

From The Myth of Seven Angelic Spirits to Religious Legitimation: *Kesultanan Ternate* Source of Power

Rustam Hasim

Pancasila and Civic Study Program - Khairun University
Ternate City, North Maluku, Indonesia.

Nahdia Nur

Faculty of Cultural Sciences - Hasanuddin University
Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Abstract:- The Sultanate of Ternate established and upheld their power base through maneuvering in the realm of religious and cultural magic. It was a hegemonic strategy that led this group to become the ruler and the center of role models in the life of the people of Ternate. To structure and strengthen their position, the Sultanate of Ternate used four important elements as a strategy. First, the doctrine of *Jou se Ngofangare* (king and servant) is regulated to pose the king or sultan as the representation of God's power (macrocosms). Second, the myth of the Seven Princesses is exercised to justify the sultan's powerful position. This myth is related to magical-religious concepts used as a means of legitimating the royal power to gain communal consent. Third, titles and heirlooms of the Sultans from which the Sultan is considered to have charisma and supernatural powers along with various symbols and heirlooms of the sultan, such as weapons and titles, were used to validate the sultan's position as ruler. Fourth, *Kadaton* (palace) symbolizes the highest position of traditional identity which is used as a source of reference for traditional values which are also closely related to magical sources of trust.

Keywords:- *Palace, Sultan, Politics, Culture, Ternate Island.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Sultanate of Ternate, one traditional power that remained alive today continues to take place in the modern power realm. This position does not only allow the Sultans to pose a traditionally political power, but he also stands as the center of role models of the society in Ternate. This very strategic position in the life of Ternate has given rise to an assumption that the sultan and palace, not only as a political and cultural but also as the magical-religious center of the kingdom. Religions and mythical narration have been major and powerful formulas in forming the unconscious mind to consent to the acceptance of political and cultural struggle to power. Here, as a *Tubaddilur rasul*, a person who is believed to receive divine authority to uphold a certain task, the sultan is considered to have magical powers, which could provide protection, safety, and prosperity for all his people. This condition can be seen in prayer recitation such as *kololi kie prayers* (encircling mountain), *fere kiye* prayers (climbing the mountain) and sultan birthday prayer. People of Ternate accept that the sultan's powerful charisma is derived from his religious background which is related to mythical traditional

spirituality. Thus, the Sultan is believed to possess magical and cosmological powers.

The Sultanate of Ternate built and maintained its power base through building religious and cultural magic. This hegemonic strategy made this group become the ruler and center of role models in the life of the people in Ternate by the doctrine that the Sultan obtained his power to govern the people is from a sacred source namely the divine power. This doctrine is used to justify his power. By this trust and religion that dominates the Ternate community view, the sultan's position in the community received strong support, especially from religious believers. This reason formed the thought that only members of the Sultan's descendants had the right to remain in power. The magical-religious legitimacy caused the palace not merely to be the residence of the sultan and his relatives, but also to be seen as the country itself. As such, the sultan and his court were integral and mutually reinforcing. A sultan will not have political meaning if it is not established by the palace. Sultan who does not have a palace will experience a decline in social status, using Clifford Greetz language. On the contrary, the palace cannot be an important institution without strengthened by the political skills of the aristocrats who at any time with their creative power will increase the authority of the palace.

This paper elaborates the four mentioned above strategies used by the sultan of Ternate in upholding his power to continue and preserve his existence until today. The first elements to explore is the way sultans maintaining the power using the narration, the way palace positioned as a highest cultural and traditional identity, and the way magical source is trusted to validate the sultan's position as a ruler.

II. THE SOURCE OF LEGITIMATION: SEVEN ANGELIC SPIRITS MYTH

The conception of the power applied by the Sultanate of Ternate is not too far different from the concept of the power applied by the kings in Java. The concept of the power of the Sultanate of Ternate always poses ancestries as an extremely essential source. This condition leads the Sultans appraised and consciously oriented to the chronicle text and genealogy. This orientation then has stimulated and given rise to the creation of genealogical myths used for political legitimacy.

