

Research Article

The Meaning and Function of Ornaments in Bridal Make-Up in Terms of the Boh Gaca Tradition in Beutong Sub-District, Nagan Raya District, Aceh Province

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the philosophical meanings and functions of ornaments in bridal makeup based on the Boh Gaca tradition in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, Aceh Province. Boh Gaca is a ritual of applying henna with distinctive motifs passed down through generations. The study employs ethnographic methods with a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the symbolic meanings and cultural values embedded in these ornaments. Levi Strauss's structuralism theory serves as the main framework, supported by Clifford Geertz's symbolism theory, Bronislaw Malinowski's functionalism, and Edward Shils's theory of cultural preservation. The findings reveal that Boh Gaca motifs, such as geometric patterns and floral designs, carry deep philosophical meanings, symbolizing harmony, fertility, and hopes for a happy household. This tradition also serves as a symbol of social status and cultural identity for the Acehnese community. The younger generation plays a crucial role in sustaining this tradition, despite facing challenges such as lack of interest, modernization influences, and limited educational media. Innovation and intergenerational collaboration, along with the use of social media, are key strategies in maintaining the existence of Boh Gaca. The conclusion of this study affirms that Boh Gaca is not merely an aesthetic ornament, but a cultural heritage rich in symbolic and social values that must continue to be preserved.

Keywords: Boh Gaca; Ornament; Bridal Makeup; Cultural Symbols; Tradition Preservation

1. INTRODUCTION

The wedding culture in Aceh is part of a rich cultural heritage and has deep social and religious values. In every Acehnese traditional wedding procession, bridal makeup plays an important role as a symbol of social status, cultural identity, and a manifestation of traditional values that are upheld by the community. One tradition that is still preserved in Acehnese bridal makeup is Boh Gaca, which is the ritual of applying henna to the bride and groom. This tradition is not just an aesthetic decoration, but also contains deep philosophical meaning, reflecting beauty, purity, and hope for a harmonious household life. Each henna carving motif applied in Boh Gaca has its own meaning that is passed down from generation to generation, making this tradition an integral part of the cultural identity of the Acehnese people, especially in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency (Hasan et al., 2024; Mulyadi & Herdianto, 2022; Wasiul et al., 2024).

Etymologically, Gaca in Indonesian means henna. Henna comes from the essence of henna leaves which are finely ground using a grinding stone until they become a paste which is then applied to the hands, fingers, and feet of the bride. Although currently Boh Gaca is more synonymous with wedding ceremonies, initially this tradition was also carried out in a series of circumcision rituals. Each henna carving has a different pattern depending on the area of origin. Bride and groom, thus showing the richness of decorative motifs in Acehnese culture. From generation to generation, these motifs are passed down as a symbol of the elegance and purity of the prospective bride. In practice, Boh Gaca is not only limited to makeup, but also contains prayers and good hopes for couples who will enter married life (Hasanah & Moulidya, 2022; Manan & Arifin, 2019; Zulfikri Usman & Hasan, 2022).

The history of Boh Gaca in Aceh began with the tradition of beautifying the bride-to-be through a special ceremony known as Malam Berinai. This ceremony used to be carried out for four to seven consecutive nights, where the bride would be given henna on her fingernails, palms, toenails, and soles of her feet. This procession was carried out at night and led by an expert in the use of henna leaves and an elder in the family. This was intended so that the ceremony would be blessed and run smoothly. Malam Berinai began with the peusujuk (plain flour) ritual as a form of prayer and good wishes. In Acehnese traditional bridal makeup, the ornaments used in Boh Gaca not only have an aesthetic function, but also contain

symbolic values that are closely related to customs and religious values. These ornaments reflect the social status of the bride, strengthen cultural identity, and are a form of respect for ancestors.

In addition to the philosophical meaning, the function of ornaments in Boh Gaca is also closely related to the social and cultural aspects of the Beutong community, Nagan Raya Regency. This tradition is not only part of the local cultural identity, but also has economic value for the local community. Henna carving craftsmen and bridal make-up artists have an important role in preserving this tradition, while creating economic opportunities for people involved in the traditional bridal make-up industry. With the growing traditional wedding industry, Boh Gaca has also become one of the main attractions in the Acehese traditional wedding procession which is still maintained today (Taslina, 2022). However, along with the development of the times and the entry of modernization influences, the Boh Gaca tradition has experienced various challenges in its sustainability. The younger generation living in the era of globalization tends to be more interested in modern beauty trends compared to traditional rituals such as Boh Gaca. This has resulted in a shift in the meaning and practice of this tradition, where many prospective brides choose other beauty methods that are more practical compared to the night procession that requires a long time and process. In addition, modernization has also had an impact on the shift in religious values in society, where some people have begun to question the relevance of Boh Gaca from an Islamic perspective. However, most Acehese people still consider Boh Gaca as part of a cultural heritage that has spiritual and religious values, because this ritual is carried out with prayers and good wishes for the bride and groom.

