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A Literary Analysis of Ethics in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

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Dedication

Every challenging work needs self-efforts as well as guidance of elders especially

those who were very close to our hearts.

I would like to express my undying gratefulness to my two shields and mentors in life who proved to be the perfect example of the desired parents.

I fancy granting my thankfulness to my brother who taught me to trust myself and believe in hard work; and to my sister for her support and love.

My eternal gratitude goes to a special person in my life for everything he helped with for the sake of fulfilling this work.

To my soul mate, sister and best friend khouloud.

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to deal with a literary analysis of ethics in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*. Throughout this research we have shown how the author raises the questions of what makes life relevant by asserting ethics and morality in the aftermath of a catastrophe of an apocalyptic world. The study basically examines how the experience of non-human environment expresses an ethical endeavour by showing the protagonists as 'good guys' rather than 'bad guys' by 'carrying the fire' and that the novel uplifts humanity rather than darkness. We tried to wrap the historical background of the topic, apocalyptic literature, its characteristics and the apocalypse in the novel. The second part was consecrated solely to the posthuman ethics. Finally, we dealt with ethics and morality. The conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that the author was able to make life so meaningful with the ethical responsibility in a world lacking any sign of civilization.

Key words: Apocalyptic literature, 'bad guys', 'carrying the fire', 'good guys', posthuman ethics.

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General

Introduction

General Introduction

Ethics refers to society's sense of the right way of living our daily lives. This can be achieved only by establishing rules, principles, and values on which we can base our conduct.

Thus, *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy's novel, tells the story of a man and his son, trying to survive in the aftermath of a catastrophe, while sticking to the ethical and moral aspects, in spite of all the calamities and the apocalypse they endure.

"Carrying the fire" is an expression that is used again and again throughout the novel. It is of great importance. It has pushed the boy to carry out his survival journey. The father gives his son hope when stating this expression several times. It symbolizes seeds of civilization, fertility, and life. The fire symbolizes life, specifically, the life of the boy that marks the ultimate gift of the journey. Thus, our main aim in this study is to investigate the following questions:

- How does the experience of non-human environment express an ethical endeavour?

My 1st sub-question is: -How do the protagonists consider themselves 'good guys' rather than 'bad guys'? My 2nd Sub-question is:- Does the road uplift darkness or humanity?

So, it is all about apocalyptic world and how the father and his son can survive as humans not as cannibals in that hopeless world using morality and ethics and faith.

The researcher hypothesized that Cormac McCarthy, in his novel *The Road*, shows that though it is almost the end of the world and the non-humans filled that world, there is always a hope for ethics to play an important role in the life of people. Without ethics, we would have a degenerating world.

The father and his son being the protagonists would survive this apocalyptic situation as good guys because they carry the fire. Furthermore, the Road is full of darkness, but it uplifts humanity rather than darkness.

The researcher was so motivated to do this challenging work, however the lack of books and references made it difficult for us to cover it deeply, especially the part dealing with 'Posthuman Ethics and Morality'

General Introduction

This work is divided into three chapters. Chapter one entitled ‘Apocalyptic Literature: an overview’ looks into the definition and characteristics of apocalyptic literature, how to read apocalyptic literature and the apocalypse in the novel, *The Road*. Chapter two entitled, ‘Post human Ethics’ studies posthumanism, the post human philosophy, post human ethics and the ethical time. Chapter three entitled ‘Ethics and Morality in the Road’ reads the ethics in the novel, *the Road*, ‘carrying the fire’, Good vs evil, God and faith, surviving, morality in the novel dealing with the man and the boy and ‘good guys versus ‘bad guys’.

Chapter One:Apocalyptic Literature: an overview

1.1. Introduction

Apocalyptic Literature emerged as a new genre of literature in the third century BC. It generally includes chronologies of events that are to occur in the future, when speaking of the end times. Furthermore, it is a combination of narrative and prose written in clear images and poetic phrases that are intended to exaggerate for a purpose. Apocalyptic writing is a more specific form of prophecy because it is a type of literature that warns us of future events.

1.2. Definition of Apocalyptic Literature

The term apocalypse means to uncover or to reveal the cover. According to Oxford English Dictionary, the word “apocalypse” stands for a situation causing very serious damage and destruction of the world. The word’s origin is from the Greek word “apokalupsis”, from apokaluptein which means to “uncover” or “reveal”.

Uncovering the apocalyptic world is a timeless and placeless universal mission. Back in history, ancient apocalypse was associated with religious documents found in the three Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The three religions have each a holy book that gives an account of the apocalyptic prophecies and God’s destruction of the world. Thus, it has a religious origin.

The apocalypse is known as the end of the world “like the onset of some cloud glaucoma dimming away the world”.⁽¹⁾ According to John J. Collins, an apocalypse is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework in which a revelation is mediated by another worldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality (2004, p.41). Frank Kermode says further that apocalypse is “the sense of an ending” (1970, p.23) which means

1. The Road, Cormac McCarthy, Alfred A. Knopf 2006.

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to reveal the horror of the destruction of the world. Historically, this apocalypse emerged in times following crises such as wars, diseases and other disasters which lead to the survival of humankind.

Although the apocalyptic genre disappeared after the Middle Ages, an apocalyptic mood, reinforced by explicit references to the Revelation to John, appears in numerous modern literary works, such as Katherine Anne Porter's *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (1939) and Nathanael West's *Day of the Locust* (1939). Furthermore, there are films like Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* (1957) and Federico Fellini's *La dolce vita* (1959). Moreover, several Protestant denominations in the United States propound apocalyptic beliefs, which have been expressed in numerous sermons and pamphlets by such preachers as Billy Graham and Jerry Falwell (1), as well in an American best seller book, Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970). The *Left Behind* series of novels (2), by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, which describe apocalyptic events in particularly violent terms, achieved.

It is estimated that forty million copies of books in the *Left Behind* series were in print by the early 21st century, and a computer game based on the series was also produced (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Apocalyptic Literature, literary genre, Robert E. Lerner).

1. William *Franklin Graham* Jr., born on November 7, 1918 and died on February 21, 2018. He was an American *evangelist*.

Jerry Lamon Falwell Sr., born on August 11, 1933 and died on May 15, 2007). He was an American Southern Baptist pastor and conservative activist.

2. The *Left Behind* is a series of 16 bestselling religious novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, dealing with Christian dispensationalist End Times. Published 1995–2007.

Apocalypse in Islam:

"O mankind! Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour (of Judgment) is a terrible thing. The Day you shall see it, every nursing mother will forget her nursing, and every pregnant one will drop her load, and you shall see mankind as in a drunken state, yet they will not be drunken, but severe will be the Torment of Allah. (Quran: 22 Hadj 'the pilgrimage', verses 1, 2)(1)

The above verses are taken from the Quran, from the Chapter entitled 'Hadj' meaning pilgrimage. In these verses, God warns people of the Last Day (2). God reminds people that they should follow the teachings of the Quran, Islam, so that when the last day comes, they should not suffer.

