

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF MOHAMED BOUDIAF- M'SILA



FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

STREAM: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

N:.....

OPTION: LITERATURE AND CIVILIZATION

**Mapping the Self and Uncanny in Cormac
McCarthy's *The Road***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for a Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

Submitted by:

Supervised by:

Souaad Ibrir

Dr. Mohammed Gouffi

Sara Ben ziane

Academic Year:2021/2022

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Board of Examiners

Mrs. Sabah FARAH	University of M'sila	Chairperson
Mr. Bachir SAHED	University of M'sila	Examiner
Dr. Mohammed GOUFFI	University of M'sila	Supervisor

Academic Year:2021/2022

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work:

*To my dear parents who have always been a constant source of unconditional love
and of undying support and encouragement during my whole educational career
and academic pursuits.*

To my beloved brothers and sisters.

To all my family and friends.

Souaad

Dedication

*Before all , my sincere praise goes to Allah the Almighty for giving me strength and
patience to accomplish my work .*

*To my beloved parents for prayers, encouragement and support .I could never
reach this moment without them .*

To my dear sisters and my lonely brother for help and support.

Sara

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We thank as well the respected jury for spending time on reading and evaluating our dissertation .

Our deepest recognition and special gratitude are devoted for our parents, families and friends.

Abstract

This dissertation investigates mapping the self and uncanny as they have been presented throughout Cormac McCarthy's post-apocalyptic novel *The Road* (2006). It also investigates things that help the protagonists in their selfhood mapping which are parental love and hope. Indeed, literature is one of the best means to deepen our understanding of human self. Therefore, due to the fact that literary works can not be fully appreciated without reference to their contexts, the selected novel offers the reader an opportunity to enter into the world of post-apocalypse. It portrays the journey of a father and his son across a landscape blasted by not only an unspecified cataclysm , but also the wrath of mankind in which case has destroyed most of civilization. McCarthy depicts a dystopian world that has lost sight of humanity and its future. In this study, psychoanalytic literary approach is used through which it examines the characters' selfhood in post-apocalyptic world. This dissertation came to the result that the uncanny is strongly presented through the novel highlighting its characteristics, parental love and hope are the powers to overcome the uncanny's danger and to construct the selfhood.

Key Words: Uncanny, post-apocalyptic, *The Road*, Selfhood , hope

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General Introduction



General Introduction

The end of the world is one of the interesting topics that has been fruitfully tackled in many literary narratives and even interpreted in several American movies, with various imaginations based on how the world would end giving different reasons to this end such as the climate change disaster, Alien invasion or the wars. *The Road*(2006) by The American writer Cormac McCarthy. In fact, the novel is a paragon that portrays the world after a disaster and even depicts its main literary features.

Cormac McCarthy is considered to be one of the most popular novelists of the present time . An American author who has dedicated his novel the *Road* to shed light on how people live in a destroyed world . He has succeeded in capturing his readers' attention as well as researchers due to his depiction to the difficult life during the post-apocalyptic world. The author of this masterpiece gives the readers an opportunity to experience and even live the journey with his characters.

Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* takes place in a hypothetical post-apocalyptic world, but without mentioning the disaster that led to the collapse of the world in the novel. McCarthy's narrative is about the journey of a father and his son to the South , seeking a warmer climate , after an unknown catastrophe ended civilization and scorched the entire planetary ecology , in which they live out their days . They share a deep bond of love and a commitment to each other .Their survival plan depends on constantly moving along the road while scavenging food, clothing and supplies from the ruins of homes , farms and towns. As they move south across the cold , grey landscape , the father and his son encounter the spectrum of humanity , ranging from goodness to depravity .They struggle to preserve memories and values that are becoming increasingly meaningless in a world where the future was wiped out with the past.

General Introduction

Cormac McCarthy's Pulitzer Prize Winner novel has been a focus of concern for many researchers and critics from various fields of study. Among the researchers who have attempted to investigate McCarthy's *the Road* is Silje Lippmann. In his thesis *Parental Strategies and Embodied Hope of Children in Post-apocalyptic works : the Road and Bird Box a Study of Literary and Film Adaptation Strategies*. He endeavoured to compare alternative strategies of parenting under extraordinary circumstances, and to depict how the family engage with the concept of the embodied hope of children and how they establish a focus that enforces a fighting spirit and sparks positive enforcement of hope(5-6).

Besides to Silje Lippmann work, Alexander David Jackson has done a research on McCarthy's *The Road*. In his MA thesis entitled *A World-maker's Will: The Post-apocalypse And The Human Power In Cormac McCarthy's The Road(2014)*, Jackson has discussed the existence and sustainability of human empowerment in a post-apocalyptic world. He has accentuated the non-physical and non-rational powers that can be found within the human mind (4).

Another researcher who has shown interest in this topic is Samuel Tascon Olmedo. In his article *a post-apocalyptic Redefinition of Space in Cormac McCarthy's the Road* , he depicts the vision of defamiliarization and homelessness in the characters and spaces that are described in the novel. Further, he interprets how a father struggles in his attempt to instil in his boy a strong system of moral values while travelling through the vastness of a space without boundaries that only has defining and common characteristic : the road(123).

Although the previous mentioned researchers have analysed the same novel under study, each one has analysed it from a different angle. Some of them have focused on the human selfhood and its powers only, and others have focused more on the post- apocalypse as the novel is a post-apocalyptic work. However, the specific point of studying the characteristics of uncanny in the novel and the link between uncanny, apocalypse and

General Introduction

selfhood mapping was missed in the previously mentioned literary studies, and that is what the actual study seeks to stress on.

The dissertation will refer to the Psycho-analysis theory in its analysis of *The Road*. The theory will be explained focusing more on the uncanny concept from Freud's perspective of the uncanny, and then it will be applied in order to analyze the aspects of uncanny in the novel. Therefore, the research will follow a descriptive analysis method under which the events of the novel will be described, showing the literary features of uncanny in the novel.

Based on the aforementioned theory and methods, the study has several aims to realize. Firstly, it aims at describing and depicting the aspects of uncanny in the novel and crafting the link between uncanny and the post-apocalyptic world. Secondly, it seeks to demonstrate how the characters of the novel try to construct themselves and find meaning in a chaotic and post-apocalyptic world.

In order to achieve those aims, the research is guided by the following research question : How does Cormac McCarthy represent the uncanny and to what extent does the novel represent the characters selfhood mapping as being the outcome of defamiliarisation in post-apocalyptic world?

As an attempt to provide answers to the research question , we assume the following hypotheses: uncanny is strongly presented in the novel through its characteristics which we find among them dislocation, estrangement and homelessness. Parental love and hope might help to map and construct the selfhood in such a chaotic world.

To check the hypotheses of the research, the work is divided into two chapters. The first one is devoted to the theoretical background of apocalypse and uncanny in literature. First, it discusses the art of embodiment of apocalypse in American literature. Then, an eagle

General Introduction



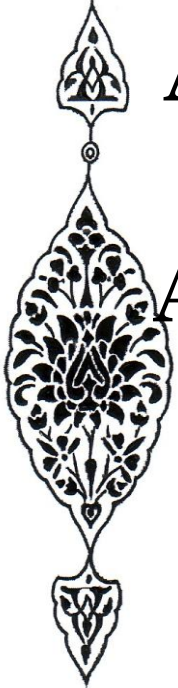
eye is put on uncanny from Freud's perspective. In addition, the modes and style of writing of Cormac McCarthy are included in the chapter.

