

Use of Kota Cina Sites as a Resource for Outdoor-Based History Learning in Medan, North Sumatra

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Abstract. Learning history is learning whose object of study is material regarding past events with all their activities. The temporal past of his studies seems to be a problem in his learning practices. Moreover, if the learning takes place in the classroom with passive student participation. An analysis of the urgency of historical learning based on outdoor learning by utilizing historical sites using literacy studies. Literacy studies are part of a qualitative research method. Therefore, this article offers an alternative solution by utilizing local historical sites as learning resources and learning activities. This article explores and makes examples of how to use historical sites Kota Cina in Medan Marelan. Given the many heritage sites in the city that can be used as a source of learning with field activities or outdoor learning.

Keywords: Historical Sites, History Learning, Kota Cina.

1 Introduction

Outdoor study is a learning method that is able to foster creativity, initiative, cooperation or mutual cooperation and familiarize students with the surrounding environment. The role of the teacher in outdoor learning is as a motivator, meaning the teacher is a guide so that students learn actively, effectively, creatively, and are familiar with the environment.

Learning outside the classroom is one effort to create learning to avoid boredom, boredom, and the perception of learning only in the classroom. Learning does not need to only be done in the classroom, but can be carried out outside the classroom, and knowing the importance of life skills and life experiences in environment and natural surroundings, and have an appreciation for the environment and natural surroundings.

The out-door learning approach uses an open natural setting as a means. The learning process using nature as a medium is seen as very effective in knowledge management where everyone will be able to feel, see directly and even do it themselves, so that the transfer of knowledge based on experience in nature can be felt, translated, developed based on their abilities. This approach sharpens children's physical and social activities where children will do more activities that indirectly involve cooperation between friends and creative abilities.

Kota Cina, as a cosmopolitan city in its time, was certainly part of a political entity that was quite influential in the Malacca Strait area in particular. Based on written sources regarding the political entity in the Malacca Strait area that can be linked to the range of use of Kota Cina between the XI-XIV centuries AD, it is Aru or Haru. History of the Yuan Dynasty is the oldest foreign written source which states that in 1282 the ruler of Aru was invited to Kublai Khan's palace for a meeting with the Mongol leader who had just conquered China. In 1295, the ruler of Aru sent his brother as an Aru ambassador to China, bringing a number of objects for the ruler of China [1]. In 1310, Rasis Ad-Din noted that Aru, Perlak, and Tamiang were the main cities on the island of Sumatra [2].

Another foreign written source comes from the records of Chinese exploration carried out by Ma Huan, a Chinese Muslim who was a scribe on Cheng Ho's fleet expedition. This record was made through visits to various places in mainland and island Southeast Asia, India, Sri Lanka, the Middle East and the east coast of Africa. Ma Huan in his work entitled *Ying-yai Sheng-lan* noted that *Ya-lu* (Aru) - which he visited in 1416 AD - could be reached after leaving *Man-la-chia* (Malacca) [3], in 4 days and 4 nights. In the note it is written that, in this country there is a river called the Fresh Water River, after passing through this river you reach the residential area. In the east of this country are lowlands and in the south of this country there are mountains, while in the north is the sea, in the west it is bordered by the Ocean (Pasai). The king and his people are Muslims. The people live from farming and fishing. Its traditions and customs are still pure; wedding ceremonies, funerals, and so on are similar to those in Java and Malacca. The land of this country is only suitable for rice farming, and the rice is small-grained, but is always available in abundance. Apart from rice, they also have various kinds of livestock such as goats, poultry and ducks; milk is also widely consumed. In the forests of this country there are flying tigers that are the size of a cat; its entire body was covered in gray feathers and fleshy wings like bat wings; these wings connect the front legs and hind legs; this animal cannot fly far; when caught, usually he will not eat the food given, and will soon die. In this country the clothing material is called *k'au-ni* (perhaps what is meant by cloth). They use very little external goods. The country is small and produces nothing but fragrant sap and a few things [4].