The genealogy or origin of the kings (sultans) of Ternate cannot be separated from the myths of the Seven Angelic Spirit or known as the tale of Ternate. The myth was

written by Naidah (1856-1866), a palace female poet who served as the Judge *Soa-Sio* of the Sultanate of Ternate during the reign of the 41st Sultan, Sultan Muhammad Arsyad (1852-1869). This myth gave a central role to a legendary figure from Arabia, Jafar Shadik (sometimes called Jafar Noah), who arrived in Ternate on Monday 6 Muharram 643 Hijri or 1250 AD. Jafar Shadik's genealogy is associated with Ali bin Abi Talib, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, who married a daughter from a noble family named Nur Sifa. Naidah then recited the origins of the Kingdom of Ternate as follows:

Once upon a time, there came an Arabian man named Jafar Shadik. He built a house on a hill *Jore-jore*, and at the foot of the hill there was a spring called *Ake Sentosa*.

One day, when Jafar Shadik was about to bathe in the spring, he saw seven beautiful women having bath. Jafar Shadik took an opportunity to take a pair of wings belonging to one of the angels and hide them. When they were satisfied with their bath, the angels prepared to return to heaven, but one of them, named Nur Sifa, was forced to stay because her wings were missing, which eventually married to Jafar Shadik.

From their marriage, three sons were born, Buka, Darajat, and Sahajat. One day, while Nur Sifa was about to bath Sahajat, she happened to see the shadow of her wings reflected in the bath water of Sahajat. She finally found out where the wing was kept by her husband. Soon he was ready to go home, but every time he wanted to fly, the youngest always cried. Then the milk was collected and then given to the eldest Buka, while giving the message to feed his sibling if he cries and to tell his father that she has returned to her origin. Then she left his husband and the children.

Hearing his wife was gone, Jafar Shadik cried. Accidentally, a bird, *Goheba* bird (two-headed eagle) was watching him and asked him about his sadness.

The *Goheba* bird was moved by the story and offered to take him to heaven to look for his wife. When arriving at heaven, he met Nur Sifa's father and asked about his wife. The father showed Jafar Shadik seven angels who were very similar to each other and was asked to appoint which of them was his wife that he meant. He was also required, if he could point precisely, he could bring her home. But if not, Jafar Shadik's own life is at stake.

In hesitation, Jafar Shadik suddenly rested on the shoulder of a green fly or *gufu sang*. The fly offered its services while asking for compensation. To the green fly Jafar Shadik promised all that stinks on this earth for it, and the offered was agreed upon by the fly. The fly could easily recognize Nur Sifa only from her body odor which is different from other nymphs because of her distinctive smell of a breastfeeding woman.

Jafar Shadik was finally accepted as a family member in the angel family and his marriage received the blessing from the father. During their stay in heaven, they got the fourth son

named Mashur Malamo. After Malamo reached a year old, they said goodbye to return to earth. But the plan was always delayed because Malamo always cried every time they were about to depart. Mashur Malamo was silent after his grandfather gave him the *tolu* (crown) he was wearing. Immediately the three returned to Earth.

Upon arrival on Earth, they met their three children who had been left behind for so long. Then to the four children, Nur Sifa gave him signs of their position in terms of power distribution. To the first child, Buka, he gave *age* (wood) as his seat. Buka then immediately departed for Makian and became the forerunner of kolano (king) and was given the title *Dehe Ma Kolano* (head of the cape). The second child, Darajat, got *ginoti* wood, and later became the forerunner of Jailolo's *kolano* (king) and was given the title *Jiko Makolano* (ruler of the bay). Sahajat, the third child, got a seat of stone and became the forerunner of Tidore's *kolano* (king) and was given the title *Kie Ma Kolano* (mountain ruler). While Mashur Malamo, the youngest, got a chair and became the forerunner of the Ternate *kolano* (king) and was given the titles *Alam Ma Kolano* (world ruler) and *kolano Maluku* (ruler of the Moluccas) [1]

