NOTICE OF ORDINARY MEETING

The next meeting of the Society will be held in the Museum Education Building, North Terrace, Adelaide at -

8.00 p.m. on Monday 27 October, 1975

AGENDA

1. Apologies

2. Confirmation of minutes of meeting held Monday 22 September, 1975 (Copies of these minutes are attached)

3. Papers & Journals
   The following papers & Journals will be tabled at the meeting.
   Anthropological Society of Queensland 'Newsletter' No. 74 Sept. 75
   Anthropology News, Western Australia, Vol. 12 No. 7 Sept., 1975
   Vol. 12 No. 8 Oct., 1975
   The Artifact, No. 37, May, 1975
   Royal Society of South Australia, September, 1975
   October, 1975
   The South Australian Naturalist, Vol. 50 No. 1, September, 1975
   Mouton Recent Publications in 'Social Sciences' Spring, 1975
   Recent Publications in 'Anthropology Ethnology' Spring, 1975
   Department of Aboriginal Affairs, W.A. 'Newsletter' Vol. 11 No. 1 June, 1975

4. New Members.
   Janet Gaye Modra, Box 62, Echunga

5. Business.

6. Speaker.
   MR. CRAIG HOSKYN, S.A. Museum, will give an address to the Society entitled
   'Flinders Range Site Recording Program'

7. Next Meeting
   The next meeting of the Society will be held on Monday, 24 November, 1975 and will be the Annual General Meeting.

V.A. TOLCHER,
Honorary Secretary,
213 Greenhill Road,
EASTWOOD S.A. 5063
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER, 1975

Held in the Museum Education Building, North Terrace, Adelaide at 8.00 p.m.

The President Mr. G.L. Pretty was in the chair, with 14 members and visitors present.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr. S Mrs. R.D.J. Weathersbee and Mrs. N. Worthley.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held Monday 25 August, 1975 having been circulated with the Journal were taken as read and confirmed.

3. Papers and Journals

Various papers and journals from other Societies and Organizations were tabled.

4. Speaker

Brother William BORRELL of Sacred Heart College gave an illustrated address to the Society entitled

'SOME ASPECTS OF ARCHAEOLOGY OF HONG KONG'

A precis of this address is attached.

DATE..................................................CHAIRMAN..........................
NOTICES

1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with the rules and By Laws of the Anthropological Society of South Australia Inc., members are advised that nominations are called for persons as Officers of this Society as follows:

President
Vice President
Honorary Secretary
Honorary Treasurer
Librarian
5 Councillors

Members are advised that all positions will be declared vacant at the Annual General Meeting on Monday 24th November, 1975 and new officers will be elected.

Nominations must be forwarded to the Secretary on or before Monday 10 Nov., 1975 to comply with the rules and must be accompanied by a letter from the nominee, agreeing to stand for the position.

2. MOTIONS

In accordance with the rules and By Laws of the Anthropological Society of South Australia Inc., members are advised that Notices of Motions intended to be moved at the Annual General Meeting shall be given to the Secretary on or before Monday 10 November, 1975.

3. FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP FLUCTUATIONS FROM 1964 to 1975

The following is published for the general information of members.

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SOME ASPECTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF HONG KONG

O. WILLIAM BORRELL, F.M.S.

INTRODUCTION

One would not expect a place like Hong Kong to have any other interest that industry and trade. However, the fact is that Hong Kong is extremely rich in archaeological finds, and an active centre of investigation both field and research exists in that city of business. There is now strong evidence that the coastal area of South China, including Hong Kong, was inhabited as early as 4000 B.C. and probably much earlier 5000 to 6000 B.C. It was the migration route of people from South East Asia and later from North China; these tribes were boatmen travelling by sea along the coast, or nomadic hunters from the mountainous regions of North Laos or cultivators of the rich deltas of 'Further India', i.e. Indo-China. Hong Kong constitutes in that respect an important piece in the jigsaw puzzle archaeologists try to reconstruct.

