



RESEARCH PAPER

**The Collapse of Meaning in McCarthy's *The Road*: A Post-Modern Critique**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study analyzes Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2022) from the Postmodernist-Marxist theoretical framework of Fredric Jameson, which he cited in his book *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), and aims to uncover how the characters, dialogues, and incidents reflect meaninglessness, fragmentation, and superficiality. Moreover, this study critically examines how capitalism shapes the economic world and prophesizes how it could lead humans to self-destruction. *The Road* (2022) is a narrative about two characters, 'the boy' and 'the man,' trying to construct the meaning of their identities and surroundings while trying to survive in a post-apocalyptic world. This post-modern critique traces these phenomena in the narrative through close reading and thematic analysis. The present study concludes that the erosion of meaning and identity foreshadows the disastrous effects of late capitalism and suggests that readers reflect on their cultural and environmental practices in a deeper insight and consider the hazardous effects of late capitalism.

**Keywords:** Meaninglessness, Fragmentation, Capitalism, Post-Apocalypse, Hope

**Introduction**

Humans grapple with the challenges this world entices them to face because they can make sense of their existence by attributing meaning to their being—the existence of meaning kindles in them a sense of social belonging. Meaninglessness, on the other hand, leads to an identity crisis. The inability to connect handicaps a person's mental abilities. Hope clashes with despair, the phenomenon of goodwill clashes with a constant struggle for survival, unity is stripped off, and a constant doubt about the existence of God arises. The rise of *The Hollow Men* (Eliot, 1925), after the chaos of both world wars and the significant surge in technological development, instilled a sense of meaninglessness in every existing being.

*The Road* (2022) comprises two characters: *the boy* and *the man* trying to construct the meaning of their identities and surroundings while trying to survive in a post-apocalyptic world. Post-Modernism is suggestive of reality as an irrational, chaotic, and subjective entity, it also suggests that language is a neutral tool for creating and debating meanings that depend on intrapersonal interpretations (Salberg et al., 2017). Cormac McCarthy, a Post-Modernist American Author, tackled post-apocalyptic tendencies, the allure of violence, and the absence of meaning from society in his novel *The Road*.

The novel is about *the boy* and *the man* struggling to survive in a post-apocalyptic world where a catastrophic event has led to the destruction of the world. Basic human necessities are nowhere to be found, and humans have turned into savages, trying to

consume and live off what is left. Cormac has dedicated this novel to his son, John McCarthy, who was not born until Cormac was in his late sixties. A similar perception is of *the man* in the novel who sees his son as the last hope of this world and someone who has been sent by God Himself. *The Man* thus represents the logical resilience of humans in the face of adversity, trying to construct meaning out of the ashes that surround him, while *the boy* is a symbol of hope he clings on to stay alive. The fragmented narrative of the novel provides glimpses as to how the man's wife committed suicide in the face of adversity, as she was unable to comprehend the chaos surrounding her.

Jameson views the post-modern condition as superficial, of heterogeneity, the narrative; fragmented, the emotional intensity to be reflective of the chaotic sublime, and the impact of technology hazardous enough to collapse social structures (Jameson, 1991). The entirety of his views are traced in the novel's narrative by the critical examination of the sequence of events, images, symbols, and dialogues.

This analysis discovers how the characters and the events of the novel reflect meaninglessness, fragmentation, and depthlessness. Furthermore, it discusses how this meaninglessness leads to a lack of association and an identity crisis for the characters. The impact of consumer culture also foreshadows the effects of capitalism in the novel and is traced through various events in the narrative.

This analysis reveals how *The Road's* (2022) pervasive fragmentation, waning of affect, meaninglessness, and superficiality collapse coherent meaning and create a sense of existential emptiness. With the application of Fredric Jameson's Postmodern Framework, this analysis reveals the havoc that might befall the human race as a result of the multinational hyperspace created by the capitalistic system.

