

**BURIAL SYSTEM IN KARAKELANG ISLAND, TALAUD REGENCY,
NORTH SULAWESI**

***Sistem Penguburan di Pulau Karakelang, Kabupaten Talaud,
Provinsi Sulawesi Utara***

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Abstract. *Karakelang is an island located in Talaud Islands Regency, North Sulawesi. As one of the migration entrances of immigrants from the north of Indonesia islands, Talaud has become a quite wide area of prehistorical findings site dispersion and various activities that occurred in Talaud that provide the proof of civilization. One of the civilization heritages is a burial system. This article aims to explore the burial system in Karakelang Island in the past by looking at the site dispersion potential of the occupancy area. The data were collected through survey and excavation. The research result shows that the collected occupancy sites in Karakelang reflect the burial activities in this area. The dispersion of the occupancy site and burial system in Karakelang Island were parts of the adaptation system of people in Karakelang Island. It was mostly influenced by the natural resources that were closely related to the developed local culture in Talaud*

Keywords: *Burial System, Prehistoric, Occupancy, Local Culture, Karakelang Island*

Abstrak. Karakelang adalah nama sebuah pulau, yang secara administratif terletak di Kabupaten Kepulauan Talaud, Sulawesi Utara. Sebagai salah satu pintu masuk migrasi datangnya imigran dari bagian utara kepulauan Indonesia, Talaud menjadi wilayah dengan sebaran temuan situs prasejarah yang cukup luas dan berbagai aktifitas yang pernah terjadi di wilayah Talaud memberikan bukti akan perjalanan peradaban. Salah satu warisan peradaban yaitu sistem penguburan. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi sistem penguburan yang terjadi di Pulau Karakelang pada masa lampau, dengan melihat pada potensi sebaran situs permukiman yang ada di wilayah tersebut. Pengumpulan data dilakukan baik secara survei maupun dengan ekskavasi. Hasil penelitian memperlihatkan telah dikumpulkan beberapa situs permukiman di Karakelang yang mencerminkan adanya aktifitas penguburan yang pernah terjadi di wilayah ini dibuktikan dengan temuan berupa gerabah, keramik, tulang manusia, dan sisa fauna. Sebaran situs permukiman, dengan aktifitas penguburan di Pulau Karakelang merupakan bagian dari sistem adaptasi masyarakat Pulau Karakelang, yang banyak dipengaruhi oleh sumber daya alam yang erat kaitannya dengan budaya lokal yang berkembang di Talaud.

Kata kunci: Sistem Penguburan, Hunian, Prasejarah, Budaya Lokal, Pulau Karakelang

1. Introduction

Austronesia was first introduced by W.Schmidt in 1899 for language clusters uttered by people who resided in Nusantara and Pacific islands. Peter Bellwood developed 'out of Taiwan' theory and mentioned the dispersion of Austronesia culture speakers in Indonesia conducted by immigrant groups who were believed to come from Taiwan. It is mentioned in the reference that they used Austronesian language and Talaud was one of the migration routes to Indonesia's eastern area (Simanjuntak, 2011). Austronesia speakers inhabited Indonesia in around 3.600 BC. With the coming of immigrants from Taiwan through the Philippines, self-adaptation ability toward the island environment kept developing, creating various ethnicities in Indonesia that we know in this present time. As part of the migration route gate to the culture, many Austronesian fragment remains are found in numerous areas of Talaud islands (Soegondho, 1996).

The presence of Austronesia culture in the northern islands of Indonesia (Sulawesi islands) created a cultural mixture between Austronesia and local culture. (Soegondho, 2005) mentions the cultural mix is marked by the remains of cultural material found in this area, such as flakes and neolithic axes found in the caves in Talaud Islands, Minahasa (Passo), Bolaang Mongondow (Guaan), and Gorontalo (Oluhuta). Besides that, various megalithic culture remains were also found in some sites in Minahasa, Sangihe islands, Bolaang Mongondow, and Gorontalo such as waruga, mortar and pestle (lesung batu), stone jar (dulang batu), stone mortar (lumpang batu), kalamba, menhirs, etc. (Soegondho, 2005).

Prehistorical sites show the early migration and culture dispersion of Austronesia which is found in North Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi and Gorontalo based on the occupancy sites namely the dispersion of cave settlements in Talaud Islands (Leang Buida, Leang Sarru,

Leang Tuwo Mane'e), Kerang Passo site in Minahasa, Guaan site in Bolaang Mongondow, and Oluhuta site in Gorontalo (Tim Penelitan, 2019). Meanwhile, the sites that contained the remains of megalithic buildings and burial jars were found dispersed in North and Central Sulawesi, such as the Waruga megalithic site that was discovered in most of Minahasa areas, Kalamba megalithic site which was found in the valleys in Central Sulawesi (Fahriani, 2014). Burial jar sites were also found in some sites in both of the areas, namely the findings of burial jar distribution in Passo site and Sinuian site in Minahasa, Watunongko, Central Sulawesi (Fahriani, 2014).

