

THE CREATION OF BATIK DESIGNS INSPIRED BY BOBOKO

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian traditional crafts exhibit remarkable diversity and possess significant artistic and creative value. Boboko is one form of traditional Indonesian craft that functions as a rice container in the traditional Sundanese community of West Java. The boboko embodies meanings and philosophies that convey valuable teachings for everyday life. This study aims to create batik motifs inspired by the visual form of the boboko. The creation process employs a conservation-based concept using a symbolic abstraction approach. The creative process resulted in three batik designs: boboko masagi, boboko buleud, and boboko nyuncung. Through this study, it is expected that the public will gain greater knowledge of the life teachings embodied in the philosophy of the boboko utensil, while the work will also contribute to enriching the repertoire of Indonesian traditional crafts.

Keywords: boboko, batik design, art creation

INTRODUCTION

Crafts are products of Indonesian culture created to fulfill the daily needs of society. Since prehistoric times, crafts have emerged alongside human life and have served as evidence of the level of civilization of their respective eras (Zam, Dharsono, & Raharjo, 2022). As cultural artifacts, these products fall within the scope of material culture, with materials and forms such as woven crafts and pottery derived from Indonesian traditional arts (Zuhdi, 2010). Almost all ethnic groups throughout the Indonesian archipelago adhere closely to norms rooted in their respective civilizations. This can be observed among the people of Kampung Naga, who adhere to *pamali* as an unwritten customary rule (Sudjatnika, 2018), as well as the Baduy community, who firmly uphold *pikukuh* as a way of life (Sujana, 2020). As cultural products, craft objects contain meanings and philosophical teachings related to the cultural life of society (Guntur, 2007, p. 8). These meanings are manifested, among others, through ornaments containing particular symbols, as seen in the silver crafts of Koto Gadang (Kamal, 2020). The rich cultural diversity of the Indonesian archipelago makes craft objects fascinating to the wider public (Sunaryo, 2018, p. 32). Craft products resulting from cultural civilization also contribute to the formation of national identity because they reflect the culture of the places in which they originate, as demonstrated by craft centers in various regions, each with its own distinctive characteristics (Zam et al., 2022). Indonesian traditional crafts also function as a medium for cultural expansion in addition to fulfilling people's daily needs (Dharsono, 2007, pp. 16–17).

Along with the development of the times, current conditions indicate that some Indonesian people are beginning to abandon and no longer recognize traditional Indonesian craft products, including the meanings and philosophies embedded within them. This condition is consistent with the view that the existence of crafts amid social change remains unclear and difficult to interpret (Sunarya, 2006), and that globalization has eroded local wisdom and the traditional arts of Sundanese indigenous communities among younger generations (Sumarlina, Permana, & Darsa, 2025). In fact, the meanings and philosophies embodied in craft products contain noble teachings that are highly valuable for guiding people in their daily lives. If this condition is allowed to continue, it may have negative consequences for the preservation of Indonesian cultural heritage.

Based on this situation, cultural preservation efforts are needed so that these traditions can be developed by future generations and become a strong cultural identity. Local wisdom inherited by each ethnic group can serve as a reference for subsequent generations (Sumarlina, Permana, Darsa, Kurnia, & Rasyad, 2023), while customary institutions play an important role in preserving the culture of indigenous communities (Sonia & Sarwoprasodjo, 2020).

Indonesia is a country with extraordinary cultural richness. Its diverse ethnic groups and traditions have merged into a unified whole that mutually strengthens one another. This heritage must be properly preserved to prevent divisions among the nation's people. One of the ethnic groups in Indonesia with a particularly rich cultural heritage is the Sundanese. West Java, also known as the land of Priangan, is the homeland of the Sundanese people and has been the center of their cultural development from the past to the present. West Java is the region where Sundanese culture was born, developed, and continues to flourish (Ekadjati, 1995, p. 56). The richness of Sundanese culture is also reflected in crafts originating from everyday life, such as bamboo weaving in Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya, which serves as a source of livelihood for residents in addition to farming (Apiati, Heryani, & Muslim, 2019; Yasri et al., 2024).

