

# Moving From Vernacular Culture to Urban Culture: Evolution of Batik Culture in Indonesia

Ayoeningsih Dyah Woelandhary, Nuning Y Damayanti, Yan Yan Sunarya  
& Ira Adriati

Faculty of Arts and Design, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Jl. Ganesha 10,  
Bandung 40132, Indonesia

Email: 37022007@mahasiswa.itb.ac.id

Received	Accepted	Published
18.07.2024	20.08.2024	31.08.2024

<https://doi.org/10.61275/ISVSej-2024-11-08-06>

## Abstract

Batik has initially been a practice among the ordinary people, having been introduced to Jakarta during the Dutch rule. It has evolved from a vernacular product to a symbol of urban culture and national identity, pursuant to independence of Indonesia. It has acquired an association with the political and cultural activities linked to Jakarta's role as the national government center and has reached a position of national significance. This study examines the significant elements and the effects of batik in the development of the urban culture of Indonesia.

It employed interviews as primary data sources to gather information from batik owners and craftsmen, museums, collectors, institutions, and decision-makers regarding local culture and its contemporary significance. Secondary data was compiled from reference sources using an interdisciplinary historical approach in order to reconstruct the historical development of Batik in Indonesia.

It is concluded that the roots of the batik tradition in Jakarta have arisen from the immigrant vernacular communities. Numerous political, economic and cultural events have produced the setting for its growth to form the current urban cultural identity having become a fashionable cloth of national significance even symbolizing the national identity of Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Vernacular Culture, Batik, Urban Culture, Indonesia.

## Introduction

Since the 18-20 century, batik has been a significant textile commodity for Africa and Europe during the VOC period. Currently, the growth of batik in Jakarta, Indonesia has spread to 16 production houses of micro to medium scales, located in various areas. Control of batik affairs is regulated by the DKI Governor Regulation concerning Betawi Cultural Icons and Betawi Cultural Principles which ensures that each municipal government service area has batik with a distinct identity, symbols and colors representing the region.

The earliest period of the history of batik in Indonesia refers to the period of the Kalinga Hindu-Buddhist Kingdom in Java, in 650-850 AD. According to the oldest sources around 550 AD, the kings and nobles of the Liang Dynasty have been described as wearing "thin flowery clothes, which covered the upper part of their bodies". Other sources also indicate that batik was the work of Indians (Rouffaer & Juynboll, 1899) or the invention of the Chinese (Veldhuisen & Heringa, 1996) which was considered valuable enough to be traded abroad (Febriani, 2023).

Jakarta batik has motifs that are now developing with motifs adapting to the behavior of the urban society. This link is thought to be closely related to the growth of the society of Jakarta. Originally a vernacular culture of Java and the surrounding coastal areas, batik has now spread to other areas outside Java, including Jakarta, where it has begun to receive renewed attention in the urban community. In fact, Batik in Jakarta, which was originally a commercial commodity, is now used in various formal and informal events, showing that it has a relevance beyond being a commercial cloth in the lives of modern people in Indonesia.

This phenomenon shows an effort to preserve and adapt batik culture in urban society. In previous studies, the focus of the discussion on batik has been on how to read the meaning, symbols, development of the creative industry, visual elements and aesthetic aspects of batik. In this context, this research examines how batik has become a significant social commodity of the urban community and how it has moved up from an insignificant vernacular cultural artefact. Its aim is to ascertain its use by the government and regional leaders in Jakarta, along with the regulations issued so that it can grow outside its traditional areas, but with the urban community in Jakarta.

Its objectives are:

1. To find and describe historical tipping points and the extent to which these critical points can be seen as something that can be noted as an important moment of its existence.
2. To establish the basis for it to become a symbol of identity it has become today.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Symbol and Identity**

According to Djoemena (1990), Batiks in Indonesia generally have different motifs and color systems. The creators of batik motifs in ancient times did not just create something beautiful to the eye, but also gave meanings was closely related to the philosophy of life they lived. Indeed, they have created something decorative with a sincere and noble message and hope that it will bring goodness and happiness to the wearer which is manifested in symbols.

In the Nusantara traditional art, symbols are a form of indirect communication. In this communication, there are hidden messages so that the meaning of a symbol is very dependent on each individual and culture. Sumardjo (2006) shows that symbols in pre-modern Indonesian culture do not simply refer to the concepts, but something absolute and something transcendent; the immanence of God and something supreme. The reference of a symbol is not the connotation of ideas or ratios, and human experience/feelings, but refers to the presence of supernatural powers or energy. The meaning of symbols is a sign of the presence of the absolute/transcendent, while symbols in the modern civilization always refer to meanings, concepts and experiences.

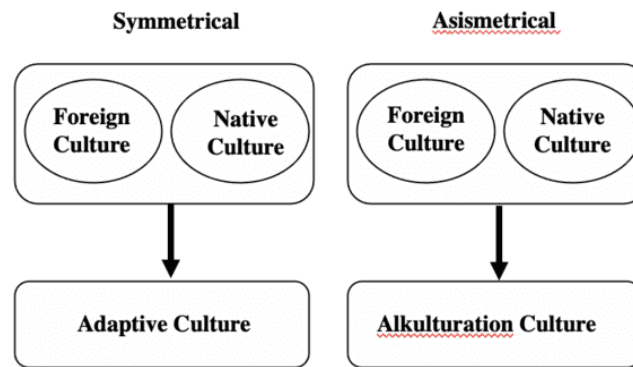
Identity refers to the special character of an individual, a member of a group or a particular social category. It is interpreted as similarity or unity with others in a certain area or matter (Rummens, 1993). It is interpreted as something more complex and interpreting identity leads to something more conceptual, about how to put a person/community in the place of others or empathic communication or at least putting or sharing thoughts feelings, problems and sympathy/empathy between cultures (Liliwari, in Istiyanto, 2018).

An identity is recognized if there is a supporting community. This implies the existence of migrants and urban communities. Identity must function as a self-differentiator from the other people or the other communities, because identity can be understood from a dualistic perspective. In other words, there is 'us and them' so that the existence of identity can be understood by the other entities. However, identity is closely related also to culture.

### **Adaptation of Culture**

Theoretical interpretations of culture explain how people adapt and change in different environments, how adaptation occurs when people act in different environments, migrate to new places and deal with different cultures. Cross-cultural adaptation is a basic process of communication in which there is a messenger, a medium and a recipient of the message, resulting in the process of encoding and decoding. Cross-cultural adaptations include three

things: acculturation, deculturalization and assimilation. They lead to shifts and changes, and the adaptation process that occurs is generally includes five phases: honeymoon, frustration, readjustment, and resolution (Young & Kim in Oriza, et al., 2016). Tirtosudarmo (2021) says that change is a social reality and people in their communities and societies interact, whether they are asked or not. In fact, changes and shifts will occur as a social reality, and are not always constructed according to the will of any individual or a group, because people are an integral part of the society acting as subjects of change, as well as objects of change.