A recent study finds that the oldest Austronesia colonization in Indonesia is located in Sulawesi area at 3.800 BP, that discovered based on the dates of Minanga Sipako, West Sulawesi. Another study conducted by Stein Calenfels in 1993 in Kamasi Site and Heekeren in 1949 in Minanga Sipako Site found some potsherds which indicated as the relics of Austronesian culture. Besides that, stone tools were also found in Kamasi and Minanga Sipako sites, such as stone adze, knives, projectiles, spearheads, and bark-cloth beaters (Simanjuntak, 2011).

Talaud Islands is one of the regencies in Province of North Sulawesi which is located between Mindanao Islands and Sulawesi Islands. The geographical location is quite strategic, it makes a special and important history and culture. According to the archaeological study, the Paleolithic era shows the oldest occupation in Talaud was in 30.000 years ago (Tanudirdjo, 2001). It proves that the ancestors of Talaud people had occupied this area from Paleolithic age, who migrated from Mindanao and its surrounding islands. The excavation in Leang Tuwo Mane'e Site in Karakelang Islands (Talaud) discovered potsherds which were similar to Neolithic pottery of South Philippine, Kalimantan, and Micronesia Islands which buried with

the obsidian whose source was unknown (Tanudirjo, 2001). It provides a clue about the early migration of Austronesian people to the areas that possibly related to the ancestors of South Philippine, Kalimantan, and Micronesia Islands.

Talaud Islands area stimulated some archaeologists to conduct research in this area, such as Peter Bellwood, Tanudirjo, and Regional Agency for Archaeological Research in North Sulawesi. Bellwood conducted research in Cave (*Leang*) Site of Tuwo Mane'e in Karakelang Island and Cave (*Leang*) Buiduane (Wuidduanne) in Salibabu Island in 1974. Excavation of these sites has found archaeological evidence about the cultural relics of human material in the past, such as flakes, as well as plain and red-slipped potsherds which are characterized as part of Austronesian culture (Bellwood, 2000). Further research was continued by Peter Bellwood and Daud Aris Danudirjo (Gadjah Mada University) in 1994. Daud Aris Tanudirjo's research on Gua Sarru site has identified potsherds, flintstone flakes (tatal) which dominated the findings, and seashells. These evidences assume that Gua Sarru is a place of lithic workshop (Tanudirjo, Dhewayani and Siswanto, 1995).

Base on the previous research conducted on Talaud Island, archaeological evidence suggests that this area played a significant role in the Austronesian diaspora across Asia and the Pacific region. The Regional Agency for Archaeological Research in North Sulawesi has identified potential sites in Northern Sulawesi, indicating a rich archaeological site. Many researches have been conducted to find the roots of Austronesian, and most of them describe partial elements of culture without explanation about their origin. The issues related to the origin and diaspora of Austronesian speakers are still debated among archaeologists until nowadays. However, only a few Indonesian researchers who studied Austronesia, even though it has initiated since

the 2000s by the researcher of The National Research Center of Archaeology, Truman Simanjuntak. The research of the Austronesia diaspora in Indonesia has rapidly increased in the last few years and evolved to various topics.

Generally, the research in Talaud shows evidence of early settlement in this location. However, the burial evidence in this location has not been examined more deeply. The research of Regional Agency for Archaeological Research in North Sulawesi in 2018 and 2019 describes the distribution of burial sites in Karakelang Island that describe a specific character of adaptation pattern developed by local people in the past. Due to the lack of research about burial in Karakelang Island, in this study, the writer tries to study the burial system that existed in Karakelang Island in the past based on the obtained data from the survey and archaeological excavation. The data about the burial system in Karakelang Island are still deficient, thus the interpretation of the burial activities that existed in the past time is limited. Calendrical analysis of the combustion remains (charcoal) found in Karakelang Island is also lacking, consequently, it is quite hard to determine the site's existence in the past time. The current research data possessed by the writer are obtained from the research activities conducted in Karakelang Island in 2018 and 2019 that are expected to support and be relevant to this study.

This study aims to explore the potential dispersion of archaeological remains on Karakelang Island, drawing from research conducted in the area during 2018 and 2019. Furthermore, the result of this study can be used to find out the burial system in Karakelang Island in the past time.

