

THE PAVING OF THE ROAD that runs past the Hotel Iorana at the foot of the runway is nearly finished. A relief to all who have to drive it. This road is now called Policarpo Toro after the naval man who first suggested the annexation by Chile. It formerly was Atamu Tekena. A short while ago, these two street names were switched. So while the hotels and other establishments have not changed locations, they are now on different streets. This may sound a bit confusing to outsiders, but it is very Rapa Nui.

A GRASS FIRE AT THE QUARRY, Rano Raraku, effected the kneeling statue, called Tukururi, as well as many other statues. Damage was caused to the statues by the fire and heat. Fires are set by islanders who run horses and cattle; they burn off the dead grass to encourage new growth. But the fires often burn out of control. Sadly, those who set the fires seem not to realize that tourists come to see the statues, not horses and cows.

THE MIR SPLASHDOWN. A flurry of activity on Rapa Nui preceded the reentry of the Mir space station. Hedging their bets, news agencies lined up various individuals on Easter Island for eye-witness accounts of the expected fall-out of space debris. Rapanui resident, Conny Martin, who was interviewed by Reuters, noted that Rapanui islanders had little information about all this, and she added, "It's business as usual here and we're just hoping that nothing will land on us. What can we do? We can't move out of the way." News agencies in Australia also contacted some English-speaking islanders as they wanted to do a piece on the precautions being taken by the Chilean government in case of any debris fallout near the island. However, no one mentioned the possibility of danger on Chilean TV so the Rapanui were unaware of the situation. But LANChile cancelled some scheduled flights to Tahiti to avoid any possible collision with falling debris. Other Pacific islands, closer to the action, reacted more nervously. In Fiji, ships were kept in port and residents warned to stay in their homes. Things were different in Tahiti as they were involved in local elections that seemed more explosive than debris falling from the sky.

One Rapanui islander said that he hoped a piece of Mir would land in his yard so tourists would come, not just to see the *moai*, but also would pay to see pieces of Mir.

CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW AIRPORT control tower has been postponed due to a conflict over the land belonging to the city and the shape of the tower, originally planned in the shape of a *moai*.

THE GOVERNOR announced that the island's population is now 4500 although a census has not been done since 1992.

THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII'i Archaeological Field School will have a project this summer, 2001, in Rapa Nui. Field work will be conducted on prehistoric habitations and other sites in a northwestern coastal sector of the island. For further information: Contact Dr. Terry L. Hunt, Department of Anthropology, University of Hawai'i; 2424 Maile Way, Honolulu, HI 96822. Email: thunt@hawaii.edu

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Easter Island Archaeology. Research on Early Rapanui Culture*

Christopher M. Stevenson and William S. Ayres, eds.  
Easter Island Foundation, 2000 \$25

*Review by Paul G. Bahn*

One of the millstones that has always hung around the neck of archaeology is the problem of the unpublished or long-delayed excavation report. A totally unpublished excavation is useless and injurious to knowledge, on a par with looting. Indeed it is a form of theft, since information is permanently withheld from the world (the excavation cannot be repeated) and thus destroyed. In fact one could argue that it is worse than theft, since many looters of sites are too ignorant to realize the damage they are doing; the same cannot usually be said of unethical excavators, and there is simply no excuse for them, especially where public funds have been wasted on their projects.

Scandalous examples of archaeological non-publication could be cited from every part of the world, but Easter Island has certainly suffered more than most from this scourge. If memory serves me correctly, Carlyle Smith mentioned at the Laramie meeting in 1993 that not even all of the data from the excavations carried out by members of the Norwegian Expedition in the 1950s had yet been analyzed or published. But at least those pioneers did publish extensive reports on their activities quite rapidly, in volumes which have become indispensable to Easter Island studies.

On the other hand, many excavations carried out on the island in more recent decades have yet to be published. We can all think of examples, and it has to be said that some Chilean specialists are among the worst culprits here. The present volume, however, goes a long way towards solving the problem of unpublished work by foreign (primarily American) excavators, and we should be grateful to the indefatigable Chris Stevenson—always exemplary in the rapidity and thoroughness of his own excavation reports—for rounding up this collection of material, some of which has been awaiting publication since 1981 and even, in some cases, since the early 1970s. And the Easter Island Foundation is to be thanked and congratulated for taking on the task of publication.

Having said that, one must admit that few of the articles here set the pulses racing, and indeed some are of the kind where one immediately turns to the concluding summary. But nevertheless, basic data of the kind presented here are the essential building blocks of future archaeological synthesis and interpretation, and it is therefore crucial that they should be available in printed form. The volume contains a tremendous variety of material—excavations of different kinds of platforms, of caves, of beach deposits; various studies of skeletal remains and cremations; rock art, and color symbolism; artifact use-wear and obsidian hydration rates; subsistence patterns and original vegetation. It's a potpourri, a curate's egg; but nevertheless it is a valuable addition to the literature. And above all one hopes that it creates a precedent and acts as a spur to other guilty parties in

Easter Island studies to atone for their sins at last by letting the rest of us know what they have been doing and what they have found. We can never hope to produce a fully rounded or up-to-date picture of what happened on the island if crucial pieces of the puzzle are deliberately withheld.

