

Representation of Longing in the *O Tano Batak* Song and the Song of *Kampuang Nan Jauh di Mato*: Comparative Literary Study

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Abstract

This study examines the representation of longing in the songs "O tano batak" and "Kampuang nan jauh di mato" as a form of collective emotional expression that represents the human relationship with the homeland. Both songs were chosen because they play a crucial role in building Batak and Minangkabau cultural identities, as well as show narratives of migration, nostalgia, and attachment to one's hometown. This study aims to describe the forms of longing that emerge in the lyrics of both songs, identify similarities and differences in thematic elements, language styles, and cultural symbols used, and explain how longing is positioned as a cultural identity in the context of diaspora communities. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a comparative literature approach. The research data consists of song lyrics that are analyzed through in-depth reading to identify themes, imagery, diction, and cultural symbols that convey the meaning of longing. The analysis is conducted by placing both songs within their underlying socio-cultural context, so that the meaning of longing is not only understood as an individual emotion, but also as a collective construct that reflects the diaspora experience. The results show that longing in both songs is constructed through depictions of nature, family memories, and the idealization of one's hometown as a spiritual space and identity. However, the song "O tano batak" emphasizes genealogical pride and ties to ancestral lands, while "Kampuang nan jauh di mato" emphasizes the personal sadness and emotional distance of migrants from their hometowns. This research is expected to enrich comparative literary studies based on folk songs as cultural texts.

Keywords: *longing, folk songs, comparative literature, cultural identity*

Introduction

Folk songs are a form of oral literary expression that not only serve as entertainment but also serve as a medium for conveying cultural values, social identity, and the emotional experiences of their communities. In literary studies, songs can be understood as texts containing symbols, imagery, and representations of social life constructed through poetic language. Teeuw explains that literary works always emerge from a close relationship between the text and its surrounding sociocultural context, so that the work's meaning cannot be separated from the cultural background of its community (Teeuw, 1984). Thus, folk songs can be examined as a part of literature that holds collective meaning and serves as a medium for expressing community experiences, including the experience of migration and longing for one's hometown.

Longing is a universal theme in literature, as it relates to the human experience of loss, distance, and separation from something meaningful. In the context of Indonesian

culture, longing for one's hometown often appears in oral and written works born from experiences of migration and diaspora. Ratna stated that literature not only reflects individual emotions but also represents the social experiences of specific community groups (Ratna, 2011). Longing in folk songs often serves as a collective expression for migrant communities experiencing geographical separation but maintaining a spiritual connection to their homeland. Therefore, the theme of longing in songs can be analyzed as a discourse of cultural identity that reflects the community's social experiences.

The phenomenon of migration (*merantau*) is a strong tradition among several ethnic groups in Indonesia, including the Batak and Minangkabau. These two ethnic groups are known for their high social mobility and long diaspora histories, making the experience of migration often a dominant background in their cultural works. Koentjaraningrat emphasized that migration in traditional Indonesian society is not only economic but also a socio-cultural strategy that shapes the community's perspective and identity (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). In the Batak context, the experience of migration has given rise to various cultural expressions emphasizing pride in their ancestral homeland, one of which is reflected in the song "*O tano batak*." Meanwhile, the Minangkabau people have the concept of migration as part of their social system, so that the song "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" is a strong representation of the emotional experience of Minang migrants towards their hometown (Navis, 1984).

The song "*O tano batak*" is known as one of the songs that embodies the Batak people's love for their ancestral homeland and ethnic identity. This song is often sung at traditional ceremonies and gatherings of Batak migrants as a symbol of pride and genealogical ties. Sibarani explains that Batak culture places a strong emphasis on the connection to their homeland as a space of identity inseparable from the kinship and clan system (Sibarani, 2012). The longing expressed in "*O tano batak*" is not only sadness due to distance, but also reverence for their ancestral homeland as a source of identity. On the other hand, "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" is a Minangkabau song that depicts the sadness and nostalgia of migrants for their distant hometown. Navis states that Minangkabau cultural works often contain the inner expressions of migrants, who always carry the village as an emotional memory and center of social values (Navis, 1984).

The study of these two songs is interesting because they both address the theme of longing for their hometown, but they originate from different cultural backgrounds. In comparative literature, the comparison of works from two cultural traditions aims to identify similarities, differences, and the influence of social context on the structure of a work's meaning. Damono states that comparative literature not only compares texts formally but also connects them to the socio-cultural realities that shape them (Damono, 2005). Thus, comparing the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" can open up an understanding of how the concept of longing is shaped by different diasporic experiences, while also revealing how each culture represents the homeland as a space of identity.