Boh Gaca preservation is a shared responsibility between families, traditional elders, and local governments. Efforts to document and revitalize local culture are essential so that this tradition is not lost over time. Local governments and cultural institutions have an important role in educating the public about the importance of preserving cultural heritage, both through cultural festivals, training for the younger generation, and scientific publications that can introduce this tradition to a wider audience. In addition, the involvement of the younger generation in understanding and appreciating the Boh Gaca tradition is essential so that this culture can survive and be passed on to the next generation (Husna, 2017).

Various previous studies have examined Boh Gaca from various perspectives, such as the deconstruction of the meaning of henna use in Jacques Derrida's study (Situmeang, 2016), symbolism in the marriage customs of the Seunagan community (Aini & Amri, 2019), and the development of decorative henna carvings for Acehese brides (Zuhra et al., 2021). These studies show that Boh Gaca is not just a beauty ritual, but also has strong social, cultural, and economic meanings in Acehese society. Therefore, this study seeks to examine more deeply the meaning and function of ornaments in Boh Gaca, especially in the social and cultural context of the Beutong District community, Nagan Raya Regency (Aini & Amri, 2019; Amalia et al., 2022; Kristina Situmeang, 2016; Nurkhalis & Misbah, 2024).

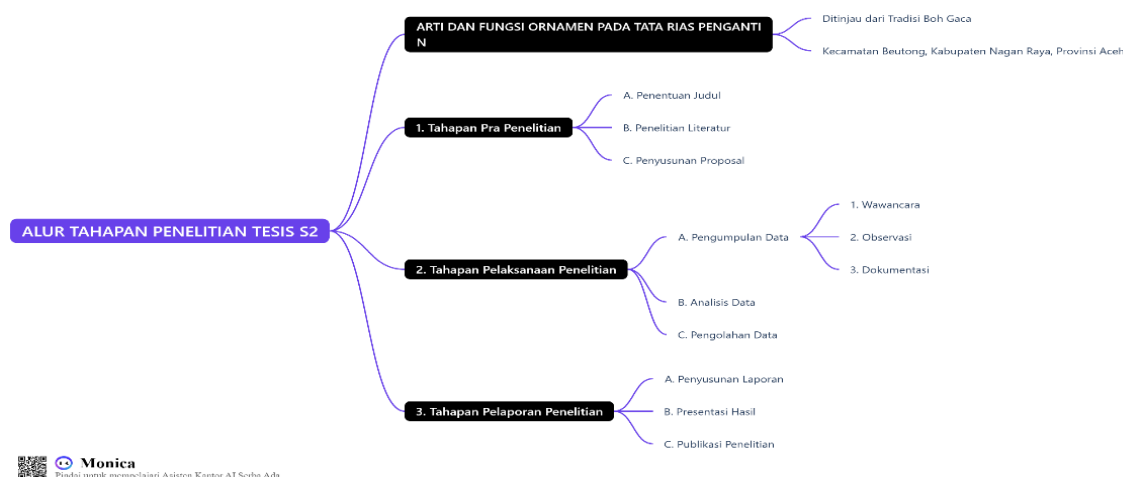
With this research, it is expected to provide broader insight into the meaning and function of ornaments in bridal makeup in the Boh Gaca tradition. Moreover, the results of this study are expected to be a reference for the government and society in efforts to preserve local culture. The younger generation as the successors of culture are expected to be able to understand and appreciate the cultural richness that has been inherited by their ancestors. Through the right approach, both in terms of education and cultural promotion, the Boh Gaca tradition can remain sustainable amidst the development of the times and remain an important part of Acehese traditional weddings. Based on the background of the phenomena that have been described above, I as a researcher took a thesis entitled "The Meaning and Function of Ornaments in Bridal Make-Up in Terms of the Boh Gaca Tradition in Beutong Sub-District, Nagan Raya District, Aceh Province".

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses an ethnographic method with a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze the meaning and function of ornaments in bridal makeup based on the Boh Gaca tradition in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, Aceh Province. This approach was chosen because it is able to explore the cultural meanings inherent in bridal makeup in depth through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of various symbols and ornaments used in the traditional procession. The ethnographic method allows researchers to understand how local communities interpret and maintain this tradition in their social and cultural context. By applying this method, the study can provide a deeper understanding of how ornaments in Boh Gaca bridal makeup are not just aesthetic elements, but also have a role in maintaining cultural identity, social values, and local community beliefs. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for broader cultural studies, especially in understanding Aceh's cultural heritage which is rich in symbolism and traditional values. By applying the above method, the researcher plans to conduct research with the following research stages:

This research was conducted in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, Aceh Province, by selecting several research locations that are centers of information on the Boh Gaca bridal makeup tradition. The research locations include three educational institutions that are related to the informants who played a role in this research, namely: 1) SMAN 2 Beutong, Meunasah Teungoh Village, which was the location of the interview with the Principal Mohammad Yunus, M.Pd., whose wife works as a Make Up Artist (MUA) and has experience in doing Acehese traditional bridal makeup. 2) SDN Blang

Mesjid, Gunung Nagan Village, where the interview was conducted with the Principal Muhammad Syarif, S.Pd., who has a daughter who works as a MUA, so that he can provide information related to the regeneration of make up skills in the family. 3) SMAN 1 Beutong, Kuta Jeumpa Village, where the interview was conducted with the Principal Ahmad Ali, M.Pd.I., whose wife is also a MUA, providing additional perspectives on the Boh Gaca tradition from his family's direct experience.



Source: Processed By Researchers

In addition, this study also involved several Make Up Artists who have experience in Acehnese traditional bridal makeup, including: 1) Fitria Muslimah, owner of the business @pipit_wedding_organizer, 2) Rianti Fitriani, owner of the business @v3_rias_dan_dekorasi. 3) Alya Hanifah, owner of the business @allya_salon The existence of these informants is very important to gain insight into bridal makeup practices, techniques for using ornaments, and the symbolic meanings contained therein. The research instruments used in this study consisted of: Interview Guidelines to obtain in-depth information from informants regarding the meaning and function of ornaments in Boh Gaca traditional bridal makeup. To obtain valid and in-depth data, this study uses three main data collection techniques, namely: In-depth Interview, Participatory Observation, Documentation, Interactive Analysis (Miles & Huberman) and Symbolic Interpretation. This study was conducted for three months, namely from April to July 2025. This period covers all stages of research from data collection to analysis and preparation of research results reports. With this comprehensive research method, it is hoped that the study can produce a deep understanding of the meaning and function of ornaments in bridal makeup based on the Boh Gaca tradition in Beutong District. In addition, this study also aims to enrich cultural studies related to Aceh's traditional heritage that is still preserved today.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results of Interviews with Informants

Based on the results of the interview, which was conducted with informants in this study, data was obtained showing that the Boh Gaca ornament has a very deep philosophical meaning in traditional bridal makeup in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, Aceh Province. The motifs used in this tradition, such as geometric and floral patterns, are not only aesthetic elements, but are also full of symbolism. The inheritance of this symbolic meaning is carried out from generation to generation through oral stories, informal training, and traditional activities involving families and community leaders. Traditional elders play an important role as guardians of the noble values in the Boh Gaca symbol, and they emphasize the importance of preserving this meaning amidst the flow of modernization. Boh Gaca is also believed to be a symbol of prayer and hope for a harmonious household life, full of blessings, and strong spiritually and socially. Although this philosophical meaning tends to remain the same from time to time, its interpretation can be adjusted along with the development of social values in society. In the current era, some people still hold fast to the philosophical meaning of Boh Gaca, while others are starting to see it as a mere visual element. The manufacturing process itself reflects Acehnese cultural values such as perseverance, patience, and respect for manual labor, while also being a form of cultural expression that is passed down orally, without much written documentation.

Regarding the role of the younger generation, it was found that they still know the Boh Gaca tradition, although the depth of understanding of its meaning has decreased. Factors such as social media have a big influence, both positively and negatively. On the one hand, social media facilitates access to information and fosters interest, for example through bridal makeup tutorial videos or content from local Make-Up Artists (MUA). On the other hand, many younger generations only

see this ornament from an aesthetic perspective without fully understanding its philosophical meaning. Several innovations have also emerged, such as modifying colors and materials so that Boh Gaca is more in line with contemporary tastes, but still maintaining its symbolic elements. The role of the family in introducing and maintaining the meaning of Boh Gaca is very significant, especially from parents who still uphold traditional values. Although there is no formal institution that specifically oversees Boh Gaca making training, a number of art communities and individuals have begun to initiate preservation activities that involve across generations.

The main challenges in preserving the Boh Gaca tradition include the declining interest of the younger generation, limited raw materials, minimal written documentation, and the influence of modernization and foreign culture. Economic factors also play a role, because traditional ornaments require special time and skills that are not always commensurate with the costs or demand in the current era. Overall, the Beutong community has high hopes that Boh Gaca will not only survive as a memorable cultural symbol, but also continue to live as an identity that is inherited and developed by future generations. From the description of the interview results above, as a researcher, I divide the interview result narrative based on sub-aspects of the research data that refer to the problem formulation, namely as follows:

3.1.1 Philosophical Meaning of Boh Gaca Ornament

The Boh Gaca tradition as an integral part of bridal makeup in Beutong District contains various philosophical meanings that are deeply rooted in the outlook on life of the Acehnese people, especially Nagan Raya. The ornaments used, such as floral motifs and geometric patterns, are not merely decorative elements, but also hold deep symbolism. Floral motifs, for example, symbolize the hope for a new life full of growth and fertility for the bride and groom. While geometric patterns reflect the steadfastness, unity, and harmony of the household. The informant explained that local people view Boh Gaca as a spiritual symbol that contains moral, religious, and customary values. Certain motifs are even associated with Islamic values, such as inner peace, loyalty, and peace in household life. The inheritance of this philosophical meaning is generally done orally, both within the family environment and through direct practice in customary activities. Families, especially parents, have an important role in introducing this symbolic meaning to their children. Interestingly, the meaning of Boh Gaca also contains aspects of social status. The more complex and intricate the motifs used, the more it shows the high social status of the bride and groom's family. The views of the traditional elders reinforce this, that these ornaments should not be removed or changed carelessly because they contain the cultural identity and long history of the Beutong community. Despite the influence of modernization, in general the philosophical meaning of Boh Gaca is maintained, although it has undergone slight adjustments in interpretation according to the times. Structuralism theory is very relevant in examining this meaning, because each symbol in Boh Gaca is interrelated in the overall Acehnese cultural value system.

3.1.2 The Role of the Young Generation in Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition

The younger generation in Beutong District is still involved in preserving Boh Gaca, although not as massively as the previous generation. Some of them know this tradition thanks to the role of their families and access to information from social media. Instagram and YouTube have become popular media that make it easier for the younger generation to re-familiarize themselves with this Acehnese bridal makeup tradition, including fostering their interest in the profession of traditional Make-Up Artist (MUA). The process of learning about Boh Gaca is carried out through informal training at school, workshops, and direct involvement in traditional events. Some schools even include Acehnese arts and culture training in extracurricular activities, including training in making Boh Gaca ornaments. At the community level, youth arts and culture groups are a place for preservation, although they have not specifically discussed Boh Gaca. However, the younger generation tends to understand this ornament more from an aesthetic perspective than its symbolic meaning. Even so, several young MUAs have begun to innovate so that Boh Gaca can be accepted by the current generation, for example by adjusting the colors, materials, and designs. This shows that there is an adaptation so that tradition remains relevant in a modern context. Inspiration also comes from local figures, especially MUAs who consistently combine traditional values and current trends. Family remains the main foundation in maintaining the spirit of the younger generation to know and maintain Boh Gaca. In addition, intergenerational involvement and support from the arts community provide hope for the continuity of this tradition into the future.

3.1.3 Challenges of Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition and Strategies to Overcome Them

The preservation of Boh Gaca faces a number of major challenges that reflect the dynamics of culture amidst the flow of modernization. One of the main challenges is the declining interest of the community, especially the younger generation, in the philosophical and technical values of this tradition. Modern lifestyle factors and the perception that the tradition is old-fashioned are the main causes of this lack of interest. In addition, limited craftsmen, raw materials, and high production costs for ornaments make Boh Gaca increasingly rarely used in wedding ceremonies. Several informants stated that in certain communities, economic aspects are the main consideration for choosing more practical and affordable make-up ornaments. Modernization also accelerates cultural shifts with the entry of foreign make-up trends that are considered

simpler and more visually appealing. Local government support is considered less than optimal, although there are sporadic initiatives from several agencies to revive Acehnesse arts and culture. The role of traditional institutions is also considered limited in efforts to socialize and train the making of Boh Gaca to the general public. As a strategy to overcome these challenges, the community has begun to rely on community-based education, creative training from art groups, and the use of digital media as a means of promotion. Local media and traditional figures are important elements in voicing the urgency of preserving Boh Gaca culture. Documentation efforts through writing, photos, and digital videos have begun to be encouraged by some parties as a form of symbolic preservation and cultural archives. The Beutong community has slowly begun to design a more open cross-generational approach, by combining traditional heritage and modern creativity as a way to maintain the sustainability of Boh Gaca. Innovation in the form of collaboration between artists, young MUAs, and educational institutions is a new hope in maintaining this cultural identity.

3.2 Display of Research Findings Data

Table 1. Displaying Research Results Data Regarding the Philosophical Meaning of Boh Gaca Ornaments

Aspects	Findings	Code Data
The motifs used	Geometric patterns symbolize harmony and unity; floral motifs symbolize new life.	C1
Symbolic meaning	Flowers = growth and fertility; geometric = stability of household.	C1
Public understanding	Ornaments are considered to be full of moral and spiritual values, not just decoration.	C1
Religious connection	The Boh Gaca motif is related to Islamic values such as peace and loyalty.	C1
Inheritance of meaning	Through oral stories, family training and traditional teachers.	C1
Social status	Complex/rare motifs indicate higher social status.	C1
Views of traditional elders	Symbols are seen as sacred and need to be preserved.	C1
Change of meaning	The basic meaning is fixed, the interpretation adapts to the times.	C1
The role of the family	Families teach symbolic meanings from childhood.	C1
Difference between men and women	Women: complex ornaments (softness); men: firm ornaments (responsibility).	C1
Meaning in the household	A symbol of hope for a harmonious and blessed household.	C1
Current relevance	Still considered important, but also seen as aesthetic.	C1
Acehnese cultural values	Making Boh Gaca emphasizes skill, patience, perseverance.	C1
Local literature	Not yet discovered, but knowledge is passed down orally.	C1
Structuralism analysis	The meanings of Boh Gaca are interrelated in the socio-cultural context of Aceh.	C1

