

THE JAR BURIAL SITE OF LOLO GEDANG, SOUTHWEST OF KERINCI LAKE, JAMBI

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Abstrak. Situs Tempayan Kubur dari Lolo Gedang, di Barat Daya Danau Kerinci, Jambi. Kawasan Danau Kerinci merupakan salah satu lokasi yang memiliki keanekaragaman warisan budaya masa lampau. Secara administratif, kawasan ini berada di Kabupaten Kerinci, Provinsi Jambi. Wilayah ini pada masa sekarang masih tergolong daerah terpencil akibat sarana transportasi dan komunikasi yang terbatas. Kondisi geografis yang bergunung dan berbukit dengan danau dan anak-anak sungai merupakan faktor penyebab utama sektor pertanian sebagai andalan pendapatan daerah.

Daerah pegunungan Sumatera merupakan salah satu wilayah kepulauan Asia Tenggara yang kurang menjadi perhatian dalam arkeologi. Salah satu wilayah Jambi, yaitu sekitar Danau Kerinci sampai kini masih dijumpai bukti benda budaya materi berupa artefak memiliki karakter budaya masa prasejarah. Tinggalan arkeologi yang ada di situs-situs kawasan Danau Kerinci dari masa prasejarah (mesolitik sampai perundagian) mengindikasikan peradaban awal dengan komunitas yang telah memiliki tingkat teknologi (peralatan), organisasi sosial, kepercayaan dan sebagainya. Program penelitian berupa survei dan ekskavasi dalam kesatuan zona geografi dan lingkungan telah dilakukan sejak van der Hoop (1932) yang mengawali studinya terhadap megalitik di dataran tinggi Pasemah pada sekitar tahun 1930-an. Penemuan van der Hoop memicu penelitian serupa baik di Pasemah dan Kerinci (2009).

Fokus karya tulis ini memberikan penekanan pada salah satu situs kawasan Kerinci, yaitu Situs tempayan kubur di Lolo Gedang. Hasil ekskavasi menemukan beberapa tempayan kubur di Situs Lolo Gedang (sektor II) yang sangat menonjol dengan slip berwarna merah pada permukaan bagian luar dan dalam dengan berbagai ukuran dan bentuk khas lokal. Tempayan kubur ini mengandung kubur sekunder dengan bekal kubur (beliung, serpih, periuk kecil, manik-manik, perhiasan perunggu) ditemukan di dalam dan luar konteks kubur.

Kata kunci: Kubur Tempayan, Situs Lolo Gedang, Danau Kerinci, Jambi

***Abstract.** The area of Kerinci Lake is one of the locations that have varied archaeological heritages. Administratively, this area is located in the Regency of Kerinci, the Province of Jambi. Until now it remains a remote area due to limited access of transportation and communication. Its mountainous and hilly geographic condition with lakes and river tributaries is the main factor of local income, which is from agricultural sector (in fields/plantations).*

The hilly areas of Sumatra are among the places in Southeast Asian Archipelago that have not been sufficiently investigated in terms of archaeology. Up to the present, in an area in Jambi Province, which is the one around the Kerinci Lake, can still be found material culture in forms of artifacts with prehistoric characteristics. The prehistoric (from mesolithic up to paleometalic periods) remains found at the sites around Kerinci Lake indicate that there was an early civilization supported by communities

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with quite advanced technology (tools), social organization, and belief. Research program in forms of surveys and excavations in geographical and environmental units have been carried out since van der Hoop (1932) began his study on megalithic in the highlands of Pasemah in 1930's. Van der Hoop's discovery led to similar researches in Pasemah and Kerinci.

This paper is focused on one of the sites in Kerinci, which is the Jar burial of Lolo Gedang (Aziz et al. 2009-2010). Results of excavation yield a number of burial jars in various sizes at the site (Sector II), which are dominantly treated with red slip on both their outside and inner surface; they have several local shapes that are unique to this site. The jars are secondary burials with funeral gifts of adzes, flakes, small pots, beads, and bronze ornaments within and outside the burial context.

