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PATTERNS OF LIFE**

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THE SYMBOLISM OF BADUY ADAT CLOTHING

ON THE EFFICACY OF COLOURS, PATTERNS AND PLANTS

JET BAKELS

The Baduy: a Life in Black and White

The Baduy form a traditional community of about 5000 people, who, motivated by religious conventions, have lived a relatively isolated life in the mountainous area of Banten in West-Java. In fact they live in Multatuli's sub-district Lebak.¹ Amazingly, although less than 200 kilometers from the Indonesian capital Jakarta, they have lived almost untouched by history, and have managed to preserve in their culture many aspects that have disappeared elsewhere. The Baduy try to live in strict accordance with their traditional rules of behaviour, the *adat* rules, laid down by their forefathers. The Baduy stress that they are not allowed to change these *adat* rules and consequently have to live exactly as their forefathers did. This attitude, characterized by some Dutch in the beginning of this century as "obsessively traditional", is properly expressed by the Baduy saying "What is long should not be shortened, what is short should not be lengthened". Everything should remain as it is.

Although - as we will see - this does not mean that no changes have occurred, the leaders of the community have tried to keep as small as possible the margins in which changes could, in their view, be tolerated. One area in which this adherence to tradition is visualised and instantly catches the eye is that of the clothing. (See fig. 2)

Dress is uniform for all Baduy, permitting very little variation. Basically only two 'colours' are allowed: black/dark blue and white. Only in a special ceremonial context is some red allowed. The Baduy form one of the very few communities in Indonesia in which *adat* clothes have to be worn all the time, in daily as well as in ritual life. Only the Kajang of South Sulawesi have comparable codes of dress (personal communication from Catherine Mackenzie). A Baduy is directly recognizable as a Baduy by his clothes. Without the *adat* clothing a Baduy is not a Baduy anymore. The question I shall try to answer here is why the Baduy always wear their *adat* costume. Why are clothes and wearer so indissolubly intertwined? To understand the Baduy codes of dress it is not sufficient to refer only to their general adherence to tradition (which I hope to clarify as well) or the problem of identity that each small ethnic group faces. We have to look at the efficacy of symbols. It is in Indonesia a general conception that objects are animated and that the 'personality' of the object is connected (among others) to its outward characteristics, for instance its form or its colour. This happens, whenever such formal characteristics are symbolically associated with a phenomenon in another context. The object itself is then supposed to be directly related to that phenomenon. Special ritual acts can activate this intrinsic potential (although this is not always necessary), and consequently an object can exercise a specific, supernatural influence (Schefold 1988: 37). For instance a red cloth can, because of its colour, be associated with fire and 'hotness'. Consequently such a cloth is held to influence its wearer to become 'hot as fire'. We shall see this is exactly the way the Baduy motivate their uses and taboos of certain coloured textiles. Thus the colours, patterns and material of which a cloth is made are not arbitrary, but selected according to their specific characteristics and corresponding efficacy.

Original Sundanese

The Baduy call their religion **Sunda Wiwitan**, meaning 'originally Sundanese' (the Sundanese people roughly speaking inhabit the interior of West-Java). They are not Muslims and even explicitly oppose Islam. Until recently it was extremely hard for small tribal communities in Indonesia to keep their own religion. Officially as well as unofficially these communities had to overcome severe attacks on their traditional lifestyle. The Baduy, however, have been able to maintain their way of life thanks to their proud perseverance and because of the help offered them from Jakarta. For reasons I have elaborated on elsewhere they were granted the right of collective ownership of their traditional *adat* land, the *desa Kanekes* (Bakels 1990) (1).

In the **Sunda Wiwitan** religion Hindu-Buddhist influences have mingled with older layers of old Javanese belief in which ancestor worship and the powers of nature play an important part. As the focus of the Baduy religion stands a terraced sanctuary, called **Arca Domas**.

The Baduy consider **Arca Domas** the centre and origin of the world. It consists of 13 ascending terraces, on some of which several megaliths are placed in commemoration of the deified ancestors of the community. The megalith of the highest terrace is said to be the resting place of their highest god, generally referred to as **Batara Tunggal**. The sanctuary is located near the source(s) of the river Cijung.²

In Indonesia the strongly Hindu-influenced cultural complex has been connected primarily with court-life. Probably the farmers were far less aware of the complexities of Hinduism. The Baduy though are not ordinary farmers and, I hope to show, have never been so. It seems plausible that their culture was framed in a time when Hindu kings ruled West-Java since its very existence cannot be disconnected from the Hindu conception of the king and his realm.

The life of the Baduy is guided by a strict system of rules of conduct or *adat* rules. These *adat* rules apply to every aspect of domestic, agrarian and ritual life. The Baduy cultivate dry rice on the steep hill slopes (fig. 10). Wet rice cultivation on *sawahs* is taboo (*buyut*) as is the keeping and eating of the animal associated with the wet rice complex, the water buffalo (*kerbau*). Cash crops are forbidden because it is forbidden to make profit, and perhaps also because the cashcrops are relatively recently introduced into the area. In fact all 'modern' objects are taboo. Neither domestic commodities made of plastic nor radios are allowed (although especially young people buy these articles more and more). Houses are built according to a uniform and traditional plan and in the construction nails are not allowed (although many Outer-Baduy now use them).

