

RAPA NUI JOURNAL

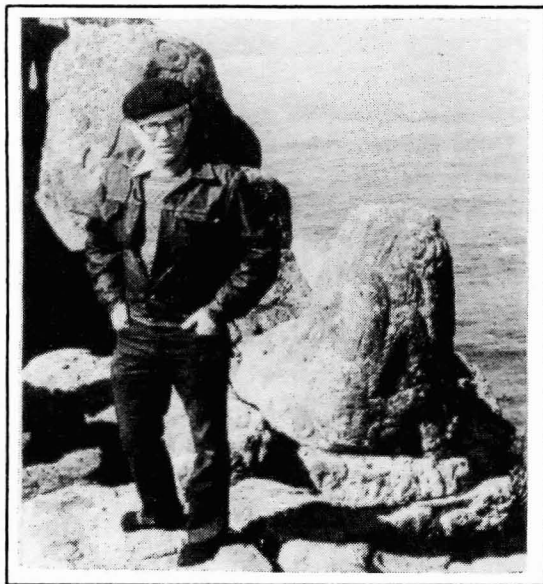
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Contemplate The Navel of the World

William Mulloy

Many readers have asked us to reprint Bill Mulloy's paper, which originally appeared in *Américas* Vol. 26:4 1974, a monthly magazine published by the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States in English, Spanish and Portuguese. It is as perceptive and timely now as it was then.



William Mulloy at Orongo

The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970s the world will undergo famines--hundreds of millions of people are going to starve to death in spite of any crash programs embarked upon now. Nothing could be more misleading to our children than our present affluent society. They will inherit a totally different world in which the standards, politics, and economics of the 1960s are dead." Many have read these grim words from the prologue of the recent book *The Population Bomb* by Paul Ehrlich, professor of biology at Stanford University, and most have forgotten them as too painful to remember.

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Nicknames and What They Mean

Grant McCall

"A nickname is the heaviest stone that the devil can throw at a man". William Hazlitt, *Nicknames*.

Language by its nature is tied to a community. To speak a language is to know a community; hearing unfamiliar speech close to oneself can make people uneasy.

All of us who live in multi-ethnic ("multicultural" is the term in Australia) societies have experienced the ill-ease of being in a situation where a language is being used by others who we do not know. Is there some kind of a minor paranoia built into the human psyche, or, perhaps, exaggerated sense of self-importance, that makes people think that *others* always are talking about them?

No one is more susceptible to such feelings than the tourist travelling in foreign climes, away from familiar signs and known routines. That which gives tourism its pleasure, experiencing the unknown, provokes in some its greatest fear which, at its most acute, becomes disabling "culture shock".

On the other hand, tourists *are* objects of derision; sometimes it is the only way that a local, poor population can deal with foreign, wealthy people in their midst. Ridicule becomes the defense of feelings of powerlessness and anybody who has been on the local, receiving end of tourism can appreciate those kind of responses. Make that local population the possessors of a little-known language and give them lively imaginations, and you have the Rapanui situation.

M. Dodds letter in the Winter 1990/91 issue of *Rapa Nui Journal*, prompts me to think about nicknames on the world's most remote continuously inhabited place, whose ethnic group is one of the smallest in the world, a fact of which many are acutely aware (See McCall 1975).

The Rapanui community was a tightly sealed one, as far as we know, before outsiders first turned up in 1722. If there were ancient contacts with others, very little was left in the culture, particularly the language and the physical anthropology. The Rapanui, perhaps as prehistoric voyagers to the Americas, brought back those items they liked and adapted them to their unique society (McCall 1977; 1979a ; see also Ramirez 1990/91).

After 1722, Rapanui continued to take what they liked from the over one hundred ships that visited the place to 1862, and there is plenty of evidence for this (McCall 1976; 1977).

Following 1862, slave raids, disease, resident missionary contact and out-migration reduced the Rapanui population to some 110 by 1877. There were few resident outsiders (Jean Baptiste Onésime Dutrou-Bornier, Christian Smith, Tati Solomon, etc.) in the nineteenth century who adapted to local life, which recovered to re-start a local monarchy, becoming an elected one in 1892. Annexation by Chile took place in 1888, but the colonisation of the place was restricted, restrained; the resident, Pedro Pablo Toro (brother of the naval captain who promoted the Chilean claim), having no more than twenty-two outsider settlers there at any one time (See McCall 1977).

After the Toro's fortunes declined, Rapanui was abandoned to its king and court up to 1898, when Alberto Sanchez Manterola arrived and firmly imposed the heavy hand of colonial power on the population, sending the young King Riro to assassination in Valparaiso the following year. A series of Managers of the, by then established, sheep ranch, were joined (from 1915 onwards) by resident agents of the Chilean government. But, until after World War II, the local foreign population never numbered more than a dozen or so. Inter-marriage, or any lasting relationship with outsiders, was rare (Cardinali, Pont and Beatriz Perez being the early exceptions), although a number of offspring were produced with several non-Rapanui, who stayed for anything from a few hours to some years.

Due to Chilean government regulations and controls, travel off the island by Rapanui was rare, although, over this century, nearly fifty persons have tried in clandestine voyages to find their freedom, half of them dying in the attempt.

The first point that I am making is that until very recently, the world of the Rapanui was confined to their island. In fact, the day-to-day world for most was the small settlement of Hangaroa, around which a stone fence had been built to contain them!

Since resident outsiders were few, there was a clear and unambiguous Rapanui community, reflected in a rich and evolving language. Outsiders were *tangata hiva*, although some few nationalities were distinguished, such as *harani* (French), *marie* (American), *paratani* (British) and *tire* (Chilean). This reflected the restricted contact that the Rapanui had with outsiders and who most of those were.

Outsider males were called *kape* ("captain" or boss) and this avoided having to pronounce difficult foreign names; *kape* is still the term used to refer to outsider males, whether in authority or not, although *mauku* ("grass" or

"weed") has become a reference term to non-official Chileans increasingly to be found on the island today.

For much of this contact history, the division of the world was a clear US and THEM, and some Rapanui feel this way still. Along with that was an US and THEM world. US became--in the last century-- Catholicism, in the by now particular Rapanui practice; also, the language. There was a local prestige system, based on age, but also accomplishment (McCall 1983). Local government, through prestige, existed and persons were consulted for their opinion, and people defined family by descent from a particular, named ancestor (McCall 1980). THEM were the local, outsider officials, their practices and language(s), visitors of various sorts and what went on elsewhere. Through the period of association with Chile, the island has been the subject of speculation, planning and, for the state and its armed forces, prestige. Numerous committees have come and gone to aid the Rapanui; plans for ports, tropical development, even mass colonisation, have been heatedly discussed, but all far away. That was what THEY did and thought.

One senior Rapanui once remarked to me: "Before, this island was a free island; you could do what you wanted".

I was puzzled at that statement, since, before 1966, the Rapanui were confined to their township for the most part, unable to visit even ancestral lands, much less travel overseas. The Chilean Navy, particularly in the 1950s and early 60s, imposed a severe regimen on the Islanders, with public floggings and other forms of humiliation featured.

No, what my friend was talking about was the level of bureaucratic control experienced by the Rapanui. Before the opening up of Rapanui, and its full civil status in 1966, provoked, it must be said, by a declaration of human rights by an educated Islander, control through required schooling, registration, tax and the like, was minimal.

There was a Civil Registry from 1915, but those books were kept by THEM and are incomplete in their early years. Even the content of baptismal records, which are very complete, was more THEM than US.

Especially THEM were names. People did choose *ingoa* (name) from the Catholic Christian list and Juan, Maria and the usual abound. Sometimes, these names had a meaning: they might be chosen because an ancestor was called that; sometimes, the priest or other outsider might contribute the name. Until recently, though, the use of these names was mostly for official purposes. In many cases, these official names were known scarcely to anyone and never used (See McCall 1986 for a full description). Instead, most in that tight community were known by *ingoa rapanui*, what outsiders would call "nicknames".

The ancient system of naming, in common with many other small scale societies, was based upon community knowledge. Names commemorated something, and could change throughout the lifetime of an individual. People

could have more than one name and different parts of the population would use the name appropriate to their micro-community.

