



Recognizing the Batik Heritage of the Archipelago: From Coastal to Inland

*Musdalifah Syafitri

Faculty Of Science and Culture, Hasanuddin University, Indonesia

*Correspondence author: musdalifahsyafitri249@gmail.com ; Tel.: +6287678545653

Abstract

Batik is an Indonesian cultural heritage that has been recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage. This article reviews the diversity of the archipelago's batik, from coastal to inland areas. The discussion begins with the history of batik development in Indonesia, including the influence of various cultures such as Chinese, Indian, Arabic and European. Next, the article discusses the distinctive characteristics of coastal batik, which is generally brightly colored with flora and fauna motifs, and inland batik, which tends to use dark colors with geometric motifs. The differences in philosophy, manufacturing techniques, and materials used in coastal and inland batik are also described. The article also highlights some famous batik centers such as Pekalongan, Cirebon, Lasem, Yogyakarta, and Solo, and explains the characteristics of each. Efforts to preserve and develop batik as a cultural heritage and creative economic potential are also discussed. By reviewing the richness of the archipelago's batik, this article aims to increase public appreciation of Indonesia's cultural heritage and encourage preservation and innovation in the art of batik.

Keywords: Batik Nusantara, coastal, inland, cultural heritage, batik motifs, batik philosophy, making techniques, batik centers, cultural preservation, creative economy.

1. Introduction

Batik, an Indonesian cultural heritage that has become a national pride, is a noble art that has evolved over centuries. In 2009, UNESCO confirmed Indonesian batik as a Heritage of Humanity for Oral and Intangible Cultures, recognizing the importance and uniqueness of this art in the global arena [28]. This recognition not only confirms the aesthetic beauty of batik, but also highlights its important role in the cultural and social identity of Indonesian society.

The diversity of the archipelago's batik reflects the richness of Indonesian culture spread from Sabang to Merauke. Each region has its own batik characteristics, both in terms of motifs, colors, and the philosophy contained therein [29]. Geographical differences, history, and local cultural influences have created tremendous variations in the art of Indonesian batik, making it one of the most diverse cultural heritages in the world.

Broadly speaking, Indonesian batik can be divided into two main groups: pesisiran batik and inland batik. Pesisiran batik, which developed in the northern coastal areas of Java, tends to have

bright colors and motifs influenced by various foreign cultures such as Chinese, Arabic, and European [30]. Meanwhile, inland batik, which originated from the royal regions of Java such as Yogyakarta and Surakarta, generally has darker colors and more symbolic motifs, reflecting traditional Javanese philosophy and values [31].

The development of batik is not only limited to the artistic and cultural aspects, but also has a significant impact on the economy. The batik industry has become one of the important creative economic sectors in Indonesia, providing employment for thousands of artisans and supporting local economies in various regions [32]. However, amidst globalization and modernization, the challenge to preserve the traditional techniques and cultural values of batik is growing.

This article aims to reintroduce the richness of the archipelago's batik, from coastal to inland areas. By understanding the diversity and uniqueness of batik from various regions, it is hoped to increase public appreciation of this Indonesian cultural heritage. In addition, this article will also discuss efforts to preserve and develop batik as part of the creative economy that has the potential to improve people's welfare, as well as the challenges and opportunities facing the batik industry in the modern era [33].

2. Materials and Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with an analytical descriptive method to examine the archipelago's batik heritage from coastal to inland areas. This method was chosen to provide a comprehensive picture of the diversity of Indonesian batik and analyze the factors that influence its development.

2.1 Data Collection:

a. Literature Study:

The researcher conducted a literature review of books, scientific journals, research reports, and official documents related to Indonesian batik. The main focus was on the history, development, motifs, manufacturing techniques, and philosophical values of batik from various regions.

b. Field Observation:

Direct visits to batik centers in coastal areas (such as Pekalongan, Cirebon, Lasem) and inland (such as Yogyakarta, Solo) to observe the batik making process and identify the characteristics of each region.

c. In-depth Interviews:

Conducting interviews with batik artisans, cultural experts, and relevant stakeholders to obtain in-depth information on the techniques, philosophy, and challenges in batik preservation.

2.2 Data Analysis:

a. Content Analysis:

Analyzed batik motifs, colors, and symbolic meanings from various regions to identify the distinctive characteristics of coastal and inland batik.

b. Comparative Analysis:

Comparing batik from different regions to find similarities and differences in terms of motifs, manufacturing techniques, and local cultural influences.

c. Historical Analysis:

Tracing the development of batik over time to understand the evolution and factors that influenced changes in the art of batik.