HISTORY OF THE HONG KONG ARCHAEOLOGY

The first person to be interested in the Hong Kong Archaeology seems to have been Mr. C.M. Heanley, who in 1928 wrote an article on the "Hong Kong Celts". Head of the government Vaccine and Bacteriological Dept., Heanley was an amateur geologist, who turned to archaeology as he discovered a great number of stone adzes during his geological walks. He also contributed a few articles in the local Hong Kong Naturalist. In 1932 he and J.L. Shellshear of the Hong Kong University read a paper on Hong Kong Prehistory, at the 1st. Congress of 'Praehistorica Asiae Orientalis', held in Hanoi. (Near the Hoabinhian finds which will later dominate the whole Archaeological literature of South East Asia and the South Seas.) In 1928 Shellshear contributed a paper at the Proceedings of the 1st International Congress of prehistory and Proto-Historic Sciences, in London.

About that time Hong Kong was visited by van Stein Callenfels and probably Dr. H. Oetly Beyer, as both mention Hong Kong collection in their writings. Another important visitor was C.H.K. von Koenigswald, a paeloontologist, who met the local archaeologist and visited the sites. He later contributed in the discovery and identification of the remains of Pithecanthropus and Meganthropus in 1926-39. He also arrived at the discovery of "Gigantoxithicus", an extinct giant ape, by examining Chinese medicinal "Dragon Bones" or teeth in Chinese drug shops.

In 1935 and subsequent year W. Schofield, a government administrator contributed several articles in different Bulletins and Reviews. But the two outstanding names in Archaeology of the region were Rev. R. Maglioni, 1938-52, a Salesian missionary in Kuantuung, near Canton, whose extensive collection is now at the Hong Kong Museum and Rev. Fr. Finn, D.J., 1933-1936 of the Hong Kong University who excavated on Lamma Island and whose finds are recorded and discussed in a book, "Archaeological Finds on Lamma Island, near Hong Kong".

After the war, archaeology was attached to the Geography and Geology Department of the University of Hong Kong - I suppose, because of Fr. Finn's work and also because of Prof. Davis, of the Geography and Geology Department, now Emeritus Prof. at Hong Kong University who was the President of the Society, but in 1953
an archaeological team was formed with rather wide membership recruited not only from University staff and students but also from any one interested in the subject and prepared to help in the field's work and study.

I joined the society in 1960 and with me joined two other members of the St. Francis Xavier's College staff as well as a group of students. I was rather disappointed with the work of the Society. Our group, therefore, decided to have separate outings and so we built up our own collection which was methodically catalogued and studied. It was, at all times available to the society. A great interest arose among our Chinese student members, who spent their spare time doing projects of all sorts: on stone implements and their uses, on pottery sorting and reconstruction on designs, etc. And these projects they eventually exhibited in annual Science Fairs, under the Auspices of the Education Department.

An important event took place in 1961. On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee Congress of the University of Hong Kong, a symposium was held on Historical, Archaeological and Linguistic Studies in South East Asia and Hong Kong Region. I was one of the participants and attended the meeting as far as my teaching programme allowed me to do so.

When the City Hall Museum was organized in 1970, the Society was somewhat dissociated from the University and became attached to the City Hall Museum. However, the members remained more or less the same.

In the meantime, more sites were discovered along the strongly and deeply indented Hong Kong coastline and with the arrival of new members, some of them with professional training and qualifications, the work of the society became more methodical.

Our group was dissolved in 1972 when I left for Papua New Guinea, but it provided the society with some of the most enthusiastic members. But what spurred the enthusiasm and incited to new methods and extensive studies was the discovery of Shan Wan, a well stratified site on Lamma Island. This site yielded new prehistoric and historic material and has shed new light on present and previous finds, their stratigraphical and chronological interpretation.

As a matter of fact, the site was known to our group long before, and I remember telling my students that this place was an ideal settlement, extremely promising. In fact, we had decided to reserve it for the winter 71/72 holidays for a careful and methodical dig. However, our movements were spied and a few inquiries I made about some lizard or fish skulls I had collected on that spot, gave the place away and someone else has claimed its discovery since. But I am very glad they excavated the site and that they made a very good job of the excavation.

It is amusing to note that in his report in the Journal of the Hong Kong Arch. Society, Vol. III, 1972, Dr. Bard Writes: the site was discovered in March, 1971 by Mr. W. Meucham. There were no surface finds, etc. enquiries revealed that no archaeological work was carried out there before... It was known, however, that a certain number of implements in our collection bore the mark of that place and that an enquiry among the villagers of the area would have revealed that our group had made frequent visits to that place because we actually borrowed their tools and they shared the food and drinks we had brought with us.
The intrusion into our fieldwork by some members of the Society angered the students in spite of my trying to reason them into accepting the fact and join- ing them which they eventually did. But on one occasion, when the Great W.G. Solheim II visited the site in June 1971, the only thing that was found during the digging of a trench was that the site was "likely to prove of rich importance." The following day some boys returned to the site and knowing that the finds were located deeper, continued to dig and came back with potsherds, artifacts and a Han dynasty coin.

