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Symposium on “The Archaeology of Sulawesi —
An Update,” held in Makassar, Indonesia, from 31 January
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Sulawesi has been in the archaeological news recently. In January 2016 a date of more than 100 000 years was announced for stone tools, almost certainly made by pre-modern hominins, from a site in the middle of South Sulawesi. In 2014, cave art from the well-known sites near Maros was dated to about 40 000 years ago, the oldest date for figurative art in the world. This symposium, convened by Sue O'Connor and David Bulbeck, both of the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University, was nothing if not timely.

Sponsored jointly by the Australian National University, as part of a large project grant from the Australian Research Council, and the local Balai Arkeologi Makassar, the gathering gave expression to the longstanding cooperation between Indonesian institutions and a number of Australian universities in investigating the past in Sulawesi. Support from the Granucci Fund for the travel and accommodation costs of Indonesian presenters was particularly valuable. Researchers from elsewhere too were represented, especially among the multiple authors of papers with heavy scientific content, and as the significance of what has been achieved so far becomes better known, interest from around the world is likely to increase. The Indonesian openness to collaboration means that it is possible to combine the experience of local archaeologists and other experts with access to the latest techniques for dating and other analyses. The distant past of island Southeast Asia, and especially Wallacea, the band of islands between the Asiatic Sunda shelf and the Australian Sahul shelf, is now assuming its proper place in our understanding of human development around the world.

After papers from Mike Gagan and Janelle Stevenson setting the long-term environmental background, Gert van den Bergh presented the evidence—published only a few weeks before—from Talepu, near the previously known Cabenge sites, for *in situ* stone tools dating to a minimum age of about 118 000 years ago, as well as a much longer record of fossil fauna. Given recent discoveries of pre-modern humans in Flores up to a million years ago, it seems very probable that hominins crossed the sea barrier of the Wallace line to Sulawesi, perhaps even before reaching Flores. Adam Brumm then described recent excavations in limestone caves and shelters near Maros which reached much greater depths than earlier efforts and revealed sequences including both very early stone artefacts and later artefacts clearly made by modern humans. Mark Moore expertly analysed the manufacture of stone tools from these sites in the Last Glacial Maximum period, roughly 26 000 years ago, and Michelle Langley dealt with the human modification of teeth from the local babirusa (pig-deer) dating to about the same time.

A series of papers on rock art was introduced by Paul Taçon who illustrated the early art from the Maros sites and discussed issues of conservation. Susan Hayes then analysed early European depictions of babirusa to show that the 37 000 year old painting from the Maros cave could be identified as a babirusa, rather than the Sulawesi warty hog (*Sus celebensis*). Adhi Agus Oktaviana and Budianto Hakim showed the widespread prevalence of rock art with material from Muna and Southeast Sulawesi respectively.

Sue O'Connor provided a general overview of recent excavations east of Lake Towuti in Southeast Sulawesi which have provided a good sequence from the Late Glacial Maximum onwards. Fakhri discussed the diverse fauna found in one of these caves between about 5500 and 3500 years ago. Fadhila Arifin Aziz urged more attention to the need for analysing subsistence strategies of cave-dwelling populations.

A second day of papers began with Campbell Macknight sketching the history of research from the Sarasin cousins at the beginning of the twentieth century to 1970s, stressing the interaction between the people concerned. David Bulbeck, by counting the number of known sites in Sulawesi through the last 10 000 years, suggested that the figures show—subject to some qualifications—points of population increase at about 4500, 2000 and 1000 years ago.

The focus then shifted to work in Central and North Sulawesi. Wiebke Kirleis and Johannes Mueller drew parallels between the distribution of megaliths in the landscape of northern Germany and in the uplands of Central Sulawesi, where, in the Besoa valley, forest clearance starts around 3500 years ago with extensive grassland from about 2000 years ago, although the standing stones and huge stone burial vessels, together with the introduction of rice, seem to be somewhat later. The location of the megaliths in the landscape

points to their social function. Julian Louys reported on DNA analysis of rat remains from the Talaud islands which, though all from the last 300 years or so, raises questions about human and faunal movement. Wiwek Sriwigati and Joko Siswanto discussed the very varied marine and terrestrial resource use over the last millennium as shown in two excavations in the Talaud islands. Christian Reepmeyer reported on Mansiri, an inland site in North Sulawesi dated to roughly 3000 years ago and with dentate-stamped pottery which raises questions relating to the origins of Lapita wares in the Pacific and parallels with the Karama valley sites in West Sulawesi. Anggraeni then described her most recent work on the Karama valley sites, especially the Iron Age site of Palembang where there are links with settlement in the upland valleys. Hasanuddin discussed further Neolithic to Iron Age sites known from survey and excavation in the Enrekang district in South Sulawesi, south of the mountains. Suryatman added more Iron Age evidence from the site of Sakkarra on the upper Bonehau river, a tributary of the Karama. The need to integrate archaeological material with environmental data was illustrated in Siria Biagioni's presentation on the changing vegetation, climate and fire history of the Lindu plain in Central Sulawesi over the last millennium.

The final set of papers concerned the interaction of archaeological evidence and historical or ethnographic sources over the last millennium in South and West Sulawesi. Akin Duli discussed the interpretation of the megalithic remains at Onto on the south coast on the basis of traditional information. Rosmawati presented a very thorough and helpful typology of Islamic graves in South Sulawesi, while Muhaeminah added further data from West Sulawesi. Ian Caldwell related the importance of the early kingdom of Cina as evidenced in the manuscript genealogies to the archaeological data from the Cenrana and Walennae valleys between 1200 and 1600 CE and also to Cina as described in the La Galigo materials. Horst Liebner challenged the traditional account of political structures in the Mandar area of West Sulawesi on the basis of preliminary archaeological survey and a closer reading of the texts.

