

## CULTURAL IDENTITY IN YU HUA'S NOVEL *TO LIVE*

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### Abstract

Every ethnic group has its own cultural identity and is used as a reference to distinguish between one ethnic group and another. Understanding cultural identity is important to avoid cultural conflicts so that all ethnic groups within a unitary society can live side by side in harmony. The core discussion in this research is related to Chinese cultural identity based on the novel *To Live* written by Yu Hua with two points of discussion, kinship system and marriage system, conducted by means of a qualitative descriptive method to obtain data related to social phenomena with the results of the analysis in the form of description. Concepts and theories relating to cultural identity, Chinese cultural identity, kinship and marriage systems are implemented to support the overall research. The results of the analysis show that wherever Chinese ethnic groups are located, they try to maintain their cultural traditions. In Chinese culture, kinship includes all members of the extended family and the essence of a marriage is the union of two extended families; both have values that must be used as guidelines based on the teachings of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism; the value of maintaining and preserving harmonization and norms to bind each individual to remain in the corridor of cultural tradition heritage.

**Keywords:** *Chinese; cultural identity; kinship; marriage*

### 1. Introduction

The identity possessed by an individual can be in the form of personal identity and social identity. Personal identity is the result of self-identification, by oneself, with the assessments of other people. Personal identity is a certain character possessed by an individual that differentiates the individual from other people. Personal identity can be in the form of physical characteristics such as face and height, or psychological characteristics such as character, behavior and speaking style. Social identity is the result of self-identification by other people, and is an identification that a social actor approves or gives to an individual (Hogg & Brewer, 2017; Appiah, 2018; Crocetti, & Prati & Rubini, 2019).

When identity is linked to culture, cultural identity is formed, an understanding of an image related to culture. Cultural identity is a person's feeling or emotional significance of sense of belonging or being affiliated with a certain culture. Society which is divided into groups then carries out cultural identification, each person

considering himself/herself as a representative of a particular culture. The cultural identity formed in the life of a society will influence the self-perception of each member of society; furthermore, each individual will congruently or simultaneously participate in the cultural system. Cultural identification is a process, a dynamic that is influenced by social, psychological, environmental, situation and context and other cultural factors (Karjalainen, 2020).

Cultural identity is a basic awareness of the special characteristics of a person's group which are related to life habits, traditions and values as well as norms. Cultural identity is closely related to ethnic identity, as to categorize a society, someone must know the characteristics of their culture, or in other words, ethnic identity can indicate the cultural identity of a group (Chen and Lin, 2016). Ethnic identity in general is closely related to culture, politics and economics. This identity has a strong relationship with politics which is defined as the power to control and regulate the distribution and availability of resources.

In relation to literary works, cultural identity is also expressed by the author; beginning with a depiction of the author's identity through writing style or environment and then becoming a reflection of an ethnicity. Literature is a social and cultural product, showing that literature cannot be separated from society (Manugerén, Arafah, Purwarno, Siwi, Ekalestari, & Wulan, 2023). Literary works are not born in a cultural vacuum because authors also have a cultural background. This is in line with the sociological perspective of literature stating that there is a close relationship between society and literary works: society as producers, readers and recipients of literary works (Sapiro, 2023; Alwaqaa, 2020). The literary work chosen in this research has nuances of cultural identity, a novel entitled *To Live* by Yu Hua (2015). This research is intended to gain insight into various civilizations or cultures, especially from outside, so that awareness arises of being able to live together in harmony while overcoming stereotypes and prejudice towards a culture.

The cultural identity at the center of this research is Chinese cultural identity. Chinese culture is one of the oldest and most complex cultures in the world, having developed for more than 5,000 years. This culture is rooted in ancient history and philosophy, influenced by various dynasties and socio-political changes. From the steep mountains of Tibet to the calm flowing Yangtze River, Chinese culture is rich and diverse, encompassing everything from language, art, kinship systems, marriage, clothing, architecture, to cuisine. Chinese culture originates from various ancient civilizations that were born in the Yellow River valley. Its history is rich with important discoveries and achievements, including the invention of paper, printing ink, the compass, and gunpowder, often referred to as China's "Big Four" ancient inventions. Ancient dynasties such as the Shang, Zhou, Qin, and Han influence various aspects of Chinese culture, including language, philosophy, etiquette, and art. Some core values in Chinese culture contain respect for authority and elders, the importance of social and moral harmony, and the concept of 'face' or maintaining reputation and dignity. Chinese culture also highly values education and knowledge (Ding, 2019).

