# GASTRONOMY IN FOLK SONGS AS A SOCIAL SYMBOL OF MALAY COMMUNITY LIFE

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Malay community is well-known for the numerous rhythms and songs passed down from generation to generation. This can be seen through the lens of Rahmah Bujang (1999), who defines a folk song as a Malay community song that originates from a specific area in the Malay world. The text of folk songs is loaded with elements of advice, reprimands, and also aspects of food culture found in the Malay community, as a result of the study of several types of folk songs that have been studied. This cultural element has long covered culture in the Malay community's daily life and is still practiced today. This can highlight the Malay community's identity at the same time. Furthermore, this study aims to identify and analyze gastronomy in folk songs. Textual and thematic analysis is also used to strengthen this study. The reader's attempt to see the relationship between song lyrics, the author and the reader through social, political, economic, linguistic, and artistic aspects as a result of reflection on the reading of a literary text is referred to as the theory. This also examines the factors that influence individual development and their role in shaping community behavior.

**Keywords:** Community, Folk Songs, Gastronomy, Malay, Social Life.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

The culture of a country is a symbol of its identity. Malaysia's diverse society is reflected in our traditional cultural customs. On the other hand, modern civilization has shunned cultural legacy and shown little interest in safeguarding its priceless possessions, particularly literary masterpieces. Folk music creation is just one of several methods used to rekindle interest in Malay culture. This is because cultural elements were included in folk song lyrics during the creation process. Furthermore, it can more effectively transmit the content while giving listeners a clearer picture of the Malay community's culture, including etiquette, clothing, socializing, food, and daily activities. The Malay language. Finally, gastronomy is a field of study concerned with food.

A nation's culture serves as a symbol of its identity. The diversity of our society in Malaysia is reflected in our traditional cultural practices. However, modern society has shunned cultural heritage and has shown no enthusiasm for protecting its priceless possessions, particularly literary works. The creation of folk songs is just one of many methods used to rekindle interest in Malay culture. This is due to the inclusion of cultural elements in folk song lyrics during production.

Additionally, it can more effectively convey the message while providing listeners with a clearer picture of the Malay community's culture, including manners, dress, socializing, food, and daily activities. The Malay community is well known for its extensive repertoire of rhythmic art and nostalgic songs. The folk songs of the Malay community are, in this sense, songs or songs that originate from a specific area of Malay nature or even from a small island in the archipelago's corner. Folk songs typically focus more on describing society, the natural world, creatures, and plants, and the current situation intended to be related to a specific location or region. This folk song will typically be sung when the community is playing, intoxicating kids, and for entertainment for those who are sick of banging their bones after farming. Folk songs are more likely to be sung on festive occasions. However, the primary goal of this study is to determine whether a folk song's lyrics can incorporate the cultural significance of food.

Nowadays, many comforters, or lyricists, prefer to write lyrics that revolve around romance and continue to give meaning to the song without using figurative language that describes something unique to the culture. Aspects revealed in this study have the potential to serve as a reference and a starting point for unearthing lost heritage treasures. It will also be discussed in the Malay community about the true definition of gastronomy and the folk song itself. Researchers are interested in studying because they want to reacquaint themselves with lost treasures. Folk songs that were influential in the past can still play a role in the present, but researchers must think of new methods or approaches to revive and re-promote these folk songs to the community.

Finally, gastronomy is defined as a field of study concerned with food. The unique cooking methods and nutrition make the country the most appealing to food lovers. Gastronomy derives from the Greek words gastro, which means stomach, and nomos, which means science. So gastronomy is the science of the stomach or food and drink. According to Soejoeti Tarwotjo (1998), gastronomy is the art of processing food that begins with choosing food and preparing the food to be cooked, including peeling, washing, cutting, and shaping, and then continues with cooking the food that has been prepared, using various cooking techniques, as well as how to present food or dishes to make them look more appealing to eat.

#### **B. METHOD**

Qualitative research using text, internet, library, and theory methods. This approach is used in a study to ensure that research can be done methodically and successfully. Using Malaysian folk songs, the researcher conducted a text analysis. The researcher used ten folk songs to examine the folk song culture. The researcher will explore the ten folk songs by reading the song text and analyzing the lyrics to collect research data. Based on the reading, the researcher will identify and analyze the cultural elements in the folk songs that the authors of the pieces attempt to highlight.

To produce this study, the researcher used Gastronomy Theory, a theory put into practice. The reader's attempt to understand the relationship between the text, the author, and the reader concerning social, political, economic, language, religion, and the arts as a result of reflection on the reading of a literary text is what is meant by the theory of gastronomy in this context. Look at the elements that pertain to how people develop as people and how they play a part in how society develops in the same context. Gastronomic theory delves into the text's culture and conducts a thorough, analytical analysis to demonstrate how food is conceptualized and how it serves its

### C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

purpose.

