

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is something that can be defined broadly. Some academics define literature from various perspectives. According to the more exact meaning of the term, "literature" encompasses all forms of written expression, with the condition that not every recorded item qualifies as literature according to the more general definition. As a result, reports frequently include adjectives such as "aesthetic" or "artistic" to distinguish literary works from other types of materials such as telephone books, newspapers, legal records, and scholarly publications that are more commonplace (Klarer, 2004). We know that literature expresses what we do and what we feel from this definition. This expression is described in an imagination which is commonly referred to as a literary work. There are several literary works in literature, such as films, poetry, plays, and novels. In this research, the literary work that will be analyzed is the novel.

The novel is one of many possible prose narrative forms. Gill (1995) states that, in writing, there is a recognition that a novel is something especially made by an author so that a reader will respond to it in a particular way. Based on the above explanation, the author believes that the work is also strongly connected to human experience or the author's opposition to a specific group. Novels are also used as a medium of expression to convey the values that exist in society. The novel is a

medium of communication and expression, generally a series of life stories. Novels use literary language that has an expressive aspect that carries the tone and attitude of the author. Therefore, the literary language in the novel does not only state what is said but also wants to influence the reader's perspective, persuade him, and finally change it (Pradopo, 1997).

In writing novels as a medium of expression, there are usually values that reflect the values in society. The values contained in this novel usually reflect conditions or phenomena in society. According to Lina & Setiawan (2017), Values describe what is good or bad in a specific cultural environment for an individual or a community. Values are not just words; values are what we live by (Wang & fan, 2013). According to Thoha (1996), values are beliefs within a belief system. A person must behave or refrain from acting on something suitable or inappropriate to be completed. Value can be defined as a type of belief that serves as the foundation for an entire class of people, serves as a foothold for their actions, and is already associated with a belief system associated with the humans who believe in it. These values are usually already embedded in a person so that wherever and whenever someone will try to apply them. The values that are attached to a person in each country are different. The customs also influence this in each particular country. So that in some cases, we cannot compare one's values with others. One of the pretty popular values is American Values. Many people know American values from various countries because America is a large country and many foreigners visit, so American values are pretty widely known. American Values are certainly reflected in the activities carried out by American citizens in their daily lives.

In American values, there are several values that Americans generally believe in. According to Althen (2003), several American values include individualism, freedom, competitiveness, and privacy, equality, informality, the future, change and progress, the goodness of humanity, time, achievement, action, work, and materialism and, the last is directness and assertiveness. One of the novels that the author will examine related to this topic is the novel entitled *See You in the Cosmos* by Jack Cheng. This novel is one of the exciting novels because this novel discusses the harshness of life, which is described through the character of a child named Alex Petroski. However, this novel also shows the American values that have been attached to the characters in the story. Even though some people never visited America in person and witnessed some American values there. However, they can see the application of these American Values in several literary works in America. One of the literary works is a novel, which is generally influenced by events and values that we encounter daily. A novel is usually told about the behavior of someone who is a character in the novel. With the behaviors shown and the activities carried out by the characters in the novel, the readers can see the application of American Values in everyday life. Whether their actions and behavior reflect American values or not.

This topic of values is essential for further discussion because values reflect our feelings about right and wrong. Values help a person grow and develop, and the decisions we make every day reflect the values that exist in a person. Today, many people do not practice good values. Even though America has excellent values and is applied by many people, the increase in discrimination, crime, and things like

that still often happens, which even contradicts the values that are their principles. That is why the researcher decided to discuss this topic further.

## **1.2. Research Question**

1. What are American Values reflected in the novel *See You in the Cosmos*?
2. How are the American Values presented in the novel *See You in the Cosmos*?

## **1.3. Research Objective**

1. To find out American Values that exist in the novel *See You in the Cosmos*.
2. To reveal the way of presenting the American values in the *See You in the Cosmos* novel.

## **1.4. Use of the Study**

### **1.4.1. Theoretical Use**

Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to provide benefits for literary studies. This research will assist readers in understanding the American values featured in Jack Cheng's novel *See You in the Cosmos*.

### **1.4.2. Practical Use**

Practically, the findings of this study can be used in future research. In the realm of literature, this research may contribute to a better understanding and serve as a reference for researchers who would conduct similar studies in the future. It can also serve as a reference source for researchers who would conduct similar research in the future.

### **1.5. Scope of the Research**

Based on the title of this research proposal, "Delineating American Values Through the *See You in the Cosmos* Novel by Jack Cheng," the object of this research is a novel entitled *See You in the Cosmos*. The writer limits the research to analyzing the American Value in the *See You in the Cosmos* novel using Stuart Hall's representation theory and constructionist approach to keep this research guided and not out of the specified topic

