

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Myth becomes the central theme of James Wan's *The Conjuring 1* by understanding how certain elements within the movie contribute to the construction of mythological narratives and reinforce cultural beliefs and fears about the supernatural. Roland Barthes believes that myth is a form of communication that functions as a message. According to Barthes, myth cannot be depicted as an object, thought, or notion. The fundamental concept of myth is a method of representing information - a structure that will be given meaning based on its historical context and how it is utilized (Barthes, 1972, p.107).

Coming from a true story, *The Conjuring 1* film is one of the American products in a setting of 1970s. It portrays the Perron family, highlighting the traditional American family structure where two married individuals take part in raising their kids. (Edward, 1987, p.355-356). The Perron Family consisted of a couple (Roger and Carolyn Perron) and their five kids (Andrea, Nancy, Christine, Cindy, and April Perron). Their family is haunted when they move to a house that was lived by a suicidal witch named Bathsheba Sherman. The Perron receive assistance from a well-known paranormal investigators, Ed and Lorraine Warren. In reality, the Warren couple has handled several supernatural cases with their gifted vision, cleanser, and courage.

The Perron family and Warren couple represents characteristics of contemporary American society. The family's supernatural experiences and the role of paranormal investigators in addressing these challenges shape the cultural landscape, influencing how people interact, communicate, and address social problems. Fear creates a multitude of contradictory concerns as Americans try to integrate medical technology, spiritual beliefs, and commercial ideologies. (Emerick, 2000, p.34.). This helps audience see why the Warrens ask the Perrons their relationship with God. Ed Warren furthermore uses Catholics' method of exorcism to help the Perron family.

Barthes' Myth is structured through a semiotic concept, so the writer intends to depict myth in *The Conjuring I* through semiotic structure. Generally, horror films aim to provide disturbing and shocking storytelling. Specifically, it will leave the audience with a feeling of horror, fear, shock, trauma, and darkness. In order to describe the myth in the film, the writer adopts Roland Barthes' semiotics structure and concept of mythologies into 3 stages, which are the signifier, the signified, and myth theme (elements of myth).

In this thesis, the writers aim to examine the conflict in *The Conjuring I* film depicted by Carolyn Perron. As the main character, Carolyn multiple times communicate her fear against the horror she and her family face in their house. The conflict depicted is aimed to be analyzed from contemporary American culture perspective.

## 1.2 Research Questions

1. How are the intrinsic elements depicted in *The Conjuring I* film?
2. How are the myth themes depicted in *The Conjuring I* film?
3. How is the relation between the myth theme and the characteristic of contemporary American society in *The Conjuring I* film?

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the depiction of the intrinsic elements in *The Conjuring I* film.
2. To analyze the depiction of the myth themes in *The Conjuring I* through semiotics structure by Roland Barthes' mythologies concept.
3. To analyze the relation between the myth theme and the characteristic of contemporary American society in *The Conjuring I* film.

## 1.4 Previous Studies

There are multiple studies that also analyze *The Conjuring I* as an object through different approaches. The writer discovered three studies that use the same object as benchmark and one study regarding Barthes' semiotic approach. The difference among the previous studies and this research is located on the research method. None of these *The Conjuring I* studies are being analyzed through Barthes' mythology concept. Through this research, the writer aims to add a new perspective to perceive *The Conjuring I* as one of the popular culture products.

*“An Analysis of Fear Expressions as Found in the Movie, “The Conjuring””* was written by Adi Susanto. The first previous studies is from Universitas Bung Hatta Padang which was published in 2015. The research aims to identify fear expressions that appear in different contexts, expressions, and words in *The Conjuring* movie. The theories used in the analysis were basic emotion by Fiehler, speech acts theory by Yule, emotional expression by Ekman, and verbal communication by Lucas. To analyze the data, the writer used a qualitative descriptive method. In conclusion, there are three classifications of emotion, which are fear, fright, and worry.