So, before baptisms and long before the Civil Registry, names were highly individual and anchored the person in the community.

Names commemorated kinship, as in descent from a particular person, or an incident in someone's life. Sometimes, the incident would be in the life of the person bearing the name, or other times, it would be something that happened to a relative. This sort of naming system exists still in much of Oceania.

When baptism came, and priests forbade "heathen" names, a person was given an *ingoa papetito* (baptism name), "Juan", with his or his father's name being the surname. So, a man called "Rano" was baptised by the French missionaries with the Tahitian version of "Stephen", Tepano. Rano, and several others, were baptised "Tepano" because that was the name of the Bishop of Tahiti at that time.

A census made in 1886 by "Paea", as Tati Solomon was known on Rapanui, is a kind of insular Domesday Book, listing all who live there and their titles, and rather froze this naming system.

When the Chileans came along, with their different naming system, whereby each person has both the father's and the mother's surname, a further complication was added. Tepano Rano went to Chile in the 1890s and worked in the Army. He took on another name, "Juan" and used his former personal name, "Tepano" as his father's surname, with his own personal name, "Rano", as his mother's surname!

Just because *ingoa papetito* came to be required, it did not affect the continuation of *ingoa rapanui* which is the local, internal naming system, both as a term of reference and a term of address.

Some people received *ingoa rapanui* at birth, as a commemoration of an ancestor, while others acquired theirs in the course of their lifetime. Those acquired as adults or children seemed to be related to social control and pass through stages of intensity.

Social control was most commonly carried out through teasing, gossip and nicknaming (local names) (see McCall 1979b).

A person, either as a child or adult, performs an action that is inappropriate, such as talking too much about something, doing something which is not suitable for their status or some how stands out in the ebb and flow of small community life. This person is then teased by someone about that action, usually directly, with the relevant word or phrase embedded in a sentence. In all small communities, teasing is a powerful form of social control: people are loathe to stand out. Until recently, public teasing for

inappropriate behaviour was institutionalised in the satirical 'ei songs (Campbell 1964:314).

If the action is particularly outrageous or noteworthy, an account of the action, with the relevant word or phrase, is circulated as **gossip**. Gossip is an act of collusion; information exchanged by two persons about a usually absent third party. Here, the action becomes part of the community, or, at least, a segment of it. It is firmly US.

At some point, the relevant word or phrase is transformed into an *ingoa rapanui*.

Some examples:

A young man, the last in a large family, was regarded by his family as a weakling. One day, he came home with a large bundle of sticks. People teased him for carrying such a burden, a cargo (*carga*) like a ship. The laughable deed circulated and his *ingoa rapanui* today remains that: *carga*.

An outsider official tried to enliven his motivational speeches with Rapanui words and he urged the community to work together, *anga hakapiri*. People teased him for using the word *hakapiri* so often and it became his *ingoa rapanui*.

A Rapanui with a lively wit, who people say can enliven any conversation, either by provoking laughter or conflict is called by some *Oporo*, which means "Chili Pepper". His words are hot or stinging like that of the spicy fruit.

Names can change in their interpretation over time and between different sectors of the community. Some persons say that the well-known Rapanui personality, Kiko, is called that because he is fat; ie, has lots of *kiko* (meat). Others affirm that he is called Kiko because it is a shortened version of the name of one of his ancestors, "Arakiko".

Just as the person who teases another has a special relationship with his or her victim, so it is the same with gossip. When one gossips about another, there is a presumption of special knowledge.

Similarly, there was always some particular person, usually claiming or having intimate knowledge of the victim, who originates the nickname. People who have that intimate knowledge themselves can recount how, when and from whom a particular *ingoa rapanui* appeared. That is part of being in a community and demonstrating one's knowledge of it. Part of being US and not THEM.

Some *ingoa rapanui* are innocently placed. That is, the person has performed no particular action. *Fea* (ugly) is from childhood; a man baptised as "Adolfo" people know commonly as "Hitler", since his family named him for that German figure; *Dutron* is the name given to a boy by his grandmother because of his resemblance in character (obstinacy) to an outsider ancestor, Dutrou Bornier.

M. Dodds is correct in that there is a special class of *ingoa rapanui*, which we might call "local names" and these serve to identify outsiders to the Rapanui community. He is incorrect, though, that nicknames are reserved largely for outsiders: very few resident outsiders, and even fewer tourists, merit *ingoa rapanui*.

In the first instance, such names have come about since outsider (THEM) names were difficult to pronounce, even if they were known. Some of these names are descriptive, but critical too, such as the "killer whale" quoted by Dodds. Others refer to appearance, so that the *ingoa* is readily linked to the person. Henry Percy Edmunds was the Manager of the sheep ranch for twenty-nine years: people knew him as *Rehe-Rehe*, because he walked with a floppy, swinging gate. Mr. Edmunds functional ancestor, Dutrou Bornier, was *Pito-pito*, because of the many shiny buttons on the uniform jacket he always wore.

The point, then, is that the knowledge and use of *ingoa rapanui* is a marker of knowledge of local affairs; a sign of intimacy, that one knows. Rapanui who have been away from the island for a while find they have to be briefed by their relatives about changes in community onomastics, the study of names.

As I mentioned, not all Rapanui have *ingoa rapanui*, including some very prominent persons in the community. And, very few outsiders bear the dubious distinction of such nomenclature. Others, as I mentioned above, may have more than one, depending upon the part of the community involved. As an outsider, during my first fieldwork, from 1972-1974, teknomy operated and I was known by the name of my son, *Mungo*. Most Rapanui (indeed most non-English speakers, it seems) find *Grant* an impossible combination to render easily. The person who gave me that name did so because she had a lot to do with Mungo and my wife.

More recently, her nephew has been popularising another name for me: *Matamu'a*. Translated as "the past" or "old days", it is a comment on the fact that I am always asking people about the past, about their history. Whether this name gains currency will depend upon future usage. Most commonly, a simple transliteration of my surname, *Maako*, is sufficient to identify me to most in the community.

To counter William Hazlitt's grim remark, the weight of *ingoa rapanui* is not its content, it is the action of inclusion in a community, with its obligations and worries.

Rapanui's interest for me has been always its lively, contemporary population. The more I come to know other Pacific island populations, the more I come to appreciate what a powerful and unique people the Rapanui are. The Rapanui are the real treasure of the island, the *moai*, *rongo-rongo* and other pieces from the past merely are a confirmation of their abiding genius.

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MULLOY continued.....

We have required considerably more than a million years to fill our world with over three billion people. Most of us find such time intervals and numbers as well as their frightful implications so vast as to be almost meaningless. It is difficult to evaluate them.

A remote Chilean island, known to its prehistoric inhabitants as Te Pito o te Henua or The Navel of the World, provides an illustration of the essential nature of the problem in the kind of limited context that this writer, at least, can more clearly comprehend. That tiny mote of land, better known today as Easter Island, is one of the earth's inhabited places most isolated by the sea. Investigation of its unusually independent arena of human struggle for survival is beginning to reveal on its microcosmic stage some striking parallels to this decisive dilemma of the world at large.

The miniature universe is only fourteen miles long and is the easternmost island of Polynesia. The formerly wooded, but now grass covered, intersecting slopes of three great volcanoes include a triangle of about forty-five square miles of good volcanic soil interspersed with lava flows and satellite cones. Pitcairn, of *Bounty* mutineer fame, about fourteen hundred miles to the west, is the nearest inhabited

island, and one must sail a full twenty-three hundred miles to the east before reaching the coast of South America. Location near the border of the Southern Tropical and Temperate Zones provides the most pleasant of temperate climates. For the most part, coasts are rocky escarpments with few beaches and good anchorages are lacking. Though the subsurface peripheries of the island slope too sharply from the shore to permit the formation of a coral reef and thus there is no lagoon, fishing is reasonably good.

