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Types and Meanings of Folk Songs in the Hadrat *Tapur* Tradition in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahatu District, Central Maluku Regency

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the types and meanings of folk songs in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahatu District, Central Maluku Regency. The Hadrat *Tapur* tradition is an oral tradition performed during the Eid al-Fitr celebration, accompanied by *rebana* drumming and songs performed in Arabic and the Hitu language in the Tengah-Tengah dialect. Folklore theory was employed to examine the types of folk songs, while semantic theory was used to analyze their meanings. This study employed a qualitative approach focusing on the types and meanings of folk songs in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition. Data were collected through observation, interviews, note-taking, audio recording, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (verification). The findings indicate that the folk songs comprise two types: functional folk songs and lyrical folk songs. The functional type is represented by the *Ucapan Salam* (Greeting) song, whereas the lyrical type includes songs of praise to God, surrender to God, and supplication for guidance to do good deeds.

Keywords: *Folk Song; Hadrat Tapur Tradition; Types and Meaning*



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INTRODUCTION

Each ethnic group in Indonesia has its own distinctive folk songs (Khairah et al. 2023), which reflect the unique characteristics and cultural identity of the community (Simamora & Purba, 2024). These variations demonstrate that each ethnic group across the Indonesian archipelago possesses a diverse history and cultural identity shaped by the circumstances and contexts in which traditions and cultures emerge (Danandjaja, 2007). One such tradition is the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency. Tengah-Tengah Village was selected as the research site because its community continues to preserve the Hadrat *Tapur* oral tradition.

The Hadrat *Tapur* tradition is a cultural practice found in Maluku, particularly in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency. The tradition is performed to commemorate Eid al-Fitr. Hadrat is a religious tradition practiced in various regions, although its form and implementation differ from one locality to another. In the context of Tengah-Tengah, the *Tapur* tradition constitutes an intergenerational cultural practice that remains actively observed within the community. Recent research has also shown that *Tapur* is not only associated with religious rituals but also plays a role in maintaining social cohesion, solidarity, and harmony within the indigenous community (Malang & Tuharea, 2026). *Tapur* is the traditional term used by the people of Tengah-Tengah Village for a tray (*dulang*). The tradition is exclusively performed by males, ranging from children to adults. The Hadrat *Tapur* tradition is held on the first day of Eid al-Fitr, which in 2025 fell on March 31.

The Hadrat *Tapur* tradition is also similar to the *Antar Dulang* tradition practiced in Telaga Village, Piru, West Seram Regency, which is held on the seventh day of Eid al-Fitr. In the *Antar Dulang* tradition, the *dulang* was originally made in the form of a *nyiru* (a traditional woven tray). However, in response to social developments and changing times, the *dulang* has evolved into various forms, including mosques, traditional houses, and other shapes. In the community of Tengah-Tengah Village, *Tapur* is approximately 3–6 cm in length, and its design has been determined by the ancestors. It is made from sago leaf stalks and bamboo. The use of these two materials is based on functional considerations, particularly to facilitate the lifting and transportation of the *Tapur*.

The songs performed in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition are sung collectively in Arabic and the Hitu language in the Tengah-Tengah dialect (Source: Balai Bahasa Provinsi Maluku), accompanied by *rebana* drumming. The ancestors composed the lyrics of the Hadrat *Tapur* songs with the intention of preserving both the local language and Arabic among younger generations and the wider community. This characteristic reflects the nature of oral traditions, which are transmitted through performance and repeated practice from one generation to the next (Danandjaja, 2007). This study focuses on the types and meanings of songs in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition because no previous study specifically addressing these two aspects of the tradition has been identified. This focus is important because folk songs do not merely function as entertainment (Muhsyanur et al. 2024); they also serve as a medium for transmitting values, identity, and cultural knowledge within a community (Latuconsina, 2023).

Previous research on folk songs in Central Maluku was conducted by Latuconsina (2017), who examined the meaning of folksongs in the *Ma'arolo Lani Mala'apa* tradition in Pulauw, and by Latuconsina (2023), who investigated the functions of folk songs within the same tradition. Meanwhile, Malang and Tuharea (2026) examined the *Tapur* Eid al-Fitr tradition from the perspective of local wisdom and social harmony. These studies demonstrate that Maluku traditions and folk songs contain significant meanings, functions, and socio-cultural values. However, research specifically identifying the types of folk songs while simultaneously analyzing the meanings of song lyrics in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition in Tengah-Tengah Village remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to address this research gap by focusing on the classification of folk song types and the interpretation of the lyrics performed during the Hadrat *Tapur* procession.

