






The Megalithic Culture of Rampi Valley, North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi Province: Its Important Contribution During the Early Metal Period in the Indonesian Archipelago

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Abstract. Until recently, researches on the Megalithic Culture on Rampi Valley are still rarely done and published. This paper discusses results of survey and excavation carried out in 2014 by the National Research Center of Archaeology (now the Research Center for Prehistoric and Historic Archaeology) together with a team from the Cultural Heritage Conservation Office of Makassar (now the Cultural Advancement Office). The excavation around statues, dolmens, and earthenware burials at Timo'oni Site yielded quite significant data that highly contribute to the understanding of the history of habitation during the early metal period in the Indonesian Archipelago, particularly in Sulawesi, due to the discovery of old enough megalithic remains, which are at least ca. AD 86.

Keywords: Early Metal Period · Proto-historic Austronesian · Megalithic Culture · Statue · Dolmen · Burial jar · Rampi Valley · Sulawesi

1 Introduction

The arrival of Austronesian-speaking people in the framework of Indonesian prehistory can be divided into two periods, namely: (1) *Prehistoric Austronesian*, which began with the coming of early Austronesian-speakers in the Archipelago in about 4000 BP to around 2000 BP. The cultural marker during this period is Neolithic, with innovations that brought big changes in various aspects of life such as agriculture (rice and millet), animal domestication (chicken, pigs, dogs), the use of rectangular axes, pottery-making, sedentary life in stilt houses, outrigger boat, maritime life, bark-cloth, and head-hunting; (2) *Proto-historic Austronesian* (Early Metal) that flourished just before 2000 BP – 4th/5th century AD, marked by more complex society life in line with the advancement of sailing and regional-global trade. The cultural items that marked this period include continuation

of the traditions from the previous culture (Neolithic), metal objects influenced by the Dong Son culture, and Megalithic structures (Simanjuntak 2015). This is supported by other researchers who are of the opinion that in Island Southeast Asia, the Early Metal Period began in average around 3rd and 2nd centuries BC (Calo et al. 2015), and was usually marked by the presence of artifacts made of bronze and iron (which technology and raw materials were originated from South Asia, Vietnam, Thailand, and China) as well as the existence of new objects obtained from regional trade that flourished during the period (Bellwood 2017).

The research on Rampi Valley was carried out based on a report by Albert C. Kruyt, which stated that on Rampi there were archaeological remains such as stone statues and earthenware jar burials, and the local inhabitants no longer know who made them. Based on the information, the Rampi Valley is presumed to be one of the Proto-historic Austronesian (Early Metal Period) sites. In maps, Rampi area is located in quite important position with regard to Early Austronesian Culture (Neolithic) sites, which are the sites along the Karama River Valley (Kalumpang, South Sulawesi) and Proto-historic (Early Metal) sites on Bada-Behoa-Napu valleys (Lore, Highland, Central Sulawesi) (see Fig. 1).

With regards to the above depiction, it is hoped that the results of this research will be able to answer the question of whether Rampi Valley was related to the sites on the valleys of Karama River (Prehistoric Austronesian/Neolithic) and Bada-Behoa-Napu (Proto-historic Austronesian/Early Metal) areas. Therefore during this research, explorations will be conducted in forms of survey and excavation to find out whether or not there were cultural continuities at those areas.

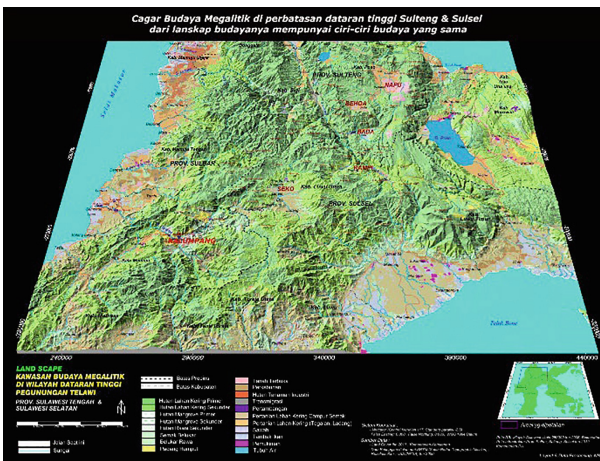


Fig. 1. Map of the Position of Rampi Valley among the Neolithic and Early Metal Sites.

2 Results of Investigation

Rampi Valley is situated on the coordinate of 2°00' to 2°20' Southern Latitude and 120°15' to 120°30' Western Longitude. Rampi Valley is one of the eleven districts that belong to North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The district of Rampi includes six villages, which are Onondoa, Sulako, Dodolo, Rampi, Tedeboe, and Leboni. The most populated villages are Onondoa and Tedeboe. The district of “Lembah Rampi” (Rampi Valley) is located on a valley in Tokalekaju Mountains to the north of the capital of North Luwu Regency, which covers an area of 1.565,65 km².

Rampi is bordered by: (1) Bada Valley, South Lore District, Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi on the north; (2) Seko District on the west; (3) Masamba District on the south; and (4) Mangkutana District on the east.

The physical topography of Rampi Valley is steep, with more than 30% sloping and an elevation of more than 1000–1600 m from sea level. It is located within the Tokalekaju Mountains, which is an ancient forest mountains that still exist in Sulawesi. Due to its geo-hydrological condition, the hilly or mountainous area of Rampi is characterized by very shallow soil thickness and therefore it is unsuitable for agriculture. The forests within Rampi cover around 112.939 Ha. Its potencies of mineral and energy resources are: (1) Igneous Rocks that consist of serpentinite of Pampangeo formation and quartz latite of Tineba formation; (2) Sedimentary Rocks that consist of limestone and chert of Latimojong formation, crystal tuff and glass tuff, as well as sand, pebbles, and gravels from alluvial deposit; (3) Metamorphic Rocks that consist of slate and quartzite from Latimojong formation, schist, genes, marble, and quartzite from Pampangeo formation, and meta-limestone.

One of the main transportation to reach Rampi Valley (Onondoa Village) is air transportation, with traveling time of about 15 min. The distance by air from Rampi Valley to Masamba (the capital of North Luwu) is about 84 km. Because the habitation area is located on a valley that was surrounded by steep mountain slopes, the land access can only be travelled by two wheelers or by walking through mountains with steep inclinations. In the dry season or when it is not raining, it can be reached by walking from Masamba for three days and two nights or 7 to 9 h by motorbike. Rampi can also be accessed from Bada Valley (South Lore District, Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi Province) by walking for two days and one night or by seven to eight hour ride on modified motorbike (*ojek/taxi bike*).

Geographically Rampi District is closer to Bada Valley (South Lore District, Poso Regency, in Central Sulawesi Province), so human interactions and the flow of commodity exchanges are more commonly carried out from Bada.

During the survey and excavation activities, the research team encountered many obstacles, the worst of which was: not being able to bring many of the implements for survey and excavation from the Andi Njema airport in Masamba to the Rampi airport due to limited baggage capacity. The team could not even go together because of the limited amount and weight of passengers and baggage that can be transported. However, despite the obstacles and simple tools available on Rampi, the team tried their best to carry out the research. Another obstacle was unsupportive weather and climate like rain, thunder, and wind, which often caused rivers that had to be crossed overflowed. Furthermore, roads, bridges, and transportation (vehicles) are scarce (or even hardly exist). Therefore,

to go to and back from survey/excavation areas, almost every day each team member had to face dangers in forms of flood or body injury because of falling/slipping.

