

Psychological perception in the novel “The Road by Cormac McCarthy”

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Abstract:

Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* brings out the bond and hope of the man and the boy. The man plays a vital role in the novel as he stimulates hope within the boy to survive in life. Dreams and memories play a vital role in this concept. In the world nobody will forget each one’s childhood memory. The novel describes the journey to south west undertaken by a young boy and his father after an unnamed catastrophic event that has struck the world. McCarthy’s feeling coincide with the writer Twain who explains the creations of God such as oceans, mountains. In the world nobody will forget each one’s childhood memories. This paper presents *The Road* deals with Memory and the past, in various information.

Keywords :

Memory, Violence, Love, Isolation, Good and Evil, Versions of Reality.

Cormac McCarthy is an American novelist, playwright, and screenwriter. He has written ten novels, spanning the Southern Gothic, Western, and post-apocalyptic genres.

McCarthy's fifth novel, *Blood Meridian* (1985), was on *Time* magazine's 2005 list of the hundred best English-language books published since 1923. For *All the Pretty Horses* (1992), he won both the National Book Award and National Book Critics Circle Award. His 2005 novel *No Country for Old Men* was adapted as a 2007 film of the same name, which won four Academy Awards, including Best Picture. *All the Pretty Horses*, *The Road*, and *Child of God* have also been adapted as motion pictures, while *Outer Dark* was turned into a fifteen minute short.

McCarthy won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for Fiction for *The Road* (2006). In 2010, *The Times* ranked *The Road* first on its list of the hundred best fiction and non-fiction books of the past ten years.

Memories make people to think their memorable days in their lives. Nobody will forget such as moment of life, which are everlasting movements. The old man likes to remember his past experience to make him happy. The pine paneling is gone from the walls leaving just the furring strips. He stood there. He felt with his thumb in the painted wood we used to have Christmas when I was a boy. He turned and looked out at the waste of the yard. A tangle of lilac. The shape of a hedge on cold winter night when the electricity was out in a storm we would sit out the fire here, me and my sister doing our homework. (TR 25-26)

The man remembers the special bond that began when his wife delivered the boy. The man made more effort to save his pregnant wife as they were already in an apocalyptic world. He remember the struggle of his wife to deliver the baby, which his most pathetic memory fixed in his subconscious mind. He remember how the wife delivered his son with the help of a dry cell lamp and cut her cord with the kitchen knife.

A few night later she gave birth in their bed by the light of the dry cell lamp. Gloves went for dishwashing. The improbable appearance of the small crown of the head, streaked with blood and lank black hair. He held aloft the scrawny red body so raw and naked and cut

cord with kitchen shears and wrapped his son in a towel (61). The crucial state he had undergone during the birth of his son. Thereafter the man himself becomes a caretaker of his son who is the wealthy gift from the God.

The man even thinks of the place where he used to celebrate the Christmas when he was a boy, and the place where he and his sister sat and done there daily homework. The boy often brings him in the realistic life. The boy tells “ We should go papa” The man said “ Yes”(26). Then they entered the dining room the man remembers of his mother. Finally, they go the man remembers of his mother. Finally, they go to living room and to the room where he slept.

The boy asks his father about the old friends in order to know about how relationship existed in the old world. His enquiry as he lacks friends is the new world. He considers his father as his only friend and his companion.

He even knows that his only relative in this world is his father. This motivates him to ask the question like, “Did you have friend? Yes. I did lots of them. Yes, what happened to them? They died... Do you miss them? Yes I do (61-62).

In this novel most often, the poet is in the depressed state, because the man is not able to remember certain colors and names of birds. Their journey goes on towards their destination. In some event, the boy felt so sacred. For example when they come across a farmhouse, the boy saw three people hanging inside. By witnessing this scene, the boy gets scared and his father drags him close to his bosom. Even the boy had some scary dreams, which even play the psychological theme.

The boy's eyes bottled up with fears. The boy asks his father to forget all those bad events to tell some good event that makes him happy. Here the author McCarthy brings out the mind of human tendency that cannot forget the bad events. People most often forget the

good memories and remember tough incidents. The old man states “ You forget what you want to remember and you remember what you want to forget”(11)

However, unfortunately there is nobody alive now. This made him to feel so badly. There was an apple yard near to his house, which looks like a skeleton. The barn house carries the smell of his house and he even wonders whether cows exists in that house anymore. The man thinks of the bad condition of the cow and he reflects if anyone would take care of cows for future use in this hopeless world.

