

The Presentation Form and Function of *Gondang Uning-unigan* by the Sabas Group in the Traditional Batak Toba Wedding Ceremony in Jambi

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Article Details	ABSTRACT
Article History Received mm dd, yyyy Revised mm dd, yyyy Accepted mm dd, yyyy	This study aims to describe the presentation and function of Gondang <i>Uning-unigan</i> Grup Sabas in traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremonies in Jambi. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, documentation, and literature study. The compilation process begins with the first stage of data reduction, followed by data presentation and conclusion drawing. The analysis found elements of presentation in the traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremony in Jambi that are incorporated into the ceremony, including the presentation, number of musicians, performance time, number of songs, and performance venue. In the presentation of <i>Gondang uning-unigan</i> , the songs performed are correlated with the wedding party. These include the procession of making <i>tua ni gondang</i> (<i>gondang mula mula</i>), the presentation of <i>tintin marangkup</i> (<i>tintin marangkup</i>), the presentation of <i>ulos</i> (<i>ulos passamot</i>), <i>kasihnya seperti sungai</i> , <i>emeni simbolon</i> , and <i>paulak une</i> (<i>gondang hasahatan and si tio-tio</i>). Seven functions of the Sabas Group's <i>Gondang uning-unigan</i> in Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremonies were found, including emotional expression, aesthetic appreciation, entertainment, communication, symbolism, physical response, and social norms.
Keywords Presentation Form Function <i>Gondang Uning-unigan</i>	<i>This article is an open-access article under the CC BY-SA license.</i>
	
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1. INTRODUCTION

The form of musical presentation is strongly related to its purpose and presentation in an art performance, which is supported by the elements of art itself (Manullang et al., 2018). According to A. A. M. Djelantik (1999), art is presented to the audience through hearing and is observed by the general public. As in the Batak Toba Traditional Wedding Ceremony in Jambi, the presentation combines rituals and music. Music plays an important role as an accompaniment in the Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremony in Jambi. This proves that there is no Batak Toba traditional ceremony that does not use music, both for traditional activities and religious processes. The Batak Toba community believes that Gondang has profound power in every traditional activity, including ceremonies and religious practices (Tinambunan, 2022). The Sabas Group's musical performance at the Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremony featured a mixed ensemble. A mixed ensemble is a performance of several musical instruments, including melodic and rhythmic instruments (Respati & Fuadah, 2018). As in the Batak Toba Traditional Wedding Ceremony in Jambi, the presentation combines rituals and music. The elements of the presentation include the performance, instruments, venue arrangement, number of musicians, performance time, number of songs, and performance venue (A. A. M. Djelantik, 1999).

(Merriam, 1964) This book discusses various theories of music's function, namely emotional expression, aesthetic appreciation, entertainment, communication, symbolism, physical response, social norms, validation

of social institutions, cultural stability, and contribution to social integration. The various uses, benefits, and roles of these ten theories of function demonstrate their influence on other things (Yuniarti, Dassy Windia, Sulistiayati, Titik Dwi; Suprayitno, 2013). The functions of these ten theories are adapted to the presentation of *Gondang uning-unigan*.

The stages of the traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremony in Jambi are: making *Tua ni Gondang*, handing over *Tint-tin Marangkup*, the mangulosi stage (*pasahat ulos hela*, *pasahat*, *ulos pasamot*, *ulos holong*), *paulak une*, and *maningkir tangga*. The entire *Gondang* procession serves as an accompaniment to the Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremony (Simanjuntak, 2016). The *Gondang Uning-unigan* used by the Sabas Group in the city of Jambi consists of a *keyboard*, *taganing*, *sulim*, *hasapi*, and *sarune bolon*. There are differences between the musical instruments used by the Sabas Group and the original *Gondang Uning-unigan* in Samosir. This change occurred as instruments were added, times became more modern, ideas became more advanced, and technology in the arts advanced. This has had a positive impact on music groups, especially the Sabas Group in Jambi, in interpreting the presentation of music at traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremonies in Jambi through the addition of a modern musical instrument, namely the keyboard, so that it sounds more harmonious and makes it easier for them to improve several voice styles that they want, such as kick drum, bass, and electric guitar voices.

During the Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremony, the sabas group performed six songs, including the following. 1) Membuat *tua ni Gondang* (*The First Gondang Song*) 2. Penyerahan *tin-tin marangkup* (*Tin-tin marngkup Song*) 3. Tahap *mangulosi, pasaht ulos hela* (*Emeni Simbolon Song*), *penyerahan ulos passamot* (*Ulos passamot Song*). Based on the above description, this research focuses on the form of presentation and function of the Sabas Group's *gondang uning-unigan* in the traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremony in Jambi.