**Fig. 1:** Pattern of symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships that encourage the growth of new cultures

Source: Tirtosudarmo, 2021

Figure 1 shows the symmetrical relationship pattern. Each entity maintains its own culture and if the relationship is asymmetrical, the lower positioned entity may take more cultural elements from the higher positioned party. The process generally produces a mixed culture between the majority and minority groups. This will provide the basis for looking at the phenomenon of the development of new cultural forms in batik in Jakarta arising from immigrant community groups in Jakarta.

### Urban Developments in Jakarta

The capital city of the country, Jakarta, is rapidly urbanizing. Its urbanites come from various regions with different cultures and traditions. It is mentioned that the original community of Jakarta is comprised of the Betawi Ethnicity. According to Heuken (1995), people of Betawi as an indigenous tribe are called Betawi Malay proto people. They inhabit the northern region of western Java, in particular the Jakarta area that is thought to have existed since 1673. They call themselves Malay, Kemayoran and Kwitang. In 1923, Thamrin founded the Pemoeda Kaoem Betawi organization as an early Betawi entity. In 1930, it was officially recorded in the national population data. The phase of cultural adaptation in the growth of batik in Jakarta is closely related to the immigrant/urban community. Kim in Utami (2015) consider that people must communicate in accordance with the local cultural norms and values to achieve functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity.

A migrant person in Jakarta is defined as "a person who changes his place of residence from one political or administrative area to another" (Sedyawati, 1987: 61). They are people who settle permanently and are thought to be closely related to the Japanese period of occupation. The number of people in several cities in Asia decreased due to food shortages, but in Jakarta, there has been a massive migration from the outside areas that increased the population (Gregg, 2015).

In this context, the immigrant community is defined as a society born and reproduced by the process of modernity in the dynamics of modern institutions. They are described as typical of people living in the last decade of the 20th century who had extensive opportunities to spread to various parts of the world to enjoy their existence (Ahmadin, 2021). The urban community structure is generally dynamic, open to change, transforming rapidly according to its physical, social, cultural and economic contexts. Ulusoy (2023) says that from the aspect of cultural

heritage organically shaped by the historical layers in temporal continuity that reshaped temporal and spatial contexts in interaction with its users.

Another view states that Jakarta is becoming a city where the main impact of urbanization flows is the formation of urban clusters that encourage the formation of networks and gradients of other urban clusters. This is to meet the needs of the people who continue to increase and seek a better life (Liangwu et al. in Wu, 2022).

According to the population data of the residents who have inhabited the Jakarta area in the population table compiled by the first scholar Lance Castles in 1967 with the title "The Ethnic Profile of Djakarta" in 1961 shows the composition of the residents.

According to Sedyawati (1987: 64), the data is as follows

Original Jakarta residents total 655,400 (22.90%),

Sundanese 952,500 (32.80%) and

Javanese and Madurese 737,700 (25.40%) ( ).

In the data, the original indigenous people of Jakarta were 22.9% and migrants from Java-Madura became one of the dominant populations. It is assumed that the flow of migration has occurred for a long time supported by data on the presence of policies on population composition arranged by the province. Since 1970, the ethnic Betawi population has decreased significantly due to several urban development projects such as the construction of toll roads, highways and buildings, causing them to be displaced to the outside and side villages of the city (Dewi, 2019).

## Literature Review

Many have examined batik and its relationship with city identity. For example, Sylvia et al. (2019) show that batik has become part of the representation of the identity of the region. She shows that the shape and arrangement/structure of motifs in batik form an element of the image of the city. Assigning an identity is a very important fundamental thing and for a city, identity is a fundamental thing that is used to recognize, distinguish one place from another. Rujianto et al. (2019) also explain that now the development of batik motifs in Jakarta has entered the stage of the creative industry vortex in Jakarta. Development of the batik industry grows along with the growth of the city and has an impact on visual changes and the shift of symbols from classic to contemporary motifs.

Batik, which originally was a traditional business, has developed as a creative industry today and has different characteristics and results. In terms of regulations, a policy strategy is needed that encourages batik producers to become an industry that adapts and develops with the order of contemporary elements to trigger creativity to produce new motifs. In this regard, Ismurdiyahwati et al. (2021) shows the role of batik as a symbol and identity. Indeed, all cultural arts have purposes as forms of social and daily rituals, not only for ceremonial purposes but many others. Interestingly, customs, taboos and symbols are born in their visuals when they are related to beliefs and religions and are also fused with moral principles. Thus, batik is used not only as a cloth and body covering, but also for ceremonial, social and daily rituals related to religions and beliefs. They are not only beautiful, but also dissolve into moral principles, customs, taboos and symbols.

Jakarta batik as a form of preservation of traditional heritage, which has also grown in other regions, is seen as an effort to maintain the continuity of the culture of the archipelago. Therefore, each region has its own uniqueness, because each region has its own mythological traditions and local wisdom.

This perspective provides a basis for looking at the context and relationship between the existence of batik in Jakarta and its relationship with the urban society there. It is known that batik is functionally associated with its meanings in the social field and traditions of the society of Jakarta, while the meaning contained in a motif may be unconsciously formed and recorded. However, they may not be realized due to the lack of understanding of primordial traditions in the Indonesian culture. According to Ardhiati's (2015), in the context of urban batik, majority of the urban people realize that there is still an element of localness even though

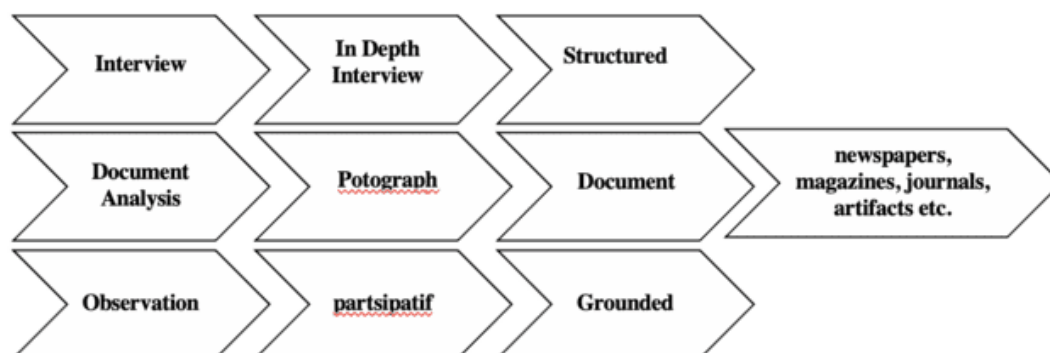
they live in a global or cosmopolitan world. This is because they realize that from a batik product or 'wastra', there is a value of *anggitan* and has something invaluable.

Indeed, there are many moments and events embedded in the visuals of a piece of cloth. Therefore, it is interesting to explore the perspectives of the use of batik cloths from time to time in Jakarta, because the function of batik has shifted into self-identity as part of the self-concept. Batik, which has originated from within the palace, has now moved to the city towards modernization, shifting the centrality of the palace (Kusno in Budiman, 2017). Needless to say, the role of batik in Jakarta is a showcase to witness how various cultural elements that come together, forming a culture that is grown and developed in the urban society of Jakarta.

## Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. A case study was chosen because this enables the study of the phenomenon of batik in depth and in the specific context of urban society of Jakarta. Understanding the culture and customs of a particular society involves the examination of the historical records and other sources of information about life and history as its basis. The research employs source materials such as maps, photography, folklore, oral traditions, site exploration, archaeological materials, museum collections, enduring customs, languages, and place names as the data (Axtell, 1979).

It also carried out interviews with selected people. Most of the data were derived from official documents, government / state reports and archives, as well as newspaper and magazine articles, because these sources are very important in shaping narratives that have national impact (Anderson in Febriani, 2023).



**Fig. 2:** Stages of the research

Source: Author, 2024

The data collection techniques used in this research are as follows

- a. In-depth Interviews: These were carried out with key informants such as batik community members, batik crafters, cultural experts and urban residents of Jakarta who have knowledge about batik.
- b. Document Analysis: This involved analyzing historical documents such as photographs, newspapers, and other archives related to batik and the urban society of Jakarta.
- c. Participant Observation: This was carried out in the batik communities and places where batik is used in the urban society of Jakarta.

Kuntowijoyo (2003) says that historical sources, also called historical data, must be verified both from the primary and secondary sources, and then criticisms must be carried out for validity. The method is to collect sources that are relevant to the issues and then interpretation; the findings are analyzed and synthesized by combining the data together into groups.

Data analysis involved the following.

- a. Content Analysis: The text content of the data obtained through interviews, observations, and document analysis were analyzed.

- b. Narrative Analysis: The data from interviews and observations were analyzed to build a narrative about the history and meaning of batik in the lives of the urbanites Jakarta.
- c. Historical Analysis: Historical documents were analyzed to understand the historical context of the development of batik in urban Jakarta.

Analysis is divided into two periods: pre-independence period and the period after independence. This time span is used to examine the relationships and regulations found in relation to batik in Jakarta.

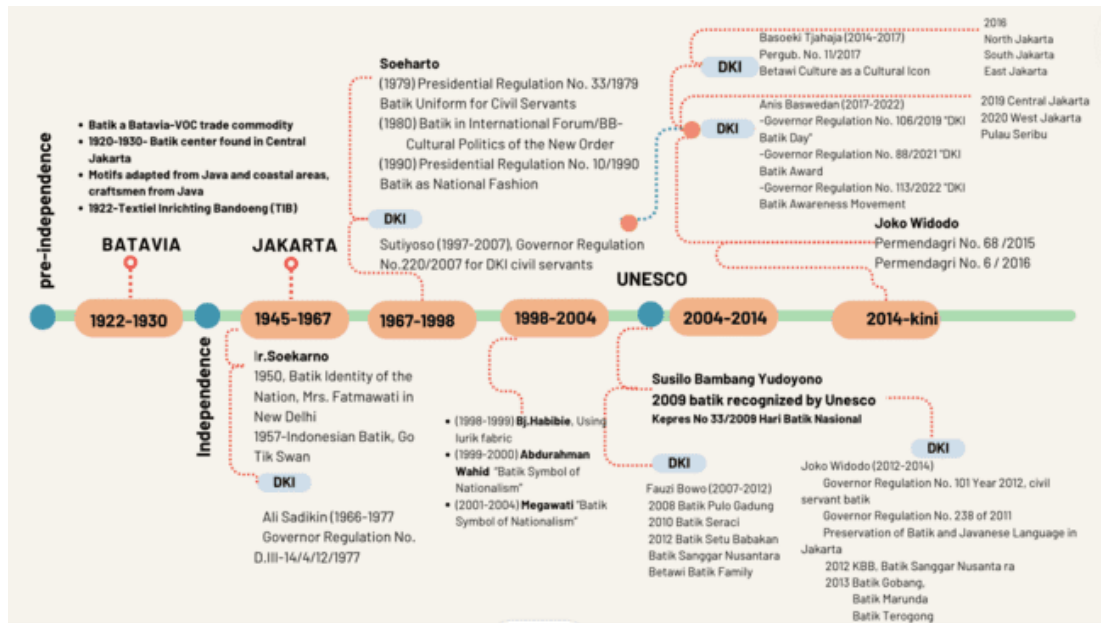


Fig. 3: Timeline diagram of batik journey in Jakarta

Source: Author, 2024

Among the batik found in the pre-independence era in Jakarta, following exist: Tjoen Tjoe or TT brand in the 1920s-1930s in the Karet-Jakarta area with motifs produced such as the Thomas Cup, Siri Kuning, Kembang Kol, Seroja. The motif ideas and naming had come from what was around the environment and the phenomena happening in Jakarta. Styles and motifs have been adapted from the Java region, such as Pekalongan and Semarang (Sumartono, 2017). The growth of batik in the traditional batik areas such as in the coastal West Java has further progressed with the establishment of the 'Weaving Experiment Center' known as the 'Textiel Inrichting Bandoeng (TIB)'. This has been established in Bandung in 1922 under the Dutch East Indies Department van Landbouw, Nijverheid en Handel with the aim of providing counseling to the textile industry, especially to the folk weavers. It introduced more advanced textile technology at that time (<https://www.pikiran-rakyat.com> and <https://www.batik.go.id/post/read/sejarah>). This is one of the reasons batik developed in other areas including Jakarta as a commercial product in the colonial period as urbanization began to occur in this region.

Emma Amalia Agus Bisri, a batik collector and founder of the Betawi Cultural Institute (LKB), says that batik was produced in people's houses and those who made them were not native Betawians but migrants from the batik-producing areas in Central Java, East Java and the West coast of West Java.

However, in the 1980s, the batik industry has experienced a decline due to the emergence of printed batik technique as well as regulations on river pollution in the area. The rising land prices in the region has also contributed to this. From the visual aspect, the batik motifs that have been developed at that time were Langgara, Cincau, Meja Nyai, Mak ronda, Pucuk Rebung, Jamblang. They have had bright colors including red, orange and yellow (Saidi (2012). Others suggest that batik has existed since Jakarta was still called the city of Batavia, associated with the finding of the Nusa Kelapa Map motif representing the Ceila map by Prince

Panembong during the reign of Prabu Siliwangi (1482 - 1521). The ancestors of the Betawi people often called their hometown Nusa Kelapa.



