

WHAT'S NEW IN HANGA ROA

AN EASTER ISLAND PROJECT, FUNDED BY two private companies plus the Embassy of France, plans to convert waste into energy and construction. This ambitious initiative, which is to begin in September, will use solid, liquid, and wastewater in the production of clean electricity. The term "self-sustainability" has become a new buzzword on the streets of Hanga Roa; everyone has been discussing environmental formulas for Hanga Roa. A master plan, designed by the local municipality, is to use polluting waste solids, liquids, and wastewater to convert into clean energy and housing subsidies. This was confirmed to *El Mercurio* by the [former] provincial governor of Hanga Roa, Pedro Pablo Edmunds, who says the unprecedented plan will help solve an historical problem: "This project is desired by all who are leading the municipality... the work will coordinate all aspects of waste and pollutants that are ecologically disastrous for the island".

The most ambitious project aims to eliminate the use of oil as an energy generator. The idea is that 40% of this is provided by the pyrolysis and gasification, whose initiative, which will begin in September as a pilot test, will be financed by the French Embassy, the IDB and the Government. "We hope that the talks of solid, liquid, and excreta help us to be a self-sustaining electricity generation," said Edmunds. However, shortly after this announcement, Edmunds resigned as governor. We hope his replacement will also be in favor of this project.

WASTE MANAGEMENT IN EASTER ISLAND

Petra Campbell
International Help Fund Australia

THE EASTER ISLAND FOUNDATION and the International Help Fund Australia are pleased to announce significant progress made on Easter Island. In March 2009, the Head of the Inter-ministerial Coordination Department at the Office of the President of the Republic of Chile, Mr Ricardo Brodsky, contacted IHFA and requested a report detailing with recommendations for solid and liquid waste management in Easter Island. Brodsky read papers concerning threats to Easter Island's drinking water supply and other pressing environmental issues written by IHFA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Petra Campbell, in *Rapa Nui Journal*. Brodsky advised Petra that the government of Chile had funds available to address the issue of the island's Orito landfill and other imminent environmental threats. Campbell produced *Options for Solid Waste Management in Easter Island* – a report on measures to be taken on the island. This comprehensive report includes the following sections:

Previous work of IHFA on Strategic Solid Waste Management in Easter Island; Removing Non-Hazardous Recyclable Waste from Orito Landfill; Management of Plastic, Paper, Aluminium, Glass, Plastic Shopping Bags, Scrap Metal, Solid Hazardous Waste, E-Waste, Used Motor Oil,



Sr. Ricardo Brodsky and Petra Campbell met on Rapa Nui to discuss and help solve the island's many environmental problems.

Lead Acid Batteries and Other Batteries; Exportation to Chile; Hazardous Non-Recyclable Waste; Expired Pharmaceuticals, Laboratory Chemicals, and Disused Pesticides; Organic Waste; Home Composting Program; Non-Recyclable Wastes; Landfill versus Incinerator; Waste Water Treatment for Hanga Roa and Remote Locations; Compostable Baby Nappies; and The Transportation of Equipment to Easter Island.

As a result of this comprehensive report, IHFA's CEO was invited by the government of Chile and the Municipality of Easter Island for a site visit. The delegation of five included high level representatives from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment, as well as Brodsky himself. Petra assisted the office of the Municipality of Easter Island in explaining the critical environmental issues in Easter Island during field visits to Orito's landfill, Hanga Hemu, and the power station, while promoting environmentally safe products and technologies specifically appropriate for island situations.

Following this first hand experience of the problems faced by Easter Island, Brodsky announced various projects by the government of Chile, such as studying the remediation of Orito landfill and transforming it into a HDPE lined sanitary landfill, closing the open-burning rubbish tip at Hanga Hemu, building a water waste treatment facility also at Hanga Hemu, launching a green waste composting program, and authorising and initiating the exportation of hazardous and recyclable wastes back to Chile. Brodsky advised IHFA of his department's intention to sign an agreement with IHFA and the Municipality in the area of public education.