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. It focuses on in-depth knowledge of an event through data interpretation, descriptive analysis in the form of verbal explanations, and the collection of research objects (Kamarullah et al., 2025). Research objects are used to collect data in accordance with specific objectives and uses. The object of study was *Gondang Uning-unigan*, which was analyzed in terms of its presentation and function in traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremonies in Jambi. The research location was the place where the research was conducted to obtain the object, and the purpose was to facilitate the researcher in the research process (Wibawa Lafaila et al., 2022). This research was conducted offline at the Asiniroha Building, located at Jl. Bruri Mansyur No.25, where the Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremony took place. Research time is the period during which the research was conducted (Pradana & Harimurti, 2017). This research was conducted on March 28, 2025.

After the data is obtained, data analysis is carried out. Data analysis is the stage of collecting and processing data in an orderly manner. The data obtained during interviews, note-taking, and documentation collection is processed by grouping the data into categories, breaking it down into units, synthesizing, identifying data patterns, collecting relevant data for examination, and drawing conclusions that researchers and readers can understand (Prof. Dr. Sugiyono, 2013).

3. RESULT

The purpose of this study is to describe the presentation and function of the *Gondang Uning-unigan* Sabas Group in traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremonies in Jambi.

Form of Presentation of *Gondang Uning-unigan*

The form of musical presentation is closely related to the purpose and presentation of a performance, and factors within the performance itself reinforce this relationship. In this case, the *Gondang Uning-unigan* presentation by the Sabas Group consists of several stages: the instruments, the layout of the venue, the number of musicians, the duration of the performance, the number of songs, the venue, and the presentation.

1. Musical Instruments

Instruments are instruments that have beauty in terms of their appearance and sound, in a musical performance, both individually and together (ensemble). The instruments used by the Sabas Group are as follows.

a) Taganing

Taganing is a drum that contains six pieces (Prier Karl-Edmund, 2009). Arranged in order from largest to smallest, it is used to carry the variable rhythm of a song. The names of each *Gondang* are, first *gordang*, *odap*, *pai dua odap*, *panonga*, *pai dua ting-ting*, *ting-ting*. It is struck using a stick. Taganing is classified as a membraphone.



Figure 1. Taganing Sabas Musical Instrument
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

b) Sarune Bolon

The sarune bolon is a musical instrument that carries melody. It consists of several parts, including *ipit-pit* (reeds) made from arung-arung, a type of small bamboo; *tukko* made from buffalo horn; *porda* made from jior wood with six finger holes; and *angar-angar*. It is played using *mangombus marsiulakhosa* (circular breathing), which allows the player to produce notes by blowing and inhaling simultaneously (Silaban et al., 2024).



Figure 2. Sarune Bolon Sabas Musical Instruments
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

c) Sulim

The sulim is a musical instrument made from bamboo, with six tone holes and one blowing hole. To play the sulim, blow into the side (side-blown flute) and then place your lips horizontally on the edge of the blowing hole. There are six techniques for playing the sulim, including *andung-andung*, *mangenet*, *mangarutu*, *mandila-dilai*, *manganak-anaki*, and *mangarappol* (Ebenezer et al., 2024).



Figure 3. Sulim Sabas Musical Instrument
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

d) Hasapi

The hasapi is a melodic instrument. It consists of two strings, which are plucked with a pick (Herza et al., 2019). The hasapi is made of jior wood, with bridge pins made of resse wood, a type of small wood used to cover the resonance hole on the back. This instrument is classified as a chordophone.



Figure 4. Hasapi Sabas Musical Instrument
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

e) Keyboard

The keyboard is a Western musical instrument used by the Sabas Group in a series of wedding activities. It is multifunctional, allowing keyboard players to use its features to create the music they need. Based on field research, modern instruments such as keyboards greatly assist the Sabas Group in

accessing the available voices. One example is the use of kick, bass, and electric guitar voicings to create a grander, more festive atmosphere.