2.1 Surveys

As mentioned before, the first researcher to conduct archaeological research on Rampi Valley was Kruyt (1938). In his book, Kruyt mentions a number of remains like: (1) Megalithic sculpture (statue) to the west of Meloi (Mbeloi) Village, which was later probably merged with Onondowa Village. The statue is badly damaged because of the weather. The shape of the head, for example the ears, can still be seen, but the nose, eyes, and mouth can no longer be seen. At the right side of its head there are six tassel-shaped decorations, while the left side is plain. The statue is facing the southeast and its height is about 1.30 m; (2) Stone slabs that were placed in a row, on the rice fields of Onondowa Village. The slabs were used as the media of worship. Their heights are ± 65 cm above sea level. Around the legs of the stones small round stones are scattered, mixed with quartz stones (fire stones). On some rice fields, the row of slab stones have been covered by plants that were considered sacred by the local people at that time; (3) Upright stone at an old village named “Hulaku” (Leboni). The upright stone, which was worshipped and honored, is called “*tobebe*” that means a miser person; (4) Burials jars made of earthenware at the village of Leboni. The earthenware burial jars are mostly found around the flat plains and are located within the road (several meters from the village towards the south). Many of the jars have been empty. One of them has a neck diameter of 90 cm, body diameter of 192 cm. The depth of its mouth is 63 cm, the height of its neck 4.5 cm, and it is buried 1–1.5 m deep. The local inhabitants can no longer able to make (and fire) such big jars; (5) Earthenware jar burials southeast of Onondowa Village, about ten minutes from the village.

They are located near a river, so that the flat plain is worn away by water and landslides or erosions happen frequently. It was due to the landslides or erosions that the rows of jar burials were seen. Then Kruyt asked a man to dig one of the burial jars that has lid made of rough (not smooth) stone. The jar has a neck diameter of 39 cm. Inside the jar is a layer of ash, remains of small bones, and several large teeth. According to Kruyt the sizes of the jars differ. Information from the head of the Onondowa Village mentioned that when he dig one of the jars, some artifacts were found such as necklace from beads, copper bracelet, and half green and half white hand band made of shell, and arm band made of glass. Information from J. Woensdregt (1921), who also carried out excavation on a burial jar, mentioned that from the jar there were a necklace made of beads, two children’s hand bands made of copper in fragile and damaged condition, and a child’s molar. The excavated jar’s body has a diameter 50 cm, its depth of mouth is 60 cm, and it has a lid made of rough stone. In Rampi language, the jars are called *kiri lomoa*, which means genie jars; (6) Stones to worship at Lowa Village, Bangko. The stones are called “*watu wurani*,” which means brave stones or the stones from *wurani* gods. The stones are about 2 m high, and are natural, unworked. It seems like they were in later period (after the period when the Megalithic objects were made); (7) Stones to worship at Tede’boe, which consist of three “*watu mpoihi*” and two “*watu baula*.” They are located near Komali River or Uwei I rompi. The stones are about 4 m high, and the inhabitants

named them “*watu mpoihi*” or the stones that give *ini watu* (rice grains). The rice god is called “*Buriro*”. There are also two stones named “*watu baula*” or buffalo stones.

Despite the fact that Kruyt had reported that the local inhabitants at that time did not know the origin of the archaeological finds, during the research the team tried to collect information about life during the recent times in Rampi. The aims are among others to know where the ancient habitation places that had long been abandoned, because from previous researches can be known that the locations that have archaeological remains are usually not far from ancient settlements that have long been abandoned. Such ancient settlements can be irrigated and non-irrigated (rainfed) rice fields, ateliers, burials, forest, or habitation places, which are usually located at a flat ground on high places (hills) near river.

During the 2014 survey, there were information from the local inhabitants about some objects that turned out to be non-artifacts but natural rocks at some locations that were still used by the communities until recently. The following are some results of surveys and excavations, which are considered important in relation to the proto-historic period (see Table 1 and Fig. 2).

Timo’oni Rice Fields. Onondowa Village The rice fields of Timo’oni, Onondowa Village, can only be reached by walking and also crossing Mokoka River, a tributary of Lariang River. At the rice fields it was difficult to observe the soil’s surface because it was the rice planting time and the soil had been filled with water. Fortunately the team finally found a piece of flat ground that belongs to Mr. Dosi Dami, which were not planted with rice because it is far from water sources and river. The location is at the coordinate of $02^{\circ}06'54.3''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}17'27.6''$ Eastern Longitude, and has an elevation of about 969 m from sea level. The observation reveals that around this piece of land there are abundance of pottery fragments. The son in law of the owner of this land (Mr. Zakaria), found two jars with stone lid that contain only earth, one was broken and the other seems intact (see Fig. 2). The shape of the broken jar can still be seen, and the measurements are: body diameter 30 cm, rim thickness 3 cm, mouth

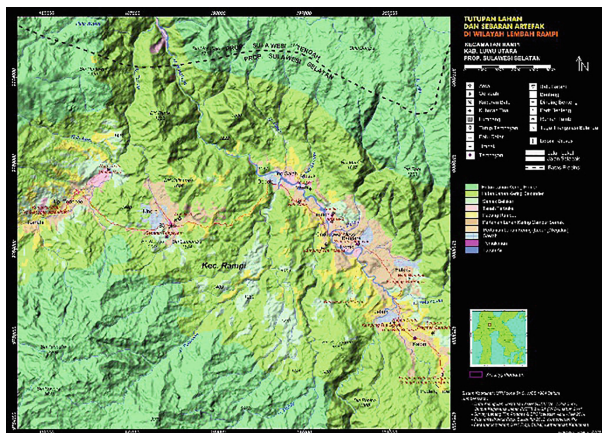


Fig. 2. Artifact distribution on Rampi Village as a result of 2014 survey.

(opening) diameter 24 cm, height of jar 51 cm, and the neck is 14 cm high. The lid is 35 cm long, 33 cm wide, and the thickness is 6 cm. The lid of the second jar is 26 cm long, 34 cm wide, 15 cm thick.

Another inhabitant, Mr. Wenas Paelo (60 years old), which is a Tokei Muhale, gave us information that pottery fragments were often found on the rice field areas when people open or ploughed it. He has also found a large jar once, which contains necklace made of beads, but he did not remember the exact location (Fig. 3).

At this location we found the traditional house of Mr. Dosi Dami mentioned by Kruyt (1938). It is a stilt house, which is the characteristic of Austronesian buildings that still be found in Central Sulawesi. It was made of organic materials like wood, bamboo, ijuk (palm fibers), and reeds. The back part is used to prepare the needs of the household like to dry and thrash rice. The types and functions of the space are generally similar: the kitchen at the center, sleeping mats or beds along the inner walls of tambli, and firewoods are hung above the fireplace (see Fig. 4).

From interviews we learn a number of terms (see Table 1).

Other interesting information is that Rampi women had hung down earlobes because of the heavy earrings that they wore. The jewelries were usually made of silver or rolled pandan leaves. Tooth-filing (for upper teeth) were usually done for men, while the women had two of their front upper teeth extracted. They chew betel nut, used poisoned blow pipes (the “arrows” were made of bamboo or metal), and practiced circumcision. However, they did not have tattoos (Fig. 5).

Another find at this location is human statue 1 (see Fig. 6), about 300 m from where the burial jar was found. Its position is between 02°06'49.8" Northern Latitude and 120°17'29.7" Eastern Longitude, with an elevation of around 968 m above sea level. The location is where the village inhabitants' buffaloes wallow, because after rain this location is flooded with water from the cliffs. It tjared out that the *Human Statue 1* is the one that was once mentioned by Kruyt. The vegetation around the *Human Statue 1* is similar to the location where fragments of pottery and jars were found, which is an



Fig. 3. Top: the location of land owned by Mr. Dosi Dami; Bottom: one of the jars that seems intact, the two lids of jars that were made of stone, and jar fragment.



