Jambi Malay Dance Fashion Aesthetics

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This research aimed to know the concept of dress aesthetics and art of traditional and creative dance of Jambi Malay, and dress development of Jambi Malay dance could be seen from a dress of traditional dance, creative dance, and contemporary dance. The research result was expected to be one of Jambi Malay culture inventory in social science. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative research method with a symbolic interaction approach. The background of the people of Jambi city which is multicultural makes Jambi city rich in cultural diversity, one of which is dance. Dance dress is included as an important element in dance performance. The dress of Malay dance is not separated from aesthetic and artistic concepts based on concepts of custom and Islam. The concept is based on message of Jambi culture, “adat bersendikan syarak, syarak bersendikan kitabullah, syarak mengato adat memakai”. The research conclusion is that the ideal dress aesthetically according to Jambi Malay tradition after converting to Islam is a dress that covers the genitals. Artistically it is the dress that is lost when moving, with not too much design based on Islamic custom and law while color is usually natural color and adapted.

Keywords: aesthetics, dress, dance, tradition, creation, Malay, Jambi

Estetika Busana Tari Melayu Jambi


Kata kunci: estetika, busana, tari, tradisi, kreasi, Melayu, Jambi

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INTRODUCTION

Dress reflects personality, social status, function, and special meaning, especially in the local cultural environment. Furthermore, a dress can also present a message or image to everyone. Therefore, wearing a dress requires attention and consideration, so that it matches, is beautiful, and is interesting based on norms, customs, social, culture, and religion in a certain environment.

Dance dress and clothing are two different words, but basically, they have the same definition, such as clothes, accessories, and cosmetics. Dance dress is which is included accessories and cosmetics used by dancers in a performance like dance shows in the certain event (Nurlaini, Yusuf Martun, 2014).

Dress is an important element of the dance component as traditional clothing is an important element in culture. The clothes will play a role as a mirror of the identity of a community group or ethnicity and even cultural context or certain tradition. Likewise, the same thing to dance dress, not only the skill but also the beauty of the dance moves is important to be equipped with a dress that matches the character of the dance. The presence of makeup and clothing in the dance is very supportive and will strengthen the charm of the dance that is shown. A fashion historian, Elizabeth Wilson, connects clothing and modernity. She says that cloth can show the “spirit of the age” (Nordholt, 1997). Wilson’s statement is not too much if dress in dance becomes also one of the spirits of art at a certain time for users.

The dance art in Jambi is quite diverse and has many styles. Each region has its characteristics based on the regional and ethnic conditions of the indigenous peoples. With the many varieties and styles of the dance, of course, they have a variety of dresses supporting the dance.

The wisdom of Jambi Malay dance dress is certainly inseparable from aesthetics and art. Aesthetics and art in Jambi Malay dance dress are inseparable from the concept of custom and Islam. Before the entry of Islam into Jambi, the concept known by the Malay community was the custom concept of Hinduism – Buddhism (Hartati M., Fatonah F., 2020). This is because the culture of the Jambi Malay community before the entry of Islam was based on Hindu-Buddhist teachings, so the aesthetics of Malay dance dress can be believed to be based on the teachings of this religion, in addition to environmental influences. However, when Islam entered the Malay lands, the aesthetics of Malay dance dress would undoubtedly conform to Islamic teachings as seen in the custom massage, “adat bersendikan syara', syara’ bersendikan Kitabullah, syara’ mengato, adat memakai.” Thus, it is impossible for the dance dress inherited by the Islamic Malay generation to not conform to Islamic teachings.