Keywords: Jar Burial, Lolo Gedang Site, Kerinci Lake, Jambi

Introduction

Most of the excavation activities are aimed at placing an archaeological site in its cultural context and its relation to other sites, as well as retracing the internal and cultural organizations and its community that bore the culture. Archaeological investigation at the hinterlands of Sumatra – particularly Kerinci – was first reported by van der Hoop at the tea plantation of 'Danau Gadang' that means Gadang Lake (which later changed its name into Kebun Baru Lolo or the New Garden of Lolo) and Djoedjoen plantation near Kerinci Lake in 1936 (Hoop 1941:284-7; 1940:168-9). Other investigations by a joint team of the archaeological students of Universitas Indonesia (the University of Indonesia) and personnels of Dinas Purbakala or Archaeological Office (Soekmono 1955:14-5), a joint team from Lembaga Purbakala dan Peninggalan Nasional or The National Institution of Archaeological Remains (1994) and the University of Pennsylvania and Universitas Museum at Bukit Pulai Site (Bronson dkk 1973: 4-5, 18-9), an archaeological team from the National Research Centre of Archaeology, The Archaeological Research Office of Palembang, The Archaeological Office of the Southern Part of Sumatra, the National Museum, the University of Indonesia, Institut Teknologi Bandung (Geology Department), and Bakosurtanal or the National Coordinative Agency of Land Survey

(geography)(Laporan Jambi 1994:107-21), teams of the Office of Conservation, Research, and Development of Jambi (Setyorini 1996:1-24; 2002:523-26; Agus Sudaryadi 2007), The Archaeological Research Office of Palembang (Tri Marhaeni S. Budisantosa 2006:32--54), and some foreign researchers such as Dominik Bonatz (2003, 2005, 2006), as well as a team led by Fadhila Aziz (the author) (2009, 2010). At those sites, pottery are usually the dominant finds and the most important source of information. Among certain communities, pottery play an important role in human life.

The aim of this paper is to inform results of archaeological investigations at the site of Lolo Gedang. The site was discovered through a report by local inhabitants about some artifacts in the cultivated field of Mr. Afdalni in 2008. Long before, in 1994, a team that consists of researchers from various institutions and fields of science (archaeology, geology, and geography) has identified a pottery distribution in this area. The report by the local inhabitants was followed-up by Office of Conservation, Research, and Development of Jambi at Muak Site (1996), The Archaeological Research Office of Palembang at Lolo Gedang Site (2009), and the National Research and Development Centre of Archaeology at the archaeological sites southeast of the Kerinci Lake and the site of Lolo Gedang (2009-2010).

The Location of Kerinci in the Hinterland of Sumatra

The situation of Kerinci Highland with a landscape of wavy hills and fog that resembles a sheer curtain can be seen as nature's beauty and richness of Sumatran hinterland. As the smallest regency in the area, the place is locally known as "*sepucuk jambi sembilan lurah*". Mountain range and hills with lake, waterfalls, and fascinating panorama can also be found in this area.

The valleys and lake of Kerinci are situated on a vast mountainous area, which stretched lengthwise in northwest – southeast direction in accordance with the orientation of the Sumatra Island. The lake is situated in the southeast. It has an elevation of ± 800 m, with hills and mountains that soar more than 2000 m high from sea level. Among the countless active volcanoes in Indonesia, Kerinci Mountain is one of the highest (3.805 m above sea level). To the south of the lake are also volcano peaks such as Kunyit Mountain (2151 m), Raya Mountain (2545 m), Pandan Mountain (2168 m), Medan Mountain (1575 m), Kebongsong Mountain (2262 m), etc.