There are nine songs used in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition; however, the researchers were able to obtain only four of them. The remaining songs could not be freely shared because they are performed in *bahasa tanah* (the Hitu language in the Tengah-Tengah dialect), and the customary elders who traditionally performed these songs are no longer living. Based on the four songs obtained, two types of folk songs were identified. The folk songs in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition have distinctive characteristics associated with the *Tapur* culture and performance. They generally employ repeated stanzas, in which a leader (*khalifah*) sings a passage and the congregation or group responds to it. In addition, the use of language in Hadrat *Tapur* songs demonstrates a combination of Arabic and the local language. Arabic is generally used for praise, prayers, and *shalawat*, whereas the local language is used to convey messages and advice to the community. The simple lyrics and melodies that follow the rhythm of the *rebana* make these songs easy to memorize and transmit orally from one generation to another. These characteristics indicate that many aspects of the tradition remain unexplored, suggesting that this study can make a valuable contribution to expanding understanding of the subject. The researchers also expect the study to provide new and relevant insights for

broader scholarship. This study aims to identify and describe the types of folk songs and analyze the meanings contained in the folk songs performed in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency. Accordingly, the research question is: What are the types and meanings of folk songs in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency?

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive research design (Sugiyono, 2022). A qualitative approach was chosen because the study seeks to understand cultural phenomena through linguistic data and utterances that occur within the natural context of the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition. The research data were not intended for quantitative measurement but rather for describing the forms, contexts, and meanings of folk songs as found in the field. In line with Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research is used to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena through data in the form of words, utterances, and documents, while Moleong (2021) emphasizes that qualitative research produces descriptive data obtained from oral and written sources. The research data consisted of words, phrases, sentences, and stanzas contained in the folk songs performed in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition, along with contextual information related to the implementation of the tradition. The data sources were obtained through observations and interviews conducted in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency, as well as through note-taking, audio recording, and documentation during the research process. Based on the field findings, the tradition involves nine songs; however, this study obtained only four songs that could be analyzed, namely the *Ucapan Salam* (Greeting) song, *Pujian kepada Tuhan* (Praise to God), *Penyerahan Diri* (Surrender), and *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* (Supplication for Good Deeds). The limited acquisition of data was related to the fact that certain songs could not be disclosed freely and that only a limited number of customary elders still possessed knowledge of their lyrics.

Data were collected through five techniques: observation, interviews, note-taking, audio recording, and documentation. Observation was used to directly examine the implementation of the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition, including the role of songs within the sequence of activities, the performers, the congregation, the use of *rebana*, and the contexts in which each song was performed. Interviews were conducted to obtain information concerning the lyrics, performance, functions, and meanings of the songs from individuals knowledgeable about the tradition. Note-taking was used to record oral data and important information obtained during observations and interviews. Audio recording was employed to preserve the integrity of the songs and utterances, while documentation was used to supplement the data with photographs and documents related to the tradition. The use of multiple techniques was intended to enable cross-checking of the data and to ensure that the findings did not rely solely on a single source or form of data. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument and directly conducts observations, interviews, note-taking, and data interpretation. To support these activities, supplementary instruments were used, including observation sheets, note-taking materials, recording devices, and documentation equipment. The observation sheets focused on aspects of the traditional performance and the contexts in which the songs were used, while field notes were used to record important information that could not be fully captured in the recordings. The use of recording and documentation equipment also enabled the researcher to recheck the data prior to analysis.

Data validity was established through technique/method triangulation by comparing information obtained through observation, interviews, note-taking, recording, and documentation. The lyrics obtained through one technique were cross-checked against data obtained through other techniques to assess their consistency and correspondence. This step is important in qualitative research because the findings must be accountable on the basis of sufficient and consistent data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Accordingly, the researcher did not immediately determine the meaning of a song based on a single source of information but reexamined the data by considering the context in which the tradition was performed. Data analysis was conducted systematically through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification, as proposed by Miles et al. (2014). During the reduction stage, data obtained from observations, interviews, note-taking, recordings, and documentation were selected and focused on information relevant to the types and meanings of folk songs. The data were then presented by grouping the lyrics according to the four songs obtained and relating them to their contexts of use within the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition. The subsequent stage involved drawing and verifying conclusions by interpreting the data to determine the types of songs based on folkloric classification and to identify the meanings embedded in the lyrics within the social and religious contexts of the tradition. The analysis was conducted iteratively by comparing the interpretations with the field data to ensure that the conclusions remained consistent with the research findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Theoretically, the classification of folk songs in this study follows Brunvand's categorization, which distinguishes folk songs into functional songs, lyrical folksongs, and narrative folksongs (Brunvand, 2022). For the analysis of meaning, this study adopts a semantic perspective, namely the study of meaning as expressed through linguistic expressions. Yule (2019) states, semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences". Accordingly, the analysis of meaning in this study focuses on the semantic relationships constructed through words, phrases, and sentences in the song lyrics, which are then interpreted within the cultural context of the community that preserves the tradition (Simatupang & Setyawati, 2023).

