ARCHAEOLOGY IN MICRONESIA

Ross Cordy Historic Preservation Office Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

The intent of this shorter communication is to provide information on recent archaeological activity in Micronesia—specifically in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Presently, nearly all archaeological work is done by or under the auspices of the Trust Territory Historic Preservation Office. The information is current to April 1, 1980.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK BEFORE 1977

Before 1977, very little archaeological research was undertaken in the Trust Territory. There were about 15 projects in the years between 1945-1977 (Table 1). Earlier work had been done under the German and Japanese administrations, but, this, too was limited. The German Südsee Expedition of 1910 was largely a programme of ethnographic study, although important archaeological work was done. Japanese researchers did small-scale excavations here and there throughout the area, but these were few in number and few of the reports are translated (see Chapman 1964).

A closer look at the 15 archaeological projects between 1945-1977 is merited. Archaeological surveys were quite rare. Clune's survey in Truk and Davidson's in various areas of Ponape were both cursory reconnaissance surveys. Only Osborne's and Spoehr's surveys were intensive. Although Osborne identified general archaeological areas, he rarely mapped villages or terraces in detail. Spoehr generally checked only coastal areas. Of the surveys, only Davidson's and Osborne's provide hints as to settlement patterns.

Most projects were excavations of one or a few sites. This generally reflects the culture history research orientation of the projects. The focus was on the establishment of time periods based on artefact types and the resultant determination of origins and sources of local cultures. Pottery overwhelmingly was the type artefact of concern in Palau, Yap, and the Marianas. Fishhooks were used in Nukuoro. No suitable type artefact was found in Truk. The Nan Madol research has not yet been published, so it is unknown if any type artefacts were identified there.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK SINCE 1977

Since 1977 the Historic Preservation Office has done or sponsored nearly all archaeological work in the Trust Territory. A few exceptions are the 1977 Kelton-Bishop Museum Expedition to the Eastern Carolines, the Alkire's 1977 Yap outer

TABLE 1

Archaeological Research in Micronesia 1945-1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/Year</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Nature of Work/Island of Work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palau</td>
<td>Osborne</td>
<td>Survey &amp; Excavations</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### TABLE 2

**Archaeological Projects Since 1977**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Takayama</td>
<td>Test Excavations: Koror, Aluptaciel &amp; Pelilieu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Takayama</td>
<td>2Test Excavations: Kayangel, Rock Islands &amp; Angaur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PH&amp;CPC</td>
<td>*Survey: Road Improvements, Babelthaup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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atoll excavations, and Japanese-funded work; however, the Historic Preservation Office has affiliated itself with these projects in various ways. Over 125 archaeological projects have been undertaken in the Trust Territory since 1977. These include survey, excavation, and some site development.

Table 2 lists survey projects in which sites have been identified, excavation projects, and site development projects. These projects are fairly well distributed over the districts, for one of the aims of the Historic Preservation Office is a well-distributed programme.

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1 Exact date uncertain.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Project Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Cordy &amp; Sam</td>
<td>Survey: Coral Hauling Roads, Airai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cordy</td>
<td>*Survey: Housing Development, Ngerbechedesau</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lucking</td>
<td>Salvage Excavations: Palau Airport, Airai</td>
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<td>Cordy</td>
<td>Data Recovery Plan: Palau Airport, Airai</td>
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<td>Cordy</td>
<td>Survey: Palau Airport, Airai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gumerman</td>
<td>Survey: Airai &amp; other areas on Babelthaup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>PH&amp;CPC</td>
<td>Survey: Koror Sewer Extensions</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Craib &amp; Price</td>
<td>Survey: Capital Improvement Projects</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Price, Craib &amp; Dye</td>
<td>Survey: Yap Airport, Rull</td>
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<td>Kirch</td>
<td>Survey: Yap Airport, Rull</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>King</td>
<td>Survey: Yap Airport, Rull</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>King</td>
<td>Survey: Neighborhood Center, Gagil</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hayakawa</td>
<td>Survey: Rang village, Fanif</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K. Alkire &amp; W. Alkire</td>
<td>Test Excavations: Lamotrek, Faraulap &amp; Woleai Atolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>Craib</td>
<td>Survey &amp; Test Excavations: Ulithi Atoll</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>Cordy</td>
<td>Data Recovery Plan: Yap Airport, Rull</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cordy</td>
<td>Survey: O'Keefes Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>Price</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>Cordy &amp; Kugfas</td>
<td>Survey: Gitam &amp; Balabat Villages, Rull</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pickering, Hanson, Hanson, Denfeld, Lingenfelter</td>
<td>Survey &amp; Salvage Excavation: Yap Airport, Rull</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hunter-Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Denfeld</td>
<td>*Survey: Second World War sites.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Denfeld</td>
<td>**Survey: German Transmitter Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>Truk</td>
<td>Sinoto, Shutler, &amp; Takayama</td>
<td>Salvage Excavation, Fefan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>King</td>
<td>Predictions: Site Locations</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Craib</td>
<td>Survey: Capital Improvement Projects, Moen &amp; Dublon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edwards</td>
<td>Survey: Road, Tol</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edwards</td>
<td>Site Development Plan: Fauba Fort, Tol</td>
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</table>