*To Live*, a novel written by a Chinese writer, Yu Hua, was first published in 1993. Yu Hua's name is known as a famous Chinese writer who produced phenomenal, high-quality work and is considered in the realm of international literature. By translating his first novel *To Live* into Indonesian by Agustinus Wibowo, his name has become even closer to Indonesian readers.

The novel, which was translated with the same title, was published by the publisher Gramedia Pustaka Utama in February 2015. The man who was born in Haiyan, Zhejiang province in 1960 grew up in an environment working as a doctor. Throughout his youth, Yu Hua lived through the Cultural Revolution until he served as a dentist. However, his desire to write was great, five years later Yu Hua published his first short story in a literary magazine (Standaert, 2004).

The novel is set in China from the 1940s to the 1970s and follows the life of Fugui, the son of a wealthy landowner, who navigates life and experiences the tumultuous events of Chinese history during that time period. This novel opens from the point of view of a young man who meets Fugui, an old grandfather who chats with his cow while plowing a field. From this encounter, Fugui begins his life story which is full of twists and turns as he enjoys his free and respected youth. He spends his time gambling, drinking, and ignoring his family. However, he soon loses his family's fortune after gambling debts pile up and he is forced to sell everything he owns, including the house, land and inheritance of his ancestors. Fugui and his family consisting of father, mother, pregnant Ziajhen (wife) and Fengxia (first child) have to move to a hut.

His father and mother die, and Fengxia becomes deaf and dumb. Fugui lives during a time of war and times of changing leadership and he loses his family members one by one in several chapters of his life. He witnesses the destruction of traditional values and the emergence of new ideologies, and is forced to adapt to the changing times to survive. Along the way, he experiences love, loss, and redemption for his youthful attitudes; that is when he reflects on the meaning of life and the importance of a family who sincerely accompanies him. *To Live* is a powerful commentary on Chinese history and society, exploring themes of identity, tradition, and the human condition. There are many proverbs and norms discussed. The novel has been widely acclaimed for its vivid depiction of Chinese life during a socially and politically tumultuous time period, as well as its enduring message of resilience and hope in the face of adversity (Hua, 2015).

The research is conducted through qualitative research method, sociology of literature approach and supported by related theories on cultural identity and respective researches related to cultural identity on kinship and marriage systems. The study of Chinese culture makes a significant contribution to the context of globalization, relationships between nations that respect each other so that conflicts of interest can be avoided. In an increasingly connected and multicultural world, understanding Chinese culture can open many doors and broaden one's personal and professional horizons. Learning Chinese culture can be a valuable investment for the future. Developing cultural interaction skills is a beneficial asset for both individuals and groups because understanding foreign cultures, in this case Chinese culture, helps a person develop the ability to interact with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. These include skills such as sensitivity to social norms, appreciation of differences, and the ability to communicate effectively with individuals from different cultures.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Sociology of Literature**

Sociology of literature is used in this research with the idea that sociology of literature examines the relationship between literary works and society such as social structure, culture, values and norms. Literary sociology involves the analysis of

literature in its social context and attempts to understand how literature influences the reader, is influenced by, and reflects the society in which it appears. Literary sociology views literature as a social product that is inseparable from society. Literary works reflect the social and cultural realities in which they are created, and therefore, literature must be understood in its social and cultural context.

Sociology of literature has a close relationship with cultural identity, and this reflects the importance of literature as a reflection and strong influence in the formation and understanding of cultural identity. Literature represents various aspects of cultural identity, including ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, language, and other social groups. Literature plays an important role in supporting or casting doubt on cultural identity. Sociological analysis of literature can help understand how stereotypes are produced and maintained in literary works and their impact on cultural identity. The reader's cultural identity also plays a role in the way literature is interpreted and understood. People with different cultural backgrounds may have different understandings of the same literary work. Through the analysis of literature in a social context, literary sociology helps understand how literature is a mirror and a strong influence in the formation and understanding of cultural identity. This helps us recognize the role that literary works, play in representing and celebrating cultural diversity and in supporting intercultural dialogue (Sapiro, 2023; Swingewood & Ward, 1987; Vana, 2020).

