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Items from the Edge

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non-Rapanui focus to much of the proceedings, including a very significant symposium in its own right, on Lapita. The most recent news from the Island came through Charlie Love, who only a fortnight before had been excavating *moai* roads. In a moment of great candor, Charlie admitted that what he had found during his just-completed research was that all *moai* moving theories so far could not cope with the structure of the road he explored! Oh, well: back to the logs, ropes and cement casts....

As a kind of theme, both intellectual and personal, the presence of Peter Bellwood as a keynote and active participant was very welcome. Bellwood's books would be known to most if not all the conference participants and he clearly is interested still in what the Pacific has to offer in the piecing together of human history. Emily and Brigid Mulloy, as always, were great to see again. And, how does Juan Grau keep on keeping on! What an amazing and clear thinking man he is!

With some amusement too, there was a constant procession of shame-faced people stealing off to the library, to be interviewed about wild theories and to be expertly filmed. During my session, more time was spent adjusting the ambient lighting and a vase behind me on a shelf than was allowed for answering the questions. "That's fine", the director would encourage, "but can you make your reply 15 instead of 20 seconds"? I could feel the commercial break looming.

People reacted in very personal way to the venue of the conference: The Hawaii Preparatory Academy is remote from Kona-Kailua and the flesh pots of Hilo. Those of us familiar with boarding schools reacted by throwing our food when the Headmaster addressed us. Others, mindful of military parallels, became shifty and ran stealthily between buildings, keeping a low profile. Still others seemed delighted that no one (except those at their table) could tell them not to put disgusting combinations of food on their plates. There were the rebels, of course. A riotous ping-pong party, fuelled by Diet Coke, was firmly quashed by the authorities by removing, first, the paddles and, then, returning later, to hide the ball itself! Dastardly clever those prefects!

There would be little point in a short account of this kind in going through the many excellent papers, even the highlights, for each of us will have our favorites where, in astonishment, we learned something very new and/or puzzling. I gave Charlie a plug because we spent the day after the conference driving leisurely around Kona-Kailua and spending money in enticing bookshops where we ran into other colleagues similarly engaged. He paid for the petrol, so I give him a guernsey, in true academic payola fashion.

One of the points that should be made is that there was a healthy (and I do mean healthy) contingent of younger researchers from the USA, Spain, Norway, Germany, France, Japan, Chile and New Zealand (that I met) ready to take over in Pacific Studies when us "crumbles", as Australian slang has it, doze off. A very good sign.

Perhaps a last item to notice is the puzzling (to most people) announcement made by Steve Fischer at the luau that the Easter Island Foundation is due to transform into something very different to what it is today. Maunga Kea did not rumble in the background, but some people did. Scarcely had life-time

achievement awards been given to Joan Seaver Kurze and Georgia Lee in the form of weighty 'gold *moai*' (accompanied by fragile chocolate *moai* petit-fours) than the demise of the institution seemingly was being announced. Leaving aside for the moment that both these two stalwarts have many more good years to come (along with the fighting fit Frank Morin!), it is not clear to me what people have in mind. Is it impossible to keep as the core of a Foundation an interest in one little island in the Pacific? I suppose that is the question: To be or not to be. Nice ring, don't you think? Might use it in a play.....

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AFTER FOUR MONTHS OF WORK, the conservation of the *moai* at Viña del Mar is completed, and the Easter Island statue is now protected from future weathering. The *moai* that stands outside the Fonck Museum is said to be from Ahu One Mahiki, on the south coast of the island. After analysis, it was determined that treatment was essential because continual exposure to bad weather was eroding the surface. Several months ago it was possible to see cracks that could have caused major damage around the neck and shoulders. The conservator in charge, Mónica Bahamóndez, head of the laboratory at the Centro Nacional de Conservación y Restauración, directed the treatment, explaining that once the interior of the *moai* became totally dry, it was then possible to protect it with a consolidant, making it resistant to rain.

Thanks were given to the Easter Island Foundation, which provided a grant toward the treatment, making it possible to finance the process. The treatment used on the Viña *moai* is similar to that utilized on the statues of Easter Island and consists of the application of a German-developed product that enables the volcanic stone to resist erosion by weathering.

The conservation crew also removed some white deposits and injected an adhesive into the cracks and fractures to prevent larger losses of material.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 27 July, 2000

Items from the Edge

OUR ROVING CORRESPONDENT, Peter Thornquist, informs us that yet another coral mask "from Easter Island" was being sold on eBay. We reported on this phenomenon in our last issue (RNJ 14(2):40). This sales blurb contains a few more tidbits of information, a different year collected, and an odd comment about it being "brought by other people to Easter Island..." Oh yessss. Maybe those little guys from Outer Space?