The second chapter depicts some of the uncanny features in the novel which we find among them estrangement, dislocation and homelessness. Then, it deals with how the characters of the novel map and construct themselves in a chaotic world in which parental love and hope have been points of strength to overcome the uncanny pain.

Chapter One :

Apocalypse and Uncanny:

A Theoretical Background



.Introduction

Apocalypse is considered to be as one of the most important topics in American literature . It refers to the idea of the end of the world or the image of world after a huge destruction that has accompanied American literature through time. In such world, one may feel strange in his own home, and such a feeling is being referred as uncanny, which is a major feature in the apocalyptic world. This chapter begins with a discussion of the embodiment of apocalypse in American literature. Then, an eagle of eye is put on the epistemological roots of the uncanny from Freudian perspectives, on one hand. On the other hand, the focus is shifted to the modes and style of writing of Cormac McCarthy, the writer of the work under study, *The Road*.

1.1. America And The Art of Embodiment of Apocalypse in Literature

The origin of the term "apocalypse" refers to the Greek word for "revelation". Nevertheless, the word is much related to the introducing verse of the book of Revelation(*The Apocalypse of John*). Moreover, the term is often combined with its connected words "apocalyptic" and "Apocalypticism". It is commonly known that The Jewish and Christian apocalypses are the most well-known. Whereas, many writings of the same kind have been presented in different cultures in very old or in recent times (Collins 2).

It is observed that the classification of the term "apocalyptic" or "apocalypse" is a contemporary one. Despite of some Jewish , Christian and Gnostic titles named Apocalypses such as *The Apocalypse of Holy Mother of God* and *The Apocalypse of Adam*. Those titles do not reflect the real representation of the modern literary type of apocalypse. So, it is seen that not all the works that have the name "apocalypse" are certainly concerned with the modern genre of apocalypse(2).

Currently, the apocalypse has always been an outstanding characteristic of the modern world. Despite of the complicated definitions of the apocalypse that have been given from

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historical and religious perspectives, the apocalypse can be defined as : " an event or occurrence (accidental or otherwise) that brings about the end of the world." (Yar 2). Many novels and movies that tackle such a topic can be considered as apocalyptic works. These artistic works portray " the end " of the world and present some of people's journeys of survival. However, the post-apocalyptic art is concerned with the aftermaths of a disaster which has been the reason behind the destruction. Therefore, post-apocalyptic literary works portray humanity's persistence, but " in a world where the familiar coordinates of social, cultural, political, economic and moral organization are gone."(2). In such a context, the critic Yuen states:" The end of the world rarely is the end, at least in popular culture. Instead, it's the beginning of a new world, a world that is devoid of strong central government and traditional social institution..."(qtd in Yar 2). In the light of the breakdown of human life, the human existence in such apocalyptic stories has taken the lion's share of focus (2).

The post-apocalyptic stories in the American novels are written to present the perplexity about the end of the United States cultural dominance and the annoying adaptation of the new life under neoliberalism. It has been seen that apocalyptic stories turn toward political responses(Bellamy1).

The post-apocalyptic narratives were first introduced in the novel form. Later, they have been introduced in the multimedia. Thus, many apocalyptic stories have been included in novels. They are such kind of stories and novels that portray the future world without the necessities of life to be shared among mankind. The worries that are portrayed in the apocalyptic novels are the embodiment of people's fears and how they would react to such fears(2).

The post-apocalyptic stories have combined tension and drama. Many questions are tackled in such stories," What would the world be like after an apocalyptic event? Would the survivors remain safely sequestered? Is it possible that the enclave would be breached or

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compromised? How alone is the sole survivor, really?"(qtd in Bellamy52). Such questions evoke many dramatic imaginations that may come to the mind(52).

The post-apocalyptic style has long been combined with contemporary real-world disasters(3). In 1890, a novel, which is entitled *Caesar's Column*, can be considered as the first American post-apocalyptic work. This literary work is named after a memorial building that symbolizes the devotion that some workers have appeared during their establishment to the nation. The story of the novel is about a rebellion of a working class against the dictatorship of the state. Therefore, the disreputable Column is formed by concrete and human bodies(3).

The disaster of the 9/11, as one of the contemporary real-world disasters, has been a major theme in many literary works. After the attacks, many literary works have presented the event of the 9/11 and its aftermath. The literature provokes people to discover different areas, areas such as " between the real and imagined, between image and trope, and between the private realm of memory and the public realm of history"(qtd in Keniston and Follansbee 2). It presents a clumsy link between life and language. In addition to its attempt to portray what is still ambiguous about the attacks of the 9/11, many questions have been arisen because of this kind of literature on how people explain and present the 9/11 (Keniston and Follansbee 1,2).

The language and its tools have become meaningless in front of the disaster of the 9/11. Expressions and words have become useless to such event. Many American writers have corresponded to the attacks. "I have nothing to say."(qtd in Gray 1), that is what Toni Morrison said about what she called " The dead of September."(1). Addressing his literary skills, W.S. Merwin says : " when it happens you are not there."(1), he expresses his feelings of pain towards the attack in his poem *To The Words*. Besides many other American writers who have agreed on the paralysis of the language in front of such a disaster (Gray1).

All in all, the importance of the post-apocalyptic literature lies on the manifestation of the future negative outcomes, as it is shown in this passage: "Contemporary post-apocalyptic fiction manifests risk awareness through the critical extrapolation of hazardous current technological, environmental, economic and political trends."(qtd in Kaup 62). Furthermore, the post-apocalyptic fiction links the current events to the future ones, as it provides predictions about the future:" Apocalyptic narrative ties present developments to projected futures ."(qtd in Kaup63). Thus, the present time is related to the future in the post-apocalyptic literature (Kaup 63).

1.2. Epistemological Roots of Uncanny : Freudian Basics

The apocalyptic events , that occurred in the world , make the people face a specified set of barriers in relation to homelessness. The lack of a sense of home makes the people feel horror , fear and anxiety which characterized the uncanny. the latter has been a subject of critical , literary and philosophical debate in the nineteenth century . Freud's essay " Das Unheimlich" considers a key point of reference for discourse and discussion . It is distributed in1919 in " the Psychoanalytic Journal Imago" . James Strachery translated Freud's essay into English (in collaboration with Anna Freud) and distributed as " the uncanny " in 1925 (Jochum and Goldberg 9).

Freud starts by attempting to clarify the meaning of the concept " uncanny" following it to the term " heimlich " (Komorowski 2) . Freud states:

The German word ' unheimlich ' is obviously the opposite of ' heimlich' [' homely'] , 'heimlich' [' native ']- the opposite of what is familiar ; and we are tempted to conclude that what is ' uncanny' is frightening precisely because it is not known and familiar . Naturally not everything that is new and unfamiliar is frightening , however ; the relation is not capable of inversion. (220)

So , understanding of the two words " unheimlich" and " heimlich" in various languages appears to agree . The word signifies having a place to the house .Also , it means "

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concealed and kept from sight which covers the meaning of the term "unheimlich". The prefix "un" could be a stamp of restraint (Schweigert 6).

