

## The Meaning of the Emblem of the Bandung Raya Regional Government

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**Abstract.** The Bandung Raya area is contained in the Bandung basin, including the City of Bandung, Bandung Regency, West Bandung Regency, and Cimahi City. Based on government regulations, every regional government has emblems that function as an identity and binder of the socio-cultural unity of regional communities. This study aims to reveal the meaning contained in the emblem of local government. The research location was conducted in the city of Bandung, West Java. Previous research that has been carried out has not studied the meaning of regional emblems based on visual elements. The research conducted used qualitative methods to reveal the visual meaning contained in the emblem of the Bandung Raya area. This study aims to gain knowledge about the meaning of local government emblems and helps add science to the field of visual communication design. The research found that the elements contained in the emblem of Bandung Raya are related to the vision and mission of the city and regency. The regional logo design depicts the region's potential, it was found that the symbols contained in the regional coat of arms have the meaning and expectations of the local government for its people.

**Keyword:** Bandung Raya, Emblem of Local Government, Meaning

### 1. Introduction

Bandung Raya, or the Bandung Basin Urban Area, is a national strategic area in terms of economic interests, per Presidential Regulation (Perpres) number 45 of 2018 about Spatial Plans for the Bandung Basin City Area. The Bandung Basin Urban Area is made up of the City of Bandung, the City of Cimahi, and the areas around them, such as Bandung Regency, West Bandung Regency, and five districts in Sumedang Regency [1]. The Bandung Basin Urban Area is a region that the government runs. It has various symbols that mean different things and looks different. Government Regulation 77 of 2007 indicates that the regional emblem is a sign of greatness and a cultural emblem for a region's inhabitants that symbolizes that region's distinctiveness [2].

The meaning of a regional government symbol's form reflects a regional community's geographic location and features. According to the goal that the local government wants to reach, not only the way it looks but also the colours it uses matter. Each local government emblem seeks to blend the region's history, geography, and traits into a visual form that conveys the region's distinctiveness. In

fact, every official symbol in Indonesia has a shield as its primary component. This is due to the fact that in Indonesia, the shield has come to represent all sorts of symbolism.

During the Dutch colonial era, the shape of the European symbol influenced the design of the Indonesian royal coat of arms. During the Dutch East Indies era, the central government and provincial governments began using the government sign (*Gemeente*), and its use was restricted by law (*Staatsblad van Nederland-Indie* 1928 No. 394). This became a rule for the use of regional government symbols after the independence of Indonesia [21]. The first government emblem created following independence was the state symbol of the Republic of Indonesia (1950), known as the Garuda Pancasila, which was acknowledged by Government Regulation no. 66 in 1951 and represented the country's sovereignty, individuality, and grandeur. The values embodied in the national symbol reflect the Indonesian national mindset, which is one homeland, one language, and one nation. The conception and content of the embodiment of the government symbol in Indonesia as a regional identity element are based on the reflection of one attitude, people's aspirations, a summary of the history, religious attitudes, socio-economic potential, art and culture, and the most prominent or particular geographical location of an area.

Research on regional government symbols located in Bandung Raya needs to be done to find out the meaning of the elements contained in these symbols, and this is based on the function of regional government symbols. Although there are not many journals that discuss the symbol of the Bandung Raya government, several studies that have been carried out include previous research conducted by Johari in 2016 on the regional symbols of the city of Bandung through ethnographic methods discussed the influence of myths and their meanings on the visual symbols of the area [14]. Another study was conducted by Hakim in 2004, analyzing the shape and color of the symbol of the city of Bandung [21]. Anny conducted research on the logo and symbol of Bandung in 2016 in order to develop criteria for an identity for the city of Bandung with unique characteristics that can be used as branding for the city of Bandung, particularly in regards to slogans, logos, and symbols that are in accordance with the perceptions and expectations of the community so that they can provide an identity to the community [22]. Nugraha and Nursholih did study on symbolic relationships in visual structures in 2016, and these meanings were derived from the sociocultural conditions of society at the time. The results of the examination of both visual structure and meaning reveal the presence of many types of symbols, as well as disparities in symbol dominance in each city sign [25]. This research was conducted to find out the meaning of the symbol through its visual elements and its relationship with the function of the symbol in local government. This study used qualitative methods. The research was conducted in the Bandung Raya area, West Java.

Given the underdevelopment of natural language and the absence of written speech, symbols are often viewed as visual images created to interact in specific situations. Despite the renewal and transformation of their form, the number and significance of symbols in the modern world have not diminished at all in accordance with the level of social development [32]. The research objects studied consisted of the government symbols of Cimahi City, Bandung City, West Bandung Regency, and Bandung Regency. The symbols of the Bandung Raya government were analysed using Roland Barthes' semiotics, which divides the meaning of an object under study into denotative meaning and connotative meaning related to the object of research [3]. The purpose of this study was to find out the meaning of the local government symbols found in the Greater Bandung area and their correlation with the function of the local government symbols through the visual elements of the symbols. The benefit of this research is to add knowledge to the field of visual communication design.

