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ABSTRACTS FROM THESES AND DISSERTATIONS, UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO, 2006-2007

IAN SMITH AND JESSIE GARLAND
ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT,
UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

Abstracts from theses and dissertations on topics related to archaeology completed during the period 2006–2007 are presented below. These include two PhD and six MA theses, along with 11 BA(Hons) and three PGDipArts dissertations. The theses submitted in Anthropology and Maori Studies are held in both the University of Otago Central Library and the libraries of the departments concerned, while the dissertations are held only in the Anthropology Department Library. Requests to consult any of these items should be directed towards the library concerned.

Barribeau, Tim, 2007. The Bronze Age Funerary Ceramics of Ban Non Wat. MA thesis, Anthropology Department, University of Otago.

This thesis analyses the evidence for the beginnings of social differentiation in the Bronze Age of Northeast Thailand. It does so through the analysis of Bronze Age burials at the site of Ban Non Wat in the Mun River Valley of Thailand and the artefacts associated with those interments, with special attention being paid to ceramic vessels.

Vessel form, decoration, location and associated artefacts were all used as data for the analyses undertaken. Statistical, numerical, spatial and comparative analyses were performed to gain a fuller understanding of the social basis and implications for the manner in which the dead were interred at Ban Non Wat. A seriation chronology was developed based on vessel form

and count in these burials in order to interpret the temporal implications of the interments.

The results showed that there were distinct changes in the mortuary practices across the Bronze Age, with early burials being spread around the site and having a large number and wide variety of artefacts, which then slowly developed into a tradition of burials with fewer artefacts in more localised areas. Over this time period, as the occurrences of bronze artefacts decreased, there was a change in the forms of associated pottery found. There also appear to have been specific forms of pots that are associated with burials that had a large numbers of interred artefacts, or with bronze goods.

This suggests a period of social change and development, where there were major alterations in material goods used for interment, and a corresponding development of social differentiation. These conclusions may be tested further in the near future with the addition of radiocarbon analyses from individual burials. Until such time, the evidence presented in this thesis seems to suggest strongly that there was early social differentiation in the Bronze Age of the Mun River Valley of Thailand.

Beaton, Sophia, 2007. A Contemporary Maori Culinary Tradition – Does it Exist? An Analysis of Maori Cuisine. MA thesis, Maori Studies, University of Otago.

The Western world has long boasted different regional culinary traditions as witnessed by the Yorkshire pudding of Northeast England, the gateaux of France and the griddle of Western Scotland. An extraordinary aspect of these culinary traditions is that they have stood the test of time. Many may argue that for an Indigenous culinary tradition to exist it would be in isolation from the Western world and there could be no influence from alternative resources, tools and methods. The colonisation of New Zealand brought inevitable changes in Māori society and one of the most fundamental of these changes affected Māori cuisine. First impressions of a contemporary Māori household would have one believe that traditional Māori food, tools and methods are extinct; therefore, a Maori culinary tradition is also long dead, surviving only at formal occasions on marae (meeting house). However, the appearance of Māori recipes in modern day cookbooks, and Māori cookbooks themselves would seem to contradict this statement. Nevertheless, one has to ask if these cookbooks are a long line of 'heritage' books harking back to days of old: are they designed for tourists in order to get the 'authentic' Māori experience; are these recipes due to a renaissance of Māoritanga in order to assert cultural identity? Or are they in fact evidence that a Maori culinary tradition has been running parallel to that of Pākehā? Through analyses of these cook books and through inter-

views conducted with members of the Māori community, it is evident that an Indigenous people such as Māori can in fact absorb outside influences whilst still retaining an inherently Māori culinary tradition.

Brown, Andrew, 2007. Lithic Technology and Raw Material Use at the Buller River Mouth (K29/8). BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

A selected artefact assemblage of the predominant lithic materials (obsidian, argillite and Pahutane flint) from the Buller River Mouth site (K29/8) was analysed to investigate lithic technology and raw material use in the site. Formal tool types were not found within the flake tool assemblage, however, some similarities were found to exist in retouch of Pahutane flint flake tools. This took the form of unifacial retouch which formed serrations along the margins of flake tools.

Analysis of artefact size and utilised edge sections for each material revealed differences in the exploitation of materials within the site. Argillite was used predominantly in adze manufacture whilst obsidian, the other exotic, high quality material, was used in informal flake tools. These were smaller in size and were probably used for more delicate tasks within the site. The local material, Pahutane flint, was the most abundant material within the assemblage and appears to have been exploited for flake tools used in larger tasks than obsidian. This research contributes to the understanding of lithic technology, raw material use and raw material value within the Archaic phase of New Zealand.