The ascetic life style of the Baduy has brought the Baduy, they feel, great powers. They supposedly are able to keep off evil powers and to attract the good ones, thus controlling or at least strongly influencing the cosmic forces that determine life on earth. This idea can be connected with the Javanese conception which presupposes a close interaction with the microcosmos, the visible, daily world, and the macrocosmos, the all-encompassing universe with its supernatural powers (Stöhr 1976:88, Hidding 1935: 73). This concept the Baduy apply to themselves in a very direct way. If a human being makes a mistake in his daily life, he also endangers the balance in the cosmos. This disturbance is not only personally endangering - as would be the case elsewhere in Java - but has, in the opinion of the Baduy and that of many Sundanese, consequences for the whole of West-Java, Java or maybe even for the whole of Indonesia. It is a great responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the Baduy. Were they to give up their traditional way of life, their harmonizing powers would be lost and the cosmic balance deranged: volcanoes would erupt and rivers would flood. Maybe the world would come to an end.

Mandala

All authors writing on the Baduy have sought to explain their exceptional position. The dominant explanation has, until recently, been that the Baduy were refugees from the Islamic troops that defeated the Hindu kingdom of Pajajaran in 1579. Little evidence has been given to support the 'refugee' theory, which is rejected by the Baduy themselves. It has been argued (Berthe 1965, Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986, Bakels and Boevink 1988, and Bakels and 1990) that the Baduy community dates from earlier times. In these articles the Baduy are understood as a *mandala* society.

Mandala is Sanskrit and refers in India to a geometrical representation of the cosmos. These representations were often painted on silk or other textiles and served as an aid in meditation for the monks. But a temple, like the Central Javanese Borubudur, could be called a *mandala* as well (Soekmono 1977). In Java this term has another connotation and may refer to a sacred ring, sacred territory or sacred community as well (Pigeaud 1962: 485).

About the functioning of these communities we only know what old chronicles and texts tell us, and that is not very much. Pigeaud gives us some clues in his *Java in the 14th century* and in his comments on translations of other East-Javanese texts, such as the *Tantu Panggelaran*. Following Pigeaud, the French anthropologist L. Berthe was the first to apply Pigeaud's typology to the Baduy, and I have argued elsewhere in more detail why I think the model fits. In fact it is very possible that the Baduy formed part of

a *mandala*-network in Banten, of which elements can still be found (Bakels 1989). It is likely that also the Tenggerese community on Mount Bromo can be understood as a (former) holy community, connected with the worship of chthonic powers (see Lüem in present volume and Hefner 1985: 274).

Characteristic of the *mandala* - Pigeaud states - was a belief system in which Hindu-Buddhist influences were mixed with a substratum of an older Javanese worldview in which ancestor worship was considered indispensable for the maintenance of the cosmic order³. *Mandala* were found at sacred spots such as mountain tops or sources of rivers. These were also ancient places of worship in the old Javanese belief where mountain deities or chthonic powers supposedly played an important role. The ascetic and isolated life of the 'members' of the *mandala* brought them special powers that they used to bring harmony within their own community but also in the realm of their king.

In 16th century West Javanese texts (*Carita Parahiyangan, Sanghyang Siksakanda Ng Karesian*) we also find references to religious centers, here called *kabuyutan*, that were founded by a king of Pajajaran. The *kabuyutan* could have a Hinduistic character, but there existed also *kabuyutan* where Hinduism had not penetrated deeply and that were connected to the originally Sundanese ancestors cult, as is the case with the Baduy (Danasasmita and Djatisunda 1986: 4). The Baduy nevertheless do know the Sanskrit term *mandala*, with which they refer to their holy territory, the *desa Kanekes*, or to one of their sanctuaries (*Sasaka Domas*, see note 2). It is striking that until today the Baduy are still aware of the task they had in older times. They still literally say that they have to perform their daily work (see for example fig. 7) and ritual obligations in the traditional way, to maintain prosperity for him "who has the state."⁴ Although in West Java the Hindu-Javanese sovereigns lost the throne to a dynasty of Islamic sultans in the 16th century, and later to an Indonesian President, the Baduy have always kept a special relation with those whom they consider to be the heirs of the West-Javanese royalty.

Inner- and Outer-Baduy

The *mandala* concept has in the Baduy society led to a preoccupation with purity and traditional rules in many respects. Basically the society is divided in two endogamous groups: Inner-Baduy (*orang Tangtu*) and Outer-Baduy (*orang Panamping*). The Inner-Baduy form the holy centre of the society and also inhabit its geographical heart - the sacred core of the region that comprises about one third of the total area. The Inner-Baduy live in three villages, Cibeo, Cikartawana and Cikeusik and form about one seventh of the total population. The more than 4000 Outer-Baduy inhabit about 40 villages and these villages lie like three quarters of a circle around the Inner-Baduy. Thus they form a living 'fence' protecting the Inner-Baduy. The other quadrant of the circle consists of heavy forest and mountain slopes.

To protect their holy territory and their traditional life from polluting influences from outside, special rules regulate the entrance of non-Baduy people in their territory; the Inner-Baduy territory is altogether forbidden to foreigners. Apart from some Dutch civil servants and a few others who, driven by scientific or personal curiosity, more or less forced their way in, hardly any European has entered this inner territory. Today the inner territory is still forbidden to foreigners, but Indonesians - who come in great numbers to speak to the Baduy leaders, the *pu-un* - can stay up to a maximum of three days in one inner village.