Fig. 4. Top: Houses of Rampi people in Leboni, photographed by L.H.C. Horsting (in Kruyt 1938); Bottom: Tambi house owned by Mr.Dosi Dami

Table 1. Some words in Rampi language

Indonesian	Rampi
Lumbung (granary)	Buho
Rumah (house)	Tambi
Sawah (rice field)	Lembo
Kebun (garden)	Kinete
Padang terbuka (open field)	Po Pada
Perahu (boat)	Duanga
Padi (rice plant)	Kina
Ketela (cassava)	Inkeru
Beras (rice grains)	Boi
Belanga (earthenware pot)	Kiriwoi
Makan (to eat)	Mangka
Kerbau (buffalo)	Bukolu
Anjing (dog)	Ahu
Kuda (horse)	Nara
Manusia (man)	Toa'
Orang tua (old person)	Tomo Todi
Sunat/khitan (circumcision)	Mebo labak
Pangur gigi (tooth filing)	Megese
Pencabutan gigi depan - khusus wanita (front-tooth extraction - specially for women)	Merupu



Fig. 5. Women with hung down earlobes, photographed by S. Narumi (in Kruyt 1938).

open field with tropical forest at the east side. This location was previously made into agricultural field by people from the surrounding area, but was later abandoned because it is far from the river, so that it is difficult to get water. People call the statue “Moni”, and it is believed to be the statue of a female figure. According to the locals, in 1990s a foreigner had tried to be lifted this statue on the grounds of protection. But the attempt failed. Instead, the statue sunk even deeper. The height of the statue from the surface is about 60 cm, its width is about 65 cm, and its length is 70 cm. It faces southwest.

The survey was then continued, still within Timo’oni rice fields. About 800 m from the location of Human Statue 1, the team found *Human Statue 2* (see Fig. 4) that has not been mentioned in Kruyt’s book. It is located on an open field (plain) on a hill. This statue’s position is between $02^{\circ}07'06.1''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}17'26.7''$ Eastern Longitude, and around 973 above sea level. It faces east and it is slanting backwards (to the west). The local people named this statue the statue of “Anak Moni”. It is 75 cm high at front and 48 cm at the back. The width of the rock 29 cm and the width of its shoulders is more or less 50 cm. Sekitar 29 cm, Panjang bahu sekitar 50 cm. Lebar bahu 50 cm. The height from head to neck is 58 cm, and from chin downward is around 15 cm. The width of its nose is 8 cm, while the diameter of its eyes is 7.5 cm (Fig. 7).

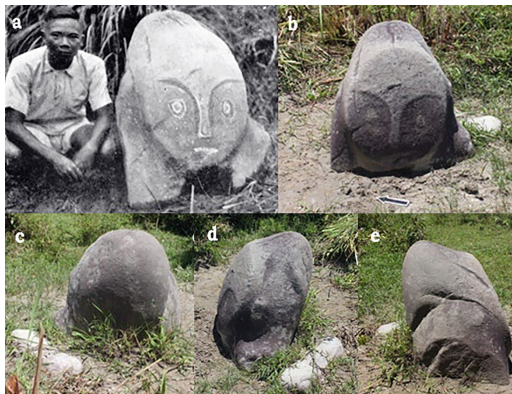


Fig. 6. (a) Megalithic statue that can be found in Kruyt’s book (1938), photographed by H. Zuppinger; (b–e) *Human Statue 1*: the front, back, left, and right (doc. by Dwi Yani).



Fig. 7. Megalithic Human Statue 2 (doc. by Dwi Yani).

Padang Vwal, Onondowa Village. The area is located ± 4.5 km northeast of Onondowa Village or ± 2.2 km from Timooni Site. To reach the location we have to go through the same route to Timooni Site, then to the northeast through the footpath between Onondowa and Dodolo villages. It takes one hour and thirty minutes walk from Timo'oni Site to the location. There we found scattered potsherds and Human Statue No. 4. Information about the statue was given by the local inhabitants.

The distribution of potsherds and flat stone slabs, which are thought to be fragments of burial stone jars and their lids, were found in large amount along the foothpath of Mamilo Forest, which was the route to the Forest and Padang Vwali where Human Statue 4 is located. The coordinates of this location are between $02^{\circ}06'02.6''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}16'45.9''$ Eastern Longitude and $02^{\circ}05'58.7''$ Northern Latitude (kok lintang utaranya dua?), and the elevation is about 973 above sea level. The average thickness of the potsherds is between 1–2.3 cm. The Stone Slab 1 is 53 cm long, 46 cm wide, and 17 cm thick, while the Stone Slab 2 is 39 cm long, 26 cm wide, and 12.2 cm thick. It is probable that the Stone Slab 1 is the lid of a quite large stone jar, while the second slab is the lid of a medium-sized jar. According to the local inhabitants, this location was an ancient settlement (Fig. 8).

The Human Statue 4 was found at the bottom of Padang Vwali hill slope, and was broken into two, most likely because it was fall down the hill due to landslide. It is 142 cm high, 115 cm wide, and about 28 cm thick. Probably it was facing the northeast. On the broken part of its head there are five wavy indentation, which seem to form a hairstyle called *dodangka/dangka* (meaning pendulum). But it is unclear whether the wavy indentation located on the right or left sides of the head (Fig. 9).



Fig. 8. The landscape of Mamilo Forest, where potsherds and jar lids were found.



Fig. 9. Padang Mali Field, Onondowa Village, where Human Statue 4 was found, toppled and broken into two. There are 5 wavy curves on its head.

To' Ahoa Rice Fields. *Onondowa Village* Information about this rice fields came from a traditional leader, Mr. Tokei Muhale, who told us that some burial jars that contain beads were found here. Its coordinates are between $02^{\circ}07'48.8''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}18'16.1''$ Eastern Longitude, with an elevation of ± 1005 m above sea level. The rice fields are located on a hill, surrounded by a river below the hill that was used to irrigate the rice fields. The team was not able to conduct survey at this area because it was covered by rice plants and wet. Only five potsherds were found around the area.

Padang Pobeloa (Pobeloa Field) Onondowa Village. Padang Pobeloa (Pobeloa Field) is assumed to be an abandoned old settlement on the ridge of Pobeloa Hill, which extends in north – south direction. It can be reached by the tributary of Lariang River using a suspension bridge, crossing a steep road, grass land, and shrubs of reeds and ferns, as well as tropical forests at several points. It takes about 40 min to go there from Onondowa Village. Administratively, Padang Pobeloa is part of the Onondowa Village (Melo Hamlet), ± 1.5 km west of the capital of Rampi District (Onondowa). Astronomically it is located between $02^{\circ}07'48.1''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}17'16.1''$ Eastern Longitude. The artifacts found there include pedestals where house piles were placed on and a mortar (Fig. 10).

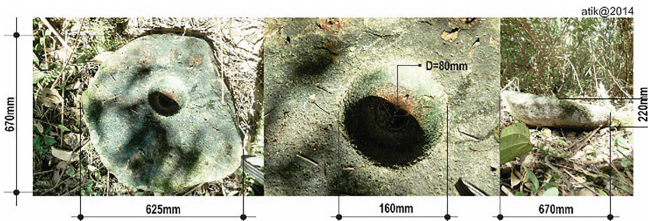


Fig. 10. Stone mortars with their measurements

Most of the pedestals are no longer in situ, probably due to human activities. They are in the form of unworked stones from the river. They are rectangular in shape, measuring 47–62 cm long and about 25–31 cm wide, placed at the distance of 2.0 m and 1.7 m from each other.

Not far from the pedestals, about 320 m to the southwest, there is a roundish and flat mortar made of diorite rock. It is 67 cm long, 62.5 cm wide, and 22 cm thick, with a 8 cm-deep round hole 16 cm in diameter. The color of its surface is green due to moss.