**Fig. 4:** Husni Thamrin with Volksraad members in 1935 and Mrs. Fatmawati wearing batik in 1950

Source: <https://steemit.com/soekarno/@fotosedjarah>,  
<https://www.youtube.com/@arsipnusantara9483,2024>

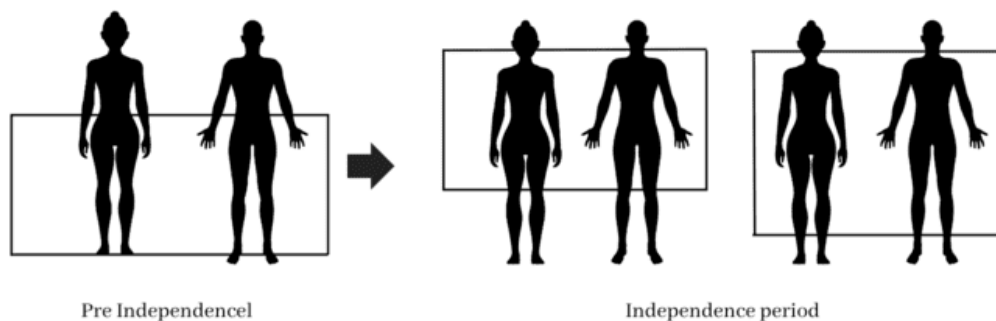
Figure 4 shows batik being used by the members of the council. Here, it is seen being used by the men and women as a lower body covering. For example, Mrs. Fatmawati, the president's wife is wearing batik. The motifs found are ornaments from the Javanese region, such as Pekalongan, Parang and Liris. In the pre-independence period, batik motifs made by the batik makers in Jakarta had still adapted motifs from their home regions, such as Java, Pekalongan, Semarang and the other coastal areas. Thus, the motif of Phoenix still shows a touch of Chinese culture such as Barongsay, Hong birds, Dragon teeth, Chinese New Year celebrations, and cap go meh. However, since Betawi culture is also influenced by the Arabic, Indian, Dutch and the Portuguese cultures, the motifs produced are even richer. For example, in the gringsing motif that has been widely known since the 14th century, or in the ciliwung motif, a river that has been a bone of contention for the Dutch, the Portuguese and the British since the 16th century, as well as motifs about daily life such as agriculture, arts and games are included. A significant phase in the growth of batik in Jakarta has been when Indonesia had become independent, and Jakarta had become the capital city.

Another image shows President Soekarno carrying Mrs. Fatmawati on a bicycle during a visit to India to attend President Rajendra's invitation in New Delhi in 1950. Again, Mrs. Fatmawati is seen wearing a batik cloth as a lower cover and a kebaya for the upper. In 1965, the supervision of the Textile Center, which had been established during the Dutch East Indies in 1922, has been given to Hardjono Go Tik Swan, and batik art has been further developed. Thus, batik produced by Go Tik Swan has undergone changes in the form of patterns and decorations, no longer in the form of long cloth, but in the form of official clothing used for the Javanese official events. Pramono (2021) writes that batik during the Soekarno era was associated with political discourse, because it was used as a symbol of national identity.

In 1955, the 1st President of the Republic of Indonesia, Ir. Soekarno has given a mandate to Go Tik Swan, an artist from Surakarta, to make batik motifs that were not characterized by certain regions. Batik motifs with the concept of national identity as an Indonesian identity apply the philosophy and concept of Nunggak Semi, which is a concept of cultural development based on old cultural principles or milestones. The resulting motif aims to advance the field of culture, initiating a form of batik capable of playing a role as one of the unifying elements of the nation. 'Batik Indonesia' thus, has transcended the regional identities culminating in a style representing the wealth of Indonesian art and motifs, by adapting the ideology of political nation and character building (Pramono, 2021).

During the transition from President Soekarno to Soeharto's administration, the Governor of DKI Jakarta, Ali Sadikin, in 1977 has established a policy regarding the use of special batik in the Jakarta area. At this time, batik, which has originally been a lower body cover and identified as women's clothing, has been transformed into an upper body cover. Thus, they have been used as shirts, suits and dresses. It is thought that at this time, there have not been many batik makers in the Jakarta area. In fact, the batik cloth producers have been still

dominated by the batik makers from Java and other coasts. The characteristic motifs of Betawi or Jakarta have not yet appeared, even if there was batik produced in the Jakarta area. Visually, it does not offer a strong sense of identity of batik typical of Jakarta culture, because at this time, the batik makers have been still oriented towards Javanese batik patterns and compositions that already had standards in composition, style and color. The Fig. 5 explains the shift in batik, which has originally been used as the cover for the lower bodies, shifted to be also upper body covers and subsequently the full bodies.



**Fig. 5:** Illustration of the shift in the functions and the forms of batik  
Source: Author, 2024



**Fig. 6:** DKI Governor Ali Sadikin wearing batik at an official event  
Source: Perpunas.go.id, 2024

According to reports, Ali Sadikin initially had not wanted to use batik, because it had been perceived as women's clothing. However, he has been inspired by the national shirts of men from the Philippines, the Barong Tagalog. Thus, batik has been adopted as shirts, as well as replacing the suits which were considered to not represent the Indonesian values. In fact, were not suitable for the climate of Indonesia. It has been then decided that the long-sleeved batik shirt was the official attire. According to Ramadhan (1992), Ali Sadikin has said that "such attire was acceptable to the public for going to receptions, to weddings and so on. The decree also applies to foreign diplomats to wear batik for meetings that require enough politeness," (<https://voi.id/memori/74892/ali-sadikin-menebas-batas-kelas-sosial-pakai-batik>)

Based on the analysis, it can be surmised that batik used at that time has been produced from outside Jakarta. However, regulations have been enforced on the use of batik as official clothing for the DKI regional government, replacing the suits, which were associated with the colonial narrative. In fact, not all government employees could afford a suit as official clothing. It is clear that batik has been getting stronger as a symbol of the state; especially the government of the capital city of Jakarta itself makes provisions for the use of batik in the form of shirts.

Later in the record of Rupa Gaya Betawi (Permana, 2012), Emma Amalia Agus Bisri, one of the batik collectors from the fashion house of batik producers in the Indo-Dutch period, says that in the 1970s, batik has been used in Betawi motifs/identities. They are found to be brightly colored batik motifs including five main motifs: Pucuk Rebung, Belah Ketupat, Kain Panjang Pagi-Sore and Jawa Hokokai. This statement is strengthened by Hartono Sumarsono



in an interview session with the author in 2020. He explains that in the previous period the nobles and the relatives of the wealthy people, often used Betawi motifs. In G.J Fillet's book, *Plaatkundig Woordenboek van Nederlandsch Indie*, published in Amsterdam, the existence of batik in Betawi is associated with the *Cassia Glauca* tree, a type of *Ketapang* that grows a lot on the banks of rivers and rice fields. Thus, it is not surprising that batik found in Jakarta at that time often had used the names of the plants, regardless of the pros and cons. However, this finding is reinforced by the name of the settlements or villages that use the names of the trees and plants (Bisrie, 2012).

Due to this 'awareness', in 1976, Lembaga Kebudayaan Betawi (LKB) has been officially formed, initiated by Hj. Emma Amalia Agus Bisri with the aim that Betawi culture would be better organized and conserved, and one of its concentrations could be on batik. At that time, Jakarta area has also begun to receive batik entrepreneurs from Pekalongan and Solo who had begun to develop the batik business in several areas of Jakarta while shifting the dominance of Dutch batik entrepreneurs at that time. Saidi (2012) says that during the 1960-1970 period, batik motifs with typical Betawi motifs have been found.

It is assumed that these motifs were orders from the batik collectors who had begun to grow their awareness of the identity of the Betawi entity, as one of the original ethnicities living in the Jakarta area. Hartono Soemarsono, a batik collector and writer, says in an interview session that many batiks were ordered by wealthy people, called *Kapitan batik*, at very expensive prices. They were of excellent batik quality and the people had ordered the motifs as desired. Thus, it is not surprising that during this period, many batik motifs have been found that had been influenced by various outside cultures, such as Chinese, Dutch, Portuguese, British, Arabic and others.

