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"Where Giants Walked" TV Review

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points out, Salmon's 'take' on things undoubtedly was influenced by his Tahitian background. Combined, Geiseler's and Thomson's collections comprise the largest collection made at the end of the 19th century.

Although the carved pieces are not the finest (few good specimens were available after the mid-1800s), they are securely dated and are accompanied by detailed descriptions.

The book is illustrated with drawings from Geiseler's report, maps, and photographs of many of the ethnographic pieces. Plates 1-3 (black and white photographs dated from 1911) provide a fascinating glimpse of the island at an early date, and are probably close to the way the island looked at the time of Geiseler's visit. Two of these early photographs are from the Percy Edmunds collection, now at the Bishop Museum. The view of Hangaroa (50 inhabitants; the rest lived at Mataveru) shows a tiny cluster of houses on a windswept and treeless plain.

Imagine then the island with 150 inhabitants (67 men, 39 women, and 44 children); 12,000 sheep, 700 head of cattle, and 70 horses. The Jesuits had left for Mangareva, taking many Rapanui with them. Geiseler states, ". . . if the causes for the decline of population continue, in a short time the last Rapanui man will have lived on his native land." There is no political organization, and the people ". . . do only what is precisely necessary for maintaining their existence." (49). He comments favorably on singing and dancing and notes that "They eat whenever they have something to eat . . ." (74). Contrast this grim description with the bustling village on Rapa Nui today!

Appendices include: Easter Island Early Historic Chronology of Ship Visits; The Berlin Anthropological Society's Research and Collecting Guide; Inventory and Description of Ethnographic Specimens collected and Purchased on Easter Island; Geiseler (Hyäne) and Related Holdings of the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin; Collected Vocabulary of the Rapanui Language; and Collected Songs.

As with many such publications, the 30 pages of notes are illuminating and helpful; they provide comparative material and correct misstatements made by Geiseler in the light of current research.

I would like to comment on one item in the References. The oft-cited Dr. Stephen-Chauvet, author of *La Isla de Pascua y sus Misterios* (1946) should be cited as Chauvet, Stephen. The mystery of Chauvet's hyphenated name was solved in recent years when his death certificate was located by Steven Roger Fischer.

TV REVIEW: "Where Giants Walked"

Paul G. Bahn

The latest 30-minute TV documentary on Easter Island, screened in the USA and Britain, forms part of a series entitled *Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious Universe* made by Granite Productions of London, and is one of the best of its kind. Like all programs in this series, it has an introduction, conclusion and occasional comments from Clarke himself at

his home in Sri Lanka, but--despite the ominous introductory description of the island as "the most mysterious place on Earth"--the actual content of the show is solid fact combined with interesting footage. Joanne Van Tilburg at Rano Raraku ("This is a place of pilgrimage") briefly explains the quarrying of the statues, and their likely meaning; later she presents the *moai* eyes. When the topic of how the statues were moved is broached, however, we are mercifully spared any computer games. Instead, we are shown footage of the Franco-Belgian expedition of 1934 moving a 6 ton statue by sledge with great difficulty, using 100 islanders and a ship's crew; a bearded Charlie Love presents his successful experiment in moving an upright statue on a sledge over rollers; and Pavel Pavel in Prague carries out new experiments especially for the program: a 9 ton replica statue, on its back on a sledge, was moved by 20 men over rollers. Pavel reckons that this method could have been used for the smaller statues, weighing from 5 to 20 tons. When the rollers were absent, it was found that even three times as many men could not budge the statue and sledge one inch; however, when lubrication was provided--not sweet potatoes, but ordinary potatoes scattered before the sledge--the statue could be moved (we are not told how far or how easily).

In the most important sequence of the show--and one that is far too brief--Pavel adapts his ingenious and simple method for raising the lintel stones onto the uprights at Stonehenge (as set out in his article in *Antiquity* 1992, vol.66, 389-91) and places a *pukao* onto his statue. He makes it look remarkably easy, involving a few men, levers, ropes, and two sloping, lubricated timbers up which the *pukao* is gradually dragged. This is not easy to describe without drawings or photos, but *RNJ* readers can gain some idea from the photographs in Pavel's Stonehenge article, and it is to be hoped that he will publish this very important contribution to Easter Island studies in the near future.

In the final section of the film, we have Bill Liller presenting the astronomical orientations of the ahu; Gerardo Velasco taking a new sediment core in the lake at Rano Raraku, and a bearded John Flenley explaining how he studies the pollen in such cores, and how he feels deforestation explains the end of statue production because of the lack of rollers. Velasco then shows us the very interesting cylindrical holes he has found on the coast, holes left by the straight trunks of the now-vanished palm, and in some of which the imprint of leaves can be seen. Finally the geologist Oscar González Ferrán argues that, since the island is in a very active earthquake zone, and since 80% of the statues have fallen to the west, the *moai* were toppled not by conflict but by earthquake--an intriguing idea, but if it were true one wonders why there is no mention of such a recent and devastating catastrophe in the island's rich oral traditions.

All in all, a program to be recommended, in particular the statue transportation sequences and especially for Pavel's *pukao* solution. It is also worth watching to catch Van Tilburg's startlingly humble admission: "The longer I work here, the less I know"!