Pehaha', Onondowa Village. The old hamlet of Pehaha' is an open field on the ridge of Pehaha' Hill, which extends in north–south direction. Its astronomic position is between 02°09'47.0'' Northern Latitude and 120°17'56.5'' Eastern Longitude, with an elevation of 1209 m above sea level. In Rampi language, *Pehaha'* means a person who makes bark cloth (bark-cloth maker). The Pehaha' Field can only be reached by walking 4.5 km southward from Onondowa Village for about two hours. To reach the foot ridge of the Pehaha' Hill, one has to walk through a hiking trail, crossing the Lariang River, and walk along the Pehaha' River.

At this location there is an earth fortress, which extends from east to west, at the north end of the hill ridge. Its wall, which is about 1.5 m wide and 50 cm to 1 m high, was less visible because it was covered with shrubs. There are also pedestals along the ridge, most of which seem in situ so that it was not difficult to reconstruct the size of the building. The pedestals are made of natural boulders half-buried on the ground forming a rectangular space. Their amount at each location are between four and six pedestals (see Fig. 11).

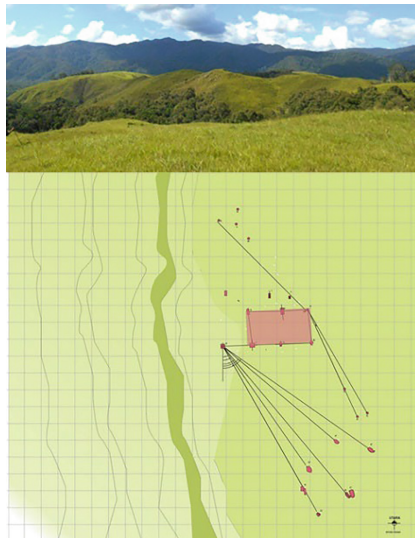


Fig. 11. Landscape of the old hamlet of Pehaha' and the sketch of the orientation of the tambu house, adjusted to the flat field that extends in north-south direction. Stone pedestals are colored red, while the darker green "line" is the earth fortress. The farther west, the steeper it is until it reaches the river.

Along the way to the old hamlet of Pehaha' the team observed various types of plants like *Opadi, Baru* (*Arenga pinnata*), *Nunu'* (*Ficus*), *Koroina, Onohi* (types of *pandanus*), *Balo* (bamboo). Those plants are used by the Rampi people for their daily needs. The bark of the *Nunu'* trees is the raw material to make traditional bark clothes while *Onohi* leaves are woven to make mats/floor-coverings. Bamboo is commonly used for house walls and floors, and *Baru* palm has double functions, the leaves are the material for roofing and the sap if its flower is made into palm wine.

Dodolo Village. At this village there are a human statue and a flat stone, which exact location is a the house yard of Mr. Posi Kuna (60 years old) at Hamlet 3, between 02°06'28.6" Northern Latitude and 120°16'25.6" Eastern Longitude. with an elevation of about 980 m above sea level. The distance from Onondowa Village is ± 4 km to the northwest. To reach this location the survey team walked along the pathway newly made by the local inhabitants. for three hours from the Timooni rice field to the northeast. The terrain was very heavy. The team had to pass forest and the Manilo River through Vwali Field, crossing a river, then walked across the open grassland of Lino, and crossing the Tetahi River. Before crossing the river, the path forks northward to the Bada Valley and southward to Dodolo Village.

In the olden days the human statue was called "*lolih*" by the locals, but now it is better known as "*kontara*". This statue is one of the two statues sculpted in human-like shapes, which were reported by Kruyt in 1938.

The statue looks worn out, but parts like eyes, ears, nose, eyebrows, and borders of face can still be seen. It is a torso statue without arms and legs. On the right part of its head are 5 wavy indentations (Kruyt mentioned 6). According to Tokei Mohale, the 5 wavy indentation seem to form a hair style called *dodangka/dangka* (pendulum). It is oriented to the east (facing Timo'oni Site), while Kruyt mentioned that it is oriented to the southeast. The measurement of Human Statue 3 is 134 cm high; the width of its head, including the ears, is 81 cm; the height of its head from the crown to the chin is 84 cm and from the chin to the ground is 50 cm; the diameter of the eyes are 13 cm, the width of the lower body is 68 c; the head is 21 cm and 18 cm thick, and the lower body is 14 cm high.

About 30 m from the statue, there is a half-circle shaped flat stone, on the yard of Mr. Sakeus Aho. The location is between 02°06'29.8" Northern Latitude and 20°16'24.6" Eastern Longitude, at an elevation of 983 m above sea level. The raw material is like the material of the Human Statue 3, which is granite (biotite granite) (Fig. 12).

According to information, the object was in upright position and therefore looked like a half circle. Based on this indication, the survey team assumed that probably this object was originally intended to be made into a human statue. The stone clearly shown traces of working. With the presence of three small holes (pit-marked), there is a possibility that the object was later used as an altar or other media, such as mortar to grind or pound grains. The flat stone is 122 cm long, 82 cm wide, and about 23–30 cm thick. The first hole has a diameter of 11 cm and a depth of 6 cm, the second hole has a diameter of 6.5 cm and a depth of 2.5 cm, and the third has a diameter of 4.5 cm and a depth of 1.5 cm (Fig. 13).

Bangko Village. A human statue (Human Statue 5) was found at Bangko Village with some burial jars. The Human Statue 5, or "*Watu Werani*," is located at Tinanu (Reuwe



Fig. 12. Human Statue 3 at Dodolo Village: (a) photograph taken by H. Zuppinger, in Kruyt's; (b–f) photographs taken by Dwi Yani.



Fig. 13. The flat stone at Dodolo Village.

Hamlet, Bangko Village). This statue is situated on a hill. According to Bola Bangko there is settlement at the surrounding area. The hill is about 500 m from Kororaa River (Wai Kororaa). Astronomically the location where the statue is situated between $02^{\circ}06'59.4''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}12'39.5''$ Eastern Longitude, with an elevation of 1399 m above sea level.

The Human Statue 5 (Fig. 14) is a torso type statue (without arms and legs), and it faces the east. On the right top of its head are four wavy depressions that resemble a type of hairstyle named *dodangka/dangka*, which means pendulum. It is ± 123 cm high and ± 76 cm wide (shoulder to shoulder). Its head is 43 cm wide, and the lower body is about 14 cm thick. The diameter of its eyes is 5 cm and its nose is 8 cm. The breasts protrude with a diameter of about 8 cm. It is unclear whether it represents female or male figure.

In front of the statue there is a sunken flat stone, which function is undecided, whether it was in the same context with the statue or merely functioned to keep the statue from slanting further forward. The size of the flat stone in front of the statue is 63 cm long, 55 cm wide, and about 11 cm thick. About 145 cm to the northwest of the human statue is an upright stone that resembles a tombstone. It is 73 cm high and about 35 cm thick. The width of the upper part is ± 29 cm and the lower part is about 31 cm. The raw material of the statue is granite (biotite granite).

In his book Kruyt (1938) did not mention the Human Statue 5. He only mentioned that at the village there are natural rocks called *watu wurani*, which were worshipped by the people at that period, and he believed that the natural rocks were used in later



Fig. 14. The Human Statue No. 5 (*watu wurani*) at Bangko Village.

period (after the period when Megalithic artifacts were made). There is a possibility that Human Statue No. 5 or the rocks called “*Watu Werani*” were not discovered until later. That is why the local inhabitants at the time had no knowledge about the existence of the Human Statue No. 5.

Information about stone jars at this village was given by Mr. Sarlon Bomboyang. The location is on a flatland of a hill with an elevation of ± 1454 m above sea level, between the coordinates of $02^{\circ}07'32.5''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}12'15.2''$ Eastern Longitude. From Bangko Village one has to walk 2 km to reach that hill. The stone jars were empty (Fig. 15). The diameter of the body is about 86 cm, the cavity is about 65 cm deep, with a thickness of between 0.7–1 cm, and the diameter of the mouth (opening) is ± 35 cm. From the fragments, it seems as though the burial jars are carinated and have rounded bottom. About 2.5 m from the burial jar is flat stone slab, which is assumed to be the lid of the jar. It is 64 cm long, 54 cm wide, and 9 cm thick.