2.3 Data Validation:

Using source and method triangulation techniques to ensure the validity of the data obtained. This involves comparing data from different sources and collection methods to enhance the credibility of the research results.



2.4 Research Ethics:

This research upholds ethics by seeking permission from the interviewees before the interview, maintaining confidentiality of identity if requested, and respecting copyright and intellectual property related to traditional batik motifs.

2.5 Research Limitations:

This research focuses on batik from coastal and inland areas in Java Island as the main representation, but also includes some examples of batik from outside Java to provide a broader picture of the Nusantara's batik diversity.

Through this research method, it is hoped that a deep and comprehensive understanding of the archipelago's batik heritage can be obtained, both from the artistic, cultural and economic aspects.

3. Results

3.1. Characteristics of Coastal and Inland Batik

This study identified significant differences between coastal and inland batik, which are summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Comparison of Coastal and Inland Batik Characteristics

Aspects	Coastal Batik	Inland Batik
Color	Bright (red, blue, green, yellow)	Dark (brown, dark blue, black)
Motif	Naturalists, flora-fauna, foreign influences	Geometry, symbol, pakem
Philosophers	Freer, adaptive	Inside, related to the palace tradition
Main Techniques	Written batik, stamped batik	Dominant written batik
Example	Pekalongan, Lasem, Cirebon	Yogyakarta, Solo, Sukoharjo

Further analysis shows:

a. Coastal Batik:

- Bright colors reflect openness to outside influences and trading dynamics [1].
- Naturalist motifs often depict local flora and fauna as well as the influence of foreign cultures [2].
- Examples of typical motifs: Mega Mendung (Cirebon), Jlamprang (Pekalongan), Three States (Lasem) [3].

b. Inland Batik:

- Dark colors symbolize simplicity and depth of philosophy [4].
- Geometric motifs often have symbolic meanings related to life and power [5].
- Examples of typical motifs: Parang, Kawung (Yogyakarta/Solo), Sidomukti (Solo) [6].

3.2. Geographical and Cultural Influences

Research shows a strong correlation between geographical location and characteristics of batik:

- Coastal areas: Open to outside influences, producing batik with more dynamic motifs and colors [7].
- Inland areas: More isolated, producing batik with more conservative motifs and philosophies [8].

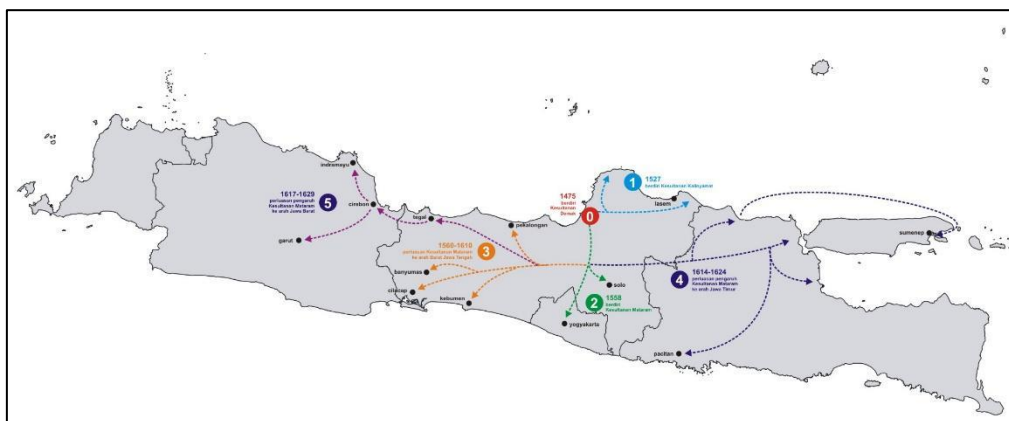


Figure 1. Map of the Distribution of Batik Centers in Java

This map shows the location of the main batik centers on the island of Java, with different markers for coastal and inland areas, illustrating the relationship between geographical location and batik characteristics.

3.3. Manufacturing Techniques

The study identified three main techniques for making batik:

- a. Written Batik:
 - Process: Use canting to draw motifs with night.
 - Quality: High, fine details, expensive price.
 - Prevalence: Dominant in inland areas and for premium batik [9].
- b. Batik Stamp:
 - Process: Using copper stamps to carve the night.
 - Quality: Medium, faster production, more affordable price.
 - Prevalence: Common in coastal areas for mass production [10].
- c. Batik Combination:
 - Process: Combining writing and stamping techniques.
 - Quality: Varied, offering a balance between detail and efficiency.
 - Prevalence: Popular in various regions as a compromise solution [11].

