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Island Archaeology: In Search of a New Horizon Arie Boomer & Alistair J. Bright Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University Leiden, The Netherlands HYPERLINK "mailto:aboomer@hotmail.com" aboomer@hotmail.com HYPERLINK "mailto:a.j.bright@arch.leidenuniv.nl" a.j.bright@arch.leidenuniv.nl

Abstract This paper charts the academic development of "island archaeology" from its roots in Darwinist and anthropological island studies through island biogeography to processual and post-processual archaeology. It is argued that the rarely made explicit yet fundamental premise of island archaeology that insular human societies show intrinsic characteristics essentially dissimilar from those on mainlands is false. The persistence of this misconception is due in part to the emphasis on islands as ideal units of analysis. It is suggested that island societies should be studied at the level of the archipelago and/or mainland coastal setting within their maritime cultural framework, ultimately leading up to an archaeology of maritime identity. Keywords: Caribbean, insularity, island archaeology, maritime identity, Mediterranean, Oceania Copyright © 2007. Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. Island Studies Journal, Vol.2, No. 1, 2007, pp. 3-26