The aesthetic values of Islam and Malay culture are inherent in the life of the Jambi Malay community in all aspects of life, like how to dress. This can be seen well in wearing traditional dress/ bridal wear or dress dance. The dress worn by dancers is not as complementary but also it has philosophical values in custom. The beauty of dance certainly will not be perfect without the perfect dress. The aesthetic values of dance will be more perfect and meaningful with the clothes used.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research with a symbolic interaction approach. The symbolic interaction approach is used to explain how the meaning and understanding of the symbols attached to the aesthetics of dance dress which symbolizes the values of Jambi Malay cultural identity implemented through dance and accessories to complement dance outfits. Malay dance dress is one of the Jambi Malay cultural identity symbols in maintaining the traditions and cultural heritage of the Malay community itself. Therefore symbolic interaction understands humans based on the view of the subject itself. It means that it is the subject who determines his condition and their environment based on the symbols they have and they are the ones who explain and determine their behavior and not others.

For completing the written data, data collection was conducted in form of files and supported documents, deep interviews, and participant observation of informants in the art of Malay dance in Jambi city.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Dance Art and Jambi Malay Dance Dress

Dance is a human expression with a rhythmic soul, the beauty of motion in which there are conveyors to be conveyed. Through delivery that can be understood, it can be easily reached by the audience to delivery that is a bit difficult to understand, but its beauty can be felt (Soedarsano, 1977: 34-35) in (Made Rianta et al., 2019)

Dance is a human being who moves through the body and creates beauty, rhythm, and harmony in souls. Motion is created by humans through body
members (body) that already have a shape, then they are moved. The movements shown can stand together, alone, and continuously and have a rhythm so that harmony is created.

Dance movements are human feelings that are expressed, implemented into raw movements, and then processed into beautiful movements that have rhythm and harmony of the soul. Dance movement as art uses art materials in the form of dancers' limbs in it. The limbs start from head to toe (Made Rianta et al., 2019).

To support the philosophical meaning of the beauty of dance movements, clothing is needed that by the philosophical values of the dance movements, by customary ethics, culture, and religion but can also provide flexibility and movement for dancers.

Jambi culture is influenced by various tribes and ethnicities in Jambi such as the tribe of Kerinci, Batin, Kubu, Bajau, Melayu, Penghulu, Pindah, and various ethics such as ethnic of China, Arab, Indian, and others. These tribes and ethnicities influence the existing cultural elements, including artistic elements such as dance.

The dance art of Jambi that is spread throughout the region is quite a lot of variety and form, that is the culture of each region or community group, but the various forms and varieties of dance have almost disappeared and been forgotten by the environment (Jambi, 2001). In Jambi City, several dance arts are still being preserved today as follows:

**Dana Dance**

Dana dance is one of the dances that live and develop in the Sebrang area of Jambi City. The supporters of this dance are people of Arab descent. Historically, the Arabs who lived on the other side came through trade routes and at the same time spread the religion of Islam. Besides bringing the influence of Islam, they also bring their culture, namely the existence of a dance called the Dana dance which is always performed at events to enliven weddings. Till right now this dance is known who the creator is, but Dana dance become a traditional dance. Dana dance is a traditional dance of the Jambi community of Arab descent generally and the Jambi community especially.

The Dana dance is danced by young and old men with agile footwork. However, at this time Dana's dance is danced by women specifically for women. Based on dance moves there are three parts as zapin, sarah, and samar, what distinguishes them from the three is the pattern of motion and tempo which is getting faster and faster and supported by the music tempo. According to Habib Abdullah bin Husein Aljufti (75 years), “Zapin dance come from Arab descendants who live in Jambi at the beginning of the spread of Islam conducted in Sebrang region, Zapin dance is entertainment for Habib-habib until right now”. Zapin dance is danced by men using gambus music. According to Habib Abdullah bin Husein Aljufr, “The philosophy of this Zapin dance is to remember Allah because the songs are the values of Islamic poetry” (interview, Habib Abdullah bin Husein Aljufr, Kota Sebrang, Sunday, 12 September 2021).

The dress worn in this Dana dance according to Habib Abdullah the past time is wearing gamis for men, but at this time along with the era and acculturation of Jambi Malay culture, the dress worn is teluk belango and sarong at the waist. The dress of Dana dance for women consists of a sack dress, skirt, and sarong.