COMPOST BINS SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

The second objective of Petra Campbell's visit to Easter Island was to launch a home composting program. One kg of organic waste going to a landfill yields 1 kg of methane which is 26 times more heat-retaining, therefore more problematic, than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. Composting has added benefits by diverting organic waste from a landfill (which, on an island, takes up valuable space and threatens drinking water supplies), while providing enriched soils for subsistence farmers to grow healthy food. The 'Tumbleweed' composting bins selected for the program were tested by IHFA for a year prior to recommending their use on island. These bins are rust, rat, fly and dog proof, which is very important on an island with a chronic rat problem and packs of dogs breaking into bins and bags, or open backyard compost piles. Additionally, the bins themselves are 100% recyclable at the end of their life.

The current 'Sponsor a Composting Bin for Easter Island' campaign, launched in May 2009, is part of IHFA's ongoing efforts to help save Easter Island's drinking water supply from irreversible contamination as well as assisting in soil fertilization and climate change mitigation. The goal is to provide one composting bin to each of Easter Island's 1,200 households, assisting local efforts to save the island's environment. The first delivery of plastic composting bins to Easter Island consisted of 13 bins, two of which were donated to the municipality, one to the Governor's Office and one to the Hotel Taura'a, the owner of which - Edith Pakarati - is an active member of the Chamber of Tourism and has been instrumental in encouraging good environmental practice in the tourism industry.

The Easter Island Foundation sponsored ten bins, while the new Regional Manager for LAN Airlines, Mr Alfonso Luna, graciously maintained continuity of support by provid-



Islanders assembling the new compost bins on Easter Island.

ing free freight from Tahiti to Easter Island. Ceva Freight Management sent the bins from Australia to Tahiti at a third of the market rate. Tumbleweed has agreed to provide one extra bin for every ten bins sponsored by IHFA.

This trip was wholeheartedly supported and sponsored by the Easter Island Foundation and the Laboratory Leadership and Management Special Interest Group which provided a large portion of the travel and accommodation costs. LAN Airlines, with a new regional director in Tahiti, have maintained their previous support and provided a complimentary ticket to Easter Island from Tahiti. The Municipality of Easter Island provided a vehicle to use on the island, and the Taura'a Hotel provided accommodation for the duration of Campbell's ten-day stay. Another leg of the journey was donated by IHFA.

RAPANUI SOLAR ECLIPSE: A GLOBAL PHENOMENON FROM AN INTIMATE POINT OF VIEW

Riet Delsing, Santiago, Chile

ALTHOUGH LIVING IN SANTIAGO, I had totally ruled out the possibility of going to Rapa Nui for the solar eclipse because of the predictable increase in airfares. Nevertheless, and to my great surprise, LAN Chile offered tickets far below its usual prices about two weeks before the event. Add to this the invitation of a Rapanui friend to stay at her place and I was off to the island, once again.

Even though the total eclipse was going to take place over a huge extension of the Southern Pacific Ocean, it would only be visible on land at Mangaia, a small island of the Southern Cook Islands, and a couple of atolls in the Southern Tuamotu Islands. This made Rapa Nui an unmatched place for observation. Hundreds of European, North and South American and Japanese astronomers, astrophysicists, astro-photographers and amateurs followed course and flocked to the island. The eclipse would end its path in the South American continent, in Patagonia, where hundreds of people were also gathering.

Days before the big day of Sunday July 11, Hanga Roa seemed to be more busy than usual: more activity in the little eating places along Atamu Tekena and a larger number of rental cars in the streets. I also noticed some extravagantly dressed young people, who, I later learned, were participating in "Honu Eclipse 2010", a week long techno festival with international DJs. The event took place on a large "private" property belonging to a member of the Tuki family on the slopes of Maunga Terevaka just above Ahu Akivi and had the permission of both the Governor's office and the Rapanui Parliament. The organizers were expecting a thousand participants, but only approximately 250 joined the party. I heard complaints about loud music on the part of the Hanga-roans, while concert-goers complained about the lack of toilets and other promised facilities in the camp, even though they had paid more than \$500 as an entrance fee.

