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ABSTRACTS FROM THESES,

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Abstracts from all Ph.D., M.A., and B.A.(Hons) theses in archaeology completed in the period 1985 - late 1986 are given below. Copies are held in the Department of Anthropology, University of Otago, where they may be consulted in the Departmental Library. Xerox copies may be obtained through the Librarian, Anthropology Department at cost, plus GST and postage. These are subject to the usual restriction applying to theses, namely the understanding that their use is for private research and not publication.

1985

Brian P. Kooyman, Moa and Moa Hunting: an Archaeological Analysis of Big Game Hunting in New Zealand. Ph.D. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 2 page abstract, xvi, 444 pp., 37 plates, 13 figures, 23 tables, 5 appendices.

This study is an archaeological examination of the pre-historic hunting of moa, a family (Dinornithidae) of now extinct flightless birds that inhabited New Zealand. The analysis employs a detailed butchering pattern analysis for the moa remains and combines it with a lithic usewear micro-chipping and polish analysis. The usewear analysis examines two lithic materials, porcellanite and silcrete. The criteria used to distinguish worked material in the usewear analysis are based on the results of an experimental usewear study. The general patterns of moa exploitation and butchering are defined in a faunal analysis of moa remains from sites throughout New Zealand.

Hunting strategies are examined in a case study of the Clutha River area of southern New Zealand, by interpreting the results of the butchering pattern analysis in combination with the usewear analysis results and some of the general aspects of site type and location. It is concluded that moa were hunted by an individual hunting strategy, probably with wooden spears. Hunting was done from habitation sites, not from temporary camps established from base camps. Hunting did not specialise in any one particular moa species. In addition to meat, bone marrow was also extracted and eaten. No evidence of meat preservation was found. The results correspond well with expectations based on analogies from traditional hunting of other large birds and in east Polynesia, suggesting the methodology is reliable for studying hunting and could be applied elsewhere.

The study also includes an examination of bone anatomical landmarks as a means of identifying moa species. The hypothesised significance of the variation in these traits is used to make suggestions about possible moa behaviour. It is suggested that Megalapteryx didinus was more awkward than the other moa, that Anomalopteryx didiformis may have had a diet more similar to that of the kiwi than to that of the other moa, and that Dinornis species may have balanced their centre of gravity differently from other moa. Based on the manner in which moa were hunted, it is proposed that moa did not congregate in large flocks.

Andrea C. Seelenfreund-Hirsch, The Exploitation of Mayor Island Obsidian in Prehistoric New Zealand. Ph.D. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 2 page abstract, xii, 363 pp., 24 figures, 19 tables, 2 appendices.

Obsidian in New Zealand was exploited from a variety of sources, and has been found in the majority of New Zealand archaeological sites. The presence of obsidian from the Mayor Island sources in most sites has been noted by archaeologists, and it has been assumed that a complex exchange system was responsible for its distribution. The purpose of the present thesis has been to evaluate the importance of Mayor Island as the main supply source of obsidian in prehistoric New Zealand, and to study the pattern of exploitation and distribution of the obsidian.

The analysis employed two separate approaches: site-oriented and regional. On a site-oriented basis, the quarries on Mayor Island were examined, particularly the production and procurement strategies. Ethnographic and comparable archaeological data on quarry exploitation were reviewed in order to test for evidence of access restrictions to the resources.

For the regional analysis, archaeological obsidian assemblages from 58 sites were sourced using energy dispersive XRF spectroscopy. Sourcing results indicate a changing pattern of source utilisation throughout the temporal depth of New Zealand prehistory. The pattern of source utilisation also varied according to site function.

The regional analysis of Mayor Island obsidian investigated further the importance of the Mayor Island obsidian in the total lithic assemblages of the sites studied, and the nature of the manufacturing techniques in relation to geographical distance from the source, by means of fall-off curves.

Using this combined methodological approach it was possible to conclude that the exploitation of Mayor Island obsidian varied between the North and South Islands of New Zealand. While direct access seems to be the most probable way of acquiring the raw materials in the North Island, down-the-line exchange seems to be indicated for the South Island.

