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**Quest for the Self and Authentic Existence in Jack
Kerouac's *On the Road***

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Dedications

I dedicate this work to my loving parents, whose endless love, support, and encouragement made this journey possible. I hope this achievement will fulfill the dream they envisioned for me.

To the ones who know me the best and love me anyway, my first best friends, my dearest siblings.

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Abstract

Since the beginning of time, individuals have been searching for the meaning of life. Essentially, people want to know what it means to be human in order to add value to their lives and the world around them. And to search for their identity. This study aims to investigate questions of identity issues and the complexities of the human psyche from an existential lens, by exploring themes of formation, choice, and the entirety of human existence. *On the Road* 1957, a controversial novel by Jack Kerouac changed American literature by creating the Beat movement, the rebellious youth that best describes the novel's characters. It examines how Sal Paradise's journey embodies the never-ending quest for meaning in a world marked by existential absurdity. This work also uses a psychological dimension to construct a more in-depth analysis of the conflict where light is put on themes such as loneliness, illusion, identity crises, and escapism. This study reveals the importance of personal choice and existential principles in shaping one's existence, overcoming existential angst, and accepting the absurdity of life, which can lead to a more fulfilling and authentic life. and how idealizing others can lead to feelings of loss and disconnection.

Keywords: existential absurdity, identity crises, escapism, meaning.

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General Introduction

Humans crave searching for meaning and purpose, yet find themselves thrust into a world without meaning or direction. They are always on a quest to discover their identity. This pursuit can seem endless but humans often strive for it. Thus, the only thing that people frequently have are assumptions. Additionally, there was a lack of acceptance among people, following World War II, American society was faced with deep existential concerns and a meaning crisis. Many, especially young people, felt lost and aimless in a chaotic world full of disorder as a result of the war's destruction, advancements in science, and the downfall of traditional religious institutions and churches. A gap was left when society moved from the certainty of religious dogma to the reason of scientific studies. Many people felt lost, Existentialism and absurdism emerged as philosophical responses to the chaos and meaninglessness of existence. It should not be surprising that the pursuit of meaning has a key place in the human experience. According to research, having a sense of purpose in life influences not just our objectives and aspirations but also how we handle life's unexpected turns. Humans require a sense of purpose at some point in their lives; some find it in religion, others in life itself, and to each their philosophy of why they exist.

This led people to look for new ways to figure out who they were and where they fit in the universe. In this environment of religious disillusionment and intellectual chaos, the Beat Generation appeared, it was a counterculture movement that would change forever the American way of thinking. As Ameri Baraka once wrote The so-called beat generation was a whole bunch of people, of all different nationalities, who came to the conclusion that society sucked (Bahadur) , They were all united by a rejection of the dominant middle-class American ideals, the term beat introduced by Jack Kerouac.

The movement was against the established guidelines of society, by pursuing individuality and rejecting conformity. In a society characterized by materialism, conformity, and cultural traditionalism, the Beats which included well-known individuals such as Jack Kerouac, Allen

Ginsberg, and William S. Burroughs, attempted authenticity and a purpose. They chose a life based on experience, freedom, and self-expression over the standard American Dream.

The literature and way of life of the Beat Generation resonated with the frustration and purpose-seeking feelings shared by many young Americans during that era. The Beat Generation were portrayed as the American existentialists who challenged the norms of society, welcomed spontaneity, and aimed at questioning the purpose of life itself. Their impact went beyond literature, influencing 1960s countercultural movements. The Beats significantly influenced post-World War II American intellectual and cultural settings, encouraging an entire generation to challenge authority, pursue authenticity, and discover new ideas about the self and the outside world.

Existentialists believe that individuals create their own identity through their choices and actions, For them the self is never complete but always a process of becoming. This idea emerged to support numerous writers and be present in a wide range of literary works. It reached its height in the years immediately following World War II. The youth who lived following the war's atmosphere frequently wondered what the purpose of life was. Sickness and sadness were all around them, and thinkers questioned why they had chosen to suffer while living in such a miserable world.

This quest for self and individual identity through the exploration of existential space or philosophy is an idea explained through the narrative of Sal and Dean's attempt to understand their entirety of existence. *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac. American novelist and poet Jean-Louis K  rouac was born in Lowell, to French-Canadian parents. He was a key figure in the Beat Generation. The most well-known piece of Kerouac's writing, *On the Road* 1957, had an important impact on society. Many were influenced by his spontaneous and rhythmic approach, including well-known American singers Bob Dylan and Tom Waits (7). Kerouac's

influence went beyond writing. The hippie movement and other 1960s countercultures were influenced by his writings.

On the Road is the story of the desperate search for “it”, in which the novel's protagonists have been talking about “it” i.e. human identity, the characters are always pondering life’s big questions, we all do that too, right? trying to figure out what they are doing here in this chaotic world, what is their purpose.

On the Road addresses important existential problems about the nature of self, existence, and purpose. Using an existential perspective highlights Kerouac’s use of special exploration as a metaphor for a deeper philosophical journey. The story claims that knowledge is found in accepting life’s paradoxes, traveling without a set goal, and discovering existential meaning on the open road. The pages that made up Jack Kerouac's main character, Sal Paradise, were all devoted to escaping adulthood. The novel’s meaning goes far deeper than its words, leading the reader on a journey on which he criticizes society's moral standards. Kerouac's book was criticized and explained in a variety of ways. It is frequently referred to as a confusing book that caused discussion among writers and critics.

When addressing the themes included in the work, the novel has always been interpreted through psychological lenses or placed in the context of post-war writings, and only a few researchers are invested in viewing this narrative from a philosophical point of view. I have an interest in philosophy because I have a background in it. I am also interested in existentialist philosophy and its ideas about meaning, authenticity, and freedom. And how Kerouac tackles existentialist ideas in his work allows me to unite my interest in literature and philosophy, since great philosophy is often said to be great literature and that’s my area of interest.

This research work aims to address issues of formation, and individual identity through existential philosophy in Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road* by answering the following research questions.

1. How does Sal's search for self and meaning reflect existentialists' ideas?
2. How does Sal's experiences relate to the existential understanding of individuality and authenticity in *On the Road*?
3. How does the portrayal of travel and the influence of different places shape the development and transformation of personal identities in Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*?

The following hypotheses are developed based on the previous questions:

1. It is hypothesized that since Sal begets an identity in his mental space, this drives him to go on the road in search of self and meaning and authentic existential space, by rejecting societal norms and using drugs, and by traversing the rootless anonymity of America, by doing so, Sal's search for identity and meaning may share motifs of existentialism.
2. The journeys of Sal' in *On the Road* can be hypothesized as a quest for individuality and authenticity, and the road trip symbolizes an existential exploration of self and truth. The adventures of Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty indicate a quest for a deeper understanding of life and a craving for authentic experiences that challenge societal norms, reflecting the Beat Generation's desire for personal freedom and authenticity.
3. It is hypothesized that portraying Sal and Dean's journey across America to different places has an impact on how these characters change and discover new aspects of who they are as individuals as a result of their experiences. It appears that their long-

distance travel experiences and the things they encounter along the way are related to how their identities shift over time.

This work will be divided into three chapters to fully explore and develop the ideas. The first chapter; is the theoretical framework that introduces the themes of identity from a psychological dimension as well as from a philosophical lens through the existentialism theory, and the struggles individuals face when dealing with the issues of identity crises. The second chapter will address the identity theories previously developed in the first chapter through an existential lens in relation to the novel *On the Road*, and the different representations of it through the novel's events and characters and also focuses on an analysis of the characters to have more in-depth understanding of their nature. The last chapter tackles the aesthetics and poetics of the novel. Additionally, the chapter looks into the novel's intertextuality with many famous literary works.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Humans have always been on a quest to find meaning in the lives they have been given. This quest has characterized people's lives for millennia, if not longer, dating back to Aristotle and Plato and continuing to current philosophers, psychologists, and scientists. Though there are many interpretations of meaning, both religious and non-religious scholars argue that meaning search is a fundamental aspect of being human, regardless of whether they attribute it to an inbuilt tendency or biological evolution. For instance, in Islamic tradition, that is called the "fitra".

According to existentialists, individuals must construct their meaning and essence through their choices and actions. Absurdism asserts that, while life has no inherent meaning, humans may find joy and purpose by accepting their absurd existence. Themes of self-development and authentic life require an extensive theoretical framework. This first chapter delves into the central ideas that guide the novel's focus on identity, individuality, and the human condition. Through an analysis of the theories of identity formation, existentialism, and authenticity, along with the function of escapism in travel literature, to developed a strong foundation for comprehending the complexity and importance of the novel.

1. Revealing the Layers of Identity :

Identity is a multidimensional and complicated notion that refers to how we see and identify ourselves as individuals and in connection to communities. Existential questions like "Who am I?" and "Who do I want to be in the future?" are difficult for everyone to answer. The intricacy of the solution might be one of the causes. A person's identity is shaped by their various relationships, including those with their parents, friends, partners, and children. It involves outside factors like height, race, or socioeconomic status that an individual has little or no influence over. Political views, moral convictions, and religious convictions are all

components of identity that influence daily decisions. Now you most likely believe that you will always be the same person from birth to death! yet the only thing about you that truly doesn't change throughout your life is your name.

Philosophers have long debated the question of personal identity, seeking to identify that unique quality that defines who you are and that which maintains your identity across time and through all of the changes that accompany it. Some philosophers believe in the body theory and found it the most relevant one, as Rene Descartes is known for repeatedly questioning his certainty and the connection between his body and mind. He concluded, "I think, therefore I am"(cogito, ergo sum) The body theory claims that the mind and the body are separate parts that interact to create human consciousness.

It studies the relationship between the two. Some philosophers believe that this theory explains why personal identity remains constant throughout one's life (Noor), as we remain in the same body from birth to death. According to this idea, the mind and body are interdependent, but the body is a physical entity while the mind is, on the other hand, a non-physical being different from the body. Philosophical and scientific discussions on this idea are numerous.

The body and mind are strongly linked according to research, with our mental and emotional states influenced by our physical experiences and vice versa. For instance, many studies show that physical activity can improve mental health, while stress can have negative physical effects. Some believe in materialism, which rejects the idea of a soul and claims that our identity is only shaped by our physical body and intellectual ability. Our physical qualities influence all of our thoughts, feelings, and experiences. in contrast, John Locke, the English philosopher, stated that "the thing that makes you you is the non-physical thing - your consciousness" (Green), rejecting the idea that a person's physical characteristics define them.

