



Survival of Positivity and Humanity in Cormac McCarthy's

The Road
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The Road was a novel written by Cormac McCarthy in 2006. This novel comes under the genre, of post-apocalyptic fiction. The Road has many themes in which positivity and humanity play a major part in elevating the plot. The struggle of a young boy and his father in a post-apocalyptic land was described by the author. In this study, we expose the positivity and humanity which survives among them even in their hardest situation. The Road shows the beautiful relationship between the father and his son. The urge to maintain a good fire is given much importance by Cormac.

Keywords: Post-apocalyptic, positivity, humanity, survival, catastrophe

INTRODUCTION:

American Literature was produced by the colonial people present in that region. It began in the early seventeenth century when English-speaking Europeans arrived in the United States. American literature was shaped by the history of that country like the other national kinds of literature came. America was a group of colonies for more than a century and a half and then that got scattered. After a great struggle against the motherland, America has become a United States, a nation. By the end of the nineteenth century, America has taken the world powers. The rise of science and industries got developed and it changed the thoughts and feelings of those people. These factors played a major part in the development of the United States in the literature.

There were some eras in American literature. They are Native Americans, the Enlightenment era which comprises the age of faith and age of reason, the Romanticism era, the Realism era, the Modernism era, and the Contemporary era. We could observe the various changes in the development of American literature right from the early Seventeenth century till the Twenty-First century. Even traces of African American literary works could be seen in American literature. Poetry was used as a weapon during the American Revolution. By the end of the Eighteenth-century novels and dramas were produced based on giving importance to histories.

Some of the important periods in American literature are the colonial period (1607- 1776), the Early National period (1776- 1830), the Romantic period (1830- 1865), the Realistic period (1865- 1900), the Naturalist period (1900- 1914), the Lost generation, and the Contemporary period (1945- present). Some of the famous and notable works of these periods are *The Leather stocking tales*, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, *The Bluest purple*, *The Color Purple*, etc.

The first American novel was William Hill Brown's *The Power of Sympathy* (1789). Some of the other notable works in American literature are James Fenimore's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851), Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), Cormac Mc McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* (1985), Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom* (2010) and so on.

Some of the major themes we could observe in American literature are the American dream, in which we see endless opportunities, self-reliance, and optimistically expect life to improve. Loss of innocence or coming of age is another major theme in which we see about the protagonist who goes through his adulthood through experience, knowledge, or both. The next major theme is alienation and isolation, the relationship with nature, the relationship with society, and the relationship with science, technology, and advancement in the world as a catalyst for change and survival of the fittest.

American literature focuses on politics, economics, and sociology. It deals with various aspects. We could find sarcasm, satire, and cynicism in most of the American works. Language is used as a tool for their protest. Puritanical and revolutionary topics can be seen in American literature than romances and human values. American literature completely differs from other English literature. And this stands out as unique in several ways.

Cormac McCarthy was born on July 20, 1933. He is an American writer. He wrote twelve novels, two plays, five screenplays, and two short stories. This spans the Western and post-apocalyptic genres. He is well

known for his graphic depictions of violence and his unique writing style, recognizable by the sparse use of punctuation and attribution. He is regarded as one of the greatest contemporary American writers. He wrote in genres like Southern Gothic, Western, and Post-apocalyptic.

He is one of the six children of Gladys Christina Mc Grail and Charles Joseph McCarthy. His family was Irish Catholics in 1937, and the family relocated to Knoxville, Tennessee, where his father worked as a lawyer for Tennessee Valley Authority. The family first lived on Noel ton Drive in the upscale Sequoyah hills subdivision by 1941. He had settled in the house on Martin Mill Pike in South Knoxville. Cormac McCarthy would later say, we were considered rich men because all the people around lived in one or two-room shacks.

Cormac McCarthy attended Knoxville Catholic High school and was an altar boy at Knoxville's Church of the Immaculate Conception. In 1951, he attended the University of Tennessee but dropped out in 1953 to join the United States Air Force. While he was stationed in Alaska, Cormac read books voraciously, which he claimed was the first time he had done so. He returned to Tennessee in 1957, where he published two stories *Wake for Susan* and *A Drowning Incident* in the student literary magazine *The Phoenix* written under the name C.J McCarthy Jr.

He won the Ingram Merrill Award for creative writing in 1959 and he also won Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and Qwill Award for General Novel in 2007. Cormac McCarthy won National Book Award for fiction in 1992 and James Tait Black memorial prize for fiction in 2006. McCarthy changed his first name from Charles, to avoid confusion and comparison with ventriloquist Edgar Bergen's Charlie McCarthy. Cormac McCarthy was one of the most pre-eminent and influential American novelists. He received widespread recognition when he was awarded for his novels. He is one of the most important American writers of our period. Some of his notable works are *Suttree* (1979), *Blood Meridian* (1985), *The Border Trilogy* (1992-1998), *No Country for Old Men* (2005), and *The Road* (2006).