2. Method

The dispersion of Austronesian culture fragments become the clue or proof of human occupation in the past in Karakelang Island area. In other words, the activities and materials

are the actualization of ideas and actions of humans in the past. One of the methods to figure it out is by using the dispersion data of cultural remains in this area. The dispersion pattern and human activity proofs could become the people's mindset and actions in the past (Mundardjito, 1990).

Based on the framework, a series of ways or methods is required with its approach that relates one object with the other objects in a site. This study applies explorative and explanatory methods. Explorative research aims to explore the data of cultural relics in a particular space (Tim Penyusun, 2008) or to dig as much data as possible to be revealed in the research (Tanudirjo, 1989). Explanatory research tends to explain the studied phenomena by applying a certain proposition, method or theory (Tim Penyusun, 2008).

According to the standard operational procedure in archaeological research, the survey and excavation as parts of data collection were done in Karakelang Island. Survey method was implemented on the sites concentrated in Karakelang Island which were assumed to contain cultural remains. The survey was implemented by direct observation and review in the areas around the site to find out the indication of site existence in the past. In this activity, data collection of archaeological remains was also conducted on the ground surface, besides that, the documentation of inventions was also done by record-keeping, photo shooting, measuring, and portraying.

The ground excavation that was conducted to collect data was done systematically. It was applied to invent a set of archaeological remains in this site (original). The excavation was carried out by choosing a specific place or area in one of the sites, it focused on finding the potential archaeological remains and cultural layer. Two strategies were applied in the excavation that aimed to figure out the cultural period and layers (vertically) and the context and association in one or more cultural

layers (horizontally). In this step, the making of excavation box layout used box system with square square-based shape, grounded on the point choice that represents the condition and type of findings on the site. The placement of excavation box used a grid system. The excavation implemented spit technique which digs the ground arbitrarily (arbitrary level) with a depth interval between 10 cm consistently (Tim Penyusun, 2008). The interview with some customary leaders or Ritung Banua in some villages of this area was also conducted to complete the supporting data on the site and cultural existence that developed in Karakelang Island and its surroundings. This interview aims to get a local culture description which developed in Talaud society since long time ago.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Cave/Rockshelter Distribution in Karakelang Island

The first data on archaeological cultural remains in Talaud Islands were obtained from Peter Bellwood's research conducted in this area in 1976. The research results on some caves/rockshelters in Talaud Islands have occupied in around 4000 BC (Bellwood, 2000). Later, the research about occupancy in Talaud area was improved by Tanudirjo, an academician from Universitas Gadjah Mada in collaboration with Balai Arkeologi Manado since 1994. The research result of Tanudirjo, *et al.*, mostly provides information about the occupancy data in some cave/rockshelter sites in Talaud Islands (Tanudirjo, Dhewayani and Siswanto, 1995). The research on the remaining Austronesia cultural remains was continued by Balai Arkeologi Sulawesi Utara since 2000. The research result was additional data on occupancy activities in the prehistorical existed in this area. So far, the research conducted in Talaud Islands has become essential data on entrance gates, particularly in the part of northern islands.

The Karakelang Island consists of 11

subdistricts namely, Melonguane, Melonguane Timur, Beo, Beo Utara, Beo Selatan, Rainis, Tampan'Amma, Pulutan, Essang, Essang Selatan and Gemeh subdistricts. Geologically, most of the islands in Talaud area do not have active volcanoes, and even some areas of the coastal islands are limestone areas which resulted from the removal of coral units in the area. Generally, the cave or rockshelters were formed in these calcareous areas (Figure 1).

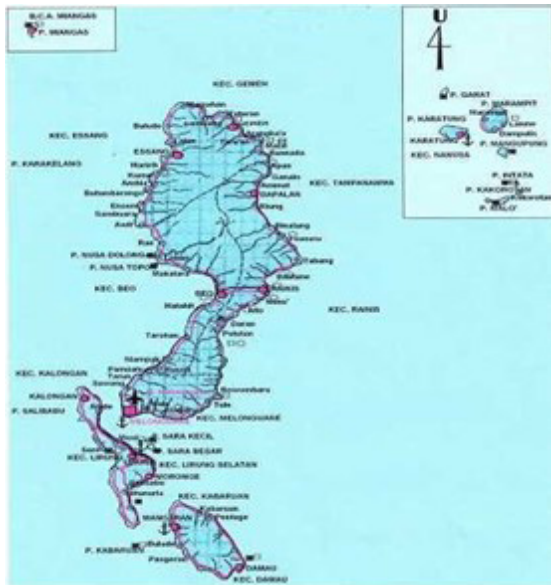


Figure 1. Map of Talaud Islands (Source: Research doc, 2019)

