



RESEARCH PAPER

**Redefining Americanism and American Literary Tradition:
Hospitality, Ethics and A Transcendent Humanism in Cormac
McCarthy's *Fiction Reality***

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ABSTRACT

Cormac McCarthy's fiction shows that the US and Others are not sealed off hermetically from each other but have a variety of complex relations with each other. Utilizing multiple perspectives, McCarthy examines alternatives to the "racist, nationalist, or ethnically absolutist discourses" that insist upon divisions, lines of demarcation, and oppositional structures as the way to define identity, nationalism and American-ness. In particular, McCarthy's fiction makes it clear that it is necessary to appreciate the things that potentially connect people to one another rather than about divisions in the imagined community of the nations. He devises stories that overcome these divisions, constitute a fruitful mode of agreement that grows through hospitality and ethics, and propose a transcendent community composed of people who might be in conflict with one another

Introduction

An important field in American Studies focuses on the issue of immigration from other countries into America and the resultant clash of various human cultures in the US. The recent murder of Gorge Floyd, a black American, very inhumanly by white Police Officers has once again highlighted the subject mentioned. His last words "I can't breathe" could not influence the police officers who paid no attention to his screaming. This murder created a new series of protests and "Black Lives Matter" the movement in America and other parts of the world. This murder has once again highlighted the issues of nationalism, Americanism, Us, Others: the key concerns of the novels of a present-day American novelist Cormac McCarthy (1933).

In her efforts to understand why women authors were excluded from the American literary canon, Nina Baym proposes that the major reason for this exclusion is that the early literary critics "looked for a standard of Americanness rather than a standard of excellence" (Baym,1981: 125-126). Despite their different definitions for the term Americanness, American literary critics share the following tenet: "America as a nation must be the ultimate subject of the work" (Baym,1981: 127). That is, American writer must be writing about unique American experience and character which set "Americans off from other people and the country from other nations" (Baym,1981). At one extreme, such a restriction of the content of the literary work excludes "stories of universal"; at the other extreme, it also excludes "detailed, circumstantial portrayals" of American life. This argument means that any American novelist writing about internal particulars or transnational universals is writing against American literary tradition.

At stake in the American literature's disarticulation of internal particulars and transnational inequalities is its incapacity to address its social injustice and structural inequalities within and without the country. At home, the US is far more than a country of freedom, equality, and democracy. Despite its self-claiming democracy and social upward mobility, the US remains a country stratified by ethnicity, race, class, gender, and sexuality. That is, despite a theoretically egalitarian political system, America society maintains social, political, and economic stratification. Abroad, the US assumes a superior position in dealing with other countries in the world, especially those of the third world. In particular, the US is abstracted from the not so equal relations it maintains with its neighbors.

Cormac McCarthy contributes to the development of alternative and even utopian visions of a new social order. Bercovitch claims that all utopian visions "express powerful feelings of social discontent", which are used by writers to challenge the status quo (Bercovitch, 1993: 364). McCarthy in his fiction is committed not only to exposing the domestic division so as to challenge the status quo but also to laying bear the mechanism in the formation of transnational hierarchies and inequalities so as to find out the way to establish new forms of coalition and community. The visions of a transcendent unity in McCarthy's fiction all depend on utopianism, which envisages the possibility of transcendence through benevolence and action in *Blood Meridian*, the witnessing and hospitality in the *Border Trilogy*, the consolation and warmth of a father carrying fire in *No Country for Old Men*, and the post-apocalyptic adherence to justice and goodness in *The Road*.

Cormac McCarthy's novels investigated the ethical dimensions of a new world and endeavor to return to ethics and to establish a transcendent human order where ethics precedes ontology and philosophy: "the comprehension of being in general cannot dominate the relationship with the Other. The latter relationship commands the first." (Levinas, 1969, p. 47). McCarthy's novels, such as *The Road*(2006), embrace this mode as the father and the son choose to share food with others which runs counter to a Darwinian survival imperative. Phillip A. Snyder,

