

JAPAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS UTILIZATION PLAN - LITTLE TOKYO IN HALMAHERA DURING WORLD WAR II

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Abstract:

Kao, which used to be called Little Tokyo, was one of the important bases for Japanese. Kao was the main choice so it was used as the main base for the Japanese Navy in the Maluku Islands, also supported by the topography of the area which suited their war strategy. Using qualitative methods based on primary sources, reports from BPK Region XXI (Cultural Preservation Office), results were obtained in identifying archaeological remains, not only on land but also at sea. Cultural Resource Management can be applied to this area. Through utilization efforts, it is hoped that it will have a positive impact on the surrounding community. Therefore, as a first step, a plan was made to utilize Japanese archaeological remains from World War II in Kao.

Keywords:

Kao, World War II, Japanese, Utilization, Cultural Resource Management.

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1. Introduction

World War II (1939-1945) initially occurred in Europe but since Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the war spread to the Pacific and showed a different pattern compared to World War I. World War I is considered to still be a classic form of warfare, namely warships against warships. This is different from World War II, especially the Pacific War, which prioritized sea and air areas. Aircraft were used to destroy enemy warships. In the modern world, the victorious country has an impressive navy, but this must also be balanced with great air force power (Hikmah, 2012, p. 1). *"Everyone was on the front line and that transformed the world. World War II made the modern world what it is more than any single event in history. It changed the technology we use, changed art and literature and the world's legal, international, and political structures- everything*

from nations to families.” (Moshenska in *Archaeological Institute of America*, 2011, p. 26).

Japan as one of the main players in World War II, left various traces of battle in the Pacific including in Indonesia. In historical records, Morotai Island was once a Japanese base before being successfully captured by the allies. Japan arrived in Morotai in early 1944, but in late 1944, General Douglas MacArthur appointed Morotai as an American air and sea defense base (Smith in Handoko, Godlief, & Alputila, 2018, p. 70). Morotai and its surroundings became a contest because it was one of the main accesses close to the Philippines, this also encouraged the surrounding areas to join the defense line.

It turned out that MacArthur had his own strategy for choosing a battle area with Japan. The first consideration, the desired area must be between Vogelkop (Papua) and Mindanao. Second, the area must be reachable by medium bomber fighter aircraft from the base location in Sansapor (now part of West Papua). Third, a large area was needed for the development of *an airdrome* and space for the navy. Finally, the area was not too strongly controlled by Japan. These considerations narrowed down to 2 locations, namely Morotai and North Halmahera. Halmahera was ultimately not chosen by the general because he did not want to spend a lot of resources on an area that was firmly held by Japan. His spies had reported that Japan had placed a strong garrison in Halmahera. Only 25 miles from the northern tip of Halmahera, at that time it had been decided that Morotai would be seized by the Allies from the hands of Japan (Smith, 1996, pp. 450–451).

In World War II, no area could be categorized as the only most important area. There were at least 4 areas that could be categorized as important if related to war strategy. The first was Kao in Halmahera, the Bukidnon highlands in Mindanao, Tarakan in Kalimantan and Minahasa in Sulawesi. Tarakan became important because of the presence of oil. As for Kao and Minahasa because of their strategic location and position. For Japan, Kao was a good place to accommodate all troops. The existence of low and flat plains supported the creation of warplane runways and two steep peninsulas in Kao Bay became natural defenses (Anonim, 1944, p. II–38).

Actually, in North Halmahera Regency, there are many Japanese relics scattered such as in the Samuda, Kira, Tobelo, Duma and Galela areas, but in this article, the author will only discuss the remains in Kao. So the problem to be studied in this article is what are the remains of World War II belonging to Japan in Kao and how is the plan for the potential of these remains utilized? The novelty of this article is the formation of steps for utilizing cultural heritage in Kao because so far it has only been limited to identification without any future plans for what the results of the data collection will be developed into. The purpose of this writing is to design one design for utilizing archaeological remains.