The mask is described as "A fairly crude ceremonial mask carved from coral stone and found on Easter Island. The mask belonged to a French Scientist, in fact a medical doctor, who was part of a French excavation team in 1972, who studied various burial sites on the island. 3 of such masks were found; 2 of them in one grave; the other half exposed and not allocated to a specific burial site approx. 500 metres away. There are some notes of the former owner (now deceased) and a rough sketch of the location; but except that one of the masks was given to the Musée des Hommes in France, and one sold to a private collector last year not much more is known. Speculation exists that

these masks, very unusual in Oceanic Art, were brought by other people to Easter Island but again: By whom and why remains unresolved.... Apparently carbon dating was attempted by the Musée des Hommes without precise results.... Serious and adequate bidding is invited. The present vendor is the executor of the Deceased Estate."

Publications

Le Bulletin du Cercle d'Etudes sur l'Ile de Pâques et la Polynésie. Bulletin 37 for August, and 38 for September 2000.

Centre for South Pacific Studies, Newsletter. University of New South Wales, Sydney NSW 2052.

Grau, Juan. 2000. *Palmeras.* Ediciones Oikos Ltda, Santiago de Chile. ISBN 956-7277-11-7. Soft cover, all-color photographs plus a few line drawings. 335 pages, index. In Spanish. For information regarding this book, contact Dr Grau at grau-eco@entelchile.net

Indo-Pacific Prehistory: The Melaka Papers, Vol. 3. Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association 19. 2000. Proceedings of the 16th Congress of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association, Melaka, Malaysia, 1-7 July 1998. Australian National University.

The Journal of the Polynesian Society, Vol. 109(1) and 109(2) for March and June 2000. Volume 109(1) is a special issue: "Essays on Head-Hunting in the Western Solomon Islands". Volume 109(2) contains "The Samoan Category of Matai/Chief: A Singularity in Polynesia?" By Serge Tcherkezoff; and "A Range of Disciplines Support a Dual Origin for the Bottle Gourd in the Pacific", by R. C. Green.

Rongorongo Studies, A Forum for Polynesian Philology. Vol. 10(1), 2000. PO Box 6965, Wellesley Street, Auckland 1, NZ. This issue contains "Fijian Diphthongs" by Albert J. Schutz, and "The Definite Article and the Authenticity of Moriori" by Ross Clark.

Tok Blong Pasifik, June 2000; Vol. 54(2). Pacific Peoples Partnership.

In Memorium

ROBERT RAMSDELL KOLL 1908-1999

FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES of Robert Koll were saddened to learn of his death Sept. 13th, 1999 at his home in Ajijic, Jalisco, Mexico, victim of a (still officially unsolved) murder, which also took the life of his long time companion. Mr. Koll was born in Oakland, California, December 7, 1908, and attended the University of California at Berkeley.

In 1968 he took early retirement and moved to Ajijic, where he became interested in geology and archaeology, joining a local study group. This led to his acting as a volunteer on archaeological digs in Mexico. In 1973 at one such site in Teocopan, Sinaloa, he met William Mulloy. The following year he joined the Orongo project as a volunteer during the July-December field season. We stayed in the same guesthouse, so were in close contact both on and off the site. His energy and enthusiasm as well as his sense of humor made him fit in easily with people of all ages, nationalities, and occupations.

Koll returned to work with Mulloy at Orongo in 1976, and during that season also came in contact with Jacques and Phillipe Cousteau, and their crew then filming on the island. He appears in the video, "Blind Prophets of Easter Island" (Cousteau Odyssey # 6). Koll had become interested in

recording the many petroglyphs both inside and outside the Orongo houses, and developed several techniques of his own for doing so.

A petroglyph which he discovered near the Orongo site formed the basis for Mulloy's 1975 article "Double Canoes on Easter Island?" which is illustrated by a Koll rubbing. The making of such rubbings has since been banned, so Koll's form a record of rock art now impossible to duplicate. A number of these have been displayed at the University of Wyoming Art Museum together with the William Mulloy collection of wood carvings and other folk art from Rapa Nui. Several more rubbings from his personal collection are being offered for sale by his estate. These can be seen on the website www.ajijic4me.com

Robert Koll continued his interest in Rapanui long after leaving the island, corresponding with many other associates interested in Rapa Nui, and writing a number of articles for *Rapa Nui Journal*.

Emily Ross Mulloy

Web Sites

Easter Island Foundation:
www.islandheritage.org

The Fonck Museum library, Biblioteca Rapanui y Polinesica: Director of the Library, Ana Betty Haoa:
bibrapanui@entelchile.net

David Stanley's (South Pacific Handbook) website:
www.southpacific.org

An archive of photographs of Pacific art and culture:
<http://sorrel.humboldt.edu/~rwjl/oceanic.html>
www.tattoo traditions.alohaworld.com

Rongorongo and Thomson:
www.rongorongo.org/Thomson/index.html

Centre for South Pacific Studies Newsletter,
www.arts.unsw.edu.au/southpacific/homepage.html

www.tattoo traditions.alohaworld.com

Grant McCall's website about Easter Island:
www2.hawaii.edu/usr/cgi/sss/~ogden/piir/pacific/Rapanui.html



The EIF has a few excellent tote bags left over from the Pacific 2000 conference. Heavy-duty and generously sized, they make great farmers' market bags, book bags, etc. In natural with the conference logo in black. Only \$5 including postage!

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