looks at Emmanuel Levinas so as to “recover ethics” in McCarthy’s fictional world. Snyder’s endeavor to interpret McCarthy’s fiction in the light of Levinas offers insight into the ethical dimension of McCarthy’s fiction. However, Levinas connects the Self/Other relation with “God, the Divine, or Infinite” so that the service to the Other removes “any requirements of reciprocity” (Snyder, 2008, p. 71). In an important responsibility for the Other, “I can substitute myself for everyone, but no one can substitute himself for me. Such is my inalienable identity of subject”, which reveals the dilemma of “dissolving the borders of individuation...in a moment of an affirmation of the unique self” and replicates the dilemma of dissolving the physical borders and cultural borders in a moment of the US assertion of its global hegemony (Levinas, 1969, p. 101). Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the notions of the Self/Other relation in the light of notions of hospitality which “revolves around the French term *hôte*, meaning at one host and guest” whose undecidability would ease the pressure and demand on the “I” in its responsibility for the Other while offering the promise in the reciprocal responsibilities (Snyder, 2008, p. 72). Only if the difference of the Other is defined as unbridgeable, can it become possible for “a full recognition of otherness” (Fluck, 2009, 8). As Cameron puts it, McCarthy’s fiction underlies’ valuation of humanity and concern for its well-being” (Cameron, 2011, p. 57). For McCarthy, the adherence to morality and justice in amidst of catastrophe gives answers to the basic questions about what is meant by to be a human, and, particularly, to be human alongside other humans, and to be Americans alongside other nations.

Theoretical Framework

Matthew Mullins claims that Cormac McCarthy’s emphasis on an intimation of possibility and light in his fiction is linked with the redemptive power that develops from the linkages of human community, which points toward a different ideation of transcendence, “a transcendent-humanism...that...seeks a transcendent source for humans as sovereign individuals’ that goes beyond their immediate need of survival (Mullins, 2011, p. 81). This transcendent-humanism echoes Edward Said in his call for the “pull away from separatist nationalism toward a more integrative view of human community” (Said, 1993, p. 216). Said emphasizes on “the reintegration of all those people and cultures, once confined and reduced to peripheral status, with the rest of the human race” (Said, 2000, pp. 378-379). In Said’s assertion, the cross-national affiliation is very important to a more inclusive visualization of the peaceful world. McCarthy likewise pushes his readers to move forward to an idea of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness.

McCarthy’s deployment in his fiction of a strategy of “expanding and simultaneously diminishing his characters, as actors on a global stage” to universalize human violence results in what Judie Newman has called “McCarthy’s parodic transnationalism” (Newman, 2007, p. 135). Echoing universality and timelessness in his fiction, McCarthy highlights the vicious human nature and its concomitant violence. Every one engaged in transnational wars in the US-

borderlands around the time of US-borderland war is both a victim and a victimizer. Apaches and Comanche are just as violent and vicious as the White scalp-hunters. However, in his leveling of all individuals, McCarthy necessarily lowers human kind as a whole. This status is not completely satisfying.

McCarthy, however, does not presume to provide coherent answers through a nihilistic worldview. His fiction is not based on hopelessness. Rather, genuine hope is found "by acknowledging the harshest realities and the darkest of human circumstances" (Frye, 2009: 5). McCarthy develops a style to deal with that complexity, a style that can hold these opposites together in a unity, and a style that expresses the irony of a reconciliation of conflicting opposites and differences. In particular, he adopts and modifies the narrative strategies by giving voice to multiple perspectives. Mikhail Bakhtin employs "the musical principle of polyphony" in order to characterize the novelistic structure of a writer's work, which unfolds "plurality of independent and unmerged voices" (Bakhtin, 1984: 42). This polyphony of voices has two layers of meaning: first, "the author's consciousness does not transform...the consciousnesses of the characters into the objects"; second, the characters "are juxtaposed to one another as inseparable wholes", engaged in "dialogic contact" (Bakhtin, 1984: 68; 96; 112). McCarthy's fiction is found to represent polyphony in these dual senses: first, he seldom dominates his fictional world with "a single authorial consciousness" but undertakes the role of a writer in "a detached, almost forensic manner", reluctant to judge the conflicting claims of his characters; second, the consciousnesses of his heroes live "by their unfinalizability, unclosedness and their indeterminacy with the possibility of making changes or performances, i.e., he juxtaposes his characters "side by side or one against the other" in "simultaneous coexistence", whose ideas enter into a meaningful "dialogic relationships with other ideas, with the ideas of others" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 6). Three of McCarthy's novels are selected here for the study of hospitality, ethics and transcendent Humanism: *Blood Meridian*(1985), *The Crossing* (1994), *The Road* (2006)

Discussion

The voices of two main characters juxtapose each other's views in *Blood Meridian* thus exhibiting Mikhael Bakhtin's polyphony of voices. The judge's powerful rhetoric of war and violence dominates the world of *Blood Meridian*, which is hard to resist and even harder to refute. Faint but alive as well is the kid's voice that reveals itself through discrete gestures of human decency and benevolence. Clearly of a different ethical frame than the rest of the gang, the kid has chance to kill the murderous judge, an act that would confirm in large part the judge's version of vicious human nature. But he does not do so. In spite of Judge Holden's verbal and physical power, the kid resists him to death.