Freud plans to introduce that what is "uncanny" should likewise be new or it should be added to what is novel and unfamiliar in order to make it uncanny" (qtd in Hogman 7). He then expresses that this a surface understanding of the "uncanny", starting from Jentsch, he presumes that: "it is not difficult to see that this definition is incomplete, and we will therefore try to proceed beyond the equation uncanny". He continues to examine the uncanny in a few different languages bringing about more definitions like "strange, foreign" (Greek), uncomfortable, uneasy, gloomy, dismal, "daemonic, gruesome" (Arabic, Hebrew). In other words, dismal means causing or showing the feeling of being sad, daemonic means the unrest that exists in us which forces us in the unknown, leading to self-destructive and the word gruesome means very unpleasant and filling with horror usually because it is connected with death or injury. Then, he states, "unheimlich is the name for everything that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light" (Hogman 7).

Freud finishes up his discussion of the "uncanny"; "it may be true that the uncanny is something which is secretly familiar [heimlich - heimisch] which has undergone repression and then returned from it, and that everything that is uncanny fulfills this condition" (7). He makes sense of the uncanny as the polarity between the "familiar" and "unfamiliar", adjusting what excites "familiar" through the appearing of repressed characters (Hogman 6-7).

.The factors of uncanny :

Freud explores some factors that arose the feeling of uncanny which are the double, repetition compulsion and castration complex.

.The Double or "Doppelganger" :

Freud claims that , " the quality of uncanniness can only come from the circumstance of the " double " being a creation dating back to a very early mental stage , long since left behind, and one , no doubt , in which it wore a more friendly aspect "(389). " A creation dating back " means whenever reviewed for instance in isolation , disagreement or around evening time in our fantasies leads to unheimlich climate .The saying of " a more friendly aspect" means that Freud alludes to the double as an anticipation against elimination which along these lines must be viewed as a partner of the acquired fear from which everyone unknowingly endures (Reuber 12).

Freud and other western researchers state that the reason of the " doubling" as the reflect picture , shade and body " was originally an insurance against the destruction of the ego , an ' energetic denial of the power of death ' , as Rank says , and probably the immortal soul was the first' double ' of the body (qtd in Stanizai3).The double remains in alliance with someone else . This alliance happens by moving mental cycles from one individual to someone else (Suyoufie 31). Freud argues that the double has information and encounter unfamiliar with the other individual , the self gets to be perplexed or the outside self is alternated for the claim , or by multiplying , parting and altering the self .one that encounters the prepare of " self-dissolving " , regularly endures from self estrangement that for the most part closes to mental illness and as often as possible causes self-destruction.

Therefore , Freud follows the concept of the double refers to a repressed idea (Reuber11). This repression connects with the unhomely and the homely . It may be viewed as the cycle by which the homely is transformed into the unhomely. Recollections and encounters should be visible as actual on a continuity between the homely and the unhomely . The homely exists completely in the mind , whereas the unhomely exists altogether in the " unconscious mind " . Repression is the interaction by which recognizable recollections and

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encounters are gradually driven into the unaware .In which may be perceived as something contrary to repression is the interaction by which restrained recollections and encounters quickly return to the mind . The uncanny lives in the middle of this range , where the restrained / overpowered / unfamiliar and the recuperated / affirmed / recognizable are in balance .Ambiguity about the idea of an item can join the person's awareness at or close to the middle of the range where it typically does not dwell and consequently makes the kind of mental conflict encountered as a feeling of uncanniness (Cooperstein 28).

. Repetition compulsion :

In which the uncanny may appear to be produced by being helped to remember the repetition impulse , not by being helped to remember what is happened again. Being conscious of the cycle is recognized like ghostly , not being conscious of specific thing in the " unconscious " , already homely , then " repressed , presently returning into awareness (Hertz 101- 102).

. Castration complex :

Is a psychoanalytic concept in order to portray " the boy's fear loss or damage to the genital organ" as discipline for perverted desire toward " the mother " and dangerous dreams toward the opponent " father " .The boy's discovery of the physical distinction between the genders approves this compulsion (Taylor).

In his perusing of *The Sandman* , Freud endeavors to discover the secret root of the uncanny by declaring the principal subject which is " ocular castration" , represented by the eponymous and Creative figure does not show up in the tale and is accepted to detach the eyes of children . In regards to the scholar Samuel Weber , Freud's connection of castration to the eyes is not established in hereditary truth , yet instead means a " restructuring of experience , including the relation of perception , desire and consciousness in which the narcissistic categories of identity and presence are riven by a difference they can no longer

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subdue or command "(qtd in Jochum and Goldberg 10). This view recommends that the uncanny is not really about not seeing yet instead about elevated discernment set off by an item that incites the consciousness of consciousness (Jochum and Goldberg 10).

The concept of the uncanny is not only tackled by Freud , Ernst Jentsch was the first who discussed it in his famous essay " on the Psychology of the Uncanny 1906" (schweigert 5) . It was distributed in two parts . The first can be caught on as tending to the inner mental forms related to the propensity of a person to involvement . The other part depicts outside occasions which might provoke the person to encounter (Cooperstein 32). Jentsch argues :

with the word *unheimlich* ['uncanny '] , the German language seems to have produced , a rather fortunate formation .Without a doubt , this word appears to express that, someone to whom something ' uncanny' happens is not quite ' at home ' or ' at ease' in, the situation concerned , that the thing is or at least seems to be foreign to him .In brief, the word suggests that a lack of orientation is bound up with the impression of the unc- anniness of a thing or incident. (2)

This is what he says about the origin of the term of the uncanny .He rejects to give meaning to the " essence of the uncanny" (Cooperstein 33) he writes " so , if one wants to come closer to the essence of the uncanny , it is better not to ask what it is" (Jentsch 3). According to Jentsch:

It is thus comprehensible if a correlation 'new / foreign / hostile ' corresponds to the physical association of ' old / known / familiar ' . In the former case , the emergence of, sensation of uncertainty is quite natural , and one's lack of orientation will then easily , be able to take on the shading . The latter case , disorientation remains concealed for, as long as the confusion of ' known / self-evident ' does not enter the consciousness of the individual . (48)

He portrayed the orientation and uncertainty , recently states the act of opposition between " strange / familiar " . He states that the strange is new and the familiar is old (

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Cooperstein 37). " The confusion of the known / self- evident " means that the intrinsic inconsistency can be no disorientation about familiar and " self-evident " . It would appear to be that Jentsch verges on advancing a kind of repression .Thus , it assumes that he proposes a repression of the person's confusion or disorientation about that which is looked to be familiar. (38)

Freud and Jentsch reach to a similar resolution : " the uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar " (qtd in Schweigert 6) .They allude the reader to the appearing opposition of terms , the " familiar " and the " unfamiliar " , or kind of the " canny " and " the uncanny " (Schweigert 6).

According to Nicholas Royle, in his significant study of the uncanny , " to write about the uncanny , as Freud's essay makes admirably clear , is to lose one's bearings , to find oneself immersed in the maddening logic of the supplement , to engage with a hydra " (qtd in Reffett 8). He tries to set out a hypothesis of the uncanny are definitely frustrated by the propensity for instances of the uncanny to arouse different models that he states the " logic of supplement " .He might interpret the uncanny with this rational of the enhancement at it middle and established on something of an irregularity . Every uncanny's illustration , which is assumed to depress any steady comprehension of the idea, must obviously be familiar as uncanny to act as an illustration in any case but if someone can recognize something as uncanny's illustration , it should previously acknowledge a good idea of similarity to someone's concept of uncanny . Considering this , it is hence muddled the way that this new illustration can attempt to disrupt and confound a thought of the uncanny it previously conduct with (Reffett 19).