Based on the research findings, four folk songs were identified as being used in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition: (1) *Nyanyian Ucapan Salam* (Greeting) song, (2) *Nyanyian Pujian kepada Tuhan* (Praise to God) song, (3) *Nyanyian Penyerahan Diri* (Surrender) song, and (4) *Nyanyian Permohonan Berbuat Kebajikan* (Supplication for Good Deeds) song. The study also identified 13 stages in the implementation of the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition. First, the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition is performed on the first day of Eid al-Fitr. The participants gather in front of the mosque before the Zuhr or Asr prayer, depending on the number of *Tapur* trays available. Second, participation in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition is restricted to males, ranging from children to adults. Third, the Hadrat group forms an orderly procession. Fourth, the group consists of approximately 50 participants and 13 *rebana* players. Fifth, each line consists of four participants. Sixth, after the Zuhr or Asr prayer, the Hadrat group proceeds to the designated *Tapur* collection points. There are generally two routes for collecting the *Tapur* trays, namely Hukehare Hamlet and Tantui Hamlet, which alternate from year to year; in the year of the study, the first route was Hukehare Hamlet. Seventh, the first song performed is the *Perlindungan dan Permohonan Rahmat* (Protection and Supplication for Mercy) song. The *khalifah* sings the opening line, followed by the *rebana* accompaniment, after which the congregation repeats the line while performing movements that attract the attention of the surrounding community. Eighth, after the *Perlindungan dan Permohonan Rahmat* song concludes, the congregation proceeds to the *Tapur* placement site while accompanied by the *Pujian kepada Tuhan* (Praise to God) song. After the *khalifah* completes the verse, the *rebana* is played and the congregation stops to sing together. Ninth, upon reaching the *Tapur* placement site, the first *Tapur* is carried by elders, young people, and women who follow behind the Hadrat group. Tenth, the procession continues to another location, accompanied by the *Seruan Jiwa di Dunia Fana* (Call of the Soul in the Mortal World) song. After the song concludes, the congregation continues walking toward the second *Tapur* point, accompanied by the *Permohonan Berbuat Kebajikan* (Supplication for Good Deeds) song. The second *Tapur* is carried jointly by elders and younger people. Eleventh, if there are only two *Tapur* trays in Hukehare Hamlet, the group turns back toward Tantui Hamlet, accompanied by the *Doa Jalan Terang* (Prayer for the Path of Light) song, followed by the *Penyerahan Diri* (Surrender) song, and then the *Kasih Sayang Sang Maulana* (The Love of the Maulana) and *Kemuliaan Para Nabi dan Sultan* (The Glory of the Prophets and Sultans) songs. These songs are repeatedly performed until the procession returns from Tantui Hamlet. Twelfth, upon returning to the front of the mosque, the *khalifah* performs the *Kasih Sayang Sang Maulana* song, followed by the *Ucapan Salam* song. The congregation then disperses to allow those carrying the *Tapur* trays to enter the mosque and place them in the mosque courtyard. The *Ucapan Salam* song is performed twice to signify the completion of the Hadrat *Tapur* procession. Thirteenth, after the Isha prayer, the event continues with a Qur'an recitation completion ceremony (*khatam al-Qur'an*), after which the *Tapur* trays are distributed to local community members and to relatives from Hatusua, Abubu, and Hutumuri residing in Ambon.

Based on the research findings, the researchers analyzed all songs used in Hadrat *Tapur* tradition in Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency, applying folklore theory to examine the types of folk songs and semantic theory to examine their meanings. *Ucapan Salam* song is classified as a functional folk song. It belongs to this category because it serves a social function, namely welcoming or conveying greetings during a particular event or social situation. According to Brunvand's (2022) classification, functional folk songs are closely associated with specific activities in human life, such that the functions of their lyrics and melodies reinforce one another.

Song of Greeting

Nyanyian Ucapan Salam song is classified as a functional folk song. It belongs to this category because it serves a social function, namely to welcome others and convey greetings in particular events or social situations. Functional folk songs are characterized by lyrics and melodies that play an important role in human life and are closely associated with specific social activities.

