



Historical Study of the Use of the *Dingklik* in Java in the Economic Activity of the Colonial Era (1800-1900)

Irna Arlianti, Deny Willy Junaidy, and Jake Kaner

Abstract. – Low seats in Java have existed since Indian traders came to bring Hindu/Buddhist practices in the 8th century, where only high-caste people sat on low-elevated stone. During the colonial era, ordinary Javanese began using a low wooden stool named *dingklik*, intended for work. It has a simple form and is often hidden when unused, with little perceived importance. This study identifies the *dingklik*'s transformation through economic activities in Java during the colonial era. By collecting contemporary paintings, photographs, and films, the *dingklik* was analyzed in terms of content, visual elements, and height in the economic activities. Economically, the shape was oriented for mobility: the *dingklik* for *pikul* traders has smaller and lighter legs, hence was easier to carry. The *dingklik* in crafting has a greater volume of wood legs for long term use in a workplace. This research exposed the visual characteristics of the *dingklik* especially in the trade and craft economic activities. [Java, *dingklik*, Javanese sitting culture, trade and craft economy, colonial era, traditional low stool].

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1 Introduction

The typical Javanese sitting practices adopt a floor-type lifestyle (Wiyancoko and Kiyoshi 1999: 48). Initially, the culture of low sitting was influenced by Hindu/Buddhist and Islamic teachings brought by Indians and Chinese when they came to Indonesia in the 8th century in establishing trade relations (Magnis-Suseno 1984; Sachari and Sunarya 2001). This is evident in the reading of the visual relief narration on panel 42 of the Borobudur temple which was built in 824 AD. It tells about Bodhisattva sitting on the throne in the form of low-elevated rocks inside a pavilion (Tabrani 2013: 6f.). In the 1500s, when the teachings of Islam were introduced, people were increasingly accustomed to sitting on the floor when carrying out worship. Low-sitting habits then influenced Javanese culture with minimal furniture being used for both social interactions and working practices. The development of furniture in Eastern nations was slower than that of the Europeans, due to the temperature and air conditions in Eastern countries that are consistently warm and allow people to sit on the floor and do outdoor activities including farming and gardening (Wardono and Willy 2005: 18). Thus, the design of furniture was purely practical and of minimal form.

Craftsmen usually had workshops that were close to homes with low roofs and minimal furniture, therefore the low sitting position was practical and supported working conditions (Zalay 2016: 12).

In the beginning of the colonization era (1800–1900), seating furniture began to evolve. Prior to contact with Europe, Indonesia did not use much furniture. However, in the 1600s, Batavia as a capital of the Dutch East Indies developed rapidly into a furniture production center with customers from the Dutch-Indies government and wealthy traders. The presence of Europeans and their seating furniture played an important role in the business growth. It also affected the life of the native Javanese who worked as craftsmen of ebony chairs, which was a commodity produced mainly for the staff of *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), a Dutch trading company operating in the East-Indies (Cookson 2010: 6f.). Therefore, in the 1800s, Javanese people made a living in carpentry as the industry was evolving. Moreover, indigenous people also worked in the trading sector as peddlers or as servants for European women in Batavia (Blackburn 2011: 79) who usually used low-seated culture in their activities. At that time, the *dingklik* began to be used as low-sitting furniture that accommodated work. The *dingklik* in Javanese is a low stool under 30 cm, being two-legged, used it in a lot of menial work, such as working in the kitchen, trading in the marketplace, or making crafts (Marizar 2013: 69).

In literature, it has not yet been established where the term *dingklik* originates. Some references mention Javanese traditional seating that might have had an influence on the naming of *dingklik*. It is spelt *dhingklik* in Javanese and said to be similar to *dhampar*, the king's seat (Poerwadarminta 1939a). *Dhingklik* is also written in Javanese as *blablag pèsagi nganggo sikilan (piranti linggih)* (Poerwadarminta 1939b), which means a sitting facility in the form of a square board with legs as a support. Another source mentions *dhampar* which is similar to *dingklik* but larger in scale. The word *dhampar* came from *ampar* in Javanese, meaning seating on the floor, whereas *dingklik* means a seat that comes from underprivileged or ordinary people (Jv. *wong cilik*), low caste society outside the palace, who don't have peerage. Therefore, the *dingklik* was overlooked and often hidden when not used because it was regarded as a purely functional object with no aesthetic purpose, due to its simple form. The study of the *Dingklik* form has been neglected by scholars due to its intangible status as a cultural object. Research is therefore necessary to explore the history of the use of the *dingklik* in

Java and its relation to the economic activities of the colonial era (1800–1900), which will provide an accurate account and preserve this element of national history.

Within the scope of Javanese national culture, design was not considered to be a meaningful discourse before the 20th century (Sachari and Sunarya 2002). In developed countries, design had its origins in the late 14th century with the Latin term *designare*: to mark out, devise, appoint, which, later in the mid-19th century, became important in European industry and material culture discourse, which transferred to a response by arts education, through schemes such as the Government Schools of Design in the UK, c. 1840 (London, Manchester, Nottingham, Birmingham, etc.), that were related to local (national) industries – textiles, metalwork, lace, etc. –, and to educating the population in the “arts and principles of design” (Government School of Design 1848). Hence, there has not been any historic research examining the use of the *dingklik* in Java.

This historical research was conducted by applying content analysis methods to a collection of various historical visual sources of the colonial era (1800–1900) as a representative period, such as paintings, photographs, and videos from national library catalogues (*Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Eye-filmuseum, KITLV*, etc.). The data were analyzed in terms of visual elements by mapping the visual transformation through the timeline of the use of *dingklik*s and the element of the *dingklik*'s height through the typology chart of the *dingklik*'s heights, based on an economic aspect as an authentic traditional seat in Java. The research is expected to be used to provide research results on the visual characteristics of the *dingklik* especially in the trade and craft economic activities, both from a historical and a periodical perspective.

2 Objectives

In the colonial era, the dynamics in the economic activities of the Javanese community led to the development of various types of jobs in craft and trade, such as craftsmanship in the carpentry industry, batik industry, peddlers and servants of European women in Batavia. This occurred simultaneously to lifestyle changes, such as the increased use of seats that accommodated work activities. Hence, this research aims to identify the transformation of the use of the Javanese *dingklik* in relation to the economic activities during the colonial era (1800–1900).

3 Materials and Methods

3.1 Artefact Collection

The research method used a triangulation approach. Firstly, it uses historical sources, in the form of visual data gained from cultural heritage collections, by gathering and tabulating relevant visual objects (paintings, illustrations, photos, videos) from the online library of several national libraries (Tropen museum catalogue; Leiden University digital; *Koninklijke Bibliotheek*; *eyefilm.nl*). Secondly, the tabulation was arranged

and selected from set parameters based on the etymological definitions of the *dingklik*.¹ Thirdly, economic historical events in *Java* were examined that referred the use of the *dingklik*. The relevant period 1800–1900 was used to scope the study because this was the period within which the *dingklik* was observed to be widely used. In total, 40 paintings, 45 photos, and 9 film scenes were evaluated. The resulting triangulated data is presented in the following chart:

¹ Wiyancoko 1999; Chung, Lee, and Kee 2003; Sriwarno et al. 2006; Carpenter 2009; Marizar 2013.