For Royle , " one uncanny thing keeps leading to another . Every attempt to isolate and analyse a specific case of the uncanny seems to generate at least minor epidemic " (qtd in Reffett 19). He argues that the uncanny will continuously avoid accurate definition since

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someone considers one has typified it , it reaches and strengths the definition to alter. The term evades definition , and in such a way the elusiveness characterizes it (Reffett 19).

Royle argues that :

The uncanny is destined to elude mastery , it is what can not be pinned down or Controlled .The uncanny is never simply a question of a statement , description: or definition , but always engages a performative dimension , a maddening supplement , something unpredictable and additionally strange happening in and to what is being stated , defined or described. (qtd in Reffett 19)

It means that it is possible to define or describe the concept of the uncanny in which the attempt to accomplish it is a fundamental , characterizing the uncanny's features , the " logic of the supplement " destructing any achieved definition for uncanny itself at the core of interpreting of the uncanny (Reffett 19).

Furthermore , the critic Helene Cixous states that , " Freud considers the unheimlich as , at the same time , a " domain" and " a " concept " , and classic designation " (528). She explained that the " domain " is unlimited and the " concept " is with practically no core : the uncanny introduces itself . Freud states that the unheimlich detailed to different terms which look like it horror , dread and misery ; it considers as an entity in the " family " .Yet it is not exactly an individual from the " family" .

She argues that the practice of the uncanny is ambiguous. This ambiguity considers as a part of the " concept" Freud contending for the presence of the uncanny , hopes to hold the " sense , the real , the reality of the sense of things " .In such a way , she comes upon the fundamental impression . So , the search is solid in which is implied and it is an issue of the idea whose whole indication is implication (Cixous 528).

However, the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan also tackles the theory of the uncanny by Freud . He claims that :

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The unheimlich is what appears at the place where the minus phi should be . Indeed, everything starts with imaginary castration , because there is no image of lack , and with good reason . When something does appear there , it is , therefore if i may put it this way because lack happens to be lacking. (qtd in Stanizai 4)

He hypothesizes that the unheimlich is connected with the spot of " mini phi " and " lack" that he states like " the imaginary castration anxiety in relation to the other " . The spot of need is the position of " anxiety " and it is the body of primitive passion.

Lacan indicates Freud's comprehensive linguistic study for the root of the concept of the uncanny . He states that the unheimlich is unfamiliar and the heimlich is familiar . His place of concentration in the uncanny is the immediate arrival of anxiety , particularly when the unfamiliar is familiar . when the subject arrives at the homely void inside , he is in the domain of the unheimlich . All of that means Lacan's reading "anxiety " has likewise an object which is homely need . Lacan is in acceptance with the theoretical position of Freud which gives in his seminar a diagram to anxiety that starts with confusion and in the wake of transforming , it prompts anxiety (Stanizai 4-5).

1.3. Style and Modes of Writing

Cormac McCarthy has achieved a great success after the publishing of *All The Pretty Horses* in 1993. After his prior editor died, McCarthy has chosen Alfred A. Knopf as his new publishing company that has helped making his new book wildly spreads; 500.000 copies of *All The Pretty Horses* have been sold immediately after its publication. In the same year, McCarthy has won The National Book Award for fiction and The National Book Critics Circle Award . He has been considered as one of the most well-known American writers. Harold Bloom has identified him as one of the four great writers of his age , combined with Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo, and Philip Roth, especially after the success of his works : *All The Pretty Horses*, *No Country For Old Men* and *The Road*. In 2006, Cormac McCarthy has been given The Pulitzer Prize for his novel *The Road* (Keller Estes 88).

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McCarthy's works are generally separated into two categories, depends on their period of writing. On one hand, there are early works that are arranged in his local Tennessee and South East such as : *The Orchard Keeper* (1965), *Outer Dark* (1968), *Child Of God* (1973), and *Suttree* (1979). In this early time , McCarthy was not such a famous writer to the readers. On the other hand, McCarthy's later works which were written while he was living in different towns like Texas and Mexico. *Blood Meridian* (1986), *All The Pretty Horses* (1992), *The Crossing* (1994), *Cities Of The Plain* (1998), and *No Country For Old Men* (2005) are included in his later works. All these literary works include journeys outside the local borders and provide an external vision at The United States (20).

Lots of McCarthy's works are related to nature and environment and that appears through the excessive use of many environmental concepts and words in his texts, even in some titles such as: *Blood Meridian*, *The Road*, *Cities Of The Plain*, *Outer Dark* and *All The Pretty Horses*. All of these titles focus on features of nature and environment. In addition, some of McCarthy's titles emphasize the relationship between humans and nature, for instance *The Orchard Keeper*, *No Country For Old Men* and *Suttree*. In fact, McCarthy has employed concepts of nature and environment in his texts in order to express what is inside the human mind (32).

The works of McCarthy for the most part manage brutality , fear , awfulness , pandemic and other topics that the human experience in the journey for endurance. In the vast majority of his novels , he unequivocally addresses awful circumstances and savagery . For example , in the novel of "*Blood Meridian* " , the hero " the kid" starts his brutal life after the death of his mother . He joins to the killers and criminals . Also , in his other novels like " *the Road* " , " *the Child of God* " and " *the Crossing* " , McCarthy states that when social requirements are lost , people fall into the crude rough style in the battle of natural selection . Moreover , in other works of McCarthy have an exceptionally ethical worth . The *Road* is one

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of the works that addresses ethics as a human credited. It is common and starts from people instead of godliness . It portrays the ruining of mankind when they liberated from social limitations(Cormac McCarthy writing Style 2).

In the vast majority of his tales, he depicts people in struggle with their social qualities . For example, they accompany their nature as opposed to level headed reasoning or normal practices . There is a hazier perspective on future life in the personalities of specific characters and they accompany the way of disadvantages instead of accompanying the right . However , one of McCarthy's desired thoughts to conduct is the lack of those having legitimate and illegitimate authority . that is viewed in works as " *All the Pretty Horses* " , " *No Country for Old man* " and " *the Blood Meridian* " . In the novel of *All the Pretty Horses* , degenerate authority is found as a back stabbing cop . Moreover , the policing are likewise debased . on the other hand, in the novel of *Blood Meridian* , the country gives prizes to the killers to continue the homicides parade (3).

The novelist Cormac McCarthy is ahead of its time in the American writing .Thinkers, intellectuals , and analytical readers of novel made this logical perspectives and narrative technique the topic of their discussion .the works of Cormac McCarthy shows different views of life wherever the integrity and bad battle with one another .It tackled the different circumstances by thinking about the current situation on different viewpoint (Shlndl 2).

His works explored the moral elements of another world and attempt to get back to morals and to lay out another worldly human request where morals goes before ideology and reasoning .One of his novels tackles this element which is " *the Road* " in which the man and the boy decide to impart food to others (Shabbir 850).

The writing style of Cormac McCarthy is straightforward , but authoritative .His use of punctuation is very limited (Spaudling 1). He uses very little commas . In his dialogue , he always tries to evade the use of quotation marks , this adds an oral aspect to his tales when

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somebody were recounting the story aloud .His use of line - by- line sentences makes the reader reads the tale quickly and provides it with a feeling of reality (2).

His writing also characterized by the use of slang especially in dialogue which makes readers sometimes misunderstood that .For instance, the word " boar's tush" which uses it in his novel " *No country for old men*" ; many readers previously believed that there was a spelling error in his phrase. In fact, there is no error because the formal word is " tusk" and the word " tush " is just its slang .This slang will be understood by southern and south-western readers whereas the readers from other countries will find difficulty to understand that (Cremean 10). In this passage from " *All the pretty horses*" demonstrates that :

John Grady looked at Rawlins .Rawlins looked last standing there.

