

Design of the Decorative Motifs Embun Sikawiten and Bindu Natogog on Ready to Wear Clothing Made of Checkered Batik

Netty Juliana

Vocational Teacher Training Program, Faculty of Engineering,
Medan State University
Indonesia

Abstract - The Berastagi region is rich in decorative motifs found in the carvings of traditional Karo houses. The aim of this study was to translate the Embun Sikawit and Bindu Natogog motifs into Karo batik patterns for ready-to-wear clothing. The methodology employed is the SP Gustami method, a three-stage fashion design process: exploration, design, and implementation. The study aims to expand the diversity of batik patterns in Indonesia, particularly in North Sumatra, and to develop a wide range of ready-to-wear clothing that reflects cultural values and meets the needs of the population. Furthermore, the study aims to contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage of the Karo region of Berastagi, which is increasingly being lost due to modern developments and technologies.

Key Words: Embun Sikawit, Bindu Natogog, clothing, batik, Karo

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia boasts a rich cultural heritage and diverse traditions, including the textile art of batik. Each region of Indonesia presents batik patterns with unique characteristics that reflect history, mythology, customs, environmental conditions, and local knowledge. This local knowledge plays a crucial role in preserving the country's cultural diversity. Regional batik motifs serve not only as decoration but also as symbols of identity, distinguishing individual communities. Through the motifs and patterns they create, communities not only maintain their cultural identity but also communicate their regional character to the public (Widiastuti et al., 2024).

The popularity of batik began to increase in the late 18th century. The emergence of stamp batik marked the beginning of the industrial age and introduced a new batik technique. This technique significantly influenced the development of the batik industry, as it enabled a faster process and lower prices. Creative batik arose from the desire to further develop batik motifs (Artiwi & Widyastuti, 2021).

Each motif, color, and manufacturing technique carries its own philosophical meaning and reflects the cultural background of its region of origin. Over time, batik has evolved beyond traditional Javanese motifs, incorporating innovations through the adoption of cultural elements from various regions of Indonesia.

According to Ayda & Astuti (2020), ready-to-wear clothing is garment that can be worn easily without the tailoring or individual designs common in haute couture or bespoke tailoring. Nurfirdausiah & Katiah (2020), on the other hand, define ready-to-wear clothing as clothing that emphasizes comfort and usability and is suitable for both everyday wear and festive occasions. Ready-to-wear clothing is not limited to a single style. It is typically characterized by simple cuts and patterns. Furthermore, the materials used are efficient and readily available. Various innovations, such as fabric processing techniques or surface designs, can be employed to create unique and distinctive ready-to-wear clothing.

Several studies have shown that the stamped batik technique can be applied to any region through the development of decorative motifs from North Sumatra. Previous research examined the quality of checkered woven motifs applied to fabrics using hand-drawn and stamped batik techniques. Five fabrics with checkered woven motifs resulted in innovative, high-quality products through the application of these techniques (Soliyanti, 2014).

Revalina Ananda Ginting (2025) designed 14 batik fabrics measuring 100 cm × 100 cm for use as interior decorative elements. The 14 fabrics included two checkered, nias, toba, pakpak, malay, simalungun, and mandailing motifs each. The results of this work demonstrate that traditional North Sumatran motifs can be further developed into aesthetically valuable works that strengthen cultural identity in the field of interior design.

Based on this foundation, a checkered batik design was created in the present study, incorporating the decorative motifs Embun Sikawiten and Bindu Natogog as decorative elements in ready-to-wear clothing. The aim of the study is to promote creativity in transforming traditional decorative motifs into modern fashion designs while preserving cultural values and local knowledge. Furthermore, the decorative motifs of traditional checkered house carvings are integrated into modern batik clothing with local aesthetic value.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Karo batik designs using the stamping technique on ready-to-wear clothing employ the design method developed by Sp Gustami, as outlined in the book "Butir-Buku Mutiara Estetika Timur" (The Pearls of Eastern Aesthetics). Karo batik designs using the stamping technique on ready-to-wear clothing are divided into three main stages:

1. Exploration Stage

First, the exploration stage involves exploring sources of ideas through problem identification and exploration; gathering and collecting reference sources; and processing and analyzing data to draw important conclusions that serve as the basis for design solutions (Gustami, 2007:333).