Ian W.G. Smith, Sea Mammal Hunting and Prehistoric Subsistence in New Zealand. Ph.D. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 3 page abstract, xx, 576 pp., 68 figures, 100 tables, 15 appendices.

Archaeological evidence for the exploitation of seals and whales by the prehistoric Polynesian inhabitants of New Zealand has been accumulating for almost 150 years. Although never closely examined, these data have suggested that sea mammal exploitation occurred in only some parts of the country and that its importance varied throughout the prehistoric period (ca. A.D. 1000-1800). Detailed analysis of this evidence provides an opportunity to reassess the broader issues of temporal change, regional diversity and seasonal variation which have characterised most previous interpretations of subsistence patterns in prehistoric New Zealand. After reviewing pertinent archaeological and ethno-historic evidence a series of hypotheses were formulated regarding the methods by which sea mammals were procured, the manner in which their exploitation was integrated within regional patterns of subsistence and settlement, and broad temporal and regional variations in its occurrence and importance.

Three sets of analytical techniques crucial to the testing of these hypotheses were developed. Osteometric criteria for determining the age and sex of New Zealand fur seals (Arctocephalus forsteri), the principal exploited species, were derived from a large modern reference sample as zoological data indicated that most of the biological and behavioural variables likely to have influenced prehistoric exploitative patterns vary with age and sex. Methods for determining the seasonality of exploitation from population composition, growth zones in fur seal canine teeth and the age of fur seal pups were developed, and procedures for reconstructing butchering patterns and estimating meat weight, energy and nutritional yields from archaeological remains outlined.

These techniques were applied to 100 assemblages of sea mammal remains from 53 archaeological sites located in the southern, central and northern regions of New Zealand. Four principal methods of exploitation were identified: scavenging from naturally stranded large cetaceans; harpooning of smaller cetaceans; occasional, opportunistic land-based hunting of seals; and regular land-based seasonal cropp-

ing of seals. Seal hunting took place predominantly during the period from late spring to early autumn, although in each of the regions examined there was some evidence of autumn-winter exploitation.

In general these pursuits made significant contributions to the diets reconstructed from archaeological faunal remains, with the overall meat, energy and nutritional yields from seals being matched only by those from fish. Whaling may have been directed as much towards collecting teeth and bones for industrial purposes as it was a means of acquiring food. Seal hunting was concerned predominantly with acquiring fresh meat for immediate consumption. There was no archaeological evidence for the ethno-historically documented seal hunting expeditions during which large quantities of seal flesh were preserved.

Both temporal and regional variations in sea mammal exploitation were documented. In general these pursuits were of greatest importance early in the prehistoric sequence and persisted longest in southern parts of the country. However both the timing and extent of their decline in importance was much more variable than has previously been acknowledged. These changes appear to have been influenced predominantly by alterations in the distribution and abundance of the major exploited species which, in turn appear to have been a direct result of human predation. While this study provides further documentation of diversity and change in the composition of subsistence patterns in prehistoric New Zealand it also argues that such variability had little impact upon the organisation of settlement patterns with substantially similar patterns evident throughout the prehistoric sequence in each of the regions examined.

Fiona R. Cameron, Analysis of Buttons, Clothing Hardware and Textiles of the Nineteenth Century Goldminers of Central Otago. B.A.(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract, ix, 220 pp., 12 plates, 21 figures, 2 tables, 3 appendices.

The analysis of clothing hardware and textiles is important in historical archaeology as some idea of the clothing worn by the inhabitants of historical sites can be gained through these data. Arising from this information we can infer such things as demographic profiles, together with aspects of the residents' social, economic and cultural relationships. In the course of this study on the Chinese miners of Central Otago it was found that they exhibited a significant degree of acculturation in dress that is in marked contrast to other aspects of their lifestyle.

One important class of artefact, due to its survival rate, is the button, which has been used in this study to develop a relative dating system. It is hoped that these findings will prove to be helpful in the future for dating historical sites, in New Zealand and further afield.

1986

Barry L. Fankhauser, Archaeometric Studies of Cordyline (Ti) Based on Ethnobotanical and Archaeological Research. Ph.D. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract, xvi, 251 pp., 74 figures, 51 tables, 2 appendices.

The prehistoric utilisation of Cordyline (ti) in southern New Zealand was studied using a multidisciplinary approach.