## **2. Method**

The research was conducted using qualitative methods. This method focuses on presenting specific descriptions, symptoms, and phenomena. The data consists of words and images, not numbers, so future researchers can examine the data based on these insights [23]. This qualitative study aims to comprehend the phenomena associated with the investigated subjects. On this subject, a descriptive

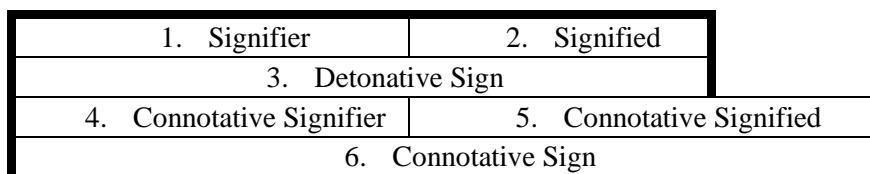
qualitative approach is used to expose the meaning contained in the regional symbol of Bandung Raya and to present an overview of the message included in the forms of symbols contained in the emblem, from which an analysis can be drawn. Using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis method to get the visual meaning contained in the Bandung Raya regional government symbol Roland Barthes divides the meaning of an object into denotative and connotative meanings in semiotics. Data collection was carried out through literature studies using books related to research and collecting references from previous research journals and trusted sources from the internet, such as official government websites. From the observation results, the data collected is then used to analyse the meaning of the regional government symbols found in Bandung Raya.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Emblem

The emblem is an image with a motto, device, symbol, or idea adopted and used as identification [4]. An emblem is a sign that states something or contains a specific purpose. In Indonesia, each local government has its own symbol, which is usually very important to the people who live there and their beliefs. According to Angela Locatelli, in early modern emblems, the reciprocity between the verbal and graphic levels is not instantaneous and direct, but rather is mediated by a cultural semiotic process. Moreover, Locatelli asserts that "words and pictures can create opposing interpretations" and that "the interaction of the verbal and graphic dimensions, far from being stable, oscillates in such a way as to valorize diversity" in addition to more traditional cultural substance (Locatelli 2000: 77, 80, 93). It's interesting to note that Locatelli's analysis draws on Lotman's research on the iconism, isomorphism, and semiotic equivalence of various artistic practices and cultural formations, highlighting the decodification of symbols as a process and reiterating the nature of symbols as practice (Locatelli 2000: 80) [26].

Roland Barthes' semiological approach is used to figure out what local government symbols mean. This approach divides the meaning of an object being studied into its denotative meaning, its connotative meaning, and any related myths (5). According to Barthes, semiology studies how humans make sense of things. Not only interpreting objects as carriers of information but also constituting systems structured in signs. Barthes sees social life as significant. In other words, social life is a separate sign system [6]. Barthes devotes considerable effort to elucidating and demonstrating that the meanings inherent in these mythologies are typically the result of deliberate creation. The role of the reader is an important aspect that Barthes examines in his study of signs. Although connotation is the true character of the sign, it requires the reader's participation in it to operate. Barthes examines in depth what is commonly referred to as the second level of the meaning system, which is constructed on top of earlier systems. Literature is the finest example of a second-level meaning system based on the first-level system of language. Barthes refers to this second system as connotative, which he expressly differentiates in his *Mythologies* from denotative or first-level systems of meaning. Barthes continued Hjelmslev's research by creating a map of how signs function (Cobley & Jansz, 1999):


























**Figure 1.** Roland Barthes' Sign Map



### 3.2. The emblem of the Regional Government of Bandung Raya

Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis in researching the symbols of regional government in Greater Bandung from the aspects of denotation, connotation, and myth [5]. The table below is a way to describe in detail the symbols that make up the regional emblem of Bandung Raya. This makes it easier to see what the symbols mean.



**Table 1.** Elements of the Bandung Raya Government Coat of Arms

							
	(Bandung City)	(Bandung Regency)	(West Bandung Regency)	(Cimahi City)			
Emblem Elements							
Bandung City Coat of Arms							
Coat of Arms of Bandung Regency							
Coat of Arms of West Bandung Regency							
Cimahi City Coat of Arms							

From the table above, it can be seen that regional symbols contain many elements. Each element has a different meaning. From the division of these elements, a table is made to explain the meaning of each symbol in the regional symbols. A symbol can have two primary meanings, depending on the context. In the sciences, symbols serve as signs with a single, well-defined meaning, as in mathematical formulas. These are arbitrary symbols. Symbols have various meanings in the cultural sciences and religion. They serve as cultural icons.