This visit to the island was a new anthropological experience for me. My principal goal was to experience the eclipse, but I was also interested in the tourist phenomenon which would undoubtedly unfold in front of my eyes. Besides the professionals, many journalists, eclipse chasers and other tourists invaded the island. I also knew that all the major hotels had been booked, some of them up to a year ahead of time and on my arrival I saw lots of visitors being whisked away from the airport by late-model vans. On the other hand I didn't have access to a car myself, so it was difficult to gather information which I wasn't even sure I wanted to have. How could I take all this in?

A good place to start was the Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert which was bustling with activities. From 6-12 July it hosted the "From Earth to the Universe" photo exhibition, traveling the world since last year, as well as a series of talks. There I learned about stars and skies, about constellations, supernova and an ever-expanding universe, from Chilean, French and Austrian astronomers and astrophysicists. We were told that the last full solar eclipse on Rapa Nui took place in the 6th century and the next one will occur 330 years from now. The island was thus most likely uninhabited during the last eclipse. I listened to a talk by an Austrian astrophysicist about the work of Prof. G. Firneis in archaeoastronomy: Rapa Nui's astronomical orientation, its astronomical observatories and the amazing amount of knowledge existing in Rapa Nui and other Polynesian islands about the movement of the stars. Two French astronomers, Dominique Proust and Vincent Coudé du Foresto, told us about eclipses and astronomy in the 21st century.

I met them again on the evening before the eclipse, when Dominique Proust played the organ and his wife Brigitte sang in a most amazing concert of classical music in the local church, which they organized with local music teacher César Rivera. Together with Rapanui youngsters of the school's orchestra who played the strings and a Tahitian flutist, they performed Bach, Chopin, Purcell, Handel, and other composers. It was very special and beautiful because of the dimly lit church with its wooden statues and flowers, and the mixture of Polynesians, Europeans and Chileans, young and old. I was particularly touched when a Rapanui girl, daughter of Maria Ika Araki, played Chopin's second nocturne.

It was still raining when we left the church at around 9 p.m. – which brings me to the all-important topic of the climate. During the first days of my visit the weather had been fine, but on Friday evening it started to rain and on Saturday a full-fledged storm hit the island with winds of more than 50 km per hour, pouring rain, and canceled flights. This situation had us worried for perhaps we would not be able to see the eclipse. But on Sunday morning, after Mass, the skies cleared. Rapanui called it *mana* and it was magical indeed. The rain had cleared the atmosphere and thus created perfect conditions to observe the eclipse.

On that memorable Sunday morning, I left the house equipped with "eclipse shades" without really knowing where I was going. The eclipse was predicted to start at

12:40 PM and end at 15:34 PM, while totality would last approximately 4:40 minutes, starting at 14:10 PM. The first thing I saw while walking down the street was a large group of Japanese who had set up their telescopes in neat lines and covered with plastic bags in the open field between the Church and the Catholic school. I had been invited to the *campo* close to Ahu Akivi, where I would undoubtedly have an excellent view – but I had a problem: I wanted to be close to a TV screen to watch the World Cup finals in South Africa between Spain and The Netherlands, which was going to take place exactly during "totality". This forced me into the position of having to choose between two major global events. When I got to Café Tahai on Atamu Tekena, where I had watched the semifinals in the company of a couple of (other) Dutch tourists a few days earlier, it was closed.

So I took a taxi to hotel Vai Moana because I remembered they had a TV screen in the entrance area and owner/friend Edgard Hereveri had told me that the place was fully booked with astronomers. It turned out that several Americans and some Greeks were staying there (Edgard also rented his private house to astronomers from India and had cut down a tree for better eclipse sighting). The Greeks were from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece's largest university, and the group of Americans had come with Prof. Jay Pasachoff of Williams College. They set up their equipment in the hotel garden in the early morning amidst flowers and palm trees. Pasachoff was no newcomer to total solar eclipses as he already witnessed twenty-eight before this one. He had an agreement with NASA to complete a map with images that are not possible to take from regular space observatories. His telescope was equipped with three latest generation cameras for this purpose. Material taken during a total eclipse also allows for further studies of the solar corona.

