Rapa Nui

Conflict between Rapa Nui people and the Chilean state escalated during the review year and peaked in December 2010 as Chilean military and police forces committed state violence against Rapa Nui. While the intensity of conflict has lessened since December, Rapa Nui continue to engage in large-scale public demonstrations against the Chilean state as of June 2011. Interpreting the conflict is problematic given that there are competing discursive grounds by which it can be framed (see Young this issue; Young 2011), and because most of the information available is represented in Chilean media, not controlled by Rapa Nui people. Herein I focus on representations of the conflict primarily in terms of the ways it is portrayed by scattered Rapa Nui voices in the international media.

At the close of the last review (Gonschor 2011), Rapa Nui were noted as embroiled in demonstrations sparked by the Chilean state appointment of Petero Edmunds Paoa as the new governor of Rapa Nui. Following the solar eclipse celebrations in July, conflict intensified as a number of hua’ai (extended families) reclaimed hua’ai lands currently occupied by Chilean state institutions and businesses, such as the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of the Interior, the municipality, the public school, part of a museum, and the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa (Indigenous News,
3 Aug 2010). Lands began to be reclaimed on Friday, 30 July (EMOL, 2 Aug 2010). By Wednesday, 4 August, a total of eleven lands occupied by state institutions had been reclaimed (EMOL, 4 Aug 2010). Among the hua'ai reportedly involved were Atan, Chavez/Teave, Haoa, Hito, Huke, Hotus, Ika, Pakarati, Pate, Rapu, Tepano, and Tuki (EMOL, 2 Aug 2010; The Clinic, 15 Sept 2010; ST, 4 Aug 2010; Te Rapa Nui website, Aug 2010)—some of the largest and most powerful of the thirty-six total hua'ai on the island. Hua'ai members set up tents, cooking grills, and fire pits on the reclaimed lands (The Clinic blog, 15 Sept 2010).

Hua'ai members who were directly or indirectly involved in the conflict represented the reclaiming of land as a response to a range of problems. Some hua'ai reclaimed lands against privatization. This was the case in the attempt of the Hito hua'ai to reclaim land occupied by the new high-end hotel, the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa. The US$50 million hotel is a development of Cristoph Schiess, the chief executive of one of the largest private companies in Chile, Empresas Transoceanica (AP, 7 Feb 2011). Resistance to privatization was also fundamental to the Haoa hua'ai's reclaiming of lands occupied by municipal institutions. Reina Haoa, an eighty-five-year-old woman, emphasized that she had provided the municipality land to use in order to improve the functioning of the town at the request of her son Alfonso, who was mayor at the time. On learning that new state leaders hoped to privatize and sell this land she stated, “I went from my home and I came to get my land and I will stay here until I die” (The Clinic blog, 15 Sept 2010; translated from Spanish).

Some hua'ai members stressed broader social and cultural problems. Piru Huke Atan, a hua'ai member involved in the reclaiming of land at the Chilean governor’s building in Rapa Nui, represented the reclaiming of ancestral lands as part of a struggle to retain the integrity of Rapa Nui as a people (PIR, 17 Aug 2010). Hua'ai members felt threatened as a people, in part because of increasing Chilean settlement on the island. Angela Tuki Chavez complained, “Everything they do here goes badly. Especially immigration—it’s not immigration, it’s an invasion. The state doesn’t listen to us as a distinct ethnic group” (National Public Radio, 9 Sept 2010). Valeria Pakarati saw the conflict in terms of social inequality; she emphasized that Rapa Nui are reclaiming land in a context where Chilean officials have housing while Rapa Nui increasingly have nowhere to live (LT, 3 Aug 2010). Such concerns were echoed by other Rapa Nui. Tiare Paoa emphasized problems of health, pollution, power, and assimilation resulting from current state policies in Rapa Nui (EC, 9 Aug 2010). One anonymous Rapa Nui commentator stated that “the reality we live in today is one of being crammed into a ghetto called Ha'aa Roa. Our families are fighting for a couple of crumbs of land for the children and grandchildren, and there is no space to plant even a potato” (EC, 9 Aug 2010; translated from the Spanish).

