CHAPTER ONEINTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Human civilizations are coined by some aspects of life that inherently influence
the ways they develop their civilization. Human civilization obviously different
from one region to another region; it can be seen from their ways of life, religions,
beliefs, traditions, local wisdoms, myths, legends and the heritages from their
ancestor. Those aspects of life become the essential part of human civilization
from years to years.

One of the interesting parts of human civilization is the story about their God and
Goddess, legends, Myths and other typical ancient stories. Greek is one of those
which is popular. According to Berrens, in Ancient Greek we can find many
stories about Legends, Myths, God and Goddess. Consequently, the story about
ancient Greek is always eagerly interesting to be discussed in any level because it
is believed that Greek is the first human civilization especially when we are
talking about myths (Cotterel, 2001).

Myths are stories that are passed down from generation to generation. Often they
answer questions about the world. For instance, the myth of Pandora explains why
there is evil in the world (Martin, 2002). Myths also often contain heroes who
overcome obstacles by using superhuman strength or skill. Some, like the Greek and Roman myths, are thousands of years old. The popularity of books like TheLightening Thief is proves that even today people are captivated by the drama and
adventure of myths (Cotterel, 2001). Generally, myths tell such interesting and
fundamental stories that it is no surprising that mythology has been a rich source
of inspiration for authors Authors work with mythology in many ways. Some refer to mythological
characters or scenes to add flavor to their own works. Some writers will rework
mythological styles or themes. Others use ancient myths as a starting point for
their own stories. American authors of the 19th century, such as Thomas Bulfinch
and Nathaniel Hawthorne, believed that myths should provide pleasure, and held
that the study of the classical myths was essential to the understanding of
literature. Many contemporary authors have used classical mythology as a source
for their stories. Percy Bysshe Shelley's play Prometheus Unbound (1820) was
inspired by a play of Aeschylus of the same name. The Romantic poet John Keats
wrote poems such as “On First Looking into Chapman's Homer” (1816) and “Ode
on a Grecian Urn” (1820), which deal with mythological themes. (Eva, 2005)
One of recent novel which deal with mythological themes is the novel titled TheHunger Games. The novel is written by Suzanne Collins. The story refers to
mythological characters and some scenes to add flavor to Collins‟s own works.
Suzane Collins's The Hunger Games (2008) adopts classical mythology in a new
way. Collins bases the plot of her novel on Theseus and the Minotaur, creating a modern story that parallels the characters and themes of the ancient myth.
Although The Hunger Games is set in North America and takes place over the
course of a single day instead of ten years, it patterns itself on the Theseus and the
Minotaur. Although the characters have different names, they are reinterpretations
of the main characters of the Theseus and the Minotaur.
The Hunger Games is a 2008 science fiction novel by Suzanne Collins. The book
received mostly positive feedback from major reviewers and authors. The HungerGames was first published in hardcover on September 14, 2008. Since its release,
The Hunger Games has been translated into 26 languages, and publishing rights
have been sold in 38 territories. The Hunger Games has been well received by
critics. The New York Times wrote that the novel and the film was "brilliantly
plotted and perfectly paced.” The Hunger Game is a story that deals with issues
like severe poverty, starvation, oppression, and the effects of war among others.
(Margolis, 2008)

The story of The Hunger Games begins on the day of the reaping in District 12.
Katniss Everdeen wakes up on the day of the reaping, when the tributes are
chosen who will take part in the Hunger Games. Katniss's sister is chosen to be in
the Games. Knowing that Prim knows nothing of survival, and Katniss is more
skilled in hunting; Katniss offers to take her place. The Games are held in an
arena in a forested area. When the game begins, Katniss uses her hunting/survival
skills to develop a strategy. She then finds out that the boy tribute was Peeta Mellark. Once Peeta expressed his love for Katniss the capital went crazy with
attention towards the "star-crossed lovers." She has so many issues in the games
that it is hard to decide which one is her greatest threat. Her forbidden love with
Peeta, or the deadly trained careers who have been waiting for this moment for
years.
Suzanne Collins was inspired by the Greek myth of “Theseus and the Minotaur”and she explicitly stated it in one of the interview.
A significant influence would have to be the Greek myth of Theseus and
the Minotaur. The myth tells how in punishment for past deeds, Athens
periodically had to send seven youths and seven maidens to Crete, where
they were thrown in the Labyrinth and devoured by the monstrous
Minotaur (Margolis, 2008).

It is worth considering the story since the similarities and differences can prove
illuminating. Orme (1998) explains that the myth of “Theseus and the Minotaus”was a story about heroism of a brave young boy.
The son of King Minos of Crete was killed by Athenians; King Minos demanded
seven youths and seven Maidens to be sent to Crete once every nine years as a
sacrifice for the Minotaur (Orme, 1998). The Minotaur was a monster - half man
and half bull - who was kept by King Minos in the labyrinth underneath Knossos,
King Minos‟s palace on Crete (Orme, 1998).

This story has an implication in several ways with The Hunger Games. Though
the citizens of Athens were suitably horrified by their plight (whereas Panem is
distracted by the spectacle of the television program), Katniss has an awareness of
injustice and a stoic strength that recalls Theseus. Likewise, she succeeds not only
through her personal strength, but through love, in her case with Peeta, in
Theseus's case with Minos's daughter. Lastly, the unnecessary cruelty involved
with both games is the arena of unbeatable labyrinth.
The most important aspect of “The Hunger Games” is that the premise of TheHunger Games is heavily influenced by the Greek myth of Theseus and the
Minotaur. To punish Athens for the death of a son, King Minos of Crete
demanded a tribute of seven maidens and seven youths, drawn by lot, every nine
years to be sacrificed to the Minotaur. Theseus volunteers to be a tribute and slay
the beast. Katniss represents Theseus in a post-apocalyptic world. This makes the
researcher interested to do a research about an Ancient Greek Myth Reflected inCollin’s the Hunger Games.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the description above, the writer formulates the research question
as;
1. How is the expansion of an ancient Greek myth “Theseus and theMinotaur” seen in Collin‟s The Hunger Games?

2. How is the conversion of an ancient Greek myth “Theseus and theMinotaur” seen in Collin‟s The Hunger Games?

3. How is the modification of an ancient Greek myth “Theseus and theMinotaur” seen in Collin‟s The Hunger Games?

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the writer focuses on the
myth of Theseus and Minotaus from ancient Greek. Then, this research is
objected to examine the reflection of the myth inside of the novel The HungerGames. At the end, this research will provide new understanding about myth
particularly ancient Greek myth.

1.4 Uses of the Research

1. Theoretical Uses Theoretically, the research gives the contribution to the growth of literary
study at first, since the discussion of the existence of myth in literary work
widely discussed. Secondly, this research is expected to provide a new and
fresh idea about ancient myths and its influence toward the literary works.

2. Practical Uses Practically, this research can be an assist for those who want to learn how to
analyze a literary work which adapted from ancient myths. The last, the result
of, this research can be used as the guidance or references for students who
want to conduct similar research, especially those who are interested in
influence of the existence of myth for authors.

1.5 Scope of the Study

Referring to the ideas that have been elaborated in the background of the
study, this thesis is focused on the novel The Hunger Games written by
Suzanne Collins. Discussion is focused on the transformation, expansion, and
the modification of myth Theseus and The Minotaur into the novel entitled
The Hung