on I carried a big stick with me in

the tent in case they got the idea we Mexicans were fouling up their trailer camp. They thought I was a Mexican, of course; and in a way I am. (94)

This is far more than mere identification with an outsider group. Here Sal sees himself as one of the dispossessed, calling himself a Mexican when he is not so.

Later in the novel, Sal says he is a "'white man' disillusioned" (169-70). His white ambitions" (170) have only fetched him "disappointment and white sorrows" (171). His dissatisfaction with the material, conformist white world becomes more explicit when Sal says: "I walked...wishing I were a Negro, feeling that the best the white world has offered was not enough ecstasy for me, not enough life, joy, kicks, darkness, music, not enough night" (169). For him, mainstream American tendency towards material gain and accumulation has deprived him as a white man to experience the real world.

However, the relation between Sal and Dean remains as the central focus. According to George Dardess in "The delicate Dynamics of Friendship", *On the Road* is "delicately constructed account of the relation between the narrator, Sal Paradise, and his friend, Dean Moriarty" (200-201). Sal's initial attraction to Dean as a guide to lead towards authentic life gradually weakens. Dean and Sal part ways by the end of *On the Road*, after an intense and intimate friendship and several wild trips across America and into Mexico. One important lesson Sal learns from his tutelage under Dean is that authenticity in life requires abandoning our need for personal ties. We must focus our energies on obtaining our own kicks, and mustn't let any obligations to others get in our way. This philosophy is clearly shown to Sal in clearest terms when late in the novel Dean leaves him seriously ill in Mexico City. As Dean says, he's "gotta get back to his life" (285). This is a turning point in the relationship, with Sal acknowledging that Dean cannot commit to a true, long-term friendship: "when I got better I realized what a rat he

was, but then I had to understand the impossible complexity of his life, how he had to leave me there, sick, to get on 'Okay, old man, I'll say nothing". (285)

Sal assigns Dean's shirking of responsibility not to a lack of caring but to the life he has led. Suffering may lead to self-realizations, but the journey is in the end a focus in the self over the others. This is a lesson Sal finds difficult to adopt. For Dean, getting trapped in the obligations would not let him live in the authentic moment. Dean hopes Sal will take action for himself. Sal eventually leaves Dean, settles with "the girl with the pure and innocent eyes" (268) and returns to the commercial life previously he had abandoned. Ultimately, Sal displays belief in conventional, bourgeois value system and exhibits what Sartre calls bad faith.

Struggle for Individual Freedom

According to Sartre, man is always in the mode of being what it is not. It embodies possibilities. Man, unlike physical object, is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Individual gives meaning to life by defining himself, creating himself through the involvement with other and the world according to Sartre. Freedom of choice offered by the contingent world is the most important fact of human existence. Free choice, which is spontaneous and without self-deception, helps individual to be what he is not. One has to be conscious of his freedom and natural to his own instinctive inner-self. Dean possesses such capacity found in his thrust toward authentic existence. In the course of pursuing his existence he undergoes intense suffering. He accepts his outsider status attributed to him by society. He is ready to take responsibilities of the consequences of his action.

Dean has understood the harsh reality of human existence and has decided to confront it. His existential choice of actions shows his recognition of the supremacy of individual freedom and struggle against absurdity of social conformity. His emphasis on

authentic experience of existence makes him live frenetically in the moment. Dean is looking for the "tune of the moment", which enables him access to plenitude of being in the present moment (194). But it has significant and threatening consequences. Though he achieves the experience of authentic existence, this frenetic activity leaves Dean broken. He learns that any transcendence or understanding exists only for that duration. As Heidegger notes, it is this knowledge that things will not last that provides such access to the present.

Despite his suffering Dean does not plunge himself to the route of other people or society, thereby he avoids bad faith. Unlike Sal's, his choice is absolute not colored by the rules and regulations of the society. Towards the end of the novel, Dean's energy is spent and his once-transcendent talking turned into mumble: "can't talk no more—do you understand that it is—or might be—. But listen!" (288). Still, he stands determined in his fight for individual freedom and authenticity. When Sal and his friends deny him a ride, Dean "walks off alone"(290), and his eyes are on the road ahead.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Quest Goes On

Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* is haunted by the big questions of existence, and reflects very human attempt to confront those questions with varying degrees of courage and cowardice. Within Kerouac's works runs the glorious and daring search for an authentic mode of existence. Kerouac creates in Dean Moriarty an existing hero who denies submitting to the domination of the public in order to attempt authenticity, that is, to be himself. For Dean, to give in to the demands of the mass means to lead mere social existence. Therefore, Dean attempts to create personal values and meanings so as to become free from the chains of 1950s conformist America. So, Dean's search for authentic existence takes the form of going against the accepted norms and values of contemporary society. Hence, his search can be observed in terms of his unwillingness to live within the bounds of economic, religious and social conformity.