Geographically, Hong Kong is part of South China, the Kuantung Province, a few miles from its capital, Canton. It is situated near the delta of the Hungshui and Si rivers, at the end of a wide estuary, the Pearl River, that leads to Canton. The first European traders referred to is as "Boca Tigris" and were rather reluctant to enter it and preferred to reside in Macau which is on the opposite bank of the same estuary. Hong Kong is a rather small peninsula surrounded by some 300 islands, big and small. Being hilly and mountainous, it's coastline is deeply cut forming numerous protective, often sandy, bays. The western plain was still under water half a century ago as is now the northwestern region covered with brackish water marshes. Hills and mountains were most probably covered with forests dominated by the Cunninghamia lanceolata which still existed in parts, till the development of the colony. On the now denuded hills along the shores one can see straight grooves dug up from the top to the bottom of the hills. These were probably used to let slip down the tree trunks after they were felled and trimmed of their branches, and to be loaded on boats.

Hong Kong is closely connected with the deltas of Indo-China through plains and waterways as well as by sea. It is only 800km from Hanoi and the Red river alluvial plain. Note also, that most of the great rivers of this peninsula as well as those of West and North China, originate roughly from the same region, North of Laos and Plateau of Yunnan. This aspect is important in the development of cultures and the migrating movements.

Because of its connection with the well irrigated S. China plains and especially because of its coastal line offering protection against hostile tribes, and shelter against hostile elements (typhoons), Hong Kong has been since the early Neolithic and most likely late Mesolithic a link between South East and North-West Asia.

This is a daring hypothesis, and the supporting evidence has to be mighty strong and plentiful, all the more because it irritates the Chinese nationalism which clung to the belief that all cultural thrust in the South originated from the fabulous North China dynasties of Shang, Chu and Han. The hypothesis can be stated as follows: "between 6000 and 4000 B.C. Thai racial tribes possessing indonesian, melanesian, negrito and mongoloid characters inhabited the Hong Kong Region". Reason? Most likely the rising sea level during the post-Pleocene, after the last Glaciation.

Evidence. Most, if not all the archeological sites in Hong Kong are situated on raised beaches in bays possessing permanent running water and sheltering from typhoons. Now, apart from minor fluctuations, the sea started rising ca. 4000 B.C. to keep more or less its present level. Of course, it is possible that submerged earlier sites exist - a pilot flying a helicopter told me that he had noticed some kind of timbs in the Toto Harbor water. However this has never been verified. In the same region around 1960, a lady found on
emerged rocky island artifacts of a very primitive character. Unfortunately, she left the colony taking the implements with her. I never had the chance to see them. In the same area, I myself have collected some stone implements which appear to be typically Baosongian, and can be dated as early Neolithic (Neolithic Inferieur). Similar thin black stones with parallel lines were found in Laos and Java.

Overwhelming evidence, backed by C14 reading in many coastal areas of a number of countries show that "between 16,000 and 6000 B.C. occurred the greatest and fastest rise of sea yet discovered in the geological records, (Fairbridge, 1960) It was observed in Mediterranean, Atlantic, Taiwan, Philippine, Japan ... China coast, Indo-China...I think we can safely say that this evidence is also valid for our area, short of tectonic movements. However, in comparison with neighbouring areas, the correlation between dates and levels seems to follow the same pattern during the Holocene.

When we consider the skill of these sea people in producing stone tools of all kinds, weapons, ornaments, their ability as potters, their inventiveness in producing a great number and variety of patterns, their greatly developed aesthetic skill in manufacturing all these articles, we can say that they had developed a rather high culture and superior technology. These assets they brought to South China and even further North according to forthcoming evidence and latest archaeological conclusions.