The Sundanese people generally inhabit the regions of West Java and Banten. This area is also referred to as *Tanah Pasundan* or *Tatar Sunda*. The Sundanese ethnic community has traditionally used the Sundanese language and its dialects in everyday life. Many Sundanese people inhabit mountainous areas, leading some communities to refer to themselves as "mountain people." According to Koesoemadinata, Sundanese people have a strong affinity with the mountains. This is demonstrated by their daily activities of farming and raising livestock in mountainous regions (Rosidi et al., 2006, pp. 59–65). Sundanese oral literary arts, particularly traditional songs, frequently feature themes related to mountains or mountain life. In the past, the Sundanese were known as shifting cultivators, and the local wisdom of the Kanekes Sundanese community developed from the long experience of farming communities closely connected to their environment (Indrawardana, 2012). This tradition can still be found in several indigenous communities living in mountainous areas, such as the Baduy indigenous community in Kanekes, Banten, and the Kampung Naga indigenous community in Tasikmalaya. The people of Kampung Naga utilize bamboo for household equipment and crafts sold to tourists while continuing to adhere to *pamali* (Indrianeu et al., 2022). Nevertheless, they face the challenges of globalization and must balance the preservation of tradition with adaptation to change (Yasri et al., 2024).

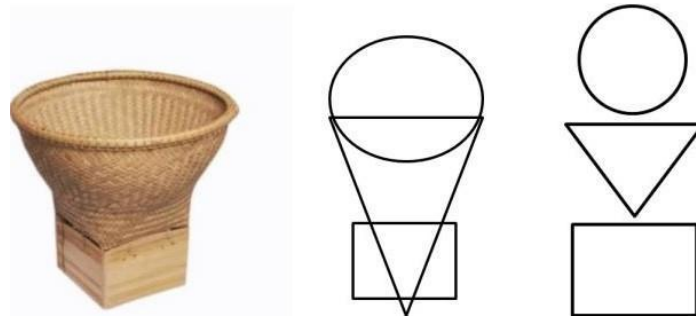


Figure 1. Form of the Boboko

The cultural civilization of the Sundanese people continues to evolve along with changing times. The Sundanese also have a tradition of crafts or handicrafts used to fulfill their everyday needs. One of the crafts originating from the civilization of traditional Sundanese communities is the boboko. This craft functions as a rice container and is made from woven bamboo. The boboko consists of three main parts: a square-shaped base, a body based on a conical form, and an opening based on a circular form. Sundanese cosmology recognizes Pohaci Sanghyang Asri as the goddess of rice. The form of the boboko represents an effort by Sundanese communities to honor and revere Pohaci Sanghyang Asri. In modern Sundanese visual culture, the boboko has three basic geometric forms: square, triangle, and circle.

These three basic forms are used in Sundanese language expressions (*babasan*) and proverbs (*paribasa*) that contain profound meanings and philosophies. The Sundanese expression associated with the square form is *Hirup Kudu Masagi*. The square form is known in Sundanese as *masagi*. This expression conveys the advice that life should be lived with versatility and competence in many areas. The expression *jelema masagi* can also be used to refer to a person who possesses many abilities and has few shortcomings. The expression associated with the circular form is *Niat kudu buleud*, which means that one's intention must be firm or wholehearted. The circular form is known in Sundanese as *buleud*. This expression conveys advice concerning firmness of attitude, conviction, and belief, which ultimately relates to matters of faith or spirituality. The Sundanese expression associated with the triangular form is *bale nyuncung* or *buana nyuncung*. Among traditional Sundanese communities, particularly the Baduy of Kanekes, Banten, this term refers to a sacred place of worship for honoring deities or *hyang*. The triangular or *nyuncung* form represents a mountain or *meru*. Traditional communities of the Indonesian archipelago have believed that mountains are the dwelling places of deities and the sacred spirits of ancestors (Jamaludin, 2011, pp. 8–11).

Based on the discussion above, these three basic forms used in traditional Sundanese expressions within the cultural aesthetic tradition share a common meaning related to perfection. The square or *masagi* symbolizes perfection of behavior in creating a complete or ideal human being. The circle or *buleud* symbolizes perfection of belief or inner ideology. The triangle or *nyuncung* symbolizes a sacred place that represents a medium for transforming the perfection of the life cycle.