![Figure 1. Example of children's Zapin dance costumes. (Source: Private doc, 2021)](image1)

![Figure 2. Women's fund dance clothing in the form of new creations. (Source: Private doc, 2021)](image2)

**Serangkuh Dayung Dance**

The Serangkuh dayung dance has the meaning of togetherness in the Jambi community in all things. The Creator of Serangkuh Dayung is also known but this dance is rearranged by Aini Rozak in 1990. This
dance describes the same feelings, the same direction as agreement, and togetherness in all things. Serangkuy Dayung dance consists of 6 - 8 girls with sack dresses and trousers and a scarf to cover the head and batik in the waist.

Figure 3. Serangkuh Dayung dance outfit played by young women.  
(Source: Private doc., 2021)

**Sekapur Sirih Dance**

Sekapur Sirih Dance is created by Firdaus Chatab in 1962 and rearranged by OK Hundrek, BBA in 1967. This dance is used to welcome respected guests with a sincere heart in welcoming guest, and this dance is danced by 10 girls. It consists of 7 dancers and 2 cerano carriers (a container filled with betel) with one holder and one opener of cerano and one umbrella carrier (interview, Zulkarnain, 13 October 2021). The musical instruments that accompany this dance are violins, stringed instruments, accordions, tambourines, gongs, and drums.

The dress used in the Sekapur Sirih dance is usually worn Jambi Malay traditional dress, a sack dress made of velvet which is bright red with gold thread embroidered and combined with songket cloth as a subordinate and a scarf at the waist and lotus on the chest, equipped with gold metal accessories on the bracelet, belt and crown on the head.

If the Sekapur Sirih dance is looked at at a glance, it is almost similar to the Gending Sriwijaya dance dress, namely the lotus accessories that cover the dancer's chest. In the Gending Sriwijaya dance, lotus is used to cover the chest because the dress uses kemben (an Indonesian female torso wrap) with songket cloth worn till the chest and coated with songket to cover the chest and the outer is covered by lotus. The dress of Sekapur Sirih dance does use kemben but it uses Jambi Malay traditional dress which is a sack dress and lotus accessories of Tanjung Silang. The Tanjung is used as a sweetener to cover the chest of the traditional dress. Nurlaini state that why there is a similarity between the lotus of Gending Sriwijaya and the dress, “lotus Tanjung Silang covering sekapur sirih dancer’s chest is the influence of ethnic group who come into Deuto Melayu, they come from Langkat and South Sumatra which borders Jambi. They live in some areas in Jambi such as Pauh, Mandiangin, Martapura, Sarolangun, and other areas including Jambi city. When Jambi had not been Jambi province, Jambi was part of the region of Central Sumatra which is united with South Sumatra.” (Interview, Nurlaini, Museum Siginjai Jambi, 2 September 2021). Historically 1958 Jambi province was formed through constitution number 61 in 1958. It influenced the culture of Jambi Malay including dance dress namely teratai Tanjung Silang at the dress of Sekapur Sirih.

Nurlaini explains that “dance dress depends on dance creator.” (Interview, Zulkarnain, Mendalo, 12 October 2021), explains that “the dress is not separated from the background because there is ego to create which is native culture. Based on the creator’s background that rearrange this dance is OK Hendrik comes from Bangka Belitung (the previous time is part of South Sumatra).

The distinctive feature of the Tanjung Silang lotus functions as a breastplate and it has an aesthetic and artistic value that will make the dance dress beautiful because the influence of Islam is so strong in Jambi, so the dress is not separated from massage adat bersendikan syarak, syarak bersendikan kitabullah. Therefore the dress of traditional dance uses the Jambi Malay sack dress.

