

## THE PERSONALITY OF THE PROTAGONIST IN SEAN PENN MOVIE SCRIPT'S INTO THE WILD

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### Abstract

The objective of the research were to know the personality of Chris McCandless as **protagonist** by analyzing the evidence from the dialogues and his actions in the movie. And to know what the causing factors of Chris's **personality**, the writer used the method in this paper is descriptive-qualitative. The writer focused the dialogues of the movie script, and then analyzing the characteristic using characterization theory based on structuralism and then identified the personality using **Big Five Personality** by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae. The writer finds out that final result about the personality and the causing factors of Chris McCandless as protagonist. From the analysis, the writer concludes that the personality of the protagonist in Sean Penn Movie's Into the Wild based on the Big Five Personality is that the protagonist has a high level of Openness to Experience. and the factors that cause the personality trait are the social and cultural factors that influence the personality of the protagonist.

**Keywords:** *Protagonist, Personality, Big Five Personality,*

### Introduction

Literature is the result of human's creativity. Literature is created as a work of art that aims to entertain and inform the readers. Literary works such as novels, songs, short stories, dramas, poems, movies and other works of literature can reveal human behavior development. Human nature can automatically be aware about the values of life and its problems by reading literary works. Literature is a written communication whether in poetic shape or dramatic or fiction. It always communicates human experiences and employs devices of narrative. Movie or in a larger scale termed movie, on the other hand mostly employ the spoken aspects of communication like sounds. Sounds are dominated in movie making. Written and Spoken Communication is a very important source through which human beings gain wisdom throughout their life span. Man gets perfection when he makes use of both these aspects of language communication.

Movie and literature inspire and enrich each others. They also ennoble human mind through action, images, words and replicating life of human beings. Adaptation of literary genres for filming is not a new recent phenomenon but an old one. Adaptations of movies have various sources such as theatre, novel, music and painting. By this is it is clearly seen and proven that the movie script of *Into*

*the Wild* is a product of literature. As a product of literature, a movie also has objects discussed in a story. The object is someone who jumps into the story to convey the contents and purpose of the story which is referred to as a character. Characterization is one of the intrinsic elements in a literary work beside the theme, point of view, plot and setting. The characteristics of a character can be seen through its appearances, actions, manners and words. There are several types of characterizations, one of which is the protagonist. The protagonist in a story becomes dominant in every memory of the readers or audience for his attitude, action, and deeds. Therefore a story can be understood because of an object in the characters, especially the one in the protagonist; and the object concerned in this study is the personality of the protagonist based on the theory of the *Big Five Personality traits Model*, meaning there are five dimensional personality traits on each individual namely *Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism*, proposed by McCrae & Costa (1997)

Personality is a behavioral conduct. A person's good or bad behavior depends on the background of his or her life; or in general personality is the whole way an individual interacts and reacts to other individuals. Personality is the main thing we should know to understand an individual or a figure in conducting research. According to Allport (Feist & Feist : 2008), *personality is a dynamic organization ranging from psychophysical system to the individual who helped in finding unique ways when adjusting to the environment*. The data are taken from the script of *Into The Wild*, a movie, a drama, of biographical adventure originated in the United States.

Chris was born to a normal and rich family. His father worked for NASA and his mother a secretary at the aircraft's part company, Hughes Aircraft. It was a long time ago that Chris had a dream to live in free nature, without anyone else, without knowing what day it was and where. After graduating cum laude from the Emory University in 1990, Chris left the house, heading for Alaska to pursue his wishes. The journey began when Chris destroyed all the identity cards, the atm cards, the credit cards, and donated almost the entire savings account of \$24,000. Chris decided to walk after his car got hit by a flood when he fell asleep in Arizona, then Chris burnt the rest of the money he had. Chris also changed his name to *Alexander Supertramp* so no one could trace it. The movie is presented in a non-linear narrative, the flashback scene and the present scene. Along the way to Alaska, Chris met and forged friendships with many people. A lot of impressions he left on the people he met. In his travels Chris also worked in some places to meet his needs and supplies. Chris never wanted to receive help in the form of matter from the people he met and helped him on his way to Alaska.

As soon as Chris was in Alaska, he lived on a bus with the Fairbanks 142-relic International Harvester in the 1940s that he called the 'Magic Bus'. The story of Chris McCandless in the movie *Into The Wild* is quite controversial. Much of the debate and also the pro-cons of the audience come from the movie 's reviewers, the community, and also the researcher in response to its story. Chris's fascinating and unique personality, the inspiring and motivating story according to some viewers and researchers, makes it one of the writer' s main reasons for analyzing Chris McCandless 's personality. Chris is also smart and likes to read. Some literary works such as Jack London, Leo Tolstoy, and Henry David Thoreau had always been his friends on his way to Alaska and he always wrote about what he felt and he was having his diary every day.