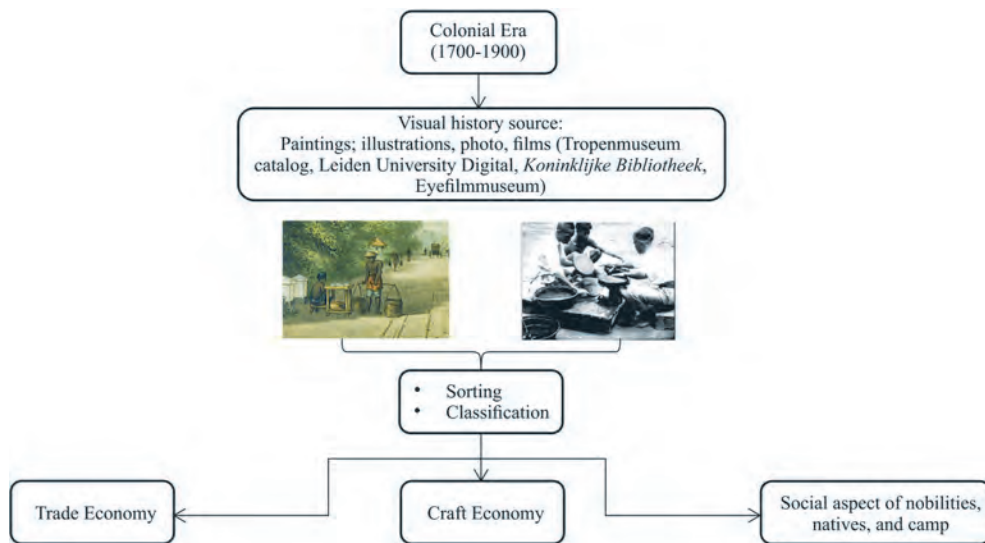


Fig. 1: Cultural heritage collection tabulation

The historical objects were collected from the following sources:

Table 1: Data Collection Sources (Artefact Collection)

Period	Object	Location
1800 – 1900	Painting, illustration, photo	Online catalogue of the National Library of the Netherlands (<i>Koninklijke Bibliotheek</i>) – Online catalogue of Leiden University Digital – Online catalogue of Tropen Museum – Online catalogue of KITLV, Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies
	Film	Online catalogue of Eye Film Museum Amsterdam-Corporate Film: – Syndicaat voor Filmopname in Nederlandsch Oost-Indië – Haghe Film – Nederlandsch-Indische Film Maatschappj – Nationale Filmfabriek Bloemendaal – P. R.W. van Gesseler Verschuur

3.2 Content Analysis

The collected data were processed using content analysis (Paoletti 1982; Suwabe and Ishimura 2010). The data were classified, categorized, quantified, and interpreted. Content analysis consists of 5 stages, namely: (1) determining the data sample, (2) developing a theoretical basis, (3) determining the unit of analysis, (4) determining the categories, (5) quantifying and interpreting the coded data to identify the frequency of the use of a *dingklik* and the pattern of economic activities in Java.

(1) Determining the sample data: The data were collected using artefact collections, which were classified according to the type of visual historical sources (paintings/illustrations, photos, videos, reliefs), from the earliest years until the most recent.

(2) Developing a theoretical basis: Literature containing the description and specifications of the *dingklik* was used to determine the unit of analysis and guidelines for interpreting the findings.

(3) Determining the unit of analysis: The unit of analysis is the entity or aspect to be analyzed. The aspects evaluated in this research consist of non-verbal content in the form of visual sources (pictures, photos, and films), and verbal content (words, sentences, and paragraphs) in the form of descriptions, information, and titles of the visual history sources.

(4) Determining the categories: Categories are aspects measured in the content analysis table. The categories were determined based on the study of literature covering the technical features of the design of seats:

- User profiles, usage backgrounds
The *dingklik* is a seat used by natives when working in the kitchen, trading, and making crafts (Marizar 2013: 69).
- Height (cm)
The height of the *dingklik* was determined based on relative comparisons with humans. Its average height was 10, 15, and 20 cm (Chung, Lee, and Kee 2003; Sriwarno et al. 2006). This means that in comparison to the relative height of humans, it is lower than the knee, i.e., less than 40 cm.
- Material
The *dingklik* is made of square wooden boards (Marizar 2013). The majority of the

material is wood (Carpenter 2009; Marizar 2013), thus the material will be categorized as wooden² and non-wooden (adjustments or additions of category are made if there are other materials found in the evaluation process).

The aspects in the categories were compared with indicators of the types of economic activities that were commonly found in the evaluated visual sources.

(5) Quantifying and interpreting coded data: The quantification was aimed at identifying the presence and frequency of use of the *dingklik* in the economic activities which were then interpreted descriptively. The quantification was done manually based on visual sources from the colonialization era (1800–1900) and the term *dingklik* that was used in the literature.

4 Analysis of the *Dingklik*'s Visual Characteristics and Height

The historical sources were evaluated using content analysis tables which were translated from the categories of the *dingklik* and the types of activities, and the frequency of occurrence was calculated. The categories of the *dingklik* were then compared against the types of economic activities. The visual elements were further analyzed using the timeline of the presence of the *dingklik* in each sub-activity (trade economy and craft economy) and the height element of each sub-activity described in the following sections.

4.1 The Characteristics of *Dingklik*

In steps 1 to 4 of the content analysis, the visual historical sources were collected, selected, and then coded in the analysis units and categorized. The categories of the *dingklik* were determined based on the specifications in the literature and the evaluation of the visual objects, including the user, background, height, material, and indicators in the form of economic activity in trade and craft.

² In the 19th century, there was the discovery of wooden *dingklis* in varying heights (Carpenter 2009). The *dingklik* as a low stool was defined in the height of 10–30 cm.

Table 3: Frequency of Appearance of the *Dingklik* in Visual Historical Objects by Category

Object	Category							
	User	Setting		Height (cm)			Material	
	Lower class	Indoor	Outdoor	<10	10-20	>20	Wood	Bamboo
Paintings and illustrations (PI) 26 items	Based on trading, craft, servants & camp prisoners	Based on craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading
26 (100%)	26 (100%)	9 (34%)	17 (66%)	2 (7.7%)	13 (50%)	11 (42.3%)	25 (96.2%)	1 (3.8%)
Photos (Ph) 26 items	Based on trading, craft, servants & camp prisoners	Based on craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading
26 (100%)	26 (100%)	4 (16%)	22 (84%)	6 (23.7%)	9 (34%)	11 (42.3%)	22 (84%)	4 (16%)
Film scenes (F) 9 items	Based on trading, craft, servants & camp prisoners	Based on craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	Based on trading & craft	-
9 (100%)	9 (100%)	2 (22%)	7 (78%)	2 (22%)	3 (33%)	4 (45%)	9 (100%)	-
Total source	61	15	46	10	25	26	56	5

Table 2: Category of the *Dingklik* and Types of Activities

Period (Year)	Object	Category								Indicator	
		User	Setting		Height (cm)			Material		Type of activity	
		Lower class	Indoor	Outdoor	<10	10-20	>20	Wood	Bamboo	Trade economy	Craft economy
1800 - 1900	Paintings and illustrations (PI)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Photos (Ph)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Film scenes (F)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	-	O	O
Sum	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	

Based on the content analysis table, more specific characteristics of the *dingklik* were found. It is known that the lower social class people used the *dingklik* (61 objects) and none of the upper-

Table 4: Comparison of *Dingklik* Categories against Types of Activities

		Category							
		User	Setting		Height (cm)			Material	
		Lower class	Indoor	Outdoor	<10	10 - 20	>20	Wood	Bamboo
Trade economy	<i>Pikul</i> traders	(PI) (Ph) (F)		(PI) (Ph) (F)	(PI) (Ph)	(PI) (Ph) (F)	(PI) (Ph) (F)	(PI) (Ph) (F)	(PI) (Ph)
	<i>Gelaran</i> traders	(PI) (Ph) (F)		(PI) (Ph) (F)	(F)	(PI) (F)	(PI) (Ph)	(PI) (Ph) (F)	
Craft economy	Batik artisans	(Ph)	(Ph)	(Ph)	(Ph)	(Ph)		(Ph)	
	Wood crafters, metal crafters, others	(PI) (Ph) (F)	(PI) (Ph) (F)	(PI) (F)	(PI) (F)	(PI) (Ph) (F)	(PI) (F)	(PI) (Ph) (F)	

Note: (PI) Paintings and Illustrations, (Ph) Photo, (F) Film

class users did, with the most frequent occurrences found in paintings and photos, each featuring 26 objects. Meanwhile, outdoor use (46 objects) occurred more than indoor use (15 objects). The average height of the *dingklik* was 10 to 20 cm (25 objects) and >20 cm (26 objects). The most widely used material for the *dingklik* was wood, with 79 of 84 objects evaluated being made of wood and other material (bamboo) only little used.