Hatless and afoot in his shrunken clothes.

Let's get something to eat .

We don't have any money .

I got money .

Where'd you get money at ? Rawlins said .

I got a whole envelope full.(qtd in Spaudling 2)

James Joyce's writing inspired McCarthy's style choice , he makes use of a big arrangement of landscape description(Spaudling 1). His characterizations of landscapes of brutal or demise are written in a manner that is not intended to inspire a particular feeling from the reader. He passes on the choice of how to answer his landscapes and characterizations to the peruse. This leads to add to the general sensation of reality in his works (3).

However , the sentence fragments is one of McCarthy's style which makes trouble for his readers .Long sentences formed by these fragments , and a lot of them work as piece of series of fragments. McCarthy presents them clearly in their text. Moreover, readers

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accommodate to their density to associate with their topics and ways of thinking .As with the whole of devices and quirks of McCarthy , the significance is conveyed by the widespread use of fragments in itself. Quite a bit of life seems fragmentary ; simultaneously, the fragments associate with whatever went before (Cremean13).

. Conclusion

Apocalypse and uncanny are among the significant topics in the American literature. Therefore, they have been crucial elements in many literary masterpieces, as uncanny is a major feature that has been encountered in the post-apocalyptic world, which is characterized by destruction and loss. This chapter provides an identification for both concepts apocalypse and uncanny under their literary context. It aims at paving the way for a best understanding to the themes of the current research.



Chapter Two :

Uncanny and Selfhood

Construction in *The Road*



. Introduction

As a post-apocalyptic novel, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) portrays the world after an unknown disaster through the journey of a father and his son. The events of the novel take place at a post-apocalyptic world; a world that is full of danger, strangeness and lack of safety. McCarthy depicts the various features of uncanny through his novel. The chapter explores the different characteristics of uncanny through his narrative and basically dislocation, estrangement and homelessness. Furthermore, it spots light on the things that help the two protagonists in their selfhood construction and mapping under the umbrella of the post-apocalyptic world. Parental love and hope have been the weapons to overcome the crucial features of uncanny.

2.1. The Uncanny's Pain : Familiar Vs. Strange

In McCarthy's *the Road*, defamiliarisation connects with the conditions of post-apocalypse in which spaces changed to places on the grounds that they experience a partition according to the progressions they encountered after the disaster. The characters experience legendary place that encompasses the place in which it sometimes seems furry and unknown .This is clear in the question of the son to his father. He can not respond his son because the places are unknown (Tascon Olmedo132).

However, in this novel, the idea of home does not mean the safe place and the place where somebody belongs, but it means hazardous places that engraved with dread and tension. The enormity of the place creates the feeling of not " at home" and it makes the characters afraid of " getting lost" (126-127). The boy wishes dying like his mother because does not want to live in this world , he says:

I wish I was with my mom .

You mean you wish that you were dead .

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Yes .

You must not say that .

But I do .

Don't say it .It's a bad thing to say .

I can't help it. (McCarthy 30)

They make the journey the best solution to stay alive and keeping away from the risks of the path and the most important thing in the excursion is persevering the entire way to completion. Perseverance turns into an everyday battle both genuinely and intellectually which tests the confidence of the two characters in the excursion (Shlndl 2) .

In a post-apocalyptic world , life is so dangerous .The father does not have anyone except his son .The son asks his father :

Did you have any friends ?

Yes .I did .

Lots of them?

Yes.

Do you remember them?

Yes . I remember them.

What happened to them ?

They died.

All of them?

Yes. All of them.

Do you miss them ?

Yes . I do.(McCarthy 33)

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This dialogue means the father lost all the people who loves them (Sharma33). His identity and the identity of those who actually stay alive have broken up in this dystopian world .He is questioned at a certain point " Are you a doctor?" then he answers , " I'm not anything(McCarthy64).The identity that he has and the life he encountered has been consumed and displaced by taking care of his son(Hage 103).

In the journey , the father and his son evade going to towns because there are " bad guys" and they wear the ragged clothes and sleeping under the rain which signify they are homeless(Reesman18).In addition to the grocery cart which indicates the unexpected capability that everybody is destitute (Hollister 2).

The two characters face many problems during their journey because they do not have a home .The thief ransacks their clothes. Subsequent to getting back the taken things , the man drives him to remove his clothes in spite of his asking for leniency in the coldness. The son is feeling pity and sorrow for the thief , the following dialogue shows that :

Don't do this , man.

You didn't mind doing it to us .

I'm begging you .

Papa , the boy said .

Come on . listen to the kid .

You tried to kill us .

I'm starving , man .You'd have done the same .

You took everything .

Come on, man. I'll die .

I'm going to leave you the way you left us. (McCarthy 136)

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The father treated him with the same way that he did before because he threatens their safety (Qui-Sheng 6).

In the evening, the father and his son stay in a destroyed vehicle beyond anonymous city , the father notices some lights in the house, in which in front of them, he admires how these people are still alive and what their food is .Then, the son says him: " who are they, papa?"(McCarthy 44) .The father can not reply because the people are cannibalism. After they awoken , the son's interest is for security when he saw before the unknown people .He says :

We're going to be okay , aren't we papa?

Yes. we are.

And nothing bad is going to happen to us.

That's right .(McCarthy 44)

The boy says that because he is afraid and he does not know what it will happen to them, but his father creates such a feeling of safety for him (Luttrull 6).

On the other hand , the man and the boy's immigrating restricted local borders and the deserted places make a feeling of dislocation .the father goes home with his son to look for food however he knows about the risks implied." The house was tall and stately with white Doric columns across the front [...] fine Morris paper on the walls , water stained and sagging."(McCarthy111-113) .The big house becomes unhomely in the deterioration of the buildings as well as terribly through the bared and cramped people which considers presently as a store for cannibals people. This reverses the idea and changes it from customary local place into position of dread and monsters (Turner 60).

In order to investigate the pain of uncanny and the absence of safety as recommended in the realm of *The Road* . The attention will be on the factors of the " uncanny " in the novel as it previously mentioned in the first chapter. The first factor of the uncanny , which Freud focuses on, is the double. It is clear in the novel in which the father has information ,

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emotions and involvement in familiar with his son . They live in the same world and they face the same problems in their journey. So , the father determines himself totally with his son (Suyoufie 31) .

Another factor that shows the effects of the uncanny , in regards of Freud , is the repetition compulsion . It appears in *the Road's* novel. This might explain the man's natural impulse to get back to the house of his childhood .When he sees a house a " few miles south of the city " the boy says him " what is it" , his father answers , " it's the house where I grew up"(McCarthy 25). Then the father comes in his infancy home with his son (Miles Briton 20).

This memories that invokes a local family place are at the base of his hope to create a thought , and superior life style inside his son. He feels,

with his thumb in the painted wood of the mantle the pinholes from tacks that had held stockings forty years ago .This is where we used to have Christmas when I was a boy .On cold winter nights we would sit at the fire here , me and my sisters , doing our homework. (McCarthy 26)

The stockings are not any more in that , the soft stamp of openings in the covering returns a part of his previous event and he does not encounter Christmas day with his family (Turner56) . So, home is, not only a place , a memory that establishes in specifically reviewed recollections of the past repressed in strain with current residences, and reappeared in the memory .It considers as an " emotional warehouse " , a different scope of feelings worked in the house are set and arranged to establish a strong local place .In the dependence on memory for the purpose of getting back house , people looked like " exiles". Because it empowered people to be moved home, memory functioned as a root of solace in the mindset of chaos .The man, specifically, was a feature of the exile , introducing a transcendently glorified and nostalgic form of home like the house of the past which common with his loved ones (McCarthy 11).