Neither prehistoric Polynesians nor American Indians are known to have been capable of precise and systematic navigation over the vast distances that separate this island from the rest of the inhabited world. Thus this remote place would appear to have been populated by one, or more likely several, small parties of lost seafarers forever unable to return to their original homes. Single canoeloads of such wanderers may have arrived at widely separated times. Comparative research has suggested the Marquesas and Mangareva as likely places from which they came, though some South American Indians also may have been involved as well as people from other Pacific islands. Such lucky landfalls could only have been rare and survivors had to develop their life way in a new environment with significantly less of the stimulation of external ideas so vital to communities in most other parts of the world. Nevertheless, in sharp contrast to the experience of most isolated peoples and for reasons still largely enigmatic, they developed a surprisingly complex culture, including such unexpected symbols of advancement as a written language still undeciphered and not known to be related to any other script, a class-organized society with enough coercive power to assemble large crews for spectacular public works projects, an organized priesthood, systematic knowledge of solar movements, an impressive religious architecture utilizing precisely cut and fitted stones weighing many tons, highly stylized stone sculpture productive of about a thousand statues some of which weigh hundreds of tons, and the engineering procedures necessary to transport and erect them. Under such unusual conditions of isolation these achievements reflect an industrious community and evoke genuine astonishment. Clearer understanding of the forces that encouraged them would enrich significantly our theoretical knowledge of the mechanism of human cultural advancement in general.

As the Pacific was one of the last parts of the world to be exploited by man, the florescence of this accomplishment could only have been as rapid as it was independent. The earliest reliable radiocarbon date so far discovered is A.D. 690. It establishes the time of construction of one of the many gigantic outdoor altars--an architectural undertaking certainly not the first activity of new immigrants. A community undoubtedly had been developing for many years before this date and it is thus not unreasonable to

assume that people were already living here about two thousand years ago.

Though the stockpile of ideas brought from the earliest homelands might have been rendered more ample and diverse than one would suspect by arrivals from a considerable number of other islands and perhaps the South American continent as well, another important key stimulation to advancement clearly resulted from a curious turn in religious expression developed from ideas widely known in Polynesia. Certainly before the time of our earliest radiocarbon date, these islanders had already embarked upon the most remarkable religious building and sculpturing obsession known anywhere in the Pacific. This was to establish the orientation of much that followed. The typical architectural product was a variety of Polynesian outdoor altar locally called *ahu*. Similar, though less spectacular, sanctuaries are found on many other Polynesian islands, there they are frequently called *marae*. The Easter Island *ahus* were elongated masonry platforms sometimes approaching two hundred yards in length and twenty feet high. They were usually built along and close to the shores, and frequently included precisely fitted, unmortared stones weighing many tons. From the inland side of the platforms descended paved, sloping ramps to border spacious plazas on which worshippers assembled. Just inland were rows of houses occupied by the priesthood. Common people appear to have lived even further inland. Eventually most shores became dotted with hundreds of such sanctuaries and they spilled over into the interior. *Ahus* were enlarged and rebuilt as capacities increased, with new and increasingly ostentatious features being added in a way reminiscent of the competitive motivations of our own society.

At some point during this architectural florescence stone statues began to be carved and erected alone or in rows on the *ahu* platform. These, we are told by local legends, represented ancestors of special importance in the religious beliefs, and in them was thought to reside the impersonal supernatural power called *mana* which protected the communities that owned them. The earliest sculpture tended toward crude and naturalistic human forms that eventually developed gigantic size and an endlessly repeated highly distinctive local style known to the world of today as the special hallmark of Easter Island. The largest of these brooding and disdainful figures ever transported to an altar weighs more than eighty-three tons and is over thirty feet high. Unfinished examples more than twice that height call attention to the ambitious self-confidence of the long dead engineers who appear to have felt capable of undertaking the transportation and erection of even the colossal monoliths. Most statues were carved from a buff-colored volcanic tuff in a great quarry located high on the steep interior and exterior slopes of a large satellite volcanic cone called Rano Raraku.

Here they were finished almost completely, including fine detail, before being detached from the living rock and lowered to the plain below. Over two hundred unfinished examples remain today in the quarry, illustrating every phase of a highly systematic sculpturing process. Others stand at the foot of the slopes apparently awaiting transportation to their *ahu*.

Statues were transported face down on prepared roads, probably on wooden sledges pulled by many men. The details of the techniques used remain mysterious. Considerable evidence indicates that the hundreds of statues that stood on altar platforms were erected by gradually constructing masonry supports under them as they were elevated by many long levers. As statues became larger and engineering methods developed, large cylindrical topknots called *pukao* began to be placed on the heads of some of the gigantic figures. They were made of contrasting red scoria and were carved in another crater quarry called Punapau, whence they were rolled to their *ahu* destinations. The delicate mechanics of balancing an eleven-ton topknot on the head of a thirty-foot statue may well be the more remarkable engineering achievement performed by these islanders. Today we can only speculate on how they did it.

Religious building stimulated other construction. The network of roads with their cuts and fills that permitted statue and topknot transportation was extensive. Paved ramps were built into the sea to bring ashore large canoes and thus the problem of the scarcity of good beaches was solved. Fantastically shaped volcanic tubes and other kinds of caves were sometimes lined with masonry to form dwellings, refuges, and other structures of more obscure purpose. The precisely carved foundation stones of the boat-shaped, thatched houses occupied by the priesthood are seen everywhere in the vicinity of the *ahu*. Cylindrical towers of unknown purpose are dispersed along the shores, and crematory platforms reflect death customs. Masonry-walled agricultural terraces and enclosures attest to the careful conservation of limited soil resources. Thousands of bas-relief carvings, some of heroic proportions, adorn available rock surfaces.

The ceremonial center of Orongo astride the narrow crest of the nearly mile-wide crater of the volcano called Rano Kau includes some forth-seven masonry houses and was the site of annual religious rites during which specially trained athletes were sent swimming through shark infested waters to the off-shore islet of Motu Nui. Here the one lucky enough to find and bring back the first egg of the Sooty Tern gained special ceremonial privileges for his sponsor during the following year. This Easter Island egg hunt was a part of spring ceremonies dedicated to the cult of the *Manutara*, as the Sooty Tern was called. It appears to have been a late feature of the religious practice.

Such spectacular building and ceremonial activities required a society as delicately balanced as were the topknots on the ancestor images and capable of diverting large numbers of people to construction, sculpture, religious activities, and other work not productive of food. Still remembered legends relate details of a class-organized theocracy with its specialized groups including priests, sculptors, masons, fishermen, agricultural workers, and others. Progressively more of the protective bush was cut down to make available agricultural land for the ever more numerous plantations. These eventually exploited even the most marginal agricultural land. Domination of the natural landscape was intensive and undoubtedly effective in serving the human purpose of the times. Such a people at the climax of its development must have felt great confidence in the future and a powerful sense of the impregnability of its accomplishments. As is twentieth century man, the Easter islanders were technologically successful. Secure in the protection of the supernatural power of their deified ancestors who lined the shores in an unbreechable bulwark against the mysterious dangers of the empty seas and gazed proudly inland upon the achievements of their issue, these industrious islanders must have rejoiced in the solid assurance that their success was permanent.

But disaster hovered and it was not precipitated by enemies from beyond the seas. Forty-five square miles was a finite environment and, with ever-increasing labor-consuming emphasis on religious construction, food had to be produced continually more efficiently by those allotted the task. Food-producing potential was probably never completely exhausted, though its limits may have been approached. It was, however, dependent on the uninterrupted maintenance of what must have been a highly coordinated social mechanism. Even slight disruption might have been expected to be sharply felt by many people. A legend describes trouble and dissension erupting from disagreements about the idea of improving the productivity of agricultural land by removing the surface stones and throwing them into the sea. Animosity once generated appear to have produced their usual reactions, and eventually two groups, the Hanau Eepe and Hanau Momoko, fought a great battle along an entrenched line on the slopes of the volcano Poike. The former are said to have been all but exterminated. Radiocarbon dates and genealogical research agree that this decisive conflict took place about 1680.