Other hua'ai members framed the issue in more political terms. Tuhiiira Tuki conceived of hua'ai resistance as a struggle for “a better future for
our children, and not a life as we live in today. To reach this end, we have to be in charge of our lives, our land and everything that goes with it: laws and social development” (EC, 9 Aug 2010; translated from Spanish). Santi Hitorangi, a member of the hua‘ai that reclaimed the land occupied by the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa, contextualized the conflict in terms of international and national law. He stated, “The root of the current revolution is based in the Chilean’s continued occupation and systematic abuse of the Rapanui people, in violation of the United Nations laws on political decolonization and today also the International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, to which Chile became a signatory in 2007. Chile’s actions also violate Chile’s own Indigenous Laws, which make it illegal for non-Rapanui people to own land on the island. The Chilean government has continued to condone abuses relating to health, usurpation of lands, and endangerment of the fragile environment and eco-system of the island by unrestricted immigration of foreigners and Chilean nationals” (PIR, 17 Aug 2010). Alfonso Rapu Haoa, the leader of resistance in the 1960s that led to the end of military rule and to some civil rights for Rapa Nui in Chile, also emphasized the conflict as a struggle for self-determination. In a letter addressed to Chilean President Sebastián Piñera that was later circulated in the media, he stated, “We want issues to be decided on Easter Island where it belongs: in this territory and by the Rapa Nui people” (EC, 16 Sept 2010).

Hua‘ai members were supported by Rapa Nui leaders working within and outside of Chilean institutions on the island. Luz Zasso Paoa, mayor of the Chilean-organized municipality of Haña Roa, and Governor Petero Edmunds Paoa were sympathetic to the hua‘ai in some reports. Governor Edmunds Paoa framed the actions as part of decades of Rapa Nui conflict with the state; Mayor Zasso Paoa represented the conflict as a response to ongoing state failures to reduce Chilean migration to the island, to reconstitute hua‘ai lands, and to establish real autonomy for Rapa Nui (ST, 4 Aug 2010). Leviante Araki, current president of the grassroots political organization Rapa Nui Parliament, threatened that the conflict could lead to Rapa Nui independence from Chile (EMOL, 4 Aug 2010). (The Rapa Nui Parliament developed from the original hua‘ai-based Rapa Nui Council of Elders, which disbanded when a faction led by Alberto Hotus was incorporated into the Chilean state; the council retained the name but its makeup was no longer determined by hua‘ai.) Mario Tuki, who is an elected member of the Chilean state–based Development Commission for Easter Island (CODEIPA) as well as a member of the Rapa Nui Parliament, supported Leviante’s call for independence (EM, 6 Aug 2010).

Initially, the state responded to the August events diplomatically. Raúl Celis, mayor of the fifth region of Chile, which includes Rapa Nui, met with Rapa Nui elder representatives of all thirty-six hua‘ai along with Chilean officials to discuss the conflict in a series of meetings. He acknowledged that Chile had failed to fulfill promises dating to the 1960s and earlier. Celis proposed to resolve conflict with
amendments to current Chilean land tenure laws. Interestingly, while Celis dismissed the threat of independence by the Rapa Nui Parliament, Mata Atan, a leading representative of the hua’ai, emphasized that the call for independence was reasonable in light of the decades of Chilean state failures in Rapa Nui (Emol, 5 Aug 2010).

In a move to reduce tensions and facilitate conflict resolution, Governor Petero Edmunds Paoa resigned on 9 August 2010 (BBC Mundo, 12 Aug 2010). He resigned under accusations of corruption for supporting the contested development of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa (Torrealba 2010), and for favoring other Chilean-based developers who supported him as mayor and helped him gain appointment as governor (ST, 8 Sept 2010). To readers of past reviews of Rapa Nui in this journal, conflict regarding Petero Edmunds Paoa should come as no surprise. Edmunds Paoa, like Alberto Hotus, the president of the Chilean state–organized Council of Elders, has often supported lucrative development projects and policies strongly contested by the majority of the Rapa Nui population, such as a casino on the island (Gonschor 2008, 239) and a watered-down autonomy bill composed with little formal dialogue with Rapa Nui hua’ai members (Gonschor 2007). Carmen Cardinalli Paoa was ultimately appointed to take his place (ST, 8 Sept 2010).