While theories of consciousness rely on the connection between the mind and body, individuals' search for identity delves even deeper as they explore the essence of self. The search for identity is a popular issue in modern society. Characters in popular novels and movies frequently express doubt about their identity, serious books show people struggle to develop their identity and complete themselves, magazine articles explore the complexities of personal identity, and social scientists use the term 'identity' to refer to a range of phenomena. The search for identity is commonly referred to as 'finding yourself' 'self-actualization', 'identity crisis'

By analyzing the complex layers of identity, one can gain an understanding of the basics of the self and prepare for an additional psychoanalytic investigation of the psyche. Through exploring the complex nature of identity construction and self-awareness, we can move into the field of psychoanalytic theory, which shows the deepest levels of the unconscious mind and the relationship between conscious and unconscious processes.

1.1. Delving into the Depths of Psychoanalytic Theory:

Psychoanalysis is the term used to describe the psychological theory and treatment approach founded by Sigmund Freud in the early twentieth century, as well as its resulting advancements. Psychoanalysis is widely regarded as unique in its emphasis on the dynamic unconscious idea.

In his book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), Sigmund Freud developed a self-description notion that led to the development of the psychoanalytic method in the early 20th century (Evans). Furthermore, according to Freud, the unconscious is a group of suppressed urges, sensations, memories, and drives that are connected to violence and sexuality.

According to Freud, throughout his books and studies, humans' mental lives stem from biological urges. He outlines how a child's development begins with their family and then progresses to society, children then learn to express themselves and develop a sense of self in response to family and societal expectations.

Concerning personality, Erik Erikson argued that Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory focused mainly on childhood experiences; as a result, he then expanded on Freud's psychoanalysis theory to create the life cycle theory. Erikson's theory is known as the psychosocial development theory, according to which human growth requires a variety of life events and phases, including childhood. Additionally, Erikson developed the idea of an identity crisis as an essential feature of his theory of psychosocial development. He noted that most people struggle with identity issues, feeling as though they have lost or regained their identity, since identity is a fundamental aspect of human existence at all stages, from childhood to adulthood. Both Sigmund Freud and Erik Erikson applied psychoanalysis to investigate the human mind and its impact on daily life.

1.2.Mapping the Freudian Mind: Insights into the Human Psyche:

According to Sigmund Freud, human personality is complex and consists of several components. In his known psychoanalytic theory, Freud believes that personality is made up of three components: the id, the ego, and the superego. These factors combine to produce complex human actions (Boag). Every element contributes differently to personality, and the three connect in ways that have a significant impact on a person. Each aspect of personality arises at different times throughout life.

According to psychoanalytic theory, our childhood experiences and unconscious impulses determine our behavior. Thus, 'unconscious' is a crucial term for this theory. Our

unconscious is made up of the memories, convictions, impulses, desires, and instincts that make up our personalities. And we are not always conscious of these things. Furthermore, the idea of libido serves as the main inspiration for Freud's instinctive theory. The libido, often known as the sexual desire, creates all psychic energy. Thus, it is a natural energy source that powers the mind. Another important consideration is when this libidinal energy gets stuck or focused at different phases of psychosexual development. Therefore, conflicts may arise when this obsession happens at this stage of psychosexual development.

Sigmund Freud's daughter Anna Freud developed and elaborated the psychological methods and she provided a new impulse to ego psychology, the primary human defense mechanism to relieve anxiety and internal conflict. These strategies often involve denying or manipulating reality on an unconscious level. These are the mechanisms that our mind uses unconsciously to protect us from unwanted thoughts and emotions that can cause stress and anxiety. According to Freudian theory, these mechanisms twist our reality to help us cope with difficult situations. Gaining an understanding of these mechanisms can help us know how they impact our emotions and behavior, which consequently can help us live healthier lives and deal with challenges more effectively (Noor). There are seven defense mechanisms, including the first, Repression, also called "motivated forgetting," which is the incapacity to remember a risky situation, person, or occasion. The superego frequently suppresses thoughts that may cause emotions of guilt. Second, Anna Freud developed a protective mechanism called denial, which includes refusing to accept reality and so hiding external events from consciousness. The individual may react by refusing to see the circumstance or by denying that it exists if it is simply too much for them to handle. Another defense mechanism, Projection, is when a person projects their own undesired ideas, feelings, and motivations into another person. And there is also, Displacement, regression, sublimation... (McLeod)

While Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory placed a lot of emphasis on the defense mechanisms that shape human behavior and personality, Erik Erikson, after him, adopted a broader psychosocial perspective to comprehend the developmental barriers people face throughout their lives. In contrast to Freud's defense mechanisms, which function at the unconscious level to protect the ego from anxiety, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development emphasizes the conscious challenges people face in trying to form a strong identity, especially during the important stage of adolescence. based on Freudian concepts, Erikson's 'identity crisis' theory places more focus on the social and environmental elements that affect a person's changing sense of self.

1.3. Erik Erikson's Identity Crisis :

Interestingly, not much is known about an identity crisis. Research has barely begun to identify the origins and implications of such crises. An identity crisis is a psychological dilemma that causes you to wonder 'who you are. It makes you doubt your life's purpose and ideals, as well as your social status in comparison to others, a person might have an identity crisis at any age or stage in their life.

Erik Erikson, a developmental psychologist, developed the notion and introduced the word in his theory of psychosocial development. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development was significant in psychology from the mid to late twentieth century. According to Erikson, he and his colleagues came up with the phrase 'identity crisis ' in the 1940s to describe a specific form of psychopathology they encountered at their mental hospital. The word gained popularity and grew to apply to a wide range of existential disorders. Primarily, the term was employed to refer to the developmental challenges faced by 'normal' 'i.e., non-pathological' people (Erikson 17). Erickson's eight-stage theory of psychosocial development focuses on the various stages of a person's life, from birth to death, and the relationships we have with

others in each stage. People go through several phases as they evolve and change throughout their lives, according to Erikson. Everybody has a developmental conflict at each stage, which needs to be overcome to develop the stage's main virtue properly. Erikson was captivated by how connections and social interaction impact growth and development. Each stage involves what Erickson referred to as a crisis, which involves interactions with others. Through these interactions, we develop certain characteristics.

Erikson's theory outlines eight phases of development, from infancy to old age. In the infancy stage 'trust versus mistrust' (169), babies develop stable relationships with parents and the world, while mistrust may develop if care is not provided. Second, the 'Autonomy versus Shame' and Doubt (toddlerhood) stage; period occurs between the ages of 18 months and two or three years (Erikson 161). 'Initiative versus Guilt' early childhood stage This stage takes place throughout the preschool years. 'Industry versus Inferiority' is the fourth stage in Erik Erikson's theory, this stage occurs in childhood, when a child learns new talents, When they negotiate this period successfully, they feel valuable and gain a feeling of self-worth (McLeod). 'Identity versus Role' is the fifth stage of the theory (Erikson 175), This phase begins in adolescence, roughly between the ages of twelve and eighteen, when Adolescents investigate their freedom and form a sense of identity, and it's the most important stage in the individual's life, "We may, in fact, speak of the identity crisis as the psychosocial aspect of adolescence. Nor could this stage be passed without identity having found a form which will decisively determine later life" (Erikson 91). Physical growth, hormonal changes, and brain development are all characteristics of the period between teenage years and early adulthood. Adolescence is a period of self-discovery that includes physical appearance, preferences, career goals, social beliefs, passions, and relationships. According to Erickson's theory, identities develop through social relationships and experimentation as people take on new roles and behaviors.

'Intimacy versus isolation' is the sixth stage (186), the phase that occurs in early adulthood, roughly between the ages of nineteen and forty. At this point in life, the main source of conflict is establishing close, loving relationships with other individuals. Achieving this level of success results in satisfying relationships. On the other side, struggling at this point may make you feel alone and isolated, as Erikson said in his book *Identity Youth and Crises*:

He may settle for highly stereotyped interpersonal relations and come to retain a deep sense of isolation.. a man can go far, very far, in life and yet harbor a severe character problem doubly painful because he will never feel really himself, although everyone says he is somebody. (136)

By intimacy, what does Erikson mean? Although many people immediately identify the word 'intimacy' with 'sex', it actually refers to much more. Erikson defined connection, honesty, and love as the defining characteristics of intimate partnerships (McLeod). How do you define intimacy versus isolation? Intimacy necessitates a willingness to share certain aspects of oneself with others, as well as the capacity to listen to and support others. In these partnerships, both sides share you give of yourself, and others share with you as well. When this is accomplished, you acquire the support, intimacy, and company of another individual. However, things do not always go easily. You may receive denial or different reactions that drive you to retreat. It may undermine your confidence and self-esteem, making you careful of pushing yourself out there once again in the future.

The seventh stage, 'Generativity versus Stagnation' (Erikson 197), occurs in middle adulthood between the ages of forty and sixty-five. During this phase, individuals aim to build lasting things, raise children, and promote social change. They prioritize giving to society and benefiting future generations. Life events during this phase are less age-specific. The

important events that contribute to this stage (such as marriage, job, and childrearing) might occur at any time over the wide period of middle adulthood. Generativity means ‘making your mark’ on the world (McLeod), and Stagnation is defined as the inability to discover a method to contribute. People in a stagnant state could feel disengaged or detached from their surroundings or society at large (McLeod).

The eighth and last stage in Erik Erikson's stages theory is ‘integrity versus despair’. This stage begins at the age of sixty-five and concludes with death, and it is when one looks back on their life, they may determine whether they have ‘integrity’ or ‘despair’. Integrity is the feeling that life was well-lived, while despair is the regretting of decisions and wasted choices. “Despair expresses the feeling that time is short, too short for the attempt to start another life and to try out alternate roads to integrity” (Erikson 140). Integrity, often referred to as ego integrity, is the capacity of an individual to reflect on their life with a sense of satisfaction and achievement. On the side,

While many developmental theories focus just on childhood events, Erikson was one of the few scholars who examined development throughout the lifespan. At each stage of psychological development, humans experience a crisis that serves as a crucial period. Successfully resolving the crisis results in the development of a psychological virtue that promotes general psychological wellness.

The American scholar and psychologist Lori Lawrenz in her article What is an identity crisis? explains the meaning of an identity crisis and states the periods of identity crisis and how the expression In common use, went through significant changes from its original meaning, and it currently has two separate meanings. Saying that “ An identity crisis is a phase many people go through when they question or reassess who they are. A search for identity is common during the teenage years but people may also reassess their lives after a major life event, such

as retirement. (Lawrenz) Erikson's theory highlights that identity crises can occur in adulthood, not just during adolescence, as individuals face difficult situations. While Erikson's theory sheds light on the psychological and social factors that impact one's view of self, he raises larger existential questions that philosophers have dealt with, the philosophical principles of existentialism provide an additional viewpoint on the deeply human quest for identity and a purpose in life.