Figure 5. Sabas Keyboard Musical Instrument
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

2. Venue Setup

In the Batak Toba traditional wedding in Jambi, the room layout is divided into five sections: the groom's side, the bride's side, the traditional room, the music room, and the wedding stage. Inside the wedding ceremony hall, when the bride and groom enter the wedding hall, they immediately take their seats in front of the wedding stage. The bride and groom are not yet allowed to go up to the wedding stage because an initial procession requires them to remain at the traditional wedding ceremony venue. This is followed by the groom's family on the left and the bride's family on the right. This is a customary arrangement that is still practiced today. The musical instruments are arranged on the right side of the wedding stage, facing the ritual room. The keyboard player was positioned behind, aligned with the taganing, sulim 1 and 2, and hasapi in the middle. According to an interview with Benni Sinnar Sihaloho, the instruments' positions were adjusted according to their size. In addition, the musicians' location was determined by the venue, specifically on the right side of the wedding stage.



Figure 6. Arrangement of the Venue
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

3. Number of Players

In a traditional Batak Toba wedding, there are musicians and a trio. The number of players is random, often including players from other groups or even guests who can play the *Gondang uning-unigan* instrument. The Raja parhata (speaker) is Anjur Sitohang, who leads the gondang uning-unigan music performance. The following are the names of the Sabas Group players and the musical instruments they play in the Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremony in Jambi. Beni Sinnar Sihaloho (Taganing), Mikael Sianturi (Sarune bolon), Mawanto Sihaloho (Sulim), Agus Sinurat (Hasapi), Sindo Sianturi (Keyboard), and Aransa Trio (Vocals).



Figure 7. Sabas Group Players
(Personal documentation by Rian)

4. Songs Performed

Gondang Batak is regarded as a human activity for describing and expressing feelings of value. Songs have a specific function in the traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremony. The notation used in cultural music is block notation and numbers (Mahendra et al., 2025). The songs performed by the Sabas Group are as follows: *Gondang Mula-mula*, *Tin-tin Marngkup*, *Emeni Simbolon*, *Ulos Passamot*, *Kasih-nya Seperti Sungai*, *Gondang Hasahaton Sitio-tio*.

5. Order of Presentation

a) Making Tua Ni Gondang

Performing the *Gondang* ritual broadly means opening the ceremony with respect and asking for blessings from *amata namartua debata* (God Almighty), *amata raja situan natorop* (the elder king), and *sa hala ni angka opung* (the spirits of the ancestors). During the ritual of offering prayers before the traditional wedding ceremony begins, Raja Parhata (traditional king) asks the pargoci (musicians) to play the *Gondang* Uning-unigan instrumental, known as *manjur gondang* (requesting gondang). It is believed that *Gondang* is used as a sacred channel for humans to connect with spirits that are no longer alive. Respect and honor for spirits are different from respect for fellow humans, especially for God (Cerano Seni et al., 2023). The *Gondang* is played during the process of making tua ni *Gondang*; it is called *Gondang Mula-mula*. *Gondang Mula-mula* is an instrumental song with a fast tempo ranging from 120 bpm to 168 bpm. The rhythm or meter of *Gondang Mula-mula* is 4/4. The basic chord in this song is F = Do, or the root note one mol. The notes used tend to be repetitive. *Gondang Mula-mula* is played for 2 minutes with a *tor-tor* posture that signifies respect, politeness, and perfection before God (Santa Jajor Banjarnahor et al., 2024).

Gondang Mula-mula



Figure 8, Notation Transcription

(Personal documentation by Rian)

b) Handover of Tintin Marangkup

The presentation of *tintin marangkup* is interpreted as a part of the *sinamot* (dowry) from the groom's and bride's families to the groom's *hula-hula*, referred to as uncle (Nainggolan et al., 2021). The presentation of *Tintin Marangkup* is accompanied by a song titled "Tintin Marangkup". The *Tin-tin Marangkup* song has a fast tempo ranging from 120 bpm to 168 bpm. The rhythm or meter is 4/4. The chord used is Do = D, or the introductory note 3 kres. In the presentation of the *Tintin Marangkup* song, the music begins in bars 1-12 with the performer still standing. Entering the 13th bar, the *penortor* begins to walk while carrying the *sinamot* that has been given until they finish.

Tintin Marangkup

M.S. Silitonga





Figure 9, Notation Transcription

(Personal Documentation by Rian)

c) Mangulosi Stage

From ancient times to the present day, traditional Batak Toba weddings have featured ulos, a characteristic of the Batak Toba people. According to Novelita et al. (2019), Mangulosi is a form of affection filled with hope and even prayers that the recipient of the ulos will always be blessed. The *Mangulosi* stage is divided into three stages of *ulos hela*, *ulos passamot*, and *ulos holong* (Tama & Lephene, 2023).