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Moreover , the boy has another response about the sight of man's remembering his childhood . the son came to the world after the unknown event that made the world destroyed .In contrast to the father , the son does not have any memory before that unknown event. His infancy has characterized by abandoned paths, burned backwoods and the consistent apprehension about being assaulted or eaten by cannibalism . The son does not know the meaning of security and solace of a home , and has also "no concept of a bedroom or a living room...because all the sleeping and living that has ever known has been outdoors" (qtd in Miles Briton 22) . Before the man is going to come in a house , the son feels anxiety. He says:

Are we going in?

Why not ?

I'm scared .

Don't you want to see where I used to live ?

No.

It'll be okay.

There could be somebody here.(McCarthy 15)

The son does not want to stay alone when they are in a deserted house because he thinks there are assaults "scared" or " dead" .The anxiety toward little places is obvious because the son has lived a long period on the path .This anxiety is connected with the past of the son .Since the unknown event ruined all the forms of life and houses became scared rather than the place of rest and security(yee93).The son's finished absence of place is not misfortune, it is a resource. Recollections and brilliant fantasies before the end of the world are as a matter of fact hazardous .In the beginning , the father regrets the way that he actually dreams in the shades of the pre-apocalypse. "And the dreams so rich in colour . How else would death call you? Waking in the cold down it all turned to ash instantly .Like certain ancient frescoes entombed for centuries suddenly exposed to the day."(McCarthy 21), dreaming does not give

many advantages in a dystopian world , because memories and colours are brutal tokens of a world that has stopped to survive .Alternatively, dreams give just the indifferently appealing allurements of death .As the father says his son when he had a terrible dream , "when your dreams are of some world that never was or of some world that never will be and you are happy again then you will have given up"(McCarthy189). So, dreams of all times , either past or future, are to be concerned with carefulness (Miles Briton 27).

The last factor of the uncanny , which Freud points to , is the castration complex . It illustrates in the castrated leg of man . His anxiety unequivocally instils the father's feeling in the memories of the actual pain of the fundamental injury of his leg. So , this anxiety is gotten from the tension toward castration (Suyoufie 31) .

2.2. Negotiation Selfhood

2.2.1. Parenthood as a Healing Power

The Road (2006), Cormac McCarthy's Pulitzer Prize-Winning novel, portrays the travelling of nameless characters, a father and a son, crossing a road in a destroyed world, full of danger, struggling to stay alive and safe. The father tries to keep his son safe along the journey by teaching him how to defend himself and to prevent any harm that may happen to him. Thus, the father keeps telling and insisting on his son to carry the gun (Chen 1).

In *The Road* (2006), the human civilization seems to be impossible to reconstruct. However, people have never stopped interacting and relying on each other, interactions that are much related to the thoughts of the past. The interaction between the main characters of the novel, the father and the son, is the best representative of such interactions. The father is presented as a guide to his son, fighting to build up new principles out of the broken old ones, and helping to convey them to his son. The job of the son is to apply the new principles on reality(Jergenson 124).

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In such a destroyed world, and with food deficiency, many people have become cannibals in order to stay alive. Through the journey, the father attempts to keep his son and himself away from other people as a sort of safety. His wife has chosen to give up from the beginning and die because of such a reason, she has been scared of the inevitable destiny. So, the mother has chosen to kill herself, using one bullet from the three that they have, rather than living such a moment : " Sooner or later they will catch us and they will kill us...they are going to rape us and kill us and eat us and you won't face it. You'd rather wait for it to happen. But I can't." (qtd in Chen 56). Therefore, having a gun, with two bullets that have been left, is absolutely necessary for the father and his son to protect themselves in case of facing any danger. The father has been afraid that his son may face danger and being hurt or killed in a cruel manner by the brutal gangs. Thus, the father has been doing his best to show his son how to " carry the gun" and how to use it to protect himself, or to kill himself if it is needed. He has asserted on making his son aware of how to stay safe. When they go through a dangerous location, he keeps the gun with the son:

Stop it. I want you to do what I say. Take the gun.

I don't want the gun.

I didn't ask you if you wanted it. Take it.(qtd in Chen 70)

At the beginning, the boy has been afraid of carrying the gun, but his father insists on him trying to encourage him (Chen 2).

The father's character in *The Road* has a great responsibility, which is the life of his son. He has been so conscious concerning his son's safety, he attempts to keep him safe and alive along the journey. Throughout the novel, the father has been as a narrator by telling and narrating stories to his son in order to make him remember everything in the coming days when he is no longer with him. The father's stories have been such an ethical and personal heritage for the son. The father presents the parenthood love and sacrifice , emotions that most

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parents have. the father's emotions have been appeared and strengthened towards his son along the journey(Reesman 105).

Along the journey, the father has been the main source of knowledge for the son, a practical knowledge. Many questions about different things have been asked by the boy, and each time, his father answers him by giving a full explanation. The dam is one of those things that the child asks about:

What is that, Papa?

It's a dam.

What's it for?

It made the lake. Before they built the dam that was just a river down there. The dam used the water that ran through it to turn big fans called turbines that would generate electricity.

To make lights.

Yes, to make lights.

...

Will the dam be there for a long time?

I think so. It's made out of concrete. It will probably be there for hundreds of years. Thousands, even. (qtd in Qui-sheng 19-20)

That has been the first time the child views a dam. So, the father provides him with a detailed explanation about the building (Qui- sheng 1123).

Other discussion has been started between the father and the son when they have found such a sort of mushroom, and the father eats some of it. The boy starts asking about it :

What is it, Papa?

Morels. It's morels.



What's morels?

They're a kind of mushroom.

Can you eat them?

Yes. Take a bite.

Are they good?

Take a bite. (qtd in Qui- sheng 40)

Here, the son acquires new information about that sort of mushroom, and he recognizes that it can be eaten. " take a bite" is the reply of the father which means that you can experience that thing by yourself. Therefore, the child learns many things by experience (1123-1124).

At a certain point in the novel, the reader may understand ambiguity that envelops the scene through the questions raised by the boy. Again, the boy starts questioning in the following conversation :

Why are they the state roads?

Because they used to belong to the states. What used to be called the states.

But there's not any more states?

No.

What happened to them?

I don't know exactly. That's a good question.

But the roads are still there.

Yes. For a while.

How long a while?

I don't know. Maybe quite a while. There's nothing to uproot them so they should be okay for a while. (qtd in Qui-sheng 43)

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From this discussion, the son knows the reason behind the name of the state roads. However, the father does not know the answer of some questions, as no one knows that, for instance the reason behind the destruction of the world and what the world will be like in the coming days, letting his son to discover such facts by himself through time (1124).

Throughout the novel, a great family love has been shown by the father and his son. Each time, great emotions have been appeared by both of them through different situations. One of those situations, when a can of Coca Cola is found by the father. He wants from his son to drink it, especially that the child has never tasted it before, but the son, also, wants his father to have some of it:

You have some, Papa.

I want you to drink it.

You have some.

