

European Fortresses in Tidore

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Abstract. The North Moluccas is a cluster of islands situated in eastern Indonesia, boasting a wealth of historical and cultural significance. The focus of this study is on the field of historical archaeology intending to delve into the region's history by examining its physical remains. The results of this study not only offer a sneak peek into the history of the North Moluccas but also contribute to broader discussions within the field of historical archaeology. This research analyzes the physical remains of a region that was deeply impacted by European colonization, exploring themes of cultural hybridity, resistance, and power negotiation. Ultimately, this study emphasizes the importance of historical archaeology in uncovering untold stories and enriching our comprehension of the past. The North Moluccas, with their assorted cultural heritage and intricate history, are a fascinating case study that sheds light on the interplay between local customs and global factors.

Keywords: European Fortresses, Tidore, Historical remains

1 Introduction

In the 16th and 17th centuries, spices were a highly marketable commodity with a long history in Indonesia and other countries. Their value was so great that they could bring about economic and political developments and even trigger wars. When discussing spices, we often think of Maluku as a renowned spice-producing region. The spices were traded from Maluku to other places and then brought to Asian markets and even Europe[1].

The lure of spices attracted ocean explorers from Europe to sail the oceans to find spice-producing areas (The Spice Island). Many of these voyagers faced disasters along the way and lost their lives. Ferdinand Magellan was one of the most famous ocean explorers from Spain who lost his life on his voyage. Magellan managed to arrive in Southeast Asia, precisely in the Philippines. Magellan died on his mission to find the spice islands. However, the Magellan expedition group led by Juan Sebastian Elcano managed to continue their journey and stopped at Tidore, one of the spice-producing kingdoms in Maluku [2],[3],[4],[1].

Upon their arrival, Sultan Mansyur, the Sultan of Tidore, warmly welcomed Elcano's entourage. Two days later, the Spaniards were invited to the Mareku palace for a luncheon by the Sultan. Then, Sultan Mansyur allowed the Spaniards to sell their goods in the market and even assisted

in setting up trading places[5]. Once the trade was completed, Sebastian Elcano returned to Spain aboard the ship Victoria[6].

The cooperation between Tidore and Spain continued after Elcano's return to Spain. Elcano's return with good news was the beginning of Tidore and Spain's cooperation in the future. Spain helped Tidore in its efforts to confront the Ternate Kingdom, which cooperated with the Portuguese. For this reason, Spain established many fortresses in Tidore[7]. Even some traces of Spanish forts in Tidore can be found until now. This research will examine the traces of cooperation between Tidore and Spain in the form of fortresses established on the mainland of the Tidore archipelago.

2 Research Method

This study used historical research methods. There are five stages of the historical research process according to the historiography method, namely topic selection, heuristics (source collection), verification (historical criticism, source validity, source relevance), interpretation (analysis and synthesis), historiography (historical writing)[8]. The first step in tracing the relationship between Tidore and Europeans, including Spain, in the 16th-17th centuries AD was to determine the research topic. The topic was selected based on a review of related literature. In the second stage, the researcher collected historical sources related to the chosen topic. These sources could be in the form of archives, documents, books, or journal articles obtained by collecting sources in Tidore and other places related to that period. In the third stage, the researcher verified and criticized the sources, evaluating their validity and the information they contained. The fourth step involved interpreting the obtained data. Finally, the last step was writing the research article. This last step of Historiography was done carefully to ensure weighty and quality writing.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 The Geopolitics of Tidore

Tidore was one of the four major kingdoms located in North Maluku. The other three kingdoms are Ternate, Jailolo, and Bacan. Together, these four kingdoms were referred to as Moloku Kie Raha, and they formed the pillar of political power in the region[8],[9],[10]. Ternate and Tidore were the most developed pillars among the four kingdoms due to their expansion to other regions.

Historical records indicate that during the 16th and 17th centuries, Tidore expanded its influence to the Papua region. According to Abdurachman (1978), Tidore played a significant role in mediating the relationship between the Maluku and Papua Islands. This relationship was facilitated by the use of the Malay language as a trading language in the 1600s. Tidore was unique when compared to other kingdoms in Maluku. Tidore had a more extensive territory when compared to the Kingdom of Ternate. In addition, Tidore was classified as multiethnic and multicultural, and there are several ethnicities in Tidore, namely Tidore, Ternate, Makian, Jailolo, Bugis, Makassar, Mandar, and Chinese with Chinese settlements[11]. Even Tidore had good relations with Europeans, especially Spaniards, signified by the presence of Spanish fortifications in Tidore.

Tidore's good relations with other ethnicities or nations must be connected to Tidore's strategic location as the maritime kingdom of the archipelago. Tidore became increasingly developed after spices became known by the international market. Even in the 15th-16th centuries, Europeans, such as the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch, tried to plant a monopoly on the spice trade in Maluku[12]. The strategic location of Tidore, having a port in the archipelago area, supported the development of Tidore as a large maritime kingdom; this impacted Tidore's growing trade as well. In addition, the Sultan of Tidore was an open-minded man. The Sultan of Tidore even carried out trade cooperation with foreign nations such as Spain. Tidore and Spain entered into cooperation during the reign of Sultan Mansur (1512-1526), who succeeded his father, Sultan Jamaluddin, who died[5].