This research is important because folk songs are often considered merely entertainment, resulting in less academic attention for their literary value and social meaning. In fact, folk songs are cultural texts rich in symbols, figurative language, and emotional constructions that reflect the collective experiences of society. Endraswara explains that oral literature has a strong social function because it serves as a means of transmitting cultural values and identity from generation to generation (Endraswara, 2013). Therefore, folk songs need to be scientifically studied to explore their cultural meanings, particularly the theme of longing related to migration experiences, which remains relevant in contemporary Indonesian society.

The research problem in this study focuses on how the representation of longing is constructed in the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*." Furthermore, this study highlights the similarities and differences in thematic elements, imagery, stylistic style, and cultural symbols used in the two songs. Another question is how the Batak and Minangkabau socio-cultural contexts influence the way longing is positioned in song lyrics as an expression of identity. Ratna states that research problems in literary studies must be directed at a structured reading of meaning through textual analysis and its relationship to cultural context (Ratna, 2011). Therefore, this study positions longing as the primary concept, examined comparatively using a comparative literature approach.

The purpose of this study is to describe the representation of longing in the two songs, identify similarities and differences in the literary elements that construct longing, and explain the meaning of longing as an expression of cultural identity in the context of migration. This research also aims to broaden the understanding that regional songs can be positioned as literary texts worthy of academic analysis. Teeuw emphasized that literary works, both written and oral, possess aesthetic structures and social meanings that can be examined through scientific methods (Teeuw, 1984). Therefore, this research focuses on an in-depth reading of song texts as oral literature.

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich comparative literary studies in Indonesia, particularly those that utilize regional songs as research objects. Practically, this research can contribute to the preservation of regional culture by demonstrating that traditional songs contain important identity values to be passed on to the younger generation. Endraswara stated that the preservation of oral literature can be achieved through academic research that positions oral traditions as a source of cultural knowledge and collective identity (Endraswara, 2013). Thus, this research is also expected to strengthen public awareness that regional songs possess significant literary and cultural value.

Previous studies have shown that research on Batak and Minangkabau folk songs has focused more on musical aspects, the social functions of songs, or their use in traditional rituals. However, studies comparing the representation of longing emotions in Batak and Minangkabau songs are still limited. This research gap lies in the lack of comparative literary studies that consider these two songs as cultural texts that represent diasporic experiences comparatively. Damono stated that comparative literary research in Indonesia still holds significant potential because many regional works have not been studied cross-culturally (Damono, 2005). Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by positioning songs as literary objects for comparative analysis based on the theme of longing.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on connecting representations of longing with cultural identity in two ethnic contexts that both share a strong tradition of migration. This research not only compares thematic elements and stylistics but also interprets how longing becomes a distinct collective discourse in Batak and Minangkabau cultures. Ratna emphasized that novelty in literary research can emerge through new approaches, previously uncomparing objects, or interpretive perspectives that broaden the meaning of a work (Ratna, 2011). Thus, this research offers a new reading, emphasizing that longing is not merely an individual emotion, but rather a representation of identity shaped by social experiences.

The theoretical framework used in this research combines comparative literary theory and representation theory. Comparative literature is used to examine the relationship between two works from different cultural traditions by considering their textual structure and social context. Damono explains that comparative literature allows

researchers to discover patterns of similarities and differences between works and to explain the cultural factors that shape them (Damono, 2005). Furthermore, representation theory is used to understand how longing is constructed in song texts as a depiction of social experience. Hall states that representation is the process of producing meaning through language and symbols used to depict cultural realities (Hall, 1997). With this theory, longing in songs is understood as a construction of meaning shaped by language, imagery, and cultural symbols.

In addition to representation theory, this study also utilizes the concept of nostalgia in cultural studies to understand longing as a collective memory for one's hometown. Boym explains that nostalgia is an emotional and symbolic form of longing for home, often emerging in diaspora communities as a response to distance and social change (Boym, 2001). In the context of the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*," nostalgia presents as a form of spiritual attachment to one's homeland that is inseparable from ethnic identity. Therefore, this study positions longing as a form of cultural nostalgia articulated through poetic language and natural symbols.