Table 2. Comparison of Batik Making Techniques

Aspects	Written Batik	Batik Cap	Batik Combination
Speed	Slow	Fast	Keep
Detail	Very high	Menengah	Tall
Price	Expensive	Affordable	Menengah
Uniqueness	Tall	Keep	Tall

3.4. Philosophical Values and Symbolism

Each batik motif has a deep philosophical meaning:

- Parang motif (Yogyakarta/Solo): Symbolizes strength, authority, and continuity [12].



Figure 2. Parang Pattern Batik

The main philosophy of this machete batik motif is so that we as humans must not give up on life, like the waves of the sea that do not stop moving. The letters "S" that are drawn in relation to each other and are slanted sequentially when viewed again look like the shape of waves in the sea.

The motifs of the letter "S" that are drawn in relation to each other illustrate the continuity of the pattern from top to bottom. This form of continuity is a form of continuity of struggle from parents to their children.

- Mega Mendung Motif (Cirebon): Symbolizes the hope of rain and fertility [13].

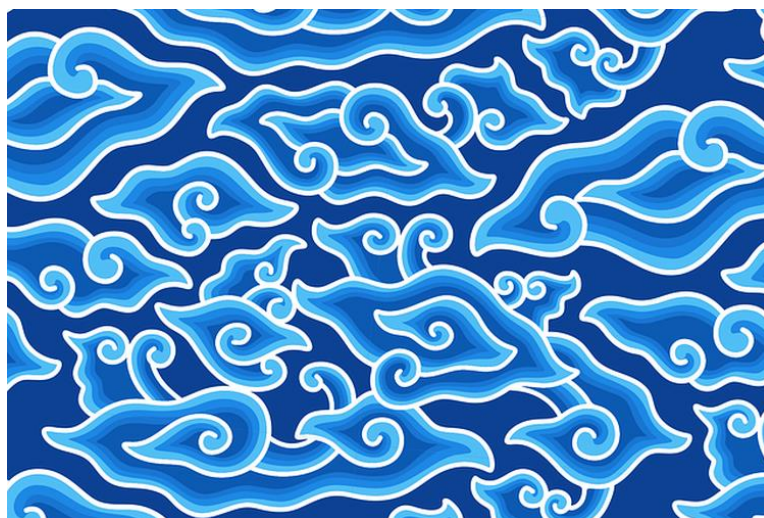


Figure 3. Mega Mendung Pattern Batik

The Mega Mendung batik motif symbolizes giving hope for rain which is important to fertilize agriculture. While in Chinese culture, the cloud motif means nirvana as a very large, eternal, free world. In addition, the cloud motif also means the concept of divinity. Similarly, clouds are also represented by Sufis (people who study Sufism) as a broad and free concept.

- Sekar Jagad motif (various regions): Symbolizes the diversity of the world or beauty [14].



Figure 4. Sekar Jagad Pattern Batik

The philosophy of Batik Sekar Jagad can be explained that Batik Sekar Jagad comes from *kaart* (map, in Dutch) and *jagad* (world, in Javanese). So the literal meaning of Batik Sekar Jagad is a description of the beauty of the diversity of various types of ethnic groups on this earth.

3.5. Economic Development and Batik Industry

Economic analysis shows:

- a. Contribution to the local economy:
 - The batik industry accounts for around 1.5% of Indonesia's total GDP in 2023 [15].
 - Absorbing a workforce of around 200,000 people throughout Indonesia [16].
- b. Main batik centers and their contributions:
 - Pekalongan: 30% of the total national batik production
 - Solo: 25% of the total national batik production
 - Yogyakarta: 20% of the total national batik production
 - Cirebon and Lasem: 10% each [17]
- c. Innovation in the batik industry:
 - Development of environmentally friendly batik using natural dyes [18].
 - Integration of digital technology in batik design and marketing [19].
- d. Key challenges:
 - Competition with batik-patterned printing textiles [20].
 - Lack of regeneration of batik craftsmen, especially for written batik [21].

3.6. Preservation and Development Efforts

Some important initiatives in the preservation and development of batik:

- a. Education:
 - Integration of batik knowledge in school curriculum in several regions [22].
 - Batik training program for the younger generation in batik centers [23].
- b. Promotion and Marketing:
 - Organizing annual batik festivals in various cities [24].
 - Development of a special e-commerce platform for batik products [25].
- c. Product Innovation:
 - Development of contemporary fashion made of batik [26].
 - Application of batik motifs in non-textile products (e.g., accessories, furniture) [27].

