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The Relative Evidence For Or Against God In Mc Carty's "The Road" And The Textual Nihilism.

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Instead of taking place before or during the end, the events in Cormac McCarthy's The Road take place after. The story follows a man and his son as they try to survive in what's left of the planet after an unspecified apocalyptic event. There is almost nothing left, not even food, animals, society, or hope. Many readers feel that the work makes them wonder why anyone would choose to live in such conditions. What, if anything, makes human life significant and valuable is a question that can be answered at any moment, even though it might become more urgent after the end of the world. The tale provides answers to these questions, although they are inconsistent. The reader is forced to choose between compelling arguments for faith and despair. Christianity is associated with hope in The Road, while atheism is associated with despair. However, the book makes it clear that choosing to believe is not an easy decision. The significance of Christian imagery in the novel will be discussed first in this article, with a focus on the two primary symbolic components of fire and darkness. Next, it will show how the text actively encourages and allows for both Christian and atheistic readings. It will be argued that the book presents a convincing argument against both Christian and atheistic worldviews, even if it never explicitly rejects either. However, what do they mean when they define "God," "messianic," and "redemption" in McCarthy's work? Deconstruction and apocalypse theory provide some initial hints into a more intricate plan that not only "saves" McCarthy from his opponents' charges. It also makes it more interesting to examine ideas of redemption and the messianic in contemporary disaster fiction.

Important terms: disaster, hopelessness, Christian imagery,

Overview:

The first thing the man on The Road speaks aloud is, "If he is not the word of God, God never spoke" (McCarthy 5). This assertion introduces a fundamental ambiguity that runs throughout the novel. The dad does not assert that his son is the inspired word of God; his assertion is entirely speculative. He asserts that either his son is the message of God or that God never spoke. According to the book of Genesis, which portrays God as creating by speech, a God who does not speak is a God who does not create (Genesis 1:1–31). Accordingly, the father affirms that either his son is the word of God or that the cosmos is actually devoid of God.

Throughout the book, there are numerous examples that might be interpreted either way. For example, there is a recurrent pattern of near death followed by an unrealistic rescue throughout the book. Just before they starve, the father and child discover an underground bunker filled with food (McCarthy 138). Later, when the child is once again in danger of starvation death, he spots a house in the distance and discovers that it contains food (202). The man later finds a flare weapon aboard an abandoned ship, which is crucial in a later conflict (240). Naturally, the child meets the shotgun-wielding veteran after his father's death (281). Is the infant saved by God's hand reaching into the scorched hellscape, or are these events just fortuitous breaks? The answer to this question remains unclear. Indications of divine activity do occur, but they are never more than that. For instance, the dove is a sign of hope, and the abandoned sailboat is known as "Pajaro de Esperanza," or "bird of hope." A dove holding an olive leaf warns Noah that the flood waters are receding (Genesis 8:11). Despite its origins in Tenerife, a Spanish island off the coast of Africa, the sailboat bearing the dove's name conveys a message of despair. This gives the impression that the catastrophe that forms the backdrop of The Road is a worldwide one.

The encounter between the father and son and an elderly man who may or may not be known as "Ely" is a particularly fascinating illustration of this ambiguity (McCarthy 161). This character has resemblance to the Old Testament prophet Elijah (see Snyder 81). Ely asserts that she knew the tragedy (or something like it) was coming—"I always believed in it"

(McCarthy 168)—and that Elijah had prophesied a drought (1 Kings 17:1). Ely wonders, "What if you were the last one left? What if you did it to yourself?169." Elijah tells God, "the Israelites have killed your prophets with the sword, thrown down your altars, and abandoned your covenant." I am the last one left, and they are trying to take away my life (1 Kings 19:10, emphasis added); God provides food for Elijah through birds (1 Kings 17:5-7); Ely is fed by the kid and may have thought he was an angel (McCarthy 172). Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, foretells a day of judgment that will "burn like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day … will leave them neither root nor branch" (Malachi 4:1).

Before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, you will be sent the prophet Elijah, who will convert the hearts of parents toward their children and children toward their parents to save me from arriving and punishing the land (Malachi 4:5–6).

Review of the Literature

Such clues suggest that Ely may be a prophet who foretold the child, who is the word of God, and foresaw the disaster of The Road, but Ely has lost faith: "I'm over all of that now." The mysterious disaster of The Road involves a lot of fire, and it has obviously won the hearts of both man and child over to one another. They have been for years. "Gods get along just as well where men cannot" (McCarthy 172). He further denies that "Ely" is his given name (171). Interestingly, in the same paradoxical statement, Ely asserts that he is a prophet while rejecting the idea of God: “There is no God and we are his prophets” (170). These characteristics of Ely imply the idea that God never spoke. This old man and every other survivor of the catastrophe are atheist prophets who testify to the nonexistence of God in the universe; their survival is due to sheer luck rather than divine intervention.

Not only does the universe on The Road question the reality of God, but so does the human mind. He tries to convince the child—and maybe himself—that God is still at work in the earth by saying, "It is my responsibility to look after you," at various points. That's what God gave me to do (77). Earlier, the man challenges God's existence while crouching in ashes like Job (Job 2:8): "Are you there? Are we going to meet?