Tedeboe Village. The village of Tedeboe was reached after passing through Bangko Village. The Tedeboe village was famous as the biggest rice producer within Rampi area. Kruyt (1938), in his book *De West Toradjas op Midden Celebes* stated that all of



Fig. 15. The landscape of the area on a hill where burial jars were found.

the old villages of the To Rompi (Rampi) people were established at flatlands on top of hills, Hinopu to the south and Biri to the north. Tedeboe means pig dung. According to him, this village only has natural rocks named *Watu Mpoihi* and *Watu Baula*, which were functioned as communal worship places.

From results of surveys the team found locations where natural rocks are still considered sacred by the community until today: (a) the rice fields of Hiwontu at Rante Hamlet, where Mnahi (*Watu Mpoihi*) and *Watu Baula* statues are located, with the coordinates of $02^{\circ}11'44.5''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}13'92.6''$ Eastern Longitude and an elevation of 1334.5 m above sea level; (b) the rice fields of Luwa'a, Pongka Hamlet, where *Watu Tinanu* (a statue that is shaped like a chair) with the coordinates of between $02^{\circ}09'02.7''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}17'36.1''$ Eastern Longitude, and an elevation of 1254,52 m above sea level. About 300 m from *Watu Tinanu* there are stone pedestals where pillars of a *rumah tambi* (traditional house) and a *buho* (a structure that functions as a storeroom or granary) were placed on; only two left at each place. All the stones found at Tedeboe Village are natural rocks with no trace of sculpting (Fig. 16).

Leboni Village. Leboni Village is one of the locations mentioned by Kruyt (1938), who stated that many burial jars were found at the flat land of Leboni Village, exposed because the Leboni River is frequently flooded, which eroded the banks of the river. It was told that in 1915, during the construction of a new road, the head village of Leboni found a large jar several hundred meters south of his village. It contained water. The jar has an opening with the diameter of about 90 cm and the diameter of its body is \pm 192 cm. The depth of its cavity is 63 cm and the height of its neck is 4.5 cm. According to the local inhabitants such jar was usually buried about 1–1.5 m deep. Kruyt was told by the locals that when they found the jar, potters within the Rampi Valley could no longer able to make a jar that big.

Exposed burial jar was also found at Padang (Pada) Rau, about 500 m to the southeast of the Leboni Village, north of Pekabusanga River and within the trans Masamba–Rampi road area. The position is between $02^{\circ}14'83.7''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}33'16.6''$ Eastern Longitude, with an elevation of 1058 m above sea level. Mr. Yusuf Geso (Tokei

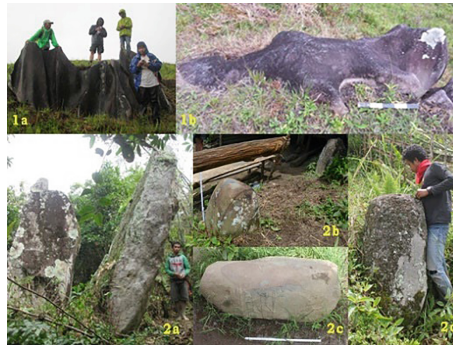


Fig. 16. (1a) *Watu Mnahi* (Kruyt called it *Watu Mpoihi*); (1b) *Watu Baula*; (2a) *Watu Tinanu*; (2b) stone pedestal of *buho* (storeroom or granary); (2c) stone pedestal of *rumah tambi* (house/residence).



Fig. 17. Location of the jar at Padang Rau.

Tongkoh Lebani) informed us that when the jar was found, there were a spear-head and a 40 cm-long machete in it, and the lid is not made of stone but of earthenware shaped like a tool to pan for gold. The diameter of the jar is 63 cm (diameter), the depth of the cavity is 17 cm, and it is about 1 cm thick (Fig. 17).

The team found some beads and lithic tools (flakes), as well as flat rounded stones among the distribution of potsherds. There is a great probability that this area was the location of burial jars. Those finds were found around pathways and waterways/canals with earth outcrops at Pada' Powoliaha'a, on a sloping hilly meadow, about 2 km south-east of Beloi Hamlet that is the centre of Lebani Village. It is between $02^{\circ}10'35,09''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}20'36,42''$ Eastern Longitude, and has an elevation of 1,015 m above sea level. This location can be reached by walking through the Rampi-Masamba axis road (south of Lebani), along the path to the gardens and fields of the local inhabitants, crossing Tumahu River, eastward into the foot of the sloping hills (Fig. 18).

Besides locations of burial jars, the team also found an ancient village and a worshipping place that is considered sacred in Lebani. The ancient village is Pogaa, which is situated at Sulaku Village, with a coordinate of between $02^{\circ}14'80.1''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}33'15.5''$ Eastern Longitude, and an elevation of 1054 m above sea level. It is at a meadow with reeds on the ridge of (Bulu) Hulaku Hill, ± 2.5 km to the southeast of the



Fig. 18. Stone flake tools and potsherds found at Padang Powoliaha'a, Beloi Hamlet, Lebani Village (doc. Makassar Subcentre of Archaeology).



Fig. 19. The stone arrangement at Padang Toroah.

habitation centre of the Sulaku Village. The location is surrounded by tropical forest. The finds include earth fortress with a slabstone as the marker of its opening, stone pedestals, and potsherds. This settlement is surrounded by steep hills, except for the south side, where the earth fortress is located. The earth fortress extends about 1.5 m long and a high as an adult person. It is assumed to be one of the abandoned ancient villages of the Leboni communities, which was moved nearer to the trans Masamba-Rampi road.

There is also an arrangement of stones in Leboni Village, which area is considered sacred. The stone arrangement area was used as a sacred place to worship and perform rituals such as asking for rain, initiating the planting activities in the rice fields, or during certain occasions. The area is located at Padang (Pada') Toroah, between $02^{\circ}20'39.5''$ Northern Latitude and $120^{\circ}34'58.1''$ Eastern Longitude, with an elevation of 1,061 m above sea level. It is on a vast plain at the foot of hills and covered with vegetations dominated by grass and reeds, about 300 m west of the Masamba-Rampi axis road. The Pekabuangan River, which is located ± 50 m to the east, complements the landscape of Padang Toroah. The distance from the Leboni Village is ± 3.5 km to the southwest (Fig. 19).

2.2 Excavations

Excavation was carried out at the Timooni rice field, Onondowa Village, particularly at the location where scattered potsherds (fragments of jars) and Human Statue 1 were discovered, based on the following reasons: (1) the area is undisturbed by rice-planting season, (2) the area is seldom used to plant rice because it is hard to get irrigation water, (3) there are fragments of jars and a megalithic statue at this location within not too great distance. It was hoped that the excavation will find and collect buried relics, which could help us comprehend the activities conducted during that period, and their chronology.

The excavation was conducted by opening three 2×2 m excavation boxes. Due to limited equipments, the team did not make grids. Instead, the team merely plot the coordinate of each box (see figure/map 2 and Fig. 20). Then, in line with the results from K1 and K2, the team opened two more excavation boxes.

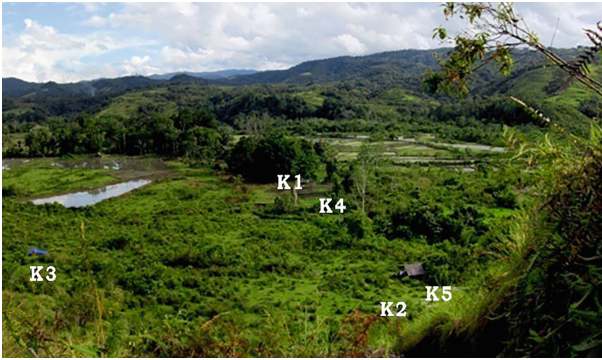


Fig. 20. The positions of excavation boxes at Timo'oni rice field area, Onondowa Village.