The survey and excavation conducted by Ipak Fahriani, *et al.*, in Karakelang Island (2018-2019) found cave and rock-shelter distribution show the grouping of human activity existed in this area in the past and archaeological evidence of settlement, workshop, and burial system. An adequate cave was large, with quite high lighting so as not to make the space humid, water source availability, and the other important human culture remains such as potsherds, ceramics, and some stone tool production were also found. The findings of the other cave/rockshelter characterized the area used as a burial location. It is indicated based on the remains of some human skeletons along with some grave provisions, such as the remains of beads jewellery, potsherds, and ceramics. The cave/rockshelter indicated as

the workshop centre or location to produce a thing or tool is shown by the abundant remains of shales, commonly known as the remains of stone tool production. Besides that, the raw materials of the thing or tool production are still found in the site area (Tim Penelitian, 2018, 2019).

Karakelang Island became one of the routes which quite easy as the lane for human migration from the north through Talaud islands. It can be seen from the topography of Talaud Islands which generally consists of mountains, quite sloping hills which are not so high, and valleys and rivers that have quite sufficient water debit. The topography of Talaud Islands is dominated by mountains and hilly grounds which are surrounded by the oceans. The ground altitudes are divided into: 0–100 masl, 100–500 masl, and more than 500 masl, almost 50 percent of the whole area's height is about 100-500 masl. The slope's tilt is between 0-2 percent, 2-15 percent, 15-40 percent and more than 40 percent. The topography of Talaud Islands is mostly mountainous ranging from the north to south, spread over the islands (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Talaud, 2015).

The survey result of cave/rockshelter site dispersion in Karakelang Island generally shows the location of stopover and residential remains, and the location of people's burials in the past in this area (Tables 1 and 2). According to the dispersion of 21 caves and rockshelters, also the open site, it is known that 9 sites indicated functioning as residential location, namely Ceruk Moong, Ceruk Kucing 1 and 2, Gua Wointumbu, Ceruk Raranganusa 2, Ceruk Antil, Ceruk Mendeet, Gua Wurro and Ceruk Pampini. Meanwhile, the site dispersion of burial activity was found in 5 locations namely Ceruk Raranganusa 1, Ceruk Masare, Ceruk Ttombatu, Gua Totombatu, Gua Wuida and Makatara site. The result of data entry in the other cave/rockshelter sites does not indicate any cultural activity in that area.

Table 1. Location of Cave/Rockshelter Sites in Karakelang Island based on Research Report in 2018

No	Sites	Astronomical Latitude (N)	Astronomical Longitude (E)	Height (mapl)	Location on the island
1	Wetta	04°13'20,7"	126°49'52,5"	130	Center of the island
2	Marat	04°13'21,9"	126°49'38,0"	83	Center of the island
3	Moong	04°13'53,1"	126°51'57,1"	33	East coast
4	Aluramu	04°12'41,6"	126°48'31,5"	155	Center of the island
5	Gua Amumung	04°13'01,7"	126°48'00,4"	68	West Coast
6	Leang Nusa	04°13'01,9"	126°48'00,6"	5	West Coast
7	Gua Kucing 1	04°28'23,4"	126°51'11,7"	20	East Coast
8	Gua Kucing 2	04°28'23,4"	126°51'11,7"	20	East Coast
9	Gua Rarangunusa	04°27'32,6"	126°51'58,8"	17	East Coast
10	Ceruk Rarangunusa 2 (occupancy)	04°27'32,6"	126°51'58,8"	17	East Coast
11	Ceruk Gamalo	04°26'02,6"	126°52'03,3"	13	East Coast
12	Ceruk Masare 2	04°32'01,2"	126°48'27,8"	22	North Coast
13	Ceruk Masare	04°32'01,2"	126°48'27,8"	22	North Coast
14	Toton Batu	04°07'36,3"	126°44'11,9"	7	West Coast
15	Leang Matahit	04°10'22,8"	126°45'34,7"	7	West Coast
16	Liang Mandect (attached)	04°10'22,8"	126°45'34,7"	7	West Coast
17	Ceruk Antil				East Coast

Source: Research Report, 2018

Table 2. Location of Cave/Rockshelter Sites in Karakelang Island based on Research Report in 2019

No	Sites	Astronomical Latitude (N)	Astronomical Longitude (E)	Height (mapl)	Location on the island
1	Wurro, Desa Tuabatu	04°18'34.9"	126°53'31.6"	1	East Coast
2	Wuida, Desa Rusoh	04°04'28.7"	126°43'19.6"	243	West Coast
3	Ceruk Pampini, Desa Bowon baru	04°03'47.3"	126°48'16.0"	8	East Coast
4	Makatara, Beo Utara	04°15'51.3"	126°44'22.4"	10	West Coast