In his action of helping the Indian woman, as noted in *Blood Meridian* , the kid can conceive the possibility of peace with the Racial Other because he can overcome racial prejudice and recognize the humanity of his enemy. Steven Frye

points out that this signals “a possibility of transcendence through action and benevolence (Frye, 2009, p. 79)”. Indeed, the kid’s pronouncement that “he is an American” when he attempts to bring the Indian woman to a safe place seems to confirm Frye’s belief in this unique and exceptional virtue of being American (McCarthy, 1985, p. 315).

In fact, however, the kid is not the first party to offer an olive branch in the transnational confrontations in the US-Mexican borderlands. Instead, the kid has been given hospitality many times before he is able to overcome his racial prejudices. For instance, when he has been nearly robbed by the self-proclaimed former slave owner, he encounters herders of cattle, including some “cross-breeds, free niggers, an Indian or two”, who ask him no questions, share food with him, and leave him “a cupful of dried beans and some peppers and an old knife with a handle made of string” before they depart in the next morning (McCarthy, 1985, pp. 20-21). This hospitality is not acknowledged and appreciated since the kid joins the filibustering team of Captain White and later the Glanton Gang in their indiscriminate slaughter of Indians, Mexicans, and “cross-breeds”. When the kid finally crosses over the border of race and nation to recognize the common humanity of his enemy, it seems too late because the Indian woman that the kid is intended to rescue “has been dead in that place for years” (McCarthy, 1985, p. 315).

Despite the gloomy ending of *Blood Meridian*, the epilogue is seen as a complex image of hope, as an allusion to the myth of Prometheus, which is incarnated as a man with his followers striking fire from the rock in defiance of the evil principles of the judge. Hence, *Blood Meridian* is not an unmitigated expression of nihilism since it closes on a principle of order, expressed in an image of community, which seeks the present possibility of transcendence for the human race whose souls are compromised by greed, loss, and violence and urges people to make connections and interactions across borders.

McCarthy’s fiction brings forth the viewpoint further that countries over the border, like the United States and Mexico, imply a reciprocal vision not entirely in keeping with hierarchies and inequalities over the border. In the work of McCarthy, a very complicated employment of borders emerges, one that could sometimes be termed as a “complex and oxymoronic melding of nihilism and optimism, good and evil, illusion and reality” (Busby, 2000, p. 227). For his American cowboys, the border between the US and Mexico is not only the line dividing a developed country and a Third World country but also the medium through which they come to understand and reestablish human solidarity.

Similarly, in *The Crossing* (1994), both Billy and Boyd receive assistance from the peasants and workers in Mexico. Throughout their journeys, they receive hospitality freely given often by plain Mexicans they have never met before. When they are trying to retrieve their father’s horses in Mexico, they clash with the Mexican buyer who refuses to give up his ownership of the horses. In their fight with five horsemen sent forward by the buyer, Boyd is shot. When it seems that

there is no way for them to run away, "an ancient flatbed truck carrying farm workers" slows down and some workers reach for the wounded Boyd and others clamber down into the road to help lift him up (McCarthy, 1994, p. 273). In particular, McCarthy provides an intensely detailed, gripping and moving account of a Mexican doctor who tends Boyd's wound for free with meticulous loving care for no other reason than that this is what he has sworn to do. The doctor's unhesitating response to Boyd's need for healing is an aspect of the other value that McCarthy asserts against nihilism and death, that of human hospitality.