The Kerinci valley and lake cover a 30,000 hectare area, and the lake itself is about 5,000 hectare wide. It is a volcanic lake, which sources of water come from the surrounding hills and mountains. Its water flows relatively eastward through Batang Meranging River into Tembesi River before it reaches the open sea in the eastern coast of Sumatra. A number of river tributaries around Kerinci Lake include among others Meragin, Siulat, Jujun, Lingkat, Lolo, Kunyit, Kerinci, Kemumu rivers (Aziz *et al.* 2009b:146).

The morphology of this area makes it a fertile place. The soil is resulted from the weathering of rocks and materials from the activities of

ancient volcanoes that are rich in minerals. It is no surprising, therefore, that this area becomes fertile, and most of its inhabitants are farmers or workers of plantations. Understandably, the local government considers its natural sources (mining and agriculture sectors) the biggest resource of Gross Regional Domestic Income. The recent condition of natural environment of this area is presumed to be not too different from $\pm 3,500$ years ago (early century AD).

Among the mountains of Kerinci, Raya, and Kunyit there were once an early civilization unlike the present communities, both physically and culturally. The environmental condition with hilly areas, valleys, and rivers did not stop previous communities from occupying this area, which is rich in flora and fauna. Those small communities lived nomadically and they left traces of their existence in the interior of the central part of Sumatra, the Kerinci Valley. Some of the evidences are cylindrical stones, pottery, and lithic tools (neolithic axes/adzes), which are widely dispersed within this area. They fulfilled their everyday needs by hunting, gathering forest produces, and fishing. The communities carried out their daily activities and conducted ceremonies not far from their habitation places.

The Environment and Jar Burial Site of Lolo Gedang

Administratively, the Jar burial site of Lolo Gedang is located at Pasar Kerman -Lolo Gedang Village in Gunung Raya District, Kerinci Regency, Jambi Province. The village itself is part of Teluk Dalam Valley. The lithology of this valley consists of clay, sand-gravel, as well as volcanic boulders of andesitic-basaltic and breccia rocks. This valley is currently used as habitation place, agricultural fields, and rice fields. The Lolo Gedang Site is located in the inner arc of the Sunda Mountains. During the West Monsoon there are high waves, while during

the East Monsoon the sea is calm. The average temperature at the coastal area is 25° C and at the mountain area is 20° C.

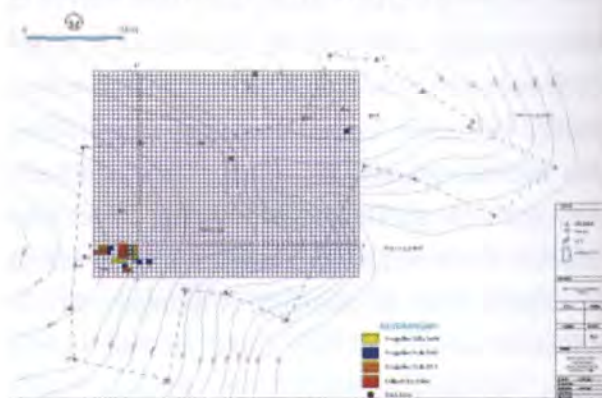
The site is situated between 02°12'06.5" Southern Latitude and 101°32'37" Eastern Hemisphere, with an elevation of 1.028 m above sea level, behind Meluang Hill, which is located in the highland morphological unit south of the Kerinci Lake. Geographically, the Meluang Hill is surrounded by the Lintang Mountain, Surabening Hill, Raya Mountain, Sigantung Hill, Kuniyit Mountain, Setangis Hill, Betuah Mountain, and Bujang Mountain. These hills have relatively similar elevation, which is about 1050 m above sea level. The site of Lolo Gedang is bordered by Talang Sembilan Hill in the east, Kerman Hill in the north, Meluang Sakti Village and Singaling Hill in the west, and Lubuk Kabu Valley and Gaung River Valley in the south. At the valley of Lubuk Kabu there is Lingkat River, which flows eastward.

