

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

FRANCE

"A grand exposition of Easter Island and its enigmatic civilization" was inaugurated on the 20th of April in the Musée Aquitaine of Bordeaux and will continue until September 15. The exhibition, the most important one concerning Easter Island ever to be organized in France, is presented as a "voyage" from Polynesia and combines collections that never before have left Chile, together with pieces from French, Belgium and Italian museums.

The first part of the exposition is dedicated to Polynesia, whose culture and peoples are linked with those of Easter Island, with a hundred sculptures, cult and navigation objects, clothes, jewelry and domestic implements. The second part, the most important, is dedicated to the Chilean island, inhabited by Polynesians since the year 400 and whose great statues of stone were discovered by Europeans in 1722. One of these statues, a *moai* of 3.5 meters, figures in the exhibition together with other sculptures of more modest dimensions, but equally fascinating. Completing the exhibition are four of the 20 existing objects with *rongorongo* writing from Easter Island.

El Mercurio de Valparaiso, April 1996

Readers of *RNJ* will recognize this exhibition as the one that previously was shown in Milan and Barcelona where the *moai* temporarily lost its head (see *RNJ* Vol.9, No.4:121).

UNITED STATES

Easter Island statue replicas were displayed at the 1996 Rockefeller Center Flower and Garden Show in New York City in April. About twice life-sized, these truly ugly replications obviously were created by someone who had never seen a real *moai*.

ECUADOR

A Japanese explorer, Kenichi Horie, set off from Ecuador in March to sail alone across the Pacific, his destination the Galapagos Islands and then Japan. His boat is made from recycled aluminum cans [we are not making this up] and is powered by solar energy. The 31-foot boat was expected to pass O'ahu, if on track, sometime in May. This is the first attempt at a trans-Pacific voyage in a solar-powered vessel. Obviously a guy thing. Mercifully, Horie is not trying to prove anything about settlement voyages, but wants to draw attention to the use of "clean" energy.

WHAT'S NEW IN POLYNESIA

TAHITI

More than 300 people took to the streets of Tahiti in February to protest the building of a controversial hotel on the outskirts of Pape'ete where preliminary excavations have

uncovered burials and traces of an ancient village. The adjacent beach is a traditional native fishing spot. The land now is fenced off from the local population and is under police guard. The hotel project has been opposed by Tahitians since 1991. Protesters note that no independent environmental study was done; the only survey was by the company doing the project. A number of legal actions are pending against the development, plans for which include an 8-story hotel with 350 rooms plus 12 over-water bungalows.

The March elections for French Polynesia's territorial assembly were postponed until May 17. An official reason is to give the new statute of internal autonomy time to be put into place. But the unofficial reason is to allow time for the bad p.r. from the nuclear weapon tests to fade into memory. Reports say that President Chirac will visit French Polynesia before the elections to boost the chances of his friend, territorial President Gaston Flosse. Flosse is hoping to take the "edge off" the campaign for independence.

Pacific News Bulletin 11(3) 1996

French government officials admit that radioactive material leaked from Moruroa Atoll during the recent tests. Although France claims the leaks are "not dangerous" there are concerns about long-term impacts on the environment and people of the area. Now that the nuclear program has ended, French President Chirac committed to a treaty banning testing in the region. French exporters are welcoming the end of the tests as wine exports were hard hit by boycotts: sales dropped about 15% worldwide and 50% in Japan and northern Europe. Chirac will provide French Polynesia US \$2 billion over the next ten years in order to compensate for loss of revenue from the termination of the nuclear testing program.

Tok Blong Pasifik, Vol. 50(1), 1966.

COOK ISLANDS

A severe cash problem led to the withdrawal of Cook Island currency in 1995. The government of New Zealand has frozen further aid, citing no evidence of reform. Public servants face a 15% pay cut and may get nothing as one bank already has bounded a government pay check for lack of funds. Spending abuses by politicians appear to be part of the problem.

Tok Blong Pasifik, Vol. 50(1), 1966.