2. Method

The qualitative method used in this writing is the basis for researching community life, history, behavior, organizational functionalization, social movements, or kinship relationships (Straus & Corbin in Murdiyanto, 2020, p. 19). Qualitative is chosen to develop understanding, help define and interpret something from the events that occur.

Strengthened by literature studies, the author first collected various data from the North Maluku Cultural Heritage Conservation Office (now BPK Region XXI), books and printed articles and also those that can be downloaded online. Although the main data sought was regarding the Japanese battle in Kao, reference sources from the Allies (one of which was from America) were used by the author to understand the two warring parties in World War II. After the data was collected, it was then sorted out according to what was needed for further analysis. First, an identification of cultural heritage was carried out, then a utilization plan was made that was in accordance with the distribution of the cultural heritage. The conclusion will later be obtained from the results of the exploration design that is in accordance with the characteristics of the distribution of cultural heritage in Kao. So far, data on the physical archaeological remains in Kao have not been analyzed holistically to show how important Kao's position was in the past, what were the specific reasons why Kao and its surroundings were fought over. This has attracted the author's attention to be studied in more depth.

3. Results and Discussion

War is not only supported by equipment but the most important thing is the strategy that is prepared. Japan during World War II had a strategy that was divided into two, the first was the offensive strategy of the center by controlling Southeast Asia through attacks and controlling the territory (Eposito in Bachri, Hasan, & Mulyana, 2023). The second was an active defense strategy by creating outer defense perimeter protection that guarded strategic areas that were considered important by Japan in Southeast Asia (Ness, 2014, p. 46). This is related to the basic military doctrine that they adhere to, to carry out attacks rather than defense. Defense is still carried out if the enemy is much stronger both in terms of the number of troops and equipment. The active defense type is the main choice, not passive with the aim of draining strength and repelling attacks (Takahashi 2008; Steusser 1987 in Abrianto, 2022, p. 49). Enemy troops must be attacked and destroyed before landing or right after (Marshall, 1994, p. 140).

As described at the beginning of the article, one of the areas used as a Japanese base was in Kao, North Halmahera Regency, North Maluku Province. As part of the strategy, the Japanese Empire had long ago placed a spy in Kao, namely Fujiu Egawa with the rank of major who disguised himself as a cat's whisker entrepreneur. Fujiu had a father who was the owner of a large shop in Ternate. Oddly enough, they had disappeared before the outbreak of the Pacific War and returned after Japan began to control one region after another in the archipelago (Amal, 2010, p. 270).

It seems that only Fujiu Egawa's disguise was revealed. However, if you look at how Japan had prepared to find an area to be used as a base, there should have been spies in other areas who carried out undercover orders like Egawa. In addition, together with Fujiu, other spies had actually conducted reconnaissance long before Japan launched the attack by bringing in warships disguised as fishing boats, then measuring the coastline to the depth of the sea for the process of determining the landing of troops (Hasan, 2023). Fujiu also had the task of being a translator (R Hasim, 2022, p. 106). Not stopping there, Fujiu also apparently prepared a *heiho troop* formed from former KNIL soldiers. *Heiho*, also known as the Yellow Troops from the North, was then divided into

2 groups, the first was sent to Ambon and the second was sent with the Japanese army to Kao (Rustam Hasim, 2023, p. 2).

Since successfully controlling North Maluku, the Japanese Navy (AL) built defense facilities in Kao. Not long after, this area became the headquarters of the Japanese Navy in the Maluku Islands region. It is estimated that there were 62,000 Navy troops and 300 fighter planes. Airfields and shipyards have also been built in Kao. Japan's land and sea defenses were finally destroyed after being bombarded by the allies who occupied Morotai (Muller in Amal, 2010, p. 271).

This is the reason why Kao is called Little Tokyo. Of course, all the war facilities and other equipment must be paid for with sweat, tears and the lives of thousands of indigenous people. Romusha on Halmahera Island, especially in the Japanese defense base, left only 20% of the indigenous population after the war ended (Anonim, 2019, p. 6). Although decades have passed, there are still traces of the massive war that once took place in this area.