The Baduy in fact form a state within the state; they have their own territory⁵ and they have their own traditional political framework and specific religious officials and rituals. They are as autonomous as they have always been. The political and ceremonial leadership of the community rests in the hands of the three *pu-un*, each residing in one of the three inner villages. The *pu-un* can perhaps best be described in terms of Frazer's (1922) priest-kings; they hold the most important ceremonial functions as well as the political power. The *pu-un*'s most prominent function however is in ritual. In several rice rituals and other ceremonies that are to bring fortune and harmony they are the central fig.s.

The position of the Inner-Baduy versus the Outer-Baduy, and in a broader context the Baduy as a group versus the outside world brings to mind the 'Lord of the soil' (*Tuan Tanah*), a concept which refers to the mythical original inhabitants of an area. Because they are the original inhabitants, the 'Lords of the soil' maintain a special relation with the local religious powers such as the spirits of the earth and the forest and the ancestors. Because of this they maintain a spiritual superiority over groups that settled down later and often usurped the political power. The former then acts as a source of spiritual blessing which he ritually bestows over the latter (Stöhr 1976: 136 and Schefold in press).

This pattern we recognize in the relationship between the Baduy as a whole and the surrounding Sundanese people, a relationship that is given in the *mandala* concept mentioned above. The Baduy - and especially the Inner-Baduy - ritually attract blessings from their ancestors and other supernatural powers, located near their jungle sanctuary *Arca Domas*, which is dispersed into the Sunda world (formerly the realm of the king, representing the political power). The Sundanese generally are convinced that as long as the Baduy (who consider themselves the oldest inhabitants of the region, even the Sundanese kings are thought to be descendents from a younger lineage) maintain their function, there will be general prosperity. In this light the *mandala* concept can be regarded as an old, Indonesian pattern, disguised in a Hindu term.

Textiles: Concentric Circles

The Baduy are in West-Java the only indigenous cultural group that has preserved a living weaving tradition. They weave on back-strap looms that have a comb and a discontinuing warp (see fig. 8), as seems to have been the case in the whole of Banten (Pleyte 1912). This does not mean that everything they wear is made from hand-woven cloth; nowadays the Outer-Baduy combine hand-woven cloth with batik *cap* they buy in Jakarta and have jackets and trousers made by a tailor from outside their territory. Model and material of the clothes of a Baduy seem to reflect the 'grade' of adherence to tradition of the village he comes from. The degree to which a Baduy feels compelled to follow strictly the traditional clothing conventions also parallels his closeness to the geographical and spiritual core of the territory, thus forming concentric circles of subtly shifting clothing conventions. The Inner-Baduy of the village of Cikeusik, considered the most holy village of the three inner villages, still dress in cloth woven of *daun pelah* (*Ceratolobus rudentum*), a rattan variety. The other Inner-Baduy have changed this material, from which they got itches, for cotton. I have found no traces of the use of barkcloth (*fuya*)⁶. The *adat* imposes restrictions on the cultivation of cotton, which might suggest a relatively new introduction. The Baduy only cultivate a little cotton that is sown together with rice. For the bulk of their cotton they have always been dependant on barter with their neighbours. At the end of the 1970's raw cotton that was to be hand-spun by the Baduy had become more and more difficult to obtain since neighbouring farmers shifted from the cultivation of cotton to the more profitable cloves. So in 1988 many Inner-Baduy wore cloth woven of market-bought cotton threads, which some Baduy feel is too far removed from tradition. The Inner-Baduy buy a very coarse type of thread, so that it looks more like the formerly used hand-spun material. The Inner-Baduy never wear clothes from a non-Baduy tailor, sewn from manufactured material, as do the Outer-Baduy.

In the traditional Outer-Baduy villages such as Kaduketer and Cikadu (see fig.1) men and women generally wear a hand-woven sarung as loincloth. These sarung are longer than the loincloths of the Inner-Baduy, and both ends are sewn together while those of the Inner-Baduy are not sewn (as a *kain panjang*). Both measures (the sewing together and the lengthening) probably are a reaction to the outside world in an attempt to conform to modern dressing codes and be more chaste - surrounding farmers often scorn the Baduy for their backward and 'unpolite', 'indecent' *adat* costume. In the same light we can see the use of black trousers by many Outer-Baduy men in the villages closest to the border of the Baduy-territory. The use of the pan-Indonesian *kebaya* by Outer-Baduy women and buttoned jackets by Outer-Baduy men also reveals modern influences. Inner-Baduy men and women wear short high-necked jackets, as was the case in the whole of West Java until the turn of this century.

The Inner-Baduy women also wear black breastcloths (*kemben*), whereas the Outer-Baduy women wear this traditional garment only during rituals.

Black & Blue and White

As I have mentioned clothing prescriptions are very severe; black and white are the only colours of the *adat* costume⁷. Only in special circumstances some red is allowed. A clear pattern is recognizable in the use of black and white in the *adat* costume.

Most striking is the difference between the head-sashes of Inner- and Outer-Baduy men. The Inner-Baduy, forming the holy centre of the community, wear white turbans, the surrounding Outer-Baduy black and

contact with this ancestral upperworld only white is appropriate - as also becomes clear in the second example.

The second occasion is during a pilgrimage when a special ritual is performed at the sanctuary itself. Part of the ritual is the ritual cleaning of the terraces. As this is the domain of the ancestors, only the *pu-un* leading the pilgrimage performs this task. During this ceremony at **Arca Domas** (and only then) the *pu-un* is dressed in the *boeh rarang*, the pure white cloth.