However, Edmunds Paoa’s resignation did not lead to any resolution or significant change in the conflict. By the latter part of August, Rapa Nui hua’ai had reclaimed an estimated thirty-five lands (Torrealba 2010). On 9 August, Chilean Minister of the Interior Rodrigo Hinzpeter formed a committee to address three specific issues: the special status of the island, immigration regulation, and land conflict. The committee’s mandate was to propose solutions to the conflicts within sixty days. Dialogue between hua’ai members and the Chilean state dissolved as Celis threatened state violence against Rapa Nui and requested that forty-five members of Chilean special forces be brought to the island to assist conflict resolution. Raul Teao, a Rapa Nui CODEIPA member, emphasized that because Celis threatened violence, Rapa Nui ceased negotiations (ST, 9 Aug 2010). Rapa Nui Parliament leaders responded by sending a letter to the Pacific Islands Forum and Chilean President Piñera, requesting independence from Chile (OTR, 18 Aug 2010). At gunpoint, the majority of an estimated 1,000 Rapa Nui were forced to end reclamations of ancestral land occupied by colonial Chilean institutions on 17 August (ST, 18 Aug 2010). Hito hua’ai members continued to reclaim the lands occupied by the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa, despite risking harm and death (PIR, 20 Aug 2010).

In September, the government announced that more than thirty land titles for land in the Vaitea region would be released to Rapa Nui hua’ai within sixty days. While some Rapa Nui who were to receive titles were excited about the prospect, Marisol Hito, the main spokesperson for the Hito hua’ai (the hua’ai in conflict with the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa), emphasized that the lands scheduled for titles in the Vaitea region had nothing to do with the ancestral lands being reclaimed in Hāna Roa (ST, 16
Not surprisingly, hua’ai members began to reclaim the lands that they had been forced from in August. Despite the September promise of titles, by October a reported eighteen of the total thirty-six Rapa Nui hua’ai had reclaimed buildings they had been forced from in August (ST, 12 Oct 2010).

Amid the protracted conflict, the annual celebrations usually held on the island to celebrate the annexation of Rapa Nui by Chile on 9 September and the independence of Chile on 18 September were suspended. Governor Cardinali in part canceled the event because the place where it is usually conducted had been reclaimed by hua’ai members (EMOL, 9 Sept 2010). Though it was later reported that she had initially hoped to have the celebration (EMOL, 17 Sept 2010), she ultimately saw the event as inappropriate in the political context (EMOL, 9 Sept 2010). In contrast, Alberto Hotus, president of the Chilean-organized Council of Elders—a man whom many Rapa Nui derogatively nickname both “Kete” (pockets, as “in the pocket” of the Chilean government) and “Hokotahi nō” (someone who stands alone)—once again demonstrated his lack of connection with the Rapa Nui people he is formally supposed to represent. He conducted a private celebration of annexation with Chilean officials aboard a navy ship off the coast of Rapa Nui (EMOL, 9 Sept 2010).

In October, at the international level, attorney Leonardo Crippa of the Indian Law Resource Center (ILRC) in Washington DC filed precautionary measures with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to stop Chilean forces from using state violence against hua’ai members who were reclaiming lands (ILRC, 7 Feb 2011). The measures were filed on the basis of a fact-finding mission Crippa had conducted in August and in light of the September eviction of Hito hua’ai members from Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa, the arrival of additional Chilean forces, and the history of Chilean violence toward its indigenous peoples (Crippa, pers comm, June 2011). As the sixty-day Interior Ministry committee review drew to a close in October, the Chilean government announced its proposals for resolving conflict in Rapa Nui. The state highlighted an “investment plan” of US$203.4 million (PIR, 26 Oct 2010), which would utilize more than twenty times the total amount the state appropriated for Rapa Nui over the past fifteen years. The proposal included bills to improve land title transfers, clarify the boundaries of the national park, improve health care, increase infrastructure, and improve the conservation of the environment and cultural heritage (ST, 25 Oct 2010). Minister of the Interior Hinzpeter discussed the investment plan and other matters of concern (land titles, migration, and the special status of the island) with select Rapa Nui at the public school auditorium for five hours (EMOL, 23 Oct 2010).