A new era appears to have been inaugurated. Very probably because the devastation of war interrupted food production, the established religious aristocracy lost its essentially magical control and the people degenerated into mutually hostile bands controlled by new war leaders called *matatooa*. The hitherto efficient economic equilibrium disintegrated. Crops were burned and farmers prevented

from cultivating in safety. Fishermen were molested and the coordination that had provided food for many non-food producers could no longer be maintained. Though ritual cannibalism may have been present in earlier times, this now became a more practical activity and people were hunted for food. A frequent theme of the legends of this period relates the suffering of fugitives who hid in caves from human predators. The most horrible of atrocities are described.

Religious building and sculpture considered essential for supernatural aid became difficult and eventually impossible. Because labor parties were no longer safe away from their own territories, work at the great statue quarry ceased. To this day the locality speaks eloquently of catastrophe, hopes unfulfilled, and projects suddenly abandoned. Hundreds of gigantic works of art remain unfinished and thousands of stone adzes and picks still rest where they were dropped by the artisans. Even the roads mutely reveal sudden work termination with statue after statue lying abandoned along them in sad commemoration of abandoned struggles for supernatural rewards. The toppling of statues on altars became one of the typical depredations of the time, probably with intent to destroy the supernatural power thought to reside in them. In some cases statues may have been overturned and the masonry of the *ahu* destroyed by their owners who had lost faith in their supernatural support, rather than by enemy groups. In many cases the vandalism was carried out with coldly calculated vindictiveness by placing vertical stone slabs so that statue necks would fall across them and surely be broken. The beautiful masonry of the altars was pried apart and the great stones scattered. The destruction continued until no statues were left standing on altars, and the survivors knew only the rubble. Such extreme reactions suggest people forced beyond endurance by intolerable conditions and finds a sharp parallel in many familiar events of our own century.

The highly ritualized disposal of the dead by cremation was discontinued, probably because the priesthood charged with its supervision no longer functioned, and the vast numbers of often casual inhumations began to be made in the ruins of the *ahu*. In salient contrast to earlier periods, weapons become the commonest items encountered in archaeological deposits of these times. Land lay fallow and the unused plantations developed a sparse short grass cover quite different from the original protective bush. Formerly retained moisture sank quickly into the soil and escaped into the sea. The general cultural level was reduced greatly and the population had decreased to an estimated three or four thousand people by the time the island was discovered by the Dutchman Jacob Roggeveen on Easter Sunday of 1722. He and three other eighteenth century explorers who came after him encountered a remnant people progressively more deprived of the capacity that had produced their earlier

achievements. They survived in an impoverished and grass-covered land that retained slender water resources.

Local conflicts continued while the disorganized and vulnerable community's ability to resist was further reduced until it was easy prey for nineteenth century slavers and whalers. The schooner *Nancy* out of New London, Connecticut, carried away twenty-two people as slaves in 1805. This established a pattern that culminated between 1859 and 1862 in systematic raids by Peruvians who removed about a thousand people to the mainland for use as agricultural laborers. The Bishop of Tahiti with the aid of the French Government about a year later was able to enforce the repatriation of the miserable survivors of overwork and unfamiliar living conditions, who then numbered about a hundred. Of these, only fifteen lived through the ill-fated return voyage to see again the rubble of the Navel of the World. They brought with them the previously unknown gift of smallpox and this, together with other new diseases, wreaked havoc among those who had evaded the slavers. Later a few of the islanders were taken to Mangareva and Tahiti as plantation workers. A population estimate in 1877 recorded only 111 people.

Thus the slave raids and their sequelae wrote the epilogue of a spectacular culture that would appear to have been unable to cope with a population too numerous to maintain the social relationships by which it had adapted to its tiny environment. Once the delicate economic balance was destroyed, the foundation was laid for a sad sequence of later events. With the religious aristocracy dead, the rituals, ceremonies, and values that had made life meaningful were largely forgotten. No one remained who could read it.

The hieroglyphic literature, and the wooden tablets on which it was written were used to eke out the fuel supply in this now nearly treeless land. The architectural ruins remained only as sad mementos of better days, and a source of wonder to visitors. The handful of unhappy and demoralized survivors had reached a profound cultural nadir.

.....to be continued in the next issue

ATTENTION RAPA NUI SCHOLARS.....

The name "Dr. Stephen-Chauvet" is a familiar one to Rapa Nui researchers; however, confusion has resulted from the hyphen between the names. Thanks to Steven R. Fischer, we now can state that the correct spelling does **not** have the hyphen. The correct documentation was found in Patrick O'Reilly, "Stephen Chauvet" *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* (Paris) 6(6):219-221, 1951. This article was Chauvet's official obituary and it includes a text of a letter written by Chauvet himself ---without the hyphen. Chauvet is best known for his book, *La Isla de Pascua y sus misterios*, Empresa Editora Zig-zag, Santiago de Chile, 1965.

Astronomical Orientations in Polynesia

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The virtually irrefutable evidence that some of the ceremonial platforms (*ahu*) on Easter Island were intentionally oriented or positioned astronomically leads one to ask if the Polynesians to the west and north carried out similar practices. One might expect so, and once a well known expert on French Polynesia (and Easter Island) Edmundo Edwards, told me that he thought they probably did.

And so during the past several years my wife, Matty, and I have traveled three times to other Polynesian islands measuring, wherever possible, orientations of *marae* (temples) and other important structures. There is still much to do, but some initial results can now be reported.

So far we have sampled 12 different islands, six in the Society (Tahitian) group; Raratonga and Aitutaki in the Cook Islands, Tongatapu in the Kingdom of Tonga; Upolu in Western Samoa; and Hawai'i and Oahu in the Hawaiian chain. A total of 58 *ahu* orientations have now been measured by us, and in the literature plans can be found for several hundred more. Unfortunately, the early archaeologists seemed not to be very interested in precise directions, and their indicated north directions are only approximate. (Yosihiko Sinoto, who has carefully restored dozens of Polynesian *marae*, is a clear exception; we have found his indicated directions to be accurate to a very few degrees.)

The orientations so far measured reveal no strong evidence of a desire, for whatever reason, to orient temple platforms astronomically. Several explanations come to mind: Few inland *marae* have been measured by us simply because the tropical vegetation has buried many of the ancient monuments; Easter Island is decidedly not tropical and inland *ahu* are usually easily reached and measured. Secondly, unlike Easter Island, all the above islands, except Raratonga and Aitutaki, are within sight of other islands whose often dramatic mountains provide excellent "pointers". Finally, the large population densities along the coasts of many of the islands, especially the Hawaiian, Society, and southern Cook Islands, have brought the destruction of many *marae*. Thankfully, much of Easter Island remains a National Park and most monuments have been reasonably well preserved.

But there are some interesting exceptions and curious orientations, for example, the "Vatican" of Polynesian religion, *Marae Tapatapu-atea* on the east coast of Rai'atea in the Leeward Society Islands. Carefully restored by Sinoto, this temple has a 43-meter-long platform with external walls constructed of huge vertical slabs of coral; its orientation can

be measured precisely. A perpendicular to the impressive 3-meter-high seaward facade points 6.3 degrees to the right of due east. No noteworthy celestial object rises in this direction other than the sun in early March and again in early October, and on occasion the moon and planets. Perhaps one of these two dates was the birthday of an important chief, or one of the Polynesian gods. Or maybe *Tapatapu-atea* was laid out at the time of year when the sun rose in this direction. No legend that I have read gives any clue.

It is rather curious that four other *marae* in the Leewards, all very important and all having dimensions very similar to that of *Tapatapu-atea*, are oriented in the same direction: *Tainuu*, on the west coast and the second most important *marae* on Rai'atea, *Anini* on Huahine Iti; *Matairea-rahi* on Huahine Nui, said to be the second most important temple in Polynesia; and *Marotetini*, the most important *marae* on Bora Bora. All except *Matairea-rahi* are strikingly similar in appearance to *Tapatapu-atea*. It is also interesting that according to legends, *marae* built after *Tapatapu-atea* had to incorporate a stone taken from this holiest shrine "in order to acquire religious prestige" (Buck 1972). Perhaps the similar orientation is no accident.

