

# Rapa Nui Journal: Journal of the Easter Island Foundation

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## EIF News

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soon by another 1.500 hectares. You can find whatever you like in these newly inhabited and cultivated lands, from some decent houses to the most ugly squatters, to just Eucalyptus plantations, or nothing, but certainly an impressive lot of barbed wire fences, padlocks, etc. A large part of the island is, for tourists, now impenetrable. He added that he expected to return to the island the following April to organize a seminar for land development and conditions for island autonomy. But his expectations were not high: "... they change their mind so often, both Rapanui and Chilean, that I really do not know if this will materialize..."

He added, "Of course, some of my conversations with authorities could never be mentioned in a publication because this fragile process would immediately collapse, and we should start again in a dozen years or so. Rapa Nui is in a very dynamic state. According to the laws of thermodynamics, when this process takes place in a non-equilibrium status, it is technically called chaos, and this is precisely the island at present." And he added, "... terrible management problems remain to be solved in Rapa Nui. I think that nowhere else in the world is there an island where, concerning its management, more unprecedented and surprising madness has occurred. It goes from the tragic to the completely ridiculous. Usually, I deal with development issues of such large countries as China, India, Canada or Argentina. But stimulated by a strange mixture of fun and love, I have concentrated a sizeable amount of my time this year (December 2002-January 2003, April and June 2003) on Rapa Nui and Chile."

In December 2004, di Castri wrote, "The situation in Rapa Nui is bad, very bad for its sustainability. In addition to the traffic congestion, including motorbikes and so many taxis (a world record), there is the continuous arrival of poor and uneducated *Continentales*, and the situation of waste disposal and treatment, etc., continues. Land use is a total disaster. Have you realized the level of erosion in Poike (totally eroded) and even around Rano Raraku and Rano Kao? It is also as bad in level parts because of the excess of cattle and horses. All ecosystems in Rapa Nui are under rapid destruction."

Despite frustrations and struggles, we hope that di Castri's valuable contributions to Easter Island's ecological problems may have a positive impact for the future.

## EASTER ISLAND FOUNDATION NEWS

### THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As the Spring edition of the *Rapa Nui Journal* goes to press, The Easter Island Foundation is preparing for its annual Board Meeting. Our very active scholarship program continues, and several publications are in the offing. However, our most exciting pending project is the VII International Conference on *Easter Island and the Pacific: Migration, Identity and Cultural Heritage*. The conference, will be held in the Medieval walled city of Visby, Gotland, in

the Baltic Sea, from the 20th to 25th August 2007. The meetings are co-sponsored by Gotland University, Sweden. The conference is developing into a most interesting meeting with several new archaeological and anthropological developments that may alter some of our current thinking about the expansion of the Polynesians across the Pacific. We expect some lively discussions.

The conference is primarily a mechanism to present papers that disclose the latest research results concerning the people of the Pacific Islands, their migrations, and development. However, equally important are the secondary aspects of the conference: meeting face-to-face with colleagues that one might know only from a name on a research paper or perhaps an E-mail. This is an opportunity to meet people from all over the world who share a common interest, and to have extended (or heated) discussions about the latest research or ideas for future research activities. The rapid exchange of ideas over a beer (or two) can be as interesting and productive as some of the formal papers. So, whether you are presenting or not, we encourage all RNJ readers to make every effort to attend the meeting and become part of the formal and informal discussions that will undoubtedly expand the knowledge base for Easter Islanders and peoples of other Pacific islands.

Through the generous assistance of Gotland University, we will have the Conference opening ceremonies at a brand-new conference center, and a Welcome Reception in the Picture Stone Hall at Gotland Museum, arranged by the Municipality of Gotland. In addition, we have not forgotten about those traveling with Conference attendees. Visby, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is surrounded by a 13<sup>th</sup> century wall with ramparts, towers and gates. Some of the activities include guided tours of a cave system; tours to Medieval churches and other structures; the Botanical Gardens; or a picnic at one of the numerous beaches; golf is also available. And we hear the shopping is super!

Following the meeting is a Post-Conference Tour, taking in rune stones, megaliths, petroglyphs, castles, the Kon-Tiki Museum, the Viking Ship Museum, and ending in Stockholm. It promises to be a wonderful adventure.

We hope you all enjoy this edition of the *Rapa Nui Journal* and we look forward to seeing you in person in Sweden.