Interview conducted with Mr. Ardi Hariyadi, (Head of the Information and Education Implementation Unit of the Art Museum Management Unit of the DKI Jakarta Provincial Cultural Office, 2023) said that batik makers in the Jakarta area generally take motifs and patterns from what is around their environment, referring to the character of said *pepikiran batik*. However, the findings show that there are no batik motifs that describe the traditions of the coastal communities, such as images of the sea, fishermen, marine life, and others, because generally, the resulting expression is what is seen and experienced daily by the batik craftsmen.

Around 1980s, in the period of the 2nd President Soeharto, batik has begun to be promoted as a national icon in the international forums, used as a uniform at the official state events at the UN events (Febriani, 2023). The first use of batik has been by Soeharto in 1986, during the visit of the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan to Bali to attend the ASEAN Summit. President Soeharto had presented a souvenir batik shirt to Nelson Mandela in 1990 and in 1997 and then Mandela became President of South Africa and came to Indonesia wearing a batik shirt given by Soeharto. In 1994, when Indonesia chaired and hosted the APEC Summit and, in its activities, batik has been placed as a 'medium' in cultural political activities, as well as a symbolic form of Indonesian identity to honor the state guests (Sachari 2007: 99).

President Soeharto's batik appears in several documentats in the form of shirts, and for women in the form of cloths and dresses. This shows a shift in the form of batik, from cloth to shirts/dresses used in official state activities.



**Fig. 7:** The President Suharto of Indonesia and First Lady Nancy Reagan in Bali, 1986.

Source: AP Photo/Bob Daugherty and TututSoeharto Instagram, 2024

In the Figure 7, Soeharto is seen in his state activities using batik with Javanese motifs but there is a cloud-shaped motif such as mega mendung as the main motif. This use of batik during the Soeharto era is seen as a time when batik was associated with power and politics during the New Order era. In fact, one of the efforts has been to discipline the Civil Servants (PNS) to wear batik on certain days. Besides in state events, Soeharto also gave batik representation through his extended family through TV or national media, so that batik was increasingly widely recognized in Indonesia. It is thought that the batik use comes from batik craftsmen in Java and other coastal areas, considering that many batik designers in Jakarta produce in areas outside Jakarta. However, the limitations of batik centers and regulations regarding the batik industry in Jakarta, has had an impact on the urban development during the Soeharto administration.

This is reinforced by Hartono Soemarsono's statement in an interview (2020) and Mrs. Laila-the owner of the Tarogong batik studio in Jakarta (2022). They say that there was a time when batik disappeared from Jakarta and experienced a receding phase. This is related to regulations on the management of batik waste that polluted the river. This shifted the batik center which was originally in the city center to the outskirts of the city. One of these regulations is that the industrial center / factory cannot exist in the middle of the city. It must be relocated to the outskirts of the city due to the problem of fabric raw materials coming from Japan. Invariably, batik production in the Jakarta area is hampered and almost disappeared.

In the era of the leadership of BJ Habibie, Abdurahman Wahid to Megawati, batik was still present as part and identity of the nation. At the DKI Jakarta government level, during the leadership of Governor Sutiyoso, a government regulation was issued which regulated the use of batik among the Civil Servants in the Jakarta area. This regulation revived batik producers on a national scale, especially since batik had experienced a shift in the forms, functions and the meanings, from the sacred to the profane. Similarly, due to the impact of modernization and practical functions, batik was increasingly being produced and has shifted to become the upper body coverings. However, Jakarta and Betawi batik motifs have not yet appeared in the batik ecosystem in Jakarta.

In 2004, during the administration of the 6th President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, UNESCO designated Indonesian batik as an intangible cultural heritage of the mankind. This decision was welcomed in Indonesia, and October 2 was declared the batik day (Febriani, 2023). What was hailed by the UNESCO was the traditional batik technique, which included drawing and coloring cloths using the technique of blocking with hot wax, and staining the color.

Thus, batik began to develop accompanied by government regulations including the granting of the logomark BATIKMARK Batik Indonesia, with Copyright no 034100/5 June/2007 and only given to batik producers who already had a registered brand at the Directorate of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Ministry of Law and Human Rights, through the National Standards Agency (BSN) test. Data in 2011 records as many as 79 batik producers that have received certificates with details of 69 for written batik certificates, 17 certificates for stamped batik, and 9 certificates for combined batik types. Batik motif certificates alone had recorded as many as 3000 motifs that have been copyrighted on a national scale.

The current condition of national batik producers is different in Jakarta, where during Fauzi Bowo's time as Governor, batik representing Betawi culture was initiated by Betawi culturalists Ridwan Saidi and KRT Daud Wiryo Hadinegoro from Yogyakarta in 2008. They have undertaken a project to create 24 Betawi batik motifs that were patented to the Batik Betawi Secretariat that manages the Pulogadung industrial area, East Jakarta. The aim was to increase the interest of the people of Jakarta (Rujiyanto et al, 2019). A polemic emerged in a panel discussion forum written in the *Wastra Journal* (2009) on the topic of Batik Betawi in 2009 that there were problems with the identity and copyright of batik, given that there were still cross opinions, what kind of Betawi batik should be developed in Jakarta? Since not all batik produced has had Betawi motifs, naming it Jakarta batik was considered more appropriate (Achjadi, 2009). Batik that was produced at that time have been in the form of cloths and have

not been produced again, given that batik was now transferred to the work area of the Ministry of Culture and Education.



**Fig. 8:** Pattern produced by Ridwan Saidi and KRT Daud Wiryo Hadinegoro, the Ciliwung pattern and Kondangdia

Source: Rujiyanto et al, 2021

The motifs are inspired by several areas of Jakarta, such as the Ciliwung river, depicting a river that has become an important element for the Betawi and Jakarta people. The river is closely related to the history of the people of Jakarta, including the habitat of fish, aquatic plants, the geographical condition of the river that stretches from upstream to downstream areas on the north coast of Jakarta. The Gondangdia motif represents an elite settlement in the Jakarta area, whose conditions are still lush. Many large trees grow in this area and are associated with the existence of Gondang trees which used to grow a lot in this area. Aesthetically, the batik motif has the style and concept of batik from the region of origin, namely Java, where patterns and ornaments are symbolically depicted.

The key point of batik in Jakarta was in 2009-2010 with the establishment of the Batik Betawi Seraci on the border of North Jakarta. Interviews with Mrs. Munawaroh (September 2023) and Mr. Andi Icing (via cellular phone in January 2023) shows that Seraci is the pioneer of Batik Betawi in Jakarta. The Seraci initiative was born by Mrs. Umi Adi, a batik owner in Semarang who conducted batik training in several coastal areas of Jakarta. The endeavor paid off with many residents and other areas learning and producing batik. Now Seraci is entering its third generation, which is currently preserving batik by empowering residents, with a labor system division. Today, batik production is made in the form of handwritten and stamped techniques, with the aim of making it more affordable for the community. Handwritten batik is made when there are orders from the collectors/local governments for certain activities and specific motifs. Seraci's batik concept is based on what they see, feel and enjoy in the daily life of the local community, such as the cultural traditions of rural communities, farming activities, rice planting, farming in the fields, religion, pounding rice with a mortar and the charm of the Nature around them. Seraci concentrates on copyright protection; thus, almost every motif produced is protected using HAKI patent certificates.

