

Political Reviews

*Micronesia in Review: Issues and Events, 1 July 2012
to 30 June 2013*

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RAPA NUI

Politics in Rapa Nui during the review period were diverse. In addition to municipal elections in November, there were significant political contests over cultural and ecological conservation projects, economic development, education, health, immigration, and the international human rights of the Rapa Nui Nation. Broadly, two competing discourses have structured conflict and possible resolutions: a Rapa Nui–based nationalist discourse of self-determination and a neoliberal Chilean-based discourse of stakeholders and sustainable tourism.

While Rapa Nui nationalist discourse continued to gain international support during the period in review, stakeholder discourse strengthened its local roots as a result of the municipal elections. In an election in which there was a voter abstention rate of approximately 47 percent—slightly better than the 55 percent Chilean national average rate of voter abstention—Petero Edmunds Paoa was elected mayor after receiving 1,013 of the 4,300 possible votes and thus defeating four other candidates: Luz Zasso Paoa (the current mayor); Julio Araki Tepano (a municipal councilman); Jose Rapu Haoa (a member of the Development Committee [CODEIPA]); and Mata Atan (a lawyer and political activist for Rapa Nui self-determination) (*CM*, 26 Nov 2012). Alberto Hotus along with Carlos Mardones Riroroko, Marta Hotus, Yolanda Nahoe, Mai Teao, and Peter Tepano were elected as the municipal council (*concejal*). Local media interpreted the abstention rate in Rapa Nui and Chile more broadly as “an indication

that the majority of the population is dissatisfied with the political class that governs the destinies of the country” (*CM*, 26 Nov 2012). In the case of Rapa Nui, some basic arithmetic is indicative of why some Rapa Nui voters would be disinclined to vote. There are only about 1,800 possible Rapa Nui votes (Young 2013), so Rapa Nui people are significantly outnumbered by the voting power of the Chilean settler population and thus see municipal elections as hopeless. Although Rapa Nui people commented to me while I was on the island in July and August 2013 that they knew some Rapa Nui had voted for Petero Edmunds and Alberto Hotus and that they recognized that a significant number of Chilean settlers had not voted (*CM*, 26 Nov 2012), they insisted that the Chilean vote nevertheless had an important impact on the elections. Given the numerical differences, it is indeed hard to see how the Chilean vote could not have had a significant impact.

Alberto Hotus and Petero Edmunds historically have been strongly supportive of the Chilean status quo on the island. Their election is particularly noteworthy in light of heightened conflicts on the island over the past few years. Alberto Hotus, the president of the Council of Elders (a Chilean political office transformed from an initially grassroots organization), has consistently supported the Chilean state and military against Rapa Nui people. For example, when Rapa Nui shut down a public Chilean celebration of the “annexation” of the island amid the six months of Rapa Nui occupations and protests of 2010, “Kete,” as Rapa Nui

nicknamed Hotus (“kete” meaning “pocket” and the nickname implying that he is “in the pocket of the Chilean government”), conducted a military celebration on a navy ship anchored off the coast of the island (*EM*, 9 Sept 2010). Such betrayal is not uncommon in Hotus’s biography: in 2003 he supported replacing a truth commission report that told the history of relations between Rapa Nui and Chile, written by Rapa Nui over the course of months of painstaking grassroots community discussions, with a report written by Chilean social scientists that radically simplified the history and current Rapa Nui demands for reconciliation (Desling 2009, 244–245).

Petero Edmunds’s last involvement with politics on the island ended with his resignation as island governor amid the large-scale Rapa Nui occupations and protests of state-run institutions and the increasing corporatization of the island in 2010 (see Young 2012). It is transparent why Chileans would vote for Edmunds: he has consistently supported and collaborated with Chilean “stakeholders” on the island against the Rapa Nui people. After supporting the corporate development of the Hotel Hanga-roa Eco Village and Spa against the interests of the indigenous Hitorangi clan in 2010 in the conflict associated with his aforementioned resignation, he quickly went into partnership with Chilean businessman Alberto Pirola—owner of the Chilean hotel chain Noi—after failing to reach a deal with Hilton Hotels (*LT*, 11 Feb 2012). Mayor Edmunds is currently a 60 percent stakeholder in the Hare Noi luxurious boutique hotel that he and

the Executive Pirola developed just outside Hanga Roa, the town center of Rapa Nui. This corporate orientation is not new for Edmunds; in prior years he supported the development of corporate casino gambling on the island, which the Rapa Nui people vociferously resisted (Gonschor 2008).