FIJI

The VIII Pacific Science Inter-Congress will be held in Suva, Fiji during July 13-17, 1997. Information on this meeting can be had by contacting to Dr. Mahendra Kumar, Secretary-General, % School of Pure & Applied Sciences, University of the South Pacific, PO Box 1168, Suva, Fiji. Fax: (679) 314007.

The Physics and Technology Energy team at the University of the South Pacific (Suva) is investigating the possibilities of using coconut oil as a source for energy. Coconut oil for use in engines is being studied at schools in

the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Coconut oil has many applications from body oil, cosmetics, soap, cooking diesel and kerosene alternatives. Cold-pressed coconut oil for use in body oils now sells in some areas for \$50 a liter.

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Vol. 29(4), 1996

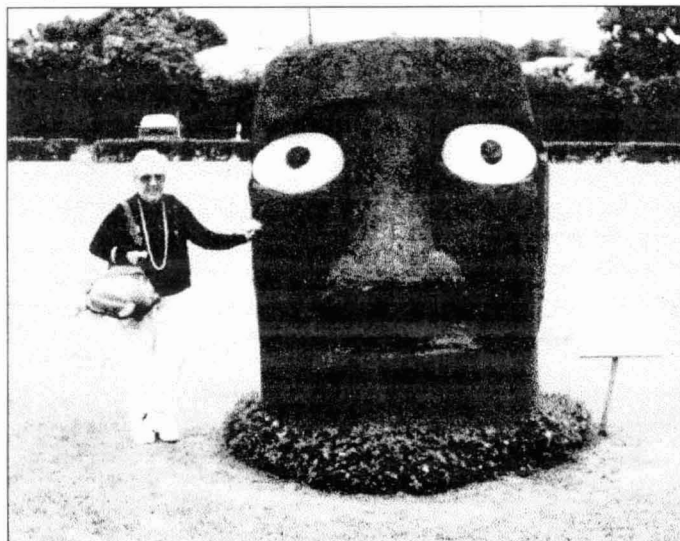
The President of the Republic of Kiribati, Mr Tito Teburoro made a courtesy call to the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. Teburoro stated that Kiribati students graduating from the USP will eventually take leading positions in the Kiribati community. He sees education as of vital importance to the development of that island country.

A Cooperative Education program between students of the University of Victoria (Canada) and the University of the South Pacific has just been completed. The program studied problems of marine pollution assessment and control. This year's topics were in preparation for a series of course readings for USP Law students; the use of mangroves to combat pollution, and toxicity tests for the study of marine ecology and pollution effects.

The University of the South Pacific Bulletin,
Vol. 29(7), 1996

HAWAII

For many years the gardens of the Bishop Museum in Honolulu have been graced by the presence of a casting of a *moai* head from Easter Island. The head, a replica of one that formerly sat in front of Ahu Tongariki (before its restoration), never failed to stun visitors who remarked upon its presence in Hawai'i, not realizing (at first glance) that it is a facsimile. Recently someone has added some fake eyes (see photo). We note with chagrin that it now looks more like Kermit the Frog.



Emily Ross Mulloy poses with the bug-eyed *moai* head, in the gardens of the Bishop Museum, Hawai'i.

WHAT'S NEW IN HANGA ROA

El Mercurio de Valparaiso for 21 April, 1996 reported the following account of a riot on Rapa Nui. The headline read: "Sect Assaults Court on Easter Island." According to the story, a group of 40 youths calling themselves "Messengers of the Moai of Peace" interrupted the court and rescued one of their group, Mateo Tuki Atán, who had been detained for trafficking drugs. Since then there has been continuing tension among the 3000 people on the island.