The last day of the symposium was devoted to a field excursion to visit the early art sites and other excavated caves and shelters in the wonderful limestone karst landscape east of Maros. It was a privilege to have commentary from many of those who had worked at the sites.

With its history of investigations and excavations, Sulawesi, and especially South Sulawesi, has long had a claim to be archaeologically one of the best explored region of Indonesia. What the papers at this symposium show, in all their richness and variety, is that it is now possible to trace a coherent sequence of human activity in the island from the mid-Pleistocene to the present day. That is a remarkable achievement which is not possible in many other comparable parts of the world, particularly in Southeast Asia. There is still much to be done, of course, but the most promising ways forward will be

much clearer with the projected publication of the papers from the symposium, probably in the *Terra Australis* series.

The following list supplies the full authorship of papers in addition to the symposium presenters:

- Michael K. Gagan, Nicholas G. Scroxton, Linda K. Ayliffe, Gavin B. Dunbar, Heather Scott-Gagan, Wahyoe S. Hantoro, Hai Cheng, R. Lawrence Edwards, John C. Hellstrom, Jian-xin Zhao, Claire E. Krause, Bambang W. Suwargadi and Hamdi Rifai, *Speleothem evidence for vegetation collapse on Flores and Sulawesi 68,000-61,000 years ago: an environmental turning point for early human dispersal in Australasia?*
- Janelle Stevenson, Rose Whitau, Jack Fenner, James M. Russell and Satria Bijaksana, *A 60,000-year record of vegetation and climate change from Lake Towuti, South Sulawesi, Indonesia*
- Gert D. van den Bergh, Mark Moore, Adam Brumm, Li Bo, Dida Yurnaldi, Ruly Setiawan, Bert Roberts, Suyono and Fachroel Aziz, *Early moderns or modern ancients? Occupation of Sulawesi before 60,000 years BP*
- Adam Brumm, Muhammad Ramli, Budianto Hakim and Iwan Sumantri, *The first people of Sulawesi: recent archaeological excavations in the limestone karsts of Maros*
- Mark W. Moore, Adam Brumm, Muhammad Ramli, Budianto Hakim, Suryatman and Yinika Perston, *Pleistocene stone-flaking technology in the Maros karsts of Sulawesi*
- Michelle C. Langley, Adam Brumm, Muhammad Ramil, Budianto Hakim, and Iwan Sumantri, *A unique osseous tool tradition: suidae tooth use at Leang Bulu Bettue*
- Paul S.C. Taçon, Maxime Aubert and Adam Brumm, *The contemporary importance and future of Sulawesi's ancient rock art*
- Susan Hayes and Gert van den Bergh, *Rock art, art and geometric morphometrics: shape changes and the babirusa of Sulawesi*
- Adhi Agus Oktaviana, *Advanced rock art research in Muna Island, Southeast Sulawesi*
- Budianto Hakim, *Black drawings at the site of Gua Pondo, Southeast Sulawesi: interpretation of their meaning and motifs*
- Sue O'Connor, David Bulbeck, Philip J. Piper, Fadhila Aziz, Fredeliza Campos, Rachel Wood, Ken Aplin, Ben Marwick, Fakhri and Suryatman, *Human occupation in the Towuti Routa region of South-Eastern Sulawesi*
- Fakhri, *Fauna of Sambango cave sites*
- Fadhila Arifin Aziz, *Subsistence strategy of community on Holocene, South Celebes*
- Campbell Macknight, *The joint Australian-Indonesian archaeological expedition to South Sulawesi in 1969 in context*
- David Bulbeck, *Holocene site occupancy in Sulawesi*
- Wiebke Kirleis, Johannes Mueller, Hermann Behling and Santoso Soeghondo, *Megalithic landscapes of Central Sulawesi and northern Germany*
- Julien Louys, Stuart Hawkins, Ken Aplin, Christian Reepmeyer, Michael Herrera, Felicitas Hopf, Sue O'Connor and Daud Tanudirjo, *Late Holocene and Recent murids recovered from archaeological and natural deposits in the Talaud Islands, Northern Sulawesi*
- Rintaro Ono, Wiwik Sriwigati, and Joko Siswanto, *Marine and terrestrial resource use in remoted islands during the 10th to 19th Centuries: excavation results of Leang Buida and Bukit Tiwing in the Talaud Islands, Northern Sulawesi*
- N. Azis, C. Reepmeyer, G. Clark, D.A. Tanudirjo and Sriwigati, *Mansiri: A new dentate-stamped pottery site in Northern Sulawesi*
- Anggraeni, *The development of Neolithic-Palaeometallic pottery with a special reference to the Karama Valley, West Sulawesi*

- Hasanuddin, *A Neolithic site on the Enrekang Plateau, South Sulawesi*
- Suryatman, Budianto Hakim and Fakhri, *The Sakkarra site: new data on prehistoric occupation from the Metal Phase (2000 BP) along the Karama River drainage, Western Sulawesi, Indonesia*
- Siria Biagioni, Wiebke Kirleis and Hermann Behling, *Unravelling the past 1,000 years of history of human–climate–landscape interactions at the Lindu plain in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia*
- Akin Duli, *Reflections of social and cultural aspects at the megalithic site of Onto, South Sulawesi*
- Rosmawati, *Typology and efflorescence of the tomb and gravestone forms of ancient Islamic graves in South Sulawesi*
- Muhaeminah, *Typology of the early Islamic graves of Mamuju, West Sulawesi*
- Ian Caldwell and Kathryn Wellen, *The problem of Cina in the historical archaeology of South Sulawesi*
- Horst H. Liebner, *First stages for a survey of the pre-Islamic history and archaeology of Mandar: historiography vs reality*

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