In 1436, when Groeneveldt made his second visit to Aru, he described Aru as being in the opposite direction to the Sembilan Islands (around the coast of Perak, Malay Peninsula); can be reached in 3 days sailing from Malacca. The climate and customs and customs of this country are slightly different from Samudra (Pasai). The people live mostly on bananas and coconuts, the land is less fertile and produces only a small crop (rice). Both men and women leave their upper bodies bare-chested, while their lower parts are covered with a long piece of cloth. Every (adult) man always carries a bow and poisoned arrows as a means of martial arts. For their daily life they catch fish in the sea, using boats made from a tree, or go to the forest to collect camphor and other forest products. The country's agricultural products are crowned cranes and camphor, which they sell to foreign traders. In their trade transactions they buy colored silk, glassware (pottery and ceramics), and glass beads [3].

2 Research Methods

Research on the use of Kota Cina historical sites as learning resources is descriptive qualitative. According to Moleong, qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior [5]. This research was carried out in the historical heritage study course at the STKIP Kie Raha History Education Study Program as part of an evaluation of learning activities. Considering that this research is qualitative research which seeks to uncover phenomena that occur in the field, in this research the researcher acts as a good key instrument in collecting information through interviews, observation and analysis of documents including lesson plans, articles and open books that are relevant to the problems being discussed and researched. The data collected was then tested for correctness using triangulation techniques.

Triangulation is intended as a tool to assist researchers [6]. The triangulation technique used by researchers is data/source triangulation and method triangulation. Data analysis according to Miles and Huberman states that activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continue continuously until completion, so that the data is saturated [7]. Furthermore, Miles and Huberman stated that data analysis consists of three interrelated sub-processes, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing or verification. Data analysis and data collection are inseparable processes [6], [7]. The data analysis process begins by examining all available data from various sources, namely from interviews, observations that have been written in field notes, personal documents, official documents, and photographs [5].

3 Results and Discussion

At the Kota Cina site, apart from finding various kinds of ceramic shards, pottery, money, shells, wood, glass, beads and statues, several types of fish and mammal bones were also found. The bones of large fish and mammals were found in ancient community kitchen waste mixed with shells, pottery and ceramic shards. These organic materials in the form of animal bones were found together or close to other archaeological finds such as ceramics and pottery. Among the organic findings, it is known that there are crocodile jaws, wild animal fangs, and fish ribs [8].



Fig. 1. Clam Shells in Kota Cina.

In Kota Cina, many shellfish of various sizes, ages and types or families of shellfish, including snails, were found. Currently, there are quite a lot of shellfish in the form of Lokan, Kupang and various snails in paloh, swamps and the Si-Ombak lake area. Until now, people around this museum are still looking for shellfish in the form of Lokan to eat or sell, while Kupang is sought to be sold as livestock food. This finding shows quite a lot of shells from various types, sizes and eras. These shells are kitchen waste that was thrown away near residential areas after the shells were consumed by the local community [8].

The wood is a piece of house pole thought to be from the 14th century which was found at the bottom of a pool in this part of the museum. The lower part of the four pillars is still left in the pool awaiting archaeological excavation. Ancient house pillars like this are very common in river flows and can be seen at low tide [1], [2], [8].



Fig. 2. Column house from the 14th century in Kota Cina.

The female statue is ± 6 cm tall. In the picture the right hand may be in the posture of abhayamudra (repelling danger) or vitarkamudra (teaching or arguing); while his left hand hangs down to the side of his hip. His head is decorated with *kiritamukuta* (a crown resembling a cone). If this statue is found in the same context as the metal Buddha statue, it is possible that this statue is Tara, a goddess in Buddhism. This object is still used as a means of worship at Klenteng, the site of Kota Cina [2], [3], [9], [10].

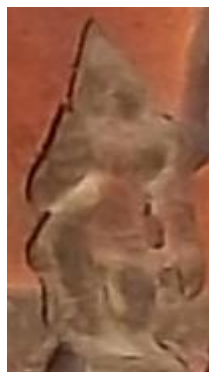


Fig. 3. Metal sculpture in Kota Cina

The earliest record of the existence of the Kota Cina site was recorded in 1823 when John Anderson visited a number of areas on the east coast of North Sumatra, on the orders of the Governor of Penang W.E. Philips for a political and economic survey for British interests. One of the interesting things related to Kota Cina as revealed in John Anderson's report (1826) is the existence of a large stone with writing which, according to John Anderson, cannot be read by the local residents [11]. When a Dutch controller looked for the inscribed stone in Anderson's report in 1882, it was no longer found. A brief description of this site was published in the *Oudheidkundige Verslag* in 1914, but after that this site seemed to be forgotten until in 1972, McKinnon conducted research on Kota Cina. Archaeological activities in the form of archaeological and geomorphological research on Kota Cina sites began from 1972 to 1989, carried out by researchers such as McKinnon (1973, 1976 and 1978), Bronson (1973), Suleiman (1976), Ambary (1978 and 1979), Miksic, (1979), Wibisono (1981), Manguin (1989), and finally Puslitbangarkenas, Medan Archaeological Center and EFEO (2011) [12].

