

I. Introduction

Quest for Spiritual Peace in *On the Road* and *Howl*

Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road* deals with spiritual thirst of American people due to the excessive practice of materialistic way of life. Discarding the values of capitalism and money oriented culture; it aims to establish the spiritual and anti-materialistic society. For spiritual freedom, the Oriental religious spiritualism is celebrated. Protagonists' wandering and searching the new sensation on the road in the novel is the quest of spiritual peace. So, the thesis will observe different activities of characters in the novel, which are oriented towards spiritual peace.

The novel attacks the prevailing cultural norms. After the end of World War II, America stood as the most powerful country in the world, which led its ruler to be more supremacists. It dominated not only the other countries in terms of power politics, economy and militarism but also repressed the middle and lower class people in its own country. Superior attitude of American ruler neglected the common peoples' will and their interests. America's involvement in war, explosion of atomic bomb over Japan, militarism and its conformity made the common people fearful and beaten psychologically and spiritually. They always faced the threat of war and destruction even in post war period of America. America's over-ambition and greed for power and money brought the apocalyptic scenario of another war. There was lack of peace and freedom from which the common people suffered extremely. They felt that their individual spirits and souls had to do nothing within such situation. Humanity was absent in American society due to the suppression of spiritual freedom and dominance of materialistic thought deeply rooted in America in the 1940s and 1950s.

Materialistic and so-called intellectual mentality of American elite obsessed the human spirits, which, later, wanted to get rid of such over-burdening materialism. Kerouac's novel *On the Road* represents the postwar American milieu and reality of current cultural trends. It is the creation of Kerouac belonging to Beat Movement in American literary history. Being devoid of humanity and spiritualism in America was the main problem in this era, which was not taken seriously by the American leaders and politicians. Rather they began to cast aside those who were willing to settle the values of humanity. This resulted as the novel like *On the Road*, which protests all the politico-social and cultural tradition and attempts to create the alternative way of living standard. In the beginning, it faced the problem in its publication because of asocial and abnormal characteristics in the eye of so-called American intellectual ruler. Characters, in the novel, have followed quite different lifestyle transcending to other sensational world from the material dominated world. For this, they wander throughout the street denying the accepted values in postwar America. They involve in search of spiritual peace and freedom doing different activities which were taken as asocial by America's capitalistic government.

Kerouac's semi-autobiographical novel *On the Road* is written in anti-traditional form applying the spontaneous prose style. The narrator Sal Paradise represents Kerouac himself in the novel. He believes that he can express his voice freely in such writing. So, being defeated spiritually, Kerouac raises the voice against the materialism. He knows that spiritual lack was the cause of excessive dominance of materialism. For spiritual satisfaction, protagonists Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty go against the rules of capitalistic government and participate in emotional activities rather than the activities of physical comforts. They practice alcohol taking, homosexuality, jazz music and mystic vision of life to quench the spiritual thirst.

Capitalistic system of America undermined the helpless people and minorities. This was the result of endless desire for power and lust for material possession. It means American capitalistic culture was materialistic in nature. In such culture, poor people and their will had no values. They had to surrender to the rich and capitalistic government and had to follow whatever they imposed upon them. They were exploited physically and psychologically. Fear of war was another bad impact of capitalism and greed for power. American ruler was indifferent in such issues. But those people who valued feelings and emotions of human beings took it very seriously and attentively. The novel *On the Road* rebels against the bad impact of such materialistic capitalism. The rebellion is done rejecting the material values and searching for inner peace. Therefore, this thesis will put its main focus on the various experiences in such milieu undergone by the characters to attain a new spiritual knowledge.

Allen Ginsberg's poem *Howl* is also related with the issue about the bad result of capitalism and power seeking tendency of American culture and lack of spiritualism. The poem, like the novel *On the Road*, aims to fulfill the spiritual thirst. It speaks for the establishment of mentally peaceful society. The rejection of material culture and quest for spiritual peace is found in the poem. The anti-materialistic attitude and spiritual quest will be the issue in this research.

Ginsberg and Kerouac wrote under the same socio-political and cultural background. They experienced the spiritless American society of mid-twentieth century. They were colleagues in Beat writings. They published their works attacking the postwar American capitalism and material values. Both found spiritual lack and found many problems to exist in American culture and tried to establish spiritual values through their writings.

Ginsberg's poem *Howl* came out just before to Kerouac's novel *On the Road*. The poem, as novel, radically disagrees with the capitalistic culture of postwar America. *Howl* is known as the manifesto of Beat Movement in American literary trends. Beat Movement was also known as the counterculture movement, which rebelled against the American capitalism and materialistic culture, and makes effort to bring peaceful anti-materialistic cultural tradition. It evokes out the suppressed human psyche through the howling process.

The poet Ginsberg finds that the best minds of his generation have been made mad. His idea is that this madness is the cause of American capitalistic system. Capitalism, in America, dominated the intellectuals and scholars in post world war period. This system established the material world and destroyed the human conscience and spiritual values. The poem *Howl* raises the voices against such system and protests against it by foregrounding the idea of homosexuality, drug addiction and mystic vision. It came out, in fact, as an indictment of American materialism and its destructive effects on the American people. Poet's friend Carl Solomon is also a victim of such material haunted capitalism. He is compelled to stay on psychiatric ward. According to Ginsberg, Solomon's individual soul has been tried to destroy. But he asserts that soul is innocent and immortal.

American capitalistic culture is compared with Moloch. Moloch is a Biblical Fire God who requires human child sacrifice. Like Moloch culture, American capitalistic culture is sacrificing the ignorant people. This has created violence, inhumanity and nightmarish image of current American society.

Both the novel *On the Road* and the poem *Howl* make the rebellious attitude towards American capitalism and material dominated life. Both writings launch for alternative way of living standard full of spiritualism. In his semi-autobiographical

novel Kerouac describes the many events happened in life representing the narrator Sal Paradise whereas Ginsberg, colleague to him, presents himself as omniscient speaker in the poem responding towards American material culture. Both disagree and rebel against it. The novel and the poem have the same sense of making a voice against the American greed and lust for power and money. Both the novel and the poem portray the characteristics those are totally indifferent towards the imposed rules and regulations of American capitalism and deny the will of material possession. Rather they are eager to have the sensual and emotional world. They experience homosexuality, alcohol taking, jazz music and mystic visionary practice opposing the material thirst. They are very much conscious about the horrible situation of militarism and fear of war possible in capitalism and power seeking culture of America. To be free from this, they search alternative way of spiritual life. Inspiring from Zen Buddhist spiritualism, an Oriental religious philosophy, they want to follow such spiritual and anti-materialistic life.

Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg: Historical Background

Jack Kerouac as a Novelist

Jack Kerouac was born in Lowell, Massachusetts on march 12, 1922 as a third child to his French-Canadian parents. His parents, Leo Acide Kerouac and Gabrielle-Ange Levesque, were natives of the province of Quebec in Canada and migrated, later, to New England to find employment. Kerouac family used to speak Quebec French at home; therefore, Jack Kerouac started to learn English only after his six-year age. He studied at Lowell High School in Massachusetts and later in Columbia University of New York.

In New York, Kerouac came to contact with other young writers like Allen Ginsberg, Neal Cassady, and William Burroughs etc. They dissatisfied with the

American superior attitude and material life. They felt that minorities and lower class people were marginalized and their voices were suppressed. So, they sought their identity through writings and wandering throughout the street as well. This was known as Beat Movement. Kerouac was a prominent figure in this movement.

At an early age, Kerouac was profoundly marked by the death of his elder brother Gerard, later prompting him to write the book *Visions of Gerard* (1963). Kerouac joined the Merchant Marine in 1942 and United States Navy in 1943. But he was discharged from the Navy during the World War II on psychiatric grounds. He was blamed as indifferent disposition. He married thrice in his life one after another. He also worked as construction laborer, gas station attendant, newspaper sportswriter (Lowell Sun), railroad brakeman etc. etc.

Kerouac's first novel *The Town and the City* (1950) was published under the name "John Kerouac". When he discovered spontaneous and confessional prose style, wrote other works such as *On the Road* (1956) in three weeks and *Subterraneans* in three nights. Famous novel *On the Road* was taken immoral and asocial creation in the beginning and faced some difficulties in its publication. Kerouac's technique was heavily influenced by jazz and Zen Buddhist philosophy. Kerouac also wrote and narrated a "Beat" movie entitled *Pull My Daisy* in 1958. Being an American novelist, poet and artist, Kerouac sketched out the spirit of post world war Beat Generation.

Kerouac, in 1954, found Dwight Goddard's *A Buddhist Bible* at the San Jose Library, which marked the beginning of Kerouac's immersion into Buddhism. His novel *The Dharma Bums* (1958) was a result of this Buddhist reading and it is considered as sequel to *On the Road* (1957). He read Oriental religious philosophy of Zen Buddhism continuously. Zen Buddhism influenced almost all of his later works. He also met and had discussion with the famous Japanese Zen authority D. T. Suzuki.

Kerouac wrote a biography of Siddhartha Gautama, profounder of Buddhism, entitled *Wake Up*; but it remained unpublished.

Kerouac's writing often reflects a desire to break from society's mold and to find the meaning in life. This search led him to experiment with alcoholism, to study spiritual teachings such as Buddhism and to embark on trips around the world. He spent his last years in Northport, New York, living alone with his mother and his third wife Stella. Kerouac died in St. Petersburg, Florida at the age of forty-seven from an internal hemorrhage.

Allen Ginsberg as a Poet

Allen Ginsberg was born in Newark, New Jersey on June 3, 1926 in a middle-class Jewish family. His father Louis Ginsberg was a teacher. Mother Naomi Ginsberg, a political activist, was the influential source for Allen's poetic creation. But her mental illness caused her to die in 1950. Allen educated at Columbia University where he met Jack Kerouac.

Ginsberg, like Kerouac, suffered from the sense of frustration due to his mother's mental illness. His family life remained always shaky and instable. He had to stay eight months at Columbia psychiatric institute in 1949. Ginsberg was expelled from Columbia University and set off to see the world, traveling on merchant tankers, picking up menial jobs, and living with friends. But later he graduated from the same university. He, along with his mother, had also attended the meeting of Radical Left organized by USA communist party.