On officially taking office as mayor in December, Petero Edmunds felt a sense of “coming home”—no doubt because he has held the office four previous terms (*MV*, Jan 2013). During his inauguration he did not publically discuss his contested past neoliberal policies, resignation, and individual pursuit of corporate profit but instead stressed the theme “hagamos todos el amor” (let us all love) (*CM*, 6 Dec 2012). He proposed an island vision that will “focus on the union of the entire Rapanui society, both public and private, to rediscover the passion for many types of cultural encounters, material and immaterial, to care for and preserve our land and history” (*MV*, Jan 2013). More specifically, he encouraged the development of municipal work communities on issues such as cultural and natural resource management, education, social problems, health, tourism, and sports (*CM*, edition 34, 2013).

The vision of Mayor Edmunds has articulated well with the Bicentennial Legacy Projects promoted by Chilean President Sebastián Piñera, the president who appointed Petero Edmunds to his failed reign as island governor. The projects emphasize marine, ecological, and cultural heritage conservation and restoration that will represent Easter Island as “a symbol for the planet” (*BB*, 1 Nov 2012). In light of the ever-increasing scope of tourism

on the island—Rapa Nui had a 17 percent increase in tourism in 2012, with approximately 87,000 visitors (*BB*, 3 May 2013)—it is no surprise that ecological and cultural heritage conservation problems on the island are intensifying. The Chilean state has never developed a sewage system or water treatment facility on the island, and garbage is piling up (*BB*, 28 July 2012). Chilean Senator Richard Lagos Weber fears that the groundwater will eventually become contaminated (*BB*, 27 July 2012).

To address waste management issues, extensive and creative recycling is being conducted at the new Orito Recycling Plant under the direction of Piru Huki Atan. Projects have also been developed to transport some of the waste and recycled materials away from the island. As garbage accumulates, thousands of tons of solid waste—including tons of highly toxic computer waste (I Love Chile website, 6 June 2013)—have begun to be transported from Rapa Nui to Valparaíso, Chile, on a monthly basis (*BB*, 16 April 2013). The most interesting recycling project by many accounts is the construction of the “Eco-hare” (Eco-house) at the Orito Center, developed by the municipality and Coca-Cola Chile as part of the twenty-year plan entitled “Limpiemos Rapa Nui” (Let’s clean Rapa Nui) (*MV*, May 2013). Offices of the recycling center are housed in the seventy-five-square-meter Eco-hare, a building composed entirely of recycled materials: 50,000 beverage cans, 4,500 tetra pack boxes, 2,200 plastic bottles, 250 tires, and four cubic meters of ground glass (*LT*, 17 April 2013). Mayor Edmunds emphasized that the Eco-hare is sym-

bolic of a community unified over the concept of sustainable growth (MV, May 2013).

An estimated 90 percent of the island's surface is significantly eroding, and there has been extensive loss of island biodiversity (EM, 17 April 2013). To help conserve terrestrial resources, the Jacques Cousteau Society has begun a project with Chilean state institutions to help reforest Rapa Nui. The project will initially begin with the reforestation of 1,400 hectares, with an ultimate goal of 5,000. Special attention will be given to the endangered Toromiro tree and other native species (NT, 18 April 2013). The Chilean secretary of the Institute of Agricultural Development, Louis Mayol, has begun related projects to reduce the impact of island farming on natural and cultural resources. Plans include promoting greenhouse crop production as well as the use of the traditional manavai (rock wall planters) (LT, 16 April, 17 April 2013). A sustainable livestock project—Programa de Ganadería Sustentable—is also being promoted to reduce the number of grazing cattle and to limit areas for cattle (LN, 17 April 2013).