Although at the last minute I had an urge to walk down to Tahai, I stayed at Vai Moana with a Rapanui friend and waited for the big moment which announced itself by a peculiar change of light, a strange penumbra which I will never forget. Then darkness set in and the temperature lowered by various degrees. It is hard to describe what I felt during those 4 minutes. There was a lot of excitement, clapping and shouting towards the end when we could observe the famous diamond, a luminous area on the edge of the moon/sun, which is produced at the moment the sun is appearing again from behind the moon. Then champagne was served, while I was still in agony over the ongoing soccer match. Although I missed out on the party at Tahai and at so many other places, one can only be in one place at a time – and I did get to see the defeat of the Dutch in overtime.

The afternoon was glorious: the waves rolled as never before and there were hundreds of people strolling along the coastline. Later I heard stories from friends who had been higher up on the island, on the slopes of Rano Kau, and saw the shadow produced by the eclipse as it came in from the West, sweep over the island and disappeared over Poike peninsula towards the East. This must have been awesome and I literally lost the chance of a lifetime to have this experience.

Many Rapanui, like my hostess, just stayed home and saw “totality” from their yards. I feel that in special moments like this, Rapanui often don’t want to be where the tourists are.

Some numbers: according to the Chilean tourist office SENATUR, 2,808 tourists visited the island in the days around the eclipse, 778 of which came and left on July 11 in four charter flights from Santiago and Tahiti. The tourists were mainly from Japan, the United States, France, Germany, Spain, Brazil and Argentina, as well as mainland Chileans. I also heard that Larry Page, co-founder of Google, arrived in a private plane with his wife and guests. Other celebrities are said to have been there as well. All together, they left three million dollars behind and spent an average of \$500 a day. A special security plan had been put into place, which included drug control, protection of the environment and cultural patrimony, and a group of motorized “special forces” were flown in from the continent to control disorders. Nothing major happened and the island did not collapse.

Less than a month later, the same “special forces” returned to the island, this time to control the occupation of land by several Rapanui families who claim that their ancestral lands were illegally seized by the Chilean state in the last century. But that is another story.

UNREST IN HANGAROA

THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN HANGAROA. And, although much news has been generated, we have few hard facts. The appointed Governor of Easter Island, Pedro Edmunds Paoa, resigned on 10 August in the midst of unrest on the island. But disputes intensified, and there was talk of independence from Chile. Edmunds stated that his resignation was “one step” toward discussions about a special statute for the island as well as to curtail the influx of settlers. Carmen Cardinali Paoa was appointed Governor in September by Rodrigo Ubilla, Undersecretary of the Interior.

The appointment of Edmunds was said to be related to an economic group hoping to acquire parcels of land for development; this triggered an occupation by some Rapanui of some government buildings and disputed land parcels. The speaker of the Rapa Nui Parliament, Leviante Araki, threatened to declare independence from Chile and “unite” with Polynesia. Others criticized the government for failing to control immigration, saying that the island is filling up with poor continental Chileans searching for work.

Protesters blocked access to a hotel and occupied the land near the Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert. Other properties owned by the Ministry of Interior and National Assets were occupied, including property of the municipality of the island and the local office of SERNATUR (the national tourist office).

The President of the Council of Elders, Alberto Hotus, called the protesters “subversives who want money without working.” Although the disturbance started with the islanders’ dissatisfaction over the appointment of Edmunds as governor, others claim it to be a movement for possession of ancestral lands. Rapanui argue that government buildings are

sitting on Rapanui land; when the Chileans brought their institutions to the island in the 1960s, they used Rapanui land without compensation.

