

## **The Role of Philosophical Values in the Lontong Cap Go Meh Celebration in Fantasy Novel Writing**

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### **Abstract**

This research explores the potential of fantasy fiction to reintroduce Chinese-Indonesian youths to their cultural heritage, specifically focusing on the philosophical significance of *Lontong Cap Go Meh*, a traditional dish associated with the *Cap Go Meh* celebration. Through a qualitative study combining observation, interviews, and documentary analysis, this research identifies core philosophical values embedded in *Lontong Cap Go Meh* and examines how these values can be integrated into a fantasy narrative. Utilizing the Ethnic Food Identity theory, the study analyzes how *Lontong Cap Go Meh* embodies core philosophical values within the Chinese-Indonesian tradition. Visual Picture of the Story and Structural-Affect Theory of Stories are then applied to examine how these values can be effectively incorporated into the narrative structure of a fantasy novel. A prototype fantasy fiction novel was created and tested with target readers to assess its effectiveness in fostering cultural understanding and appreciation. The study found that *Lontong Cap Go Meh* is rich in philosophical values, including hope for prosperity, respect for tradition, and integration into Indonesian culture. These values were successfully integrated into the fantasy novel's narrative through plot, theme, character development, and the core message. User testing revealed a positive impact on target readers' understanding and appreciation of Chinese-Indonesian culture. This research offers valuable insights for creators seeking to use fantasy fiction to bridge cultural gaps and promote cultural understanding. It emphasizes the importance of accurately portraying cultural essence while crafting engaging narratives that resonate with young readers.

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### **Keywords**

*Chinese-Indonesian youths; Fantasy fiction; Cultural heritage revitalization; Ethnic food identity; Narrative Integration*

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### **1. Introduction**

Chinese-Indonesian youths often face a disconnect with their cultural heritage, which can be attributed to various factors. One significant contributing factor to this disconnect is the suppression of Chinese cultural expression during the Suharto regime led to a loss of cultural identity among Chinese Indonesians (Ling, 2016). This caused many Chinese Indonesians to lose their cultural identity. This is despite the fact that cultural diversity is an important asset that becomes the identity of the nation and wealth that should be preserved and maintained (Ikhsan, and Giwangsa, 2019). Following the end of the New Order regime, Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000 by President Abdurrahman Wahid lifted the ban on Chinese cultural practices in Indonesia (Fikri & Hasudungan, 2022). This marked a significant shift, as Chinese culture was once again recognized as part of the national identity. The abolishment of the ban

triggered a visible resurgence of Chinese cultural expressions in public spaces, highlighting the enduring resilience and adaptability of Chinese culture within Indonesian society (Matondang & Butsi, 2019).

Three decades of New Order rule resulted in the suppression of various Chinese cultures and traditions, leading to a significant cultural gap among those born during this period. As a result, many individuals from this generation lack familiarity with their heritage, contributing to a "lost generation" disconnected from their cultural roots (Cangianto, 2021). A preliminary survey of 30 Chinese-Indonesian teenagers in Surabaya, Indonesia, found that 92.6% did not identify with their cultural roots, which shows that the majority of the young Chinese-Indonesian have lost their cultural identity (Aryodiguno, 2019).

This disconnection is a multifaceted issue, exacerbated by the rising influence of modern pop culture. Addressing this challenge requires a careful balance between preserving cultural traditions and embracing innovation (Bratakusumah, 2023). To address the need for revitalizing appreciation for Chinese culture among Indonesian youth, this research proposes developing popular literature inspired by this rich heritage. This approach aims to foster a sense of pride in their diverse cultural background, including Chinese influences, and to empower them as future custodians of Indonesia's unique cultural tapestry.

Popular literature, valuing storytelling and engaging narratives, was chosen to reintroduce Chinese culture in Indonesia due to its capacity to engage and shape the mindsets of younger generations (Wolny, 2017). This medium resonates as cultural traditions are best understood through a framework that prioritizes storytelling, rituals, and shared narratives that form our identities (Davies et al., 2019). Exposure to diverse cultures, including minority cultures, enriches understanding within pluralistic societies. Popular literature offers a valuable avenue for fostering such exposure (Kidd, 2016). Therefore, accurate representations of Chinese culture in Indonesian popular literature empower Indonesian youth to engage with their nation's diversity and expand their cultural literacy.

