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