Based on this description, this study confirms that regional songs can be positioned as literary texts that represent the social experiences of communities. The focus of this study is to compare the representation of longing in two songs originating from different cultures, but sharing a strong sense of the experience of migration. Using a comparative literary approach, this study hopes to demonstrate that longing is expressed not only through sadness but also through pride in identity, family memories, and the idealization of one's hometown as a symbolic space. Teeuw emphasized that literature has the function of demonstrating how humans understand themselves and their world through aesthetic language (Teeuw, 1984). Therefore, this research is expected to provide a scientific contribution to the development of regional literary studies and strengthen the preservation of Nusantara culture through a systematic academic approach.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a comparative literature design to analyze the representation of longing in the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*." A qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on interpreting the meaning, symbols, and linguistic structures contained in the lyrics as a form of cultural expression. Creswell states that qualitative research emphasizes understanding social phenomena through in-depth interpretation of data in the form of texts, symbols, and cultural contexts (Creswell, 2014). A descriptive design was used because this study aims to describe in detail the forms of longing expressed in both songs without conducting statistical hypothesis testing.

This type of research is library research, oriented towards the analysis of song texts as oral literary documents. Library research was chosen because the research object, song lyrics, can be analyzed through in-depth reading based on theories of comparative literature, representation, and nostalgia. Zed explains that library research is conducted by tracing, collecting, and analyzing data from written sources to gain a systematic conceptual understanding (Zed, 2014). In the context of this research, song lyrics serve as the primary data, while literary theory books, journals, and previous research serve as supporting data to strengthen the interpretation of the meaning of longing.

The subjects of this research are two regional songs: "*O tano batak*," which represents Toba Batak culture, and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*," which represents Minangkabau culture. The object of this research is song lyrics, understood as literary texts containing themes, imagery, figurative language, and cultural symbols. Damono

states that comparative literature positions two works from different traditions as objects of analysis to examine thematic relationships and the sociocultural contexts that shape them (Damono, 2005). Therefore, the subjects of this research are not human respondents, but rather literary texts, which serve as the primary source for uncovering representations of longing and cultural identity in the context of migration.

The data sources for this research consist of primary and secondary data. The primary data consist of the official lyrics of the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*," obtained through song documents, cultural archives, and widely recognized music publications. The secondary data consist of books, journal articles, proceedings, and academic studies discussing regional songs, Batak and Minangkabau migration culture, and theories of representation and nostalgia. Moleong explains that secondary data in qualitative research serves to strengthen the analysis by providing conceptual and historical context for the object of study (Moleong, 2018). Therefore, secondary data is used to more accurately interpret the symbols and cultural meanings in the lyrics of both songs.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which selects works based on the relevance of the theme and the song's position in society. Both songs were chosen because they share the theme of longing for one's hometown and hold strong positions as symbols of cultural identity for migrants. Sugiyono explains that purposive sampling in qualitative research aims to obtain the most informative data and aligns with the research focus (Sugiyono, 2019). Thus, the selected songs are considered to significantly represent longing in Toba Batak and Minangkabau culture, making them worthy objects of comparative literary study.

The researcher serves as the primary instrument, reading, recording, coding, and interpreting the text's meaning. In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument because analysis relies heavily on the ability to interpret symbols and cultural context. Creswell emphasizes that in qualitative studies, the researcher plays a direct role in collecting and analyzing data, resulting in a deeper understanding of meaning (Creswell, 2014). The supporting instruments used are a data classification table and a text analysis sheet containing categories of themes of longing, imagery, language style, cultural symbols, and forms of identity representation.

The data collection technique was conducted through a documentary study, which involved collecting lyric texts, verifying lyric versions, and repeatedly reading them intensively. The documentation process involved identifying keywords, metaphors, emotional expressions, and natural symbols appearing in both songs. Bowen stated that documentary study allows researchers to analyze the text as a stable, traceable source of data to produce systematic interpretations (Bowen, 2009). Therefore, all song lyrics were collected in written documents, then marked with sections that conveyed longing.

The data analysis technique used descriptive-comparative analysis, with the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The collected data were classified based on elements of theme, imagery, diction, style, and cultural symbols. Miles and Huberman explain that qualitative data analysis involves data reduction to select important information, data presentation to facilitate interpretation, and drawing conclusions to discover patterns of meaning (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A systematic comparison was then conducted between the two songs to identify similarities and differences in the representation of longing based on their respective cultural contexts.

The validity of the data in this study was achieved through source triangulation, which involved comparing the lyrics with various scholarly references discussing the history of the song, the culture of migration, and previous research related to the theme

of nostalgia. Denzin explains that source triangulation aims to increase the validity of qualitative research by testing the consistency of information across different data sources (Denzin, 1978). With this triangulation, the interpretation of the results is not solely dependent on the researcher's subjectivity but is strengthened by relevant academic references.