## Literature Review

In "The Man" and "The Boy" on *The Road*: A Postmodern Reading of *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy (2016), Asya Sakine Uçar analyzes *The Road* (2022) according to the multiple tenets of post-modernism. Uçar integrates theoretical insights from multiple post-modernists and authors to examine the multiple features of post-modernism present in the novel, including Linda Woodson, Brian McHale, Fredric Jameson, Teressa Heffernan, Linda Hutcheon, and others. However, Uçar's analysis justifies how the novel can be justified as a post-modernist work along with being post-apocalyptic as it comprises multiple defining features of post-modernism such as fragmentation, skepticism, ontological questions, nostalgia, etc. This study focuses on how the collapse of meaning and effects of capitalism are traced in the novel according to the Post-Modernist Framework provided by Fredric Jameson, particularly with its relevance to the identity crisis of the characters.

Abolfazl Bafandeh Pour and Mahsa Golmohammad Gharedaqui in *The Traces of Postmodern Vocabulary in the Road by Cormac McCarthy* (2023) highlight how the vocabulary of *The Road* (2022) lacks a centre around which one would be able to construct any meaning. There is no trace of reason and sense, but rather of Undecidability, Irrationality, Dissemination, Thematic Disequilibrium, Decentering, Depthlessness, and of the Unpresentable. This contributes to our objective of tracing meaninglessness in the novel as it justifies how the theme is subsequently traced by the syntactic analysis of the novel.

Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* as an Early Metamodernist Novel (Letters from a maladroito, 2019) argues the status of *The Road* (2022) as a work that is "at once modern and post-modern and neither of them". The basis of his argument is that in the novel, nihilism and hope are co-existing factors, which is a metamodern concept. He argues that *The Road* swings between metamodernism's pendulum, the uncertainty of mood and thought. The duality of future and past, rejection of subjectivity and rationality, cannibalism and suicide as responses to the chaos, skepticism regarding God's existence yet return to

Christian Morality are a few of the constituents of his arguments as he states that “What McCarthy has done is employ metafiction to reinforce his message. This is an example of the metamodern pendulum, how it does not deny postmodernism outright.” (Letters from a maladroit, 2019). However, all these can be read as an extension of post-modern ambiguity rather than a departure from it.

Michael Chiariello in *Philosophers chained to a madhouse wall: The rationality of hope in Cormac McCarthy's The Road (2013) debates on the notion of hope and the nature of morality in The Road (2022)*. Chiariello draws on the views of Immanuel Kant and Thomas Hobbes contrastingly. For Kant, the rationality of hope is dependent on the rationality of belief in God, while for Hobbes, morality emerges from the construction of society; both of which are absent in McCarthy's world. Regardless, the man embodies hope in the face of adversity and an effort to maintain morality in the bleakest of the world due to his relationship with his son- juxtaposing a main tenet of post-modernism: despair.

In *Fredric Jameson's Interpretation of Postmodernism (1992)*, Ira Chernus builds on the post-modernist framework Jameson elaborated in his book *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism (1991)*. Chernus, being a professor of religious studies himself, takes into account Jameson's various views on postmodernism and critically examines them concerning real-life examples. This critical examination of Chernus provides a foundation for the following Post-Modernist critique of *The Road (2022)* as it clarifies how Jameson's model is sufficient to trace meaninglessness, superficiality, detachment, and the portrayal of a multinational capitalistic world of the future in the novel.

## Material and Methods

Fredric Jameson, in his book *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism (1991)*, uses various examples from architecture, art, music, and literature to brief on the various features of postmodernism. The present study employs a Postmodernist-Marxist framework derived from these various features of postmodernism, as described by Jameson.

This study used qualitative research design, employing textual analysis as the primary method for analyzing *The Road*. The primary data for this study will consist of the novel *The Road (2022)* by Cormac McCarthy. Secondary data, including critical essays, journal articles, and theoretical texts on postmodernism, especially Jameson's *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, will also be utilized to inform the analysis.

Post-Modernism finds its basis in skepticism regarding objective realities, which it infers from Nietzsche's assertion of the illusion of truth, in the rejection of meta-narratives, celebration of fragmentation, blurring the lines between reality and simulations, and a critique of the consumer culture that is the result of capitalistic practices. Jameson views Post-Modernism as a Cultural Dominant whose offensive features, from obscurity to psychological filth and undisguised social and political defiance, have become institutionalized in the official culture of Western society. In his work, he thinks of Post-Modernism to be constitutive of certain features, a few of which he states as: a new depthlessness, weakening of historicity, a new emotional ground tone, and the link of all this to modern technology.