McCarthy mainly writes in the genres like Gothic, Post-Apocalyptic, and western. After a great struggle in his life, he has slowly developed his standard in his career and his own life. He travelled to many places in search of opportunities. His works received great critical as well as positive responses from contemporary writers. Cormac is well versed in using minimal punctuation and was much influenced by his biographies.

Cormac McCarthy is a writer who is much confident in his works and he does not stick to the conventional style of writing. We could find vivid and direct representations of his thoughts and feelings. He uses a very simple

form of language and he does not force grammatical rules, spelling, and punctuation in his works. Mostly he deals with violence, horror, and pandemic elements in his works.

Suttree is a semi-autobiographical novel that was written by Cormac McCarthy. This got published in 1979. The setting of this novel is Knoxville, Tennessee. In 1950, the novel talks about Cornelius *Suttree*, who has refused to accept his former life to become a fisherman on the Tennessee River. In *Blood Meridian*, he says that people involved in hazardous enterprises like warfare often become preoccupied with the idea of fate the case in the novel. *The Border Trilogy* is a work that contains a series of novels in it. Some of them are *The Crossing* (1994), *All the Pretty Horses* (1992), and *Cities of the Plain* (1998).

No Country for Old Men is a neo-western crime thriller novel in 2005. The film was set in borderlands in west Texas in the early 1980s. The main theme of this novel is Dirty money and Desperate people. Anton Chigurh was a psychopathic killer; he sees himself as an agent of fate. They were using coins, bolt pistols, and Boar rusk for killing everyone. Ed Tom Bells was a devotee to justice and sheriff. He cannot handle the cash left behind and he takes everything with him. The central focus of the narrative is that each of them represented the past, present, and future of these the novel.

Post-apocalyptic is the genre in literature that covers human suffering, disaster, and destruction of the world which is affected because of a catastrophic event. Mostly this particular genre focuses on natural or man-made disasters. We could find zombies, nuclear war, viruses, climatic disasters, or even alien invasions. The end of the world or the suffering of the world can be seen in this particular genre.

The apocalyptic, dystopian, and post-apocalyptic genre has similar elements but differs from each other. In the apocalyptic genre, the destruction of the world is shown. In dystopic fiction, the destruction of the world and some political or social happenings are shown completely in a fictional world. In post-apocalyptic fiction, we could not see any formal society.

The major themes that we can find in the post-apocalyptic genre are survival, the importance of human concern, death, the breakdown of morality, and so on. This mostly comes under science fiction. Characters in this genre try to survive in that catastrophically stricken land and they struggle hard to survive. They come across various people who try to survive there. Memories play a vital role in this genre where the main character compares their life with their beautiful and happy past.

Some of the main features of post-apocalyptic fiction are these stories comprise adventures element, action, or survival stories. The ability to understand the new world and adapt is shown. Violence is also included

in this genre. For example, cannibalism, zombie attack, alien invasion, lack of food, shelter, missing family members, etc. end of the world is picturized in this genre.

The Road is about a father and a son who travel toward the southern coast. They were in search of a better place to live in that destructed land. An apocalyptic event has stricken their entire civilization a few months before the boy's birth. After that apocalyptic event, the son has not seen the moon, stars, sun, or living plants and animals for several days. Both the father and son share a deep bond of love and commitment toward each other. They started moving to various lands until they find the perfect area for them to survive. They could not find proper food, shelter, or even clothing. They could not able to find anyone with humanity and goodness.

They both struggled a lot to preserve their memories of the past and were increasingly worried about their present and future. The father suffered from a worsening respiratory condition which led him to cough blood but he was much more confident about leading his son toward their destination. Because of the lack of agriculture, animals, and plants, there was a rise in cannibalism that got widespread.

Road agents and cults hunt the other travellers and kept women as slaves to produce babies for their food. But they both continued their journey where they had two pistols left for safeguarding themselves. The father and son came across a few farmhouses from where they got some essentials that kept them alive from starvation. They even got a flare gun and first aid kit from a sailboat.

They encountered various characters on the road which taught them not to trust anyone among those cannibals. They hoped to meet some good men with humanity. We could observe that only at the end of the novel, after the death of the father. Even though the father's health condition worsened, he constantly kept motivating his son to never leave him until he reached his destination.

The kind-hearted son insisted his father help the people who suffered from various aspects on their way. Father consoled his son by giving hope that the goods will find him even if he was not with him. He even handovers the gun with two bullets which are considered as an aid that saves them. After the death of his father, the son kept weeping and sat next to his father for almost three days. A man arrives there and investigates the dead man next to the boy. After knowing about the dead man, he invites the boy to join his family. The son questions that man whether he has a fire within him. It means where he belongs to a good man or cannibals.

By the end of this novel, the son moves along with that man and joins a new family. He mourned beside his father and he left with that man. The wife welcomed the son with a joyful hug and expressed her gratitude that he was with them. From this, the author conveys the positivity that was present in them. This novel majorly points

out the various struggles that the father and his sons face to survive in that post-apocalyptic land. Some of the critics have shared their various opinions.

