

BHARUGANO WUNA MUSEUM AS AN EFFORT TO PRESERVE AND REVITALIZE THE CULTURE OF THE MUNA COMMUNITY IN MUNA REGENCY

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Abstract:

A museum is one of the institutions that has an important role in preserving the cultural heritage of a community. The existence of a museum not only functions as a place to store historical objects but also as an information center, a learning medium, and a means of cultural recreation for the community. This study aims to understand the history of the establishment of the Bharugano Wuna Museum, the development of the Bharugano Wuna Museum, and its role in preserving the culture of the Muna community in Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. This research uses a historical research method which includes the stages of heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Data sources were obtained through interviews with museum managers, direct observation at the research location, as well as documentation studies of various written sources related to the Muna museum and culture. The research results show that the Bharugano Wuna Museum was originally a traditional Muna house built in 2017 and was then converted into a museum in 2018. This museum plays an important role as a center for cultural information, a medium for learning history, a facility for preserving cultural heritage, as well as a cultural tourism attraction in Muna Regency. In addition, community participation in contributing to museum collections shows the collective awareness of the community in preserving and maintaining local culture. Thus, the existence of the Bharugano Wuna Museum becomes one of the strategic efforts in maintaining the cultural identity of the Muna people while introducing regional cultural heritage to the wider public.

Keywords: Bharugano Wuna Museum, cultural preservation, Muna community

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1. Introduction

The Culture is one of the important elements that shape the identity of a society. From the perspective of social sciences and humanities, culture is understood as the entirety of systems of ideas, actions, and human creations that are acquired through the process of learning and passed down from generation to generation (Koentjaraningrat, 2015). Culture is not only reflected in the values and norms that live within society, but also in various forms of physical heritage such as artifacts, traditional buildings, and historical objects that represent the life journey of a community. Culture also becomes a symbol of collective identity that gives meaning to the social life of a society and strengthens the connection between the past, present, and future (Geertz, 1973). Therefore, efforts to preserve culture are crucial so that cultural heritage does not disappear or experience degradation amid the increasingly modern development of the times.

One of the institutions that has a strategic role in preserving and safeguarding cultural heritage is the museum. Museums not only function as places for storing historical objects but also as centers of information, education, research, and cultural recreation for the public. According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), a museum is a permanent, non-profit institution that serves society through activities of collecting, preserving, researching, communicating, and exhibiting the cultural heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study, and recreation (Museums, 2019). In modern museum studies, museums are also understood as social institutions that play a role in building the collective memory of society and strengthening the cultural identity of a community (Bennett, 1995). In this context, museums have an important role in introducing and instilling public awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage.

In Indonesia, museums play a vital role in supporting the preservation of the highly diverse local cultures. Each region possesses unique cultural wealth, in the form of traditions, languages, arts, or historical heritage. However, globalization and modernization often lead to changes in local cultural values and even pose a threat to their survival. Therefore, the establishment of regional museums is one of the strategic measures taken by local governments to safeguard and reintroduce the local cultural identity to the wider public. (Yusuf, 2018). Through museums, various artifacts and historical relics can be documented, preserved, and exhibited as a medium for education and cultural learning. Museums also function as a means of public education that allows the community to gain a deeper understanding of history and culture through direct learning experiences (Hein, 1998).

In addition to being an educational institution, museums also play an important role in strengthening the cultural identity of the community. From the perspective of heritage studies, museums are seen as institutions that play a role in building historical narratives as well as promoting the cultural identity of a society in both national and global contexts (Harrison, 2013). The existence of museums allows a society to represent their history, cultural values, and collective experiences to a wider public. Thus, museums not only function as places for storing historical artifacts but also as

symbols of cultural pride and means to strengthen the identity of a region. Moreover, museums can serve as an effective alternative learning resource in introducing local history to the community, especially for students. Through artifact collections and the presentation of historical information, museums are able to provide a more contextual learning experience compared to learning that is solely text-based (Harnisa, 2021).