## Food and Its Function

Food and roles are two forms of entertainment; folk songs, on the other hand, provide a space in pronunciation with very effective social and psychological functions (Dinas Pariwisata, 2015). The folk song *Tehang Tehu* depicts Malays' wisdom in feeding animals such as monkeys, and the implied meaning of this song is about the advice that the singer wishes to convey to the community, as follows:

Pam-param pisang
Pisang masak layu
Dimana kayu bongkok
Disitu kera meniti
Exemplification 1: Tebang Tebu lyrics

A banana is a fruit that contains numerous nutrients that can aid in weight loss. According to the lyrics of Roslan Madun's folk song Tebang Tebu, the Malays enjoy fermenting bananas until they ripen or go wrong. Although it is not explicitly stated in the song's lyrics, you can discover the usefulness of bananas and monkeys by reading and appreciating the song's meaning. As a result, the implied meaning in the highlighted banana describes Malay philosophy. According to Juliana Nopiah (2018), bananas have an implied sense that gives an interpretation to "profit" and is associated with "Happiness" in the folk song. Bananas were once regarded as a symbol of happiness in Malay communication, particularly in folk songs.

Food and the role of bananas in the lyrics of the song Tebang Tebu It is well known that in Juliana Nopiah's (2018) study, it is stated that bananas play a role as a cold food for humans. This explains that bananas can help humans stimulate a sense of health and are suitable for the body while making a person feel happy and fun. According to Juliana Nopiah (2018), bananas represent human nature, which relates to the wisdom of the Malay community through the knowledge and experience gained from the lyrics of the folk song. Bananas are also a rich source of nutrition and vitamins, which are well-known in the Malay community. According to Zabedah (2016), bananas

are the most preferred food by people from all walks of life because they are high in vitamins. Furthermore, according to Faszly (2017), bananas can influence feelings and emotions and provide a sense of calm to those who consume them. In conclusion, it can be concluded that the ancient society was knowledgeable and sensitive in producing song lyrics capable of providing the closest guidance and example to the surrounding community.

## Recipes and Food

In the realm of cuisine, the Malay world has unique expertise and characteristics (Khailila Ilia Ismail & Mohd Faisal Muda, 2016). They also believe that by associating elements of the recipe with just two lines of Lagu Rakyat lyrics, the Malays demonstrate their ingenuity through Folk Song, which is now very limited in space. The primary characteristic of Malay cuisine is the extensive use of spices and coconut milk to create fatty and dense dishes. The lyrics of Roslan Madun's song Lemak Manis illustrate this point.

Lemak manis (ala amboi-amboi) santan kelapa (ala amboi-amboi) ku pandanglah manis (ala amboi-amboi) anak siapa Exemplification 2: *Lagu Lemak Manis* lyric's

The implied meaning to be communicated is that the dish's recipe claimed to be able to whet the community's appetite. Still, the Malay community is typically associated with cooking that uses fat from coconut milk in various side dishes and pastries. This is so that the food produced can be flavorful thanks to the coconut milk's fat content. However, the fat in coconut milk has a high-calorie range and should not be consumed regularly. The intention behind the creation of this song is to communicate the meaning of the lyrics of the folk song mentioned above regarding the elegance and sweetness of a girl's face, which is pleasing to the eye with polite behavior character and represents the character of virgins in ancient times who were shy and respected both parents.

Additionally, it is explained in this study that how food is consumed varies depending on the technique and manner in which a particular type of side dish or dish is produced. Every recipe in this book is, in actuality, exclusive to this nation compared to other countries. Therefore, it is believed that more research is required to determine the distinctive qualities of food, the methods used in food preparation, and the creation of a food recipe for each nation and how it spreads to alter the techniques and methods of food production for today's generation (Wan Mohamed Radzi 2009). Therefore, the relationship between culture and food will be examined to understand better Malaysian society, which comprises the three primary races of Malay, Chinese, and Indian in Peninsular Malaysia. The approach that will be applied is to use primary and secondary sources that discuss the history and tradition of food in the Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities. In light of that, it is appropriate to consider that the cooking traits and recipes created are a legacy of

their ancestors' practices regarding food traditions (Wan Mohamed Radzi, 2009).

## Preparation And Food.

Food can be viewed as a representation of national identity in Malaysia. Because food can be seen as a symbol of a society's cultural cohesion, this is said (Wan Mohamed Razi, 2009). Bell and Valentine (1997) assert that some foods and preparation methods indicate a country's identity and that it would also be incomplete if we did not consider Western scholars' perspectives. The traditional song "Tepung Kita" contains information about food and preparation.