2. Mapping Existentialism; A Philosophical Investigation:

We have the freedom to act on anything we desire in what is thought to be a meaningless world and universe. That is the fundamental concept of existentialism, a philosophy that is more open-ended than most, resulting in more questions than solutions. What it is and is not. Existentialism began as a response against conventional philosophy and ideals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In rejecting the essentialism and rationality of previous philosophical schools, existentialists focused on the importance of personal experience. As Sartre says, "existence precedes essence" (Aho), meaning that behavior and personal experience instead of an inherent nature are how humans define themselves. Because of this emphasis on subjective experience, existentialists emphasize the individual's extreme freedom to choose and pursue their own meaning and purpose.

The central idea of existentialist philosophy is the term existence. It has a very specific meaning in this philosophy. Existence is especially used by the existentialist to refer to human existence. It is often believed that only a concrete thing may exist. This point of view is also supported by existentialists, who define mankind as a concrete being who has the ability to exist. According to existentialists, one must be able to recognize their own existence in order to be considered an existentialist. Man alone is capable of existing in this way. The term existence was originally employed in a religious biblical meaning by Kierkegaard, His

primary concern was the potential for human self-awareness, for him “Existentialism is a rejection of all purely abstract thinking, of a purely logical or scientific philosophy; in short, a rejection of the absoluteness of reason” (ROUBICZEK 10).

And existentialism can be interpreted as a historically contextual phenomenon that emerged in the context of the Second World War, the Nazi concentration camps, and the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs, where a generation was made to face the realities of life and the unsettling givens of freedom, death, and meaninglessness (Aho). The movement gained popularity primarily from French intellectuals like Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir,

2.1. Existentialism; From Essence to Existence:

According to a commonly recognized definition, 'Existentialism' is a philosophical position that prioritizes existence over essentiality. The dictionary defines existentialism as an existential philosophy. Existentialism focuses on the individual's unique experience. It is therefore seen as a theory of being. However, the issue occurs whether man's existence has an essence. Existentialism has been generally associated with the popular saying "existence comes before essence" by contemporary French existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre, which means that man has no predetermined essence other than that which it creates for oneself, Sartre expresses one's existence in the following way: “Man first is only afterwards is he this or that. Man must create for himself his own essence.” Or, even more clearly: ‘Man is not, but makes himself’. (ROUBICZEK 121), He argues that we create ourselves, rather than simply developing our identities via knowing our human nature. However, it seems obvious that our ability to choose concerning our fundamental nature is little more than our ability to choose over our existence; we behave like humans in all that we do. We may either grow, improve, and purify our own humanity or fail and nearly destroy it. However, no amount of effort can transform us.

According to Heidegger, people are "beings who always understand themselves in terms of possibilities" placed into a world they haven't chosen but are nevertheless capable of fundamentally redefining themselves and the world through choices. Existentialists consequently place the highest emphasis on the individual. Kierkegaard argues in "subjective truth", which emphasizes the individual's personal experience over theoretical understanding. Sartre, too, emphasizes the subjective nature of life and individuals' potential to change their own essentials (L. J. Evans).

Subjectivity, the idea that people are nothing until they become what they make of themselves, is one of existentialism's central principles. Since existence comes before essence, this idea supports freedom and a sense of self-mastery by making people responsible for their existence. Second, Disbelief in God; Man's freedom arises from the existentialists (also known as atheists) rejection of the existence of God. This is encapsulated in the statement made by one of the pioneers of existential writing, Fyodor Dostoevsky with his character saying "If God did not exist, everything would be permitted" (Aho), This serves as existentialism's foundation.

In addition, Sartre rejects certainty, which argues that there is no God or other force that can dictate or control a person's decisions, stated differently, man is either free or instead fated to be free. The word "fated" in this context means that although man hasn't created himself, he is still free to create or destroy himself, taking full responsibility for whatever he does. Third deliberate choice; Man has two contradictory kinds of freedom: 'freedom of choice' and 'choice of freedom' (Lukes). As a result, if a person is free, he will be able to choose, but he can make the correct decision, which frees him, or the wrong option, so bounds him yet again. As a result, individual's roles in the world are not prearranged, and each individual must make a decision. Therefore, choosing is the supreme assessor, and the process of making choices is

at the heart of true human existence, allowing man to become more aware of his unique existence. fourth; meaninglessness or nothingness, anxiety gives rise to something known as nothingness, therefore, the existence of humans seems to contradict all realities and to be an empty state of being, existential philosophy that addresses the essence of existence shifts between Being and nothingness, coming to the conclusion that nothingness is only through nothingness that One can be revealed, According to Heidegger, « Human existence cannot have a relationship with being unless it remains in the midst of nothingness »(Lukes). It's thought that man exists eternally in a state of suspended life between the two extremes of nothingness—before being born and after death.

As Sartre once said with complete nihilism "All existing beings are born for no reason, continue through weakness, and die by accident Man is a useless passion. It is meaningless that we are born; it is meaningless that we die". (ROUBICZEK 125). Thus, if God is absent, there is only this emptiness, which serves as the basic experience that man enters in which he appears to confront the essence of his existence, As Nietzsche stated, "Man without God will strive to become a god himself". (125)

We have also, the absurd; According to Sartre, the acceptance of nothingness gives rise to the idea of the absurd, which becomes a defining characteristic of existentialist. The absurd is essentially a condition of alienation from the outside world. Thus, Kierkegaard believed that the most meaningful way to experience life is to completely realize how absurd everything is. Realizing how absurd life makes it possible to go past all outside thinking and find the underlying reality. As Roubiczek said in his book *Existentialism for and Against*; "the irrational remains senseless; the essential foundations of human existence are invaded and made absurd" (165).

The existentialist understanding of the absurdity of existence raises important concerns regarding the meaning of death. If death is the ultimate affirmation of existence's absurd aspects, then life is ultimately pointless and illogical. This prompts existentialists to consider how human existence is framed by death's unavoidable nature. Knowing that time is limited has an effect on every aspect of the search for meaning and purpose, and Facing death makes life more authentic by focusing on the present moment rather than the future. But the absolute reality of death can also raise nihilistic anxiety and hopelessness about the nature of existence, and Existentialists have particular concerns with the issue of birth: why was I born into this specific age group, into a nation and family that I had no control over, and with a personality and set of abilities that I had to accept and of course the big issue of death as it is stated in Roubiczek's book: " there is the problem of death—why am I born to die? ". (161)

Sometimes, individuals seek to escape the sameness of everyday life, which can obscure the true nature of existence beneath banal concerns. His knowledge of this nothingness causes him to select the one inescapable choice available to him which is death, Kierkegaard argues that one's existence is a journey toward death, according to Him, death, is like birth, it's a fundamental truth. (Evans, et al)

Existentialist thinking sees the person as the primary source of meaning in an absurd irrational universe. With no essential truth or essence, humans have the complete freedom to form their own destinies and identities through the choices they make. This freedom comes with huge responsibilities and might cause anxiety. Meaning must be intentionally created by accepting life's absurdity and making brave, real choices. Personal experience takes priority over external norms and expectations. Despite living in a meaningless world, individuals maintain the ability to establish their own purpose and value. Therefore, existentialism emphasizes the individual's central role in creating meaning in the face of life's absurdity and

uncertainty. We build our inner being by confronting human challenges. This idea, which is both liberating and terrifying at the same time, has had a significant influence on modern philosophy and society. It argues that meaning is found within the subjective sphere of individual consciousness rather than in the outside world. Indeed, there are moments when life seems pointless, isn't it? Is there anything else? If we're going to die anyhow, what good is it all?

The existentialists directly addressed the question, Is this all there is? However, they went one step beyond. They declared that life is useless and the universe as a whole! Humans are not a part of any divine purpose or big purpose. They must create their own meaning as they are merely aware of their existence. This concept is both freeing and scary, and that's where the crazy part lies. Of course, it's unnerving to consider that life may all be an absurd joke. Freedom gives people the ability to choose their surroundings and ideals without being constrained by notions of fate or destiny. But with freedom also comes responsibility, since people have to make hard choices regarding their environment and ideals. Existentialists emphasize the importance of giving meaning to a world that may not always make sense and the idea that our identities are defined by the decisions we make rather than by a specific order of events. As Sartre once said "Existence comes before essence" (Aho)

Existentialism prioritizes the subjective experience of the individual. Developing on these ideas, individualist philosophy expanded the emphasis that existentialism placed on the individual. According to individualists, everyone should be in control of their own life and destiny as they are all the writers of their tales. Individuals should take precedence over collective groups, regardless of whether it is society, the nation, or even the family. Individualism adapted existentialism's embrace of subjective individual meaning to social and political ideals of individual rights and liberties. As existentialism looks to the individual's

search for meaning and authenticity in a chaotic world, the study of individuality becomes a logical step in understanding how personal identity and autonomy influence a person's view of the existential challenges of life.

3. Embracing Individualism; Philosophical Roots :

Individualism is a widely recognized matter in philosophy, social science, psychology, sociology, and organizational and leadership theories. The extent, fundamental terms, and analytical aspects of the meaning can differ significantly. The concept of individualism holds that a person's demands and rights take precedence over those of a collective group. According to Britannica Encyclopedia, "Individualism, is a political and social philosophy that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual" (Lukes).

Scholars and philosophers studied and debated Individualism, which dates back to the nineteenth century and it is believed to have caused the decline of Western culture through encouraging consumerism, selfishness, and social division. There are two sides to individualism. Many people think that early Christianity is where it all began in the West. When, Jesus showed that salvation is determined by the way you conduct your life, not by your tribe. God did not relate to groups of people but rather to individuals. and it is a perspective that prioritizes each person as an individual and not as a part of a community, It also highlights the value of freedom, individuality, and authority (Lukes). The individualist ideology, which has its roots in ancient Greece and made a comeback during the Enlightenment, has had a profound impact on the development of humanity. It rejects the view that a person's identity is determined by their social standing or societal responsibilities. In fact, it highlights each person's unique characteristics and their inherent worth. Individualists throughout history, including Aristotle and John Locke, argued that societies

may encourage creativity, advancement, and personal fulfillment if they acknowledge and value each person's liberty.