Faced with an increase in consumption and sales of marijuana cultivated on the island (and whose narcotic effects are supposedly superior to that produced on the continent), the police carried out an operation headed by the national chief of Anti-Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, Hugo Pinochet. They destroyed 600 live plants and an unspecified quantity being dried and packaged in aluminum foil. During the operation two men were detained, one of whom was released as he was judged to be mentally perturbed, and a woman. The woman was released shortly, leaving only Tuki in custody. A large group of youths gathered in front of the tribunal with sticks and machetes and shouted for the release of Tuki. At that time, only three police were on duty were they were unable to prevent the entry of the group into the building. One youth struck the secretary of the court, Bernardo Toro, with a blunt instrument and the group fled with Tuki. Later, a larger number of people gathered at the open market on Calle Policarpo Toro where protests were made against judicial functionaries and police personnel.

The secretary of the court, who has lived 6 years on the island, said that what occurred is very serious and without precedent on the island. He recalled that it is their obligation to suppress drugs and they would not tolerate the action of rescuing a prisoner from the court and menacing administrators.

The *El Mercurio* article stated that "The protagonists are mainly youths who, despite having organized with a laudable objective two years ago, acted contrary to their original intent." The president of the Consejo de Ancianos, Alberto Hotus, said that the group lives on the margin of reality and it is "indispensable that the government concern itself with public education" [?]. Hotus explained that, in the group's concept, growing marijuana is no different than growing squash as they have private land and it damages no one. He added that they have the right to harvest and sell the stuff because there are no alternatives on the island, such as jobs. Hotus lamented that he had personally helped form this group but they had changed their mentality and introduced the marketing of the drug. He recalled that, two years ago, some Frenchmen arrived from Tahiti and proposed the carving of a *moai* one meter tall which could be sent around the world to promote tourism for the island (see *RNJ* Vol.7,1:19). The stone sculpture was called the "Moai of Peace" and currently is in Paris. From this grew the idea of creating a movement they called "Messengers of the Moai of Peace," headed by Mateo Tuki. The group returned from Tahiti and "began to smoke marijuana and dedicate themselves to its cultivation

and exportation." Under the influence of the narcotic, the group began to "transmit and receive messages from the Moai of Peace and thus transformed themselves into a weird sect."

Hotus related that on a woman recently approached him with wild eyes to deliver a message from the *moai*, namely that he should stop whatever he is doing and return to his ancestors. "Truthfully, they are living in another reality," he commented.

Toro, the injured secretary, indicated that the Moai of Peace had been transformed in a short period of time into a kind of belief or doctrine lead by people who are deranged. He announced that he will study the legal actions that he will personally follow for the injuries that he received.

Meanwhile, Judge Ricardo Soto initiated legal processes for the assault and gave corresponding orders to the Carabineros and the investigating police. At the same time he informed the Court of Appeals in Valparaiso and the National Association of Magistrates.

The two principal Island authorities, Governor Hey and Mayor Edmunds, were not on the island during the incident.

There is no actual prison on the island nor are there prison guards. Prisoners are taken to an annex of the Sixth Commisary of Carabineros. The police unit under the command of Major Patricio Ulloa Ortega is made up of a small contingent of about 20 functionaries who, beyond their specific duties which they carry out in three shifts, must also act as Custom Agents every time a plane lands, and they must take the detained prisoners before the tribunal. The Investigative Police also have limited personnel with only 6 functionaries on the island.

A follow-up item stated that the escaped leader of the Island group turned himself in voluntarily on April 23 and remains in detention. In a TV interview, former Mayor Hotus suggested that Mateo Tuki needed psychological treatment on the continent.

On March 22, 1996, UNESCO officially declared Easter Island as a "Patrimonio Cultural de la Humanidad," a condition that establishes an obligation to the Chilean government to watch over the island's preservation and protection.

The director-general of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, delivered to Chilean President Frei the certificate incorporating Easter Island into a grand list of 450 places and monuments that enjoy this status, including the National Park of Iguazú, the Colombian city of Cartagenas de Indias, Grand Canyon National Park, the Statue of Liberty, and the Galapagos Islands.

The decision of UNESCO, adopted after a long process in December last year, converts Easter Island into the first Chilean possession with this ostentatious title. With it, a series of plans for protection was initiated, such as the investigation and development of cultural tourism. With the presentation of the certificate, Easter Island passes to the responsibility of 148 countries that have signed the corresponding convention. The mayor of Rapa Nui, Petero Edmunds, has stated his opposition to this designation

because it would restrict progress by prohibiting construction or works that modify the present environment.