Nak wat tepung kita masuk kakah tak banyak karo Nisey atau gula tepung berah capur gan telur Walaupun pat benda dengan masak banyaknya rasa Itu satu tanda kepandaian bangsa kita Exemplification 3: *Tepung kita lyrics* 

This dish is a Kelantan State food legacy and a popular dish in the state. This folk song describes foods that have been passed down through generations. The current generation must preserve and reintroduce this food to the general public. In addition, food and preparation are described in the second line of the lyrics, which includes the flour cake's four primary ingredients. Consequently, the community gains knowledge through the song's lyrics, emphasizing the use of southern dialect. Each lyricist writes folk song lyrics to impart wisdom and leave a positive social mark. Melson (1993) explains that young women and homemakers with a high level of education and affluence have the most knowledge.

## Food Preparation.

According to Mohd Fadzallah Zaini (2014), the preparation of a traditional Malay dish is predicated on preserving its flavor, quality, and method of preparation. He added that the Malay community, especially when entertaining guests, places great importance on the nutritional considerations that must be met so that the guests can enjoy the food. In the interim, the preparation of this traditional dish will vary according to the ingredients utilized. In the past, ancestors emphasized the importance of research when preparing traditional foods; if not prepared according to every rule or sequence, the food could be imperfect. Mohd Fadzallah zaini (2014) stated that some villagers still practice the tradition of preparing traditional food, and the lyricist of the song took this opportunity to share it with the community, especially the younger generation, so that they can practice and preserve the knowledge that has been passed down to the Malay community. Che Wan Jasimah (2009) states that Chinese cuisine includes color, aroma, and seasoning considerations when preparing food. It is an essential aspect of preparing every type of cuisine, apart from the cooking technique. He said that the dish served as one of the main courses will have three to five colors, selected from the ingredients such as light green, dark green, red,

yellow, white, black, etc.

A person who embodies the culture of politeness are characterized by their good manners and gentle nature. According to the Fourth Edition of the Hall Dictionary (2010: 1517), politeness describes proper behavior. Through the lyrics of Roslan Madun's song Lemak Manis, a comparison is made between a meek and well-mannered girl and coconut milk. The author compares the flavor of Lemak to the personality of Malay women from the past.

Lemak manis (ala amboi-amboi) santan kelapa (ala amboi-amboi) ku pandanglah manis (ala amboi-amboi) anak siapa Exemplification 4: Lagu Lemak Manis lyric's

The lyrics reveal that the lyricist purposefully compared food to human behavior and nature. Clearly, the verse of the lyrics states that when a man looks at a woman, it is as sweet as the sweet fat found in coconut milk. It can be concluded that the culture of the Malay community in the past, as it pertains to delivering songs, is fascinating when they produce lyrics that are accessible and simple to comprehend by the community. Consequently, the perspective that best fits this quotation is a cultural perspective. This is evident when the culture of the Malay community plays a crucial role in the creation of song lyrics by giving similes to the food of the Malay and Asian communities. Consequently, Wan Jasimah believes there is a relationship between food and culture. Regarding traditional food culture, it is generally accepted that each race's traditional foods are still significant and are prepared for specific ceremonies. In the lead-up to Hari Raya, for instance, lemang, ketupat, and rendang will be served to the Malay community, kuih bakul, Karachi, kuih Bakar, and lemon fruit will be served to the Chinese community, and tose, curry and murukku will be served to the Hindu community. Don't miss a feast when certain events occur, such as births, marriages, and deaths. Banquets are also held when there is an event such as a house move, achieving a certain level of success, or as a token of appreciation. In Malaysia, people of all races and nationalities participate in event-based celebrations. The connection between cultural aspects and food is crystal clear, and it corresponds to the lyrics of the chosen folk songs.

Nasi kuning, nasi kuning gulai la ayam.

Mana lah Ayam
Similar Ayam,
Sungguhkah ayam? Singgahlah makan, batu melintang....
Ala canggung ala la mak cik cang canggung, canggung, canggung la la...

Exemplification 5: Ala Canggung lyric's

The culture of politeness reflects the individual and the community that resides within a particular social group. In this section, the researcher examines the lyrics of Ala Canggu, dance, and song from the Perlis community. According to Zambree Ku Khamis and Aniza Abdullah

(1989), awkward dances are typically performed at weddings, rice harvests, and statewide celebrations. Ala Canggung singing and dancing are viral among the people of Perlis, Kedah, and the surrounding northern regions. In the meantime, according to his perspective, this ala Canggu was the foundation of his fame and a source of revenue for the Malay community in the past.

