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Easter Island: The Heritage and its Conservation (Review)

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chevron-shaped eyebrows, carved ribs, doughnut at the dorsal waist and bas relief spinal vertebrae) that suggest these three artifacts represent different aspects of the same supernatural 'entity'. The crescent shape of the *rei miro* refers to a phase of the moon (some researchers suggest a boat shape). The *tangata moko* (lizard man), although described by oral tradition as a club often planted at the door of a house for protection against intruders, was, the Orliacs claim, a creature hung inside a house or around the neck of a dancer. I do challenge the statement that a narrow, raised ridge divides the *tahonga* into four sections because I have seen pictures at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu of *tahonga* divided, like coconuts, into three sections.

Twenty-eight pages of maps, reproductions of historic engravings, the Orliacs' own excellent photographs of the island, descriptions of the islanders' Polynesian ancestors and their religious beliefs (including a discussion of good and bad traits of the *aku aku*), comments about the priest-carvers of wood and stone and the *ahu moai* (representing gods, ancestors, chiefs or other important persons raised to the rank of divine protection) eventually lead us to the authors' subject, wooden sculptures of Rapa Nui. Published in French, this book represents, with very few exceptions, Rapa Nui wood carving from the time of Cook to Heyerdahl's Norwegian expedition in 1955. Most of the pieces discussed are found in European museums and collections. Since this work is not of global scope (pieces from the Bishop Museum for example, are not included, nor are the modern Christian saints in the Hangaroa Church of the Holy Spirit, my own specialty), a more accurate title for the book might have been *Early Wooden Sculptures from Easter Island in European Collections*.

Although so short a book does not really need a Table of Contents, I would have liked to use an Index. Also, it is unfortunate that Dr. Steven Fischer's definitive 'pending' book on *kohau rongorongo* was not available to the Orliacs for reference.

In closing, the Easter Island Foundation/*Fundación Rapanui* owes Catherine and Michel Orliac great and sincere thanks for enclosing the French version of its informational brochure in the first 1000 copies sold of *Bois Sculptés de L'île de Pâques*.

 *Easter Island. The Heritage and its Conservation*. A. Elena Charola. 1994. World Monuments Fund, New York. 68 pages. Soft cover, line drawings, maps, black and white photographs and 72 color photographs.

Review by Paul G. Bahn

What a pleasure to read a well-informed, accurate, straightforward and unpretentious book about Easter Island. The latest in a distinguished series which the World Monuments Fund (previously the International Fund for Monuments) has devoted to the island over the years, it is well designed, with colour photographs on each left-hand page and a map at the top of each right-hand page marking the sites mentioned in the text and captions on that page. The book is

divided into three main sections: a historical overview, the monuments of the island, and their preservation. There are three appendices (the island's archaeological elements, a glossary of terms, and a bibliography), a Foreword by Gonzalo Figueroa, and a brief account of the World Monuments Fund's involvement in Easter Island by its executive director, Bonnie Burnham, accompanied by a remarkable photograph of a moai head on open-air exhibition among New York skyscrapers in 1968. Charola's excellent text provides a short but up-to-date account of Rapa Nui's archaeology and cultural history, a valuable overview of conservation projects on the island, and an introduction to the problems involved in countering the effects of natural deterioration, tourism, vandalism and unfortunate incidents such as statue-casting or damage by movie makers. All of these factors are very well illustrated.

One welcome aspect of the book as a whole is the tribute paid throughout to the pioneering work of William Mulloy, whose restorations of monuments were in large measure made possible by the Fund. It is interesting to learn that, before he died, Mulloy recommended that no further reconstruction should take place, since the destruction was an important part of the island's history. Now that the process of registering the whole island on UNESCO's World Heritage List is at last underway, it is to be hoped that efforts to conserve and consolidate the archaeological vestiges will henceforth be better funded and coordinated. A Spanish-language edition of this book is forthcoming.

Note: *Easter Island: The Heritage and its Conservation* by Dr. A. Elena Charola is available from the Easter Island Foundation. Price is \$24 plus \$3 shipping/handling [surface mail] CA residents add 7.5% sales tax. Foreign air mail extra. Write to the Easter Island Foundation, 666 Dead Cat Alley, Woodland, CA 95695. Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing and delivery.

 *Geiseler's Easter Island Report: An 1880s Anthropological Account*. Introduction, annotations and notes by William S. Ayres; translated by William S. Ayres and Gabriella S. Ayres. *Asian and Pacific Archaeology Series* 12. University of Hawai'i Press, 1995. ISBN 0-8248-1555-6; 207 pages, paper cover.

Review by Georgia Lee

This publication has been a long time coming, and at last it has appeared in English translation. Lieutenant-Captain Geiseler, who arrived to Rapa Nui in 1882, made the island's first detailed ethnographic descriptions. Although on the island for only four days, he collected more than 250 craft and technological items (some of which were never seen again on the island), 50 human crania and two hair samples. His main informant was the half-Tahitian, Alexander Salmon, who also was Paymaster Thomson's informant in 1886. As Ayres