



CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION



s of seven elements; background of study, identification of problem, questions of study, objective of study, significance of of chapters.

1.1 Background of Study

Culture is a form of human expression and beliefs passed down across different generations through many aspects of life, such as eating, communicating, and celebrating (Kalman, 2009: 4). Culture is then produced and spread through a nation, which is a human community sharing the same history, beliefs, symbolism, rules and traditions in the same land (Smith, 2008: 19). In other words, different communities around the world may produce different cultures, resulting in each having its own unique identity to define themselves. Furthermore, unity is needed in order for a community to thrive and survive, otherwise it will slowly break up either from internal or external influences (Harari, 2014). Likewise, a nation, being a community, will collapse without a strong and authentic national identity.

The expression of national identity within each individual towards their own nation is called nationalism, further divided into two dimensions, namely ethnic and civic nationalism. Ethnic nationalism is passed down directly to the individual upon birth in the form of immutable qualities such as race, ethnicity and religion from which the individual was born, whereas civic nationalism is achieved by the individual through their own will or consent to respect traits of a nation, not necessarily of their own origin of birth (Leong et al., 2020). Therefore, it is possible for individuals, such as immigrants, to have more than one national identity regardless of their legal citizenship status due to shared bond and feelings with the people outside their national community, resulting in comfort to become a part of a certain community (Guibernau, 2004).

In reality, the application of civic nationalism brings more benefit to the sustainability of a nation in the modern age compared to ethnic nationalism due to civic nationalism promoting inclusivity regardless of heritage, leading to a more diverse and equal society (Verge, 2024). Australia was an exclusively white society with many of its foreign migrants mistreated until it eventually led to population decline from its involvement in World War I and II. Following the removal of White Australia Policy, the nation finally embraced multiculturalism, therefore encouraging immigrants to repopulate and bring benefits to the country. Furthermore, such change would not have been possible without the involvement of the media in channeling aspirations from the minority.

According to Kittler (1990), literature or criticism is a sub-genre of media, therefore it may be used to spread messages from the author. Literary works, in particular, can serve as a means to spread the word of awareness as it

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ce of human experience during a particular timeline written by
 dy, 1972). Regardless of the period of time in which the literary
 r, it may not may not always portray the period of their writing,
 ways related to their respective authors, be it through their
 ambitions. Ethel Turner, for one, had a past full of constant
 ck of fatherhood, causing her to develop sympathy especially
 | the same fate in the nation, thus seeking to achieve a deeper
 level of nationalism to Australia through her contribution of national values.

Ethel Mary Burwell (born 24 January 1870, Doncaster, England) was an Australian writer known for her contributions to Australian children's literature. She was the second child of Bennett George Burwell and Sarah Jane Burwell. According to Brenda Niall in *Friends & Rivals: Four Great Australian Writers (2020)*, Turner's life had become tumultuous after her father passed away in 1872, which led to her mother marrying Henry Turner at the same year and Ethel's surname to be changed from Burwell to Turner through baptism when they arrived in Sydney in 1885. Before then, Henry Turner had passed away in 1879 and left his family in bankruptcy, causing Sarah Jane to go to Australia to seek a better life in 1880 and married Charles Cope, a wealthy clerk from a pastoralist family, in the same year. Niall described Mr. Cope as a dominant man, seeking to gain control even over Turner's personal relationship with her husband, Herbert Curlewis; however, Turner had slowly managed to escape from his control by embracing a new life with Curlewis, pursuing romance despite his father's disapproval.

Although Turner's past is full of changes, it shows that a new life can be made by moving on and severing past ties. In Turner's case, it was by writing *Seven Little Australians* to shift Australia's literary direction from predominantly colonial literature to a new aggressive sense of nationalism inspired by *The Bulletin's* ethos, of which Turner once became a part (Pearce, 1997). In reality, the writing was impeccably timed as it influenced the birth of Australian national identity by portraying a sense of rebelliousness in children similar to the land itself, as well as offering a different perspective in many rules and conventions already set by the British Empire as the colonists of the land. Rather than following their father's rule with much difficulty, the children collectively decided on a set of values they shall follow to overcome challenges and be better together. Similarly, Australia sought to explore itself more instead of following every part of Britain's colonial norms and values.