The functional nature of the *Ucapan Salam* song can be seen in the lyrics, "*Assalamu'alaikum*" (May peace be upon you) and "*Wa'alaikumusalam*" (And may peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you). These lyrics demonstrate that greetings are customarily conveyed at the beginning of social interactions or

activities. Offering a greeting expresses wishes for peace and conveys Allah's mercy and love toward others, while responding to the greeting represents a reciprocal expression of goodwill and affection. Thus, the song is closely connected to everyday social practices, with greetings serving as an important element of interpersonal interaction. The classification of this song as a religious folk song and the interpretation of its meaning take into account the contextual use of the lyrics within the tradition, consistent with a folkloric analytical perspective that situates textual expressions within the cultural context of the community that preserves them (Danandjaja, 2007).

Song of Praise to God

This song is classified as a spiritual and religious folk song (Ivana, 2024) because its lyrics portray angels who protect human beings from all directions. This can be seen in the lyrics, "*Ya Hannan anu Ya Manna*" (The Most Compassionate and the Most Giving; the *angel guarding the front door*), which depicts an angel protecting people from the front. Similarly, the reference to an angel guarding the back suggests that any evil approaching from behind will be prevented from reaching them. The same meaning is reflected in the lyrics, "*Ya Daiya anu Ya Burhan*" (The Most Powerful and the Most Evident; the *angel guarding the left side*), which conveys the belief that human beings are protected from harm approaching from the left. Furthermore, the lyrics, "*Ya Sultan anu Ya Abdurahman*" (The Most Sovereign and the Most Merciful; the *angel guarding the right side*), emphasize protection from the right. Overall, the song conveys the belief that human beings are protected from evil and misfortune by angels positioned in all directions. The song is therefore performed as an expression of gratitude and praise to God for His protection and blessings. This interpretation is situated within the cultural and religious context in which the song is performed as part of the local community's traditional practice (Danandjaja, 2007; Malang & Tuharea, 2026).

Song of Surrender

Nyanyian Penyerahan Diri (Surrender) song is classified as a spiritual and religious folk song because it expresses the relationship between human beings and God, particularly the hope of attaining a blessed place in heaven. This is reflected in the lyrics, "*Asola, Allah humma asola*" (O God, I surrender myself in prayer). This line emphasizes the idea that human beings should willingly devote themselves to prayer as an act of submission to God, with the hope of receiving a righteous reward in the hereafter. This meaning is further reinforced by the lyric, "*Allah ba'ainaja jannah almaka*" (Grant us a good place in Your heaven), which expresses the human aspiration to attain the best possible place in the afterlife through sincere devotion and worship. This interpretation is consistent with Latuconsina (2023), who found that folk songs in Maluku Central traditions can convey educational functions, social norms, solidarity, and cultural values.

Song of Requests to Do Good

This song is classified as a folk song that conveys advice to engage in virtuous conduct because its lyrics express a supplication for individuals to emulate the character of the Prophet Muhammad. This is reflected in the lyric, "*Allah igfir Junnu lana*" (O Allah, forgive our sins). This line emphasizes that when individuals commit mistakes or wrongdoing, they should return to God and pray for forgiveness, as God is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful. God is also believed to grant guidance so that people may engage in good deeds and emulate the character of the Prophet Muhammad, as expressed in the lyrics, "*Najina Mingkaya Da'i*" (Grant us goodness) and "*Allah sifat Nabi Muhammad allah*" (May our conduct and character be like that of the Prophet Muhammad).

First, *Ucapan Salam* song contains tropological meaning, namely meaning that conveys moral teachings. Through this song, members of the community express prayers and hopes for others to attain goodness and safety together. This can be seen in the opening line, "*Assalamu'alaikum*" (May peace be upon you). As members of a community, people are encouraged to pray for one another's safety. The *Ucapan Salam* song therefore conveys messages of peace, prayers for goodness, and positive hopes to its listeners. It also teaches politeness in communication by emphasizing that interpersonal interactions should begin with respectful and courteous attitudes. In addition, the greeting contains a prayer for the safety of others, reflecting a sense of brotherhood and mutual concern. By offering greetings, individuals express goodwill and a desire to maintain harmonious social relationships. The interpretation of this song reinforces the view that folk song lyrics can serve as a medium for transmitting moral and religious values within collective life (Latuconsina, 2017; Danandjaja, 2007).