The white dress reflects, we could conclude, that the *pu-un*, as he sets foot on **Arca Domas**, is absorbed in the world of the ancestors, where black, symbolising 'form' or 'subject matter', does not exist and where there is only a spiritual world¹⁰.

The black and white duality has a well established West Javanese basis. In a 16th century Javanese text (*Babad Pajajaran*) the West Javanese kingdom of Pajajaran is said to have a black and white flag (Djatisunda and Danasasmita 1986:62). And in certain West Javanese *pantun*, holy verses that are recited during rituals, the combination of black and white seems to be expressed in a symbolic way. Well known, for example, is the **Lutung Kasarung**, where a black monkey eventually marries a shiningly beautiful princess **Purba Sari**, meaning 'light' of the day. This dichotomy we also find for instance on Ambon, where the inhabitants of a village were divided in two groups, a 'black' and the 'white' one (Stöhr 1976: 81, referring to Duyvendak). As in Ambon Hindu influences were not so apparent, the symbolism of black and white dichotomy has deep roots in Indonesian culture.

Also outside West Java there are examples of the harmonizing, evil-banning potential of black and white textiles, such as the *bangun tulak* (Veldhuizen-Djajasubrata 1991) or the check-board loincloths (*poleng*) of the Balinese temple guardians (Hauser-Schäublin et al: 1991). The protection against evil that the combination of black and white offers, symbolising the totality of the ordered universe, is also very fitting for the tasks of the *mandala*, as has been described above¹¹.

Life-Cycle Rituals

In the Hindu classification scheme (and maybe before that) 'white' is linked to the natural element 'water', 'black' to 'earth' and 'red' to 'fire'. In a number of rice and life-cycle rituals, white cotton - in the form of the *boeh rarang* cloth and in the form of a hand-spun thread, worn as a bangle (*kapuru*) - is used to bring forth coolness and well-being. Here I will give an impression of these 'rites of passage' because we have so little information on them¹².

The association between the colour white and water is very direct when the rice is sown, for men and women (sometimes) wear a piece of *boeh rarang* on their heads, as they say, "to bring water and coolness to the rice in order that the seeds don't dry in the earth" (fig. 9).

During initiation rituals the *kapuru* plays an important role. The initiates are given this bangle to protect them in these dangerous 'hot' moments (danger being classified as hot) when one passes from one phase of life to the next. They receive a *kapuru* from a local *adat*-specialist (*dukan*) who says magical spells (*mantra*) over it to strengthen its impact. The importance of the *kapuru* is reflected in the fact that in former times its name could stand for the whole ceremony: the Sundanese word for bangle, *geulang*, occurs in the term *ngageulangan* as a synonym for an initiation ceremony (Danasasmita and Djatisunda 1986: 67).

The first rite is performed when a baby is seven days old. Then the eyes of the child are 'washed' with seven species of herbs, so that it will have a 'clear' look. The midwife (*paraji* or *ambu kolot*) hits the ears, nose, mouth, feet and arms of the child with betel leaves, so that it will not "hear wrong things, smell foul smells, speak evil words, leave the right path or steal". Then the midwife gives the child a name and binds a *kapuru* around its wrist: its left wrist if it is a girl, its right one if it is a boy.

On the fortieth day the midwife ritually washes father, mother and child, purifying 'body and soul' (*lahir* and *batin*). The child gets a new *kapuru*.

Ritually, perhaps the most elaborate initiation ceremony is the circumcision, though other ritual acts such as tooth-filing and hair-cutting are performed as well. During the ceremony the initiates are ritually

cleansed and as a whole it marks the entrance into adult life. After initiation the children have the right (and duty) to attend ceremonies, to sit in meetings, etc.

Especially for this ceremony a small shed (*panggung* or *papajanggan*), standing on high poles, is erected in the centre of the village. The walls of the shed are covered with black and white textiles (loincloths and *boeh rarang*). One *boeh rarang* several meters long is stretched along the roof as a 'heaven' (*lalangit*). On the third day of the ritual the boys and girls who will be initiated are brought together in the shed. A female *dukun* (*juruaes*) 'decorates' the faces of the children with a rice-stalk, which she dips in a mixture of water and riceflour. Then, according to my informants, she cuts a bit of the hair of the children and with a stone files a bit of their teeth¹³. Then the children descend to the village square where a local *dukun* gives them all a *kapuru*, cut from a long thread of cotton. This thread is wrapped around a coconut that, together with a bunch of bananas and some sugarcane, served as an offering. Thereafter the fathers of the initiated children perform what was referred to as a 'dance of happiness' (the *baksa*). But evidently not only happiness inspires the dancers. The men carry a plaited fan (Javanese: *kipas*, Sundanese: *hihid*), and in the right hand a large wooden spoon. Both are kitchen utensils and normally used by women to loosen up and cool the just cooked rice. The men imitate these movements during the dance. The aim of the *baksa* is also to *ngakeul*, a Sundanese term meaning 'cooling off'. Presumably it has the same aim as the *kapuru*: to cool off the initiates and protect them from dangerous 'hot' influences. After the performance of the dance the girls go home, but the boys return to the shed to spend the night there. The next morning they are circumcised following a Sundanese, pre-Islamic tradition¹⁴.