1.3. Characteristics of Apocalyptic Literature

What makes apocalyptic literature so different from other types of forms of literature? By what means can this genre be identified as a distinct category of literature? There is much diversity among the apocalyptic writings. Nevertheless, there are certain general features which are characteristic of the literature as a whole and which justify the distinguishing of "apocalyptic" as a literary type.

Apocalypses are usually pseudonymous, written by an ancient figure, such as Enoch or Abraham. They are usually written from a context of oppression, persecution and despair. Many scholars use the phrase 'resistance literature' to describe apocalypses. In addition, a heavenly intermediary usually appears in apocalypses to interpret visions or reveal secret knowledge. Thus, apocalypses contain a sharp dualism, a contrast between the present age dominated by evil, and a coming age of change because they tend to be pessimistic about the possibility for positive change during the present age. Consequently, what is needed is a radical divine intervention to overthrow God's enemies and set things right.

1. The Quran, Chapter 22, Al Hadj (pilgrimage), verses 1 and 2.

2. According to the Quran, The Last Day is the day of judgment. In Arabic, it is called 'Al-Qiyamah'. It is also known as the Day of Reckoning, Resurrection, or the Hour. It is one of the six articles of faith in Sunni Islam.

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Apocalypses are usually filled with symbolism, monsters, angels and other creatures, and they tend to be deterministic, portraying an inescapable future, set in stone by God's fixed calendar of events. Finally, in apocalypses, events that are contemporary to the author are often portrayed as if they were prophesied long time ago, so that what is happening in the author's day is merely a fulfilment of what was revealed centuries before (David E. Aune, *Word Biblical Commentary: Revelation 1-5, 1997*).

Moreover, when compared to the bulk of writings found in the Bible, apocalyptic literature is a very distinctive form of literature. For that reason, it requires special attention and effort in order to grasp accurately its message. When Bible students first approach the book of Daniel in the Old Testament or the book of Revelation in the New Testament, they immediately realize that things are very different from what one finds in most other portions of the Bible, (Richard A. Taylor, 2016.)

Thus, the reader has entered a different world, one in which the sights and sounds described there in may bear little resemblance to what one finds in the rest of Scripture. The landscape seems unfamiliar. The scenes portrayed by visions and dreams are not immediately clear or understandable. Instead, these writings are characterized by mysteries, puzzling symbolism and startling predictions. The meaning of strange things is as though a mysterious veil rests over the language. Such is the world of apocalyptic literature. Russell suggests four distinctly literary characteristics of apocalyptic: "It is esoteric in character, literary in form, symbolic in language, and pseudonymous in authorship"(D. S. Russell, 1964, p. 106).

1.3.1. Esoteric: The apocalyptic writings claim to be revelations of divine mysteries intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of people of a certain origin, people of past Israel. These writings were subsequently recorded in secret books for the instruction of God's chosen followers. The secrets are revealed to the seers only, persons who are supposed to be able to see what the future holds, through supernatural insight. These were in the form of a dream or vision, often in the context of a literal or spiritual way to heaven. The vision may consist of a review of the history of the world up to the time of the assumed author, or it may take the form of prediction and outline the future destiny of the world and the coming of God's kingdom. It may also describe the

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mysteries of the unseen world, heaven, the movements of the heavenly bodies, and nature forces. What is seen by the seer is written down, to be hidden away for many generations and faithfully preserved until the time of the end.

1.3.2. Literary: In spite of the visionary character of Apocalyptic Literature, it is clear that the visions are literary creations of the author. That is to say, they are not the descriptions of actual ecstatic experiences, but rather are self-conscious metaphysical statements. While the prophets were only messengers of God and they brought only what was revealed to them by God, the writers of apocalyptic literature were mainly authors. In addition, related to this feature there is symbolism through which these authors convey their messages.

1.3.3. Symbolism: Apocalyptic Literature is marked by imagery and style which are noticeable. Some of the images are taken from the Old Testament. Some of it has its origin in ancient Near Eastern mythology. For instance, the references to “the dragon” (1). The use of animals to symbolize men and nations. These allusions were meant to heavenly planets and astral phenomena. In fact, the whole literature is marked by a carefully developed symbolism, which tends to suit its esoteric character. A study of this symbolism is important for an understanding of the Book of Revelation in the New Testament, as well as the Book of Daniel in the Old Testament.

1.3.4. Pseudonymous: Apocalyptic Literature is generally, pseudonymous. That is to say, the writers put their message into the mouth or pen of some honoured figure from ancient times, such as Enoch, Moses, Abraham, and the like. The reason behind the adoption of pseudonymity is not clear. The traditional explanation is that these writers had to attribute their writings to men of God in order to have them accepted as authentic revelations. Yet it is not sure if some people would have been deceived by this tactic. Another suggestion is that they adopted pseudonyms to avoid persecution by the authorities of the day. Another explanation given by some is that pseudonymity was merely a literary custom with no attempt to deceive the reader. More recently, pseudonymity has been explained by Russell (D. S. Russell, 1964, p. 106) in terms of “corporate personality,” the peculiar time-

1. The dragon identified as Satan, in the Old Testament.

consciousness of the ancient Hebrews, and the proper name in Hebrew thought. The author identified himself and his message with the

Ancient seer in whose name he wrote, and wrote as his representative. Whatever the real reason for choosing the medium of pseudonymity, it seems probable that the name of the person in whose name the author wrote is related to the content of the book and, therefore, is not the result of an arbitrary choice.

1.4. How to Read Apocalyptic Literature

One of the important things to remember about apocalyptic literature is that it is highly symbolical, and part of the reason of that symbolism was to evoke emotion and to help the reader feel a sense of what prophecies were about. Another thing to remember about apocalyptic literature is that it is often a code for the original audience. So, they would have read these symbols and they would have understood what they referred to. And, we are so far removed from that context in terms of time and in terms of culture. That symbolism is largely lost to us. So, it is symbolic, but we should not try to identify all the details of the symbolism. First, we should come away with a sense of the emotions it evokes. So, in Daniel 7 (1), Daniel sees a sea and from the sea emerge four terrifying creatures. That was a horror in itself because that is what that literature was trying to accomplish. Another purpose of this literature was that it was comfort and that it was intended to encourage people who were oppressed. Consequently, this literature was written to an audience that was suffering. It is a way to encourage them that their enemies would be conquered and there would be victory and better days ahead for them.

Furthermore, Apocalyptic literature unveils something that is hidden as a secret. It shows the true nature of things. It shows us not to take what we see as good, natural and cultural realities. It also talks about the political and cultural institutions because the world is unstable and ephemeral.

1. Daniel 7 is the seventh chapter of the Book of Daniel that tells of Daniel's vision of four beasts coming out of the sea meaning four world kingdoms.

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Apocalyptic literature is shocking, but it does not leave us stumbling. Both Daniel and Jesus say at the destruction of all things, there will emerge coming in the clouds and all his glory the son of man (1), who comes into this world, but comes bearing the eternal power of God. He comes as the bearer of the divine presence and so he is unveiling to us the truth, which is to rely on the eternal power of the Creator of the universe.