One example of efforts to preserve culture through the construction of a museum can be found in Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province. The government of Muna Regency has built a local museum known as the Bharugano Wuna Museum. This museum represents the local government's commitment to preserving and revitalizing the cultural values of the Muna community, which has a long history in the local civilization of the area. The presence of this museum is an important step in safeguarding various Muna cultural heritage that reflects the identity and history of the local community.

Bharugano Wuna Museum was originally a traditional Muna house building constructed by the Muna Regency government in 2017 using Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) funds. The traditional house building was then inaugurated in December 2017 by the Acting Governor of Southeast Sulawesi H.M. Saleh Lasata together with the Regent of Muna L.M. Rusman Emba and the Head of the Muna Customary Institution Laode Sirat Imbo. On May 14, 2018, the traditional house building was officially converted into a museum, which then became known as Bharugano Wuna Museum. This change of function is part of the local government's efforts to make the traditional house a public space that can be used as an information center and to preserve the culture of the Muna people.

Etymologically, the term "Bharugano Wuna" comes from the ancient Muna language and means "human self." This meaning represents the identity of the Muna people, which is manifested through the form of traditional houses that are then made into a museum. The museum building is constructed using high-quality teak wood sourced from the local forest resources. The uniqueness of the building lies in its construction technique, which is done without using nails, reflecting local wisdom as well as the traditional technological skills of the Muna people in building traditional houses.

In addition to having traditional architectural value, the Bharugano Wuna Museum is also designed as a replica of the Muna palace that was formerly located in the Tongkuno area, which was the center of government of the Muna Kingdom in the past. The spatial arrangement within the museum building still follows the traditional palace structure, consisting of several rooms such as a meeting room, the king's chamber, the queen's chamber, and the princess's chamber. This arrangement aims to reconstruct the social life and governance structure during the era of the Muna kingdom so that visitors can understand the history and cultural system of the Muna people in the past.

As a local museum, Bharugano Wuna Museum has a vision to become a center of information, documentation, as well as a cultural learning medium for the community. In addition, this museum is also expected to become a cultural tourism

object capable of attracting public interest to learn more about the history and culture of Muna. In carrying out its vision, the museum has several main missions, including making the museum a center of cultural information, a medium for learning and developing knowledge, a means of cultural preservation, as well as a place for recreation and cultural tourism for the community.

The existence of the Bharugano Wuna Museum is also inseparable from the role of the community in supporting the development of the museum's collection. To date, part of the museum's collection comes from donations from the community who have historical objects related to Muna culture. This community participation demonstrates a collective awareness to preserve and maintain local cultural heritage. This aligns with the view that cultural preservation is not only the responsibility of the government but also requires active involvement from the community as the owners of that culture (Sedyawati, 2014).

In an effort to increase the attractiveness of the museum, the management of the Bharugano Wuna Museum also carries out various promotional and educational activities for the public. One of the efforts undertaken is utilizing social media as a means to introduce the museum to a wider audience. In addition, the museum has also held seminars on the importance of museums as a medium for learning history, involving history teachers in Muna Regency. These activities aim to enhance public understanding, especially among educators and students, regarding the importance of museums as a source of historical learning.

In addition to serving as a center for cultural preservation, the existence of the Bharugano Wuna Museum also has an impact on strengthening the cultural identity of the Muna community in a broader context. This is evident from the participation of Muna Regency in the Nusantara Palace Festival, which is a gathering of various kingdoms and sultanates in Indonesia. Before the construction of the traditional house and the museum, Muna Regency could not participate fully in the festival because it did not meet certain requirements, such as having a traditional house as physical evidence of the kingdom's existence. However, after the construction of the Bharugano Wuna traditional house and the establishment of the customary institution, Muna Regency was finally able to become a full participant in the festival.

