



At the End of the Road: Jack Kerouac in Mexico

Jorge García-Robles

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“We had finally found the magic land at the end of the road and we never dreamed the extent of the magic.” Mexico, an escape route, inspiration, and ecstatic terminus of the celebrated novel *On the Road*, was crucial to Jack Kerouac’s creative development. In this dramatic and highly compelling account, Jorge García-Robles, leading authority on the Beats in Mexico, re-creates both the actual events and the literary imaginings of Kerouac in what became the writer’s revelatory terrain.

Providing Kerouac an immediate spiritual freshness that contrasted with the staid society of the United States, Mexico was perhaps the single most important country in his life. Sourcing material from the Beat author’s vast output and revealing correspondence, García-Robles vividly describes the milieu and people that influenced him while sojourning there and the circumstances between his myriad arrivals and departures. From the writer’s initial euphoria upon encountering Mexico and its fascinating tableau of humanity to his tortured relationship with a Mexican prostitute who inspired his novella *Tristessa*, this volume chronicles Kerouac’s often illusory view of the country while realistically detailing the incidents and individuals that found their way into his poetry and prose.

In juxtaposing Kerouac’s idyllic image of Mexico with his actual experiences of being extorted, assaulted, and harassed, García-Robles offers the essential Mexican perspective. Finding there the spiritual nourishment he was starved for in the United States, Kerouac held fast to his idealized notion of the country, even as the stories he recounts were as much literary as real.

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