

THE VISUAL STRUCTURE OF 19TH CENTURY BATAVIAN INDIGENOUS WOMEN CLOTHING

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Abstract: *This research used material objects in the form of indigenous Batavian women's clothing worn in the 19th century (1870-1930). Clothing at this time was used as a social marker based on ethnicity. This research used the symbolic interactionism paradigm, and the analysis of clothing structure was carried out formally regarding the main clothing, millineries, and accessories. The interpretation used Anthony Giddens's theory to see the formation of structures and agents. This research concluded that indigenous women in the 19th century had a significant role in shaping the type and quality of clothing in the Dutch East Indies. Indigenous women in the 19th century were not only users but were also involved in creating fashion for the people of Batavia.*

Keywords: *clothing; indigenous women; batavia; colonial*

Introduction

Batavia is the name for an area located at 6-10 South Latitude and 122 East Longitude. Based on geology, this area is formed from volcanic mud deposits known as fan-shaped alluvial (Stockdale, 2014). The city's name originates from the name of a fort founded by VOC in 1621 by Coen (Van Leur, 1967). The name Batavia is taken from the name Batavir, which is the name of the ancestors of the Dutch (Heuken, 2001). Blackburn (2011) mentions that the Batavia region was previously known as Sunda Kelapa and it was already quite an essential area in inter-island and international trade.

In the 19th century, the Batavia region

was a residency described in Regeeringsalmanak voor Nederlandsch consisting of the Meester Cornelis, Tangerang, Buitenzorg, and Karawang areas (Indies, 1870). However, in 1930, based on Regeeringsalmanak voor Nederlandsch – Indie 1930 (Indies, 1929) it was divided into two districts, namely Batavia Regency (Batavia, Weltevreden, Tangerang, Balaraja, and Mauk) and Meester Cornelis Regency (Meester Cornelis, Kebayoran, Bekasi, and Cikarang).

From 1870 to 1930, Batavia was an area larger than the city of Jakarta, which we know today. Various ethnic groups had been inhabiting the Batavia region since the city was founded and had been very heterogeneous. Nordholt (1997) states

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that individual identity is a social and cultural shell that is the expression and identity of society, so indigenous group identity can represent the community's identity. Clothing is material worn to cover parts of the body (Kawamura, 2018). Additionally, clothing is also related to fashion because clothing is associated with the procedure for wearing it (Barnard, 1996). Okonkwo (2016) mentions the procedure for wearing this clothing, mixing, and matching, and how to arrange it. How clothing is worn, according to Black et al. (2012), is also influenced by political, economic, and technological conditions. In general, clothing and fashion in the 19th century are said by Zaman (2001) to be identical to the character of traditional clothing.

The phenomenon of ethnic diversity in Batavia can at least be seen in the use of clothing, whose function goes beyond the functional aspect and influences the formation of the group's collective identity. The use of this clothing is also a representation of the response of indigenous women as agents of economic, political, and technological change. To see the role of indigenous women in creating urban culture, the questions of this research are:

1. What kind of clothing structure did indigenous women apply in the 19th century?
2. How do indigenous women structure themselves as agents in responding to the structures provided by the colonial government?

Methodology

This research used the symbolic interactionism paradigm, which viewed the need to understand human behavior from a human perspective. This perspective believed that human behavior must be seen as a process humans form and regulate with consideration. This perspective suggests that human behavior must be seen

as a process that allows humans to shape and regulate their behavior by considering the expectations of other people with whom they interact (Mulyana, 2013). According to this perspective, social life was "human interaction using symbols". This perspective was used to obtain patterns from several indigenous female figures.

The material object was indigenous women's clothing (kebaya and jarit), and the formal object used Anthony Giddens' theory to see clothing as an embodiment of behavior with the procedures for wearing clothing (folded, waist-length, ankle-length). In Giddens' view (Wirawan, 2012), there was a connection between the agent and the agent's actions as a totality. Indigenous women's clothing, in Giddens' structuralist view, was considered a duality in which structure and individual actors interact in the process of production, reproduction, and social relations so that indigenous women (actors) were the result (outcome) and structure (rules, resources) but also mediation for the formation of new structures (Wirawan, 2012).