Results

The research results show that the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" both represent longing as a primary emotion arising from an individual's separation from their homeland. The longing in both songs is constructed through melancholic diction, natural imagery, and symbols of hometown, positioned as a space of identity and memory. In the study of representation, language not only conveys personal feelings but also forms a collective construction of meaning that reflects the cultural experiences of migrant communities. Hall states that representation is the process of constructing meaning through language, so that emotions in the text do not stand alone but are shaped by a system of cultural symbols (Hall, 1997). Therefore, these two songs can be understood as cultural texts that contain representations of longing as a social experience of the Batak and Minangkabau ethnic groups.

The thematic analysis shows that the song "*O tano batak*" places longing within the framework of pride in ethnic identity and genealogical ties to ancestral lands. The longing expressed is not merely sadness due to distance, but also a form of glorification of Batak land as a source of origin and honor. This is evident through the use of words that emphasize emotional closeness to the "*tano*" (land) as a symbol of origin and return. From a Batak cultural perspective, ancestral land is understood not only as a geographical space but also as a spiritual space linked to clans and family history. Sibarani explains that Batak identity is strongly built through attachment to the land of origin and kinship structures, so that the narrative of the hometown often appears as a symbol of collective pride (Sibarani, 2012). Thus, the longing in "*O tano batak*" contains nuances of strong identity affirmation.

Conversely, the analysis shows that the song "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" emphasizes longing in the form of personal sadness and alienation for migrants. Longing is depicted through emotional distance, evoking feelings of loss, longing for family, and the image of the village as an inaccessible space. The diction used emphasizes the feeling of sadness, distance, and profound separation. In Minangkabau culture, migration is part of the social system, making the emotional experiences of migrants a strong theme in cultural expression. Navis stated that Minangkabau culture places the hometown as the center of values and the origin of identity, so that migrants always carry memories of their hometown as part of their life consciousness (Navis, 1984). Therefore, the longing in this song appears as a nostalgia that is both personal and collective.

The research also reveals strong similarities in the use of natural imagery as a medium for constructing longing. Both songs utilize images of land, village spaces, and the natural environment as symbols of memories attached to past experiences. In "*O tano batak*," natural imagery appears more frequently as a form of respect for the Batak land as a revered place of origin. In "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*," natural imagery appears as a beautiful image of a distant, yet unattainable, village, thus reinforcing the feeling of sadness. Ratna states that imagery in literary works functions to build the reader's imaginative experience while also serving as a means of emotional expression that reinforces the meaning of the theme (Ratna, 2011). Thus, the use of natural imagery in both songs serves as a literary device that emphasizes the representation of longing.

Stylistically, the research shows that both songs utilize repetition and emotional diction as aesthetic strategies. Repetition is used to emphasize the persistent longing within the lyrical characters. In "*O tano batak*," repetition serves to reinforce the expression of love for one's ancestral homeland, while in "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*," repetition emphasizes the inevitability of sadness and distance. Teeuw states that repetition in literature is a form of affirmation of meaning that strengthens the text's suggestive power for the reader or listener (Teeuw, 1984). Therefore, repetition in both songs demonstrates longing as a recurring and persistent inner experience.

The research found that the symbol of hometown in both songs serves different functions. In "*O tano batak*," hometown is represented as a sacred space associated with origins, honor, and collective pride. The symbol of hometown is not only a place to be missed but also an identity that shapes one's identity. In "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*," hometown is represented as a nostalgic space that holds memories of childhood, family, and tranquility, so that longing focuses more on the emotional loss. Boym states that nostalgia can take both reflective and restorative forms, namely nostalgia that simply remembers or nostalgia that seeks to restore the past (Boym, 2001). In this context, "*O tano batak*" tends towards restorative nostalgia, while "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" emphasizes more reflective nostalgia.

Based on the results of the comparative analysis, it was found that the forms of representation of longing in the two songs can be grouped into the following categories.

