WOLIO FORTRESS, BUTON:
BETWEEN ITS DEFENSE AND SYMBOLIC FUNCTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Wolio Fortress is a heritage of Buton Sultanate that functioned as its centre of government and capital city. Several researchers who conducted research on Wolio Fortress did not discuss its defense and symbolic aspects, leaving a knowledge gap in them. Therefore, the discussion of Wolio Fortress should be broadened. It is now thought that a fortress may provide information not only on its function as a defense facility, but also on the social, political, economic, and ideological life when it was being built. The research methodology consisted of three stages, i.e. data collection, data processing, and data interpretation. Data were collected by describing Wolio fortress in terms of its materials, shapes, and sizes, including relics in the fortress. The collected data were processed by identifying and classifying them into data related to the fortress’s defense function and its symbolic function. The data interpretation was conducted by synthesizing archaeological and historical data. Results of the research show that besides its main function as a defense fortress, Wolio Fortress had a symbolic function. The defense function refers to the concept of the defense of Buton Sultanate, the key parts of the fortress, i.e. its bastions and cannons, and its strategic position from the defense point of view. The symbolic function encompasses ideological indoctrination through the fortress’s plan, its function as a city landmark, its function as the border between the nobles and the lower class’ settlements, and its sturdiness and greatness representing the military power and economic prosperity of the sultanate.

KEYWORDS: Wolio Fortress, Defense Function, Symbolic Function

INTRODUCTION

A fortress, in several definitions, is always said to be a main building or facility in a defense system. Hooq (1991), for example, stated that a fortress constitutes the main defense facility between two parties at a war. A fortress demarcates the defensive party from the offensive party. Further, Kamps et al. (1999) classified fortresses into defensive fortresses, barrier fortresses, protective fortresses, and tower fortresses. From the classification, it seems that the main reference is the function of a fortress as a defense facility.

Over time, the study of fortresses has been broadened. It is considered that fortresses provide information not only on their defense function, but also on the social, political, economic, and ideological life when they were constructed. It is seen that their walls not only became a protective facility, but also separated different social classes. Those living inside were the elite, while those living outside were the lower class. A large and majestic fortress
was often used to convey the majesty of its “owner” to the outsiders (Muth, et al B: 131).

Research on the symbolic function of a fortress or research that does not see a fortress as merely a defense facility has actually been conducted by several scholars. David Bulbeck (1998), for example, studied the fortresses of Gowa Kingdom. Results of his research show that the existence of the kings’ tombs inside the fortresses indicates that they were the centres of spiritual power. Novida Abbas (2001) carried out research on colonial fortresses on Java, and Syahruddin Mansur (2014) studied colonial fortresses in the Moluccas. They concluded that the main objective of constructing fortresses was obtaining economic benefits. The colonial rulers built fortresses to control those territories and protect the spice route.

Silke Müth, Eric Laufer Christiane Brasse, and Mitwirkung von Mike Schnelle (2016) conducted a research on the fortresses of Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. They concluded that robust defensive fortresses were often meant to convey to the outsiders about a majestic city, power, and legitimacy. Simon Halama (2018), conducting a research in Mesopotamia, Iraq, concluded that the naming of the fortress gates after gods was intended to remind the community of the ideologies that they had to uphold. A strong ideological understanding would necessarily strengthen the legitimacy of the kings as stated in the concept of god-king.

Some researchers or institutions studied fortresses in the former territories of Buton Sultanate, including Wolio Fortress. Rustam Awat (2006) studied Wolio Fortress from the perspective of Cultural Resource Management. He suggested an alternative for the management of Wolio Fortress. Puslit Arkenas (the National Centre for Archaeological Research) conducted a research on the ceramic artifacts at Sorowolio Fortress in 2005. They concluded that the fortress not only functioned as a defense facility, but also was strongly connected to the social and economic aspects of the community’s daily activities. Since 2011, the Makassar Cultural Heritage Preservation Office has conducted a research on the fortresses on Muna Island, Buton Island and Binongko Island, all of which are the former territories of Buton Sultanate. The research focused more on preservation in the forms of preservation survey and zoning. In the book Negeri Seribu Benteng (2012), there are two articles discussing fortresses. The first article, written by Rustam Awat and Muhammad Nur, discusses the environmental wisdom and settlement pattern of the Buton Palace. They tried to reconstruct the settlement space inside the palace complex. It is shown that inside the palace there were spaces for settlements, defense facilities, government offices, economic activities, educational activities, and sacred rooms. The second article “Membedah Benteng Wakatobi”, written by Sumiman Udu, only describes Tindoi Fortress and some of the relics inside it.

