SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

The title of the thesis is “Beat Iconoclasm: A Study of Radicalism in the Works of Jack Kerouac”. The Beat Movement was a literary revolution that transformed into a cultural rebellion in the American Fifties. Jack Kerouac had coined the term ‘Beat’ which encapsulated the unrest of beaten down people residing at the social fringes. The term also catered to an inherent sense of beato- a state of bliss. Kerouac displayed a radical approach through anarchic lifestyle and mutinous writing. The thesis focuses on the radical facets in the works of Kerouac that led to a cultural transformation. The thesis is divided into four major segments. The first chapter titled The Bohemian Rapture describes the radicalism projected through the bohemian lifestyle of the Beat writers. The second chapter is titled The Beat-Bhikkus: Embodiments of Ragged Saintliness is based on the work The Dharma Bums. The focus is on the introduction new spiritual trajectories into the American religiosity through the works of Kerouac. The third chapter titled The Romance of Abjection deals with Kerouac’s romance with Alene Lee described in his work The Subterraneans (1958). Kerouac performed the iconoclastic feat of entering into the mind of a black female body and narrated her conception of racial subjugation by the white mainstream male dominant society. The fourth chapter titled Beat Aesthetics discusses the writing techniques and narratological breakthrough achieved by Jack Kerouac. He used the radical potential of his art to produce an avant-garde culture.