



Otanaha Fort: Existence, Identity, Contestation of Power Cultural Heritage Area and Tourism Object in Gorontalo City

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Abstract. This article will discuss the existence of Otanaha Fort in Gorontalo City as a collective memory of Gorontalo people which has become a cultural heritage and one of the tourism objects in Gorontalo City. Historically, Otanaha Fort was built by the Portuguese and discovered in 1525. At that time, Gorontalo port was a transit area for the navy of the Kingdom of Ternate and the Kingdom of Gowa. This article is the result of qualitative research through observation, interviews with informants and literature study. The result of the research is a product of material culture. The fort is a source of pride and identity which is interpreted in various perspectives and power relations of groups that interact with Otanaha Fort. As a representation of power, Otanaha fort became a surveillance medium on Tomini Bay shipping route. Its existence is currently a contestation between the state and the surrounding community. The state represented by Gorontalo City Tourism Office because Otanaha Fort is a cultural historical tourist attraction. The state is also present through the central government with supervision over the preservation of cultural heritage carried out by the Cultural Heritage Preservation Center or Gorontalo Region Cultural Conservation Center. Since the state claim the ownership of the fort, the local communities in surrounding area are considered it as an ancestral heritage which is interpreted as an effort to legitimize ownership by fighting through demonstrations or legalizing it with a certificate. In anthropological study, this kind of site is considered as fortified settlement.

Keywords: Fort Otanaha, Identity, fortified settlement, Ownership Claims and Contestation

1 Introduction

This research talks about Otanaha Fort as the context of current existence, the identity of Gorontalo people and as a tourism object which has social, economic and political meaning. It is not just seen as a material from the past in cultural heritage. As a product of history, the construction of cultural identity is complex in some parts. Cultural identity is changed and transformed depending on the context, power, and vested

interests in role. Identity construction at the individual and collective levels is a dialectical process between recognizing similarities and differences and as a consequence between inclusion and exclusion [1]. Otanaha Fort for Gorontalo people is considered as a dialectical process and is a form of construction of Gorontalo identity in politics and economics.

The study of forts as material culture is commonly only discussed by archaeologists and historians. The concept of Otanaha fort is widely interpreted in the context of power. The meaning of power has opened up opportunities for various socio-cultural disciplines to see power from various perspectives. If power was only the domain of political science as in Weber's concept and Economics as in Marx's concept in the previous time, then in the last decades power has also become a study in sociology, anthropology and archaeology. The fundamental difference in explaining power both anthropology tends to use the approach of Michael Foucault's concept of power, Pierre Bourdieu's habitus model, and Anthony Giddens' concept of structuration. Therefore, this research plan is to study the fort from an anthropological perspective by using a cultural materialism approach based on the concept that the material conditions of society determine human consciousness. In this research, Gorontalo people's awareness of the existence of the Otanaha fort is interpreted as identity and development in various arenas such as legal institutions and tourism objects.

Otanaha Fort is a cultural heritage which can be seen as a form of connection between the memories of Gorontalo people and the object (Otanaha Fort) in the memory experience approach. Otanaha Fort continues to survive from time to time and is developed in various political and economic (tourism) arenas because the traditions are reproduced with social memory artefacts. Regarding to Indonesian Law Number 11 of 2010 about cultural heritage, it is stated that the definition of "cultural heritage" is cultural heritage that is material in nature, which is found on land or in water, movable or immovable, is a unit or group, is old or represents a period of more than 50 years and has special meaning for history, science and technology, religion, culture, and contains important values for the nation's personality.

Otanaha fort is seen as a form of connection between the memories of the Gorontalo people and the object (Otanaha fort) in the memory as experience approach in the context of cultural heritage. It can be categorized as fortified settlement in anthropological study. Traditions are reproduced with social memory artifacts, therefore the Otanaha fort continues to survive from time to time and is developed in various political and economic (tourism) arenas. The Gorontalo people's awareness of the existence of the Otanaha fort is interpreted as identity and development in various arenas such as legal institutions and tourism objects

2 Methods

This article is the result of research by applying a qualitative approach. This research examined the fort through an anthropological perspective. The data of this study was collected by applying interviews, literature study and observation. The informants in this research were historians, cultural figures, people who lived around the fort,

employees of Gorontalo City Tourism Office, and employees of the Cultural Conservation Center (BPK) of Gorontalo Regional Office. The analysis of Otanaha Fort as a cultural product of the past and its existence through meaning, identity constructed as a tourism object in the political and economic arena used refers to the techniques described by Creswell [2].