Fantasy literature, popular among younger audiences for its engaging and imaginative narratives, has significant potential for promoting intercultural understanding. By integrating diverse cultural values into fictional worlds, authors can bridge cultural divides and counteract prejudice (Evseev, 2019). Additionally, the growing interest in fantasy science storytelling underscores its effectiveness in conveying complex scientific concepts through compelling narratives (Joubert et al., 2019). Therefore, fantasy narratives that incorporate cultural contexts, structural qualities, and engaging formats can illuminate cultural concepts for readers, thereby enhancing both intercultural understanding and cultural literacy.

By delving into the philosophical values of *Lontong Cap Go Meh*, we can create captivating stories that not only entertain but also foster a deeper appreciation for Chinese-Indonesian heritage. Stories have long served as powerful tools for exploring cultural identity. This research seeks to craft a fantasy novel that captures the essence of *Lontong Cap Go Meh* and its cultural significance, promoting cultural understanding and highlighting the enriching impact of Chinese-Indonesian cultural interactions

xxxxThe introduction should briefly place the study in a broad context and highlight why it is important. It should define the purpose of the work and its significance. The current state of the research field should be carefully reviewed and key publications cited. Please highlight controversial and diverging hypotheses when necessary. Finally, briefly mention the main aim of the work and highlight the principal conclusions. As far as possible, please keep the introduction comprehensible to scientists outside your particular field of research.

## 2. Literature Review

*Lontong Cap Go Meh*, a unique Java-based tradition of Chinese-Indonesian origin, embodies diverse philosophical values rooted in Chinese culture. The dish was created among Chinese immigrants who settled in port cities on the north coast of Java, such as Semarang, Lasem and Surabaya (Jiwanto, 2016). *Lontong Cap Go Meh*, estimated to have originated in Indonesia over 250 years ago, remains a staple dish served during the annual Cap Go Meh celebration (Marcus, 2009). This culinary tradition is unique to the Chinese-Indonesian communities of Java and Betawi and is notably absent in both Peninsular Malaysia and Sumatra (Saraswati, and Wardhani, 2012).

The Lantern Festival celebrated on the first full moon of spring, marks the conclusion of the Chinese New Year festivities. This significant event, rooted in both religious and cultural traditions, signifies the beginning of a new year and resonates with Chinese communities worldwide. The Chinese calendar, a lunisolar system, integrates the moon phases with a 12-year animal zodiac known as "Shio" (X. Lu, 2022). The "Shio" cycle includes the rat, buffalo, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, chicken, dog, and pig (Waru, D., et al, 2022).

Chinese New Year, which heralds the arrival of spring, is a multi-day holiday. *Yuan Xiao Jie*, or the Lantern Festival, takes place on the fifteenth day after the New Year. This occasion marks the end of the Chinese New Year. With its deep cultural and religious roots, *Yuan Xiao Jie* is a unique celebration with a rich and diverse history that has been passed down through generations (Feng, 2022). *Yuan Xiao Jie*, the Lantern Festival, is celebrated on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month. It is a time for families to gather, share meals, and illuminate their homes and public spaces with lanterns. A traditional dish associated with this festival is *Yuánxiāo*, glutinous rice balls served in a sweet ginger soup. Chinese-Indonesian communities have preserved the tradition of *Yuan Xiao Jie*, known locally as "*Cap Go Meh*." (Saraswati and Wardhani, 2012). This term, derived from the *Tiociu/Hokkien* dialect, signifies the "fifteenth night" and marks the conclusion of the Chinese New Year celebrations (Tan, 2002). According to Wenshi Yudhi, a religious leader at Tjoe Tik Kiong Confucian Temple, *Cap Go Meh* holds dual significance for Chinese Indonesians. He explains that the celebration serves as both a moment of reflection on past blessings and an expression of hope for the future.