3.1. Identification of Cultural Heritage

The preparations made by Japan had been carefully calculated. In the Handbook on Japanese Military Forces, there is a brief description explaining the stages of basic military construction. First, a runway was built for fighter planes, then an anti-aircraft defense was built, followed by the construction of coastal defenses complete with weapons. Furthermore, various additional barriers such as tank barriers, trenches, pillboxes and bunkers were built. Natives were prohibited from helping in the construction of these defenses so that local residents were deployed to build runways, barracks and docks only. Japan was very careful in dividing the workforce that built their defenses. However, in its development, some natives were armed and asked to fight. Many were willing to fight but there were also those who hid in shelters and eventually surrendered (Marshall, 1994, p. 139). Using reports from the activities of the North Maluku Conservation Office (now, the Cultural Conservation Office Region XXI), the following is a description of the results of the identification of archaeological remains in Little Tokyo.

3.1.1. Airfield

The airport became one of the vital facilities to support World War II. The construction of the airport in Kao by Japan supported the landing and flight of approximately 300 fighter planes to fight the allies. There are not many historical records that discuss the initial condition of this airport. What is certain is that since Japan experienced defeat in 1945, this airport has been neglected. Several decades later, on the initiative of the former Kao Sub-district Head, Dudi Kadato in 1972, an airport was built with a trial landing using a CN 235 aircraft, which was then donated to the Ministry of Transportation in 1989 (Entje, 2021, p. 4).

Although Kao was the headquarters of the Japanese Navy, to defend the territory, the ground and air forces also worked together. By using active defense, the Japanese Air Force (JAF) provided cover fire, reconnaissance before and after landing, attacks on enemy aircraft, directing fire for ships and providing smoke screens. The JAF also landed

troops as close as possible to allied airfields to make them easy to attack (Ness in Bachri et al., 2023, p. 159).

3.1.2. Bunker

One of the Japanese defense buildings that can be found in Indonesia is a bunker. In Kao, a number of bunkers were also found, including:

1) Kao Bunker 1

The bunker located in Kusu Lovra Village is now inaccessible because it is buried under soil and sand. The bunker facing east, facing directly to the beach is thought to have functioned to spy on enemies arriving from the coast. Until now, what can be observed is the existence of 1 door (buried) and 1 surveillance hole with a wall thickness of about 27 cm.

2) Kao Bunker 2

This structure is located on the coast of Kusu Lovra Village in a severely damaged condition. The bunker made of concrete leaves a broken structure with several iron frames. The wall thickness is about 34 cm.

3) Bunker Kao 3

Located not far from Bunker Kao 2, its condition is also badly damaged because it will be flooded when the tide is high. The walls are slightly thinner than Bunker Kao 2, which is only about 27 cm.

4) Kuabang Kao Airport Bunker

The bunker is located not far from the runway at Kuabang Kao Airport. The bunker utilizes the natural landscape of a small hill, the interior of which has been dug and cemented in a square shape.

Of the 4 bunkers, 3 can have their wall thickness measured. This is useful for classifying the type of bunker against weapon attacks. Based on the classification of Roger and Chair, (In Abrianto, 2022, p. 51), Bunker Kao 2, which is 34 cm thick, is included in class "C", estimated to be able to withstand 3 cm caliber bullets. While Bunker Kao 1 and 3 with a thickness of 27 cm may be included in category "D" which can only withstand machine gun fire and small fragments of cannon bullets with a minimum wall thickness of 7.8 cm. Actually, the quality of the bunkers made does not match the specifications. This is influenced by one of the quality of the materials and also the quality of the water, there is a high possibility of using sea water as a mixture. The number of bunkers on the coast indicates the number of enemy attacks from the sea that came using ships (Primantono & Pamungkas, 2017, p. 1460).