3 Result

3.1. History of Otanaha Fort and Identity of Gorontalo People

Otanaha Fort is a cultural resource in Gorontalo. Academically, Fort Otanaha has been studied by several researchers from various different scientific disciplines. Otanaha Fort is one of the object of study. Saraswati [3] assumed that the establishment of Otanaha Fort was a combination of ideas between the Kingdom of Gorontalo and the Portuguese. In its construction, Fort Otanaha used the Territoriality concept which is characterized by the presence of demarcation space, defense space, area control, and area defense space.

Regarding to the function, Otanaha Fort was built by local residents of Gorontalo. The location of the fort in a high area that can monitor the surrounding environment and the shape of the fort which tends to be circular to make it easier to move within it are strong indications that Otanaha Fort was used as a watchtower rather than a defensive fort.

Studies from the historical aspect have been written by Baruadi and Eraku [4] based on folklore which mentions the background of development and events that have occurred at Fort Otanaha but the article does not mention the exact time of the found of the fort. There are at least three events related to Fort Otanaha. First, Fort Otanaha was founded by the Kingdom of Gorontalo to fight threats from Portuguese colonialism. Second, Fort Otanaha also witnessed a civil war between Gorontalo pencak silat teachers and students, namely Limonu and Hemuto. Third, Otanaha Fort was used as a defensive fort for the Panipi troops against the Dutch troops.

From the geographical aspect, Dwi Randayani Batulipu and friends conducted a study of the spatial development of Fort Otanaha as a Cultural Heritage area. The results of the research identified the existing facilities and tourist attractions at Fort Otanaha. The Fort Otanaha area needs to be developed by adding facilities needed by visitors so that the level of visits and visitor comfort can be increased. Determining the type of facility is based on perception data by visitors, the surrounding community, and the cultural heritage management of Otanaha Fort.

Traditional forts are generally simple, asymmetrical, with the main construction materials is based on local material availability. The main function is as a means of defence. The fort during the VOC period was made of stone walls and equipped with bastions. Other functions of fort are storage warehouses, trade offices, and places to make agreements. During the Dutch Colonial period, the fort grew larger and was equipped with bastions at the four corners of the fort. Besides being used as a military

camp, the function of the fort was also used to run the government included the prison and warehouse were placed in the Otanaha Fort as well.

As a product of material culture, the fort is the pride and identity of Gorontalo people who are the original inhabitants of the northern of Sulawesi. Some say Gorontalo comes from the word "hulontalo", which also comes from the word "hulontaloangi", which means "wanderer who descended from the sky". This argument is based on the mythology that has developed among the community which tells the story of Hulontaloangi who is considered the first person in Gorontalo lived at the lower of Tilongkabila mountain. A number of other theories suggest that Gorontalo comes from the words "hua lolontaloangi", which means "cave used for walking back and forth", "pongolontalo" or "pohulontalo", which means "waiting place", "Gunung Telu", which means "three mountains", and many other assumptions.

3. 2. Otanaha Fort: A Representations of Power

Power in the social and cultural sciences, both in terms of understanding and how power works in society and the state, early studies on power always look it at the from of politics and economics perspectives. Power is always seen as a form of obedience and public service to the state as the holder of legality. In the context of a feudal state, royal power demands sacrifice from its people to maintain the throne [5]. In the concept of domination, it is stated that one of the important and dominant factors in explaining power is economic factors. Each party wants to be an autonomous and independent ruler in all economic practices. Especially in control of economic resources [6].

Power is not only focused on one point in which the state as the holder of legality but also it is spreading out everywhere. The word power must be expanded to include how to regulate the actions of other people, it is not only orders from official institutions in the form of political and economic submission but also how to regulate the actions of other people individually and voluntarily (not coercion, but following rules through laws). Furthermore, Foucault [7] explains that power relations are not hierarchical relations where there are those who control and those who are controlled. Power is not understood in a relationship of ownership of property, acquisition, or privilege that can be held by a small group of people as in Marx's concept. Power is in the relationship of communication, assignment, and the use of it [5].

