

The Influence of Power towards Spatial Change in the History of Kupang Old Town Development

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Abstract:- Cities, especially the ancient cities whose civilization relies on trade forces and political interests will generally develop according to the decisions of the leaders. Kupang is an ancient city that has undergone civilization since the 12th century and becomes a central town of sandalwood trade in addition to 12 other ports in Timor Island. The historical journey of Kupang was characterized by various interests of power, from the formation of traditional village to colonial-style government. The leader as the main character plays an important role in each physical space changed according to the political power that he held. Changes in space are very typical of the ongoing power. This research aims to discuss and study in-depth about the change of space as the impact of political power in Kupang Old Town, using diachronic analysis techniques, sourced from primary and secondary data based on Kupang's Old Town spatial change history. The results show that the power in each period of history affects the formation of spaces including the determination of the city center to place naming.

Keywords:- Diachronic Analysis; History; Kupang Old Town; Political Power; Spatial Change.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of the city is closely related to the early history of development, current condition and the face of city in future. This indicates that the development of the city has a relationship with the function of time which is bound to the historical aspect (Zuhri, 2012; Mumford, 1967). Cities will develop in line with the development of social, cultural, economic and political as a form of rich outcomes and construction forms of human thought both in the past and the present (Tallo, Pratiwi, & Astutik, 2014).

In general, cities in Indonesia developed according to the history and political leader's decision in them (Damayanti & Handinoto, 2005). Cities with a long history journey, especially those that function as the center of capitalism or relying on trade forces and led by different

rulers, will bequeath the historical space as a characteristic city (Su, Bramwell, & Whalley, 2018; Aminah, 2015; Azizu, Antariksa, & Wardhani, 2011). The phenomenon of a city is reflected in written historical records and manifested in a physical footprint based on the decisions of residents and leaders of the city from time to time (Wang & Aoki, 2019; Mulyandari, 2011).

Kupang is an old town located in the Gulf of Kupang, discovered by Chinese and Indian merchants who have been looking for the spices since the 7th century. Previously the civilization in Kupang has begun since 13,500 years ago by a group of humans who lived with hunting. Development began when merchants from China came and settled in Kupang to look for sandalwood, at that time Kupang became part of the territory of the Majapahit Kingdom. In the 16th century Helong Kingdom was formed, better known as the Kingdom of Kupang. In the footsteps of its development, Kupang was ruled by the Portuguese and the Dutch in the 17th century. There were developments which centered on the estuary of the Dendeng River as the first port city on Timor Island (Luitnan, 2012). In 1886 the Resident Grave then set the boundaries of political territory about 2 km² called *Opperhoofd*. This certainly affects some spatial formation such as supporting buildings and residential environment as well as the establishment of city center and place naming. The development has not ended even after Indonesia declared its independence and Kupang was officially a city.

Kupang Old Town has undergone a phase-by-phase development as a ruler's residence so that the spaces that have been created are the result of the thought and importance of power. This research will provide an overview of developments that affect the formation and naming of places in Kupang. It should be explained that the political power has influenced the formation of spatial and structural patterns in Kupang, especially during the period of colonialism. The discussion about the formation of space will be discussed in the physical space as a form of representation of political interests in the course of the history of Kupang.