Good relations between Tidore and Spain were not only motivated by trade factors, but there was another contributing factor, namely the competition between Tidore and Ternate, and also Spanish and Portuguese. Sultan Mansur was on perfect terms with Spain, allowing the Spanish to hold their trades and even helping to establish trading places and forts for the Spanish. This close relationship angered the Portuguese in Ternate, who attacked Tidore in 1524[13].

Spain helped Tidore to face the Portuguese attack in coalition with Ternate. To strengthen their resistance in the Moluccas, the Spanish established several forts in Tidore. The fortifications were the defensive fortifications of the king's city or Lugar Grande de el Rey (Soasio), San Joseph de Chovo (Chobo), San Lucas de el Rume (Rum), Marieco el Grande (Marieco), Marieco el Chico (Tomanira), Gomafo, Santiago de Los Caballeros (Tohula), Lugar Grande de el Rey de Tidore, and Socanora fortress[14].

3.2 European Fortresses in Tidore

There were 8 European fortresses established in Tidore. The first one, known as Fort Rum or San Lucas del Rume, was originally built by the Portuguese but later rebuilt by Cornelis Sebastiaanszoon in 1605. After that, it was taken over by the Spanish[15]. The fort was reconstructed in 1618, under the direct supervision of the Spanish Governor of the Moluccas, Lucas de Vergara. The fort was built in a natural harbor northeast of Tidore Island, which became a popular destination for ships sailing from Manila. The construction of this fort was in response to the concerns of Sultan Mole (1599-1627) of Tidore, who feared that the region was at risk of being controlled by the Dutch after the Ternate attack[16]. The Rum Fort is divided into two areas. The first area is located on the plains parallel to the seawater, and it consists of defensive complexes equipped with trenches and artillery as port defences. The second area is a wooden fortress located on a hill that dominates the port area. In 1653-1654, the Spanish governor Francisco de Esteybar replaced the pointed wooden fence surrounding the wall with a stone field[16]. The fort had a strategic defensive position over the Port of Rum, which is the main sea access to the island of Tidore. The Dutch controlled Fort Rum in 1605, but a few years later, the Spanish regained control. However, the Dutch regained control of Fort Rum eventually. This fort is strategically located and plays an essential role as an export controller of Tidore Field[9]. Fort Rum was the last Spanish enclave in Maluku before the Spanish ultimately left the Moluccas in 1663, ending 140 years of Spanish presence in the Moluccas Field[17].

Second, Fort Marieku el Grande (1609-1646), or Fort Ome, was built on the west coast of Tidore Island, located opposite Kastela and Benteng Kota Janji[9]. This fort, located in the South of the

Port of Rum, was built to control shipping between the islands of Ternate, Tidore, and Maitara. The fort began construction in 1609 by the Spanish governor Lucas de Vergara. This fortress was built in Mareku City, the old capital of the Tidore Kingdom. Mareku was the capital of the Kingdom of Tidore before the arrival of the Portuguese and Spanish on the island. After the arrival of Europeans, the capital of the Kingdom of Tidore was moved from Mareku to Soasio because it had a better port. Since then, Soasio has been the arrival point of ships coming to Tidore in search of cloves, as well as the docking of the Magellan-Elcano expedition fleet on November 8, 1521[16]. The Fort changed ownership several times. On 9 February 1613, the Dutch occupied the Fort, but due to continued harassment by the Spanish, the Dutch abandoned the Fort in 1620. From then on, the fortress of Marieku el Grande was again controlled by Spain until 1646. In 1646, the Spanish abandoned the Fort for good due to a reconquest attempt by a prominent Dutch fleet. The Spanish then focused defence on the Fort around Soasio City. At this time, no structures remain of the original buildings of this Fort due to its destruction and abandonment by the Spanish[16].

Third, Fort Marieku el Chico (1613-1662) is located south of Marieku el Grande. Fort Marieku el Chico, or Fort Tomanira, is on a hill. The Spanish Governor Jeronimo de Silva built this fort. At the foot of this hill is the present village of Mareku. This fort was built because Fort Marieku el Grande was captured by the Dutch in 1613. The fort was built of stone with two bastions using leftover materials from the demolition of Sabugo Fort in Halmahera. The fort had towers, watchtowers, cannons, and garrisons that were moved to Fort Marieku el Chi[16]. The local population around the fort, namely the local people of Tomanira, always supported the Spaniards, even helping the Spaniards to face a massive resistance against Spanish rule, which was centred in the village of Toloa, located south of the fort.