Marriage

When a boy and a girl have agreed to marry, the parents of the boy visit the parents of the girl to 'eat betel' (*ngalamar*). On this occasion a complete set of clothing is exchanged: the parents of the bride offer their future family-in-law clothes for their son and in return they receive clothes for their daughter (contrary to the general pattern where a metal object - e.g. a *kris* - is given to the bride-givers that occurs in most parts of Indonesia). The family of the man also gives cooking utensils, and at the Inner-Baduy a box made of bamboo and palm-leaves, used as a 'wardrobe', and an elegantly formed small knife (*pisau pacikur*) used to cut cloth. Some betel is sent to the *pu-un* and eaten with the *pu-un* or a representative.

One or two months later the actual marriage takes place. The night before the marriage the engaged couple spends in the house of the girl. They are placed in a corner of the guest-room, shut off from the other guests by a wall of black and white loincloths¹⁵. When the ritual betel-eating between the two families and the *adat* specialists is finished, a *boeh rarang* is hung in the air near the young couple. In front of the *boeh rarang*, a *tukang pantun* (someone specialised in the reciting of holy verses - in the marriage I witnessed at the outer village of Karahkal it was an old man from Cikeusik) recites *pantun* until daybreak. The next morning the couple is decorated with rice-flour paste (as were the circumcision initiates). The *dukun*, who performs the short marriage celebration, gives them both a *kapuru*. The actual marriage celebration does not take more than three minutes: the couple, ceremonially dressed, comes out of the house and kneels on a plaited mat placed on the village square. They both hold a chicken under their arm. The *dukun* rests his left hand on the head of the girl, his right hand on that of the boy and mutters some prayers to the ancestors. When he has finished, the villagers throw rice-grains on the bridal couple; the grains are eaten by the two chickens. The rice-grains and chickens are 'grains of fertility' (*bibit rumah tangga*) and are intended to bring prosperity to the new household.

The *kapuru* is not only worn in connection with initiation rites. When a Baduy is ill, or in psychic distress, he or she often goes to a *dukun* for a *kapuru*. The *kapuru* is worn about 40 days. Then it is thrown away.

Ambiguous Red

Black and white form the colours of the Baduy, but red is, in the eyes of the Baduy, the colour of the outside world. In this context red stands for emotions, anger, danger, chaos - all concepts that are far from Baduy ideals¹⁶.

The Baduy say that if they wore red cloth, their "heart would be put on fire, and their body would get hot and sick". That they connected red with outside was beautifully illustrated in 1988, when at the request of the Baduy their territory was fenced with concrete poles. The Indonesian government granted the Baduy's explicit wish that the poles were not painted red as the Baduy feared, but white, their own colour.

But in one case the Baduy do wear red in their traditional costume. During rituals that are connected with fertility - such as marriage and the sowing of the rice - the Outer-Baduy men wear a belt called the *adu mancung* (see fig. 4). It is white with, on both ends, two or three rows of lozenges in alternating red and black. The motives represent people: the red ones are female persons, the black ones male. Together they form couples. On the *adu mancung* the red is not regarded as a negative colour anymore. In this context it represents fertility and new life. The Baduy say it is "the blood that is spilled when a woman gives birth to a child". Worn during the marriage and planting ritual, the *adu mancung* symbolises the unity between husband and wife or on a more abstract level between the male and the female principles, as father sky and mother earth from which rice is born. But the *adu mancung* also generates fertility: by wearing this belt during the sowing- and the marriage ceremony the *adu mancung*, by depicting the fusion of the male and female principles, has also to bring it about. Strikingly only the Outer-Baduy men wear the *adu mancung*. Maybe fertility is considered too profane and ambivalent a concept to be openly promoted by the Inner-Baduy. Why the women are not the ones to promote fertility in this way remains open to discussion as well. Generally they are said to "just join" the men in ritual¹⁷.

Summing up, colours do not have an unequivocal meaning. A colour gets its meaning within the context of a complementary opposition - an opposition that can dissolve when placed in another context. Black and white, day and night, *batin* and *lahir*, old and young, visible and invisible, inside and outside confront each other as complementary oppositions. In their totality they enclose this dichotomy and function together as a holy totality, that bestows blessing and bans evil, in opposition to the red of the hot and chaotic outside world.

The application of colours is deeply rooted in the tradition and worldview of the Baduy. As such the meaning of colours is as real as the world itself.

Patterns and Plants

The evocative power of the colours should not lessen the role of the patterns and material from which clothes are made, although for the Baduy *adat* costume it surpasses the importance of other characteristics of a garment. A Baduy explained to me the difference between the striped *aros* of the Inner-Baduy and the chequered loincloth (*poleng hideung, poleng paul*) of the Outer-Baduy as follows: "With the *aros* the stripes all go in one direction, not to the left or to the right, just as the Inner-Baduy only walk one way, the straight way of the *adat*. For us Outer-Baduy this applies to a lesser extent, we can go right or left". Improbable as it may seem that this conception lies at the base of the difference in patterns between the two Baduy groups, it does shed some light on the way the Baduy perceive the importance of patterns. Like colours, they reflect and shape the nature of the wearer.

Until now we have looked at processed cotton, and paid little attention to the substance itself. In Baduy mythology both rice and cotton originate from the goddess Nyi Pohaji Sanghiang Asri, from whose body, after her death, there grew several varieties of plants. In a Baduy version of this widespread myth (see Hidding 1919 and Pleyte 1912:4) red rice grew from her genitals, yellow rice from her eyes, black rice from her ears and white rice, cotton and a number of ritually important plants such as *panglai* and betel from her navel or according to others from her heart (literally her liver; *hati*). The Baduy refer to the common origin of cotton and rice to explain why in several rice rituals cotton seeds or flocks are included. The divine origin attributed to the clothing material reflects its importance and magical potency.