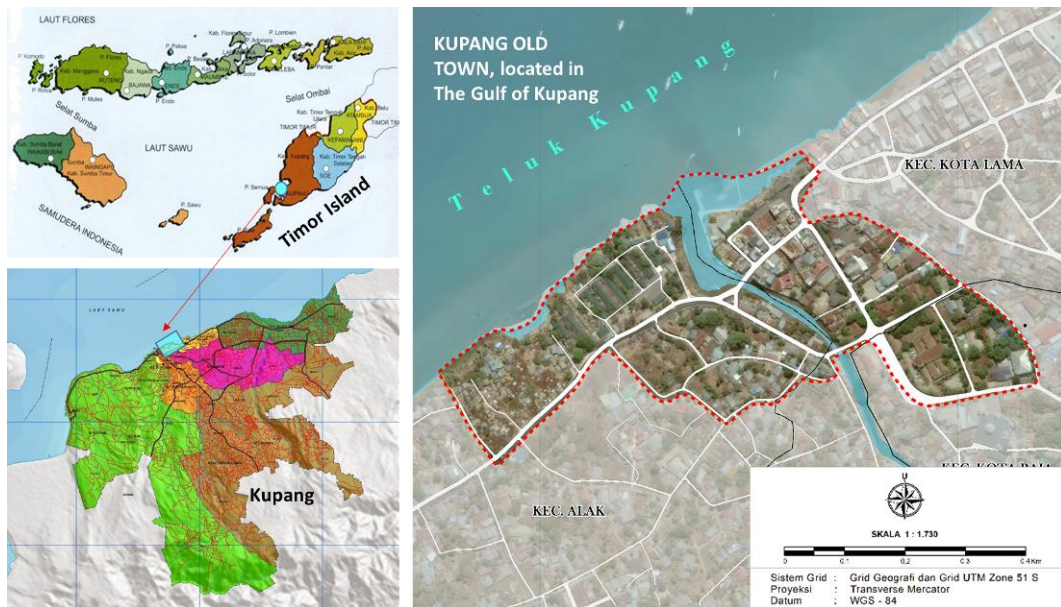


Fig 1:- Location of Kupang Old Town
Source: Google Maps, the Authors

II. METHODS

This research uses a structuralist approach with diachronic analysis techniques and content analysis. Data and historical validity were obtained through literature review and interviews about the history of the development of Kupang Old Town (Chrisomalis, 2010). History is an empirical thing that is based on the text and statements about the history (Supriyatna, 2013). In this case, the authors plays a role in interpreting history to find the spatial changes that have been occurred.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kupang Old Town underwent a gradual process of development from the pre-colonial era to colonialism which tried to control the territory of Kupang. The spatial formation, in this case the spatial pattern, spatial structure and government system in Kupang has been influenced by the ruling leader.

A. Spatial Changes in the Pre-Colonial Period

Civilization on Timor Island began in the 10th century BC by a group of residents who lived hunting and collecting forest products (Luitman, 2012). In a Chinese inscription written in 1436 it was recorded that the Bay area of West Timor Island was a fertile sandalwood forest and was visited by Chinese merchants in the 10th century. In 1225 this area became the territory of the Majapahit Kingdom and contributed as a supplier of sandalwood to the Hindu-Javanese Kingdom in Kediri (Doko, 1981).

The Chinese people come to Kupang to obtain the necessary spice to the interests of trade and spiritual. Chinese traders did not colonize, they only traded spices and built a temporary shelter as a place to rest, furthermore even some of them chose to settle in Kupang. The Chinese people who settled in Kupang adhered to land-based Chinese culture or

what was called by the population at that time as "*atoin fak meto*", they considered the sea as a threat. This has an effect on the shape of space and the style of buildings that are oriented to the land.



Fig 2:- Building styke that adheres to Chines land culture or *Atoin Fak Meto*

Source: Authors documentation, 2018

In the 17th century, a group of Helong tribes from Seram came and occupied the bay area, they named the area Kaisalun and Buinbaun. "*Kai*" means tree and "*salun*" means sandalwood, Kaisalun means sandalwood forest while "*buin*" means hidden and "*baun*" means cave so Buinbaun is interpreted as a safe hidden place. The name Kaisalun and Buinbaun indicate that there is a natural and functional potential in both areas. The leader of the Helong tribe is Lai Kopan then formed a kingdom in Kampung Kaisalun, where Kaisalun was the residence of Chinese merchants. At that time Kaisalun Village was described as the center of customary and economic governance, coupled with the existence of the Bandar Kaisalun or port as a place for sandalwood trade transactions. The title as Raja Koen (King Koen) was given to Lai Kopan, he then built his palace called "*sonaf*". *Sonaf* is surrounded by a protective fence made of four-layered stone structures, called "*Pan*", so that the people

who wanted to meet the King would recite “*Koen Pan*”. The term has been verbally metamorphosed into “*Koepan*” and eventually became “*Kupang*”, and now officially became the name for a city located in the bay of the western part of Timor Island.