This mythical genealogy shows that the descendants of Ternate sultans are descended from extraordinary figures. The first group (male side) is a descendant of the prophet and the second group (the mother) is the descendant of the king of heaven or the divine angelic character. This blood inheritance made the dynasty be eligible to rule the kingdom. Naidah seemed to show two ways of the political impression through this narration. Firstly, the name of Jafar Shadik was taken as the ancestor of the ruling kings in North Maluku. This name highlights the blood relation of sultans to the religious leader, the prophet Muhammad. Whereas the Mahsyur Malamo who was depicted to born in heaven was known as the forerunner to the next sultans of Ternate, occupied the central position in the story. Further, he was appointed as the first king of Ternate, Secondly, by posing his older brothers as the forerunner of Sultan in the surrounding kingdoms outside the region, the story constructed alliance and brotherhood among kingdoms. In fact, the four kingdoms, the Sultanate of Ternate, Bacan, Jailolo, and Tidore, become the leaders of a confederation which later became known as Moloku Kie Raha (Four Kingdoms: Bacan, Jailolo, Tidore, and Ternate) [2]

It has been common sense of the people in Ternate that the Sultan of Ternate was a dynasty that came from the descendants of the prophets. This has made the sultan's position gained strong support from the religious side. The sultan's position can even be said to be based on religion. The belief influenced by animism and dynamism also confirms that the sultan is the holder of power who mediates man to God.

Politically, the Seven Angels myth created during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Arsyad (1852-1869) was a strategy to maintain his power when spices (cloves) were no longer the source of his economy. At that time, the Dutch East Indies government held monopoly control by

implementing a strict and systematic extirpate and *hongitochten* policy to control the price of cloves at the international level. The exploitation system of these commodities forceably changed the situation of Ternate as an exporter of spices into a mandatory acceptance spices. At the same time, the sultan of Ternate no longer was able to manage spices as his economic source. As a result, the sluggish spice trade faded the political power of the sultans of Ternate. The implication was that the sultan no longer made clove as a reference for his self-identity.

The conclusion above seems speculative, but in reality, in that period, the sultan's power was subjected to the economic and political hegemony of the Dutch East Indies government as a consequence of the agreements they had made. As a consequence, in order to maintain the position of the sultans, they made religion as a new source of strength. The Myth of the Seven Angels was then used by the sultans to justify their great position through magical-religious concepts (obtained from the above world) and to make it as a means of hegemony. By creating genealogies that connected themselves as descendants of the prophet, they re-established their position in achieving their desired goals. According to Ibrahim Alfian a myth written by court poets intended to obtain the interest of the ruling dynasty at that time, and it also served to strengthen the legitimacy and increase the power of the king who in turn was seen to be able to increase the prosperity and affluence of the people[3]. To this day, the Seven Angels story continues to play a decisive role in justifying and strengthening the power of the Ternate sultans in relations with their people.

III. THE DOKTRIN JOU SE NGOFANGARE (RULER AND THE RULED)

Besides the myth of the seven angels, the power and legitimacy of the Sultanate of Ternate is also supported by the doctrine of *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* (leader with the people). This notion has a major significant political weight, and until now has become a major philosophy of the Sultanate of Ternate. This shows that palace has become the sole source of knowledge and discourse production of belief systems, of reference to social stratification systems, of status symbols and of lifestyles [4]

Mudaffar Syah implicitly stated that the notion *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* contains two meanings, namely the government and religious elements [5]. In government, the word *jou* means you which implies the leader of the state/ government, and the word *Ngofa Ngare* means the people. This means that the element of a country or kingdom is a ruler here king and people to be ruled. This notion also means "what is in me, is also in you, and what is in you, it is also in me." While in the religious sense the word *Jou* contains the meaning of God, while the word *Ngofa Ngare* means servant. It is in this concept that the sultans of Ternate are placed as *khalifatullah* or representatives of God in the world. With his position as God's representative and governing under the law of justice, the people are obliged to obey him. People who do not follow the king or refuse his orders mean he is against God's will. This can be understood because one of the sources of Ternate

palace power is hegemonic domination at the level of cultural discourse.