1) Presentation of *Ulos Hela*

Pasahat ulos hela is an ulos presented to the bride and groom by their parents (Firmando, 2021). The presentation of ulos hela symbolizes respectful acceptance into the bride's extended family. The presentation of *ulos hela* begins with the entire family of the bride standing in a circle and holding the *ulos* to be pinned on the bride and groom. After preparing to pin the *ulos*, the raja *parhata* immediately asks the *pargoci* (musician) to accompany the pinning of the *ulos*, which will be given by the parents of the bride, with a song titled "emeni simbolon". The music in the song Emeni Simbolon has a meaning of grouping the Simbolon clan identity. This can be seen in the first line of the lyrics, "emeni simbolon inang na lambok ma lilu". These lyrics mean that the Simbolon clan is a friendly and gentle group.

EME NI SIMBOLON

Victor Hutabarat



Figure 10, Notation Transcription

(Personal Documentation by Rian)

2) Presentation of *Ulos Passamot*

Ulos passamot is an ulos presented by the groom's parents to the bride, signifying that the bride has been accepted by them (Darmawan et al., 2015). The *Ulos Passamot* song has a slightly slow tempo, ranging from 69 bpm to 76 bpm. The rhythm or meter is 4/4. It uses the

chord Do = D or the introductory note 2 kres. The process of presenting the Ulos Passamot begins after the 4th bar.

ULOS PASSAMOT

Aristo Trio

Andante

9
13
16
20
24
28
30
39

Figure 11, Notation Transcription
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

3) Presentation of *Ulos Holong*

Ulos Holong is used only for weddings as a symbol of love for the couple (Jawa et al., 2024). When giving *Ulos Holong*, it is accompanied by a song titled "Kasih-nya seperti sungai" (His love is like a river). Presenting *Ulos Holong* during a wedding ceremony takes a long time because all relatives and guests give *ulos* to the bride and groom one by one. The order of presenting *Ulos Holong* starts with the closest relatives, then the clan or *punguan*, neighbors, church members, and friends of the *suhut* (the host). Therefore, this song is played repeatedly. The song "Kasih-nya Seperti Sungai" is played during the presentation of *ulos holong* because it follows the *ulos holong* theme of love. It is also adapted to the church community, so the song "Kasih-nya Seperti Sungai" is very suitable as it contains elements of church music.

KASIH-NYA SEPERTI SUNGAI
Maranatha Kids



Figure 12, Notation Transcription
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

d) *Paulak une* and *Maningkir Tangga*

This ceremony is the final stage of the entire series of traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremonies. In this ceremony, which is held at the bride's residence, the *Paulak une* is a traditional meeting between the groom's family and the bride's parents, and vice versa (Situmorang & Sibarani, 2021). However, in Jambi, it is held directly at the Asiniroha Building, with the bride and groom brought to the wedding stage. The gondang played in this procession is Gondang Hasahatan and Si tio-tio in *maningkir tangga*, which tends to be fast because, when bringing the bride and groom to the wedding stage, they walk quickly so that the tempo and the walk are in harmony.

Gondang Hasahatan dan Si tio-tio



Figure 13, Notation Transcription
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

The Function of *Gondang Uning-unigan*

The function of a musical performance is as a form of aesthetic presentation or appreciation that creates a beautiful atmosphere and leaves a profound impression on the audience (Danny Firmansyah, 2024). *Gondang Uning-unigan* plays a profound role in Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremonies as a means of spiritual tradition, so that tradition is not just a mere fulfillment of customs but a means to obtain spiritual values and perspectives (wisdom) for life that are conveyed to the surrounding environment. Such culture must be preserved and maintained (Dewi, 2019).

1. Emotional Expression Function

This function means that *Gondang Uning-unigan* is a place that conveys mood. Through tempo, rhythm, and the type of Gondang played, it can influence emotions throughout the wedding ceremony, including happiness, hope, and pride. The role of *Gondang Uning-unigan* as an emotional expression can be seen, for example, during the pasahat *ulos hela*, by the bride's family. Before the *ulos hela* is handed over, prayers and wishes are conveyed to the bride and groom, which already creates a sad atmosphere. This is followed by *Gondang Uning-unigan* playing the *ulos passamot* song, which evokes sadness and emotion, stirring feelings in both families.