During the period of transition from Governor Fauzi Bowo to the new Governor, Joko Widodo, batik producers have increased due to regulations issued regarding the use of batik motifs in Jakarta. One of the participants of KBB (Kelompok Batik Betawi) in 2012, Mrs. Siti Laila, had decided to make an independent batik center at her home in Jalan Terogong, Cilandak Sub-district, South Jakarta City. She is a teacher at an SMKN (Vocational School) in Jakarta and had started her business independently, with the motifs produced in a semi-contemporary style and taking the theme of the daily life of the Betawi people in Jakarta. Since the motifs produced adopt many Betawi elements, the batik produced is often used by the public and collectors as a representation of Betawi culture, such as Tugu Monas, Bajaj, mengkudu and others. In an interview conducted in 2020, it was explained that the concept in batik is a 'media criticism' about the Betawi people who must be relocated to the suburbs, and Mrs. Laila as an indigenous Betawi tribe, persists in not wanting to be relocated due to the growth of luxury buildings and offices around her. Her vision is not to let the Betawi people

be drowned by the skyscrapers in Jakarta. Thus, the expression of her 'anger' is often poured in black batik as a symbol of the Betawi tribe's anxiety at the increasingly marginalized conditions.

Law No. 5/2017 on the Promotion of Culture is a law passed on April 27, 2017, by the Government of Indonesia as the first legal-formal reference for managing cultural wealth in Indonesia. In its explanation page (<https://pemajuankebudayaan.id/undang-undang/>, accessed November 10, 2023) the discourse of 'cultural promotion' has appeared in the 1945 Constitution in Article 32, where the Government promotes Indonesian national culture, to emphasize that culture is a pillar of national life. When there were changes to the 1945 Constitution at the beginning of the reform period through the amendment process, promotion of culture remained a priority and was even more emphasized.

Section 32 of the 1945 Constitution says that the state promotes Indonesian national culture in the midst of world civilization by guaranteeing the freedom of the people to maintain and develop their cultural values, and this is the basis of its birth. Under this law, culture is placed as the direction of national development, covering the social life system in Indonesia. Culture becomes the goal of all the development sectors, the foundation of development, encouraging development, shaping mentality and community insight and increasing economic growth.

Based on the government law, Governor of DKI Jakarta Regulation No. 11/2017 on Betawi Cultural Icons was issued, which regulates the use of the icons and definitions as below:

**1. Shape and material:**

- a. Betawi batik is formed from long cloth and long sarong whose motifs are done by handwriting and stamping. Materials include silk, ATBM, prima, primis and dobi.
- b. Betawi batik motifs include: Dodolio, mak Ronda, Rasamala, Nusa kelapa, slope, Ondel-ondel, Pesalo, Salakanagara, Albetawi, Kondangdia, Langgara, Warakas, Flora Fauna native to Betawi, Daun Tarum, Nderep, Kampung Marunda, Ngeluku (Bajaka Sawah), Ngelancong / Bedemenan, Nandur, Hong Bird, Numbuk Padi, Baritan, Sulurm Jawara, Ronggeng, Uribang, Galur Ondel-ondel, Kuntul Blekok, Payung Cokek, Ulung-ulung, Bondol Biru and others.

**2. Philosophy/Meaning:**

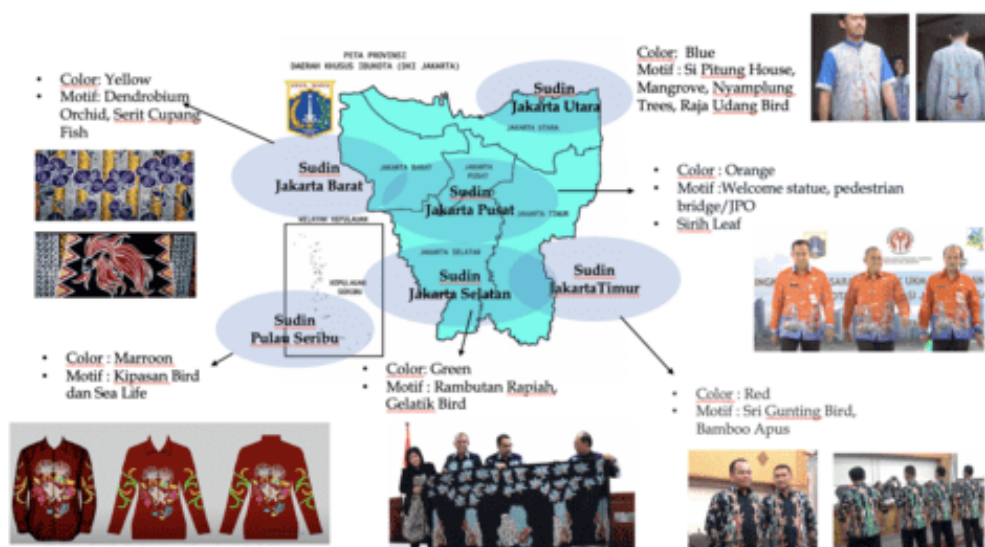
As a balance of the universe to fulfill a prosperous and blessed life.

**3. Function and Usage:**

Function and use as a uniform for employees of government and private offices, tourism industry, schools and various ceremonial events, tourism objects and attractions and cultural arts performances.

These regulations are thought to be related to the development of motives that are outside the cultural context of the Betawi entity as the core culture of the citizens of Jakarta. It can be concluded that the background of various cultures in Jakarta, both from the type of local culture, this culture or Betawi culture, and the concept of urban society cannot be separated from the context of batik in Jakarta where various elements of cultural mix exist in the Jakarta area. Furthermore, the birth of cultural forms in the form of adaptation and cultural values will continue to grow dynamically adapting to internal and external factors in this region. These include batik products which are now growing and starting to be used in various local government official activities.