LINGUISTIC

The evidence of a linguistic aspect is rather difficult to establish. But prominent scholars (Lacouperie, 1895, Forrest, 1965) using complicated methods have established the use of Tai and Mon-Khmer as pre-China and have located its position in prehistoric China. For example, in the feudal states of Ch'u and Wu, the earliest words known going back to 663 B.C. have definite Tai characteristics, still recognisable after 2000 years (Wiens, 1952). When the influence of the Northerners during the Han became too strong, the Tai were either absorbed or rejected and the language changed. But in the South, Cantonese language being inhibited in its evolution by the Tai sounds remained closer to the Ancient Chinese pronunciation than the Mandarin. Pockets of Tai speaking people still exist in Kwangsi, Kweichow, Hainan. It is ironic that the people of Vietnam, after being for centuries subjected to the Chinese influence, rejecting the real Tais to the Mountains are still designated by the name Yuet, which mean barbarians.

ETHNOLOGICAL

Several Sinologists, notably W. Eberhard, Hsu Sung-Shih, and Eric von Eickstedt agree that various Tai and Mon-Khmer cultures have been predominant in early South and Central China. Tai groups settled on the coastal areas from the Red River Delta to the Shantung Province and the Yangtze basin from 4th-3rd M and earlier. They specialized in wet-rice cultivation.

The Miao Yao were mountain dwellers characterized by hunting, gathering, and/or slash-and-burn agriculture. They were centred in Hunan and Hopei and the mountains of the South.

According to Eberhard the Lungshan culture should be considered as "A stratification of Tai, Tungus and North", (i.e. Yangshao) culture, with respective traits of rice-cultivation, hunting-gathering, and large scale animal breeding.
Under the pressure of a higher culture, developed in the North, the Tai were easily assimilated during the Han expansion. However, Hsu Sung-shih (1939) studies of the bloodstock components in the present day population gives an idea of the extent of the Tai Descendants in Kwangtung and Kwangsi Provinces. 60% of the population are of Chuang, i.e. Tai antecedents.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

Up to lately, any geometric design on pottery was attributed to the Shang influence, that is imitation of designs on bronze. Now some sites in Hong Kong have yielded pre-geometric pottery that is soft geometric, white instead of grey. With this ceramic are associated special stone implements like stepped adzes, shoulder adzes, lead-shaped points, etc. this horizon is certainly earlier than Shang and can be dated 2000 B.C. In fact, a similar layer in China (Pao Ma Ling, Kiangsi) has been carbon-dated 2335 B.C.

Furthermore, we have in Hong Kong, at a depth of 1.70 to 2.50m an earlier culture, that of incised pottery, underlying the Geometric one. A similar horizon yielded a C-14 of 3395 (Sung Che, Shanghai) and 2750 B.C. elsewhere (Chien Shan Yang, Shekian). These two cultures are classified as "Lungshanoid" but the term is misleading for two reasons. (A) because they are earlier than Lungshan and Yangshao, and (B) because they are situated outside that nuclear area, south of the Yangtze River. Besides, the designs on the Pan Shan pottery are reminiscent of fishing and hunting, occupations of Southern cultures rather than Northern ones.

To conclude, I shall quote the end of a short article written by Wilhelm G. Solheim II in the Journal of the Hong Kong Archaeological Society: "It would be logical to suppose that during the warmer periods of the Pleistocene there was a small and relatively random movement of Hoabinhian peoples from South East Asian and South China along the streams and river and the coastline to the north, especially during the last warmer period between 42,000 and 35,000 B.C. These people would have mixed with those who had lived in the north through the colder weather. With the warming weather at the end of the Pleistocene, there was probably again such a gradual movement introducing new elements into the northern cultures. The soils and ecological conditions to the north of the Yangtze drainage were so different from those to the South that the cultural and genetic contributions of the peoples from the Hoabinhian south were no doubt of secondary importance to the local cultures which would have been much better adapted to the local conditions. I suggest, however, that there was an important contribution of a cultural nature from the south into the evolving Yang-shao cultures. These hypothesized contributions from South China to the north, contributing to the Yang-shao cultures and through the Lungshan leading to Shang-Yin culture, would mean that South China was at least an equal partner with North China in the development of Chinese civilisation."
REFERENCES

Daniel J. Finn, S.J. - Archaeological Finds on Lamma Island near Hong Kong. Ricci Hall of Hong Kong University, 1958.


The Hong Kong Archaeological Society. Society Journal Vol. I to V 1968-74

Bard S.M. - A survey of prehistoric sites in the Hong Kong region.

University of Hong Kong Golden Jubilee Congress, Sept. 11 - 16, 1961.


