

**Making Clay Moai as an Interdisciplinary Activity with
Middle School Students,
International School of Düsseldorf**

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With the exception of the Polynesian stamps, which are worth a mild premium, none of the Chilean issues should cost more than a few dollars each. Most dealers have some in stock and they also can be found on eBay. Covers are another matter. First Day of Issue souvenir envelopes have been issued by Empresa de Chile, but not in any great numbers. Some of the Concorde flight covers can be worth \$40 or more, when they can be found. As for the earlier items, prices of hundreds of dollars can be expected. Condition is a major aspect of value¹.

Easter Island philatelists have other options for collecting. Chile has issued several aerogrammes, one showing the *moai* at Anakena; another the lake at Rano Kau. Either of these sent from the island would be of great interest to a collector.

Collectors also like QSL cards, the privately printed cards by ham radio enthusiasts to note their contacts. Since the 1950s there have been ham radio operators, both military and civilian, on the island. Occasionally they will form "expeditions" and travel to exotic locations, such as Easter Island and try to contact thousands of other hobbyists around the world. I have recorded over thirty of these cards so far. At times they will have postal cancellations, while others are dispatched to central clearing offices.

Stamp collectors have formed hundreds of specialist societies although there are none for Easter Island. However, there is a Chile Collector's Society and a Pacific Islands Study Group out of Great Britain. Each publishes quarterly journals that occasionally carry articles about the island.

If anyone possesses copies of mail used from the island, particularly early items, I would very much like to know about it. A book is in preparation (by the author); it will include illustrated lists of markings, stamps, and QSL cards. A notice will be in *Rapa Nui Journal* when it becomes available. My thanks to David Maddock of England, and Sr. Oscar Medina Rojas of Chile for their information and materials for this article.

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IN THE 7TH GRADE GERMAN CLASSES at the International School of Düsseldorf, Germany, we read the novel "Motu-Iti," which takes place on Easter Island. The students learned about the history of this unique island and its isolated location. The students were very impressed not only by the location but especially by the making and transporting of the *moai*. Having read additional texts and found more information from websites and viewing videos on this topic, including the movie "Rapa Nui," we started an interdisciplinary unit, making clay *moai*. Combining the knowledge acquired in their classes with art classes we started this very special unit.

First the students had to choose which type of moai they would like to produce. For their research they used various websites to view examples of the statues. They first had to draw the moai from three different perspectives: front, side and back. The drawings helped the students when they began to form their clay moai. This activity was supported by our MS Art Teacher who introduced various techniques and explained how to form the basic shape using the drawings made by the students and additional pictures from the internet. The students found it difficult to reach to the stage where an observer could have recognized their model as a *moai*. They indicated that making a *moai* with clay was nothing compared to the making of a real one on Rapa Nui. They were even more impressed with the abilities of handcraft and artwork of the people who built the created the statues.

This special activity was valuable for the students because it helped them realize how difficult it is to form a statue using with only some tools. They have gained respect and agreed that they found it very interesting to learn about this extraordinary place in the world. When asked if they would be interested in visiting this special island, all expressed an interest in traveling to Rapa Nui in order to take a look at the real *moai*. Perhaps in the future they might have the chance to visit the island and hopefully will remember what they found out in their research in 7th grade when reading the novel "Motu-Iti" and making their models of a *moai* out of clay.

They have managed to create good models of typical stone figures and these will be exhibited in the MS Resource Center of the International School of Düsseldorf, where they will be seen by all students, faculty and parents.

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