The exploration stage consists of two steps: first, data collection based on field studies to identify the problem formulation that requires problem solving. Second, the exploration of theoretical foundations, references, and sources to obtain concepts and solutions to the problems used as the basis for the design.

2. Design Stage

Second, the design stage is carried out through the analysis of key points, followed by the visualization of ideas expressed in alternative forms to determine the best option used as a reference for implementation (Gustami, 2007:333).

The design stage is carried out in two steps: first, the design process involves converting ideas into two-dimensional visual sketches through visual exploration, and second, the development of a three-dimensional prototype based on the selected sketches, which serves as a reference for the final product implementation stage.

3. The implementation stage:

Third, the implementation stage produces a prototype, which is the process of applying the ideas from alternative sketches to create the artwork desired by the designer (Gustami, 2007:333).

The implementation stage is carried out in two steps: first, the product is manufactured based on a refined design, based on the implementation of a prototype model deemed satisfactory, and then an evaluation of the final product to assess the concept's suitability to the initial design objectives.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This design concept is based on an exploratory study of the decorative carvings of traditional Karo houses in Berastagi. The Karo live in the Karo Highlands of North Sumatra in Indonesia and are the largest ethnic group in the region. Tanah Karo is therefore located in the Karo Governorate (Ginting, 2014, 1–2).

Traditional houses are rich in decorative carvings, the preservation and development of which needs to be spearheaded by the younger generation to prevent the loss of Karo cultural heritage due to modern developments and technologies. According to Gustami (1980:4), decorative motifs are part of a work of art that is consciously created for decorative purposes. They fulfill an explicit function: they serve practical application and increase the aesthetic value of an object, making it more attractive and appealing, both spiritually and materially. According to Sunaryo (2009), decorative motifs in traditional art contain both aesthetic values and philosophical messages associated with community life.

The decorative motifs of traditional Karo houses were developed into batik fabrics for ready-to-wear clothing, including the Embun Sikawiten and Bindu Natogog motifs. According to the Karo, the Embun Sikawiten motif has a philosophical meaning and is closely related to the values of

inner peace, peace of mind and the hope for a better life. Tau, as a symbol of nature, represents renewal and freshness, while the orderly arrangement of motifs symbolizes order, balance and harmony in life. Thus, these motifs not only offer visual beauty but also convey a moral message about the importance of balance, patience and hope in life.



Figure 1. Roof of a Karo house (Sikavite rope carving)

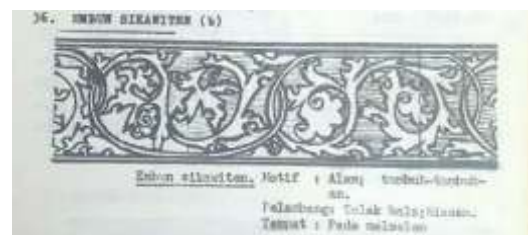


Figure 2. Sikawiten Dew

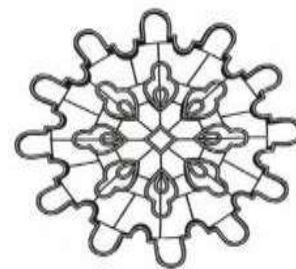


Figure 3. Design of Sikawiten Dew Decorative Motifs

Bindu Natogog is the counterpart to the footprint of King Solomon. According to legend, Bindu Natogog was Solomon's wife, hence the arrangement of the two gerga (pillars) side by side. The Bindu Natogog gerga represents a distorted version of Solomon. Furthermore, according to the Karo people, the decorative Bindu Natogog motif symbolizes connection or unity, with "Bindu" being interpreted as a point or center. Thus, the Bindu Natogog motif is understood as the center of life, connecting and balancing.