The ethnographic literature on the prehistoric use of Cordyline in the Pacific area and particularly in New Zealand was reviewed. Cordyline had several uses, the main ones being, food, cordage, medicine, and a material for plaiting.

Cordyline terminalis is the commonest species in Oceania. It was also introduced into New Zealand by Maori, but there were four endemic species which provided food for the early inhabitants.

Large earth ovens (umu ti) were used to cook Cordyline. Many earth ovens, from two to eight metres in diameter, still exist in southern New Zealand. A site surveying and excavation programme was carried out in South Canterbury to investigate these ovens.

Radiocarbon dates on excavated ovens indicate that they were used throughout the prehistoric period of Maori occupation in South Canterbury. The construction of these ovens revealed through archaeological investigations was found to be identical with ethnographic descriptions. Residue analysis on soil from large raised-rim ovens indicate they were used for cooking Cordyline australis (the commonest species of Cordyline in New Zealand). Insect remains excavated from ovens point to a late spring to autumn use for cooking.

A thermoluminescence (TL) dating method using quartz inclusions from greywacke ovenstones was developed. A description of the equipment is given. Problems of dosimetry and measurement of TL is discussed and a recommended method of TL dating ovenstones is presented. TL dates and C-14 dates from the same ovens are compared.

A nutritional study of Cordyline was undertaken. Complete proximate analyses of C. australis plants collected over a

one year period was done. Maximum carbohydrate levels in the stems of C. australis occurred in late spring. This time is coincident with the recorded times of harvesting by Maori. Ti was found to be a rich source of carbohydrates, mainly fructose with some glucose from a glucofructofuranan type of polysaccharide. This polysaccharide required long cooking times (ca. 24 hours) to convert it to edible sugars.

Research points to Cordyline being a useful and important plant throughout Polynesia and especially in southern New Zealand.

Neville A. Ritchie, Archaeology and History of the Chinese in Southern New Zealand During the Nineteenth Century; a study of acculturation, adaptation and change. Ph.D. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract, xviii, 711 pp., 20 plates, 149 figures, 128 tables, 8 appendices.

Amongst the thousands who swarmed into New Zealand last century in quest of gold were some 10,000 Chinese. Although they were relatively 'late arrivals', within a few years they constituted one of the largest, and certainly the most conspicuous ethnic group on the goldfields. They differed not only in appearance but also in material culture and outlook. Whereas other nationalities among the goldseekers tended to rapidly assimilate with the dominant Anglo-European population, the Chinese were perceived 'to be different' and 'unwilling to adopt European ways'. They also differed in that from the outset the majority came as sojourners rather than settlers. As economic conditions in New Zealand deteriorated in the latter half of the 1870s, fear of economic competition led to growing racial intolerance against them, culminating in repressive legislative restrictions on Chinese immigration.

The first part of this study is a social history of the Chinese in New Zealand in the nineteenth century based on archival and ethno-historical records. The second part utilises archaeological information - field evidence and studies of material culture, to provide a new perspective on the lifestyle of the Chinese miners. The historical and archaeological data is compared against information on traditional lifeways, to gain a measure of the Chinese miners' responses to their situation in New Zealand in terms of acculturation, adaptation, or change.

Michael A. Fleming, The Scaridae Family in Pacific Prehistory. M.A. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract, xiii, 169 pp., 47 figures, 23 tables, 5 appendices.

In many archaeological sites bones of the Scaridae family have been found to be the most common fish represented. This is a marked contrast to the impression given in modern ethnographic accounts of fishing in the Pacific Islands. This thesis seeks to bridge this gap between the ethnographic and archaeological bearing on this fish.

Historical records are reviewed, along with ecological information on these fish, to provide the basis for interpretation of archaeological finds. These fish are highly successful animals in coral reef environments, and their daily spawning behaviour probably makes them less prone to population depletion under conditions of intense human predation. Ethnographic records generally fail to recognise the important role which these fish play in household economics, as attention is largely focussed on other fish, such as bonito, where there is a high degree of ritual associated. It is concluded that to fully appreciate the changing economic and social role of the Scaridae fish, it is necessary to be able to reconstruct the live animal characteristics, such as original fish length and weight. To this end, a modern sample of 115 fish was caught and defleshed and bone measurements subjected to linear and cubic regression analysis. Following this, bones from nine Pacific Island sites, broken down into 20 temporal assemblages, were measured, and live fish characteristics reconstructed. These reconstructions represent the original catches of prehistoric fishermen. The statistical dispersion features of these catches are compared from one island to another, and over time to observe the effects of human predation on fish stocks, and to suggest different catching methods which may have been employed.

