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# MEGALITHIC SITE IN NEGERI SEMBILAN

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## ABSTRACT

*The development of Megalithic culture in Malaysia is said to have begun since the time of Metal. The megalithic found in Pengkalan Kempas History Complex is categorized as unique as it is engraved and carved in various forms such as the shape of the sword, the blade, the steering wheel and also the stone carved with the Arabic word "Allah" in jawi letters. The megalithic site in Negeri Sembilan is likely to exceed 200 sites. The objective of this paper is to discuss the previous studies that have been done by previous researchers associated with megalithic sites in Negeri Sembilan. This study used written materials in the library whether books, journals or seminar papers and so on. The results of this study showed that there various community perspectives about the megalithic stones. Among these is the concept of live rock which is the existence of various rituals, offerings or worship, extraordinary confidence, a sense of honor and so on*

**Keywords:** Pengkalan Kempas History Complex, Megalithic culture, Community perspective.

**Cite this Article:** Siti Salina Masdey, Zuliskandar Ramli, Nuratikah Abu Bakar and Shamsuddin Ahmad, Megalithic Site in Negeri Sembilan, *International Journal of Mechanical Engineering and Technology*, 10(1), 2019, pp. 1159-1170.

<https://iaeme.com/Home/issue/IJMET?Volume=10&Issue=1>

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Megalithic is one of the major forms of innovation that produces large stone cultures for worship purposes. Megalithic is derived from the Greek word 'Mega' which means great and 'Lithos' which means stone. The combination of the two words forms Megalith or Megalithic which is the use of large stones in the past life of society especially in the period of Metal and later. Most of the remains of the megalithic culture was built with the stone monolith or andesite. The composition of this stone is most of its relative size as large as menhir and dolmen. This megalithic culture is believed to have existed around Southeast Asia since the time of Neolithic but it began to grow rapidly in the Metal Age. Metal Age is categorized as a

prehistoric age however the period is shorter than the other periods either the Paleolithic or the Neolithic era [1]. In addition, the uniqueness of this megalithic causes it to be called a living stone. This live stone culture has been widely practiced in Southeast Asia [2].

The development of megalithic culture throughout the world suggests that this culture greatly influenced the society of the past. The influence of this megalithic culture can be seen in several places to this day and is still ongoing in some countries. Even this megalithic culture is still practiced and continued to date even though it has undergone renovation [3]. There is a view from the earlier researchers who stated this megalithic culture symbolized an inanimate object as a human being. This makes the argument relevant to the object and tradition of ancestral worship. The influence of megalithic culture has begun to spread throughout Southeast Asia. But the original function of the megalithic culture is still maintained but the shape of the grave begins to change according to the needs of the community. In addition, there are some researchers who argue that the megalithic function and culture are two that relate to ritual and burial [2]. Even megalithic this is interpreted as a liaison between the living and the dead [4].

The development of megalithic culture in Malaysia is said to have begun since the end of the metal to the 18th century [5]. This megalithic culture is believed to have started in the Neolithic period of 3500 S.M and practiced by people around the world [6]. Evans conducted archaeological research in the Bernam Valley, Perak and found several pieces of stone. The findings show that megalithic culture in Malaysia began in the Metal Age. This argument is due to the discovery of several slab graves in Slim River, Sungkai and Changkat Minister in Perak. [7]. Most megaliths found in Malaysia are found in several states such as Perak, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Sabah and Sarawak. Megalithics discovered in Malaysia are the types of Menhir, dolmen and slabe grave. In Peninsular Malaysia, the focus area that is found megalithic types of menhir are in Negeri Sembilan. Megalithic in Negeri Sembilan is widely known and there are 80 have been detected by Sheppard during his research. However, in Kuala Pilah most megalithic are found and concentrated by Terachi and most megalithic can be seen clearly from the main road from Seremban to Kuala Pilah [8]. In addition, there are also several types of menhir megalithic found in Melaka and South of Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Furthermore, the megalithic type of dolmen was also found in the Kelabit Highlands, Sarawak. In addition, megalithic types of slabe grave were found in the Slim River area until Bernam, Perak. Thus, some earlier researchers have studied the megalithic culture found in Malaysia such as Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Sabah, Sarawak and Perak.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The development of megalithic culture in Malaysia is said to have begun since the end of the metal to the 18th century [5]. Most megaliths found in Malaysia are found in several states such as Perak, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Sabah and Sarawak. Megaliths discovered in Malaysia is a type of menhir, dolmen and tomb of slabe grave. In Peninsular Malaysia, the focus area that is found megalithic types of menhir are in Negeri Sembilan. In addition, there are also several types of menhir megalithic found in Melaka and South of Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Furthermore, the megalithic type of dolmen was also found in the Kelabit Highlands, Sarawak. In addition, megalithic types of slabe grave were found in the Slim River area until Bernam, Perak. Thus, some earlier researchers have studied the megalithic culture found in Malaysia such as Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Sabah, Sarawak and Perak.

