

THE ROLE OF KEMIREN VILLAGE IN INDONESIAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY THROUGH THE SEPULUH EWU COFFEE FESTIVAL IN BANYUWANGI

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Abstrak: Studi ini mengkaji peran strategis Desa Kemiren, Banyuwangi, dalam mendukung diplomasi budaya Indonesia melalui penyelenggaraan Festival Kopi Sepuluh Ewu. Festival ini tidak hanya menjadi ruang pelestarian budaya masyarakat Osing, tetapi juga sebagai sarana promosi nilai-nilai sosial dan budaya Indonesia ke dunia internasional. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif dengan metode studi kasus, studi ini menggambarkan bagaimana praktik budaya lokal berbasis komunitas dapat mendukung soft power dan nation branding Indonesia. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa Festival Kopi Sepuluh Ewu mencerminkan model diplomasi budaya partisipatif yang mampu memperkuat citra Indonesia sebagai bangsa yang inklusif, damai, dan berbudaya. Keterlibatan masyarakat lokal sebagai aktor non-negara menjadikan festival ini sebagai wujud nyata kekuatan budaya dalam membangun hubungan antarbangsa secara berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Diplomasi Budaya, Festival Kopi Sepuluh Ribu, Desa Kemiren, Budaya Osing.

***Abstract:** This study examines the strategic role of Kemiren Village, Banyuwangi, in supporting Indonesian cultural diplomacy through the implementation of the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival. This festival is not only a space for the preservation of the culture of the Osing people, but also serves as a means of promoting Indonesian social and cultural values to the international world. Through a qualitative-descriptive approach with a case study method, this study illustrates how community-based local cultural practices can support Indonesia's soft power and nation branding. The results of the study show that the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival reflects a participatory cultural diplomacy model that is able to strengthen Indonesia's image as an inclusive, peaceful, and cultured nation. The involvement of local communities as non-state actors makes this festival a tangible manifestation of cultural power in building relationships between nations in a sustainable manner.*

***Keywords:** Cultural Diplomacy, Ten Thousand Coffee Festival, Kemiren Village, Osing Culture.*

INTRODUCTION

Kemiren Village, located in Banyuwangi Regency and inhabited by the Osing ethnic community, occupies an important position in the dynamics of Indonesian cultural diplomacy. In the context of international relations, cultural diplomacy is present as one of the main

instruments of soft power. Countries today compete not only through military and economic power, but also through the way they build perception and influence through culture. Therefore, local cultural activities, such as folk festivals, have great potential to be used as a tool to promote national identity that is inclusive and attractive in the eyes of the world. In this case, the involvement of local communities in the organization of cultural activities makes them non-state actors who play an important role in public diplomacy.¹

The Osing people are an indigenous tribe of Banyuwangi who have maintained their ancestral cultural heritage for generations. Their culture emphasizes social values such as togetherness, openness, and harmony, which are concretely reflected in the tradition of drinking coffee together. The Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival is not just a culinary celebration, but a social ritual that contains a deep symbolic meaning, as reflected in the motto "sak corot dadi seduluran" (once brewed, all become brothers).² This tradition has become a place of social inclusion, where there are no barriers between locals and tourists, between social classes and cultural backgrounds. The festival is also designed as a cultural performance space that includes traditional music, dance, performing arts, and local crafts. Thus, Osing culture is not only nurtured, but also actively disseminated to national and international audiences.³

Ngopi Sepuluh Ewu is one of the real examples of Indonesian cultural diplomacy that is participatory and community-based. This festival presents a strong narrative about Indonesia as a nation that is rich in culture, friendly to differences, and open to the outside world. When foreign tourists attend and experience firsthand the noble values of Osing culture, this contributes to the formation of a positive image of Indonesia at the global level. From a nation branding perspective, this festival represents the face of Indonesia that is peaceful, cultured, and creative. Nation branding is not only about promoting tourism, but also about building a national identity that is internationally recognizable and appreciated. In this case, Kemiren Village and the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival are symbolic assets that are very valuable for the Indonesian narrative in the world.