4.2 The Correlation between Categories of *Dingklik* and Socioeconomic Activities

The results of the content analysis of *dingklik* characteristics showed that the user is the lower-class Javanese who used it for working (trade and craft economy). This finding indicates the influence of activities carried out while sitting on a *dingklik*. Therefore, a comparison of the *dingklik* categories against socioeconomic sub-activities was made and the results are presented in Table 4. Trade activities were divided into *pikul* (carrying pole) and *gelaran* (mat) traders, craft economy was divided into batik and other artisans.

As presented in Table 4, there is a correlation between the categories of the *dingklik* and the type of activities. In the trade sub-activity, *pikul* and *gelaran* traders were lower class people who traded outdoors. This was found in all of the visual objects evaluated, namely paintings, photographs, and films. Both types of trades used a *dingklik*

of all height ranges and the majority used wood material. The *dingklik*s of *pikul* traders were 10–20 cm in height and heights of > 20 were found in all visual objects. A height of less than 10 cm was only visible on objects of paintings and photographs. In addition to wood, another material used by *pikul* traders was bamboo which was found in paintings and photographs. The *dingklik* of *Gelaran* traders had relatively similar specifications to those of *pikul* traders, including the height. The only difference was that it was made of only wood.

In the craft sector, which also includes lower social class, the *dingklik* of the batik artisan was only found in photographs and it was used either indoors and/or outdoors. The height of the *dingklik* of batik artisans was relatively small, that is, under 20 cm. Other crafts, which include wood carpentry, copper processing, cooks, carpentry outside camp barracks, farming, or *keris* craft used the *dingklik* indoors and outdoors with varying heights. The *dingklik* was found mostly in paintings and films. All of the crafters' *dingklik*s were made from only wood.

4.3 Timeline of the Existence of the *Dingklik* Based on Socioeconomic Activities in Java

Based on the previous findings, certain types of economic activities affected the specifications of the *dingklik* used. To visually identify identical



Chinese traders, before establishing many shops and factories, also used wooden *dingklik* as a means of sitting while selling. Food trade, both travelling cooks and food vendors, is the living job of many natives, especially residents of urban villages in Batavia in the 19th century. Based on the way they sell their merchandise, there are two types of traders, namely travelling trader and *galaran* (on a mat) trader. Travelling traders are also called *pikulan* traders because they brought their merchandise by carrying them on their shoulders. In the photo documentation of traders in the 1890s, they appeared to be sitting on the wooden *dingklik* as a means of sitting adjusting to the relatively low height of the *pikulan* stand. For higher mobility, the *dingklik* used was simple and not too long. Besides *soto* vendors, bamboo *dingklik* is also used by the beverage vendors in the Dutch-Indies 1900s.

The beginning of Chinese traders in Java - Before the rise of successful Chinese entrepreneurs in Batavia in the 19th century, Chinese immigrants were mostly employed as coolies and street vendors with small incomes (Blackburn, 2011). **The dynamics of the growth of Batavia in the 19th century** - The 19th century was a calm period, with less national turmoil. Batavia as the center of Java remained as the administrative and trade centers. Its contribution in industry did not increase rapidly such as in other cities because of the lack of large-scale industry in Batavia (Blackburn, 2011). Batavia (Blackburn, 2011). **The function of *dingklik* in Java** - The use of *dingklik* has been defined and estimated to have been used since the 18th century. *Dingklik* is a low seat made of square wooden boards, it is simple, two-legged and used when working in the kitchen, trading in the market, or when making crafts. Seats used by servants (the lowest social strata) in the palace are mats, on the floor/ground. The tallest seat was *dingklik* used outside the palace when trading or cooking in a *paswon* (kitchen) (Mariztar, 2013).

1900

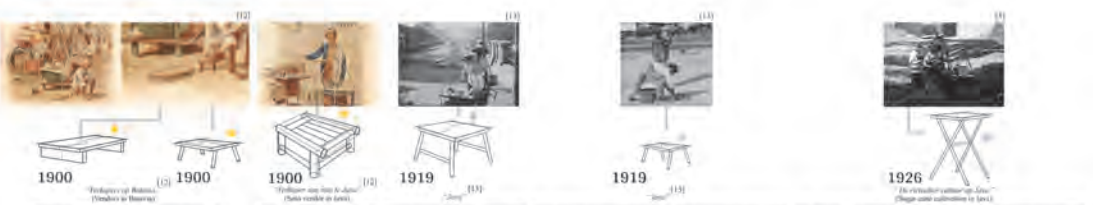


In a Dutch illustration book, one of the professions the natives had was as vendors in Batavia who sell goods by displaying them on a mat (*galaran* traders). They used a square wooden *dingklik* which was also widely used by *pikulan* traders.

The publication of an illustration book of the Batavians' occupation - The illustration book *Pelajar dan Kanak-kanak Anak-anak dan Iboe-hajunio* (Lessons and the Children's and Their Parents' Favorites) was first published in 1870 by the Dutch publisher, Kalff. It contained illustrations from 17 G.J. Thiene lithographs (Tropenmuseum in Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Indonesia zaman Doelce, 2019). The book, which was sold in Betawi and Bandung, also contained a description of various community traditions, the role of the native, Dutch, and Chinese people with Malay-language translated from Dutch. Before 1900, there were not many books published by Indonesian writers (Blackburn, 2011).

1900

[9] Collection of Simulasi user Filmogram in Nederlandch Oost-Indie in Eye Film museum Amsterdam-Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl>)
 [10] Collection of Woodshop & Page in <http://www.pandor-project.com/vignette11.htm>
 [11] Collection of Tropenmuseum in <http://www.tropenmuseum.nl/collecties/india/india.html>
 [12] Collection of London University Digital Collection in <https://digitallibrary.ucl.ac.uk/>
 [13] Eye Film museum Amsterdam-Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl>)
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Traveling vendors who did not need a table to cook used very low wooden *dingklik*. *Soto* vendor was identical to the use of bamboo *dingklik*. This tradition has not changed much since the 1800s. Travelling food vendors used square wooden *dingklik* which was approximately as tall as the *dingklik* used by *soto* vendors in the 1800s. The types of traveling traders are not only *pikulan* traders but also traders who carry their goods on their heads, who were generally women. Due to the absence of trade carts, the *dingklik* used for selling was relatively smaller. The sugar industry has been a commodity since the times of VOC in the late 17th century (Fernando, 2013). A cultivation area was often a crowded area. It was also a place for traveling traders to sell their goods. For mobility, they used folding stools when trading.

Types of traveling vendors - Batavian migrants who were natives had different occupational tendencies based on their ethnic group. The majority of partners in the port of Tjariung Priok are migrants from Tangerang, Banten. The migrants from Central Java and Buitenzorg mostly worked as servants, port workers, vegetable farmers, laundries, and vegetable sellers. In a study of an area in Pasar Senen 1936, traveling traders came from different regions. Almost all *gado-gado* (a type of salad) vendors were from Cirebon and Kuningan. The majority of beverage and ice cream sellers were from Central Java and Sunda (Blackburn, 2011). **The defense by the Nationalist for the traders in the City Council** - The Nationalists who served in the City Council (*gemeente raad*) protested at the 1918 City Council session on the eviction of street vendors who were originally inhabitants of the villages among European settlements. At that time, the vendors were evicted for ruining the beauty of the city. These traders had been popular selling their goods by shouting to attract buyers (Muis in Blackburn, 2011).