Jack Kerouac portrays his most of the characters as attempting to liberate themselves from the control of middle class work ethics. Kerouac's Dean Moriarty rarely holds a job permanently. Dean's follower Salvatore Paradise too joins him leaving his job for the cross-country journey. Kerouac's other characters as well exhibit disregard to the work which is the base of the functioning of capitalism. Dean and his friends do not perform their duty honestly even if they temporarily become engaged with the job. Most of the times, Dean abstains from the job and fills his life with idiosyncratic actions and behaviors. The abstinence from the job enables him to counter the control, the capitalistic reification of life. Thus, free from the constraints, Dean manages to enjoy the moments authentically.

Dean not only abstains from the job, but also from the accumulation of property. Dean does so because participating in production and accumulation creates alienation among men. Because modern consumer society has placed such an emphasis on material gain that it has become an ultimate goal of life. Consequently, man is compelled to be subordinated to such abstract values as labor, commodity and money. Hence, man does not remain himself, but something other than himself. In this way, the inter-human relationship is perverted because what matters are extra-human categories such as money and property. Then, it is no wrong to state that in a capitalistic society the relationship among men has become mediated by the very extra-human obstacles. This is why Dean refuses to take part in the capitalistic production.

Dean's refusal is directed to restore human bond to its natural, unmediated form. By choosing the lifestyle that resists inter-human alienation brought about the consumer society, Dean hopes to maintain an authentic connection with other people. Dean stands in sharp a position to other minor characters that cling to social conformity. Those characters respect man for his achievement, or what he has earned and become, not as a human. Sal Paradise's aunt and the like characters despise Dean for his non-conformist lifestyle. But they fail to understand what Dean is trying to reach to. Dean wants to treat his fellow-men exclusively as human beings, to respect them for what they are—human beings.

Dean's respect to fellow-human's dignity regardless of any external measures is the secret of his spirituality. He does not believe on the rationalized, established religiosity of the institutionalized search. Dean observes in American society that it has religion only as formality. For him, religion should be based on passion and commitment to protect the intrinsic worth of humanity. Only with the direct and unmediated relationship among humans can true spirituality be achieved. Dean advocates that such

spirituality requires honesty and openness to experience, and the dehumanizing material culture of the contemporary America stands as the hindrance for this kind of religiosity because such a culture has obstructed people from having pure human relationship. Therefore, he sets out in his search on the road so that dehumanization can be resisted and human worth be defended.

Dean attempts to live in the present in order to have a direct and unmediated experience. He refuses to conform to capitalistic values because the reification forces one out of the present moment. Dean avoids the traps that make present something else, not what it really is. By living in the present, Dean wants to avoid Heideggerian inauthenticity. Courageously, he faces the knowledge of his death and realizes that since death is the ultimate reality of life, it must be lived in the moment. Therefore, he feels each of the moments with various activities. He does not think of living on through fame, philanthropic contributions, or amassing wealth because such attempts distract from the present moment, which is the real basis of our life. Thus, focusing on the present moment he maximizes his understanding of each moment. Being free in the present moment allows him to experience the moment as it unfolds. For Dean, it is only in the free moment humans encounter one another and their environment in an immediate way, and achieve the direct physical and mental relationship with the world which is the hallmark of authenticity.

Kerouac contrasts Dean's commitment to achieve authenticity with other characters. Initially Sal Paradise is attracted to Dean because he hopes to understand and participate in Dean's knowledge of human existence. Therefore, Sal accompanies Dean in several trips across America. Like Dean, he also disregards work and shares Dean's sense of making most of the present moment. He leaves the life of mainstream America hoping that he will find essence of existence among the marginalized communities such

as Afro-American, Indian-American and Mexican-American. But after short stays, he returns to his society. He also abandons Dean and comes back to participate in mercantile activities. He publishes a book, earns money and decides to settle with a fair girl. Thus, he commits Sartrean bad faith and surrenders to the public and embraces mere social existence.

Kerouac leaves Dean in the end of *On the Road* lonely. Sal and other friends desert him on the road and head towards city center. Dean is left broken and his energy is spent to the extent that he can hardly utter words. Despite the miseries, he still looks forward and is committed to continue his search for authentic existence. Kerouac emphasizes that the whole dedication with which Dean pursues his journey is a special kind of revolt to ensure the human freedom. He fights and will fight against the powers more powerful than himself. Though his is the tragic life, he reveals human greatness in the unequal struggle. In his revolt, he attempts to achieve authentic existence.

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