That's why Apocalyptic Literature unveils for us the deepest truth about the world, and there by allows us to live in a rightly ordered way.

1.5. The Road as an Apocalyptic Novel

Apocalyptic is from the word apocalypse, referring to the end of the world. Apocalyptic novels fiction focus on the end of civilization either through nuclear war, plague, or other global catastrophic risk.

Apocalyptic fiction is set in a world or civilization after such a disaster. The time frame may be immediately after the catastrophe, focusing on the painful and laborious efforts of survivors. Hence, Post-apocalyptic stories often take place in an agrarian, non-technological future world, or a world where only scattered elements of technology remain. There is a considerable degree of blurring between this form of science fiction and that which deals with dystopias.

Post-apocalyptic novels are thriving and popular. People when reading them, feel unrested, insecure and likely to fall or collapse. People feel they are on the lip of the abyss than ever, facing fears. Fiction helps us those people deal with those situations. These stories are relieving as well as preventive. The earliest known work of apocalyptic fiction is Mary Shelley's 1826 novel, *The Last Man*. It follows the lives and loves of the European nobility of the 21st Century, which is shattered by the arrival of a plague that wipes out mankind.

1. Alluding to Jesus himself.

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The novel, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy is a story of apocalypse, starting with giving flashbacks. The woman, the man's wife, was pregnant when the apocalypse started:

The clocks stopped at 1:17. A long shear of light and then a series of low concussions. He got up and went to the window. What is it? she said. He didn't answer. He went into the bathroom and threw the switch but the power was already gone. A dull rose glow in the window glass. He dropped to one knee and raised the lever to stop the tub and then turned on both taps as far as they would go. She was standing in the doorway in her nightwear, clutching the jamb, cradling her belly in one hand. What is it? she said. What is happening? I don't know. Why are you taking a bath? I'm not. (1)

McCarthy, through his characters, gave a scene of struggle whose major fact is resistance. Thus, apocalypse, whatever the damage costs, implies that "human life can be meaningful, even in circumstances as desperate as those depicted in the novel", (Erik J. Wielenberg, 2010, pp. 441-464). For the author, the fact of believing paves the way to imagine how terrible was the situation, which he reveals the religious tendency of the father and Cormac McCarthy himself when he said "He knew only that the child was his warrant. He said, if he is not the word of God, God never spoke." (Alfred A. Knopf, 2006, p.16).

Moreover, in *The Road* the world is dead in terms of nature and morality, a world where cannibalism is a constant threat and civilization is beyond saving. But, to frustrate the interpretation of an absolute end of civilization, the novel gives hope in the reader through portraying the compensating love between a father and his son. They are referred to as the 'good guys' who will not succumb to immorality on their journey, whatever happens. By placing hope in form of the good guys and hopelessness in form of a dead surrounding world side by side in the story, the novel invites for both sentimental and nihilistic readings. It is important to realize that the surrounding world needed to aid the father and the boy to escape is gone, but even if the world as we know it has ended and all of nature is dead, the father

1. *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy, Alfred A. Knopf, (2006, p. 16).

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and his son still continue relentlessly down the road. We can say that there is a paradox at the heart of the novel, the world has ended and the hope of a future is no longer a part of the picture, but the father's actions always express hope (Estes, Andrew, 2017, p. 12-3).

The post-apocalyptic world in *The Road* is a world that stays between past and future. The pre-apocalyptic world is lost and a new world has not yet emerged, something Teresa Heffernan sees as significant for the post-modern apocalypse: "The present world is portrayed as exhausted, but there is no better world that replaces it" (Teresa Heffernan, 2008, p. 22). According to Heffernan, all these obscure the reader's view of the impossibility for humanity to survive in that dark hopeless world.

The linking of *The Road* to the apocalypse is of course in no way original. The link has been commented upon in both critical considerations and various book reviews. These, however, mostly use the term as either a simple statement of the novel's setting (Warner, 2006), or in the religious sense. As for the former, "needless to say that evoking the six apocalyptic merely as setting, as one would mention the novel takes place in Florida or in 1995, completely misses the ideological and thematic tensions the setting entails. The religious aspect, however, demands more serious consideration," (Englander, Yonatan and Elana Gomel, 2016, pp.127-143).

1.6. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, we can say that Apocalyptic Literature deals with apocalypses, being a literary report of an amazing, often fearful, violent vision that reveals truths about past, present, and future times in highly symbolic and poetical terms. Such literature often includes extreme and vivid polarized contrasts, the corruption and despair of the visible world contrasted with the pure light of the world to come.

Chapter Two: Posthuman Ethics and Morality

Chapter Two: Posthuman Ethics and Morality

2.1. Introduction

Ethics and morals relate to 'right' and 'wrong' conduct. Although they are sometimes used interchangeably, they are different. Ethics refer to rules provided by an external source, such as codes of conduct in workplaces or principles in religions. Morals refer to an individual's own principles regarding right and wrong.

Posthuman Ethics deals with how posthuman theory creates new, imaginative ways of understanding relations between lives. In addition, it explores certain kinds of figures to think new relations that offer liberty and a contemplation of the practices of power which have been exerted upon these figures. That is to say, posthuman ethics is a position that extends moral concern to things that are different from human beings, such as other species and objects. In the end, human beings, the other species and objects, such as robots may cohabit the same world.

2.2. Posthumanism

Posthumanist scholars focus on a few core characteristics which are the notion that the proper study of man is man. Humanism was by definition anthropocentric (1). Humanism as a historical phenomenon drew on a renewed and reinterpreted appreciation for the rhetoric and civilization of Greece and Rome, in placing man at the centre of its literary and philosophical project. Modern science beginning in the Renaissance sought to achieve an understanding of the natural world that depended on human powers of observation and reason to uncover universal laws. As a Cartesian thinking subject, man could examine the world and explain its workings with scientific detachment, such as Galileo famously put it, in the language of mathematics. This view of man as an autonomous agent, separate from nature, flourished in the Enlightenment. Scholars of posthumanism regard Darwinian biology, Marxist economists, and Freudian psychology as preliminary indications of the breakup of this unified Enlightened Nevertheless, although the separation and elevation of man from and over the natural world were called into question.

1. The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy, Vol. 4, Jefferson D. Pooley, Eric W. Rothenbuhler, 2016.

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By these 19th-century developments in biology, psychology, and economics, positivist science sought to maintain the subject–object dichotomy even in the 20th century. (Klaus Bruhn Jensen and Robert T. Craig, 2016).

Posthumanism or post-humanism means ‘after humanism’ or ‘beyond humanism’. It is a term with at least seven definitions according to the philosopher Francesca Ferrando, (2019, p. 26). She states further that it is a theory that is critical of traditional humanism and traditional ideas about humanity and the human condition.