To help conserve marine resources, two reserves have been proposed: a large marine reserve of 411,000 square kilometers around Motu Motiro Hiva and a relatively small reserve of 1.3 square kilometers outside of Hanga Roa in the area known as Hanga Roa o Tai. The reserve for Motu Motiro Hiva was proposed to the Chilean state by representatives of National Geographic and the Oceana international nonprofit organization, who have been alarmed by severe declines in marine resources in Rapa Nui—

particularly tuna—that could result in imbalances in the marine ecosystem and consequently affect the Rapa Nui culture, which is dependent on marine resources for survival (The Clinic, 26 July 2012). The marine reserves, according to Pablo Galilea of the Chilean Undersecretary of Fisheries and Aquaculture (SUBPESCA), are designed to help “protect the ecosystem and biodiversity of fishery resources” in Rapa Nui. At Hanga Roa o Tai, there is particular concern about the viability of various kinds of sea snails, corals, and algae as well as lobster and Nanue fish without direct conservation efforts (EM, 22 March 2013). Some of the sea snails, according to Diego Ramirez, a leading scientist in the study of Rapa Nui marine life, have recently declined by as much as 80 percent (LT, 26 Dec 2012). Further, Chilean Senator Francisco Chahuán has suggested that a reserve will not solve the ecological crisis; he has begun to develop a fisheries act that would further restrict fishing (NT, 10 Nov 2012). Of particular concern is an act that would help Rapa Nui limit industrial fishing—a topic of protest against President Piñera during his visit (CM, 19 Nov 2012).

Somewhat contradictorily, in a period in which Chilean officials proposed two marine reserves, they concurrently promoted the expansion of the Hanga Piko docking area into a more comprehensive wharf. Mayor Edmunds stressed the importance of the expansion in terms of a broader twenty-year development plan during April meetings with Rapa Nui leaders, Chilean officials, corporate representatives, and consulting firms (*Tāpura Re’o*, May 2013). Perhaps that is why

Esperia Bonilla, SUBPESCA chief of staff, uses the language of “stakeholders” to discuss the proposed marine reserves. For Bonilla, marine reserve developments must balance the interests of fishermen, tourists, divers, and educators (EM, 22 March 2012).

President Piñera’s announcement of the bicentennial projects in late October and early November during his first visit to Rapa Nui coincided with the inauguration of the new Chilean hospital in Hanga Roa. President Piñera emphasized that the creation of the hospital, a project initiated six years prior by President Bachelet (EM, 6 May 2006), was about doing “justice to the island” (CM, 19 Nov 2012). The hospital is supposed to represent “the state of the art” and a significant advance in the capacity of the island to treat disease and improve health on the island (BB, 2 Nov 2012), but the president admitted that, on its opening, the hospital had a “shortage of specialists” (CM, 19 Nov 2012). That situation has not thus far been resolved. When I asked Rapa Nui what they thought of the hospital in July and August 2013, I often received a reply similar to the one given by Vaihere Tuki Haoa: “It’s pretty.” Vaihere and others emphasized that while there is great potential for the hospital facility, more than six months after its inauguration it was still not really functioning. It still lacks medical staff and specialists to deliver the justice promised by the president.

The gravity of the current health care situation, unfortunately, is one I have begun to understand intimately. While on the island in July 2012, I developed appendicitis. A routine operation in many places in the world

could not be performed on Rapa Nui. My life in danger, I had to be flown with a nurse to administer antibiotics intravenously on a five-hour flight to Santiago, Chile, to receive proper treatment in Hospital Salvador. Having missed the opportunity for a safe and easy operation due to the time delay, I had no option but to stay at Hospital Salvador for two weeks to reduce infection and swelling enough that I could be discharged to an outpatient care center in the nearby Providencia district of Santiago for another week and eventually return to the United States for surgery. While aboard the plane, at Hospital Salvador, and at the outpatient care center of Casa Acogido, I became acquainted with the situation that Rapa Nui have suffered for decades and continue to suffer despite the new, “pretty” hospital. Rapa Nui are regularly being flown in and out of Santiago for health care, and dozens are residing at Casa Acogido and Hospital Salvador while getting treatment that should be available on the island. Rapa Nui community members in Santiago take turns caring for the sick Rapa Nui who come to Hospital Salvador and Casa Acogido and help them navigate the complex bureaucracy of Chilean medical care. Tragically, many Rapa Nui die before obtaining treatment in Santiago—indeed, the island doctors sincerely wished me luck as they did not know whether I would survive the flight and transport to the hospital. Rapa Nui continue to live every day in a kind of medical terror: serious illnesses and medical problems can be treated only following a long and complex transport that lasts at least half a day from the hospital bed