Ginsberg wrote the poem *Howl* in 1956, which is known as the manifesto of Beat writing. His subject of poetic creation is the action of mind and soul in which emotional state is depicted rather than rational ideas. Therefore, *Howl* came out not only as a social commentary but also made revolutionary attitude about modern-day

materialism of America and its destructive effects on individual soul. In his popular poetic creation *Kaddish and Other Poems* (1961) he has expressed the difficulty of family life and mother's mental problem. His poems present the voice and vision of marginalized people. The usage of long line of prose style and the repetition of the sub-ordinate clause are effective techniques in his poems. He was influenced by the ideas of Kerouac that future literature would consist of what people actually wrote; and he asserts that first thought is the best thought.

Ginsberg followed the concept of Beats, love of freedom and the power of road where common people are forced to spend their life. Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs were his best friends in New York living. He involved in many kinds of jobs in San Francisco in 1950 where he met other poets Kenneth Rexroth, Gary Snyder and Lawrence Ferlinghetti.

Ginsberg felt tortured everywhere and found no place for peace. This was because the corrupt materialistic world didn't listen the voice of the lower people. In such condition, his writings were always directed not toward the materialistic love but towards the mystical knowledge of the world. As a confessional poet, he foregrounded the ideas of drugs, alcohol and homosexuality. He took sex as a choice not as a force.

Ginsberg was forced to endure long months of severe depression and isolation after the break with Neal Cassady in 1947. This was sad and gloomy time for him. William Burroughs was in Mexico, Huncke was in Jail, and Kerouac was busy in writing a novel. Being isolated from the friends and becoming frustrated in his mother's pitiable condition he was about to suicide. But his confrontation with the idea of mystic vision led him to gain the spiritual knowledge and to minimize the pain. The impact of Oriental Zen philosophic spiritualism brought him to generate the

Beat movement. Like Jack Kerouac he also studied Zen Buddhism, which helped him to create the Beat writings.

Ginsberg, like Kerouac, had to experience the bad effects of American capitalism and materialism in 1950s. He found lack of spiritual values in this environment. His attraction towards mystic knowledge released him from mental tension roused in material world. He applied this concept of mystic vision in his poetic works assimilating the idea in his real life as well. He died on April 5, 1997, in New York.

Critics on the Novel and Poem

The novel *On the Road*

Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road* was published in 1957. It was not allowed to publish in the beginning blaming it as obscene writing. When it succeeded in publication, it was read widely. It was not allowed to publish in the beginning blaming it as obscene writing. Various criticisms were written about the novel from different views. The novel is taken to be a great work of Beat Movement.

Regarding the novel, William Harris and Judith S. Levey stress that the novel represents the literature of Beat Movement and say, "the novel considered to be the testament of beat movement" (1470). Giving emphasis on it Richard W. Fox and James T. Kloppenberg make the statement, "Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957), with its frenetic, footloose wanderers and its impulsive sensuality, is a classic of the BEAT GENERATION" (369). They further remark about the novel that it is writer's celebration of freedom in American social conformity. They admit:

Condemning the alienation produced by American social conformity, Kerouac celebrated an exhilarating freedom from middle-class propriety. His search for pure experience and sensation under girded

principle of never rewriting a text: only a direct record of thought and perception can embody raw, unmediated truth. (369)

The novel also represents the voice of the youth towards their elders in USA who were responsible for militarism and war like situation. Supporting this Wakeman provokes, “In 1957, when *On the Road* at last appeared, it rapidly became the bible and manifesto of all those people who, growing up under the threat of the atom bomb, were disgusted by the greed, conformity, and militarism of their elders” (778).

Some of the writers saw the novel picaresque and episodic but without coherent structure. Max J. Herzberg does not find characters’ aim in their moving across the country and states:

On the Road is picaresque in structure and episodic. Its characteristic action is either hitchhiking across country no purpose or driving cars at outrageous speeds from New Orleans to New York to Denver to San Francisco with no particular aim in mind. The book reflects an existence that has no coherent structure. There is no reason for the actions of the novel. (68)

Emory Elliot observes the novel like this, “consisting of Sal Paradise’s account of his transcendental journeys with or in search of his buddy Dean Moriarty, *On the Road* seemed to some of its first readers only a picaresque travelogue” (446). He again asserts that, “Although Keroauc’s characters only crisscross the West, seldom staying in one place for long, *On the Road* deserves classification as a novel of the West: that it is a land of possibility” (446).

Most of the critics find the novel as writer’s quasi-autobiographical work in which a group of Beat seeks many experiences around the American world to fulfill their satisfaction rejecting the material values. James D. Hart writes, “...*On the Road*

(1957), a quasi-autobiographical tale of Beat people ranging around America seeking experience and fulfillment” (346). Jack Kerouac, being a Beat writer, has participated in the events happened in the novel who searches for different experiences along with his other Beat friends.

In the introductory part of the book *The Portable Jack Kerouac*, Ann Charter comments “...*On the Road* in which he appears as the narrator, ‘Sal Paradise’, who tells the story of going on the road with his buddy ‘Dean Moriarty’ is only one part of the larger whole. ‘Sal Paradise’, is one of Kerouac’s many pseudonyms, like ‘Jack Duluoz’, his preferred name for himself” (xvii). Here, Charter takes the narrator Sal Paradise himself in *On the Road* who experiences and responds the American society.

One of the reviewers Georgia Mathis sees the novel as a rebellion against the normal society for freedom. Mathis points out, “The two main characters in the novel are Dean and Sal and they both go against the normal society. This is one of the first novels that take you through the ‘beat’ life. To Kerouac the ‘beats’ were people who rebel against everything accepted to gain freedom and expression” (5).

David Crystal tries to clarify about the novel like this, “...*On the Road* (1957), a formless, spontaneous, expressing the youthful discontent of the ‘Beat Generation’ ” (606). He puts emphasis on dissatisfaction felt by youths of Beat group who were against the American capitalism.

Another reviewer Johnwhite Head views that the story concerns about the various impressions gained by the narrator Sal Paradise in different places in his wanderings in search of freedom from over-burdening American orthodox society. He makes a point, “*On the Road* is a blast of fresh air, a celebration of abandoning the constraint of a burdening society; but it is also pause for reflection, and consideration of what it really means to live free and be an independent spirit” (7).

A critic George Dardess observes the novel mainly on its character's shifting movement temporally as well as spatially. He writes, "Where the book begins cautiously, with careful distinctions made between the narrator's present, his Moriarty past, and present Moriarty past, it ends with a complicated paragraph in which temporal and spatial boundaries are obliterated" (201).

Peter B. High claims that character's wandering is a symbolic trip towards free world full of spiritualism from the bondages of American materialistic culture and its confinement. He explains about the novel, "It is the story of a group of Beats who travel westward across America. Symbolically it is a trip from the 'unfree' city to the emotional, spiritual and physical freedom of the west" (192).

The Poem *Howl*

Allen Ginsberg's poem *Howl* was published in 1956. Many writers and critics gave their interpenetrations regarding the poem. The poem is accepted as the manifesto of Beat Movement in American literature. Peter Conn opines that the poem *Howl* is a protest poem that voices for liberty. He expresses, "*Howl* (1956) was intended at once as a shout of protest and an anthem of liberation" (454).

The *Howl* is a protest poem against the capitalistic political system prevailed in America after World War II by some critics. Making an argument on it, M. L. Rosenthal remarks:

A revolutionary social and political criticism is implied in many of the lines. The heroes of *Howl* appear, for instance, 'on the West Coast investigating the F. B. I. in beats and shorts with big pacifist eyes sexy in their dark skin passing out incomprehensible leaflets'; they have 'burned cigarettes holes in their arms protesting the narcotic tobacco haze of capitalism' ... (93)

The value of modern American world creates the horrible situation. Robert E. Spiller et al. find such situation in the poem and make the statement like this, “It flailed or flayed with anger and love. The compulsion was to embrace all the horrible of the modern world, and again to transcend them: the howl was drowned in a yawp of cosmic ‘holiness’ ” (143).

Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury take the poem as wasteland of native America. They have the opinion, “ ‘Howl’ is a wasteland poem, but its roots reach not to Eliot’s tradition of European culture but back through Dos Passos’s camera eye and William Carlos William to the native leaves of Walt Whitman” (395).

The language of the poem is derived from the language of the street, which deals with the mystical illumination. Focusing this J. E. B. Breslin provides his idea, “*Howl* links the visionary, and the concrete, the language of the street and two joined not in a static synthesis but in a dialectical movement in which an exhausting and punishing immersion in the most sordid of contemporary realities issues in transcendent vision” (97).

William Carlos William sees the poem as a poem of defeat. According to him this defeat is only for those who lacked the spirit of love and courage:

It is a *Howl* of defeat. Not defeat at all for he has gone through defeat as if were an ordinary experience. A trivial experience, everyone in the life is defeated but a man if he be a man is not defeated... he from the very depths, he found a fellow whom he can live... the spirit of love survives to enable our lives if we have the wit and the courage and the faith” (1592)

Some critics observe the poem *Howl* to be a prophetic. Max J. Herzberg has taken the poem as a prophetic written in a long line showing anger towards American commercial system. He views:

Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*, a prophetic poem, a form of Jeremiad, written in a long line derived from the Bible, Whitman, Blake, and Christopher Smart. The poem treats a world in which all values have become dehumanized; it is a diatribe against a military and commercial society.
(68)

Matts Djos observes, "After its initial publication, some came to regard the poem as a latent manifesto for the Beat generation; others saw it as a spiritual and political declaration of righteous indignation; still others condemned the poem as little more than obscene" (876). Djos himself saw the salvation of the poet in it and proclaims, "In *Howl*, the poet nags at circumstance, and he yearns for salvation through some kind of psychiatric and political nirvana" (876).

George Stephenson emphasizes on poet's shifting movement towards spiritual world from the world of darkness and suffering. He states, "The poet descends into underworld of darkness suffering, and isolation and then ascends into spiritual knowledge, blessedness, achieved vision, and with a sense of union with the human community and with God" (880). Stephenson looks the visionless American society caused by Moloch like culture. He finds corrupted materialistic culture and inhumanity in America's capitalistic system, "Ginsberg has shown the effects of a society without vision. Commercialism, militarism, sexual repression, technocracy, soulless industrialism, inhuman life, and the death of the spirits are consequences of mental Moloch" (883).

According to Jeff Johnson the poem *Howl* is the portrait of exploitation made by callous and spiritless society to poet's generation. He tells, "The poem is at once a history, an account of the exploits of Ginsberg and his friends, and a portrait of a generation. Ginsberg idolized as rebels persecuted by a callous society bent on punishing those who refused to conform to rigid standard of behaviors" (867).

Macphee takes the poem as an immoral writing, which destructs the mind of the new generation. He says, "The words and the sense of writing is obscene, you wouldn't want your children to come across it" (Miles 169).

