

**PAINTED DESIGNS**  
on  
**RAINFOREST ABORIGINAL SHIELDS**  
from  
**NORTH QUEENSLAND:**

*An Analysis of Correlation Between  
Design Styles and Geographical Distribution*

by  
Ranna-Lesley Lachlan  
(formerly Ranna Hale at the time of submission)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the possibility of a correlation between geographical distribution of the large wooden shields made by the Aboriginal people of the north Queensland rainforest and the designs appearing on the shields. The early chapters do this through an examination of the relationship between design and shield morphology for which a previous study had indicated correlation with geographical distribution (Abernethy 1984). Detailed analyses of the design symmetries and the relationships between these design symmetries, shield shapes, and the recorded distributions of language groups within the rainforest are also presented. In part, the study is also an attempt to find, without the benefit of field data, a theoretical and methodological basis for the study both of art and design on anthropological artefacts and the geographical distribution of artefacts on the basis of such art and design.

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*Ranna-Lesley Lachlan*

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