1. Longing as a bond of cultural identity: The song "*O tano batak*" emphasizes longing as a form of pride in ancestral lands and ethnic identity, while the Minang song places identity more as an emotional memory of the village. Hall states that cultural identity is formed through symbolic representation in the text, making the song a medium for the production of collective identity (Hall, 1997).
2. Longing as an expression of nostalgia for migration: Both songs are shaped by the experience of migration, but "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" presents a sadder and more personal nostalgia than the more affirmative "*O tano batak*." Navis explains that the Minang tradition of migration gives rise to expressions of sadness due to separation from family and village (Navis, 1984).
3. Longing as a construction of natural symbols: Both songs utilize nature as a symbol of the village, but the natural symbol in "*O tano batak*" tends to symbolize the revered ancestral land, while in the Minang song it symbolizes beautiful memories that are difficult to attain. Ratna emphasized that natural symbols in literature are often used to describe emotions that cannot be explained directly (Ratna, 2011).

To clarify the comparison of research results, the following is a summary table of the similarities and differences in the representation of longing in the two songs.

Analytical Aspects	<i>O tano batak</i>	<i>Kampuang nan jauh di mato</i>
Main Theme	Longing for and pride in ancestral lands	The longing and sadness of immigrants
Emotional Dominance	Identity affirmation and respect	Nostalgia and loss
Village Symbols	Sacred, genealogical, honorable	Family and past memories
Natural Imagery	Strengthening Batak land identity	The image of the village as a memory
Forms of Nostalgia	Restorative	Reflective

The table shows that both songs share a similar pattern of longing, but differences emerge in the emphasis on emotions and cultural symbols. Damono states that comparative literature aims to uncover similarities in themes while simultaneously highlighting the differences in cultural contexts that shape the works (Damono, 2005). Thus, these findings confirm that longing is a universal theme, yet its representation is influenced by different cultural value systems.

Overall, the research results indicate that longing in both songs is not only an individual expression but also a collective symbol of the migrant community. The song "*O tano batak*" represents longing as a sense of pride in one's genealogical identity towards one's ancestral homeland, while "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" represents longing as the sadness of a migrant separated from his village and family. Teeuw asserts that literary works are expressions of life that combine the aesthetics of language with the socio-cultural experiences of the community (Teeuw, 1984). Therefore, these two songs can be understood as oral literary texts containing representations of longing as part of Batak and Minangkabau cultural identity.

Discussion

This research discussion demonstrates that the longing expressed in the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" is a form of cultural nostalgia formed from the experience of migration and separation from one's homeland. The finding that both songs feature longing as a dominant emotion aligns with the concept of representation, which states that language shapes social reality through symbols and narratives. Hall explains that representation is a process of meaning-making that enables cultural texts to become spaces for the production of collective identity and experience (Hall, 1997). Thus, the longing expressed in both songs is not merely a personal emotion, but rather a cultural construct that illustrates the community's relationship with their hometown.

The finding that the song "*O tano batak*" emphasizes longing through a framework of genealogical pride indicates a strong connection between ancestral land and Batak identity. In Toba Batak culture, land is not only a place of residence, but also a symbol of clan origins and a center of social identity legitimacy. Sibarani states that Batak people place ancestral land as a vital part of the kinship system, thus giving the hometown a sacred position in collective memory (Sibarani, 2012). This explains why the longing in Batak songs is not only melancholic, but also affirmative and imbued with respect. This finding reinforces previous research that asserts that Batak cultural expressions often display a combination of longing and pride in ethnic identity.

Conversely, the finding that the song "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" emphasizes personal sadness suggests that longing in Minangkabau culture is constructed through a strong emotional distance between the migrant and the village. Minangkabau culture embraces the concept of migration as part of the process of maturity, but on the other hand, migration also gives rise to feelings of loss and alienation. Navis explains that the Minangkabau experience of migration gave rise to a tradition of nostalgic narratives that position the village as the emotional center and a place of inner return (Navis, 1984). Therefore, the sadness in this song can be understood as a form of collective reflection of migrants facing both geographic and psychological distance.

Research on the use of natural imagery in both songs shows that nature is used as a symbol that binds memories of the past. In literature, natural imagery is often an aesthetic device to convey complex feelings without having to express them directly. Ratna emphasized that imagery is a crucial element in building the suggestive power of a text because it creates a sensory experience that reinforces the meaning of the theme (Ratna,

2011). In "*O tano batak*," natural imagery symbolizes respect for ancestral lands, while in Minang songs, natural imagery symbolizes distant, beautiful memories. This difference demonstrates that natural symbols in regional literature are influenced by how communities interpret the village space within their cultural systems.

The research findings also indicate that both songs use repetition as a strategy for emphasizing emotion. The repetition in "*O tano batak*" reinforces pride in Batak land, while the repetition in "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" amplifies the sadness of the unreachable distance. Teeuw stated that repetition is an aesthetic technique in literature that serves to strengthen the intensity of meaning and create an emotional impact on the reader or listener (Teeuw, 1984). Thus, the repetition in both songs demonstrates longing as a lingering and unresolved feeling, creating a distinctive melancholic atmosphere.