Figure 4. Tanjung Silang lotus that serves to cover the dancer’s chest. The influence of the ethnic group.  
(Source: Private doc., 2021)
Figure 5. Sekapur Sirih dance dress for welcoming guests of honor. (Source: Private doc., 2021)

**Anggut/Angguk Dance**

Anggut/Angguk dance comes from Sebrang town (part of Jambi city) created by H. Burhanuddin in 1930s. This dance was inspired by music brought by Arab traders to Jambi through trade in the river Batanghari. This Anggut dance is accompanied by kompangan so that harmony is combined and created. Why this dance is called the Anggut dance? According to Rawiyan known well called Ning Yan (50 years old) “while dancing Anggut, the dancers shake (menganggut) head and pronounce names of God by accompanying kompangan music and pencak silat, whatever of movement conducted is always accompanied by names of God. It is danced while the groom is taken to the bride’s house. The dancer of this dance is men consisting of 10-16 men. Anggut dance follows the movement of pronouncing face to face. The philosophical meaning of this dance is remembering God by saying “Laa Illaaha Illah” with every move, every activity is remembering God, symbolically all activities are remembering God while planting the rice, rowing the boat, everything is remembering God. All society activities are accompanied by remembering God, so the blessing is got in every activity” (Interview, Rawiyan/Ning Yan, Kota Sebrang, Sunday, 12 September 2021).

The dress worn in Anggut/Angguk dance according to Ning Yan is that cloth for men and consists of telokbelango, black hat, and sarong but now the dress is a bit changed like a black hat which is changed to the sharp hat, and for a sarong, some time is changed songket, but it depends on dress given by event organizer.

In addition to the four types of dance above which are traditional dances in the city of Jambi, there are many other types of traditional dances that have become creative dances and contemporary dances that were born and known in the city of Jambi.

Figure 6. An example of anggut/angguk dance now use Malay costume of Teluk Belango. (Source: Private doc., 2021)

**Aesthetic Concept of Traditional Dance Dress**

The multicultural province of Jambi has cultural diversity, including dance dress that symbolizes the ethnicity of the people who are the background of the dance dress. Various tribes and ethnic that live in regions in Jambi will influence all aspects and social life patterns including art.

Traditional dress as a result art has aesthetic value because basically human has needs to dress toward everything used and the place where they live. Humans also love beauty.

Art and beauty are two things that stick together. Beauty certainly cannot be separated from the word “aesthetic”. Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that deals with beauty. It is usually found in art and the universe. Any art contains an aesthetic value, including the art of dance. One of the cultural elements that cannot be separated from aesthetics is the art of dance, starting from the dance itself to the supporting equipment for the dance such as dress and accessories.
Komang Indra Wirawan states that Art is not always beauty pleasant the ideal beauty can be various and depends on the ideal values of life. Beauty is a value that is formed by subjective feelings, as an emotional response to the quality of the work (Wirawan, 2021)

According to Djelantik (1992:2) What is said beautiful can we feel in the soul a sense of pleasure, a sense of happiness, a sense of calm and comfort, and if the impression is strong, it makes a person-pleasant, and a desire arises to enjoy it again (in Balinese it is called kelangen). Based on that Komang Indra Wirawan concluded that aesthetics or beauty is synonymous with the beauty that makes a person enjoyable, and there is a sense to enjoy that beauty (Wirawan, 2021)

Dress and accessories are the result of human creation functioning nature and environment and developing knowledge and technology.

Providence of Jambi as explained previously geographically located in the trade path influence all cultural aspect. Hindu-Buddhist influences come from India and China. This culture has ever dominated all cultural life in Jambi, Indonesia. Then along with the entry of Islam in Indonesia, the development of Islam In the archipelago in the seventh century BC started. The preachers who come to Indonesia come from Arabia and have adapted to the Indian nation (from Gujarat) AND China from various directions that are by trade teaching began to penetrate the coasts of the archipelago including Jambi. Islam develop continuously in the 13 century BC when the Islamic king stood in various archipelagos.(Supian, 2018). One of the kingdoms in Jambi according to Datuk Azra’I (Head of LAM Jambi city) that “in the 15th century King Jambi Orang Kayo Hitam declare that Jambi was an Islamic country.” (Interview, Datuk Azra’I, Kota Jambi, Monday, 1 September 2021). The influence of Islam dominates almost all aspects of Jambi society's culture, which was previously thick with the influence of Animism – Dynamism, and Hinduism - Buddhism began to shift with the influence of Islam in all aspects, especially in customs and traditions.