Raja Koen who was then the leader of the Helong Kingdom formed the structure of the Kingdom Helong. The Helong Kingdom government system took the form of a social system. This system was divided into a system of kingdoms and local levels consisting of a clan system. In the clan system there are other subsystems, namely the system of village government, *ngaladukat* or clan groups, dan *nehetuan* or kinship system (Beeh, 1996).

The Helong Kingdom space pattern had a central and peripheral pattern, where the King is a central figure. The outside central area was surrounded by clan groups (*kakaama*) using cosmic unity (Fig. 3). Cosmic circles which increasingly away from the center will be referred to as a periphery, while cosmic circle which approaching the king inhabited by a king's servants and stand close to the suburbs. The Helong Kingdom system contains administrative significance as a political and cosmic power. The arrangement of buildings and cities followed the construction set by Raja Koen.

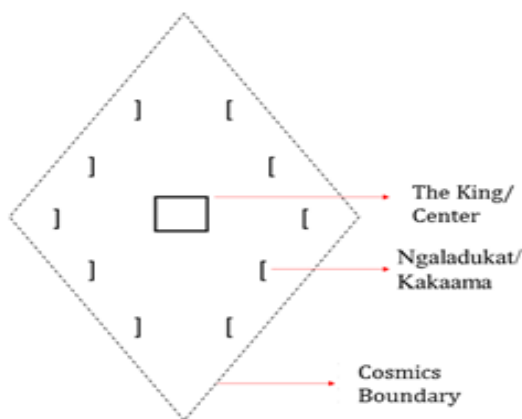


Fig 3:- Illustration of the City Structure during the Reign of Raja Koen
Source: Beeh, 1996

B. Spatial changes in the Period of Portuguese Occupation and V.O.C

During the Portuguese occupation in 1645, a fortress was built, namely Fort Henricus and a Catholic church located inside the king's palace. The Portuguese also expanded the land to the west of the palace to build residential areas for Portuguese groups. Construction of fortress, church and land expansion was carried out in accordance with the cooperation contract between the Portuguese and Raja Koen. The contract contains permits for the construction of church and fortress and also prohibitions for other nations to enter the port of Kupang.

In 1653 the Dutch did politics “*divide et impera*” to colonized Kupang and moved the center of power from Solor Island to Kupang. The Dutch attacked the fortress used for Portuguese defence and built a new fortress named Fort Concordia. After Fort Concordia was completed, Raja Koen and his family left the fort and settled in another place. In that period, Kupang was used as the trade and Governance center of V.O. C called “*Opperhoofd*”.

There was a Spatial change occurred from the Portuguese occupation into the reign of V.O. C. The change was seen from the physical footprint where *sonaf* which initially functioned as the residence of King Koen and the central government of the Helong Kingdom, changed function to become a fortress. Other changes were marked by the expansion of land for residential areas due to cooperation between the Raja and the Portuguese.

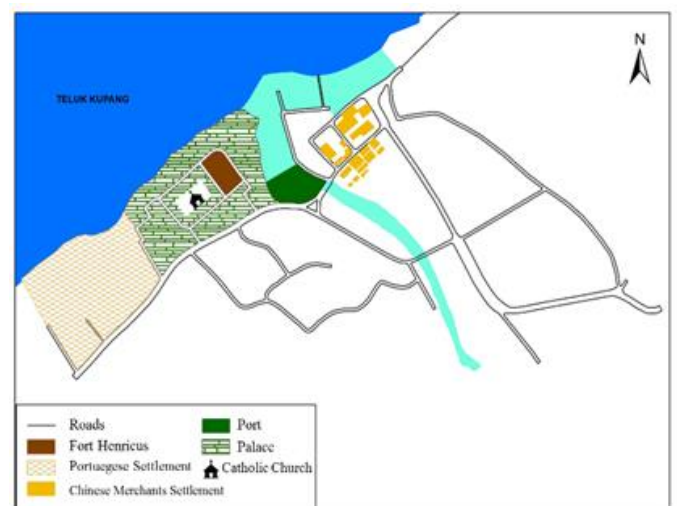


Fig 4:- Illustration of Kupang during the Portuguese Occupation Period
Source: Luitnan, 2012