He took the can and sipped it and handed it back. You drink it, he said.
(McCarthy 12)

Each one of them is concerned about the other. The son does not want to drink all the Cola alone, and he offers some for his father. The father wants his son to have it all. McCarthy writes:" Each the other's world entire." (qtd in Qui-sheng 6), that means each one of them represents everything for the other. Through their journey of struggle, a physical and mental reliance has been appeared by both of the father and the son:

What would you do if I died?

If you died I would want to die too.

So you could be with me?

Yes. So I could be with you.(McCarthy 5-6)

A strong affection has been shown through these words, no one of them can live without the other as they are living for each other.

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By the end of the story, death is to be the father's fate. However, he never stops teaching his son how to survive in such a world, full of danger and destruction. The father keeps encouraging his son to defend himself by carrying the gun and carrying the fire:

You're going to be okay, Papa. You have to.

No I'm not. Keep the gun with you at all times. You need to find the good guys but you can't take any chances. No chances, Do you hear?

I want to be with you.

You can't.(qtd in Chen 278)

I want to be with you.

You can't.

Please.

You can't. You have to carry the fire.

I don't know how to.

Yes you do.

Is it real? The fire?

Yes it is.

Where is it? I don't know where it is.

Yes you do. It's inside you. It was always there. I can see it. (278-279)

The father tries to instill the self-defense consciousness in his son by keeping saying " Carry the fire"." Keep the gun with you at all times". The father gives courage to his child to go on until he will find salvation and safety (Chen 3).

Even in the last moments, the father has been a great power and support for his son. The father's love and care have been unlimited, they are expressed through strong expressions and words from the novel: "... You have my whole heart. You always did. You're the best guy.

You always were. If I'm not here you can still talk to me. You can talk to me and I'll talk to you. You'll see."(qtd in Qui-sheng 278-279). The parental love has been the great power of the son. It is one of the most important themes that characterizes McCarthy's *The Road* (Qui-sheng 1130).

2.2.2. Hope as a Weapon To Beat The Uncanny's Danger

The Road (2006) combines between two different sides, each side is the opposite of the other. On one hand, a dark and gloomy image of the world is portrayed through the setting of the novel, it can be the gloomiest setting among McCarthy's works. A setting which is full of darkness, destruction, evil and danger. On the other hand, the novel, between its lines, contains faith and hope in the goodness of humanity. It shows hope and love through its texts. The main characters of the novel, the father and the son, are considered as " good guys" who, as well, believe in the existence of good people around them in such a corrupted world. The contrastive sides, that the novel shows, are appeared through the beginning of the novel : " When he woke in the woods in the dark and the cold of the night he'd reach out to touch the child sleeping beside him. Nights dark beyond darkness and the days more gray each one than what had gone before." (2)(Softing 705).

One of the most important expressions that has been repeated frequently in the novel is " Carry the fire ". This expression has been used many times through the text of the novel. " Carry the fire " has a strong meaning to hope and humans' future as many critics have agreed. Paul Patton, for instance, states that the expression is used as " a metaphor for some kind of moral order and as such the guarantee of a future humanity that is clearly intended ." (qtd in Chen 142). "The fire" , as a word, has taken a great focus as it indicates the symbol of hope(Chen 01).

The mother seems powerless. She does not have any hope , and thus decides to kill herself .No matter what the way her husband and son will be left by her in this dangerous life

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.She does not effectively urge the man to share her. She does not take consideration to others except for herself and staying away from all the problems that will face her. Her husband , in many case , has not done like her. In as much as , the man has to safeguard his child (Essential Quotes by theme : Hope 2).

In fact, the relationship between the father and his son takes the great part of focus in the novel. Even they want isolation and being far away from the rest of the people, both of them still believe in the existence of " the good guys ". Both of the father and the son have hope that there is still goodness in people, and that appears through the text of the novel when the child asks : " I don't know what we're doing." and his father answers him : " There are people. There are people and we'll find them. You'll see."(qtd in Jergenson 244). The son has been confused about the end of their destination and what would they find. The father, even he is not quite sure about that, tells him that they will find good people and they should be as a part of them, interacting and communicating inside such society. Such belief has made their struggle for survival meaningful and worthy (Jergenson 129).

The father has been the first source of hope for the son. Along the journey, he keeps his son hopeful and optimistic. The child has been curious about many things. Thus, he discusses many topics with his father. Life and death have been one of the topics that the father and his son have discussed. The child asks about such topic here:

Are we going to die?

Sometime. Not now.

And we're still going south.

Yes.

So we'll be warm.

Yes. (McCarthy 5)

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The father's answer has been a wise answer. He does not lie on his child and say that they are going to live forever. At the same time, the answer contains hope and optimism by saying that they will die " sometime" but " not now" as death is the final point of everyone's life. As long as they continue travelling south, there is always hope for being alive (Qui-sheng 1123).

Despite of the hard-living conditions that the father and his son go through, they still keep their goodness and their nature as humans. Throughout the novel, it occurs that the boy and his father totally reject the idea of eating other people because of starvation, as they discuss that through this conversation :

We wouldn't ever eat anybody, would we?

No. Of course not.

Even if we were starving?

We're starving now.

You said we weren't.

I said we weren't dying. I didn't say we weren't starving.

But we wouldn't.

No. We wouldn't.

No matter what.

No. No matter what.

Because we're the good guys.

Yes.

And we're carrying the fire.

And we're carrying the fire. Yes. (McCarthy 75)

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Through this dialogue, it seems that the father and the son still have their good nature as humans, even the harsh world they live in. They still believe that they are good guys, and they are still carrying the fire which symbolizes hope and faith in life (Qui-sheng 1128-1129).

All through the novel , the man and his child are continually struggling to search for food. Then they discover the dugout of nourishment , they find " canned hams" and " corned beef". It indicates the man's pleasure and joy that the world will become hopeful with all this good and this is clear by the man who repeats " oh my God " again and again .He has always hope in anything . The morals of man is also shown in the novel , he generally console his son that they are " the good guys". This makes them hopeful to keep going since they are carrying the fire(Choe2).

However, the father finds seeds in a shed , he hides them. The seeds represent life and development . Cormac McCarthy recommends that there is a person will plant the seeds , doubtlessly the son, because the man is sick and feeble and all signs highlight the son as the survivor. Also , the dog bark is heard by the two characters which appears to be weird because they believe that all the creatures died, this gives them a hope to carry on their journey(Lidberg11).

The two characters find Coca-cola can which makes them feeling pleasure . This is the first time the son saw a can in all his years. The colour of can is probably red which is the colour of fire and connected to strength. This colour proposes there may be a future for the man and his son in some place(12).

Whether the kid will reside , obviously hope will remain . All through the novel , the son's reliable reaction has been " Okay" .He maintains that all should be " Okay". Okay considers as the stone of hope that he grips to .The man puts him on the stone over and over, at all times things occurs that intimidates the son's confidence in the okay of existence. In McCarthy's gloomy world , the appearing hopelessness on a superficial level can not totally

Chapter Two : Uncanny and Selfhood Construction in *The Road*

surround it. In the father , in his son and in his family, hope for humankind remains(Essential Quotes by theme: Hope 3).

With power determined from hope, the father has persevered opposed to lethal disease. He passes away from the impacts of the destroyed world , not from the loss of hope like his wife. The critic Cecilia lidberg views that the journey of man and boy gives such a hope for future in the ruined civilization. She claims that the two characters and their belief show an extraordinary degree in the goodness:" when the man eventually dies because of a long illness , they have not geographically reached a goal. However, the man has reached a goal within .He has come to be so certain of his son's prosperous future , that he can die calmly[...]it is , for the moment, a happy ending"(McCarthy 23).The man encourages his child to continue:" you need to keep going .You don't know what might be down the road. We were always lucky .You'll be lucky again .You'll see. Just go .It's all right(147).These expressions are full of hope and belief for the boy to never give up(Strand 19).

