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by

Submission date: 20-May-2022 11:24AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1840346767

File name: Distribution_and_Spreading_of_the_Underwater.pdf (362.57K)

Word count: 2699

Character count: 14104

Distribution and Spreading of the Underwater Archaeological Sites in the Selayar Waters

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ABSTRACT

Selayar Islands Regency of South Sulawesi Province has 10.369 Km² wide (including land and sea). It has a strategic location between the west and the east of the archipelago. It shows that the waters are a shipping lane now and back then. The evidence of shipping activities in the past was proved by ceramics found in some sites on the land. While some archaeological underwater sites are also found. Based on some research, both archaeological underwater surveys and literature study, six locations with archaeological findings are found. The archaeological finding is ceramics, coins, shipwrecks, bottle fragments, and anchors. The spreading of the archaeological sites is evidence that Selayar Waters was a shipping route in the past. The existence also becomes strong evidence as supporting information that has been reported in both written and oral history.

Keywords: archaeological underwater, ceramics, shipwrecks, coins.

1. INTRODUCTION

Selayar Island has a strategic position because it is surrounded by the sea which is the node of shipping traffic between The Makassar Strait which is in the west, Bone Bay which is in the north, and the Flores Sea the east and south (Ahmadin, 2016). As an island located in a strategic area, Selayar has an important role in inter-island trade traffic and commodity distribution, which connects the western and eastern parts of Indonesia and vice versa.

Selayar Island as a transit port provides the needs for traders, including clean water, supply, and also commerce. In addition, Selayar is also a location for sailing ships to get maintenance and repairs before returning to continue their voyage.

In addition to filling supplies, traders also take advantage of the time to carry out trading activities for commodity goods that are brought to the people who inhabit Selayar Island. This has been going on for a long time as evidenced by the discovery of archaeological sites in the Selayar area; both on land and the seabed. In some of these archaeological sites, ancient ceramics from The Yuan dynasty (XIII and XIV centuries) were

found, which was one of the trade commodities in the past (Adhityatama, 2016).

In the legal text and shipping “Ammana Gappa” (1984), Selayar has been mentioned as one of the commercial destinations and as a transit port to wait for a good sailing season, considering that shipping activities in the past still used the wind as a propulsion force for ships which were used as activities. Shipping is very dependent on the monsoon or wind direction (Ahmadin, 2016).

Activities that pass through the island of Selayar also had a very high risk and got marine accidents. In certain months, the sea conditions around Selayar Island have high waves and storms caused sinking ships in shipping activities. The limitations of navigational tools in shipping in the past, as well as the geographical conditions of the waters of Selayar Island which are formed from coral islands both appearing on the surface and those still on the water surface, make this water area a “natural trap” caused an accident, then sink and were in these waters. This is evidenced by the discovery of the underwater archaeological sites in the water of Selayar Island.

These relics are evidenced by the shipping lanes of Selayar Island in the past. The existence of these underwater archaeological sites has attracted the interest of researchers to conduct research in Selayar. In addition to researchers, many parties have an interest in these underwater archaeological sites, including treasure hunters. The activities of treasure hunters in Selayar waters pose a threat to the sustainability of these sites because they only see the economic aspect without considering the historical, scientific and cultural importance. Therefore, it is necessary to protect the existence of underwater archaeological sites in Selayar waters, one of which is by ensuring the distribution of underwater archaeological sites so that can provide optimal protection for each of these sites. Based on that, this article focuses on discussions related to the distribution and distribution of underwater archaeological sites in the Selayar waters area.

2. METHODS

The discussion in this article refers to the result of descriptive research that combined the methods of searching library data and collecting field data. The Pustaka data search is focused on research reports, articles, and books related to underwater archaeological sites in Selayar waters, as well as literature related to the history of Selayar Island. Reports on exploration activities or surveys of underwater sites that have been carried out in Selayar waters are also used as library data in this paper. The field data collection is in the form of surveys and exploration in Selayar waters. Field data collection begins with a site search, then plots the site's location using GPS, then records data which includes description, mapping and

as well as from the field were further analyzed to produce information related to the distribution and distribution of underwater archaeological sites in Selayar waters, which also contained information about the characteristics and types of archaeological relics.

