

Rapa Nui: Patrimonio natural y cultural

Emma Maldonado Gac, Julio Hotus Salinas and Francisco Valiente Garces. 2004.

Fundación OCAC, Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena, Chile. In Spanish.

THE REVIEWER, XIMENA CEARDI of *El Mercurio de Valparaíso*, describes this book as being “somewhere between a book and a booklet...whose objective is the presentation of cultural and natural patrimony.... It covers the culture, the history, the Rapanui terrain and flora with abundant photographs and has a nice description of medicinal herbs, flowering bushes, fish, birds and marine shells....”

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, May 8, 2005.

The Moai Murders

by Lyn Hamilton, 2005.

Berkley Crime Time, New York.

261 pages, hard cover. ISBN 0-425-20044-2

Review by Georgia Lee

THE MOAI MURDERS WOULD BE a good book to take along on the flight home from a visit to Rapa Nui; reading time is just about the same as the flight time. The story can help you remember the sites you visited, and maybe you might learn a bit more about the island’s history. But the book mainly is aimed at those who love mysteries, and it just happens to be set on our favorite island.

The story line is complicated; it involves a missing *rongorongo* board and the archaeological conference from hell, one being conducted on the island and specifically at the Hotel Iorana. While those who attend archaeological conferences are aware of the often bitter infighting that can occur between researchers with different points of view and different agendas, I must say that the particular meeting described in the book, while often a bit close to the bone, does go beyond the norm. I have not yet been to an archaeological conference where many of the participants are murdered, although such happenings might improve the discipline of archaeology.

My main complaint about the book is that, with very few exceptions, the Rapanui people themselves are invisible. Only a few islanders are thrown into the story line, and these are mainly for background color.

MOAI SIGHTINGS

A BAR IN THE NUGGET HOTEL in Reno, Nevada, advertises “Island Drinks” and amongst the usual suspects (Zombie, Pina Colada, Blue Hawaiian, etc.) they offer an “Aku-Aku” which is described as a ginger brandy base decorated with a flaming sugar cube; and “Easter Island Grog”, a mixture of Cuban and Jamaican rums served in a communal bowl. Neither have any relation to Easter Island’s signature drink, the Chilean firewater called pisco, which usually is mixed with lime juice and sugar for a dynamite drink.

Our thanks to Rapanuiphile, Kathy Cleghorn, who spotted this list of so-called Polynesian drinks.



On their way to a wedding, Gadi Reinhorn (right) and John Campbell stopped to help some grad students at Cornell University (Ithaca, NY) raise a paper mache moai. When they asked why the moai was made, the students replied, “We’re in grad school, what else are we supposed to do?” Photo by Danielle Gillis.

WHAT’S NEW IN THE PACIFIC

VANUATU

ALL VEHICLES UNDER THE MINISTRY OF LANDS, Geology, Mines, Energy, and Water Resources are switching to coconut bio-fuel. Amidst rising prices of oil worldwide, Vanuatu is one of the few Pacific Island nations that is looking to coconut oil as an ecologically sound petroleum alternative. It is cheap, efficient, and renewable. Aside from Vanuatu, the Marshall Islands, Samoa and the Cook Island use coconut oil as fuel for diesel engines, but still on a small scale.

Pacific News Bulletin, January 2005, page 3.

THE SOUTH PACIFIC SEA LEVEL and Climate Monitoring Project is measuring sea levels and other variables in twelve Pacific Island countries, including Cook Islands, Tonga, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands. The project, funded by the Australian government, addresses the concerns of Pacific Island governments and provides accurate information on sea level and climate change.

Oceanic Waves, Vol. 7:1 for March 2005. University of the South Pacific, Suva.

SUVA, FIJI

SPEAKING AT THE GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY for Paradise Point Resort on Yasawa-i-Rara Island, Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase told *The Fiji Times* that he was happy that tourism was flourishing because it helps to improve the living standards of the people living there. Members of the landowning unit, Mataqali Nataalum, will be given first chance to be employed at the resort and they will be given 10 percent of shares in the operating company. Qarase said opportunities in management training would be available for the islanders.