Another American critic Lionel Trilling doesn't like the poem because he finds it dull and without any voice. He comments, "...I don't like the poem at all...that... seem to me quite dull... there is no real voice here" (Miles 158).

From the above reviews on the novel *On the Road* and the poem *Howl*, it appears that different interpretation came to existence through multiple perspectives. Some critics call both works as asocial and immoral writings and others call rebellion against the America's conformity. Some have declared the works as the voice of young people for freedom in American capitalistic culture and some have discovered the horrible effects of war on American people due to the militarism. Both the novel and the poem represent the Beat writing and raise the voice against the strict bond of materialistic world. In fact, the characters in both works moves towards new sensational world for spiritual peace from the world of American conformity.

II. Buddhist Spiritualism

The Concept of Buddha and Buddhism

Buddhism is an Oriental religious tradition that seeks the release from human suffering leading towards non-violence and peace. Involvement in meditation, striving for moral perfection and, finally, the acquisition of wisdom is the sole idea through which human beings can reach in their goal, that is Nirvana, means the state of peace and happiness and freedom from cycle of rebirth. It believes that human beings can escape from worldly suffering to the state of spiritual peace by their own efforts but not by any others' blessings.

Siddhartha Gautama's preaching helped to establish Buddhism. Gautama was born into a royal family of Southwest part of present Nepal in 6th century B.C. Now it lies in Kapilvastu district of Lumbini zone. He was very much bothered why the human beings have to face the suffering of old age, sickness and death when they get birth at once. Lippy and Williams say, "he became concerned the world in order to seek an antidote this suffering through religious means" (669). He tried to find out the reason but no one solved his problem. He studied the foremost religious teachers of that time, but found their system lacking.

Siddhartha Gautama wandered place-to-place leaving the palace in his twenty-nine years age, but found no peace. Having experienced extremes of poverty and riches, he concluded that salvation could only be found through carefully mapped-out middle path, and devoted himself to strenuous meditative practice. One day when he was illuminated under a tree in his meditation, perceived the knowledge about worldly suffering. After this, he was named as Buddha, an enlightened or awakened and hence his doctrine is known as Buddhism. Henry Clarke Warren writes:

The term “Buddha” means “Enlightened One” and signifies that the person to whom it is applied has solved the riddle of existence, and discovered the doctrine for the cessation of misery. It was by his attainment of this supreme “Enlightenment” or Wisdom that Gotama became a Buddha. (1)

Conventionally, it was thought that the termination of life is to be followed by rebirth in a new form, prolongs into eternity. Each individual is afforded no release from this continuing cycle, which is known as Samsara. Siddhartha, after getting the Buddhahood, argued that this continual rebirth established all life as suffering. He posited the cause suffering as human craving and assured that it is possible to terminate this endless craving. Bowring and Kornicki Stress:

Suffering stems from desire and desire arises through the notion of ‘self’. Only extinguish this cause, realize the world and our ‘selves’ as they really are, and suffering will cease. Then way to extinguish our fundamental illusions is the Buddha’s dharma or teaching. (158)

Thus, the concept of human suffering and way to release from it, propounded by Siddhartha Gautama, made him known as Buddha. His doctrine spread as Buddhism at the same time and later developed in different schisms place to place. Then it flourished as a religion that always seeks the establishment of peace.

The main idea in Buddhism is incorporated in its basic teaching of Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Noble Paths. Buddha discovered the fact of human suffering and proclaimed the ways to release from it. Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Noble Paths are the doctrines that formulated as Buddhism, which gives the way to come out from the worldly suffering.

According to the Four Noble Truths, the first truth concerns with the suffering that all life is suffering and the fact of suffering exists. The second truth is that the suffering is the cause of human desire, which is ignorant. The third truth is that there is a way to achieve the release from the suffering. And the fourth truth is the Noble Eightfold Path which prescribes the manner of overcoming the suffering and attaining the true knowledge.

The Eightfold Noble Path provides the method of how human beings can release from the suffering. These Eightfold Noble Paths are (1) Right view: it is clear understanding of the nature of existence and the knowledge about the Four Noble Truths, (2) Right thought: unselfish, loving, and non-violent are right thoughts, (3) Right speech: the practice of abstention from lying, slander, harsh or abusive language, (4) Right action: conducting oneself in moral, peaceful, honorable ways and keeping the basic precepts are right actions, (5) Right livelihood: it is the state of living honorably in a profession which is no way harmful to sentient beings, (6) Right effort: the process of avoiding and rejecting ignoble qualities while acquiring and fostering noble qualities, (7) Right-mindedness: It implies the state of constant awareness with regard to the body, feelings, mind and ideas; this state helps the practitioners to prevent from being led by erroneous views, and (8) Right concentration: the knowledge of this nature is acquired through the practice of meditation; there are two condition, of which one is 'the active of practice' and the other is 'the passive of realization of truths'.

Nirvana (Salvation) is the state of liberation through full enlightenment and total extinction of desire and suffering entering into peaceful state. Jerrold Schecter states, "This ultimate state of happiness and peace, a pure and spontaneous state of being, is Nirvana or Enlightenment, the highest goal of Buddhist endeavor. To

Buddhists, Nirvana is salvation" (2). For salvation from suffering, Buddha's doctrine of Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Paths came out as Buddhism. The Buddhist religion spread into different countries from its original and core place. Buddhism separated into various schisms during its expansion. Mahayana Buddhism and Theravada Buddhism came to existence in most of the countries. Vajrayana Buddhism is another sect of Buddhism related to tantric recitation.

Mahayana and Theravada

The original community of Buddhism began to separate into sub sects after hundred years following the death of Siddhartha Gautama. The two main forms of Buddhism are the Mahayana and the Theravada that developed at around the beginning of the first century A.D.

The Mahayana is known as Great Vehicle tradition because it is possible in Mahayana for everybody to become a Buddha or Enlightened. It separated from the mainstream Buddhism supporting the polytheism of many Buddha-Gods. It predominates Northeast and East Asia such as Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Mongolia, and China etc.

In Mahayana, the practitioners involve to carry many people to Enlightenment. It is accessible to all kinds of human beings. Personal devotion and reliance upon the salvatory activities are the means towards Enlightenment not only of oneself but also for others. Mahayana is, "capable of offering salvation not only to the dedicated but to the broad mass of humanity" (Bowring and Kornicki 158).

Mahayana does not follow the complex and hard practices. To achieve the goal, it "offers a simpler formula for salvation" (Schechter 12). Mahayana, being flexible, has accommodated other religious doctrines in its different stages of Development.

The traditional Buddhism emphasizes in its pragmatic approach, soberness and immanence thinking where as the Mahayana emphasizes in "emotional warmth of its ethics and the colorfulness of its spiritual world" (Schumann 93).

The Mahayana criticizes the earlier, traditional school for seeking only personal enlightenment with esoteric belief, calling it Lesser Vehicle. Mahayana dissatisfied with what they see as the self-complacency and monastic elitism of the earlier school and aims at the salvation of all people. According to the Seeker's Glossary of Buddhism, it has arisen, "at least in part as a reform movement, seeking to restore the original spirit of Buddhism, and has involved lay believers as well as clergy" (350).

The Mahayana believes that the individualism and difficulty of the Theravada tradition are inaccessible to all. In contrast to it, Mahayana is a vast wagon capable of carrying many to release from rebirth, which is impossible in Theravada. Through countless lives of perfection, Bodhisattvas acquire great merit in Mahayana, which they use to free those who suffer. A number of celestial Bodhisattvas have become important, most notably, Avalokitesvara, Manjusri, Samantabhadra and mahasthamaprapta. They served as ideal models for their earthly counterparts by exhibiting deep compassion and wisdom.

Theravada branch of Buddhism is known as Lesser Vehicle because it adheres to a strict understanding of the teaching of historical Buddha. It does not believe, like Mahayana, that everybody gets enlightenment. Theravada is largely found in South Asia like India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, etc. The Scriptures preserved in these countries are written in Pali language. It is also known as Monastic Buddhism, Southern Buddhism, and Early Buddhism etc. etc.

The literal meaning of Theravada comes as the doctrine of elders. It teaches personal struggle to find the path to enlightenment. It is hard and takes long time to achieve in Theravada. In Theravada, self is without substance and Nirvana is their total annihilation. Theravada teaches the elimination of earthly desires. It is also known as Hinayana by its generic name.

The Theravada believes mainly in Shakyamuni Siddhartha and refuses in numerical historical Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Theravada stresses the early teachings of Buddha. Theravada does not allow the sensual activities and worldly pleasures. Schecter quotes, "For the Theravada monk, freedom from craving is achieved by withdrawal from the world and abstinence from eating meat, handling money, indulging in sexual relations or even being touched by a woman" (12).

In Theravada, Practitioners aim at attaining the state of Arhat- attainment of enlightenment. Arhats are depicted as elderly shaven-headed monks clad in yellow robes, one holding a begging bowl. They stand stiffly, with compressed lips and their attitude seems not altogether free from strains, which contrast to Bodhisattvas of smiling face, graceful and easy pose. Schecter, thus, say, "Theravada Buddhism offers salvation through rigid monastic discipline" (11).

Besides these two types of Buddhism, another Buddhist branch Vajrayana arose many years later and now dominated largely in Tibet. Magical exercises and Tantric rituals are practiced in it to proceed towards spiritual world. The hierarchy of Lamaism and their schools come under this Buddhism.

Vajrayana is an esoteric practice in which only those who initiates properly can achieve enlightenment. It is "a third major school of Buddhism, known as Vajrayana (diamond vehicle), developed stressing the esoteric side of the Buddhist tradition" (Lippy and Williams 669).

Other religious roots have influenced Vajrayana Buddhism. Albanese writes, "From the third or fourth century A.D., Vajrayana Buddhism grew from Buddhist, Hindu, and other popular religious roots to become the Buddhism, most notably, of Buddhism" (313). Albanese further states:

...Vajrayana sought the mystical goal of union with a divinity within. By dramatizing the inner work in a series of secret initiations and magical techniques, Vajrayana Buddhists were trying to make the spiritual concrete. And by making the spiritual concrete, they hoped to achieve practical control over it. (313)

This third type of Buddhism, Vajrayana, takes magical techniques to achieve spiritual world according to Albanese. Vajrayana Buddhist try to make the spiritual concrete and to control over it by the help of mystical union.

Zen Buddhism

Zen Buddhism is a form of Mahayana Buddhism, which developed as Chan in China and as Zen in Japan. Both the Chinese and Japanese terms mean meditation, which has come from Dhyana, a Sanskrit word. So, this Zen Buddhism emphasizes the importance of mind controlling and concentration to get Enlightenment or realization of one's inner self.