This phenomenon shows that the existence of museums not only functions as a place for storing historical artifacts, but also has a strategic role in strengthening the legitimacy of a region's cultural identity at the national level. Museums can become a symbol of cultural pride as well as a means to represent the history and civilization of local communities to a wider public (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000).

Bharugano Wuna Museum plays an important role in the preservation and development of Muna community culture. This museum not only functions as a storage place for cultural objects but also as an educational medium, information center, and cultural recreational facility for the community. Therefore, research on the existence and role of Bharugano Wuna Museum is important to conduct in order to understand how a local museum can contribute to maintaining and developing regional cultural heritage.

2. Method

This research uses the historical research method to systematically examine the history of the establishment, development, and role of the Bharugano Wuna Museum in the preservation of the culture of the Muna Regency community. The historical method is a research procedure used to reconstruct past events systematically and objectively through critical analysis of available historical sources. Through this method, researchers can understand a historical event more comprehensively by tracing various facts related to the research object (Gottschalk, 2008). The historical research method generally consists of four main interconnected stages, namely heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 2013). These four stages are used as a framework in this research to produce a scientific historical reconstruction of the Bharugano Wuna Museum.

The first stage in historical research is heuristics, which is the process of tracing and collecting historical sources relevant to the research topic. Heuristics is a very important initial step because the quality of historical research largely depends on the completeness and accuracy of the sources found (Sjamsuddin, 2012). At this stage, the researcher collects various data related to the history of the establishment of the Bharugano Wuna Museum, the development of the museum, and its role in preserving the culture of the Muna community. The data sources used in this study consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were obtained through direct interviews with informants who have knowledge and involvement in managing the museum, such as museum managers, museum guides, customary leaders, and community members who know the history of the construction of the Bharugano Wuna Museum. In addition, the researchers also conducted direct observations at the research site to obtain an overview of the physical conditions of the museum, the spatial layout of the building, the museum collections, as well as the activities of visitors coming to the museum. Meanwhile, secondary sources were obtained through document studies of various written sources such as books, scientific journal articles, previous research reports, as well as archives related to the cultural history of the Muna people and the development of museums as cultural preservation institutions.

The second stage is source criticism, which is the process of evaluating historical sources that have been collected to determine their level of authenticity and credibility. Source criticism is carried out in two stages, namely external criticism and internal criticism. External criticism aims to assess the authenticity of a source by examining the physical aspects of the source, such as the origin of the document, the time of its creation, as well as the legitimacy of the author or party that produced the source. By conducting external criticism, researchers can ensure that the sources used are truly authentic and can be scientifically accountable. Next, internal criticism is conducted to assess the truthfulness of the information contained in the source. At this stage, the researcher analyzes the content of the source by considering the historical context, the background of the author, and the possibility of bias in the delivery of information. Through this source criticism process, the researcher can obtain historical facts that are more valid and reliable (Kuntowijoyo, 2013).

The third stage is interpretation, which is the process of interpreting historical facts that have been obtained through the heuristic and source criticism stages. At this stage, the researcher analyzes the various data that have been collected to understand the relationship between one historical fact and another. The interpretation process is carried out by examining various information obtained from interviews, observations, and document studies so that a deeper understanding can be gained regarding the background of the establishment of the Bharugano Wuna Museum, its development process as a local museum, and its role in the preservation of Muna community culture.

The final stage in the historical research method is historiography, which is the process of writing the results of historical research systematically, chronologically, and scientifically. At this stage, researchers compile all the analysis results obtained from the previous stage into a structured scientific writing. Historiographical writing is carried out by sequentially describing the history of the establishment of the Bharugano Wuna Museum, the development of the museum as a local museum in Muna Regency, and the role of the museum in preserving the culture of the Muna people.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The History of the Establishment of the Bharugano Wuna Museum

Bharugano Wuna Museum is one of the local museums built by the Muna Regency government as an effort to preserve and introduce the culture of the Muna people to the wider community. The existence of this museum is inseparable from the local government's awareness of the importance of preserving local cultural heritage that has high historical and cultural value. As a cultural institution, a museum has an important function in maintaining, caring for, and documenting various historical relics so that they can be passed down to future generations (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000).