David L. Rose

### EIF SCHOLARSHIPS

THE MEMBERS OF THE *Comission Fundacion* Easter Island have chosen three Rapanui students to receive the scholarship awards provided by the EIF. The winners are:

**Viviana Ana Hereveri Figueroa** (7th semester of administration of hotels and restaurants, at the Instituto "INACAP"); Viviana received the Nicholas Haoa Sr. Memorial Award.

**Akivi Hanga-Hoonu Atan Soto** (6th semester teaching of Physical Education at the Universidad de Catolica de Valparaíso) won the Easter Island Foundation Award;

**Antonio Fernando Muñoz Tuki** (6th semester, University Pedro de Valdivia) was awarded the EIF Director's Award.

Each scholarship award winner received a check for US \$3,000. The judges of the competition were Maria Virginia Haoa Cardinali, Sofia Faundez Hey, and M. Carolina Hotu Hey, *Gobernadora Provincial*. We are very proud of our award winners and wish them well in the coming school year.

These scholarship awards are in addition to the two four-year Wiegand Scholarship awards, administered by the EIF and given this year to **Juana Luna Atamu** and **Ioan Soler Hotu**.

Some of our previous recipients have kept in touch, informing us of their graduation and awards, again thanking the Foundation for assistance, and expressing their desire to return to the island to help Rapa Nui and their fellow islanders. One of our award winners from last year has been able to study abroad, in Spain, and plans to study law.

#### FROM THE OFFICE

GREETINGS FROM BAYWOOD PARK! Things are changing around our little office as the hotel next door is adding a large park-like area and conference center. With new restaurants and lodgings, Baywood Park is becoming quite the spot for a weekend get-away.

Recently some generous EIF members donated items of interest to Rapanuiphiles. Are you still longing for a special wood statue from Rapa Nui? We have a few nicely carved wood *moai*, as well as a set of salad servers with carved bird handles. Prices vary and you can see these items on our website: [www.islandheritage.org](http://www.islandheritage.org). We also have a set of Tapati Rapa Nui posters from various past years. Many contain the wonderful artwork by Cesar Aguilera, proprietor of Hotu Matua's Favorite Shoppe, and are difficult to come by. By press time we hope to have photos of the posters on our website.

Our most recent publication is Georgia Lee's memoir, *Rapa Nui. Island of Memory* (2006). We highly recommend it as a journey back in time to the way the island was twenty-five years ago. It is illustrated with black and white and color photographs as well as Georgia's original pen and ink drawings.

As always, we have copies of used and rare books about Easter Island and other Pacific Islands for sale. A few of our publications are nearly out of print and will not be republished. If you are thinking about adding to your book collection, now is the time! We have slightly damaged books for sale at a discount, so ask us for a list.

Please keep an eye on your *Rapa Nui Journal* address label for the expiration of your membership. If you have any questions about your membership, let us know!

#### POETRY CORNER

##### ISLAND ABOVE THE SUN

The wind here never dies  
At this navel of the world.  
It carries stony voices in the firelight  
Calling for dances in an arena of seas.

Here are temples lost among worlds  
Where Uoke broke his immense lever  
Trying to annihilate Rapa Nui  
And abandoned the isle, disgraced.

Ceremonies of savage awe and the law of the  
cave  
Are reflected in the living faces of the sentinels  
Who await not a mystery solved but a return  
To a past graced by ancient regalia.

Gazing northwest, standing where the lever  
broke,  
Between Hanga Ho'onu and Poike  
(Some say Mataveri or Rano Raraku)  
We ponder Uoke's failure...

...wrought from a desperate incantation  
To impede his vengeful Nature,  
Chanted rhythmic and fervent by the children  
Of Hau Maka, Hotu Matu'a, Makemake.

Their descendants survived scathed but proud  
An ancient cataclysm – *He 'ati nuinui tuai*  
To re-invent themselves without war  
From the restless dust of the fallen *moai*.

At the carved 'Orongo threshold  
Carnivorous waters carried men to a promise  
Of an egg that grants royal rejuvenation –  
To peace before chaos, life before blood.

With eyes to the heavens – *Mata ki te Rangi*  
A story is told of decadence and ascent,  
Rapacious Tangata Hiva and renewal,  
And still the fertile voices continue...

Alone amidst the ceaseless seas  
And undying echoed winds  
The Rapanui endure  
On this island above the sun.

SHAWN MCLAUGHLIN