All the researches on the fortresses in the former territories of Buton Sultanate still leave a gap in the symbolic aspect of the fortresses. There has been no record of the “messages” that the fortresses’ owners wanted to convey through the fortress’s plan, the fortress’s dimensions, and the naming of each of the fortress’s gates. Therefore, this article aims to fill such an information gap by finding out the symbols inherent in Wolio Fortress that were intended to convey to the internal and external community, besides investigating the defense function of Wolio Fortress.

A fortress and its ornaments often have various symbols intended to convey. For instance, the Aurellian Walls in Rome are large and majestic, reflecting the philosophy, literature, and arts of Western Europe. Their robust design was intended to convey to the
outsiders about a majestic city, power, and legitimacy. The naming of the gates after gods asserted the kingdom’s theological legitimacy. A strong ideological understanding by the people strengthened the legitimacy of the rulers (Orr, 2010: 6-9; Silke Müth, Eric Laufer Christiane Brasse, and Mitwirkung von Mike Schnelle, 2016: 131-132; Halama, 2018: 85-87).

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In investigating the defense and symbolic functions of Wolio Fortress, this research, in line with the procedure proposed by James Deetz (1967), comprised data collection, data processing, and data interpretation.

The data were collected through three steps. The first step is literature study, which reviewed writings about fortresses in general and Wolio Fortress in particular, books on the concepts of fortresses, and reports describing Wolio Fortress. The second step is the collection of field data in the form of description on the dimensions, materials, and forms of the fortress’ walls. Data on the buildings inside the fortress directly related to Wolio Fortress were also collected. Such data include the names of *kampung* inside the fortress. The third step is interview. Interviews were conducted to shed light on who could and could not live in the fortress and the names of every bastion and gate at the walls of Wolio Fortress.

Data processing was conducted by identifying and classifying parts of the fortress into defense and symbolic indicators. The defense indicators reflect the concept of the defense of Buton Sultanate and cover the presence of bastions and cannons at the fortress and their strategic locations. The symbolic indicators are the parts of the fortress that are not related to the fortress’s defense function. These indicators cover the fortress’s shapes and dimensions, the naming of the fortress’s parts, the groups of people who were allowed to live inside the fortress, and the buildings used for non-defense purposes inside the fortress.

Data interpretation was conducted by synthesizing archaeological, literature, and interview data. Results of the synthesis shed light on the defense and symbolic functions of Wolio Fortress.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Wolio Fortress, also known as *Benteng Keraton Buton* (Buton Palace Fortress), is located on Sultan Labuke Street, *Kelurahan* Melai, Murhum Sub-district, the City of Bau-Bau, Southeast Sulawesi. Astronomically it lies at the coordinates of 5, 21˚ - 5, 30 SL and 122, 30˚ - 122, 45˚ EL. Wolio Fortress, which is often considered as the largest fortress in the world, has a circumference of 2,740 metres. The fortress’s plan is adjusted with the flat area, so that it is not rectangular, unlike the plans of the Indonesian fortresses in general. Several records and oral traditions mention that the plan of Wolio Fortress resembles the Arabic letter “Dal”. The walls follow the contours of the land. Even though they seem to be levelled, the height of the walls varies between 2 and 8 metres due to the rugged landscape on which the walls stand. The thickness of the walls varies between 1 and 2 metres. The walls are made of coral as the main basic material. The fortress was built by piling the coral using soft limestone as the cement.
Benteng Keraton Buton has 12 gates (lawu) and 16 bastions (baluara). Every gate was named after the controller or his title. Those 12 gates are Lawana Rakia, Lawana Lanto, Lawana Labunta, Lawana Kampebuni, Lawana Waborobo, Lawana Detu, Lawana Kalau, Lawana Wajo/Bariya, Lawana Burukene/Tanailandu, Lawana Melai/Baau, Lawana Lantongau/Sambali, and Lawana Gundu-Gundu. Meanwhile, the bastions (baluara) were named after the kampung in which they are located, i.e.: Baluarana Gama, Baluarana Litao/Waolima, Baluarana Barangkatopa, Baluarana Wandailolo, Baluarana Baluwu, Baluarana Dete, Baluarana Kalau, Baluarana Wajo/Bariya, Baluarana Tanailandu, Baluarana Melai/Baau, Baluarana Lantongau, Baluarana Gundu-Gundu, Baluarana Siompu, Baluarana Rakia, Baluarana Godona Batu and Baluarana Godona Oba. In particular, Baluarana Godona Batu and Baluarana Godona Oba had the functions of a bastion and arsenal.