Actually, the philosophical *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* is the basic value of religious belief that has been living in the Ternate community long before the arrival of Islam. Philosophical religion is used by the local people as an effort to trace the origin of humans in relation to the creator.

In its instigation, when Islam became the official religion of the Sultanate of Ternate, the philosophy of *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* underwent a materialization process. It turned out to be the symbol of the Sultanate of Ternate in the form of a two-headed; one-bodied and one-hearted bird called the *goheba dopolo romdidi* (two-headed eagle). This symbol signifies the connection of Islamic teachings namely the two sentence of *sahadah*, to the kingdom. Mudaffar Syah further elaborated that the philosophical *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* has a close relationship with the two sentences of the *sahadat* namely *Asyhadu alla ilaha illallah* is "*Jou*" and *wa asyhadu anna Muhammadarrasullah* is "*ngofangare*". Therefore, the philosophy of *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* contains a religious notion, which symbolizes the union of humans with their Lord, as described in Ternate's oral literature "*gudu moju si to nunako, ri jou si to suba*" (I already knew him, so I worship him) [6].

The doctrine of *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* is not only limited to the religious aspect (God's relationship with the servant). Yet, in the political field, the relationship between the ruler (*Jou*) and the people (*Ngofa Ngare*) is symbolized by the *nasi tumpeng*, rice cone. The egg of *nasi tumpeng* signifies the Sultan and the people in which the whole egg is the sultan and the yolk is the people. This signification explains the sultanate's public relations system between the authorities and the customary leaders and their assistants in the government system. According to Soehartono, this kind of relationship is also found in Javanese society which prominent by the notion *kawula-gusti* which means the people are required to carry out various orders from the authorities. This makes the people, like or not, loyal to the authorities [7].

In life as a ruler, the Sultan had a right to exercise any actions in any way he demands regarding all subjects in his kingdom, including human beings, his people. That absolut power made the people distress and feel uneasy to the *Kolano* (sultan). Besides that, the Sultan also has special privileges in politics in the form of *Jaib Kolano* and *Iddin Kolano* (veto). By his prerogative political control, the sultan exercised so unlimited power without any obstacles. In the eyes of the people, for this powerful position, he was considered the owner of everything, including property and people. Therefore, whenever the Sultan demanded his wishes, the communal only uttered that *Jou kasa ngom kage* (we are where the sultan is). In such situation, one could only bow down before the sultan. If one was willing to talk, he or she should bow and win the adherence of the king while saying *Jou Suba* (ask for permission) then express an intention. The more he or she has an intention, the more frequent the bow down is performed while saying *jou suba*. This is as stated in

Ternate's oral literature "*Dara to Lefo Mapila Soro Gudu to Nunako. Gudu Moju si to Suba, ri Jou Si to Nunako*" (The pigeon I marked on its wings I recognized it when flying far away. From the distance I worshiped him because I already knew him). At this level, the power possessed by the sultans does not only come from what people believe, but comes from the ability to construct what the king wanted to be believed by the society. In this way, the philosophy of *Jou Se Ngofa Ngare* became a power legitimation [8].

IV. TITLES AND HEIRLOOMS

Ternate sultans were always involved in the establishment of their power using symbols and myths. One of symbols is the use of a designation *Alam ma Kolano* (ruler of the world). By holding the titles of *Alam ma Kolano* and *Kolano Maluku* (Maluku rulers), the sultan of Ternate was considered the strongest and most respected king of Moluccan in the North part of Maluku Island. The use of this title can be found in various European documents. One of them is C. Bossher who wrote that the Dutch called the sultan of Ternate the 'ruler of the Moluccas'. Even the sultan of Ternate himself, based on the Dutch documents dated the 19th century, referred to himself as *Alam ma Kolano* (ruler of the Moluccas) and 'the sultan of Maluku' [9].