The structure of Batavian women's clothing from 1870-1930 was classified into three types, namely primary clothing (functional), millinery (structural), and accessories (decorative) (Davis, 1980). The form of clothing, a design element, discussed clothing elements, including the neckline, collar, sleeves, and cuffs (Koester et al., 1991). Clothing structures were analyzed using design principles, which include balance, proportion, emphasis, rhythm, and unity (Davis, 1980).

Discussion



Figure 1. 19th Century Indigenous Woman's clothing
(Source: <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:845983>,
<http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:912528>,
<http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:722738>)

The clothing of indigenous people in the period 1870 to 1930 physically looked striking because it was colorful. This clothing looked contrastingly different from the clothing used in Batavian society. In general, the clothing of indigenous people at this time was a mix-and-match of long-sleeved kebaya combined with the use of jarit cloth at the bottom. At this time, imports of fabric used in Batavian clothing were very high. This fact can be seen in the widespread use of "saya" cotton material from India and imported fabrics from Europe (Veldhuisen, 1993). The kebaya worn at this time consisted of several colors, such as indigo (blue) and red.

Meanwhile, Zaman (2002) said that the jarit as the bottom clothing, applies motifs from inland areas, with the dominant color being sogan (brown). Sumarsono (interview 2019) noted that the use of jarit by indigenous people in Batavia was inseparable from the availability of batik in the Batavia market. This opinion was not an exaggeration because colonial government records from the 19th century stated that a batik production center in Batavia predominantly produced stamped

batik (Angelino & others, 1930).

Indigenous women's (figure 1) upper clothing was a kebaya that reached the knee level, had long sleeves, and was characterized by a 'V' cut at the neck. The opening of the kebaya was connected using a brooch with a pin, which allowed the body to fit at the waist. The combination of materials, techniques, and design of this kebaya forms the silhouette of the letter "S". Muchlison (interview 2019) said that the clothing in picture 1 was a kebaya with traditional characteristics. This type of kebaya was not influenced much by Western fashion.

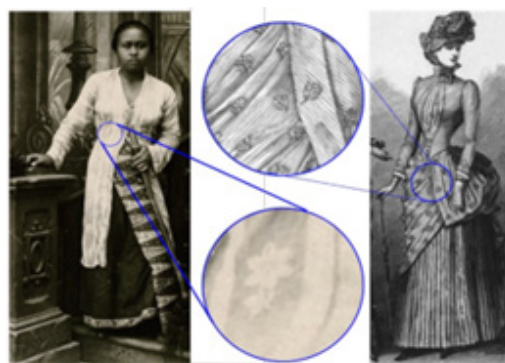


Figure 2. Rose ornament on indigenous women's kebaya 1880
(Source: <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:845983>,
Blum, 2012)

Indigenous women's kebaya (figure 2) was made of colored material. It had a rose motif (embroidery) that looked identical to the floral motif mentioned by (Blum, 1981), which was also used in Victorian clothing from 1880 to 1890. The similarity appeared in the formal characteristics of the rose motif, which was realistic and detailed, typical of Victorian-style motifs. The indigenous woman in picture 2 wore a jarit in a sarong style. Sarongs could be recognized because of the folding technique at the head of the cloth. The use of a tumpal with floral ornaments characterized the sarong head. The contrast in this jarit was the empty body of the fabric,

Table 1. The structure of indigenous women's clothing in the 1880
 (Suwito Casande)

Main Clothing				
Indigenous women 1880	Kebaya	Neck circumference	V 2/8 of kebaya's height	
		Collar	Shawl collar	
		Button	1/8 of kebaya's height	
		Length of kebaya	Below the knees	
		Sleeves	Long-fitted	
		Cuffs	Folded and stitched (without cuffs)	
		Lace	-	
		Jarit	Length of cloth	Below the ankles
			Type of cloth	sarong
			Motif	-
Ornament	Organic-geometric			
How to wear	Fold to the center			



especially in the middle. The body of this cloth had ornaments placed only on the edges. Visually, this jarit ornament gave the characteristics of batik cloth produced by stamping.