Source: Research Report, 2019

The caves/rockshelters which were indicated as the occupancy location in the past were more found on the eastern and western sides of Karakelang Island. These sites are located on the coast fringes throughout the outer side of the island. These caves disperse linearly and the dispersion follows the form of Karakelang Island. Only for the cave/

rockshelter and an open site which parts of burial activity are in the coast fringe with the site placement distance not more than 10 masl. Commonly, the location of residential cave/rockshelter is farther from the coastline, with more sloping surface, sufficient lighting and reasonably available of water resources.

3.2 Archaeological Evidences

The cave/rockshelter sites spread in Karakelang Island show the activity that existed in the past in this area. The survey results on the cave/rockshelter sites indicate the settlement and burial activities marked by the findings of cultural remains produced by humans (artefactual), and natural objects that are used in the activities (environmental remains (ecofact)). There is no human culture remains found in the natural cave/rockshelter which was never utilized for any activities in the past time.

3.2.1 Pottery (earthenware)

Potteries are human culture remains which mostly found in the cave/rockshelter sites in Karakelang. Pottery is a thing/tool for a particular purpose that is made of clay created by humans. The potteries were generally found in fragmentary forms. The result of typological analysis on the edge part of some potsherds shows that the objects were pots, medium bowls, medium jugs, and crock. The size of the potsherds varies in small, medium, and big size. These objects were commonly used in daily activities such as to keep water in a smaller size container and different thicknesses, and there was also a specific container for food storage, etc. But, some of the potsherds are quite thick and big, which is predicted as the grave vessel. Some typology analysis results on the potsherds Karakelang as follows:

a) Cup/Bowl: has a wide surface with a fold out edge, the body part is round, the fragments are found generally in medium size and quite thick (Figure 2).

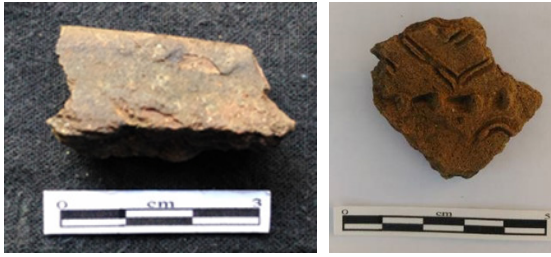


Figure 2. . Pottery fragments remain of the cup/bowl (Source: Research doc, 2019)

b) Pot: has a fairly wide surface with a fold out edge, but this part is less thick than the body part. The body part is generally oval round, with a quite round body and narrowed at the bottom (Figure 3). The object's thickness is similar in average or proportional.



Figure 3. Potsherds of pot (Source: Research doc, 2019)

c) Urn or jug: Is a jug or urn to keep water. The jug or urn size typically ranges from medium to big size. The round surface is not so wide, the edge tends to follow the lip surface, some jugs have a neck, and some do not. Then the body is bigger or wider. Normally, a jug or urn has a handle, the handle to hold when lifting it. The bottom is narrowed with quite a thick wall. The potsherds of jugs or urns that are found in Karakelang area typically have an ornament pattern (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Potsherds of jug/urn (Source: Research doc, 2019)

d) Crock: it is quite interesting that there are crock fragments found in big sizes. Besides the big shape and size, some of the fragments also have Austronesia culture ornament or pattern (red stripes). The crock has a wide surface with a flat lip, narrowed on the neck, enlarged on the body and quite narrowed at the bottom (not very small). The typical wall thickness is quite thick (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Potsherds of crock (Source: Research doc, 2019)

Early analysis of potsherds found in Karakelang can be categorized based on the edge shapes and the intact shape. The found potteries were ornamented and plain. According to the applied technology in the production process, although it was done simply, which commonly used hand spinning and paddle anvil technique, but the pottery quality was quite good and strong, though some of the surfaces were rather coarse. Referring to the decoration technique in the making, generally the pottery found in this area was decorated by scratching ornaments, pin and squeeze, gouging, and other technique variations such as the combination of scratch and squeeze technique. Based on the manufacturing technique, the potsherds found in Karakelang were earthenware that was produced simply by hand spinning and paddle anvil technique. The raw materials were relatively poor quality, the burning temperature of the pottery was also low, thus the pottery quality was not good, which can be seen from the coarse surface and easily broken or fragile. There were plenty of potsherds found in Karakelang area, which were found through survey or excavation. It shows that the utilization of those tools was pretty high.

