

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH), as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), can be classified as traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.¹ Cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, has been used by many states to promote their presence in the international community and as a tool of soft power. A staple example is how Korea has been persistent in getting their presence known in the international community, not only through their popular culture but also their traditional ones. *Kimjang*, the process of making and sharing Kimchi, is inscribed as one of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage and has a lot of history.² Through nation branding and gastro diplomacy such as “Korean Cuisine to the world”, Korea has not only successfully gotten their recognition for their Kimchi but is also able to share the long history it

¹ "UNESCO - What Is Intangible Cultural Heritage?", *UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage*, accessed September 16, 2020, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003>.

² "UNESCO - Republic Of Korea", *UNESCO*, last modified 2020, accessed September 18, 2020, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/state/republic-of-korea-KR?info=elements-on-the-lists>.

brings with it too.³ Indonesia, a country which is known to be rich in its culture, is no different.

Indonesia has previously campaigned “Wonderful Indonesia” to promote tourism in Indonesia, and also “Remarkable Indonesia” by Indonesia's Ministry of Trade to promote Indonesia’s economy and inward investors.⁴ Both are made to boost Indonesia's good image to the world. However, Indonesia has not had a global and official tagline or title to promote its national identity as a whole abroad. Like President Joko Widodo had mentioned through an interview, Indonesia’s nation branding is not optimal yet, there is still a lot needed to be improved, mostly in synergizing all sectors to have one common branding strategy.⁵

Branding, according to marketing strategists, refers to the management of a product image, which includes creating and maintaining a competitive advantage, something unique that no other is the same.⁶ This unique feature will then become the said image wanted to be projected towards the public eye. Nation here, differing from state and country, would be defined as a group of people with a common identity, history, and destiny that seeks statehood or can exist independently.⁷

³ Kieth Dinnie, "Repositioning The Korea Brand To A Global Audience: Challenges, Pitfalls, And Current Strategy", *Academic Paper Series* 4, no. 9 (2020): 1-7, accessed September 18, 2020, https://www.brandhorizons.com/papers/Dinnie_Korea_Brand.pdf.

⁴ Muhammad Hafiz, "Enam Sektor Kunci Untuk Nation Branding Indonesia", *Marketeers - Majalah Bisnis & Marketing Online - Marketeers.Com*, last modified 2017, accessed September 10, 2020.

⁵ Fabian Januarius Kuwado, "Bangun "Nation Branding" Indonesia, Ini Poin Yang Ditekankan Jokowi", *KOMPAS*, last modified 2017, accessed September 10, 2020, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2017/02/03/16511191/bangun.nation.branding.indonesia.ini.poin.yang.ditekankan.jokowi>.

⁶ Douglas B. Holt, *Brands And Branding*, ebook (Cultural Strategy Group, 2003), accessed September 9, 2020, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307966276_Brands_and_Branding.

⁷ Gyorgy Szondi, *Public Diplomacy And Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities And Difference*, ebook (Clingendael Institute, 2020), accessed September 9, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05374>.

Combined, nation branding , on the surface, would mean managing the group of people sharing the same identity, as one nation, to project a particular image towards the public eye, which may include the domestic and international public - other states and nations. Many states have now realized how important it is how others perceive them as a nation, which made nation branding more concerned towards the formation of national identity and enhancing the political, economic and cultural competence of the nation.⁸

Based on the *Nation Brands 2018* report, Indonesia is in position number sixteen for its nation branding, with the United States, China and Germany being in the top three, respectively.⁹ Indonesia's heritage is also ranked 29th by *Best Country 2020* listicle by the US News, seen by its accessibility and richness in food, history and cultural attractions.¹⁰ There is no doubt that one of the most remarkable cultural heritage sites that Indonesia has is batik.

Batik is a piece of cloth made by drawing patterns using a dye-resistant wax before dying, which is then threaded into wearable garments.¹¹ In an interview, Pramono Anung, the cabinet secretary of Indonesia mentioned that batik is not only

⁸ Ying Fan, "Branding The Nation: Towards A Better Understanding", in *Place Branding And Public Diplomacy*, Ying Faned. , 6th ed. (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 2010), 97-103.

⁹ Brand Finance, *Nation Brands 2018*, The annual report on the most valuable nation brands (Brand Finance, 2018), accessed September 10, 2020, https://brandfinance.com/images/upload/brand_finance_nation_brands_reports_2018.pdf.

¹⁰ "Indonesia Country Performance, Brand Strength And Reputation", *The Place Brand Observer*, last modified 2020, accessed September 10, 2020, <https://placebrandobserver.com/indonesia-country-performance-brand-strength-reputation/>.