K1 is situated at the area where the fragments of jars are located, while K2 is situated near the Human Fig. 1, and K3 is about 200 m east of. Afterward, K4 was dug about 14,6 m west of K1, and K5 is the extension of K2. Only four excavation boxes will be reported in this article, which are: K1, K2 and K5, and K4.

K1 Excavation Box. K1, one of the excavation boxes at Timo'oni rice field, is located at a piece of land that belongs to Mr. Dosi Dami. To the west of K1 is Tokinopoh Hill, to the north and east is Timone Hill, and to the south flows Mokoka River. The $2 \times 2 \text{ m}^2$ excavation box is level with the datum point (DP) at the southwest angle, with an elevation of 12 cm above the ground.

There are four layers of soil in this box (see Fig. 21). The first layer is black humus layer with sandy clay, which contains plenty of gravels. The depth of this layer is 22–25 cm. No artifact was found in this layer. Artifacts began to be found in the second layer, at the depth of 25–55 cm. The soil of the second layer is blackish brown with sandy clay texture containing gravels. Potsherds were found more abundantly (471 fragments) compared to the other layers. They consist of fragments of plain and decorated rims, plain body fragments, red-slipped and black-slipped body fragments, carinated body fragments, handles, lids, and base parts. Next is the third layer at the depth of 55–95 cm, characterized by yellowish-brown soil with sandy-clay texture containing small pebbles. About 193 potsherds were found in this layer, which consist of fragments of plain and decorated rims, plain bodies, red-slipped and black-slipped bodies, handles and lids, and plain and red-slipped bases. Finally, the fourth layer at the depth of 95–135 cm, with yellowish-brown soil, medium to coarse sandy clay, and no pebbles. Artifacts are no longer found in the fourth layer (sterile).

As a whole, the cultural remains (artifacts) found in K1 were probably used in burial activities. This assumption was supported by the discovery of ground lens (feature) on the north wall, which began to emerge at the end of the second layer and continued to the third layer. The ground lens is blackish-brown disturbed/ stirred soil, and is probably where the burial jar was placed. The jar burial is no longer seen, most probably it due to soil acidity or damaged because people had taken it out to get the funeral gifts.

K2 and K5 Excavation Box. K2 is situated at the place where the Human Statue 1 on the rice field area of Timo'oni at the foot of a cliff with very high quartz content, while

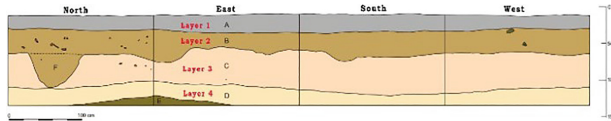


Fig. 21. The Stratigraphy of K1, Rice field area of Timo'oni, Onondowa Village.

K5 is an extension of K2 that was made because there was an indication of a dolmen. The aim of opening this excavation box is to know the activities and chronology of the area around the megalithic statue. The soil surface is sandy clay and river sand, which resulted from avalanches from the upper part of the cliff at the north side of the box. This location used to be a place where the buffaloes of the local inhabitants wallowed, because everytime it rains, this place tjars into a puddle of water coming from the top of the cliff.

This excavation box has five layers of soil, with many soil inserts. The stratigraphy of K2 and K5 are not too different from that of K1 (see Fig. 22). It is interesting to know from the results of the excavation how the statue was placed in upright position at the recent place. In Fig. 22, there is S5 insertion, which shows that in the olden days the statue was placed in this position through the position on the S5 insertion, and not buried like when it was discovered according to the position of the S5 soil insert. The excavation also reveals that originally the statue was not buried like when it was found (the height from the surface was about 68 cm). Instead, the position was parallel to the dolmen, at the end of the second layer (B) and the beginning of the third layer (C), while the buried part is in the third layer (layer C). So the statue is buried about 118 cm below the surface.

When it was parallel to the dolmen (the dolmen is 148 cm long, 100 cm wide, and 16 cm thick), its body ornaments was clearly seen, which are a couple of breasts, but its gender has not been known. On its head is a kind of bun, and on the right side of its head are 4 or 5 wavy indentations.



Fig. 22. Excavation in K2 (Human Statue 1) and K5 (dolmen) at Timo'oni Site, Onondowa Village.

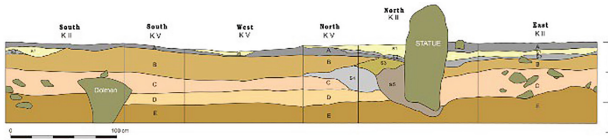


Fig. 23. The Stratigraphy of K2 (Human Statue 1) and K5 (dolmen) at the rice field area of Timo'oni, Onondowa Village.

It is unclear whether the indentations represent a head-dress or wavy (curly) hair. At the site of Pokekea (Behoa Valley) there is also the statue (near dolmen) of a male figure that has wavy indentations on its head and has a couple of breasts as well as a dagger. Therefore the team is of the opinion that the statue at Timo'oni and the other human statues within the Rampi Valley are depicting male figures, and the wavy pattern on their heads are not head-dresses but represent wavy or curly hair).

With the presence of dolmen, it seems like the statue is depicting a respected figure. The function of the dolmen is still uncertain, whether as burial or medium of worship, because excavation around the dolmen could not be continued due to limited time. Hopefully it can be carried out in the next research (Fig. 23).

The pottery fragments and some man-made tools are mostly found in the second layer (B) and the third layer (C). The pottery fragments consist of plain rims, plain bodies, carinations, handles (lids), bases, and *gacuk* (round, flat, thick pottery commonly used in children's game), while non-pottery artifacts are stone percutor, red chert, and stone flakes. Unfortunately, when the research team left the site and were crossing the river, the current was fast due to flood, dan some the important finds fell and swept away. The finds had not been documented by being photographed or drawn. Based on the available data, the artifacts found in the excavation box were probably used in religious ritual activities, but it is unclear whether it was burial or worship.

From the excavation, the team gets the chronology based on the charcoal samples in the context with the Human Statue number 1 and dolmen. The date of the human statue is minimal 1850 ± 25 BP (lab code Wk-39676) or, if calibrated, around AD 86–109 (1st–2nd M), and the dolmen dates back to minimal around 1854 ± 25 BP (lab code Wk-39675), with result of calibration of around AD 86–109 (1st–2nd AD). The dating analyses were carried out at Waikato Laboratory, New Zealand.

K4 Excavation Box. K4 was oriented towards the northeast, following the *tegalan* (dry/not irrigated field to plant vegetables, near rice fields) to the southeast of the excavation box). On the northwest the box is adjacent to the hut/house of Mr. Zakaria, to the southwest flows Mokoka River, and to the northeast is the Timo'oni Slope. At the east of K4 is K1, 14.6 and 130° from the north. The excavation box is 2×1 m, level to the Datum Point (DP) at the southwest corner, with an elevation of 8 cm above the soil's surface. The reason of digging this excavation box was to look for the traces of activities in relation to jar burial, because the team found flat, roundish stone object on the surface, presumably a jar's lid (cover). It is hoped that this excavation will reveal the chronology and supporting finds inside the burial jar.