Seven Little Australians is a classic and renowned Australian children's literature published in 1894 by Ethel Turner. Since its release, the book has sold approximately 2 million copies in the English language alone. It tells the story of a family living in Sydney, New South Wales, consisting of seven children with their biological father and stepmother. Set around the same time as the Industrial Revolution, the influence of British culture is quite dominant for this family, with it being firmly portrayed through the disciplined character of Captain Woolcot. However, what makes it unique is Turner's attempt to insert



national identities within the novel, creating a new literary sense distinctive compared to other Australian children's literature at realizing naughty children instead of good-natured children.

Seven Little Australians is a fascinating literary work to it influences and promotes Australian national identity in a through children's literature. The success of *Seven Little* provide valuable insights for policymakers to cooperate with parents and teachers to find ways in cultivating national identity through fun and enjoyable ways both for children and adults, potentially serving as a strategy to improve cultural preservation and youth development through the use of media. Seeing the connection between literary work and its benefits it may bring to the current society, the writer proceeds to utilize the sociology of literature approach in this research, which analyzes the connection between literary work and its process in shaping itself and the society it is in.

The writer believes that there is a connection between Turner's life experiences, conveyed through the novel *Seven Little Australians*, and the Australian national identity itself, therefore making it suitable to be analyzed using the sociology of literature approach. By using the sociology of literature approach by Terry Eagleton supported with values of national identity provided by Corkalo & Kamenov to analyze the representation of national identity within the novel, this research may hopefully be able to raise awareness on the influence of media as the world advances into a much more modernized and globalized society, while the preservation of unique cultural identities remains increasingly important to maintain cultural diversity throughout the world.

1.2 Identification of Problem

After reading the novel *Seven Little Australians* by Ethel Turner, the researcher finds various points of discourse to inspect:

- 1) The neglect and abuse of children
- 2) The idealization of certain women standards
- 3) The environmental destruction brought by the British settlers to Australia
- 4) The decreasing significance of Aboriginal culture
- 5) The representation of Australian national identity

1.3 Scope of Problem

As stated in the identification of the problem, there can be a lot of different issues found in *Seven Little Australians*; however, the researcher needs to decide a problem to analyze. Therefore, this research will be focused on the representation of Australian national identity as reflected in the novel *Seven Little Australians*. In this research, the writer has chosen the characters as subjects of national identity.



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background of the study as well as the identification and scope of the researcher proposed the research questions below:
 1) How did Ethel Turner contribute to Australian national identity?
 2) How was Australian national identity represented through the characters in *Seven Little Australians*?

1.5 Objective of Study

Below are the objectives of study based on the research questions:

- 1) To identify the values contributed by Ethel Turner to Australian national identity
- 2) To analyze the Australian national identity represented through the characters in *Seven Little Australians*

1.6 Benefits of Study

The study may hopefully enrich the knowledge of everyone reading it, especially those interested in the connectivity of literature and social sciences, both in theoretical and practical aspects.

Theoretically, this research may contribute to the development of literary theories, especially one used in this study, by serving as a reference for future researchers interested in analyzing the same variables using different approaches or other literary works using the sociology of literature approach.

Practically, this research may raise awareness regarding the importance of preserving one's own sense of national identity while understanding foreign national identity simultaneously. In doing so, society may avoid various conflicts related to cultural differences, possibly resulting in mutual appreciation, understanding, and benefits between different cultures.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW



s of previous studies relevant to this research, sociology of each used in this study, and the pertinent ideas related to the ch.

2.1 Previous Related Studies

Previous related studies function as a means to prove the novelty of this research by elaborating similarities and differences between previous studies and this study. In addition, these studies will be used as references or supporting data to help the researcher conduct this research.

Firstly, **Jane Worme** (2018) in *Centuries of the Narratological Construction of Gender: Seven Little Australians and The Graveyard Book* used the comparative literature approach in analyzing the reoccurring gender-based ideologies found in 18th and 19th century literary works, particularly through the narrative in *Seven Little Australians* and *The Graveyard Book*. The feminine ideals in which women are portrayed to be in a weaker position than men result in the taming of masculinized women through death, sacrificing themselves as a means to save the men they consider dear, indirectly influencing them to be manlier than before. The research compares gender ideologies from two literary works published in different time and place; *Seven Little Australians* in 19th century Australia and *The Graveyard Book* in 21st century England. Similarly, this thesis includes several issues regarding gender roles in Australia, albeit with a different focus and approach using sociology of literature, leaning more heavily on how such ideals took part in shaping the Australian national identity.