## 2.2 Cultural Identity

A concept that refers to the way individuals or groups identify themselves in a particular cultural context is cultural identity. Cultural identity includes various elements such as values, norms, traditions, language, religion, ethnicity, and other cultural factors. Cultural identity can be the basis for individuals or groups to feel related to a particular community and feel part of that culture because basically all humans are related to one another, the concept of globalization; therefore, a person cannot possibly live alone without interacting with other people (Suhadi, Manugerén, Purwarno, Siwi, & Ekalestari, 2021). Globalization has enabled individuals to engage in more intensive cultural exchange. It can influence cultural identity by bringing in cultural influences from different parts of the world and combining them in individual or group identities (Ding, 2019; Julien, 2021). One who performs a cultural tradition will surely get a lot of precious benefit. The attitude quality with the self-identity realization will progress automatically. The loss of self-identity is a general phenomena in a modern society. At this level, one will feel a certain type of depression which is so subtle that one does not realize having been plunged into that depression (Manugerén, Sibarani, Nasution, & Takari, 2017).

Cultural identity also has links to human rights. Human rights protect the right of individuals to maintain their cultural identity, including the right to practice their language and religion, and live a lifestyle appropriate to their culture; also provides a sense of ownership, self-esteem, and empowerment for individuals or groups. When people feel connected to their cultural roots, they often feel stronger and more connected to their communities. Understanding and respecting the cultural identities of others is an important step in promoting an inclusive and diverse society. Thus, it is clearly illustrated that cultural identity is an important aspect in a person's life that shapes how a person sees himself and how that person interacts with the world around him (Berry, & Taban, 2021).

## **2.3 Chinese Cultural Identity**

Chinese Cultural Identity is a very interesting topic to explore as China is a country that has a rich history and culture, and has had a big impact on various aspects of the world. Chinese cultural identity has been formed over thousands of years through its long history. It begins with ancient civilizations in the Yellow River Valley that produced the oldest written language, which became an important element in Chinese cultural identity. Later, dynasties such as the Qin, Han, Tang, and Ming played an important role in shaping Chinese culture, language, and value system. Over the course of history, China has also influenced neighboring countries in terms of language, religion, and philosophy, strengthening its cultural identity throughout East Asia (Bin, 2017).

Belief systems are also an integral part of Chinese cultural identity. The religious traditions and beliefs of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism have influenced the morals, ethics, and values in Chinese society. Apart from that, China also has traditional religious traditions that involve respect for ancestors and nature spirits. These religions have shaped the worldview and behavior of Chinese society. Confucianism and Taoism emphasize principles such as politeness, obedience to authority, and a sense of responsibility to family and society. These values have formed social and ethical norms in Chinese culture. In the modern era, Chinese cultural identity continues to develop. The cultural revolution, economic reform, and globalization have brought about major changes in Chinese society. Chinese younger generation is now faced with new challenges in maintaining the cultural identity while keeping up with global trends. This creates an interesting dynamic in the formation of Chinese cultural identity; however, Chinese people will still try to maintain their cultural traditions (Belden, 2020; Lin, 2022).

The systems of kinship, marriage and respect for elders in Chinese culture reflect a deep network of values, social norms and cultural traditions. Values such as responsibility to family, politeness, harmony, and humility are fundamental to Chinese culture. Social norms govern social interactions, while cultural traditions reveal Chinese rich cultural heritage. This cultural kinship system plays an important role in shaping the cultural identity of the Chinese people and contributes to the uniqueness and richness of Chinese culture that continues to develop (Belden, 2020).

### **2.3.1 Chinese Kinship System**

The kinship system is a series of rules that regulate the classification of people who are related. This includes various levels of rights and obligations among relatives starting from grandfather, father, mother, children, grandchildren, nephews, and so on. Other forms of kinship that exist as a result of a marriage relationship include: in-laws, in-laws, stepsiblings, and others. Kinship is a relationship between humans who have the same genealogical origins, either through biological, social or cultural descent. Kinship in Chinese culture is also formed by lineage/family relationships and marriage relationships. The Chinese ethnic group has its own rules regarding marriage, where marriage is generally carried out through an arranged marriage system as a form of devotion to parents and ancestors with the aim of continuing the lineage and worshiping ancestors (Chan, 2018). Chinese Ethnic strictly abstain from marrying with the same surname, but in order to protect family property so that it does not fall into the hands of other people, this ethnic group seeks to marry one ancestor to a different clan.