Zen Buddhism originated as Dhyana School in India and was carried in China by an Indian monk, named Bodhidharma, in 6th century A.D. It incorporated the native Taoism and Confucianism. The Zen school was known for making the practice of meditation as the central tenet rather than adherence to a particular scripture or doctrines. Catherine L. Albanese Views, "Thus the goal of Zen was to bring a person to Enlightenment through the practice of meditation" (315).

In Japan, Zen Buddhism came to existence at around 12th century. Many Chan masters from China taught the Chan Buddhism in Japan where it flourished as Zen Buddhism incorporating native culture. Two Zen Sects Rinzai and Soto were established there. Rinzai Zen was founded by Eisai (1141-1215) and Soto Zen by Dogen (1200-1253). Being separated into two branches both have the common goal of spiritual practice. Alan Campbell and at al. write, "Though they vary in teaching and methods, both schools assign a central role to meditation as the foundation of their spiritual practice" (1772). Besides these two, third branch of Zen Buddhism also established in Japan by a Chinese monk called Igen, at about 1653 A.D. It was named as Obaku.

The transportation of Zen tradition from China was important event in Japanese religious history. Zen prospered under official patronage in Japan and spread its influence into all forms of art and culture. Zen practice became the major candidate to fill the spiritual vacuum of Japanese people. Zen Buddhism blossomed throughout Japan within hundred years and it also spread towards west representing the Oriental spiritualist religion.

Rinzai Zen tries to enlighten by puzzling and baffling the mind by means of different activities. Albanese clarifies, "One school, Rinzai Zen, taught that enlightenment was a sudden event, triggered by unusual circumstances that jolted a person out of ordinary consciousness. Hence its practice centered on meditation using Koans, riddles or verbal puzzles meant to baffle the ordinary working mind..." (315). Another Sect Soto believes in gradual development of enlightenment. Albanese stresses, " The other school, Soto Zen, taught that Enlightenment was gradual. Soto Zen practice centered on 'just sitting' meditation in which the goal was to quiet the mind and to empty it of all thought" (315).

Zen practice consists of meditation in lotus posture, which is called Zazen in Japan. Koan or exercise of mental riddle is done. The Zazen and the Koan are directed towards the inner experience of enlightenment or Satori in Japanese language. Satori is a mystical experience merging one with the whole universe. Those who experiences enlightenment (Satori) is considered to go beyond the trivial self of consciousness

Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki writes, "Zen is discipline in enlightenment, Enlightenment means emancipation. And emancipation is no less than freedom" (5). According to Suzuki real freedom remains in inner side, "The real freedom is the outcome of enlightenment. When a man realizes this, in whatever situation he may find himself he is always free in his inner life, for that pursues its own line of action" (6).

Zen stresses the personal experience of enlightenment based on simple way of life and meditation method. It takes no complicated rituals and abstruse thought. All worldly concerns are banished and state of selflessness leads to enlightenment. Zen opposes the intellectual approach rather it offers the self-knowledge and introspection towards enlightenment. Scriptures and doctrines are not important because Zen emphasizes mind-to-mind instruction in order to achieve the enlightenment.

Zen Buddhism concerns with inner meaning of life. Bodhidharma, a founder of Zen in China, taught the spiritual practice to his disciples. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki states, "When they ask about the first coming of Bodhidharma to China, their idea is to get into the inner meaning, if there were any of his special teaching, which is thought to be spiritual transmitted to his successors" (212). Suzuki does not see the value of words in Zen. Instead of it, he observes the importance of action and gestures, "Since Zen is the truth of life, something more intimate and immediate than

words is to be made use of, and this can be found in some kind of movement symbolizing life as it moves on" (218).

There are three essential factors in Zen practice. The first is the strong faith, which is more than mere belief. The second is the strong doubt. This doubt is not skepticism rather a state of perplexity of probing inquiry stems from faith. It is a doubt as to why the world and we should appear so imperfect, full of anxiety and suffering. The third essential is the strong determination, which naturally arises from the feeling of doubt. It is an overwhelming determination to dispel the doubt with the whole force of energy and will. These three essentials qualities propagated the Zen Buddhism.

Zen Buddhism offers the method of Spiritual practice whereby disciples recover their Buddha nature. Disciples may see their own nature and became a Buddha by means of meditation, and spiritual transformation from master to disciples. Meditation method points directly to the mind without the use of words, which are recognized as ineffectual either in Scripture or as means of communicating the enlightenment.

Zen Buddhism helps to make a higher standard of living in terms of spiritualism. Christmas Hummhreys quotes, "But wherever the students of Zen may live, his purpose of life is to raise his quality of living as distinct from his standard of living, his spiritual as distinct from his material wealth" (97). Zen provides a new vision to look at, "For Zen is not a new thing but a new way of looking at things. It is a new vision with the old eyes" (Humphreys 99).

Trainees in Zen Buddhism "spend one or two week sequestered in the visiting monks' quarters concentrating solely on Zazen, the meditation regiment that forms the core of Zen spiritual life" (Campbell and et al. 1774). Cleaning and washing, like

every other part of daily life, are regarded as a spiritual exercise, which are done in silence. The monks beg for alms once a year. This tries to remind that they depend on the laity, and receiving donations encourages their spiritual pursuits. Through this, Zen aims to enlighten all human beings.

In Japan, Zen Buddhists use to practice Zazen, sitting in meditation, the practice of Dhyana to acquire spiritual courage and power. This practice of Dhyana is done in silence, which aims to get freedom inwardly. Watanabe Shako makes the point like this, "It indicates that one experiences inwardly a state of absolute freedom by earnestly undertaking Zazen and pacifying the mind" (100). He means Zen Buddhism is for mental peace.

Zen Buddhism satisfies the deepest spiritual needs of human beings. It is a religion that seeks inner peace. It is "perhaps the only spiritual schools in the world which makes deliberate use of laughter in its training and the Zen life as I knew it is just full of it" (Humphreys 97).

Zen Buddhism is not like Christian and other form of religions in which human beings are taken as sinner and faithless creatures. It does not believe that human are helpless and have to surrender under the God. In contrast to it, Zen is a quest for inner peace and satisfaction through mind concentration. Daisetz T. Suzuki explains:

We can thus see that the antecedent that leads to the Zen experience is not adoration, obedience, fear, love, faith, penitence, or anything that usually characterizes a good Christian soul; but it is a search for something that will give mental peace and harmony by overruling contradictions and joining tangled threads into one continuous line.

Every aspirant feels this constant and intense seeking for mental peace and wholeness. (54)

Suzuki claims that the Zen Buddhism searches for mental peace and harmony. Through Zen experience one gets spiritual peace.

Zen Buddhism in America

Buddhism, an oriental religion, began to appear in America after the middle of the nineteenth century when Japanese and Chinese people immigrated there. They brought different concept of Buddhist sects into the land of America. Zen Buddhism, originated in China coming from India and developed fully in Japan, made great influence in America.

Soyen Shako, a Japanese Zen Buddhist, established Rinzai Zen, a branch of Zen Buddhism in the beginning of the twentieth century A.D. Shako lectured in several American cities and helped for establishing the Zen meditative school. Nyoyen Senzaki came to California in 1905 with Zen mission to teach. Soyen Shako's second disciple Sokatsu Shake and another most noted disciple Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki visited the USA to make the public awareness of Rinzai Zen. Next branch of Zen Buddhism, Soto Zen, also developed in the USA in the mid-twentieth century A.D. Shunryun Suzuki Roshi, another Japanese Zen Buddhist, contributed for its establishment. He founded the San Francisco Zen center. Richard Barker Roshi and Jiyu Kennet were others who continued the Soto Zen tradition in America and also made Zen monastery.

Most of the young, middle class people and well educated were attracted by Zen Buddhism. They converted themselves into the world of Zen experience from mainstream America. They helped to establish Zen American culture making the use of English language, adapting rituals and wearing western clothes during meditation.

"It became in America part of the culture of religious expansionism and an extraordinary religion, in which people sought to pursue transcendence" (Albanese 317). Through Zen Buddhism American "people would find their Buddha-nature within and attain happiness, prosperity, and peace" (318).

The movement of Zen Buddhism gives a new approach of life style to the modern Americans. Lippy and Williams has declared, "Here, it is sufficient to say that the Zen movement in America is the first Japanese-based organization to cultivate a non-Asian membership and to emphasize a meditative, reflective life-style as the staple of a new approach to being complete and whole in modern America" (679).

Zen experience has provided the Americans to find out the true meaning of life. It has attempted to liberate the Americans from material greed creating the pure mind. Shunryun Suzuki claims, "I feel Americans, especially young Americans, have a great opportunity to find out the true way of life for human beings. You are quite free from material things and you begin Zen practice with a very pure mind, a beginner's mind" (134). Zen has played significant role to convert the materialist mind of Americans into the pure mind of selflessness. Campbell and et al. concludes:

Nourished within the great Asian culture of India and China and reaching maturity in Japan, Zen has found a deep resonance in the west. At a time when technology threatens to dominate the world, Zen awakens a demand among many for spiritual values necessary for human life. (1773)

The Oriental Zen spiritual values became important in modern America to decrease the destructive effects of its materialism. Spiritual value of Zen sought to pacify threatens of war and greed for power and material possession. According to

Campbell and et al., it has rescued from technology threatens and fulfilled the spiritual lack.

It is impossible to offer a generalized outline of Zen practice of its varied groups. Moreover American Zen differs from the actual Zen of Japan. Shunryun Suzuki tells, "Here in America we can not define Zen Buddhists the same way we do in Japan. American students aren't priests and yet not completely laymen" (129). He further provokes, "I think you are special people and want some special practice that is not exactly priest's practice and not exactly layman's practice. You are on your way to discovering some appropriate way of life" (129). Suzuki states that Zen Buddhism is not the same in America like that of Japanese one. He agrees that American Zen Buddhists practice it in their own way. Some people celebrate Zen Buddhism making meditation even in their wanderings. Beat people of 1950s adapted such method of Zen practice.

Zen Buddhism has been practiced in terms of their own socio-cultural and political background in the USA. Regarding this, a group young American writers like Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and Gary Snyder etc. celebrated the Zen in response to their cultural values. They took the Zen path making it rebellious attitudes towards their capitalistic culture of mid-twentieth century. They held Beat Movement in American literature, language, philosophy and life style and exercised the Zen Buddhism on it. They called themselves Beat Zen discarding the prevalent culture. "The champions of Beat Zen- Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and others- became celebrities in the subterranean culture of the 1950s" (Lippy and Williams 673).