Source: processed by researchers, 2025

OrnamenBootsIn the bridal makeup tradition of the Beutong community, Nagan Raya Regency, it not only functions as an aesthetic element, but is also full of philosophical meaning, cultural symbols, and spiritual values. The motifs used consist of geometric patterns that symbolize harmony and unity, as well as floral motifs that depict new life, growth, and fertility. These symbols reflect the hope for a stable and blessed household life. These ornaments also imply Islamic values such as peace, loyalty, and honor, which have become part of the local culture. The meaning of Boh Gaca is passed down orally through parents, families, and traditional teachers, making it an informal educational tool and a medium for socializing cultural values. Complex motifs mark social status, while gender differences are reflected in the choice of motifs: women tend to use soft motifs, men firm motifs. In the modern era, although some people have begun to see it from an aesthetic perspective, its symbolic meaning is still maintained. The process of making it reflects Acehnesse values such as skill and perseverance. Through a structuralism approach, Boh Gaca is understood as a structure of meaning that is closely connected to the social, cultural, and religious context of the Beutong community, Nagan Raya.

Table 2. Display of Research Data on the Role of the Young Generation in Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition

Aspects	Findings	Code Data
Knowledge of the younger generation	Still familiar, but the depth of understanding is beginning to decrease.	C2
Learning process	From parents, teachers, school training, and MUA workshops.	C2
Conservation community	There is an arts and culture community, but it does not focus specifically on Boh Gaca.	C2
The role of social media	Instagram and YouTube effectively introduced Boh Gaca.	C2
School/institution efforts	Extracurricular arts and culture programs and traditional ornament training.	C2
Involvement in traditional events	Technically involved such as helping with make-up/decoration.	C2
The main challenge	Lack of interest, lack of hands-on training, and the influence of modern trends.	C2
Symbolic interpretation	It is better understood as decoration, not a cultural symbol.	C2
Innovation of the young generation	The design is modified to be more modern and attractive.	C2
The role of the family	It is very important to be an early introduction for children.	C2
Training program	Yes, but limited and incidental.	C2
Cultural relevance	Still feels important, needs an interesting tidying up.	C2
Inspirational figures	Local MUAs are an inspiration because of their consistency in preserving traditions.	C2
Cultural identity	Boh Gaca is seen as a symbol of heritage, even if it is partly just aesthetic.	C2
Collaboration between generations	It already exists, but has not been facilitated by an official institution.	C2

Data shows that the younger generation in Beutong District still knows the Boh Gaca tradition, but their understanding of its philosophical meaning is starting to decline. Although it is known as part of bridal makeup, the symbolism contained

in it is often not fully understood (Fatmi & Fauzan, 2022; Muzakkir, 2021; Putri & Dewi, 2017). Knowledge about Boh Gaca is obtained through family, school, local training, and workshops by bridal makeup artists. The role of the family is key in introducing this cultural symbol from an early age. Amid the influence of globalization, some of the younger generation are trying to preserve Boh Gaca through modern designs that still maintain traditional elements, although some see it only as a decorative element. Cultural communities and social media such as Instagram and YouTube have become important tools in reintroducing Boh Gaca visually. However, preservation efforts in schools and educational institutions are still limited and unsustainable. The involvement of the younger generation in traditional practices is generally still in the technical aspect. Inspirational figures such as local MUAs play an important role in fostering a love for Boh Gaca. Although challenges such as modern trends and lack of training are obstacles, cooperation between generations shows optimism that Boh Gaca will continue to live as Aceh's cultural identity.

Table 3. Display of Research Data on the Challenges of Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition and Strategies to Overcome Them

Aspects	Findings	Code Data
The main challenge	Modernization, declining interest, limited training and materials.	C3
The impact of modernization	Young people are more interested in global styles, less interested in local traditions.	C3
Loss of interest	Many young people feel that this tradition is no longer relevant.	C3
Economic factors	The cost of making Boh Gaca is quite high, especially for complicated motifs.	C3
Government support	Still minimal; there is no specific Boh Gaca preservation program.	C3
The role of customary institutions	Still actively maintaining values, but lacking synergy with the younger generation.	C3
Limited materials	Traditional materials are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, necessitating innovation in new materials.	C3
Community strategy	Through informal education, involvement in traditional events, design innovation.	C3
External cultural threats	Modern wedding trends and global makeup are eroding local values.	C3
Public education	Done through schools, social media, and inspirational figures.	C3
Supporting policies	There is no policy that directly targets the preservation of Boh Gaca.	C3
The role of local media	Less than optimal; needs dedicated coverage and consistent local cultural content.	C3
Documentation efforts	Still limited, there is no comprehensive written or audiovisual documentation.	C3