3.2.2 Ceramics

Ceramic fragments were also found in the survey of cave/rockshelter in Karakelang. The found ceramics in this area were generally brought from outside of Talaud Island, or foreign ceramics. The ceramic findings in the cave/rockshelter sites in Karakelang were the fragments of the edge part, body and bottom (foot), neck, and carination of the object (Figure 6). The ceramic findings were in grave context, as a grave provision put in the sarcophagus or cave rockshelter in the sickle of Karakelang coast. According to the observation of the fragment forms, it is found that the ceramics were the plate, bowl, cup, jar and vase fragments. The use of ceramics was the heritage of the ancestors, which later functioned as grave provisions. Ceramics existence was possibly one of the commodities brought by the outside comers to this area. Besides as commodities, apparently, ceramics were also utilized in daily use. When the owner died, the thing would be put in the grave, as the stuff that was close to its owner.



Figure 6. Some ceramic fragments that are found in Karakelang cave/rockshelter (Source: Research doc, 2019)

Typology analysis on the jar fragments shows the medium to large size of the jar. The round surface is not so wide, the edge tends to follow the lip surface, which has a neck and does not have a neck, then the bigger or wider

body. In general, the jar has a handle which functions as a holder or handle to lift the jar, but there is also a jar which does not have a handle. The bottom is narrowed with adequate thickness.

Ordinarily, the basic element in ceramic production was clay, namely the finest particle deposit which resulted from the weathering process of particular stones. The main compositions are alumina, silicate, and kaolin from felspathic rocks. Particular materials are generally found such as the composition of glaze, blazing layer like glass on the ceramic surface, which are distinguished into three materials namely main material, blending material and colouring material (Rangkuti, Pojoh and Harkatiningsih, 2008). The technique that was applied was the spinning wheel technique.

3.2.3 Human Bones

The search result in a cave/rockshelter and open site in Karakelang in 2018 and 2019 successfully discovered the remains of human bones, teeth, and skulls. The skeleton's remains were found in the cave/rockshelter which indicated a burial. These remains were found along with the other utilities in burial treatments, such as burial systems



Figure 7. Human bones and teeth discovered in cave/rockshelter site on Karakelang Island (Source: Research doc, 2019)

(ceramics, beads jewellery, jewellery made of shells or animals), and burial containers.

There are two patterns of human bones placement in the Karakelang cave/rockshelter. The first pattern is the bones that are placed in a rectangular box made from wood, put with the ceramics and jewellery. The second pattern is the bones that were put on the surface of the cave/rockshelter, or open site, whereas the grave provision was placed around the bones (Figure 7).

3.2.4 Fauna Remains

The other relics also found in the cave/rockshelter dispersion in Karakelang Island were fauna remains namely boar tusks and fur, shells, and shell fragment dispersion. Besides found in the survey, shell fragments were also found from the excavations in 2 sites including Situs Antil (2018) and Situs Muruut (2019) (Tim Penelitian, 2019).

The analysis of the shells had been conducted in Laboratorium Pusat Survei Geologi Bandung. The shell which taken as an analysis sample was shell fragments obtained from the excavation conducted in 2018, such as shell fragments, shell cover, and shell skin (Figure 8). The analysis results on the shell fragments in the site, conducted in LPSG Bandung, through C-14 (carbon dating), shows the age of the shell is as follows: shell fragments were about 7-9 a.d., the shell was 11-13 a.d., and for shell cover was in 2400 b.c.



Figure 8. Some shell types found in cave/rockshelter site in Karakelang Island (Source: Research doc, 2019)

The fauna remains of boar tusks and fur had been proceeding and functioned as

decoration. This decoration was found in the same context as human bone remains in a burial site location in a cave/rockshelter (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Decorations made from fauna remains that were found in a cave/rockshelter site on Karakelang Island (Source: Research doc, 2019)

3.3 Local Wisdom

Based on the interview with customary leaders (*Ratung Banua*) in the area, it can be concluded that Talaud community had developed a political social system which created from small kingdoms. The impact still can be seen nowadays in the social strata of the society. The class from the generation of Talaud kings occupied a big position and influence in customary decision making, even though it still exists in society in this present time. The customary system in Talaud still holds a big role in every life element of the society in Talaud islands and becomes the comparison toward the existing governance pattern.