C. Spatial Changes in the Reign of Dutch East Indies Governor

During the reign of the Dutch East Indies governor, Kupang experienced many spatial changes due to the transition of government. In 1744, the Portuguese who did not accept his defeat came back to Kupang and settled in an area in the west. They named the place “*Fani Teni*” which means it was repeated. *Fani Teni* is currently changing its name to Fontein. In 1799 V.O.C was dissolved and this was made an opportunity by the British to controlled Kupang. Finally, in 1812-1816 the British took control of Kupang.

The transfer of power occurred again from the British to the Dutch, at that time the Dutch government was led by Resident Hazaart. In 1816, Resident Hazaart carried out various developments for the benefit of his government. He built access of roads and facilities that support Dutch activities in Kupang. Residen Hazaart also built church and missionary houses who aim to served the Dutch soldiers, located on the edge of Kali Dendeng (Dendeng River). When Hazaart's leadership ended, the government turned to Resident Spanoghe from 1833-1838 with the programs to

improved the economy through sandalwood commodities. Spanoghe also built roads in the city and built a new dock to support trade activities, nowadays the new dock is used as a reclamation park located on Aloha Beach, people often called it Tedy's Beach. The program was continued by Resident Sluyter who led from 1838-1849, he built a retaining walls in Kupang port. In the same year, the boundary between the occupancy of foreign nations and indigenous peoples and also the functional zoning of the region was formed. Chinese merchants who had been living in Kupang for generations remained in the eastern part of Fort Concordia and the Dutch occupied the area around the fortress and along the Dendeng River, whereas indigenous people lived in other areas that are quite far from the fortress (Fig. 5).

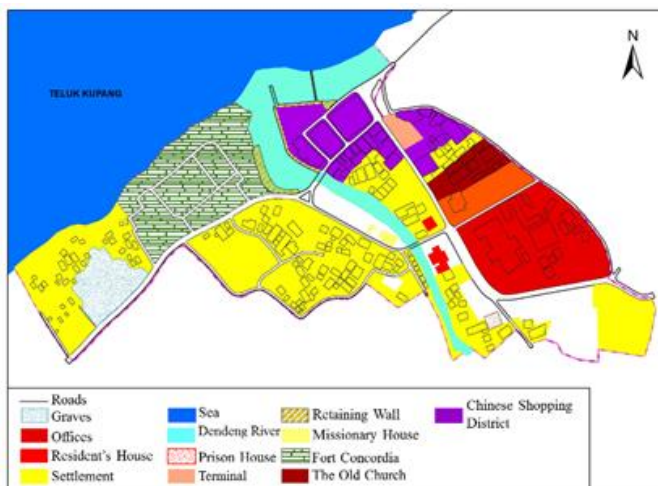


Fig 5:- Illustration of Kupang during the Reign of Dutch East Indies Governor
Source: Luitnan, 2012

Other policy occurred in Resident Grave leadership in 1886, where Grave submitted a request to the Dutch East Indies governor in Batavia to set the boundaries of Kupang City. Determination of city boundaries was made to have a clear boundary and zone to separate between the city center and the periphery area. Exactly on April 23, 1886, the city boundary or “*Vierkante paal gebied*” was set. The area that belongs to the inner city was called “*Rechtsreeks Bestuursgebied*”, the population living within the city is the people of governor and those who live outside the city were called “*Zelfbestuur*”. The boundaries of Kupang according to the Staatblaad 1886 No.171 was KM 0 drawn up to 1.5 Km to the east to Pasir Panjang, westward to Namosain and southward to Kuanino. The city center was set with radius of 1.5 Km from kilometer 0 (now became Kupang Old Town), the remaining area was a *periphery*. The area of city center was only 1.5 to 2 km² (Fig. 6). The zero kilometer point determined by the Dutch has now been built into a monument and is known as the Human Rights and Pancasila Monument.