This demonstrates that the boboko is a cultural heritage passed down from ancestors and embodies local wisdom containing meanings and philosophies concerning valuable teachings for human life. At present, however, some members of society no longer understand and are beginning to abandon this valuable cultural heritage. The contemporary world is no longer concerned only with expressive art but also with design, which places greater emphasis

on the functionality of artistic and aesthetic products (Albahi H. D., 2021). Therefore, efforts are needed to preserve the cultural heritage of the Indonesian archipelago so that it remains protected from disappearing from contemporary civilization and can be passed on to future generations.

Kosakriya emerges as a symbolic expression of the craftsperson's inner experience, expressed materially through visual media containing aesthetic and ethical dimensions, philosophical relationships, and customary norms that can serve as references in the process of humanization (Toekio, Guntur, & Sjafi'i, 2007, p. 25). The creation of this artwork represents an expression of inner experience concerning the preservation of local wisdom and the cultural heritage of boboko crafts from traditional Sundanese communities through the medium of batik design. The purpose of this creative process is to produce batik motif designs whose sources of inspiration are derived from the form of the boboko bamboo-woven craft. Through the meanings and philosophies embedded in these batik motif designs, it is expected that this work can increase public knowledge and awareness of ancestral cultural heritage, particularly the boboko craft. The creation of these works is also expected to enrich the repertoire of Indonesian batik design, particularly in the West Java region.

METHOD

The creation of the artwork employs Susanne K. Langer's concept of non-visual art creation, which explains that an artwork is a form of expression of feelings or inner experiences created for individual perception through the senses and imagery. The creation of this artwork applies a conservation concept with a reinterpretation approach as the conceptual foundation for developing the motifs. The story or narrative idea serves as the basis for the artistic development process (Dharsono, 2016, p. 105). In this creative process, the *boboko* craft serves as the source of inspiration for the creation of batik fabric motifs. The method employed in this artistic design process consists of three stages: exploration, design, and formation.

The first stage is the exploration stage. A literature review related to the theme is conducted to develop the artistic concept underlying the creation of the work. The second stage is the design stage, or the artistic creation process. This stage consists of experimentation, contemplation, and formation. The experimentation process involves trials with materials, tools, techniques, and compositional arrangements. This process determines the qualities required in accordance with the expressive objectives of the artwork (Dharsono, 2016, p. 17). The contemplation stage involves the artist's inner exploration in seeking and discovering symbols or metaphorical language that will become icons in the process of creating the artwork (Dharsono, 2016, p. 16). This contemplation process applies the conservation-based art creation concept with a reinterpretation approach. The craftsperson employs this concept to express traditional idioms through an expressive framework with a thematic orientation (Dharsono, 2016, p. 40). The form of the *boboko* undergoes a creative transformation through a stylization technique to produce batik design motifs. These motifs represent symbolic expressions of inner experience resulting from a process of searching and discovery through imagination. The motifs are subsequently developed through a creative process to produce motif pattern sketches.

The motif pattern sketches consist of main motifs, supporting motifs, and filling motifs. The formation stage in the contemplation process involves arranging the composition of visual elements, which is always related to the principles and rules of composition (Dharsono, 2016,

p. 35). The realization stage in this creative process is carried out by arranging the motif pattern sketches using a repetition technique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This creative research resulted in batik design works featuring boboko motifs. In traditional Sundanese language, the word boboko refers to a utensil used as a rice container. This meaning serves as the basis for the boboko theme, which becomes the source of inspiration for the creation of these artworks. The exploration stage was conducted by transforming the form of the boboko utensil into several alternative batik motif sketches. The transformation of the form employed a stylization technique through imagination, which was expressed on a flat, two-dimensional visual plane. The following table presents the results of experiments in transforming the form of the boboko utensil into the main batik motifs.