For him, the new superficiality is not a matter of content but lies in the fact that objects have now turned into 'simulacra' and we interact with them differently. Moreover, Post-Modernism deconstructs the whole idea of inward feelings vs their outward expression for him; the subjective alienation is taken over by the subjective fragmentation. Jameson states that the self is decentered, fragmented, and fluid while being vulnerable to external forces. Individuality is replaced by mechanical reproduction, and Post-Modernism

shifts the focus from time and memory to how we occupy space (the present) and are drawn towards pseudo-events. For Jameson, history is now viewed through distorted simulacra and pop images, remaining unreachable itself. Jameson also cites Lacanian's views of the schizophrenic and links it to the breakdown of language, which further links to personal identity, as he states "If we are unable to unify the past, present and future of the sentence, then we are similarly unable to unify the past, present and future of our own biographical experience or psychic life" (Jameson, 1991, p.49).

According to Jameson, Post-Modern works view the idea of differences as new ways of seeing the world. In them, even urban decaying is idealized, treatment of humans in a shallow way, the hysterical sublime, and the replacement of nature by industrialization question our ideals of beauty and humanity as he cites "The other of our society is in that sense no longer Nature at all, as it was in precapitalist societies, but something else which we must now identify." (Jameson, 1991, p.56). Jameson extends the concept of interlinkage to postmodern hyperspaces which are so complex that they are impossible to map or understand, thereby leading to dislocation, as described by Kevin Lynch; "...Kevin Lynch taught us that the alienated city is above all a space in which people are unable to map (in their minds) either their own positions or the urban totality in which they find themselves..." (Jameson, 1991, p.72). Jameson then links Lynch's idea of a cognitive map to that of Althusserian's ideology; they both provide a way to mentally situate oneself within a structure too vast to be fully comprehended itself.

This study analyzes *The Road* (2022) in the light of this post-modern framework provided by Fredric Jameson, which encapsulates most of these features contributing to the overall collapse of meaning.

## Results and Discussion

### Meaninglessness, Fragmentation, Superficiality, and Their Impact on the Characters

*The Road* (2022) opens with a bleak atmosphere; the protagonist, *The Man*, wakes up from a terrifying dream in which he and *The Child* (his son) wander in a cave where the child led him by his hand and they encountered a horrendous creature. Now awake, he describes the present as "Nights dark beyond darkness and the days more gray each one than what had gone before. Like the onset of some cold glaucoma dimming away the world" (McCarthy, 2022, p.11). This stark description hints towards something disastrous having occurred. He rises and studies the South of the country, commenting, "Barren, silent, godless" (McCarthy, 2022, p.11).

Jameson's theory of post-modernism is like a prophecy about the future. He analyzes the present and tends to describe what the future societal collapse might look like (Chernus, 1992). Jameson states, "The postmodernisms have in fact been fascinated precisely by this whole 'degraded' landscape..." (Jameson, 1991, p.23). Thus, the opening of *The Road* (2022) serves as a foreshadowing of what Jameson believes is to come in the future, a world stripped of Historical continuity and meaning. As the man and the child set off on their journey towards the South, to find warmth amongst the cold, barren, and ashy wasteland the earth has become, throughout their journey, multiple events unfold that showcase the loss of meaning in this post-apocalyptic world and reflect fragmentation and depthlessness—an idea Jameson associates with post-modernity.

Jameson extends on the idea of 'simulacrum' to build his master narrative of the loss of meaning, a new depthlessness. He quotes, "The first and most evident is the emergence of a new kind of flatness or depthlessness, a new kind of superficiality in the most literal sense—perhaps the supreme formal feature of all the postmodernisms..." (Jameson, 1991, p.31). This idea of superficiality, central to Jameson, is reflected in McCarthy's novel. When the man cries out, "Are you there? he whispered. Will I see you at the last? Have you a neck