Fourth, Toloa Fort is located in Toloa, one of the essential cities in Tidore's history. The fort is located on a hillside to the southeast of the settlement area of Toloa Village. Several structures are thought to be semi-circular bastions. On the west side, the fort wall consists of two layers of stones sandwiching a layer of earth. The fragile layer is still present on the east and west sides, but the adhesive material consisting of a mixture of sand and white burnt lime can still be seen. On the other side, only the stones without the adhesive[9]. There are no Iberian sources from the 16th-17th centuries regarding this fort. Local sources say the fort is associated with Kadato Biji Negara, one of the ancient settlements on the island. Local people believe it was the former centre of Kedaton before it was moved to Soa Sio[18]. Toloa town held an important position in Tidore after the civil war between Cachil Mole (supported by Spain) and Saifuddin (supported by Ternate and the VOC) following the death of Sultan Zayde-Magiau (1640-1657). Sultan Saifuddin succeeded to the throne and gave Toala a vital position in Tidore. In 1789, Toloa again became a source of rebellion against European rule (this time against VOC rule) during the reign of Sultan Nuku, who ruled Tidore from 1738-1805[16].

Fifth, Fort Tohula (1610-1662) or Santiago de los Caballeros, is an impregnable fort. Fort Tohula is known as an impregnable fort because it never fell to the enemy and remained under Spanish rule from the time it was built until it was abandoned. This fort symbolizes the Spanish capital in Tidore. The fort was built in 1610 by the Spanish governor of Maluku, Cristobal de Azcueta, with the permission of Sultan Mole. The fort was built on a hill previously a Spanish defence area to control Soasio, the capital of Tidore at that time, accessible from the sea. In 1615, Governor Jeronimo de Silva completed the construction of the fort. Its strategic position overlooking the coastline with more than 180 degrees of exposure allowed the Spanish to control

maritime traffic between Tidore, Mare Island, and Halmahera. Fort Tohula consists of 3 bulwarks and 2 Caballeros (buildings within the bulwarks) connected by a cortina (connecting wall) and equipped with a garrison and artillery of 60 soldiers. A large tank was inside the fort to supply water for several months. The fort also featured an orchard, an inn, and warehouses for storing gunpowder and ammunition. Some traces of the fort buildings can still be seen today. The walls on the north side are more than 15m high, and there is a local burial site in the lower south. Today, the fort can be accessed from the east side using a steep staircase overlooking Soasio Village. The Dutch attacked the fort several times in collaboration with Sultan Saifuddin (1657-1689) but were never successful[16].

Another fort, Fort Chobo or San Jose de Chovo is located in Chobo Village, North Tidore District, Tidore Islands City. Fort Chobo is located on a hill or cliff headland that leads to the open sea, making it easy to monitor the waters and Fort Oranje on Ternate Island. Two structures appear separate at this location. Structure I to the west is \pm 150 cm high, and Structure II is \pm 100 cm high. The structure I is larger and resembles a bastion. The structure material consists of andesite and volcanic rock with plastered surfaces[9] (Handoko & Mansyur, 2018). In 1644, the Spanish demolished the original structure and built a new fort on higher ground. The aim was to protect the north-eastern side of the island from attacks coming from the south coast of Ternate. This fort was the last defence built by the Spanish in[16].

Fort Torre was named after the name of Hernando De La Torre, who sponsored the fort's construction. The fort has a rectangular structure, facing south-east[19]. The fort was briefly controlled by the Portuguese and was rebuilt by Ruy Lopez de Villalobos in 1545. The reconstruction infuriated the Portuguese, who demanded the demolition of the fort. Fort Tore was finally demolished in 1551, but a few years later, the people of Tidore rebuilt the fort and even used it as the official residence of the Sultan of Tidore until today[16]. Fort Tore, called Gomafo by the locals, is built on top of an old lava flow from the Kie Matubu volcano. Large chunks of lava on barren land surround the fort and occupy the entire courtyard or centre. This makes the defence of Fort Tore even better because of the difficulty of attacking through this barren stretch of lava soil[16].

The last fort, Fort Socanora (1613-1620), is located on a hill near the coast in southwestern Soasio. The fort was built to defend the southern sea access from Soasio. After the Dutch captured Mareku in February 1613, the Sultan of Tidore built a fort at the tip of Socanora as an outpost in anticipation of a Dutch attack. In the same year, the Dutch attacked but were held back by the Tidore army supported by Spanish troops. Good defences prevented the fort from falling to the Dutch[16].

4 Conclusion

Tidore played a significant role as a central point for transcultural interaction between Indonesia, Europe, and Southeast Asia during the 16th and 17th centuries. The relationships established during this period, especially with European countries like Spain, not only influenced geopolitical and economic paradigms but also left cultural relics that reinforced Europeans' presence in the region. The Spanish presence in Tidore had a considerable impact on its social, political, and cultural dynamics. By analyzing historical materials in their context, historical archaeology can reconstruct narratives. The forts in Tidore, especially those associated with the

Spanish presence, provide unique insights into the interactions between the local and global cultures, cultural adaptations, and knowledge exchanges that took place during that period.

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