Farther west, on the Cook Island of Aitutaki, Bellwood (1978) noted the existence of a number of *marae* composed of numerous upright stones, all basalt and mostly over a meter tall, and frequently arranged in straight rows. In *Marae Paengariki*, there were once some sixty such stones placed in six roughly parallel rows, the longest being 40 meters long and aligned 11 degrees to the left of due north. *Marae Tapere* with approximately fifty uprights (the tallest measures 2.8 meters) consists of three roughly parallel rows, the longest (65 meters) oriented 8.5 degrees to the right of due east. And *Marae Rangi O Karo* again has three rows, these oriented towards true azimuths of 178.8, 179.3, and 180.8 degrees, i.e., all very close to due north-south. All three rows, again made up of a total of about fifty stones, are approximately 85 meters long.

Ten other *marae* having similar stone alignments are listed by Bellwood, but some of these had already been badly destroyed or heavily damaged. According to my local guide, the three listed above are the only ones that have not become overgrown by jungle. Two others for which Bellwood shows plans are rather closely aligned north-south: 43-meter long *Kaionu* at 13 degrees azimuth and 24-meter long *Maramanui* at 5 degrees. But as noted earlier, Bellwood's direction indications are only approximate.

It is most interesting that all these alignments are (possibly) within 13 degrees of a cardinal direction. Remember that the Cook Islanders, like all Polynesians, were expert navigators. Aitutaki is located within 350 kilometers of eight other islands, none visible from Aitutake;

travel to and from these islands must have been frequent, and Aitutaki, despite its small size (1x4 km), once supported a sizeable population. These alignments, never more than a few hundred meters from the coast, could have been seen from canoes off shore and would have served a practical navigational purpose--and almost certainly a ritual one, too.

Turning finally to the Kingdom of Tonga, according to tradition, in A.D. 1200 the 11th Tongan king ordered the construction of a trilithon made of massive coral blocks (See Figure 1). Various reasons have been given for why he had it built, but the two uprights, both about 5 meters tall, are said to symbolize his two sons, and the lintel that rests in slots at the top of the uprights signifies the strong bond between them (McKern 1971). Approximately 50 meters towards the north is a monolith 2 meters tall and 1.8 x 0.6 meters in cross section. According to one legend, the trilithon was a gate through which bearers of food passed as the King waited at his throne.



The famous trilithon in Tonga, made from massive coral blocks.

In 1967 it occurred to the newly-crowned (and current) King that the trilithon might have an astronomical connection. The idea came to him while pondering the significance of a small double zig-zag on top of the lintel; his thought was that the arms of this design indicated the directions to the solstice rising points. According the *Island Tour Guide* booklet, "...in his Majesty's gracious presence surveyors took accurate sightings of the rising sun on the morning of the 21st June, and lo and behold it was found that the sun did rise according to His Majesty's expectations...The lintel itself is undoubtedly aligned along the southern-most point at which the sun rises marking the Summer Solstice."

My own measurements fully confirm these statements. Although a small figure cut in rough coral cannot define directions with high accuracy, the smoothly cut lintel 5.7 meters long can; it is directed towards rising declination of --24.7°. (In A.D. 1200 the sun's declination at the summer

solstice was -23.54°) Also well-defined is the true azimuth from the center of the trilithon to the throne stone: 10.6°.

Without further ethnological information, we cannot positively say that the trilithon was intentionally oriented with the Summer solstice. However, the W-shaped mark does indicate the directions to the three significant solar rising points reasonably well (to better than 5°) and suggests that at some point, someone did want to record these directions. The direction towards the throne stone would seem to have no astronomical significance.

In summary, the great number of impressive religious and ceremonial sites in Polynesia begs further archaeo-astronomical investigations. The majority of these structures are, like those on Easter Island, oriented parallel to the nearby shoreline, but some suggest astronomical useage and deserve more study. Expecially noteworthy are the standing stones on Aitutaki and the massive coral Trilithon on Tongo.

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A Look Back.....

24 Years of Tourism on Easter Island

Hanns Ebensten

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When I went to Easter Island with the first groups of tourists twenty-four years ago, a visit to the island was a considerable undertaking. The flight by chartered propeller plane from Chile took twelve hours; the tents in which the intrepid tourists were accomodated were rudimentary; water was scarce; the shortage of wheeled transport made explorations of the archaeological sites difficult. We found a distressed population living in poor houses, everyone dependent for all needs on the capricious arrival of the annual freighter from Chile. The sides of Rano Kau volcano and other parts of the island were disfigured by the wire fences, iron huts, discarded vehicles and broken pieces of machinery of the U.S. Air Force then stationed there. The archaeological sites were unkempt. It was the enthusiasm of Father Sebastian Englert, the island's priest, and the knowledge of Dr. William Mulloy and Dr. Carlyle Smith, the archaeologists working there, which then made a visit to the island memorable and meaningful.

The islanders were strictly confined to Hangaroa village, like serfs. It was grotesque: tourists were allowed to explore the rest of the island, but our drivers, being locals, could not cross the barriers which enclosed Hangaroa and were subjected to bureaucratic delays when they applied for a permit to accompany us.

The U.S. Air Force assisted the first tourists far more than the Chilean authorities; they appreciated the boon that tourism could bring the island economy and set up neat orange containers for litter near the major archaeological sites. When they departed in 1970, they had done far more for the local population during their eight years than Chile had done in eighty years and left behind the infrastructure which made tourism possible--electricity, the airstrip which they had extended and which first put the island in touch with the rest of the world; the roads to the archaeological sites and beaches; and the hospital. The airmen gave plenty of enjoyment to islanders, attended church services, and were popular. No wonder that the island remembers all this with gratitude and that prices are still quoted in U.S. dollars.

The only available evening entertainment was offered in village homes, where everyone who brought a bottle of rum or beer was welcome to join the lively dancing. Since there were usually a few genial old men and women from the leper colony among the guests--cured, but with pathetically disfigured faces--it was somewhat disconcerting when the bottles were passed around from mouth to mouth. But this added to the sense of adventure.

The introduction of the regular air service and twenty-four years of tourism have happily not made one's stay on the island mundane. Although a few large cruise ships now call (but rarely manage to get all their passengers ashore through the tremendous surf) and the Concorde has touched down briefly during some luxurious round-the-world tours, the island has remained almost wholly uncheaped--the only exception is that the delightful hand-made straw hats with frilly, amusing decorations which the island ladies created in the 1960s and which grand travelers wore with elegant gowns back home in New York, Paris and Rome, are no longer made. Instead it is sad indeed to see that the mass-produced tee shirts are made in Korea and Taiwan.

Due to its remoteness Easter Island is still a very special place and one moreover at which it is tempting to stay longer than the few days which most tour itineraries provide. It is a place where the traveler should linger long over island meals in inns or private homes, attend church service, meet the people, relax. The islanders have sensibly not permitted the roads outside Hangaroa to be tarmaced nor neon lights installed to ruin the charm of the village.

In 1967, the island was largely barren and treeless. Now, with many groves of flowering shrubs and plantations of imported tropical trees, it has a most attractive South Seas appearance. Anakena beach, fringed by the many tall palms

planted there since then, could be Tahiti or the Marquesas. Culturally, too, the island has drawn closer to Polynesia since the 1960s. The planes from Chile bring mostly European and a few American tourists who stay at the hotels for a few nights and take no part in island life; but when the planes return from Tahiti the visitors are predominantly young, stay in island homes for many weeks, and fraternize with the locals. Their conviviality and shared heritage make them highly welcome. French, not Spanish, is beginning to be the second language of the Easter Islanders, whose aspirations turn to French Polynesia, not to Chile; and there are far more islanders than twenty-four years ago who have the bearing, stature and classic features of the Polynesian.

What strikes me most when I re-visit Easter Island now and am cosseted at a hotel with hot showers and flush toilets and bedside lamps, is to see how fast the island has moved from the Stone Age into the 20th Century. One now communicates with the island by direct dial telephone and fax. The entire operation of the airport is computerized and requires only one man to run it. A smart launderette has opened in Hangaroa village. Our young islander guide, an extremely knowledgeable and eloquent graduate of a California university, was brought up by his grandmother who was born and lived most of her life in a cave and never learned to sleep in a bed.

