

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Humans are born with emotions. It is an innate and universal part of our existence. From the moment of birth, emotions serve as a fundamental means of communication and survival, shaping how individuals interact with their environment and others.

According to Ekman, emotions are conscious mental reactions, such as anger or fear, that are subjectively seen as powerful feelings, a multifaceted psychological state characterized by subjective experiences, physiological responses, and behavioral expressions, influencing decision-making and behavior in various contexts (2003:213). They help individuals evaluate situations, communicate with others, and respond to environmental demands.

Fear is a complex emotion that plays an important role in human psychological state and behavior. Ekman claims that there are six fundamental emotions: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise (1992:2). Fear arises when a person perceives a threat of harm, whether physical, emotional, real, or imagined. It is a fundamental survival mechanism that directs our bodies to react to threats with a fight-or-flight response. Consequently, it plays a crucial role in ensuring human safety.

While there is no inherent fear stimulus present in everyone, individuals can learn to fear nearly anything based on their experiences. For example, a person who has previously been attacked by a dog may develop a fear of dogs as a result of their

trauma. Similarly, someone may experience existential dread when confronted with the vastness of the universe and their seemingly inconsequential place within it. This fear can be intensified by cultural pressures to find meaning in accomplishments or by societal norms. Fear itself is not bad, but unexamined fear can be harmful. Learning to understand and manage fear can actually be good for our well-being, helping individuals and societies function more healthily and recover from challenges more effectively (Halliwell, 2009:4).

In literature, emotions serve as a powerful tool for exploring characters, advancing the plot, and deepening thematic elements. Feelings such as fear, anger, joy, and sadness are not merely decorative but often mirror the inner conflicts of characters and the psychological or moral challenges they encounter. Analyzing this literary text can offer valuable insights into both the narrative's themes and the human experience. This thesis can shed light on how emotions, such as fear, influence the decision-making and behavior of the main character in the face of uncertainty or danger.

H.P. Lovecraft's "Shadow over Innsmouth" story revolves around a young man, Robert Martin Olmstead, who travels to the half-abandoned town of Innsmouth, Massachusetts, after seeing a piece of unique jewelry in a museum and discovering that it originated from the neighboring decaying seaport of Innsmouth. Robert, despite the caution of the neighboring town of Newburyport, decides to board the bus to Innsmouth out of curiosity. He finds Innsmouth weird and dilapidated, making him wary of the town and its residents. He becomes increasingly concerned by the odd conduct of the locals and the town's creepy aura. He quickly discovers that the village is controlled by a dark cult. After learning too much, he is attacked

by the locals and forced to deal with the horrors he witnessed. During the night, residents attempt to capture him, prompting him to flee the town. After coming home, he informs the authorities, who then demolish the town and relocate the residents to unknown locations. After conducting his study, Robert discovers that he is also an ancestor of the Deep Ones' intermarriage with the people of Innsmouth. Struggling with the weight of this revelation, he initially isolates himself as a way to regulate his overwhelming emotions. Eventually, after overcoming the impulse to commit suicide, he accepts his fate and returns to the sea to join his ancestors. This research will analyze the symptoms, causes, and impacts of fear experienced by Robert Martin Olmstead throughout the story.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

Based on the background of the study, the following are the research problems.

1. What are the symptoms of fear on Robert Martin Olmstead in the “Shadow Over Innsmouth”?
2. What are the causes of fear on Robert Martin Olmstead in the “Shadow Over Innsmouth”?
3. What are the impacts of fear on Robert Martin Olmstead in the “Shadow Over Innsmouth”?

## **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

1. To analyze the symptoms of fear on Robert Martin Olmstead in the “Shadow Over Innsmouth”.

2. To analyze the causes of fear on Robert Martin Olmstead in the “Shadow Over Innsmouth”.
3. To analyze the impacts of fear on Robert Martin Olmstead in the “Shadow Over Innsmouth”

#### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

This research thesis focuses on the emotion of fear and how it is reflected, along with its primary psychological impact on Robert Olmstead. The intrinsic analysis of this research thesis will be more focused on the character and characterization, conflict, and setting. The extrinsic analysis, on the other hand, will focus on the symptoms, causes, and the impacts of fear on Robert Marin Olmstead. This research will take a psychological approach supported by library research. The analysis draws upon Isaac M. Marks’s theory of fear and James J. Gross’s theory of emotional regulation to examine the symptoms, cause, and the impact of fear experienced by Robert Marin Olmstead.