The growth of villages in the city, where the majority of the population were traders, increased the number of traders including in traditional markets that have existed since before 1600 (Chanindra, 2012). The traders still carried a low-seated culture by displaying their goods on a mat sitting on a *dingklik*. The *dingklik* in the 1921 market seemed identical with the *dingklik* in Bandung market in 1927 in the form of a simple wooden board with different heights.

The growth of villages in the city - Batavia as a capital and the center of Java had a population increase to 435,000 in 1930, three times that of the population in 1900. About half of them came from outside the region, especially West Java. The increase in immigrants was due to increasing population in the village and the insufficient availability of land. Additionally, in the 20th century, travelling to the city was easier and cheaper because of buses and trains. This phenomenon had an impact on the localization of villages in urban areas. Before 1900, the villages stood among European houses but since there was an increase in population, the native's villages were moved to occupy the agricultural land that surrounds the city. These villages were usually grouped based on ethnicity. Some villages had their own lives with a private scope because they were isolated from suburban housing (Blackburn, 2011).

[11] Eye Film museum Amsterdam-Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl>)
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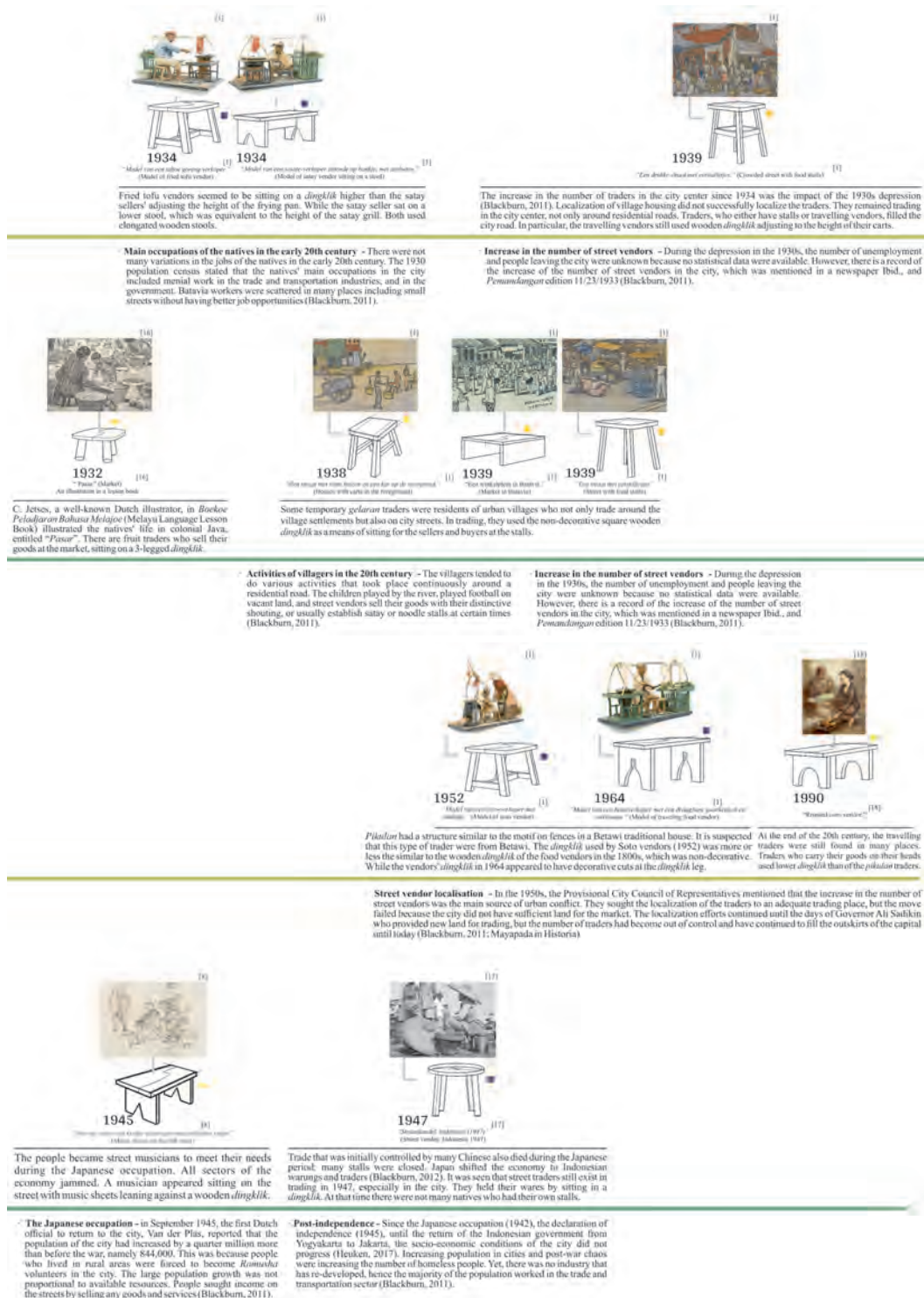


Fig. 2: Timeline of the *dingklik*'s existence in the trade economic activities

Timeline of *dingklik* existence in the craft economic activities

- : paintings
- : photos
- : films

Economy activities (craft-indoor)

1800



1854 [1]
 "Een Javaans beely met het versmandigen van kerivon."
 (A Javanese is busy making kerivon (a type of traditional weapon).)
 Metalworking had been a skill of the people since ancient Java (Haniif, 2013). A metalsmith worked by sitting on a *dingklik* while sharpening a kerivon in a low-sharping place.



1870 [1]
 "Tevenschildende Atsoepjan"
 (Various professions)
 In this era, needs in sailing was still high, especially in Batavia which was the center of Dutch trade in Asia (Lombard, 2006). Sewing the fish nets was one of the jobs the natives had that required *dingklik* as sitting support because of its eyeable nature.

Economy activities (craft-outdoor)

1800

Metalmith profession since ancient Java - Metalmith has existed since the time of the King Duhisiting (820 S - 832 S). It played an important role not only as a profession that sold goods but also as a royal servant. The ancient Javanese people did not give up religious guidelines in their activities. Kerivon craftsmen chanted mantra before making a kerivon (Haniif, 2013).

General profession of the natives in the colonial era - After the liberal system was implemented around 1870, Europeans still ran large trading offices in the city. The natives in Batavia tended to be laborers at the docks, warehouses, and in public works (Blackburn, 2011).

[1] Collection of *Tropenmuseum in Etnologische Bijdragen - National Library of the Netherlands* (<https://open.eyefilm.nl/>)
 [2] Collection of KITLV in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek - National Library of the Netherlands* (<https://open.eyefilm.nl/>)
 [3] Collection of National Museum of Ethnology in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek - National Library of the Netherlands* (<https://open.eyefilm.nl/>)
 [4] Collection of Prof. Dr. E. Erathius in (https://www.museum.wa.trois.org/wa/Fiche/Breitefahrig_von_Batavia%20%20chry_001_Java.jpg)

[5] Collection of *Nederlandsch-Indische Film Maatschappij* in *Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam-Corporate Film* (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
 [6] Collection of *Huglo Film* in *Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam-Corporate Film* (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
 [7] Collection of KITLV, *Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies* (<https://www.kitlv.nl/>)
 [8] Collection of *MUSEUM in Etnologische Bijdragen - National Library of the Netherlands* (<https://open.eyefilm.nl/>)



1875 [2]
 "Naitser met naaimachine op Java"
 (Tailor in Java)

Servants in European and Chinese households occupied strategic positions such as tailors, child caregivers, and cooks (Blackburn, 2011). Since the tailor profession was carried out by Javanese natives, a low-seated chair was still brought in including the modification of using *dingklik* instead of sewing table.



