

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Apocalyptic or apocalypse is the name of disaster or cataclysm which attacks our world or has attacked our nation, Indonesia sometime ago. It is a very frightening disaster. It is one of the worst events in the world. The word apocalypse is used in literature and sociology to describe the phenomenon in the ancient world. According to Davila, in *The Origin of Apocalyptic*, that apocalypse is a word that to a large degree is used by scholars to describe an elusive social and literary phenomenon in the ancient world. The word "apocalypse" (a universal destruction prophesied in the Bible) is derived from the Greek *apokalupsis*, "revelation," and is used inconsistently by both ancient authors and modern scholars (Davila, 1997; 231). There are two kinds of apocalypse. The first kind happens naturally such as: earthquakes, giant tide or tsunami, volcanic eruption, etc. The second one is a war which is a man made disaster such as: the World War II, the Iraqi war, etc. A disaster happens very fast and it damages the surroundings. For example, a disaster caused by tornado will damage houses, buildings, trees and the environment. While, war is a situation in which groups of people in certain countries fight against each other over a period of time. The occurrence is so bad that it brings death, fear or anxiety, and fright. Sometimes a war can become ferocious with the use of nuclear weapons and nuclear bombs. On one hand, the definition and term of apocalypse in the popular terminology

today is a catastrophic event or case by nuclear holocaust (Davila, 1979; 12). On the other hand, according to Just in *Apocalyptic: Definition and Related Terms*, he argues that an apocalypse is not an event, but a "revelation" that is recorded in written form: it is a piece of crisis literature that "reveals" truths about the past, present, and to the future in highly symbolic terms; the revelation often comes in dreams or visions, and usually needs to be interpreted with the help of an angel; it is usually intended to provide hope and encouragement for people in the midst of severe trials and tribulations (13-14). In addition, the event of apocalypse damages and destroys everything. It can be said that apocalypse is like the end of the day.

Cormac McCarthy's 2006 novel, *The Road*, the writer of this thesis has chosen because he wants to depict about a father and a son who survived after the apocalyptic event. The novel is started when a man and a boy, father and son, journeying together for many months across a post-apocalyptic landscape, some years after a great, unexplained cataclysm. The story takes place in the former United States, where civilization had been destroyed, along with most life. The precise fate of the rest of the earth is not made clear here, though the implication is that the disaster affected the entire planet. After the apocalypse, there were only large bands of cannibals and their prey, and refugees who scavenge for canned food or other surviving foodstuffs. Likewise, ash covered the surface of the earth; the atmosphere, it also obscured the sun and moon, and the two travelers breathed through improvised masks to filter it out. Plants and animals were apparently all dead (dead wood for fuel is plentiful), and the rivers and oceans were seemingly empty of life. The only non-human organisms that they encounter were a dog,

some mushrooms and apples found in an orchard. It is a post-apocalyptic tale describing a journey taken by a father and his young son over a period of several months. They traveled across a landscape that was blasted years before by an unnamed cataclysm that destroyed civilization and, seemingly, most life on earth.

The unnamed father is literate, he was experienced in travelling and knowledgeable in machinery, woodcraft, and human biology (when confronting and threatening a cannibal, he was able to list several obscure portions of the brain, at which point the cannibal asks him if he is a doctor). He realized that he and his young son could not survive another winter in their present location, so the two set out across what was once the Southeastern United States, largely following the highways. They aimed to reach warmer southern climates and the sea in particular. Along the way, threats to the duo's survival created an atmosphere of sustained terror and tension.

In the end, after the father brought the boy south after extreme hardship but without finding the salvation he had hoped for, the father succumbed to his illness and died, leaving the boy alone on the road. Three days later, however, the grieving boy encountered a man who had been tracking the father and son. This man, who has a wife and two children of his own, invited the boy to join his family, the narrative's closing suggests that the wife was a compassionate woman who treated the boy well, a resolution that vindicates the boy's late dead father's determination to keep the boy alive by keeping moving.

Furthermore, the writer has chosen this novel because of its quality. It is the most compelling, moving and accessible novel since *All the Pretty Horses*, additionally McCarthy brilliantly captures the knife edge that fugitives in a hostile world stand on. In one hand, he shares something vital and endures the boy's spirit, his father's love and the nature of bravery itself.