¹ Alif Azhar. "Peran Kebudayaan dalam Membangun Identitas Nasional." *Kompasiana*. Juli 5, 2024. <https://www.kompasiana.com/alifazhar7549/6687ee1dc925c4200970c5d2/peran-kebudayaan-dalam-membangun-identitas-nasional>

² Muhammad Ahsanul Faiz, "A Series of Facts Behind the Ten Thousand Coffee Festival in Kemiren Tourism Village, Banyuwangi," *Radar Banyuwangi*, November 4, 2024, <https://radarbanyuwangi.jawapos.com/seni-budaya/755272855/sederet-fakta-di-balik-festival-ngopi-sepuluh-ewu-di-desa-wisata-kemiren-banyuwangi>

³ Ninda Tamara, "The Excitement of the Ten Thousand Coffee Festival in Kemiren Village, Banyuwangi," *TIMES Indonesia*, November 7, 2024, <https://timesindonesia.co.id/indonesia-positif/517233/serunya-festival-ngopi-sepuluh-ewu-di-desa-kemiren-banyuwangi>

In addition to supporting international image, the festival also has an internal impact on strengthening national identity and local empowerment. Cultural activities like this revive local wisdom that has been marginalized by the current of globalization. In this case, cultural diplomacy not only leads outward, but also creates a reflective space inward to foster a sense of pride in one's own culture. In addition, festivals also have an impact on strengthening the locally-based creative economy, creating job opportunities, and expanding the community's social network. As well as the role of Kemiren village through the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival in supporting Indonesia's cultural diplomacy and nation branding at the international level.

Kemiren Village is a concrete example of how the power of local culture, when strategically packaged, can be transformed into an effective and sustainable tool of diplomacy. Thus, the role of local communities as actors of non-state diplomacy has become increasingly significant in the era of cultural globalization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In contemporary international relations, diplomacy is no longer limited to formal interactions between governments, but also includes more subtle and persuasive non-traditional approaches. One form of such approach is cultural diplomacy, which utilizes art, traditions, and cultural expressions as tools to promote national image and interests at the global level. Cultural diplomacy is the embodiment of *soft power*, which is the ability of a country to influence another country through the attraction of cultural values, political systems, and foreign policy without using pressure or military force.⁴ More than just a promotional tool, cultural diplomacy plays an important role in building cross-cultural dialogue, strengthening international relations, and creating common understanding in the midst of global diversity.

In this context, cultural diplomacy cannot be separated from the concept of nation branding, which is a communication strategy used by a country to build and strengthen its image in the eyes of the world. Culture is the main foundation in nation branding because it represents the national identity, values, and distinctive character of a nation. Through strengthening cultural identity, the state can create a positive and competitive image in the midst of global competition. For example, Indonesia uses batik as a national cultural symbol that is not only internationally known, but also part of the world's cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO. The use of batik as a tool for cultural promotion is a strategic effort in building

⁴ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008), 5.

a global perception of Indonesia as a nation rich in art, culture, and creativity.⁵

However, cultural diplomacy and nation branding efforts are not solely carried out by the government as the main actor in international relations. The role of non-state actors, especially local communities, is becoming increasingly prominent in the era of cultural globalization. The local community is not only the guardian of traditions, but also an active agent in disseminating culture through various activities such as festivals, art performances, culinary, and local wisdom practices. These activities, although local and informal, have a far-reaching impact in introducing national culture to the international world. For example, cultural promotion through puppet shows, batik crafts, and Indonesian culinary performances carried out by local communities shows that cultural diplomacy can be carried out in a participatory, inclusive, and sustainable manner.⁶ Therefore, the involvement of local communities in cultural diplomacy not only enriches a country's soft power strategy, but also ensures that inherited cultural values remain alive and relevant in the modern world.

Cultural diplomacy can also be seen through various cultural festivals that are not only a place for preserving traditions, but also a strategic tool in building the nation's image in the eyes of the world. The involvement of local communities in these cultural activities reinforces the participatory dimension of cultural diplomacy, making them non-state actors who are active in shaping global perceptions of their countries. In addition, this kind of activity can also open a space for cultural exchange that enriches each other between countries and strengthens bilateral and multilateral relations.