The cylindrical stones are located at Sector I of Lolo Gedang Site and are locally known as 'Batu Gong' (Gong Stone). They are made of boulders of andesitic igneous rocks decorated with engravings of concentric circles or vine motifs. Similar type of rocks of boulder size are also found in great numbers within the location of the burial Jars (Sector II) because igneous rocks are one of the main lithology units in this area.

Excavations at Lolo Gedang Site (Sector II) have been carried out by The Archaeological Research Office of Palembang (April 2009) and The National Research and Development Centre of Archaeology (July-October 2009, August 2010). The lithology of the excavation pit, which is located south of Maluang Hill at the coordinate of between 2° 12.107' Southern Latitude and 101° 32,608' Eastern Hemisphere with an elevation of 1.028 m above sea level, is yellowish tuff deposit with clay lenses at various places. The upper

layer is black humus. The yellowish colour of the tuff is clearly seen when the soil is wet, while when it is dry the colour becomes whitish. There are also off-white coloured tuff gravels with black weathering colour on the outer layer. To the east of the excavation pit there is an outcrop of large andesite rock, which is a volcanic igneous rock. Based on the morphology of the location of the excavated site of Lolo Gedang, at Sector II, it seems like this site is situated on the southern slope of the Meluang Hill, which is only slightly steep (20°) measured against Air Palik River (the tributary of Lingkar River). The sloping morphology and the lithology of this site are among the cause of the slanting position and broken condition of the burial Jars.

Excavations at Sector II of the Lolo Gedang Site reveal a number of very prominent burial Jars, as well as various sizes of distinct local shaped pottery with red slip on both their outside and inside surfaces. The Jar burials are secondary ones with funeral gifts (adzes, flakes, small jars, beads, and bronze ornaments) within and outside the context of the burials. Not far from this location, there are large cylindrical stones decorated with engravings of human and geometric motifs (Sector I)(Map 1).



Map 1. Situation of the Excavation Pits at the Site of Lolo Gedang, Sector 2, District of Gunung Raya, Regency of Kerinci, Province of Jambi

Recently the vegetation of the eastern part of Lolo Gedang Site consists of plantation

crops, which is dominated by homogenous plants of cinnamon (*Cinnamomum burmanii*), while the vegetation within the site area – particularly around the excavation pits – includes bushes of *Ageratum conyzoides*, *Hyptis capitata*, *Stachytarpheta jamacensis*, *sikeduduk* (*Melastomamalabatricum*), *akarwangi* (*Polygala paniculata*) and grasses (*Poaceae*). Among the homogenous plants are several types of trees like *jengking* (*Euphorbiaceae*), *ara* (*Baccaurea sp.*), *baniban* (*Piperaceae*), *sakek* (*Asplenium nidus*), areca palms (*Areca sp.*), *jengkat* (*Erythrina lithosperma*). The vegetation along the Lingkat River is dominated by plants that need wet soil, such as bamboo (*tamiang/Bambusa spinosa*, *betung/Dendrocalamus asper*); ferns like *kerakap simpai* (*Cibotium baranetz*), *paku sarang burung* (*Asplenium nidus*), *paku lahat* (*Lycopodium sp.*); a kind of *Poacea*, taro or caladium (*Araceae*), *sembung* plants (*Zingibera-ceae*), *Gesneriaceae*, *Arecaceae* (*Arenga pinnata*, *Zalacca sp.*), betel plants (*Pipera-ceae*), *sepimping* (*Saccharum spontaneum*), various types of tubers (*Convolvulaceae*), *sitawa* (including *Zingiberaceae*), and *Commelinaceae* up to the valley of Tebat Naga (Aziz et al. 2009a:26-8).

To the north of Lolo Gedang Site, the vegetation is dominated by bushes of *Euphorium triplinerve*, *Euphorium inulifolium*, *Ageratum conyzoides*, *Stachytarpheta indica*, *Melastoma sp.*, bamboo (*Bambusa sp.*), *jaluang* (*Cordylin*), *anakan surian* (*Toona sureni*), cinnamon (*Cinnamomum burmanii*). Part of this northern area is also used as agricultural fields of capsicum (*Capsicum annum*), tomatoes (*Solanum lycopersicum*), corns (*Zea mays*), and so forth (Aziz et al. 2009a:29).