The symbolism of Baduy textiles demonstrates how all characteristics of clothes - colours, patterns and material - are supposed to have an active influence. They reflect what its wearer stands for, but also make him or her live up to the values embodied in their outward form. A symbol not only reflects certain values or characteristics - it has a magic potential as well when its instrumental efficacy is activated. This explains why Baduy have to wear their traditional clothes all the time and why changing clothing traditions can be a hazardous undertaking with undesirable consequences. Ironically, an old European saying, now a modern

commercial slogan; "fine clothes make fine men" ('kleren maken de man', 'Kleider machen Leute') seems to fit the Baduy much better than it fits ourselves.

Notes

- ¹ I have conducted fieldwork in the Baduy area in 1983-84 and 1988. The latter fieldwork was sponsored by the Leiden-based 'Bureau voor Indonesische Studiën' and the Treub-Maatschappij in Amsterdam. I thank LIPI in Jakarta for its kind cooperation and support. I also thank Reimar Schefold and Anne-Marie Boer for their comments on an earlier version of this text and David Stuart-Fox and my mother for their help with the English version.
- ² In the literature and among the Baduy themselves there exists some obscurity about the number, names and locations of these sanctuaries. Probably there exist two sanctuaries, of which *Area Domas* is the most important one, visited by the *pu-un* of Cikcusik. The sanctuary of the *pu-un* of Cibeo is probably called *Sasaka Domas* (see also Danasasmita and Djatisunda 1986:24) The archaeologist Heine Geldern classified this type of terraced sanctuary as pre-Hindu; they occur from West Indonesia until Hawaii, including regions where Hinduism has been absent. They were connected with ancestor worship.
- ³ Pigeaud discerns different types of religious communities (see 1962:227) with varying religious and social characteristics. He is most explicit about the *mandala*, but remains uncertain about their origin. Maybe the members were spiritual men with their families, who had lived as priests at the royal court - or maybe they were autonomous (pre-Hindu) secluded groups that were given the status of a *mandala* by a Hindu king and thus became encapsulated in a new network.
- ⁴ The prosperity for which the Baduy hold themselves to be responsible has a religious as well as a concrete ecological component. Their ritual activities bring harmony, and their religious respect for the sources of the river Ciujung and the surrounding forest guarantee a constant supply of water. This is crucial for the ruler in another way; the water irrigates the *sawah* of his people, thus guaranteeing the needed surplus to pay for the court.
- ⁵ This was officially granted to them in 1988. In this year a delegation of Baduy visited President Suharto. The President conferred upon them the right to live autonomously, according to their own rules of behaviour.
- ⁶ Pigeaud (1962: 506) thought that members of 14th century East Javanese *mandala* societies wore barkcloth (*fuya*). If true, this might have been a symbolic statement. Not only special ritual occasions, but also everyday life did call for the traditional way of dressing (or the oldest known dressing codes). Barkcloth might have been directly associated with the domain of wilderness and the 'culture of the beyond' (Schefold 1988). Woven textiles have been repeatedly compared to the 'fabric of society'. In this line of thought, for example, unmarried Karo-Batak young girls could not dress in handwoven cloth. Only from the day she married, and therewith fully entered Batak society with its complicated network of rights and duties connected to several kin groups (as wife givers and wife takers), did she have the right to wear handwoven textiles (Bakels and Boer 1990). I do not know however whether the Baduy ever used bark cloth for this reason. In 1988 I could find no trace of the use of this material, and it seems unlikely that the *daun pelah* clothes would have the same connotation because they are woven too. Further research on the symbolic connotations of the use of barkcloth versus woven cloth would be very interesting.
- ⁷ Elsewhere (Bakels 1991) I have commented on the complex weaving techniques the Baduy use, such as the application of supplementary warp in the *suat songket* and weft threads in the *suat songket* and *adu mancung* and what has been called by Jager Gerlings (1952) the 'ornamentbinding' (in the *suat samata*) (See fig. 3). Here I will concentrate on the colour symbolism of the textiles.