### 2.3.2 Chinese Marriage System

Marriage for Chinese society is an obligation. This is because Chinese society adheres to a patrilineal kinship system or a kinship system that draws on the male or paternal line of descent. For traditional Chinese society the word 'marriage' has a different meaning; for a man, 'marrying' means taking a woman as a relative, while for a woman, 'marrying' means getting a family. Marriage in Chinese society is also a symbol of a person's maturity, therefore wedding is to be celebrated on a large scale (Muqi, 2021). Values and norms based on the teachings of ancestors which refer to the teachings of Taoism, Confucius and Buddhism remain the basis of a marriage.

To obtain reliable research results, this research is also referred to two previous related studies, those related to Chinese cultural identity. Liang, B.B. (2015) in a paper entitled *English's Influence on the Cultural Identity of Chinese People in the Context of Globalization* states that Chinese culture is dynamic and ready and confident in absorbing new ideas for its own benefit. Many significant cultural confrontations in China's long history have been handled elegantly by Chinese culture, and they have provided rich material for advancing China's cultural development. Chinese people wherever they are still maintain their cultural identity both in the social and cultural fields.

Ma, & Mohame (2023) in their paper *Heritage Tourism and Cultural Identity in China: Challenges and Opportunities for Development* state that the Chinese nation is culturally and historically a great nation with a diverse cultural heritage and is of particular concern in the field of tourism. In general, Chinese culture is a heritage culture and currently it can be seen that the nuances of the concepts of Confucius, Taoism and Buddhism are very significant in every implementation of cultural traditions and serve as guidelines in carrying out their social and cultural activities. Their kinship system is very prominent so that from this system a strong bond is formed containing high solidarity.

## 3. Research Method

The novel *To Live* by Yu Hua is the object of study in this research which provides an overview of Chinese cultural identity which is elaborated through two points of discussion, kinship and marriage systems. In order to complete the data in the study of cultural identity, analysis of Chinese cultural identity becomes the focus of the discussion. The data source is obtained from the novel *To Live* by Yu Hua published by Gramedia Pustaka Utama, Jakarta in 2015 and the data are obtained from the text in the novel in the forms of sentences or quotations that reflect the kinship and marriage systems. Secondary data sources are obtained from books, other related references and previous research related to discussions about Chinese cultural identity. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative (Miles & Huberman & Saldana, 2019). The study is an explanatory orientation which is drawn on the descriptive and interpretive paradigm (Nasution, Pardi, Manugeran, Hidayati, Pratiwy, & Wulan, 2022).

The data are collected through note-taking techniques which are then classified. After the data are collected, then identified and analyzed. The data collection technique used in data collection is by recording documents or archives that are closely related to the research objectives. This type or method is called content analysis. The steps taken are: reading the entire novel repeatedly to fully understand its contents and noting down important words, sentences, or data related to the problem being studied. The data

analysis is done by data reduction techniques and drawing conclusions with the aim of describing the phenomena of Chinese cultural identity in more detailed ways.

#### 4. Discussion

The novel, which has been translated into traditional Chinese, French, Dutch, Italian, Korean, German, Japanese, English, Swedish, Polish, Romanian, Mongolian, Hungarian as well as Indonesian, teaches us to survive even at the lowest point. Fugui is always optimistic and does not give up on circumstances. There is always a way out of complicated situations. Other lessons are about responsibility, the meaning of family, enthusiasm for life and maintaining cultural identity. There are many positive aspects that can be obtained from this novel. This story is able to invite readers to reflect on life's struggles through their ideology.

The novel *To Live* tells the story of the life journey of a farmer named Fugui and his family during a very difficult period of Chinese history, including the Cultural Revolution. The novel depicts the challenges and dramatic changes experienced by the characters in the face of these historical events. Yu Hua uses a unique storytelling style, powerful and full of emotion to convey messages about life, family, courage, and resilience in the face of difficult times. The novel has received much praise for the beauty of its prose and its ability to depict Chinese history and social change. This is a moving novel and provides insight into Chinese culture. Chinese culture is closely attached to the Chinese ethnic group; wherever they are, they still maintain and practice their culture. In this research the two elements of Chinese cultural identity discussed are the kinship and marriage systems.