A visit to this most isolated of the world's islands is not only fascinating and rewarding due to its unique archaeological and historic sites, but because its people have remarkably not permitted tourism to ruin it. Tahiti must have been like this a hundred years ago. It is, to quote the British writer Brigid Brophy, writing on nature, "one of the few spots left where the machine has not yet gained the upper hand; some place as yet unstrangled by motorways and unfouled by concrete mixers; a place where the human spirit can still--but for how much longer?--steep itself in natural beauty and recuperate after the nervous tension, the sheer stress, of modern living."

(Hanns Ebensten conducts one-week tours on Easter Island several times each year, usually at Easter, October, and Christmas).

Another Look Back.....

An item that appeared in the *London Daily Mirror* for 17 November 1922 was headlined thusly:

"Island Disappears: Further Violent Earthquake Shocks in Chile--Cruiser's Rescue Dash."

The text breathlessly states: "Two more violent earthquakes occurred yesterday in the Coquimbo region followed by a tidal wave.... It is feared that Easter Island has disappeared. President Harding has given instructions for the cruisers *Denver* and *Cleveland* to proceed to the Chilean

Coast with supplies from the Canal Zone, the Central News adds.

"Easter Island, supposed to have been the last remnant of a lost continent, at one time joining Asia with America, was situated 2,000 miles west of South America. It was the most eastern of the Polynesian group and entirely volcanic, with many extinct craters rising more than 1,000 ft.

"In this remote spot, of a total area of forty seven square miles, immense platforms facing the sea, and consisting of huge stones, had been formed. Some of the stones weigh five tons each. In 1916, Mr. and Mrs. Scoresby Routledge, the well-known explorers, visited the island in an attempt to discover the origin of the statues, but owing to the dream of a mad woman they were attacked and robbed by the inhabitants, and only escaped with their lives by the timely intervention of a Chilian man-of-war."

A subsequent item appeared in the *Yorkshire Observer* for 28 May 1923 that included the following: "Mr. and Mrs. Routledge attach no credence to the report of the disappearance of Easter Island, pointing out that what probably happened was that, as in their own experience, the navigators had lost all sense of reckoning."

Or, as Mark Twain once cabled to the Associated Press, "The report of my death was an exaggeration."

RAPA NUI AT THE POLYNESIAN CULTURAL CENTER

Plans are underway for the Rapa Nui village exhibit at the Polynesian Cultural Center at Laie, Oahu, Hawai'i. Construction will begin in November with the re-orientation of existing trees and shrubbery in order to present the most advantageous setting for the village. Plans, formulated by Sergio Rapu, call for the construction of an *ahu-moai* with *paina* circle, a replica of the famous wall at Vinapu, *hare paenga*, *hare moa*, and an *umu*; a small island will become a recreation of Orongo and will contain several Orongo type houses and copies of the famous petroglyph boulders.



Sergio Rapu, former governor of Rapa Nui, stands beside a sign in the Polynesian Cultural Center gardens that announces the location of the projected Rapa Nui village.

¿Podrá sobrevivir el idioma Rapa Nui?

Roberto Weber and Nancy Thiesen de Weber

Revista Signos, Estudios de Lengua y Literatura, Vol. XXIII, No.28. Instituto de Literatura y ciencias del lenguaje, Universidad Católica de Valparaíso. 1990; Pp.119-136.

The following consists of sections from an important paper concerning the loss of the Rapa Nui language; at the end is a summary in English. The full text in Castellano, including charts and graphs, has been published in Chile. For further information on the publication, write Secretaría de Redacción de "Revista Signos", UCV, Casilla 4039, Valparaiso, Chile.

En el presente comunicación documentamos lo que ojalá no hubiera que consignar nunca: Que la lengua Rapa Nui está en vías de extinción. Pero nuestra decidida preocupación por servir a la comunidad isleña en cuanto estudiosos del lenguaje humano, ayudándola a abordar y resolver los problemas idiomáticos que la afligen, nos obliga a tratar el tema en este momento con toda franqueza y seriedad.

En pocas palabras: Pensamos que la población de habla Rapa Nui ha llegado a una encrucijada, al momento decisivo para el futuro de su idioma polinésico. Durante estos últimos doce años de residencia en Isla de Pascua, hemos sido testigos de un abandono paulatino de la lengua madre isleña. Hemos observado y cuantificado que hay cada vez menos niños que aprenden de sus padres a hablar la lengua Rapa Nui. Muchos padres isleños simplemente han dejado, por una razón u otra, de transmitirles la lengua a sus hijos. Para que un idioma se mantenga y siga vigente, es imprescindible que haya una provisión continua de niños que aprendan a hablarlo. Como ha sido reconocido por los investigadores expertos en el decaimiento, extinción y cambio de lenguas en todo el mundo, "...las lenguas se mueren no por la pérdida de reglas (es decir, gramática) sino por falta de hablantes" (Denison 1977). Pensamos, entonces, que la historia del futuro de la lengua Rapa Nui dependerá, fundamentalmente, de las decisiones y medidas que la población isleña misma habrá de adoptar con respecto a ella.

Nuestro objetivo, en este documento, no es informar simplemente acerca de la inestable situación sociolingüística de la lengua Rapa Nui y, menos todavía, de ser alarmistas prediciendo a los lectores una forzosa y definitiva eliminación de la cultura y lengua de la Isla de Pascua. Nuestro objetivo principal es, más bien, proponer algunas medidas que, si se implementan, podrían, tal vez, ayudar a la población isleña a revalorizar y mantener su propio idioma. Sabemos que en el fondo ningún rapa nui espera que su lengua y cultura desaparezcan. Es de nuestro conocimiento, además, que la política oficial de desarrollo de la Isla de Pascua contempla preservar lo que es propio de los rapa nui, respetando su personalidad cultural y aceptando sus distintos

valores, tradiciones y lengua como parte integrante del pueblo chileno.

Esta comunicación hace, entonces, un llamado urgente a la acción; presenta un desafío a todos aquellos que estamos comprometidos con la Isla de Pascua y su cultura. Al igual que cualquier otro lenguaje, el idioma Rapa Nui es una creación asombrosa, llena de sutilezas y de inesperadas posibilidades. Es el ser propio de la población rapa nui, su misma esencia y su dignidad. Debemos luchar para que la lengua Rapa Nui se mantenga y se siga hablando junto a la lengua nacional.

LOS DATOS

Este trabajo ordena, sintetiza e interpreta algunos de los datos obtenidos en encuestas sociolingüísticas realizadas a intervalos en la Escuela de la Isla de Pascua durante los últimos doce años. Compara algunos de los datos recopilados en los años 1977, 1979, 1983 y 1989, y expone algunas tendencias imperantes relacionadas con la conformación lingüística de los cursos, los hogares de procedencia de los alumnos, y las lenguas aprendidas por alumnos procedentes de hogares netamente rapa nui y "mixtos" rapa nui-continentales.

El cuestionario empleado necesariamente se ha refinado y perfeccionado a medida que se ha venido mejorando nuestro conocimiento y comprensión de la realidad familiar, social y educacional isleña. No obstante, las encuestas siempre han preguntado por el idioma que el alumno aprendió *primero*, el que habla *major* y el que suele hablar *más* a las diferentes personas que lo redean. Los cuestionarios también han intentado indagar acerca de qué influencia lingüística ha tenido el hogar sobre el alumno.

A continuación hacemos unas observaciones y comentarios en torno a seis gráficos (añadidos al final de este documento) resultados de la síntesis de algunos de los datos obtenidos.

English Summary:

This paper represents an urgent call to action, for the language of Rapa Nui is in danger of extinction. The population that speaks Rapa Nui has reached a crucial stage.

During the last 12 years, the authors have observed and quantified the fact that fewer children are learning to speak Rapa Nui because many island parents have stopped transmitting the language to them.

The objectives of the authors are to propose methods to help the island population to value and maintain their language. From the data collected (as shown in graphs) the authors determined that the percentage of children who have a really good command of the language has dropped from 77% in 1977 to 25% in 1989.