Based on Japanese military doctrine, bunkers were specifically built if the distance between the sea surface and the landing site was not too far. Usually there was a trench connecting 1 bunker with the surrounding bunkers and inside it had been prepared gun holes to attack the enemy. The bunker also became a shelter from air and artillery attacks. To disguise the existence of the bunker, this structure was covered by existing natural materials such as sand, soil and wood (Military Intelligence Division War Department, 1945, pp. 54–55).

3.1.3. Pillbox

According to reports North Maluku Cultural Heritage Conservation Office (2018, p. 4), there is a pillbox in Kusu Lovra Village on the coast not far from the Japanese shipwreck. The condition of this pillbox is still intact with a height of 1.53 m and a wall thickness of 35 cm.

3.1.4. Cannon

Artillery cannons can be found inside the Kuabang Kao Airport area in a temporary storage area. Initially, these cannons were located near the airport runway, with an average distance of only 50 meters. In connection with the runway expansion plan, these 4 cannons were moved to a safer position in 2011. This decision was negotiated by various parties so as not to disrupt flight activities but still within a safe radius of internal airport supervision. The cannons, which were initially installed intact, were actually divided into several parts when moved. The condition is also very concerning (North Maluku Cultural Heritage Conservation Office, 2017).



Figure 1. Temporary Storage Area for Artillery Cannons at Kuabang Airport.
Source: North Maluku BPCB (2018).

3.1.5. Japanese Shipwrecks

Based on the Report from North Maluku Cultural Heritage Conservation Office 2014 (pp. 21–22), namely the Survey of Potential Underwater Cultural Heritage in North Halmahera Regency, it was recorded that there were 2 shipwrecks in Kao District.

1) Kawimaru Shipwreck

The wreck is located at a depth of 0-7 meters above sea level with a length of 70-80 meters and a width of 7-10 meters. The ship can still be seen clearly and will be even clearer if the sea water recedes. Interestingly, there are still fragments of the anchor chain puller in the bow. Unfortunately, in addition to damage from natural factors, theft of ship parts by irresponsible people also made this ship no longer intact.

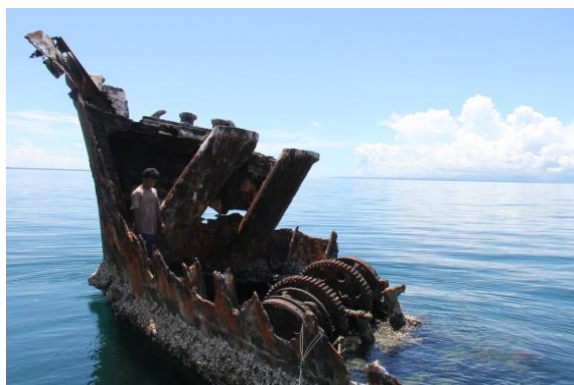


Figure 2. The part of the Kawimaru ship that is above the surface.

Source: North Maluku BPCB (2018).

2) Hawiamaru Shipwreck

Found in the same waters as Kawimaru, the condition of this ship is no less concerning. Indeed, some parts can still be seen but this ship has also had parts stolen by white iron hunters to be resold. The bow of the ship is above sea level while the rest has sunk to a depth of 8 meters. The length of the ship is around 70-75 meters with a width of 7-10 meters and now the inside is filled with coral reefs.

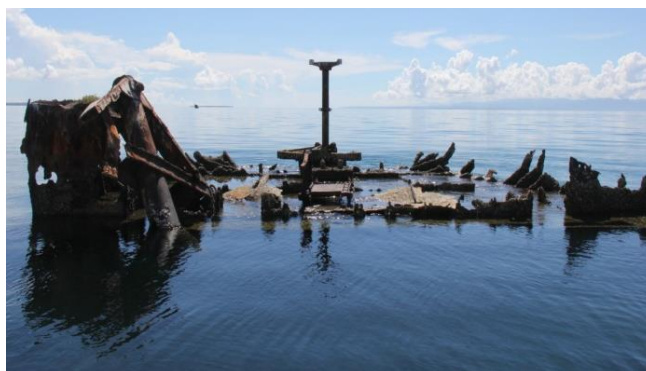


Figure 3. Condition of the Hawiamaru Ship which is not intact.