Based on the lyrics of the Ala Canggung song, this clearly describes the personality of a girl who dances the Ala Canggung dance with proper etiquette. In this regard, the emphasis on food is also illustrated by the phrase "Nasi Kuning, nasi kuning gulai la ayam." A few people in the past, particularly the nobles in the Palace, enjoyed eating yellow rice, now known as oil rice. This hue is widely associated with the royal family. As a result, it is unsurprising that some of their food contains yellow ingredients, as yellow is also a symbol of royalty. Consequently, the performance art component of food is readily apparent in the food itself. This is because some food presented beautifully will affect a person's vision regarding arousing their appetite and then enjoying the food (ZA Yahya, 2011). In this context, yellow rice is viewed as both a food and a means of cultural transmission. Folk songs provide a space in the field of pronunciation with highly effective social and psychological functions, according to Dinas Pariwisata's (2015) research.

Rendang is a dish that the Malays consider a must-have on the festival day every time before it occurs. This demonstrates that the Malay community's identity is still present today. Gastronomy Theory, which uses the Cultural Aspect Approach, is the theory used in this text. Only the Malay community practices this food culture during the Hari Raya celebrations. Even though it takes some time to prepare, most Malay Muslims will make this dish a requirement because it is exciting when done cooperatively and cooperatively.

In the past, the Malay community also upheld the traditions and customs their parents had passed them. Food is also regarded as significant because it is a legacy that the ancestors left for their descendants. Food is served also edited from how it is prepared. It is unsurprising that some communities today, particularly mothers and grandmothers, continue to follow traditions and customs, the culture of food and cooking. This is demonstrated by an excerpt from Pak Ku Shadat's folk song Mai Chek Mai, published on January 2, 2008, by Syarikat Mutiara Records.

Kotlah rasanya penat jom pi ke Langkawi Langgah ayaq gamat minumlah ayaq tongkat ali Langgah ayaq gamat muka naik seri Exemplification 6: Mai Chek lyrics

On this page, you can read about the tradition of the Kedah community, which emphasizes the practice of Tongkat Ali's minimum air to make their attire more beautiful and hospitable. Most of the Kedah population adheres to religion and tradition; consequently, the peninggalan warisan Warisandown from one generation to the next is largely intact. Masyarakat Kedah possesses a unique budaya and language, according to pandangan (Huang, 2007), and deiksis usage can be observed thanks to a connection between the structural and linguistic facets of the language that illustrates the socio-budaya of the broader population. The present kajian may be improved by the continued use of the language, which is particularly important when describing a particular mesej using song lyrics and other Melayu prices. The traditional diet of the people of Kedah is very well-known, and they frequently use tetamu to travel to their home country.

In addition, the lyrics of the rakyat's fourth song, Lagu Rakyat Negeri Terengganu, also include references to traditional food practices. Kerabu Pucuk Paku, a piece by Mat Over released in 2015, is an excellent example of Lagu Rakyat that isn't often heard on corong-corong radio but is still relevant and well-liked in the Terengganu area. Penelitian is visible in the lyrics of the song Kerabu Pucuk Paku because the composer discusses food for the Terengganu population in a way that is both insightful and compelling. Generally speaking, Malaysia is well known for its kekayaan and variety of lauk-pauk foods in the country. According to the song's lyrics, the topic of the populace's lauk pauk in Pantai Timur is raised.

Kerabu pucuk paku sayur kacang
Panggang ikan puyu tumbuk sambal belacang
celur pucuk labu buat ulang
tanok nasik berah using
ikan kering anok tambang
Exemplification 7: Kerabu lyrics

Linguists claim that because the Terengganu community speaks a dialect and using food-related terms in songs is fascinating and closely related to the community's daily life, it is unique. In light of that, the music used in this study was selected because it is a Terengganu Community folk song and emphasizes the locally produced and well-known cuisine. You are already aware of how well-liked the food turned into kerabu is in the East Coast state. Kerabu is a significant theme in the song's lyrics, and it serves as their central pillar. It is still common practice in Malaysia to eat Kerabu Pug Paku, a traditional dish.

In the past, singers tended to make lyrics more personal by fusing elements of traditional cuisine with experiences from modern culture. The practice of cooking conventional foods like kerabu is still common in some places, particularly among East Coast residents, who now prepare it in various ways. In the song's lyrics, the uniqueness of food is equated with that of people and society. The study and preparation of food have a lot in common with gastronomy theory. Chinese philosophy holds that five elements should be considered when preparing food. These elements should also be considered when preparing food in terms of its form and cooking technique.