##### 4.1 Kinship System

Cultural Identity, in this research, refers to Chinese cultural identity in certain historical periods, such as the Cultural Revolution and land reform periods. This novel shows how cultural identity can shape personality and social as well as political changes. Traditional values and norms as well as the role of the family in Chinese society are explained clearly. In this novel, the main character, Fugui, and his family are very close and support one another.

*Aku bilang begini pada ayahku, "kamu tak usah pusing, nanti anakku yang akan bikin bangga para leluhur." (Hua, 2015: 13)*

The quotation is conveyed by Fugui who argues when his father asks him to take responsibility for his abuse and disregard for those around him. Fugui in the early phase is described as someone who really likes to show off his wealth and uses it for temporary pleasures such as prostitution and gambling. The sentence "you don't need to worry" is expressed to ignore his father who likes to complain about the harm he has done; "later my son will make the ancestors proud", this shows that blood relations cannot be separated and will be mutually bound.

Furthermore, Fugui says, "After all, we have to leave some good work for our descendants, right?" (Hua, 2015:13). Fugui feels that the Xu family's prosperity will last a long time and can increase. The term "good duty" refers to the obligation of the next generation to protect the family's property and good name. Based on this, it is seen that family relationships cannot be separated and will continue as an obligation for future generations.

*Aku sudah tua, tak kuat bawa pikulan. Kamu mesti pikul sendiri itu duit buat bayar utang. (Hua, 2015: 31).*

The quotation is taken from Fugui's father to Fugui. He says this after selling the land and all the wealth of his family to pay Fugui's debt. Even though the relationship between Fugui and his father is not good, his father provides assistance for Fugui's mistake due to gambling. "My father often complains, scolds me for not making my ancestors proud" (Hua, 2015:13). From the start, Fugui's father often rebukes his son for the bad attitude. According to his father, Fugui "does not make his ancestors proud" because he keeps on being lazy and spends his wealth on useless things. However, even though he is described as being tough and likes to scold Fugui, his father does not leave him when Fugui falls.

Previously, Fugui's father says "From the past until today, there is no rule stating that debts are not paid" (Hua, 2015: 31). Fugui's father tells his son not to run away from any problem. On the contrary, his father shows a responsible attitude so that Fugui could see and emulate him. This also shows that he still cares about his son, though he does bad things to the family.

The related data show that no matter how bad a child's character is, parents still try to give the best and will not abandon their child. Parental care is always shown through sacrifices that cannot be compared with other people. Furthermore, from this data it can also be seen that the family is a person's last support to survive all the problems.

*Aku bilang, "Kalau kamu penat sampai sakit, nanti satu tangan pun tidak ada karena aku harus rawat kamu" (Hua, 2015: 47)*

The quotation is given by Fugui to his mother, who is old but still forces herself to help Fugui in the fields. She is so old that her legs are difficult to walk, so when she bends her body and works even a little, her body could no longer be straightened, (Hua, 2015: 47). Fugui loves his mother and understands that her mother's condition is no better than his own. He himself also understands that his mother is stubborn when asked to stop working. Therefore, he asks his mother to help with light things and waits for him at the edge of the rice field. The sentence "then there won't be even one hand" shows that when his mother is sick, Fugui will be much more overwhelmed to work and look after his mother. This metaphorical sentence shows that Fugui wants to gently reprimand his mother. Based on this, it can be seen that the attitude of mutual help among family members is very close to lighten one other's burdens. The role of family backbone borne by Fugui seems to be an obligation for other family members.

*Aku dan ibuku berunding, kami sepakat biar Changgen tinggal sama kami saja. Dengan begini, hidup memang bakal lebih menderitá. Aku bilang pada ibuku, "sesusah apa pun hidup kita, tetap harus biarkan dia tinggal di sini." (Hua, 2015: 50).*

Changgen is a very loyal servant of the Xu Family. He has served as an errand boy since Fugui is young. "Changgen, the porter, ran, over his body, I flew like a sparrow on a twig (Hua, 2015: 12). Changgen is very obedient and respectful to his young master (Fugui). Unfortunately, after falling into poverty, the Xu Family is unable to pay Changgen and stops him from working. At this time, Changgen feels a close kinship due to the loyalty shown by Changgen. Fugui tells his mother, "... no matter



how difficult our lives are, we still have to let him stay here" (Hua, 2015: 50). Though they are in the same difficult times, Fugui feels he must be responsible for Changgen's increasingly difficult fate after no longer working in their family.