Beat Zen has followed the Rinzai Zen tradition that wants to escape from materialistic culture and its bad impact. Rinzai Zen believes that the liberation and freedom comes through sudden enlightenment. Albanese writes:

In the late fifties, a group of San Francisco artists and writers that included Allan Ginsberg (b.1926), Jack Kerouac (1922-1969), and, with qualifications, Alan Watts (1915-1973) and Gary Snyder (b. 1930) combined the interpretations of Suzuki with other elements to form an eclectic 'Beat Zen'. As a group, they drew on the side of Rinzai teaching that stressed the suddenness of enlightenment and made it into an exaltation of emotional release and freedom. Soon beat Zen pursued liberation at the expense of the rigorous and ascetic meditation practices that were part of the Rinzai Zen tradition. (316)

In 1950s, the Beat writers adopted Rinzai Zen exercise to liberate from American capitalist confinement. Rinzai Zen is a type of Zen Buddhism in America that seeks emotional release and freedom through sudden enlightenment.

Beat Movement

Capitalist culture of postwar America promoted materialism. This caused happen in decreasing the humanity and intellectual values. Some authors, being frustrated, sought to release from this and celebrated an alternative lifestyles creating unconventional writing style using simple and street language. They sketched antisocial characteristics in mid-twentieth century American capitalist culture. They were known as Beat writers in American literary history.

Beat writers opposed the contemporary American culture. Their writings spoke the suppressed will of common people and attacked the cruel American capitalism. They were extremely dissatisfied with the materialist culture and power-seeking tendency of capitalism. They saw inhuman and injustice treatment towards them in such system and tried to liberate themselves. For this, Beat writers neglected the material want and assimilated the spiritual values in their life and writings as well.

The rise of Beat generation in America was the cause of prevailing state of mental disorder and anxiety faced by the people due to the fear of violence, discrimination, crime and possibility of another great war. The capitalism in America did not respect the people's longing for peace rather they gave priority to material greed and lust for power. Therefore, making rebellion against such culture Beat generation evolved in American postwar culture. Most of the Beats were young, intellectual and from marginalized group.

The Beat movement emerged in 1950s rejecting the commercial values and experimented with different perception through drugs, homosexuality, jazz music and meditation method. The movement was "Essentially anarchic in philosophy, members of the group, called beatniks (term coined by Herb Caen, San Francisco columnist), reject tradition" (Bridgewater 96). The Beat writers stood against the conventional society and its values for a life. In America, "During the 1960s 'beat' ideas and attitudes were absorbed by other cultural movements, and those who practiced the 'beat' lifestyle were called 'hippies' (Harris and Levey 253). Beat movement converted, later, into hippie culture in America.

The postwar era in America, especially during the 1950s, brought new and serious problems for America. Buddhist ethics provided to "address American problems from Buddhist perspectives" (Lippy and Williams 673). Beat generation in America:

“offered a new literature, language, philosophy and lifestyles, some of which was borrowed, in perverted form, from Zen Buddhism. The champions of 'Beat Zen'- Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and others- became celebrities in the subterranean culture of the 1959s" (Lippy and Williams 673).

Lippy and Williams make an opinion that Beat people carry the new way of thought and lifestyle to decrease the American problem of spiritual barrenness. Buddhist perspective comes as an alternative to them ultimately.

Beat Writings disliked the modernism and its center-seeking attitude in literature. Writers of Beat generation:

"did define themselves through their opposition to the reigning literary orthodoxies of the 1940s and 1950s, the overseas modernism of Eliot and Pound institutionalized in the nation's universities by Ransom, Tate, Brooks and Warren and the other New critics" (Ruland and Bradbury 397).

Unlike New Critics, Beat writers observe the author's background and his/her feeling and emotion on it. The writing is not self-referential and self-contained to Beat writers rather it carries the writer's intention.

The Beat implied both exhaustion and beatification that was expressed by writers who were tired of prevailing American capitalistic culture and disgusted by it. Beat writers opposed to the current culture, literary and moral values, and favored self-realization and self-expression. They saw commercial world as corrupt and crass, and cultivated ecstatic states by way of visionary practices. The Beats "looked for new experiences through love, drugs and Oriental religions" (High 195).

Postwar capitalism created the sense of alienation and rootlessness to many Americans. Discriminating laws of capitalist government suppressed the helpless people more. Likewise, the Beat people felt imprisoned not only physically but also psychologically. They were compelled to search their proper place and rebelled against so-called intellectual rules and regulations. Some Beat writers "notably Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, celebrated spontaneity, sensual gratification, alcohol and

marijuana, and the freedom of the open road as alternatives to suburban conformity and family commitment" (Cayton, et al. 231). So, these celebrations sought to release from American mainstream conformity.

Beat writing focuses on free associations of words. Writing should carry out the first expression of experiences of the first impression that appears in mind. Beat writers "adopted rhythms of simple American speech and of so-called progressive jazz" (Harris and Levey 253). They practiced for illumination to escape from traditional social norms and "sought immediate expression in multiple, intense experiences and beatific illumination like that of some Eastern religions (e.g. Zen Buddhism)" (Harris and Levey 253).

Beat movement carried the anti-establishment, anti-political and anti-intellectual attitude, and captured the subterranean culture like culture of drugs and homosexuality, which, Beat writers supposed, help to transcend the new visionary life through illumination. Herzberg describes:

The concept of illumination was central to their view of life. It might result from simple surrender to the process of experiences, from sexual ecstasy, from drunkenness and abandon, from such hallucinogenic drugs as peyote and lysergic acid, from the disciples of Buddhism, from anything that increased the illusion of receptivity to life. Their main aim was release-from the confines of social and moral judgment and from the conventions of literature. (67)

Herzberg emphasizes that Beat people seek illumination surrendering themselves into different experiences. They assimilate Buddhist method to be illuminated. Through illuminations they want to release from the contemporary social and moral boundaries.

Zen Buddhism, an Oriental religion, influenced Beat movement. Most of the Beat writers read the Zen Buddhism and applied it to calm their inner derangement. The meditation practice and other spiritual methods helped them to fly away from evil like capitalist society of America. Beats "looked for a deeper spiritual life through Zen and other Oriental philosophies" (High 190).

Beats "called themselves 'Beat' because they felt beaten (defeated) by society, and they loved the strong, free beat of jazz rhythms" (High 190). Beat people lost their mental peace in modern American materialist society. They feared the future that was directed by illness of modern society. So, the Beat movement emphasis was on escape from such rigid convention and to enter "towards visionary enlightenment and artistic improvisation, approached via (Zen) Buddhism..." (Drabble 74). Following Zen Buddhism, Beat people transcend the visionary experience by means of enlightenment. This enlightenment is a wisdom that helps one to awake up to spiritual world.

III Spiritual Value in *On the Road* and *Howl*

***On the Road* and *Howl*: Rebellion against Capitalism**

Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road* and Allen Ginsberg's poem *Howl* represent the spirit against American capitalism. Both writers have tried to destabilize the capitalistic culture. America through its capitalistic system dominated all other values imposing its own capitalistic interests. Capitalism in America valued only money and material possession. This dehumanized the common people and deserted their spiritual values. So, these writings have made an effort to bring spiritually oriented culture in opposition to capitalistic norms and values.

America succeeded to develop industrialism and modern technology, in a great extent, after World War II and it grew very fast. Implementing capitalistic policy elite people handled all economic, political and socio-cultural aspects in America. Control over trade, mass media and technical invention America became supreme nation in the world. But America's capitalism and its superior attitude created many problems to the poor and minority people within its own territory. Poor people in America had no access to its mainstream and were excluded and marginalized in every field. The narrator Sal Paradise and another protagonist Dean Moriarty in the novel *On the Road* and friends of the poet in the poem *Howl* are such people in American capitalistic society who were thrown out and neglected by American so-called civilized society. They have felt a sense of alienation in American social life.

America showed its lust for power and material possession preparing atomic bomb and strengthening military power to capture the world. This shocked the intellectuals and other Americans. They suffered from the anxiety of nuclear explosion. Kerouac and Ginsberg have sketched the people's psychological repression in such war oriented culture of America in their novel and poem *On the Road* and

Howl respectively. The ordinary people in America were becoming poorer day by day due to extreme exploitation made by postwar capitalism in the one hand and were suffering from terror and mental disorder aroused by fear of destructive war. The explosion of atomic bomb, competition of militarism between America and Soviet Union, the policy of Eisenhower, and bad treatment of McCarthy towards communists created a fearsome situation in postwar American World by which people in the novel and the poem are suffering and seek to celebrate alternative ethos.

Capitalistic government of America did not pay attention to the people's plight and their poor condition. Instead of it, war oriented mentality of American leaders encouraged the militarism and interfered the other countries. Such activities of America brought the apocalyptic vision of another war, which was against the interests of people in the novel and poem. They reject capitalistic rigidity and begin to search alternative way of life.

Postwar American government promoted the capitalistic culture through which it exploited more the minorities and marginalized people. Characters depicted in *On the Road* and *Howl* were made the victims of commercialism and consumerism developed by capitalism. American ruler was indifferent toward the need and will of these people. Rather they suppressed their voice and imposed injustice rules and regulations. This period was totally in favor of elite people because they have absolute freedom to implement their money anywhere without any restriction and can earn more exploiting the poor. So, the novel *On the Road* and poem *Howl* came out making strong dissatisfaction regarding elite culture in postwar American world.

In Kerouac's novel *On the Road*, two main characters Sal Paradise, narrator, and his friends Dean Moriarty has spent most of their time in wandering on the road. Sometimes, they even do not know where they are heading. But they knew that they

dislike capitalistic society and wished to go far away from this. Furthermore, they also have to face many problems in their traveling physically as well as mentally everywhere either sometimes by police or sometimes by beaurocrats. These police and beaurocrats are the representatives of American capitalism in the novel who work only for upper class people. Poor people can not get any service rather they feel haunted in their presents in front of them.

Capitalistic culture of postwar America repressed the lower class and helpless people. It neglected their will and tried to suppress them. Capitalist government took every action of these people as immoral and illegal. This compelled them to raise the voice against the restriction of capitalism. For this, Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty in the novel do not take any weapon to rebel but show their disliking traveling throughout America involving in homosexuality, jazz music, visionary life of Zen, and taking alcohol, which were considered as illegal and asocial by American capitalism. Dean and Sal try to make a rebellion avoiding American capitalistic rules and regulations. Then they forward to get new experience of life discarding the American capitalist living standard.