One of the concrete examples of the application of Indonesian cultural diplomacy is the holding of the Bali Street Carnival and Melasti Water Carnival in the series of events of the *10th World Water Forum* in 2024. The festival carries the theme "Water Shared for Prosperity" and showcases the rich culture of Bali through art performances, traditional rituals, and carnivals involving local communities and supported by governments at various levels. This event not only introduces Balinese culture to international delegates, but also strengthens Indonesia's image as a cultured, environmentally friendly, and open country to diversity. This shows how cultural diplomacy is used strategically as a soft power, which is able to attract

⁵ Joseph S. Nye, quoted in Sofia Trisni and Ardila Putri, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power: Same or Different?" *Andalas Journal of International Studies* 12, no. 1 (2023): 5, <https://doi.org/10.25077/ajis.12.1.1-12.2023>

⁶ Andrik Purwasito and Erwin Kartinawati, "Wayang and Batik as a Vehicle for Cultural Diplomacy Practice," *Kawruh: Journal of Language Education, Literature and Local Culture* 1, no. 2 (2019): 105–15, <https://doi.org/10.32585/kawruh.v1i2.401>

foreign tourists and create a positive narrative about Indonesia at the global level.⁷

Apart from the Indonesian side, the cultural diplomacy strategy is also implemented by other countries such as Japan through the Jakarta-Japan Matsuri 2019. This festival is part of the "Cool Japan" cultural campaign which aims to disseminate Japanese popular culture to various countries, including Indonesia. Through an event that presents performances of Japanese music, art, culinary, and traditions, this festival has succeeded in attracting the interest of the Indonesian people, especially the younger generation, in Japanese culture. Not only strengthening Japan's image as a modern country but still rooted in its traditions, this festival also strengthens Indonesia-Japan diplomatic relations culturally. This is proof that non-state and government actors can synergistically utilize popular culture as an effective instrument of diplomacy in building relations between nations.⁸

Thus, various cultural festivals such as those held in Indonesia and Japan illustrate how cultural diplomacy can be implemented in a participatory, educational, and strategic form, while proving the importance of the role of local communities in supporting the country's soft power.

Conceptual Foundations

The concept of *soft power* was introduced by Joseph Nye as the ability of a country to influence another without using military or economic coercion, but rather through cultural attraction, political values, and widely accepted foreign policy. *Soft power* focuses on persuasion and attraction, where other countries are driven to follow or support the interests of that country not out of pressure, but out of admiration or attachment to its values and culture. In this case, culture is one of the main sources of *soft power*, so the role of cultural diplomacy is very important in realizing this soft power.⁹

Following Nye's thoughts, cultural diplomacy is understood as a key instrument in conveying and building a country's soft power. Mark Leonard and Milton Cummings explain that cultural diplomacy is a process of art and cultural exchange that aims to build reciprocal relations between countries, as well as create deeper understanding between people across

⁷ Maria Veni Cista Wau, Nur'aini Nugrahayuningtyas, and Luerdi, "Bali Street Carnival and Melasti Water Carnival as a Form of Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy in the 10th World Water Forum," *Indonesian Journal of Political and Social Sciences* (JIPSI), 2024.

⁸ Muhammad Abdul Faqih, *Pop Culture and Soft Power: Cool Japan's Strategy in the 2019 Jakarta-Japan Matsuri Festival* (S1 Final Project, Bakrie University, 2023).

⁹ J. S. Nye, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (2008): 94–109.

nations.¹⁰ Through cultural diplomacy, the state not only introduces its cultural heritage and richness, but also builds a positive, tolerant, and open narrative of national identity. As a form of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy is a strategic tool in mobilizing *soft power* through cultural exports, such as performing arts, languages, culinary, and globally recognized local values.

Furthermore, the concept of *nation branding* reinforces the importance of culture in shaping the international image of a country. Simon Anholt explained that *nation branding* is a systematic effort to build and manage a nation's image in the eyes of the world through aspects such as culture, tourism, products, and foreign policy.¹¹ In this context, cultural identity is the main foundation because it reflects the values, history, and unique characteristics of a nation that are able to attract global attention and sympathy. An *effective nation branding* strategy can increase the attractiveness of the country, strengthen its position in international relations, and support overall economic and social development. Cultural promotion in *nation branding* is also a manifestation of *soft power*, where a positive perception of a country's culture can lead to an increase in global reputation and influence.¹² The relationship between *soft power*, cultural diplomacy, and *nation branding* shows that culture is not just a local heritage or expression, but also a strategic asset in international relations that is able to strengthen a country's position in the eyes of the world.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach that aims to understand and describe the phenomenon of cultural diplomacy that occurs in Kemiren Village through the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival in depth and systematically. The qualitative approach was chosen because it provides flexibility in exploring the meanings, narratives, and cultural contexts that emerge in the practice of cultural diplomacy and nation branding, especially in local contexts that are loaded with the values of traditional wisdom of the Osing people.