*Figure 1.* Plan of Wolio Fortress (*Source*: BPCB Makassar)

*Photo 1.* Baluara Melai, *Documentation*: BCPB Sulsel
Wolio Fortress was constructed about the 16\textsuperscript{th} century until the 17\textsuperscript{th} century by the Buton people during the reign of Sultan Buton IV, Sultan La Elangi, also known as Dayanu Ikhsanuddin (1597-1631 AD). The construction was completed during the reign of Sultan Buton VI, Sultan La Buke or Gafur Wadudu (1632-1645 AD). It used to be the centre of the government and all the sultanate’s activities. Today, inside the fortress, there are some community settlements and government offices.

**DISCUSSION**

**Wolio Fortress as a Defensive Fortress**

Buton was a part of the main maritime route when the spice trade peaked in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century. As a part of the main route of the spice trade, Buton Sultanate faced two major threats, Gowa Kingdom and Ternate Sultanate. Gowa Kingdom, under the rule of Sultan Alauddin (1561-1638), embraced the doctrine of *mare liberum* (the freedom of the seas) and expanded its territory to control the trade route. Besides obtaining economic advantages, the control over the trade route asserted the territory of the kingdom (Poelinggomang, 2002: 32). At the same time, Ternate Sultanate, under the reign of Sultan Baabullah (1570-1584), also expanded its territory to establish its hegemony in the Eastern Region. Ternate conquered not only the areas around it, but also islands in the Moluccas, North Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, and Nusa Tenggara.

To counter those threats, particularly in the control over the maritime route, Buton Sultanate implemented four layered defense systems, i.e. *barata*, *matana sorumba*, *patalimbona*, and *bhisa patamiana* (Achmad, 2016: 114-115; Aspin, 2019: 70-71; Zuhdi, 1996: 56-58). In particular, *patalimbona* was a defense system involving four main *kampungs*, which were the earliest *kampungs* of Buton as a state, namely Gundu-gundu, Peropa, Baluwu, and Barangkatopa. They are encircled by the stone walls called Wolio Fortress.

In the concept of defense of Buton Sultanate, especially the concept of *Patalimbona*, Wolio Fortress was one of the key defense elements. The walls protected four *kampungs* inside the fortress. They became the barriers to prevent enemies from entering the stronghold and the power centre.
Figure 2. The Concept of Defense of Patalimbona

Photo 2. The bastion that functioned as an arsenal

Documentation: BPCB Sulsel
As a defensive fortress, Wolio Fortress has 16 bastions (baluara). There are two types of bastions in Wolio Fortress, namely rectangular and circular bastions. There are 11 rectangular bastions and 5 circular bastions. They were used to spy the approaching enemies and fire at them. Furthermore, two circular bastions functioned as an arsenal. The north wall, which faces directly towards the sea and the maritime route, has most bastions. The east wall, facing the valley, only has three bastions. As a defensive fortress, Wolio Fortress has cannons at its bastions. At least, there are 39 cannons at Wolio Fortress. They are placed at the bastions, gates, and the yard of the fortress’ mosque. The cannons date back to 1658-1776 and have the monogram of VOC. Their lengths vary from 168 cm to 315 cm.

The location of the fortress on a hillside at 375 metres above sea level is defensively strategic. It allowed the monitoring and oversight of the maritime route on the north of the fortress, including the threats coming from the sea. The threats were from Ternate and Gowa, which wanted to control the maritime route. The other regular threat, according to the oral tradition of the Buton people, was the pirates from Tobelo. Hence, considering that those three threats were all from the sea, the high position of the fortress was strategic, enabling the monitoring of the sea. From the defense point of view, another advantage of the location of Wolio Fortress is that it is encircled by a steep cliff. Enemies would find it hard to approach the walls to attack the stronghold directly. The steep cliff was the first shield to prevent the enemies from approaching the fortress.