Individualism emphasizes freedom, allowing individuals to make decisions and pass judgment without fear of punishment. This emphasis touches on many areas of life, such as goals, beliefs, and freedom of expression and it also extends to the fields of politics and economics. Moreover, individualism honors and allows the power of the person. It inspires people to take responsibility for their choices, rely on their own judgments, and base decisions on their beliefs and interests. With the founding ideas of Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham, modern individualism developed in Britain, and Alexis de Tocqueville considered the idea as essential to the American essence. (Lukes)

There are different forms or types, each with its unique perspective on the role of the individual within society and the broader effects of human existence in areas like ethics, politics, metaphysics, and social science methodology that emphasize the priority of the individual over society or social forces. A popular type of individualism is ethical individualism, which highlights the moral autonomy and responsibility of the person in making ethical decisions.

This philosophy is closely linked to the thoughts of Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill, and it shows the value of individual freedom and self-determination. But why ethics? The French existential philosopher Albert Camus is quoted as saying, "A man without ethics is a wild beast loosed upon this world" (Bansal). This ethical approach defends the notion that people are responsible for the consequences of their decisions and have the freedom to choose their moral standards. Authenticity and integrity should guide moral decisions instead of social standards. Characters who face moral decisions and come to terms with their beliefs can be used in literature to illustrate ethical individuality. For example, Raskolnikov, the main character in Fyodor Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment", struggles with the consequences

of his actions and eventually has to confront his own beliefs. Another major type of individualism is political individualism, which emphasizes one's rights and liberties in the framework of government and society. This ideology is frequently connected with liberalism's principles, emphasizing the significance of limiting the state's authority in order to protect individual liberties. Philosophers like John Locke and Ayn Rand have been prominent supporters of political individualism (Steven).

As previously stated, this highlights the significance of individual rights, independence, and individuality in political decision-making. In the context of literature, it plays an important part in shaping characters, narratives, and themes. This concept is frequently addressed in literary works by portraying characters who reject societal norms, fight for personal liberty, or reject restrictive governmental institutions. Furthermore, the notion of political individuality connects with societal identity and diversity. Literature frequently examines the experiences of individuals from oppressed or minority groups and their fights for acceptance and equal rights within a democratic system.

There are existentialist and metaphysical forms of individualism in addition to ethical and political forms, as expressed by philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Friedrich Nietzsche who focus on the unique and subjective nature of human existence, while Metaphysical individualism centers on the notion that the individual soul or self is the fundamental reality of the universe, in other words, people are at the core of reality. as shown by René Descartes' and Ayn Rand's writings. Existential individualism can be found in literary works that explore characters' inner struggles and decisions as they try to find answers to the most important concerns of life, freedom, and authenticity (Steven).

Albert Camus' *The Stranger* is an example of such a concept. The protagonist's alienation and disengagement from societal norms are shown, emphasizing the person's search for purpose and meaning in an otherwise meaningless world. utilitarian egoism and the rationalism .

Émile Durkheim, a French sociologist, distinguished between two forms of individualism: the utilitarian egoism of Herbert Spencer, an English sociologist and philosopher, and the rationalism of Immanuel Kant, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which both had as their main proper the belief of free research (Lukes).

It has been said that individualism, which values liberty and self-determination, develops excessive self-interest. Collectivism emerged as an ideology that places a strong emphasis on human relationships and shared values, saying that people develop when they unite around common interests and a sense of identity. Collectivism views all people as interconnected parts of an organic social structure. This viewpoint criticizes the rise of individualist philosophy. In collectivism, sacrificing for the benefit of the collective is encouraged. Individualism encourages people to think about their own needs. Collectivism is the view that an individual ought to live based on the demands of the community. In contrast, individualism is a view that an individual must live due to their requirements instead of those of others.

While individualism promotes individual autonomy and rights, the concept of authenticity delves into what it means for a person to live an authentic life. While individualism concentrates on protecting personal freedoms, authenticity explores how each person should use their freedom to live authentically and reach their greatest potential. While individualists can support the notion that everyone has the freedom to select their course in life, authentic life philosophy looks at how to make such decisions in a morally responsible and sincere manner. While individualism offers a philosophical defense of personal autonomy, authenticity offers standards for identifying the types of free choices that are consistent with one's actual self. Authenticity might thus be understood as a counterbalance to individualism's political liberties, offering interior guidance and self-awareness.

4. The Pursuit of Authenticity :

Authenticity is a common term, however, it is not a well-defined concept, particularly in tourist literature. Its meaning is a confusing combination of intellectual, psychological, and philosophical components, reflecting its complex past. The difficulty increases in tourism since the word "authentic" is frequently employed in two different beliefs: authenticity as the genuine or realism of objects or events, and authenticity as a human trait indicating one's actual self or being true to one's essence. 'Authenticity' takes into account leading to a 'free' existence (Aho). Being authentic means accepting responsibility for the decisions we make about who we are and overcoming our circumstances to succeed in life.

In philosophy, the concept of authenticity refers to what makes a person's life truly meaningful and rewarding. Living authentically means being in line with one's actual self rather than submitting to external pressures or inauthentic wants. It entails self-awareness, autonomy, and sincerity - recognizing one's own values and objectives, managing one's own life, and living truthfully. Existentialist thinkers such as Sartre, Heidegger, and Kierkegaard explored the notion that people must choose to create meaning and purpose for themselves in an absurd and uncertain world. For existentialists, living authentically means understanding one's freedom to define oneself via genuine thinking and behaviors (Aho). More broadly, authenticity has been related to ethical principles and humanistic psychology, which argue that fulfillment comes from expressing one's unique qualities and relationships.

In existentialism, authenticity is a fundamental idea that highlights the significance of people being true to themselves and living according to their own values and beliefs. This idea is frequently explored in literary contexts through characters who struggle with the conflict between their own identity and society's expectations. Famous existentialist philosopher Sartre claims that authenticity is accepting complete responsibility for one's acts, decisions, and existence as well as realizing one's freedom (Aho). Literature frequently uses characters

who struggle with life's purpose and the sincerity of their decisions to illustrate this concept. For instance, Albert Camus's work "The Stranger" presents its protagonist, Meursault, as an example of an authentic person because of his disregard for social conventions and his solid commitment to his own principles despite rejection from others.

Over the course of the last forty years, the pursuit of authenticity has been a common subject in research on tourism. Nonetheless, authenticity has a far older history in existential philosophy, which has always been associated with feeling one's 'self'. However, the origin of authenticity in existential philosophy has only been acknowledged in tourist studies, and it is referred to as 'existential authenticity'. The authenticity of experienced things was the main emphasis of tourism study until an existential conception of authenticity centered on the self. according to its' description, Existential authenticity is connecting with one's inner being, understanding one's identity, and living accordingly. Existential authenticity requires a strong feeling of self-integration. Poststructuralism has questioned the possibility of a stable sense of self by discounting authenticity concerning the original (Aho).

The idea of existential authenticity become popular in numerous fields, and its goals and nature appear to be coherent and well-known. Heidegger's philosophy unifies the essential characteristics of authenticity and inauthenticity shared by numerous disciplines into a very clear philosophical structure that allows practical examination (Lukes).

5. Escapism in Travel Literature :

From epic adventures of discovery to personal stories of change, travel literature has always attracted readers with its combination of adventure, vivid description, and cross-cultural insights. Travel writing, as a genre, originates from the author's factual descriptions of journeys or pilgrimages, but it also employs creative literary methods to construct fascinating

stories. Travel writings take readers across borders and oceans, describing both exterior adventures through strange locations and inside voyages of the mind and spirit. Travel tales offer insights into less well-known places, people, and habits while reflecting on concepts of identity and belonging. The author's displacement as an immigrant or outsider leads to insights into cross-cultural contacts, which frequently results in deep personal change. Travel literature embodies the human yearning for self-discovery and adventure, whether it is by examining the mysteries, dangers, or absurdities of life on a journey. As a genre, it keeps evolving in this era of globalization and more interconnectedness coupled with changing cross-cultural connections and tastes.

Many travel novels are about getting away from everyday life. The author takes to the road in an attempt to escape their boring routine at home or to forget about their heavy troubles. The travel allows them to mix things up, Travel stories frequently present distant locations as exotic and daring, quite different from the author's everyday life. These foreign countries signify an escape from boredom or being stuck in a routine. the human yearning for exploration and self-awareness, whether it is by tackling the mysteries, dangers, or absurdities of life on the road. As a genre, it continues to change with changing cross-cultural connections and perceptions in an age of globalization and greater interconnection.

Some argue that escapist travel books just transfer the author's thoughts and desires onto other civilizations. The writer may romanticize or exaggerate the areas they visit. They're not realistically presenting them. However, for the writer, the voyage allows them to connect with a more true and freer version of themselves. They reflect differently while they are not at home. Escapism in travel literature is about both fleeing and running toward something - self-discovery, exhilaration, or wonder. The far-off places provide an escape from the inside as

well as the outside. The writer's contact with other persons and viewpoints influence their outlook. Travel puts people out of their comfort zone, providing them with fresh perspectives.

Conclusion :

To summarize everything, this chapter introduced existential philosophy, which also looked at the ideas of Soren Kierkegaard, Albert Camus, Martin Heidegger, and Jean-Paul Sartre. These philosophers looked at the chaos of life, the search for meaning in nothingness, and the conflict between moral principles. They also examined how individuals struggle with responsibility, freedom, and choice. These theoretical elements will be addressed in more detail in the next chapter. This chapter also examined the complexity of human identity and the psychoanalysis method, which includes Erik Erikson's theory of identity crises and Freudian psychoanalytic theories, which have expanded to include further humane characteristics. The existential philosophy and psychological approaches will be utilized to address Sal and Dean's quest for the self, and purpose through existential space and escapism.

**Chapter Two: The Quest for Self and
Freedom: A Contextual Study of 'On
The Road**

Introduction

Authors are said to often go above ordinary aspects of everyday life when composing a work of literature. Consequently, one key feature of current psychology ideas is the effort to use intensive research to focus on the subconscious of life as well as to characterize behavioral patterns and experiences. As a result, these additions are significant resources in describing the process of developing and maintaining a literary text.

There was a great deal of confusion and existential crises as a result of the postwar chaos. Individuals faced the difficult challenge of rebuilding their identity and meaning such as *On the Road*. This shared feeling of breakdown and alienation gave birth to literary postmodernism. Postmodern literature attempts to depict the sense of modern existence without coherence or obvious truths to guide one's life by employing separate narratives and dishonest realities. Jack Kerouac's book embodies the values of the Beat Generation. Kerouac's portrayal of different topics shows his rejection of the American culture. The characters are the roots of this rebellion; their pursuit of an alternative way of life is first shown in their actions. This chapter will look at the methods used by Jack Kerouac to convey opposition, escapism, resistance, and rebellion to pursue his desires. Sal's quest for identity, the theme of alienation in the story. In a second part, it will examine the character's sense of escapism. Finally, the chapter will cover the American atmosphere as well as rebellion in post-World War Two American Literature, against the institution, and how it's manifested through the novel.