This novel even shows up the responsibility of the father in taking care of his son right by giving him proper food, shelter, and safety. Meanwhile, the boy's sense of humanity is visibly seen in this entire novel. Cormac McCarthy has used a fragmented style which makes the readers a sense of uncertainty and urgency. Critics like Michael Madsen, Mark Busby, and Janet Maslin criticized *The Road*.

Cormac McCarthy has used literary devices like figurative language, foreshadowing, and imagery. He also used some metaphors, and symbolism and used various tones and moods according to the characters. This novel also explores ecological, psychological, and sociological changes that take place in that catastrophic land. We could even notice various elements which show the before and after of life in that land. Stream of consciousness can also be observed in this novel where the father recalls his past life where they lived happily and peacefully.

This novel portrays a post-apocalyptic landscape that covers a barren land, ashes, and an empty road. People starved for food and cannibalism is the best example of the level of starvation that they faced in that barren land. Many people lost their families and even their lives. But the positivity and humanity present in that boy and the man helped them reach their destiny after several great struggles. They suffered both physically and mentally.

Elliot Ackerman said *The Road* was the best post-apocalyptic fiction. There are different types of apocalypses. He gave examples of more vengeful apocalypses, like Sodom and Gomorrah, which were the god's wrath on humanity. Because of that reason, it deals with death, not just death but the end of humanity. If there was a point of giving life a feel less precious, *The Bible*, *The Koran*, and Canonical religious texts give meaning to life and show how to live life. The apocalyptic stories depend on historical moments. *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy has archived a living titan status of literary fiction, based on violence, and philosophy.

The Road is probably McCarthy's 'Happiest book'. But it is a little weird to sincerely say that the overt love relationship in all of his works was solely dependent on the father and son relationship. The beginning and the end give importance to the power of love. McCarthy works to show the dynamic of human violence in the natural world. *The Road* seems like an extreme biblical version, most are just as dead and devoid as they are in the nightmarish world that McCarthy has imagined. The Road acts as a warning, showing us what a world without much life could look and feel like, and for that alone it is important.

George Monbiot recommends this book for its crucial reading. This is the most important 'Environmental Book' that has ever been written. He imagined the world with the biosphere and the experiment about environmentalism. The horror story arises from the disappearance of the biosphere. They thought about survival by feeding themselves, but they are thrown into brutal and fatal competition among those people. *The Road* is the 'Ground Zero of environmentalism'.

McCarthy imagines an extra scenario of losing everything in the world and they use the brilliant sparseness and starkness to refuse, where there is no hope. *The Road* is entirely based on a hopeless situation and they felt that was dishonest. The novel ends with a message of hope and renewal. *The Road* makes its environmental apocalypse particularly noticeable in humans. Human beings are remarkably resilient.

James Miller recommends this post-apocalyptic novel. He stated that *The Road* is such a powerful story. We have an utterly bleak scenario and it was incredible, they used a limited palette of blackness, ash, coldness, and snow. But the situation is against the father and son, but they build an incredibly emotional relationship. The father sacrifices everything for his son but the son remains full of humanity. Someone tries to steal their stuff and they stop him. The love of the father and son relationship is the same till the end.

James explored the meaning of life in *The Road* novel, a wonderful, powerful, Unforgettable story. James Wood's review of *The Road*, 'survivors' in post-apocalyptic minimalism is assumed. Minimalism can be very good, certainly, for the life of fiction. Cormac McCarthy's reputation as an ornate stylist. *The Road* represents both a logical terminus and a kind of ultimate triumph in the American minimalist. A father and son are making their way southward, America toward the sea with the hope that they find a human community. Ten years ago, the boy's mother committed suicide rather than survive in that world. But the father had ordinary life memories before the catastrophe.

McCarthy beautifully explored the two generations' lives. The father gives better life to his son in the violent world. They only need food and shelter to survive the world. McCarthy is not afraid to stint the banal to the Contemporary American Civilization that was overthrown by events. and they think give ideas and are patient with things. McCarthy is writing at his best. He indeed belongs to the company of the American masters. McCarthy likes to stage bloody flights between good and evil towards the fatalistic. To compare McCarthy to Beckett, as some reviews have done, is to flatter McCarthy.

Survival of humanity and positivity was the major theme that revolves in this novel. Cormac McCarthy has used many elements to show up this theme. The father and the son had a sense of humanity and positivity

which helped them to survive in that catastrophic land and their intention of helping others while they pass by can be seen here. Some of the major incidents of humanity and positivity were described in the following chapter.