in Rapa Nui to the hospital bed in Santiago. The result is a complication of whatever ailment one has and a reasonable chance of death in cases of potentially mortal conditions.

As with the case of the hospital, promises for actual migration control have still failed to materialize in a context in which the population has increased approximately 86 percent in twenty years (IWGIA 2012, 19) and that Rapa Nui leader Rafael “Rinko” Tuki sees as contributing to a kind of “silent genocide” (CR, 5 Feb 2013). However, officials like Presidential Commissioner Carlos Llancaqueo emphasize “progress” in terms of the initial proposed amendment to Article 126 bis of the Chilean Constitution and the development of a bill “representing the community”; this bill would reportedly be based on discussions with Rapa Nui people and their elected officials that have been documented with video, photography, official note keeping, and observations from December 2012 to May 2013 in accordance with International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 (Isla de Pascua government website, 10 May 2013). The proposed bill distinguishes four categories of migration to be managed: “crew,” “tourists,” “residents,” and “indigenous people.” All temporary residents, tourists, and flight crew are given particular timetables for residing on the island and eventually must depart according to the rules governing their category. Tourists will generally be restricted to no more than thirty days on the island and will be asked to pay fees proportional to the length of their stay for visiting the archaeological park. Permanent residents include individuals

who are not indigenous Rapa Nui but have been residing on the island for at least two years prior to the enactment of the proposed bill. Indigenous people and permanent residents of the island are at liberty to reside on, depart from, and return to the island at their discretion. Committees and rules will be formed to evaluate new applications for permanent residency. Chilean police will be used to enforce laws based on the enactment of the bill.

The Chilean government appears to be developing laudable, progressive projects for protecting the island ecology, cultural heritage, and migration. However, when contextualized in more detailed terms of various struggles for self-determination during the review period as well as in the past few years and beyond, the projects often appear at least questionable—and, in many cases, seem to promote settler colonial interests. The progress stressed in the case of the proposed migration bill in official reports ignores the colonial processes that modified the content of the bill as formulated within community meetings. Rapa Nui had initially stressed that migration concerns were about conserving their contemporary culture and the possibility for democratic self-determination amid increasing numbers of settlers who, as noted above, are outnumbering Rapa Nui voters. Later formulations, following meetings with Chilean officials, replaced the emphasis on the politics of self-determination with a discourse of “environment” and “sustainable development of the island.” Chilean President Piñera, without consulting Rapa Nui people or leaders, also

modified the text of the bill after it was passed in congress from a bill that “restricts the right of freedom of movement” to a bill that “simply regulates” the freedom of movement (IWGIA 2012, 18–19).

Further, official insistence that the process is in accordance with ILO Convention 169 is disputable. Beginning at least in August 2012, Rinko Tuki, the leading representative of the National Indigenous Development Corporation (CONADI) for Rapa Nui, began consultation with James Anaya—UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples—to “develop a mechanism for consultation, in accordance with Convention No. 169 International Labour Organization Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries” (CR, 25 Oct 2012). Among many concerns, Rinko is alarmed that Chile’s version of ILO 169 dialogue, in violation of international law, includes the presence of threatening, armed Chilean police in “public” meetings (CR, 5 Feb 2013). UN Rapporteur Anaya has worked with Rinko and other members of CONADI to help Rapa Nui develop a proposal for a formal mechanism of “non-coerced” consent throughout the review period. In May 2013, the Chilean state promised that it would hold meetings between CONADI representatives and ministers of the Chilean government at Palacio de La Moneda in Santiago, Chile, and that it would make an official statement on such a formal mechanism in June. At the time of this writing, no statement has been articulated. During the review period, Chile has emphasized that in various contexts—in meetings on migration, language, conservation projects, and