After the death of the father , the son becomes lonely .He actually has the hope which left him by the man .Then, he sees the foreigner in the " yellow parka". In a dark life, the colour yellow looks like the daylight , a definite image of hope .It is the fire the son inquires as to whether he is conveying .Furthermore , one of the good guys wears the yellow who is as yet human and has not hurt other people. The stranger invites the boy to live with him and with his family. The boy asks him:

Do you have any kids?

We do...

And you didn't eat them .

No.

You don't eat people .

And can I go with you ?



Yes. You can.

Okay then.

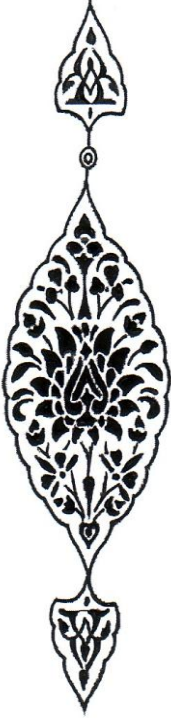
Okay.(McCarthy 150)

After the man answers the son , the boy trusts him and accepts to go with him because he has a hope in this family(Essential Quotes by Theme: Hope 3).

The Road ends with an image that can be considered as the best representative of hope. After the meeting between the boy and the man, the latter becomes the savior of the boy. He represents hope and life for him. The man represents " the good guys" who the father and the son were looking for through their journey. This end portrays the persistence of hope in a world that is full of danger and evil. With the boy's survival, hope is continued to be existed (Greenwood 80).

. Conclusion

Through *The Road* (2006), Cormac McCarthy attempts to provide a depiction to the image of the world after a disaster via writing about the journey of a father and his son towards the south in a post-apocalyptic world. This chapter has been anchored on uncanny as one of the significant aspects that characterizes a post-apocalyptic world through identifying the uncanny's features that are embodied in dislocation and estrangement mainly. Furthermore, the chapter has elaborated the extent to which the parental love and hope have a pivotal role in building and mapping the selfhood in a wrecked world.



**GENERAL
CONCLUSION**



General Conclusion

The current study focuses on mapping the selfhood and uncanny in a post-apocalyptic world in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*(2006). McCarthy's masterpiece is considered to be a typical example that portrays aspects of uncanny in such a post-apocalyptic world. Throughout the course of the novel, the present work aims at depicting the manifestation of the uncanny's characteristics in McCarthy's fiction. It also tries to shed light on how the protagonists of the novel have tried to overcome the crucial reality of uncanny and mapping selfhood when the world falls apart, and how parental love and hope had a pivotal role in their selfhood construction.

The protagonists' journey portrays the life in a post-apocalyptic world under the uncanny's characteristics. They have experienced strangeness, homelessness and pain through their journey of survival. After all, the two nameless characters of the novel, the father and his son, have tried to construct themselves and find meaning in a chaotic world with the help of parental love and hope persistence.

In tracing the aim of this study, the thesis has provided a theoretical background of the most important elements of the study. It starts with describing the art of embodiment of the apocalypse in American literature in order to identify the post-apocalyptic genre, as the novel is considered a post-apocalyptic work. On the other hand, an eagle eye is put on the uncanny from Freudian perspectives providing the epistemological roots of the uncanny. To end with, the element of modes and style of writing of Cormac McCarthy is included in the theoretical background for better understanding to the novel.

The analysis section has been divided into two main titles. The first title is dedicated to the manifestation of the uncanny through the novel. This part has provided the description of the main characteristics of uncanny in which we find: dislocation, estrangement and homelessness. *The Road* (2006) is considered to be a post-apocalyptic literary work that



GENERAL CONCLUSION

embodies a number of those characteristics supported by examples from the novel. The second main title is focused on mapping and constructing the selfhood focusing on the things that have helped the protagonists overcoming the uncanny's danger . Two subtitles have been under this main title, the first one has depicted the parental love as a healing power illustrating the role of the father in his son's life through their journey. In parallel, the second subtitle has focused on hope as a weapon to beat the uncanny's danger.

After going through a considerable analysis throughout the novel, this dissertation has proved that uncanny is strongly embodied in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* thanks to its dominant literary characteristics throughout the novel. These characteristics are presented in dislocation, estrangement and homelessness. The study also comes up with the idea that parental love and hope have been as powers to beat the uncanny's danger and to map the selfhood in a post-apocalyptic world.

According to the results that this research has found, we can say that uncanny is one aspect that characterizes the post-apocalyptic world since one may feel strange, homeless and afraid in his home, and those feelings represent uncanny. One may overcome and such feelings through love and hope.

To conclude, the present research has valuable results that would inspire other researchers to go in deep analysis in this topic. Due to time restrictions, we may miss some points which we, as researchers, highly recommend to be taken into consideration for further studies either to complete or fill the gaps that we might cause because of other imposed circumstances such as the scarcity of references.



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Appendix

Plot Summary of *The Road*

A father and his son travel on foot to the southern coast, seeking a warmer climate in which to live out their days. A few months before the boy's birth, an apocalyptic event ended civilization and scorched the entire planetary ecology, leaving behind a vast cloud enveloping Earth. Even though years have passed since that event, the son has never seen the sun, moon, stars, or living plants and animals. The father and his son wear masks to filter the pervasive ash particulate residual from the disaster. They share a deep bond of love and a commitment to each other. Their survival plan depends on constantly moving along the road while scavenging food, clothing, and supplies from the ruins of homes, farms, and towns. As they move south across the cold, gray landscape, the father and his son encounter the spectrum of humanity, ranging from goodness to depravity. They struggle to preserve memories and values that are becoming increasingly meaningless in a world where the future was wiped out with the past.

الملخص:

تعالج هذه الدراسة موضوع بناء الذات و التغريب كما تم تقديمهما في رواية "الطريق" لكورماك مكارثي في أدب ما بعد النهاية . و اهتمت أيضا بالأشياء التي تساعد الأبطال في بناء أنفسهم وهي الحب الأبوي والأمل . يعتبر الأدب أحد أفضل الوسائل التي تساعد على التعمق في فهم ذوات الإنسان . لذلك بسبب حقيقة أن الأعمال الأدبية لا يمكن تقديرها بالكامل دون الرجوع إلى سياقاتها، تمنح هذه الرواية للقارئ فرصة الدخول إلى عالم ما بعد النهاية حيث تصور رحلة أب وابنه عبر كل أشكال الحياة التي دمرت ، ليس فقط بسبب الكارثة الغير محددة ولكن أيضا غضب البشرية في هذه الحالة دمر معظم الحضارة. كما يصور مكارثي في روايته عالما بانسا أفنى البشرية ومستقبلها. اعتمدت هذه الدراسة على منهج التحليل النفسي الأدبي الذي يدرس الجانب الذاتي لشخصيات عالم ما بعد النهاية . النتيجة التي توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة هي أن هذه الرواية صورت التغريب بصورة واضحة مع إبراز خصائصها ، الأمل والحب الأبوي كسمة بارزة وقوية للتغلب على خطر التغريب وبناء الذات.

الكلمات المفتاحية : التغريب ، ما بعد النهاية ، الطريق ، الذات ، الأمل .