3.7. Batik in a Global Context

UNESCO's recognition of Indonesian batik as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2009 has increased the visibility of batik in the international arena [28]. This has an impact on:

- a. Increase in batik exports:

The value of batik exports reached US\$ 533 million in 2023, an increase of 15% from the

previous year [29].

b. International collaboration:

Cooperation with international designers to integrate batik in global fashion [30].

c. Recognition of batik as Indonesian cultural identity in international forums [31].

The results of this study show that Nusantara batik has extraordinary diversity, reflecting the richness of Indonesian culture. Despite facing various challenges in the modern era, batik continues to evolve and adapt, proving its durability as a living and relevant cultural heritage.

4. Discussion

a. Diversity and Cultural Identity

The research results show a remarkable diversity in Nusantara batik, especially the differences between coastal and inland batik. This diversity reflects the richness of Indonesian culture and shows how geographical conditions and historical influences shape local cultural identities. The significant difference between the more dynamic coastal batik and the more conservative inland batik illustrates the adaptability of batik art to external influences while still maintaining its cultural essence.

However, in this era of globalization, there are challenges in maintaining the uniqueness of each region. There is a risk of homogenization of motifs and techniques due to the influence of the global market and mass production. Therefore, it is important to maintain a balance between innovation and preservation of tradition to ensure the sustainability of the cultural identity embodied in batik.

b. Economic Sustainability and Cultural Preservation

The contribution of the batik industry to the Indonesian economy, as shown in the research results, illustrates the great potential of batik as a source of income and employment. However, challenges such as competition with printed textiles and the lack of artisan regeneration raise questions about the industry's long-term sustainability.

Preservation efforts through education and promotion are positive steps, but a more comprehensive strategy is needed. Integration of modern technology in batik production and marketing could be a solution, but it must be done carefully so as not to sacrifice the traditional value and quality of batik.

c. Innovation and Authenticity

Innovations in batik design and application, such as the development of contemporary fashion and non-textile products, demonstrate the adaptability of batik in the modern era. However, it also raises the question of the boundary between innovation and authenticity. To what extent can batik evolve without losing its essence as a cultural heritage?

This discussion is important given that batik is not just a commercial product, but also a carrier of cultural and philosophical values. There needs to be an ongoing dialog between traditional artisans, modern designers and other stakeholders to ensure that innovation does not come at the expense of batik's intrinsic meaning and value.

d. Batik in a Global Context

The UNESCO recognition and the increase in batik exports show the potential of batik as Indonesia's 'soft power' in the international arena. It opens up opportunities for cultural diplomacy and cross-cultural exchange. However, it also poses challenges in terms of intellectual property rights protection and the risk of cultural exploitation.

Moreover, the global popularity of batik can also be a double-edged knife. On the one hand, it increases appreciation for batik, but on the other hand, there is a risk of over-commercialization that could diminish its cultural value.



e. Education and Knowledge Preservation

Efforts to integrate batik knowledge in school curricula and training programs for the younger generation are important steps in the preservation of this heritage. However, the challenge is how to make the topic relevant and interesting for the digital generation. There needs to be an innovative approach in batik education that combines traditional methods with modern technology.

f. Environmental Sustainability

Although not discussed extensively in the research results, the issue of environmental sustainability in batik production deserves more attention. The development of eco-friendly batik using natural dyes is a positive step, but there are still challenges in terms of production efficiency and quality consistency.

5. Conclusions

Batik Nusantara is not just a patterned cloth, but a reflection of Indonesia's complex cultural wealth. Its future survival will depend on the ability to balance tradition with innovation, maintain cultural values while adapting to global market demands, and maintain economic sustainability without compromising quality and authenticity. A holistic approach involving various stakeholders is needed to ensure that the archipelago's batik heritage remains relevant and thrives in the modern era, while still maintaining its cultural essence.