1885 [2]
 "Een Javaansse vrouw die aan het batikken is."
 (Javanese women making batik)

The livelihood of making batik *ndis* (hand-drawn) was still done by Javanese women in the 19th century, so that *dingklik* was still used as a low seat support.



1887 [1]
 "Houten model van een Javaansse smidse"
 (Model of wood workshop in Java)

Carpenters in the villages were more comfortable sitting low when at work because generally the workshop were near the house with a low roof and not too much furniture (Zalay, 2013).



1900 [1]
 "Een vrouwelijke bediende die aan het koken is."
 (Female servants cooking)

European families needed female servants who could cook European and Indonesian food (Blackburn, 2012). Activities in the kitchen still used the culture of sitting on *dingklik* while working.

Skills of female servants - European and Chinese households in the 19th century employed many servants outside their ethnic groups, namely the natives. Some servants had considerable social influence, especially female servants who occupied strategic positions as child caregivers, tailors, and cooks. In this sector of activity, there was a cultural exchange (Blackburn, 2011).

Women making hand-drawn batik - In the industrial sector, hand-drawn batik became women's work at home. It was before the stamp technique was known, which made batik making done by men in factories with capital from China (Blackburn, 2011).

Craft industry in the 1900s - In the late 19th century, the non-agricultural industrial sector became one of the sources of income along with the industrial revolution so that the development of the craft industry and the regulation became better (Gustami, 1997).

1900



1875 [2]
 "Een Javaansse vrouw aan het batikken op Java"
 (Women making real batik in Java)

Dingklik legs appear to be in the form of lathed wood, most likely influenced by the style of palace chairs when batik was still made in the palace.



1885 [3]
 "Het tekenen met was bij het batikken."
 (Drawing with wax when making batik)

Javanese female batik artisans - hand-drawn batik, before the stamped batik was known (Blackburn, 2011) required the process of drawing the motifs (using *combing*) with wax on a fabric stretched downward so that a very low seat was needed to support sitting, named *dingklik*.



1885 [2]
 "Een batikkerij"
 (Hand-drawn batik)



1885 [3]
 "Een batikkerij"
 (Hand-drawn batik)

Effect of European chair style on the batik artisan's *dingklik* with the lathed legs
 - The distinctive style of the palace chairs with the lathed legs was influenced by the colonials who brought the trending lathed ebony chairs as gifts to local aristocrats.
 - In 1651, an English rattan chair was given to the Sultan of Mataram as a gift (Carpenter, 2009).

The beginning of hand-drawn batik industry - In the late 19th century, batik craft began to spread among Javanese natives, which was originally only made by the royal family. Hence, making batik became the livelihood of women in their household and done in their free time (Ulum, 2016). From the documentation of the batik process, batik was mostly drawn by women.

1900

[9] Collection of *Syndicaat voor Filmspinnen in Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* in *Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam-Corporate Film* (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)

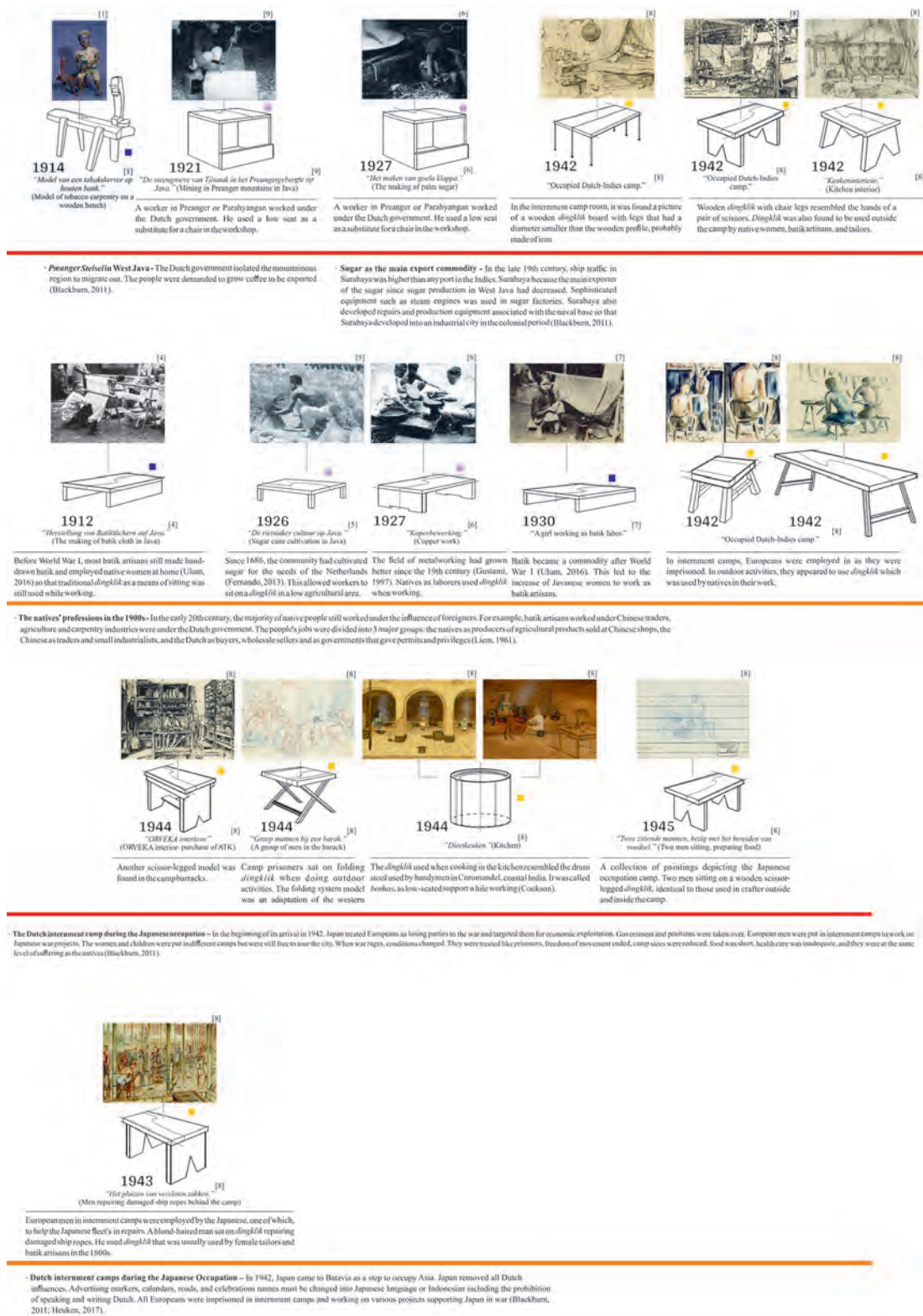


Fig. 3: Timeline of the *dingklik*'s existence in the craft economic activities

Based on the timelines of the existence of the *dingklik*, the following tendency was found in the design of the *dingklik* used in economic activities. Timelines were divided between trade and craft activities. Findings show the basic designs of the Javanese *dingklik* as following (below).

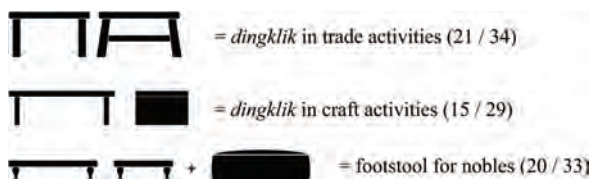


Figure 4. The basic designs of the Javanese *dingklik*

Figure 4 shows a basic *dingklik* design used by the Javanese when working in trading and crafting activities. The *dingklik* for trading tended to be a non-decorative 4-legged low wooden bench that was widely used by *pikul* and *gelaran* traders. *Pikul* traders were small traders who sold their goods by carrying one or two baskets using carrying poles whereas *gelaran* traders were small traders who used selling tools such as mats, baskets, or low tables to place their goods. These type of traders, *pikul* and *gelaran* traders, illustrate the characteristics of traditional dealing activities (Rohmah 2015: 13ff.).