The megalithic culture found in Negeri Sembilan is of "alignment" type. This type of alignment megalithic is also available in other countries such as in the North East of India and Indonesia. In addition, the influence of megalithic cultures of this alignment was found to be particularly widespread in the areas of the Minangkabau community [9]. According to Evans,

megalithic culture development in Negeri Sembilan is estimated around the 14th to 15th century. This is because, Evans used the dating of the tomb grave of Syeikh Ahmad Majnun where his date of death was around 1467 BC. In addition, there are megalithic findings in several places in Negeri Sembilan namely in the areas of Rembau, Jelebu, Kuala Pilah and Tampin. [2].

The existence and function of megalithic culture in Negeri Sembilan is still a mysterious thing. This is because there is a contradiction between the previous researchers in relation to the existence of megalithic culture in Negeri Sembilan. There are two opinions related to the existence of megalithic culture which is the first opinion that the existence of megalithic culture is said to have existed since the beginning of the century. This opinion is based on the discovery of megalithic stone shape that is rough and has no ornamental or various carvings. Then the second opinion is that the existence of megalithic culture in Negeri Sembilan has been brought in by the people who practice adat perpatih. This opinion is based on the migration of the people who practiced the adat perpatih as early as the 15th century during the reign of the Malay sultanate of Malacca. This is because the megalithic remains in Negeri Sembilan are similar to those of megaliths found in Minangkabau. Nevertheless, the first opinion indicates that megalithic culture existed earlier [10].

Minangkabau is one of the communities that migrated to Negeri Sembilan as we know through past history. However, the actual date of their migration is uncertain. This is because the date stated by the previous researcher was in 733 Hijrah. However, megalithic in Pengkalan Kempas is estimated to exist in 1467 as it takes into account the Sheikh Ahmad Majnun tombstone that died in that year. This opinion was also approved by R.J. Wilkinson stating that the Minangkabau migration took place in the 18th century [2]. Existence of megalithic that found in Negeri Sembilan can be divided to four categories according to luak or district in the state. Among the *luak* are *luak tanah mengandung*, *luak tampin*, *luak beradat* and *luak berundang*.