Cooking has become more popular due to the use of cloves, which also has a crucial role. To create a unique flavor, Karibu's spikes also come in a variety of flavors.

Suhaila Mohamed and Shaiful Bahri Md Razdi (2015) stated that a person's sarcasm, behavior, or feelings are defined as eating. The verb "eat" has a variety of simile-based meanings, including "to eat heart," "to eat inside," and others. A substance that can be consumed and utilized by the body to carry out its functions is what Phuah Kooi Ean (2006) defines as food or eating. The body uses nutrients when nutrients are consumed through food, and the eater receives energy. In the meantime, another viewpoint holds that food is any substance, solid or liquid, that can undergo oxidation and provide humans with heat energy for movement, work, and other functions like growth, tissue repair, and the regulation of processes related to growth and repair. Food aids in boosting the body's defense mechanisms and preventing infections and disease.

Makan sayur pucuk paku
Masak rebus ubi kayu
makan buah belimbing besi
goreng ikan selar papan
masak gulai ikan parang
cuci mulut lepas makan
kita kunyah jambu batu
Exemplification 7: Makan lyrics

The purpose of Jalil Hamid's song Lagu Rakyat Makan is to satirically address the Malaysian populace, endowed with a bounty of food but still engages in a majority of wasteful behaviors. He wrote folk songs intending to rebuke today's society for being unappreciative of the food it has been given to it and offering advice through satire. He is also happy that he can inform the public through music, and even earlier albums have lyrics that convey a message rather than being merely ornamental. According to Jalil Hamid's (2016) point of view, when creating a piece of art, one should consider how it will fit into the community. At the same time, the community must work together to inform the public about issues that could promote extraordinary literary advancement.

Most Malay folk songs have been created in the past and up to the present day to get listeners to appreciate the message contained in the songs' moral lessons, satire, and advice. A song's lyrics result from the writer's inspiration, thought process, or creative imagination. As a result, the creator will scrutinize each gesture and action of people in his immediate environment. Behavior is defined based on an individual's actions or gestures, or more generally, it can be connected to the diversity or complexity of the society itself. Song Bongai's lyrics provide evidence of research:

Cili api memang pedas Buat rendang sedap rasanya Abang berbudi tak hendak dibalas Kalau kau kenangkan apa salahnya. They are based on the lyrics of the traditional folk song "Bongani," sung by the people of Negeri Sembilan. The use of rhyme in the lyrics for a specific purpose, such as satire, humor, or the cultivation of love, is said to be what distinguishes Bongai as being unique. However, the poem's intent is not to make things worse; instead, the singer will include a brief note of regret if the song's lyrics offend anyone who hears them. While this was going on, studies were also done on the Bongai song's lyrics, which included both poetry and references to food in their composition. The artists who have created song lyrics throughout history have done so in such a beautiful and subtle way, using appropriate language in public speech. Furthermore, in Wan Faizah Wan Yusoff's (2016) opinion, betel nuts represent a fair, upright society. In addition, he said that the betel tree, which creeps and climbs without harming other plants, was a good example. Meanwhile, he believes that the Malay community's distinctive characteristics are explained by the fact that in the past, lime, areca nuts, and gambir were often consumed alongside real betel as a compliment. Sireh can be used in traditional medicine, rituals, and interactions with other beings, according to Malay beliefs. The Indian community thinks betel has such ritual components as a symbol of prosperity and freshness. The cultural aspects of food are what we focus on here.

This parable was once widely used by society because it accurately described the times. Betel nuts are used in food and magic, according to Rooney (1993), who believes that they play a symbolic role in both of these contexts. Abdul Hamid (2001) also agreed that this betel nut is seen to symbolize the status of the community in addition to representing its morality, aesthetic value, and literary status. As for the union of two souls between men and women, particularly in marriage, Khir (2013) claims that betel nut and betel nut describe this. When taken as a whole, sekapur sirih describes the Malay community's way of life, which is centered on social mores and traditions.

## **D. CONCLUSION**

In summary, eating is a type of patterned behavior correlated with culture, including food-related beliefs and taboos that emerge among a population. Food that has received cultural confirmation means that it will be connected to ideas, prohibitions, laws, technological advancements, etc., that grow and develop within a group of people, becoming a dietary custom that defines that group of people and sets it apart from other groups. In many social groups, using food as a symbol will have particular connotations, for instance, in the food categories used in celebrations, traditions, traditional wedding ceremonies, or other formal gatherings. Ethnic identity can also be expressed through food, which is distinguishable by the particular cuisines' distinctive flavors. It is possible to see and identify how food shapes an ethnic group's identity by examining its cuisine and specific traits.

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