While some Rapa Nui appear to have been interested in the state’s proposal to resolve the conflict with promises of financial investment, more discussion, and further committees, many clearly were dissatisfied. Mario Tuki emphasized that that the proposal did not really address the
concerns of Rapa Nui hua’ai, and that only some hua’ai had been invited to the meeting with Hinzpeter. Mario further stressed that the land titles were limited to just three extended families while the rest were not addressed. Hinzpeter alienated the Hito hua’ai, as he did not meet with the family members to discuss their conflict with the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa (ST, 25 Oct 2010). Nor did he meet with members of the Rapa Nui Parliament (PIR, 27 Oct 2010). Raul Teao, a CODEIPA member, characterized the state’s development plan as mere “pills” that did not address the more fundamental demands for true political autonomy for Rapa Nui (EMOL, 26 Oct 2010).

Thus it was no surprise that as Hinzpeter tried to fly away, demonstrations at the airport delayed the departure for an hour (EMOL, 26 Oct 2010). As Angela Tuki Chavez noted is typical of the Chilean state, it appears the officials “‘ina he hakaroŋo” (did not listen). None of the comments made by Rapa Nui explaining the reclamations of land mentioned earlier in this review explicitly discussed a need for a new Chilean “investment plan” or lands in Vaitea. At issue were ancestral lands in Haŋa Roa and the island as a whole, as well as demands for self-determination and independence. While it supposedly does address some of the social concerns mentioned by some Rapa Nui, it is clear that Chile’s plan failed to confront the more fundamental concerns regarding ancestral Rapa Nui lands and the question of autonomy or independence for Rapa Nui. Interestingly, Erity Teave, executive director for human rights within the Rapa Nui Parliament and long-time spokesperson for Rapa Nui at the United Nations, has recently emphasized that the investment plan is not actually focused on problems of the Rapa Nui people at all (pers comm, Aug 2011). Her research has suggested that the plan is primarily connected to Chilean international trade interests as projected participants in various Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) programs. According to Erity, the investment plan centers on the development of a new port, as well as a project for airport expansion to increase international trade between Asia and Chile.

On 3 December, Chilean military and police forces began acts of state violence against unarmed Rapa Nui men, women, and children. Violence began at dawn as forty-five Chilean special forces entered a house reclaimed by members of several hua’ai at the center of town, under a court order requested by Special Prosecutor Guillermo Felipe Merino and signed by local Judge Bernardo Toro (EC, 3 Dec 2010). Esther, Roberto, and Verena Ika Pakarati, as well as Margarita Pakarati Tuki, Ricardo Hito Tuki, and Miguel Tuki Atan were arrested (EC, 3 Dec 2010; EMOL, 4 Dec 2010; RNP, 5 Dec 2010). According to Verena, “The police arrived at the house, knocked loudly and violently entered. It was like a war between us and them. We were all crushed” (LS, 4 Dec 2010; translated from Spanish). State violence occurred in spite of the fact that Claudio Hito Tuki confronted the Chilean special forces with paperwork indicating the precautionary measures filed with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Following the arrests,
Chilean special forces burned Rapa Nui flags that surrounded the house (EC, 3 Dec 2010).

As Rapa Nui began to protest the violent eviction, conflict escalated further when the special forces proceeded to fire rubber bullets and tear gas into the gathering crowd of Rapa Nui (RNP, 3 Dec 2010). Twenty-one Rapa Nui were reported injured during the events, which long-standing social anthropologist of Rapa Nui Grant McCall characterized as “government thuggery” (2010). Four children were reported injured (Indigenous Peoples Issues and Resources website, 4 Dec 2010). Mario Pakarati, Zita Atan, Pia Vargas, Claudio Tuki, Enrique Tepano, Honu Tepano, and Santi Hitorangi were all shot with rubber bullets (RNP, 3 Dec 2010). A total of seventeen were hospitalized (LT, 4 Dec 2010). Jose Riroroko was beaten on the head with a police baton (RNP, 3 Dec 2010). Ricardo Tepano was the most seriously injured: he was shot in the face at close range and lost an eye (RNP, 5 Dec 2010). Rapa Nui Parliament President Leviante Araki was shot in the hip twice (RNP, 3 Dec 2010), as well as strangled and beaten to the ground by four policemen (EC, 3 Dec 2010). He and Ricardo Tepano were flown to Chile for medical care. Rapa Nui emphasized that those arrested in the conflict were denied medical care and sufficient heat while incarcerated (EM, 4 Dec 2010). Violent state evictions continued in late December. On 29 December dozens of Rapa Nui were beaten with clubs by one hundred Chilean special forces around the central plaza of Haŋa Roa (ST, 3 Jan 2011).