The data (in Table 3), shows that the preservation of the Boh Gaca tradition in Beutong District faces complex challenges, both from the flow of modernization and internal limitations of society. Modernization drives changes in the tastes of the younger generation who prefer modern and global wedding styles, so that the philosophical values of Boh Gaca are starting to be ignored (Hatuwe et al., 2021; Lopulalan, 2019). In addition, the high cost of producing ornaments and limited raw materials are significant obstacles, especially without the support of special policies or programs from the government. Traditional institutions continue to play an important role, but the lack of cross-generational communication hinders the inheritance of cultural values in their entirety. Preservation initiatives emerge locally and informally, such as the involvement of youth in traditional events and innovations in Boh Gaca design. However, the lack of documentation and local media coverage makes the existence of this tradition less widely known, especially in urban areas. Education through schools and inspirational figures such as traditional makeup artists has helped, but is not yet optimal. Therefore, structured cross-sector collaboration is needed to design a comprehensive preservation strategy, involving all stakeholders to maintain the sustainability of Boh Gaca amidst current cultural dynamics.

3.3 Discussion of Research Results

3.3. 1. Various Ornaments in the Boh Gaca Tradition

The Boh Gaca tradition in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, is part of the cultural heritage of the Acehnese people that has symbolic and aesthetic meaning in bridal makeup. The ornaments used not only beautify the appearance, but also represent the values of tradition, social status, and the philosophy of life of the community. The following are the types of ornaments that are generally found in the Boh Gaca tradition:

a. *Jeumpa Flower Ornament*



Figure 1. Jeumpa Flower Ornament
 Source: processed by researchers, 2025

The Bungo Jeumpa ornament or cempaka flower is one of the most frequently used ornaments in Acehese bridal makeup. In the context of Acehese culture, Bungo Jeumpa has a deep meaning as a symbol of the fragrance of character, gentleness, and elegance of women. The fragrant and beautiful flowers are used as a metaphor to describe the ideal personality of women according to Acehese customs, namely a figure who is gentle, behaves politely, and is able to maintain the honor of herself and her family. In bridal makeup practices, Bungo Jeumpa is usually placed on the head or pinned to the chest as a representation of purity, nobility, and prayers that the woman will become a person who brings coolness and happiness to the newly built household. The selection of cempaka flowers is also inseparable from its use in other Acehese traditional rituals, such as death or birth ceremonies, which show that this flower has a sacred and symbolic position in the structure of the cultural values of society.

b. Ornaments of Pucok Reubong



Figure 2. Ornaments of Pucok Reubong
Source: processed by researchers, 2025

The Pucok Reubong ornament is an ornament in the form of tendrils or plant shoots that tower upwards and are usually part of the bride's crown or headdress. This ornament symbolizes high ideals, hopes for a bright future, and the spirit of continuous growth. In the context of marriage, Pucok Reubong is a symbol of the family's prayers and blessings to the bride and groom so that they continue to grow in wisdom, maturity, and success in building a household. Its towering shape suggests a spiritual direction and purity, namely the hope that the household that is built always leads to the values of goodness, blessings, and is always under God's protection. In addition, Pucok Reubong also reflects the philosophy of Aceh which values the values of effort, hard work, and courage in facing life's challenges.

c. Glass Ornaments



Figure 3. Glass Ornaments
Source: processed by researchers, 2025

The Boh Gaca ornament itself is the main ornament in this tradition, in the form of tiered bracelets worn on both wrists of the bride. These bracelets are arranged in layers and are generally made of brass or gold, each level of which symbolizes the phases of a woman's life, from childhood, adolescence, adulthood, to becoming a wife and mother. Boh Gaca is a visual representation of the increasing responsibility along with changes in a woman's social and biological status. In the view of the Acehese people, married women are required to be able to maintain their honor, their husband's family, and uphold customary and religious values. Therefore, Boh Gaca not only beautifies the appearance of the bride, but also contains a strong moral and cultural message, namely about the importance of physical and spiritual readiness in entering married life.

d. Black Datu Ornament



Figure 4. Black Datu Ornament
Source: processed by researchers, 2025

The Itam Datu ornament, which literally means “black gold,” is a dominant color combination in the makeup and attire of Acehese traditional brides. Black symbolizes strength, authority, and dignified simplicity, while gold reflects luxury, wisdom, and blessings. The combination of these two colors creates a harmonious yet authoritative visual impression, depicting the duality of life that is balanced between strength and beauty, between simplicity and majesty. The Itam Datu color symbolizes that in living a household life, a woman must be able to be firm but remain graceful, simple but dignified, and strong but full of affection. Thus, the choice of this color is not merely a matter of aesthetics, but is full of philosophical meaning that is rooted in the traditions of the Acehese people.