Currently UNESCO is studying the possibility of also naming the Juan Fernández Islands as a patrimony of humanity because of their exotic natural wonders. And the National Park of Torres de Paine might be added to the list, but the Government still has not proposed the latter.

The UNESCO representative stated his satisfaction in personally delivering the certificate making Rapa Nui an official "Cultural Patrimony of Humanity," a sign of prestige for Chile. He is quoted as stating, "Isla de Pascua is one of the phenomena of most impressive creativity in the cultural history of humanity." Mayor also noted that the Chilean government and the congress will be able to enforce, by maintaining and conserving with the collaboration of UNESCO, the exceptional and natural characteristics of Easter. He added that "in case of alterations produced over such characteristics by natural or provoked catastrophes, not only the Chilean Government but all the signers of the convention (in this moment including 145 countries), would concur immediately with support of the labor for rehabilitation and restoration."

El Mercurio de Valparaiso: 22 March 1996

Headlines appearing on the last day of February in *El Mercurio de Valparaiso* said, "Naval School Promoted in Easter Island." However, this heart-stopping headline was a just teaser for an item about a Rapanui, Hugo Jaime Edmunds Concha, who graduated from the Naval School "Arturo Prat." He is the first Marine Guard of island origin and he returned to the island to promote the Naval Academy. Hugo presented talks about naval careers, the naval history of Chile, and his own experiences in the Academy. Marine Guard Edmunds was born on the island and lived there until he was 8 years old. He maintains strong ties with the island and still has a great-grandmother on the island (now 104 years old), two grandfathers and several uncles with whom he visits every year.

El Mercurio de Valparaiso for March 16th stated that the usual four weekly flights to Easter Island had been suspended while the final section of the runway was being repaired, but an Air Force Hercules C-130 stood by in case of the need for medical evacuation. The article pointed out that the runway upgrade (an investment of US \$11.5 million) is the largest made on the island by the government. The original asphalt paved runway dated from 1966 and was in very poor condition. Upgrades were also made to the control tower, the terminal building, the drainage system, and the official buildings.

The former squadron of Chilean Marines on Rapa Nui was relieved by a new unit. The Armada freighter *Rancagua* with 15 Chilean Marines was sent off by the Commander-in-Chief of the First Naval Zone, Hernán Couyoumdjian Bergamali. The Marines will stay for seven months on the island, under the command of petty officer, José Acuña. To better carry out their assignment, the selected Marines took a 9-day course at

the Institute Carlos Condell. This course, called "Familiarization Pascuense" pointed out various aspects "relative to the way of life on the island." According to *El Mercurio*, the Marines will spend part of their time working on the island school, library, and cultural center. Another of their missions is to avert a fire threat that menaces a munitions storage area.

The *Rancagua* also carried 21 civilians plus a school teacher and three dental students of the School of Odontology of the University of Valparaiso. The dental students plan to "develop attention to their specialty." The ship carried livestock, construction material, combustibles and other commodities solicited by the municipality, including a set of school texts for the island school, "Lorenzo Baeza".

Island authorities visited Japan in April. Making use of his legal vacation, Governor Jacobo Hey Paoa, together with Mayor Petero Edmunds Paoa and archaeologist Claudio Cristino Ferrando, traveled to Japan to be present at the inauguration of a replica of Ahu Akivi. The ceremony took place April 13 in the city of Nichinan, Miyazaki. (See *RNJ* 10 (1):23).

A replica of an Hawaiian canoe headed for Rapa Nui was delivered to Valparaiso. It was donated by Chileans living in the USA, and was brought to Chile without cost by the South American Steamship Company (CSAV). It will be taken to Rapa Nui by the Chilean Navy. The fiberglass canoe is 12 meters long and will be presented to the Canoe Club of Rapa Nui in order to revive the custom of Polynesian navigating. Once the canoe arrives to the island, it will be delivered to the Corporation for Cultural Preservation "Hotu-Matu'a Kahu-Kahu-O-Hera," Rodrigo Paoa, Director.