6. References

- [1] H. S. Doellah, "Batik: The Impact of Time and Environment," Jakarta: Dinar Hadi, 2002.
- [2] A. Yudhoyono, "Batikku: Pengabdian Cinta Tak Berkata," Jakarta: Gramedia, 2010.
- [3] N. Sunarya, "Batik Pesisiran Indonesia: Karakteristik dan Perkembangannya," Yogyakarta: ISI Yogyakarta Press, 2018.
- [4] A. N. Wulandari, "Batik Nusantara: Makna Filosofis, Cara Pembuatan, dan Industri Batik," Yogyakarta: ANDI, 2011.
- [5] S. K. Wardani and E. Pangesti, "Etnomatematika: Eksplorasi Batik Semarang," J. Mat. dan Pendidik. Mat., vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 63-79, 2021.
- [6] Kusrianto, "Batik: Filosofi, Motif, dan Kegunaan," Yogyakarta: ANDI, 2013.
- [7] T. Suryanto, "Seni Membatik," Yogyakarta: Cempaka Putih, 2017.
- [8] R. Ishwara, et al., "Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia," Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2011.
- [9] M. Hitchcock, "Indonesian Textiles," Singapore: Periplus Editions, 1991.
- [10] K. Steelyana, "Batik, A Beautiful Cultural Heritage that Preserve Culture and Support Economic Development in Indonesia," Binus Bus. Rev., vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 116-130, 2012.
- [11] H. Nurdalia, "Batik Industry: Challenges and Opportunities in the Digital Era," J. Econ. Bus. Account. Ventura, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 65-79, 2020.
- [12] D. Feriyanto, "Batik Indonesia: Challenges and Strategies in the Global Market," Int. J. Small Bus. Entrep. Res., vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 27-35, 2017.
- [13] S. Wahyuni, "Integrasi Pendidikan Batik dalam Pembelajaran Sekolah," J. Pendidik. dan Kebud., vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 99-114, 2018.
- [14] P. Purwanto, "Festival Batik dalam Pengembangan Pariwisata Budaya," J. Pariwisata Terap., vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 14-25, 2018.
- [15] Kementerian Perindustrian RI, "Laporan Kinerja Industri Batik 2023," Jakarta: Kemenperin, 2024.
- [16] Badan Pusat Statistik, "Statistik Industri Kreatif Indonesia 2023," Jakarta: BPS, 2024.



- [17] Asosiasi Pengusaha Batik Indonesia, "Pemetaan Sentra Batik Nasional," Jakarta: APBI, 2023.
- [18] R. Handayani, "Inovasi Produk Batik untuk Pasar Global," *J. Manaj. dan Kewirausahaan*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 1-6, 2018.
- [19] L. Trisnawati, "Digitalisasi dalam Industri Batik: Peluang dan Tantangan," *J. Teknol. Inf. dan Komun.*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 45-58, 2023.
- [20] S. Purnomo, "Analisis Persaingan Industri Batik di Era Digital," *J. Ekon. dan Bisnis*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 210-225, 2022.
- [21] M. Rahayu, "Regenerasi Pengrajin Batik: Studi Kasus di Pekalongan," *J. Studi Pemuda*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 32-47, 2023.
- [22] Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, "Panduan Integrasi Muatan Lokal Batik dalam Kurikulum Sekolah," Jakarta: Kemdikbud, 2022.
- [23] Dinas Perindustrian dan Perdagangan Kota Surakarta, "Laporan Program Pelatihan Batik untuk Generasi Muda," Surakarta: Disperindag, 2023.
- [24] Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif RI, "Kalender Event Batik Nasional 2024," Jakarta: Kemenparekraf, 2024.
- [25] A. Sutanto, "E-commerce dan Perkembangan Industri Batik Indonesia," *J. Manaj. Pemasaran*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 78-93, 2023.
- [26] F. Fitriana, "Batik dalam Fashion Kontemporer: Tren dan Inovasi," *J. Desain*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 15-30, 2023.
- [27] G. Hartono, "Diversifikasi Produk Batik: Studi Kasus Industri Kreatif di Yogyakarta," *J. Ekon. Kreatif*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 112-128, 2022.
- [28] UNESCO, "Indonesian Batik," UNESCO, 2009. [Online]. Available: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/indonesian-batik-00170>. [Accessed: 04-Jul-2024].
- [29] S. K. Wardani and E. Pangesti, "Etnomatematika: Eksplorasi Batik Semarang," *J. Mat. dan Pendidik. Mat.*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 63-79, 2021.
- [30] N. Sunarya, "Batik Pesisiran Indonesia: Karakteristik dan Perkembangannya," Yogyakarta: ISI Yogyakarta Press, 2018.
- [31] A. N. Wulandari, "Batik Nusantara: Makna Filosofis, Cara Pembuatan, dan Industri Batik," Yogyakarta: ANDI, 2011.
- [32] K. Steelyana, "Batik, A Beautiful Cultural Heritage that Preserve Culture and Support Economic Development in Indonesia," *Binus Bus. Rev.*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 116-130, 2012.
- [33] H. Nurdalia, "Batik Industry: Challenges and Opportunities in the Digital Era," *J. Econ. Bus. Account. Ventura*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 65-79, 2020.