Indigenous women's kebaya (picture 3, part a) showed long-fitted sleeves, which meant that the circumference of the wrist to the circumference of the arm had a size that fitted the body. The sleeves of the kebaya did not use cuffs. A sewing technique was used to close the edges of the wrist opening.



Figure 3. The structure of indigenous women's clothing in the 1880
 (Source:<http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:845983>)

The prominent physical characteristic of this kebaya was the neck circumference (figure 3 part b), which was in a "V" shape (table 1), measuring two-eighths of the kebaya's height. This kebaya's neck circumference was also the bodice's collar, commonly known as a shawl collar. This kebaya (table 1) had a body opening six-eighths the height of the kebaya. The two front pieces of the kebaya were joined together with a brooch (image 3 part c).

Indigenous women mix and match kebaya with batik cloth (picture 3 part d) worn from the waist to the ankles. This batik cloth was a sarong with a tumpal as the head of the cloth and various decorations inside. Meanwhile, the body of the cloth was only filled with ornaments on the edges with various organic plant decorations. joined together with a brooch (image 3 part c).

Indigenous women mix and match kebaya with batik cloth (picture 3 part d) worn from the waist to the ankles. This batik cloth was a sarong with a tumpal as the head of the cloth and various decorations inside. Meanwhile, the body of the cloth was only filled with ornaments on the edges with various organic plant decorations.

Table 2. The principles of indigenous women's fashion design in the 1890

Indigenous Women 1890		Main Clothing	
		Kebaya	Neck circumference
Collar	Shawl collar		
Button	1/8 of kebaya's height		
Length of kebaya	Knees		
Sleeves	Long-fitted		
Cuffs	Folded and stitched (without cuffs)		
Lace	-		
Length of cloth	Above the ankles		
Type of cloth	Sarong		
How to wear	Fold to the center		
Jarit	Type of cloth	Sarong	
	Motif	-	
	Ornament	Organic-geometric	
	How to wear	Fold to the center	

The design principles (table 2) for indigenous women's clothing had an asymmetrical balance, seen from the right and the left parts, which had the same size even though in terms of volume, the size of the top and bottom clothing had a different ratio, 6:2. The visualization of this indigenous woman appeared to be eight parts compared to two parts of the body that were not covered by clothing. Clothing was dominant because it was mainly represented by the clothing (non-body) worn. Indigenous women's clothing emphasized the jarit, achieved by using dark tones. The color was pretty contrasting compared to kebaya, which had light tones. The rule that made this clothing visually non-monotonous was the use of repetition, especially in the use of organic ornaments found on the kebaya and jarit cloth.

Indigenous women's kebaya (figure 4 part d) had long sleeves that were fitted from the wrist to the shoulder. The ends of the kebaya's wrists were not cuffed but were finished by folding them. The neck of the kebaya was "V" shaped (figure 4 part a) with a size of two-eighths and the shawl collar technique. The kebaya opening (fig-



Figure 4. The structure of indigenous women's clothing in the 1890
(Source: <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:912528>)

ure 4 part a) was one-eighth the length of the kebaya and used buttons to join the two opening parts.

The main composition is the bottom part, a batik sarong (figure 4 part c), worn from the waist to the top of the ankles. The sarong was worn by making a fold in the middle so that the front of the cloth with geometric ornaments was visible.

Design principles (table 3) for indigenous women's clothing in the kebaya had a symmetrical balance, and the right and left parts were the same size. Meanwhile, the batik cloth used had an asymmetrical balance because the right and left sides (the front of the cloth) were not the same.

The proportion of this clothing made the kebaya part appear bigger than the

Table 3. The principles of indigenous women's fashion design in the 1890
(Source: Suwito Casande)

Indigenous women 1890		Balance	Proportion		Emphasis	Rhythm	Unity
Main Clothing	Kebaya	Symmetry	6/8	6:2	kebaya	Transition	White color
	Jarit	Asymmetry	2/8				

jarit, 6:2. Indigenous women’s clothing emphasized the kebaya, which was achieved by using light tones that are quite contrasting compared to the jarit with dark tones. The rhythm in the main clothing is transitional, namely the use of ornaments with a pseudo-smooth texture to kebaya with small rough-textured geometric areas. Unity was achieved by using white on the kebaya and white on the geometric ornaments of the batik cloth.