It is found that fishing strategies were quite diverse, some people targetting on particular sizes of fish, while others caught a much wider selection from available populations. It is argued that in some cases, where especially small sized fish dominate the archaeological record, social factors such as evasion and subterfuge are involved in presentation to high ranking people. In others, small size indicates a cavalier attitude towards the conservation of marine resources. There are two main effects which can be observed following a long history of human predation - one is a general diminution of fish size, the other is the loss of especially large individuals, including some genera which are normally large.

Richard J. McGovern-Wilson, Small Bird Exploitation. An Archaeological Approach to the Study of Fowling in Southern New Zealand. M.A. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract, xiii, 294 pp., 10 plates, 43 figures, 93 tables, 2 appendices.

Excavations and surface collections of bones from archaeological and sub-fossil sites in southern New Zealand have, over the years, recovered a large number of bones of small-bird species. This study looks at those remains from an archaeological point of view.

From an initial listing of material for each site, distribution maps are drawn for the extinct species as well as for a range of extant species. The data indicates that most species experienced a widespread distribution during prehistory. The distribution of the individual species, coupled with ecological information relating to their habitat requirements, allows for the reconstruction of the environment during prehistory which supports that postulated by the palaeobotanical evidence.

Two main problems are approached in this study - What were the causes of the extinctions and changes in species distributions recorded in the study area? From a study of differential body part representation in specialised fowling sites, what can be proposed as regards butchery techniques as they relate to the exploited species?

The results indicate that humans were the prime mover in a multi-factor cause of the extinctions, and the butchery of exploited species generally involved the removal of elements with little meat value, prior to their being returned to the site.

Jacqueline S. Pilditch, The Ban Na Di Jewellery: a Typological and Comparative Study. M.A. thesis, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract, ix, 216 pp., 35 figures, 20 tables, 5 appendices.

This dissertation is concerned with the jewellery and other personal ornamentation found in the prehistoric site of Ban Na Di which is situated close to Lake Kumphawapi in Northeast Thailand. It presents a typology of the artefacts and compares them with ornaments from other related sites and discusses what can be assessed of the technology, social practises and exchange systems that were current in the region.

The first chapter describes the site in detail and places it in chronological context. The method of recording the details about individual items is presented in order to allow more accurate comparisons of this material with that from future excavations. Also discussed are the methods used for cleaning and examining the material as they resulted in several interesting discoveries. Finally, the sites used in the comparative study are presented with their chronologies where known.

Chapter 2 is concerned with the classification and detailed description of the material from the sites. After several different methods of classification had been tried it was recognised that by using the raw materials as the major division a comparatively simple but efficient typology emerged.

Manufacturing techniques were discussed in as much detail as possible in Chapter 3. At Ban Na Di there was only direct evidence for the manufacture of metal goods and methods used for the production of ornaments made from other materials had to be identified by studying the ornaments themselves. In several cases it was the broken or less perfect specimens that were the greatest source of information. It was recognised that the same styles of ornaments from other sites may be produced using other techniques. It was felt that recognition of these differences may assist in the identifying of sources of the goods as well as a greater understanding of the pre-history of Southeast Asia in general.

The similarities and differences in the jewellery assemblages from Ban Na Di and the comparative sites were considered in Chapter 4. There appeared to be some evidence for the ornamental assemblages from central and Southern Thailand being different from those found in the Northeast.

In Chapter 5 the findings were interpreted and theories as to the social organisation and the exchange systems practised at Ban Na Di during the period of the first mortuary phase were presented. They were compared with those proposed by other researchers, and especially with the model proposed by Higham and Kijngam. The conclusions reached were summarised in Chapter 6 as were the problems encountered during the research and some of the many questions that remain still to be answered. It was recognised that this work could not be considered a definitive piece of investigation but it was hoped that it would be seen as a reasonable starting point for further research in what the author believed was a key topic in the understanding of early Southeast Asia.