- ⁸ The *adat* forbids the Baduy to dye their cloth themselves with indigo or chemical dye, although some Outer-Baduy have taken up this activity in the beginning of the eighties. Until the second world war the Baduy brought their white textiles to Serang and other places where they were dyed with indigo. When the last indigo dyer in the region stopped, the Baduy turned to chemically dyed cotton threads they bought on the market.
- ⁹ Perhaps an old concept of a creator who was of a female sex was replaced by an male Hindu god, but this remains mere speculation.
- ¹⁰ These different spheres could be compared to the ground plan of the Borobudur, that was based on the tripartition of Buddhist cosmology (Sukmono 1977: 28). *Arca Domas*, high up the mountain slopes, could be related to the highest sphere of the Borobudur, both domains of the formless 'white' world of the ancestors. The ascetic Baduy dwell down the mountain - the middle part of the Borobudur - where earthly longings are left behind, but where man is still bound by form. This phase is symbolized by the black dress covering the white one. The lowest sphere of the Borobudur, the world of earthly longing, perhaps can be compared to the non-Baduy inhabitants of West Java, populating the plains around the mountains, symbolized by the colour red.
- ¹¹ A few comparative remarks might trigger further discussion. In contrast to what has been described for Central-Java (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebrata 1991), Bali (Langewis 1956) and Tuban (Heringa 1989), I have hardly found any materialized expression of a connection between the colours, the life-cycle and the cardinal directions. White symbolises the pure and spiritual aspects of life, therefore when a person gets older he does not come 'closer' to the black, but rather to the white spiritual world of the ancestors. For this reason quite old Outer-Baduy men sometimes wear a white headsash. In the view of the Baduy white also symbolises the older line of the Inner-Baduy, vis-à-vis the younger descent of the Outer-Baduy. These ideas seem to stand in contrast to what is the case in, for example, Tuban (Heringa 1989: 128). Black, as far as I know, is not connected with any special moment in life. On the other hand there is a lot in common: the similarities to the meaning of the *bangun tulak* and the Balinese *poleng* have been mentioned, and I could add the similarity in form and symbolism of the fig.s of the *adu mancung* with the *cili* or *ibu* of the Balinese *lamak* (compare Langewis 1956 and Brinkgreve 1987 and in the present volume) and the association of red with fertility.
- ¹² To my dismay I have never been able to attend the circumcision ritual. Once I saw the ritual shed erected in the village of Kaduketer but we were expelled from the village before the ceremony would start. I did have the opportunity to partake in a marriage celebration.
- ¹³ Tooth-filing is not regularly done anymore by the Outer-Baduy. The Inner-Baduy are said to continue this practice more persistently. See also Jacobs and Meijer 1891:71.
- ¹⁴ Danasasmita and Djatisunda (1986:67) refer to the pre-Islamic text *Carita Parahiangan* where the "Sundanese" practice of circumcision is mentioned in connection with a king of Pajajaran. The fact that the Baduy practise circumcision as well seems an argument for its pre-Islamic roots in Sundanese culture as well.
- ¹⁵ This corner is called *kakasangan*, a reference to the *kain kasang*, an ikat that was in use in other parts of Western Java until the turn of this century. The Baduy themselves told me they never had used this specific *kain kasang*, but I have seen a very old example of the *kasang* in a non-Baduy village in the area. Pleyte (1912:81) mentions that the *kasang* was used on special occasions "to decorate the walls of a house, the ceremonial sheds and sometimes also to ward off evil influences" [my translation]. The use of black and white cloth as hangings as described above certainly had the same functions.
- ¹⁶ This association of red with the outside world brings to mind Pigeaud's observation on white being the colour of the 'people of religion' in 14th century Majapahit in contrast to the red/brown cloth of the '*abangan*' (Javanese: red) (1962: 507). In the view of the Baduy the term *abangan* would not (only) have a materialistic, but a spiritual content.
- ¹⁷ It is possible that Baduy women once had a special cloth worn as a belt when they were pregnant, that also had red and white in it. A mysterious cloth that could have served such a purpose is in the textile collection of the Museon in the Hague. Possibly, the other red-and-black cloths the Baduy weave, the *suat songket* and *suat samata*, were used to carry children. Now they are used as a shoulder cloth by Outer-Baduy women and are not part of the *adat*-costume.

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Captions

- Fig. 1: Map of West Java and the Baduy territory. From: J. Bakels: Een kleur van heiligheid; kleding en wereldbeeld van de Baduy van West-Java. Den Haag: Museon 1991.
- Fig. 2: Outer-Baduy in Cikeusik. Photo J. Bakels 1988.
- Fig. 3: Ambu Caseu with daughter and niece dressed up for the photo. Over their shoulders they wear *suat songket* and *suat samata*. Cikeusik. Photo J. Bakels 1988.
- Fig. 4: Outer-Baduy man, Jakri, wearing an *adu mancung*. Cikeusik. Photo J. Bakels 1988.
- Fig. 5: Father and daughter. Cikeusik. Photo J. Bakels 1988.
- Fig. 6: Two Inner-Baduy leaders photographed outside the Baduy territory. The men can be recognized as Inner-Baduy by their white head-sashes, the model of their jacket and the striped *aros*. They carry the typical Baduy bag, made of tree-bark, over their shoulder. Leuwidamar. Photo J. Bakels 1984.
- Fig. 7: Outer-Baduy man making a *koja*, a bag made of thread from bark from the *teureup*-tree. These bags are made and worn only by men. Kompol. Photo J. Bakels 1988.
- Fig. 8: Ambu Jujun weaving a *suat songket*. Gajeboh. Photo J. Bakels 1988.
- Fig. 9: Outer-Baduy during the sowing-ritual. The *dukun* says prayers over the rice in the basket, before it will be sown. On his head he wears a white cloth, *boeh rarang*, to bring coolness to the rice. Resettlement project Gunung Tunggul. Photo J. Bakels 1984.
- Fig. 10: Women sowing rice. Gunung Tunggul. Photo J. Bakels 1984.

