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Nota di contenuto	Contents; Figures and Tables; Preface; Acknowledgements; Note on Calibration of Radiocarbon Dates; Chapter 1 The Archaeology of Deserts: Australia in Context; Positioning This Research; Australia's Deserts; The Ecological Background; The Deserts People; Human Ecology; The Archaeology of Deserts; The Politics of Practice; Chapter 2 Deserts Past: A History of Ideas; The Dead Heart of Australia; Desert Societies; Ancient Petroglyphs; The `Great Australian Arid Period'; Shifts in Climatic Belts; Culture Histories; Physical Anthropology; Stone Tools; Historical Linguistics The Australian Desert CultureLake Mungo and the Willandra Lakes; Initial Colonisation of the Desert; Beyond the Willandra; Desert Refugia;

Islands in the Interior; 'The Australian Aboriginal as an Ecological Agent'; A Land Transformed?; Landesque Capital; Social Intensification; Writing the History of the Desert; Chapter 3 The Empty Desert: Inland Environments Prior to People; The 'Desert Transformation' Concept; Age and Origin of Australia's Deserts; The Last Interglacial in Australian Deserts; Quaternary Context; Lakes and Saltlakes; Lake Eyre: 'A Continental Rain Gauge'; Other Inland Lakes  
The Arid Rivers Desert Dunes and Dust; Inland Vegetation during the Last Interglacial; Last of the Dryland Megafauna; The Katapiri Fauna; Lake Callabonna; Population Ecology; Collapse of the Katapiri Fauna; Genyornis; Overview: The Desert Prior to People; Interglacial Landscapes; The Landscapes of Colonisation; Chapter 4 Foundations: Moving into the Deserts; The Continental Setting; A Modicum of Ideas; Invasion Biology; Geographic Background to Colonisation of the Desert; Routes; Early Sites: Chronology and Distribution; Northern Desert Fringe; The Willandra Lakes and Lower Darling River  
Cuddie Springs The Arid West Coast; Pilbara; Nullarbor Plain; Central Australia; Western Desert; Desert People; WLH1 (Mungo 1); WLH3 (Mungo 3); Assemblages and Site Inventories; Subsistence and Economy; Ecological Impacts; Discussion: Moving into the Deserts; A Global Perspective; Dispersal and Colonisation; Desert Societies 45-30 Ka; Chapter 5 Islands in the Interior: Last Glacial Aridity and Its Aftermath; Ideas about Refugia: Archaeological Frameworks; The Contraction of Settlement; Life in Glacial Refugia; Reoccupation of Desert Lowlands; Where Are the Refugia? Biogeographic Perspectives  
Inland Environments during the Last Glacial Maximum The Impact on Australian Drylands; Implications for Human Ecology in the Interior; The Archaeological Record 30-12 Ka; Interpreting Site Histories and Stratigraphy; The Desert Uplands; Central Australia; The Inland Pilbara; Other Desert Uplands; The Arid Core; The Lake Eyre Basin; The Problem of the Sandy Deserts; The Shifting Margins; The Carpentarian Gorge Systems; The Arid West Coast; The Nullarbor; The Darling River and Willandra Lakes; Discussion: The Last Glacial Maximum Revisited  
Chapter 6 The 'Desert Culture' Revisited: Assembling a Cultural System

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### Sommario/riassunto

This is the first book-length study of the archaeology of Australia's deserts, one of the world's major habitats and the largest block of drylands in the southern hemisphere. Over the last few decades, a wealth of new environmental and archaeological data about this fascinating region has become available. Drawing on a wide range of sources, *The Archaeology of Australia's Deserts* explores the late Pleistocene settlement of Australia's deserts, the formation of distinctive desert societies, and the origins and development of the hunter-gatherer societies documented in the classic nineteenth-century ethnographies of Spencer and Gillen. Written by one of Australia's leading desert archaeologists, the book interweaves a lively history of research with archaeological data in a masterly survey of the field and a profoundly interdisciplinary study that forces archaeology into conversations with history and anthropology, economy and ecology, and geography and Earth sciences.

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