This hospitality and generosity is returned in *Cities of the Plain* when Billy helps "a truckload of Mexicans" with a flat tire (McCarthy, 1994, p. 30). He explains in detail the story of his brother being hurt and helped by Mexicans when his companion Troy questions his decision to do so:

he was hurt and there was a truckload of Mexicans just about like them back yonder appeared out of nowhere and pulled our bacon out of the fire....They didn't have no reason to stop for us. But they did. (McCarthy, 1994, p. 36)

Despite the fact that Billy is an American stranger to these Mexicans, they feed him, wash his clothes, mend them, sew his boots, and instruct him of his connection with other men. This is the "'literal interrelatedness' of man and man, and of man and environment" that Edwin T. Arnold points out in his illustration of McCarthy's "Christian sensibility" in *The Crossing* by tracing the influence of "esoteric philosophical and religious...thinkers like Jacob Boehme" (Arnold, 1999, 221-222; 216).

Indeed, one of the epigraphs to *Blood Meridian* is taken from Jacob Boehme, who had belief that all living things are joined by one "matrix":

only one matrix, from which everything originates and flows. And all creatures are made out of these qualities, and originate and live therein, as within their matrix (qtd. in Arnold, 1999, p. 222).

Read together with the epigraph to *Blood Meridian* which indicates that violence is universal and eternal and that life is darkness in itself, Boehme's philosophy is not without hope for the human race in that he sees connection between man and man, and between man and the nature around him. That is, McCarthy's use of polyphony does not "harmonize everything into a single unified picture" or congeal a plurality of consciousnesses "into the bounds of a single consciousness" (Booth, 1984: xxiii). When McCarthy writes in the final lines of *The Crossing* of the natural rising of the sun, it does not "recognize the shared need of all for God's mercy" as Arnold claims since God assumes no benign face in his Western fiction as the old trapper tells Billy that "God sits and conspires in the destruction of that which he has been at such pains to create" (Arnold, 1999: 233). Therefore, what McCarthy conveys is a transcendent-humanism, which emphasizes the need for

love, understanding, and sympathy despite human propensity for violence, evil, and injustice. This blend of nihilism and a cautious optimism runs throughout McCarthy's fiction.

The combination of McCarthy's tale of Billy and the lessons and stories that Billy is told by various men, Mexican and otherwise, illustrates the way in which a multitude of narratives make up the matrix of what we call "culture". McCarthy suggests that our wish to establish connections with other people can be realized only to the extent that we accept the roles of storyteller and witness. These concerns are manifest in the many stories told Billy by the people whose paths cross his on his journeys in Mexico.

Billy encounters a priest at Huisiachepic, who witnesses to the tragic life story of a Mexican man born in the town of Caborca on the Altar River, whose parents "were killed...[in their defense] against the outlaw American invaders" and whose son died "in the terremoto [earthquake]" (McCarthy, 1994: 144; 145). In telling Billy the sad story of the Mexican man, this priest suggests that all of individual lives have a narrative thread, which converges in a kind of mystical synthesis in the matrix. Hence, in the act of the priest's observing, witnessing, and telling, the Mexican man's story has also become the priest's. It is through this act of empathetic witnessing and re-articulation that human beings come to see how their individual lives are connected and their stories are one. In the priest's words: "All men are one and there is no other tale to tell" (McCarthy, 1994, pp. 156-157). Here McCarthy highlights the role of the witness and the process by which the story of one life, through witnessing and retelling, becomes the story of all. The dark epiphanies of both the priest and Billy are on the surface experienced by the Mexican man, articulated by the priest, and witnessed by Billy. But they are in fact experienced and told by both as one universal experience.

The priest is absent from the events and the immediacy of the Mexican man's physical pain, but in his act of witnessing he comprehends a deeper significance in the suffering and eventual delivery of the Mexican man, which reflects the existential condition of a human race fated to wander alone for a time but ultimately destined to be delivered from suffering and loneliness to the empathy present in the retelling of the witness. The priest explains, after the Mexican man's spiritual trial in immense darkness, he begins to see the world of appearances as unreal and illusory, and beneath that world resides an immaterial principle of a transcendent order. That understanding is inseparable from the sympathy of the priest and his intimate grasp of the truth of the Mexican man's experience, a truth and empathy he faithfully assumes Billy will share as their mutual story becomes his own.

McCarthy suggests that human beings take their understanding of the world from the cultural matrix formed by the limitless range of tales. If these tales are treated as one, it is necessarily true that history of the US- borderlands is a shared experience and that borders of ethnicity, race, and nation do little to separate the effects of events where different worlds touch. Human lives derive meaning and

sustaining power as they participate in story-telling and witnessing that are more truthful than actualities bereft of purpose and meaning, since "they are embodied with principle of unity, communal understanding, and intimations of the divine", principally as it is defined in terms of order, harmony, and human intimacy (Frye, 2009, p. 127).