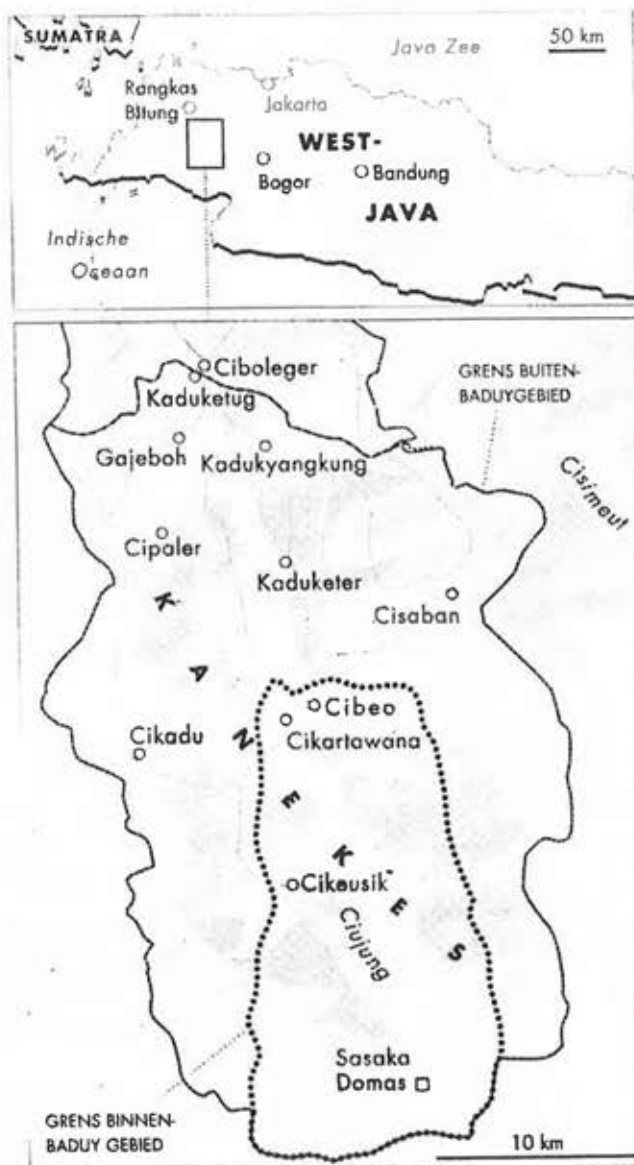


Fig. 1



fig. 4



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

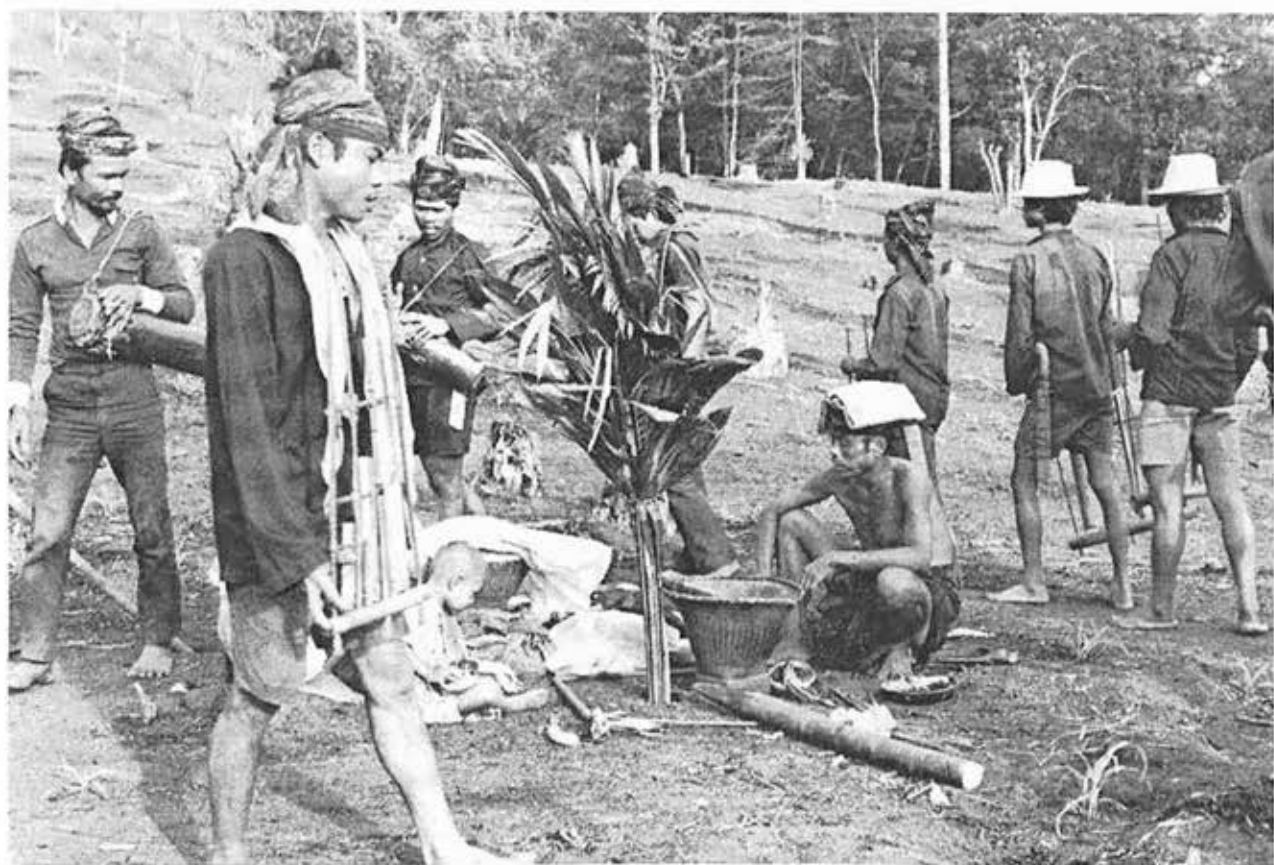


Fig. 9



Fig. 10