

# The Padang Lawas Temple of North Sumatera, Indonesia (In Perspective Thoughts of Historic Heritage)

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**Abstract.** One of them is the Archaeological and Historical Heritage spread in Padang Lawas (Palas), North Sumatera, Indonesia. Discovered in 1846 by Franz Junghun. All this time, its existence has not been explored and studied maximally, especially for its relation with other sites spread in Indonesia. Therefore, it is necessary to collect the data in order to reveal whether the historical and archaeological heritage still exists on Padang Lawas Site through archeological and historical approaches as they are able to reveal the existence of these sites. In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 5 of 1992 on Cultural heritage objects are stated as both the moving and non-moving objects. The sites located in Palas are the immovable objects as they are in the form of buildings. There are some important aspects of value in understanding Cultural Heritage, include historical values, sciences and cultural aspects. Therefore, it is necessary and very important to preserve these heritages for the benefit of both local, national and international community. The method used was through data collection, data processing, analysis, and preparation of recommendations. The data collection process was conducted on two types of information, namely the historic and archaeological heritages and the policies/programs on cultural heritage development and preservation. The data were divided into two types, namely primary data (observation/measurement, interview and questionnaire/checklist) and secondary data (reports, inventory lists, and study results). Furthermore the spreaded sites were studied through the archaeological data and historical methods, and through the reconstruction of the archaeological and historic heritages that have been collected.

**Keywords:** Temple, Potential, Archaeology and History, Padang Lawas

## 1. INTRODUCTION

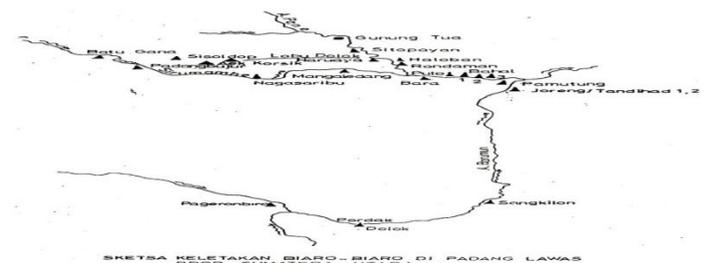
Palas Regency, one of the regencies in North Sumatera Province, Indonesia has many sites spreaded along the Barumon, Batang Pane, Sirumambe and Sihapas river streams, in the form of temples, artifacts, statues, and stamba as the relics of the classical period (Hindu-Buddhist) of Indonesia. The relics are in the form of statues, either intact or fragmented, which are either in the context of buildings and separated relics; such as inscriptions, either intact or damaged; contained in *Oudkundige Verslag (OV)* and in the Reports of Department of Archaeology. In addition, they were also written by individuals, such as F.M. Snitger in some of his books on archeology in Sumatra (1937, 1964); Satyawati Sulaiman (1954, 1976, 1980); Rumbi Mulia (1980); and Nick Hasan Suhaimi (1992). The Padanglawas site is located on the valleys around the Barumon, Batang Pane, Sirumambe rivers and other rivers with a total area of about 1500 square kilometers (Miksic, 1979). In this location, there are some remains of *Biara* made of brick and some fragments of the area found on the upstream of Batang Pane, namely Gunung Tua, Sitopayan, Hayuara, Haloban, Rondaman, and Bara; on the banks of the Sirumambe reiver, namely biaro Pulo, Bahal I, Bahal 11, Bahal III, Batu Gana, Sisoldop, Padang Bujur, Nage Saribu and Mangaledang; and on the banks of Barumon river (Batang Sihapas), namely Pordak Dolok, Si Sangkilon, Joreng Belangah (Tandihat I), Tandihat II, and si Pamutung (Snitger, 1937: Plate XXI). Not all of these sites have the remains of buildings, but there are some artifacts found in some sites, such as inscriptions, statues, and *stambha* (stone pillars).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Indonesian National Center for Archaeological Research conducted a research on the Padanglawas site in 1993, 1994, and 1995. The 1993 research resulted in the assumption that Barumon and Pane rivers had undergone considerable changes due to the high erosion rate. Most of Padanglawas buildings are located near a river stream of about 200 to 500 meters away. The 1994 research conducted a survey in Barumon and Pane river streams and excavations on Tandihat II site. The excavations conducted on Tandihat II remains were able to reveal the shape and size of the building plan. The building faces east with a stair decorated with a pair of makara. A lion area made of sand stone was found among the remains of the buildings. The 1995 research indicated that there were ancient settlements around *Biara* Tandihat II. The remains of the settlements outside *Biara* Tandihat II were found on the northeast side of the exterior of the building walls (Archeological Research Team, 1995), while the remains of the settlements in *Biara* Si Pamutung were suspected to be inside of the castle surrounding the *biara* complex.

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive-analysis research, this method is used for describing the phenomenon obtained from the field which is related to the research topic. Descriptive-comparative method, this method is used for comparing the existing phenomena, especially for the phenomena related to the archaeological/historic heritages in Indonesia. SWOT analysis method, this method is used for identifying the *Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat* towards the resources.



Source: Department of Archaeology of Medan (2017).