The technological representation of power in Otanaha Fort can be seen in the construction process and the shape of the plan and area of the fort. The process of working on Otanaha Fort walls used two building techniques. The first technique is to stack coral rocks to form a wall without using species as stone adhesive. The second technique of stacking coral rocks used crushed limestone as a rock adhesive. The difference between the two wall building technologies not only has implications for the strength of the wall to withstand attacks and prevent enemies from penetrating but also it created a different image.

The use of the spec on the wall of the fort makes it looked stronger. The walls are more static, neater and looks luxurious. The use of limestone indicates greater access to materials other than coral that provided by the nature as a primary material. The use

of specs also reflects the greater number of workers involved and the length of processing time. These processes required energy to lift the stones and energy to crush the limestone. The work system was clear with the division of labor in the wall construction process. As a technology for building fort walls, the use of specs requires more advanced knowledge and technology than without using special things. On the contrary, the fort walls used a stacked system without special process is more unstable and easily shaken. These forts look simpler and were built quickly without a great planning and only used coral stone as a single type of material.

The mastery of technology and construction knowledge in constructing stone walls is simpler than using specs. Construction that only assembles stones and only uses one type of stone has reduced the number of workers and the time to construct the wall. Technologically, constructing the wall without specs prioritizes defense and security aspects rather than representational functions. The entire construction of the fort walls used coral stones which found mostly in the surrounding area. The technology of wall construction used two methods, a stacked system with specs and a stacked system without specs. The system that used crushed limestone as a species can be seen in Otanaha Fort which is the main fort for the people of Gorontalo. Beside as a representation of power, the presence of the Otanaha fortress also functions as a panopticon. The location of the fort which on the coastline and in an elevated area allows the fort to monitor shipping traffic on Limboto lake and Tomini Bay. For the forts that do not pass-through trade shipping routes, its function is to monitor the threat of Tobelo pirates from the sea on the eastern side of the region.

3. 3. The Function of Otanaha Fort for Tourism

Otanaha fort is a superior tourism product for the historical fort in Gorontalo City which is thought to have been built in the 15th century as a relic of the past in the form of material culture. Although it is only remain the walls around 1 meter high with a thickness of around 50 centimeters stands on a hill, it is still become one of the tourist destinations in Gorontalo. The location of the fort is directly adjacent to Limboto lake which is the only lake in Gorontalo. Currently the fort has been designated as a cultural heritage managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Otanaha Fort was built by King Ilato in 1522 AD as a defensive with the initiative of the leaders of the Portuguese ship which stopped at the port of Gorontalo. This fort made from sand, limestone and the eggs of Maleo bird. It is very strong even though the adhesive is made from eggs. Regarding to the history of Otanaha Fort, long time ago King Ilato had 3 children. 2 daughters and 1 son named Noba, Naha and Tiliaya. When he was a teenager, Naha went abroad to migrate while her two sisters remained in the Kingdom of Gorontalo. In 1585, Naha intended to return to Gorontalo and married Ohihiya. Shortly, they got 2 children, Paha and Limonu. One day there was a war with Hemuto, the leader of the transmigrants. Naha and Paha finally died in the war. Limonu who did not accept the death of his brother and father demanded to revenge. To commemorate their struggle in the war against Hemuto, the fort was named

Ulupahu Fort, Otahiya Fort and Otanaha Fort. During its development, the fort became more popular as Otanaha Fort.

Otanaha Fort was built on a hill. Tourists visiting this fort must pass several stairs and 4 stopovers. Uniquely, the number of steps at each stop is different. From the base to the first stopover there are 52 steps, from the first stopover to the second stopover there are 83 steps, from the second stopover to the third stopover there are 53 steps, from the third stopover to the fourth stopover there are 89 steps and from the fourth stopover to the fort there are 71 steps to reach. Otanaha Fort consists of three forts. There are two large forts located close to each other and one small fort located below the two large forts. Each fort is located separately and the average diameter of the fort is only about 10 meters. There is a road between the forts made of blocks connected with the longest distance of about 50 meters. The floor of the fort is covered with grass. Besides the fort as the main object, it is also facilitated with several places to sit. From Otanaha Fort we can see the view of Limboto lake which is now overgrown with water hyacinth plants and the beautiful view of Gorontalo City also is seen from the top of this fort. To get to this fort, visitors can use a vehicle to the top or put their vehicle in the parking lot.

