



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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The 1964 expedition to Pitcairn was a reconnaissance in force which began to assemble the material from which the prehistory of Pitcairn will eventually be written. What stands out is the suitability of the stone and wood resources of the island for the needs of a neolithic people. It could be argued as Buck did on the basis of his study of Mangarevan tradition, that Pitcairn was visited by groups from that area because of these resources. On the other hand we must remember Sharp's point that the traditional evidence used by Buck was provided in writing by an educated Mangarevan, at a time when Pitcairn was well known to the Mangarevans from visits in European ships. It is hoped that the problem of the original settlement will be resolved by further investigation not only on Pitcairn, but also by study of all the material available in collections around the world.

See Plate V

A SUGGESTED PA TYPOLOGY

A. G. Buist

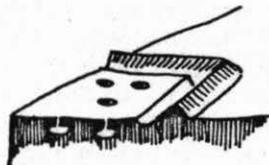
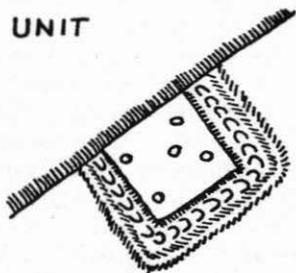
Introduction

In the recording of signs of occupation of the Maori in New Zealand, the most striking field monument is the pa, or fortified village. Whilst, in any given area, these are by no means the only signs of occupation, they appear to provide a circumscribed set of artifacts representing that phase of Eastern Polynesian Culture in New Zealand which has been defined by Drs. Green and Duff and by Mr J. Golson, as Classic Maori.

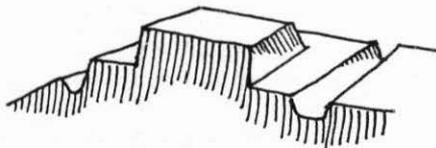
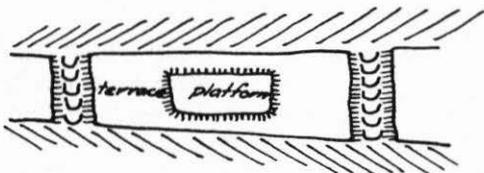
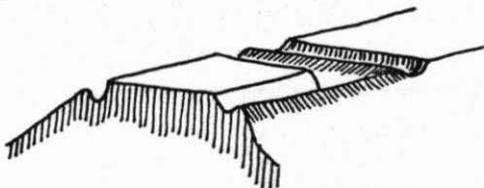
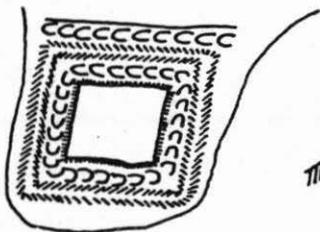
The casual recording of these field monuments has been undertaken by different workers since Europeans first landed here, and although the detailed description of a single pa has a certain fascination it is ultimately unsatisfactory. Pas were classified according to their topographic setting in the first classical study by Elsdon Best (1927) and the later study of Golson and Green (1958), but any attempt at statistical analysis of the total pas in one locality fails if topographic classification is used. Extended argument of this appears elsewhere (Buist 1964), this paper being a summary of that presented at the 11th Science Congress.

The crucial terms used have been defined as precisely as possible, in descriptive rather than interpretative words. Other field-workers may define a pa, platform or terrace in a different way, but until such time as standardized definitions are approved by Council it is necessary for each worker to make plain just what any term means.

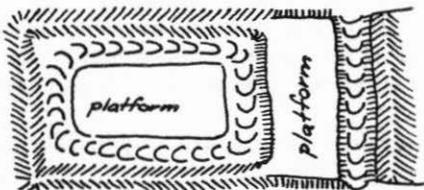
SINGLE UNIT
PA



-  *bank*
-  *ditch*
-  *scarp*



DOUBLE UNIT
PA



Pa Types:

A pa is defined as an area of land enclosed by a ditch, or a ditch and a bank, or a scarp. All pas fall within the following subdivisions:-

Single unit pas

Double unit pas

Multiple unit pas

Single Unit Pas:

The basis of all pas is the single unit, which is characterized by a single platform. A platform is an area, usually flat, in whole or in part enclosed by ditches, or ditches and banks, and not rising by way of a scarp to any feature natural or otherwise. The single unit may be small or large, its size having no particular or peculiar significance.

Double Unit Pas:

In this subdivision are placed those pas in which the platform units are doubled, or in which the platform is associated with a terrace. A terrace is defined as a flat area arising by way of a scarp to another feature, natural or artificial; it may or may not have ditches or ditches and banks on one or more sides. The abutment by a scarp distinguishes a terrace from a platform.

Multiple Unit Pas:

In this subdivision are placed those pas that have more than two platforms, or have a single platform with more than two terraces in association. Multiple unit pas have already had the name "pukearuan" designated to them, if they contain 3 to 9 units (Buist 1964). I propose the name "opitean" for pas containing 10 to 19 units, in honour of the area in which so much archaeological activity has taken place over the years. Opita Pa, with its 19 units, is the type pa. I also propose the name "otamean" for pas containing 20-29 units. The type pa is Otama Pa which contains 23 units, and is also on the Coromandel Peninsula.

It should be noted that there is in the multiple unit category no significance either in shape or total area of the complex.

Pa Typology:

This method of pa recording has the virtue of simplicity and of general application by the least experienced of field-workers. The method was developed in order to record pas in as completely objective a manner as possible; the classification is purely descriptive and leaves no room for subjective reconstruction or interpretation, in the first instance. It may be considered the basic ground work upon which a more painstaking and fragmented analysis may be based.

The method allows the recorder to present his data as facts and not as opinions. Other archaeologists can examine these facts and perhaps interpret them differently but the evidence cannot be disputed. The only assumption made is, of course, the primary one that the recorder can recognize a pa when he sees one; some destroyed pas may be difficult to recognize and assign to a particular category, but usually re-examination at different times of the year or in a different light, or from aerial photography, will reveal the truth.

If the total number of pas in an area are subdivided according to type, it is possible to draw some conclusions on this evidence alone. It must be emphasized that I am discussing the pa dwelling phase of Maori culture broadly, so that both early and late variations are not considered separately. Type analysis undertaken to date shows that, in North Taranaki, the single unit is the predominant type, there being twice as many as other types. This is obviously of some significance and is the more remarkable in that it is contrary to the recorded impressions of early European travellers who seemed to note only the larger multiple unit pas of tribal congregation. Their greater numbers and wider distribution over an area suggests a pattern of living of dispersion rather than aggregation. It is too easy to assume as the early observers did, that the single unit has a functional significance different from the more complex pas; to assume, for instance, that they were all evolved as a defense against gunfighting, and are therefore late in the time scale of pa-building. Some single units may have indeed been built for this purpose, but only the complete area survey, with regard also to setting, will lead to unequivocal conclusions.

References:

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| Best, Elsdon | 1927 | <u>The Pa Maori.</u> Dom. Mus. Bull. No. 6 Wtg. |
| Buist, A. G. | 1964 | <u>Archaeology in North Taranaki.</u> Monograph No. 3, N. Z. Archaeological Association. Wtg. A. W. & A. H. Reed Ltd. |
| Golson, J. & Green, R. D. | 1958 | <u>Handbook of Field Recording.</u> N. Z. Archaeological Assn. Monograph No. 1 Auckland. |