

ANARCHISM TO SANGUINITY: A STUDY OF THE CORMAC MCCARTHY'S NOVEL "THE ROAD"

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Abstract: After the world war, American society explodes into miserable condition due to anxiety, loneliness and boredom. Forerunner and contemporary writers of Cormac McCarthy reflected such wretched condition of human being. Human being caught between faith and unfaith. They disturb by the eliminating moral value of the world. But Cormac McCarthy presented not only apocalyptic picture but also propose meaning and goodness in life. Nihilism and craving for human values pertains in the novel of Cormac McCarthy. His novel is potent and powerful enough to be discussed and assessed from more than one perspective regarding the values of human being. So the attempt shall also be made to explore how McCarthy has presented his wounded psyche regarding the condition of human being and his new vision regarding the status of value on the face of post-modernism.

Key words: Apocalypse, nihilism, anxiety, human value

Introduction:

Cormac McCarthy is a pioneering novelist in the American literature. His logical views and narrative technique has become the subject of discussion of literati, critics, academics and inquisitive readers of novel across the world. He has written ten novels which gives him name and popularity in the world of literature. These works are like "No country for old men", "Blood Meridian", "All The Pretty Horses", "The Road", "Sutree". His most popular novel "The Road" has got Pulitzer prize in 2006.

On the ground of nihilistic picture of his novel, most of the critics consider Cormac McCarthy's novel is written in a nihilistic line. But on the contrary critics like Edwin T. Arnold argues that, "McCarthy's characters are clearly motivated by those emotions we all share love, loneliness, guilt, shame, hope, despair; the narratives are driven by distinct thematic concern move at least in the direction of some form of resolution..."

So Cormac McCarthy's novels have various shades. It presents the various perspectives of life where the goodness and evil struggle with each other. It discussed the various situations by considering the present scenario on various perspectives. To come to know about the real perspective of his novel, the present paper highlights the two sides, nihilism and optimism in the novel The Road.

Alienation And Nihilism:

Alienation and nihilism reflected in the novels of Cormac McCarthy. His most of his novels filled up with darkness where is no rays of goodness. It forcibly exemplifies the uprootedness of men and nihilistic approach of writer's towards life. Almost of his novel present the gloomy picture of the world where no hope for God. Cormac McCarthy beautifully presents the pathetic condition of human being prevailing after the 2nd world war. His character tried to get meaning in their life but they failed. Because the violence is became an inherent part of the human condition. If it is repressed which create disturbance in the world. So violence can be restricted but not stopped.

Novel *The Road* begins with the following dark words: "When he woke in the woods in the dark and the cold of the night he'd reached out to touch the child sleeping beside him. Nights dark beyond darkness and the days more gray each one than what had gone before." It indicates the limitless darkness spread up in the world. Men's values are insignificant before the wickedness. McCarthy's characters never abandon a non-illusory view of their surroundings. They act and hardly talk. They move forward even though there is no vision to follow and no lighthouse to point the way in the darkness. In the first part of the book the father and child are walking south toward the sea but when they reach it, they are disappointed to find that the sea is not blue but gray. Yet, the two keep going because it is not the blue sea or any other destination that gives meaning to their journey. What they become is the outgrowth of what they do. This idea is demonstrated when the two find their own footsteps on the ground and conclude that by following them they will be going in the right direction—they will be doing what they are doing.

The necessity of movement means their journey is unavoidable. They have no choice to abandon their quest and thereby avoid the dangers of the road, since they are in danger no matter where they are in this world. The journey becomes the only means for finding potential safety, and the greatest task of the journey is enduring through to the end. Endurance becomes a daily struggle, both physically and mentally, as it tests their faith in the journey. There remains for them only one alternative to travelling – death – as one exchange reveals, when the boy says:

I wish I was with my mom.
[...] You mean you wish that you were dead.
Yes.
You mustn't say that.
But I do.
Don't say it. It's a bad thing to say.
I can't help it.
I know. But you have to.
How do I do it?
I don't know. (55)

Right from the beginning, the father senses the fragility of their goal. "He knew that he was placing hopes where he'd no reason to. He hoped it would be brighter wherefor all he knew the world grew darker daily" (213).

In the “New York Times” he put that, “there’s no such thing as life without bloodshed”. I think the notion that the species can be improved in some way, everyone could live in harmony, is a really dangerous. It shows men’s soul cannot live happily. Because it gets pleasure only in piercing each other. They are surrounded by anxiety, loneliness. Men strive to get over the difficulty but the situation remains as it is. Here father and boy started their journey keeping faith on the values. Still they face many difficulties during the journey. Father knows the real trauma of the world which he wanted to hide from the boy. He wants to defend his innocent son from the darkness of the world. Novelist pictorially depicted the journey which symbolizes the degeneration of the world. Men’s soul becomes a slave of wickedness but it searches for the eternal hope.

Craving For Human Values And Stability: A Study:

But he has seen the life in a very optimistic way. At the end of his novels he gives lesson of goodness and hope amid cruelty, darkness. It is difficult to say that he is purely nihilistic but under the darkness he makes aware the reader about the goodness and craves for stability of human being.

Many critics have interpreted McCarthy’s novel as a bleak and nihilistic tale, offering little in the way of hope of redemption. However the protagonist like the boy in “the road” show the potential for goodness exists. In spite of overwhelming odds, the father hopes against hope that there is a future for his son. When the final moment arrives in which he knows he will die, and he cannot kill his son, the father gives his son over to that hope. It may not follow the logic that he conceived of rationally, but it is all he can do as a father. He comes to realize that the most important thing they have to do is to continue to trust that goodness can persist.

There were times when he sat watching the boy sleep that he would begin to sob uncontrollably but it wasn’t about death. He wasn’t sure what it was about but he thought it was about beauty or about goodness. Father and boy though seem to be pathetic figures but they hope for goodness. Here father and boy represent the people of the world. Many people are getting trouble to cope with the present situation. They face many difficulties while living. Depicting the day of day struggle for survival, McCarthy focused on the point of altruism in an unforgiving world. He gives favour to the idealism of the boy. Thus the boy holds out hope of liberation from the life of constant violence and despair.

McCarthy observed this situation and put forward the views regarding the loneliness and anxiety. On the bleakness of the world, father and son still go forward to get some destination which will give them right direction. They keep moving though they face many difficulties in keeping their journey. They searched for those things by which they get some hope of their life. They become tired due to incessant journey. But they keep faith on values of life utmost level and in some stage they show their courage. They still flame of hope and goodness in presenting the confidential spirit of father and son. The father and his son struggle to survive in the harsh weather with little food, supplies, or shelter. Despite their hardships, father and the child remain determined to survive, reaffirming. The boy in particular retains

his unquenchable humanity against all odds, consistently seeking to help the tattered remnants of living humans they encounter.

Conclusion:

In a nut-shell his novel *The Road* has been widely recognized as the novel with difference. It exemplifies the struggle between evil and goodness. It depicted the real situation of the world but keep the faith on the human value. So the provocative themes of his novel make its own niche on the literary map of the world and made it a force to be reckoned with. It revolutionized the entire course of English novel by turning the mainstream literary values topsy-turvy.

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