by which to throttle you? Have you a heart? Damn you eternally have you a soul? Oh God, he whispered. Oh God.” (McCarthy, 2022, p.15), he first questions the existence of God, then goes on to curse Him for the suffering inflicted as if not only did he readily accept God’s existence within a moment but also holds Him responsible for the catastrophe. Furthermore, just after cursing Him, he whispers out to God, as a desolate cry for help. This disjointed oscillation highlights the lack of meaning he associates with the entity he calls ‘God.’ Although throughout the novel, he believes that he is appointed by God to protect the child and that they are carrying ‘The Fire’, “And we’re carrying the fire. Yes.” (McCarthy, 2022, p.82), and he thinks of the child as some ‘warrant’ given to him by God as McCarthy writes, “He knew only that the child was his warrant. He said: If he is not the word of God God never spoke.” (McCarthy, 2022, p.12). His belief in them being ‘the good guys’ appointed by God is so strong that it is from this belief that he derives his sense of struggle and resilience in the face of utter despair. Although hopeless for himself and the world, he continues to live for his son and teaches him survival skills as well. This point of contrast highlights the meaninglessness of his belief; that he questions the mere existence of God, and simultaneously, not only calls out to Him and Christ multiple times but also believes that they are carrying ‘the fire’ given to them by God- the fundamental drive in his struggle to remain alive.

Another dimension of meaninglessness is depicted in the novel via the character of the man’s wife. The female character has a passive presence throughout and enters the disjointed narrative via flashbacks or nostalgia the man experiences. The distinction between the past and the present is blurred via her character throughout. This breakdown of temporality signifies a breakdown of the signifying chain; another hallmark of depthlessness as described by Jameson, “...that personal identity is itself the effect of a certain temporal unification of past and future with the present before me...” (Jameson, 1991, p.49).

The meaninglessness of her character arises from her incapability to connect with the father and the son, her inability to judge the chaos surrounding her, her inability to distinguish between the present and the future, and her emotional acceptance of death being less painful than the uncertainty of what the future holds. She justifies her choice of suicide by the fear of the unknown, particularly the future. When the man imagines himself conversing with his dead wife, she says that she would’ve taken the boy to embrace death with her as she says, “I’d take him with me if it werent for you. You know I would. It’s the right thing to do.” (McCarthy, 2022, p.40). When the man calls her crazy, she responds with the following words:

Sooner or later they will catch us and they will kill us. They will rape me. They’ll rape him. They are going to rape us and kill us and eat us and you wont face it. You’d rather wait for it to happen. But I cant. I cant. (McCarthy, 2022, p.40).

Here, “they” are a representation of the fear of the unknown. She finds herself in a potential threat by the barbarism around her and chooses death over life. She thinks that the man vowing not to leave her is meaningless and that death is a new lover she has taken. She says to the man, “It’s meaningless... I’ve taken a new lover” (McCarthy, 2022, p.40). The woman felt a sense of detachment when she was birthing their child, as McCarthy writes, “Her cries meant nothing to him” (McCarthy, 2022, p.42). This emotional abandonment made the pain of death more caressing to her than the struggle of breathing as for her; the meaning she attributed to the thought of a partner was abolished. For her, hope meant nothing as she says, “As for me my only hope is for eternal nothingness and I hope it with all my heart” (McCarthy, 2022, p.41). This emotional detachment of hers from her child and husband was an aftereffect of the identity crisis she had fallen into, what Jameson cites as ‘Waning of Affect’, where “affect” refers to profound personal feelings. For Jameson, in the post-modern era, emotions have become superficial and replaced by disorientation and a sense of simulation that is heightened by consumer culture or mass media. People become

numb, and the boundary between authentic and mediated emotions blurs out, leading to a loss of connection and a decentered self. This explains her choice of suicide as a depthless response of a fragmented self to a meaningless life. As Jameson states as

The very concept of expression presupposes indeed some separation within the subject, and along with that a whole metaphysics of the inside and the outside, of the wordless pain within the monad and the moment in which, often cathartically, that 'emotion' is then projected out and externalized, as gesture or cry, as desperate communication and the outward dramatization of inward feeling. (Jameson, 1991, p.33)

The woman reappears abruptly in the narrative when the man dies and the child is to choose whether or not to embrace the stranger as his new guardian. It is ambiguous whether she is visible to her son or not. Regardless, in contrast with her first appearance in the novel, her belief in God is at eminent display here rather than her nihilistic pursuit of death as it states, "She would talk to him sometimes about God... She said that the breath of God was his breath yet though it pass from man to man through all of time." (McCarthy, 2022, p.175).