This human intimacy is suggested by the fire in Sheriff Bell's dreams about his father after a series of violent events of which he can make no sense in *No Country for Old Men*. The book ends with a dream, in which Bell's father looms large in his imagination: "he was fixing to make a fire somewhere out there in all that dark" (McCarthy, 2005, p. 309).

For Bell, the fire has a meaning of hope and light in the darkness of his life. The novel, therefore, for all its evocation of the fear for foreign-scented criminals and the wrath for the degeneration of his people within the border, concludes on hope and light, linked "to the redemptive power that grows from the bonds of human community" (Frye, 2009, p. 164). McCarthy seems to be suggesting that we need this fire to be human which is perhaps the ultimate image of the warmth and intimacy promised by the envisioned transcendent humanism. The father figure and the fire that he is carrying are continued in the next novel. However, the promise of a transcendent human order is passed from the father onto the next generation, the son.

Fire represents the sacred of human spirit, in opposition to the demonic fires of apocalypse in *The Road*. What is different is that the fire is passed on from the father to the son, a messiah figure with compassion for the other. Lydia Cooper claims, the boy "is other-focused" in his concern for the other child, in his wish to save others, and in his longing to be with others (Cooper, 2011, p. 233). Indeed, the boy's belief on what morality means is nicely expressed as in his creation of an "other" child, who is not there, however. Worried about this absent other, the boy speaks, "I'm afraid for that little boy" (McCarthy, 2006: 72-73). In the ending pages of the novel, after seeing a cannibalized infant, he says, "If we had that little baby it could go with us" (McCarthy, 2006: 168). His desire to rescue the other child is founded on a belief that the major source of counteracting the cannibalism and indifference of this post-apocalyptic world is by helping others to make them safe and sound.

The messianic feature of the kid, however, lies less in his assumption of all the responsibilities for the Other than in his belief in "Derrida's notion of faith in the promise of the future", i.e., when he "addresses the other, [he] is waiting for the future" in the conviction there coexist "other good guys" (Snyder, 2008, p. 73). It is this conviction in the coexistence of other good guys and the "mutual responsibility" that he is able to "transform the other person from a shadow into an authentic reality" in the form of a family who are willing to take him in after the father died (Snyder, 2008, p. 78).

The theme of hospitality is highlighted again and again in *The Road*. Phillip A. Snyder presents his argument that the hospitality “may constitute McCarthy’s essential notion of goodness” because, when it is actualized in this post-apocalyptic world, it signifies a commitment of those people who practice it despite the risk of harm and death (Snyder, 2008, p. 70). Despite their meager food, the son insists on sharing it with an old man named Ely. When the father questions Ely how he manages to survive in this post-apocalyptic world. Ely’s answer is that “people give you things” (McCarthy, 2006, p. 170). This idea of hospitality is manifest in the constant luck that befalls the father and the son on their southward journey. For instance, it seems a miracle that when they are running out of food, the father finds a bunker abundant with the food: “Crate upon crate of canned goods. Tomatoes, peaches, beans, apricots.” (McCarthy, 2006, p. 139). As they start eating meal, the boy feels an ethical need to thank the people who have originally stocked the bunker: “Dear people, thank you for all this food and stuff... and we hope that you’re safe in heaven with God” (ibid, 146). Even with an explicit reference to a divine transcendence, the boy’s heartfelt appreciation for the people who give him food indicates a clear appeal to a transcendent humanism.

In his endorsing of witnessing and hospitality in the Western novels, McCarthy draws a complex picture of the world, where human nature is both good and evil, where people, separated against each other based on such markers of identity as race, gender, and culture, also take solace in their common suffering. Although the reconciliation cannot be permanent, McCarthy’s texts provide the possibility of a complex and difficult harmony in a world that is as corrupt and degenerate as it was at the moment of Adam’s fall. In this, McCarthy echoes yet differs from Randolph Bourne in his proposing and establishing new forms of community and coalition.