3. DISTRIBUTION AND SPREADING OF THE UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE SELAYAR WATERS

Selayar Island Regency is one of 24 regencies/cities in South Sulawesi Province which is located at the southern tip of Sulawesi Island and extends from North to South. As an archipelago regency, Selayar Regency has an area of 9.146,66 km² or 87,09% of the total area of The Selayar Islands. Based on literature searches, underwater archaeological research in this area has been carried out since 2003 by The Makassar Archaeological Heritage Preservation Office (now Preservation for Cultural Properties office of South Sulawesi). In the following years, these institutions which are part of the Ministry of Education, Cultural, Research and Technology periodically conducted research in the Selayar waters area. In 2008 a survey and exploration were carried out, then in 2009 an updating collection and zoning study were carried out at The Bonto Sikuyu Site. Then in 2019 excavation activities were carried out at The Bonto Sikuyu Site, in 2021 a survey was carried out in the waters of Pasi Gusung Island. In the excavation activities in 2019 and the survey in 2021, the author was directly involved in the research. Based on the research results that has been carried out from 2009 to 2012, 6 locations containing 7 underwater archaeological relics were found which can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. The Underwater Archaeological Sites in Selayar Island Waters

No	Location Name	Findings Name	Depth
1	Kalaotoa	Ships, Anchor	3.8 -4.9 meters
2	Taka Pulau Batu (Taka Lambaena)	Fragment ceramic and bottle	3 meters
3	Taka Pasirilayaran	Ceramic, Brick, shipwreck	4 meters
4	Bonto Sikuyu	Ceramic, coin, wood, Bamboo.	22 meters
5	Taka Kappala	Shipwreck, Ceramic	4-6 meters
6	Taka Bajangan 1	Anchor and Cannon	5 – 6 meters

Source: Preservation For Cultural Properties Office of South Sulawesi, 2021

documentation. The data obtained from library research The data of underwater archaeological sites in Taka Lambaena, Kalotoa and Pasilayaran, refers to the report on underwater archaeological survey activities in Selayar waters in 2003, the authors are not directly involved in these activities. While the underwater archaeological site data of Bonto Sikuyu, Takappala and Taka Bajangan 1, are obtained from surveys and excavations conducted in 2009 and 2021, where the authors are directly involved in these activities. Here are the descriptions for each underwater archaeological site in The Selayar Waters:

3.1. Taka Lambaena

Taka Lambaena is administratively included in The Pasilayaran District area. This sites is located in a coral area which the community around The Island named Taka Pulau Batu or Taka Lambaena, which is 2 miles from Karompa Island. The location of this site is at a depth of 1.70 meters with a visibility of 3 meters in the water. The distribution area of the findings at this site is 400x100 meters with environmental conditions that

have been overgrown by corals. Archaeological finds found at this site are ceramic fragments and bottles.

3.2. Kalaotoa

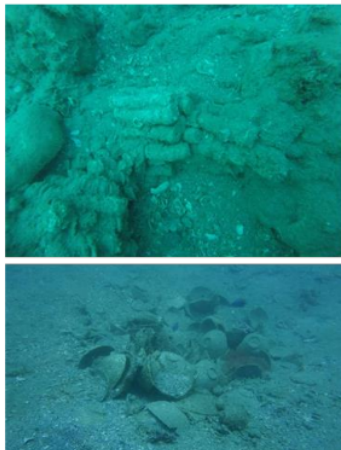
The Kalotoa Sites is located in the waters of The Kalotoa Island which is administratively included in The Pasilambaena District. This site is located in the west of The Kalotoa Island with a depth of 3.8-4.9 meters. The archaeological relics at this site are in the form of 2 large anchors of their respective sizes: anchor 1 with a length of 460meters, a width of 280 meters and a ring diameter of 0.60 meters, anchor 2 with a length of 490 meters, a width of 280 and a ring diameter of 0.90 meters. In addition to the anchor findings, stone blocks were also found which were strongly suspected of being The Ballast stone.

3.3. Passilayaran

The Passilayaran Site is located in a taka named Taka Passilayaran, this taka is on the border between The Selayar Islands District and The Flores Region. The location of the site is at a depth of 4 meters. The archaeological relics found at this site are ceramics, bricks, and iron shipwrecks which are scattered from the southeast to the northwest.

3.4. Bontosikuyu

Administratively, The Bontosikuyu underwater site is located on the border of two villages, namely Harapan Village and Patikaraya Village, in The Bontosikuyu sub-district. The site is parallel to the mouth of the Bontosikuyu river, at a depth of 22 meters. The archaeological relics found at this site are ceramics and coins, ceramic findings found in several forms, namely plates, bowls, cups, jars, scattered on the surface of the seabed or those that have been buried by mud. While the coins in the form of Chinese currency in the hundreds.