The Bharugano Wuna Museum was originally not a museum, but a traditional Muna house built by the local government of Muna Regency in 2017 using Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) funds. The traditional house was erected in the center of Raha City, specifically on Jalan Bypass Raha within the Laode Pandu Sports Facility (SOR) area. This area is one of the centers of community activity, so it is expected to become a strategic location to introduce Muna culture to the public.

The inauguration of the Bharugano Wuna traditional house was carried out in December 2017 by the Acting Governor of Southeast Sulawesi, H.M. Saleh Lasata, accompanied by the Regent of Muna, L.M. Rusman Emba, and the Chairman of the Muna Customary Institution, Laode Sirat Imbo. On that occasion, the Regent of Muna stated that the construction of the traditional house is part of an effort to revive the civilization of Muna in the past. This shows that the construction of the traditional house not only has a symbolic function as a representation of culture but also serves as a means to strengthen the cultural identity of the Muna people.

On May 14, 2018, the traditional house was officially converted into a museum named Bharugano Wuna Museum. This change of function was carried out as a strategic step to make the traditional house a center for documentation and

preservation of the Muna community's culture. Over time, the museum began collecting various items related to the history and culture of the Muna people, including artifacts, traditional objects, and historical documents.

Etymologically, the name Bharugano Wuna comes from the ancient Muna language, which means 'human self.' According to the Head of the Muna Customary Institution, Laode Sirat Imbo, the term is interpreted as a representation of the Muna community's identity, displayed through the form of this traditional house. Thus, this museum not only functions as a place to store cultural objects but also as a symbol of identity and pride of the Muna people towards the cultural heritage they possess.

The Bharugano Wuna Museum building was constructed using high-quality teak wood sourced from local forest resources. The construction process of this traditional house is quite unique because it uses traditional construction techniques without nails. This technique reflects the local wisdom of the Muna people in building traditional houses and demonstrates the level of traditional technological ability possessed by the people in the past.

The Bharugano Wuna Museum building is also a replica of the Muna palace that used to be located in the Tongkuno area, which was the center of the Muna Kingdom's administration in the past. The spatial arrangement inside the museum building still follows the traditional palace structure, consisting of several rooms such as a meeting room, the king's chamber, the queen's chamber, and the princess's chamber. Thus, this museum not only displays a collection of cultural objects but also brings back a picture of the social and political life of the Muna people during the kingdom era.

3.2. The Development of Bharugano Wuna Museum

As a relatively new museum, the development of the Bharugano Wuna Museum can be said to be quite significant in recent years. Although at the beginning of its establishment the museum was still in the stage of collecting collections and arranging exhibition spaces, the public's enthusiasm for the presence of this museum was quite high. This is evident from the many people who have donated collections to the museum, reaching about fifty percent of the total collection owned by the museum.

Community participation in contributing to museum collections demonstrates a collective awareness to preserve and maintain local cultural heritage. According to (Sedyawati, 2014) cultural preservation is not only the responsibility of the government but also requires active involvement from the community as the owners of that culture. With community participation, museums can develop as living cultural institutions that have a direct connection with the community.

The development of the Bharugano Wuna Museum can also be seen from the efforts of the museum management in promoting and socializing with the public. One form of promotion carried out is through the use of social media, especially the Facebook platform, which is used to share various activities and visitor activities at the museum. Social media has become a fairly effective means of introducing the museum to the wider community, especially the younger generation who are more active in using digital technology. In addition, the museum has also organized seminar activities that discuss the importance of museums as a learning medium for history for students.