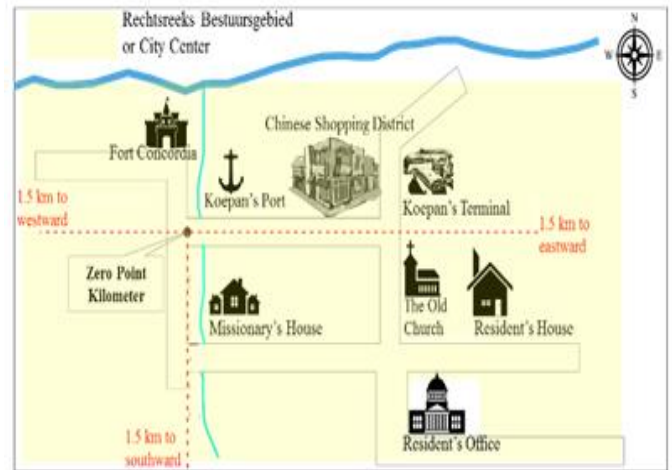


Fig 6:- Illustration of city boundaries setting in Kupang Old Town during the Resident Grave government
Source: Luitnan, 2012

During the reign of the Dutch East Indies Governorate, there were several regions which were named in accordance with the figures who had important roles and until now were embedded in people's memories, one of them is Selam. Selam was the name of a Dutch figure who in the 1900s had a business in the field of trade and services. He had a guesthouse that is quite famous and often visited by foreigners when visiting Kupang, there was also a shop located on the edge of Dendeng River. This shop was known to supply basic necessities for the city community and was quite famous. Until now the Selam is still used to describe a small area near the Dendeng River where the guest house and shop are located.

D. The Japanese Colonial Period

On February 20, 1942 Japan was led by General Hayakawa entering the Kupang, when Kupang was controlled by Kaigun or the Japanese Navy based in Makassar (Luitnan, 2012). When Japan occupied Kupang, the changes that occurred were insignificant, Japan only made caves or tunnels around Fort Concordia as a place to take refuge. The Japanese colony was called “*Ken*” which was led by “*Kenkarikan*”. To strengthen its power, the Japanese ordered the local king to translocate people from other regions to Kupang such as from Rote Island, Timor inland, and Flores Island to come to become slaves and worked for Japan. As a result, the number of people in Kupang is increasing.

E. Kupang after Indonesian Independence

Post-independence, precisely on 6 February 1946, according to the Gubernatorial Decree Number 9, all regions of Kupang are handed over to Swapraja Kupang (or Kupang Self-Government) including the kingdoms that existed since V.O.C. In accordance with this decree, *Timor Eiland Federatie* or East Timor Federatie was formed and led by Raja Koroh from the Kingdom of Amarasi. During this period, Kupang remained a residency from 1946-1949. Until 1951 the Minister of Internal Affairs of the East Indonesia dissolved the East Timor Federatie due to Kupang and the surrounding island areas were included in the region of the

Lesser Sunda or Sunda Kecil Province which had its capital in Singaraja, Bali. Kupang is the center of the Swatantra region of Timor and the surrounding islands. In 1954 the name of Sunda Kecil was changed to Nusa Tenggara, and in accordance with the insisting of the community of Swatantra Kupang to form its own province, then in 1958 the province of East Nusa Tenggara was formed which had its capital in Kupang (Doko, 1981). Kupang 's Old Town area changed its status to a sub-district which is also the center of Kupang Regency.