Ihab Hassan coined the term ‘posthumanism’ in 1997, in his work entitled *Prometheus as Performer: Towards a Posthumanist Culture*. According to Ihabn Posthumanism seeks to undermine the traditional boundaries between the human, the animal, and the technological. Whereas, Katherine Hayles reused the same term, in 1999, (N. Katherine Hayles, 1999). According to Hayles, the posthuman view privileges information over materiality, considers consciousness as an epiphenomenon and imagines the body as a prosthesis for the mind. Thus, she suggests that in the posthuman view "there are no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation." She understands "human" and "posthuman" as constructions that emerge from historically specific understandings of technology, culture and embodiment; "human and "posthuman" views each produce unique models of subjectivity. Within this framework "human" is aligned with enlightenment notions of liberal humanism, including its emphasis on the "natural self" and the freedom of the individual.

Posthumanism in literature represents an evolution of thought beyond that of the contemporary social boundaries and is predicated on the seeking of truth within a postmodern context. The philosopher Michel Foucault placed posthumanism within a context that differentiated humanism from enlightenment thought. The philosopher Michel Foucault placed posthumanism within a context that differentiated humanism from enlightenment thought. According to Foucault, the two existed in a state of tension: as humanism sought to establish norms while Enlightenment thought attempted to transcend all that is material, including the boundaries that are constructed by humanistic thought. Drawing on the Enlightenment’s challenges to the boundaries of humanism, posthumanism rejects the various assumptions of human dogmas, anthropological, political and scientific, and takes the next step by attempting to change the nature of thought about

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what it means to be human. This requires not only decentering the human in multiple discourses, evolutionary, ecological and technological, but also examining those discourses to uncover inherent humanistic, anthropocentric, normative notions of humanness and the concept of the human.

The advantages of posthumanism is that it regards aspects of the human condition, such as disability, suffering, disease, aging and the like as unnecessary and undesirable. Therefore, it aims to reduce the effects of disability or physical ailment by providing seamlessly integrated enhancements with longevity.

There is also the concept, transhuman which is the project of modifying the human species via any kind of emerging science, including genetic engineering, digital technology, and bioengineering. So, the posthuman can be defined as that condition in which humans and intelligent technology are becoming increasingly intertwined. Whereas, the idea behind transhumanism is a way of thinking about the future that is based on the premise that the human species in its current form does not represent the end of our development, but rather a comparatively early phase. Thus, the main characteristic of transhumanism is that it is a social and philosophical movement devoted to promoting the research and development of robust human enhancement technologies. Such technologies would increase human sensory, emotive ability, or cognitive capacity as well as radically improve human health and extend human life spans.

2.3. Posthuman Philosophy

Posthuman philosophy is a concept originating in the fields of science fiction, futurology, contemporary art, and philosophy that literally means a person or entity that exists in a state beyond being human. The term ‘posthumanphilosomhy’ is applied to a range of contemporary theoretical positions put forward by researchers with different disciplinary backgrounds in philosophy, science and technology studies, literary studies, critical theory, theoretical sociology, and communication studies.

According to Francesca Ferrando (2019), the philosophical landscape which has developed as a response to the crisis of the human, includes several movements, such as: Posthumanism, Transhumanism, Antihumanism and Object-Oriented Ontology, (Francesca

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Ferrando, 2019). She further explains that the similarities and differences between these currents, and offers a detailed examination of a number of topics that fall under the 'posthuman' umbrella, including the anthropocene, artificial intelligence and the deconstruction of the human. Francesca Ferrando affords particular focus to Philosophical Posthumanism, defined as a philosophy of mediation which addresses the meaning of humanity not in separation, but in relation to technology and ecology. The posthuman shift thus emerges in the global call for social change, responsible science and multispecies coexistence. (1)

Philosophical Posthumanism reflects upon the broader signification of technological developments, but it does not exhaust its analysis there. Actually, considering that a large number of the population worldwide is still engaged in the attempt of surviving, if Philosophical Posthumanism was reduced to a reflection on the technological kinship of the human revisited in its specific technical endeavours, such a preference would confine it to a classist and techno-centric academic movement. In fact, the posthuman turn cannot be accounted only in relation to the human or to technology. Philosophical Posthumanism is an onto-epistemological approach, as well as an ethical one, manifesting as a philosophy of mediation, which discharges any confrontational dualisms and hierarchical legacies; this is why it can be approached as a post-humanism, a post-anthropocentrism, and a post-dualism. Historically, it can be seen as the philosophical approach which suits the informal geological time of the Anthropocene (Paul Crutzen, Eugene F. Stoermer, 2000). While Philosophical Posthumanism focuses on decentring the human from the centre of the discourse, the Anthropocene marks the extent of the impact of human activities on a planetary level, and thus stresses the urgency for humans to become aware of pertaining to an ecosystem which, when damaged, negatively affects the human condition as well.

2.4. Posthuman Ethics

We can say that ethics helps people to develop skills in articulating their own values, to provide others with reasons for our actions and give us the means of questioning the values of others. Both morality and ethics loosely have to do with distinguishing the difference between "good and bad" or "right and wrong." Many people think

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of morality as something that's personal and normative, whereas ethics is the standards of “good and bad” distinguished by a certain community or social setting.

According to Patricia Mac Cormack, posthuman theory investigates in various ways in what it means to be human in a time when philosophy has become suspicious of claims about human subjectivity (2012, p. 2). Those subjects which were historically considered odd and our future lives becoming increasingly hybrid show we have always been and are continuously transforming into posthumans. If we try to have a look at the ethical considerations of thinking the posthuman, we can say that posthuman ethics does not ask about what the posthuman is, but how posthuman theory creates new, imaginative ways of understanding relations between lives. Ethics is a practice of activist, adaptive and creative interaction which avoids claims of overarching moral structures. Inherent in thinking posthuman ethics is the status of bodies as the site of lives inextricable from philosophy, thought, experiments in being and fantasies of the future.

2.5. Ethical Time

Ethics plays an important part in our life. It is a system of principles that helps us tell right from wrong and good from bad. Ethics can give real and practical guidance to our lives. We constantly face choices that affect the quality of our lives. We are aware that the choices that we make have consequences, both for ourselves and others.

Ethics deals with answers to questions about the moral status of human actions and human lives. What we should do, what we should not do, what sort of life we should lead. According to Heather Dyke (2003, p.3), actions and lives are temporal things. Actions are performed at certain times, are informed by past events and have consequences for the future. Lives have temporal extension, and are experienced from a sequence of temporal perspectives. “Thus, one would think that answers to ethical questions should take some account of their temporal features. Yet there has never been a systematic study of the relations between time and ethics”. In 2001, a conference was held at the University of Otago in New Zealand on the theme of ‘Time and Ethics’ to explore issues that emerge at the intersection between these two fields of study. (1)

1. Heather Dyke, *Time and Ethics: Essays at the Intersection*, 2003, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

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The ethics of time is to be read both as subjective and objective genitive: the temporal nature of ethics and the ethical nature of time. Time is to be understood here as movement and change, and central to ethics is the movement motivated by the perception of imperfection, of evil, guided by a sense of the good. The fundamental point here is that ethics and time are interrelated because time is only possible through a consciousness which is eschatologically orientated, that glimpses perfection. What this means is that evil is a moment of the "temporalized unfolding of the good", and this is what is being hinted at in speaking of the "scandal of the good," (John Panteleimon Manoussakis, 2017, p. 4).