SURVIVAL OF POSITIVITY AND HUMANITY:

Positivity and humanity are the key element in this novel that initiate the survival spirit in the leading characters. The novel begins with the journey of a father and a son toward the southern coast founding a better place to survive. The description of the post-apocalyptic landscape is explained that has collapsed because of a catastrophic event that has stricken the land. Cormac has described the landscape as darkness and everything has been covered up with ashes. They could hardly breathe. All they could hear is the silence after the disaster. Apart from the silence they could hear their heart beating up. This shows how the protagonists of this novel struggle to survive in that land.

The barren landscape where we could find constant threats to the lives of people. All the creatures and plants were covered with ashes. The man wakes up and looks around him. He had a dream last night in which he holds the hands of his son and moves forward having very little hope within him. His son has not seen anything like the sun, moon, or other living things since birth.

The man kept sure that he has everything needed for his son before moving on. The boy was asleep. The father carried a pistol with him which has a bullet and that too for his son. Father and his son came across many places which were not safe for them to live in. They slept on the roads covering them with blankets. They crossed the river. The boy observed his father's actions and he has some uniqueness in his character. They took some essentials and left that place. They share a beautiful bond of fatherhood. This event portrays the intensity of positivity they have within them and that influences the son too.

They suffered from severe colds. Everything that they find was only waste and they cannot make use of those things. That gave them extra suffering and pain but then their strong positivity kept them moving further on that road. The father suffered from a severe respiratory disorder but then he wanted to save his son. He pushed himself to that dreadful journey. He does not even know what the month it is as they do not have any calendar for years. This indicates that the world has been in a destructive state for some time. The stronger hope and the survival spirit prevailed in them. They both carried some essentials like food, tools, and a pistol to keep them safe and alive. Paternal love can be seen obviously between them. In every situation, the father keeps protecting his son by preaching about his humanity.

They started moving on the road pushing their cart loaded with their belongings and the supplies that they needed for them to survive. At first, they reached a gas station where he made a call to his father but everything was in vain all they could do is to carry some oil for their lamp. It was only darkness and ashes covered up around them. The very next day they reached the city. The landscape was like a charcoal sketch of the city. It was that grey covered with ashes We could observe the steam of consciousness in the man who recalls his memories either it could be happy or sad. It was raining then, they covered up all their cart and hide near the rocks. After the rain stops, they unwrapped the spread and moved on. This is one of the hurdles that they tackled in that long journey.

They had very poor meals and slept near the woods. The boy listened to the water-dripping sounds and has fallen asleep. The father secured his son from all the dangers. They reached the city which had no sign of life. Hurricanes have stricken hard. They did not find even fresh water to drink. They could not even find single-road agents or travellers. Positivity is seen here from which they kept moving toward their destination which was not set. This novel mainly revolves around the bonding between the father and his son. The father clarified good versus evil to his son. He also taught him about humanity and the power of the god who resides everywhere. "He knew only that his child was his warrant. He said: If he is not the word of God never spoke." (5)

The man and the son continued and they both try to link themselves with God. They tried to manage with food whatever they find. The man had very poor sleep which worsened his health condition even more. Crops were found flattened and dead. They peeped into a farmhouse where they found some food and carried it with them. Nearby they went into the supermarket, they found two soft drinks vending machine which was tilted down. Coins were completely covered up with ashes. The boy looked at the Coca-Cola and asked his father what it is. The father replied that it was a treat for him. He opened that tin and gave it to his son. He looked into it and found the bubbles coming out which is fizz. He shared it with his father and he too drank.

The man and his son travelled like pilgrims toward all the cities. The boy carries the fire and he keeps the fire within him. The fire mentioned here is the humanity present in every humankind. The element of positivity can be seen right from the beginning of the novel. "And nothing bad is going to happen to us. Because we're carrying the fire. That's right. Because we're carrying the fire." (83). The father and the son make camp while they pass. They try to manage themselves with the minimal food that they carry. They kept following the road without thinking about their end. This shows the positivity that they have within them.

The boy finds everything new to him when they cross. He questioned his father about the things he looks because he has not seen those before. They encountered the bones of animals too. Suddenly the land trembled.

The boy busted out in fear and the shaking stopped. The man gave hope to his son by telling him that it was only the earthquake and it has gone now. They ate cold rice and beans that they cooked a few days before. At first, they found some refugees moving around but then no one was there around them.

Dreams and memories play a major role in this novel. The father recalls the moment when his son was born and the special bond that they both share. In his dreams, his wife comes and he thinks about the happy times that they shared. But she died leaving them to suffer. It was snow then after rain. They couldnot even push their cart forward as it was covered up with snow. They camped at places where they feel safer. The boy kept questioning his father about his doubts. The man picked some morels and gave some of it to his son to taste and he told him that it was a kind of mushroom. They shivered and walked away from there. Cormac has given deep detailing of the places they pass by.

They slept on a truck that day. They came across wood smoke and kept moving on. The man uses to carry his wife's image which shows familial love. He moves back to his memories where he heard some concussions and power has gone. His wife placed her hands on her belly when she was pregnant with the boy. The man feels hard to answer his son's questions when he asks about his past. He and his wife kept talking about death. They discussed how cannibals will kill them and rape the for food. They dreamt only about danger and nothing else. She was not with them except in memories. The boy questioned what happened to his friends. The man answered that he missed them and they all were dead.