Secondly, **Janani** (2019) in *Post Colonial Narrative in Australian Children's Book Seven Little Australians* used the postcolonial approach in analyzing the postcolonial experience of Australians expressed through the characters in *Seven Little Australians*, particularly the seven children and their stepmother. The shared feeling of transgressions shared by the colonized resulted in a sense of insecurity, leading to rebelliousness against the colonizer. In *Seven Little Australians*, Captain Woolcot was shown to be the colonizer towards the children along with their stepmother being the colonized within the family of Misrule. Captain Woolcot transgressed over his own wife and children with his strict disciplinarian behavior, which resulted in the children rebelling against their own father while supporting each other, with the exception of the stepmother shown particularly submissive. Similarly, this thesis will portray the rebellious behavior of the seven children as the representation of Australian national identity, but will also discuss the production, distribution, and the reception of the correlating literary work, *Seven Little Australians*, in relation to the sociology of literature approach.



Arul Ihsan (2021) in *Australian Cultural Identity in Winton's* used the sociology of literature approach in analyzing cultural identity and its connections to Australian history. The tragic and abusive treatment of the Aborigines on their own homeland leaves an eerie and sense of loss to the white settlers who had claimed authority on the land, especially in heavily advanced and modernized areas such as cities. This serves as a reminder for the settlers to always be respectful of Indigenous people and their culture to avoid repeating the same mistakes that had been done by their ancestors. The focus of the research is on the aspect of Australian cultural identity and the effects of its decreasing significance in urbanized areas, whereas the focus in this research will be the influence of literature to Australian national identity.

Fourthly, **Donny Syofyan** (2021) in *Australian Rural Identities in Barbara Baynton's Bush Studies* used the postcolonial criticism approach in analyzing the subverted myth of Australian national identity in which the Australian bush is not hostile as typically perceived, but the confused inhabitants themselves failing to adapt to the land as a result of unfamiliarity, which leads to them deluding themselves with false familiarity with the land to gain comfort. *Bush Studies* occasionally feature things controversial to the time it was published, such as the reversal of stereotypical gender roles through its characters, and deconstruction of characters serving not only as an oppressor but also as a victim of unfamiliarity. This research focused on debunking the typical bush narrative created by the white people or the city dwellers of Australia as part of Australian national identity, whereas this thesis will focus on the creation of Australian national identity through the influence of literary work.

The novel chosen in this study is particularly unique for research considering its nature as one of the first children's literature based on Australia. In addition to scope and theoretical approach differences, the limitations imposed on the previous studies may have caused the researchers to not directly inform the sociological context behind the creation of Australian national identity and its relation with the influence of literary work. Therefore, this study will fill such gap by connecting the production of *Seven Little Australians* being one of the most influential literary works with the making of Australian national identity.

2.2 Sociology of Literature Approach

The term sociology of literature originates from two Latin words, socius and logos. In Latin, socius means friendship or community, and logos means science; therefore, the term itself means social sciences used in studying social conditions within societies reflected in literary works. Sociology was first born as a discipline through the writings of Karl Marx and Max Weber and



...n developed into literary theory by other well-known figures, Eagleton and René Wellek.

... and Friedrich Engels were German philosophers who wrote the *Manifesto*, which was originally written in German in 1848, translated into other languages in the following years. Marx and Engels (1848) stated that society and literature may significantly influence each other: the production of literature influences the environment it belongs to, and such influences within the society may affect the literature produced. Marx himself obtained his inspiration from the social conditions during the industrial era, where the bourgeoisie must keep up with the industrial needs to ensure perpetual economic dominance and the proletariat is to survive and hope for a better life from the wages provided by the bourgeoisie.

Marx's opinion on sociology was not yet connected to the field of literary studies until a decade after he founded the ideology, when Terry Eagleton as one of the Marxists born in England, drew his inspiration from Marx in his book *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (1976) by connecting a gap between society and literature by using the term Literary Mode of Production, or LMP in short. Eagleton (1976: 47-48) described LMP as different social relations behind pieces of literary work which deals with the production, distribution, and reception of literary works in a particular society.