Source: North Maluku BPCB (2018).

As archaeological evidence that still remains, some of the findings mentioned above are part of Japan's defensive tactics to survive the Allied attacks in World War II, namely the *Interlocking Sector of Fire tactic*. This tactic allows heavy equipment weapons to fire towards land and sea, resulting in a combination of cannons, artillery and rifles against enemies landing on the beach. (Goldberg in Bachri et al., 2023, p. 162) In addition, bunker defenses are also positioned in such a way that they are not known by the enemy. To support defense, Japan makes maximum use of natural resources. For example, in the archipelago, Japan often uses coconuts as a camouflage support. Coconut leaves can be used to cover the roof while the inside of the trunk with a soft and porous texture is very strong to withstand impacts (Abrianto, 2022, p. 50).

All the efforts made by Japan to fight the Allies were not enough to make Japan win the battle. After Japan surrendered, the surviving troops were disarmed and ordered to destroy or intentionally damage their combat equipment. After that, they were gathered in Kao before being picked up by ships that would take them back to Japan (Amal, 2010, p. 276). The rest of the combat equipment, such as ships, were mostly sunk and damaged by Allied attacks and remain in their original positions to this day.

3.2. Exploration as an Effort to Utilize Little Tokyo

The archaeological remains in Little Tokyo have the potential for management to be utilized, following the regulations written in the Regulation of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia Concerning the National Register and Preservation of Cultural Heritage No. 1 of 2022: "Utilization of Cultural Heritage can be carried out by Any Person whose purpose is to carry out Management in Utilization for the interests of religion, social, education, science and technology, culture, and tourism."

The role of the community is very necessary in this condition because the community is the layer of owners and the closest to the existing cultural heritage. Moreover, the paradigm that is developing now is no longer *top-down*, but *bottom-up*. The community is not a complementary element but rather an element that is prioritized and included from the initial to the final management stage (Atalay, 2012). Cultural heritage management or *cultural resource management* must begin to be designed so that the existence of this cultural heritage is no longer a dead object but has benefits for the surrounding community. Identification of these archaeological remains can be one of the basis for creating a tour route that can be run by anyone in Kao, one of which is for tourist attractions.

Jelajah has several other names including *heritage trail* and *walking tour*. These three names have similarities such as the existence of routes, activities in historical areas, experiences gained by participants, and now its development is increasingly actively involving local communities and encouraging this activity to become a sustainable activity with the hope of bringing positive benefits. Trying to eliminate the rigid approach, Jelajah supports the provision of better education by directly showing the condition of a cultural heritage in real terms. The long-term goal is to create awareness among people so as not to increase damage with deliberate elements (Suwindiatrini, 2024, pp. 60–64).

Adapting one of the three exploration routes Small (In Saha et al., 2017, p. 100) and adjusting it to the current geographical conditions of Kao, a linear route was chosen as the most appropriate design. This linear route is in the form of a line, starting at one point, following the existing points and ending at the other end of the point. Some archaeological remains, especially those located in the Kuabang Airport area, certainly cannot be entered at any time, so access in and out at this point will be more difficult than at other points. While other archaeological remains are located around residential areas. This linear route will not only be on land but also at sea, considering that there are 2 ships located at sea and still connecting the historical context and archaeological remains from the past about the battle that took place in this area. Kao that has been prepared by Japan is not only on land but also in the air and sea so that the exploration

route designed concerns this. This linear route starts from the Airfield-Cannon-Bunker (one area at Kuabang Airport) then continues along the coast, where you can find Bunker Kao 1-3 and pillboxes, finally along the waters to see the Kawimaru and Hawiamaru Ships.



Figure 4. Little Tokyo Tour Plan Linear Route.

Source: Author Data Processing.