The *dingklik* used in crafting was commonly a wooden board with two-foot boards (legs) along the left and right (ends) of the seat. The craft *dingklik* was used by artisans outdoors for making batik.³ Batik making was mostly done outdoors (Ulum 2009: 23). It was also used outdoors for repairing fishing nets, as well as in the copper industry, in the rice fields or plantations, and by the camp prisoner for activities outside the barracks. The indoor craft *dingklik* was more varied in use, namely in the workshops, the kitchen, and inside the camp barracks. The outdoor and indoor craft *dingklik* had similar forms based on a simple design made from boards.

4.4 Typology of *Dingklik* Height in Socioeconomic Activities

Another factor that also indicated the role and influence of economic activities on the use of the *dingklik* was its height. In Table 4, the comparison results of *dingklik* categories with types of activities demonstrated that each occupation in the eco-

nomie sectors of trade and craft used the *dingklik* with a typical height. To identify more specific patterns a taxonomy of use was created. Each occupation was presented in a graph showing the relationship between trade and craft economy activities illustrating the height of the *dingklik* within the range <10 cm, 10–20 cm, and >20 cm. Then each occupation was compared to the graphic of the *dingklik* (object) periodically, providing the following results.

The craft economy sector in Table 4 illustrates the comparison of *dingklik* categories against types of activities. This explains that the use of *dingklik*s, other than those used by batik artisans, involved variable heights. When compared to the three graphs of craft economics (outdoor-batik; outdoor others-indoor; indoor) in figure 5, the *dingklik*s used in indoor craft were the tallest, followed by those used in outdoor craft, with the lowest being those used by batik artisans, which are in the height range of 10 cm and less. The graph in figure 5 shows the tendency of a *dingklik* for outdoor craft to have a lower height than a *dingklik* used for indoor craft activities.

In the graph of trade economy in Figures 5 and 6, the traders' *dingklik*s were found to vary in all height parameters. The *dingklik*s of the mobile *pikul* traders and the permanent *gelaran* traders had the same relative height range, which was 20 to 25 cm. However, it can be seen that the *dingklik* of *pikul* traders tended to be slightly higher than that of the *gelaran* traders. Mobilization of the use of the *dingklik* might not affect the height of the *dingklik* because because there is no significant difference in the range of height. For overall economic activity, the *dingklik* in indoor craft was higher among others. Nevertheless, there was no fluctuating height evident in craft and trade, which was typically around 20 cm. The most apparent difference is the *dingklik* in batik making which has the lowest height of less than 10 cm.

Compared to trade economy and craft economy, the *dingklik* used in indoor craft had the highest height among others; followed by the *dingklik* of *pikul* traders, *gelaran* traders, and outdoor craft with almost the same height. On the other hand, the *dingklik* used by the batik artisans seemed to be the lowest among others. Therefore, based on the type of activity, the economic factors (craft and trade) did not significantly affect the height of the *dingklik*. From all typology graphs, there are similarities in several patterns which are correlated through the following typology correlations.

3 Batik is a wax-patterned fabric and is one of the Javanese cultural heritages. In its early development, Batik was made for the nobles in the palaces, then began to expand generally in the late 18th or early 19th century by women in homes.