1. Sal's Search For Identity :

In pursuing identity and purpose, men frequently have to challenge the values they were raised with. They may look at norms that other individuals have adopted or beliefs that older generations have established. This self-examination process makes individuals ask:

Which of these beliefs speak to who I am and what I stand for Have I just followed the crowd without thinking about what drives my own life From this nihilistic breakdown of believed truths, one can start building a more authentic identity and purpose by choosing values and principles that generate authentic personal meaning. Although challenging, breaking down the false identities that society creates gives each person the freedom to define a life that is true to their unique self.

Sal's quest for identity is interconnected with the existential issue of finding purpose and He struggles with searching for meaning and the passing of time in life. He once said; "What is that feeling when you're driving away from people and they recede on the plain till you see their specks dispersing? – it's the too-huge world vaulting us, and it's good-bye. But we lean forward to the next crazy venture beneath the skies" (Kerouac 92). When Sal Paradise first appears in *On the Road*, he seems to be experiencing an identity crisis, asking himself, Who am I? and What do I want to do with my life?, as a young writer who recently graduated from college, he is unsatisfied and disillusioned with the conventional path that has been set out for him.

Sal's desire to travel with Dean Moriarty might be viewed as an attempt to investigate their identities and new lifestyles. This desire for identity might be interpreted as an expression of Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory, particularly the stage of identity versus role confusion. Sal keeps asking himself questions such as, who I am, what I wants out of life, and how he fits into the world. As he said, "didn't know who I was... I wasn't scared; I was just somebody else, some stranger, and my whole life was a haunted life, the life of a ghost".And as it is known that Adolescence is a time when people struggle with identity issues and try to define who they are. Sal represents this time in the story as a young man. He is attempting to identify himself independently of societal norms, experimenting with several identities, and looking for his place in the world. Due to his interactions with many individuals and encounters with

different lifestyles, Sal's journey might be seen as an exploration of several roles and identities.

Sal's character also reveals existential psychological features. Existentialism focuses on the individual's search for meaning and purpose in life as mentioned in the first chapter in detail. Sal's restlessness and desire for freedom can be interpreted as a reaction to existential angst caused by confronting the inherent meaninglessness of existence. His constant desire for new encounters and experiences can be seen as an attempt to achieve personal importance and transcendence in a world that frequently appears absurd, chaotic, and lacking in purpose. Sal's journey might be viewed as a reflection of this existential search, as he struggles with issues of authenticity, alienation, and the fundamental absurdity of existence. As he wants to understand his true self by engaging in a variety of events and relationships, He seeks authentic connections and fulfilling experiences with others who share his beliefs and goals. Sal and Dean's friendship, for instance, exemplifies the pursuit of authenticity since they both aim to live life independently of social standards, "With the coming of Dean Moriarty began the part of my life you could call my life on the road".

He frequently feels cut off from the world, especially from the conformist culture he encounters. For example, when he visits his old friends in New York, he feels disconnected from their stable lives and seeks something greater. Due to this isolation, he seeks out a new route and discovers his feeling of belonging. Sal's quest for identity is connected to existentialist concepts throughout the narrative. He finds it difficult to respond to questions about his identity, purpose in life, and how to deal with life's challenges, Since he is trying to figure out who he is and where he fits in the world, his road trip takes on the symbolic meaning of a search for these existential concepts.

2. Sal and Dean as Escapists :

In the novel *On the Road*, Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty are both escapist characters in their ways. They exemplify the Beat Generation's philosophy of escapism and desire for independence. They escape because they are profoundly unhappy with the materialistic and conformist ideals that dominated post-World War II mainstream American culture. They each attempt to break free from the restrictions of societal norms and expectations, starting on the road of self-discovery and enlightenment. Sal longs for something more since he is unhappy with his ordinary life with his intellectual friends since he is a novelist; "all my New York friends were in the negative, nightmare position of putting down society and giving their tired bookish, or political or psychoanalytical reasons, but Dean just raced in society, eager for bread and love; he didn't care one way or the other" (Kerouac 07).

He feels restricted by his normal existence and seeks an escape from its boredom. Sal's difficulties as a novelist are an ideal illustration of his identity crisis. As a young author, he struggles with the tension between the demands of financial success and creative integrity. He finds himself caught between his desire to express his voice and the necessity to meet the expectations of the literary elite. His desire to escape the restrictions of conventional literary circles and discover a more genuine form of expression is driven by this internal conflict.

His choice to go with Dean symbolizes his ambition to explore the unknown and rebel against societal norms. Sal looks outside the box of conventional living for meaning and purpose through their trips. Dean, on the other hand, represents a more severe version of escapism. He is constantly on the road, looking for new adventures and pleasures. Dean's reckless attitude and disrespect for cultural rules reflect his desire to escape the restrictions of a traditional existence. He is always looking for excitement, adventure, and a sense of liberation, which he feels can only be found on the road. Both of them use their travels as an escape from the responsibilities and limitations of their everyday lives. They reject the idea of settling down

and following social norms for the sake of living a nomadic lifestyle. They expect their escape to offer them a sense of authenticity, self-discovery, and personal fulfillment.

A feeling of alienation or frustration with the dominant society's norms and expectations frequently gives rise to identity crises and existential angst. To settle his existential dilemma, Sal travels to numerous cultures and countries, hoping to experience the basic truth of individuals who differ from him. He desires to create unreal universes because of a desire to escape from a reality that is viewed as foreign rather than something that humans are responsible for making. Sal finds that being on the road allows him to escape both existentialist despair and the middle-class ideals of his current society. While Sal's journey on the road symbolizes his attempt to find answers to his existential search, his escape on the road also represents his physical anxiety. He overvalues these spatial existences, which affects the balance of his environment and makes him more unhappy with his lifestyle. Sal Paradise idealizes other people's lives in a desire to achieve authenticity.

Sal's temporal as well as spatial behavior is influenced by this idealized route persuasively because it changes the way he maps out the other physical surroundings that he tries to take in. Sal wants to travel to a new and authentic place after years of living in a single city. He wants to escape the harsh conditions of his daily existence in New York and find a new path that isn't necessarily straightforward but instead is determined by factors like physical distance, safety, the least amount of work, and the maximum experience and knowledge.

a. Isolation and Exploration :

The protagonists separate themselves from the rest of society, which adds to their escapism. Their nomad lifestyle breaks the expectations of society at large, as they refuse conventional occupations and obligations. Because of their isolated existence, they are able to

live on the outside edges of society without being subject to the demands and obligations of a home of their own. Moreover, there is a strong connection between Sal and Dean's exploration and their escape. In their pursuit of meaning and self-discovery, they look for fresh encounters, locations, and people.

They can discover many cultures, viewpoints, and lifestyles because they embrace the open road and reject social norms. By doing this, they question the standards and principles of their time as well as the way things are. Beyond simply running from responsibilities and going on adventures, Sal and Dean's escapism is a deep search for authenticity and personal freedom.

In addition to permitting them to escape the routine and conformity of daily life, their isolation and exploration allow them to go deeper into their psyches and the complexity of human existence, as mentioned earlier in the first chapter; Sigmund Freud, human personality is complex and consists of several components. In his known psychoanalytic theory, Freud believes that personality is made up of three components: the id, the ego, and the superego. These factors combine to produce complex human actions.

They come across a wide range of people and involve themselves in various subcultures as they travel across America, and every encounter deepens their understanding of both the outside world and themselves. " I shambled after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me because the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing" (Kerouac 06). Their isolation from society allowed them to think deeply and face their fears and desires. leading to a struggle with identity and internal conflicts.

2.2. Sal's Alienation :

The conflict that existed in America after the war between the person and the society he lived in is reflected in the novel. Because of the conformity that accompanied WWII,

individualism ruled the country in the years that followed. Kerouac led the rebellion and spread this concept through the characters in *On the Road*, individualism is expressed by the idea of having a free existence in which each person creates his or her principles and rules that satisfies their search for freedom. The protagonist's main concern is following his mind, which opposes standards and the middle-class lifestyle of post-war America.

Sal Paradise in *On the Road* feels such a deep sense of alienation that it encourages a lot of his anxiety and need to get outside the boundaries of traditional society. His early sense of alienation toward his working-class, as a child showed his inability to become a traditional worker. Sal, a writer, and his unsuccessful writing experience and how he feels rejected from the literary world. His attraction is "the mad ones"; "... I shambled after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me because the only people for me are the mad ones who reject the norms of society" (Kerouac 06). Sal feels deeply cut off from humanity as a whole, to the point of existential alienation as he stated; "What is that feeling when you're driving away from people and they recede on the plain till you see their specks dispersing? - it's the too-huge world vaulting us, and it's good-bye" (Kerouac 92). Sal's deep alienation from his roots, the literary world, society, and human existence as a whole are all factors that lead to his never-ending anxiety and his need to travel without stopping in quest of freedom, meaning, authentic existence, and the self.

3. **Rebellion :**

Not only are rebellion and youth central themes in *On the Road*, but they are also prevalent in a lot of post-World War II American and European cultures. Examining the actions and intentions of the characters in *On the Road* makes this fact clear. Dean Moriarty, the character in the novel, is the most notable example of rebellion. All of his behavior is a protest against any kind of social order that would restrict someone's ability to express themselves freely. Dean is a very chaotic rebel who is always on watch for begins and shows

unpredictable actions. It's also interesting to think about the logic behind this. Dean's type of rebellion is escapist in that he chooses to flee from his problems rather than being forced to deal with the issues and consequences of his environment. Dean is blind to his lack of self-control and direction as he runs forward into the journey of self-discovery. He longs to reach the highest level of existence or complete freedom. In addition to acting as a warning about the risks of this way of thinking, Dean is an exaggerated embodiment of the rebellious spirit of the era.

The characters engage in a variety of illegal activities throughout the narrative, such as fighting, stealing, and abusing drugs and alcohol. Because deviation is a means of rejecting accepted cultural norms, this is another example of rebellion against the norm. It is a means of expressing that we won't follow your moral guidance and will follow our path. The deviation serves as an illustration of the characters' rejection of society at large and their continued escape from it. It could be argued that these unusual actions caused them to become rejected by society. However, this is also precisely what the characters wanted to achieve. They were not happy with anything less because they had come to appreciate what they considered to be true freedom.