As agreed, the five main principles of ethics are usually considered to be truthfulness and confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent, beneficence, nonmaleficence and justice. Some examples of ethics are integrity in personal and professional matters, honesty, truthfulness and sincerity, loyalty and allegiance, responsibility, reliability and dependability, charity and kindness, respect for others and their property and self-discipline and acting with reasonable restraint.

If we try to see the types of ethics, there are three schools of ethics: virtue ethics, consequentialist ethics, and deontological or duty-based ethics. According to virtue ethics, we should live a life based on virtues like wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. These were proposed by Aristotle, stoics and epicureans.

From a moral point of view, we need to be ethical because it defines who we are individually and as a society. These are norms of behaviour that everyone should follow. Our society might fall into chaos if we accept that each of us could pick and choose what the right thing to do is. Furthermore, ethics serve as a guide to moral daily living and helps us judge whether our behavior can be justified. Ethics refers to society's sense of the right way of living our daily lives. It does this by establishing rules, principles, and values on which we can base our conduct. According to Vincent Ruggiero, in his book *Thinking Critically About Ethical Issues* (2011), ethics can be defined as the "study of right and wrong".

2.6. Morality

Morality implies the notion of moral obligation, that is moral law. It is believed that humans are in fact born with an innate sense of morality, and parents and society can only help develop a belief system in them. Thus, morality is the standard of society used to decide what is right or wrong behavior. An example of morality is the belief by someone that it is wrong to take what doesn't belong to them, even if no one would know. (1)

We get our sense of morality through socialization. That is to say, our behaviors were shaped from birth onward by our families, our preschools, and almost everything we contacted in our environments. Morality is an inner sense of rightness about our behavior and the behavior of others.

There are three types of morality, divine morality, that is, what has been commanded by God for righteousness. Social morality, that is, what smooths and benefits the function of society. Teleological morality which derives duty or moral obligation from what is good or desirable as an end to be achieved.

In our daily life, we need morality because we consider moral traits so important in others. Moral traits have social value. They signal to us whether we should approach or avoid and whether we should affiliate with the others.

In his essay, Louis Pojman claims that morality has the following five purposes, 'to keep society from falling apart', 'to ameliorate human suffering', 'to promote human flourishing', 'to resolve conflicts of interest in just and orderly ways', and 'to assign praise and blame, reward the good and punish the guilty', (Pojman, L.P. , 2000, p. 32).

When there are no morals, this is called moral nihilism, also known as ethical nihilism. It simply means that there is no morality whatsoever.

1. Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Colin McIntosh, 4th Edition, 2013, Cambridge.

2.7. Conclusion

To conclude, we may say that posthuman ethics and morality deal with understanding relations between lives, whether they are of human beings or other species, and even robots. Ethics and morals are norms of behaviour that are essential in any society. If there are no ethics and morals, societies would collapse. In fact, there is no condition in human society where there is no ethics and morals. We do need them. They are essential because laws arise out of ethical and moral choices. Posthuman ethics and morality are a system of principles that helps us tell right from wrong, good from bad, and it can give real and practical guidance to our lives.

Chapter Three: Ethics and Morality in The Road

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will discuss the role of ethics and morality in the novel, especially in the lives of the father, his son and the savages they encounter on their way. We will try to find out where this faith in this ethical morality comes from. We will also consider the advantages and disadvantages that morals and values have for the two of them, the father and his son, and why they insist, even after witnessing some extremely brutal situations, to continue “carrying the fire” through a world where the human race is on the verge of extinction. Their main aim is to hope for a world where morals could mean something and fight for a good and positive cause so that they will not be lost.

3.2. Ethics in the Novel

Cormac McCarthy, in his novel *The Road* tries to convey the theme of human morality and ethics. One can easily find out in the story itself the definition of morality because the setting is a post-apocalyptic world.

According to McCarthy, morality is a completely subjective concept because he believes that people derive their understandings of “good vs. bad” and “right vs. wrong” from religion, government and other institutions. That is, morality is set and fixed by societal standards. McCarthy argues that it is society that dictates peoples’ moral parameters.

In the novel, McCarthy states that the lack of human civilization and social norms led individuals to act savagely and rudely looking for self-interest only. Consequently, McCarthy sees morality alike self interest when social standards are absent. Good and positive behaviour disappears and selfishness prevails. People look for their survival only no matter what the damages they may cause in the society. The problem is that these people think that what they are doing is the right moral and they try to justify what they are doing as being right. Moreover, they see the other people who stand against them and their strange behaviour as immoral because the latter do not give them the chance to survive. All this is apparent in the novel. The two protagonists, the father and his son see all the

othersurvivors as enemies for they name them robbers, rapists and murderers. So, the protagonists try to do their best to do defend their interests.

In the novel, the writer states several times that the father is constantly reminding his son that they are the good guys and all the remaining are bad guys. In fact, all the characters in the story are fighting to survive, looking for their own interest. This behaviour led McCarthy to base his argument on the subjectiveness of ethics and morality as concepts.

Though the father could not sustain his physical survival as he dies, he maintains the physicaland the moral survival of the son. The latter is deemed to be “The Grail”, as the novel was entitled earlier, because the father imagines him like a “chalice”. This motif is rooted in mythology as it represents the treasure or the boon of the adventure (Lydia Cooper,2011, p.222).

3.2.1. Carrying the Fire

Fire is one of the four elements, fire, earth, air and water that according to the Western culture and civilization, these four elements are believed to be essential to life. In the novel, the father and his son are carrying the fire. Literally, fire can help them solve several problems. It keeps them warm. They can cook their food. It can provide them light in the dark and do so many other things with it.

However, McCarthy in the Road, with that apocalyptic situation and devastation of civilization, he has used the expression “carrying the fire” meaning carrying the seeds of civilization. So, the son attempts to carry these seeds of civilization in order to bring back civilization again in case he remains alive. And, that is why the father did all his efforts so that the son remains alive.

The father often uses the phrase “carrying the fire” to describe his dogged perseverance in surviving the post-apocalyptic world. Before the father dies, he tells the boy to keep carrying the fire and going down the road, basically, to keep hope alive in a seemingly hopeless world. And, when the father was dying, the son asked him if the fire is real. The father replied by yes. Then, the son asked for its location. The father said, “It’s inside you. It was always there. I can see it.” (McCarthy, 2006)

Chapter Three: Ethics and Morality in The Road

Thus, the man finds hope and goodness in his boy's innocence when he said:

“We're going to be okay, aren't we Papa?

Yes. We are.

And nothing bad is going to happen to us.

That's right. Because we're carrying the fire.