Beyond its religious significance, *Cap Go Meh* serves as a powerful tool for affirming cultural identity. Shared rituals and traditions strengthen community bonds and foster a sense of collective belonging (Callinicos, 2010). Chinese-Indonesian communities on Java have adapted the *Cap Go Meh* celebration, replacing *Tiociu* with *Lontong*, reflecting their integration into Javanese culture (Erll and Nünning, 2008). This culinary tradition is unique to Chinese-Indonesian communities in Java and Betawi (Saraswati and Wardhani, 2012). While *Lontong Cap Go Meh* shares similarities with *Lontong opor* served by Muslim families during Lebaran Ketupat (Graaf, 1984), it offers a more complex and flavorful experience due to its diverse ingredients (Maria, et al.2022 ).

*Lontong Cap Go Meh* is a testament to the culinary exchange between Chinese and Indonesian cultures. Its similarities to Javanese *Lontong opor* suggest a long history of mutual influence. While determining the initial direction of this influence is challenging due to the complexities of acculturation, it is clear that *Lontong Cap Go Meh* has become a deeply ingrained part of Indonesian culture. Harjanti Halim, a leader in both the Boen Hian Tong social organization and the Semarang Chinatown Tourism Community, highlights that *Lontong Cap Go Meh* serves as a symbol of Indonesia's rich multicultural heritage.

### 3. Materials and Methods

This qualitative descriptive study adopts a multifaceted methodology, integrating observation, interviews, and documentation to examine the making of *Lontong Cap Go Meh* and its cultural and philosophical significance. Grounded in established qualitative research frameworks, this approach aligns with methodologies used in cultural studies (Mason, 2017), emphasizing triangulation to enhance depth and reliability.

Direct observation is conducted to analyze the preparation process of *Lontong Cap Go Meh*, providing an in-depth understanding of the cultural practices and rituals associated with the dish. Additionally, workshops and lectures by renowned fiction authors are documented to explore the storytelling process. This ethnographic approach is crucial for capturing contextual and procedural details (Robey, D. and Taylor, 2018).

Semi-structured interviews with Chinese cultural specialists offer insights into the historical and symbolic meanings of *Lontong Cap Go Meh*. These discussions explore its embedded philosophical values, while interviews with fiction editors examine how these cultural narratives can be adapted into storytelling. The interview framework follows cultural anthropology methodologies, ensuring open-ended and exploratory inquiries (Bayeck, 2021).

Archival research gathers historical and cultural data, including culinary records, historical texts, and cultural artifacts. This method complements primary data collection, aligning with historical-cultural research methodologies (Howard, 2019).

Collected data are analyzed using the Ethnic Food Identity (EFI) framework, which examines the influence of cultural identity, beliefs, and social norms on food choices. Prior studies affirm the significance of understanding ethnic food within its cultural context (Mardatillah, 2020). Furthermore, the findings contribute to the development of a fictional novel, guided by the Structural Affect Theory of Stories (SATS) and Visual Picture of Stories (VPS) frameworks, both validated in narrative construction studies (Murray, S. and Holmes, 1994).

#### 4. Results

Exploring the cultural identity of *Lontong Cap Go Meh* through fantasy fiction requires understanding the intricate link between cuisine, customs, and identity. This necessitates employing the Ethnic Food Identity (EFI) framework. Shared beliefs, skills, and social norms within ethnic groups foster a distinct food identity, highlighting the intricate link between cuisine and identity formation (Ishak, et al., 2019). The ethnic food identity framework acknowledges the enduring significance of ethnic/culinary dishes, even when enjoyed outside their traditional cultural context (Camarena & Sanjuan, 2009). Cultural identity dictates a group's food choices (Carrus et al., 2011), with ethnic minorities further shaping their identity through shared food practices (Brown, 1984). Beyond ingredients, preparation methods weave culture, tradition, and environment into cuisine (Chapman, 2013), shaping unique signature dishes across ethnicities. This research examines how the preparation and serving of food in Chinese-Indonesian communities transmitted cultural identity during the New Order era, utilizing the EFI framework to unravel the link between cultural identity and food consumption behaviors.

