

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The use of the cultural dimension as a mechanism of diplomacy is becoming increasingly significant because it is carried out harmoniously without coercive elements. This is because the relations that exist do not only occur between state actors. Culture is an effective medium for diplomacy because it has a universal element. The archipelagic nation has great potential in using soft power in today's world, especially with the diversity of its culture. Indonesia is a diverse country, with each region having its own set of characteristics. One of Indonesia's creative industries with high potential in its economic development is batik. Batik is one of Indonesia's heritage that plays an essential role in developing the Indonesian economy.

Today, Batik is not just written in cloth, but many programs, like foundations, schools, Indonesian-made aircraft, and soft power diplomacy, also appreciate and maintain Indonesian batik. The Indonesian Batik Foundation and the Tjanting Batik Nusantara Foundation are under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry, which play a direct role in increasing the number of employment, especially for micro and medium enterprises, and providing knowledge about the

preservation of Indonesian batik to remote areas.¹ Besides, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also came up with "Batik Diplomacy" to monitor the development of Indonesian batik directly, both from an economic and political perspective.

Based on *The Step-by-step Process of Making Batik*, Batik is a pictorial cloth specially made by writing it on the fabric using a dye-resistant wax, which is then processed in a certain way.² In 2008, the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry or Kamar Dagang dan Industri Indonesia (KADIN) encouraged the candidacy of Indonesian batik to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs mobilized Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia to organize the Heritage of Indonesia – World Tour to promote batik and gather international support for the nomination of Indonesian batik to UNESCO.³ Not long after that, On October 2, 2009, UNESCO had awarded Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity to Indonesian batik. UNESCO has also declared batik as Indonesia's Cultural Identity.⁴ As a consequence, it is likely that batik has a high cultural value that may be useful as leverage for the proliferation of the country's foreign policy.

¹ Pusat Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Kebijakan Multilateral Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, *Dasawarsa Diplomasi Batik Indonesia, Rekam Jejak Peran Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia 2008-2019*, Badan Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Kebijakan Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, October 2019, p. 102.

² "The Step by Step Process of Making Batik," *The Step-by-Step Process of Making Batik*, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.expat.or.id/info/batiksteps.html>.

³ "Dasawarsa Diplomasi Batik Indonesia," *Rekam Jejak Peran Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia 2008-2019* (Badan Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Kebijakan Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, October 2019), 38.

⁴ "UNESCO - Indonesian Batik," UNESCO, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/indonesian-batik-00170>.

With the long history of batik from its long and rich history to UNESCO's recognition as Indonesia's very own cultural heritage, this reflects the global recognition of Indonesia's cultural affluence as well as their vigorous commitment to protecting Indonesian batik and making it an essential tool in Indonesia's economic development. Efforts to preserve Indonesian batik in various lines have started to roll. Since the inauguration of batik by UNESCO on October 2, the Indonesian government has designated October 2 as "National Batik Day," where Indonesians are required to wear batik on that day as a form of batik preservation in Indonesia.⁵ In this case, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has assigned diplomats to become ambassadors for Indonesian batik abroad. This is also an effort to protect the wealth of Indonesian batik.⁶

It was as if the window of the world of business was wide open when, on October 2, 2009, UNESCO declared Indonesian batik as a world cultural heritage. Indeed, this is a challenge for Indonesia to elevate batik as one of the people's economic pillars. The declaration turned out to evoke the spirit of "Berbatik Ria" in Indonesian society. Reportedly, batik sales in numerous outlets have been skyrocketing. This mirrors the euphoria of batik. The euphoria of batik will bring a more positive aura for the growth and development of Indonesia's national economy. More than simply cultural heritage, batik has also transformed into an industry with a high contribution to the national economy precisely after batik

⁵ "Celebrating Indonesian Heritage on National Batik Day," Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Indonesia to UNESCO, last modified October 21, 2017, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://kwrii.kemdikbud.go.id/en/news/celebrating-indonesian-heritage-on-national-batik-day/>.