During late Neolithic period, people lived a sedentary life and their culture and civilization flourished. The communal sedentary life in a campsite had led to greater need of daily necessities, which had to be managed together.

As a consequence, there was advancement of technology, for instance pottery-making for daily and ceremonial uses. Archaeological investigations at the southeast part of the Kerinci Lake have yielded widely distributed fragments of pottery around the cylindrical stones (gong stones) at some sites.

The archaeological sites that bear cylindrical stones within the Kerinci area are among others Kumun Mudik, Situs Jujun or Bukit Talang Pulau/Benik, Muak, Pondok, Pulau Sangkar (I dan II), Lolo Gedang (Sector I), Lolo Kecil, Lempur, and Tanjung Batu. The ones southeast of Kerinci Lake that yield pottery include Talang Ganting or Padang Lalang at the village of Sungai Hangat; Batu Patah Muak at Muak Village; the Jar burial site (II) at Muak Village; Playang at Playang Village; Batu Gong Pondok at Pondok Village; Kebun Lima (Ladang Sariso I and II); Jujun at Jujun Village; Koto Pekih at Pasar Kerman Village; Pulau Sangkar, Lolo Gedang (Sector II), etc. (Aziz et al. 2009b:28-49). Some of those sites were reported by foreign researchers before the Second World War, but the reports were not followed-up by systematic excavation.

Pottery technology and diversification are observed at the Lolo Gedang Site (Sector II). The types and shapes of pottery found there are: (1) Jars (plain and decorated); (2) shallow cups/cups (plain and decorated); (3) bowls (plain and decorated); (4) spoutless flasks (plain); (5) stove (?) or part of terracotta figurine (decorated) as shown by fragments of bases/legs; (6) Jars (plain and decorated); (7) lids (plain and decorated) as shown by fragments of handles or necks of covers; and (8) some fragments of pottery, which shapes and types are still unidentified. The most dominant ones are Jars, bowls, and cups or flat-based cups. Other types are bowls (*pasu*), fragment of a vessel with lid (most probably a pot with lid). The most dominant ones are pots, bowls or flat based bowls, and terracotta objects that until now

are believed to be part of a stove with supporting legs. The following are general descriptions of pottery (Aziz *et al.* 2009b:71-8).

Pots are the most dominantly found artifacts at the archaeological sites at the southern part of Kerinci. In general, the pots have the following characteristics:

- Open or straight rims with varied diameters (5 m up to 20 cm).
- Impressed decoration on the rims, necks, shoulders, bodies, or – in rare cases – their bases.
- The bodies are usually round or oval, and some are carrinated while some others have handles (based on the fact that we found some fragments of handles)
- The bases are mostly convex and there are some pots with legs.

The round-based shallow cups (*cawan*) are mostly decorated on their body or carination parts, although there are also some that have net-impressed decorations on the entire outside surface. A number of shallow cups with carination on their bodies and convex bases were also found. The ones with carination are decorated with geometric designs on their upper parts.

In general the cups (*mangkuk*) have an average diameter of around 10 cm while the diameters of the bowls (*pasu*) are 15 – 20 cm. Both cups and bowls have open rims with flat lips. Like the pots, the impressed decorations on bowls and cups are placed on the lips and bodies.

The spoutless flasks are relatively small in size, with long necks and small openings (about 3 cm in diameter) and rounded bodies. The flasks are very rarely found.

Another shape of pottery found at Lolo Gedang are fragments of decorated foot. Our preliminary assumption is that the fragments are

stove foot parts. In the context of Jar burial, they were found around the burial Jars. Fragments of decorated foot are also found at the sites of Ganting/Padang Lalang and Kuto Pekih.