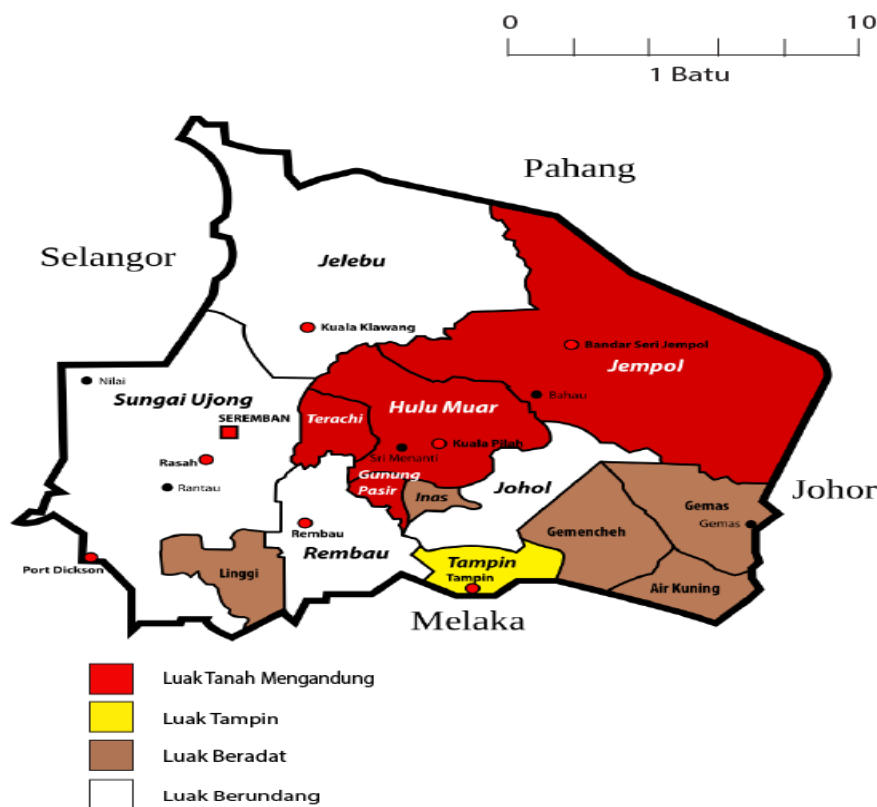


Figure 1 Customary districts of Negeri Sembilan

### 3. MEGALITHIC SITE OF PENGKALAN KEMPAS HISTORY COMPLEX

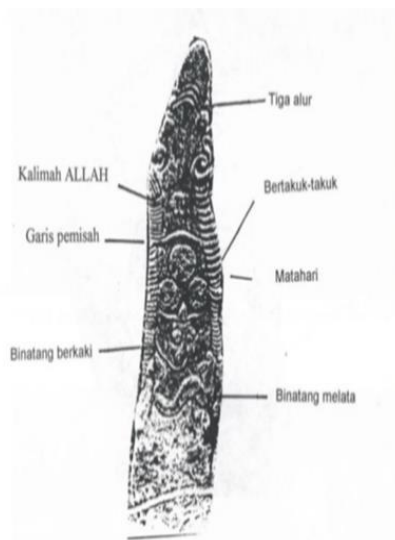
Megalithic archeological study and research in Peninsular Malaysia was first conducted by I.H.N Evans at the Pengkalan Kempas site in 1919. There are approximately 15 granite menhir while the three main menhirs and laterite stones are scattered, tilted and fallen. When the excavations were carried out were found glaze and blue-white ceramics, celadon, multi-colored glass, stone tools and coins. The soil layer does not show any interference effects while the burning effect is also found. Overall the relative layout of this site is around the 14-15th century M. Evans also claims that the culture in Pengkalan Kempas is as deep as two feet based on the different sand effects of the top layer. [11]. This site is estimated to be dated around the 14th century AD based on the relative (relative) tomb of Sheikh Ahmad Majnun who had a death sentence of about 1467 AD [2].

The megalithic morphology that exists in Pengkalan Kempas, Negeri Sembilan is unique as it has a steering-shaped megalithic, spade (umbrella) and sword (keris). All of these images are basically attributed to the leadership created in the form of symbolism and clearly show how this ornamental pattern relates to the customs practiced by the masons in Negeri Sembilan. This is because the megalithic found in Pengkalan Kempas is the only megalithic carved and sculpted with animal form, sun / moon and there is the Arabic word "Allah" in jawi [12]. The intimate relationship between humans and their environment could also indirectly encourage humans to appreciate it and eventually translating it creatively through art or material culture [13].