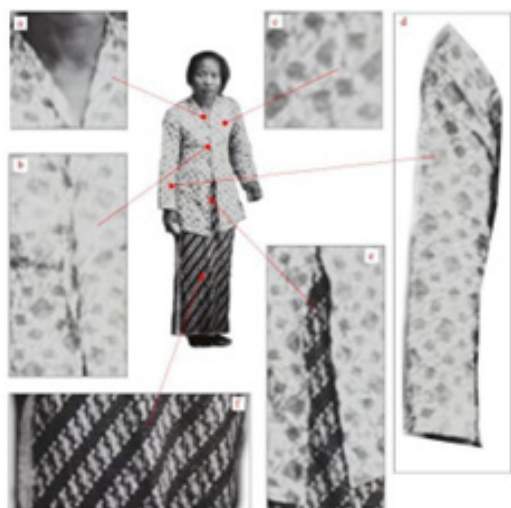


Figure 5. The structure of indigenous women’s clothing in the 1920
 (Source:<http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:722738>)

Indigenous women’s kebaya (figure 5 part d) had long sleeves fitted from shoulder to wrist. The ends of the kebaya’s wrists were not cuffed but were finished by folding them.

The neck of the kebaya was “V” shaped (figure 5 part a), with a one-quarter size and a shawl collar technique. The kebaya

opening (figure 5 part b) was one-quarter of the length of the kebaya and used buttons to join the two opening parts. The main composition of the main clothing was a long sarong as the bottom part (figure 5 part f) worn from the waist to the top of the ankles.

This sarong was wrapped by making folds at the edges so that the front of the fabric was visible in the form of a geometric parang ornament.

Design principles (table 4) for indigenous women’s clothing in the kebaya have a symmetrical balance that looks the same between the right and left. Meanwhile, the batik cloth had an asymmetrical balance because the right and left sides (front of the cloth) differed. The proportions in this clothing made the kebaya appear more prominent than the jarit, 5:3. This indigenous women’s clothing emphasized the kebaya, which was achieved by using light tones that are pretty contrasting compared to the jarit, which had dark tones. The rhythm applied in the main clothing was a transition, namely using dark colors in the combined kebaya ornaments to black diagonal stripes. A unified look was achieved using white on the kebaya and white on the batik cloth.

This section describes the findings and analysis of the research data and explains the limitations of the study. It can also describe the study’s result, why it matters, and the perspective for future research.

Table 4. The principles of indigenous women’s fashion design in the 1920s

Indigenous women 1920		Balance	Proportion		Emphasis	Rhythm	Unity
Main Clothing	Kebaya	Symmetry	5/8	5:3	Kebaya	Transition	White and black colors
	Jarit	Asymmetry	3/8				

Conclusion

1. Structure

Indigenous women's clothing structure in the 19th century (table 5) had the kebaya's dominant visual characteristic, achieved with proportion and emphasis. The unity of the composition was achieved by using elements of color and rhythm as variations so that there was an individual touch. The kebaya was characterized by a "V" neck shape with a size between 2/8 to 1/8 compared to the whole kebaya. The length of the kebaya is slightly past the hips (above the knees). Kebaya sizes tended to shorten between 1890 and 1920 (Casande et al., 2022).

The bottom part was a variety of batik cloth, which could be a sarong or long cloth. This cloth was worn with a different asymmetrical balance between the right and left sides. The characteristic of the batik motif was that it was a variety of geometric decorations filled with or-

ganic ornaments; this emphasized the use of stamped batik, which was widely produced and marketed in Batavia. If you look at clothing within the scope of procedures, as stated by Okonkwo (Okonkwo, 2016), wearing batik cloth is connected to the wearer's profession.

