Imagining Polynesia: Heritage, Identity Politics and the Evolution of a New Rapa Nui architecture

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Abstract

Rapa Nui's prehistoric Polynesian heritage is iconic. From the later twentieth century the island's economy has been dependent on the tourism its prehistory attracts. However, until recently there has been little link between the modern built environment of Rapa Nui and its prehistoric past. This article tracks how during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the island's traditional domestic architecture was supplanted first by colonial then early modern Chilean architecture. The remains of this transformation are fast disappearing through contemporary demolition and an associated rejection of the past that the introduced architecture represents. We highlight how contemporary Rapa Nui architecture instead actively references its iconic prehistoric Polynesian past and positions Rapa Nui in a Polynesian context, for the first time detailing this trajectory and identifying how elements of past artistic and architectural traditions have become incorporated into the architecture of the present. Instead of presenting the intervening period as one of loss of traditional identity, this in fact emphasises a subtle continuity of Rapanui (indigenous Rapa Nui islander) identity. The study is relevant to exploring how the interacting demands and expectations of identity politics and heritage tourism (here in a Polynesian context) can impact on contemporary local architecture and the visitor milieu, reflecting modern concepts, which promote the preservation of some architectures and cultural attributes over others.

Key words

architecture; Easter Island; identity politics; heritage; Polynesia; Rapa Nui; tourism

Introduction

During the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, architecture in the Polynesian South Pacific has become a tool, and marker, of an ongoing interest in the re-establishment of "original" island identities. Driven by group self-identification, and the expectations of the tourist (Urry 2002), upon whom many islanders depend for a living, there is a growing perceived value in creating or enhancing a generic pan-Polynesian ideal that re-affirms a past Polynesian heritage and threads it into a global present. For some islands, most notably in Aotearoa / New Zealand and Sāmoa, this ideal is informed by a continuity of indigenous architecture into the present (e.g. Austin 2001b; Schnoor 2016, 297–307). In acknowledgement of earlier cultural movement to and between islands, it is also informed by an abstract idea of "pan-Polynesian cultural identity", which has allowed the direct transplantation of both traditional forms and more recent regional architectural adoptions from one Polynesian region to another (Refiti 2005). Rapa Nui, or Easter Island (the island at the easternmost corner of the Polynesian triangle), differs from these mostly larger Polynesian islands, in that there is little direct continuity there between traditional and contemporary architecture; rather, the latter developed out of colonial and more recent Chilean architecture, cherry picked for its appropriateness to Rapa Nui conditions, but otherwise taken for granted by the local community, onto which a renascent consciousness of earlier Rapa Nui traditions was only later grafted.

Rapa Nui has a distinct, and exceptional – in terms of its monumentality and quantity – prehistoric architectural heritage. It is a source of pride for many on the island and the main reason for its tourism, on which the island is economically dependent, and the

impulse for the Rapanui and outsiders working there to materialise it in contemporary material culture is strong.

In this paper we examine the local trajectories, the economic and cultural imperatives, which led first to the supplanting of prehistoric Rapa Nui architecture by its colonial and early modern Chilean successor, then to the former's rediscovery, and finally to a current building boom, preceded in many locations by the demolition, unrecorded, of architecture of the intervening period, and the emergence of a new commercial, municipal and everyday domestic architecture that overtly references the island's iconic past. The aesthetic of this new architecture is based in part on past architectural forms (as distinct from past architectural techniques: cf. the building of traditional *fale* in Sāmoa – Van der Ryn 2008); in part on the monumental statues, or *moai*, widely associated with these; in part on an uninterrupted tradition of Rapa Nui woodcarving; and in part on a realisation of the wider "pan-Polynesian cultural identity" referred to above, and thus exemplifies the prominent role of architecture in capturing a contemporary renaissance of indigenous Polynesian identities and aesthetics. But like that it is replacing, the new architecture is also strongly influenced by Rapa Nui's isolation, the time it takes to travel to and from it and the limitations on and the concomitant costs of building material procurement, and by its physical environment. The interaction of these two sets of inputs, one cultural and one practical, is central to the development, and therefore our understanding, of contemporary Rapa Nui architecture. It also provides a microcosm of the nuances, strategic obliterations, counter-cultures and practicalities, which can be usefully contrasted with those of earlier colonial and current democratic governance, potentially relevant to our understanding of the material culture of other, similarly isolated cultures.

