A good survey source on the archaeology of the Pacific is Peter Bellwood’s, Man’s conquest of the Pacific, Sydney, Collins, 1978.

Tregear op. cit, has a full column on ahu and related terms, supporting this meaning. Maraee, with rather fewer, but more specific, meanings supports the notion of open and sacred space, including a Malay cognate.

Mara has eight separate meanings, not unusual with Polynesian polysemy, mostly relating to eye and sight.


Tregear op. cit, provides a number of cognates for the Rapanui kumara, including umala uala, kumala, kumaw, with an intriguing note that kumara in Fijian is the modern name, the traditional one being A kawai ni vavala, “the foreigners yam”. The most complete source on the characteristics and distribution of the sweet potato is D. E. Yen, The sweet potato and oceania. An essay in ethnobotany. Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 236. Honolulu, Bishop Museum Press. 1974.

A good survey of Polynesian maritime technology is Judi Thompson and Alan Taylor, Polynesian canoes and navigation, Laie, Brigham Young University, Hawaii campus, 1980.

The historical development of Rapanui, apart from my own work, has been treated well in J. Douglas Porteous, The modernization of Easter Island, Western Geographical Series Volume 19, Department of Geography, University of Victoria, Victoria, B. C., Canada. 1981. Porteous is strong especially on the development of the sheep ranch and how it altered the landscape.


JoAnne Van Tilburg has summarised the available material on the moai and related architecture in her PhD thesis in 1986. She is preparing for publication by the British Museum a summary of this research. An earlier and important PhD thesis on the ahu structures themselves is by William S. Ayres, “The cultural context of Easter Island religious structures”, Tulane University, 1973. All USA originating theses, incidentally, are easily available from University Microfilms International, with representatives throughout the world.

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