In these activities, the museum invited history teachers from various schools in Muna Regency to introduce the function of museums as a source of learning history. This activity shows that museums not only serve as places for storing historical objects but also as educational facilities that can be utilized by the educational world (Ambrose & Paine, 2018).

The existence of the Bharugano Wuna Museum also has an impact on strengthening the cultural identity of the Muna community at the national level. This is evident from the participation of Muna Regency in the Nusantara Palace Festival activities. Before the construction of the Bharugano Wuna traditional house, Muna Regency could not become a full participant in the festival because it did not meet certain requirements, such as having a traditional house as physical evidence of the kingdom's existence. However, after the construction of the traditional house and the museum, Muna Regency was finally able to become a full participant in the festival.

3.3. The Role of Bharugano Wuna Museum in the Preservation of Muna Community Culture

The Bharugano Wuna Museum plays an important role in preserving the culture of the Muna community. One of the main roles of the museum is as a center for documentation and storage of various cultural items related to the history and life of the Muna people. Through the process of collecting, storing, and exhibiting collections, the museum can maintain the existence of cultural objects so that they are not lost or damaged due to changes over time. In addition to serving as a place for storing cultural collections, the museum also functions as a center for cultural information for the community. Visitors who come to the museum can gain knowledge about the history of the Muna Kingdom, the social structure of the Muna community in the past, as well as various traditions and cultures that developed in the region. Thus, the museum serves as an educational medium that can raise public awareness about the importance of preserving cultural heritage.

The Bharugano Wuna Museum also serves as a means of learning history for the community, especially for students and university students. Through visits to the museum, learners can directly see various historical relics related to Muna culture. This can help enhance their understanding of local history, which may so far have been studied only through school textbooks. In the context of history education, museums can be an effective learning resource because they provide a learning experience that is direct and contextual (Widja, 2018).

In addition to its educational function, the museum also plays a role as a cultural tourism destination that can attract public interest in learning more about Muna culture. The location of the Bharugano Wuna Museum in the Laode Pandu Sports Facility area makes the museum easily accessible to people who come for sports or recreation. Many visitors come to the museum after engaging in sports activities, either to see the museum's collections or simply to take photos around the traditional house building that has cultural aesthetic value.

The existence of the Bharugano Wuna Museum can also strengthen the cultural identity of the Muna community. The museum becomes a symbol of the community's

pride in their cultural heritage while also serving as a means to introduce Muna culture to people from outside the region as well as international tourists. Thus, the museum not only functions as a cultural preservation institution but also as a medium for representing the cultural identity of the Muna community in a broader context.

4. Conclusion

The existence of the Bharugano Wuna Museum in Muna Regency is one of the strategic efforts to preserve and maintain the cultural heritage of the Muna people amidst the dynamics of changing times. This museum not only functions as a place for storing historical objects, but also serves as a symbol of the cultural identity of the Muna people, reflecting the course of history, traditional values, and the socio-cultural systems that have developed within the community. The museum building, which is a replica of the Muna palace traditional house, demonstrates how traditional architectural heritage can be utilized as a medium to revive the community's collective memory of past history and civilization.

The development of the Bharugano Wuna Museum as a local museum shows fairly strong support from both the local government and the community. This is evident from the construction of a traditional house that was later converted into a museum, the collection of cultural items, some of which came from community donations, as well as various promotional efforts and educational activities carried out by the museum management. This community participation reflects a collective awareness of the importance of preserving and maintaining cultural heritage as part of the region's identity.

In the context of cultural preservation, the Bharugano Wuna Museum plays an important role as a center for cultural documentation, a learning medium for history, and a cultural tourism site in Muna Regency. Through the existence of this museum, various cultural heritage of the Muna people can be preserved, introduced, and passed down to the next generation. Thus, the Bharugano Wuna Museum not only functions as a cultural preservation institution but also as a means to strengthen the cultural identity of the Muna people while introducing the region's cultural wealth to a wider audience.

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