Jars are usually found in the context of burial. This type of pottery is the most dominant find at Lolo Gedang, which is indeed a Jar burial site. Jars were once highly needed in human life, as shown by the dominantly found jars – both fragmented and whole ones – at Sector II of the Lolo Gedang Site. Results of surveys and excavations at this site indicate that the pottery have different shapes, decorations, colours, qualities, and sizes. Some of them were found at the depth of 40–60 cm below the surface, or in the second layer (brown loose-textured silt) up to third layer (yellowish clay/tuff).

The shapes and sizes of the jars vary, which are the basic shapes of round and cylindrical. Some of them were decorated with irregular net-impressed motifs (interwoven patterned). They are mostly red-slipped on both the outer and inner surfaces. There are about 22 codes of burial jars from systematic excavations and another 7 obtained from illegal digging. Therefore it is assumed that there are about 29 burial jars at the Lolo Gedang Site/Sector II (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. The complexity among the jars and potsherds at Lolo Gedang Site, Kerinci, Jambi

Discussion

The site of Lolo Gedang is one of the evidences of human activities in the past, namely ceremonial activity (Sector I), which is shown by decorated cylindrical stones, and burial activity which is shown by the burial jars. This complex is located on the Meluang Hill, near Palik River that flows on its eastern part (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. Location of Lolo Gedang Site (sector I and II) on Meluang hill

Those burial jars were found in groups, although there are also some that were found individually with a distribution mostly eastward and southward. The landscape condition of the site – about 20° if measured from the Palik River – has made the jars pushed downward by water during hard rains. Field observations show that the sloping morphology and the type of lithology of the site were responsible for the slanting position and broken condition of the burial jars.

Most of the pottery were found in cracked, broken, and fragile conditions. Some were found with their outer surfaces peeling. Those conditions are due to intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The raw material, manufacturing technology, sloping landscape, rainwater, and underground water have intensified their porosity and dampness state. Furthermore, the looseness and fertility of the soil (ph 5.5–6.5), which is planted with cinnamon and coffee plants, have caused the plant roots to push through and broke the soil so

that the soil volume becomes greater and cracked the jars. The highly fluctuated temperature of the area has also accelerated the pottery's fragility.

The cracked and fragile conditions of the pottery, particularly those found in the excavation pits, are due to interactions between the raw material and the environmental factor. Pottery is made of clay, which has various qualities depending on the compositions of the clay. The clay is usually dug out and then treated by the potters to improve its quality. It can be done by eliminating the organic elements like plant roots and adding certain material such as sand, rice husks, or other material. The treatment is aimed at lessening the clay's plasticity, ease the shaping process, and improve heat distribution during firing process.

The pottery fragments are concentrated in one place, and some were found not far from each other and can be reconstructed to reveal their shapes, sizes, and patterns of decorations. Besides being found in cracked condition, the pottery were also found in fragile condition. The fragility is characterized by peeling of the outside surface so that the sand and minerals were eroded from the other elements of raw material (they became less compact), and their colours were fading. The colours of the pottery are generally brownish red, brown, grayish brown, grayish white, and blackish gray. The colour variation is probably due to their placements during firing (they were placed at different positions from the flames) or by choice (there might have been special colouring processes in pottery manufacture).

Observations on the outer and inner surfaces of the pottery show that they were made using coiling, slow-wheel, and paddle-anvil techniques. The fragments do not show striation on the inner surfaces, which are traces of fast-wheel technique.