Based on this description, the Embun Sikawit Bindu Natogog motif can be understood as a fusion of aesthetic and philosophical elements from local wisdom. Its use in batik and ready-to-wear clothing not only enhances the appearance but also reinforces the cultural values and local identity it embodies.



Figure 4. Picture of a Karo Traditional House Wall



Figure 5. Bindu Natogog

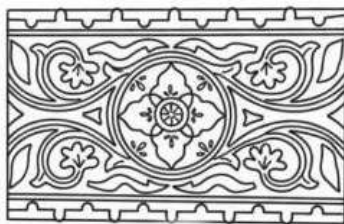


Figure 6. Design of Bindu Natogog

In the study of batik decorative motifs, motifs play a crucial role as representations of cultural values and societal philosophies. According to Rens Heringa (2018), batik motifs are visual forms that reflect the interconnectedness between humans, nature, and cultural value systems. Furthermore, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (2020) explains that traditional batik motifs are inseparable from symbolic meanings passed down through generations.

Thus, the Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten motifs serve not only as decorative elements in batik but also as symbols of life values emphasizing connection, harmony, and balance. Their use in ready-to-wear clothing adds value not only aesthetically but also strengthens cultural identity and the philosophical meanings they contain.

Ready-to-wear clothing is clothing that is ready to wear. According to Kharimah & Nursari (2019), ready-to-wear clothing is clothing produced without regard for waste in its production process and where the manufacturing process is based on standard or general measurements, resulting in a product that can be marketed as a ready-to-wear product. Ready-to-Wear clothing is designed to meet broad market needs through mass production systems and standard sizes. The manufacturing process is carried out efficiently to produce uniform, practical, and ready-to-wear products without the need for special adjustments.

Ready-to-Wear clothing prioritizes production efficiency, standard sizes, and ready-to-wear to meet broad market needs. Mass production systems allow clothing to be produced in large quantities with uniform models and sizes, making it more practical and economical. Ready-to-Wear clothing is designed to be purchased and worn immediately by consumers without additional adjustments. Therefore, Ready-to-Wear clothing plays a vital role in the development of the fashion industry, enabling it to reach various market segments while keeping pace with evolving trends.

This conceptual background motivated the author to create creativity and innovation in Karo batik ready-to-wear clothing as a representation of the cultural richness of Karo Regency in clothing pieces that have local cultural value and support sustainable principles. The Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten decorative motifs are reworked in a deformative style as a form of exploration adapted to the characteristics of the stamped batik technique.

The design of Karo Batik motifs on Ready To Wear Clothing is carried out by making two-dimensional visual sketches of batik motifs with the design of the placement of Embun Sikawiten and Bindu Natogog motifs on the fabric to be made. Furthermore, visual sketches of motifs and prototype designs as a reference for the realization of stamped batik works are based on the application of design principles consisting of the principle of balance, the principle of rhythm, and the principle of unity.