The consideration of the location of Wolio Fortress as a defense facility was in line with the opinion of Huey (2010) that the location of a fortress should meet the following criteria: 1) it is near a narrow river; 2) it cannot be shot from a higher place; 3) large ships cannot approach it; 4) it can be used to watch distant places and is not blocked by trees or hills; 5) if possible, it is encircled by watery trenches; and 6) it is not located on sandy soil (Huey, 2010: 152).
The Symbolic Aspect of Wolio Fortress

Islam came to Buton in the first half of the 16th century, having influences on various aspects of life in Buton Kingdom. In terms of politics, there was a tendency to make Islam the official religion. In 1538, on the approval of the Mufti of Turkey Sultanate, the kingdom officially became Buton Sultanate. It was marked by the accession of the 6th King of Buton, Lakilaponto, to the throne as the first sultan of Buton with the title of Sultan Murhum.

The transformation of a kingdom into a sultanate can also be seen in the structure of government. There was the additional office of the council dealing with religious affairs. The council was led by Lakina as the Minister of Religious Affairs. When Buton was still a kingdom, there were only two large groups in the structure, i.e. the government council and the customary council. During the period of the sultanate, it had three large groups: the government council, the customary council, and the religious council. The third group was the Religious Council or Sarana Hukumu. It dealt with and watched the implementation of Islamic teachings in daily life and worship. Sarana Hukumu was led by Lakina Agama and its members were imam, khatib, bilal, and mukimu.

The stipulation of Martabat Tujuh as the law of the sultanate increasingly asserted that Buton was an Islamic state. At that time, the monarchy came to an end. The sultans no longer held their positions due to their royal birth, but elected by the Siolimbona Council. The criteria to be a sultan strongly reflected Islamic teaching, i.e. Siddiq (truthfulness), Tabliq (conveying useful words), Amanah and Fathonah (Zuhdi, 1996: 24-25).

The assertion of Buton Sultanate as an Islamic state is manifested in the plan of Wolio Fortress. Some records and oral traditions mention that the plan of Wolio Fortress resembles the Arabic letter “Dal”. This indicates that the sultanate was inspired by Islam in running its government. The sultans were the heads of state and religious leaders according to the characters of sultans stated in Martabat Tujuh. The oral traditions saying that the plan of Wolio Fortress resembles “Dal” played a role in reminding the people about the state ideology, necessarily strengthening the legitimacy of the Sultans.
The settlement inside Wolio Fortress, which was the fortress of the sultanate centre, could be inhabited by only two groups of the Buton people, i.e. the groups of Kaomu and Walaka. Both groups were the nobles and descendents of the founders of Buton Kingdom. The group of Kaomu were the nobles who could be elected Sultan Buton and held high offices in the government. The group of Walaka held offices in the Customary Council of Siolimbona. One of their duties was to elect Sultan Buton. The third group was papara or the lower class who could not live inside the fortress. They lived in several kampungs around Wolio Fortress.

The walls encircling the nobles’ settlement can at least be interpreted in three ways. Firstly, if the power centre was considered to be the capital city, the walls of Wolio Fortress were landmarks of the city or where the urban community lived. The urban community in the context of Buton Sultanate was the community of nobles. Secondly, the walls separated the settlements of the nobles from the lower class. The walls separated the settlement of those holding the authority from the areas inhabited by the lower class. Thirdly, the walls separated the groups of Kaomu and walaka from the group of papara. The groups of kaomu and walaka were more civilized, spoke the Wolio language, and had a clear place of origin and clear ancestors. They had their own rules and norms in daily life. The group of papara were less civilized, they did not speak the Wolio language, and their origins were unknown (Rudyansjah, 1997 in Tahara, 2010: 30).

The walls of Wolio Fortress were robust and made of the pile of coral and soft limestone as the cement. The heights vary between 2 metres and 8 metres and the thicknesses are between 1 and 2 metres. The fortress is often called the largest one in the world with a circumference of 2,740 metres. Internally, the robust walls had a psychological impact on the inhabitants. They felt safe, stable, and even intellectually and spiritually comfortable. Outside the walls were dangers from the jungle, i.e. its animals – all of which were threats to the peace of an urban life (Orr, 2010: 10).
Externally, according to Muth et al. B (2016), a robust defensive fortress conveys a message about a majestic city to the outsiders. In the context of this article, Wolio Fortress was used by Buton Sultanate to show that it was rich and prosperous. A robust defensive fortress was the symbol of military power. The monumental aspects of the fortress demonstrated military power, economic power, and demarcation (Muth et al B, 2016: 134).