They were travelling towards south, the boy and the man saw a barn house. Even in his events, the author brings out the psychological perspective. The man remembers the experience that once he happened to live in the barn house. His memories are so sweet, that his house was so beautiful, where his family led a happy life.

The man also remembers about his wife, when she falls sick and the man takes care of her. It reflect the readers that how he loved his wife. His in-depth love for his wife is expressed though this context.

However, their bad luck always followed them. Lack of trust in her husband lead her to go into woods. This separation psychologically affect him often. Knowing or unknowingly all those bad movements comes across his mind.

The man had the strong affection towards his son, this made him not even brother about his own illness and only worries about his son's suffering. The boy shows a field of dead grass and asks his father to go there, but his father refuse to go. His words proves that, “Papa let's not go up there. It is okay. I do not think we should go up there. It is okay. We have to take a look” (11).

At this point of them, the man remember how his wife has left both his son and himself. He tries to stop her but she has already decided to go. In this conversation, the father explains his wife that she said “ Yes. What in god's name are you taking about? We

are not survivors. We are the walking dead in a horror film (57). The man begs her and pleads with her to stop but she refuses and asks them to follow her. These memories bring out pleasure moments with his wife, and the world transforms into a dream that symbolizes dead according to the man.

The novel gives an important place to God. However, most of the place, there is no place in God for the man during the journey. The will to survive keeps the faith of the boy and the man going, as if heightens their courage to live. His father does not lose his faith in God, when he happened to undergo the dreadful situation. Instead, he place the hope, which he has lost in his son and convey:-

There is no god and we are his prophets. However the father is angry
With God at time, he feels as though he is going to die, and he worries
How his son will survive without him. This question like; are you
There? He whispered. Will I see you at last? 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? (10)

He cures the God because oh is situation he placed him. The boy's own belief in goodness and hope helps his father to carry the fire throughout the novel.

Even in the upcoming story, the man fears whether his son will be disturbed psychologically, "in the night, he heard gruesome shrieks coming from the house and the tried to put his hand over the boy's ears and after a while the screaming stopped" (121).The man in order to save his son he took the pistol from his belt and laid it under the blankets. He has seen the boy in a dream lay out upon a cooling board and woke in horror. He could bear in the walking world he could not by night and he sat awake for fear the dream would return.

Dreams are succession of images, emotions and sensation that occur involuntarily in the mind during certain stages of sleep. The scientific study of dreams called 'neurology'. This may even cause during over psychic pressure in our mind. Sigmund Freud that dreams as manifestation of our deepest desires and anxieties often relating to repressed childhood memories and obsession.

Joys and sorrows are the part of life. Everybody should undergo these two things simultaneously. The protagonist of the novel is the man ; he shows his love towards his son, which is unconditional. This true and strong affection makes the boy to love his father more. Separation cannot be done between them.

When the boy met a person after his father's death, had a question ,whether he is a good person or not. He did not even have anybody to guide him. He was so much confused. So he got scared and asked to him

"Are you one of the good guys?"(302).the man to mingle with him but the boy repeatedly kept asking:

How do I know you are one of the good people? You do not. You will have To take a shot. Are you carrying the fire? Am I what? Carrying the fire. You Are kind of weirded out, aren't you? No. just a little. Yeah. That is okay. So Are you? What, carrying the fire? Yes. Yeah. We are. Do you have any kids? We do. Do you have a little boy? We have a little boy and we have a little Girl. (303-304)

This information, which he gathers because of the awareness, he is taking to get rid of the bad people. Therefore, that he can be safer hands rest of his life. The boy psychologically disturbed many time in his life, he lost him mother lovable father. All his sufferings the author has explained. The author has highlighted the psychological element in the novel. It also explores the trauma undergoes by the character. Dreams and memories play

a vital role in this concept. In the world nobody will forget each one's childhood memories. All memories the author has explained. The author has highlighted the psychological element in this novel. This paper present the psychological development of the character in the view of the boy and man. This shows how strong their relationship and that makes this topic to be more effective and the novel.

Work cited

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*. Picador, 2006.