Butcher, Maria, 2006. Preserving our Past: Local Government and Cultural Heritage Protection in New Zealand. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Regional, city and district councils have an important role to play in the protection of New Zealand's cultural heritage. The extent to which regional and local councils participate in the management and protection is considered. Case studies of selected regional and local councils addressed the issues of consistency across the country and co-ordination across the different levels of government, with regard to managing and protecting cultural heritage. District plans and regional policy statements were primary sources of information. The individual councils studied have interpreted their responsibilities towards cultural heritage in different ways. Variability in performance was most apparent

between the two regional councils studied (Auckland Regional Council and the Otago Regional Council).

Cable, Nicholas, 2007. *Greenstone Distribution Networks in Southern New Zealand*. MA thesis, Anthropology, University of Otago.

This thesis examines the prehistoric distribution networks of pounamu (greenstone) in the South Island of New Zealand. It is based upon analyses of physical and location data recorded from collections of greenstone artefacts in major museums across New Zealand. Previous studies on the role of stone tools within exchange systems have focused on the key areas of raw material procurement and technological attributes. Recent studies, particularly on obsidian, have begun to merge the results of source characterisation studies with assemblage based distribution analyses.

Although museum collections cannot be viewed as artefact assemblages for accurate distribution analysis, they are well suited for providing regional information on intrinsic qualities such as technological attributes and raw material availability. Comparison of independent museum samples in this study found significant consistent patterns in the regional proportional data between the samples and significant variation in source proportions between the regions.

Analysis of the regional source patterns indicated that two separate distributions networks operated in the South Island, distinguished by the transportation of source material along the west and east coastlines of the South Island. In the case of the eastern coastline, this source material was transported overland from remote inland locations before being redistributed from coastal centres. The results also indicate that the two coastal networks operated independently of each other, possibly due to socio-political divisions between the east and west.

Coote, Logan, 2006. 'The Box by the Door': the Role of the Public in New Zealand Archaeology. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

The public in New Zealand have been involved with archaeology over a long period of time. The purpose of this study is to understand the public's role in archaeology as it was in the past, as it is now, and the role it could have in the future. This study looks at how archaeology has been perceived by the public. Interpreting archaeology and informing the public is looked at through the literature and the media. The public also learns about archaeology through museums as well as visiting sites or excavations. Prior to the archaeological profession in New Zealand the role of the public was mainly as private collec-

tors and amateur archaeologists. They held this role until the 1975 acts began to allow for the growth of professional archaeology and for the Historic Places Trust to take control of managing of New Zealand's archaeological resources. The role of the public, including bottle collectors and Maori, is shown through case studies. Commercialisation in archaeology has involved the public since artefacts were first collected and this has changed over time. This dissertation will discuss the relationships between the public and archaeology in New Zealand and will suggest future directions in this area.

Coote, Logan, 2007. 101 Years: D'Urville Island and the Development of the Archaeological Record in New Zealand. MA thesis, Anthropology, University of Otago.

The interest in archaeological sites on D'Urville Island began about a century ago. My recent survey of the southeastern corner shows that site recording has not been comprehensive. This thesis examines the possible reasons for this. It also identifies factors crucial toward understanding the development of the archaeological record on southeastern D'Urville Island and addresses the larger practical and theoretical issues involved in New Zealand site recording. Other islands and the mainland will be used as a comparison to D'Urville Island to see if the factors defined operate in a wider context. Together, these examples identify other factors which can also affect the development of the archaeological record. They lead to a deeper theoretical and practical understanding of what affects site recording and how the archaeological record is developed from an island perspective. Understanding these factors within the New Zealand archaeological record should increase the effectiveness of future surveys and the assessment of the existing archaeological record.

Edwards, William 2006. A Review of the Prehistoric Settlement of the Kaikoura Coast by Examination of Archaeological Reports and Material Culture. PGDipArts dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

The Kaikoura coastline has a long chronology of prehistoric settlement. The area of this study is from Pari Whakatau in the south to Wharanui in the north and examines prehistoric settlement through evaluation of published and unpublished archaeological reports. The study is augmented with material culture from the Kaikoura and Canterbury Museums. These multiple sources have been integrated to establish a chronology of settlement and comment on

the efficacy of using material culture from museum collections for associative dating of archaeological sites.