The inherent Hindu-Buddhist style in the archipelago also affects the dress code of the community. At first, the people dressed with the concept of customs and traditions such as using folded cloth as kemben in daily clothing and dance then changed based on the times and the entry of outside influences such as the entry of Indian, Chinese, Arabic and Dutch colonial in the early 20th century and Japan in early 1939.

The entry of Islam into the Jambi region in the 7th century through trade routes and continued to develop in the 13th century to the 15th century influenced all aspects of the socio-cultural order of the Jambi community, including the arts and fashion of the Malay community, inseparable from elements of custom and Islamic law. If initially, the concept of dress used the concept of custom, then after the entry of Islam, the Jambi community used the concept of Islam. Based on philosophy and message of Jambi “adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendi kitabullah, syarak mengato, adat memakai, syarak babuhul mati, adat babuhul sentak.” (Interview, Datuk Muslim, Kota Jambi, 1 Novembert 2021). Explains that the meaning of the message of custom is the application of the order of customary values/guidance for Islamic law must be based on religious values sourced from the book of Allah, namely the Qur’an and hadith, while syarak mengato adat memakai means that the application of customary values/customary law is guided by Islamic law or how according to Islamic law it also serves as a guideline for customary law/customary application, in other words, it must not conflict with Islamic values, therefore there is the word syarak babuhul mati which means that Islamic values are inviolable, while babuhul sentak adat means Customs can still change and adjust if they are contrary to the Islamic law.

Islam has changed basic knowledge, perspective, good and bad values, forbidden and not forbidden, and obligatory and not obligatory so that their overall knowledge to do or act ideally does not conflict with the rules of Islam. The Islamic teachings shape their aesthetic conceptions so that realizing the art they want or accept is essentially art or art objects that do not conflict with Islamic
teachings. Any aesthetic concept that does not conflict with Islamic teachings is acceptable in the cultural environment of the Jambi community (Bahar & Muchtar, 2021)

Dance art includes part of the culture, cultural symbols, and traditions that must adapt to Islamic law. Traditional dance is old dance. The dress worn in traditional dance originally is a Malay dress that is top with a sack dress and bottom with songket or batik cloth for women and teluk belango, sarong waist, and black hat for men.

The dress of traditional dance is very simple consisting of a sack dress with tengkulak accessories and a scarf on the waist or neck. The staff of the museum for dancing, Mrs. Rismala Isma states "that dress of traditional dance only consist of sack dress and songket as well as a scarf for women and teluk belango for men and black hat for men" (interview, Rismala Isma, Museum Siginjai, Wednesday, 11 Agustus 2021). It is agreed by Ning Yan, Zulkarnain and Datuk Azra'I, Datuk Hasan Basri, and Datuk Muslim as the progenitor of Jambi Malay culture.

The ideal clothing according to tradition after the entry of Islamic influence is clothing that covers the genitals, loose-fitting costumes when moving, and designs that are not excessive by customs and Islamic law, while colors are usually natural colors and adapt.

Tribal and Ethnic diversity that live in Jambi have influenced the daily dress or dance dress worn by Jambi people. In the beginning, the dress was worn based on the influence of custom and cultural concepts. Then with the times, of Islam comes, the style of dressing also changed based on Islamic law as the message "adat bersendikan syarak, syarak bersendikan kitabullah".