2 No final report is yet available.

3 Project ongoing. In some cases, preliminary reports are available.
### Archaeology in Micronesia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>King</td>
<td>*Survey &amp; Salvage Excavations: Truk Airport &amp; Iras Sewer, Moen</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>Truk HP Survey Team</td>
<td>Survey: Sapuk Dredge Site</td>
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<td>Test Excavations: Mortlocks</td>
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<td>Susumu Enterprises, Takayama &amp; Nishikawa</td>
<td>*Site Development: Fauba Fort, Tol</td>
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<td>Denfeld</td>
<td>Survey: Second World War Land Sites</td>
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<td>Russell</td>
<td>*Site Development Plan: Lighthouse, Puluwat</td>
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#### Ponape

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<td>Survey &amp; Test Excavations: Awak Valley, Uh</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>PHPC</td>
<td>Survey: Pohnollap Homesteads, Sokehs</td>
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<td>Saxe, King, PHPC</td>
<td>*Survey: Circumferential Road</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ayres, Haun &amp; Severence</td>
<td>Survey &amp; Test Excavations: Awak Valley, Uh &amp; Ant Atoll</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saxe</td>
<td>*Site Development Plan: Nan Madol</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>Denfeld</td>
<td>Survey: Second World War Land Sites</td>
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<td>Athens</td>
<td>Survey: Palikir, Sokehs</td>
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<td>Athens</td>
<td>*Survey: Nan Madol</td>
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<td>Ayres &amp; Haun</td>
<td>*Survey &amp; Test Excavations: Awak Valley, Uh; Wene Valley, Kitt; &amp; Ant Atoll</td>
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<td>Jones &amp; Cordy</td>
<td>**Site Development Plan: German Belltower, Kolonia</td>
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<td>*Survey: Colonial Kolonia</td>
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#### Kosrae

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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
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<td>Survey: Dam Redevelopments</td>
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Cordy & KHPC Archaeological Survey Team
Survey: Contractor's Camp, Tafunsak

Cordy, KHPC Survey Team
*Survey: Lela, Malem

Cordy & KHPC Survey Team
Survey: Innem/Okat Road, Lelu

Cordy & KHPC Survey Team
*Survey & Excavations: Putuk, Wiya, & Tepot villages, Tafunsak

Cordy
Predictions: Site Locations

Cordy
*Survey: Lelu Stone Ruins

KHPC Survey Team
Survey: Tofol, Lelu

1980
KHPC Survey Team
Survey: Yewal, Utwe

KHPC Survey Team
Survey: Kupla, Malem

Sinoto & KHPC Survey Team
*Test Excavations: Tafunsak & Utwe

Cordy & KHPC Survey Team
**Survey & Test Excavations: Lelu Stone Ruins

Marshall Islands

1978
Jelks
Restoration: De Brum House, Likiep Atoll

1979
Rosendahl
*Report Preparations: 1977 Kelton Expedition

Riley
*Survey & Test Excavations: Majuro Atoll

MIHPC
*Survey: Outer Island Docks

Cordy
Predictions: Site Locations

1980
Rynkiewich
**Background Survey: Colonia Era Majuro & Jaluit

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PH&CPC = Palau Historical & Cultural Preservation Commission

Truk HP Survey Team = Truk Historic Preservation Survey Team

PHPC = Ponape Historic Preservation Committee

KHPC = Kosrae Historic Preservation Committee

MIHPC = Marshall Islands Historic Preservation Committee

The Nature of the Work Since 1977

Most of the projects listed in Table 2 are strictly oriented towards producing inventories. They itemise the survey area and locate and describe sites found. I regard this as one of the major flaws of contract work in the northern Pacific. The Historic Preservation Office is trying to change this pattern by requiring a research framework, in which village settlement pattern analysis is a minimal prerequisite.

None the less, a look at Table 3 indicates that research orientations in Micronesian archaeology have changed. This change has seen an increase in the kinds of research orientations and the dominance of a settlement pattern focus. It is the intent of the Historic Preservation Office to continue to promote a variety of research approaches to archaeological work in the Trust Territory. (In Table 3, the Natural Environment category refers to subsistence studies. The Social Environment category refers to relations with other social units—e.g., in trade, marriage, war, etc. Chronology entails chronological analyses not associated with the culture historical concept of type artefacts and period assemblages; rather it refers to establishing chronologies independent of the period concept.)

### TABLE 3
Research Orientations in Micronesian Archaeology (1977-April 1980)

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<td>Social Environment Variations &amp; Adaptations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of Complex Societies</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

THE FUTURE

At present, the Historic Preservation Office has two basic goals which relate to archaeology. One is to continue to promote a large number of archaeological projects with different research orientations. The other is to establish a strong local programme, to continue after 1981, which is able to function easily and effectively despite financial restrictions and which continues to promote archaeological research in the area. If both goals are met, then a moderately large number of archaeological projects should continue in this area of the Pacific during the coming years.

REFERENCES


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