The motif pattern structure in these designs consists of main motifs, supporting motifs, and filling motifs. The main motif is the primary component of the batik design structure. It represents the central theme of the design and contains specific meanings and philosophical values. The supporting motif functions to enhance the beauty of the motif structure while reinforcing the main theme. Meanwhile, the filling motif functions to enrich the beauty of the pattern design, creating an aesthetic and dynamic appearance. These three types of motifs form the overall pattern structure of the boboko batik designs.

Table 1. Transformation of Motif Sketches

Form of the Boboko Utensil	No.	Boboko Batik Motif Experiment
	1.	
	2.	
	3.	

The main motif used in the design was the second alternative motif. This decision was based on considerations of aesthetics and production techniques. The main motif was subsequently developed by combining it with supporting and filling motifs to produce a batik

pattern design. Once the batik pattern had been established, it was further processed using repetition techniques to create the overall arrangement of the batik design. The resulting arrangement was also developed through color combinations intended to enhance both its aesthetic qualities and philosophical meanings, producing an attractive visual impression.

Boboko Masagi Motif

The first motif pattern consists of a main motif, supporting motifs, and filling motifs. The main motif is a *boboko* motif positioned in the central area and enclosed by filling motifs consisting of a combination of curved lines at the top and bottom and horizontal lines on the right and left sides, forming a square-shaped field. This combination of visual components creates a flexible, harmonious, and aesthetic impression. Based on these characteristics, this motif is referred to as the boboko masagi motif.

The supporting motifs are positioned above and below the main motif, closely framing it. These supporting motifs take the form of ellipses and diamonds resembling grains of rice, thereby reinforcing the main theme of the creation. The supporting motifs are arranged toward the four cardinal directions: north, south, east, and west. This arrangement is related to one of the basic forms of the *boboko* utensil, namely the square, which has four corners. The supporting motifs are surrounded by filling motifs consisting of dots, combinations of curved lines, and diagonal lines, creating a dynamic, flexible, and aesthetic impression. The main motif is larger than the other motifs, making it visually prominent and serving as the focal point of the design.

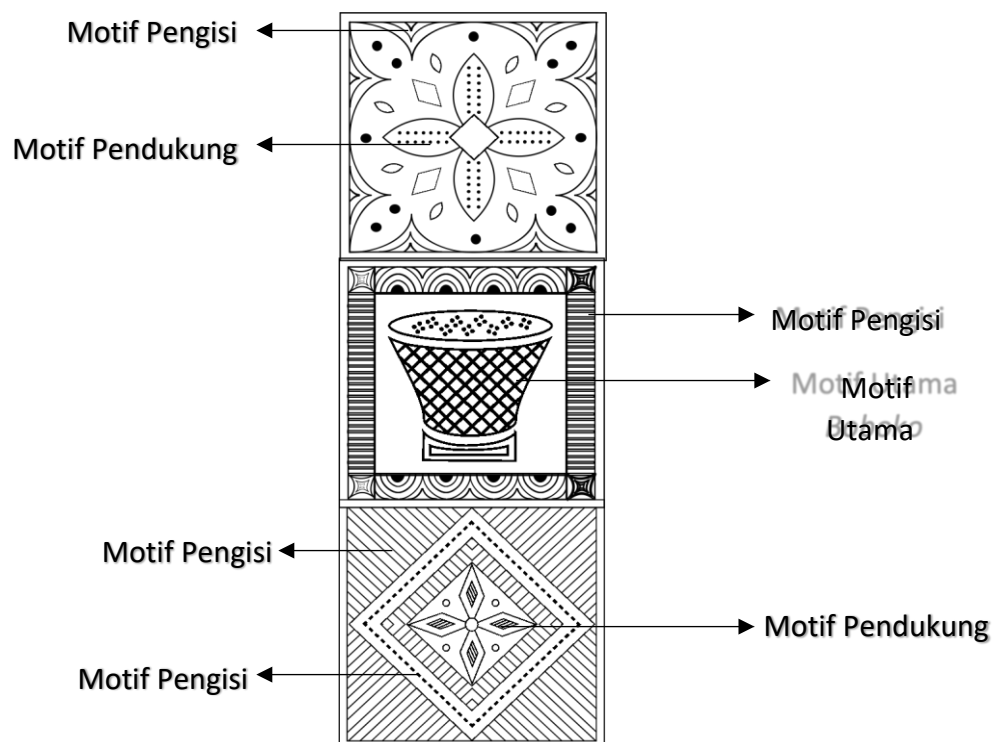


Figure 2. Structure of the First Motif Pattern

The first motif pattern uses the classic batik color combination of black or indigo blue, brown, and white. The *boboko* motif in the main motif uses brown for its lines, which is associated with the color of woven bamboo, the primary material used to make the utensil.