Figure 1. Padang Lawas Regency Map Research Materials this research :

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### 1. Primary Data

- Related to the potential of environmental resources, both the physical, biotic, and local-cultural resources.
- The economic and cultural conditions of the people
- Data related to the archaeological and historic heritages

### 2. Supporting Data

Collected from many government institutions and also the documents, archives, maps, reports, etc. as the references.

### 3. Research Equipment

- Questionnaire
- Stationery/interview/questionnaire equipment
- Data Processing Tools (PC and others)
- Administration

- Padang Lawas, the name for this region is in accordance with the expansion of South Tapanuli Regency, has been expanded/divided into 2 (two) regencies, namely Padang Lawas and North Padang Lawas (Paluta) as there are many sites found in both regencies.
- In Indonesia, Temple is a general term for all the cultural heritage buildings of Hindu and Buddhist. So, regardless the forms of the buildings; the ancient bathing places, gates, religious sacred buildings; are called temples.
- Kerangas forest, the word Kerangas came from Iban language from Sarawak, Kalimantan, which is poor in vegetation and animal species. Kerangas forest is actually a forested land, and not suited for rice plants once it is cleared. Kerangas forest usually grows on soils derived from rare silica materials, which lack of bases, and have rough and quick-drying structures. The open fields are covered with a layer of white sand with a thickness of about 0,5 - 5 centimeters and on have a dark color underneath.
- In Malaysia, the term for archaeological heritages is *tapak* (site) similar to the term site in Indonesia.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the calendar elements obtained from the inscriptions found in Padang Lawas, it is temporarily suspected that the Padanglawas site existed from the 12th to 14th century. The buildings consist of some *biaro* which have a statue on each top, which shows the remains of Buddhism with the vajrayana teachings, one of the teachings in Buddhism that has the gigantic properties. In the lowlands, in the altitude of about 100 to 130 meters above sea level, there are some *biaro* sites found, namely Nagasaribu, Jamal I Taon Tomb, Padang Bujur, Batu Gana, Tor Na Tambang/Mangaledang, and Biaro Sangkilon, of which the floral environment is not that diverse. Prior to the year of 2000, there were many *balaka* palm trees in this area with a height up to 5 meters. The local people used the bark and quite-bitter fruit as a spice of traditional cuisine called *holat*. In addition, there were also *Mapa/harambir* (*Cocosnucifera*) trees; oil palm (*Eloisguineensis*) trees, which were the newly popular cultivation plants. In the lowlands, the rice fields were quite large, considering that there were many rivers that became water sources. The cliffs had various types of bamboo/Ibus trees, sugar palm/bargot (*Arengapinnata*) trees, and areca (*Arecca catechu*) trees, also, the kwini mango (*Mangifera adorata*) and many types of banana (*Musa paradica*) trees. Thus, it can be said that this area has a great potential to serve as a "meeting" of various fields.

Table 1. The Archaeological And Historic Heritages In Padang

| Lawas |                                    |                     |                  |                   |
|-------|------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| No    | Name of Temple/Site                | Village             | Sub-District     | Regency           |
| 1.    | Bahal 1                            | Bahal               | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 2.    | Bahal 2                            | Bahal               | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 3.    | Bahal 3                            | Bahal               | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 4.    | Si Pamutung                        | Siparau             | Barumun Tengah   | Padanglawas       |
| 5.    | Bara                               | Bara                | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 6.    | Tandihat 1                         | Tandihat            | Barumun Tengah   | Padanglawas       |
| 7.    | Tandihat 2                         | Tandihat            | BarumunTengah    | North Padanglawas |
| 8.    | Tandihat 3                         | Tandihat            | Barumun Tengah   | North Padanglawas |
| 9.    | Pulo                               | Bahal               | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 10.   | Batu Gana                          | Batu Gana           | Padangbolak Julu | North Padanglawas |
| 11.   | Nagasaribu                         | Bangun Purba        | Padangbolak      | North Padanglawas |
| 12.   | Aek Haruaya                        | Aek Haruaya         | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 13.   | Sangkilon                          | Sangkilon           | Lubuk Barumun    | Padanglawas       |
| 14.   | Rondaman                           | Tanjungbangun       | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 15.   | Sitopayan 1                        | Sitopayan           | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 16.   | Sitopayan 2                        | Sitopayan           | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 17.   | Si Soldop                          | Tanga-Tanga Hambeng | Padangbolak Julu | North Padanglawas |
| 18.   | Lobu Padang Bujur                  | Padangbujur         | Padangbolak Julu | North Padanglawas |
| 19.   | Aek Korsik                         | Aek Tolong          | Padangbolak      | North Padanglawas |
| 20.   | Aek Tolong Huta Jae                | Aek Tolong          | Padangbolak      | North Padanglawas |
| 21.   | Lobu Dolok                         | Aek Tolong          | Padangbolak      | North Padanglawas |
| 22.   | Tor Na Tambang/Mangaledang         | Mangaledang Godang  | Portibi          | North Padanglawas |
| 23.   | Keramam Jiret Mertuah/Pageran Bira | Pageran Bira Jae    | Sosopan          | Padanglawas       |
| 24.   | Si Joreng Belangah                 | Tandihat            | Barumun Tengah   | North Padanglawas |
| 25.   | Gunung Tua                         | Ibu Kota            | Ibu Kota         | North Padanglawas |

|    |                 |              |                         | was                      |
|----|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 26 | Pordak<br>Dolok | Pageran Bira | Sosop<br>an             | North<br>Padangla<br>was |
| 27 | Manggis         | Manggis      | Batang<br>Lobu<br>Sutam | Padangla<br>was          |