Based on this, it can be seen that a person's status can increase in the eyes of other people if their good attitude and behavior remains consistent and humble. Someone can be considered relative even if they are not from the same blood, because they have loyalty and a sincere desire to respect each other. On the other hand, from this quotation it is also seen that someone will tend to respect other people more when they are in the same situation.

Jiazhen benar, asalkan keluarga kami bisa tiap hari bersama, siapa lagi yang peduli soal keberuntungan macam-macam? (Hua, 2015: 80)

This sentence is a contemplation of Fugui when he speaks to his wife, Jiazhen. Fugui and Jiazhen have been through a lot together since he is rich until finally having to survive in poverty. Previously, Fugui says that he fears that after the big disaster he has faced, luck might catch up with him. "He bit the thread until it broke, then looked at me, "I don't want any luck either," he says, "I would be happy enough if every year I could make you new shoes" (Hua, 2015: 81). Without thinking, Jiazhen answers that she has enough with their current life, though not wallowing in wealth.

Though she is only able to make shoes from used clothes, Jiazhen feels that her life is more meaningful than before. Jiazhen demands nothing more than living a full life with her family. Then, Fugui, at that time feels that he needs more profits to survive, finally realizes that his current life is more than enough. The sentence "as long as our family can be together every day" shows that family members are of a valuable asset. Based on this, it is clear that a complementary family is described as the most comfortable place for someone to return to. In the novel, the remaining Fugui family members (Fugui, Jiazhen, Fengxia, and Youqing) have different characters, but they support one another to survive.

#### 4.2 Marriage System

Marriage described in the novel *To Live* shows the importance of traditional marriage in Chinese society and is part of cultural identity. Marriage is considered an important part of culture and tradition, and often involves special ceremonies and rituals. The novel shows how traditional marriage is part of China's cultural identity and is a value esteemed by society. In the conditions of social and political change in China at that time, marriage still exists to maintain cultural identity through conservative and traditional wedding ceremonies.

Fengxia sudah tidak muda lagi, mesti carikan dia suami. (Hua, 2015: 156)

The sentence is given by Fugui after conferring with Jiazhen. As a father, Fugui feels that his daughter is at a ripe age to start a family. Fengxia is described as "no longer young", meaning she has entered the normal age for a woman to start a family. Throughout the novel, the exact age of a woman who is categorized as "not young" is not stated. However, it is explained that when a girl reaches that age, she "must find her a husband" or must immediately find a partner. The sentence "you must find her a husband" that Fugui thinks leads the reader to understand that the obligation to find a daughter a partner depends on her family, especially her father. "In my heart I thought,

if Fengxia wants to watch the wedding, I should also let her," said Fugui (Hua, 2015: 158). By "let her" refers to Fugui allowing Fengxia to marry someone she likes. Here it is seen that girls in Chinese tradition must marry and do so at a certain age. Then, it can also be implied that the process of finding a partner is not only borne by the girl, but also by the family.

*Menurut adat kami di sini, Jiazhen dibawa pulang oleh keluarganya, maka harus keluarga mereka juga yang antarkan Jiazhen balik ke sini (Hua, 2015: 52)*

The sentence is conveyed by Fugui after receiving news that Jiazhen gives birth to their second child (Youqing). "Ten days after my father died, my in-laws came" (Hua, 2015: 39). Fugui's in-laws come to forcefully pick up Jiazhen who is heavily pregnant. The Chen family (Jiazhen's family) does not accept the fate that Jiazhen has to bear due to the Xu family's bankruptcy. Fugui and his family could not do anything and are forced to let Jiazhen go. Jiazhen also has to give birth without Fugui accompanying her. In fact, Fugui and his mother really want to visit Jiazhen in the city, but are prevented from doing so because Jiazhen is picked up by her father. If someone is brought home by their family, then the family must return it to the family. This rule limits in-law relations between extended families. These kinds of rules are unwritten norms of Chinese society but are generally followed. Based on the data, it can be seen that marriage not only binds two people but also binds two large families according to social norms. Biological families are not allowed to drop off or pick up their children because they already have the status of members of another family.