The son raises questions about the good and bad guys. Later they went into houses they cross by to get something that will help them for surviving. The son sees a little boy there but the father could not find him. Because the man doesnot want his son to starve without food in the future. So that he hesitated to help them. He came to know that some people are silently noticing them.

Their struggle for survival continues but their hope doesnot fade away. Humanity plays a great part in this area. They both can sense that the landscape with dead people without flesh was the result of cannibalism. Even in harder times, the father insisted his son not hurt other living creatures. The father asked his son whether they are going to die but the son isnot sure about it. But the father assures him that they would not die as of now.

They both kept starving for food, shelter, cold and from the bad guys. They somehow survived with the last tin of food. They climbed and searched in the kitchens of the town. They found corpses too. Everything there

smelled rot. He looked for some clothes again he went back down. Darkness came fast. They shared a great time even whether it was happy or sad. Humankind is seen when they helped a dog that followed them for two days. Cormac is much keen on elevating such themes in his works.

Motivation plays a vital part in this novel. The father boosts his son with abundant positivity and humanity. Even though the father opens up about the bad guys around them he also shared about the good guys who still prevail in that catastrophic land. The man kept insisting with his son about the protection that will be given either by him or the god.

You wanted to know what the bad guys looked like. Now you know. It may happen again. My job is to take care of you. I was appointed to do that by God. I will kill anyone who touches you. Do you understand? Yes. He sat there cowered in the blanket. After a while, he looked up. Are we still the good guys? He spoke. Yes. We're still the good guys. (65)

Later, they could find a grand estate that looked horrible. This describes the other terrible landscape of that area that was described by Cormac. We can witness the cannibalism that has taken place. The entire estate was dumped with naked women and men who were dead. In the basement, they found alive humans who were stocked up for their food. They treated women as their slaves and used them to produce babies for food.

Father kept protecting his son from all the evilness and they struggled to escape from terrible situations with tremendous positivity and hope. "There's a reason this is locked" (108). The father and the son somehow managed to survive cannibalism. The memories from the past hit the man hard. He thought about his dead wife who left them for some goodness. They fought against death with the little fire within them.

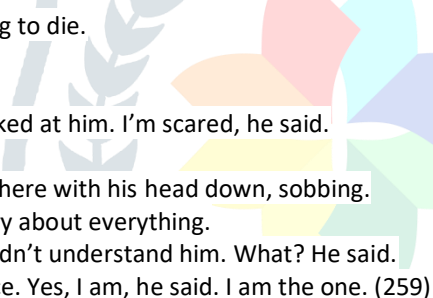
They drank only water and moved on. They were almost exhausted. Few people hide away from cannibals. They kept running from them. The boy was scared of everything happening around him. But we could find his father beside him every time by holding him and protecting him. Everything that happens shattered their hearts and minds. Surviving was the toughest thing there. Dust surrounded them. The man became weak and heading forward became the toughest thing.

The boy was keen on carrying the fire within him by not hurting anyone. He even feels guilt for not helping the people he crosses by. The father keeps pushing himself from his struggle only to make his son away from that

catastrophic land: "People were always getting ready for tomorrow. I didn't believe in that. Tomorrow wasn't getting ready for them. It didn't even know they were there." (168).

Whatever obstacles they across, both the father and the son carried their fire of being a good man in the catastrophic land. The father observed some of his actions in his son's activities. The man and the boy shared a strong bond within them. Later they meet an old man named Ely. He shared his thoughts on survival in that land. From that incident, they took on the hope of survival. The old man also added up that his real name wasnot Ely and he doesnot believe in God.

The boy wants to help the people whom he meets but the father wanted to save food for their survival. The boy is sure that the old man will die for sure. This resulted in the breakage of the bond between the father and his son. But the man tried to explain to his son the situation that they are undergoing. Positivity and humanity prevailed in that man but then all he wanted is to save his son even by giving up his own life. Even the landscape illustrates the images of death. This novel majorly focuses on the death and future after the struggle for survival:



He was just hungry, Papa. He's going to die.
 He's going to die anyway.
 He's so scared, Papa.
 The man squatted and looked at him. I'm scared, he said.
 Do you understand? I'm scared.
 The boy didn't answer. He just sat there with his head down, sobbing.
 You're not the one who has to worry about everything.
 The boy said something but he couldn't understand him. What? He said.
 He looked up, his wet and grimy face. Yes, I am, he said. I am the one. (259)

The father's health got worsened and he couldnot move forward in saving his son. They didnot move anywhere for four days. But positivity lasted longer than him. But he kept motivating his son that some good men are left in this world. And he should find those people and keep that fire alive even after him. He also promised his son that he will be with him till eternity. We can notice the beautiful bond that they share at this point. The man reached his death and even the boy could realize that he is losing his father. The boy could sense that someone is following them up. They kept escaping from the murderers.