Figure 14, Presentation of *Ulos Hela*
(Personal documentation by Rian)

2. Aesthetic Appreciation Function

This function can be seen in the musicians' compactness, so that the music presented has a beautiful meaning. The beauty of *Gondang Uning-unigan* performed at wedding ceremonies lies in the *piltik* or characteristic of Batak Toba that is integrated into a *Gondang uning-unigan* ensemble. In addition, aesthetic appreciation can be seen from the harmony between the beats of the *pargoci* (musicians) and the *panortor* during the presentation of the *ulos*. From interviews with the guests who were present, it was found that most of them did not receive manortor lessons. However, during field research, a harmony between the manortor and the music presented by the Sabas Group *pargoci* could be seen. In this case, this harmony can be seen due to the appreciation between the *sipanortor* and the Sabas Group musicians.



Figure 15, *Manortor*
(Personal documentation by Rian)

3. Entertainment Function

During *manortor*, a characteristic of the Batak Toba people is *mangolopi*, which means *manortor* while giving money. The tradition of *manortor* is accompanied by money given by the family holding the event to the guests in attendance. Researchers observed that this entertained the guests. Coupled with the fast tempo of the songs, this allowed them to express themselves more freely in manortor.



Figure 16, *Manortor* and *Mangolopi*
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

4. Communication Function

Music can communicate something to people who understand the local language of a particular tradition. Communication through *Gondang uning-unigan* is conveyed vertically and horizontally. Vertical communication is conveyed to God as a sign of respect and to ask for blessings before the event begins. This is evident at the beginning of the event, when the elderly play *Gondang*. Horizontal communication is evident in the interaction between the Sabas Group players as they play the *tintin marangkup* song with the *panortor* (dancers). The two appear to be in sync and harmony, thus implementing the function of *Gondang Uning-unigan* as a medium of communication.

5. Symbol Functions

The *Gondang* symbol in the traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremony includes: making the *tua ni Gondang* a prelude or sign of hope for blessings or gifts (*mula gabe*) and for peace and prosperity (*mula horas*). In other words, it is interpreted as a symbol of praise to God Almighty as a form of connecting prayers and longing for *mula jadi naboon*. The songs performed can also symbolize a group identity. This can be seen in the song *Emeni Simbolon*, which plays a role in grouping the kuhus marga simbolon before they give *ulus hela*. In addition, when dancing together with the *hula-hula* accompanied by *Gondang*, *hasahatan si tio-tio* with both hands raised parallel to the shoulders, symbolizing that the role of the *hula-hula* is to give blessings to the *boru*.



Figure 17, Classification of Clan Symbols
(Personal documentation by Rian)

6. Physical Response Function

The physical response function can be seen in the musicians from the Sabas Group playing a song titled "Emeni Simbolon," where the performer will dance with joy until he utters the word "eeemaada," which means "let us have fun."



Figure 18, Manortor as a physical response
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

7. Social Norm Music Function

Gondang Uning-unigan plays an important role in social norms and is highly respected by the Batak Toba tribe. *Gondang Uning-unigan* serves as a symbol to reinforce the social structure and traditional roles of the parties involved, for example, in the giving of *ulus* by *hula hula* (uncles), *parboru* (female relatives), and *dongan tubu* (relatives of the same clan).



Figure 19, Symbol of Clan Structure
(Personal Documentation by Rian)

4. CONCLUSION

The presentation of *Gondang Uning-unigan* has several important aspects that reflect how this music is performed at traditional Batak Toba weddings in Jambi, namely through musical instruments, venue arrangement, number of performers, performance time, songs performed, performance venue, and order of presentation. The presentation is delivered through musical instruments and singers. In presenting *Gondang Uning-unigan*, the *raja parhata* (speaker) who guides the wedding ceremony is indispensable. This presentation is held directly in a closed room, namely the Asiniroha Building, and runs from morning until afternoon.

The Gondang uning-unigan performance by the Sabas Group includes making *tua ni gondang*, handing over *tin-tin marangkup*, the *mangulosi* stage; *ulos hela*, *ulos passamot*, *ulos holong*, and closing with *paulak une* and *maningkir tangga*. The performance of *Gondang uning-unigan* by the Sabas Group features several musical instruments typical of Batak Toba traditional wedding ceremonies. These include taganing, sulim, hasapi, sarune bolon, and keyboard. In terms of function, *Gondang uning-unigan* has vertical and horizontal functions. This means that *Gondang Uning-unigan* not only functions as an accompaniment in weddings but can also be a form of prayer to the creator. In this study, seven theories of function are examined: emotional expression, aesthetic appreciation, entertainment, communication, symbolism, physical response, and social norms.

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