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding, this study uses a case study method with a focus on Kemiren Village and the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival as the main object. The case

¹⁰ Mark Leonard and Martin Cummings, "Diplomacy and the Arts," in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, ed. Nancy Snow (New York: Routledge, 2020), 108–115.

¹¹ Simon Anholt, *Competitive Identity: The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

¹² Alan Smith et al., "Culture and Nation Branding," in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, ed. Nancy Snow (New York: Routledge, 2021), 189–202.

study is considered appropriate because the festival is a tangible representation of the practice of local community-based cultural diplomacy. Through this approach, researchers can specifically examine how local cultural practices can contribute to strengthening Indonesia's soft power and image in the eyes of the world. To support the validity of the findings, data is collected through a variety of techniques. First, literature studies are conducted to obtain theoretical and conceptual foundations regarding cultural diplomacy, soft power, and nation branding. Second, the researcher observed social media and visual documentation of the festival to understand how the representation of Osing culture is constructed in the public narrative. Third, an analysis was carried out on mass media reports and official publications that discussed the implementation of the festival and the contribution of Kemiren Village in cultural diplomacy. The combination of these techniques allows researchers to access data that is both empirical and contextual.

Through this overall method, the research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive overview of the strategic role of Kemiren Village and the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival in promoting Indonesian culture to the international level, as well as showing their contribution to strengthening the national image through the soft power and nation branding approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kemiren Village, located in Glagah District, Banyuwangi Regency, is a customary area that is the center of the Osing culture which is the original tribe of Banyuwangi. The name "Kemiren" itself comes from the many hazelnut trees that used to grow in the area.¹³ This village is widely known for still maintaining the intact cultural heritage of Osing, ranging from language, customs, arts, to religious rituals and oral traditions. Typical arts such as Gandrung and Barong Osing have become cultural identities that have high mystical and historical value.¹⁴ Since 1995, Kemiren has been inaugurated as the Osing Traditional Tourism Village and is now part of the Ijen Geopark area as an important cultural site. The characteristics of Osing culture can be seen from various aspects of the life of its people, including traditional houses, traditional culinary such as pecel pitik, and how to roast coffee manually which is still

¹³ Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, "Osing Kemiren Traditional Tourism Village," accessed May 26, 2025, https://jadesta.kemenparekraf.go.id/desa/adat_osing_kemiren

¹⁴ Department of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education, State University of Surabaya, "Cultural Observation of Osing Kemiren Traditional Village," accessed May 26, 2025, <https://bk.fip.unesa.ac.id/post/observasi-budaya-desa-adat-osing-kemiren>

preserved. All of this makes Kemiren a cultural tourism destination that is not only unique and authentic, but also educational for local and foreign tourists.

One of the most prominent forms of cultural preservation is the organization of the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival, an annual event that brings together people and tourists in the tradition of drinking coffee together. This festival carries the philosophy of "sak corot dadi seduluran", which means that from one brew brotherhood is created, describing the collective spirit and the value of togetherness of the Osing community. The series of activities in the festival include a procession of traditional coffee roasting, Gandrung art performances, cultural parades, and the presentation of Osing culinary specialties. In addition to being a forum for entertainment and recreation, this festival also contains educational and symbolic values that strengthen local cultural identity in the increasingly rapid flow of modernization.¹⁵

More than just a cultural event, the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival also plays an important role as a tool for Indonesian public diplomacy. By displaying Osing culture as a form of soft power, this festival opens up an effective space for cultural promotion to domestic and international tourists. This is in line with the approach of public diplomacy that uses culture as a bridge of communication across nations, building deeper understanding through participatory and authentic interactions. The active role of local communities in organizing festivals has also strengthened the approach to community-based diplomacy, making them the main actors in introducing positive narratives about Indonesia to the world.