¹¹ Bram Priandono, "batik - Pengertian, Asal Usul & Makna", *Pemoeda.Co.Id*, last modified 2019, accessed September 10, 2020, <https://www.pemoeda.co.id/blogs/atribut/batik-pengertian-asal-usul-makna-terlengkap-di-internet>.

a culture but also an identity that all Indonesian needs to be proud of.¹² Anung also said regarding the versatility of it, and how each region has its eccentric features in batik. Batik was first introduced to the international community as an item of cultural diplomacy – as gifts given to foreign officials visiting Indonesia given by Suharto during his presidential period.¹³ He had always been wearing batik when attending International conferences and meetings which gave batik both its domestic and international popularity.

Batik has gained an even greater recognition after the UNESCO inscribed it into UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on 2 October 2009. UNESCO has also declared batik as Indonesia's cultural identity.¹⁴ Since then, 2 October has been declared as National batik Day to commemorate that historical event and conserve Indonesia' cultural heritage of batik. All government instances, educational institutions and many offices have also dedicated Friday as "Batik Friday" where everyone is recommended to wear batik for their work activities. These actions can be classified as nation branding. It not only projects what Indonesia has culturally outwards but also brings together the people as one unity to take part in the nation branding itself.

The road for Indonesians to be able to proudly claim batik as their own has not been easy. Prior to UNESCO's recognition of batik as Indonesia's intangible

¹² "Seskab: Bukan Hanya Baju, batik Jadi Identitas Yang Membanggakan Indonesia- Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia", *Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia*, last modified 2019, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://setkab.go.id/seskab-bukan-hanya-baju-batik-jadi-identitas-yang-membanggakan-indonesia/>.

¹³ Budwining Angreani Tiasuti, "Asal Mula batik Jadi Warisan Budaya Milik Indonesia".

¹⁴ "Indonesian batik", *Intangible Cultural Heritage*, last modified 2009, accessed September 10, 2020, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/indonesian-batik-00170>.

heritage, the ownership for batik was debatable. Malaysia was seeking the opportunity to claim batik as their own too.¹⁵ Since UNESCO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is made for intellectual co-operation and mutual understanding of peoples through all means of mass communication,¹⁶ their recognition for batik has contributed a lot more towards Indonesia's national identity and cultural assets, as well as Indonesia's image in the international community.

1.2. Research Questions

Recognizing the importance of having a strong national branding image, as well as the importance of conserving the intangible heritage in contributing to a national identity, this research will focus writing this thesis around the research questions as follow:

1. How is batik established as Indonesia's national identity?
2. What are the contributions of batik as a nation branding towards achieving Indonesia's national interest?

1.3. Research Objectives

The thesis should be able to reach the objectives as follow:

1. To examine the importance of batik as a cultural heritage of Indonesia.

¹⁵ Peter Gelling, "Score One For Indonesia In The War Over batik", *Nytimes.Com*, last modified 2009, accessed September 10, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/15/world/asia/15iht-batik.html>.

¹⁶ "UNESCO In Brief - Mission And Mandate", *UNESCO*, last modified 2020, accessed September 18, 2020, <https://en.unesco.org/about-us/introducing-unesco>.

2. To highlight the importance of national identity and nation branding in the international community to achieve national interest.

1.4. Research Contribution

This thesis along with its findings is made to highlight the importance of conserving cultural heritage, in the hope of enlightening the younger generation of Indonesia that being able to call batik as their own is an honour and is something they should be proud of. Through that, it is hoped that Indonesia's national branding and identity could be strengthened even more.

It is crucial for countries with less sustainable hard power (in the economic and military strength) to still have their standing and be positively appealing in the international community, and having a strong soft power is just the perfect answer for that.

Having a strong cultural standing can be considered to be one of the most attractive soft powers these days. It is hoped these countries would still be able to have an impact and an influence on one another through their cultures and build good relations upon that.

1.5. Structure of Thesis

The first chapter of this thesis, which consists of the background, research questions, research objectives and significance of the research is written to give the reader brief and clear information about what is to be discussed further in this research.

The second chapter of this thesis will be divided into two parts which consists of literature reviews from previous books and peer-reviewed journals written regarding the topics related to this research and the theoretical concept to be used as a framework to further discuss Indonesia's national branding through batik.

The third chapter focuses on discussing the methodology being used to finish this research, which includes the research method, data collection technique and data analysis technique of gathering the information for this research.

The fourth chapter, which is the highlight of this research, is the analyzing of the data that has been collected and analyzed regarding building Indonesia's national branding through UNESCO's recognition for batik as Indonesia's Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

The fifth chapter, which is the conclusion and recommendations, wrap ups everything that has been discussed throughout this research. The chapter will also point out recommendations for future studies of building Indonesia's nation branding through batik.