The father could observe that his son is no longer a child and then he is capable of handling things. He doesnot allow his son to stop carrying the fire since he could find good men like them. The man and the boy have discovered and come across many things in their grueling journey and they kept in search of the place which will be suitable for them to live. Finding a better place to live was their ultimate aim. They need to keep them away

from cannibals and other hazards. The father has less trusting power when compared to his son because of his life experience. But then he tries to sort out the misunderstandings that occur between him and his son.

With the help of the map, they headed toward the beach but they couldnot find anything that could help them to survive so they returned. Suddenly the father came to know that the boy lost his pistol on the beach and they went back in search of that. Meanwhile, the tempest has stricken. The father and the son found a ship where they could stay for that night. They searched for the pieces of stuff that could help them to be alive. They were happy to have pieces of stuff that helped them to be alive over some time.

A few days later their stuff on that ship has been stolen by thieves. They both searched for those thieves with traces of sand. To their surprise, it is a single thief and not thieves. We could find various representations of all the characters. Every character symbolizes a different motive in their life. The man raised his pistol toward the thief and ordered him to return everything he had stolen.

The boy pleased his father for not killing the thief. In this area, the thief urges to live so he searches for food and steals everything that he needs to survive. Even this is a symbol of positivity where he has the positive hope that he will struggle hard to survive somehow in that barren land. The father considered his son's request and they left the thief naked and alone on the road. All they could do is only that. The man couldnot even give up the belongings that he saved for his son to live there.

The boy wasnot happy about the action that his father did. He always wanted to help everyone. We could find the care of the son towards others. Even though this attitude was taught by his father but then the situation decides every action of those characters. All these incidents run through the mind of that young boy. Other incidents that took place on that road hurt the boy deeply.

The father advised the boy and tells him that he does it only for him and he should live long. That night, the father's health got worsened and he had a bloody cough. He couldnot even stand up erect. The boy searched for people who could help them. The man's love for his son is seen in this novel: "You said you wouldn't ever leave me. I know. I'm sorry. You have my whole heart. You always did. You're the best guy." (279) Even then the boy kept questioning the events that were happening around them. He couldnot find anyone. He lied close to his father:

He slept close to his father that night and held him but when he woke in the morning his father was cold and stiff. He sat there a long time weeping and then he got up and walked out through the woods to the road. When he came back, he knelt beside his father and held his cold hand, and said his name over and over again. (281).

Days later, a bearded man came near the boy with a shotgun. He asked the boy whether the man is his father. The boy said that it was his father. The man came to know that he has died. Even this man was the representation of the man with humanity and positivity which lead them to the destination. He asked the boy whether he would travel with him. The boy asked the man about carrying fire. The man replies that he carries fire and he said that he has a son and a little girl. The boy says goodbye to his father and joins the new family. It brings to an end that God will be present in all men if one carries the spirit of fire within them.

If we look at the characteristics of the man, he is so kind-hearted and he cares a lot for his son. He keeps motivating his son about humanism and survival spirit. He gives tremendous positivity in tackling the hardship they face. The man survives only for his son who learns everything by observing his father. He even sacrificed his food and starved to keep his son alive. The man is much more controlled about handling the stuff they carry with them. This does not mean that he does not have humanity. Instead, this shows his love for his son.

The man does some meaningless stuff where he calls through broken telephones and visits hopeless places. He knows that he could not find anything that helps but then the positivity hidden within him triggers him to do that. All his actions give him hope which will be carried out by his son later. Recalling his memories has been a great part of this novel. He shows that death is inevitable and he teaches the spirit of hope and positivity.

The boy takes over the place of his father after his demise. There were some ups and downs in their relationship. Father always wanted to save his son but the son wanted to help other travellers who struggle to survive. The boy is dependent completely on his father. He learns everything from his father and develops his skills to handle the universe. He does not have any memories like his father and he has seen only destruction. Both the son's and father's perspectives seem to be different. The boy himself represents the symbol of positivity when he helps strangers.

The boy learns the methods of survival after his father's death. He was capable of analyzing the people belonging to bad guys or good guys. Moving on to the next character, Ely was an old man. The boy and his father met him on the road. He traveled alone and does not believe in God which was quite opposite to the belief that

man holds. He doesnot want to give his real identity to anyone and doesnot even share his real name with other survivors.

He doesnot even need anyone to help him. But the boy knows that he suffers a lot with no proper food. So, the boy wanted to him but then the old man refused it. Apart from that, the father doesnot want to sacrifice their supplies for that old man. Ely thinks that death is a common thing that waits for every human being. He respects the boy but then he doesnot believe his beliefs. Other minor characters were opposite to positivity and humanity.