The rebellious spirit of the Beat movement is embodied by the characters in *On the Road*, especially Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty "an American social and literary movement originating in the 1950s" (Lukes). During the 1960s, significant youth movements gained popularity. It's the time when teenagers and young adults start to play a significant role in society and take on extremely unique mindsets, ideas, philosophies, styles of dress, and musical tastes. Music, TV, movies, and fashion are all influenced by these role models. The most significant youth movements in Europe and America were the existentialists, who emerged right after WWII, is the Beat Generation movement. Their rejection of consumerism, family life, and traditional occupations stands in juxtaposition to the conformist ideals of the

majority of post-World War II American society. They rebel against the banality and limitations of social norms by embracing spontaneity, nonconformity, and unconventional artistic expression. The Beat characters' choice to go on the open road to pursue their freedom and authenticity represents a larger rejection of the boundaries and duties placed on them by society at large.

Mobility took on a new significance for the Beats in addition to rejecting society; it turned into a struggle against the standards of 1950s society and the middle-class American family. In his writing, Jack Kerouac shows the way the American way of life of the time made them stick to specific norms and habits that each society member is expected to show. For the Beats, those acts are nothing more than barriers that harm their individuality and freedom, but for the vast majority of people, they appeared to be accepted standards for leading an ordinary life. Therefore, as Sal states, mobility is their response to any social standards: “This is the story of America. Everybody’s doing what they think they're supposed to do. So what if a bunch of men talk in loud voices and drink the night?” (Kerouac 42).

Sal uses speaking out loud and excessive drinking as examples of how he is interested in breaking American standards to convey his idea of rejection. In this situation, Sal decides to travel the entire nation with his friends in protest. The Beat's mobility is due to several factors. Their experiences with feeling rejected and neglected by society led them to flee into loneliness, as shown by Sal's conversation with his friend Dean: “I told Dean I was sorry he had nobody in the world to believe in him” (Kerouac 125). In various circumstances, they are disrespected by others, and Kerouac portrays the pressures the Beat Generation faced as a part of society. They failed their feeling of identity. Therefore, mobility serves as their means of escaping into freedom. They no longer felt like they belonged in the community, but they used it as an exciting escape, acting as if they could go anywhere, as Sal stated :

I shambled after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me, because the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes «Awww!» (Kerouac 06).

As stated earlier, mobility was the means of rebellion in the novel, in this passage, critic Cresswell claims that: "Mobility is a central theme in North American culture yet, in *On the Road*, Kerouac clearly uses it in a resistant fashion" (253). The protagonists' journey is unique, with a focus on happiness and liberty. However, the West is seen as their only chance for fulfillment, as Sal claims: "I was halfway across America, at the dividing line between the East of my youth and the West of my future" (Kerouac 12).

According to critic Creswell, Kerouac employs mobility as a means of identity quest; "On the one hand the frantic directionless mobility of the central figures in *On the Road* represents a form of resistance to the 'establishment'. On the other hand mobility is clearly a central theme in mainstream North American culture" (249).

This countercultural philosophy emerged in the Beat movement, of which Sal and Dean are members. Their rebellion toward materialism, norms, and conformity symbolized a larger cultural shift. They questioned the dominant ideals of the time and sought an alternative way of life that valued experiences and self-expression over material possessions and a life free from social norms. In his book, Jack Kerouac explored what it meant to live free from conventional and social pressures. He also aimed to inspire Americans to reject middle-class lifestyles and develop their critical thinking skills.

3.1. Rebellion in Post-WW II American Literature :

America saw a period of profound social and cultural transformation following World War II. Growing frustration and anxiety began to grow during the postwar era, particularly among young people, as the country experienced economic success and technological advancements. The Beat Generation, An anti-traditional literary movement emerged as a result of the dissatisfaction with the dominant standards and values of the era.

The rebellion depicted in *On the Road* was more than just rejecting social conventions; it was a deeper search for self-discovery, authenticity, and freedom. Sal and Dean's cross-country journeys represented their desire for adventure and disagreed with the monotony of everyday life, but they also desired something more than the materialistic American Dream.

The post-World War II American literary rebellion, best exemplified by novels such as Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, was a complex reaction against the social norms and conformist ideals that ruled the time (Tandon). This rebellion took many different forms, each one expressing a profound dissatisfaction with the materialism, boredom, and lack of authenticity that characterized mainstream American culture at the time.

Instead of rejecting authority, this era's rebellion was motivated by a need for authenticity, freedom of expression, and a more meaningful life. The young people who grew up after the Second World War fell from the ordinary career paths that their parents had taken, which included owning a home, working in an office, and gathering wealth. They believed that achieving wealth and expressing social status symbols was meaningless and empty after witnessing the destruction and chaos of the war years. They wanted something more authentic, satisfying on an emotional and spiritual level, and that connected to the essence and pure nature of the existence of humans. A specific way that younger people showed their search for authenticity was by rejecting the conventional symbols of success, such as a new car every year and a white picket fence the American dream. People who lived unusual lives, such as the Beat writers, gave up on legal occupations, threw off their suits and ties, and

welcomed poverty, travel, language exploration, psychoactive drugs, and sexual freedom. Their way of living was a protest against the superficial social statuses that older people had forced on them. As Sal says to his friend: “everybody in America is a natural-born thief” (Kerouac 44). He believes in this, so there is nothing wrong with his stealing since he steals to live, existing without thinking about morals is an act of rebellion in the novel as all the Beat Generation members see it as a freedom of expression and their philosophy. talking about philosophy, the Beat Generation was called the American existentialists of their time since they conveyed their thinking and their rules in existing, as mentioned in the first chapter about the ideas of existentialists like Sartre, Kierkegaard, and others, beat members adopted the same philosophy to prove themselves in an absurd society, an empty culture in their thinking. As critic Antonio stated in his article “ Existentialism, jazz, and the Beat Generation”; “the first great European youth movement, the existentialist one, born immediately after World War II, and the first American youth movement, that of the Beat Generation” (Lisa 01).

3.2 Rebellion Against the Institution :

The literary works written by these authors historically forced oneself regarding an unwarranted feeling of belonging that was created in the United States during the period known as the Cold War and its collapse in Korea. According to a literary perspective, the Beat movement was acknowledged as an emerging aesthetic shift that elevated themes of the discovery of one's independence through feeling, occasionality, exotic spirituality, use of drugs, and creation of a poetic standard in the early years of the 1960s. They proposed works characterized by being spontaneous in shape as well as free in style and prose. By connecting out, these authors created satire, biographies, political manifestos, spontaneous writing, autobiographies, philosophical plays, pure poetics, and oral prose.

Sal originally set out on the traditional way of trying to get published and become well-known in the literary world in order to fulfill his dream of becoming a successful writer. But the more

he attempted to follow that establishment's standards, the more upset he got. He felt that the system only supported writers who followed popular tastes rather than remaining faithful to their original artistic voice after being rejected by publishers. While a part of him continued to seek the support of the literary elite, Sal was inspired by the Beat writers in San Francisco when he became friends with them because they went against social norms and lived unconventional lives while creating innovative art. He understood that the created artistic institutions were all about molding creative work to fit capitalist, making money motives instead of encouraging pure self-expression.

Sal thus came to the conclusion that he had no place in that world. The professional writer's path was not something he could see himself pursuing. Being molded and wrapped by the literary machinery into a product that can be sold. It disagreed with everything that his free-spirited personality was for. Sal broke away from the strict literary establishment by moving toward the Beat counterculture, which allowed him to explore his art in a rebellious way.

His dissatisfaction with the literary establishment and his search for an authentic means of creative thinking are two significant examples of Sal Paradise's rebellion against institutions in *On the Road*. His struggles as a young author seeking to discover his unique voice in the face of conformity and materialism illustrate this, as he says ;

Yes, and it wasn't only because I was a writer and needed new experiences that I wanted to know Dean more, and because my life hanging around the campus had reached the completion of its cycle and was stultified, but because, somehow, in spite of our difference in character, he reminded me of some long-lost brother (Kerouac 07).

Sal's rejection of the literary establishment and desire to grow his own identity exemplifies a rebellion against the conventional publishing industry's rules. He wants a form of expression that would allow him to completely develop his artistic abilities, without the boundaries of society and the needs of the economic system. Sal's relationships with the Beat writers and

artists in San Francisco serve as another example of his rebellion against the institution. Their rebellious ways of living match his artistic pursuits and his desire for independence and liberty of expression. Sal, though, feels alienated and outsider at first.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, the purpose of this chapter was to examine the ways in which Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* embodies existential thinking. It is therefore certain to ask questions about the social consciousness of the 1950s in the setting of World War II trauma when introducing Sal's identity quest and his unstable behavior, which started when he abandoned his writing career. Moving to his rebellion against dominant authorities and the American culture. Sal's reckless behavior reflects his progressive rejection of all of the values he has learned. He claims to have intentionally chosen the path of isolation, idealizing the people he meets along the way in the belief that this will lead him to the answers he is looking for. However, he failed to seek his values, leaving him stuck and uncertain whether he was doing the right thing or not, and how this would end, which eventually harmed his mental health and was harmful to his personality.

In the process of creating a unique literary vocabulary and style, the Beat Generation's leader Jack Kerouac included elements of his rebellion into his novel, making it an original literary resistance. His informal writing techniques serve as a means for expressing his rebellious spirit against the poets of his era, challenging not just the American society during the 1950s era but also the standards of writing concerning the literary world of the era.

**Chapter Three: Aesthetics and Poetics
in *On The Road*.**

Introduction :

A story is a narrative regardless of the format it can be prose, poetry, or any other form. The development of the plot is what keeps any narrative moving forward. However, the author's use of narrative techniques shapes the way those events are portrayed and understood by the reader. Writers employ narrative strategies to develop and transmit their stories in particular ways and skills to achieve their goals. This involves choices regarding the narrative order, the writer's point of view, characterization, style of writing, and a lot more. The specific set of techniques an author chooses has a big impact on how the story develops, what details are highlighted or hidden, and finally, how the reader interprets the story. Kerouac applied different narrative strategies in his novel *On the Road*.

1. Narrative Strategies :

1.1 Stream-of-Consciousness:

A writer using the stream-of-consciousness approach wants to portray all of the evolution of a character's feelings and ideas as they occur, It aims to represent the unclear, haphazard, subconscious mind moving from one thought or memory to another in a mental discourse.

Because thoughts do not always go coherently in our heads, this type of writing frequently lacks clear organization. Instead of detailing the outside environment, the emphasis is on expressing the character's inner psychological and emotional state. It provides a direct view into their mind's adopting stream of consciousness.

Jack Kerouac, a beat writer, is well known for his stream-of-consciousness writing style, which is best illustrated in his novel *On the Road*. Throughout his seven-year revision and editing process, he wrote down the ideas in notebooks on the road. In just three weeks, the initial work had been written in a very 'stream of consciousness' style. There wasn't much

planning, which makes sense when you're working to publish a 120-foot scroll, but editing was still necessary. Kerouac showed the character's inner space by using a lot of stream of consciousness.