White dots are placed on the upper part of the motif, resembling grains of rice and reinforcing the main theme.

Indigo blue is used as the background of the main motif, creating a harmonious impression. The filling motifs are dominated by brown, providing balance to the overall color combination and creating an aesthetic appearance. Black is used as the background in the supporting-motif pattern, while the filling motifs are dominated by white accents. This arrangement creates visual contrast and produces an attractive and aesthetic impression.

The motif pattern is processed using a repetition technique, with one step in the vertical direction and three-fifths of a step in the horizontal direction. This arrangement produces a dynamic and attractive pattern design. The boboko masagi motif conveys the meaning that a person should possess multiple abilities or be versatile in navigating everyday life in order to achieve prosperity and well-being.



Figure 3. First Motif Pattern: Boboko Masagi



Figure 4. Boboko Masagi Batik Motif Design

Boboko Buleud Motif

The second motif pattern consists of a main motif, supporting motifs, and filling motifs. The main motif is a *boboko* positioned in the center of a circular field and surrounded by supporting and filling motifs. These motifs are arranged along the outer edges of the main motif. Based on this arrangement, the second motif pattern is referred to as the boboko buleud motif.

The supporting motifs consist of elliptical forms arranged toward the four cardinal directions, with a central point at the middle. These supporting motifs closely frame the main motif. The supporting and filling motifs take circular and elliptical forms resembling grains of rice, consistent with the central theme of the creation. The combination of these visual elements creates a harmonious and aesthetic impression. On the outer side of the circular field, filling motifs in the form of diamonds with curved lines are arranged to resemble the woven bamboo structure of the *boboko* utensil. These elements reinforce the main theme while enhancing the beauty of the motif pattern. The main motif is larger than the other motifs, making it visually prominent and serving as the focal point of the pattern.



Figure 5. Structure of the Second Motif Pattern

The second motif pattern uses the classic batik color combination of black or indigo blue, brown, and white. The *boboko* motif in the main motif uses brown for its lines, which is associated with the woven bamboo used as the primary material of the utensil. White dots are placed on the upper part of the motif, resembling grains of rice and reinforcing the main theme.

Black-blue is used as the background of the circular field in the main motif, creating a harmonious impression. The supporting motifs are dominated by brown, providing balance to the overall color combination and producing an aesthetic appearance. Indigo blue is used as the background for the overall motif pattern, while the filling motifs are dominated by white accents. This arrangement creates visual contrast, resulting in an attractive and aesthetic composition.

The motif pattern is developed using a repetition technique in both the vertical and horizontal directions, with one step of repetition in each direction. This creates a dynamic and attractive pattern design. The *boboko* buleud motif conveys the meaning that a person should possess strong determination in pursuing their aspirations in everyday life in order to achieve prosperity and well-being.



Figure 6. Second Motif Pattern: Boboko Buleud



Figure 7. Boboko Buleud Batik Motif Design

Boboko Nyuncung Motif

The third motif pattern consists of the main motif, supporting motifs, and filling motifs. The main motif is a *boboko* positioned at the center of a pointed triangular field and surrounded by supporting and filling motifs arranged along the edges of the triangle. Based on this arrangement, the motif is referred to as the *boboko nyuncung* motif.