The firing technique used was open firing, which is a traditional technique of firing pottery in open space with relatively low temperature

(400–600° C) that is widely used in Indonesia. Usually pottery made using high and optimal temperature during firing have good quality, which is characterized by bright colours, low porosity and water seepage, hard, and with high density and compactness. Based on observation on the pottery found at Lolo Gedang Site, it is assumed that they were fired using open firing technique, which was not optimal and resulted in unevenly coloured surface (the surfaces are not entirely red in colour, but with gray to black spots). The interaction between the pottery and the surrounding environment influenced the degradation process due to intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

The decorating techniques are quite varied: paddle impressed, cord mark, incise, impress, pointed, cut-out, cutting, and *appliqué* as well as slipping (resulting in bright red and white colours). The shapes and motifs of the decorations are straight lines, meandering lines, triangles, circles, geometric forms, points, zigzag, etc., with variations of motifs such as sun, eye, upside-down triangles, fish bone. Those characteristics bear similarities to the Sa-huỳnh-Kalanay and therefore there might have been relations with other sites in Southeast Asia.

Based on their shapes, types, sizes, decorations and other attributes, the pottery were probably used for daily purposes like cooking, storing water or food, etc. Some probably had sacred function as funeral gifts. Potteries are the most dominantly found artifacts at the archaeological sites in the southeastern part of the Kerinci Lake. Solheim categorizes the religious functions of pottery into recurring use, one-time use (funeral gifts, burial containers), and valuables (social status, wealth). The shapes of jars, jarlets/ small cups, pots, bowls, and spoutless flasks in the context of Lolo Gedang Site were found over, under, and inside the burial jars. Some of them seem to be intentionally broken, but there are also those which are presumably intact but were

cracked or broken due to the condition of the material and landscape or natural disasters.

It is understandable, then, that most of the pottery have unique shapes and decorations (in terms of motifs and placements of decorations). Based on the above discussion, it can be assumed that the tradition and use of pottery flourished during the prehistoric period in the interior part of Kerinci. Potteries were not merely functioned in daily activities but also in special occasions such as burial (both as burial containers and funeral gifts).

Traces of sedentary life in open campsites with stilt houses can still be found until recently in the use of granaries. The decoration on rice granaries are similar to the pottery decorations in archaeological context, which is flower petals, which indicates that the communities in the past lived in harmony with nature. They performed arboriculture and horticulture using stone adzes and axes. Domestications of animals (chicken, dogs, and pigs) and plants (fruits and trees) to fulfill their daily needs had also been practiced by the early communities of the Kerinci Valley. The archaeological finds that consist of lithic artifacts (hunting and agricultural implements like microliths/flake and blades made of obsidian), traces of ceremonial activities and ancestor worship (cylindrical stones and menhirs), container and non-container pottery (both plain and decorated), and bronze objects (ornaments) from the end of the prehistoric period are the forms of unique cultural development.

Study on ancient vegetation in Kerinci area through pollen analyses is still insufficient. Although identification of pollen samples taken from the excavation pits at Lolo Gedang Site (Sectors I and II) has been made, reconstruction of the area – which consists of valleys, lake, marshland, and hills – has not been carried out until now. Among the pollen samples taken from the jars and jarlets/small cups are *Asteraceae/Compositae*, *Pinaceae*, *Verbenaceae*, *Poaceae*,

Fagaceae, *Polypodiaceae*, *Haloragaceae*, *Malvaceae*, *Salicaceae*, and *Convolvulaceae*.

In general, the variations of plants, elevations of surveyed area (780--1069 m above sea level), as well as comparison and identification of recent plants and pollen samples suggest that the vegetation of the archaeological sites within this area is situated in a transition area between the bush and mixed *Dipterocarpaceae* forest with eternally wet to mid-year dry rainforest bioma and dry land rainforest bioma. The bush ecosystem is characterized by *Melastoma malabatricum*, *Eupatorium inulifolium*, *Mimosapudica*, *Lantana camara*, *Asteraceae*, *Poaceae* etc., while the mixed *Diptero-carpaceae* ecosystem is characterized by the plenty of seedlings of surian trees (*Shorea sp.*), *Baccaurea* (*Euphorbiaceae*), *benuang* (*Octomeles sumatrana/Datisca-ceae*), *Pinaceae* (*Pinus merkusii*), cinnamon (*Cinnamomum burmanii*), coconut (*Cocos nucifera*), *ara* (*Moraceae*), *Arecaceae* and so forth. Eventhough different trees dominate different places, they do not really represent the existing forest types but more a biological response to natural activities in the past (for instance landslides, volcanic eruption, and forest fires). Jamuju (*Daerycarpus imbricatus*) and mountain pines (*Casuarina junghuhniiana*) for instance, are pioneer plants that will not grow under dense crown plants.