The flat roundish stone on the surface is 43 cm wide, 52 cm long, and 21 cm thick. It is located on an axis of $x = 76$ cm, $y = 146$ cm, and, and $z = -6$ cm. To the southeast

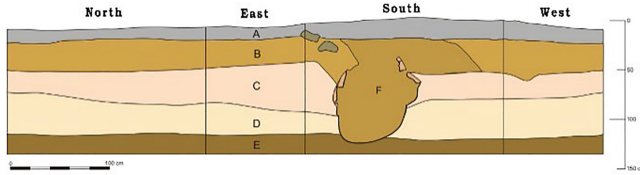


Fig. 24. The stratigraphy of K4 at the Rice Field Area of Timo'oni, Onondowa Village.

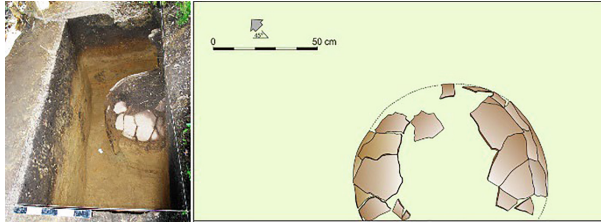


Fig. 25. Fragments of the remaining burial jar in K4.

side is a ditch that extended in southwest – northwest direction. The stratigraphy in this excavation box is similar to the stratigraphy in the other boxes on the Timo'oni rice field area, which consist of five layers. The layer that contains the most finds is the second layer (layer B) and the least is the third (layer C).

In fact, during this excavation were found pottery fragments that were thought to be fragments of jars. They were found in the second layer (layer B) and they began to appear at the depth of ± 45 cm from the surface (see Figs. 24 and 25). The jar was very worn out and damaged. There were also several other potsherds. They might have been remains of funeral gifts from inside the burial jars. They were also worn out and fragile, and were only small fragments, so that it was difficult to know the shapes/types. However, we can still see the red and black slip. It is highly probable that the jars had once been looted, and their condition worsen due to the high acidity (Ph) of the soil, which is about 5.3.

Fortunately the team still found charcoal in the context with the jars. Result of laboratory analysis at Waikato, New Zealand, yield a date of 1739 ± 25 BP (lab. Code Wk-39674), and the calibration shows the minimum date of these jars, which is AD 241–358 (3rd–4th centuries AD).

3 The Important Contribution of Rampi Valley During the Early Metal Period

Research on the Rampi Valley, eventhough has only been carried out once, has given us an indication about settlement during the early metal period, especially in Sulawesi and the Indonesian Archipelago in general. This is based on the discovery of jar burials, both in surveys and excavations, even if many of the jars were found empty and seem to have been looted. Apparently lootings had long been occurred, like reported by Kruyt

(1938) in his book, *The De West-Toradjas Op Midden Celebes*. Many of the jars that he found were empty, but Kruyt explained that the local inhabitants at that time found a large number of funeral gifts such as stone axes, beads, copper bracelets, half green and half white arm bands made of mollusks' shell, and once they also found a glass arm-band. The local inhabitants in recent time also told the team that they often found orange, red, white, black, blue, yellow, and purple beads; some are round and some others are elongated in shape.

From excavation results, the team is fortunate to can still be able to obtain dates from the cultural layers. The date of the cultural layer near the burial urn on Rampi Valley The date from the sample from the burial urn on Rampi Valley (K4), is 1739 ± 25 BP or about 3th–4th centuries AD. It has a lid/cover made of unworked stone, which surface tends to be flat. Jars with stone lid/cover with similar characteristics are also plenty in Lore Highland, which is on Bada-Behoa-Napu valleys (Yuniawati-Umar 2020). The round red-slipped burial urn in K4 bears similarities to those from Savidug Dune Site on Batanes, the Philippines (see Bellwood 2017) and Kolori Site, on Bada Valley (Yuniawati-Umar et al. 2012, Yuniawati-Umar 2020). The oldest chronology for burial urn on Bada Valley is 1920 ± 30 BP or about 1st–2nd centuries AD, which is at the dated site of Perwana (Lufpi 2016).

The burial system on Rampi Valley is still unknown, but results of investigation at Petawua Anditu, Bada Valley, Central Sulawesi (1620 ± 30 BP (abad 4th–5th centuries AD), with the discovery of fragile human bones and teeth, reveal that it was secondary and communal burial. Also, based on teeth analysis, it can be assumed that there are at least three adults and 4 children (Yuniawati-Umar, 2020), while results of research at Palembang Site (Kalumpang) on Karama Valley, West Sulawesi Province, which dates back to about 1720 ± 30 BP or about AD 248–391 ($\pm 3^{\text{rd}}$ –4th centuries AD), also yield two burial urns. One of the urns contains one child in flexed position, while the other urn only contains five teeth that belonged to one adult (Anggraeni 2022). The dates at Palembang Site (Kalumpang) has relatively similar date to the cultural layer from the burial urn in K4 on Rampi. From the excavation boxes on the rice field area of Timo'oni, particularly K1, the team found pottery fragments with red or black slip. Red or black slip was usually applied on the exterior surface of potteries at the finishing phase of pottery making. In this excavation box there were also potsherds decorated with incised lines and puncture marks (see Fig. 26). Such motifs were also found on Behoa and Bada valleys in Central Sulawesi Province. According to Anggraeni (an archaeo-logist from Gadjah Mada University), the type of pottery rims with incised and puncture decoration were found in large amount at Palembang Site, Kalumpang, in West Sulawesi Province (personal communication, 2012).



Fig. 26. Fragments of pottery with incised and puncture decorations in K1, around the burial jars/urns on Timo'oni rice field area, Onondowa Village.

Regarding the use of burial urns, Peter Bellwood (1997) mentioned that using burial urns is the indigenous tradition of Island Southeast Asia. According to him, it has been a tradition since the Late Neolithic period, and thrived during the Early Metal Age, and the urn burial sites in Southeast Asia are the characteristic of the Philippines–Kalimantan–Sumba triangle. Furthermore, Bellwood (2017) added that the burial tradition is practiced in Vietnam, Laos, the Philippines, Kalimantan, South Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Sumba (Bellwood 2017, Bulbeck 2017). From those statements, Bellwood was referring to the use of urns as burial containers than as funeral gifts.

Bulbeck (2017) classifies the jar/urn burials in Indo-Malay Archipelago into three periods or phases of burial. The urn burials on Rampi Valley belong to the second phase, which is early century AD or Early Metal Age, large sized, and have stone lids/covers (Bellwood 2017; Bulbeck 2017). The Early Metal Age is considered the period of regional trade within Island Southeast Asia, and it is assumed that it was from this point that intensive cultural contacts were established between South Asia and the west part of the archipelago, and between Taiwan, which is thought to be the place origin of large-sized primary burial urns, and the Batanes Islands in the Philippines (Calo et al. 2015; Bellwood & Dizon, 2013b in Bulbeck, 2017).

The evidences about trade can directly and indirectly be seen in the presence of bronze or iron artifacts (Dongson influence); glass and carnelian beads (India/Thailand) (Bellwood 2017), as well as exotic and prestigious pottery (Tanudirjo 2019). There are similarities of finds at the sites on Karama Valley and the megalithic sites in Central Sulawesi such as red-slipped pottery and pottery decorated with paddle impressed, carved, and gouged techniques, as well as stone jar burial at Palembang with flat, round stone lid (cover), which indicate the possibility that the Karama River had been used to carry iron and gold objects to the interior part of Central Sulawesi since about 2000 years ago during the Early Metal Age. Adanya kesamaan temuan di situs-situs Lembah Karama (Bulbeck 2010; Bulbeck & Nasruddin 2002; Anggraeni, 2012). Regarding the Megalithic sites in Central Sulawesi, the author is of the opinion that Rampi Valley was also part of this interior trade route.

From the results of observations, it is possible that the making or working of the jar graves in the Rampi Valley still used simple techniques using only the hands and combined with open-air baked goods. Information from Kruyt that at that time in the Rampi Valley there were no residents who could make large jars like the burial jars that were found. Even at that time they said that it was the genies who made the jars (Kruyt 1938).