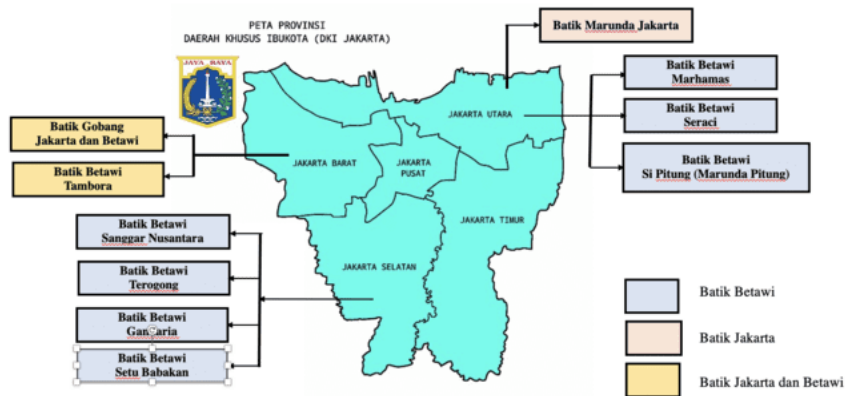
During the interview conducted with the head of the DKI Culture Office, Mr. Iwan Henry Wardhana, June 2023, it was explained that the regulation is to control the governance and ethics of batik centers in representing Betawi batik, which can be developed according to creativity. Motifs that are done outside of these regulations can be used as a representation of each batik maker, if they do not include elements that are outside the Betawi and Jakarta identity. Following are the batik motifs that exist in Jakarta and represent each administrative area:



**Fig. 9:** Batik motifs in 5 administrative regions of Jakarta and 1 in Jakarta Province  
Source: Author and youtube Pemprov DKI Jakarta, 2024

Under Joko Widodo's administration as Governor of DKI Jakarta (2012-2014), it has been continued by Basoeki Tjahaya Purnama (2014-2017) and Anies Baswedan (2017-2022). This has given rise to many regulations in Jakarta related to the identity of the city of Jakarta which is represented in batik motifs and used for the Provincial Office and encourages the birth of the identity of each administrative region of Jakarta. These are used by the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in each Service Tribe area. Due to these regulations, the number of batik actors and producers in Jakarta has also increased, including batik craftsmen, whose processes have been originally carried out in the Java region. However, they are now fully carried out in Jakarta. Although the batik craftsmen in Jakarta are assisted by the DKI Jakarta Dekranasda, which provides guidance at several points in the region, with the concept of community empowerment, there are also craftsmen who are motivated to establish batik centers to introduce motifs characteristic of Betawi culture. They are increasingly recognized by the wider community, including Terogong, Sanggar Nusantara and Gobang batik in Jakarta.

the Figure 10 is a map of batik centers found in Jakarta. These centers have developed against the backdrop of local government regulations, one of which has been the implementation of official clothing and uniforms in every DKI government agency, since 2017. This, in addition to supporting the preservation process, has also grown batik centers in Jakarta, which were originally concentrated in Java and the coastal areas. The producers of Jakarta batik are slowly breaking away from the concepts and patrons of Javanese batik, to come up with identities and motifs that are not found in the other regions. Each producer has their own characteristics that they want to highlight as the characteristics and identity of the motifs produced. The goal is to emerge character and also represent the cultural insights of the character of the people of Jakarta. The ideas in the motifs produced refer to memories, life experiences and the mental maps that are generally carried by immigrant communities as part of adaptation to a new culture.



**Fig. 10:** Map of the distribution of batik centers found in Jakarta

Source: Author, 2024

This is what is not found in the other regions, because the batik found in Jakarta each carries a different story and experience from each initiator, in this case the batik conceper and design. Furthermore, the role of the immigrant community provides a rich variety of motifs, because they have different attentions and perceptions of the city of Jakarta. Below is a description of the styles and motifs of batik in Jakarta from the pre-independence period and after independence. This shows a shift, as an effort to give birth to identity through new symbols that have been conceived and born from the mental maps of the people living in Jakarta, both as an entity of the Betawi tribe and non-tribal Betawi, namely the people of Jakarta.



**Fig. 11:** Shifts and motifs found in Jakarta

Source: various sources processed by the author, 2024

From the data presented above, several important points in the development of batik in Jakarta and its relationship in the growth aspect of batik centers in Jakarta can be surmised as follows.

**Table 1:** Data period of central, regional government and the establishment of batik centers in Jakarta  
Source: Author, 2024

No.	Year	Period		Form, Function, Technique				Batik center in Jakarta
		Pre Independence/ Independence era	Governor	Fabric	Cloth	Style/Id ea/Motif	Technique	
1	1800-an	VOC	VOC	v	-	Classic/Java	Traditional	Benhil, Karet Tengsin, etc
2	1945	Soekarno	Ali Sadikin	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional	No data
3	1967	Soeharto	Ali Sadikin	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional	No data
4	1970	Soeharto	Tjokropanolo	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional	No data
5	1982	Soeharto	Soeprapto	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional	No data
6	1987	Soeharto	Wijogo Atmodarminto	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional	No data
7	1992	Soeharto	Soerjadi Soedirja	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional	No data
8	1997	Soeharto	Sutiyoso	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional/Printing	No data
9	1998	B.J. Habibie	Sutiyoso	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional/Printing	No data
10	1999	Abdurahman Wahid	Sutiyoso	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional/Printing	No data
11	2001	Megawati Soekarnoputri	Sutiyoso	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional	No data
12	2004	Susilo Bambang Yudoyona	Sutiyoso	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional/Printing	No data
13	2007-2008	Susilo Bambang Yudoyona	Fauzi Bowo	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional/Printing	Pulo Gadung
14	2012-2014	Susilo Bambang Yudoyona	Joko Widodo	v	v	Classic/Java	Traditional/Printing	Pal Batu, Sanggar Nusantara, Gobang, Seraci, Terogong, KBB, Setu Babakan
15	2014	Joko Widodo	Basoeki Tjahaya Purnama	v	v	Betawi/Kontemporer/Jakarta	Traditional/Printing/Mix	Marunda
16	2017	Joko Widodo	Saiful Djarot	v	v	Classic/Java/Betawi/Kontemporer/Jakarta	Traditional/Printing/Mix	Batik Marhamas, Rumah Si Pitung
17	2017-2024	Joko Widodo	Anies Baswedan	v	v	Betawi/Kontemporer/Jakarta	Traditional/Printing/Mix	Batik Tambora

The phenomenon of batik as a national identity has begun to occur when batik was worn by the heads of state, namely the 1st and 2nd Presidents of the Republic of Indonesia. Batik has been publicized as representing national identity, and has also been recognized as one of the national icons. However, batik centers are not found in Jakarta, because many producers were eliminated due to the physical developments of Jakarta. These have had significant impacts on various aspects, and the strengthening of the Textile Center in Bandung and the Batik Center in Yogyakarta (1952). However, during the administration of the 2nd President of the Republic of Indonesia, Balai Batik developed into the Batik and Craft Research Center (1971) where the scope and context of batik became more specific and its development was increasingly widespread in various regions. This has encouraged awareness of the identity for the Betawi entity, which ultimately has led to the establishment of the Betawi Cultural Institute in 1972. One of its activities has been to start grouping and classifying various types of Betawi local wisdom which have led to various products, such as ornaments, home designs, performing arts and other cultural products.

The pivotal point of the revival of batik in Jakarta is when in 2004 batik was recognized by UNESCO, and in 2008 when Betawi culturalist Ridwan Saidi produced ideas for 24 batik patents. However, unfortunately, it did not have a significant impact; their use is no longer found today. It can be interpreted that its existence is closely related to political and cultural activities but does not trigger an economic impact on the people of Jakarta.

In 2010-2012, the establishment of Seraci, KBB, Terogong is considered a milestone in the existence of batik in Jakarta by taking the Betawi identity, a representation of the revival as well as a response to the Betawi people who are considered marginalized, due to the flow of urbanization. Batik became a medium of communication in the socio-cultural realm and the interaction of the Betawi community with the immigrant community, considering that batik that was previously present in Jakarta still adopted Javanese, Cirebon and other coastal motifs and styles.