From the fort at the top of the hill, visitors can enjoy the view of parts of Gorontalo City, especially residential areas on the shores of Limboto lake. The tin-roofed houses and the vehicles passing by on the streets are clearly visible from the top of the hill. Moreover, from this fort there is also a complete view of the lake from the west side of the fort which can be an attractive view for tourists. Nowadays, traveling to Fort Otanaha is not only to understand history but also to take photos for social media needs for tourists and even it is used as a place for pre-wedding photos. The morning or evening atmosphere is quite good for photography hunter to take photos in the atmosphere of the ancient fort.

3. 4. Contestation and Claims over Fort Otanaha

Using Otanaha Fort as a tourist destination means to treat Otanaha Fort the same way it treats artificial tourist attractions and natural formations. It is not using important values as a basis of design. In the context of utilizing cultural resources, Otanaha fort is one of the potential things to be developed and managed into a tourism destination. It has potential considering that cultural resources are distinctive, unique and rare. Each cultural resource has its own history, technology and character according to where it is located and when it was built or used. Each cultural resource is evidence of a historical and civilizational process, both related to the location where it was found and as a part of national culture. Commonly cultural resources become a part of human civilization in general. Regarding to the framework of statutory regulations, the use of cultural resources has been explained in Law Number 11 of 2010, chapter 85 which states: The government, regional government and everyone can utilize cultural heritage for religious, social, educational, scientific, technological, cultural and tourism purposes."

Otanaha Fort area is one of national tourism strategic area of the cultural resources in Gorontalo Province located in Dembe I village, Kota Barat subdistrict, Gorontalo City. Astronomically, it is at latitude: 0°32'56.70" N and longitude: 123°0'30.60" E. There are at least two other forts in Otanaha Fort area, namely Ohihiya Fort and Ulupahu Fort. Historically, based on spoken tradition, Otanaha Fort was built by Ndoba and Tiliaya to face the arrival of the Portuguese in Gorontalo region [4]. Another opinion states that Otanaha Fort was founded by King Detu in 1522 to deal with hostilities with the Limboto Kingdom. Technologically, Otanaha Fort has the characteristics of a Portuguese fort in which the shape tends to be rounded and its location is in an elevated area.

As a rare and fragile cultural resource, the process of utilizing this fort must consider the framework of conservation. It is not only preserving the physical but also the important values contained in cultural resources. Important value is the intrinsic value contained in cultural resources which can be emerged through academic interpretation in various scientific disciplines, for example anthropology, history or even the public and government utilization of cultural resources in the current context.

Currently, the existence of Otanaha Fort has become an arena of contestation for various sectors of life. Claims between the state and society are seen in the ownership claims by using the legitimacy of power. Currently, there are several actors who claim its existence. From the central government, the Cultural Conservation Center (BPK) Gorontalo region claims the ownership of the central government under the pretext of preserving cultural heritage. Then for Gorontalo City government, its existence as a cultural heritage tourism object is also important, therefore Gorontalo City government through the Tourism Office manages it based on a tourism perspective. Besides the states, the people around the fort area claim ownership of the fort area as their customary right of ownership of their ancestral heritage. It is obviously around the fort there are illegal settlements which disturb the beauty and authenticity of Otanaha Fort. In recent years, there has been conflict and the closure of the fort area therefore the tourists cannot access the area of Otanaha Fort.

4 Conclusions

The existence of a fort has been interpreted as a building that has a purely defensive function. Fortresses have always been seen as defensive architecture where all four sides are closed and can be defended from various threats of attack. Various explanations about forts always refer to the function of both defensive and offensive strategies. It also can be categorized as fortified settlement in anthropological study.

Otanaha Fort is a cultural heritage and identity for the people of Gorontalo. The existence of the Otanaha fort is still exists and is well maintained in Gorontalo City. This shows the importance of preserving cultural heritage in maintaining local history and identity. Otanaha Fort has a high symbolic value for the people of Gorontalo which is related to the culture, history and traditions of the community. In the Contest for power, this fort was used as a tool to confirm or challenge power in the past. Otanaha Fort has the potential to provide economic benefits to the local community through the

tourism industry. However, it needs a good planning and management to maintain a balance between cultural preservation and possible tourism impacts, such as increased traffic or changes to the surrounding environment.

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