A number of data that have been collected through surface surveys and excavations in a number of locations in Kota Cina are evidence of the existence of a fairly old culture in the eastern coastal area of North Sumatra. In his dissertation, McKinnon stated that place names in this region, like the names of many other places in the world, usually have historical meaning. The name "Kota Cina" seems to have emerged from folklore reflecting the presence of Chinese people in an area whose name, translated literally, means "a residential area with a fortress inhabited by Chinese people" [2], [9], [10].

The use intensity of the Kota Cina area in the past was quite high, occurring between the 11th and 14th centuries. This is based on the Chinese ceramics found - which date from the Sung Dynasty to Yuan Dynasty. In the period of around four centuries, Kota Cina grew and developed as a cosmopolitan city and residential area. The various artifacts found are a reflection of past human activities at this site such as trade, carpentry, worship and settlement [1], [4], [10].

Indications of trade activities with immigrants from outside the archipelago are evidenced by the presence of ceramic items originating from China. To reach this place, migrants from outside used ships or wooden boats, the remains of which were found in the area that is now Lake Si-Ombak [4], [8].

The natural products of Sumatra island, which at that time were high-value trade items, including camphor or camphor, frankincense, resin, ivory, rhino horn, etc., were the main destination for migrants from outside the archipelago coming to the Kota Cina. Apart from that, they also sell manufactured products from their respective countries, such as Arabs or Persians who sell glass items, Indians who sell fine pottery, stone and glass beads; Chinese people who market their ceramic goods and silk fabrics, and Thai/Siamese people who market their ceramic goods and pottery. The transactions that took place used money as a means of buying and selling, as evidenced by the existence of Chinese coins; in addition to possibly bartering. The variety of origins of the immigrants, namely China, India and the Middle East, shows how cosmopolitan China was at that time. Apart from migrants from outside the archipelago, there are indications of the presence of migrants from other parts of the archipelago, namely from Java, as evidenced by the presence of pottery fragments decorated with old Javanese script [2], [4], [12].

It is true that not much is known about the variety of iron items found, but these clues are initial data to provide an idea of the existence of metalsmiths at this site in the past. Another form of past activity at this site was metalworking as evidenced by the discovery of lumps of iron slag, which are leftovers from making iron objects. Other artifacts whose function can be linked to metalworking activities are a number of small *kowi* or *kui*, which are usually used as melting vessels for metal minerals that melt easily such as gold or tin. Residents in the site area often find gold jewelry and gold grains on their land. Another material in making gold objects, besides gold itself, is quicksilver or mercury. Even though the mineral was not found due to the liquid nature of the substance, its existence was proven by the discovery of a container in the form of a ceramic fragment known to ceramic experts as a mercury jar [2], [8].

4 Conclusion

The Kota Cina site discovered by the Dutch (1918) in Medan City, is one of the discoveries of world-class important historical evidence that must be developed and preserved. The name Kota Cina was based on the Dutch based on the large number of Chinese ceramic shards in that place and they concluded for themselves that this place was once a "city" and because there were many "Chinese" ceramics they called it Kota Cina.

For decades this site has been forgotten (except by historians and archaeological literature), neglected in a blanket of indifference and the remains of civilization buried in dust and soil. The site was not saved, important excavation points were damaged, important findings were scattered and sold, and unidentified ceramic and statue fragments were scattered in people's fields. The Medan City Government, throughout the history of the Republic of Indonesia for 65 years 1945-2010, did not know or pretended not to know that this important world-class site existed in its territory. This outdoor learning is carried out as an effort to foster students' curiosity through higher education institutions to get to know more closely the history of Chinese cities and save historical heritage so that it can also be enjoyed by future generations.

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