**☞ *Mangarevan Archaeology: Interpretations Using New Data and 40 Year Old Excavations to Establish a Sequence from 1200 to 1900 AD***

Edited by Roger C. Green and Marshall I. Weisler  
University of Otago Studies in Prehistoric Anthropology  
No. 19, 2000 \$10

*Review by Vincent H. Stefan*

This volume is a significant contribution to Pacific/Polynesian archaeology, and provides a detailed discussion of the dated and integrated occupation sequence for the islands of the Mangarevan group from 1200 to 1900 AD. The Mangarevan cultural sequence was developed from excavation results of six sites investigated by Green in 1959, with additional archaeological survey data collected by Weisler from 1990-92. This volume is the first in four publications planned by the editors to discuss the archaeology of the Mangareva group and the Temoe Atoll.

The contents include: Introduction; Contact Period Settlement Patterns ca. 1840 AD; Sites Selected for Excavation; Excavation Procedures; Excavations on Kamaka; Excavations on Aukena; Excavations on Mangareva; Correlations of Excavation Sequences; The Sequence; Summary and Conclusions; Notes; References; Appendix I. The volume is 39 pages long, with black and white photographs, island/site maps, site plans/profiles, and tables.

Of interest to readers of *RNJ* is a discussion in "The Sequence" section that comments on the connection of Easter Island to the Mangarevan-Pitcairn interaction sphere, and how the detailed knowledge of the Mangarevan cultural sequence may provide insight into the origins of the Easter Islanders.

Though this material was deemed of a form "not fully suitable" to appear in journals devoted to reporting on current archaeology in the Pacific field, its value is immeasurable to those individuals working in Pacific/Polynesian archaeology, as well as physical anthropology. Within any given site, more than just cultural artifacts are often excavated, analyzed and collected, occasionally human remains are encountered. Knowing the provenience and cultural context of human remains is as valuable to the physical anthropologist as knowing the cultural sequence of artifacts is to the archaeologist.

This volume is an important contribution to Pacific/Polynesian/Mangarevan archaeology and serves to insure that this data is not lost and is available to all who may need it, and would be an important reference to have in one's library.

The volume is available from the Department of Anthropology, University of Otago, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand. (Price US\$10, includes postage)

**☞ *Exalted Sits the Chief: The Ancient History of Hawai'i Island***

by Ross Cordy

Mutual Publishing, Honolulu. 2000

Paperback, 6"x9"; 464 pages; 15 tables; 75 figures (including maps and photographs), glossary, references, and index. 19.95.

*Review by Dave Tuggle*

**FIRST THINGS FIRST**

This is a superb volume that is a necessary reference for anyone interested in the history of Polynesia in general or Hawai'i in particular. I make this recommendation with the disclaimer that I reviewed and commented on the book while it was in manuscript form, and that I also provided a promotional blurb for the book's back cover—but this should indicate that in the intervening year or two I have not changed my mind about the importance of this volume.

**ORGANIZATION**

The book has four main parts: Background (with chapters on the environment, Hawaiian culture at the time of Kamehameha, and the nature of the information employed in the book); Mythic Times (with chapters on the settlement of the island and on the early era of adaptation); The Time of Epic Voyages (with a single chapter about the nature of cultural change from about AD 1000-1300); and Dynastic Times (with five chapters: "A.D. 1400s-1500s: The Ascendancy of the Pili Line in Waipi'o and Liloa and 'Umi"; "A.D. 1600s: The Reigns of 'Umi's Descendants in Kona"; "A.D. 1700s: Keawe, Alapa'inui and Kalani'ōpu'u and the Rise of Hawai'i as a power in the Archipelago"; "Kīwala'ō, Kamehameha, Keawema'uhili, and Keōua. A.D. 1781-1792: The Decade of Strife"; and "The Search for Better Understanding").

**HISTORY OF THE BOOK**

As indicated in the Preface, the first draft of the book was completed in 1991, but Cordy notes that he "continued to update it with recent material." A review of the discussions and dates of references indicates that important archaeological reports completed through 1999 are considered, particularly those that contain radiocarbon dates. The seed of the book was a portion of the author's 1978 dissertation, which grew into a chapter about the Big Island's history in *A Study of Prehistoric Social Change: The Development of Complex Societies in the Hawaiian Islands* (1981). A section of the book is also a revised version of *A Regional Synthesis of the Hāmākua District of the Island of Hawai'i* (1994). But most of the material is new, and clearly reflects the 30 years of work devoted by the author to this field.

**GOALS**

The purpose of the book, in Cordy's words (pp. vii and 2), "is to summarize Hawai'i Island's history, to introduce its rulers and chiefs, and to illustrate certain aspects of the island's history, such as royal centers and field systems," and "to blend oral history and archaeology to form an overview of the history