Yes. Because we're carrying the fire.”⁽¹⁾

Along their journey, he tells his son stories of the world before its destruction. He teaches him the physical skills and mental aptitudes needed to survive. But most importantly, the man teaches his son to “carry the fire”. Carrying the fire signifies hope for the human race. Though the world seems all but over, as long as someone is alive and trying to thrive, they are still carrying the fire, which means the human race still has hope. When the son is scared early in the novel, his father assures him that they will be fine.

Carrying the fire symbolizes a flourishing civilization and a continuous code of ethics held by the son in a wasted world that is empty from emotions and intellect. The son himself is aware of the fire he carries, once the father told him: “You're not the one has to worry about everything.” The boy's answer was: “Yes I am, he said. I am the one.” (McCarthy, 2006, p. 277). Therefore, the child is the ultimate blessing of the father's journey.

1. The Road, Cormac McCarthy, Alfred A. Knopf, (2006, p. 83).

3.2.2. God and Faith

The Road is an extended metaphor for hope and the human spirit that flickers from unproductive and silent at the beginning of the story to hopeful as the man says, “You don't know what might be down the road.” (1)

The man and the boy in *The Road* seem to be guided by a force more powerful than the desperation that inspires other faithless men to succumb to cannibalism and murder. Though the boy is rarely shaken in his stubborn faith to seek out whatever goodness is left in that post-apocalyptic land and its inhabitants. He once expresses a wish to end it all and go back with his mother. Yet this moment of weakness is overshadowed by his stubbornness to help that elderly man, Ely, his desire to thank dead people for food, his compassion for the man who stole everything they owned and his strange expectation to find birds or fishes when he has only known natural sterility and devastation.

The boy lives for and in expectation of something better. Considering the hopelessness that has governed the world throughout his life, it is difficult to imagine that his surroundings or his nearly defeated father have influenced such expectations. Therefore, there must be some internal force nourishing these dreams, separating the child from other faithless humans. This boy must have been encouraged by a source of divinity.

The son teaches the man to recognize an aspect of humanness in all the wanderers who travel in the dangerous road, including the thief who selfishly takes their possessions instead of asking for help. Even after they have been robbed of everything, the child remains sympathetic. When they are leaving their camp and the boy can no longer see the thief, he still insists “he’s so scared, Papa,” (2) as if his immense compassion allowed him to sense desperation in others.

1. *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy, Alfred A. Knopf, (2006, p. 24).

1. *Ibid*, (p. 77).

3.2.3. Surviving

In the middle of the environmental and social collapse, the characters still struggle to maintain survival. Through his work, McCarthy demonstrates the reactions of the characters to the calamity and their actions to survive it. The contemporary French philosopher Jean Francois Lyotard claims that human survival is the elemental issue in McCarthy`s works, notably in *The Road* in which the writer explores the process through which the protagonists survive and the forces that hinder their survival (William P. greenwood, 2009, p. 89).

If we try to see what the road represents in the novel, we can say that, as a unifying place for travel, the road is a place of both transience and danger, and in the novel it comes to symbolize the human drive to keep moving and keep surviving, no matter what the circumstances are.

Late in the novel, when the man finds a flare gun in an abandoned boat, he and the boy discuss how flare guns were once used to signal for help. But the boy immediately guesses the man intends to use this flare gun as a weapon instead. The flare gun also symbolizes loneliness. At the end of the novel, the boy`s conspicuous, and possibly angelic, uniqueness saves him. This presumed sanctity inspires the father to disregard his earlier promise and enter “the darkness alone,” without his son (*The Road*, p.35).

Instead of keeping his child safe through death, the man decides to trust in his moral fortitude and divine potential. The father`s mission was, as Lydia R. Cooper describes, to preserve a “vessel of nobility capable of proving that there is some merit to the continuation of the human race” (Lydia R. Cooper, 2011, p. 227) and in this mission, he finds the strength to endure all obstacles.

3.3. Morality in the Novel

Within his novel *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy addresses the interesting theme of human morality and ethics. McCarthy contends that society dictates people's moral compasses. Without these societal standards, personal morality becomes indistinguishable from self-interest. McCarthy intended to place the source of the destruction within the realm of morality.

For the full norm of the monomyth, when the hero has accomplished his quest, he has to return back to his community. He has to do so in order to renew his society through the blessing he gained, often wisdom or knowledge (Joseph Campbell, 1968, p. 177). Yet, *The Road* deviates from Campbell's norm as the hero or the father dies before he returns. The man fulfils his quest depicting his wife's words, "you won't survive for yourself" (McCarthy, 2006, p. 59), and he secures the boy's life throughout the journey. According to the archetype of child, the boy is a good omen as it spares hope for a future human existence (Campbell, p.120). In *The Road*, the boy is left in an open end when he joins a family that it is supposed to be among "the good guys" (McCarthy, 2006, p. 304).

However, there is a distinctive feature that typifies the road of trials from the other steps. In this stage the hero strives to overcome his opposites (Donald Palumbo, 2014). In *The Road*, the father aspires to balance between a set of opposites. For example, he is compassionate with his son, but he is ready to kill him if they face the cannibals. He may do so because of his love and responsibility as the son is his world. In this way, we can say that the father confronts and goes beyond human limits. For another example, the man has never made a conversation with a stranger before he meets Ely, the elderly man. The man moves from an introvert situation to an extrovert one because he begins to build trust with someone other than his son.

This is significant in the attitude of the father who tries to balance between the opposites of being open and covert at the same time. Eventually, the father tries to swallow down his pain and not to worry his son. In one scene, "He woke coughing and walked out so as not to wake the child" (*The Road*, p.56), in another, he "felt a sharp hot pain in his

leg.” (The Road, p. 181). Despite the hard health condition, he pretends to be in a well being in front of his son.

It is therefore a struggle between his physical pain and psychological will to keep going on the road of trials. To sum up, confronting opposites reveals McCarthy's exploration of good versus evil and the sustainment of hope in his works, the father in The Road is of no exception from that

3.3.1. The Father as an Ethical and Moral Protector

The father was born before the big catastrophe before everything. So, he knows the importance of morals and tries to hold on to them and to pass them on to his son. He follows and controls every act, every move of the child completely and all that for his safety and wellbeing. The father showed what he was willing to do when he felt threatened, and when he and his son were surprised by a group of savages. They were able to escape from the group but were confronted by one man when the father and his tried to hide from them. The father initially had no desire to hurt the other man with his “grey and rotting teeth. Claggy with human flesh.” (1) He simply wanted to make sure that he would not run back to the truck to get back-up so they could hunt them down. This shows that even though the father realized that the other man posed a threat to him and the child, the father acts according to his moral code and is willing to spare his life, because he seemed unarmed and without the help of the other people, they outnumbered him.

But the situation changes when the man refuses to go with them and instead attacks the helpless boy. Instead of surrendering to their destiny, the father killed the man without hesitation. For him, the safety of his son is more important than everything else as he explains to him: “My job is to take care of you [...] I was appointed to do that by God.