From the description above, it can be seen that the role of the state leader, namely the President and the regional leader, the Governor, each has a role and contribution to the growth of batik in Jakarta, although the strategies and regulations set have different perspectives. The role of urban communities who settled in Jakarta also have shaped the development of batik, as it is known that leaders in Indonesia and Jakarta are generally immigrant communities; not all of them are domiciled and have grown up since childhood in the Jakarta area. The impact is that the motifs worn and developed are of cultural values that are brought and impregnated in the memories and minds of the leaders in Jakarta, who are generally from the Java region.

The moment batik was recognized by UNESCO became a point of identity awareness for batik makers in Jakarta. The interaction of numerous cultures, and the adaptation of urban lifestyles demand opened up space for innovation and creativity and the merging of outside cultural elements, with traditional values. They created a new identity for batik to be dressed for urban life, innovating designs and materials while remaining a symbol of local identity in Jakarta, and reminding city dwellers of their rich cultural and ancestral heritage.

The presence of batik in Jakarta can be understood as the result of an intertwined process of cultural acculturation and adaptation. Acculturation creates space for innovation and foreign cultural influence, while adaptation ensures that batik remains relevant and connected to the evolving identity of urban society. Existence of batik in Jakarta reflects not only cultural heritage, but also how it lives and changes in the context of a modern metropolis.

## Conclusion

The growth of batik in Jakarta is different from that in other areas, including its origin in Java. Batik entered as a commercial commodity, but over time, it grew and was developed not only by the Betawi tribe, but developed with the role of the immigrant communities. In the city of Jakarta, batik has not yet become part of the regional identity considering that batik from the Java region still dominates and batik used by state officials is generally batik from their native Java, Pekalongan, Semarang, Lasem, Cirebon and other coastal areas. Jakarta batik has begun to find its identity around 2010, after batik was recognized by the UNESCO.



Furthermore, the role of the central and regional leaders have had an impact on the growth of the motifs used and developed, including the shift in the function and form of batik. It has originally been used to cover the lower part of the bodies, but have later shifted to cover the upper part. They have also developed into batik motifs that have been arranged according to their function and use. Batik that functions for shirts will be arranged and patterned based on the function and form of the product being worn, such as shirts and dresses. Based on this regulation, batik producers adapt and innovate with the character and the behavior of the majority of the urban population of Jakarta.

### Acknowledgements

The author(s) disclose the receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and publication of this article: This work supported by the Pusat Layanan Pembiayaan Pendidikan (Puslapdik) and financed by Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan (LPDP) Kementerian Keuangan; Republic of Indonesia.

### References

- Achjadi, J. (1999) *Batik: Spirit of Indonesia*. Jakarta: Yayasan Batik Indonesia.
- Achjadi, J. (2019) *Jurnal Wastra, Indonesian Traditional Textile Society*.
- Ahmadin, A. (2021) *Konstruksi Sosial-Budaya dalam Pembangunan Ruang Publik di Kota Makassar: Menatap Pantai Losari Dulu, Kini, dan Masa Mendatang*. *Jurnal Kajian Sosial dan Budaya: Tebar Science*, 5(1), pp 14–20.
- Ardhiati, Yuke. (2015) *Urban Fashion dalam Angitan Wastra Nusantara*, Universitas Pancasila, *Temu Pusaka Indonesia*,
- Axtel, J. (1979) *Ethnohistory: An Historian's Viewpoint*. *Ethnohistory*. 26 (1): 3-4. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/481465>. JSTOR 481465.
- Baiduri, R. (2020) *Teori-Teori Antropologi (Kebudayaan)*. Jakarta: Yayasan Kita Menulis.
- Bisrie, E.A.A. (2012) *Kebaya Betawi dan Kelengkapannya*. Jakarta: Milla House, Rumah Kebaya .
- Budiman, M. (2017) *Kajian Budaya Urban di Indonesia dalam Perspektif Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora: Tantangan dan Perubahan Memahami Evolusi Budaya*. Seminar Nasional Budaya Urban. Fakultas Ilmu Pengetahuan Budaya, Universitas Indonesia.
- Cresswell, J.W. (1994) *Research and Design Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication, Inc.
- Dewi, S. P. (2018) *Gentrification and the Vulnerability of Betawi Community, the 4th Plano Cosmo International Conference*. IOP Conf. Series: Earth and Environmental Science 158. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755/1315/158/1/012009>
- Dwitama, L. D. (2017) *Konstruksi Sosial Makna Kultural Batik Betawi (Studi Kasus: Komunitas Batik Terogong)*. Jakarta: Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah. Available at: <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id>
- Febriani, R., Knipenberg, L. & Aarts, N. (2023) *The Making of a National Icon: Narratives of batik in Indonesia, Cultural Heritage*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2254042>
- Gaven, F. U. G. (2023) *Integrate Documentation of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in Urban Historical Sites*. *International Archives of Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences - ISPRS Archives Open Access* vol. 48, issue M-2-2023, pp 701 – 707.
- Huff, G. & Gillian, H. (2015) *Urban growth and change in 1940s Southeast Asia*. *Economic History Review*. Vol. 68, issue 2, pp 522 - 547
- Juanda, D. T. U. (2022) *Legal Perspective of Intellectual Property Rights in Protecting Betawi Batik Motif*. *Bild Law Journal*, vol.7, No.1. Available at: <https://bildbd.com/index.php/blj/article/view/182/116>.
- Murwonugroho, W. dkk. (2020) *Buku Ajar, Budaya Urban, Gaya Hidup Masyarakat Urban di Ruang Publik*. Jakarta: Universitas Trisakti.
- Musman, A. (2011) *Batik Warisan Adiluhung Nusantara*. Yogyakarta: Gramedia.

- Pramono, S. (2021) Semangat Kebangsaan Sebagai Ekspresi Seni Batik Hardjonagoro Go Tik Swan Era 1956-1966, Disertasi, Fakultas Seni Rupa dan Desain (FSRD), Institut Teknologi Bandung.
- Sedyawati, E. et al. (1986/1987) Sejarah Kota Jakarta 1950-1980. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional.
- Sembiring, Y.S.B., Kerebungu, F. and Salem, V.E., 2023. Proses Adaptasi dalam Menghadapi Komunikasi Antar Budaya Mahasiswa Rantau di FISH UNIMA. *Indonesian Journal of Social Science and Education*, 3(1), pp.21-33.
- Setyaning, K. A. & Nugroho, P. (2017) The Role of Batik and Lurik in Forming Local Identity in Klaten Based on Public Perception. *Journal of Regional and City Planning*, vol 28 no. 1. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5614/jrcp.2017.28.1.3>
- Sylvia, N. & Pradipta B, D.M. (2019) Identitas Kota Bandung Pada Batik Komar Berdasarkan Teori Kevin Lynch. *Narada : Jurnal Desain dan Seni*, 6(2), p.285. doi:<https://doi.org/10.22441/narada.2019.v6.i2.006>.