

**terra australis 52**

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

1. *Burrill Lake and Currarong: Coastal Sites in Southern New South Wales*. R.J. Lampert (1971)
2. *Ol Tumbuna: Archaeological Excavations in the Eastern Central Highlands, Papua New Guinea*. J.P. White (1972)
3. *New Guinea Stone Age Trade: The Geography and Ecology of Traffic in the Interior*. I. Hughes (1977)
4. *Recent Prehistory in Southeast Papua*. B. Egloff (1979)
5. *The Great Kartan Mystery*. R. Lampert (1981)
6. *Early Man in North Queensland: Art and Archaeology in the Laura Area*. A. Rosenfeld, D. Horton and J. Winter (1981)
7. *The Alligator Rivers: Prehistory and Ecology in Western Arnhem Land*. C. Schrire (1982)
8. *Hunter Hill, Hunter Island: Archaeological Investigations of a Prehistoric Tasmanian Site*. S. Bowdler (1984)
9. *Coastal South-West Tasmania: The Prehistory of Louisa Bay and Maatsuyker Island*. R. Vanderwal and D. Horton (1984)
10. *The Emergence of Mailu*. G. Irwin (1985)
11. *Archaeology in Eastern Timor, 1966–67*. I. Glover (1986)
12. *Early Tongan Prehistory: The Lapita Period on Tongatapu and its Relationships*. J. Poulsen (1987)
13. *Cooool Creek*. P. Brown (1989)
14. *30,000 Years of Aboriginal Occupation: Kimberley, North-West Australia*. S. O'Connor (1999)
15. *Lapita Interaction*. G. Summerhayes (2000)
16. *The Prehistory of Buka: A Stepping Stone Island in the Northern Solomons*. S. Wickler (2001)
17. *The Archaeology of Lapita Dispersal in Oceania*. G.R. Clark, A.J. Anderson and T. Vunidilo (2001)
18. *An Archaeology of West Polynesian Prehistory*. A. Smith (2002)
19. *Phytolith and Starch Research in the Australian-Pacific-Asian Regions: The State of the Art*. D. Hart and L. Wallis (2003)
20. *The Sea People: Late-Holocene Maritime Specialisation in the Whitsunday Islands, Central Queensland*. B. Barker (2004)
21. *What's Changing: Population Size or Land-Use Patterns? The Archaeology of Upper Mangrove Creek, Sydney Basin*. V. Attenbrow (2004)
22. *The Archaeology of the Aru Islands, Eastern Indonesia*. S. O'Connor, M. Spriggs and P. Veth (eds) (2005)
23. *Pieces of the Vanuatu Puzzle: Archaeology of the North, South and Centre*. S. Bedford (2006)
24. *Coastal Themes: An Archaeology of the Southern Curtis Coast, Queensland*. S. Ulm (2006)
25. *Lithics in the Land of the Lightning Brothers: The Archaeology of Wardaman Country, Northern Territory*. C. Clarkson (2007)
26. *Oceanic Explorations: Lapita and Western Pacific Settlement*. S. Bedford, C. Sand and S. P. Connaughton (eds) (2007)
27. *Dreamtime Superhighway: Sydney Basin Rock Art and Prehistoric Information Exchange*. J. McDonald (2008)
28. *New Directions in Archaeological Science*. A. Fairbairn, S. O'Connor and B. Marwick (eds) (2008)
29. *Islands of Inquiry: Colonisation, Seafaring and the Archaeology of Maritime Landscapes*. G. Clark, F. Leach and S. O'Connor (eds) (2008)
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 (eds) (2009)
31. *The Early Prehistory of Fiji*. G. Clark and A. Anderson (eds) (2009)
32. *Altered Ecologies: Fire, Climate and Human Influence on Terrestrial Landscapes*. S. Haberle, J. Stevenson and M. Prebble (eds) (2010)
33. *Man Bac: The Excavation of a Neolithic Site in Northern Vietnam: The Biology*. M. Oxenham, H. Matsumura and N. Kim Dung (eds) (2011)
34. *Peopled Landscapes: Archaeological and Biogeographic Approaches to Landscapes*. S. Haberle and B. David (eds) (2012)
35. *Pacific Island Heritage: Archaeology, Identity & Community*. J. Liston, G. Clark and D. Alexander (eds) (2011)
36. *Transcending the Culture–Nature Divide in Cultural Heritage: Views from the Asia-Pacific region*. S. Brockwell, S. O'Connor and D. Byrne (eds) (2013)
37. *Taking the High Ground: The archaeology of Rapa, a fortified island in remote East Polynesia*. A. Anderson and D.J. Kennett (eds) (2012)
38. *Life on the Margins: An Archaeological Investigation of Late Holocene Economic Variability, Blue Mud Bay, Northern Australia*. P. Faulkner (2013)
39. *Prehistoric Marine Resource Use in the Indo-Pacific Regions*. R. Ono, A. Morrison and D. Addison (eds) (2013)
40. *4000 Years of Migration and Cultural Exchange: The Archaeology of the Batanes Islands, Northern Philippines*. P. Bellwood and E. Dizon (eds) (2013)
41. *Degei's Descendants: Spirits, Place and People in Pre-Cession Fiji*. Aubrey Parke. M. Spriggs and D. Scarr (eds) (2014)
42. *Contextualising the Neolithic Occupation of Southern Vietnam: The Role of Ceramics and Potters at An Son*. C. Sarjeant (2014)
43. *Journeys into the Rainforest: Archaeology of Culture Change and Continuity on the Evelyn Tableland, North Queensland*. A. Ferrier (2015)
44. *An Archaeology of Early Christianity in Vanuatu: Kastom and Religious Change on Tanna and Erromango, 1839–1920*. J.L. Flexner (2016)
45. *New Perspectives in Southeast Asian and Pacific Prehistory*. P.J. Piper, H. Matsumura and D. Bulbeck (eds) (2017)
46. *Ten Thousand Years of Cultivation at Kuk Swamp in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea*. J. Golson, T. Denham, P. Hughes, P. Swadling and J. Muke (eds) (2017)
47. *The Archaeology of Rock Art in Western Arnhem Land, Australia*. B. David, P. Taçon, J.-J. Delannoy, J.-M. Geneste (eds) (2017)
48. *The Archaeology of Sulawesi: Current Research on the Pleistocene to the Historic Period*. S. O'Connor, D. Bulbeck and J. Meyer (eds) (2018)
49. *Drawing in the Land: Rock Art in the Upper Nepean, Sydney Basin, New South Wales*. J. Dibden (2019)
50. *The Spice Islands in Prehistory: Archaeology in the Northern Moluccas, Indonesia*. P. Bellwood (ed.) (2019)
51. *Archaeologies of Island Melanesia: Current approaches to landscapes, exchange and practice*. M. Leclerc and J. Flexner (eds) (2019)