A discussion of the differences in the symbols of hometown in the two songs demonstrates that longing is shaped by the cultural ways in which relationships with one's homeland are established. In "*O tano batak*," the village is positioned as a sacred space containing honor and identity, while in the Minang song, the village is positioned as a space of nostalgia for family and childhood. Boym explains that restorative nostalgia tends to lead to the restoration of the past as identity, while reflective nostalgia emphasizes grief and irretrievable memories (Boym, 2001). This finding explains the fundamental difference between the two songs: Batak longing is restorative because it affirms the bonds of identity, while Minang longing is reflective because it emphasizes emotional distance.

The findings of this study align with the comparative literature approach, which emphasizes the importance of examining the relationship between similar themes and differences in cultural contexts. Damono states that comparative literature enables researchers to understand that universal themes can emerge across different cultures, yet have varying meanings depending on the social experiences of their communities (Damono, 2005). Longing, as a universal theme, is found in both songs, but differences emerge in the way Batak and Minangkabau cultures position their hometowns as symbols of identity. Therefore, this study reinforces the view that regional literary works can be an important source for understanding the cultural dynamics of migrant communities in Indonesia.

A limitation of this study lies in the use of data that focuses solely on song lyrics without incorporating field data such as interviews or observations of song listeners in migrant communities. Bowen states that document-based research is limited in capturing changes in meaning that occur in contemporary social practices because the texts do not always represent the actual interpretations of the community (Bowen, 2009). Therefore, further research is recommended using an ethnographic approach or reception studies to understand how Batak and Minangkabau migrants interpret the songs in real life. Nevertheless, textual analysis remains relevant because song lyrics are cultural documents that capture the collective values and emotions of a society.

Overall, this discussion confirms that the representation of longing in both songs is a form of cultural expression that reflects the diasporic experience and emotional attachment to one's homeland. The song "*O tano batak*" presents longing as genealogical pride and respect for ancestral lands, while "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" presents longing as deep sadness and personal nostalgia for migrants. Hall asserts that cultural identity is constructed through symbolic representation in text, making regional songs a space for the production of collective community identity (Hall, 1997). Thus, this comparative literary study demonstrates that regional songs can be understood as

meaningful oral literary texts relevant to strengthening cultural studies and preserving the Indonesian archipelago's literary heritage.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study shows that the songs "*O tano batak*" and "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" represent longing as a universal theme born from the experience of individual separation from their homeland, but are shaped through different cultural constructions. In the song "*O tano batak*", longing is presented as an expression of pride in the ancestral land and genealogical identity of the Batak people, so that the hometown is positioned as a sacred space related to honor, origins, and strong cultural ties. Meanwhile, the song "*Kampuang nan jauh di mato*" represents longing as a reflective nostalgia that emphasizes sadness, loss, and emotional distance of migrants from family and the village atmosphere. The similarities between the two songs lie in the use of natural imagery, melancholic diction, and repetition as aesthetic strategies to strengthen the emotion of longing, but the main difference appears in the orientation of meaning: Batak longing is more affirmative and identity-centric, while Minangkabau longing is more personal and emotional. Using a comparative literature approach, this study demonstrates that regional songs can be understood as oral literary texts containing cultural symbols and collective social experiences, thus functioning not only as entertainment but also as a medium for expressing the identity and cultural memory of diaspora communities.

This research also confirms that the study of representations of longing in regional songs is relevant to the preservation of oral literature and the sustainability of local culture amidst modernization. Regional songs have been shown to harbor values of identity and collective memory that can bind solidarity among diaspora communities and serve as a medium for transmitting cultural values across generations. Therefore, sustainability research needs to be directed toward further studies involving field approaches to examine the reception of these two songs by the Batak and Minangkabau communities within the context of contemporary diaspora life. Furthermore, future research could examine how the transformation of digital media influences the way regional songs are consumed, interpreted, and passed down, particularly through social platforms that enable widespread cultural reproduction. Research development could also be carried out by expanding the research object to other regional songs with themes of migration, so that a more comprehensive pattern of longing representation within Nusantara culture can be identified. Thus, this research not only contributes to comparative literary studies, but also becomes the basis for strengthening the preservation of regional songs as a cultural heritage that is sustainable, adaptive, and remains relevant in the dynamics of contemporary Indonesian society.

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