One of the most significant examples is in the first paragraph, in the opening sentence, Without a traditional introduction, Kerouac gets the reader into Sal Paradise's inner talk. This introduces the spontaneous, free-form narrative style of the book. without giving any context, dives straight into Sal's inner voice :

I first met Dean not long after my wife and I split up. I had just gotten over a serious illness that I won't bother to talk about, except that it had something to do with the miserably weary split-up and my feeling that everything was dead (01).

Kerouac remains in this stream-of-consciousness style as the narrative develops and Sal sets out on his cross-country journey. his ideas, which are spontaneous and frequently chaotic. As an illustration of this, he was describing his absurd life: “the raggedy madness and riot of our actual lives, our actual night, the hell of it, the senseless nightmare road. All of it inside endless and beginningless emptiness” (147) . The narrator's stream of consciousness brings the reader into the story as he discusses the chaotic aspects of his life as well as the strong feeling of emptiness.

Sal is depicted as having several inner talks and wild interactions. For example, when Sal is with Dean, he shows some of his inner voice. He expresses feelings of admiration and excitement for Dean's uncontrolled and wild behavior when they are together. Sal's inner voice in this situation is evident in lines such as ;

as Dean had, in his stresses. And in his excited way of speaking I heard again the voices of old companions and brothers under the bridge, among the motorcycles, along

the wash-lined neighborhood and drowsy doorsteps of afternoon where boys played guitars while their older brothers worked in the mills (Kerouac 07).

Meeting women along the journey is another manifestation of Sal's inner voice. Sal's inside conversation is often filled with sexual desire and ambition in these kinds of situations, she was absolutely and finally the most beautiful girl Dean and I ever saw in all our lives (122).

Kerouac offers a natural view into Sal's mind with these fragmented inner monologues about women. Just as these events take over Sal's thoughts, Kerouac's stream of consciousness also shows the portrayal of, women in the novel and during the era. emphasizing the view that women are only items of sexual acts "golden beauty" (153), or more than that when Sal describes a girl as 'a big, "sexy brunette" (143). In addition, Sal seems to give priority to physical characteristics over all other qualities, even while discussing important female characters like Marylou. Also, when a description of a female does not focus on her physical qualities, it typically emphasizes her lack of knowledge; "dumb girl" (150) or "she was awfully dumb" (08).

In this case, Kerouac used his stream-of-consciousness writing style as a tool to depict the true status of women at that time. The female is limited to supporting roles, in contrast to the male characters who unite through adventures and real comprehension and give support to one another (Birkin 01).

Through his creative application of stream-of-consciousness, Kerouac can effectively portray Sal's chaotic, absurd existential crises and inner conflicts in *On the Road*. while he struggles with feelings of alienation on his journey. As an illustration: With a free form of a stream of consciousness, Kerouac created a writing style that at last let a generation facing new levels of alienation, dissatisfaction, and mental philosophical anxiety in post-World War Two America finally express their chaotic, confused inner lives.

2. Autofiction :

A literary genre known as autofiction, or autobiographical fiction, blends parts from fiction and autobiography. It also shares characteristics with the bildungsroman writing style. Autofiction combines fictional information, personalities, and actions with facts from the author's own life. Autofiction frequently has the same move as a first-person story that has been presented. There may be moments when the reader is unable to distinguish between fiction and reality, which causes the story to seem unstable.

On the Road by Jack Kerouac is one example of a fictional work that goes toward autofiction. While autobiographical themes can be found in almost every one of Jack Kerouac's major works, the novel *On the Road* presents itself as a fictionalized account of Sal Paradise's road experience. Kerouac successfully escapes the limitations of the autobiographical narrator's position by analyzing the events of his life as fictional and taking his events with Neal Cassady above their historical context.

To create a natural and real narrative, Jack Kerouac uses an autofictional writing technique, that draws heavily from his own experiences as well as those of his Beat Generation colleagues.

3. Jack Kerouac's Writing Style :

The new writing movement, particularly Kerouac's emphasis on free-form prose, was not regarded as an acceptable writing genre. What kind of writing is it? What has made it so controversial in the eyes of critics, and what components does it contain?

Spontaneous prose was a technique developed by Jack Kerouac, in which he wrote without stopping to edit or control himself. Because of this, he was able to convey the characters' thoughts and experiences, which reflected the Beat philosophy of accepting life's chaos and living in the moment at all times. "I had nothing to offer anybody except my confusion" (Kerouac 74). Because of the stream-of-consciousness writing style, the reader finds

themselves drawn into the character's existential journeys and feels a sense of closeness and authenticity.

On the Road is known for its vivid narratives and stream-of-consciousness storytelling. He is well known for his free-form, spontaneous writing. Rich with poetic and vivid descriptions, the writing style takes the reader to the varied landscapes that Sal Paradise and his friends saw while traveling across America. Through the use of stream-of-consciousness narration as mentioned in the previous title, Kerouac gives the reader a close and deep look into Sal's encounters and inner world. One could argue that Kerouac's writing in *On the Road* is a reflection of the Beat Generation's rejection of conventional social norms and their quest for individual freedom and search.

In fact, Kerouac's writing style might have a more important role than the story's plot. The sentences frequently lack punctuation, reflecting the character's disorganized and mobile chaotic lifestyle. The rapid flow and informal language of the phrases, and his use of contractions "e.g. they're and not they are".

Jack Kerouac invented a new poetic, free-form language style with *On the Road*. His writing is full of slang, and vivid, spontaneous metaphors that come directly out of his subconscious. His use of informal terms and slang gave his writing an alive, almost lyrical quality. His language sounds free and informal, like something friends might say, rather than proper and formal. For instance, saying something like "tremendous Mexican wail" to describe the night sky is not how most people would describe it, but it still paints a vivid picture in a unique, jazz style.

Kerouac also enjoyed combining sophisticated poetic language with everyday language in a single sentence. Therefore, he may use the unsophisticated word "shambled" to say something simple like, "I shambled after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me" (06) or "he was a young jailkid shrouded in mystery" (01), when he mixed formal with informal language. Then again, he might come up with an absurd new term like 'dingledodies' to refer

to people who have become disoriented down the street; “But then they danced down the streets like dingedodies” (06). The urban dictionary gives it the explanation; (dingledodiesis, a word invented by Jack Kerouac to describe ‘the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved...).

His use of a combination of high and low vocabulary gives his writing an aesthetic that is both founded and creative or artistic. Kerouac had a real talent for reflecting the colorful dialect and slang of the Beat movement, Phrases like; “But Dean hustled around town”.In addition, the book delves into the idea of living in the present moment, incorporating Eastern philosophical ideas into the protagonists' interactions. instant by instant. He seeks his audience to understand what it's like for people who are *On the Road* that is, to continually and wildly go from a particular location, emotions, and experience to what comes next.

The writing style of Jack Kerouac in *On the Road* has drawn both appreciation and criticism. Although some readers value his direct storytelling style, others have raised concerns about his ability to write, accusing him of writing absurd prose or not having a well-organized plot. Professors Melehy and Douglas find great value in his work, as stated in the Beacon magazine; millions of the audience agree with them. When writing *On the Road*, Jack Kerouac was an achieved writer. He had devoted years to mastering techniques for writing, including character illustration, setting design, and event sequence analysis. To create the story of *On the Road*, he settled on his skill, experience, and emotions. He not just created grammatically sound sentences, but he also put the story's events in a clear and logical sequence.

All things considered, *On the Road* is regarded as a major piece of American literature, notable for its influence on society and its unique storytelling approach that continually causes debates and various viewpoints from both readers as well as critics.

Kerouac's ability to effectively convey the existentialist themes and viewpoints that characterized the Beat Generation depended strongly on his creative use of language. The combination of his free-form, rhythmic prose, and figurative language, transports the reader into the character's quest for transcendence, authenticity, and freedom.

3.1. Symbolism :

Kerouac has been linked with founding the Beat Movement or the generation known as the Beats. Kerouac is recognized as a well-known writer because of his free style of writing and the topics and themes he tackles in his writings, including jazz music, and sexual liberation. Buddhism, addiction to drugs, insecurity, and traveling. Among the writers who were part of the Beat Movement, Jack Kerouac had the greatest impact.

In Jack Kerouac's influential book *On the Road*, symbolism is essential to sharing the Beat Generation's existentialist ideas and viewpoints.

1. The Road :

A significant symbol in the book, the road, stands for the characters' anxious pursuit of liberation, purpose, and spiritual encounters. The open road represents an opportunity for freedom an escapism from the restraints of traditional society as a whole that allows the characters to follow their interests and discover the broadness of the American continent. And is a symbol of a fresh start, and with it, hope for the future. Searching for and taking advantage of an alternative way of life is their only option if they cannot find the real purpose in the standard life. In their quest to discover authentic purpose in life, they need to step into an unfamiliar world. Even so, they are unsure of what will occur on the road that awaits them, They have no other resources except unclear hope. That's the reason it inspires excitement and hope in others.

The road plays a major role in Sal and Dean's existence, as the book's title indicates. For the protagonists, the road stands for independence. They desire to be more mobile, experience

their happiest times when traveling, and make new friends along the way. During their journey, Dean and Sal gain a deeper understanding of both the world and their existence. In addition to traveling on actual, physical paths, they additionally travel through stages of development and education. The road may even represent the essence of life, which is sometimes viewed as the greatest adventure. Typically, a road is considered a helpful means of transportation. But for Sal and Dean, the journey itself, the road, is always more significant than the final destination, as Sal said when he met with Dean after a long time; "With the coming of Dean Moriarty began the part of my life you could call my life on the road" (Kerouac 01). For them, the road is the destination; the journey matters rather than the destination.

2. Drugs and Alcohol Addiction :

The protagonists' heavy alcohol and drug usage is a symbolic means of escaping the difficult circumstances of their lives and the existential anxiety they feel. These drugs stand in for the characters' seeking to reach higher levels of consciousness and infinite experiences, which is clear with the Beat Generation's quest for the sublime and spirituality. The characters' dependence on these drugs, though, also emphasizes their failure to find true happiness via only physical or psychological means.

