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**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**



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ABSTRACTS FROM THESES AND RESEARCH ESSAYS, DEPARTMENT OF  
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Abstracts from nine M.A. theses and one research essay, in archaeology and material culture, completed during the 1983 academic year are given below. They are all held in the Department of Anthropology, University of Auckland, where they may be consulted.

Xerox copies may be made available at cost (10¢ per page) plus postage, on an individual basis. These are subject to the usual restrictions applying to theses, namely the understanding that their use is for private research and not publication.

M.A. theses

Peter Adds, Archaeological Resource Management in North Taranaki. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 2 page abstract; xiii, 187 pp., 5 plates, 13 figures, 8 tables.

The hypothesis tested is that it is possible to formulate archaeological resource management plans using a numerical ranking system. The New Zealand Historic Places Trust has recently endorsed the concept of resource management at a regional level, but as yet no standardised method of implementing this strategy has been devised. This document, in which a numerical system which ranks archaeological sites and management strategies in order of priority is presented, is an attempt to remedy that situation. The method developed is based on a concept devised by Groube for the archaeological resources in Dorset, England. A study area in north Taranaki is utilised to provide examples of how the devised system operates, as well as to provide an example of the type of data that it is necessary to generate to implement the system.

The background, concepts and philosophies basic to resource management are presented, as they apply to the study area. A history of resource management in New Zealand is presented with particular emphasis on site ranking. The main threats to the resources in the study area are deduced from the work of three other researchers. The position of the Historic Places Trust and the Maori people are also analysed in terms of resource management. Three broadly identifiable Maori perspectives of archaeology are given. The development of the overall policy of the Trust is also included.

In the devised ranking system allowance is made for the amount of data that has been collected in the study area and a scale assessing the traditional Maori value of sites has also been adapted for use.

Ian G Barber, Prehistoric Wetland Cultivation in Far Northern Aotearoa: An Archaeological Investigation. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 2 page abstract; xvi, 298 pp., 31 plates, 31 figures, 5 appendices.

Prehistoric wetland cultivation has been a little studied and infrequently acknowledged aspect of prehistoric Maori subsistence. Introducing an analysis of wetland cultivation in far northern Aotearoa, evidence is presented suggesting the Oceanic wide distribution of this horticultural form. It appears that wetland ditching for drainage and frequently irrigation purposes has occurred commonly in prehistoric Oceania until the present, usually for the cultivation of edible aroids.

In Aotearoa, early ethnographic descriptions are shown to be generally ambiguous in reference to possible wetland cultivation. The only explicit, if controversial documentary evidence comes from far northern Aotearoa (Tai Tokerau) in the 1920s, which precipitated vigorous debate in the Polynesian Society. Unfortunately, much of the landscape evidence has been destroyed in subsequent development.

Motutangi is introduced in Chapter 2 as a swamp locality where a largely intact system of premodern ditches survives today. European landscape alterations in this region are shown to have been principally restricted to the 20th century. Within the context of the Aupouri Peninsula, the climate, landform, soils and vegetation of Motutangi are shown to have been relatively suitable for wetland cultivation. There is also evidence of a wide ranging prehistoric use of the Motutangi swamp.

In Chapter 3, several hypotheses are framed against which the archaeological evidence from Motutangi is tested. Given their distribution and format, it appears that the Motutangi ditch systems are likely to have been constructed for water reticulation and drainage, and that wetland taro cultivation was the dominant horticultural mode. In one specific area, C14 dates and pollen core analyses argue a deforestation horizon of approximately 450 yr B.P., with ditch system desertion 300 yr B.P.

In the fourth chapter, the archaeological distribution of wetland systems is considered throughout Tai Tokerau. This analysis suggests that prehistoric wetland ditching was par-

ticularly concentrated in the Kaitaia/Awanui district. The archaeological evidence is finally considered against concomitant social and environmental possibilities. It is proposed that wetland cultivation would have been amenable to production intensification in Aotearoa but that ecological factors would have limited the development of soci-political complexity.

Traditional evidence from the far north is cited consistent with a scenario of agricultural intensification, socio-political competition, ecological stress and finally production disintensification. It is emphasised that these are suggested relationships only, and that further archaeological and traditional history research is required if the role of wetland horticulture in prehistoric Tai Tokerau is to be fully clarified.

Jane Connor, Polynesian Basketry. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 1 page abstract; x, 174 pp., 32 plates, 22 figures.

Many ethnographers working in Polynesia in the early part of this century observed and recorded basketry techniques and customs, often with remarkable attention to detail. However, there has been no attempt to date to synthesize the results of their fieldwork, or to subject basketry to the same analysis that has been applied to other forms of Polynesian material culture.

This thesis is a comparative study of basketry from a number of island groups spread throughout Polynesia, using material and recorded evidence from the time of Captain Cook to the present day. Basketry is considered in terms of a number of variables, which include plant material, fabric structure, basket form, decoration, and aspects of production and use. Certain of these variables are shown to have spatial and historical significance, and the basketry of some island groups is seen to be more complex, elaborate, and socially important than that of others.