The discovery of Megalithic remains in form of human statues with no legs, which date back to around AD 86–109 (1st–2nd centuries AD), reveals the influence of Dongson Culture. The Dongson Culture is characterized by the mastery of metal technology that produced bronze-iron objects like kettledrums, jars, weapons, and other types of objects (Simanjuntak 2020). It seems as though the adoption of Dongson Culture on Rampi Valley is not in the making of exotic bronze and iron artifacts, but in the special expertise (knowledge) in making stone carvings, which were probably done by using metal tools. Is there a possibility that the bearers of the Megalithic culture on Rampi have had the knowledge of metallurgy technology and mined the raw material themselves? It

is unfortunate that researchers have never found the evidence, maybe because the metal tools have been worn out and damaged due to the high level of soil acidity.

The human statues on the Rampi Valley have distinctive facial carvings, in simple style, with slanting or round eyes, joint eyebrows and nose, without mouth, and a face that looks like taro leaf (*Colocasia esculenta*) (Yuniawati-Umar 2020). The presence of human face motives on a Megalithic human statues on Rampi Village have similarities to the ones found on Bada-Behoa-Napu valleys, the amount of which is higher, but unfortunately the chronologies of the three valleys are still unknown (Yuniawati-Umar 2020).

The carvings of human face motifs, which were depicted in simple style, are similar to the human face motifs on the Lapita pottery from Melanesia and West Polynesia that date back to around 1200–800 BC (Chiu 2005; Bellwood 2017; Tanudirjo & Mahirta 2009; Tanudirjo 2019; Yuniawati-Umar 2020). The statues in the form of humans with no legs show generic similarities to those on Easter Island (Raven 1926; Kaudern 1938; Bellwood 2017; Yuniawati-Umar 2020), that were assumed to date back to around 1250–1500 AD (DiNapoli et al. 2019).

The similarities of human face (anthropomorphic) motifs on metal, earthenware, and stone artifacts in Island Southeast Asia indicate widespread resemblance of style, probably due to maritime trade and migrations that were originated from the shared tradition of the Malay-Polynesian group (Bellwood 2017, Ono et al. 2018; Tanudirjo 2019; Yuniawati-Umar 2020).

The function of human statues on the Rampi Valley is thought to be as burial markers because they were located near dolmen or burial urns/jars (Yuniawati-Umar 2020), or as representations of honored figures that were hoped to protect the bearers of the Megalithic Culture of that period, a tradition based on the belief in life after death that had been known since the Neolithic period. (2020).

As for the workshop where the statues, dolmens, and stone mortars were made, results of the surveys have not been able to reveal traces of any workplace. There is a possibility that the raw material were obtained from the rivers not far from where the Megalithic objects were located. Results of researches, raw materials were usually obtained from rivers not far from the sites (Yuniawati et al. 2012; 2013; Yuniawati-Umar 2020). The type of rock that was used to make the artifacts is biotite granite.

Dolmens on Rampi Valley have a chronology of around 1st–2nd centuries AD, and thus far it is the oldest date in Indonesia. Their function has not been known whether as burial markers or ceremonial altar for worship. The use of dolmens as burial markers is thought to be the earliest function compared to as altars for worship. South Korean archaeologists, Cho Jinson and Wi Meonghawan, based on comparison study on dolmens in Indonesia and in Zhejiang (Southeast China) state that there are similarities between them, and they both assumed that dolmens were originated from Indonesia. However, chronologically there is a huge gap between the dolmens in Indonesia, which at that time date back to around 8th–15th centuries AD, and those from Zhejiang, which date back to 12th–4th centuries BC (Prasetyo 2016).

The stone mortars that have with not too big cavity were usually used in food processing (such as to pound or grind cereal grains) that needs to be ground or husked (Perry 1938). Stone mortars, like those found on Rampi Valley are exist in almost all

over Sulawesi and even the Indonesian Archaeology. But the author's observation reveals that the stone mortars within Bada-Behoa-Napu valleys and Rampi Valley have smaller diameter than those found at other areas (Yuniawati-Umar 2020). With small diameter of openings (with an average of around 10–15 cm), according to the author, they were not used for pounding rice, because pounding rice grains with the media will crush the grains, except when the rice was going to be made into flour. An ethnographic study carried out by Hasanuddin at the village of Arung Keke, Jeneponto (South Sulawesi) revealed that stone mortars are still used to pound rice into flour (Hasanuddin 2015). Soejono (1984) also informed that in South Sumatra stone mortar are used to pound rice into flour. If the age of the stone mortars are not much different from the age of the stone statues and jars, there is a possibility that during that period the people had practiced cereal cultivation.

Stone pedestals are a group of upright stones that resemble menhirs with heights between ± 15 cm (short ones) and ± 1 m (high). They functioned as pedestals of stone pillars of wooden houses. The local inhabitants named the pillar *oboka*. *Obokas* are made of granite. The upright parts are used as the base, while the upper parts are tapered or cylindrical in accordance with the shape of the wood to be placed on the stone pedestal. The *obokas* were placed in even numbers for each house, usually between 4 and 8, in rows in line with the length or width of the house.. Van der Hoop (1932) has also mentioned that groups of upright stones are found in big numbers at Gunungmegang, Kebonagung (South Sumatra), and they function as pedestals of stilt houses. Ethnographic data can still be found on Bada and Behoa valleys in Central Sulawesi, but they are not very high. Nowadays in Ende (East Nusa Tenggara) we can still find more than 1 m high stone pedestals of wooden houses (personal communication with Jajang Agus Sonjaya, a cultural observer). Generally the houses with stone pedestals are dwellings, but there are some that function as warehouse to store things or field crops.

The existence of villages that are considered ancient by the present inhabitants, and had been abandoned by the dwellers (who prefer to live near road access), the unawareness of the inhabitants of Rampi about cultural remains like burial urns/jars and human statues that were found during Kruyt's visit on Rampi Valley in early 19th century AD, as well as the continuing practice of worship of natural stones that are considered sacred, indicate the possibility that the present-day inhabitants of Rampi Valley are not the direct descendants of the bearers of the Megalithic Culture in the olden days.

4 Conclusion

With the discovery of three absolute dates from this research, in general it can be said that the settlements of the bearers of the Megalithic Culture on Rampi Valley date back to at least early centuries AD, which is during the early metal period. This date is quite old for the Megalithic human statues and dolmens in the Indonesian Archipelago. Some evidences about the similarities of artifacts indicate that there were contacts with various other sites in the surrounding areas, such as Karama Valley (Kalumpang) in the south, which has Neolithic up to the Early Metal periods, with cultural similarities in form of urn burial, while the Lore Highland (Bada-Behoa-Napu valleys) in the north has similarities in terms of urn burial and Megalithic Culture.

The contacts suggest that those sites had been involved in interior maritime trade through rivers and land routes. The commodities are most probably the trending items during the period, namely metal objects and prestigious items like pottery for ceremonial purposes, beads, and other artifacts. Trade contacts in relation to metal and prestigious objects are assumed to occur with Karama valley in the southern area.

Thus far, from investigations in Indonesia, the megalithic culture was not originated from Indonesia but was introduced by the waves of migration or diffusion from the outside world. The evidences on the Rampi Valley support this assumption, as seen in the human face motifs on the megalithic statues that show influence from the east. The motifs show the same style of depiction with the human face motifs on the Lapita pottery in Melanesia and West Polynesia. The similarities between the megalithic elements on Rampi Valley and the sites on Lore Highland (Bada-Behoa-Napu valleys) suggest that this site is one of the routes or stepping stones of the bearers of the megalithic culture that were going to the Lore Highland from ke Karama valley. Of course this assumption still have to be tested, particularly in terms of the undated human statues and dolmen.

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