Geary Nichol, Rosie, 2007. Phimai Black Pottery: A Study of Iron Age Ceramic Production and Social Organisation in Northeast Thailand. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Phimai black pottery is an Iron Age ceramic tradition specific to the upper Mun River valley of the Khorat Plateau, Northeast Thailand. The ubiquity of this ceramic tradition throughout all types of Iron Age site in the region has resulted in the use of Phimai black pottery as a significant horizon marker. The uniform appearance of Phimai black vessels has led many researchers to hypothesise centralised manufacture of these vessels, however, little work has been undertaken to elucidate the production of Phimai black and its significance in the Iron Age society of the upper Mun River valley. This study applies the standardisation hypothesis proposed by Rice (1981, 1987, 1991) to Phimai black assemblages recovered from the sites of Ban Non Wat, Ban Suai and Noen U-loke in order to relate concepts of specialised production and political centralisation to material evidence. The form, style and fabric of the vessels from each assemblage are assessed to establish any variation within and between assemblages. While certain components correspond to expected levels of homogeneity, the results of the electron microprobe analysis of the ceramic fabric prove more complex. A revision of the Phimai black production process is undertaken and the resulting implications are applied to existing interpretations of late prehistoric society in the upper Mun River valley. The assessment of ceramic standardisation therefore allows the construction of hypotheses concerning Iron Age economics and social organisation.

Glover, Jenepher, 2007. Su'ena – An Adze Manufacturing Site on the Island of Uki, Southeast Solomon Islands. PGDipArts dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

This paper presents an analysis of a stone tool assemblage from the site of Su'ena, on the island of Uki, Southeast Solomon Islands. In addition to understanding the assemblage's composition the analysis sought to determine the factors that were at work which resulted in the disproportionate distribution of chert lithic items at the site as compared to other sites on Uki. The majority of the assemblage consisted of debitage and unworked flakes, however, some cores were located. Very few formal tools were found, however, a significant percentage of debitage and flakes that were used opportunistically were located. It is concluded that Su'ena was a task specific site for the manufacture of adzes

and that some repair and remodeling activity also took place there. After manufacture adzes were distributed to other sites on Uki.

Hennessey, Matthew, 2007. On the Move: Mobility Pattern of the Early Phase Lapita Site at Kamgot. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

This dissertation presents a chemical characterisation study of the Lapita pottery assemblage excavated from the early phase Lapita site at Kamgot. The Kamgot site is a large Lapita village site located towards the northwestern-most coast of Babase Island, Anir Island group, Bismarck Archipelago. This study is primarily concerned with identifying the level of mobility utilised within the settlement pattern of the Kamgot population. The results of this study will be compared to chemical characterisation results presented by Summerhayes (2000) concerning the mobility patterns of the early phase West New Britain Lapita populations, and will identify whether the patterns of high settlement mobility identified by Summerhayes for these groups represents a localised settlement pattern or a typical early phase Lapita settlement strategy. It is argued that the chemical characterisation results of the Kamgot ceramic assemblage reflect a ceramic production strategy typical of a mobile population, thus suggesting that patterns of high settlement mobility during the early Lapita phase were not restricted to the West New Britain Lapita groups.

Hogg, Nicholas, 2007. Settling Down: Mobility Patterns of Three Mid-Late Lapita Sites in the Anir Group, Papua New Guinea. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

The research presented here involved the physico-chemical analysis of ceramics from three mid-late Lapita sites, Balbalankin, Malekolon and Feni Mission, located on Ambitle Island, the Anir Group, Papua New Guinea. This research involved two major goals. The first was to undertake the first physico-chemical analysis on ceramics derived from the three mid-late Lapita sites discussed above, in order to study the mobility patterns of mid-late Lapita settlements. The second goal involved testing the hypothesis put forward by Summerhayes (2000) which stated that a reduction in mobility occurred between the early and mid-late Lapita periods, with a subsequent development of sedentary settlement patterns in mid-late Lapita sites. To achieve these goals physico-chemical analysis was used to study the clay matrix and filler constituents of ceramics derived from the three sites detailed above. The use of multivariate statistical techniques upon the chemical data created by the physico-chemical analysis allowed the definition of groups based upon chemical similarity. Through the use of physico-chemical analysis, this research argues

that the three mid-late Lapita sites had a sedentary settlement pattern and followed a local ceramic production strategy which involved the use of a limited number of locally sourced constituents in ceramic construction. It is argued, therefore, that the results from this research support the hypothesis provided by Summerhayes (2000) detailed above.