Chilean officials responsible for the violence represented the evictions as necessary; however, other Chilean leaders questioned the use of force. Chilean President Piñera thought that the evictions were justified methods for reestablishing social order (ST, 14 Jan 2011). Regional Mayor Raúl Celis claimed that the actions were necessary given Rapa Nui resistance (EMOL, 4 Dec 2010). According to Minister of the Interior Hinzpeter, “The police forces acted in compliance with a court order. That’s how institutions function, and we all must follow them. There is a limit to these things and it was reached when there are illegal takeovers that cause damage to the island” (New York Times, 4 Dec 2010). Chilean Senator Alejandro Navarro, on the other hand, was concerned that excessive force was used against the Rapa Nui (EM, 4 Dec 2010). Chilean Senators Juan Pablo Letelier and Ricardo Lagos Weber also questioned the treatment of Rapa Nui and wondered if the state had adequately discussed alternative solutions with Rapa Nui (emol, 4 Dec 2010). Senator Letelier accused the judge who administered the court order of abuse and violation of United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169, which had been ratified by the Chilean government (ST, 6 Dec 2010). Chilean Congressman Hugo Gutiérrez also condemned the actions of the Chilean government and urged officials to immediately develop an autonomy statute for Rapa Nui (McCall 2010).

In January 2011, Rapa Nui characterized the island as “a war zone.” Three Chilean war ships were observed circling the island. Julie Brown Tuki was beaten outside her
home by twenty police and arrested for criminal trespass along with her cousin Tony Tuki (RNP, 21 Jan 2011). The Hito hua’ai encountered some success, however, as the Valparaíso Court of Appeals disqualified Chilean Judge Bernardo Toro in Rapa Nui from presiding over the criminal case against seventeen hua’ai members on 12 January (LT, 12 Jan 2011). As a result, the court deferred the criminal case against the Hito hua’ai members until 8 February (PIR, 13 Jan 2011). In response, the police in Rapa Nui intensified their harassment of hua’ai members. On 13 January they cut off the Hito hua’ai members from receiving food and water from outside the hotel. This immediately jeopardized the health of Tita Hito, a diabetic, who was subsequently hospitalized with police accompaniment (RNP, 21 Jan 2011).

State violence continued in February, though court proceedings and international action increasingly supported the plight of Rapa Nui. On 6 February, fifty policemen broke through glass doors of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa and physically forced Hito hua’ai members from the hotel. The hua’ai members were taken to the local jail in buses owned by the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa. Armed police prohibited any photography of the events. Trini Farada, who tried to photograph the process, was immediately assaulted by the police forces and jailed. A nineteen-year-old male was also assaulted for taking pictures, but was not jailed. Oscar Vargas, the defense attorney for the Hito hua’ai, was “roughed up” by the police force and was not initially allowed to consult with the hua’ai members. According to Vargas, the police removed the hua’ai members without a court order and in defiance of the fact that a court order had been denied on two separate occasions in Valparaíso by Judge Maria Cristina Cabello. Rapa Nui defense attorney Rodrigo Gomez thought that the actions were based on a fear that the court was going to decide against the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa and in favor of the Hito hua’ai members on 8 February (RNP, 6 Feb 2010).