Objective symbols are the rational products of a written culture that must be learned. They are objectively defined and universally acknowledged. In contrast, cultural symbols are unique to a particular culture or field, although some are universal [24]. The table below is used to make it easier to explain what each symbol in the regional government symbols means. The table is split into three parts: the symbol column, which lists the symbols in the symbol; the form column, which lists the meanings of the symbols; and the last column, which lists the symbols' myths and meanings.

**Table 2.** The Meaning and Myth of the Bandung Raya Government Symbol

No	Symbol	Form	The meaning and myth contained in the symbol
1.		Shield.	<p>The symbol is in the shape of a shield, which is a tool used to protect oneself from attacks by enemies. Reported from the official website of the Bandung city government, the shield is a way to show all the images in the form of feeling safe and comfortable, in harmony, strong, and dynamic in balance. The myth contains a shield as a symbol that has the power to withstand all kinds of dangers and difficulties [7]. Quoted from Suhendra in his article in the <i>Pikiran Rakyat</i>, guard shields are a way for guards to protect themselves and feel safe from internal and external threats to create a calm and safe environment [8]. Yellow and orange share many similar characteristics. According to color theorists, yellow is a cheerful hue (Cimbalo et al., 1978; Hemphill, 1996). It has good associations with the sun, brightness, and warmth (Cimbalo et al.) [28].</p>
2.		Mount Tangkuban Perahu.	<p>The official Bandung Regency website explains that the green trapezoid icon represents Mount Tangkuban Perahu. In addition, the shape of this icon depicts an area where the fertile land is green and is in a mountainous area. Also, Mount Tangkuban Perahu is known as the Sangkuriang legend, which has become folklore for</p>

generations [9]. This mountain icon is in line with the vision and mission of the local government, namely a society that is as strong as a mountain, which cannot be shaken in various circumstances, and has a solid foundation to be able to build an independent, just, and environmentally sound society [11][12][13].

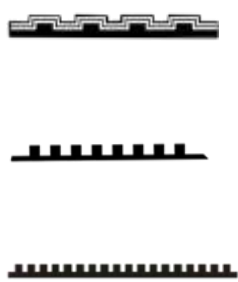
3.



Form 2 Building Pillars and Flower Arrangements.



On the Cimahi City government symbol, there are icons of two green building pillars and an orange flowers form in the middle of the pillars. This entails balancing religion in spiritual and physical development, as well as cultivating a sense of love, sincerity, and pride for the homeland and the nation with a strategic and synergistic regional order that has a structure and system based on political, economic, social, cultural, and future-oriented joints. The flowers also symbolize a valuable strategic lifeline [17].

4.





Dam.

The dam or wall icon on most government symbols in Bandung Raya is a geographical description of the area with a water dam. This image of the dam symbolizes that the Bandung Raya area has potential water sources, lakes, and dams that function as fishing grounds and sources of hydroelectric power. According to Wei-Lun Chang and Hsieh-Liang Lin (2010), using Color Psychology (Birren, 1961), black has an effect on the color psychological qualities

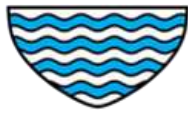
		of Modernism, Power, and Elegance [31]. The myth was built in the form of a strong, black dam that made the local community have a firm and strong stance, both physically and in stemming passions [8].
5.		<p>One jasmine flower and two banana tree leaves have midribs.</p> <p>The symbol of West Bandung Regency is a banana tree with two green leaf midribs and a white jasmine flower on a red background, depicting January 2 as the anniversary of West Bandung Regency and symbolizing the West Bandung Regency area rich in potential for farming, gardening, as well as interest yields that have the potential for the development of agro-tourism that can improve people's welfare [8]. Hill &amp; Barton (2005), cited in Andrew &amp; Markus (2014), stated that in human competitions, the color red works as a cue for dominance and boosts performance correspondingly. It is hoped that the red color symbol can give people enthusiasm and strength.</p>
6.		<p>Green industrial building.</p> <p>Then there is a symbol image in the form of a green building with a red background, which symbolizes the area of West Bandung Regency's industrial site based on potential natural resources and is strategic and environmentally friendly [8]. According to the definition of "green building," this approach aims to reduce a building's overall environmental effect. Moreover, green architecture</p>



			<p>improves social, economic, and environmental efficiency (Robichaud and Anantatmula, 2010) [30].</p>
<p>7.</p>		<p>Star and Bosscha Observatory.</p>	<p>In the symbol of the government of West Bandung Regency, there is an image of a golden yellow five-pointed star on a blue background, which symbolizes the lives of the people of West Bandung Regency, who are religious. While stargazing is a symbol of the development of science and is a hallmark of West Bandung Regency, namely the Bosscha Observatory, the oldest astronomical observatory in Indonesia is located in Lembang [8]. Blue is a cool color that is commonly associated with the sky or the ocean. Hence, when people see these hues, they may think of the sea or the sky and get a sense of tranquility and peace (Cherry, 2020) [29].</p>
<p>8.</p>		<p>The quinine tree.</p>	<p>The quinine tree in the Bandung Regency symbol shows that quinine is a way for the people of the Bandung Regency to make money. This area is also the historic area where quinine trees were first planted in Indonesia. This symbol also symbolizes the land that is always fertile and the life of a prosperous society [15].</p>



9.