Inglis, Raelene, 2007. *The Cultural Transmission of Cookery Knowledge. From Seventeenth Century Britain to Twentieth Century New Zealand.* PhD thesis, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Underpinning most anthropological definitions of culture is the concept of the cultural transmission and diffusion of learned behaviour. Anthropological works generally emphasise the outcomes of this transmission rather than the processes, in part because the mechanisms are either ongoing or practically invisible. Recipes have proved a unique tool for tracking cultural transmission because of their inherent precision and characteristically datable contexts. This study uses recipes to explore the many paths of transmission and diffusion of culinary knowledge. The period under review is from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries and the focus is on British culinary traditions up to and after their transfer to New Zealand. It was found that culinary knowledge was disseminated around New Zealand though both formal and informal mechanisms. Formal transmission involved teachers, their school cookery classes and published teaching manuals, all of which played a major role in training school children to cook the dishes served at family meals. In contrast, informal publications such as cookery columns in magazines and newspapers were transmitting recipes for more fashionable dishes, especially baking, and these incorporated mechanisms that promoted innovation more than retention of traditional recipes. The significant role of material culture in cookery provided another pathway of transmission through appliance recipe books which translated established recipes into a form that could be made with the new technology, thereby preventing their disappearance from the culinary repertoires of cooks. It was established that community cookbooks, a common means of fundraising, were a significant means of diffusing culinary information. The cookbooks produced by such efforts demonstrated change over time in their recipe content, especially if published as a series, and such publications were tangible repositories of the cookery knowledge within the community. This study examined not only the pathways of culinary transmission but also the contexts in which it occurred. These circumstances were found to be influential

in determining eventual acceptance or rejection of cookery knowledge and recipes, and provide valuable insights into processes of culture change.

James-Lee, Tiffany, 2006. Indigenous and Exotic: Archaeozoology of the Te Hoe Shore Whaling Station, New Zealand. MA thesis, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Faunal analysis has long been a strength in the archaeology of prehistoric New Zealand, though its use in the interpretations of historic sites has been relatively recent. This thesis presents the results and interpretations of faunal analyses conducted on three early-mid, late prehistoric, and historic faunal assemblages from Te Hoe, the site of a nineteenth century shore whaling station on the North Island East Coast. Historic sources from the mid-nineteenth century are used to describe the shore whaling industry and lifestyle of whaling communities. Taxa utilised, habitats exploited, indigenous/exotic species focus and butchery unit analysis are used to provide a picture of resource use and dietary consumption at Te Hoe. These results are then compared between the three assemblages to examine temporal changes in the diet of the occupants at Te Hoe during these three periods. The historic faunal assemblage from Te Hoe is then compared with faunal assemblages from four other nineteenth century whaling station sites in New Zealand and Australia. This intersite comparison places the results from Te Hoe in temporal and spatial contexts. Finally, with the aid of historic resources, the emergence of the unique cultural identity of New Zealanders of European ancestry – Pākehā – is evidenced in the period of nineteenth century shore whalers, such as those that live at Te Hoe.

McClintock, Kim, 2007. Chemical Characterisation of Pottery from Ban Non Wat, Northeast Thailand: The Transition from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Ban Non Wat is a prehistoric site located in the Mun River valley on the Khorat Plateau in Northeast Thailand and has been excavated as a part of the Origins of Angkor project since 2001-2002. The site is unique in the area as an occupation was uncovered that spanned the Neolithic to the Iron Age. No other Neolithic occupation in this area of Northeast Thailand is known in any of the literature either. This chronology is dated from calibrated radiocarbon dates for the Neolithic at 1262-1055 BC, with the early Bronze Age date to 1100-900 AD and Iron Age dates ranging from 400 BC until 400 AD (Higham, pers. comm.). Ban Non Wat is a moated site located only 2 km from the site of Noen U-oke, and over 550 burials have been uncovered over the excavation's history, with thousands of ceramic vessels found in association with the graves. The excavation during the season of the 2006-2007 involved the excavation of six 4

by 4 metre squares with occupation from the Neolithic to the Iron Age present in what has been interpreted as a continuous chronology.