so on—it has consulted with the Rapa Nui in terms of ILO 169. However, there was never a formal mechanism agreed on in terms that UN Rapporteur Anaya stated are requisite at the level of international law that would entitle the state to legitimately make this claim. Eliza Riroroko (a Rapa Nui woman engaged in the struggle for Rapa Nui self-determination and human rights as a member of the Makenu Rapa Nui women’s organization and other grassroots organizations on the island) emphasized to me in July 2013 that Chilean officials only partially allow her to speak in community meetings. She recalls in migration meetings regularly being told by officials such as Governor Carmen Cardinali to sit down after voicing perspectives that are seen as incompatible with Chilean state desires. Rinko has noted that dismissal of dissenting voices by Chilean officials like Governor Cardinali also extended to official Rapa Nui representatives. He reports that Mario Tuki, a publically elected member of the Easter Island Development Commission (CODEIPA), was also summarily dismissed by Governor Cardinali after voicing a dissenting opinion in a meeting staffed by armed Chilean police (CR, 5 Feb 2013). According to international observers, although Chile has been claiming to be consulting in terms of ILO 169, they have not really been involved in “intercultural dialogue” according to international legal standards; rather, they have been engaging in “information gathering” exercises (IWGIA 2012, 19).

Ecological conservation and cultural heritage projects, while on some level possibly of value to the

Rapa Nui, are contested by Rapa Nui in terms of political self-determination. Jacqueline Rapu Tuki, noting somewhat analogous ecological struggles for Māori in Aotearoa, has publically questioned why the Chilean state should be the one in charge. For her, it is important that “Rapa Nui own the reserve” (*Overseas Territories Review*, 7 May 2013). Leviante Araki, president of the Rapa Nui Parliament political organization, emphasized in Parliament meetings that it is not sufficient to understand Chilean conservation and restoration projects in Rapa Nui as merely altruistic instruments for the production of social and environmental good. Santi Hitorangi, a member of Rapa Nui Parliament and spokesman for the Rapa Nui Nation at the 2012 UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, stressed in dialogues with me in August 2013 that Chilean projects in Rapa Nui in general are about creating “dependency in which resources are distributed in piecemeal fashion.” He sees Chilean projects as ultimately techniques for socially engineering “needy” and “politically complacent” Rapa Nui people. Just as Parliament members oppose Chilean control of land in Rapa Nui, they contest further expanding Chilean power into the surrounding ocean, food supply, and cultural heritage. Supporting these projects is seen as weakening the prospects for Rapa Nui self-determination and dignity.

Rather than further entangling themselves in an undignified Chilean system of dependency, Rapa Nui continue to pursue political and cultural identity within international and regional forums. Rapa Nui Parliament attended both the September 2012

meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum in Rarotonga and the March 2013 meeting of the Polynesian Group of Parliamentarians in Tahiti. In Rarotonga, Rapa Nui were participants in the Pacific Leaders Group, which included Māori representatives from Aotearoa and Kānaka Maoli from Hawai‘i—Pacific Island nations previously excluded from the forum given that they are not independent states. Leviante requested that Henry Puna, prime minister of the Cook Islands, help make decolonization a priority for the Pacific Islands Forum and to assist Rapa Nui in the process of being placed on the UN list of non-self-governing territories (Rapa Nui Parliament archives). He also requested that Rapa Nui be given an opportunity to gain a permanent seat in the Pacific Islands Forum. Erity Teave, Rapa Nui Parliament director of external affairs and human rights, coincidentally met with UN Women’s Director and former Chilean President Michele Bachelet in Rarotonga to express grievances of the Rapa Nui Nation against Chile. She emphasized to UN Director Bachelet that Rapa Nui human rights have been violated and that Rapa Nui aspire to challenge Chilean abuse at the International Court of Justice at the Hague (*Cook Islands News*, 31 Aug 2012). Tuila‘epa Sailele Malielegaoi, the prime minister of Sāmoa, did not mention giving Rapa Nui a permanent seat, but he did suggest that the Forum establish an official place for the Pacific Leader’s Group, and Rapa Nui within that group, at the Forum (*Development Policy Blog*, 5 Sept 2012).