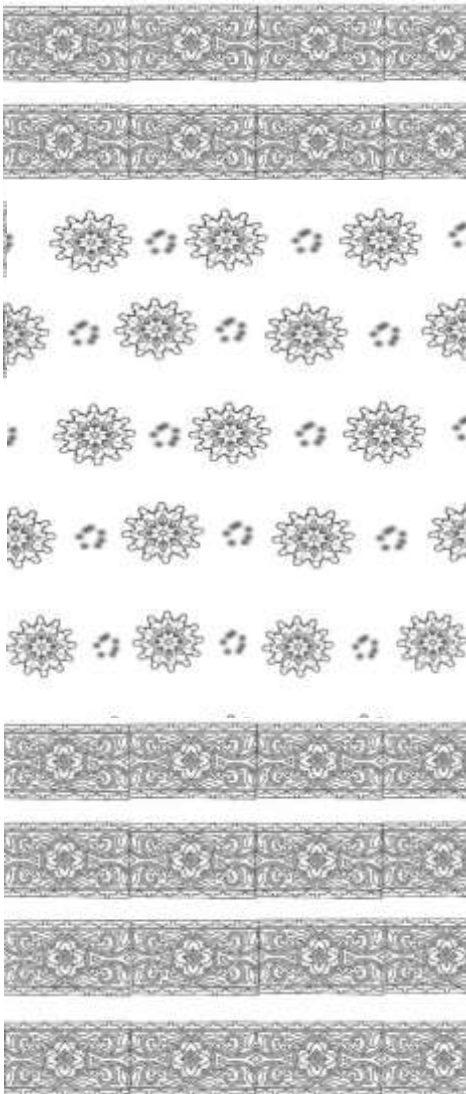


Figure 7. Motif Pattern on Fabric (300cmx106cm)



Figure 8. Embun Sikawiten & Bindu Natogog Fabric Design (300cm x 106cm)



The next stage is designing the shape sketch and Technical Drawing of the front view of the ready-to-wear casual clothing and the back view of the clothing design by applying the Embun Sikawiten & Bindu Natogog motif to the clothing. The following is a casual clothing design with the Embun Sikawiten & Bindu Natogog motif:

Figure 9. Front of Clothing Design
(Karo Batak Ethnic Clothing Design)



Figure 10. Back of the dress design

Design Analysis

Style	:Ready toWear
Detail	1. A-line silhouette 2. Shirt collar 3. Shoulder cutouts 4. Front opening with wrap buttons 5. Belt with Bindu Natogog motif
Fashion accessories	: Obi Belt
Material	: Primisima Cotton
Wearability	: Ready-to-Wear Clothing

Table 1. Design Analysis

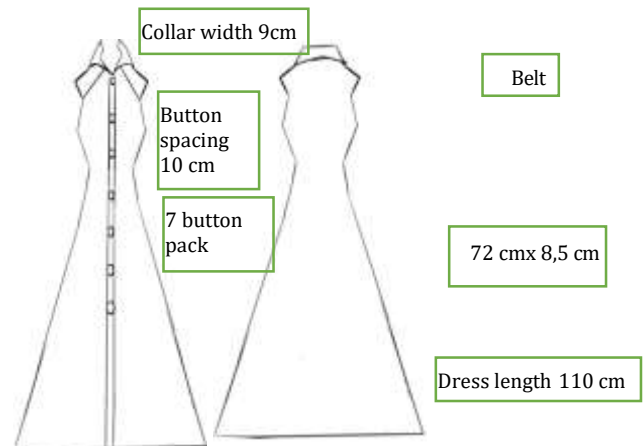
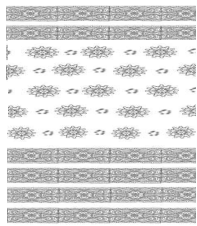
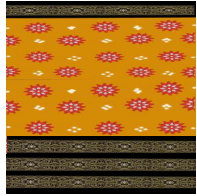


Figure 11. Technical Drawing

Based on the realization stage, the process of making stamped batik is carried out in several steps, namely as follows:

No.	Activity Description	Documentation
1	Making a sketch of a stamped batik motif with the Bindu Natogog decorative motif and the Embun Sikawiten decorative motif	
	Fabric design with Dew Sikawiten and Bindu Natogog motifs with dimensions (300cm x 106cm)	
2	Material Preparation Second, prepare the materials that will be used to make batik, namely Primisima Cotton.	
3	Determining the placement of batik motifs on the cloth is adjusted to the pattern that has been made.	
4	1. Batik stamping activity on cloth 2. Coloring motifs and backgrounds on cloth	

		
5	The activity of water-glassing batik cloth and drying the cloth until dry.	
6	The activity of washing batik, rinsing it and drying the batik until it is dry.	
7	Photographing activities of finished batik cloth	