Method of research

The authors' knowledge of the prehistoric architecture of Rapa Nui is based on more than a decade of large-scale field documentation (Hamilton 2008, 2013; Hamilton *et al*. 2011; LOC. 2009; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2016; 2019–20; Seager Thomas 2014; Hamilton and Seager Thomas 2018) and the cumulative work of numerous archaeologists working there through the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

To date, little interest has been shown in Rapa Nui's more recent architecture, most of which has involved the pragmatic use of readily available or cheap building materials and the implementation of everyday architectural necessity. The resulting buildings are not generally considered to merit study, conservation or documentation, and the summative chronology and description of Rapa Nui's colonial and early modern architecture presented here is the first. It is important to prompt this documentation before the physical architecture of these periods completely disappears. Here, its consideration affords discussion of the perceived continuities and disjunctions between the architectural traditions of Rapa Nui's prehistoric past, its colonial period and the aspirations embedded in present development of "Polynesian"-inspired architecture.

The description and chronology we present for the island's colonial architecture is based on photographic archives that include examples of its past buildings, and dated past accounts (Appendix, Tables 1 and 2). Buildings are not the focus of most of the photographs but many of these are of sufficiently high resolution to allow the identification of structural components and building materials. Their dating, which is sometimes quite precise, is based upon the depiction in them of "known" people (mostly identified by local informants), of period-specific styles of dress and furnishings, because they are associated with dated visits to the island and/or a particular photographer, and because of the dates of their publication. Most important of all are the photographs of Henry Percy

Edmunds, manager of the sheep ranch on the island until 1929 and an active photographer from 1911 (UHM 2020), prints of whose photographs survive in a number of collections. However, to establish an overall trajectory for this phase of the island's architecture, it has been necessary to consult a wide range of individual photographs and period sources dating from the 1880s to the 1960s.

For the early modern and contemporary phases, we conducted surveys in the island's settled areas of Haŋa Roa and Mataveri. Here, our analysis was particularly guided by the local and professional knowledge of our co-author Hetereki Huke, who is both a Rapa Nui resident and architect.

The article relies upon the juxtaposition of past and present photographs (Figures 1–10) to characterise the Rapa Nui architectural trajectory that our text isolates. The images make explicit the visual characteristics of recurrent or period-specific Rapa Nui architectural forms, while illustrating the limited range of available building materials. Tables 1 and 2 in the Appendix collate and detail the photographs and buildings upon which we have drawn to isolate and contextualise trends of Rapa Nui architecture from the arrival on the island of the first Western missionaries to the present. Table 3 summarises the diverse influences from which contemporary Rapa Nui architecture derives.

Key Phases in Rapa Nui's Architectural History

Rapa Nui's prehistoric architectural traditions were established by its first settlers, Polynesian voyagers who are variously dated as arriving between *ca*. AD 800 and 1300 (Kirch 2011; Wilmshurst *et al*. 2011). Its early architecture is dominated by stone garnered from the island's volcanic landscape (Hamilton *et al*. 2011). While the ceremonial sites and colossal *moai* were already degenerating by the time of European contact, Rapa Nui's prehistoric domestic

architecture traditions continued in everyday use after the first Western settlement.

More recent Rapa Nui architecture can be divided into three overlapping phases: *colonial*, dating from the 1860s, when the first Western missionaries and settlers arrived, and during which the island developed de facto into a company estate – the *Compañía Explotadora de la Isla de Pascua* (hereafter the "Company"); *early modern*, dating from the 1950s and 1960s, when Company government was superseded, firstly by that of the Chilean Navy, and then that of local democracy and the Chilean State, and the island was opened up to the wider world; and *contemporary*, dating from *ca.* 1980, when the influences of tourism, archaeology and a new sense of Rapa Nui identity began to be crystalised in Rapa Nui culture, including its architecture.

There has, however, been no single trajectory of Rapa Nui architectural traditions. Instead, a series of overlapping political, philosophical, economic and cultural points of change have moulded and directed the forms it has taken. The relationship of these architectures to, and their impact on, present and future heritage identity has wide relevance to the construction of present-day Polynesian identity and a pan-Polynesian-themed delivery of expected heritage elements in a tourist-driven economic context (Urry 2002, 156).

Prehistoric Architecture

Unlike that of most ancient societies, the present-day landscape of Rapa Nui is crowded with relatively intact and – to varying degrees – recognisable remains of prehistoric stone ritual, domestic and subsistence architecture (Figure 1). Approximately one third of this landscape is now the *Parque Nacional Rapa Nui*, a UNESCO World Heritage Landscape. Outside Haŋa Roa, the island's only town, most prehistoric structures were until recently situated in vistas unimpeded

by modern development. This exceptional fossil landscape, often described as an "open air museum", is highly appealing to archaeologists and tourists alike, its recurrent coherent layout and the repetition of its architectural forms (e.g. Vargas *et al*. 2006, 210) readily invoking the lives of its former inhabitants. This is realised in a full-scale facsimile of some of the main architectural forms recently built to the side of Ahu Haŋa Tee o Vaihu, a ceremonial platform on the south coast of the island (Figure 1.5). The fossil landscape today provides potent visual prompts of building forms that are currently being harvested into a mnemonic renaissance heritage architecture for present day Rapa Nui.