By bearing the title *Alam ma Kolano*, the Sultan of Ternate saw power as a single, whole, and unanimous. It means that power cannot be competitive, compartmentalized or divided. Therefore, by holding the title *Alam ma Kolano* (world ruler), then every king who ruled was obliged to carry out a mission to strengthen the dynasty. They believe that if their rule is successful, it will at the same time strengthen their position in their kingdom [10].

Correspondingly, in the traditional book of the kings of Ternate (copper book), it states that the sultan of Ternate with the title *Alam ma Kolano* has supernatural powers blessed with the power of bringing safety and prosperity. This ability is believed to be a gift from God, so that from this concept, the power of the sultans cannot be separated or always be connected with the spiritual concept. This is also associated with the belief that there are parallels between the universe and the human world. All of those are in line with the Javanese concept of power which places the king as the sole ruler in the field of physical and spiritual power (the king as the central which radiates into the realm of macrocosm and microcosm). For this position, Ternate sultans were placed as *khalifatullah* or God's representatives in the world. At this level, according to Djoko Suryo, religion is a source of legitimacy as well as political resources or means of power.

In the political structure of the sultanate of Ternate, the sultan was the focal point of power. As the top of the hierarchy, the sultan held great power. This is reflected in its ownership of heirlooms, titles, or genealogies. One of the heirlooms which is believed to have magical value is the *stampa* (crown) of the Sultanate of Ternate which is believed to be originated from heaven. This Mahakota is believed to come from the 'upper world' and is a miracle for the sultan in his leadership from time to time. Under the sultan was a

group of nobles, who were distinguished from the central aristocracy and the regional aristocrats [11].

In addition to the crown, other heirlooms considered sacred are royal chairs, royal umbrellas, royal wands from ivory-headed twin rattan, gold rifles, various shapes of swords, large curved six-crystal crystal lamps with three eye lights, copper clothes, shields, small and medium cannons, and the emblem of the kingdom of *Goheba ma Dopolo Romdidi* (two-headed eagle). These objects have been trusted by the community as a source of prosperity until now.

It is commonly believed that the Sultanate of Ternate was a dynasty that descended from the prophets and spirit resides in heaven. That is why he is called as *Alam ma Kolano* (ruler of nature). Although the sultan is posed as the leader of the kingdom, the highest title was not only the sultan, but also the *kolano*, because only the *kolano* could issue the *iddin* (veto) which the community obeyed. Therefore, in a sultan possess two noble titles, namely *kolano* and sultan. According to Djoko Suryo, *Kolano's* position is still used as an instrument of control and management of domestic politics. While the sultan's position is more directed at the interests of international relations [1].

Accordingly, to strengthen the position of the sultan as the ruling class, the sultans used names and titles from Arabic and Persian. Like the title used by the 41st Sultan of Ternate Muhammad Ayanhar (1876-1856), with the title of Tadjul Mahful Binajatilahi Lhanan Sirajul Mulki Amirudin Iskandar Munawarusadik Wahoeuaminaladdin Syah Putra Ajanhar Raja Ternate and the addition of the title "Syah" (title of Persian kings) behind the name of a sultan. A title used by Ternate sultans from the 19th century onwards [2].

The purpose of using these titles is to seize the influence of the masses or communal which, according to Sartono Kartodirdjo, is used to build dynastic power in order to remain sustainable. Therefore, every Ternate sultan who ruled felt obliged to carry out a mission to strengthen and maintain power.