e. *Meukat Ornaments*



Figure 5. Meukat Ornaments
Source: processed by researchers, 2025

Meukat ornaments are forms of fine carvings found on various jewelry such as Boh Gaca, crowns, chest pins, and other accessory parts. Meukat is a work of local art that is passed down from generation to generation and reflects the refinement of manners, precision, and artistic intelligence possessed by the Acehese people. These carving motifs usually take the form of flora, tendrils, and geometry typical of Aceh which are full of meaning, such as fertility, harmony, and unity. In addition to beautifying the appearance of ornaments, Meukat is also a symbol that a woman's beauty is not only seen from her appearance, but also from the intelligence, ethics, and local wisdom that she holds firmly. Thus, the variety of ornaments in the Boh Gaca tradition in Beutong District is not just an aesthetic element, but a symbolic device that is full of cultural meaning, spiritual values, and the philosophy of life of the Acehese people. These various ornaments are a visual representation of traditional teachings passed down from generation to generation, which not only beautify the appearance of the bride and groom, but also enrich the meaning of marriage in a social and cultural context. Preserving this tradition is important not only as an effort to maintain local cultural identity, but also as a means of education and passing on noble values to the younger generation of Aceh.

3.3. 2. *The Philosophical Meaning and Function of Boh Gaca Ornaments with a Structuralism Approach*

Tradition Boots in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, Aceh Province is a cultural heritage that is full of symbolic and spiritual values, especially in bridal makeup. Based on interviews and observations, Boots not only functions as an aesthetic ornament, but also contains deep philosophical meaning. The motifs used—such as geometric and floral patterns—symbolize unity, harmony, new life, and the hope of happiness after marriage. These motifs reflect the moral and spiritual values of the community and their outlook on life that is combined with Islamic teachings (Sukarto, 2018; Sulistiawati & Nasution, 2022). These ornaments have a strong social and symbolic role. For example, the use of complex motifs on noble brides reflects social status, while on brides it symbolizes gentleness and fertility, and on men it symbolizes firmness and responsibility. In the wedding procession, Boots become a visual medium of prayer and hope for families and communities for a harmonious, prosperous, and religious household life. The process of passing on values is carried out from generation to generation through oral stories, training by traditional teachers, and practice by traditional make-up artists. However, the current of modernization has caused some of the younger generation to begin to lose their understanding of symbolism. Boots, seeing it only as a mere decoration. However, a number of communities and individuals continue to maintain and educate the philosophical meaning of this ornament through training and cultural events. With a structuralism approach, Boots understood as part of the sign system in the culture of the Beutong community. These ornaments do not stand alone, but are tied to the social, cultural, and religious structures that form the collective identity of the community. Therefore, Boots not just a visual symbol, but a marker of an individual's relationship with family, society, and God, as well as an important element in preserving Aceh's cultural identity.

3.3. 3. *The Role of the Young Generation in Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition*

The younger generation plays a strategic role in preserving traditions Boots as part of the cultural identity of the Acehese people, especially in Beutong District, Nagan Raya. Although their understanding of the philosophical meaning of Boh Gaca is not as deep as the previous generation, interest in the aesthetic aspects of this ornament remains high. Social media such as Instagram and YouTube also play a role in introducing Boh Gaca through bridal makeup content and documentation of traditional events, although they have not fully touched on its symbolic meaning. The inheritance of values is carried out through informal channels in the family and formal channels through educational institutions. In the family environment,

parents who uphold tradition introduce the meaning of Boh Gaca to children. Several schools have also begun to integrate training in making traditional ornaments into extracurricular activities, although it is still limited and not sustainable. Traditional art communities and local Make Up Artists (MUA) also hold workshops, but their implementation is still temporary. The involvement of the younger generation in this tradition is generally still limited to practical activities, such as helping with decorations during the wedding procession. The main challenge faced is the lack of interest due to the perception that the tradition is not in line with current trends, as well as the lack of access to learning its philosophy. However, some young people have begun to innovate, modifying Boh Gaca with modern touches such as contemporary colors, materials, and designs, showing the adaptation of traditional values in a new form. Local cultural figures and MUA who maintain local values are an inspiration for the younger generation. Some young people are beginning to realize the importance of Boh Gaca as their cultural identity. Cross-generational collaboration between traditional elders, craftsmen, and young people is an important strategy in preserving this tradition. With an adaptive, creative, and inclusive approach, as well as support from various parties, the younger generation has great potential as agents of preserving Boh Gaca amidst the challenges of globalization, keeping the noble values of Acehese culture alive and relevant.