⁶ "Dasawarsa Diplomasi Batik Indonesia," Rekam Jejak Peran Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia 2008-2019 (Badan Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Kebijakan Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, October 2019), 25.

diplomacy was officially designated as one of the soft powers in Indonesia in 2004. Furthermore, the number of laborers in this group of industry or *Tingkat Pengangguran Terbuka* (TPT) is 1.62 million people indeed. The value of batik export even reached 34.41 million USD in 2004 right after Batik Diplomacy became Indonesia's official diplomacy. In Today's world, the use of batik is increasingly diverse. The batik export market reaches 125 million USD/year.⁷ Around two million Indonesians have depended on the batik business, starting with small and medium enterprises and suppliers of their batik needs and their families. They hope, with the recognition of batik by UNESCO, the market and batik industry will be better than in previous years. This proves that batik is not just an Indonesian culture but also the intellectual property of the Indonesian people and the source of life for some of them.

The Indonesian batik industry is currently one of the sectors that boosts employment in the country. This sector, which is dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises, is spread across 101 centers in Indonesia, with 47 thousand business units, and has absorbed a workforce of up to 200 thousand people.⁸ "The batik industry is part of the textile and clothing industry which can be one of the mainstay sectors in the implementation of the Indonesia Making 4.0 roadmap," said Airlangga Hartarto, the Minister of Industry Republic Indonesia. He noted that the batik industry's export value throughout 2019 had reached over 17.99 million USD.

⁷ Ihyaul Ulum MD, "Batik dan Kontribusinya terhadap Perekonomian Nasional," *Batik dan Kontribusinya terhadap Perekonomian Nasional*, accessed September 4, 2021, <https://www.coursehero.com/file/69178038/91-105-1-PBdoc/>.

⁸ "Diplomasi Batik Ala Indonesia di Kancah Dunia," *Indozone.id*, last modified October 2, 2019, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.indozone.id/news/ers014/diplomasi-batik-ala-indonesia-di-kancah-dunia/read-all>.

The main destinations for product shipment are, among others, Japan, the United States, and Europe. The Data also shows that since 2011, the export figures, employment level in the batik industry, the number of businesses, the total value of production, and the value of materials have increased.⁹

Not only helping Indonesia's economy, batik also plays a fundamental role in the political aspect, especially at the implementation of Batik Diplomacy. Batik Diplomacy is one of the elements in soft power diplomacy that Indonesia has implemented since 2004 by formalizing batik as an official uniform in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Batik diplomacy was introduced at the UN Security Council, where the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chair of the Delegation of Countries attended wearing Indonesian batik. The diversity of Indonesian batik reflects the diversity of Indonesian heritage culture.¹⁰ The purpose of batik Diplomacy itself is to strengthen that batik is an assets for our soft power elements. Indonesian diplomats who wear batik on international visits can lead to 'Batik talks', and foreign colleagues can easily recognize batik as Indonesian assets. Affirmation and strength of batik can have a positive impact on the development of economic aspects.

On the international stage, batik sits in a special place in the modern fashion industry. batik fabric is no longer used as an item of traditional clothing. Batik has

⁹ Rina Anggraeni, "Industri Batik Punya Peluang Besar Di Pasar Internasional," SINDOnews.com (SINDOnews.com, September 24, 2019), last modified September 24, 2019, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://ekbis.sindonews.com/berita/1442591/34/industri-batik-punya-peluang-besar-di-pasar-internasional>.

¹⁰ Fitri Sartina Dewi, "Delegasi Sidang Keamanan PBB Kompak Mengenakan Batik," Delegasi Sidang Keamanan PBB Kompak Mengenakan Batik, May 9, 2019, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://kabar24.bisnis.com/read/20190509/15/920692/delegasi-sidang-dewan-keamanan-pbb-kompak-mengenakan-batik>.

been applied in haute couture fashion and accessories such as handbags. Many famous figures have appeared wearing batik, starting from Bill Gates, Nelson Mandela, Beyonce, to Barack Obama.¹¹ Both designers, at home and abroad, have introduced batik to the international fashion scene by incorporating batik fabric into modern production methods. In 2018, the charm of batik fabric was present on the runway stage of one of the most prestigious fashion shows, Paris Fashion Week.¹²

Introducing batik in international circles can increase batik's selling price globally, which can boost Indonesia's economy and further promote batik as Indonesia's cultural wealth. The Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also continues to implement Batik Diplomacy to cooperate between Indonesia and other countries. Based on *Dasawarsa Batik Diplomacy Indonesia*, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs seeks to translate the Indonesian Government's foreign policy's four priorities into four Batik motifs, which have their own respective meanings implied in each pattern.