3.5. Taka Kappala Sites

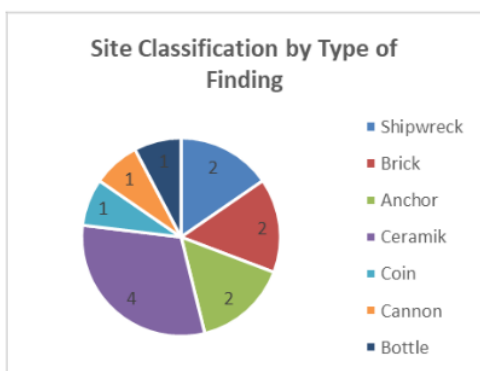
This location is administratively located in The Tambolongang Village, Bontosikuyu District, to be precise in the west of the island of Tambolongang. The location of this site is at a depth of 6-8 meters with visibility in the water of 10 meters. In addition to the archaeological relics of the ship found at this location in the form of porcelain fragments, coal, and bottle fragments made of glass, wood and rubber, these findings were found in the centre of the ship at the site of the former excavation. The remaining part of the ship, namely the hull has been buried by sand but can be identified at the excavation site located in the middle and rear. In addition, several iron plates have been cut into pieces, these iron plates are part of the ship. The results of the measurement of the remaining hull are 12 meters wide and 75 meters long, and the condition of the ship is very damaged because the iron has been taken.



3.6. Taka Bajangan 1

Taka bajangan 1 is 3,5 MI to the west of Pasi Island, the site is located at a depth of 5-6 meters with visibility in the water at the time of the survey, which is 6-10 meters. The archaeological relics found at this site are the 4 large anchors and 1 cannon. These four anchors and cannons are spread over an area of 30x20 meters. The condition of the anchor f has been overgrown by coral in all parts so that parts of it can still be identified, while the cannon has been overgrown by coral as a whole, especially in the front of it is overgrown by large coral. The dimension of these findings can be seen in the following table:

4. DISCUSSIONS



Based in the distribution map above, it can be seen that the 6 sites that have been found can be divided into 2 areas, three of which are on the southeast side of Selayar Island, which has been included in The Flores sea waters, the three sites are The Taka Lambaena Site, The Kalaotoa Site, and The Pasilayaran Site. While the other three sites, namely the Taka Kappala Site, The Bontosikuyu Site and The Taka Bajangan Site, are located on the west of side of Selayar Island. Both locations are still used as shipping lanes, regionally or even inter-islands.

Based on the depth and character of the location of the sites found, there are 5 sites whose positions are found in taka or gusung which are the shallow waters with a depth of 2-6 meters. This is preliminary evidence that the ships that sank in the waters of Selayar have been found was had accidents caused by bad weather and water conditions described in the introduction part.

In addition, from the six locations found, underwater archaeological relics are located on the west side of gusung or land which indicates that the accident may have occurred in the western seasons; wherein that seasons, the condition of The Selayar waters is avoided for shipping activities until now.

Based on the graph above, ceramic findings are the most dominant findings found. Ceramic is one of the trading commodities in the past, this trade activity was carried out by shipping and this is proof that the sunken ship at the site was a ship that sailed in the context of trading activities, this is also strong evidence that the waters of Selayar Island are one of the busiest shipping lanes

6. CONCLUSION

The underwater archaeological research in the waters of Selayar which has been carried out from 2003 to 2021 has succeeded in identifying 6 sites spread over two areas, namely the west and southeast sides of Selayar Island. The distribution of the archaeological sites found is one the evidence that these waters have been shipping lanes since ancient times and are still used today.

Based on the results of the identification carried out, the archaeological relics of the six sites found consisted of trade commodities and military equipment such as ceramics, anchors, bricks, coins and cannons. The relics can also explain that the voyages that occurred in these waters were not only for commerce but also for military purposes.

Another evidence that can be used as evidence that Selayar is also transit blood is the distribution of the archaeological relics found on the mainland of Selayar Island, such as the old tombs and ceramic. Ceramic findings were also found in several locations that are considered by the community to be old ports such as Sangkulu-Kulu and Hangoang Harbor, this toponym is considered by the community to have a relationship with China, but this requires further research on the relationship of the toponym with China.

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