

peoples may be ruled out. This paper describes the prehistoric finds and their historic context. Interesting questions about the structure of late prehistoric trade and exchange systems along the New Guinea south coast are also discussed.

### **MAINLAND MAGIC: INTERPRETING INFLUENCES ACROSS CAPE YORK-TORRES STRAIT**

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In this paper, the authors will explore current interpretations of Torres Strait archaeology. These interpretations suggest that while mainland Australians occupied the 'ancestral Cape York Peninsula' until around 6000 years ago, they were colonized by people from the north around 3500-3000 years ago. We suggest that such interpretations are problematic for a number of reasons, including their reliance on the ethnographic interpretations of Haddon (1901-35) and Lawrence (1994, 1998) and the current lack of comparative archaeological evidence from northern Cape York.

### **RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN NORTHEAST THAILAND: CEMETERIES, PERSONAL ORNAMENTS AND SOCIETY**

Nigel Chang

### **PATTERNS OF BIOLOGICAL VARIATION ALONG THE NORTH EAST COAST OF THE INDIAN OCEAN**

Colin Pardoe

There are many examples of the natural catastrophes that disrupt humanity and disrupt the patterning of biological variation shaped by our evolutionary history. In spite of that, evolutionary processes such as selection and gene flow produce patterns in biological variation. In this paper I will concentrate on one pattern - the relationship of biological difference to geographic distance. I will examine how gene flow might produce such patterns and the antiquity of such patterns. Three analyses are used to examine the nature of this relationship along a 7,000 km stretch of the north east coast of the Indian Ocean, from the Ganges Delta, through Myanmar and the Malay Peninsula to the Indonesian Archipelago. These are summary biometric differences, Isolation by Distance, and Isolate Differentiation.

Average biometric distances from other samples vary between 1.05 for Moulmein and 1.76 for Flores. Those that appear most distant from the rest