Every ethnicity in Jambi has a distinctive feature of dance dress based on culture. The dress of the Bathin ethnic dance that is spread in Jambi has a distinctive feature, this dress is completed by a sack dress of songket with the motive of tampuk manggis (the bottom of the mangosteen fruit that resembles a flower). Under the neck, it is belah buluh (long line on the cloth) has a philosophical meaning that reflects welcoming the guest, while the straight arm means philosophically measuring and reaching to the limit (not extravagant beyond the limit of the ability) and the left side, there is kickax which is cut at the waist from the armpit to the waist at the elbow and from the waist down it is spread out so it doesn’t shape the body and makes it easier to move while for covering the head using kuluk (top hat) of durian flower which is on the top there are three levels top with motive leaf petal, the subordinate use songket sarongs with plate glass flower motifs. This dress reflects the happiness of dancers welcoming a guest to a cultural event. Nurlaini explains the philosophical meaning of kok bulat boleh lah digulingkan dan pipih bolelah dilayangkan, if the discussion has been decided, how come flat can be posted already recorded (interview, Nurlaini, 2nd September 2021).

Figure 8. Dress of the Bathin traditional dance in Jambi from the collection of the Siginjai Museum Jambi (Source: Private doc., 2021)

**Aesthetic Concept of New Dance Culture Art Dress**

The word aesthetic means the value of beauty. From that beauty will emerge an artistic value. Usually, the aesthetic value is obtained based on the movements performed. Meanwhile, the aesthetic value is additively known based on the dance accompaniment. Aesthetic value can also be said to be perceptions and impressions (Made Sukrawati et al., 2022). So, impressions are the first impression of the motion seen and dance dress.

Indonesia has a variety of arts and dance culture, one of them is dance dress. Now, developing various kinds of clothing along with advances in science and technology will gradually affect traditional Jambi Malay clothing. At arts and cultural events, the dress worn is sometimes traditional clothes combined with various creations, such as in new dance outfits.

Besides traditional dances, there are also new dances that are categorized as contemporary dances and creative dances. Creative dance dress is sourced from traditional dance dress, namely, sack dress and songket cloth which are modified with the local cultural background (environment) as well as the cultural background of the dance creator himself. Nurlaini states that “At this time, dance dress from...
traditional dress can be created based on the era, as long as it can’t be separated from message of **adat bersendi syarik dan syarik bersendi kitabullah** because the clothes or dance dress depends on the creator of the dance itself” (interview, Nurlaini, 2 September 2021). Zulkarnaen says the same thing, “Every dance dress can not be separated from the ego of the dance creator himself, this can be seen in every dance and dance dress can be traced not apart from the original cultural background of the dance creator” (interview, Zulkarnaen, 13 October 2021).

Creative dance is one new dance based on traditional dance or old dance. The dress used in traditional dance is traditional dance dress developed based on period and modernity. Meanwhile, contemporary dance is a dance genre that is developing at present, adapting to the current era. Contemporary dance is usually only for one show. The dress used in contemporary dance is also not much different from creative dance, which can be based on a traditional dress that adapts to contemporary situations based on the theme, tastes, and desires of the dance creator.

The new dance dress from creative dances and contemporary dances is inseparable from the original Malay dress, namely the sack dress for men or songket cloth. So if teluk belango cloth outer of the teluk belango is only a sarong for men or songket cloth. So it teluk belango cloth with cloth outer, it is a creative result and contemporary.

**CONCLUSION**

Indonesia is rich in cultural diversity, including Jambi province. Jambi city, a pluralistic and multicultural society, has a variety of cultural art. One of them is dance culture. The diversity of dance arts has been created. Of course, it must be equipped with a beautiful dance dress. Dance dress is not only a symbol of completeness but also designed for dancers and symbolically has meaning and philosophical value as part of aesthetic and artistic values in a dress. The dress of traditional dance is not separated from the provision of Jambi Malay which is **baju kurung** for women and **baju teluk belango** for men by emphasizing the concept and tradition as well as Islamic law concept. The concept is based on the massage of Jambi tradition, “adat bersendi syarik, syarik bersendi kitabullah, syarik menggot aadat memakai” basically idea dress according to tradition after converting to Islam is the dress covering the genital, loose when moving, not too much and having natural color and adapted. Meanwhile, creative and contemporary dance dress must also be based on traditional dress. Therefore the designer may create various styles of dance dress that are not separated from the concept of custom and tradition like in the message in the custom.

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