terra australis 52

## Debating Lapita

Distribution, Chronology,  
Society and Subsistence

Edited by Stuart Bedford  
and Matthew Spriggs



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](mailto:anupress@anu.edu.au)

Available to download for free at [press.anu.edu.au](http://press.anu.edu.au)

A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia

ISBN (print): 9781760463304  
ISBN (online): 9781760463311

WorldCat (print): 1130047910  
WorldCat (online): 1130045646

DOI: 10.22459/TA52.2019

This title is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



The full licence terms are available at [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode)

Terra Australis Editorial Board: Sue O'Connor, Sally Brockwell, Ursula Frederick, Tristen Jones, Ceri Shipton and Mathieu Leclerc  
Series Editor: Sue O'Connor

Cover design and layout by ANU Press.

Cover photograph Excavations at the Lapita site on Vao Island, Malakula, Northern Vanuatu. The field crew comprises locals and Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VKS) fieldworkers and staff. Fieldworkers include in the foreground, Cesar Sami (Vao); rear left with cap, Bernard Roser (Atchin); rear with cowboy hat, Vianny Atpatun (Vao); centre with cap, Dickinson Dick (Maskelynes); right with cap, Matthias Battick (South-West Bay); and behind him, Gary Naror (Wala). Seated at rear is Willy Damelip (VKS). Photo: Stuart Bedford 2004.