Rapa Nui Parliament had observer status at the Polynesian Group of

Parliamentarians in Tahiti (TI, 27 March 2013), which developed from letters to President Oscar Temaru in August 2011 requesting participation (Rapa Nui Parliament archives). Leviante's address to the Polynesian Group of Parliamentarians was similar to the one articulated to the Pacific Islands Forum. He reviewed past and current abuses of Chile against the Rapa Nui Nation and emphasized the importance of decolonization in Rapa Nui. In addition, he highlighted an ongoing lawsuit filed against Chile in which, among other things, Rapa Nui assert that the so-called Agreement of the Wills that established a political relationship between Chile and Rapa Nui in 1888 has been breached by the state of Chile and is now void (Rapa Nui Parliament archives). Attorney Osvaldo Galvez, representing Rapa Nui Parliament in the Second Civil Court of Valparaiso, has noted that the chances of victory against Chile are slim. He emphasized, though, in a manner consistent with a recent study of possible international legal action against Chile (see Gomez 2010), that such cases are part of a process for access to international courts and human rights commissions (BB, 5 May 2013). The idea is that international courts will hear cases only after state court options have been exhausted. Given the recent reinscription of French Polynesia on the UN list of non-self-governing territories, Rapa Nui Parliament members consider relations with Oscar Temaru and other Tahitian leaders to be of utmost importance. In July 2013 meetings in Rapa Nui, Parliament members emphasized a need to learn the process of inscription from Tahitian leaders.

Attending the meeting of the Polynesian Group of Parliamentarians is seen as a major step in gaining opportunities to learn from the Tahitian example.

In addition to political relations with fellow nations and states of Oceania, Rapa Nui groups participated in both linguistic and cultural exchanges in the Pacific Islands region during the review period. In July 2012, thirty-three Rapa Nui under the leadership of Lynn Rapu participated in the Eleventh Festival of the Pacific Arts in Solomon Islands. The event featured representatives of twenty-six island groups. Rapa Nui performers were distinguished by the *Solomon Star* newspaper as the "darlings" of the festival given their consistently "vibrant" performances of traditional dances and songs (MV, Aug 2012). Also in July, thirty Rapa Nui students visited Tahiti for a two-week linguistic and cultural exchange with Tahitian students (TI, 18 July 2012). And in August 2012, like the earlier voyages of the Hawaiian *Hōkūle'a* to Rapa Nui (see Desling 2009, 360–380), two Māori voyaging canoes from Aotearoa landed at Rapa Nui as part of a cultural exchange between the two Polynesian nations. The canoes were crewed by eighteen men and five women and navigated according to traditional Polynesian knowledge of currents, stars, winds, and sea life (MV, Jan 2013).

In international media and indigenous political forums, Rapa Nui is becoming in some sense "a symbol for the planet"; however, it is becoming a symbol for something very different from what President Piñera imagines. The International Work Group for

Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) concluded in a relatively well publicized report based on field and legal investigations of the island that Chile has been, and is, violating fundamental human rights of the indigenous Rapa Nui Nation (The Clinic, 23 March 2013; LN, 23 March 2013). The report notes that violations in human rights are identifiable in terms of a number of instruments of international law to which Chile is a signatory: ILO Convention 169, the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and case law resulting from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) (IWGIA 2012, 14–15). Chile can also be shown to be in violation of its own laws (IWGIA 2012, 15–16). The report concludes with a list of human rights that it maintains Chile has violated in Rapa Nui: right to personal integrity, prohibition of slavery and servitude, right to personal liberty, right to judicial guarantees, right to liberty of thought and expression, right to freedom of assembly, right to liberty of association, right to a nationality, right to property, right to political rights, right to equality before the law, right to judicial production, and right to progressive development (IWGIA 2012, 35–37). Among the many rights violations listed, the IWGIA analysis of the Chilean breach of Rapa Nui rights to a nationality stood out to me as fundamental. They state: “The Rapa Nui identify themselves as a people of the Pacific, rather than as members of Chilean society . . . the State or other external agencies cannot decide on their behalf” (IWGIA 2012, 36). During their stay on the island, representatives of IWGIA consistently stressed an obvious

Rapa Nui Pacific Island identity in customs, heritage, language, and everyday life.