1. The Road, Cormac McCarthy, Alfred A. Knopf, (2006, p. 75).

I will kill anyone who touches you.” (The Road, 2006, p. 77). Charlotte argues that “the man’s laborious choice is to bear pain, to go on, to believe in the boy as humanity’s narrowing future” (Charlotte Bahr, 2011, p. 67) because in the end, “the boy was all that stood between him and death.” (The Road, p. 29).

Yet, some of the acts the man commits raise the question whether at the end he really is one of the “good guys” or not that different to the people he proclaims as the “bad guys”. There are for example the people that are kept in a cellar, by a group of cannibals “harvesting chunks of their living flesh as food” (The Road, p. 141). When the two realize what they found they are both completely shocked, but in the end they are actually afraid of the people in the cellar and instead of trying to help them, the father panics, grabs the boy that tells him to run and leave the place as quickly as possible. When the man and the boy have fled from the cellar, he even takes the time to “slam down” (The Road, p. 111) the door, taking any chance of escape away from the captives. The man justifies his decision to not help the hostages by saying “... they’d eat us too” (The Road, p.127). “They” referring to the cannibals and the captives. The father could have helped the captives, but somehow saw them as equally threatening “bad guys” as the cannibals who were holding them.

In the end, the man grows sicker throughout the novel, and his illness is manifested in his persistent cough and bloody spit. At the end of The Road, the man dies next to a stream in the woods.

3.3.2. The Son as the Flame of Hope

“The child was my warrant, and if he is not the word of God, then God never spoke.” (Cormac McCarthy, 2006, p. 01) In The Road, the boy represents innocence that has been contaminated by the evil in the world. While his mother commits suicide to avoid her fear of not being able to protect him, the boy becomes like the voice of God to his father, who only wants to survive for his son's sake.

The boy was always sympathetic and encouraging his father to remain faithful to the goodness he once developed in the old world. Although he possesses no reference point other than his father, the boy sees life as something more precious than an endless struggle to survive. When he asks his father about their long-term goals, he is symbolically motioning to the potential return of a world where such aims would be feasible, where

people can exist beyond the immediacy of finding shelter and sustenance (p. 26). The possibility that resides in this simple question introduces a weak sense of hope that opposes his mother's weak hope by committing suicide and his father's constant battle against the allure of suicide and maintaining hope (McCarthy, 2006, p. 74)

In the novel, the boy threw the flute because he sees music something for the old world, a false hope that he cannot indulge in or connect with. The flute directly symbolizes the beauty of expression and the beauty in life. As the novel progresses, it becomes more and more evident that the beauty in the world has been lost and that the savage nature of the world is all that is left.

3.4. Good Guys vs Bad Guys

Above all, there is the relationship between the man and his son. This can be easily seen and detected in the novel. They tell each other that they are the good guys, that they are keeping the flame alive. The man teaches his son to fear the bad guys, cannibals and casual killers, and seeks to instil in him some form of morality. But the boy is more moral than the father, when they encounter others worse than themselves, the father fears them as potential competitors for resources, the boy feels compassion and wants to help them. The boy is innocent, the father isn't, but the boy's innocence exists in part because the father sacrifices his own in order to preserve it.

The two reassure each other, the boy is terrified whenever his father has to leave him, to search a building for supplies or to scout the road ahead. He seeks comfort that they are still the good guys. He asks questions with no answer. When the father kills a man, one of the "bad guys" they ensure that goodness prevails over badness.

The road agents and members of communes are the bad guys, and they're the ones who the man and boy in the novel fear and must watch out for. They rape, kill, and eat other humans. Throughout the whole novel, the boy has proposed to offer help to the people he and his father meet. The boy has adopted the morals of the oldworld that he has bestowed from his father's stories. By repeatedly proposing assistance to other survivors, he seems to have no doubt in human's goodness.

One of the instances that depict the boy's will to help others is his encounter with an old man struck by lightning, called Ely. The boy insists on providing help and food to that man, though his father strongly opposes the idea due to the lack of supplies (The Road, p. 141). The child always points to the subsistence of other good guys but the father seems to have no existence in his ethical universe (Adeline Johns Putra, 2019, pp. 19-20).

3.5. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, we may say that ethics and morality were of great importance in McCarthy's novel, The Road. The father and his son made all their efforts to be "good guys". Thus, they avoided the "bad guys", though the lack of food, shelter, and all the danger they encountered. The father's main objective was to protect his son, to keep the flame alive, thus the famous phrase "carrying the fire". That expression was of great importance. It has pushed the son to carry out his survival journey until the end.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

As a conclusion, The researcher may say that the novel *The Road* described a hopeless apocalyptic world full of destruction and despair. However, the father as an ethical and moral protector and the son as the flame of hope were able to survive as ethical and moral humans and not as cannibals because of their faiths.

The researcher has shown throughout this research that Cormac McCarthy was able to reveal that there is always hope for ethics and morality to play a significant role in the life of mankind, though it was almost the end of the world where the savages and Inhumans filled that world. Moreover, the author managed to show that without ethics and morality, the world would degenerate. So, ethics and morality have always an important role to play in the life of people.

In addition, the father and his son being the protagonists were able to survive that apocalyptic situation as good guys and not bad guys for they were carrying the fire. As a result, *The Road* despite of its darkness, it boosts humanity and brightness rather than darkness.

The achievement of such work was not an easy task for us. The lack of books and references made it difficult for us to cover it deeply. However, it can pave the way for exploring other areas of investigations and queries like a literary analysis of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* from an Ecological Ethics perspective.

From an ecological point of view, in the beginning of *The Road*, McCarthy shows the end of ecology on earth. However, McCarthy's main goal is earth's safety. The destruction of humanity due to that catastrophe has a psychological side on individuals and all the living beings. Despite violence and insecurity that rule *The Road*, from the beginning till the end, the writer made all his efforts to clarify that there is also a profound belief in the need for moral order. Thus, we can say that *The Road* reflects a hidden message which is the beauty of nature. Certainly, there is the post-apocalyptic landscape, but with morality and ethics, there is hope for a positive future.

General Conclusion

The ending of the novel is surprisingly hopeful. After all that violence and wandering, and after the father dies, leaving the son alone, some kindhearted people come and take in that lonely boy. Throughout the whole book, the father and his son have been on the lookout for the "good guys", and in the end they come and save the boy and thus, save humanity in general, according to McCarthy.

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Appendix 1

Biography of Cormac McCarthy

Cormac McCarthy was born in Rhode Island on July 20, 1933. He is the third of six children (the eldest son) born to Charles Joseph and Gladys Christina McGrail McCarthy (he has two brothers and three sisters). Originally named Charles (after his father), he renamed himself Cormac after the Irish King (another source says that McCarthy's family was responsible for legally changing his name to the Gaelic equivalent of "son of Charles").

In 1937, when he was four, the family moved to Knoxville, and his father became a lawyer for the Tennessee Valley Authority (legal staff 1934-67; chief counsel 1958-67). In 1967, the McCarthys moved from Knoxville to Washington, D.C., where Charles was the principal attorney in a law firm until his retirement.