**Figure 2** Megalithic Stone Pengkalan Kempas

*From left it is called Rudder, Spoon and Sword. Source: Field work 2018.*

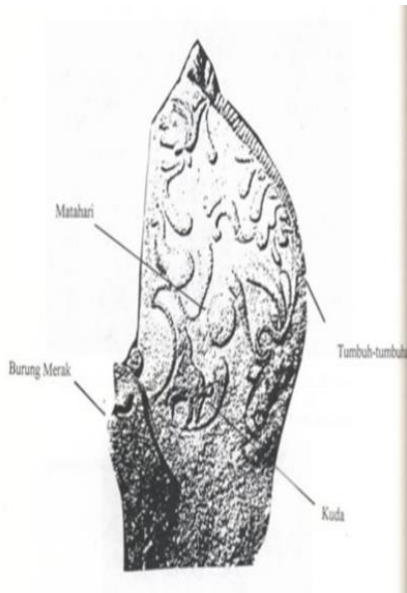


Source: Muhamad Mahfuz Nordin 1997



Source: Field Work 2018

**Figure 3** Sword-shaped Megalithic Stone carved with certain motif



Source: Muhamad Mahfuz Nordin 1997



Source: Field Work 2018

**Figure 4** megalitik Stone Shaped Rudder carved with certain motif

In 1919, Evans went for visited at megalithic site in Pengkalan Kempas to study the position and distribution of several granite and laterite stones before implement to explore the area. The excavation was performed and with a depth of two feet from the surface found a layer of sand believed to be the surface of the ancient soil in which it contained a small charcoal distribution. Besides that, there are also four small objects found like blue glass buttons, 'opaque' and 'transparent'. Next to the next depth, he discovered several fragments of celadon bowls and white porcelain plates of early Ming. However, the excavations that were carried out did not find the impression of the body [10]

#### 4. MEGALITHIC STONE IN NEGERI SEMBILAN

Megalithic stones considered as living stones aged between 200 and over 3000 years are found in Negeri Sembilan especially in the district of Kuala Pilah. In addition, the megalithic is said to grow and shine at night when exposed to light [14]. Almost the entire megalithic site is found there are residual charcoal findings and also the porcelain position in the enclosed state. The porcelain position is at the edge of the rock and does not stir. This makes the connection between the rest of the combustion with porcelain can be attributed to the ceremonial hymn performed by the past community in that field. Porcelain is one of the artifacts that are often found in many archaeological sites from the Neolithic period begins [15]. At the same time the entire megalithic site excavated by previous researchers did not find any human skeletons [16].

There are over 3,500 megalithic stones found in the area of Terachi and its surroundings. Evans also claimed that the culture at Pengkalan Kempas was as deep as two feet based on the different sand effects of the top layer. In addition, according to Zuraina Majid, the megalithic site in Negeri Sembilan is likely to exceed 200 sites. In fact, most megalithic stones are found on individual land [17].

Among the Megalithic sites at Negeri Sembilan are the following Megalith Sites Kampung Gedang Terachi (Tomb of Tok Patah), Megalith Site Kampung Terachi Batu 15 ½, Megalith Site Kampung Padang Lebar, Tanjung Ipoh, Megalith Site Kampung Kundangan Terachi, Megalith Sites Kampung Pauh Terachi, Megalith Sites Kampung Mampas Besar, Megalith Sites Kampung Ibol Seberang Terachi, Megalith Sites Kampung Kuala Talang, Megalith Sites Tanjung Ipoh Cemetery, Megalith Sites Kampung Lanjut Manis, Megalith Sites Kampung Mutiu Merbau, Megalith Sites Kampung Gedang, Sites Megalith Kampung Lanjut Manis Terachi, Batu Megalith Kuala Jemapoh Cemetery Area and so on [18]. Almost all megalithic sites are found on private land such as in figure below. In This figure shows as one of the megalithic that found in Negeri Sembilan:



Figure 5



Figure 6

**Figure 5 & 6.** Megalithic Site Kampung Gendang Terachi

Source: Muzium Diraja Seri Menanti 2018



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

**Figure 7, 8, 9 & 10 Megalithic Site Kampung Terachi Batu 15 ½**

Source: Muzium Diraja Seri Menanti 2018



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14

**Figure 11, 12, 13 & 14** Megalithic Site Kampung Padang Lebar, Tanjung Ipoh

Source: Muzium Diraja Seri Menanti 2018

Kamarul Baharin Buyong (1990) had conducted research at Terachi Valley and also divides megalithic towards three locations according to the position where it is located on the edge of the rice fields, on the hillside and in the open ground. The megalithic site that found on the edge of the rice field is a customary land of heritage and each landowner has a megalithic site planted by themselves. But, there are also two megaliths that found on private custom land. The villagers around the megalithic site considered the megalithic as their ancestral tomb [5]. Conservation and preservation of historical heritage is important to be used as tourism products. This is because all the elements of the heritage have a unique architecture and their own unique historical value that cannot be changed. Through tourism, inheritance protection. This historic community can attract people, increase knowledge and create a sense of belonging appreciation of the historical background of the heritage element [19]. Below is a list of megalithic sites available in Negeri Sembilan which have been updated by Negeri Sembilan Museum Board in 2016:

1. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Gendang Terachi (Makam Tok Patah)
2. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Terachi Batu 15 ½
3. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Padang Lebar, Tanjung Ipoh
4. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Kundangan, Terachi
5. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Pauh, Terachi
6. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Mampas Besar
7. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Ibol Seberang, Terachi
8. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Kuala Talang
9. Tapak Megalitik Kawasan Perkuburan Tanjung Ipoh
10. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Lanjut Manis
11. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Perigi Merbau
12. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Gendang
13. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Lanjut Manis, Terachi
14. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Purun, Tanjung Ipoh
15. Tapak Megalitik Kawasan Ampang Batu, Seri Menanti



16. Tapak Megalitik Makam Tok Bauk Kampung Teriang, Jelebu
17. Tapak Megalitik Makan Tok Pawing Jelebu, Masjid Kuala Dulang
18. Tapak Megalitik Kawasan Perkuburan Kuala Jemapoh
19. Tapak Megalitik Makam Dato Nisan Tinggi, Tampin
20. Tapak Megalitik Makam Syed Saaban Dan Makam Raja Ali, Tampin
21. Tapak Megalitik Kawasan Perkuburan Kampung Durian Hijau, Terachi
22. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Solok Paku, Jalan Kuala Pilah-Seremban
23. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Senaling, Kuala Pilah
24. Tapak Megalitik Kawasan Perkuburan Kampung Bukit, Senaling
25. Tapak Megalitik Kawasan Perkuburaan Kampung Gunung Pasir, Seri Menanti
26. Tapak Megalitik Kampung Pilah Tengah, Senaling

## 5. SHAPE OF MEGALITHIC IN NEGERI SEMBILAN

Megalithic stones found mostly have various types such as flat-shaped, horn-sharped, triangular-shaped sides and round sides. However, there is also a megalithic that has fallen due to environmental factors. This is considered to be one frequent challenge faced by Malaysian researchers and authorities in conservation archaeological research [20]. In addition, there is a megalithic on this site planted a pair of which is north-south direction. This megalith also has no decorative carvings or names as found in Pengkalan Kempas. There are megalithic that have different sizes showing how many followers it is. If the height and the size of the stone are higher and important the position is because there are many people who together lift the stone. The discovery of different size and decorative raised questions about when and how it spread the meaning or philosophy behind the decorative motifs, the function and the extent of its relationship with the local people [21]. This megalithic site is considered a cemetery, as it is believed their ancestors were buried in the area. In This figure shows various shape and type of megalithic that found in Negeri Sembilan:



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17

Various stone forms found in the survey area

Source: Field Study 2018.



**Figure 18**



**Figure 19**



**Figure 20**

Various stone forms found in the survey area

Source: Field Study 2018.



**Figure 21**



**Figure 22**



**Figure 23**

Various stone forms found in the survey area

Source: Field Study 2018.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Local resident believes the arrangement (alignment) found in their area ancestor graveyard. However, this megalithic stone still remain mystery to the local and also researcher because this bring a lot of inquiries regarding the influences and function of this megalithic culture. The discovery of this megalithic stone poses a wide range of perceptions among society and researchers. Among them is the megalithic stone is a sign of development for the early

settlement of the community which makes it a place of worship, used as a place of community to gather for the purpose of traditional offerings, in honor of figures and so forth

Therefore, conclusion can be made that there still a lot of research to be performed regarding megalithic side that found in Negeri Sembilan, specifically on the function of the stone that is still remain unclear. Infact the research should be carry on so this side would not be destroying without any research study been made.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was carried out with the assistance of the research grant DCP-2017-00/1 and DCP-2018-009. Therefore, we would like to express our gratitude to the The National University of Malaysia (UKM) for the research grants awarded.

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