McPherson, Sheryl, 2006. A Critical Review of the Archaeological Application of Current Analytical Methods for the Improvement of Moa (Aves: Dinornithiformes) Research. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Moa research has played a prominent role in New Zealand science since its conception. Over the last 150 years the study of these giant extinct birds has added immensely to our knowledge of New Zealand palaeoecology, palaeozoology and archaeology. Recent advances in methodology have raised the potential of moa research to contribute even more fully to an understanding New Zealand's past. Unfortunately, in archaeology, this potential has not yet been matched by practice. This research essay reviews a range of new methods and new applications of existing methods, and develops a case for applying these to future moa studies in archaeology. It shows how the application of a number of these methods will improve our understanding of the historical inter-relationship between moa and Maori.

Petersen, Kiri, 2006. The Place of Omimi in North Otago Prehistory. MA thesis, Anthropology, University of Otago.

This thesis examines the place of Omimi within the economic and settlement sequence of prehistoric coastal North Otago. This was achieved through analysis of the faunal assemblage obtained during the 2004-2005 excavation, then examination of the subsequent faunal data plus evidence of settlement patterns in context with other coastal North Otago sites. The site of Omimi (S155/31) is located around 3 km north of Warrington, situated on coastal farmland at an elevation of about 20 to 30 m above a hard-shore marine environment. Analysis of the Omimi faunal assemblage showed a dominance of marine resources over terrestrial. Fish were the dominant economic contributor, with shellfish, small bird, moa, kuri (Polynesian dog) and kiore (Polynesian rat) also identified. The absence of sea mammal remains is unusual considering its close proximity to a hard-shore habitat – the preferred habitat of the most widely utilised sea mammal in prehistoric New Zealand, the fur seal. The nature of the moa remains suggest that they were of more significance to the Omimi people as a source of artefact manufacturing material than as a source of food. Both the absence of seal remains and the minimal moa numbers suggest a late Archaic, or transitional date for Omimi, further supported by the style of the material culture recovered and a radiocarbon date obtained, placing the site to the latter part of the fifteenth century. When compared with other early prehistoric coastal

North Otago sites, the Omimi fauna is fairly typical. However, when examining settlement aspects, Omimi differs in several key points. Firstly, the location of the site at a high altitude and in close proximity to a hard-shore environment is in contrast to the usual early coastal settlement choice of low altitude and soft-shore environs. In addition, while the typical definition of a late Archaic settlement is characterised by lack of social complexity, the Omimi excavations have uncovered evidence of a wealth of complexity, with spatial differentiation of features and a wide array of activities represented by the identified material culture. Omimi therefore challenges the accepted view of a late Archaic site, thereby increasing our awareness about this period of substantial economic and social transition in coastal North Otago prehistory.

Sarjeant, Carmen, 2006. Iron Age Mortuary Goods: a Comparative Study between Ban Non Wat and Noen U-Loke, Northeast Thailand. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Mortuary traditions reflect aspects of life of a past community, including their access to resources and technological developments. This study investigates differences between the mortuary goods excavated from two Iron Age “moated” occupation and cemetery sites, Ban Non Wat and Noen U-Loke, located in the Upper Mun Valley of the Khorat Plateau, Northeast Thailand. Material culture associated with industrial and funerary activities was recovered during excavation. These mortuary goods were employed to examine potential resources, trade and technologies that may have influenced the industrial, cultural, social, political and religious developments of the Iron Age. The purpose of this dissertation is to compare and relate the Iron Age mortuary samples excavated from Ban Non Wat and Noen U-Loke that are located approximately 3 km apart.

Four distinct Iron Age mortuary phases were previously identified at Noen U-Loke. Unreported mortuary goods and burial treatments from the recent excavations of seven Iron Age burials at Ban Non Wat, a site with a chronology spanning from the Neolithic to the present era, are documented. It was concluded that the Ban Non Wat burial sample was most similar to mortuary phases two and three at Noen U-Loke.

The analysis of artefacts from the two sites found similarities that confirm funerary practices characteristic of the early Iron Age and differences suggestive of regional, economic and social aspects in mortuary practices, trade and exchange activities, and the development of industries and technologies. Both the Ban Non Wat and Noen U-Loke excavations exposed occupation and cemetery layers. Both sites provided evidence for spinning and for the exchange of marine items, Indian influenced ornaments and perhaps red ochre.

Pig remains were important to mortuary rituals at both sites and fish remains were prominent in the Ban Non Wat sample. There was extensive evidence of ceramic specialisation at Ban Non Wat. Bronze and iron were more abundant at Noen U-Loke, particularly in the later mortuary phases, but there was greater evidence for casting over the entire Ban Non Wat site. Local rice production was suggested in some Noen U-Loke burials. Salt processing was likely to have been an important economic activity, seen in the presence of salt working mounds to the east of Noen U-Loke.