Second, *Pujian kepada Tuhan* song contains tropological meaning, characterized by moral teachings. The song describes angels who protect human beings from evil approaching from the front, back, left, and right. The angels are portrayed as protecting believers from hardship and providing them with the best possible protection. The moral message conveyed by this song is that, regardless of the wrongdoings committed by human beings, God continues to provide protection and guidance.

Third, *Penyerahan Diri* song contains tropological meaning based on the levels of meaning employed in this study. It expresses hope and supplication directed toward a higher power. Through the song, human beings surrender themselves to God and pray for a favorable reward in the afterlife, as well as for divine grace and glory. This is reflected in the third line, “*Aliza, Allah lizatu liza Allah*” (May we attain glory from You). As religious believers, human beings are encouraged to surrender themselves to God in the hope of receiving a favorable reward for their good deeds.

Fourth, *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* song contains allegorical meaning, namely meaning expressed through figurative representation. Figurative meaning in folk songs may convey moral messages and advice concerning ethical conduct. The meaning of this song is a supplication for human beings to emulate the character and conduct of the Prophet Muhammad, engage in good deeds, follow his teachings, and avoid his prohibitions so that they may attain a favorable place in the hereafter. This is reflected in the third, fourth, and fifth stanzas: “*Najina Mingkaya Da’i, Allah sifat Nabi Muhammad Allah, Adehe lana fizana*” (Grant us goodness; may our character be like that of the Prophet Muhammad; and admit us into Your paradise). Through these teachings, human beings are encouraged to follow the Prophet Muhammad’s example and refrain from actions that violate his teachings.

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition constitutes a living oral folklore tradition that continues to be preserved by the community of Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency. The study identified four folk songs used in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition: (1) *Ucapan Salam* song, (2) *Pujian kepada Tuhan* song, (3) *Penyerahan Diri* song, and (4) *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* song. Based on Brunvand’s (2022) framework, these songs are classified into two types. First, functional songs, represented by the *Ucapan Salam* song, which is used to convey greetings and prayers for safety. Second, lyrical folksongs, comprising the *Pujian kepada Tuhan*, *Penyerahan Diri*, and *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* songs, which convey religious expressions and moral messages. In terms of meaning, the study identified two dominant categories: tropological meaning, found in the *Ucapan Salam*, *Pujian kepada Tuhan*, and *Penyerahan Diri* songs, which convey moral messages concerning goodness, religious devotion, and submission to God; and allegorical meaning, found in the *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* song, which encourages people to emulate the character of the Prophet Muhammad and seek divine guidance to live virtuously.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion presented, it can be concluded that the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition constitutes a living oral folklore tradition that continues to be preserved by the community of Tengah-Tengah Village, Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency. The study identified four folk songs used in the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition: (1) *Ucapan Salam* song, (2) *Pujian kepada Tuhan* song, (3) *Penyerahan Diri* song, and (4) *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* song. Based on Brunvand’s theory, these songs are classified into two types of folk songs. First, functional folk songs, represented by the *Ucapan Salam* song, which is used to convey greetings and prayers for safety. Second, lyrical folksongs, comprising *Pujian kepada Tuhan*, *Penyerahan Diri*, and *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* songs, which convey religious expressions and moral messages. In terms of meaning, the study identified two main categories based on the levels of meaning: first, tropological meaning (moral teaching), found in the *Ucapan Salam*, *Pujian kepada Tuhan*, and *Penyerahan Diri* songs, which convey moral messages concerning goodness, devotion to God, and submission to God; and second, allegorical meaning (figurative meaning), found in the *Permohonan Berbuat Kebaikan* song, which encourages people to emulate the character of the Prophet Muhammad and seek divine guidance to consistently engage in virtuous conduct. Based on these conclusions, several recommendations are proposed. First, researchers should continue to document, preserve, and study the songs of the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition so that they are not lost over time. Second, the community, particularly the people of Central Maluku and especially those in Tengah-Tengah Village, should learn more about the songs of the Hadrat *Tapur* tradition in order to understand the history and life narratives transmitted orally through folk songs. Community members are also encouraged to perform these folk songs collectively to preserve, sustain, and develop them so that they remain alive and can be inherited by future generations. Third, future researchers may use the findings of this study as a reference for further research on folk songs in Tengah-Tengah Village and develop the findings into a book that can be studied by younger generations. Fourth, Indonesian language teachers, local-content teachers, and arts and culture teachers are encouraged to identify relevant aspects of this research for use as learning resources related to folk songs, culture, and local traditions in Salahutu District, particularly in Tengah-Tengah Village.

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