Kelvin Day, Te Tai Hauauru: Maori Tribal Carving from the Western District. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 2 page abstract; xii, 226 pp., 52 plates, 34 figures, 9 tables, 4 maps, 2 appendices.

Regional diversity has long been recognised in Maori material culture; It has been the subject of many publications at both specific and general levels. However, few of these come to terms with the concept of regionalism and its implications.

Ethnologists have tended to intuitively assign unprovenanced artefacts to a particular region. The grounds on which such decisions have been made have not always been clear. Taking such an exercise to the extreme artefacts intuitively assigned have sometimes been used to more fully define the regional style to which they have been placed. In this procedure the regional styles become broader and broader and less and less secure.

This present study examines 45 carved items which can be directly provenanced to Te Tai Hauauru or the Western District. This region has been referred to in the past as 'Taranaki' but this term has proved too ambiguous and is only used here to refer to the tribe of that name.

Previous studies of wood carving, in particular those which refer to regional studies, have been examined and problems of methodology and interpretation have been identified. An attempt is then made to avoid these pitfalls in the present analysis on Te Tai Hauauru carvings.

Methods used previously to examine stylistic variation in Maori wood carvings have been examined. An iconic analysis was used. It follows Mead's work on Polynesian adze helms. The procedure has been slightly modified to meet the purpose of the present study.

A catalogue giving provenance and descriptive detail for all the carvings used has been presented. This forms the data base upon which the analysis was undertaken. The analysis involved identifying and documenting iconic units anatomical features, patterns and a form of decoration known traditionally as matakupenga.

It was found that while there was a marked homogeneity of style among the carvings examined, tribal styles were also present. These have been identified and discussed. However unlike Simmons these can only be identified for two tribal areas, principally Taranaki and Te Atiawa, occupying the northern half of the region. This is a departure from Simmons' analysis where a total of three regions were identified - these he termed north, central and south. Unique carvings found in Te Tai Hauauru have been identified in the present study and an attempt made to explain their occurrence.

Des Kahotea, The Interaction of Tauranga Hapu with the Landscape. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 1 page abstract; viii, 223 pp. (x). 43 figures, 5 appendices.

In this thesis the theme of landscape change is examined as an interpretative method in identifying preferences and strategies for settlement patterns in the Tau-ranga area. The environment prior to human settlement provided a diverse range of resource zones, subtropical climate, open sea, rocky and sandy shore, deep harbour and immediate terrestrial environment of harbour edge, coastal and inland forest zones and wetlands.

At historic contact this environment had been converted to open fern and scrub land with the depletion and removal of forest to an inland forest edge that was culturally induced.

The distribution of pa along the harbour and inland forest edge was a continuum of prehistoric settlement pattern that focussed on these two zones. With the introduction of muskets into local warfare and later colonialism, local people were exposed to processes that determined settlement patterns, but the focus on the harbour (and to a lesser extent during varying periods on the inland forest edge) was maintained. Tradition and the historic period showed that pa location can remain the same when there is an alteration of political, economic and historical factors or there can be a change in location for settlements in relation to the ecological setting while political, economic and historic factors remain the same.

Local social organisation reflected the focus on the harbour and inland forest edge where access was provided through kin networks, to resources through hapu descent system. Inland groups and harbour based groups had a passage through territory along descent lines.

Rosalind Kay, Analysis of Archaeological Material from Naigani. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 1 page abstract; viii, 200 pp., 19 plates, 16 figures, 12 tables, 2 appendices.

The archaeological site VL21/5 is situated on the island of Naigani in the Fiji Islands. The site was discovered in 1981 during excavations for the building of a resort complex. Salvage archaeology which ensued recovered an occupation zone of relatively undisturbed material which was unmistakably "Lapitoid" in association. The site comprised three stratigraphic layers.

In the course of this research various aspects of the archaeological assemblage are investigated. The major component at the site was pottery which was analysed

according to the general considerations of shape, decoration and technology. Other elements are shell and stone artefacts and their analysis is by way of description. The components have been used for the reconstruction of events and the nature of occupancy during the habitation of the site.

Brenda Sewell, The Cross Creek Site (N40/260), Coromandel Peninsula: A Study of an Archaeological Investigation in Spatial Analysis and Continuity in the New Zealand Archaic. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 2 page abstract; xiii, 196 pp., 11 plates, 29 figures, 34 tables, appendix.

This is a study of archaeological investigations which took place in 1983 on site N40/260 known as the Cross (Across the) Creek Midden, Sarah's Gully on the Coromandel Peninsula. The site has proved to be a complex development.