V. LEGU GAM, THE BIRTHDAY OF THE SULTAN AS: POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CELEBRATION

During the reign of the 48th Sultan of Ternate Mudafar Sjah (1975-2016), he turned the palace to be the political as well as the cultural center. As a cultural center, in the palace were held ceremonies, such as; *Legu Gam* (Sultan's birthday), *Kololi Kie* (around the mountain), *Fere Kie* (climbing the mountain), *Isra Miraj*, and *Maulid*, the Prophet's Birthday. This strategy is believed to have a big impact on the existence of the palace as a focal point. This condition also allowed the elite of the sultanate skillfully plays the claim as the cultural center of North Maluku. Through this claim, the new power, the state, the body of Ministry of Tourism participate and collaborate with the palace as a form of government attention to the existence of local culture.

Among the many ceremonies held by the *kadaton* Ternate is the *Legu Gam* ceremony. This celebration has a quite important political weight. This celebration is held every April to celebrate Sultan Mudafar Sjah's birthday which falls on April 12 and is carried out for a whole month. Historically the celebration of *Legu Gam* was carried out in the sixteenth century during the reign of the 26th Sultan of Ternate, Babullah. But the implementation at that time was carried out inside the palace and was only attended by nobles and *Bobato Akhirat* (royal scholars). During the ceremony the *Bobato Akhirat* recites *kiye prayers* (prayers of salvation), as a form of gratitude for God's gift of abundance of sustenance, safety, health for all people and bring glory to the country.

In 1994, Sultan Mudafar Sjah issued *iddin kolano* (sultan's fatwa) that the *Legu Gam* ceremony was carried out in the open space of the eastern square of the palace (Salero field), with a big celebration. As a form of cultural preservation of Ternate, it was expected to enrich the treasury of national culture, as well as being a glue to the value system in people's lives.

Therefore, the stage shows all the grandeur of the ceremonial procession, grandeur clothing, royal symbols. The magnificent of the *Legu Gam* celebration encourages people to attend the ceremony, and also to witness the greatness of their Sultan. Hundreds of courtiers who became important lines and the pioneer of the sultan and his family, are an exciting spectacle, and the wide various symbols such as large umbrellas or *stampa (mahakota)* are seen as magical values [11].

In the ceremony the sultan occupied the highest place, then was followed by the nobility, the attendants and courtiers were in the back. As the center of modeling, spatial planning and ceremonies are the way that power works. Thus, power is not only measured by the extent of the splendor and the number of participants who are present, yet about how to influence the logic of organizing power outside the palace, that they are the center of fervor in the midst of society [12].

The *Legu Gam* celebration has a very prominent political dimension, but the celebration itself shows the creativity in dance and other symbols, such as language, dress code and procedures related to ritual ceremonies. This can be seen in every performance that always involves dancers in large numbers, as language and culture are two aspects which interchange each other where the language is a medium to get information about the culture [13]. For example, the fourth *Legu Gam* celebration in 1999 involves 10,000 male dancers, so that it is recognized by MURI as the biggest male dancers in Indonesia. Likewise in 2000, the committee *Legu Gam* provided 10 km of bamboo rice, and received an award from MURI's record as the longest bamboo rice in the world. Apart from being a tool to measure the influence of a sultan's power, *Legu Gam* as a people's party, aims to preserve tradition and culture as a manifestation of the love of the people of Ternate (bala kusu se canoe) for their sultan.

Celebration of *Legu Gam* is also used as a strategy to expand the kinship network. In each performance guests from other countries or ambassadors from foreign countries received an honorary degree. Their presence in the celebration as part of the king's relatives certainly provides political benefits for the king, especially they are presence before traditional society. However, for the palace, the presence of politicians and bureaucrats can also raise the political prestige of the palace. By utilizing the relationships that have been built, the Sultan gained access to economic and political resources owned by politicians and bureaucrats. Likewise, politicians might hope that the noble title they get from the palace will open space for them to get traditional voter support.

That strategy is called "kinship politics". This kinship politics was taken for two reasons. First, it changes in the political power of influential and potential enemies into friends or relatives. For example, in 1997, the palace appointed every military and police officer, starting from the Military District Commander, Regional Police Headquarters, and the Danrem to become relatives of the Sultanate through the awarding noble titles. Likewise, civil bureaucratic officer, such as the Governor of Maluku, Saleh latuconsina, The Mayor of North Maluku, Abdullah Asagaf, and Ternate Mayor Samsir Andili, were also awarded the noble title along with political elites, academics, NGO leaders, and business people. The extension of power was also conducted through marriage. The member of Sultan family married potential person from member of family who are economically and politically profitable [5].