El Mercurio de Valparaiso, 12 April

The dates are set for the 1997 Tapati Rapa Nui: January 31st to February 8th. If you plan to attend, don't wait until the last minute to try to get a flight and/or a reservation on the island.

BOOK REVIEWS

📖 *Rapanui. Descriptive Grammars*, 1996.

by Veronica Du Feu, London and New York: Routledge. XV + 217 pp., map, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-415-00011-4. Price: £75. Order from Routledge, 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE, Great Britain, or Routledge, 29 West 35th Street, New York NY 10001, USA.

Review by Steven Roger Fischer
Auckland, New Zealand

Routledge's professional *Descriptive Grammars* series provides detailed descriptions of the grammars of languages that hitherto have generally been ignored or only superficially treated by descriptive linguists. The DG's descriptions adhere to a prescribed format (originally

published as *Lingua* 42 [1977], no.1) that is, according to series editor Bernard Comrie of USC, comprehensive, explicit, and flexible in order foremost to facilitate cross-language comparisons. Veronica Du Feu, who for many years taught general linguistics at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, and has twice visited Rapanui to gather linguistic data, has now presented the Rapanui contribution to the DG series. And, with this, the Modern Rapanui language at last possesses its first truly professional grammar.

Earliest descriptions of the Rapanui language, such as those by Churchill (1912), Martínez (1913), and Routledge (1914-15), were for the most part vocabulary lists harboring incidental grammatical information. Bergmann's (1963) 71-page German DPhil thesis on comparative Rapanui lexis contained only peripheral grammatical descriptions. Whereas Englert's (1948:328-76; 2nd ed. 1977; the first to describe the language adequately) and Fuentes's (1960:37-149) basic Rapanui grammars have served well three generations of Easter Island scholars, both suffer acutely from superficiality and professional obsolescence. In addition, the Modern Rapanui language that both works describe is hardly spoken on Rapanui at the end of the twentieth century, having further mutated into an even balder Rapanui-Tahitian idiom that delights in incessant change.

It is this ever-mutating Rapanui-Tahitian hybrid tongue that Du Feu describes in her book *Rapanui*. This same idiom also figures in the recent MA theses by the American missionaries N. Weber (1988) and R. Weber (1988), who here limited themselves to the study of Rapanui case marking and verbal morphology, respectively.

Du Feu's Introduction (pp. 1-8) in *Rapanui* is succinctly informative. There are only one or two rubs. Her statement (p. 2) that, "A not too controversial view [of Rapanui settlement] is that there were immigrations from the west (the central Pacific area) and possibly later from the north-west (especially the Marquesas)," would perhaps annoy most Rapanui scholars, the general consensus of whose opinion endorses a single, very early settlement of Rapanui from the Marquesas alone. And Chile annexed Rapanui not in 1862 but in 1888, whereas most deaths of those Rapanui blackbirded to Peru in 1862-63 occurred not "on the guano workings" but in domestic service in Lima households, as McCall (1976) has shown. Otherwise the introductory remarks are entertainingly instructive and precise.

In regard to Rapanui orthography, which is also discussed in the Introduction, Du Feu prefers using /ŋ/ for the nasal velar—as in 'Oronŋo for what is usually written/pronounced as 'Orongo—and dismisses the Webers' invented *g̃* that locally distinguishes the Rapanui nasal velar from the Spanish [g]. As a result, common words that one is perhaps used to reading in most Polynesian languages using either a *g* or an *ng* appear here exclusively with the more linguistically formal *ŋ*: *hanŋa* for *hanga* 'bay', *ma'unaŋa* for *ma'unga* 'mountain', and *ranŋi* for *rangi* 'sky'.

Perhaps more contentious, however, is Du Feu's dubious treatment of vowel length, perhaps the book's single greatest weakness. Du Feu does not mark vowel lengths at all, since she is certain that such vowel lengthening in Rapanui is