Local inhabitants are concerned that non-natives may eventually own much of the island; they want land ownership to be clarified plus a limit on the influx of non-natives as residents.

Initially very little information was released in Chile newspapers. Chilean authorities refused to discuss the island’s problems unless the Rapanui gave up their occupation of Government buildings. The Rapanui refused to discuss the problems unless their demands are met. On 6 August, the government set a 60-day deadline for finding solutions to the land issues, for special status for the island, and immigration restraints.

On September 16, El Mercurio reported that more than 30 Easter Island title deeds would be delivered to Rapanui families over the next 2 months. Despite claims by the government that the conflict had ended, there were still several clans occupying land who insisted that the government had not resolved their claims. Andrea Seelenfreund, a professor of archaeology at the University of Chile, stated that “at this stage Chile needs new regulations in its treatment of the Easter Island community and its heritage”. In the meantime Leviante Araki, President of the Rapanui Parliament called for the withdrawal of the armed police special forces from the island.

Grant McCall summed it up very well in a reply to an article posted on the *Guardian.co.uk* website on 13 August 2010, “What the Rapanui want is to decide who is able to reside on the island, not who wants to visit. The other matter of crucial importance is the question of land. As Mark Twain quipped about the value of land, “they aren’t making any more of it!” And that palpably is the case on an island. Without going into too much detail, the Islanders know there were plans afoot for Mainland Chileans to acquire blocks of land on Rapanui, in various ways: people are objecting to that and that’s why so-called “government land” is being occupied by around 70 people. Rapanui want all land on their island to be under Rapanui control, a not unreasonable demand by an indigenous population in the 21st century.”



Newly appointed Governor of Easter Island, Carmen Cardinale Paoa.

THE CONFRONTATIONS IN HANGAROA caused the government to suspend the anniversary celebrations of the annexation of the island by Chile. Normally this day is marked by a Naval parade and other ceremonies but were called off this year due to unrest on the island.

A NEW (AND HIGHER) ENTRANCE FEE for the island's sites has been set for foreigners (US\$ 60), to be paid at 'Orongo or Rano Raraku (the price is still US\$ 10 for Chileans). There is a new entrance facility at the Park Ranger's house at Rano Raraku, including a picnic area, and toilets. Visitors need to keep their tickets in order to enter the second site without paying again. This sounds like a steep price, but it is the only fee one pays to visit all the sites on the island. The funds collected help support the park guards and infrastructure.

TWO TOURISTS WERE HELD BY POLICE in July for entering the archaeological site at 'Orongo after hours. Australian tourist, Lachland Scott (27) and his partner, Canadian student Lauren Wilson (26), were walking on petroglyphs and house roofs when apprehended. They were denounced by CONAF for jeopardizing the heritage place, considered the most fragile on the island. The prosecutor of Easter Island, Claudio Uribe, said that both tourists must leave the island and may not return for one year. Two tourists from Japan were also detained, but for what reason was not stated.

RAPA NUI HAS ITS OWN MICROBREWERY!

It is co-owned by Mike Rapu and a Chilean named Fernando Undurraga. The beer is called Mahina and comes in a stout and a pale ale, both of which are made by the Chilean husband and wife team of Sofia Fernandez Vignolo and Pedro Salfate Gomez. Not only do they brew the beer, they grind the grains (from Argentina), wash the bottles, fill and cap the bottles, put on the labels, box the bottles, keep the facility clean, and (until recently) do most of the deliveries! The label on the stout bottle is written in English and Spanish; the label on the pale ale bottle is written in Rapanui and Spanish. They even had a "special edition" label commemorating the recent eclipse, making Mahina Beer the official beer of the total solar eclipse! The back label reads, "Beer which is made from the purest and freshest water in the world. Its original flavor and body are a result of brewing under the island's mysterious full moon using ancient recipes



of the local wise man, Paea." The brewery is located in a small, renovated house near the airport. They do plan to export to Chile and Tahiti, but before you start searching the aisles of your local liquor store, the plan to export is a long way off as they only have one fermenter and can just barely keep up with the demand on Rapa Nui. In fact, they don't be the next Budweiser; they want to keep their identity as a craft beer that was only allowed to come into existence by agreeing not to become a big industry (and therefore not become a big polluter; people are encouraged to return the empty bottles for re-use). Those who have tasted it say that both beers are quite good! We thank Jenny Gardham for the Mahina Microbrewery report and photographs.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE MAPSE

The Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert has sponsored several interesting programs and events over the past several months.