Though ultimately derived from its original Polynesian colonisers (Martinsson-Wallin and Crockford 2001), the Rapa Nui suite of prehistoric domestic, agricultural and ceremonial forms is nonetheless uniquely Rapa Nui. Characteristic stone structures include large block stone-faced, rubble-cored, ceremonial platforms (*ahu*), with inclines up to them paved with small beach-rolled boulders (*poro*), and associated plazas and stone paved ramps to the sea (Figure 1.1 and 1.4). Stone was also used for burial vaults (*avaŋa*), so-called chicken houses (*hare moa*) and circular and cellular complexes of crop enclosures (*manavai*) (Figure 1.2). Fist-sized stones form the cores of these. A distinct type of house architecture was the *hare paeŋa*. Examples *can be identified* today from their elliptical stone foundations (Figure 1.6), on which were formerly surmounted up-turned boat-shaped frameworks of branches thatched with palm fronds or grass (*mauku*) (Geiseler 1995 [1883], 75) (Figure 1.5). The entrance was narrow and low, usually on the long side, and entry to them was on all fours (Loti 1873, 66). Outside the entrance was an open area, usually paved with *poro* (Palmer 1869–1870, 110; Geiseler 1995 [1883], 73). *Hare paeŋa* were mainly for sleeping (Métraux 1971 [1940], 199; Geiseler 1995 [1883], 75) and it is assumed that the majority of domestic activities were carried

out on the associated *poro* pavement and beyond. Also of note is a unique complex of curved-walled stone houses, with corbelled, now grassed-over roofs and low entrances similar to those of the *hare paeŋa*, terraced into the ground at Oroŋo, famous for its association with the late prehistoric birdman ceremony (Mulloy 1975) (Figure 1.3).

Rapa Nui's prehistoric architecture exhibits a strategic use of recurrent colours (black, red, yellow), stone types (different types of flow lava, scoria and volcanic tuff) and stone sizes (Hamilton *et al.* 2011). For example, red scoria from a single quarry (Puna Pau) was used almost exclusively for *ahu* facia and the hats or topknots (*pukao*) of *moai* set up on *ahu* (Seager Thomas 2014). Alongside these structures, the architectural deployment and signification of *moai* was also strategic. Those on coastal *ahu* (believed to represent ancestors), dominated the littoral and faced inland (Figure 1.1), while at the lesser architectural scale of domestic life, small statues or *moai* were positioned either side of *hare paeŋa* entrances (Loti 1873, 66; Hamilton 2013, fig. 9).

<Insert Figure 1>

Colonial architecture

In 1864, the first Christian missionary to the island, Brother Eugène Eyraud, arrived from Chile and erected the first European-style hut from pre-fabricated units (Eyraud 2004 [1866], 13). Larger missionary settlements with wooden chapels and western-style houses followed soon after (*ca*. 1865–1871) (Thomson 1891, 453; McCall 1976, pl. 6; Pinart 2004 [1878], 123). In 1868, Jean-Baptiste Dutrou-Bornier, a French adventurer, purchased much of the island, which he used as a sheep ranch, and for his own use built a typical colonial-style house with a columned veranda on the foundation stones of a massive *hare paeŋa* (Routledge 1919, 125, 134, 265;

Pinart 2004 [1878], 125–128) (Figure 2). Located at Mataveri, on the outskirts of modern Haŋa Roa, this house introduced European traditions of the use of interior rooms for domestic purposes, such as eating, with an appended shaded outdoor activity area, which contrasted with traditional Rapa Nui house use (see above). The veranda was well-suited to the island's traditions of outdoor working, however, and became a fixed component of Rapa Nui house styles. Indeed, through to the present, Rapa Nui families have continued to use outdoor space for many domestic activities (Mulloy 2011, 49; 2013), and the practice continues and has been rejuvenated in the idea of "outdoor teaching" expressed in the remit of the new *Liceo Aldea Educativa Hoŋa'a o te Mana* Rapa Nui (OECD 2011, 106).