The increasing development of modern technology mechanized the American society. Heavy industrial investment and craze for capitalist market demoralized the human values. The new scientific invention forced America to be a technocratic country. Technocracy was the inevitable outcome of capitalism in such postwar American political policy. American people became valueless and unproductive in front of technocracy. Those people felt desperation, who were beyond the reach of material possession. In the novel, Sal Paradise says, "...all my New York friends were in the negative, nightmarish position of putting down society and giving their tired bookish or political or psychological reasons..." (10). They are frustrated by

capitalistic values because it has devalued human creativity imposing capitalistic rationale.

In Ginsberg's poem *Howl*, poet's friends were made mad by capitalistic culture who had, in fact, creative minds representing new generation in America. Capitalist government of America did not see the contributory possibilities of these people. Assuming them as dangerous to America, ruler tried to control over their activities. They were confined within the capitalistic values and conformity. Moreover, Characters in the *Howl* get dejection with the material life prevailed in postwar American capitalism where humanity and spiritual value have no place. Characters have realized totally absence of freedom and liberty.

Materialist capitalism and power seeking attitude of American ruler created the troublesome and confused environment in postwar American milieu. Characters in *Howl* have sensed uneasiness and strong uncomfortable in American capitalism that has brought the sense of alienation, inequality and inhumanity into their social life. The characters *Howl*, "burned cigarette holes in their arms protesting the narcotic haze of capitalism" (Line 31). America itself has confined into excessive materialism by its solely value for money, property and material richness that has impressed badly to the people in the poem. Commercialisms and consumerism of capitalism dominated the human value and spirit. In *Howl*, capitalism victimized mostly the poor and helpless people discarding their spiritual values. Their spiritual aspects are totally neglected along with their political and economic aspects.

Both the novel *On the Road* and poem *Howl* have outlined the bad effects of postwar American capitalism on people. American capitalists' bad treatment towards middle and lower class people, communists and other minor groups like Beat people, Bohemians and Black people have developed a kind of anxiety and alienation to the

ordinary people of postwar America in the novel and poem. They have been discriminated. Suppressing them, capitalist have wanted to promote their own interests. Through the application of new scientific technology America has spread its wings throughout the world and has sought to control with help of military power. Capitalist government of America launches towards the heavy experiments of nuclear bomb. This may lead atomic war in character's view in *On the Road* and *Howl*. People of America in the novel and poem have suffered from great fear and terror to observe this. This is to say that capitalism in America is responsible for creating terror and anxiety among the people. The cruel and spiritless capitalism of postwar America is overburdening problem for protagonists like Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty in the novel *On the Road* and poet's generation in the poem *Howl*.

Postwar capitalism has totally abandoned the human's feeling and emotions, which is depicted in both the novel and the poem. It's power seeking attitude and lust for material richness has exploited the human creativity and spirituality. Dean Moriarty and Sal Paradise in the novel and poet and his friends like Carl Solomon in the poem have sensed such exploitation. They find the lack of humanity and spiritual value in their postwar American culture that has made them spiritually barren. Moreover, much investment of money in the invention of new weapons, atomic bombs and empowerment of militarism creates horrible environment in the sky of American land. The rise and development of technocracy in their country is another burden in their capitalistic society. So, *On the Road* and *Howl* make a rebellion against capitalism and seek alternative way of living standard in their society. For this purpose, they involve in many experimental activities that help to heal their psychological imbalance and to quench their spiritual need. Zen experience becomes the significant mean to achieve it.

Quest for Spiritual Peace in *On the Road* and *Howl*

The novel *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac revolves around the various activities of young people. Events happened in the novel are set on the background of postwar American land. It is the story of hitchhiking, walking, taking buses and experiences different visionary world seeking free world by Beat people. The novelist Jack Kerouac has projected the mental turbulence and suffering of people because of technocracy, militarism, and threat of war. The novel came as a Beat writing making rebellion against capitalistic culture of America and its discriminating attitude towards lower class people; and offers spiritual way of living standard to release from psychic tension.

Kerouac has made an attempt to irrigate the spiritually deserted culture of postwar America by such writing that, he himself calls, comes from human soul and spirit. His writing was totally influenced by Zen Buddhism. Allen Watts, an authority on Buddhism, said that Kerouac's work was "always a shade too self-conscious, too subjective, and too strident to have the flavor of Zen" (Charters 582). Kerouac was inspired by the concept of Zen that "Zen doctrine emphasizing spontaneity and the natural flow of mind was particularly congenial to him" (Charters 582). Kerouac has written the novel *On the Road* taking this Zen concept into consideration. He completed the novel within three weeks by means of spontaneity and natural flow of mind rejecting the norms of formal writing in which he has characterized the Beat people's desire to be free from capitalistic culture. Therefore, the novel has come as response to American capitalistic culture and has foregrounded the idea of spiritual practice to fulfill spiritual lack in American society.

The novel represents as the soul of Beat movement, which negates the American materialistic culture. The narrator Sal Paradise gets inspired by Dean

Moriarty, another protagonist who has come out from reform school recently, to hit the road and see the western sky of America in the novel. Being dejected and tired from materialistic culture of America, they begin their journey towards west, making a hope to get inner peace and freedom. Various experiences of spiritual practices become the way to release from overburden mental suffering and torture felt in American society.

As a Beat writer, Jack Kerouac has written the novel *On the Road* in spontaneous prose form borrowed from Zen spontaneity. Beat writing has come out searching spiritual values that "Beat fiction flaunted its affiliation with ancient Oriental religious as well as disaffiliation from modern Western society" (Spiller and et al. 1466). Beat writing has opposed the material value, which has dominated the modern American life. So-called civilized culture of America and its superior attitude brought many problems to the ordinary people. Kerouac's Beat writing *On the Road* has celebrated the sadness, energy, and terror of America prevailed in postwar era. Materialistic capitalism has carried this sadness and terror into the mind of American people. Discarding such suffering the novel demands the spiritual world like that of Oriental spiritualist religion.

Kerouac has expressed that "the word 'beat' was first used by a friend to express a sense of spiritual exploitation and exhaustion, of imminent apocalypse" (Wakeman 778). Zen spirituality has dominated the Beat Movement. Kerouac's growing interest in Zen Buddhism resulted in his Beat writings in which he has celebrated Zen spirituality. The novel *On the Road* concerns with this spirituality and searches to attain truth for life through Enlightenment. Most characters are young American people. The protagonists Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty including almost all minor characters have felt awful horror in their capitalistic society that may cause

happen war. They have found themselves defeated in society and saw their life meaningless. Therefore, this has caused them to follow spiritual path to find real meaning of life.

Protagonists in the novel *On the Road* feel oppressed and confined within the capitalistic norms. There is no freedom for them. To release from such confinement they begin to rebel against cruel capitalism. They realize the sense of alienation, rootlessness, and homelessness in capitalistic culture and search proper place and freedom for themselves. Rejecting the material values of capitalism they adopt an emotive and sensual activities through which they seek to transcend new spiritual experience. Sal paradise, narrator, and his friends Dean Moriarty move towards new sensational world full of spiritual peace. For this, they involve in various sensual and mental exercises. They try to achieve peaceful world through Enlightenment taking Zen spiritual path. Rinzai Zen and its concept of sudden enlightenment through mental baffling inspire them to search spiritual experience. They wander and participate in both legal and illegal acts to make direct impact into mind and illuminate themselves into selfless free world.

On the Road deals with geographical variations. Sal paradise and Dean Moriarty move from place to place not staying long in a certain place. In reality, their movement from east to west is to seek free and peaceful land. They are attracted by Zen, especially Rinzai Zen and involve in such activities that help them to release from mental boredom through sudden change in mental condition that is believed in Zen Buddhism. They cross many places like Chicago, Denver and San Francisco etc. from New York. They happen to reach to Washington D. C., Philadelphia, New Orleans, Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Los Angeles and other various places in their random visiting. In these places, many people came to contact with

them with whom they get an opportunity to share the feelings and emotions to each other. They enjoy with alcoholic trance and spiritual experience of jazz gathering in bars and hotels and wish to be free from trauma of American inhuman society.

Kerouac "describes people *On the Road* to freedom. But their trips have a deeper, religious meaning. They are in 'inner journey' to the meaning of life" (High 192).

People in the novel begin their trips to get freedom inwardly. The deeper religious meaning implies Oriental Zen Buddhism that seeks the state of Enlightenment.

Enlightenment (Buddhahood) is the true meaning of life where ultimate spiritual peace is found.

The narrator Sal Paradise plans his journey when his Beat friend Dean Moriarty comes to him. They start their journey from New York, east part of America, to West Coast, even entering into Mexico. He has felt everything dead before his journey. He narrates, "My feeling that everything was dead. With the coming of Dean Moriarty began the part of my life you call my life on the road. Before that I'd often dreamed of going West to see the country, always vaguely planning and never taking off ' (3). His journey towards the west is to resurrect himself spiritually because he has suffered from inner torture and lack of spiritual peace. He longs for new experience on the way. He says, "And this was really the way that my whole road experience began, and the things that were to come are too fantastic not to tell" (9). The experience on the road gives him inner satisfaction. It is so amazing that he has never felt before. He gets various experiences in his involvement in different activities on the way. This helps him to soothe his inner torture. He involves in the practice of visionary life and takes alcohol to illuminate for new experience along with his partner Dean Moriarty.

Sal Paradise makes divorce with his wife because he does not feel peace in his married life. This has enforced him to face the worldly suffering confining him into familial bondage. So, he breaks this bondage and starts his life taking Zen Buddhist values in his life. Dean Moriarty, on the other hand, get married thrice but it does not satisfy him and comes to assimilate in Zen spiritual life. Both Sal and Dean spend their most part of life in the street experiencing and searching new sensational world for peace and happiness.

In the novel, most of the young intellectuals feel worried in so-called American civilization and its superior attitude. They feel beaten not only physically but also psychologically in capitalistic rigidity. They suffer from psychic frenzy in nightmarish environment of political policy of capitalism that deserts spiritual values and humanity. So, they oppose the strict law of American capitalism. They rebel against the cruel and inhuman culture celebrating abnormal way of life. But such abnormality is the judgment made by only capitalists. In fact, their activities and way of life are guided by spiritual aspect that develops in their quest for it, which cannot be understood and respected by capitalists.

The novel *On the Road* has concerned mainly with the people's plight condition in America. Beat people Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty are the sufferers in postwar American materialism. They are strongly disappointed with the postwar American cultural values because they do not have the right to freewill and cannot do whatever they want. It makes them to feel beaten and defeated in society. They face the bad consequence of material culture in which no opportunity is being provided for them. Insecurity is prevailed everywhere in such helpless people's lives. They have no access to the mainstream but uncertainty and terrible situation have dominated in their day-to-day life, which forces them to seek fearless world.

Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty express the energy and desire for freedom to liberate from America's inhuman treatment in the novel. They rush out hither and thither going toward the west hoping to have the sense of happiness in their lives. Senseless society has aroused severe pain in their inner state. That is why; they want to liberate themselves from such society. They neglect the social rules and orders for this purpose, which has killed their spiritual values. Now the bias behavior of capitalistic government is no more bearable for them. They become ready to violate the discriminating system and partiality done by such government.

Their desires to break from society's mold and to find meaning in life led them to experiment with wine and to study spiritual knowledge like Zen Buddhism. Sal and Dean experience with the alcohol and marijuana staying in bars and restaurants while wandering in different places, even they have little money. They meet other Beat friends, male and female, one after another in their journey with whom they indulge in a number of emotional and sensual activities to have pleasures and joy going beyond the physical reality. They take all these as the means to remain far from worldly suffering of American society.

Material life makes the narrator and his friends uncomfortable and they try to cast aside such lifestyle. They change their material life into spiritual and give up material greed and lust. Then they partake in rebellion against materialist capitalism. They involve in Beat movement to rebel against it and assimilate Zen philosophy to quench their spiritual needs through Zen life. The narrator Sal Paradise expresses, "I wished Dean and Carlo were there-then I realized they'd be out of place and unhappy. They were like the man with the dungeon stone and the gloom, rising from the underground, the sordid hipsters of America, a new Beat generation that I was slowly joining" (54). Here, Sal Paradise joins in Beat generation in which Zen Spiritual life is

exercised to fulfill mental peace. He takes part with his friends Dean Moriarty and Carlo Max to experience new way of life like them.

Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty have sensed fear looking America's preparations of war. This causes them to go away seeking peace world following the Zen path. There is unpleasant and fearful scene of militarism, Sal tells:

It was the day of Harry Truman's inauguration for his second term. Great displays of war might were lined 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; the last thing was a regular small ordinary lifeboat looked pitiful and foolish. Dean slowed down to look at it. He kept shaking his head in awe. (135)

Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty happen to look the murderous and destructive weapons on their way in Pennsylvania made ready for war. Dean gets feared more than before losing his inner peace. Sal and Dean do not like America's war oriented action. They become upset looking militaristic empowerment and a sense of anger and hate towards American government increases in their minds.

In Washington, they observe that police are responsible for crimes and violence in America. People suffer from injustice beaurocrats of capitalistic culture. Police are suppressing agents in capitalistic government who give mental and physical torture to the helpless people. Feeling extreme mental pain and anguish, Dean even becomes ready to kill those sufferers.

The American police are involved in psychological warfare against those 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 lines of crimes don't exist to its satisfaction. 'Nine lines of crime, one of boredom', said Louis-Ferdinand Celine. Dean was so mad he wanted to come back to Virginia and shoot the cop as soon as he had a gun. (136)

Dean becomes very angry with the American police who bother people and give psychological torture. Unnecessary investigations of police and blaming the people as rule breakers in capitalistic culture compel him to be so mad that he wishes to shoot them. But it is impossible to Dean to do so. He is helpless under monster like capitalist government. Rather he can get rid of mental torture through Zen Spiritual exercise. He can pacify himself following spiritual life.

In a trip to West Coast of America, narrator Sal Paradise perceives visionary world. This inspires him go further to reach heavenly world that he is looking for, "As we crossed the Colorado-Utah border I saw God in the sky in the form of huge gold sunburning clouds above the desert that seemed to point a finger at me and say, 'Pass here and go on, you're on the road to heaven' " (182). Sal with Dean has joined in a spiritual pilgrimage to liberate from suffering given by cruel American materialism. They want heaven-like world where they can get freedom and peace. They have the vision of possibility entering into such world in their pilgrimage. To achieve this, they have embraced Zen values in their lives.

They are now in Mexico where they find the magic land. Sal Paradise says, "Behind us lay the whole of America and everything Dean and I had previously known about life, and life on the road. We had finally found the magic land at the end of the road and we never dreamed the extent of the magic" (276). Both Sal and Dean, being beaten spiritually in American society, seek peaceful place roaming throughout on the road. They experience different emotional and sensual perception. Their

exercises of Zen practice lead them to vision the magic land. This is the state of enlightenment, awakening from land of suffering into wisdom. The enlightenment comes from mind concentration on various experiences in Zen life. Sal and Dean have wandered to get various new experiences searching for enlightenment. For this, they involve in mental exercises rejecting so-called American intellectual and rational rules and regulations.

They frequently think over the next heavenly world outside the American materialistic world. They wish to have it time and again. They are very eager to sense this world in their mind. Belonging to the Beat group, both transcend the spiritual world through heavy exercise of Zen Meditation and other Zen Buddhist values. They feel peace becoming selfless beings in such state. Sal expresses at the end:

So in America when the sun goes down and I sit on the old broken -
down river pier watching the long, long skies over New Jersey and
sense all that raw land that rolls in one unbelievable huge bulge over to
the West Coast, and all that road going, all the people dreaming in the
immensity of it. (309)

Sal meditates sitting on the old broken down river pier in west of America and senses spiritual solidarity when he watches long sky over New Jersey. He is far away, at that moment, from material reality of America. He becomes free spiritually and gets salvation from worldly suffering and material desires. He makes another expression, "...and nobody, nobody knows what's going to happen to anybody besides the forlorn rags of growing old, I think of Dean Moriarty, I even think of old Dean Moriarty the father we never found, I think of Dean Moriarty" (310). Certainly, conversion occurs to Dean. Dean has proceeded towards spiritual world along with his growing age to find peace and happiness through Zen experience.

The poem *Howl* by Allen Ginsberg portrays, like *On the Road*, the glimpse of postwar American spiritless capitalist world and struggle for the establishment of spiritual value. Materialistic capitalism has exploited the people's will of freedom and peace. *Howl* depicts the people's plight of suffering caused by society's betrayal, atrocities and horrible abuses. Cruel capitalist culture has destroyed the best qualities of human nature and shows unwillingness towards their problems. So, its outraged charge begins to animate successive American counterculture. It offers spiritual position of American people denying the material culture. The characters in the poem advocate Rinzai Zen and its spiritual values adopting in their lives because it can be practiced anywhere seeking sudden Enlightenment.

Destructive forces of modern American culture and its materialism, conformity, and technocracy suppress the people's emotional and sensual aspects. Characters in *Howl* are compelled to be mad due to senseless American government. They suffer from inner torture. So, *Howl* violates the contemporary values and norms through the act of howl. It captures the spirit of underground culture and conveys it in a specifically American voice, employing the version of American vernacular speech, elements of street slang, amalgam of jazz cadences, and the tempo of several species of sermon. The poem begins as a celebration of creativity and subversion ends as an anthem of enlightenment.

The poem *Howl* appears establishing the Beat Movement. It tries to destabilize the postwar material values in American capitalism and attempts to bring fearless spiritual world. The poem "centers on psychological breakdown of respectable assumption in the moral sphere, not only concerning sexual behavior but involving generally the whole range of expectation of what will make a meaningful, good, and self-regulated life" (Rosenthal 93). Beat people lose their morality in capitalistic

values. *Howl* brings the voice of these psychological beaten people of America who have to lead their life according to the norms of capitalism. In addition, it support for people's free and self-regulated life. The self-regulated life is possible only when one get freedom. Inner peace and psychic stability should be there to achieve meaningful and good life that *Howl* provokes.

Ginsberg's *Howl* is filled with political condemnation and social protest. It defends free exploration through the celebration of obscenity. So "*Howl* was widely attacked as obscene, repetitious, and formless, but it had the anger and the anguish of prophecy" (Lippy and Williams 1232). Ginsberg observes that the so-called civilized American culture has created troubles to the people leading them to revolt against American culture. Characters and poet himself are felt beaten in such American society. For them:

To be 'beat' was a way of not talking one's own tragedies too solemnly, of realizing that many others, saints and sinners, were beat, beaten, and beatific also. Finally, the 'Beat' were seekers, people on a spiritual quest through all great religions, Buddhist as well as Christian or Jewish, Asian as well as Western. (Lippy and Williams 1232)

People in *Howl* are beaten and beatific who are spiritual seekers through different religious means. Beat people feel exploited in material oriented culture of America. They do not get proper place in such system and lose their value of life. In this condition, they take spiritual way of living standard getting true meaning of life that helps them to exist in society.

Ginsberg's description of scenario in *Howl* represents his own generation and their suffering in postwar era. He finds the American society worthless to live in

terms of spiritualism. Frustration is in everywhere due to the sense of alienation. Fear of militarism and war causes the generation to look for safe world. The poem:

Howl brought the author's personal life and contact directly before the readers, describing sexual acts, moment of illumination, and drug experiences in a nonstop, hallucinating catalogue. It was a poem written for oral performance in front of an audience, not for quiet contemplation in the private study. (Fox and Kloppenberg 63)

Performance gives new experience to carry out spiritualism. This helps to illuminate into spiritual experience that is Zen experience. Beat people even involves in drugs and sexual acts to illuminate themselves. They believe this illumination brings Enlightenment. Making direct impact on mind they seek sudden Enlightenment (Wisdom) that Rinzai Zen believes.

The poem *Howl* is prophetic, which rouses social consciousness along with spiritual awareness. Stephenson's emphasis is right here, "The poem's considerable achievement, by Ginsberg's use of myth, rhythm, and prophetic vision, are the resolution of the problems associated with transcendence and the embodiment in verse of a new syncretic mode of spiritual awareness, a new social consciousness" (885). The poem addresses the spiritual desolation and its bad effects. The use of prophetic vision in the poem is to seek for spiritual awakening.

In Ginsberg's poem *Howl* poet's friends are made mad by cruel capitalistic ideology who have, in fact, creative minds representing the new American generation in postwar America. Capitalistic government does not see the contributory possibilities of these people. Assuming them as dangerous group, American ruler tries to control over their activities. They are confined within the capitalistic mores and postwar American conformity. They feel imprisoned and get dejection with material

life. People, thus, in the poem, “wandered around and around at midnight in the railroad yard” (22). They have to wander because they are made disappointed by capitalistic system; and look for some sort of relief. They move away wandering here and there in the street seeking for it.