Ha ere mai mo u'i (We Invite You to Look), a photographic exhibition by Rapanui resident Stephany Pauly, took place in March 2010.

April brought a 2nd animation workshop for children ages 8-12, directed by animation expert Vivienne Barry. Also in April a movie by Moira Fortín, *Trilogy*, was presented. This was the first in a series of Polynesian-themed films.

In May the Museo held the *Semana de Patrimonio*, which included a showing of historic videos and photographs from the collection of the museum, a talk on cultural heritage by Museum Director Francisco Torres, and the showing of another Moria Fortín film, *La Primera Vela*.

Prior to the total solar eclipse on the island, astronomer Patricio Rojas of the Universidad de Chile and the Observatorio Cerro Calan and Carmen Gloria Jiménez, astronomy professor from the Unviversidad de Concepción, kicked off an exhibition entitled "From the Earth to the Universe", which included several evening lectures in both Spanish and English on the subjects of astronomy and specifically eclipses. On 11 July, a solar telescope and giant screen were available

at the museum for anyone wishing to watch the eclipse live. On 13 July, Erich Hartig, an astronomer from the University of Vienna, gave a lecture entitled “Archaeoastronomy; Navigation and Astronomy Focused on Easter Island.”

On July 15, Astronomer Carmen Gloria Jiménez directed a workshop for children, “La luz que no vemos” (The light we don’t see), which involved constructing an optical spectrometer to measure light.

Also in July there was a yoga, *fonoterapeuta* and *deeksha* workshop given by Lorena Larraín, Rodrigo Salas, and Camilo Anguita. And for children, there was a *kai kai* workshop led by Isabel Pakarati. We applaud Isabel for keeping the very important tradition of string figures alive on the island.

It’s wonderful that the MAPSE offers so many unique and varied programs for both the islanders and visitors to Rapa Nui!

Critique Sociale. 2009.

Les luttes sociales sur l’île de Pâques. Paris. 28 pp.

<<http://www.critique-sociale.info/index.php/histoire/111-les-luttes-sociales-sur-lile-de-paques>>

by Grant McCall, University of New South Wales

France and the French have an abiding interest in the well-being of Rapanui and its people. I suggested in an article a while ago that this French interest might be due to their having not taken up the request by the Rapanui for France to establish a protectorate over the place. The first time the Rapanui made that plea was in 1868 and the last was 1883 (June 1995. “French images of Rapanui (Easter Island)” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 104(2):181–194).

For whatever reason(s), French books about Rapanui – especially those that criticise Chilean governance – always have sold well in France, the most outstanding example being the many editions in multiple formats of the one book by Francis Mazière, adventurer and author (1968. *Fantastique Ile de Pâques*, Paris, Librairie Generale Française). He visited Rapanui in the bad old days of Chilean Naval domination when, as he could reproduce in his book, Rapanui people required a pass to venture from their village on their own island.

Rapanui should be in the news as I write this in early September 2010 just two days short of the date of the 122nd anniversary of the annexation by Chile of the island. Petero Edmunds, long-time, often-re-elected Mayor, has resigned as Governor and Carmen Cardinali, former school teacher, is newly appointed. The Minister of the Interior came to the island a short while ago, after sending 45 military reinforcements to the island. So, what’s happening in Hangaroa?

According to Chile’s major newspaper, *El Mercurio* of 21 August 2010, about a dozen “families” (in the extended Rapanui sense) have occupied public buildings and the Hotel Hanga Roa in protest at the way the island and the Islanders are being treated.