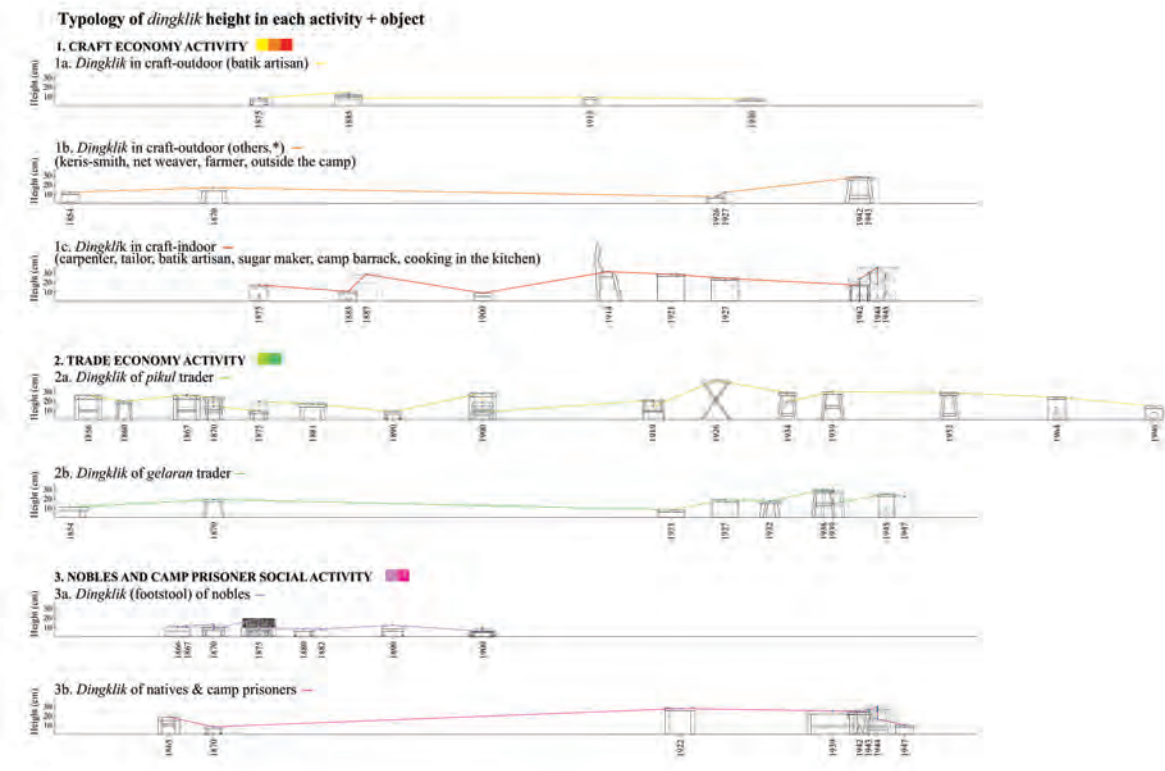


Fig. 5: Graphic showing height of each activity + object

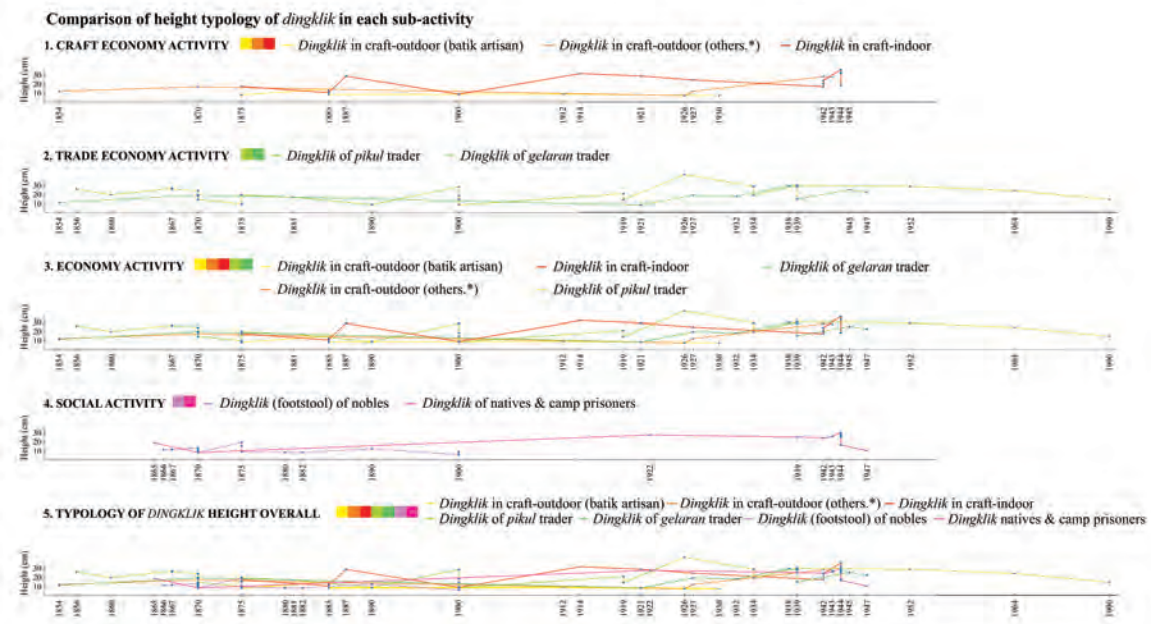


Fig. 6: Comparison of *dingklik* height in each sub-activity

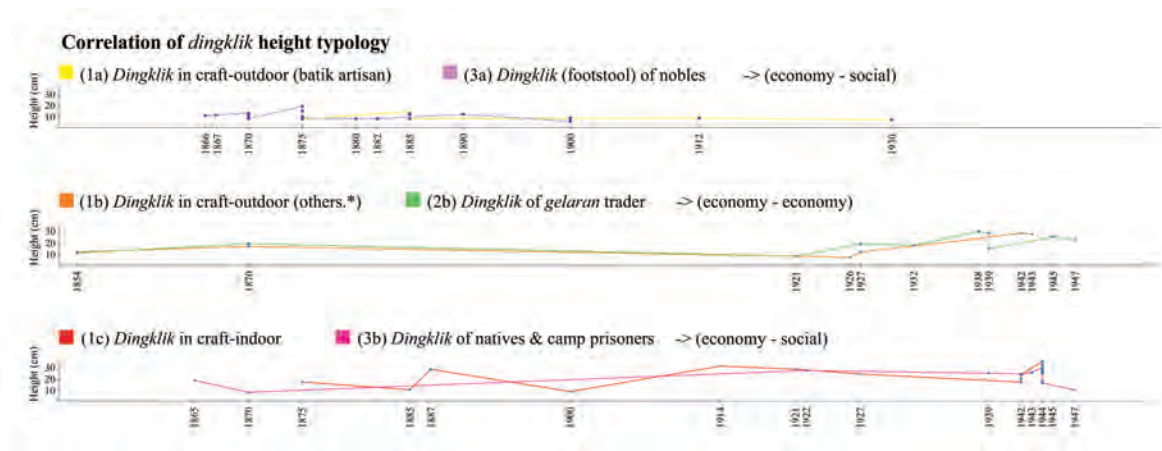


Fig. 7: Correlation of identical *dingklik* height in craft-outdoor and *gelaran* traders

The correlation graph of identical height of *dingklis* in economic activities shows that a similar height pattern exists in other outdoor craft and the *dingklik* of *gelaran* traders. The *dingklik* used in outdoor craft activities (*keris*⁴ makers, farmers, tailors, nets, etc.) had an average height equal to the *gelaran* traders' *dingklik*, i.e., between 20–30 cm, and was higher than the batik artisans' *dingklik*. It is possible that the outdoor conditions affected the height of seats.

5 Results

5.1 Trends of Using a *Dingklik*

The findings from this research show an identical *dingklik* usage pattern, based on user, background, and material categories. In the years 1800–1900, users of a *dingklik* were mostly from a lower-class social society engaged in trade activity and craft activity. As confirmed by the study of literature on the economic conditions of Javanese society in the colonial period, the natives sought income from the fields of trade, craft, and agriculture, and even being servants. In the early 19th century, many people were engaged in agriculture since the introduction of the forced cultivation system (*cultuur stelsel*) in 1830 (Heuken 2017). In addition, the work of servants was mostly done by natives in Batavia in European homes (Blackburn 2011: 78f.). The use of the *dingklik* was found

in the paintings of cook servants⁵ in 1900. At the end of the 19th century, the economy shifted to non-agricultural industries⁶ together with the Industrial Revolution so that, as a whole, the economy was strengthened by craft industry (Gustami 1997: 370f.). One of them was the hand-drawn batik industry that developed in the 1800s. The findings (below) show many photographs of women drawing batik in the period of 1875–1930 in the process of *canting* (drawing batik motifs with wax) while sitting on a low wooden *dingklik*. In the 1800s, batik began to be made by women at home, when previously it was only for the nobles in the palace (Ulum 2009: 23).

4 In Javanese culture, *keris* is a kind of short dagger with symbolic symbol as a cultural object, has supernatural powers and is believed to protect the owner.

5 Natives continued to become servants in European homes during the first 20 years of the 19th century. In the literature it was found that European servants were barefooted Indonesians and each had a particular task for European women in the home.

6 Around the 18th century, the economy had decreased as the colonial government relied on an agrarian feudal economic system that was oriented to self-sufficiency. As a result, in the 19th century, the economy shifted to non-agricultural industries.

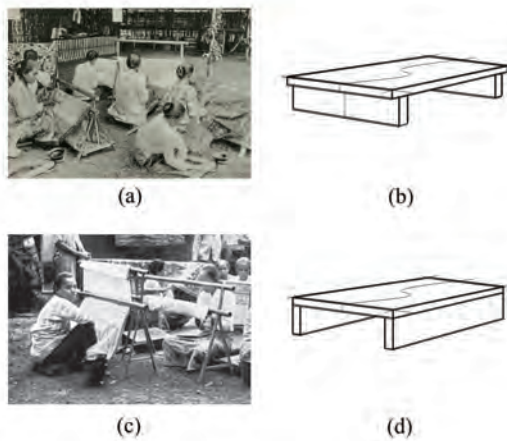


Fig. 8a: Photograph of women drawing batik in Java 1885 (Courtesy of National Museum of Ethnology in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* collection),
Fig. 8b: Redrawing a *dingklik* of a batik artisan (by researcher),
Fig. 8c: in 1912 (Courtesy of Phot. Dr. E. Erathus collection),
Fig. 8d: Redrawing a *dingklik* of a batik artisan (by researcher).

In the field of trade, it was found that the *dingklik* was used by street vendors in 1856–1990 as there was an increase in the number of traders from year to year. 1930 was a time of depression when the world economy plummeted. The native population, who at that time migrated to the city, mostly became traders (Blackburn 2011: 138f.).

Based on the environment or setting of usage, the outdoor *dingklik* had relatively more examples than the indoor *dingklik*, but was not very wide in range (15 out of 46 objects found). This demonstrates that in the years 1800–1900, the *dingklik* had been a familiar type of furniture for sitting, commonly used in various daily activities, both outdoor and indoor. The Javanese people were accustomed to sitting on the ground and then sitting on a *dingklik* (Marizar 2013: 69) while, in terms of material, the *dingklik* was commonly made of solid wood. The definition of the *dingklik* being a seat made of square wooden boards (Marizar 2013: 69) is in line with the results of the content analysis evaluation table in which there are 56 images of a wooden *dingklik* from 61 selected objects. Wood is a material that has been used since the 8th century in Java (Puspita et al. 2016: 249) and possibly before that, but due to its perishable nature no extant examples survive. From the overall data on the patterns of *dingklik* usage, it was found that there was a trend of using the *dingklik* as a means of low seating that was made of wood used by lower social class people when trading and crafting. Its use was spread in indoor and out-

door environments, which shows that the *dingklik* had become a type of seat that accommodated a variety of the Javanese people’s work during 1800–1900.