Water, bowl, and hill.






The symbol of water, found in all the logos in Bandung Raya, depicts fertility and abundance of water and has the meaning of coolness; water also has the meaning of a prosperous life. Water reflects West Bandung Regency's potential for rich water sources, lakes, and dams that serve as fishing grounds, a source of electricity generation, and a source of nature tourism. The black bowl symbolizes that this area has large mining areas, such as limestone, andesite, marble, and sand. The myth raised is that West Bandung Regency is rich in natural resources. Mutakin (2013) revealed that the Sundanese could not live far from water because, in Sundanese culture, water is a source of life [14]. The blue hill icon on the Cimahi City symbol is a gift in the form of nature, full of God's potential to be put to good use to encourage gratitude, develop harmonious knowledge, harmonize justice for prosperity, and create equality in prosperous diversity [16].


10.



Orange dome.

Dome-shaped buildings have been widely utilized for industrial, residential, and military infrastructure. In a research study, it was determined that the structural form of the dome has a higher level of load-bearing robustness and strength, and that the dome structure itself is even more resistant to the possibility of an explosion [33]. The orange dome on the symbol of Cimahi City is a picture

			of an endless passion for development to anticipate the growth and development of self-reliance, which is jointly supported by all potential human resources who are humble and knowledgeable, have good morals and ethics, are healthy and intelligent, creative and innovative, and productive [17].
11.		Slogan: " <i>Saluyu Ngawangun Jati Mandiri</i> ".	Each regional government in Bandung Raya has a different slogan. The slogan for the City of Cimahi is " <i>Saluyu Ngawangun Jati Mandiri</i> ," which means having the meaning of walking in harmony in harmony hand in hand with building an independent self-image in progress. Emphasizing the cohesiveness and cooperation between the government and the community in building Cimahi City, which has a positive, independent image, and advancing Cimahi City in a better direction [17].
12.		Slogan: " <i>Gemah Ripah Wibawa Mukti</i> ".	The city of Bandung's slogan is " <i>Gemah Ripah Wibawa Mukti</i> ," which means fertile land for prosperous people. The wealth of natural resources found in the city of Bandung is utilized for the prosperity of the people of the city of Bandung [18].
13.		Slogan: " <i>Repeh Rapih Kerta Raharja</i> ".	Bandung Regency is famous for its reliable culture of farming. Plantations are an additional source of income for the people so that they are affluent and do not lack anything ( <i>loba ketan kea keton, raharja</i> ). On this

		<p>basis, the slogan "<i>Repeh Rapih Kerta Raharja</i>" was created [15]. <i>Repeh</i> means a safe and peaceful atmosphere in life. <i>Rapih</i> means a harmonious and orderly living atmosphere in a clean, healthy, and beautiful environment. <i>Kerta Raharja</i> means a life order that is physically and mentally prosperous in a balanced, harmonious, fair, and equitable manner [19].</p>
14.		<p>Slogan: "<i>Wibawa Mukti Kertaraharja</i>".</p> <p>Meanwhile, West Bandung Regency has a slogan, namely "<i>Wibawa Mukti Kertaraharja</i>" <i>Wibawa Mukti</i> means "a life order that reflects a strong will to manage a better life to achieve prosperity." "<i>Kertaraharja</i>" means an order of life that is coveted by the community, namely physical and spiritual prosperity with the blessing of God Almighty. The yellow-gold color symbolizes majesty. It has the meaning that society always upholds the dignity of the nation, which is noble and noble [20].</p>

#### 4. Conclusion

From this study, it was concluded that meaning is an important element in the creation of a symbol. The symbols contained in the coat of arms have meanings and hopes from the local government for its people; for example, the mountain symbol depicts a strong community, having a solid foundation and protecting nature, and the water symbol depicts well-being, prosperity, and fertility of nature or the area. Based on each regional symbol found in the Bandung Raya area, several similarities were found, such as the symbol of water that is on all government symbols, the symbol of Mount Tangkuban Perahu, the water dams in three areas of Bandung Raya, and the slogan bands all over the symbols. Overall, it was found that all regions prioritized natural resources as their regional advantage, and it was hoped that the abundant wealth of natural resources would be properly managed for the welfare and prosperity of the local population. The meaning contained in the symbol provides.

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