They are taking back their ancestral lands, the ones confiscated or traded to the Chilean government over the years to be used for public buildings, such as the small civic centre around the Governor’s Office; even the airport. The Hotel Hanga Roa is being occupied by the Hito family who, when they traded that piece of prime real estate to the Chilean government in the 1960s (in exchange for a modest house), never imagined that the property would be sold and re-sold to outsiders for millions.

Now, I know that according to the 1966 Easter Island Law 16.441, land on Rapanui only can be owned by, well, Rapanui. In spite of that law, the Hotel Hanga Roa stands defiant, behind it a long story of favouritism under a dictatorship and profitable land re-sales.

Les Luttes is an impassioned account of what the Rapanui have endured in pursuit of their *liberté*. The archaeological account at the beginning derives mainly from the work of the Orliacs, with a French translation of a John Flenley article and more recent articles in English by Terry Hunt: familiar ground. The interpretation of the fall of the *moai* is class struggle, with the pushing over of the ancestral figures being compared to the destruction of the Vendôme column during the Paris Commune of 1871 (p. 7)!

Fischer becomes the source for more recent, post-contact history from p. 15, along with other English and French sources. In looking at how land was taken from the Rapanui, the authors parallel Rosa Luxembourg’s analysis of similar usurpations in Europe. Marie-Françoise Peteuil’s study, *Les evades de l’île de Pâques* (Paris, 2004) serves as the source on the twentieth century oppression by “the company” in its various forms, but with some quotations from the Chilean Government inspired “Comission on Historical Truth and New Treatment” (*Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato*), a body which gathered extensive data about Rapanui complaints at the beginning of the twenty-first century, publishing their results in an extensive dossier in 2003. The Angata revolt is featured (but without reference to Castro’s or Van Tilburg’s solid books), along with the Alfonso Rapu-led events of 1965 that led to Rapanui’s current special status as a fully integrated part of Chile.

Alfonso Rapu is the older brother of Sergio Rapu, first (in 1984) Rapanui Governor of the island, as well as being the husband of Carmen Cardinali, the newly appointed official I mentioned above.

Les Luttes ends with some speculations about how “mode of production” is affecting the current population (and the world), leading to the demise of the indigenous culture. What the pamphlet does not say – its strong ideological bias demands it – is that it is the Rapanui themselves who really own their own island. Whilst it is true *Les Luttes* asserts, that the environment of the island is sparse and that it is underpopulated (p. 25), the Rapanui don’t quite see it that way.

There is a certain ironic quality to the Rapanui recounting that the first Polynesian settlers of the place declared the island *kainga kino* (useless land) and that an alternative pun on the familiar name for the place, *Te pito o te henua*, is the

“end of the Earth”, most Islanders think still that it is a pretty special *henua*, as Olaug Andreassen showed so well in her very publishable thesis about Rapanui youth. It is also true that many if not most Rapanui see that their island has quite enough people and that they don’t want any more incomers, especially from Chile.

Land and population, who owns it and who determines it, has remained at the core of Rapanui concerns for a very long time and are the sources of discontent with how successive Chilean governments have dealt with these issues, especially with the enticing prospect of autonomy looming in law in the Chilean Senate at the moment (*El Mercurio de Valparaíso* 6 September 2010).

A conspiracy theorist – certainly the authors of *Les Luttes*, would say that the Chilean and international press is being stifled, even censored so that news of the current revolt does not reach outside. Maybe so, but the big news from Chile in the world’s press is about miners trapped for weeks, possibly months, in Copiapó. At the same time, in the south of the country, the indigenous Mapuche are protesting their rights with a hunger strike (*El Mercurio de Valparaíso* 6 September 2010, p. 13).

And all this within a fortnight of the Bicentenary (18 September 2010) of Chilean independence.

Along with all the public monuments planned for Chile, will justice for Rapanui be the Chilean Government’s gift to the Rapanui?