This mutation can be explained in the views of Jameson, which he cites as 'Self-Annihilation', a contributing factor of depthlessness. He states, "...concepts such as anxiety and alienation ... are no longer appropriate in the world of the postmodern...the alienation of the subject is displaced by the fragmentation of the subject" (Jameson, 1991, p.35). The fragmentation thus finds a two-fold interpretation at this instance. Just as the character of the woman signifies fragmentation in the literal narrative of *The Road* (2022), her self is fragmented as well. For Jameson, totality and fragmentation are contrasting concepts. While most post-modernists completely reject the idea of totality, Jameson views it differently. For him, every unified system comprises signs that only relate by differences and not unity. Yet, we do not question their coexistence; rather, we consume all the juxtaposed signs while accepting each one as a discrete entity. To extend on this view of Jameson, Chernus uses the example of an architectural artifact that might incorporate multiple elements, such as Gothic, Victorian, Egyptian, and Modern architecture. As Chernus states that for Jameson, a system that produces constant diversity is nevertheless still a single system. (Chernus, 1992). We infer that the contradictory emotions that the woman exhibits in her multiple appearances in the narrative showcase her totality of being, yet a decentered, fragmented self, which is influenced by numerous factors.

Another major event that reflects the collapse of meaning in the world of McCarthy is the interaction between the man, the child, and a man who wrongly addresses himself as Ely. Throughout the conversation, Ely responds to the man with ambiguous and contradictory statements. Ely's character here is a satiric take on Prophet Elijah (Wielenberg, 2010), who tried to warn the people and Ahab of God's existence and encouraged them to believe in Him. On the contrary, each utterance of Ely is a questionable remark on God's existence. Firstly, he says, "There is no God", but then goes on to say, "There is no God and we are his prophets" (McCarthy, 2022, p.107), which is a juxtaposition in itself. Moreover, when the man asks him how he survives, he says that people on the road give him food, but then when he inquires about their whereabouts, he replies, "There's not any people. I just made that up" (McCarthy, 2022, p.108). The man then asks him that even if his name is Ely or not, and he accepts that it is not. When the man asks him his actual name, he objectifies, "I don't want to say it" (McCarthy, 2022, p.108). This is reflective of the mistrust that grows when survival instincts overcome morality. The basic relation we share with others, of existing as a being, becomes meaningless.

For Ely, the world has become superficial and desolate to the extent that he remarks, "Where men cant live gods fare no better" (McCarthy, 2022, p.108). Furthermore, Ely says, "When we're all gone at last then there'll be nobody here but death and his days will be numbered too. He'll be out in the road there with nothing to do and nobody to do it to"

(McCarthy, 2022, p.109). The absence of human connections is what underscores the collapse of meaning for Ely. As he says that he has always been on the road, it can be extended that he does not remember what the world looked like before the catastrophe left it ash-ridden. The feeling of emotional connectivity has long diminished from his life and memory, rendering him to utter meaninglessness to the extent where even death does not hold any significance for him. His character is another portrayal of Jameson's "Waning of Affect"; feelings, hope, and human connections hold no significance in his life, but rather despair and superficiality.

### Effects of Late Capitalism

The bleak world of McCarthy in *The Road* (2022) is an exemplary depiction of what Jameson views as a 'multinational hyperreality', an outcome of late capitalism. Hyperreality refers to a state where the line between reality and representation blurs out, making simulations more significant than the originals they represent. According to Jameson, late capitalism is now driven by consumer culture rather than the mode of production. The multinational corporations, globalized economy, and electrically powered machines now produce images and data rather than products off which we feed. These images coexist in pluralist notions, linking to one another by differences yet similar experiences they provide, i.e., A shopping mall- a place where different commodities coexist yet to give a global experience to its consumers regardless of its location. This is the new imperialism for Jameson, and Culture for him is now synonymous with the consumption of these images or signs. Cultural signs are no longer distinct from media, and we consume not based on our necessities but the notion of 'cool-ness'- postmodernity's highest value (Chernus, 1992). This distinction is evident even in the desolate world of *The Road*. Where human necessities like shelter, food, and water are not readily available, where the boy and the man survive off whatever they find, when they come across a can of Coca-Cola, the man hands it over to the boy saying "It's a treat. For you" (McCarthy, 2022, p.21). The fact that the man never claimed for anything else to be a treat, not even when they find a hidden place filled up with cartons of food, reflects how the brand Coca-Cola and the soft drink itself are now consumed as a cultural sign and not a drink itself.

