

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS
DE-CENTRALIZING HUMANITY: *THE SHADOW OVER INNSMOUTH*
(1936) THROUGH ABSURDISM



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UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

**Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement of Sarjana
Degree of English Department, Faculty of Humanities,
Universitas Airlangga**

By

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2022

DECLARATION

I declare that this undergraduate thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of Sarjana Humaniora (S.Hum) of the English Department Faculty of Humanities Universitas Airlangga is entirely my own work and has been solely the result of my own original research. Hereby, I confirm that:

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Surabaya, 27 July 2022



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I dedicate this thesis to everyone who has been supporting me until this point.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

APPROVAL PAGE

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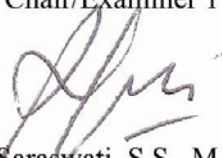
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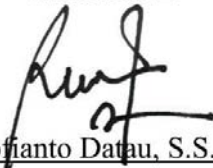
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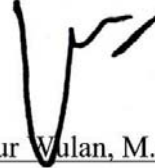
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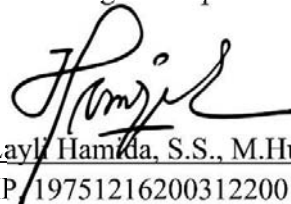
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Putri Normalita Vinaya
121811233139

“One day you’ll look back and be thankful that you kept going.”

– unknown

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INSIDE COVER PAGE.....	i
INSIDE TITLE PAGE	ii
DEGREE REQUIREMENT	iii
DECLARATION	iv
DEDICATION PAGE.....	v
APPROVAL PAGE	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
EPIGRAPH	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES	xii
ABSTRACT	xiii
ABSTRAK.....	xiv
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problems	7
1.3 Objective of the Study.....	7
1.4 Significance of the Study	8
1.5 Definition of Key-Terms.....	8
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Theoretical Background	10
2.1.1 Absurdism	10
2.1.2 New Criticism.....	15

2.2	Review of Related Studies	18
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS		23
3.1	Research Approach	23
3.2	Data Sources.....	23
3.3	Scope and Limitation	24
CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....		27
4.1	Establishing Olmstead’s Position as A Human.....	27
4.1.1	Characterization of Robert Olmstead	28
4.1.2	Plot.....	34
4.1.3	Setting.....	42
4.2	Identifying the Absurd Through Robert Olmstead’s Experience .	50
4.2.1	Robert Olmstead and His Absurd Reality	51
4.2.2	A Disproportion Between the Relations.....	54
4.2.3	The Unreasonable Silence of the World.....	57
4.3	Robert Olmstead’s Solution to the Absurd	58
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION		63
REFERENCES.....		66
APPENDIX.....		xv

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Freytag's Pyramid of <i>The Shadow over Innsmouth</i> (1936)	35
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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1	XV
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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to determine how the experience of the main character, Robert Olmstead, from *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* (1936), a novella by H.P. Lovecraft, portrays the absurdity of human life. This study aims to analyze the absurd that is experienced by Olmstead as a result of human insignificance, a recurring theme found in H.P. Lovecraft's literary works, in contrast to previous studies that have focused on the nihilistic, existentialism, and racial issues of his works. By using new critical approach, the writer explored how the presence of a more dominant species shifts humanity's place as the center of the universe as shown through the formal elements in a literary work, namely characterization, plot, and setting. The philosophy of absurdism is then applied to the findings to identify the absurd which formed in the life of Olmstead, whose final decision to transcend humanity would be defined as Camus' philosophical suicide as a conclusion, a statement that he had given up the future of humankind and himself as a human.

Keywords: Absurdism, New criticism, Lovecraft, Cosmic indifferentism

ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana pengalaman tokoh utama, Robert Olmstead, dari *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* (1936), sebuah novella karya H.P. Lovecraft, menggambarkan absurditas dalam kehidupan manusia. Penelitian ini bermaksud untuk menganalisis absurditas yang dialami Olmstead sebagai akibat dari ketidakberartian manusia, tema yang sering ditemukan dalam karya sastra H.P. Lovecraft, berbeda dengan penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya yang berfokus pada isu nihilistik, eksistensialisme, dan rasial dalam karya-karyanya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kritik baru, penulis mengeksplorasi pergeseran tempat manusia sebagai pusat alam semesta karena keberadaan spesies yang lebih dominan yang ditunjukkan melalui unsur-unsur formal dalam sebuah karya sastra, yaitu penokohan, plot, dan latar. Filosofi absurdisme kemudian diterapkan pada hasil temuan dari penelitian ini untuk mengidentifikasi absurditas yang terbentuk dalam kehidupan Olmstead, yang keputusan akhirnya untuk melampaui kemanusiaan dapat dipahami sebagai konsep *philosophical suicide* oleh Camus sebagai kesimpulan, sebuah pernyataan bahwa ia telah menyerah terhadap masa depan manusia dan dirinya sendiri sebagai seorang manusia.

Kata kunci: Absurdisme, Kritik baru, Lovecraft, Cosmic indifferentism