WHAT’S NEW ELSEWHERE

SHANKLIN, ISLE OF WIGHT. A 100-year-old Easter Island *rapa* was sold at auction for a record £220,000 (US\$336,322.00). Bidding began at only £3,000 but buyers in London and Brussels sent its value past £200,000. The *rapa* was a family heirloom and was acquired in Polynesia in the 1920s by a relative who worked onboard a P&O cruise liner. The owners, based on the Isle of Wight, were unaware of the potential value and thought it might fetch about £10,000.

The Times, 17 April 2010

NEW YORK: In May, Sotheby’s New York sold some rare Pacific items: one was a bone necklace from the Austral Islands which brought \$302,000. Although some twenty necklaces like this are known, this example is unique for its rich whale ivory and bird elements. A club from the Cook Islands brought \$326,000 and an ancestor figure from Papua New-Guinea sold for \$2,000,000. This last item had been displayed at the de Young Museum in San Francisco from October 2005 to February 2010.

Tahiti-Pacifique June 2010:41

SOTHEBY’S IN PARIS auctioned other Polynesian items from the Collection Rosenthal, *Art d’Océanie*, in March of this year. Included were an important Maori nephrite pendant, from New Zealand; 7 by 4 1/3 inches; it was expected to sell

for 142,000- to 213,000 Euros. It actually sold for 372,750 Euros (US\$502,501.09), a record for a *hei tiki*. Also sold was a fine *moai kavakava* figure from Rapa Nui, 15 3/4” high. It was expected to sell for \$170,000 to \$255,000 USD but sold for 372,750 Euros (US\$502,501.09). And a fine *moai pa’apa’a* figure, also from Rapa Nui, 16 1/8” high, was expected to bring from 100,000 to 150,000 Euros; it sold for 144,750 Euros (US\$195,134.72).

LONDON: BRITISH MUSEUM. On 14 July, three activists from the group Culture Beyond Oil protested against British Petroleum and the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico by pouring a black substance that resembled oil on the plinth upon which stands famed Easter Island statue, Hoa Hakananai’a. The three young women, dressed all in black masks, walked trance-like to the statue and poured the thick black substance out of egg-shaped bowls decorated with the BP logo. They then placed the bowls on the plinth in front of the statue and slipped away. The news item (from www.culture24.org.uk) added: “Surprised visitors to the Museum took photos of the unexpected addition to Captain Cook’s 2,000-year-old relic, taken from his 18th century travels around South America and the seas now known as the Gulf of Mexico, where the much-publicized Deepwater Horizon oil spill has had a devastating effect since being triggered by a rig explosion in April. They chose the sculpture because of its fabled links with the sudden demise of reputedly strong civilizations.”

We are not sure whether this stupid act by a clearly uneducated group or the so-called “news item” is the more shocking. The statue, of course, has no relation to Captain Cook (it was taken from Easter Island in 1868 on the HMS *Topaze* some 89 years after the death of the famed explorer). Nor did Cook tootle around South America and the Gulf of Mexico; his extraordinary voyages took him to the far reaches of the Pacific Ocean.

And while protesting BP may seem like a good idea to many – given the incredible mess in the Gulf of Mexico, protests should never happen inside a museum. Should museums provide free access? And one might ask where were the museum guards? Vandalism such as this, no matter what the reason behind it, is dangerous to the collections, and museums are not set up to deal with this type of threat. The protesting group should have done their “act” outside the museum’s front doors; their stunt was totally irresponsible. We have not yet been able to determine if anyone was prosecuted for this act of desecration.

A note from *British Archaeology* for Sept/Oct 2010 (*Spoilheap*, p.4) is of interest: “The British Museum protest defiled a room illustrating complex social issues of danger, illness and spirituality, and was infantile and callous.”

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART has two beautiful carved wooden objects from Easter Island in their Art of the Pacific Gallery; a *rapa*, circa 1800, and a *moai kavakava*, circa 1830. These items can be viewed online at: collectionsonline.lacma.org