To build such a large fortress, Buton Sultanate certainly needed vast natural, human, and economic resources. However, as illustrated by the Governor General of VOC, Gerard Reynst, in his letter, the sultanate in the 16th century was a poor country and trading with the sultanate would not provide economic benefits (Schrool, 2003: 112). The territory was arid and full of coral and sand. The only rice producer was Kabaena Island. Unlike the Moluccas, Buton had no spices, which were the main trade commodity in the 16th century. Its trade commodity in the 16th and 17th centuries was only slaves. Most of the slaves in maritime cities were obtained from trades or conquests. The small states in what is now known as the east Indonesia were the main exporters of slaves from the 16th century to the 18th century (Reid, 2014: 152). The slaves traded in Buton Sultanate came from Kalisusu, Kabaena, Muna, Poleang, and Rumbia (Vonk, 1939:21-23 in Zuhdi, 2010: 45-46).

Besides the reminder of the state ideology, a settlement demarcation, a city landmark, and a symbol of economic and military power, Wolio Fortress was the symbol of the Buton Sultanate’s control over territories it ruled. The uses of certain names for the kampungs inside and around Wolio Fortress were intended to convey that they were parts of Buton Sultanate. The same can be seen in the naming of the bastions at Fort Rotterdam, Makassar. Bastion Bone, Bastion Buton, Bastion Bacan, and Bastion Mandarsyah were named after the closest allies of VOC in its control of the spice trade route in East Indonesia. Such naming was a form of control and recognition of those territories and prevented rebellions from being launched by those territories.

| No | Name of the Bastion | Shape   | Function       |
|----|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| 1  | Baluarana Gama      | Rectangular | Defense     |
| 2  | Baluarana Litao     | Rectangular | Defense     |
| 3  | Baluarana Barangkatopa | Rectangular | Defense     |
| 4  | Baluarana Wandalolo  | Circular  | Defense       |
| 5  | Baluarana Baluwu     | Rectangular | Defense     |
| 6  | Baluarana Dete       | Circular  | Defense       |
| 7  | Baluarana Kalau      | Circular  | Defense       |
| 8  | Baluarana Godona Oba | Circular  | Arsenal       |
| 9  | Baluarana Waberongalu | Circular  | Defense       |
| 10 | Baluarana Tanailandu | Circular  | Defense       |
| 11 | Baluarana Melai      | Rectangular | Defense     |
| 12 | Baluarana Godona Batu | Rectangular | Arsenal     |
| 13 | Baluarana Lantongau  | Rectangular | Defense     |
| 14 | Baluarana Gundu-Gundu | Rectangular | Defense     |
| 15 | Baluarana Siompu     | Rectangular |             |
| 16 | Baluarana Rakia      | Circular  |             |

Table 1. Names of the Bastions/Baluara in Wolio Fortress
Each gate or Lawa at Wolio Fortress was named after the nearest kampung or the title of the gate controller. Such naming was a form of recognition by the state of the territories and its control over them. This was also the case with Rome Fortress. This fortress has many gates linking it with suburbs, which were parts of the Rome Empire outside the fortress. Such positioning of the gates became a form of control by the empire over its territories outside the fortress (Orr, 2010: 7).

| Number | Name of the Gate (Lawa) |
|--------|------------------------|
| 1      | Lawana Rakia           |
| 2      | Lawana Lanto           |
| 3      | Lawana Labunta         |
| 4      | Lawana Kampebuni       |
| 5      | Lawana Waborobo        |
| 6      | Lawana Dete            |
| 7      | Lawana Kalau           |
| 8      | Lawana Bariah          |
| 9      | Lawana Tanailandu      |
| 10     | Lawana Melai           |
| 11     | Lawana Lantogau        |
| 12     | Lawana Bundu-Bundu      |

Table 2. Names of the Gates at Wolio Fortress

The suffix na in Baluarana and Lawana means ownership. For instance, Baluarana Baluwu means the bastion of Kampung Baluwu, and Lawana Dete means the gate of Kampung Dete.

Besides the plan with some symbolic values of Islam, Wolio Fortress has some features or buildings which become Islamic symbols, such as a mosque and tombs. The mosque indicates that the fortress was an Islamic one and that the people living inside it were Muslims and worshipped in the mosque. The Wolio Fortress Mosque, or Masigi Ogena, not only was a place of worship, but also played a key role in politics. Several records say that Masigi Ogena was often used by Sultan Buton to hold special meetings. Inside the mosque, there is Maqsura, a place which only Sultan Buton could use to do some contemplation. The mosque has two other features, namely Batu Gandagi and Batu Popua, where the Sultans ascended the throne. They are located right in front of the mosque.