The purpose of the investigation was to test more fully previous claims that discrete activity areas occurred in New Zealand Archaic sites. A particular concern was to determine whether the use of space at a single Archaic site would aid in the reconstruction of the activities undertaken by a group of people in such settlements in the prehistoric past. The expanse of reasonably intact midden exposed on the surface at the Cross Creek site was intensively mapped and sampled in order to interpret the spatial patterning of the surface layer, disclosing that discrete activity did occur. The occurrence of discrete activity areas in what proved to be a deeply stratified part of the site enabled a comparison to be made between successive occupations in order to ascertain the degree of continuity in the use of space as well as in faunal and artefactual content.

Excavation revealed four earlier levels of occupation separated by sterile sand layers. These showed a great deal of continuity in the use of space because discrete activity areas occurred in similar locations throughout all occupations. Cooking, food storage pits and industrial activities were all located in the same area of the settlement during each occupation. The social organisation of an Archaic settlement was then considered in relation to the spatial arrangement of activity areas. It was concluded that the 'right' place for certain activities did not occur by chance but was culturally determined.

The faunal remains and artefactual material from each cultural layer were also examined for continuity. Shellfish, fish and mammal remains were identified. Stone material was not able to be considered. Fishhooks were studied as an example of change in artefactual material. Continuity in

exploitation of shellfish, fish, dog and rat was exhibited by all cultural layers. Rocky shore shellfish were the primary category of shellfish eaten in each occupation. Sea mammals were only exploited in the earlier occupations.

This study of an Archaic site reveals that discrete activity areas occurred during all levels of occupation. The location of similar activities in the same portion of the settlement in each cultural layer is indicative of continuity, as was exploitation of rocky shore shellfish, snapper, dog and rat. In contrast, cultural change was demonstrated in the difference in size, form and material used for fishhooks, as well as the presence of and use of moa and the exploitation of sea mammals. The minimum numbers of bird bones are set out in Appendix I.

Michael Taylor, Bone Refuse from Twilight Beach. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 1 page abstract; xv, 265 pp., 50 plates, 29 figures, 26 tables, 3 appendices.

This thesis presents the results of an analysis of bone refuse recovered from site N1&2/976, at Twilight Beach, just south of Cape Maria van Dieman, in the far north of New Zealand. The analyses undertaken concentrated on the mammalian component from the midden which consisted mainly of bones from pilot whales and immature fur seals. Some dogs and rats, and large quantities of shellfish, fish and bird remains were also present. The argument was presented that the detailed analysis of the taphonomic and cultural influences on the bone component of middens has been neglected by New Zealand archaeologists. These processes were identified and defined and the assemblage examined in this light. Interpretation of the results indicated that these processes had a considerable effect on the bone remains. In particular human butchering and artefact manufacturing, and dog attrition, had a marked impact on the patterning of remains observed. However, given an understanding of the diversity of the bone structure in the different species, these processes could be recognised and isolated, and the patterning of remains explained in a consistent manner, allowing a more sophisticated interpretation of the site and the remains contained therein.

Moira White, Greenstone and Culture Areas in New Zealand. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 1 page abstract; vii, 200 pp., 11 plates, 2 figures, 1 table, 2 maps, appendix.

After an examination of the theoretical basis of the use of culture areas in archaeology and its application in New Zealand in the form of H.D. Skinner's culture areas, relevant

practical problems of this approach are considered. These focus on a specific example - that of greenstone pendants and the processes involved in their manufacture, movement, and use of these pendants up until the time they were placed in a museum collection. A survey of the material in the four major museums in the country attempted to elucidate geographical differences among localised pendants, as a contrast to the evidence presented from the literature. The special status of greenstone artefacts is emphasised by a brief comparison with other lithic materials traded over similarly large distances.

It is suggested that the attempt to specify and understand the effect of such social processes on spatial distribution studies is a valuable alternative to the more static view inherent in the culture area approach.

#### Research essay abstract

John Mitchell, The History and Archaeology of the Armed Constabulary Archaeological Sites Along the Napier-Taupo Road, 1869 - 1885. Anthropology Department, Auckland University. 1 page abstract; vii, 81 pp., 34 plates, 16 figures, appendix.

The essay deals with a chain of seven historical defensive posts along the Napier-Taupo highway, built by members of the New Zealand Armed Constabulary between 1869 and 1885. It aims to explain briefly the purpose for which they built, and to examine archaeologically the remains present today.

In Chapter One, the work is related to other historical archaeology, then an historical resume is given of the events of the Land Wars of the late 1860s, dealing in particular with the efforts to capture Te Kooti. The formation of the Armed Constabulary is described, and the reasons for the building of the posts which are the subjects of the essay.

The seven sites, Titiokura, Te Haroto, Tarawera, Rununga, Pahautea, Opepe and Tapuaeharuru, are then described in turn in Chapter Two, with the available historical references for each quoted, and the remains today examined in archaeological terms.

Rununga Stockade was investigated archaeologically in 1983, and a small rescue excavation conducted at Opepe in 1983. These excavations are outlined in Chapter Three; the portable artefacts are not discussed although some are illustrated (an Appendix deals with the analysis of horseshoes from Rununga). Chapter Four discusses the life of the men who built these posts, and concludes the essay.