*Lontong Cap Go Meh's* philosophical values will be woven into a fictional narrative, employing both Structural Affect Theory of Stories (SATS) and Visual Picture of Stories (VPS) frameworks for analysis and construction. These frameworks facilitate identifying themes and constructing engaging, yet meaningful, story structures within the subjective mental representations formed by episodic, contextual, prospective, and fictional narratives (Akimoto, 2018). The SATS theory proposes that chronological narratives influence emotions through surprise, excitement, and curiosity (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982). This order-sensitive framework argues that altering event sequencing can impact cognitive processing and emotional engagement, highlighting its application for crafting impactful fictional narratives (Albuquerque et al., 2011). Literary fiction relies on readers' imagination to create vivid mental images, fostering engagement and diverse perspectives (Brosch, 2018). However, writers benefit from clearly visualizing their narrative before crafting it. VPS facilitates this process (Dillingham, 2005), transforming abstract concepts into concrete maps that guide story development and enhance reader comprehension (Huang, 2013).

*Lontong Cap Go Meh* is a traditional Indonesian dish characterized by its diverse ingredients, including *opor ayam kampung*, *lontong*, beef *rendang*, boiled eggs, *sambal goreng ati ampela*, tempe, peanuts, bamboo shoot, manisa vegetables, shrimp, *serundeng*, koya soybean powder, fried onions, and *sambal* (Maria et al, 2022 ). To delve deeper into the cultural significance of this dish, the Ethnic Food Identity (EFI) theory provides a valuable framework. EFI suggests that the identity of a dish extends beyond its ingredients to encompass its preparation, cooking methods, and consumption practices (Utami, 2004). This theory highlights four key elements that differentiate ethnic foods: 1) type of food, 2) cooking methods, 3) ingredient selection, and 4) eating decorum.

##### 4.1. Types of Food

To adapt to Javanese culture, Chinese immigrants replace *ronde*, their traditional sticky rice. (Boyd & Richerson, 2006), with paddy rice which is easier to find in Java (Erll and Nünning, 2008). This adaptation reflects both respect for local culture and a desire to maintain the *Cap Go Meh* tradition.

##### 4.2. Cooking Method

Despite sharing processed rice as a base, *Lontong* is favored over congee by Chinese-Indonesian for festive occasions like *Cap Go Meh*. This preference likely stems from both practical (abundance of banana leaves for *Lontong* steam-cooking) and cultural symbolism. Conversely, congee's historical association with poverty in China might contribute to its lesser preference for celebrations (Ryan, L & Choi, 2015). This case exemplifies the interplay of local resources and cultural interpretations influencing cooking methods within diasporic communities.

### 4.3. Ingredient Selection

Chinese immigrants in Indonesia transformed local ingredients and spices into distinct culinary creations, imbuing them with symbolic and aesthetic significance. Lontong's length signifies longevity, while turmeric-infused opor's golden hue evokes wealth and prosperity. Sambal goreng ati ampela's red color echoes Chinese New Year customs, complemented by the auspicious symbolism of an accompanying egg (Figure 1)