During the research samples of charcoal and burnt pottery were taken around the jars in excavation pits at the depth of 53 cm and 87—107 cm below the surface (the tuff-clay layer), and were analyzed by Darwin A. Siregar at the laboratory of the Geological Research and Development Centre in Bandung (Table 1). The result is a date of 1060 ±120 BP (1950) dan 810 ± 120 BP (1950) which confirms that the site was from within the period of the diaspora of the Austronesian-speaking people in, which covers the prehistoric and proto-historic periods (neolithic-paleometalic).

Table 1. Lolo Gedang radiocarbon dates from Laboratory of the Geological Research and Development Centre (Bandung) and thermoluminescence dates from Centro Datazioni Milano Biococca

Location	Material	Calibrated date at one sigma
B7S2	charcoal	1060 ±120 BP (1950) 810 ± 120 BP (1950)
	Sherds (code lab.D 2248)	690 ± 90 AD (Emanuela Sibia) personal communication with Mai Lin Tjoa, 2010

Conclusion

The cultural character of Kerinci bears similarities with those from the same period in Sumatra Island, which are Tanah Datar (West Sumatra); and Pasemah, Lahat, and Baturaja (South Sumatra). The jar burial in Kerinci represents one of the burial systems during the early metal period in Indonesia. The jar burial can be classified into secondary burial. Aside from burial place was also a settlement and ceremonial megalith (cylindric stone). The area has environmental and cultural characteristics of the prehistoric to proto-historic periods. The small communities in this area grew with strong local culture in the interior part and consist of several groups of professionals (carvers, pottery makers, and maybe also religious leaders who arranged religious ceremonies). They lived in caves, on valleys, and along rivers and tributaries. Archaeological finds from this area show that they lived near one another, survived, and developed; each with its own unique cultural traditions. Radio-carbon datings on other sites show quite similar periods between Kerinci Lake in Jambi and Pasemah Highland in South Sumatra. They are: Selabe Cave (4520±290 BP to 1180 ± 140 BP), Pajar Bulan 2 (1120 ± 260 BP), Benua Keling (3560 ± 220 BP to 590 ± 190 BP), Tebat Gunung (770 ± 160 BP) (Guillaud 2006, Simanjuntak 2009).

Based on site distribution and prehistoric

traditions in Sumatra, it is assumed that there are great potencies to carry out regional studies on the Austronesian culture in semi-macro scale in this island. Furthermore, archaeological evidences show that the complexity of Austronesian culture and people in Sumatra differs from those in other islands like Java, Bali, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and East Nusantara in geographic and chronological terms. Moreover, the cultural process of the Austronesian-speaking people in the Indonesian becomes global in the macro context of Asia (Tanudirjo 2002).

The archaeological data provide significant contribution to the understanding of occupational and cultural history of the Indonesian Archipelago. The efforts to retrace the Austronesian and Malay cultural histories to find

the missing link between both cultures have to be supported by thorough researches and datings of archaeological sites within those contexts. The occupation and culture of proto-historic Austronesian people have proven the complexity of local identities and the ability to interact with the outside world as shown by the huge amount of archaeological remains found all over this area. The complexity of the Austronesian people during the prehistoric and proto-historic (paleometalic) periods in the interior part of Jambi can be seen in the traditions of hunting and food gathering, widely practiced urn burial, and the development of distinct local megalithic culture, as well as the connection between the local and Southeast Asian cultures (particularly the Dong Son Culture).

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