Therefore, sociology of literature approach functions as a theory to reveal and analyze internal issues or conflicts through the production, distribution, and reception of literary work, reflecting particular phenomena happening within the society it was published. Terry Eagleton's description of sociology of literature may be adapted into one of the possible methods to analyze literary works from a sociological perspective with the procedures below:

- 1) Reviewing the social and historical context of related literary work during the period of time it was published.
- 2) Analyzing the production elements of the literary work, which include the author as producer along with the mediums and techniques used to write the intrinsic elements within the literary work as the product itself.
- 3) Analyzing the distribution elements of the literary work, which include to whom the literary work was intended for and through what platform the literary work was distributed on.
- 4) Analyzing the reception elements of the literary work, which include the readers as consumers, as well as the level of influence the literary work had on them and their actions.

2.3 National Identity

The exact definition of nation is still in debate and development as of now, although a definition may be produced with several existing opinions. According to Renan (2018: 261), a nation is a community united by commonality of fate and history, leading to shared will in continuing their

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fter. Meanwhile, Stalin (1913) stated that a nation is a belief in unity of culture under the same land, language, economy, and evolve through history. Taking both opinions into account, it can a nation consists of cultural communities living in the same ing the same language, sharing the same economy, evolving v history is being made over time.

a series of traits divided into social and personal terms; the former being used as a sign of membership to certain communities as well as an alleged feature consigned to the entity, and the latter being used as a unique characteristic set by the entity itself (Fearon, 1999: 10-11). Every entity has their own distinguishing identity; for example, individuals may differ in social terms such as race, gender, ethnicities, religions, and in personal terms such as way of living and communicating with other individuals. Accordingly, nations composed of vast kinds of individuals will have different kinds of identities within it as well.

The phrase 'national identity' itself consists of two words, national and identity, which if combined results in the identity possessed by a nation. Based on the previous explanations, national identity is an expression of distinct cultural values unique to each nation and is used to distinguish one nation from another. National identity may also be defined as a series of symbols or values expressed by a group of individuals, through habit or language, to identify themselves as a part of a nation (Cameron, 1999: 5).

According to Corkalo & Kamenov in *National identity and social distance* (2003), national identity consist of the following aspects:

1. National pride; a sense of belonging, comfort and appreciation of an individual towards elements relevant to their nation.
2. Exclusive national belonging (nationalism); a sense of shared unity and patriotism of an individual with other individuals from their nation which differentiates them with another nation.
3. National devotion; a sense of loyalty of an individual towards their own nation which goes beyond their personal benefit or interests.
4. Cosmopolitanism; an absence of personal attachments from an individual towards a specific nation including their own country, instead viewing the values shared universally as human beings as correct.

According to Kurtaran (2024), national identity is shaped by historical memory, being a component of the past owned collectively by a nation, by considering past values to further understand the present and shape the future. Therefore, national identity may be possibly renewed as a means of improving and adjusting to future challenges presented to newer generations. At the same time, history is responsible in shaping literature as it portrays human experiences through the memories of its author, and literature may as well influence history as it impacts the memories of those who read it.

Australia's history is marked by migration, oppression, and resistance, since from the First Fleet's arrival in 1778 to the waves of assisted migrations

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1850, the nation was shaped by the exploitation of Indigenous peoples, and migrants, thus the British Empire was known to have a hierarchy of white superiority, systematically erasing Indigenous people by constantly abusing the convicts and migrants (Lester, 2022). In terms of its national identity, Australia is a diverse nation with its identity evolving on shared history and values called the Australian Dream for its inhabitants, such as freedom, fairness, compassion and equality (Easton et al., 2022: 489-490).

The statements above are especially in line with the publication of *Seven Little Australians* in 1894 which presented a strong sense of Australian national identity through children's literature, introducing Australian children to the national identity of the very nation they live in. Moreover, the 1890s were a time in which Australia was trying to construct its own national identity amidst its independence as a newly grown nation, thus attracting interests in the field of literature to establish new values based on the history of the nation and visions of the writer. Therefore, the data presented will be the contribution of Ethel Turner on Australia and its history of national identity, as well as its representation through the characters in *Seven Little Australians*.