The order of customary leadership nowadays still implements the customary leadership system, in line with the current governance, which was later mentioned in Perda Talaud Nomor 6 Tahun 2014. Besides managing the order of government organization, this local regulation (Perda) also manages the organization for the conservation

Table 3. Customary symbols of Talaud Society

Symbol	Meaning
△	= Power to God
☆	= Astronomy (Astronomy System)
○	= Susambao Susampuna (We are one)
◇	= Symbol of life
+	= Unity
◇	= Believe in the Ancestors' Heritage (Inverted Pyramid)

of Cultural Heritage and Customary Culture Empowerment. The legalization of customary symbols for Talaud society is one of the orders (table 3). These symbols are also found in the potsherds discovered in the cave/rockshelter in Karakelang Island (interview with the secretary of Talaud Customary Board: Drs. Adolf Richter Awach, S.H., M.H).

Talaud society is one of the communities which still holds on to its culture and tries to preserve it until nowadays. Various customary activities, events, and rituals are still conducted by Talaud society until today. Generally, the current ritual activity tends to be aimed at a gratitude prayer for God's observance toward society. Various rituals have been conducted in customary activity in Talaud Islands, Tulude ceremony is one of them. The customary ceremony of Tulude is a heritage activity which has been administered since a long time ago. Tulude is a gratitude ceremony to Mawu Ruata Ghenggona Langi (Mighty God) for His blessing that given for a year. Tulude means refusing or encouraging, in this matter, refusing the past year and being ready to accept the new year. The ceremony is executed by releasing and pushing a small wooden boat. The boat is filled with harvested food which is later floated by the customary leader from the foreshore. It symbolizes every bad thing that happened in the previous year is disposed of or floated, in order to not recur in the new year (interview with Ratung Banua Desa Alude, Mr. Karunia Awawangi).

In general, before getting acquainted with religion, Talaud people in the past time performed burial traditions in the cave/rockshelter or on the reefs, namely Winamanua. Winamanua procession is performed by: firstly, blaming the corpse with spices. After that, the corpse is put on a mat (which is made of pandan leaves or wanggabaroo), which is later rolled and laid with a placemat (ceramics). The corpse location was near the coast, in the cave/rockshelter at

the height. Some of the locations are still used for worship/prayer to strengthen the belief in the Mighty God (Mr Arnold Panahal, Chief of Adat Musi Church, Chief of Presidium Majelis Luhur Kepercayaan Indonesia).

3.4 Discussion

Archaeological data have shown that since a long time ago, humans have known environment wisdom and sometimes they change it to support the human environment (Bagyo *et al.*, 2004). The selection of the cave/rockshelter environment as an occupancy area was due to some factors, namely safe space (shelter), from the weather and wild animal (Howarth, 1983; Bagyo *et al.*, 2004). The second factor was the existing customs in the area.

Using caves/rockshelters as occupancy places in the past time had been recognized by humans when they realized the importance of having a specific location for activities. They found out that nomadic life besides encountering some difficulties in daily activities, was also impractical and less comfortable. Thus, the people required the location which enabled them to easily run their activities. Based on the restrictiveness of the environment and natural resources, a cave/rockshelter was considered the appropriate choice as an occupancy location. The availability of cave/rockshelter indirectly can be used by humans without constructing it first.

Many caves/rockshelters which functioned as burial locations are found in the prehistorical site in Indonesia. These sites are located in Sumatera, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Jawa, Bali, Nusa Tenggara Timur, Maluku and Irian (Bagyo *et al.*, 2004). The research conducted by the researchers of Pusat Arkeologi Nasional dan Balai Arkeologi shows that the exploitation of caves/rockshelter has been done by humans since the prehistorical era. The utilization of caves/rockshelter has

been spread since the beginning, which was proven by the findings in the big and small islands, with sufficient natural resources, such as limestone mountains which enable the formation of caves/rockshelter for human activities (Bagyo *et al.*, 2004). The skeleton invention in the cave/rockshelter in Indonesia in a burial context, was obtained from the discovery in the same site. Generally, other stuff was also found in same the location where the skeleton was found such as earthenware (pottery), ceramics and jewellery, and even some stone tools which were put as grave provisions for the corpse (Bagyo *et al.*, 2004).

Talaud Islands, particularly Karakelang Island has a lot of cave/rockshelter distribution. This island's topography enabled the cave/rockshelter to be a good occupant for human activities. Various occupancy activities existed in the past in Karakelang Island, burial activity was one of them. The archaeological research result conducted by Research Team (2018, 2019) on this island, found out the site dispersion used to be the former location for burial activities, namely a cave, rockshelter, and even an open site.

Based on the observation of Karakelang cave/rockshelter site dispersion and archaeological remains discovered on the site in 2018 and 2019, it is found that in the past, the ancient people in Karakelang Island occupied the big and open cave/rockshelter tentatively with adequate sunlight, which located in the foreshore along the coast of Karakelang Island. This island had easy access like the road networks to the coast, so it eased the exploration on the land by fringing the coast or by boat. This tentative resident was located not too far into the hinterland. Whereas, the chosen cave/rockshelter used as a burial location was not very far from the coast, commonly located on the hill indented to the sea (cape).