The process through which products are turned into such signs and commodities is the advertisement done by the media. It is this global sensation promoted by the media that turns our wants into our needs. McCarthy writes,

They passed through towns that warned people away with messages scrawled on the billboards. The billboards had been whited out with thin coats of paint in order to write on them and through the paint could be seen a pale palimpsest of advertisements for goods which no longer existed. (McCarthy, 2022, p.81).

The scribbling of warnings on the billboards could be interpreted as a foreshadowing of the future if late capitalism keeps on deepening its roots. The reason that it could turn out to be so disastrous, such as the world depicted in *The Road* (2022) is that when simulations of culture become more dominant than the original, the link with historicity is broken and the world is transformed into sheer images of pseudo-events; the 'postmodern hyperspace' as Jameson calls it. A component of this postmodern hyperspace is the post-industrial society- a glimpse of which we find in the novel when McCarthy writes that in the early years, people could be spotted on the road, "Wearing masks and goggles, sitting in their rags by the side of the road like ruined aviators."(McCarthy, 2022, p.24). The masks and goggles are symbolic of the post-industrial world as the effects of industrialization on the environment are hazardous enough to pose health threats. Moreover, when the man finds the shelter filled with food, all of it is in the form of 'canned goods' and is packed in 'rows of stenciled cartons' (McCarthy, 2022, p.87) - signifying the characteristic industrialist world. The man comments, "The richness of a vanished world" (McCarthy, 2022, p.87) when the child inquires him about the commodities as he was

unfamiliar with how the actual world looked like. It can be thus inferred that it was the late capitalistic society, the postmodern hyperspace from which the world transitioned to the post-apocalyptic world of *The Road* (2022).

Jameson remarks, "...postmodern hyperspace—has finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world" (Jameson, 1991, p.65). The world of McCarthy's *The Road* (2022) is a splitting image of this criterion. The man carries a roadmap on which the black lines symbolize the roads. Throughout the novel, he brings it out occasionally to make sense of their position and fails each time, as the author quotes, "They studied the pieces of map but he'd little notion of where they were" (McCarthy, 2022, p.80). To locate oneself in a mappable external world, markers like monuments, buildings, and natural boundaries, along with others, are required. But the world of *the Road* is desolate and devoid of any such markers- the primary reason the boy and the man find themselves dislocated. This is synonymous with the postmodern hyperspace of Jameson, where the systems are so complex that humans cannot determine their position within them. The totality of postmodernity is beyond what human capacity is capable of representing. It is from here that the need for cognitive mapping arises.

The world of McCarthy is stripped of any social, physical, political, and moral structure. Even when any of the characters come across the remnants of the past world, like crayons, a flute, burned homes, and abandoned supermarkets, they are unable to connect with them. The reason is that late capitalism has created for them a world in which each system that once used to be too complicated is now abolished. For them, to remain the 'good guys' in a world where every broader social structure is absent is the stem of their need for cognitive mapping. They grapple with the question of how and what determines their position in a society that is devoid of ethical structures and physical frameworks. This struggle of the man to 'map' the world and to position them within it is an extension of Jameson's concept of postmodern multinational hyperspace.

## Conclusion

Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2022) is a fragmented narrative where the collapse of meaning is traceable via multiple characters, such as the man, his wife, and Ely, and various depictions and events. Moreover, it is not merely a depiction of a post-apocalyptic world but a critique of the cultural consequences the consumerism of late capitalism might bring on humanity. This analysis, an extension of Fredric Jameson's Post-Modernist framework on *The Road*, critically examines the depiction of meaninglessness, fragmentation, depthlessness, identity crisis, waning of affect, and effects of late capitalism throughout the narrative of the novel, making it a vital implementation of the post-modern theory in literary studies.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that a deep analysis of the contemporary cultural and economic trends and their consequences is required to ensure a secure future. If late capitalism is left unchecked, it is not far that simulacra will replace the original, the diversity of cultures will be lost under the slogan of 'universality', and the deprived will only suffer to death. If basic amenities are compromised in the name of 'culture', chaos in the social structure is guaranteed, and survival instincts will take over the shared notion of peace. Furthermore, this study invites researchers and scholars to explore the impact of these economic and cultural systems on human identity to reveal the construction of meaning in a postmodern world.



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