## **Method**

In this study, the writer will use qualitative research methods. According to (Moleong, 2010) qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words, written or spoken of the people and observed behavior (Nisa, 2015:12). The study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative design. It requires the writer to identify personality traits of the protagonist and analyze causing factors of the personality traits. The source of the data of this study was *Into The Wild* movie and the writer used a movie script which is transcribed into sentences as the data. The source of

the data in this study is the script of Into The Wild movie from <https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Into-the-Wild.html> and the data are in the form of words, phrases, sentences in the movie script Into The Wild which contain the meaning of Big Five Personality and shows the personality traits of Chris McCandless as a protagonist character.

### **Result and Discussion**

This analysis is to find the answers in the problem formulation. The movie Into the Wild and the script serves as the main resource and the theories in the chapter two are implemented as the supporting theories. This part is divided into two sections. The first analysis concerns with the description of the protagonist in the movie. The second analysis concerns of identify the personality traits of the protagonist.

#### **Description of the Protagonist**

In this part, the protagonist will be analyzed in details. The dialog or sentence from the movie script will be use to support the character's characterizations. Characterization is an important part to present the protagonist in a movie. It can make the movie interesting for the readers or audience because the story represents the human lives. What happened in the movie can be what happened in our daily lives.

#### **Active Imagination**

Scene : 3, Time :15:15-16:58

CHRIS : under the ochre sandstone arch, the red tiles glinting like bent plates of blood behind his head, I see my mother with a few light books ather hip standing at the pillar made of tiny bricks with the wrought-iron gate still open behind her, its sword-tips black in the May air, they are about to graduate, they are about to get married, they are kids, they are dumb, all they know is they are innocent, they would never hurt anybody. I want to go up to them and say Stop, don't do it--she's the wrong woman, he's the wrong man, you are going to do things you cannot imagine you would ever do, you are going to do bad things to children, you are going to suffer in ways you never heard of, you are going to want to die. I want to go up to them there in the late May sunlight and say it, her hungry pretty blank face turning to me, her pitiful beautiful untouched body, his arrogant handsome blind face turning to me, his pitiful beautiful untouched body, but I don't do it. I want to live. I take them up like the male and female paper dolls and bang them together at the hips like chips of flint as if to strike sparks from them, I say... Do what you are going to do, and I will tell about it.

CARINE : Who wrote that?

CHRIS : Well, it could've been either one of us, couldn't it?

( giving Carine a book ) There's a lot of great poems in there.

CARINE : Thanks, big brother.

The meaning of the poem that Chris reads to Carine is an expression of Chris feelings aimed at his father and mother when they first met and fall in love, and according to Chris it was a mistake. In this scene Chris graduated from Emory University and the recitation of this poem is also coincided with the appearance of a picture of Chris's father and mother when they graduated. In the statement above, Chris's answer to Carine shows the possibility of the same feelings about the content of the poem, between him and his sister.

### **Idealistic**

Scene : 40, Time : 28:10-29:30

JAN : Alex could have a vehicle. If he didn't burn his money. Why would you want to do that?

CHRIS : I don't need money. It makes people cautious.

JAN : Well, you have to be a little cautious Alex. That book of yours is all well and fine but you can't depend entirely on leaves and berries.

CHRIS : I don't know if you'd want to depend on much more than that.

JAN : Where's your mom and dad?

CHRIS : Makin' their money somewhere.

JAN : Come on Chris. You look like a loved kid. Be fair.

CHRIS : Fair?

JAN : You know what I mean.

CHRIS : I'll paraphrase Thoreau "Rather than love, than money, than fairness, give me truth."

RAINEY : You look like shit. There's the truth.

They all laugh.

Based on the statement above, it shows the protagonist avoids the question of his parents a little, then he answers Jan's question with a quote from Henry David Thoreau, which belief in those words. This shows evidence of an idealism that exists in the protagonist. In this scene Chris stays with Jan and Rainey for a few days, after which he leaves a message of thank without saying goodbye and continues his adventure. Not only that, Chris's idealistic attitude was also seen during a conversation with a friend who also helped and gave him a ride, this one named Ron.