Internationally, Chile’s violent actions against Rapa Nui people have been generally criticized. Fe’iloakitau Tevi of the Pacific Conference of Churches emphasized solidarity with Rapa Nui and asked the Red Cross to intervene with medical care (PIR, 8 Dec 2010). The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) condemned Chile’s actions as “ugly, unbelievable and reprehensible” (UBCIC, 4 Dec 2010). Amnesty International officially called for investigations into excessive force and violations of the United Nations ILO Convention 169 (Flemish Center for Indigenous Peoples blog, 10 Dec 2010). The United Nations appointed University of Arizona Law Professor James Anaya as a special rapporteur to investigate the Chilean use of excessive force against Rapa Nui (ST, 14 Jan 2011). US Senator Daniel Akaka of Hawai’i and Congressman Eni Falemavenga of American Sāmoa wrote letters of support for Rapa Nui to Chilean President Piñera and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (OTR, 11 Feb 2011). On 16 February, Congressman Falemavenga spoke to the US House of Representatives about the conflict in Rapa Nui and urged President Barack
Obama to discuss the issue during his forthcoming visit to Chile. On 7 February the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights granted the precautionary measures filed by the Indian Law Resource Center in October. The commission demanded that Chile stop the use of armed violence against Rapa Nui people and adopt a number of measures to ensure their safety and integrity (OTR, 12 Feb 2011). Attorney Crippa of the Indian Law Resource Center commented, “The action by the IACHR validates our concerns that human rights are being violated on Rapa Nui island. The Chilean government must review its policy on Rapa Nui issues, take measures to comply with international human rights law, and begin a fair dialogue with the Rapa Nui nation.” The measures were filed by Crippa at the request of Rapa Nui representatives of twenty-nine of the total thirty-six hua‘ai (ST, 8 Feb 2011).

Legal support for the Hito hua‘ai has shifted over time. On 8 February, Chilean Judge Cabello suspended the charges against the seventeen Hito hua‘ai members, given that the Supreme Court has not adjudicated regarding who officially owns the land (PIR, 9 Feb 2011). The Schiess family subsequently lost an appeal of the decision on 23 February in Valparaíso (RNP, 23 Feb 2011). Oddly, however, Chilean Minister of the Interior Hinzpeter, following dialogue with the Schiess family responsible for the development of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa Hotel, proposed a thirty-year lease of the land to the Schiess family as a “final solution” to the conflict. At the culmination of the thirty-year period the hotel and land would be transferred to a Rapa Nui foundation (ST, 20 Feb 2011), which would be composed of Rapa Nui business associates of the Schiess family—among them Petero Edmunds Paoa, the former governor at the center of the conflict initially (RNP, 21 Feb 2011). Jeannette Schiess asserted that the hotel owners would continue to press charges against the seventeen Hito hua‘ai members involved in reclaiming the lands occupied by the hotel (ST, 20 Feb 2011). Minister Hinzpeter did not discuss the matter with the Hito hua‘ai, and the hua‘ai members are explicitly excluded from the foundation under the terms of the proposal (RNP, 21 Feb 2011). Rapa Nui hua‘ai responded with a march through the main street on 26 February. Marisol Hito emphasized at the march that given that the Hito hua‘ai was not consulted, Minister Hinzpeter’s solution disrespected and mocked Rapa Nui people (RNP, 26 Feb 2011).

Though legal actions in February seemed to support the Hito hua‘ai, in May decisions began to shift in favor of the hotel. On 24 May, criminal charges were reinstated against the Hito hua‘ai by attorney Julian Lopez on behalf of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa Hotel. Measures were also filed by attorney Lopez to restrict the Hito hua‘ai from approaching the hotel, as work to complete the hotel was scheduled to proceed. How hua‘ai members are to deal with these restrictions given that they live across the road from the hotel remains unclear. Oscar Vargas, the defense attorney for the Hito hua‘ai, subsequently filed an appeal in the court of Valparaíso against the resumption of criminal
charges against the hua’ai members and also contested the legality of resuming work at the hotel (ECDM, July 2011).

On 12 June, a new group was elected to the Development Commission for Easter Island (codeipa). A total of 1,196 votes were cast—30 percent more than in the prior election for the commission. Five people were elected from among thirty-seven candidates. Jose Rapu received the most votes with 226, followed by Osvaldo Pakarati with 218, Jorge Pont with 167, Anakena Manutomatoma with 164, and Mario Tuki with 153 (ECDM, July 2011). As is established by the Ley Indigena (Law 19253), those elected serve four-year terms. Unlike the municipality elections, only Rapa Nui people are allowed to vote for the commission; Chilean settlers on the island are not able to vote. Interestingly, while visiting the island in August 2011, I noted four of the five people elected were present in many of the Rapa Nui Parliament meetings and projects. The election results thus suggest that radical political economic change on the island is supported by Rapa Nui people. Of course it is not clear that the commission can ever generate major changes. The five elected Rapa Nui members sit on the commission along with four Chilean ministers, the Chilean-appointed governor of Rapa Nui, the mayor of Ha’ana Roa (elected by Chilean as well as Rapa Nui voters), the non-elected president of the Chilean-organized Council of Elders, and three other members who are typically Chilean (the directors of Chile’s Indigenous Development Corporation, the Chilean Economic Development Agency, and Chile’s National Forest Corporation). A unified Chilean block of votes within the commission easily cancels the votes of the five elected Rapa Nui members.