#### **1.5. Previous Studies**

The first previous study is an international article entitled “*‘That Innsmouth Look’: A Study of First-Person Narration and the State of Uncertainty in ‘The Shadow over Innsmouth’*” (2015), written by Lizon Margeta. This article discusses how narration and focalisation generate state of uncertainty in the novella.

The second previous study is an international article titled “*Cosmic Horror, Gothic Body and the Text: H. P. Lovecraft’s The Shadow Over Innsmouth*” (2016),

written by Sonja M. Karlaš. This article analyzes fear through the themes of cosmic horror and bodily transformation within the Gothic tradition.

The third previous study is an international article titled “*Racism and Fear in H.P. Lovecraft’s The Shadow over Innsmouth*” (2016), written by Mattias Pettersson. This article examines the element of fear through the lens of racism and xenophobia.

The fourth previous study is an international article entitled “*Animal Symbolism in Works of H. P. Lovecraft*” (2019), written by Augustín and Pevčíková. This article examines the different forms of animal symbolism in Lovecraft’s writing, such as cats, dogs, snakes, aquatic, and amphibious animals, as these play a significant role in Lovecraftian horror fiction.

The fifth previous study is an international article titled “*The Horrors of the Oriental Space and Language in H.P. Lovecraft’s ‘The Shadow over Innsmouth’*” (2021), written by Steffen Wöll. This article analyzes Herbert Philip Lovecraft’s horror novella “The Shadow over Innsmouth” and makes the case that Lovecraft’s intentional linguistic distortions and depictions of spatial transgressions lead to the nightmare representations of Orientalized Others, hybrid identities, and miscegenation in the work.

The sixth previous study is an international article entitled “*Science and Religion in H.P. Lovecraft’s Works: Case Study The Shadow over Innsmouth*” (2023), written by Meskine Abderrahmane. This article discusses fear through the use of science and religion.

Several previous studies have examined fear in “The Shadow Over Innsmouth” through different perspectives and themes. While these studies share a common

focused on the theme of fear, this research differs by focusing specifically on the psychological experience of fear as reflected through the character of Robert Martin Olmstead. Firstly, this thesis exclusively analyzes fear in “*The Shadow Over Innsmouth*,” with a particular focus on the symptoms, causes, and impacts of fear on Robert Martin Olmstead. Secondly, this thesis focuses on analyzing the psychological condition of the main character, Robert Martin Olmstead, as the research subject. Lastly, this thesis utilizes the psychological approach to understand the character's experiences and reactions, specifically, to Robert Martin Olmstead's character. The previous studies above can be proven as the originality of this thesis.

## **1.6. Writing Organization**

The Thesis is organized in the following chapters and sub-chapters, namely:

### **Chapter I Introduction**

This chapter contains background of the study, Research problems, purposes of the study, scope of the research, previous studies, and writing organization.

### **Chapter II Theoretical Framework**

This chapter includes the theory used by the writer. The theoretical framework consists of the intrinsic aspects, they are character and characterization, conflict and setting. The extrinsic aspect includes Isaac Marks’ theory of fear and James J. Gross’s theory of emotional regulation. The writer uses a psychological approach as a research approach and library research as a method of data collection.

### **Chapter III Discussion**

This chapter is divided into two parts: the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. The intrinsic aspect analyzes characterization, conflict, and setting, while the extrinsic aspect examines the symptoms of fear, such as shortness of breath, shivering, feelings of dread, and fainting. It also explores the causes of fear, including the information about Innsmouth, the scared behavior of Zadok, and direct confrontations with the townspeople. Lastly, it addresses the impact of fear, such as feelings of isolation and acceptance.

### **Chapter IV Conclusion**

This chapter contains the results of the analysis and summary of the previous discussion.