The Road by Cormac McCarthy includes various elements in it. This comprises themes like sexuality, death, survival, suffering, and struggle. All these were tackled with the help of major themes of positivity and humanity which are much needed for enhancing this novel. Destruction is the sole purpose of this novel. The novel begins with great destruction and ends in the destruction itself but with a hopeful ending.

Cormac used morality in his works. He coveys some strong and deep messages through his works and the description of each and everything will be so deep. Even we could find the detailing in his works. The emotions were also depicted well in the novel. The characters are the pillars of *The Road*. Without that positivity, the novel would have ended up worse and humanity saved the boy at the end. To the surprise, the author concluded this novel in a hopeful thing that the audience didnot expect as he carried out the entire novel with grueling hardships.

Cormac McCarthy has shown the differentiation in characters. There are many symbols and motifs that McCarthy used to illustrate the various theme. Even the genre, post-apocalyptic itself is the quite opposite of the major theme, positivity, and humanity. Cormac has induced the theme of positivity and humanity in the major characters which concludes this novel where the boys join a new family after the demise of his father.

CONCLUSION:

American literature refers to English-language literature which was mostly written by authors from the United States. American Literature also included some stories from developing nations too. This literature creates a link between the American identity as well as the country's literature. We could wide variety of writers who uses enormous themes and creativity in their works.

Cormac McCarthy was one of the acclaimed writers in American literature. He was well known for his works which have some pessimistic and violent touch. He is also well-versed in exploring the darker side of

human nature. He has a unique style of writing. He also received many awards and he is considered America's greatest author. He prefers to write instead of conveying something through his speech.

McCarthy's work has some characters who will be outside society and struggle with moral and ethical standards. Cormac even uses biblical illusions in his work to add some extra touch. Readers will enjoy the various themes that take them through the fictional world itself. He was one of the promising and emerging talents during his schooling.

At first, Cormac novels were not enjoyed by the audience but then he came up with notable works that created a greater impact on the reader's mind. His work *The Road* was taken as a film and it got adapted as an Oscar-winning film in 2007. He does not have any scientific background but then he explored various scientific genres in his works. He even brings out some social crises in his works.

Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* was presented with an interesting study for thematic and stylistic analysis that was associated with the American West novels. It was the most important spiritual novel. Impersonal depiction of cannibal murder in the aftermath of an unknown apocalyptic land and their haunting is seen. But it is not as a spirituality that was found in the vapid self-aggrandizement of those who promote secrets for life improvement. *The Road* is a tradition of narrative death, despair, hope, positivity, and humanity. The father and son make a tortuous journey toward the coast and across the wasteland of post-apocalyptic America.

The Road ultimately covers a father sacrificing everything in his life for his son but the hope they both keep on surviving despite a nightmare landscape, only for the son's sake. The man reflects upon one of his dreams when the boy was asleep. But they continue their journey, exhausted and still starving on the place. The man does not realize how much the boy worries about him while the boy depends on his father. In the end, the boy survives with positivity and humanity.

The world was destroyed and then the landscape is ravaged but the father started the journey for his little boy with hope and he believes that he can even survive in the catastrophic world. The father was affected by a breathing disorder for a long time and smoke ashes affected his health. The son was in a chronic state of terror because of what he left on the human race from serious scrutiny.

They drag themselves through to the 'barren silent' and 'godless land'. The relationship between a father and a son was their blind faith in the obnoxious world. We could even observe a deep understanding of the violence increasing without no limit to human cruelty.

One night they stay in the camp with the snowy woods. When the trees fall around them, the man and son run to get out of the pathway of falling trees. The next morning, they find the cart to keep their feet warm and dry. They will make a fire camp for the freezing night as the men were searching for food for them. The man holds his son too closely trying to keep his son warm. They don't have food but they keep surviving with hope. The next day, the father and son part ways with Ely.

Ely was a blind old man he doesn't want to give his real name. Ely says he doesn't believe in a god. The boy said to his father that they want to help the old man. The father also wanted to do but he thinks about their survival which depends upon that minimal food. When he saw the little boy, he never thought that he would see the little boy again. Later they made a fire camp in the place to stay for that night.

The boy feels Ely was so sick that he is going to die soon. The boy will explore his humanity at this incident. The son persuades his father to leave Ely with some food and cans, however, Ely doesn't thank the little boy. Ely is out on his own. Ely wonders if the boy believes the god. But the boy still represents hope, perhaps the presence of sense and goodness, and remains a good guy in the caustic world.

The father and son were first to encounter cannibals moving down to the truck. The cannibals are wearing a dust mask and carry trifles in their hands. They are around on the road so the boy and his father hide near the road. And waited for them to pass on the road but one person approaches the son. So, the father gunpoint the man, but he seizes the boy instead. The father shoots the man immediately and he died, and they flee deeper into the woods.