*Pengantin laki mengeluarkan satu pak rokok merek Kuda Terbang dari sakunya, diberikan kepada para lelaki yang lebih tua sebagai tanda hormat. (Hua, 2015: 157)*

This quotation is related to hold a wedding in the village. A wedding is considered a joint celebration, so the groom should prepare cigarettes for his elders. "Flying Horse brand cigarettes" shows that cigarette brands are in the spotlight of village residents to measure the financial capabilities of the bride and groom. At Fengxia and Wang Erxi's wedding procession, the cigarette brand is also clearly mentioned. "As soon as he entered the hamlet, Erxi immediately tore open two packs of cigarettes at the Main Front Gate," (Hua, 2015: 167). "Main Front Gate cigarettes" is in the spotlight, especially among the old men and boys in the hamlet. Furthermore, Fugui also says that, "...Wan Erxi distributed it box by box, none of the residents in this village could match her." From this quotation, it is clear that Fugui is very proud of his son-in-law from the cigarettes he has distributed to the villagers. Even though they do not mention prices or specify which cigarettes are more expensive than others, handing out certain brands of cigarettes as a "sign of respect" shows the luxury of the wedding party.

*Wan Erxi menaruh arak dan kain di meja, lalu dengan bahu terangkat dia berjalan keliling mau perika rumah kami ini. (Hua, 2015: 161)*

The quotation shows the first time Wan Erxi visits Fugui's house. "Wan Erxi put wine and cloth" shows that Wan Erxi prepares a gift, "wine and cloth" which is specially brought as a souvenir. The drink "arak" is a common souvenir for Chinese people to strengthen relationships. In this section, it is told that Wan Erxi wants to be introduced to Fengxia, so Wan Erxi indirectly visits the house of his prospective bride.

Based on this, it can be concluded that in Chinese tradition, bringing souvenirs when visiting for the first time is very important as a form of respect for the host and making an impression on the people who are visiting.

*Aku juga bawa Fengxia ke kota untuk buat dua baju baru, belikan satu selimut, baskom buat cuci muka dan lain-lain. (Hua, 2015: 166)*

Fugui expresses this sentence after learning that Wan Erxi intends to marry Fengxia. In this description, it is explained that girls who want to get married must have things for themselves. Fugui as a biological parent must prepare Fengxia's basic needs as a form of love before releasing his child to someone else. Several items such as new clothes and a face wash basin are basic items that girls must have.

## 5. Conclusion

The novel *To Live* written by Yu Hua is full of the values of life, narrating the story of Fugui the protagonist, who wastes his money when he is young and ends up having to work hard to survive. Significant changes in social status are influenced by conflicts that occur in government politics. The story is wrapped in Chinese cultural identity. This novel is written from a first person perspective, so Fugui's feelings towards each phase can be felt deeper.

Based on the results of data analysis, there are two significant points of Chinese cultural identity in the novel: the kinship system and the marriage system. In Chinese culture, the kinship system is strongly influenced by ancient Chinese traditions and values. Some key aspects of the kinship system in Chinese culture include the importance of the extended family, hierarchy and respect for age and social status, the helpful use of family titles: such as "grandfather," "grandmother," "uncle," "aunt," and "cousin," determining the status and relationships among family members, gender roles regulating social expectations and duties in the family as well as family ethics.

The second finding is related to the marriage system. The marriage system in Chinese culture has a number of unique characteristics and traditions. Several important aspects of the Chinese marriage system include the union of two families who must respect each other, the role of parents in determining their children's partners, the ritual steps that must be carried out so that the marriage can run lastingly and all parties involved in a marriage receive grace from God.

Though the Chinese marriage system and kinship system have undergone changes in recent decades, the values and norms within them are still maintained in modern Chinese society. The kinship system, especially for those outside the main land, is maintained and produces a strong unity; they support each other in all social and cultural lines of life. Wedding is also still considered a very important event and commonly celebrated with grandeur because marriage is strength for kinship system.

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