Characters of *Howl* have become the victims by social ill of postwar America. The characters are the people from Beat groups who try to make a voice against material culture of American capitalism. They realize that the cause of fear and madness are brought by American ruler’s superior attitude and their hunger for material possession. Capitalistic values suppressed the human values neglecting their proper place in society. Lower class people and young generation are marginalized from mainstream and their interests and needs are abandoned in capitalistic society. The partiality done by capitalistic government has to wipe out to settle peace and freedom for all characters in the poem. They howl in street and capture the attention of leader to hear the suppressed voice.

Ginsberg describes the degradation of his contemporaries in the beginning of the poem. He laments, “I saw the best mind of my generation destroyed by madness, starving / hysterical naked, / digging themselves through the Negro streets at down looking for an / angry fix” (Line 1-2). His intellectual colleagues are not mad by themselves but made mad by American spiritless government. They are in Negro (poor) streets looking for relief from horrible situation caused by capitalistic culture. Best minds are made starved and thrown out into the street by postwar American government. Capitalists do not value the creativity of poet’s generation. They want to laden their own material oriented ideology upon all the common people.

In the second part, the Biblical Fire God Moloch appears who requires human sacrifice. His character represents the evils of society. This is a social ill, criticizing

government, technology, industry, and commercialism as forces that are beyond the control of the people. Ginsberg says, “Moloch whose mind is pure machinery! Moloch whose blood is running / money! Moloch whose figures are ten armies! Moloch whose breast is / cannibal dynamo! Moloch whose ear is smoking tomb” (Line 83). The mentality of American ruler is like that of Moloch. This is pure machinery that seeks always money. Machinery mind works not caring people’s need and interest. It does work whatever has already been set. American armies are like the body of Moloch who threatens the people; and capitalist’s ear does not hear the voice of people remaining passive like a soulless tomb.

The third part of the poem is an attempt to search the spiritual strength against the materialistic forces. Addressing directly to Carl Solomon, Ginsberg asserts that innocent soul never dies. The soul of Solomon has not died but to made dead by cruel society. Solomon, like him, is the victim of material world who are obliged to stay in madhouse. Ginsberg consoling him says, “I am with you in Rockland / where there are twenty-five thousands mad comrades altogether singing / the final stanzas of the internationale” (Line 109). Now, the poet is in Rockland with his other friends. They are imprisoned there considering them as mad people by capitalistic government of America. They express their will by singing. They sing for the establishment of freedom and long for spiritual dominance in American society.

Materialist capitalism has exploited the human spirit and freedom more than others. So-called rational and civilized society of America does not value humanity. Ginsberg sees his generation starved spiritually. He finds the society without vision and soul. Though he gets immoral soul in his generation and encourages rising up the soul. Through spiritual practice people can immortalize their soul. Giving light to the

mind and "illuminating all the motionless world" (Line 13) is the way to go beyond the nightmarish society of America meeting the peaceful state.

People "suffering Eastern Sweets" (Line 21) mean the lack of spiritualism. They suffer in the absence of spiritual peace, which can be found in Eastern Zen Buddhism. Strong thirst of spiritual value dominates the American society. The desperation, the suffering, and the persecution of the group, including Ginsberg, are seeking transcendent reality. They are impoverished, alienated, arrested, and driven to suicide by the hostility of American society in which they pursue their quest. Visionary experiences of religious practice become the way to arrive at spiritual reality. To get Enlightenment through illuminations they also take alcohol, marijuana and drugs participating in sexual activities, which help them to divert their mind immediately leading towards new sensational experience.

Ginsberg's attraction on Zen Buddhism is offered excessively for spiritual quest in *Howl*. He writes, "Who vanished into nowhere Zen New Jersey leaving a trail of ambiguous / pictures postcards of Atlantic City Hall" (Line 20). Zen Buddhist vision helps them to create the power of vision. They desire for Enlightenment, perfect wisdom and spiritual life that is found in Zen Buddhism. They realize that the life is full of suffering in material oriented society of America. They hate the tyranny of American capitalism and struggle for emancipation. The people in *Howl* vanish into Zen monastery in New Orleans to calm their inner pain and turbulence. They do meditation wherever they go and try to transcend illuminating into spiritual world.

Howl demands for Indian visionary angels who bear the principle of non-violence to achieve Nirvana (Salvation) from worldly suffering. Ginsberg expresses, "Who loned it through the streets of Idaho seeking visionary Indian angels / who were visionary Indian angels" (Line 25). Beat friends (who) of the poet in *Howl* seek Indian

visionary angels. They are very much inspired by Oriental religious people who practice for visionary life. They also adopt Oriental visionary lifestyle refusing American material life. Visionary power forwards them to attain spiritual eternity. To escape from materialistic world they make effort for visionary knowledge, “Who drove crosscountry seventytwo hours to find out if I had a vision or / you had a vision or he had a vision to find out Eternity” (Line 60). Poet along with his friends travels throughout the country for a long time searching the visionary experience. Everybody has the vision to find out Eternity. With the help of visionary experience they are able to sense the spiritual reality.

Ginsberg finds that the mental disturbances and deteriorations of his generation are the bad result of devil-like American capitalism. *Howl* depicts the picture of those people who are suffering extremely in American war oriented culture and want to get relief from this. They follow the Zen path to liberate involving in different practices of Zen Buddhism. They have the strong will to move towards the freedom of spiritualism, “Who fell on their knees in hopeless cathedrals praying for each other's

/ Salvation and light and breasts, until the soul illuminated its hair for / a second “ (Line 62). Now, People of *Howl* part take in praying for salvation to get release from suffering given by American materialist ruler. The salvation becomes possible by means of illumination. They get illumination in their praying meditation. This is an Oriental spiritual practice exercised in Zen Buddhism. Zen experience comes through sudden enlightenment leading towards salvation from the evil of materialism. The people in the poem entail in meditative practice to be enlightened. This is the enlightenment that carries salvation not only for individual but also for all of them equally.

So, *Howl* projects the spiritual aspects of human beings. People's dejection of material life and suffering from its destructive effects lead them to search spiritual values. Postwar American value has deserted the poet and other young people characterized in the poem. They take an alternative spiritual lifestyle to fulfill their inner need and oppose the material life dominated in American society. Thus, they involve in quest for spiritual peace. With the assimilation of Zen practice and its spiritual exercises they are able to achieve spiritual peace. Ginsberg and his Beat friends long for this spiritual peace and inner satisfaction, and proceed to spiritual world through the Zen spiritual experience.

IV. Conclusion

Inner Satisfaction in Spiritual life

Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road* and Allen Ginsberg's poem *Howl* were written in postwar period. Both works carried the same spirit- peoples' thirst for spiritual needs and its fulfillment. These creations came out from the same period and same background of American Capitalistic milieu. In this period people suffered from power seeking norms of American government. Therefore, people were dejected from fear of militarism and war caused by excessive exercise of power. Domination over helpless people, violence, brutality and tyrannical beurocracy gave mental pain to ordinary American people. They found only inhumanity and cruelty in American culture. They could not bear social injustice that killed their spiritual aspects.

Unkindness, guilt, greed and exploitation practiced by capitalist government haunted the mind of common people. They were compelled to find alternative way of life to live happily in society. During fifties, whole America was dominated by sadness, frustration and depression. All these situations converted America into spiritually deserted land. What people could do in such environment was only to seek for spiritual world to make life meaningful and joyful. So, Beat Movement was held through which they released from their psychic tension. This movement helped them to go against cruel and spiritless society of America. It also opposed the system of America's rigid government and its conformity. They rebelled again the capitalist culture and celebrated the spiritual values of Zen Buddhism.

Commercialism, militarism, sexual repression, technocracy, and soulless industrialism were the consequences of American superior attitude. Capitalistic culture centralized not only economy and material possession but also destroyed people's will and interests. This made people alienated. Their spiritual aspects were

deserted in so-called American civilized society. To liberate from this, people sought for spiritual life. They found Zen life as perfect life and followed its spiritual values negating American material life. They opposed material culture believing that it carried horrible and destructive environment. Corrupt materialistic society was a great problem in their life, which deprived them from peace and happiness. This forces them to go for spiritual search involving Beat movement.

Kerouac and Ginsberg are two main figures in Beat writing. Beat writing is based on Zen Buddhist thought. Great influence of Zen is realized in their writing. Kerouac's novel *On the Road* and Ginsberg's Poem *Howl* deal with Zen philosophy. Characters in both writing begin their spiritual pilgrimage to release themselves from sorrowful American life. They struggled for mental satisfaction and freedom. They sacrifice their life into Zen life.

Zen Buddhism centers on meditation and mind baffling activities to get Salvation (Moksha). This is the inner experience in which freedom and happiness can be found. Characters in *On the Road* and *Howl* realize this kind of inner experience by means of Zen life. Their assimilation with Zen Buddhism is to liberate from heartless American world. This is the process of giving up material desire, which causes them to feel suffering. Neither Sal Paradise nor Dean Moriarty in *On the Road* care about the material wants; rather they seek spiritual world roaming throughout America. Likewise, Ginsberg's *Howl* makes a voice for spiritual world celebrating Zen life. *Howl* laments over spiritual exploitation done by Moloch like American capitalist government. It seeks peaceful world to quench the inner need by which his generation is suffering.

In *On the Road* Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty develop their spiritual aspects wandering in different places. Their journey toward West Coast of America is going

away from material world seeking spiritual life through the adoption of Zen Buddhism. Their various experiences during their journey give them inner peace and satisfaction. Their lives become full of wisdom in such a state. Like *On the Road*, Ginsberg's *Howl* projects the development of spiritual value. Ginsberg offers the same idea of Oriental Zen Buddhist philosophy. Zen spiritual path becomes the sole means for Ginsberg to attain spiritual peace. Ginsberg's intellectual generation is entrapped within the materialistic world destroying their human values. To release from this, they have to search for free world, which they find in Zen life. Ginsberg himself inspires his generation to adopt spiritual values to establish peace and happiness. This is why *Howl* attempts to transcend visionary knowledge to achieve salvation, a free spiritual world.

So, *On the Road* and *Howl* both concern about the search for peaceful spiritual world. Being overburdened by materialism and fear of war in American capitalistic culture of postwar period, characters in both works wish to have spiritual values in their lives. All the people, either the protagonists like Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty in the novel *On the Road* or best minds of Ginsberg's generation in the poem *Howl* become the victim of American material oriented capitalism; and to release from this, they take Zen path through which they get inner peace and spiritual satisfaction. They feel extreme mental torture and anxiety in material culture. This leads them to follow Zen spiritual life and ultimately enter into peaceful world and get inner satisfaction through spiritual practices.

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