After, they returned to the road the next morning. The father was searching for the truck but the truck has moved on and the road was full of burnt skin and boiled bones. In this incident, the father will protect his son, which clearly shows the "bad guys" and "good guys" for the son. The father and son move to the old house. It was a horror and they find a full of naked women and men in the house after they realized that cannibals are harvesting the people for food. But the father gives hope to his son to survive in the world.

The out case of the man and boy was supplied while they are exploring on the beach. The thief entered with the knife and took everything in that place. When the father returned to his son, they were so confused because the food and shelter were robbed. After this, the father searches the road and they try to find traces of sand. And the boy sees some sand and they follow it, finally, they end up catching that person.

The man makes the thief remove his clothes at the gunpoint. They both leave the thief shivering on the road. The boy argues with his father about the thief and cries for the man. The boy shows a sense of goodness

and innocence. The father was explaining about the thief and he doesn't behave normally. He advised his son that everyone he sees will not be a good person. This incident shows his humanity and he wanted to help others every time.

The father sees his son as a sign of the god's existence, and he gives hope to his son to survive in the world. But the boy recognizes an aspect of humanness in the dangerous world. After the father died, a new man entered into the boy's life and carried the revolver in the same way as the father used to. The boy was thinking about whether the new person is a good or bad guy and he was in confusion to trust or not. The boy asked him whether he is carrying the fire with them. The man said that he has a little boy like him.

Finally, the boy trusts the new man and goes with him. When they move to their place, the boy goes back to his father and says goodbye to his father. The boy covered his father with a blanket. A new person is a trustworthy person and a good guy. Finally, the boy joins a new family. In *The Road*, the author conveys that there can be despair and bloodshed on the road but has the elements of hope and positivity in it. Violence is the antagonist in the novel because of the presence of cannibalism in the post-apocalyptic landscape.

We saw the in-depth analysis of the novel which runs on the theme of the survival of humanity and the positivity that was present in the major characters who struggle to keep that spirit alive. We could find many repeated motifs as the man and the boy looking at the road and their anxiety increases thinking about their past and future. They came across various characters and that teaches them a lesson.

This novel contains the power of transformation and risk. It shows the darkest side of humankind and the evilness. This deals with philosophical aspects too. McCarthy explores a wide range of elements to bring out this novel to its best and even this was taken as a movie and got released in 2010. Few of them reviewed that this disturbs their mind.

Apocalyptic movies come in three main categories. They are, "This isn't going to happen", "What if this happened?" and "This is going to happen". *The Road* comes under the last two categories. The incidents that happened felt like a nightmare but in a terrific mode. Every moment in this novel was crossed with pain, suffering, and hope.

The Road even conveys the theme that everyone should take care of themselves and shouldn't trust anyone and depend on them for survival. One will learn lessons through their journey in this world. Description of the landscape was given in detail by Cormac which brings the readers deep into the book.

Cormac McCarthy added some thriller in this work where readers were dragged inside the plot while going through. There were many ups and downs shown in *The Road*. Every journey has some struggles and overcoming them is the true identity of one. Here the boy learns everything from his father about tackling the hardest situations and carrying the fire till the last.

This novel looks similar to the Dystopian genre but then this comes under post-apocalyptic fiction. If we take dystopian fiction there are some following characteristics from which we could understand it as dystopian. They are, it takes place completely in a fictional world and everything that happens will be too bad. This may or may not comprise the apocalypse.

In dystopian fiction, the characters live in a world where everything will be strictly regulated by the government. And that problem will be addressed by the protagonist. But in post-apocalyptic fiction, this plot takes place in a non-technological world that has been destroyed largely. The events will take place after the catastrophic event and the characters try to survive in that new landscape mentally and physically, they struggle hard. The characters find other survivors in this genre.

The Road gives the differentiation between the good and bad. We could even find the religious qualities that ponder in this novel. Cormac McCarthy was efficient in using numerous characters in his works. Before introducing the characters, Cormac draws the attention of the readers by using a distinct phrase. Cormac has used new use of languages in which the readers can connect themselves easily.

In the end, the author has concluded it with three endings. The first is it ends happily when the boy finds a new family and new life. The second ending is a tragic one. In which the entire civilization got destructed and it takes time to get back to normal. Finally, the third ending is a hopeful one. This ending shows the hope which helped the boy to survive in that destructed land. Cormac left the conclusion in the reader's hands.

The Road is a new kind of fiction that got the attention of the readers. This novel has some emotional connections. Many critics compared the works of Cormac with other contemporary writers like Faulkner, Steinbeck, and Hemingway. We could find similar styles used by these authors too. In the review of *The Road*, Mark Busby writes that McCarthy 'evokes John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, another road novel that has a post-apocalyptic tone, where the dust-filled air obscures the sun and where faceless men drive others to seek survival however, they can.'

After reading this particular novel, one gets enormous information that will help us in leading our life. Many practical themes were used in this novel. *The Road* shows up as the reflection of humankind. The open

message, we find in this novel is the apocalypse which was created by God and then all that happens will be the reason for something good that awaits and nothing happens without a reason.

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