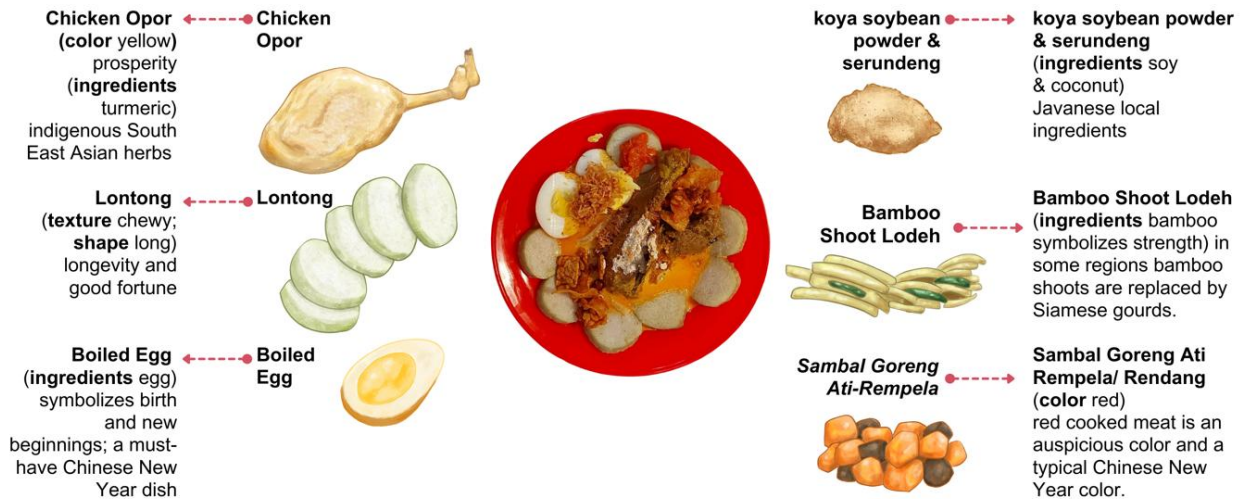


Figure 1: *Lontong cap go meh* ingredients (Made by the authors)

### 4.4. Eating Decorum

*Lontong Cap Go Meh*, play a role in the acculturation and assimilation of culinary traditions within the Chinese-Indonesian community (Aprilia, 2023). It transcends mere food, embodying cultural practices and identity. Serving and consuming it becomes a spiritual and social act, expressing heritage and strengthening familial and communal bonds (Listiyani, 2011).

#### Adapting *Lontong Cap Go Meh's* Philosophical Values into A Fantasy Novel

Informed by the philosophical analysis of *Lontong Cap Go Meh*, this research now focuses on crafting a fictional novel. Key philosophical values were identified through initial research. To guide the novel's development, in-depth interviews were conducted with Mrs. Endah Budi Heryani, Head of the East Java Region XI Cultural Preservation Center, and Ms. Grace Situngkir, Fiction Editor at Kompas Gramedia Publishing Group Indonesia. These interviews emphasized the importance of balancing factual accuracy with creative elements in *Lontong Cap Go Meh*-themed fantasy novels to ensure both cultural authenticity and reader engagement. (excerpts below).

Local fantasy rarely explores the fascinating blend of Indonesian and Chinese cultures. This novel, with its clear, engaging writing and authentic portrayal of their combined heritage, offers readers a unique window into *Cap Go Meh*, a vibrant celebration of Chinese culture in Indonesia. (Grace Rosy Situngkir, personal communication, November 4, 2023). Teenagers actively engage with popular culture, making it a valuable tool for introducing them to Indonesian traditions. I applaud the researcher's use of a fictional novel to bring Chinese culture in Indonesia to life for teenagers. As a fan of popular fiction, I believe novels can effectively showcase the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition, a beautiful example of Chinese cultural adaptation in Java (Endah Budi Heryani, personal communication, November 3, 2023).

In a recent webinar, acclaimed author Dewi Dee Lestari emphasized the importance of well-crafted narratives, highlighting three key elements: a unique premise, a clear theme, and a natural structure (Lestari, 2023). These elements guide readers through the story, fostering emotional connection and maintaining interest. To map out the emotional flow of the story, the researcher utilized SATS and VPS. The classic structure was chosen for its familiarity and appeal to a wider audience (Luhn, 2013). The novel unfolds in a forward plot, allowing for a clear and sequential

presentation of Chinese-Indonesian cultural values while also creating curiosity, suspense, and surprise for readers. The plot follows the classic structure, divided into three stages: Beginning, Change, and End (Luhn, 2013). These stages can be further divided into six phases: Exposition, Inciting Incident, Progressive Complication, Crisis, Climax, and Resolution. By strategically employing SATS at each stage, writers can evoke readers' emotions and maintain their engagement (Figure 2).