3. Jazz Music :

Throughout the book, jazz music serves as a frequent symbol of the protagonists' desires for creative thinking, spontaneity, and an unfiltered, pure connection to their current moment. The protagonists' own anxious, chaotic movements and rejection of traditional social structures are mirrored by the expressive, spontaneous nature of jazz. The characters' existentialist viewpoint, which emphasizes individual expression and the pursuit of profound, life-changing experiences, is expressed through the music. Readers are encouraged to interact with Kerouac's *On the Road* through a number of symbols, which explore themes of

authenticity, freedom, and the pursuit of meaning in a commonly chaotic and meaningless world. By acting as signs for the characters' existentialist journeys, these symbols inspire readers to reflect on the importance and value of their own decisions and experiences. So The unpredictable, rebellious, and spontaneous energy that defines the Beat Generation is embodied in jazz music.

4. The West :

The West represents the possibility of fresh starts, exploration, and the quest for personal satisfaction. Besides only being a geographical context, the West reflects ideas of liberation, rebellion, self-discovery, and the quest for enlightenment. In the book, the West represents: the search for purpose and identity, the protagonists' quest to find their actual identities and escape social norms is seen in their trip to the West, which represents a quest for a sense of self and meaning. The protagonists' inner journey and search for purpose in life are symbolized by the vastness of the West. second, Rebellion's Spirit of the West is seen as a symbol of rebellion. The protagonists reject traditional norms and adopt a more uncommon, liberal way of life by moving west. The road to the American West transforms into exploring liberty and individuality. Third, freedom and escape The West is a metaphor for a place of freedom and escape where the characters can leave behind the limits of their culture and societal norms. It represents a place of opportunity and promise where people are free to re-create themselves and follow their desires. Another significance of the West is an idealized view of the United States, a romanticized view of America as a place of chances, adventures, and discovering oneself is reflected in the protagonist's trip to the West. It also represents the possibility of a new beginning and the possibility of human development and evolution.

3.2. Jack Kerouac's Portrayal of Sal Paradise versus Dean Moriarty :

1. Sal Paradise :

A fictional character of Jack Kerouac, Sal Paradise is the book's protagonist and narrator. Sal is portrayed as an ambitious writer who lives on the outer edges of society, qualities that are common to the picaresque hero. Sal still has a different perspective on life than the typical Picaro since he believes that "everyone and everything he meets" has a mystical touch.

Sal's road trip is motivated by his desire to travel and experience new things while he tries to break free from the norms of society. He goes on several cross-country journeys with his friend Dean Moriarty because he becomes obsessed with his wild, carefree personality. However, Sal also struggles with unhappiness; he is always searching for the "IT" but has never truly found contentment. Sal's viewpoint is more deep and sad. He captures the heart of his experiences by seeing things and feeling them. His words generally explore his feelings and thoughts in an analytical manner. Kerouac creates an attitude of self-reflection and critical thinking in his story as Sal struggles with existential problems. Sal begins to discuss existential issues in his speech, thinking about the absurdity of life, the brief existence of his life, and the pursuit of authenticity.

Kerouac uses a psychological vocabulary to examine Sal's psychology. The story takes an analytical turn as it looks into Sal's desires, anxieties, and inner struggles. To summarise, Kerouac effectively modifies the writing style and terms to reflect Sal's personal development. Sal's trauma and identity issues in the narrative of *On the Road* via existential ideas, psychological research, and lyrical language.

2. Dean Moriarty :

Dean Moriarty, on the other hand, is portrayed as the personification of the Beat Generation's philosophy; he is a "mad" and "wild" man who enjoys drugs, sex, and limitless travel but lives in the moment. Sal is profoundly influenced by Dean's excitement and carelessness, which

acts as an encouragement for his restless travels. Kerouac uses a stream-of-consciousness approach to represent Dean. His words appear to come out of him constantly, which is indicative of his excited and restless personality. Dean speaks often in long, incoherent words and sentences that reflect his inner conflict and chaos and he also uses a vibrant vocabulary that is full of slang, philosophical reflections, and vivid imagery. It's clear from his speeches that he can't stay in one location for very long and is always ready to leave. Dean blends slang language, jazz, and street poetry. For instance, Dean uses the word "Kicks" to describe the excitement and adventures "Dig" means to comprehend or value something "Bop" refers to jazz in the context of music.

In conclusion, Kerouac's unique writing style facilitates character development. The story becomes complex and dynamic, embodying the spirit of the Beat Generation, as Sal's analytical comprehension contrasts with Dean's restless nature and stressed speech.

4. Intertextuality:

Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* gains a great deal from intertextuality, which gives it extra meaning, allusions, and connections to other texts and cultural contexts. Intertextuality is a means of adding references, links, and comparisons to other texts that strengthen a text's meaning and provide extra detail and complexity. When a text includes intertextual elements, it becomes part of a larger literary and cultural conversation and helps readers understand the text better by using what they are familiar with about other works. Intertextuality can improve the way readers interact with the text by providing additional meaning, symbolism, and context in addition to details about themes, characters, and narrative frameworks that aren't always obvious to readers.

1- References to Philosophers and Literary Characters :

Connections to a variety of literary, historical, and cultural figures can be found throughout the book, which reflects the Beat Generation's cultural context as well as the

characters' intellectual pursuits. These involve connections to philosophers such as Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Arthur Schopenhauer (litdevices), as well as the existential philosophers. In addition to the links to Sherlock Holmes the character of Dean, gives the book a deeper cultural and intellectual background.

2- References to Romantics and The Lost Generation :

"*On the Road*" has links to larger literary traditions and themes, including those studied by the Lost Generation of the 1920s and the Romantic writers (litdevices). The novel is in line with the principles of romance because it emphasizes spontaneity, freedom, and the search for eternal experiences. It also reflects the Lost Generation's sensibilities by showing angry and anxious characters.

3- Influence of Autobiography :

On the Road, which is semi-autobiographical and is based on Jack Kerouac's travels and friendships, is associated with a tradition of personal, confessional text. As a result, the characters and their encounters have more depth and authenticity, and since Sal Paradise is the fictional character of Jack Kerouac, it links the piece to the larger autobiographical fiction genre. Such a connection gives the story a stronger sense of reality by letting readers understand Kerouac's feelings and experiences. Kerouac's best companion Neal Cassady served as the inspiration for Dean Moriarty. The character's representation is based on connections and instances from actual events, which gives the story a more realistic feel.

In another reference; *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Kerouac examines the issue of despair about the American Dream and places his book into the bigger picture of American literature by making references to this classic piece (Al-Keshwan). Sal's obsession with "You Can't Go Home Again" by Thomas Wolfe, This reference emphasizes the concept that individuals can never completely repeat the past nor the sense of continuous instability. "Moby-Dick" by Herman Melville, Kerouac connects "On the Road" to a larger literary genre

that examines issues of adventure, passion, and the nature of the human soul by reference to this famous American classic (litdevices).

Conclusion :

This concluding chapter delves into the poetics and narrative techniques employed by Jack Kerouac to craft his much-discussed novel, *On the Road*. this work is full of symbolism and the use of stream of consciousness. The work was also criticized for its unusual use of language and the new words invented by Kerouac at that time. This chapter also examines intertextuality with several works and references to give more insights into the search for meaning through the novel.

General Conclusion

As the research work "Quest for the Self and Authentic Existence in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*" draws to an end, it is important to note that while the book caused discussions for years, it was during the time viewed as utterly incorrect, to the point when it was banned. The novel's controversial acceptance may have been influenced by its portrayal of the Beat and counterculture generations, with jazz, poetry, and drug use serving as the protagonists' escape from their daily lives. The novel was also probably banned in some places because of

its portrayal of nonconformist lifestyles, spontaneous prose style, and themes of rebellion and nonconformity, which challenged the norms of society of the day.

The extended essay and research aim to explore the quest for identity and authentic existence in Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road* through an existential lens. To find the links between identity crises, existential philosophy, and the complex human condition in *On The Road*. It seeks to analyze the impact of choice, identity crises and escapism on the characters journeys towards meaning within the absurdity of life . and finally to Investigating the conflict between the need for connection to society and the desire for freedom in the search for an authentic existence .

The first chapter of this extended essay provides a theoretical framework for understanding the complexities of human identity and the existential angst that results when individuals try to create a solid sense of self. This research used existential philosophy, Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, and Erik Erikson's theory of identity crises to analyze the concepts and ideas that define human existence. The chapter places emphasis on individual freedom and responsibility, highlighting the importance of human control in shaping one's identity. It also examines the ideas of major existential figures such as Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, and Fyodor Dostoevsky. This theoretical framework serves as the foundation for the development of this research analysis of the literature and the development of the research hypothesis. The chapter concludes by placing the book in the context of travel literature and examining the theme of escapism and its role in the characters' quests. This chapter's theoretical framework forms the basis for the analysis that follows regarding the novel's themes, characters, and literary devices.

The second chapter looks at the novel's events, the main character's narrative, his interactions with others, and his friendship with Dean to gain an in depth comprehension of his isolation

and rebellious nature. As the narrative develops, the protagonist begins to reflect on his journey, and he starts to realize where he might be going, and where it will end. Realizing that his experiences are unusual and might not be understood by future generations, he begins to challenge the traditional idea of a stable life. Sal and Dean talk about their future, considering the possibility of ending up as old, unsuccessful individuals. Dean says that there is no harm in that, meaning that they should just concentrate on living in the moment and not worry about the results of their actions. (Kerouac 146).

The last chapter focused on the poetics and narrative techniques Jack Kerouac used to write his book *On the Road*. This work contains a lot of symbolism and makes use of a stream of consciousness. The unusual, spontaneous writing style which many scholars have debated as well as the language use. Additionally, this chapter explores intertextuality with multiple references that emphasize the search for meaning.

Camu's existentialist philosophy emphasizes the importance of choice. He gives a great illustration of this in his Myth of Sisyphus when he says that Sisyphus suffered and that his struggle would never end. Rolling the stone up the mountain, Sisyphus is forced to decide whether to give up or keep going as the stone keeps falling (lowes 08). The task was meant to be an eternal punishment for Sisyphus. To move forward, Sisyphus must accept that life is absurd and there is no meaning in what he is doing. characters in *On the Road* embody absurdity, particularly Dean. That said there is no harm in spending their lives on the road with no clear destination or purpose, meaning that they should just concentrate on living in the moment and not worry about the results of their actions. In contrast, Sal unintentionally disappoints himself by idealizing everyone he meets, by rejecting this viewpoint, he accepts himself. Sal's faith supports the idea that false viewpoints can be changed to live a satisfying existence. Being a successful existentialist means making choices all through life and not stopping until physical death. Both Sal and Dean have continued living their previous lives,

dean, an absurdist, believes that life has no inherent meaning so he remains in his madman life. Sal on the other side makes choices all along the journey, when he follows Dean, and in the end, he maintains his social status and comes back to society. Finally, he is no longer searching for something and understands that the real purpose is found by accepting life and the only road he must take is his life.

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