The second previous studies was written by Kurniawati from Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar in 2018. The research entitled *“Supernatural Aspect in James Wan’s Movie “The Conjuring II””*. As written in the title, the study focuses on *The Conjuring II* through Dunwich’s supernatural theory. Kurniawati applied a qualitative method to collect the data. This resulted in five kinds of supernatural aspects in *The Conjuring II*, which are True Tales of Ghost and Hunting, Spiritualism, Possession, Obsession, Exorcism, Spells and Sorcery, and Ghostly Superstitions.

The next previous studies come from Universitas Negeri Padang by Yulia Silpitri in 2022. The writer wrote *“A Comparative Analysis of Language Style between “The Conjuring I” and “The Conjuring 3” Movie Directed by James Wan 2013 and Michael Caves 2021”*. The research aims to compare the differences and similarities between *The Conjuring I* and *The Conjuring 3* in three levels, which are in the level of Field, Tenor, and Mode. It uses Halliday’s systemic functional linguistic theory to

analyze the study. The findings concluded that both *The Conjuring 1* and *The Conjuring 3* are more similar than different.

The similarities among this research are based upon their object and method of analysis. Stated above, *The Conjuring I* have been analyzed through several approaches. The writer aims to provide an added value regarding this object through a new fresh perspective, which is mythology. As a cultural studies product, the mythology concept used in this research will be linked to American's contemporary culture. This is what have not been done by other previous researchers. As a result, this thesis will provide how the signification of Carolyn's fear is a characteristic of contemporary American society, while the previous studies highlights the language style and the expressions of certain characters.

## **1.5 Research Methods**

The writer uses two study methods in conducting this research to collect information and analyze data. The first is the method of collecting data for research and the second is the approach method.

### **1.5.1 Data and Source of Data**

The film titled *The Conjuring I* serves as the primary data source. This film provides the perspective of narrative and extrinsic. The secondary data for this research are from books/e-books, articles, journals, and other sources related to the study.

### **1.5.2 Methods of Collecting Data**

The writer gathers data by viewing *The Conjuring I* movie, which serves as the primary source. While watching the movie, the writer jots down notes and captures the screen to record the scene and dialogue. Additionally, the author utilizes library research from a combination of online and offline sources as secondary sources. Mary W. George mentioned that conducting library research entails finding sources that offer factual information or personal/expert opinions on a research question, which is essential for all other research methods at some stage (George, 2008, p.6). The additional information is obtained from sources such as books/e-books, articles, journals, and other related materials.

### **1.5.3 Methods of Approach**

The writer employs the objective method to examine the inherent qualities of the object. As M.H. Abrams explains in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, this method views the literary work as an independent and self-contained entity, or as a separate realm in its own right. It encourages readers to interact with the work for its own merit and assess and critique it according to internal standards. This includes factors like intricacy, consistency, balance, unity, and the relationships between its different parts (2008, p.63). The film being talked about includes inherent elements such as narrative and cinematography. Furthermore, the author employed a mythological approach to examine the external aspect according to Roland Barthes. In order to determine the meaning in modern American culture, it employs a sociological method to reveal

hidden themes connected to different social areas like family, religion, class, identities, and interaction. (Sutherland & Feltey, 2013, p.4).

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on analyzing the character of Carolyn Perron and her signification of myth as the characteristic of contemporary American society throughout the film of *The Conjuring 1*. To achieve the goal, the writer will break down the analysis of Carolyn's signification of myth and how they are categorized as the characteristics of contemporary American society. Furthermore, the intrinsic aspects of the film will also be provided to support the analysis.

## **1.7 Writing Organization**

### **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists of the background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, previous studies, scope of the study, and writing organization.

### **CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter has a theoretical framework focusing on the narrative elements, cinematography aspect, and extrinsic elements as the construction of further interpretations.

### **CHAPTER III DATA ANALYSIS (RESULT AND DISCUSSION)**

This chapter consists of results and discussion that explain the research problems.

#### **CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION**

This chapter consists of the study's conclusion. It also consists of suggestions regarding further analysis to help this study that might be helpful for all readers.