As the year in review closed, it did not appear Chile had addressed or resolved the long-standing conflicts Rapa Nui hua’ai have had regarding ancestral lands and self-determination. In May, Amnesty International expressed concern with Chile’s failure to constitutionally recognize all of its indigenous peoples (PIR, 14 May 2011). On 13 June, over three hundred Rapa Nui again marched through main street Ha’ana Roa. They marched for ancestral lands, in support of the Hito hua’ai, against Chilean treatment of Rapa Nui generally, and in protest of the closure and possible privatization of lands in Vaitea (RNP, June 2011). In August, Crippa of the Indian Law Resource Center and an international team working with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights scheduled public meetings in Rapa Nui, Santiago, and Valparaíso to discuss international legal measures and procedures for establishing true self-determination for Rapa Nui and the return of all ancestral lands to the Rapa Nui people. The Rapa Nui decolonization struggle continues.

FORREST WADE YOUNG

Contemporary newspapers and other publications on and off the island of Rapa Nui increasingly use the name “Rapa Nui” to refer to the culture, language, and people as well as the island. Spelling the name as two words is consistent with other Polynesian languages, where “nui”
is typically represented as a distinct word. The shift from using a different spelling—“Rapanui”—for the people, language, and culture of the island also avoids implying a separation between these and the island itself. The letter “ŋ” (as in Haŋa Roa) is pronounced like the “ng” in the English word “singing.”

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**Wallis and Futuna**

*Because no reviews of Wallis and Futuna were published in TCP since 2007, this review covers the 2007–2011 period.*

On 7 May 2007, a chapter of the modern history of ‘Uvea Island (also called Wallis) closed with the death of Lavelua (King) Tomasi Kulimoetoke. The lavelua’s passing also affected the social and political landscape of the whole Territory of Wallis and Futuna (Angleviel 2008). Participating in the funeral procession were the two kings of Futuna, his majesty Tuiagaifo from Alo kingdom and his counterpart, Tuisigave, from Sigave kingdom. In his closing address at the very moving ceremony, Tuiagaifo Soane Patita Maituku reminded the crowd of the late king’s work and courage in bringing modernity to ‘Uvea as well as his efforts to maintain tradition and local customs. Tomasi Kulimoetoke was native to the southern district of Mu’a on his father’s side and from the central district of Hahake on his mother’s side. He had been appointed king of ‘Uvea in 1959 with the support of Pelenato Pulufegu Fuluhea, an influential personality from Mu’a who was also the former lavelua (1947–1950). Lavelua Tomasi Kulimoetoke’s reign was mostly one of political and social stability. After his death, the island remained kingless for fourteen months.

In January 2008, a new health care center, encompassing the existing Sia Hospital and new extensions, was established in Mata Utu, the territorial capital, on ‘Uvea. In accordance with the French Ministry of Health’s 13 January 2000 mandate, the health center became the Health Agency of the Territory of the Wallis and Futuna Islands. The agency also encompasses another hospital (Kalevele) on Futuna and three dispensaries, in Mua, Hahake, and Hihifo (ieom 2010, 90–92). The agency is a national and public establishment with administrative and financial autonomy and a primary mission—to protect people’s health. The year 2008 also marked the beginning of work extending and improving the runway at Vele Futuna airport, which was undertaken mainly for security reasons. In the economic arena, the Monitoring Committee of the Ninth European Development Fund (EDF) met in Mata Utu on 3 April to discuss the development contract between the territory and the European Union (EU). Among the difficult issues discussed during the meeting was concern over elementary and high school enrollments, which dropped by 5.8 and 5.1 percent, respectively, in 2010; this trend is expected to continue due to low birth rates and youth emigration and may require education system restructuring and class closures in the future (ieom 2010, 88). Another thorny problem was the extension of Mata Utu harbor, which was delayed not only due to lack of materials but primarily because no local company was able to handle the job. Finally a