Chilean President Piñera and his local leaders Mayor Edmunds, Governor Cardinali, and Kete have made “progress” during the year in entangling Rapa Nui in a social order of Coca-Cola Eco-hare, Jacques Cousteau Society reforestation projects, National Geographic marine reserves, “pretty” hospitals, and Chilean hotel chains in an attempt to fashion Rapa Nui into a “global symbol” of Chilean “sustainable tourism.” Perhaps next year, through more armed “ILO 169 Convention” meetings, they will be able to develop this “satellite of the real” (Baudrillard 1998, 147) Rapa Nui further through a “Mega TV program” that hopes to film a reality show on the island (LT, 27 March 2013), even though Rapa Nui-based leadership and grassroots Facebook organizing have resisted what is seen as a development project likely only to provide a few elite Chilean-based island officials an opportunity to “fill their pockets” (BB, 29 March 2013). It is critical to see, however, that through their cultivation of international relationships with UN Special Rapporteur Anaya, the IWGIA, the Pacific Islands Forum, the Polynesian Group of Parliamentarians, and everyday grassroots organizations, Rapa Nui—as “supplementary subjects” (Rancière 2010, 33) to the Chilean-determined transnational “stakeholder” tourist order on the island—challenge its “distribution of the sensible” (see Rancière 2011). Rapa Nui are continuing to “dance their truth” (see Shorter 2009) to make sure that whatever global

symbol Rapa Nui becomes, it is not determined by Chile.

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WALLIS AND FUTUNA

During the year in review, economic activity increased despite a rise in prices (4.7 percent annual inflation, compared to 4 percent in 2011) and delays in shipping between the islands of Wallis and Futuna. Due to unfavorable weather conditions, the Pacific Direct Line's *Southern Pearl V51* was kept in port at Matā Utu, Uvéa (Wallis Island) for three weeks starting at the end of June 2012 before being able to sail for Leava, Futuna, on 21 July. As a result, Futuna experienced shortages of food and other necessities. Overall, consumer spending remained high, with a decrease in household consumption (a 17.5 percent drop relative to 2011, which in turn had been up 41 percent from 2010) being offset by increases in vehicles imports (103 new registrations compared to 77 in 2011 and 53 in 2010). Funds transfers from France sustained economic activity, particularly through government spending. The public buildings and works sector was revitalized through various projects such as the Kafika multipurpose structure (athletic stadium), an investment costing more than US\$5 million, and the improve-

ment of the water supply network for about US\$2.7 million. Although 2011 was a dynamic year for imports (US\$67,703,864), they fell by 1.7 percent in 2012. This drop can be attributed to an increase in the cost of industrial materials. Exports remained weak; only 20.5 tons of seafood were exported abroad for a total value of US\$145,651.

On 15 September, Tominiko Halagahu became the faipule (district chief) of Hihifo for the Royalists, succeeding Heneliko Kavahe'eaga. From the village of Vaitupu, Tominiko Halagahu is a member of the Halagahu family (one of the main royal families from the northern district) and was formerly seen as supported by both Royalists and Renovators (anti-Royalists). However, Renovators objected to his appointment, denouncing him as the one-sided choice of a few northern Royalists and the Royal Council.

Plans for upgrading the mobile phone network in the territory to 3G service are currently in limbo. The president of the government of New Caledonia, Harold Martin, who is also chairman of the board of directors of OPT NC (the New Caledonian Office of Posts and Telecommunications), stated in an official report to Wallis and Futuna authorities in early 2012 that as part of the special agreement that links the territory and New Caledonia, OPT NC would set up a 3G mobile phone network. Previously, the Territorial Assembly had invited proposals to improve telecommunication systems in the territory—a move that turned out to be controversial. Two private telecom operators, Broadband and Digicel, responded to the