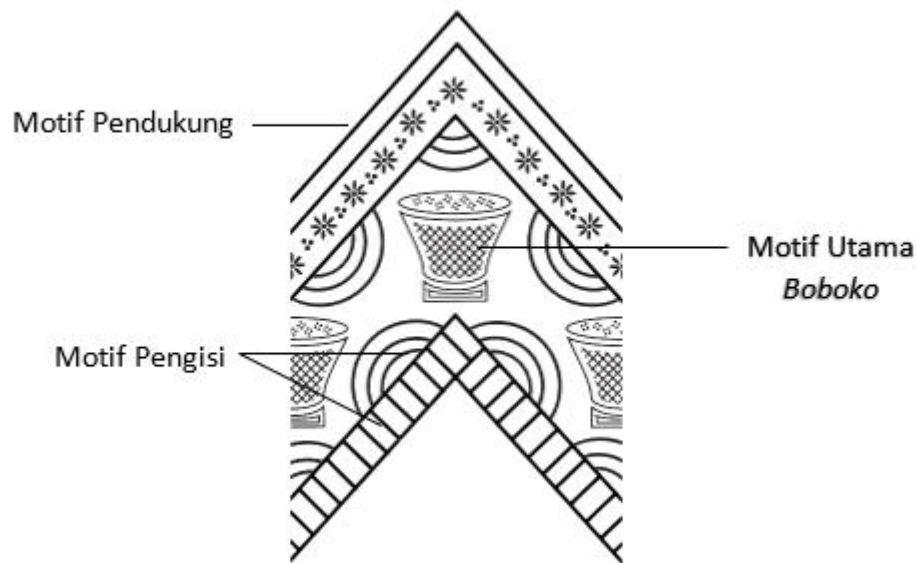


Figure 8. Structure of the Third Motif Pattern: Boboko Nyuncung Motif

The supporting motifs consist of elliptical forms arranged in eight directions, with a central point as their focal element. These motifs are positioned above the main motif and follow the pointed triangular shape. The supporting motifs, which are round and elliptical in form, resemble rice grains. Meanwhile, the filling motif consists of three layers of curved lines positioned between and below the main motifs, following the triangular shape.

The combination of these motifs creates an aesthetically pleasing composition with a dynamic and varied visual impression. The main motif is made larger than the supporting and filling motifs so that it becomes the focal point of the overall composition. The colors used in this motif are the classic batik colors of black, indigo, brown, and white. The *boboko* motif and the curved-line filling motifs are rendered in white against an indigo background, creating a harmonious and dynamic impression. The pointed triangular field is dark brown with a black background, producing a visually striking and firm appearance. White accents in the supporting motifs emphasize their rice-grain-like forms. The bright white main motif contrasts with the darker background, making it the focal point of the composition. Overall, the colors are arranged in a balanced and harmonious manner.



Figure 9. Third Motif Pattern: Boboko Nyuncung



Figure 10. Boboko Nyuncung Batik Motif Design

CONCLUSION

The rapid development of globalization has contributed to the declining recognition of traditional crafts and the meanings embodied within them. Therefore, efforts to preserve traditional crafts are necessary to ensure that their cultural values and philosophical meanings remain recognized and understood by future generations.

Boboko, one of the traditional crafts of the Sundanese community, has three distinctive forms: square, triangular, and circular. These forms symbolize different dimensions of perfection. The square form, represented by *boboko masagi*, symbolizes perfection in behavior and reflects the ideal of a complete human being. The circular form, represented by *boboko buleud*, symbolizes perfection in belief or inner ideology. Meanwhile, the pointed triangular form, represented by *boboko nyuncung*, symbolizes a sacred place and the transformation of perfection throughout the life cycle.

This study aimed to produce batik fabric designs inspired by the woven-bamboo form of the *boboko*. The creative process resulted in three batik designs, namely *boboko masagi*, *boboko buleud*, and *boboko nyuncung*. The *boboko masagi* motif conveys the meaning that individuals should possess diverse abilities and be versatile in everyday life in order to achieve prosperity and wellbeing. The *boboko buleud* motif conveys the meaning that individuals should have strong determination in pursuing their aspirations in order to achieve prosperity and wellbeing. Meanwhile, the *boboko nyuncung* motif conveys the meaning that individuals should have a devoted and dedicated heart and diligently worship Almighty God in their daily lives in order to achieve prosperity and wellbeing.

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