

terra australis 44

Terra Australis reports the results of archaeological and related research within the south and east of Asia, though mainly Australia, New Guinea and island Melanesia — lands that remained terra australis incognita to generations of prehistorians. Its subject is the settlement of the diverse environments in this isolated quarter of the globe by peoples who have maintained their discrete and traditional ways of life into the recent recorded or remembered past and at times into the observable present.

List of volumes in Terra Australis

- Volume 1: *Burrill Lake and Currarong: Coastal Sites in Southern New South Wales*. R.J. Lampert (1971)
- Volume 2: *Ol Tumbuna: Archaeological Excavations in the Eastern Central Highlands, Papua New Guinea*. J.P. White (1972)
- Volume 3: *New Guinea Stone Age Trade: The Geography and Ecology of Traffic in the Interior*. I. Hughes (1977)
- Volume 4: *Recent Prehistory in Southeast Papua*. B. Egloff (1979)
- Volume 5: *The Great Kartan Mystery*. R. Lampert (1981)
- Volume 6: *Early Man in North Queensland: Art and Archaeology in the Laura Area*. A. Rosenfeld, D. Horton and J. Winter (1981)
- Volume 7: *The Alligator Rivers: Prehistory and Ecology in Western Arnhem Land*. C. Schrire (1982)
- Volume 8: *Hunter Hill, Hunter Island: Archaeological Investigations of a Prehistoric Tasmanian Site*. S. Bowdler (1984)
- Volume 9: *Coastal South-West Tasmania: The Prehistory of Louisa Bay and Maatsuyker Island*. R. Vanderwal and D. Horton (1984)
- Volume 10: *The Emergence of Mailu*. G. Irwin (1985)
- Volume 11: *Archaeology in Eastern Timor, 1966–67*. I. Glover (1986)
- Volume 12: *Early Tongan Prehistory: The Lapita Period on Tongatapu and its Relationships*. J. Poulsen (1987)
- Volume 13: *Coobool Creek*. P. Brown (1989)
- Volume 14: *30,000 Years of Aboriginal Occupation: Kimberley, North-West Australia*. S. O'Connor (1999)
- Volume 15: *Lapita Interaction*. G. Summerhayes (2000)
- Volume 16: *The Prehistory of Buka: A Stepping Stone Island in the Northern Solomons*. S. Wickler (2001)
- Volume 17: *The Archaeology of Lapita Dispersal in Oceania*. G.R. Clark, A.J. Anderson and T. Vunidilo (2001)
- Volume 18: *An Archaeology of West Polynesian Prehistory*. A. Smith (2002)
- Volume 19: *Phytolith and Starch Research in the Australian-Pacific-Asian Regions: The State of the Art*. D. Hart and L. Wallis (2003)
- Volume 20: *The Sea People: Late-Holocene Maritime Specialisation in the Whitsunday Islands, Central Queensland*. B. Barker (2004)
- Volume 21: *What's Changing: Population Size or Land-Use Patterns? The Archaeology of Upper Mangrove Creek, Sydney Basin*. V. Attenbrow (2004)
- Volume 22: *The Archaeology of the Aru Islands, Eastern Indonesia*. S. O'Connor, M. Spriggs and P. Veth (2005)
- Volume 23: *Pieces of the Vanuatu Puzzle: Archaeology of the North, South and Centre*. S. Bedford (2006)
- Volume 24: *Coastal Themes: An Archaeology of the Southern Curtis Coast, Queensland*. S. Ulm (2006)
- Volume 25: *Lithics in the Land of the Lightning Brothers: The Archaeology of Wardaman Country, Northern Territory*. C. Clarkson (2007)
- Volume 26: *Oceanic Explorations: Lapita and Western Pacific Settlement*. S. Bedford, C. Sand and S. P. Connaughton (2007)
- Volume 27: *Dreamtime Superhighway: Sydney Basin Rock Art and Prehistoric Information Exchange*. J. McDonald (2008)
- Volume 28: *New Directions in Archaeological Science*. A. Fairbairn, S. O'Connor and B. Marwick (2008)
- Volume 29: *Islands of Inquiry: Colonisation, Seafaring and the Archaeology of Maritime Landscapes*. G. Clark, F. Leach and S. O'Connor (2008)
- Volume 30: *Archaeological Science Under a Microscope: Studies in Residue and Ancient DNA Analysis in Honour of Thomas H. Loy*. M. Haslam, G. Robertson, A. Crowther, S. Nugent and L. Kirkwood (2009)
- Volume 31: *The Early Prehistory of Fiji*. G. Clark and A. Anderson (2009)
- Volume 32: *Altered Ecologies: Fire, Climate and Human Influence on Terrestrial Landscapes*. S. Haberle, J. Stevenson and M. Prebble (2010)
- Volume 33: *Man Bac: The Excavation of a Neolithic Site in Northern Vietnam: The Biology*. M. Oxenham, H. Matsumura and N. Kim Dung (2011)
- Volume 34: *Peopled Landscapes: Archaeological and Biogeographic Approaches to Landscapes*. S. Haberle and B. David.
- Volume 35: *Pacific Island Heritage: Archaeology, Identity & Community*. Jolie Liston, Geoffrey Clark and Dwight Alexander (2011)
- Volume 36: *Transcending the Culture–Nature Divide in Cultural Heritage: Views from the Asia-Pacific region*. Sally Brockwell, Sue O'Connor and Denis Byrne (2013)
- Volume 37: *Taking the High Ground: The archaeology of Rapa, a fortified island in remote East Polynesia*. Atholl Anderson and Douglas J. Kennett (2012)
- Volume 38: *Life on the Margins: An Archaeological Investigation of Late Holocene Economic Variability, Blue Mud Bay, Northern Australia*. Patrick Faulkner (2013)
- Volume 39: *Prehistoric Marine Resource Use in the Indo-Pacific Regions*. Rintaro Ono, Alex Morrison and David Addison (eds) (2013)
- Volume 40: *4000 Years of Migration and Cultural Exchange: The Archaeology of the Batanes Islands, Northern Philippines*. Peter Bellwood and Eusebio Dizon (eds) (2013)
- Volume 41: *Degei's Descendants: Spirits, Place and People in Pre-Cession Fiji*. Aubrey Parke. Matthew Spriggs and Deryck Scarr (eds) (2014)
- Volume 42: *Contextualising the Neolithic Occupation of Southern Vietnam: The Role of Ceramics and Potters at An Son*. Carmen Sarjeant (2014)
- Volume 43: *Journeys into the Rainforest: Archaeology of Culture Change and Continuity on the Evelyn Tableland, North Queensland*. Åsa Ferrier (2015)