The field data on the cave/rockshelter site that indicated a burial location in Karakelang is characterized by the site position on the hill

located on the coast fringe, the cave/rockshelter is not so wide, the grave vessel was found in a wooden box (rectangle) form that contained human bones and stuff as grave provisions, such as pottery, ceramic, and jewellery. Besides that, the remains of human bones which were only placed on the cave/rockshelter floor, without vessels were also found, but without grave provision. This data indicates two burial types in Karakelang Island in the past time. Burial with and without a grave vessel.

The burial pattern found in the Karakelang cave/rockshelter was still difficult to explain, due to the changes on the site (not in situ) or the damage caused by nature and humans. But, if the burial pattern of cave/rockshelter was compared to those in the other areas in Indonesia which has similar topography sites (limestone cave/rockshelter), it is found that generally the burial pattern existed was direct burial in the cave/rockshelter and using a vessel. In the primary burial system, the corpse was directly buried with or without grave provision, and placed in a horizontal or folded position; whereas in the grave which used a vessel, the corpse was put in the vessel with its grave provision (Bagyo *et al.*, 2004).

The burial system which used vessels in Karakelang Island is still conducted in this area nowadays. As time went by, it became a tradition and there were changes in the form and burial location that adjusted with its era. Particularly when the Christian religion came to this area, the cave/rockshelter burial was moved to open space, with the burial rituals that had been adjusted with the belief in the Christian religion.

Objects made of porcelain were also found in the Karakelang Island area. These objects were found in grave context, as grave provisions put in the stone coffin (sarcophagi) or cave rockshelter. According to the observation, it was figured out that the ceramic forms namely plate, bowl, cup, jar and vase. Commonly, these ceramics were the inheritance

of the ancestors, which were later used as grave provisions. It can be assumed that the ceramics' existence was due to their function as one of the commodities of the Austronesia people which they brought from their country. These ceramics were from China, Vietnam, and Europe. These ceramics were not only as commodities but also used for daily needs. When the owner passed away, these objects were also put with the corpse in the grave, as the close object with its owner. The tradition of enclosing the favourite things of the dead people is still conducted in the Karakelang area, when there was someone passes away, his/her favourite object when he/she was still alive would be enclosed in the burial.

It can be indicated that the grave placement or the people that would be buried, besides being affected by the natural resource availability, also cannot be separated from their belief in the past, namely the life after death. Enclosing grave provisions for the dead people is one of the beliefs of manifestations. The inclusion of grave provisions as part of the burial ritual that developed in Karakelang Island is generally similar to the belief developed in the other areas in North Sulawesi. In the Talaud tradition itself, it is commonly known as the ritual attributed to the ancestors which is conducted in the ritual ceremony in the burial procession when someone has passed away or the other ceremony which related to gratitude.

4. Conclusion

Life activities in the cave/rockshelter and the placement pattern of humans in its room are the way of people Karakelang adapt to the environment in the era. Natural resource exploitation was one of them, due to the limitation of the way of thinking toward natural availability at that time. The restricted condition provided options for managing burial on Karakelang Island in the past. There were two burial systems of the past time which were found in the cave/rockshelter dispersion site

in Karakelang Island, namely burial that used a wooden coffin as a grave vessel and direct burial that buried or put the corpse in the cave/rockshelter.

The objects such as pottery, ceramics (foreign), and jewellery made of the animals were parts of the grave provision in the burial procession in a cave/rockshelter on Karakelang Island. The existence of the objects shows that Karakelang Island knew the commodities of the manufacturing of the object (requires further research to study). In addition, the findings of foreign ceramics show the trading or barter activity between Karakelang and the other areas had been performed in this area. The form of the jewellery made of animal remains and ornament patterns on the potteries are quite interesting. They prove the art creativity of the Karakelang people in the past. The ornament patterns found in the earthenware/potsherds in Karakelang Island had encountered value development. These prehistorical ornament patterns have become the symbol of indigenous people in the Talaud Islands. These ornaments have been legalized in regional regulations as Talaud customary symbols. It shows that the society in Talaud Islands, particularly the indigenous people still respected and maintained their ancestors' heritage.

The belief in the life of Karakelang society has been maintained in the customs which still develop nowadays. The values in the belief are rooted and maintained in the custom of the Karakelang people until this present day.

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. Human bones and teeth discovered in cave/
rockshelter site on Karakelang Island
(Source: Research doc, 2019)