3.3. 4. Challenges of Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition and Strategies to Overcome Them

The preservation of the Boh Gaca tradition as part of traditional Acehese bridal makeup in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, faces various challenges amidst modernization and socio-cultural changes. One of the main obstacles is the declining interest of the younger generation who are more exposed to foreign cultures through social media and tend to choose modern makeup that is practical and in line with current trends. Appreciation of the symbolic meaning of Boh Gaca is decreasing due to the lack of formal education about local culture in schools. Modernization also makes people choose simple and fast bridal makeup, while making Boh Gaca requires special skills and time. In addition, the economic aspect is an obstacle because the natural materials that were used in the past are now rare and expensive, and traditional craftsmen are decreasing. Support from local governments and traditional institutions is still limited, with a lack of specific policies and documentation that is mostly still passed down orally, at risk of being lost if not immediately digitized. Even so, the Beutong community is actively preserving Boh Gaca through a family approach, where parents and elders introduce its philosophical values through oral stories and traditional ceremonies. Social media is also used for promotion and education, with local Make Up Artists combining traditional and modern designs to make it more attractive to the younger generation. Several schools hold extracurricular Acehese culture, and youth communities also raise the issue of preservation through art performances. Documentation in the form of books or digital archives is an important strategy so that knowledge is not lost and can be widely accessed. Collaboration between traditional institutions, government, educational institutions, and the arts community is very strategic to maintain the sustainability of this tradition. With the support of regulations and the integration of traditional-modern approaches, Boh Gaca has the potential to survive and develop as a symbol of Aceh's dynamic cultural identity across generations.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on "The Meaning and Function of Ornaments in Bridal Makeup Reviewed from the Boh Gaca Tradition in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, Aceh Province," it can be concluded that Boh Gaca ornaments play an important role in preserving the cultural values of the Acehese people, especially in the context of bridal makeup which can be concluded as follows:

1) Philosophical Meaning of Boh Gaca Ornaments in Bridal Makeup in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, Aceh Province

The philosophical meaning contained in the Boh Gaca ornaments in bridal makeup in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, is very deep and rich in symbolism. The motifs used, such as geometric and floral patterns, are not just decorations, but have a spiritual meaning that symbolizes unity, harmony, and new life after marriage. Floral motifs, for example, symbolize a growing life and the hope for happiness in the household. On the other hand, geometric patterns depict steadfastness and strength in building a family. In addition, there is a close relationship between Boh Gaca ornaments and Islamic religious values, such as peace and loyalty, which is reflected in every decorative element. The community still understands the philosophy behind the use of Boh Gaca even though there have been changes in interpretation over time. Most people maintain the symbolic meaning of this ornament as part of a tradition passed down from generation to generation, either through oral stories or direct training in families and traditional communities.

2) The Role of the Young Generation in Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition

The younger generation in Beutong District, Nagan Raya Regency, plays an important role in preserving the Boh Gaca tradition, despite major challenges in terms of interest and deep understanding. Although most of the younger generation are familiar with Boh Gaca, many of them only know it superficially, as part of the aesthetics of bridal makeup, rather than as a deeper cultural symbol. Social media has influenced their interest, with many young people more interested in following bridal makeup trends through platforms such as Instagram and YouTube. However, some younger generations still learn about this tradition through training held by schools or local arts and culture

communities. Families have an important role in introducing and maintaining this tradition, although there are still many challenges in making this tradition relevant in the modern era. Several innovations in the design and use of Boh Gaca ornaments are also carried out by local MUAs (Make-Up Artists) to attract the interest of young brides. However, there is hope that the younger generation will appreciate the cultural value behind Boh Gaca ornaments more and collaborate with the previous generation to maintain the sustainability of this tradition.

3) Challenges in Preserving the Boh Gaca Tradition and Strategies to Overcome Them

The preservation of the Boh Gaca tradition faces various challenges, especially related to the interests of the younger generation who tend to prefer modern trends. Modernization and changes in lifestyle have shifted the use of this tradition in wedding events, with many people preferring more practical and efficient makeup styles. In addition, economic factors also influence the preservation of this tradition, considering the cost of making Boh Gaca ornaments is quite expensive. This makes some people choose more affordable alternatives even though they have less cultural value. Support from the local government to preserve this tradition is still limited, and there are no specific policies that directly support the preservation of Boh Gaca. The limited availability of traditional raw materials is also a problem, where some of the materials used in making ornaments are difficult to obtain. However, the community continues to strive to educate the younger generation through seminars, workshops, and traditional events involving Boh Gaca as a symbol of Acehese culture. Local media can also play an important role in promoting this tradition through various platforms to attract wider attention. One of the main strategies to overcome this challenge is to adapt the Boh Gaca tradition to a modern context and integrate it into more contemporary events, so that it can remain relevant and accepted by the younger generation.

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