

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Road is a 2006 novel by American writer Cormac McCarthy which is included as a post apocalyptic work. Post apocalypse is the situation which is set in a world or civilization after apocalypse. “Cormac is an American novelist and playwright. He has written ten novels in the Southern gothic, western, and post apocalyptic genres” (“Cormac McCarthy”). He is a great novelist and has some awards, “Among others are the National Book Award and The National Book Critics Circles Award” (Whither). He is also regarded as a great novelist because he has a special style in writing his novels, namely the use of thrillers and bleak effects to narrating his stories. In The Road, McCarthy takes the readers into the harsh reality of a dying world.

The Road is Cormac McCarthy’s masterpiece, published in 2006. The novel becomes bestseller, which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction and

was included in Oprah's Book Club selection list. "Awesome in the totality of its vision, The Road is an unflinching mediation on the worst and the best" ("Your guide to The Road"). Even, this novel was adapted as a film, "The movie is expected to have Oscar potential, which means they'd like to have it theatres in time to qualify for the Academy Awards" ("Cormac McCarthy's the road likely delayed to 2009").

The father in The Road, whose name is left unknown, is the central character and an activator of the story because he has an important role for determine his son's life. The father as the protagonist has challenged me to analyze the theme of the novel through the portrayal of the protagonist. According to the Dictionary of World Literary Terms, the theme is defined as "The central and dominating idea in literary work/ the message or the moral implicit in any work of art" (Shaw 378), while "The leading character of a literary work.... is always the principal and central character" (Shaw 376).

I choose to analyze theme through the portrayal of the protagonist because according to Perrine, "A story through its portrayal of specific persons in specific situations will have something to say about the nature of all men or about the relationship of human being to each other or to the universe, whatever central generalization about life arises from the specifics of the story constitutes theme" (Perrine 103). So, I think it is suitable for me to analyze theme through the portrayal of character from the novel The Road.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problems of this study are:

1. What is the theme of the novel?
2. How does the portrayal of the protagonist help to reveal the theme?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Based on the statement of the problem, the purposes of the study are:

1. To show the theme of the novel.
2. To show how the portrayal of the protagonist helps to reveal the theme.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

I read The Road by Cormac McCarthy as my primary text. I also do some research in the library, and read some sources from the Internet that can support my analysis in my thesis. Then, I make a concluding remark of my thesis.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

In my thesis, there are three chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction consisting of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problems, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two consists of Analysis of theme through the protagonist in Cormac McCarthy's The Road. Chapter Three is the Conclusion followed by the

Bibliography and the Appendices which consist of a Synopsis of The Road and the Biography of Cormac McCarthy.