### **Creative**

Scene : 204, Time : 2:00:55-2:01:19

ALEX is inscribed at the belt's left end; then the initials C.J.M. (for Christopher Johnson McCandless) frame a skull and crossbones. Across the strip of cowhide one sees a rendering of two-lane blacktop, a No U-turn sign, a thunderstorm producing a flash flood that engulfs a car, a hitchhiker's thumb, an eagle, the Sierra Nevada, salmon cavorting in the Pacific Ocean, the Pacific Coast Highway from Oregon to Washington, the Rocky Mountains, Montana wheat fields, a South Dakota rattlesnake, Westerberg's house in Carthage, the Colorado River rapids, a canoe beached beside a tent, Las Vegas, and at the buckle end, finally, the letter N.

RON : What's the N stand for?

CHRIS : ...North.

Ron is sitting on his tailgate, watching Chris, backpack  
on, climb the stone wall.

RON : Alaska?

In this scene Chris is learning to make a leather belt with Ron in his workshop, but Chris is making his own design on the belt. Chris made an engraving on the belt which depicts his journey to Alaska which reads N. Ron is a veteran, old man who gives rides to Chris. But when he found out that Chris lived at the foot of the hill, he invited Chris to visit his house. Arriving at Ron's workshop owned by Ron at his garage. After previously telling Ron about his life to Chris that he could not leave his hobby, namely leather craftsmen.

### **Openness to Experience**

Based on the description of the protagonist, the writer can see several points about the personality of the protagonist which analyzed using characterization theory, and presented with the dialogue source from the Into The Wild movie script as valid data. The writer finds seven points about the protagonist characteristic. The five points include Active Imagination, Words Sensitivity, Idealistic, Attention to Feelings, Creative, Loves Nature, and Clever. From the seven points that have been found, the writer compared the types of personality in the seven personality dimensions based on the Big Five Personality theory.

### **Personality Factors**

Scene : 15, Time : 21:31-22:01

CARINE VOICE OVER:

When we were little, Chris was very to himself. He wasn't anti-social, he always had friends, and everybody liked him - but he could go off and entertain himself for hours, he didn't seem to need toys or friends. He could be alone without being lonely.

Scene : 88-91, Time : 1:04:48-1:05:12

CARINE VOICE OVER:

Chris had always been driven, had always been an adventurer. When he was four years old...  
...he once wandered six blocks away from home at three o'clock in the morning. He was found in a neighbor's kitchen, up on a chair, digging into their candy drawer. Whatever drawer he was opening  
now must have something sweet in it.

Scene : 52-54, Time : 52:45-53:18

CARINE VOICE OVER:

In California, he'd looked up some old family friends who still lived there. He'd found out that long after he had been born, our dad had continued a relationship with his first wife Marcia in secret. And that one lie had led to another. That two years after Chris was born, dad had had another son with Marcia. Worse yet was that it was Marcia to whom he was still legally married at the time. And it was Chris and I who were the bastard children. Dad's arrogance made him conveniently oblivious to the pain he caused. And mom, in the shame and embarrassment of a young mistress, became his accomplice.

The writer found that Chris was angry with his parents who always thought about work, business, and money, which resulted in disharmony in their family. This scene in the movie is a depiction of the times revealed by Carine, Chris's younger sister. Not only that, the family problems that Chris faced increased when Chris found out about the story of his father and mother at a young age before they married and gave birth to Chris. This fact made Chris harbor anger towards his father Walt. Chris never did tell his mother and father that he knew. But Chris measured himself and those around him by an impossibly rigorous moral code. Chris loathed what he considered his mother and mother's hypocrisy and resented what they considered guidance. Chris submitted to his father authority through college but Carine knew that Chris raged inwardly the whole time. It was inevitable that Chris would rebel.

### Conclusions

Based on some descriptions taken, Chris is someone who has an active imagination, someone who is idealistic, someone who is creative, cares about feelings, and a lover of nature. Based on the five dimensions that exist in the big five personality which is Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience, it has its own characteristics about a person's behavior from each dimension. From several points that come from the behavior of the protagonist characters, it shows some similarities in the characteristics of someone who has a high level of the dimension of Openness to Experience. Therefore, the writer concludes that the personality trait of the protagonist in Sean Penn movie's *Into The Wild* is Openness to Experience. The factors that cause personality traits in the protagonist, which is Openness to Experience, have two factors that influence based on the three factors listed above. These two factors are social factors and cultural factors. The results of the analysis above conclude that the personality of the protagonist in Sean Penn Movie's *Into the Wild* based on the big five personality dimensions is that the protagonist has a high level of Openness to Experience. and the factors that cause the personality trait are the social and cultural factors that influence the personality of the protagonist.

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