The novel was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the 2006 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for Fiction, and was chosen as an *Oprah's Book Club* selection. Cormac McCarthy is Pulitzer Prize Winner, *The Searing*, and Post apocalyptic Novel Destined to Become Cormac McCarthy's Masterpiece, National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist and was chosen as an Oprah's Book Club selection.

In his 2007 interview with Oprah Winfrey for *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, McCarthy said that the inspiration for *The Road* came during a visit to El Paso, Texas with his young son, about four years prior. Imagining what the city might look like in the future, he pictured "fires on the hill" and thought about his son. He took some initial notes, but did not return to the idea until several years later while in Ireland. Then the novel came to him quickly, and he dedicated it to his son, John Francis McCarthy

At last, the writer is interested in this novel since it contains occurrences that may happen in the future. It is like a message toward society to prepare them to face the apocalypse through the disasters either natural or war which is caused by human that may happen, anytime and city at the end of the day or the end of

the world. Moreover, the writer is fascinated with the father and son because of like the relationship of the father and his son who could be not separated with anything except death. In which, a father figure will keep or save the son from danger, the father is a figure who gives comfort, salvation and life. Furthermore, the writer is attracted to the novel, because Cormac McCarthy has a good relationship with his son, John Francis McCarthy so he dedicates the novel to his son.

1.2. Statements of the Problems

Based on the background that the writer has mentioned previously in the background of study, the writer has formulated the statements of the problem as follows:

1. What reasons make the father take the journey to South Beach?
2. What problems does the father face during the Journey to South Beach?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are intended to answer the above questions, mentioned in the statement of the problems, by using some chosen theories as the tool to analyze. The objectives of the study are:

1. To explain the reasons of the father take the journey to South Beach.
2. To explain the problems the father face during the journey to South Beach.

1.4. Significance of the Study

There are several contributions that the writer hopes to make in enhancing the students of the literature studies. They are as follows:

1. This thesis provides refer as for other literature researcher or students on how to analyze the external and internal conflicts faced by characters in a novel. Especially the English Department of Airlangga University
2. It is also expected that this study may contribute to society in grasping the lessons on the father and son relationship.
3. Laymen in general can appreciate this novel even deeper by studying how complex the relationship of the father and the son through the conflicts they faced.

1.5. Scope and Limitations

There are many trials, conflicts, and characters in *The Road* that can be discussed. However, the writer only focuses on the main characters that are the Father and the son and their conflicts during their journey to South Beach.

1.6. Theoretical Background

The writer uses the intrinsic approach theory to analyze the character which is the most important part of a literary work. The writer focuses his analysis on the conflict of the main character, the father. The writer uses the theory of conflict to support the intrinsic study.

In analyzing the novel, the writer tries to elaborate the theory of conflict by William G. Cunningham, *Theoretical Framework for Conflict Resolution*, Richelle Putnam's, *Ins and Outs* and Dowling Felix conflict theory, Study Guide, *The Theory of Conflicts* books that the concepts of conflict theory are divided into two subgroups. They are external conflict and internal conflict in that happen the character. Thus, the writer also studies booth types of conflicts faced by the main character.

1.7. Method of the Study

The writer uses the library and online research in the writing process of this study. The writer collects data from books, articles, commentaries, and other printed materials from library and internet. They are used to support the analysis of this study. Those materials include the main source that is the novel itself. The supporting sources include other supporting information on the background of the author, commentaries and articles on the novel, and everything that are related with *The Road*.

Moreover, the writer also collects data and other printed sources about the theories which are used in this study. These data are included in the supporting materials.

After collecting those data, the main and the supporting sources, the writer analyzes and processes the data in order to support this study. From this process, the writer has a good understanding about the novel and the problems which are analyzed.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

Apocalyptic or apocalypse : A disaster which happens naturally, like earthquake, tsunami and unnaturally such as war.

Post-Apocalyptic : The place that is set in a world or civilization after such a terrible disaster.

Internal Conflict : A struggle that takes place in a character's mind.

External Conflict : A struggle between a character and the outside world, such as: man vs. environment
And man vs. man

Cataclysm : A disaster that attacked whichever country or Nation as suddenly