The title of nobility was not only given to local officer, but also central officer from Jakarta or foreigners. For example, the title of nobility was given to Akbar Tanjung with the title of Kapita Kooris (commander of war) in 1998. The same was also given to Wiranto as Gam Madodoto (teacher of the nation) in 1999, Hamja Haz and Sosilo Bambang Yudoyono and a number of ambassadors from Brunei and Malaysia. Awarding a knighthood is a political strategy to strengthen the palace's position in the community. Given the title, all social and political elements officially became part of the relatives of the Sultanate of Ternate. Being a relative certainly had logical consequences for the palace both economically, politically and culturally.

What Sultan Mudafar Sjah tried to do in celebrating *Legu Gam* as a place to keep the palace as a political center as well as a cultural center, the celebration indeed is a political synthesis that has been developed for a long time (before independence) from one generation to other generation. Its aim is seeking the legitimacy of traditional power. On the one hand, the presence of regional envoys in attending the sultan's birthday celebrations meant that they recognized his authority. On the other hand, the ceremony is closely related to the economy. The presence of beauty and splendor of traditional culture is intended to attract tourists to support development of economic source. The economic benefits gained from the *Legu Gam* event are used to maintain ties with their traditional followers. Economic surplus is also used to hold big ceremonies that are hegemony

in the cultural arena, such as the Kololi Kie (surrounding the mountain), and Fere Kie (climbing the mountain) ceremonies. Thus, sufficient material capacity is used creatively to build symbols of cultural grandeur that ultimately establishes them as centers of adoption.

VI. CONCLUSION

As one of the traditional powers that is still alive today, the existence of Sultan Ternate has never been lost its political legitimacy, so it has always been existing in the realm of political and cultural arena as the center of the role model of the people of Ternate. Sultan has great power. In the political structure, he is the centre point of power. He is the peak of hierarchy and exercise powerful sovereignty. Heirlooms, titles, or genealogical myths serve to validate this position.

In building its power base, two strategies that are used as an effort to form and strengthen its position, first, religious magical strategies. As the peak of the power in carrying out his government, the Sultan is accompanied by the *bobato*, (council of ministers), *world bobato*, (council who in charge of government) and *bobato akhirat* (council who take care of religious matters). In the religious field (*bobato akhirah*) in the Sultanate Ternate, the sultan is the supreme leader or high priest. As the high priest, the sultan was obliged to guard, protect, spread and preserve the religion of Islam. In this context, the sultans in Ternate called themselves the *kalifatullah* because he had two kinds of prerogative rights (veto rights) namely *Idhin Kolano* and *Jaib Kolano*.

Second, as a center of court, the palace keeps the traditional court ceremonies such as *Kololi Kie* (ritual the island), and *Fere Kie* (mountain climbing ritual). The palace rites remain as a source of cultural legitimacy and the palace is still has magical power, sacred symbol of authority. In addition, the designation of ceremonies and building a kinship network (kinship politics) by giving honorary titles to officials or former officials both at the center and regional have political weight such as *legu gam* celebration (Sultan's birthday). Here, cultural strategy as an entry point to make the palace as the center of the bearer, preservation and development of Ternate culture.

As a historical reality, the ability of the Sultan of Ternate to survive amidst the growth of modern political dynamic up to now has been largely influenced by the public's conviction in that they strongly believe that the aristocratic group has the right to govern based on genealogical myth (the myth of the seven angelic spirits). This legitimacy was continuously repeated and this in turn resulted a consensus in the society who trust the Sultan to possess advantages and privileges. The obedience of the people is related to powerful source controlled by the sultan namely provide peace and prosperity for the people.

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