Table 2. Activities in the Stamped Batik Making Process

The stages of realization based on the process of making ready to wear casual clothing involve several steps, as follows:

1	Fashion design is the initial stage in the process of making ready to wear.	
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	Back of the dress design	
2	Pattern making is the process of drawing the design of clothing parts on pattern paper according to the specified dimensions.	
3	Ironing removes creases and creates a flat surface before cutting. Ironing transfers the pattern lines from the paper to the fabric.	
4	Cutting the material is done after the pattern is transferred to the fabric. And cutting must follow the pattern lines precisely to avoid size errors.	
5	Sewing is the process of joining individual pieces of fabric into a complete garment. This process includes joining the body, attaching sleeves and collars, and overlocking to neaten the edges.	
6	Finishing is the final stage in garment production. This stage involves checking the overall stitching, cutting off excess thread, and final ironing.	

Table 3. Ready-to-Wear Casual Clothing Manufacturing Process

Product Results

The final product of Embun Sikawiten and Bindu Natogog's ready-to-wear clothing.



Figure 12. Fashion Results

The Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten decorative motifs are designed as stamped batik motifs for ready-to-wear clothing. This work is expected to expand the exploration of stamped batik motifs and reinforce the message of sustainability. As a manifestation of the balance between sustainability and cultural richness, the Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten decorative motifs can be translated into hand-drawn batik designs for casual wear. Hand-drawn batik has a unique characteristic in its motifs, which are beyond the reach of stamped batik techniques. The design of these two hand-drawn batik motifs utilizes a conceptual approach that links the visual identity of batik, a symbol of the Berastagi region of Karo, as a principle of sustainability in the textile production process.

Aesthetically, hand-drawn batik is a motif that embodies the historical narrative of the Karo region, and motifs produced using this stamped batik method are never exactly the same. The complexity of hand-drawn batik motif designs contributes to its high price. This type of batik is worn by dignitaries and aristocrats as a symbol of luxury. Technically, hand-drawn batik is created by hand using a canting (hand-drawn batik) tool to apply wax to the batik pattern. Therefore, creating hand-drawn batik requires meticulous care and patience, as every point in the motif influences the final result (Herry Lisbijanto 2013: 10-12).

The final product is a ready-to-wear women's garment, taking into account the characteristics of the fabric: its soft texture, good sweat absorption, and comfort as casual wear. Ready-to-wear clothing offers ample scope for motif exploration, making it an ideal medium for conveying the visual message of batik. The ready-to-wear clothing designs produced from this design are expected to have high functional value. The market segment for these ready-to-wear products is aimed at adult women aged 25-40. These ready-to-wear batik products can attract consumers who care about the environmental values of regional culture and desire products with aesthetic value.

The work is realized in ready-to-wear clothing with two variations of stamped batik motifs. The designs for the Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten decorative motifs were successfully visualized in their entirety using the stamped batik technique. The structure of the Karo batik motifs provides a visual strength not found in other common batiks.

3. CONCLUSIONS

This design generates creativity and innovation through the development of the Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten decorative motifs applied to ready-to-wear clothing. The inspiration for this design stems from the decorative carvings of traditional Karo houses in the Berastagi area. This approach serves as a sustainable approach and serves to preserve Karo culture through the creation of aesthetically pleasing textile products. The visual adaptation of the Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten decorative motifs, representing the Berastagi locale, is a key element in the design, while the ready-to-wear form was chosen for its functionality and broad potential for visualizing the motifs.

To achieve the desired results, this ready-to-wear batik design targeted a specific market: adult women aged 25-40. The limited production system was chosen to provide exclusive value to consumers seeking aesthetic and distinctive designs. The aesthetic aspect focuses on the development of the Bindu Natogog and Embun Sikawiten motifs, which are rarely explored in stamped batik. Therefore, creativity and innovation are required to produce a diverse range of batik motifs. On the technical side, the combination of primsissima cotton as the material of choice to increase the strength of the fabric and provide optimal comfort and visual quality.

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