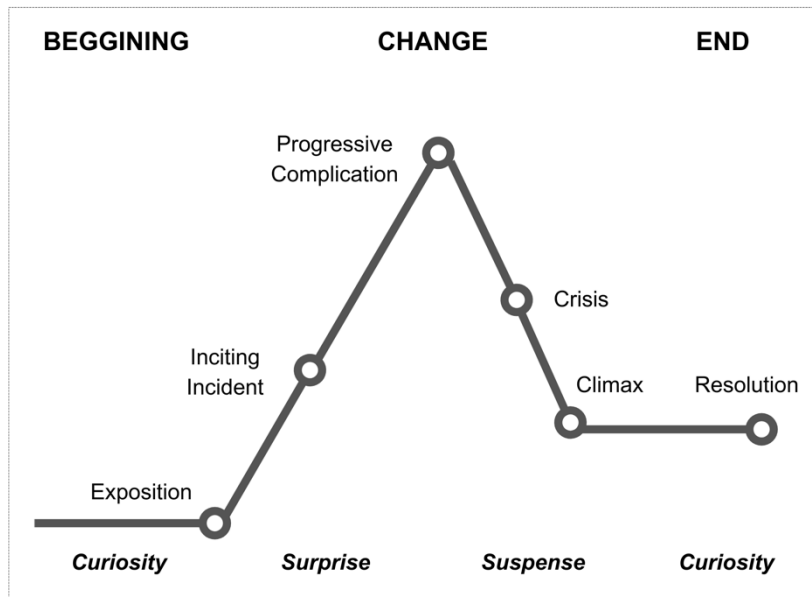


Figure 2: Visual portrait of the story (Ohler, 2006)

In frameworks like SATS and VPS, a strong premise and theme are key to building a compelling story. The premise, like a movie trailer in one sentence, captures the story's core idea. It's the message the author wants their readers to remember after reading. But the plot needs more than just an idea. That's where the theme comes in. It's the underlying message, the constant thread that weaves through the story, giving it depth and meaning.

Analysis through the Ethnic Food Identity framework reveals that *Lontong Cap Go Meh* originated from Chinese immigrants in Java's desire to both preserve traditions and integrate with local culture. This reflects their aspirations to maintain both vertical (ancestral reverence and symbolic prayers) and horizontal (family, community, and Javanese society) relationships. Despite the inherent tension between preserving tradition and embracing modernity, Chinese Indonesians achieve a harmonious balance through *Lontong Cap Go Meh*, a practice embodying the philosophical value of "embracing life without forgetting your roots." This value will be explored as a fantasy fiction novel premise. The process of interpreting the philosophical values of the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition to formulate the premise of a fantasy fiction novel can be seen in Figure 3.

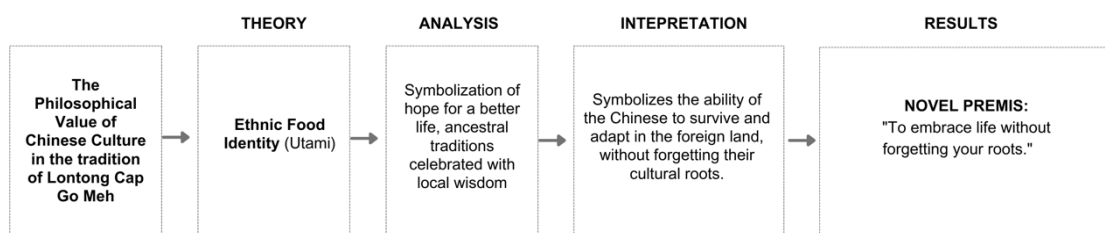


Figure 3: Process of interpreting philosophical values into premises (Made by the authors)

Luhn (Pixar's Head of Story Department), in a writing workshop, emphasized the importance of a "controlling idea" for crafting complete stories. This concise statement encapsulates the narrative arc, outlining the beginning, middle, and end, while defining the main character's challenges, setting, genre, and thematic exploration (Luhn, 2013). Character arcs, driven by conflict, unfold across three narrative stages (Lu, A. 2015). Beginning - establishing the journey, Middle - growth and change, End - resolution. Internal conflict (psychological struggles) and external conflict (obstacles faced) drive the character's development and the story's core.

Drawing on philosophical values, creative purpose, and target audience analysis, the fantasy fiction novel's Controlling Idea is formulated as follows.