The importance of Kemiren Village's position in the international tourism network is further strengthened by the achievement of the 2025 ASEAN Tourism Award in the Homestay category, as reported by the Communication and Information Office of East Java Province. This prestigious award was given at the ASEAN Tourism Forum in Vientiane, Laos, and is a recognition of Kemiren Village's success in presenting an authentic and culturally based stay experience of Osing. This award not only reflects the standard of friendly and high-quality homestay services, but also affirms the competitiveness of Kemiren Village as an international class cultural tourism destination. In addition, this achievement is a strategic asset in supporting Indonesia's cultural diplomacy, as it is able to attract the attention of foreign tourists and strengthen Indonesia's image as a country that develops culture-based tourism in a sustainable

¹⁵ Banyuwangi Regency Government, "Full of Tradition, How Kemiren Banyuwangi Traditional Village Celebrates Its Anniversary," accessed May 26, 2025, <https://banyuwangikab.go.id/berita/penuh-tradisi-cara-desa-adat-kemiren-banyuwangi-rayakan-hari-jadinya>.

manner.¹⁶

The role of local communities is very crucial in Indonesia's nation branding efforts. The active involvement of the residents of Kemiren Village in preserving Osing culture through festivals and homestay management shows that they are not only beneficiaries, but also as the main driver of the development of the nation's image. Direct interaction between residents and tourists allows for the delivery of Indonesian cultural values and identity in a more personal and touching manner, thereby strengthening the impression of Indonesia as a friendly nation rich in traditions.

The Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival and the development of Kemiren Village as a cultural destination also have a significant impact on Indonesia's international relations. Through inclusive cultural diplomacy rooted in local wisdom, Indonesia has succeeded in displaying its image as a country that respects diversity and is able to preserve ancestral culture. The increase in foreign tourist visits is also concrete evidence of the power of cultural soft power in encouraging local economic growth while strengthening Indonesia's position as a world cultural destination.

However, cultural development through festivals also faces various challenges, such as limited resources, threats to cultural commercialization, and modernization pressures. Therefore, sustainable management and active participation of the community are key to maintaining cultural authenticity and ensuring long-term benefits. The success of Kemiren Village also opens up opportunities for replication of similar models in other areas in Indonesia that have local cultural richness but have not been optimally developed. This integrative strategy that combines cultural preservation, community empowerment, and cultural diplomacy can be an example of good practices in building sustainable nation branding and soft power.

Thus, Kemiren Village and the Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival are proof that local culture can be transformed into an effective instrument of public diplomacy. Not only strengthening national identity and pride, this festival also enhances Indonesia's position on the global stage as a country that upholds cultural heritage while being open to dialogue between nations through cultural strength.

¹⁶ East Java Provincial Communication and Information Office, "Banyuwangi Kemiren Village Wins ASEAN Homestay Award 2025," accessed on May 26, 2025, <https://kominfo.jatimprov.go.id/berita/desa-kemiren-banyuwangi-raih-penghargaan-asean-tourism-award-2025>.

CONCLUSION

The Sepuluh Ewu Coffee Festival organized by the people of Kemiren Village, Banyuwangi, is a tangible manifestation of the practice of local community-based cultural diplomacy that has succeeded in strengthening Indonesia's image at the international level. Through this festival, Osing culture is not only preserved but also promoted to a global audience in an inclusive, participatory, and attractive form. The tradition of drinking coffee together that prioritizes the values of togetherness and equality has become a symbol of peace and openness of Indonesian culture to the world.

This festival not only strengthens local identity and cultural pride in the midst of globalization, but also contributes to Indonesia's *soft power strategy* through a non-governmental approach to cultural diplomacy. In addition to having an impact on Indonesia's international image as a friendly and cultured nation, this activity also encourages the strengthening of the local creative economy and community empowerment. By integrating local values within the *framework of nation branding*, Kemiren Village is an example of how non-state actors, particularly indigenous communities, can play a strategic role in international relations. Cultural diplomacy through this festival shows that culture is not just a heritage, but an effective and sustainable diplomacy asset in building a global perception of Indonesia.

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