McCarthy agrees with Bourne in his suggestion of “a changing ideal of Americanism” which has two meanings: First, America is coming to be a trans nationality, “a weaving back and forth, with the other lands, of many threads of all sizes and colors”, a union of many ethnicities and races who are loyal to their native cultures, instead of a nationality, an imposition of assimilation from the ruling class of the Anglo-Saxon upon the minorities; Second, America is going to “make patriotism a hollow sham” and to resort to “an intellectual internationalism” which is “an intellectual sympathy” that will reach into the heart of different cultures and feel as they feel (Bourne, 1916: 92; 96; 91; 94; 94). Yet he differs from Bourne in the following aspects: First, America is far from “the world-federation in miniature” where people are living peacefully side by side and “living here by mutual toleration”; Second, America is not a country with “unique liberty of opportunity” and “the superiority of American organization” qualified to educate “the primitive” and “laggard peoples” outside its borders (McCarthy, 2006: 93; 96; 95; 96; 96). McCarthy’s relentless exposure of the bloody and vicious history of the American nation and demystification of American exceptionalism in his Western fiction makes it clear that this American ideal of “a new consciousness of...a citizenship in the

world" can make progress only if the romantic gilding of its past and the complacency of its uniqueness has been removed (McCarthy, 2006, p. 97).

McCarthy's fiction reminds us that reflecting on history in the US borderlands is "an awkward, messy, painful, sublime process" and yet for all that it was and it is "an American process" from which people over the borders must learn (Martinez, 2004, 248). Only in this way, is there a more profound possibility of a new "cultural citizenship" forming out of these complex dynamics. The migrants in the post-apocalyptic world devoid of cultural borders in *The Road* are, as Rosa Linda Fregoso has claimed, "creating the conditions of possibility for the emergence of a new political consciousness" (Fregoso, 2003, xvi). As Rubén Martínez puts it,

"The migrants are a mirror in which we see the best and the worst of ourselves, our past and our future. They remind us over and over again that there is nothing stable in our world" (Martinez, 2004, p. 225)

McCarthy uses an egalitarian leveling of all the survivors in the post-apocalyptic world. The up-rootedness of all people in a post-apocalyptic world conveys a new sense of cultural identification that is very close to James Clifford's "dwelling-in-traveling and traveling-in-dwelling" (Clifford, 1997, p. 2). Because of the migratory existence of all people on the road and the dissolution of all borders, what it makes possible is a sense of fluid and multiple identities. The migrants are therefore not static identities but dynamic persons whose existence is a series of movements which explore the limitless open possibilities of the smooth space outside recognized civilization. For McCarthy writing in the post-9/11 climate of a "war on terror", where the United States has become the global "sheriff", the possibilities of a transcendent human order envisioned in *The Road* seem more important than ever. In terms of plot, *The Road* retells the story of the conflict between people over the borders between the civilized and the barbarous. In terms of imagery, the image of the father as guidance and the image of fire as hope are amplified in *The Road*.

Although there is a strong spiritual and religious aspect to McCarthy's commitment to change, he knows this has to be wedded to the struggle for social transformation from the self-outward to the world. McCarthy indicates through his work that one needs to reflect on interpersonal conflict to trigger transformation and lead to understanding. For those attempting this, the father's restraint against eating other people and the boy's impartial concern for other people are inclusive healing processes to seek conciliation and understanding. Such a process emerges from living in a post-apocalyptic world, estranged from the centers of national cultures so that one no longer sees the world the way he is instructed to see it.

Conclusion

In terms of theme, the salvation for human kind and the construction of a transcendent human order come to the foreground in McCarthy's fiction. The

visionary narrative of his fiction seeks to point out the possibility of constructing new forms of community and human order transcending borders of race, ethnicity, and culture. Therefore, McCarthy's concern with ethics as the responsibility for the Other and the reciprocal responsibilities not only "comes after history and culture" in the post-apocalyptic world in *The Road* but also underlies his previous fiction concerning the complex history in the US borderlands. In this transcendent-humanism, McCarthy seems to run against the grain of American literary tradition.

McCarthy's abandonment of narrow essentialism and nationalism in the search for common ground demands a brave call for new type of kinship which emerges from the borderlands experience and stresses interconnectivity over division. It is a call for an emerging universal culture to bridge nation-states and fixed identities, for in this the narrative national borders dividing us from the 'others' are porous and serve as gateways between the different worlds. This identity has roots that share with all people and other things to make up a greater identity category. Here we look beyond the illusion of separate welfares to shared welfare. Here the reflection on the ideas of understanding the others and a new kinship serves as an effort to be more inclusive, which breaks the habits of defining identity by exclusion. McCarthy's recognition of this might lead to the formation of new identities and the establishment of new coalition and community in the twenty-first century.

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