This has come about because, for two or three decades, island children were prohibited to speak their native language in school and (worse yet) teachers encouraged parents to speak only Castellano at home. This attitude

changed in the 1970s and since 1976, Rapa Nui has been taught in school. The children of those decades when only Castellano was spoken to them are now parents themselves and speak Castellano to their own children; this situation is rapidly bringing the original language to the edge of extinction. It is found that, without intervention, the island community will no longer be bilingual in a few generations.

The authors point out that it is not necessary that the Rapa Nui abandon their own language in order to better learn Castellano. Maintaining the Rapa Nui language (and with it the values of the society) will not be easy to do. It requires changes in attitudes, education, a sincere desire to learn and programs to help conserve it. Success will depend upon collaboration between islanders, scientific organizations and educational authorities. In light of the extraordinary value of the language for the island's ethnic identity, the authors make specific recommendations and point out that the future of the language depends on the decisions of the islanders themselves who must take the initiative for maintaining their linguistic patrimony.

FAR HORIZONS TOURS

The Rapa Nui Festival, Easter Island

In early February of each year, *rapanui* celebrate their annual festival, a combination of dance, song, parade, feats of bravery and skill, and downright fun. Dressed in Polynesian costumes, they perform centuries-old dances of their ancestors, *kai-kai* (string figures), and reenact ancient contests such as *haka pe'i* (sliding down a mountain on banana stems).

Far Horizons proudly presents a trip that includes one week on Easter Island during the time of the festival. The trip will be led by archaeologist Georgia Lee, Ph. D.

Departure: 3 February 1992, returning 13 February (optional trip extension to northern Chile is available). Group limited to 15 participants. For further information, contact Far Horizons, Box 1529, San Anselmo, CA 94960.

Phone: (415) 457-4575.

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* Readers will be delighted to hear that once again Rapa Nui is featured in *Walt Disney's Donald Duck Adventures* (August 15, 1991 issue). Donald and his nephews are again having adventures on the island, this time arriving to the island accidentally (in a crate of oranges!).

Our Readers Respond.....

RAPA NUI SCHOOL BOOK SERIES: A CLARIFICATION.

As correctly reported in the last issue of *RNJ*, the eight-volume textbook series *MAI KI HAPI TATOU I TE TAFO 'E I TE PAPA'I I TO TATOU 'ARERO RAPA NUI* [Let's learn to read and write our Rapa Nui language] has finally been published. Although specifically designed for speakers of Rapa Nui, the textbooks contain much material of interest and value to linguists, ethnographers, and others just wanting to know the Rapa Nui people better. Many islanders collaborated with the Programa Lengua Rapa Nui (Universidad Católica de Valparaíso and Summer Institute of Linguistics) in the creation of this textbook series. In a real sense, these books are their works. The stories, poems, and essays that comprise the reading and literature assignments were written by native Rapa Nui authors and are attractively illustrated by Easter Island artists. In its technical report on the series, the School Book Review commission of the Chilean Ministry of Education comments, "This work, on account of its thematic orientation, is a genuine ethnographic document on Easter Island." And adds, "It is not easy to find a work as comprehensive as this one, specially designed for teaching an indigenous community to read and write."

Linguists Robert and Nancy Weber, on Easter Island, report that since the announcement of the textbook series in the last issue of *RNJ*, a number of Journal readers have written asking to purchase sets of the books. They regret to inform us that, due to limited funding, only 500 copies of each book were printed. The Universidad Católica de Valparaíso and the Summer Institute of Linguistics made a donation of textbooks to the Easter Island school and every effort is being made to place the remaining sets of books in Rapa Nui homes where they are needed urgently. Thus, of this printing there are no copies for purchase.

The Webers suggest that if enough people were to request copies of the textbooks, the University might be encouraged to make a second printing for sale to the general public. Your help in this way might also make it possible for additional copies to be printed and made available to the Easter Island community, whose language is in very rapid decline. Please urge a second printing of the textbooks and help the Rapa Nui to value, use, and maintain their native language. Address your letters and requests (in Spanish or English) to:

Professor Luis Gómez Macker, Coordinador, Programa Lengua Rapa Nui, Departamento de Linguística, Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Casilla 4059, Valparaíso, Chile.

"Dear Sir,....your editor...critiqued [Fell's translation of rongorongo tablets] in Vol.4, No.2, 1990 issue of the *Journal*. The editor's opinion (of Fell's work) spoke of 'Metoro's translation'; the fact is Metoro never translated anything, nor did Fell ever state or infer such. Then the editor says 'Jaussen simply misheard Metoro', Fell said or inferred no such thing. Only by what Jaussen did hear and record was Fell able to resolve the translation. So what your editor uses to dismiss Fell is factually wrong. Later translations have not only the approval of Easter Islanders, but other Polynesian scholars, and have revealed historical events corroborated by island lore, and later yet explain past mysteries, i.e., why the statue were felled.... So what I'm asking, at this stage, is a retraction that rights the wrongs and which in addition makes the reader understand clearly that the *Journal* takes back its sarcasm about needing to view Fell's work 'through the eyes of a poet, much as Fell has done.'" Marshall Payn, Epigraphic Society.

Editor's note: The paper in question, by Alan Davis-Drake, was not an editorial but was submitted as an individual contribution by an author and, as such, does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial staff.

EMENDATION TO 1873 GROUP PHOTO

In *RNJ* 5(1):1 it was stated that C. B. Hoare's photographs were "unpublished". It has kindly been brought to my attention that this 1873 group photo was published in Grant McCall, *Rapanui: Tradition and survival on Easter Island*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press 1981, p.140. In addition, in *RNJ* 5(1):3 Brother Théodule Escolan is described as a "young man" in 1873; but Francois Dederen, "Le évangelisation de l'Île de Pâques par les Frères de la Congrégation des Sacrés Coeurs de Picpus," in B. Illius and M. Laubscher (eds), *Circumpacifica: Festschrift für Thomas S. Barthel*, Frankfurt a.M., Berne, New York, Paris 1990, p.120, claims Escolan was born in 1818 and moved to Tahiti (i.e. to Bishop Jaussen's Mission) in 1873, which would indicate that the bearded priest/lay brother in the center of the 1873 group photo is indeed Brother Théodule Escolan, and not Father Hippolyte Roussel.

Steven Roger Fischer, Germany.

IT'S RAPA NUI, NOT RAPANUI!

From Robert Weber, Isla de Pascua.

Dear Fellow *RNJ* readers in the Unitedkingdom, Thehague, Southafrica, Newsouthwales, Sanfrancisco, Newyork.....

Writing systems necessarily include recognized conventions and standards for the correct division and spelling of words, and for the correct punctuation of sentences. In analyzing previously unwritten languages, and in assisting their speakers to establish practical writing

systems, linguists consider four major types of criteria to determine the appropriate division of words. These are: phonological evidence (syllable structure, stress rules, rhythm and meter, pauses in pronunciation,...); morphosyntactic evidence (meaning, function,...); distributive evidence (cooccurrence patterns and restraints, position within a construct,...); and native speaker reaction (construct completeness, intuition,...). Using criteria such as these, the linguist is able to accurately determine word division in a continuous stream of speech.

My purpose in this note is to advise the readership that Rapa Nui, not Rapanui, is the correct spelling of the name, whether referring to the island, its people, or the language. This spelling is consistent with the written usage and preference of the Rapa Nui people, themselves, and is amply supported by the linguistic evidence. Rapa Nui is the spelling recognized and practiced by those of us scientists resident on Easter Island (anthropologists, archaeologists, ethno-historians, and linguists), as well as by many others who visit here frequently. Finally Rapa Nui is the spelling most commonly used in Chilean newspapers, maps, official documents, etc.

Happily, the editors of this publication have chosen to call it Rapa Nui *Journal*. But in the articles and notes submitted for inclusion, there is much inconsistency in the spelling of the island/people/language name (and, by the way, also for the names of Easter Island people and places). The spelling, Rapanui, is a foreign mistake. Please, let's all write Rapa Nui and cease propogating a stubborn error.

