[](http://crossmark.crossref.org/dialog/?doi=10.33153/dewaruci.v17i2.4147&domain=pdf)The chant is empty, could power make it sound? Kapata Hena Masa Waya in the hegemony of representation and cultural identity

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| ABSTRACT |  |  |
| Kapata is an oral tradition sung to serve as a creed, advice, prayer, and record of significant histories within Maluku society. From a philosophical perspective through semantic interpretation, Hena Masa Waya is an ancient Kapata that narrates a natural event compelling the earliest humans to seek territories to reorganize their lives. Post-sectarian conflict in Maluku, the discourse surrounding this Kapata emerged in stark contrast to cultural identity and was subsequently associated by the state with separatist movements of the Republic of South Maluku (RMS). However, culturally speaking, Kapata Hena Masa Waya represents a particular aspect of the universality shaping Maluku's ideology, binding the Maluku community itself. Given the above background, this study aims to: (a) describe the cultural identity of Kapata Hena Masa Waya; (b) understand how authorities continually associate the hegemonic representation of Hena Masa Waya's identity with the spirit of RMS nationalism; and (c) analyze how Kapata Hena Masa Waya has become an Empty Signifier in the context of contemporary Maluku. The research will employ a qualitative method through in-depth interviews with six informants, comprising academicians, cultural practitioners, and musicians, and will incorporate an analysis process supported by existing literature.  [https://licensebuttons.net/l/by-sa/3.0/88x31.png](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)This is an open-access article under the [CC–BY-SA](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license |  | Article History  Keywords  Kapata  Cultural identity  Hena Masa Waya  Empty signifier Hegemonic |