It shows that batik is not just an ordinary Indonesian culture but the intellectual property of the Indonesian people and the breath and driving force of the lives of some Indonesian. With the recognition of batik by UNESCO, Indonesia's responsibility in marketing and preserving batik is getting bigger. Based on this recognition, Indonesia has ambitions to optimize the role of batik in

¹¹ Danliris, "Batik: Dari Kain Tradisional Ke Ikon Fashion," Danliris Homepage - Textile & Garment Manufacturer -, last modified May 14, 2018, accessed February 23, 2021, <http://www.danliris.com/index.php/id/2018/05/14/batik-dari-kain-tradisional-ke-ikon-fashion/>.

¹² Annissa Wulan, "Batik Mendunia, Alleira Batik Tampil Di Paris Fashion Week 2018," liputan6.Com (Liputan6, March 18, 2018), last modified March 18, 2018, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.liputan6.com/lifestyle/read/3376040/batik-mendunia-alleira-batik-tampil-di-paris-fashion-week-2018>.

Indonesia's economy. With a comprehensive strategy, the batik industry has an essential role in the national economy and contributes to the country's foreign exchange. The existence of Batik Diplomacy further supports this since 2008. With that, the value of batik as a cultural heritage with a philosophical narrative need to balance the development of batik as an Indonesia's economy.

1.2 Research Question

Recognizing the opportunities of Batik Diplomacy to advance Indonesia in many ways, especially in the economic sector and the Indonesia Foreign Policy, the author suggests the following research questions to be answered in this thesis:

1. What is Batik Diplomacy and how is it implemented as part of Indonesian Diplomacy?
2. How does Batik Diplomacy help Indonesia's economy?

1.3 Research Objective

This research should be able to reach the objective as follow:

1. This research will also observe the batik development strategies as part of Indonesia's soft power.
2. Analyze the potential of batik in pursuing Indonesia's economy.

1.4 Research Significance

This research aims to determine the history of why Batik Diplomacy can be formed and can have an effect on the development of cooperation between

Indonesia and other countries in the form of soft power diplomacy. Batik is often underestimated because people consider batik only as a "cultural heritage." Theoretically, this research is expected to add insight and develop scientific disciplines, especially in Indonesia's economic. As well as providing an understanding of the use of batik on an international scale.

This research also highlights the importance of preserving cultural heritage to increase the young generation's spirit in participating in maintaining batik because society's role is crucial. Besides, this research wants to break the mindset that batik is just a 'traditional cloth' because, in the current situation, batik is not only a traditional cloth anymore; batik can become an Indonesia's Icon and can improve Indonesia's economy in a significant way.

1.5 Structure of Thesis

The first chapter of this research will be the basis that composes the research's background, research questions, research objectives, and research significance to give the reader brief information regarding the topic.

The second chapter of this research will be divided into two parts: a literature review following with the theory and concept. The purpose of the literature review in this study, among others, is to identify what the author has carried out relevant studies on this topic. The literature sources used are books, journal articles, official statements from the Indonesian government, and various other sources related to batik diplomacy and its contribution to the Indonesian economy. This chapter also consists of a literature review of the theories and

concepts used, both significant theories of international relations and various concepts to analyze and strengthen the author's arguments in conducting this research.

The third chapter will explain and describe the research methods used in carrying out this research. This chapter consist of research approach, research methods, data collection, and data analysis techniques that used in writing this research. This chapter also explains how the author processes data that has been obtained from various sources.

The fourth chapter will answer the formulation of the problem by explaining and outlining the explanation of batik diplomacy, how to implement batik diplomacy, and the contribution of batik diplomacy to Indonesia's economy. Then, in this chapter, all data will be analyzed using the theories and concepts mentioned in chapter two.

The fifth chapter is the final part of this research. In this chapter, the conclusions obtained from this research will be written. This chapter will also provide recommendations on the application of batik diplomacy to Indonesian government and how to maintain the contribution of batik to Indonesia's economy.