And we leave it to the proponents of the spelling Rapanui (whether in Losangeles, Torredelgreco, Honkong, Telaviv, or...) to give us their reasoning.

Editor's note: stay tuned on this one, Rapanuiphiles! More opinions coming in the next issue.

What's New in Hangaroa.....

According to *El Mercurio*, the president of the Consejo de Ancianos of Rapa Nui, Alberto Hotus, stated that a solution to the problem of a lack of seating for islanders on LAN Chile flights would be to have a certain number of subsidized seats to be made available for emergencies or for Rapanui students travelling to and from the continent. Islanders now pay US \$365; regular fare for Chilean residents is \$640.

Ten Rapanui students have received scholarships to study on the continent. The scholarships, granted by the Ministry of Education in Viña del Mar, will enable the students to enter a variety of universities on the continent in order to further their education.

EASTER ISLAND FOUNDATION NEWS.....

Since our last issue of RNJ, the Mulloy Research Library project has seen substantial progress. As of this printing, the final touches are being put on an agreement which spells out clearly the responsibilities of the three parties involved: Chile's Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos, The Sociedad de Amigos de Isla de Pascua, and the Easter Island Foundation. Architectural studies are well underway with frequent consultations now taking place between EIF's architectural expert (and Foundation treasurer) Gary T. Wirth, and Fernando Moscoso of Chile's Ministry of Public Works.

CONSERVACION Y CLIMA SOCIAL

Rodemil Morales Montero

Agrupación Milenio, Rapa Nui.

The following paper is the first in what we hope will be a regular column, coming directly from the Agrupación Milenio, on Rapa Nui. These "themes of reflection" will deal with what is happening currently on Rapa Nui and will touch on such matters as conservation, acculturation, deterioration of the environment, and concepts of development. The Agrupación Milenio, created in 1987, is a small group of persons who have anxieties concerning the natural and cultural values of Chile; it is an independent and multidisciplinary network focusing in the area of ecology and cultural values. English summary, pg.32.

Es tal la relatividad de lo que nos rodea, que mientras más nos preocupamos y ocupamos por los problemas, más problemas aparecen ante nosotros. Desde hace algunos años, se ha venido manifestando un interés creciente por la conservación del patrimonio cultural de Rapa Nui, que ha revelado un cúmulo heterogéneo de problemas, y cuyas acciones tendientes a solucionar algunos de ellos han generado o han dado las condiciones para el surgimiento de nuevos problemas.

Pero analizada esta situación desde una perspectiva más amplia, tal vez lo que ocurre es que cuando se implementan soluciones y acciones análogas, se reflejan en ellas o se manifiestan a través de ellas problemas profundos, intangibles, que han estado allí desde hace largo tiempo, y cuyas variables carecen de las propiedades adecuadas para mensurarlos y estudiarlos en forma sistemática.

Pongamos un ejemplo claro, que nos pueda situar más concretamente en esta materia: en una ocasión, hace tiempo atrás, fue botado intencionalmente el cartel del sector "La Pérouse", voluminoso monolito de escoria sostenido por barrotes a una base de piedras. Esto constituye un signo explícito de una acción que no cabe atribuirle al simple vandalismo oportunista, sino que parece motivada por un descontrol arraigado en un sentimiento de intolerancia y descontento; en un "clima social" local que aparentemente

ha resultado ser caldo de cultivo para la afloración de manifestaciones vandálicas de carácter en cierto sentido estratégico—por contraposición al meramente oportunista.

Desde este enfoque, el "clima social" podría ser un elemento significativo de considerar en relación a la conservación de áreas culturales-naturales protegidas estrechamente vinculadas a comunidades rurales, como es el caso del Parque Nacional Rapa Nui con respecto a Isla de Pascua en general. A pesar de que las investigaciones sobre las causas, efectos y mecanismos de destrucción o deterioro de los recursos culturales de la isla no está tan avanzada como convendría, sí se puede concluir, a priori, por lo menos, que varios de los principales problemas, como por ejemplo al abrasión natural, se puedan aislar suficientemente dentro del contexto general de causalidades, y por lo tanto, intendar una medida preventiva o paliativa específica. Por otro lado, un problema grave, en cuanto a dificultad de control y tipo de daño, el del vandalismo, no tiene en principio ninguna solución discreta paralela: el vandalismo contra el patrimonio cultural de Isla de Pascua es probable que sólo encuentre alguna esperanza de atenuación en el mejoramiento del clima social de la provincia.



El compulsive proceso de aculturación que ha venido viviendo Rapa Nui está en la base de su incierto "clima social." [The process of acculturation that has come to those living on Rapa Nui is the basis of the uncertain social climate.]

Hasta el momento, hemos dado por sentado el significado de la idea de "clima social". No es posible definirla aquí, pero diciendo que se relaciona con una actitud colectiva hacia ciertos elementos sentidos como ajenos al ámbito de pertenencia comunitario, y puntualizando que "clima social negativo" se vincula a una reacción negativa en ese mismo contexto, quizás se aclare lo que tratamos de connotar—más que de definir, en realidad. En este mismo sentido, podríamos señalar, en forma tentativa, que una distribución más pareja de los beneficios y oportunidades de aprovechamiento productivo de los

recursos del Parque Nacional Rapa Nui, una mayor integración de la comunidad a las responsabilidades y ventajas del manejo del Parque, una positiva definición de la postura de las agrupaciones comunitarias en torno a estas mismas materias, un mejor aprovechamiento del patrimonio cultural-natural de la isla a la labor educativa de la juventud insular, y--sobre todos--una política racional de desarrollo para la isla, son todos cambios que de concretarse incluso en limitada escala podrían ayudar a arrostrar el problema que genera el "clima social negativo", en lo que atañe a la conservación de los recursos culturales.

Queda, en todo caso, el hecho de que el mejoramiento del "clima social" no se puede abordar sistemáticamente como método de disminución del vandalismo, como solución en un marco de acciones de conservación.



Casos como éste degeneran los símbolos culturales y contribuyen a crear reacciones colectivas contrapuestas. [Things such as these degenerate cultural symbols and contribute to the creation of counter-reaction.]

En realidad, este problema podría verse reducido sólo como efecto secundario de un "mejoramiento" social más amplio, originado en iniciativas y planes tomados a la altura de las prioridades, en una perspectiva global. De acuerdo a esto, cabría pensar que sólo quedaría esperar a que se den esos cambios--cosa realmente poco útil. Sin embargo, dentro de sus respectivos intereses y posibilidades, existen instituciones locales, así como organismos nacionales y extranjeros que están en condiciones de ayudar para que se pueda dar este proceso de cambios, generando, por ejemplo, una corriente de opinión en pro de ellos, enfatizando la influencia de un clima social negativo en los problemas de protección del patrimonio cultural de Rapa Nui, y contribuyendo en general a valorizar este enfoque.

Sólo limando estas asperezas sería posible sentar las bases de una acción conservacionista racional, con una eficiencia predecible en el futuro, y --sobre todo--coherente con la realidad humana inmediata en cuyo seno de insertaría.

English summary....

The social climate of Rapa Nui has many negative aspects that result in acts of vandalism such as the intentional destruction of a directional sign of scoria that had been placed at La Perouse Bay. Such acts result from feelings of discontent.

There is no easy solution to problems of vandalism, particularly when it is directed against the cultural patrimony of the island. The cure is to improve the social climate, possibly by increasing the understanding of benefits and advantages of the resources of the National Parks, by educating young islanders, and by adopting a rational policy of development for the island. Such changes may help to arrest these problems. There also exists local institutions such as national organizations, as well as foreign, which are interested in helping to change the current negativity and its effect on the island's cultural patrimony.

An Uncommon Guide to Easter Island is still available! This unique guide to Rapa Nui and its archaeological sites contains maps, drawings, 110 full color photos, referenses, and index. Written by Georgia Lee, Ph.D., the Guide is available from International Resources, P.O. Box 840, Arroyo Grande CA 93421-0840. Price: \$18.95 plus shipping. ISBN 0-937480-17-7.

Georgia Lee, Ph.D. Publisher and Editor

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