Job had unwavering faith: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth … then in my flesh I shall see God" (Job 19:25-27), despite the fact that both he and the man live "in sunless gloom" (Job 30:28). According to Job 10:4, Job asks God, "Are your eyes flesh and blood? Do you have a neck that I could use to choke you?" Are you shaped like a heart? Do you have a soul forever, Goddamn it? McCarthy 11–2. The man's last words, "Curse God and die" (Job 2:9), are evocative of the advice that Job's wife gave him. Indeed, the person finally recalls this advice for himself (McCarthy 114). Recent research indicates a connection between religiosity and sadness. With the most socially dysfunctional nations having the highest levels of religiosity, sociologists and psychologists are increasingly demonstrating that the happiest nations in the world are also the least religious.2 Zuckerman's book Society without God, which looks at Sweden and Denmark, is especially notable. These nations are "probably the least religious countries in the world, and possibly in the history of the world," according to Zuckerman (2). "Among the 'best' countries in the world, at least according to standard sociological measures," Zuckerman (4) reveals. This correlation may be influenced by the notion that suffering necessitates faith. The man's motivation comes from his love for his son. His problem is that he doesn't seem to have any motivation to keep going. This is best illustrated by his wife's explanation of her suicide choice in the flashback: "Sooner or later they will catch us and they will kill us … They are going to rape us and kill us and eat us and you won't face it." It is better to wait for things to happen. However, I can't (McCarthy 56). After she committed herself, the boyfriend acknowledges that "she was right." There was no disagreement (58). The man keeps fighting even though he knows, deep down, that it might not be worth it. Because people tend to want their actions to make sense, he looks for concepts that will make his fight make sense. Among these is his belief that he is on a divine mission. Because he believes he is on a divine mission, he is unwilling to continue. Rather, it is the desire that propels him to continue by believing—or at least attempting to believe—that he is on a divine mission. The man recalls his wife accusing him of evading the truth at one particularly terrible moment: "He wrapped him in the blanket and his own parka and sat holding him, rocking back and forth." One round in the pistol. You will not confront the truth. You won't (68).

Evaluation and Conversation

Perhaps he regrets not doing what his wife did at the time, which is why he recalls her allegation. But rather than being a sobering admission, the man's opinions here could also be interpreted as an exhortation to himself to avoid facing the truth. Since he is aware that he will likely give up entirely if he faces reality, he uses his wife's accusation as his rallying cry. He begs himself not to face reality since doing so would mean quitting up. Both the man and the child struggle to stay motivated. Occasionally, he imagines carrying the fire to calm the youngster. He asserts that since they are carrying the fire, they won't be harmed (83). What does it mean to carry the fire? In fact, the two are carrying fire—or the means to make it—for much of the story. They are able to survive because fire keeps them warm and cooks their food. It allows the man to play cards with the child and read to them at night. Fire is the foundation of civilization. Naturally, the primary means of destroying civilization in The Road is fire. Perhaps carrying the fire is the same as carrying the germs of civilization.

A complicating factor in this dispute is that at least some of these moral principles have exceptions. At the very least, some of these ideas are merely broad principles that work in the majority of circumstances. The guy and the child see a man who has just been struck by lightning and is clearly near death early in the novel. The boy attempts to help him, but the man refuses. He tells the child, "We have no way to help him," as an explanation for his behavior. I regret what happened to him, but we cannot change anything (McCarthy 50). Later on, he tells the youngster that "he is going to die." We must not share our belongings or we will also die (52). Given the situation, the person's actions might have been justified. But there's a danger here.

In summary:
As we've seen, the existence of God in The Road is not quite clear. Craig says that how this issue is handled will determine everything. If God hadn't spoken, the father's and the child's struggles and lives would have been meaningless; the same is true of our struggles and lives.

This stuff is powerful. Assuming Craig is right, we would be sensible to believe in God. But Craig's reasoning is flawed. Craig asserts that an activity must affect the ultimate result—the end—in order to have ultimate value or significance. Since no human action can affect the ultimate condition of the cosmos in the absence of God, Craig suggests that all of our actions lack "ultimate meaning," which suggests that they are all meaningless. It simply doesn't make sense, though. Craig implies that any action that has no influence on the conclusion is totally futile in the following line, which contains the essential slide: "And because our lives are ultimately meaningless, the activities we fill our lives with are also meaningless." "The Christian worldview holds that God exists and that man's life continues after death," Craig continues. In the body of the resurrection, man can have eternal life and relationship with God (Craig 72). Christianity holds that every one of us has a perfect parent who knows us fully and loves us without conditions. Craig argues that the one action having inherent value and purpose in the Christian universe is intimate connection and communion with God. It should be obvious that this great good is an idealized version of human friendship. The disadvantage of human fellowship is that it involves flawed, mortal individuals. A flawless relationship with another creature is guaranteed by Christianity, both in terms of quality and longevity. If God exists, the faithful will not be alone in the end; after they die, they will feel the last connection with another creature. As a result, a Christian universe provides a level of certainty that a universe devoid of a god does not. Regardless of the circumstances of this life, it is always possible to lead a meaningful one.

Human companionship is unstable in any situation, and such a guarantee does not exist in a godless universe. It does have certain advantages, though. Despite the fact that flesh-and-blood animals do not live forever, we can reach out and touch them and know they are real. At the conclusion of The Road, we learn that "[h]e tried to talk to God but the best thing was to talk to his father and he did talk to him and he didn't forget" (McCarthy 286) when the youngster is in the custody of his new family. The youngster seems to have found the greatest comfort in the short, faulty, but clearly sincere relationship he shared with his earthly father.

The fundamental question of God's existence is not addressed in The Road. The solution to the question of whether God exists is not as important as is generally thought, according to one of the novel's lessons. In particular, the question is far less relevant to morality and meaning than most people believe. The Code of the Good Guys is easy to understand, universal, and straightforward. It cannot be claimed as belonging to any particular religious tradition. Love is the most valuable thing in the universe, whether or not there is a god, and since it is the only way to find true love, it is a good reason to try to be moral. In the end, loneliness is the cost of sin.

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