terra australis 44

**An Archaeology
of Early Christianity
in Vanuatu**

Kastom and Religious Change on
Tanna and Erromango, 1839–1920

James L. Flexner



Australian
National
University

P R E S S



Published by ANU Press
The Australian National University
Acton ACT 2601 Australia
Email: anupress@anu.edu.au
This title is also available online at press.anu.edu.au

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Creator: Flexner, James Lindsey, author.
Title: An archaeology of early Christianity in Vanuatu : kastom and religious change on Tanna and Erromango 1839 - 1920 / James L. Flexner.
ISBN: 9781760460747 (paperback) 9781760460754 (ebook)
Series: Terra Australis ; 44.
Subjects: Archaeology and religion--Vanuatu.
Christian antiquities--Vanuatu.
Tanna Island (Vanuatu)--Church history--19th century.
Erromanga (Vanuatu)--Church history--19th century.
Dewey Number: 200.99595

Copyright of the text remains with the authors, 2016. This book is copyright in all countries subscribing to the Berne convention. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission. Inquiries should be made to the publisher.

Terra Australis Editorial Board: Sue O'Connor, Jack Golson, Simon Haberle, Sally Brockwell, Geoffrey Clark

Cover design and layout by ANU Press. Cover photograph by James L. Flexner.

This edition © 2016 ANU Press

Contents

Smol Toktok	vii
Preface	ix
A Note on Place Names	xi
Acknowledgements	xiii
List of Figures	xvii
List of Tables	xxi
1. Theories, Methods, and Materials	1
How and Why Did People Convert?	3
Why Archaeology?	6
Outline of Mission History in the Southern New Hebrides	9
Archaeological Methodology	12
Outline of the Book	15
2. Erromango: Archaeology and the Martyr Isle	17
<i>Kastom</i> on Erromango	18
The First Martyrs: John Williams and James Harris	22
George and Ellen Gordon at Dillon's Bay	26
James Gordon at Potnuma	36
The Robertsons at Dillon's Bay	52
3. Tanna: In the Shadow of the Volcano, 1839–1868	59
<i>Kastom</i> on Tanna	61
A Tannese Village: Anuikaraka Before the Mission Era	66
Contacts in the Fish's Tail: Port Resolution	73
The Mathesons at Imua	80
The Mission Period at Anuikaraka	93
4. Expanding the Tanna Mission, 1868–1920	97
The Watts at Kwamera	98
William Gray at Waisisi	107
Lenakel: The Ultimate Mission	115
Village Life in Kwaraka after the Mission Period	125

5.	Museum Encounters: From the New Hebrides to the World	129
	Assemblages and Networks	130
	Canadian Collections	133
	Scottish Collections	143
	Australasian Collections	150
	Non-Missionary and Unexamined Collections	156
6.	Material Patterns and Colonial Religious Change	159
	Material Patterns in the New Hebrides Missions	160
	Future Research Potential	166
	Archaeology of Conversion Revisited	167
	Changing and Staying the Same	168
	Bibliography	169
	Appendices	185
	Appendix A: Archaeological sites and features	185
	Appendix B: Excavated contexts and brief descriptions	188
	Appendix C: Summary artefact tables, Erromango and Tanna sites	193
	Appendix D: Radiocarbon dates	204
	Appendix E: Museum objects sorted by museum and island	204