Angela Boocock, A Method for the Reconstruction of the Live Weight and Length of Snapper (*Chrysophrys auratus* [Forster]) from Archaeological Bones. B.A. (Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract, 78 pp., 45 figures, 4 tables.

Studies of the fish bone contents of New Zealand archaeological sites have largely involved the identification of species and the calculation of their associated minimum numbers. Few studies have involved the development of formulae relating the bone size of certain species to their live weight and length. These few generally include the reconstruction of

fish size as part of a larger study of fishing practices and/or the catch composition of a site. They mainly concern the reconstruction of the size of snapper (Chrysophrys auratus) either using the bone of only a few modern specimens, or as a means of calculating such factors as the meat-weight of the species represented by the bones found in the site, thereby forming part of the reconstruction of prehistoric diet.

This study involves the development of formulae relating the size of the six most easily identifiable cranial bones of the snapper (the articular, dentary, maxilla, premaxilla, quadrate and otolith) to the live length and weight of the fish, in order to allow the reconstruction of snapper size from bones.

Length measurements were taken on all these bones obtained from 107 modern snapper specimens, along with alternative measurements of the dentary, maxilla and premaxilla that can be used if archaeological bones are fragments, rather than complete bones. High correlations ($r > 0.92$ for all measurements) were obtained from regression analysis of bone size and length or weight of the modern snapper specimens. A linear equation was used for the live length reconstruction, and a cubic equation for the live weight reconstruction.

Alan Grant, The Large Mammalian Fauna from Khok Phanom Di. B.A.(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 65 pp., 4 figures, 56 tables.

This study seeks to investigate several archaeological questions relating to the faunal assemblages from Khok Phanom Di, a large (ca. 5 ha) mound site in Chonburi Province, Thailand. The first goal is the identification and quantification of the exploited larger mammalian taxa represented in the fossil record, and to consider any temporal changes in their relative abundance. Secondly, upon construction of a species list, an evaluation of the likely palaeoenvironment in the vicinity of the mound during the period of deposition is sought, using relevant ecological information on the extant taxa identified, and preliminary palynological and sedimentological information.

A third goal is to establish whether there is evidence for the possible domestication of any of the represented mammalian taxa (notably canids, suids, and bovids). Finally upon consideration of the stratigraphic depth of the excavation, evidence for a coastal-estuarine orientation from the earliest cultural layers, known sea level changes in prehistory, and the present location of the site (22 km from the coast), a measurement of the relative status of mammalian fauna compared with marine resources is determined.

Catherine M. Higham, Agricultural Dry Stone Walls in the Dunedin Area. B.A.(Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. viii, 268 pp., 4 maps, 48 plates, 4 figures, 11 tables, 3 aerial photographs, 5 appendices.

Because of their role in land tenure and management, fences are a significant part of the New Zealand scene, but have received little attention from either geographers or historians. It is perhaps indicative of the growing interest in historical archaeology that this study has an archaeological foundation. Dry (unmortared) stone walls are a more permanent form of early fencing than post and wire or post and rail and are found throughout New Zealand in areas where rock is abundant. This study is concerned with free-standing dry stone walls associated with farms around Dunedin, rather than with other types of dry stone wall - retaining walls, walls associated with goldmining or built around churches or those buildings not associated with the farming community. The importance of farming to New Zealand's economy and society, and the light that walls can throw upon New Zealand's earliest farmers were influential factors in the choice of walls over other fence types as subjects of study.

The aim of the investigations undertaken during this study are twofold. Firstly, questions raised by the existence of the walls are addressed, namely: (1) where are the walls built and what factors affect their location? (2) why were they built? (3) who were the men responsible for their construction? (4) how were they built? and (5) when were they built? In answering these questions light is thrown upon a little documented aspect of New Zealand's farming history. Secondly, the study seeks to establish the degree of similarity between Scottish and Dunedin walls and so to investigate the ways in which settlers adapted their native skills to a new environment.