The development continued until September 18, 1978 in accordance with Government Regulation No. 22 year 1978, Kupang was inaugurated to be the administrative city. This led to the city's administrative center moving to other territories.. Similarly, the provincial government center moved to Kota Raja Sub-District (formerly part of Oebobo Sub-district and experienced expansion into new sub-districts in 2011), whereas the old Town area became the administrative center of Kupang Regency. In 1996, precisely on April 25, 1996 Kupang was inaugurated as a Level II Municipal City and in 1999 the status of Kupang officially became a city, so that the central government which had been in the old town had officially moved to Fatululi (Kupang residents usually call the Mayor's area).

When Kupang officially became a city, administrative division also occurred. Some regional heads or Regents tried to launch a program to move the capital city of Kupang Regency because at the same time the capital city of Kupang had moved to another area. Sulamu is one of the proposals to become the new capital (formerly Sulamu was part of Timor Residency). Until the early 2000s in accordance with the decision of the Regent Medah, the capital of Kupang Regency which was initially centered in the Kupang Old Town was moved to a new location in Oelamasi (about 35 km from Kota Kupang).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The power and roles of important figures in the course of history from time to time influenced the formation of the space in Kupang Old Town. Kupang Old Town is known as one of the places that became a trading port and port city both during the Helong Kingdom, a period of colonialism and to this day remains a regional scale trade center coupled with the existence of Chinese shopping districts further strengthening the existence and function of Kupang Old Town. Physical spaces that were built as a result of the decisions of leaders in the past nowadays show the symbolic, functional and historical dimensions which made the Kupang's Old Town have a different and unique character compared to other regions.

The symbolic dimension is shown through an atmosphere that is reflected to this day as a sign that the

Kupang Old Town is a port city, seen through the existence of an old port and the former docks at Tedy's Beach which was built during the reign of Dutch. The Chinese shopping districts has also become a symbol of the trade area from the past to the present and also the Old Kupang Church which became a symbol of the spread of Christianity in the colonial period. Meanwhile the historical dimensions were printed on the building or monument which has the most important meaning of history Kupang Old Town, such as the For Concordia as the center of the King's administration and Dutch power, the Old Kupang City Church as the first church built by the Dutch and still functioning today, Human Rights and Pancasila Monument were established as zero kilometer markers and at the time of Indonesia independence as a marker of the rights of independence and ideology of Indonesian, the Chinese shopping district that had been formed since the 12th century, the former regent office building was a Dutch Resident office which later became Kupang regency government office, Selam area was known for the existence of a guesthouse and shop supplying basic needs and several other buildings that had historical value.

Even people or leaders also influenced the naming of places in Kupang Old Town, which is well known today. The name Kupang comes from the central figure who led the Helong Kingdom namely Raja Koen and the protective fence named Pan. This name was later recited by the community as Koenpan and until now the name Kupang was used not only to show an old city area, but more broadly to show a city that is now became the capital of East Nusa Tenggara Province. Some places whose names are influenced by the presence of figures and ethnicities are Fontein, Bonipoi, and Selam. Besides that power in the past apparently also influenced ethnic groupings. The boundary that was created to separate indigenous peoples, foreign nations and transmigrant communities seems to still be seen today. The Chinese inhabited the area around the river estuary and along the coastline with land-oriented style buildings and transmigrant communities who brought in from Solor forms a place called Kampung Solor located in the eastern part of the Old City of Kupang. The population of Solor also occupies an area in the southern part of Selam and is usually referred to as a Muslim route. Selam was occupied by people who used to work as Dutch stewards, and other ethnicities such as the ethnic Sabu occupied historical buildings that were already empty.

This research found an argument that political power greatly influenced the direction of the development of a city. The power of figures and development policies carried out in the past and present will determine the face of the city in the future. A city with character shows the success and glory of a leader that has happened before. Moreover, this research can be developed in other regions that have a long history or this research can also be developed to be broader by looking at other aspects such as culture which contribute to the formation and organization of spatial.

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