*Source: Data Tabulation (2017).*

1. The sites in Padang Lawas have the potential of environmental resources, includes physical, biotic, and cultural resources.
2. Padang Lawas sites are able to be explored through the archaeological and historic heritages on the sites
3. The sites in Palas become a proof of the existence of great civilization in South-East Asia in the past.

The people in the temple area located in Padang Lawas Regency have no relationship at all with the existence of the temple. Long before the Dutch colonialism in the in the northwestern and southern regions of Padanglawas, such as Padangsidimpuan, Parsabolas, Sipirok, as this area had become a center of commerce and local power. Padang Lawas was inhabited by Angkola sub-ethnic people and the people were generally Moslems. The significant development of Islam in this region was also what made Buddhist heritages getting more out of concern. In addition, there was no more Buddhists who supported to take care of and preserve these heritages lived in the region. It seems that the Buddhism which was once highly-developed at that time disappeared along with the entry of the monotheistic Islam. Unlike the temples in Java, in Padang Lawas (Palas) the temples spreaded in line along the Barumun river for about 16 temples, and reached the last temple at the meeting point with Panai river. At the meeting of these two rivers, there was Panai (Ancient Panai) Empire which had two entrances, on in the east coast of Sumatra (Malacca Strait) and in the west coast through Sibolga and Barus. It is estimated that the temple complex was established after the king of Chola named Rajendra Chola Dewa conducted the siege and occupation of Sriwijaya in 1025 AD. At that time, the king of Sriwijaya came from Syailendra named Wijayottungawarman. Then, this Indian army conquered small kingdoms in Nusantara, starting from kedah in Malaysia, Aceh (Lamuri), to Ancient Panai in the Sumatran Hinterland (this historical evidence is written in the Tanjora inscription 1030/1031). The existence of the Panai Empire was also noted in Chinese sources, stated that the center of the Ancient Panai Empire was in the upstream of Barumun river, far away from the Malacca Strait, which linked between India and China. According to Dr. F.M..Schinitger, based on a report sourced from China, in the 6th century, the Ancient Panai Kingdom had paid retributions to China and believed in Bhuddism. Unfortunately, there was no temple at Padanglawas told about the name of the kings, the historical events, as the temples only described the problems related to the Bhairawa Tantric Buddhism sect that developed from the 11th until the 14th century. The sect did not oly develop in the Ancient Panai Empire but also in Aditiawarman Empire in Minangkabau, Melayu Jambi, Kartanegara Sultanate in Singosari and Kublai Khan empire in China.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The temples were located in Padang Lawas, a spacious land. It was a 1500 square kilometers grassland. The dry breeze blew in the land with no trees. Nowadays, there are so many palm trees grow everywhere. The names of the temples were very different from

the origin of Buddhism. In India, the Viharas, Temples, or Biaro mean the priests' dormitory associated with worship, while they are only worshipping places in Indonesia. It is estimated that the temples along the Barumun River were the stops for the Bhuddists who were on the way to go to the Ancient Panai Empire (the resting places while carrying out religious rituals), and they then continued the journey to the Ancient Panai Empire. The models of ornaments on the temples found along the Barumun river are different from each other. Bahal I Temple is surrounded by fences. The main temple faces east and is surrounded by small temples. There is also a stair to climb to the entrance. The main material of the temple is a red brick with a length of 27/28 centimeters, height of 16/18 centimeters, and width of 4,5/5 centimeters. There is a terrace on the footer and the top of the temple is covered by *chatra* (royal umbrella). The wall of the temple has the dancing yatsa and laughing lion reliefs. In Bahal I Temple, there is a statue of Heruka, one of the embodiments of Vajrayana, one of the Bairawa gods. These statues depict a person who was dancing on the corpses while holding the vajra on the right hand and human skull on the left hand. There is a *tunggul* (stump)/stick made of ribs, like the *tunggul majio* or "*Tunggul Panaluan*" in Batak Toba society. All of these objects are placed in one place which is still in the location of Bahal I Temple. The Buddhism that came to Sumatra was the Mahayana Tantric sect. Furthermore, it mixed with Buddhism and Shiwaism. This Tantric Sect is demonic. It was known for its terrible rituals, which was sacrificing people. This is what distinguishes the temples in Sumatra with those in Java which are full of tenderness, as those in Padang Lawas are full of violence. The great destruction on the remains of the temples spreaded along the Barumun River was certainly made deliberately. In addition, there are no people who were in Padanglawas in the past want to know about the existence of the temples, even assume it as if there was no temple built ever there.

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