Cormac was raised Roman Catholic. He attended Catholic High School in Knoxville, then went to the University of Tennessee in 1951-52. His major: liberal arts. McCarthy joined the U.S. Air Force in 1953; he served four years, spending two of them stationed in Alaska, where he hosted a radio show.

From 1957-59, McCarthy returned to the university, where he published two stories, "A Drowning Incident" and "Wake for Susan" in the student literary magazine, *The Phoenix*, calling himself C. J. McCarthy, Jr. While at the university, he won the Ingram-Merrill Award for creative writing in 1959 and 1960.

McCarthy left the university again, this time for good. He went to Chicago, where he worked, apparently as an auto mechanic, while writing his first novel. He later married Lee Holleman, who had been a student at the University of Tennessee, and the couple settled in Sevier County, Tennessee. They had one son, Cullen. Some time later, their marriage ended. (Lee McCarthy is the author of several books of poetry, including *Desire's Door*.)

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McCarthy's early career began with his sending to a manuscript of his first novel entitled *The Orchard Keeper*; however, the novel published in 1965 and was admired by the readers. In the same year, he voyaged to Ireland, his natal land, where he met Anne De Lisle and married with her in 1966. The couple set out a journey around Europe, in Spain McCarthy wrote his novel *Outer Dark*, which is a novel referring to biblical interpretation. Yet, this book "firmly established him as part of the Southern gothic literary tradition for its use of irony and the grotesque to explore cultural issues" (Greenwood 6). What helped Cormac McCarthy to build his reputation as a giant in literature was the publication of two novels, *Child of God* (1974) and *Suttree* (1979). These two novels reflect the dark lives of the southern society and how the twisting social hardships are tearing away individuals and divorcing them with their humanity and become brutal. After *Suttree* comes *Blood Meridian* (1985), this is the grand achievement of Cormac McCarthy in the 1980s. It was also the book that truly stimulated his literary reputation and put him high in literature's citadel. McCarthy wrote other novels which marked him with timeless recognition, these are; *All the Pretty Horses* (1992), *The Crossing* (1994), *Cities of the Plain* (1998), *No Country for Old Men* (2005), and his last one *The Road* (2006).

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Appendix 2

The Road, by Cormac McCarthy, Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.

Synopsis:

This is a story about a man and his son who are travelling along a road in the aftermath of a disaster that has destroyed most of the world. The man is harboring a bad cough, but tries to make the best of it since he's all his son has left. They travel light, carrying just what they need to survive, and are extremely cautious of the few people that they do come across. Supplies are limited since most of civilization has been destroyed. They carry a map and are heading towards the coast, hoping for better weather. During their journey, they encounter various individuals, including an armed group of militia, a lonely little boy, a basement full of prisoners to be eaten, and a blind old man. Along their journey, they find supplies of food and blankets, but the man insists that they keep moving. They eventually get to the coast and the man sees a distant boat off the shore. He swims to the boat and discovers that it's abandoned and contains useful supplies, like a flare gun. After raiding the boat of all of its supplies, the man and boy continue moving on. However, someone takes their cart and supplies, so they go after the thief. After retrieving their supplies and cart, they enter a quiet town, but are suddenly attacked by a man with a bow and arrow. The man is wounded by an arrow and his son can only watch as he tries to bandage his wound. The man is dying and tells his son that he must continue travelling on the road. In the end, after the man dies, a man and woman find the boy and invite him to travel with them. As always a lot can be said about this story, but what draws my interest and attention is the idea of our perception of ourselves and others as a "good guy" or a "bad guy". Throughout their journey, the man tells his son that they are good guys and that they are searching for other good guys. However, what makes things difficult, the father says, is that the good guys are mixed in among the bad guys. Whether there really exists good guys or bad guys in the world within the story doesn't really matter. This simplified view on life that categorizes people into two broad categories - either good or bad - seems childish, but it may have been necessary to teach the boy how their world, a desolate world, works. In the end, it all could have been made up by the man as a way to keep his son safe and wary of strangers. Yet this simplified outlook on others is used by people in our less-grayed

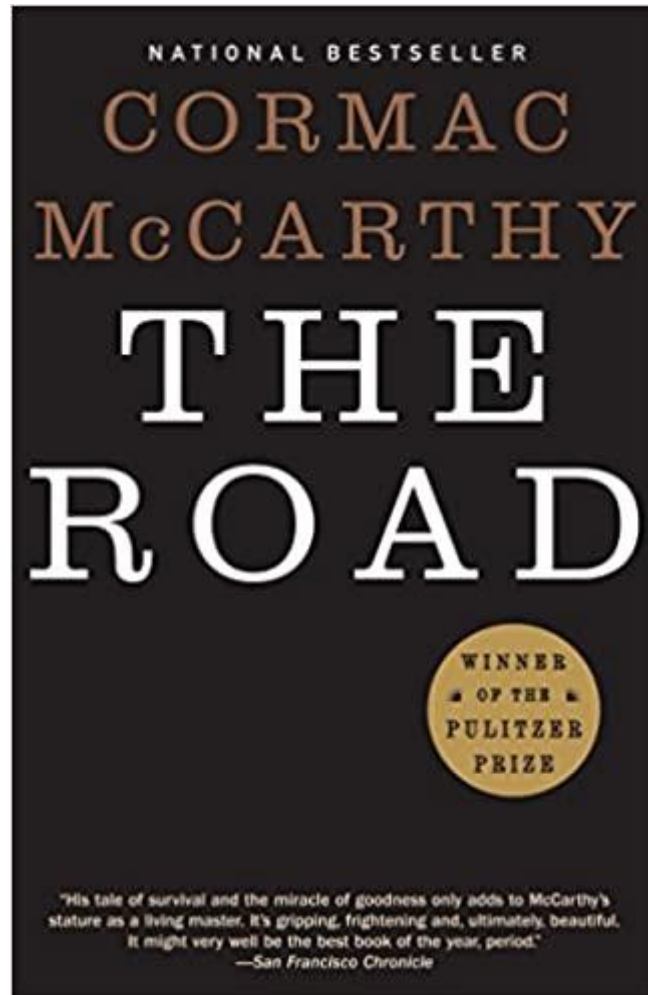
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world of today. Oftentimes, it's only natural that we place ourselves as the good guys, the individual who does no wrong and has the proper justification for our attitude and behavior. However, this also means that others are placed in the role of the bad guy, or at the very least, extras, or background characters, in our life. This can be dangerous because it sometimes can imply that we, as the good guy, are always right and that all injustices in our life are caused by others as the bad guys.

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Appendix3

The cover page of *The Road*, by Cormac McCarthy, Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.



If we look closely at the above cover page of *The Road*, by Cormac McCarthy, we may clearly see the black colour that dominates this page. This reflects the apocalyptic, catastrophic and devastated situation in the story and the collapse of values. Whereas the title, written with big size font and white, symbolizes hope and goodness that the father has traced in the soul of his son. It shows also the ethical and moral aspects the author believes in even when there is a world full of destruction and chaos.