"When Aileen / Ai Lian (爱莲) helps her grandmother serve *Lontong Cap Go Meh*, she gets into mischief at the temple and is transported to another world. To return home, she must recreate the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* based on her grandmother's teachings."

The controlling idea reveals narrative core elements: protagonist, plot & development, setting, genre, and point of view as stated di Table 1 below.

Table 1: Fantasy fiction novel development (Made by the authors)

<b>Protagonist</b>	Aileen / Ai Lian (爱莲), a 15-year-old third-generation Chinese Indonesian, struggles to connect with her cultural heritage despite strong family values. This reflects a common challenge faced by many teenagers today, who may prioritize contemporary identities over their ancestral roots.
<b>Plot and Development</b>	The novel explores Aileen's journey of rediscovering her Chinese roots and heritage, particularly the philosophical values embedded in the <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> tradition. Aileen learns these life lessons through her adventures in preparing and cooking <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> in an imaginary world.
<b>Setting</b>	The novel employs a dual-setting approach: a kelenteng, symbolizing Chinese cultural values in Indonesia, and a captivating imaginary world populated by mythical creatures drawn from Chinese beliefs, particularly those associated with the <i>Cap Go Meh</i> festival.
<b>Genre</b>	This novel aligns with the fantasy genre, employing an imaginary setting to cater to the younger audience's preference for imaginative narratives exceeding real-world limitations (Sturm, 2009).
<b>Point of View</b>	The story unfolds entirely through Aileen's eyes, drawing readers intimately into her journey as she confronts challenges and discovers life lessons relevant to the narrative's core themes.

After considering the core elements above, the philosophical values that need to be communicated, the purpose of creation, and the target audience, the formulation of the Controlling Idea for the fantasy fiction novel to be designed is as follows. Based on this explanation and the application of VPS and SATS, the following is the development of the Controlling Idea into a synopsis for a fantasy fiction novel:

Table 2: Fantasy fiction novel development (Made by the authors)

<b>VPS</b>		<b>Description</b>	<b>SATS</b>
<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Exposition</b> introduction of the story setting (time and place), as well as the main character of the story.	Aileen, a 15-year-old Chinese-Indonesian teenager, has become detached from her cultural roots and is more familiar with popular culture.	<b>Curiosity</b>
	<b>Inciting Incident</b> The event that changes the main character's life	Aileen's privileged life abruptly shifts as she's deposited in her grandmother's Chinatown home. Thrust into unfamiliar territory, she accompanies her grandmother (Ama) to prepare <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> at the temple. However, a fleeting rebellion leads to a sudden accident, leaving Aileen unconscious and her journey of self-discovery suspended.	
<b>Change</b>	<b>Progressive Complications</b> The protagonist's attempt to return to the	Aileen woke up in a strange world, greeted by two lion guardians. They explained that she was brought there for misbehaving in a real-world temple. Aileen attempted to escape but collided with the Rabbit and Tiger, two of the	<b>Surprise</b>

	status quo only made things worse.	twelve <i>Shio</i> (Chinese Zodiacs) who governed this world. They were preparing sticky rice balls ( <i>ronde</i> ) for the Lantern Festival.	
	<b>Crisis</b> The protagonist decides to do the right thing.	Aileen was tasked with creating a new dish imbued with meaning for all twelve <i>Shio</i> to judge. Recalling her Ama's <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> , Aileen decided to recreate this dish.	<b>Suspense</b>
	<b>Climax</b> The culmination of all conflicts experienced by the main character.	Recreating the dish proved more challenging than Aileen anticipated. She borrowed ingredients and, with the villagers' help, finally prepared <i>the Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> . After a day of hard work, Aileen deeply grasped the significance of the dish as a fusion of ancestral traditions and local cuisine.	
<b>End</b>	<b>Resolution</b> End of the story, the conflict is resolved as the main character grows	Ultimately pardoned, Aileen returned home, her heart brimming with gratitude for her grandmother's legacy of <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> .	<b>Curiosity</b>

The researcher chose the title "*Warisan Dua Dunia*" ("Inheritance of Two Worlds") for this novel. The title represents the main character, Aileen, a Chinese-Indonesian teenager who inherits cultures from two worlds: Chinese and Indonesian. Aileen lives between two worlds: one that has been influenced by popular culture and one that still holds fast to tradition. The title is also an allegory of the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition, which is a result of the fusion of two cultures, Javanese and Chinese, and has become a cultural heritage among the Chinese-Indonesian.