This tour planning is aligned with the development in the tourism sector, considering that Kao is actually rarely visited by tourists even though there is potential for cultural tourism that can be developed. So far, Kao has been a connecting area that has only been passed by people, because it is one of the alternatives connecting the Capital of North Halmahera Regency in Tobelo with the Capital of North Maluku Province in Sofifi. Although this planning does not immediately change Kao into a main destination, at least this area is better known because of its cultural history. People who cross Kao mostly take a short break, so this route is made short and does not take long but is still of high quality.

Before providing input for future development, observations were also made regarding current conditions to see where the shortcomings and advantages are. Observations were made by adapting the 4A components in the world of tourism consisting of *Attraction*, *Accessibility*, *Amenities* and *Ancillary Service*. Attractions are tourist attractions that are very diverse, fragmented and often have limited resources (Fletcher, Gilbert, Fyall, & Wanhill, 2018, p. 309). Accessibility is a link between tourist attractions. Amenities are supporting tourism facilities while Additional Services are provided by institutions, both government, private and community to support tourism activities.

The attraction that is to be highlighted in this tour is the remains of World War II belonging to Japan in Kao, North Halmahera Regency. Although there are Japanese

findings in other areas, what is to be highlighted is related to the past of Kao and the Japanese occupation.

Table 1. Japanese Archaeological Remains During World War II in Kao

No	Japanese Archaeological Remains of World War II in Kao
1.	Airfield
2.	Cannon
3.	Bunker at the Airport
4.	Pillbox
5.	Kao Bunker 1
6.	Kao Bunker 2
7.	Bunker Kao 3
8.	The Kawimaru Ship
9.	Hawiamaru Ship

Source: Data Processing Results from Various Reports from the North Maluku BPCB.

The accessibility in question consists of several components such as road access, transportation and directions. All of these points are within close proximity, especially in the same sub-district. To reach the 9 points described previously, 7 points are on land and 2 points are at sea. The availability of roads already exists but not all are paved, some of them are still in the form of footpaths or sand but that does not mean that this makes it difficult to reach. To see the remains of the ship, until now visitors can only see it from the coast in the distance. Regarding transportation on land, there is no public transportation that can be found other than rental cars or bringing your own vehicle. To reach all points on land, walking can also be an option for people who have more time. Sea transportation to see the 2 ships is also not easily found. The availability of directions is still very minimal apart from going to the airport, so to reach a certain location, visitors must first ask the local community.

The amenities or supporting facilities currently available in Kao can be said to be quite complete, although not in large numbers, including banks, lodging, convenience stores, pharmacies, cafes and restaurants, markets and places of worship (churches and mosques). Regarding institutions that provide additional services that can be linked to the archaeological remains of World War II in Kao, according to the author's observations, nothing related to this has been found. But if we discuss the government program that was once run to raise the name of Kao to a higher level, this happened during Sail Morotai 2012. Morotai is indeed famous because the Allies seized it from the Japanese during World War II, so on that occasion the Regional Government also discussed North Halmahera including Kao in it, which also has an important history and archaeological remains that still remain today.

4. Conclusion

There are 9 archaeological remains of World War II in Kao, namely the airfield, cannon, bunker, pillbox, Kao 1-3 bunker, Kawimaru Ship and Hawiamaru Ship. The purpose of writing this article is to use the results of the identification of cultural heritage for further use, especially in the form of a tour program design. So far, the data

has only been limited to identification and has not been developed to bring more benefits. As a cultural heritage, these archaeological remains can be used in the form of tours for tourism purposes. Based on the results of observations with the 4A concept in tourism, tour planning still requires a lot of development even though the potential is very interesting. Attractions are indeed available but accessibility must be improved to provide more convenience for visitors, especially in the sea transportation section. Until now there is no dock and boat rental on standby, maybe this is because there are no tourists who regularly visit. Amenities can be said to be sufficient to facilitate the needs of people visiting Kao. One important thing that must be realized immediately is additional services in the form of programs as a trigger for people's interest to start visiting Kao. This program should be designed to involve the community from start to finish and be sustainable, one of which is by providing training to the community so that they can become tour guides.

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