This research essay concludes that the early Iron Age burials of Ban Non Wat and Noen U-Loke had common mortuary traditions. The excavated mortuary goods provide archaeological data of value to the understanding of cultural traditions and social, political, industrial and economic pre-state progress throughout the Upper Mun Valley of Iron Age Northeast Thailand.

Spinks, Jean, 2007. *The Archaeology of Place: the Material Culture of Codfish Island*. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Codfish Island/Whenua Hou is a place with a rich and diverse history. During the early nineteenth century the island was the location of a settlement that had dual significance as it was the only substantial residential sealing settlement in New Zealand and the site of the first integrated Maori and European community. Recent archaeological investigations on Codfish Island have uncovered the remains of this nineteenth century settlement as well as several prehistoric occupation sites which date to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The material culture recovered during this excavation is the basis of this dissertation. The artefacts are used to examine the life-ways of the people who inhabited the island and their utilisation of this place and its resources. The changing use of these resources is examined in terms of long term history of place.

Williams, Erin, 2006. *The Place of Spall Tools in New Zealand Archaeology: a Descriptive and Classificatory Study*. PGDipArts dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

In the past, spall tools have been thought to have been restricted to and characteristic of South Canterbury archaeological sites. This study examines their distribution in New Zealand archaeological sites and expands their range to include the southern North Island, and the West Coast of the South Island. A case study is made of spall tools from the archaeological sites at Normanby (K39/3 and K39/4) which are held by Otago Museum. The collection is described and then classified according to the wear exhibited on the artefacts. A discussion then collates the archaeological sites in which these tools are found, and

makes a connection between early sites with evidence of moa hunting and the occurrence of spall tools.

Williams, Hamish, 2007. Hard Dates from Soft Bottles: Dating New Zealand's Historic Period Archaeological Sites using Patent Aerated Water Bottles. BA(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology, University of Otago.

Glass, especially bottle glass is often the most abundant, and perhaps the most ubiquitous artefactual material recovered from historic period sites in New Zealand. It is no wonder that the analysis of bottle glass assemblages is common practice for historic archaeologists, and chapters and appendices detailing recovered glassware are commonplace in the archaeological literature. As it is recovered almost systematically from all historical sites, it is an artefact class regularly used to make interpretations about human behaviour; both within and across sites of different types, locations, ethnic groups, and time periods. When a systematic analysis of the deposition context, associated material, and processes of site formation is made alongside a detailed descriptive analysis of recovered glassware, a wide variety of data is made available to the archaeologist; data which in many cases cannot be gleaned from available historic records.

Wiriyaromp, Warrachai, 2007. The Neolithic Period in Thailand. PhD thesis, Anthropology, University of Otago.

There are two principal models that purport to interpret the evidence for the origins of the Neolithic period in Thailand. Both stress the importance of rice cultivation and the domestication of a range of animals. One incorporates archaeological and linguistic evidence in identifying the origins as the result of the diffusion of farming communities into Southeast Asia and India from a source of the Yangtze River valley. The alternative stresses a local evolutionary pathway whereby indigenous hunter-gatherers began to cultivate rice within Thailand.

This dissertation is centred on the results of the excavation of Ban Non Wat, in the Upper Mun of Northeast Thailand. This has provided one of the largest, best dated and provenanced samples of occupation and mortuary remains of a Neolithic community so far available in Southeast Asia. Its principal objective is to define the motifs incised, impressed and painted onto the surface of ceramic mortuary vessels, in order to permit a comparison with other assemblages first in Thailand, then in Southeast Asia north into China. It is held that if there are close parallels over a wide geographic area, in these

motifs, then it would support a model of diffusion. If there are not, then the alternative of local origins would need to be examined closely.

It is argued that the similarity in motifs, particularly a stylised human figure, between Thai and Vietnamese sites lends support to a common origin for these groups. The motifs are not so obvious when examining the southern China data, although the mode of decoration by painting, incising and impressing recur there. This, in conjunction with mortuary rituals, weaving technology, the domestic dog, and the linguistic evidence, sustains a model for demic diffusion. However, the presence of ceramic vessels also decorated with impressed/incised techniques in maritime hunter-gatherer contexts stresses that the actual Neolithic settlement may have been more complex.