This edition © 2019 ANU Press

# Contents

List of figures	vii
List of tables	xiii
Preface	xvii
Opening remarks by the Honourable Meltek Sato Kilman, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu at the opening ceremony of the Lapita Conference, Port Vila, 6–10 July 2015	1

## Debating Lapita

1. Debating Lapita: Distribution, chronology, society and subsistence	5
Stuart Bedford, Matthew Spriggs, David V. Burley, Christophe Sand, Peter Sheppard and Glenn R. Summerhayes	

## Distribution and chronology

2. The ceramic trail: Evaluating the Marianas and Lapita West Pacific connection	37
Geoffrey R. Clark and Olaf Winter	
3. Moiapu 3: Settlement on Moiapu Hill at the very end of Lapita, Caution Bay hinterland	61
Bruno David, Ken Aplin, Helene Peck, Robert Skelly, Matthew Leavesley, Jerome Mialanes, Katherine Szabó, Brent Koppel, Fiona Petchey, Thomas Richards, Sean Ulm, Ian J. McNiven, Cassandra Rowe, Samantha J. Aird, Patrick Faulkner and Anne Ford	
4. Kamgot at the lagoon's edge: Site position and resource use of an Early Lapita site in Near Oceania	89
Glenn R. Summerhayes, Katherine Szabó, Matthew Leavesley and Dylan Gaffney	
5. Lapita: The Australian connection	105
Ian Lilley	
6. A Lapita presence on Arop/Long Island, Vitiaz Strait, Papua New Guinea?	115
Dylan Gaffney, Glenn R. Summerhayes and Mary Mennis	
7. Early Lapita colonisation of Remote Oceania: An update on the leapfrog hypothesis	135
Peter Sheppard	
8. Small islands, strategic locales and the configuration of first Lapita settlement of Vanua Levu, northern Fiji	155
David V. Burley, Travis Freeland and Jone Balenaivalu	
9. New dates for the Makekur (FOH) Lapita pottery site, Arawe Islands, New Britain, Papua New Guinea	169
Jim Specht and Chris Gosden	

## Society

10. A new assessment of site WKO013A of Xapeta'a (Lapita), New Caledonia	205
Christophe Sand, Stéphanie Domergue, Louis Lagarde, Jacques Bole, André-John Ouetcho and David Baret	

11. Lapita pottery from the small islands of north-east Malakula, Vanuatu: A brief overview and implications Stuart Bedford	225
12. Plaited textile expression in Lapita ceramic ornamentation Wallace Ambrose	241
13. The hat makes the man: Masks, headdresses and skullcaps in Lapita iconography Matthew Spriggs	257
14. A view from the west: A structural approach to analysing Lapita design in the Eastern Lapita Province Kathleen LeBlanc, Stuart Bedford and Christophe Sand	275
15. Measuring social distances with shared Lapita motifs: Current results and challenges Scarlett Chiu	307
16. Along the roads of the Lapita people: Designs, groups and travels Arnaud Noury	335
17. Lapita to Post-Lapita transition: Insights from the chemical analysis of pottery from the sites of Teouma, Mangaasi, Vao and Chachara, Vanuatu Mathieu Leclerc	349

## **Subsistence**

18. Early Lapita subsistence: The evidence from Kamgot, Anir Islands, New Ireland Province, Papua New Guinea Glenn R. Summerhayes, Katherine Szabó, Andrew Fairbairn, Mark Horrocks, Sheryl McPherson and Alison Crowther	379
19. Green desert or ‘all you can eat’? How diverse and edible was the flora of Vanuatu before human introductions? Vincent Lebot and Chanel Sam	403
20. Lapita maritime adaptations and the development of fishing technology: A view from Vanuatu Rintaro Ono, Stuart Hawkins and Stuart Bedford	415
21. Lapita colonisation and avian extinctions in Oceania Stuart Hawkins and Trevor H. Worthy	439

## **Beyond**

22. Connecting with Lapita in Vanuatu: Festivals, sporting events and contemporary themes Richard Shing and Edson Willie	471
23. Five decades of Lapita archaeology: A personal retrospective Patrick V. Kirch	483
Contributors	497
Appendix: Papers and posters presented at the Eighth International Lapita Conference, Port Vila, 6–10 July 2015	501