Another important feature which is no less important in the context of Buton Sultanate as an Islamic state is the Islamic tombs inside the fortress. There are at least 29 tombs and cemeteries at the fortress’s central part, edge and bastions.
| Number | Name of the Tomb | Location |
|--------|------------------|----------|
| 1      | Makam Tua 1      | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 2      | Makam Labaluwu   | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 3      | Makam Sangia Lampenano | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 4      | Makam Tua 4      | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 5      | Makam Sultan Sakiuuddin | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 6      | Makam Lakina Laompo (maa waopi) | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 7      | Makam Sultan Murhum | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 8      | Makam Tua 8      | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 9      | Makam Sultan Sirullah | Dete Neighborhood |
| 10     | Makam Sultan Zaimuddin | Dete Neighborhood |
| 11     | Makam Karaeng Tunipasulu | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 12     | Makam Tua 12     | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 13     | Makam Sultan Kaimuddin | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 14     | Makam Sultan Kaimuddin dan Sapati Manjawa | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 15     | Makam Sultan Kaimuddin II (La Sangaji) | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 16     | Makam Sultan Dayanu Kaimuddin | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 17     | KM. Sultan Alimuddin (jara ijo) | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 18     | KM. Sultan Nasiruddin | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 19     | KM. Sultan Kafiuddin | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 20     | KM. Kolaka Sapati | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 21     | KM. Lebe Pangulu | Baluwu Neighborhood |
| 22     | KM. S. Kaimuddin and S. Dayanu Asraruddin | Peropa Neighborhood |
| 23     | KM. Ogena Mamundo | Dete Neighborhood |
| 24     | KM. Mainunggu Miwariamu* | Dete Neighborhood |
| 25     | KM. Tua 1 | Dete Neighborhood |
| 26     | KM. Sultan Buton (Kamali Kara) | Dete Neighborhood |
| 27     | KM. Juru Tulis Manujuana | Dete Neighborhood |
| 28     | KM. Mujina Kalau | Dete Neighborhood |
| 29     | KM. Bonto Ogena /Sultan Saiful Anai | Kelurahan Baadia |

**Table 3. Names of the Tombs and Cemeteries at Wolio Fortress**

As shown on table 3, out of the 26 tombs, half of them are the tombs of sultans of Buton. One of the tombs is the tomb of the first sultan of Buton, Sultan Murhum. Some other tombs and cemeteries are for the sultanate officials, such as Bonto Ogena, Kolaka Sapati, and Lakina Laompo. All the named tombs are the tombs of Kaomu and Walaka, the nobles of Buton.

The existence of the tombs at Wolio Fortress reflect two things. Firstly, they indicated and asserted that Wolio Fortress and Buton Sultanate were Islamic. Secondly, only the nobles could be buried inside the fortress. It means that there were spaces dedicated for the sultans and sultanate officials inside the fortress and there were spaces dedicated for _papara_. The fortress and the settlement inside it were dedicated for the holders of power.
CONCLUSION

Wolio Fortress or Palace Fortress was the centre of government and the capital city of Buton Sultanate constructed from the 16th century to the 17th century. It is located on a hillside 375 metres above sea level. With the circumference of 2,740 meters, it is often called the largest fortress in the world. Its walls follow the contours of the hillside with the height of 2 – 8 metres and the thickness of 1 – 2 metres.

In the concept of the defense of Buton Sultanate, Wolio Fortress was the main defense facility to protect the centre of power and stronghold of the sultanate. Its role as a defensive fortress was supported by fortress technology, its key parts (bastions and cannons), and its strategic position. Wolio Fortress could be used to monitor threats from afar and it was out of the enemy’s reach.

Besides its defense function, Wolio Fortress had internal and external symbolic functions. In the internal sense, it strengthened the people’s grasp of the Islamic ideology, having an impact on the legitimacy of the sultan’s power. It also separated the nobles from the lower class. The bastions were named after kampungs, symbolizing the control and power of Wolio Fortress over those territories.

Externally, Wolio Fortress and the mosque and tombs inside it conveyed a message about the ideology of Buton Sultanate as an Islamic state to the outsiders. The fortress symbolized the military power of the sultanate against two major threats, i.e. Gowa Kingdom and Ternate Sultanate. The sturdy and large fortress represented the political stability and economic prosperity of Buton Sultanate.

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