The synopsis of "*Warisan Dua Dunia*" developed into a 250-page novel prototype. This prototype was then tested with the target audience of teenagers (Generation Z) to assess whether the novel and its accompanying illustrations could both entertain and enhance their understanding of the philosophical values underlying the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition. Thirty Surabaya teenagers aged 16-19 from diverse religious, ethnic, and educational backgrounds participated in the evaluation. Prior to the reading, a pre-test was administered to gauge their existing knowledge of Chinese cultural values, particularly the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition (Table 3).

Table 3: Pre-Test Result (Made by the authors)

Score	Statement			
	I know when and why <i>Cap Go Meh</i> is celebrated.	I know what distinguishes <i>Cap Go Meh</i> celebrations in Indonesia from those in other countries.	I am familiar with the <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> tradition.	I know the ingredients commonly used in <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> .
Strongly Agree	5	0	10	0
Agree	72	16	48	32
Rather Disagree	24	39	30	42
Disagree	2	22	10	10
Totally Disagree	3	3	2	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>(%) Index</b>	71%	53%	67%	59%
<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Fairly Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fairly Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>

The pre-test results indicated a general lack of prior knowledge among the target audience regarding the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition. Following their reading of "*Warisan Dua Dunia*," a post-test was administered to measure any increase in their understanding (Table 4).

Table 4: Post-Test Result (Made by the author)

Score	Statement			
	I know when and why <i>Cap Go Meh</i> is celebrated.	I know what distinguishes <i>Cap Go Meh</i> celebrations in Indonesia from those in other countries.	I am familiar with the <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> tradition.	I know the ingredients commonly used in <i>Lontong Cap Go Meh</i> .
Strongly Agree	80	85	75	70
Agree	44	48	56	60
Rather Disagree	9	3	3	3
Disagree	0	0	0	0
Totally Disagree	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>(%) Index</b>	89%	91%	89%	89%
<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

Post-test results indicated a significant increase in respondents' understanding of the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition. All post-test statements achieved an average agreement rate of at least 89%, indicating a substantial improvement compared to the pre-test results (Table 2). This significant increase demonstrates the novel "*Warisan Dua Dunia*" effectiveness in educating young people, particularly in Surabaya, about the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition.

## 5. Conclusions

This study explores the intersection of cultural values and fantasy narratives, employing the Structural Affect Theory of Stories (SATS) and Visual Picture of Stories (VPS) frameworks, validated in narrative construction studies, to integrate cultural elements into fictional storytelling. Using the Ethnic Food Identity (EFI) framework, the study identifies hope, tradition, and adaptability as central philosophical values embodied in *Lontong Cap Go Meh*. These values are effectively structured through the SATS framework in the novel "*Warisan Dua Dunia*", evoking emotional responses and enhancing reader engagement and cultural appreciation.

The findings highlight cultural practices as a medium for expressing identity and heritage, translating these into narratives that resonate with both local and diasporic audiences. This aligns with the novel's role as a vehicle for cultural expression and identity reinforcement among Indonesian youth. Post-test results further validate the novel's effectiveness, showing an improved understanding of the *Lontong Cap Go Meh* tradition and its ability to bridge cultural gaps. By subverting the 'other world' trope and focusing on embodied cultural adaptation and rediscovery of tradition, *Warisan Dua Dunia* offers a meaningful narrative that reflects the cultural heritage and identity of Indonesian youth.

In conclusion, the study's findings are supported by the theoretical frameworks and methodologies reviewed in the literature. The SATS and VPS frameworks enable the novel to effectively integrate cultural values into a compelling narrative, fostering cultural understanding and appreciation among its target audience.

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