5.2 Effects of Visual Elements and the Height of *Dingklik* on Socioeconomic Activities

Findings from the timeline and graphs indicate a tendency for the form of the *dingklik* to be used in the economic sub-activity in Java in 1800–1900. The visual form of *dingklik* influenced the economic activities of trade and craft. The *dingklik* used by traders in the form of a four-legged wooden stool was easier to carry, especially by the mobile *pikul* traders as the weight of this type of *dingklik* has less total material volume because the legs consist of less wood than the boards whereas the *dingklik* used in crafting with two boards for legs had a greater volume of wood. This is consistent with the pattern of craft activities that tend to stay in one place in the work process. From the overall description of the traders’ *dingklik*, it can be inferred that the influence of the form of the *dingklik* for economic activity was more oriented towards mobility of use.



Fig. 9a: *Dingklik* of a *pikul* trader (Courtesy of Tropenmuseum, 1881),
Fig. 9b: *Dingklik* used by a copper worker in craft-outdoor activity (Courtesy of Eye Filmmuseum, 1927),
Fig. 9c: *Dingklik* of a *gelaran* trader (Courtesy of Tropenmuseum, 1887),
Fig. 9d: *Dingklik* of a female servant cooking in craft-indoor activity (Courtesy of Tropenmuseum in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* collection, 1900).

Figure 9 shows an identical form of *dingklik* used in trade activity with four-legged wooden stools and craft activity with two legs of boards. The visual characteristics of an economic *dingklik* related to mobility of use can be identified based on needs. As the *dingklik* used by indigenous traders, it is a type used by small traders. Nowadays, the types of small traders include *pikul* and *gelaran* traders who are traditional traders few in number. The use of *pikulan* (a tool for carrying the goods)

is now being replaced by a taller wheelbarrow in a standing position so that it does not allow traders to use the *dingklik* when selling. It is different

from the colonial era where the lowest use of the *pikulan* was in the squatting position when selling goods and that required sitting support.

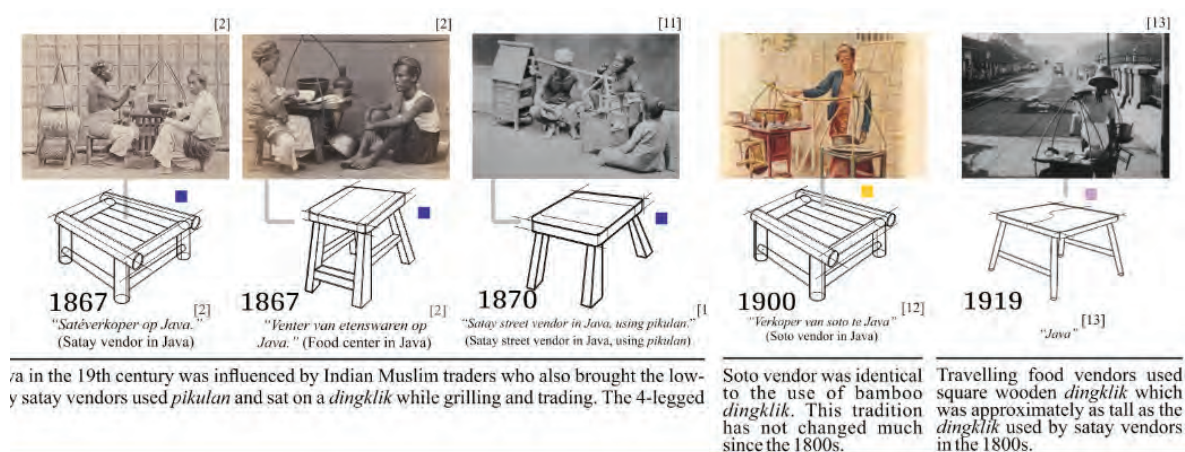


Fig. 10: The cutout of the timeline of existence of the *dingklik* used by pikul traders in trade economic activity

Figure 10 shows the cutout of the timeline of existence of *pikul* traders in trade economic activity rarely found today. Around 1800 to 1900, there was an increase in urbanization due to the lack of land availability in the village and easy transportation from village to city which then increased the number of settlements in the city that affected the expansion number of small traders (Blackburn 2011). That is why there were many natives who worked as traders in the city during the colonial period and used the traditional *dingklik*. Although it varies in shape, there are basic characteristics that appear to be associated with a four-legged wooden stool based on the mobility of use as previously described. In addition to the shape and number of chair legs, keep in mind that the use of the *dingklik* still involves a lot of natural materials such as wood and bamboo, which accentuates the naturalness of its use.

However, the height of the *dingklik* based on the category of the *dingklik* used had a specific usage pattern that is linked to the findings of the above typology graph correlation. The correlation is about the relationship between the *dingklik* used by outdoor craft and *gelaran* traders which related to the influence of the type of setting, indoor/outdoor use of the *dingklik*. It can be seen that they had almost the same height as they had in outdoor use. Based on the average height of an outdoor *dingklik*, the height of a *dingklik* for outdoor craft and *gelaran* traders was less than 20 cm. So far,

it can be seen that outdoor *dingklik*s have their typical heights.

6 Conclusions

Between 1800 and 1900, the wooden *dingklik* became a means of sitting used by lower class native people in Java, especially to accommodate its users in working (trading and crafting) both indoors and outdoors. Visually, the *dingklik* has typical shapes for each sub-activity of economics (trade economy and craft economy). The shape of the *dingklik* was oriented towards mobility of use.

In terms of height, economic activities have no significance for the height found in trade and craft activities as they had similar heights. However, they had typical heights based on outdoor / indoor usage. Overall, it can be concluded that economic factors influence the visual shape of the *dingklik*. Meanwhile, the height did not play a significant role in determining the usage pattern of the *dingklik* even though a typical height can be identified in outdoor usage. Therefore, it is appropriate to suggest that this research has established that it is possible to identify and classify a *dingklik* by its visual features and its height based on economic activity.

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Figure 2: Timeline of the Dingklik's Existence in the Trade Economic Activities

- 1 Collections of *Tropenmuseum in Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 2 Collections of KITLV in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 3 Collections of National Museum of Ethnology in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 4 Collections of Phot. Dr. E. Erathaus in (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herstellung_von_Batitt%C3%BCchern_auf_Java.jpg)
- 5 Collections of *Nederlandsch-Indische Film Maatschappij* in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam-Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
- 6 Collections of Haghe Film in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam-Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)

- 7 Collections of KITLV, Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (<http://www.kitlv.nl>)
- 8 Collections of MUSEON in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 9 Collections of *Syndicaat voor Filmopname in Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam–Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
- 10 Collections of Woodbury & Page in <http://www.past-to-present.com/wpjava01.cfm>
- 11 Collections of Tropenmuseum in http://oer2go.org:81/wikipedia_en_all_novid_2017-08/A/Street_food.html
- 12 Collections of Leiden University Digital Collection in <https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/>
- 13 Collections of Unknown in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam–Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
- 14 Collections of *Nationale Filmfabriek Bloemendaal* (Bloemendaal) in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam–Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
- 15 Collections of P.R.W. van Gesseler Verschuur in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam–Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
- 16 Collections of C. Jetses in *Boekoe Peladjaran Bahasa Melajoe 3* (<http://www.jetses.nl/Indische%20Boeken.html>)
- 17 Collections of Cas Oorthuys, Indonesia Independent-photographs in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 18 Collections of Rustamadji in <https://lukisanku.id/karya-lukisan-rustamadji/>

Figure 3: Timeline of the Dingklik's Existence in the Craft Economic Activities

- 1 Collections of Tropenmuseum in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 2 Collections of KITLV in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 3 Collections of National Museum of Ethnology in *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* – National Library of the Netherlands (<https://geheugen.delpher.nl/>)
- 4 Collections of Phot. Dr. E. Erathaus in (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herstellung_von_Batitt%C3%BCchern_auf_Java.jpg)
- 5 Collections of *Nederlandsch-Indische Film Maatschappij* in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam–Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
- 6 Collections of Haghe Film in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam–Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)
- 7 Collections of KITLV, Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (<http://www.kitlv.nl>)
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- 9 Collections of *Syndicaat voor Filmopname in Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* in Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam–Corporate Film (<https://www.eyefilm.nl/>)