In the 19th century, Locher said indigenous people (Locher-Scholten, 2000) filled many physical jobs such as servants, maids, gardeners, cooks, tailors, and laundresses. The great need for the working class at this time was also in line with the opening of Batavia to private foreign investment from Europe in the agricultural and plantation industrial sectors (Baay, 2010). Based on this information, batik cloth was worn by folding the center and the edge; this showed that its use was adapted to support physical activities. The structure of indigenous women's clothing also referred to the rules set by the colonial government in Staatsblad 1872 no 111, which applied to all commu-

Table 5. The structure of indigenous women's clothing in the 19th century

No	Main Clothing	1880	1890	1920
1	Neck circumference	V 2/8	V 2/8	V ¼
2	Collar	Shawl collar	Shawl collar	Shawl collar
3	Button	1/8	1/8	¼
4	Length of kebaya	Below the knees	Above the knees	Above the knees
5	Sleeves	Fitted	Fitted	Fitted
6	Cuffs	Folded and stitched	Folded and stitched	Folded and stitched
7	Lace	-	-	-
8	Length of cloth	Below the ankles	Above the ankles	Above the ankles
9	Type of cloth	Sarong	Sarong	Sarong
10	Motif	-	-	-
11	Ornament	Organic-geometric	Organic-geometric	Organic-geometric
12	How to wear	Folded at the center	Folded at the center	Folded at the side
Design Principles				
13	Balance			
	Kebaya	Symmetry	Symmetry	Symmetry
	Jarit	Asymmetry	Asymmetry	Asymmetry
14	Proportion			
	Kebaya	6	6	5
	Jarit	2	2	3
15	Emphasis	Jarit	Kebaya	Kebaya
16	Rhythm	Repetition	Transition	Transition
17	Unity	White color	White color	White and black color

nities in the Dutch East Indies, including Batavia (Casande et al., 2022). Idi (2019) stated that these clothing regulations were a form of segregation politics by the colonial government to group people based on ethnicity.

The clothing structure established by the colonial government did not specifically regulate the types and models of indigenous women's clothing but specifically regulated people wearing clothing according to their ethnicity. Indigenous women arranged this structure into a new clothing structure identical to indigenous women. They could look aesthetically pleasing by applying a good mix and match but could also support their daily work.

2. Agency

Indigenous women in the 19th century comprised half of Batavia's population (Blackburn, 2011). Apart from occupying several worker positions in urban society, women were also agents of acculturation who absorbed foreign culture into the culture of Batavian society (Casande et al., 2022). The role of women was also visible in their involvement in the development of the Javanese batik industry their participation in the Javanese batik trade extended to inter-island and international markets (Loebèr, 1914). Unsurprisingly, the availability of batik concentrated in Batavia was met by most batik produced in Central Java and West Java (Siem, 2017).

Indigenous women in 1870-1930 were agents who played a dual role. On the one hand, they helped determine the direction of fashion production. On the other hand, they acted as a clothing consumer for the Batavian people, representing the model of the variety and quality of fashion in the 19th-century Dutch East Indies.

Visually, these indigenous women (table 6) are characterized by their main

Table 6. The structure of indigenous women's clothing in the 19th century

No	Busana Utama	
1	Neck circumference	V 2/8
2	Collar	Shawl collar
3	Botton	1/8
4	Length of kebaya	Bellow the knees
5	Sleeves	Fitted
6	Cuffs	Folded and stitched
7	Lace	-
8	Length of cloth	Below the ankles
9	Type of cloth	Sarung
10	Motif	-
11	Ornament	Organic – geometric
12	How to Wear	Folded at the center
Prinsip Desain		
13	Balance	
	kebaya	Symmetry
	jarit	Asymmetry
14	Proportion	
	kebaya	6
	jarit	2
15	Emphasis	Kebaya
16	Rhythm	Repetition
17	Unity	White Color

clothing being a kebaya with a relatively large V-neckline (2/8) which has a tie type shirt collar, a relatively short row of buttons (1/8). The length of the kebaya is below the knee, has tight kebaya sleeves. The kebaya is equipped with edge-sewn cuffs, the kebaya is plain without a tent. At the bottom, it uses a batik sarong with geometric organic ornaments which are used by folding in the middle. Visually, indigenous women's clothing has a balance of symmetry, and the sarong is asymmetrical. The use of the kebaya dominates the proportion of clothing. This mix and match emphasizes the kebaya which applies a repeating rhythm and then the principle of unity is achieved by using the color white.

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