Carolyn McGill, Khok Phanom Di: a Consideration of Nordin's Score Based on Human Metacarpals. B.A. (Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 21 pp., 2 figures, 3 tables, 1 appendix (2 tables).

Comparison of the ratio of cortical bone to total bone diameter - the Nordin's Score - of the second metacarpal of skeletal remains from Khok Phanom Di between males and females, above and below burial number 44 (marking the transition between zones A and B), through comparison of different burial clusters and with other populations, has enabled one to gain an idea of the nutritional adequacy of their diet. The insignificance of differences between males and females and over time of the population, coupled with the similarities in the mean Nordin's Score to well nourished modern and prehistoric popu-

lations, leads one to believe that the people who occupied Khok Phanom Di through zones A and B (equating roughly with the time period ca. 4000 B.C. - 1250 B.C.) had a well nourished diet, adequate to establish a thick cortex in relation to the total diameter of the second metacarpal bone. This is a situation that appears to have occurred throughout the entire time under review with no apparent periods of malnutrition. Even when burials in zone B started becoming differentially wealthy there still appeared to be no difference in Nordin's Score between rich burials and poor ones. Although rich burials appear to have had relatively high Nordin's Scores, often well over the mean score for the population, it was not uncommon for poorer burials also to have high scores indicating that a nutritious diet was available to everyone.

Alan McMurtry, The Melanesian Fishing Technology: the Myth of Primitiveness. B.A. (Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 47 pp., 9 tables, 1 appendix (2 tables).

This study examines the myth of primitiveness surrounding Melanesia and its prehistoric fishing technology, as compared to that found in both Micronesia and Polynesia. The thesis presented here is that the Melanesian fishing technology was not an inferior method, but a very successful one involving the use of nets, traps, spears, poisons and to a lesser extent fishhooks. Each of the 14 sites studied had a fishing technology that was unique as it was subject to different social and environmental constraints. The technology was as advanced as the fishing technology in Polynesia and Micronesia, and it was just as successful if not more so.

Katherine Roy, The Incidence of Shovel-Shaped Incisors Among the People of Khok Phanom Di. B.A. (Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 15 pp., 2 plates, 2 figures, 6 tables.

Previous research on the incidence of shovel-shaped incisors have shown them to be associated with people of Mongoloid racial affiliation. A proportion of 74 per cent among the prehistoric people of Khok Phanom Di indicates Mongoloid ancestry although it is low compared with other Asian peoples. Other prehistoric Thai populations also show a relatively low incidence of shoveling particularly 'marked shovels'. Small numbers of Khok Phanom Di hindered statistical analysis. Thus, no sexual differences were indicated nor differences between burial clusters to discern family groups. Hopefully future research will continue to include studies of shovel-shaped incisors and other racial traits so that we may begin to understand their distribution and the possible effects of genetic interaction and isolation of not only Mongoloid populations but all peoples - both modern and prehistoric.

Glen W. Standring, Analysis of Spatial and Temporal Clustering in Mortuary Contexts at Khok Phanom Di. B.A. (Hons) dissertation, Anthropology Department, Otago University. 1 page abstract; 38 pp., 21 figures, 14 plans, 3 appendices.

Khok Phanom Di is a large mound situated in the Amphoe Phanat Nikom, Chonburi Province, Thailand. After preliminary excavations in 1979 and 1982, a major excavation was undertaken jointly between the Fine Arts Department of Thailand and the University of Otago in 1985. This excavation took the form of a large 10 x 10 m square. Such a large sample area enabled the recovery of 152 burials and an extremely complete spatial picture. Using detailed excavation techniques (recording important artefacts three-dimensionally, detailed plans of burial distributions, the fine sifting of grave fills and the use of flotation on spit samples), large amounts of data were unearthed and recorded in clear stratigraphic contexts.

Clearly stratified cultural lenses and burials occurred from ca. 2 m below datum and terminated at ca. 6.5 m. The burials were often stacked one on top of the other in obvious clusters. This was particularly obvious when burials occurred in the site walls. With the recovery of supraordinately wealthy burials and a possible mortuary associated structure, it was obvious that some degree of mortuary complexity had occurred at Khok Phanom Di. Within this rich context, the present study investigates both the general and internal configuration of burial clusters at Khok Phanom Di.