<Insert Figure 2>

We have a report from the 1880s of a Danish carpenter using salvaged wood (spruce) from Oregon to construct simple rectangular wooden planked houses on the island, the more prestigious of which were supplied with glass windows (Thomson 1891, 454; see also Geiseler 1995 [1883], 76; Pinart 2004 [1878], 127). For some years thereafter European and pre-European architectural typologies coexisted, with simple rectangular houses occurring side by side with traditional boat-shaped houses (e.g. Pinart 2004 [1878], 127), examples of which continued in use until at least 1917 (Skottsberg 1956 [1920], pl. 10). Also well into the twentieth century, the second church at Haŋa Roa remained fronted by a stone pavement, analogous to those in front of *hare paeŋa* and *ahu* (Figure 3.5).

<Insert Figure 3>

At some point towards the end of the nineteenth century, the small population of indigenous Rapanui began to be restricted to

Haŋa Roa, ultimately within a stone walled and fenced enclosure, today known as the "Wall" (Porteous 1981, 117–118; Fischer 2005, 152). In 1888, Chile annexed the island, believing that it would become a port of call after the opening of the Panama Canal. However, the failure of colonisation, the lack of a viable harbour and the continuing by-passing of the island by commercial shipping led to the greater part of it being leased out, ultimately to the Williamson, Balfour and Co., a Scottish-owned Chilean wool operation which ran it as a company estate – the aforementioned *Compañía Explotadora de la Isla de Pascua* (Porteous 1981, chapter 4; Fischer 2005, 157; Cristino and Fuentes 2011). At Mataveri, the Company built a village with rectangular houses for its workers, adopting Dutrou-Bornier's house as its manager's residence. Throughout the Company period, the Rapanui continued to be forbidden, without permission, to go beyond the "Wall". This contributed significantly to the preservation of the prehistoric landscape and architecture that inspires Rapa Nui's heritage today.

The following years of restricted access to the island outside Haŋa Roa shifted the balance of familiarity from traditional to, increasingly, colonial architectural forms. A photograph of Haŋa Roa from 1911 shows exclusively single storey rectangular buildings of wood with – the earliest photographic evidence of this – corrugated iron (zinc-plated steel) roofs (Knoche 1925, pl. 2). Rectangular buildings of stone with thatch roofs are also evidenced around this time (Routledge 1919, 141, fig. 27) (Figure 3.1 and 3.3–4). By 1918, 11 of Haŋa Roa's 36 houses were of stone (presumably drystone), one was of stone and "cement" and the remaining two-thirds were of wood, as were all the Company's houses (Rocuant 1916, plates; de Estella 1920, x; Skottsberg 1956 [1920], pls 1–2). The most recent known photograph of a small thatched boat-shaped house is attributed to 1925 (see Appendix, Table 1.19). By then the new square/rectangular architecture had apparently completely

supplanted traditional settlement architecture, and by 1934–1935 even stone houses were being described as "obsolete" (Métraux 1971 [1940], 200).

Elements of difference were absolute. Pre-European-contact Rapa Nui houses had curved or round sides. True walls, where they existed, were of local drystone and roofs corbelled or thatched (see above). As noted above, entry to them was on hands and knees. With the coming of Western architecture, in practice that of the European colonies and independent South America, the straight line and the right angle supplanted the curve, and nailed non-local wood plank and, later, corrugated iron walls supplanted stone and bent wood and thatch walls (Thomson 1891, 454; Geiseler 1995 [1883], 76) (Figures 3.2 and 3.7). Where stone was used, lime mortar (slaked from local coral) supplanted drystone (Figures 3.3, 4.2–3 and 8.5). (This old mortar can be distinguished from modern mortar by the mixing within it of coarse white coralline and black basaltic sand, and by the way it was laid in thin, shuttered courses – see Figures 5.3 and 8.5). Corrugated iron also ousted thatch roofs (Figure 3.1–2 and 3.6–7) (Casey 1932, 114; Métraux 1971 [1940], 200) and design features such as the veranda, the wooden post, windows, and the idea of individual rooms became prevalent (Métraux 1971 [1940], 200; McCall 1976, n. 58; Porteous 1981, 121) (Figure 3.7); and, most symbolic of all, entry to houses, went from being on all fours to standing upright through a rectangular door. Today, most of these colonial-period buildings have been lost, but a handful remain, a little-observed and little-valued architectural inheritance (Figures 4.1–4 and 5).

<Insert Figure 4>

Early Modern Architecture

The early modern period introduced several influential architectural strands, through the melding of diverse political and archaeological trends and developments. These changed the importance and cultural relevance of Rapa Nui's prehistoric architecture. Western architecture remained the island's everyday *koine* (Figure 4), but now included construction in stone and cement, wood framed walls clad with asbestos board (characteristic of, and encouraged by, the provision of and the rules surrounding 1980s Chilean social housing, as well as by its low cost), concrete and off-the-shelf doors and windows brought in from Chile (Porteous 1981, e.g. 180; McCall 1997, 120). However, its manifestation on the island, as we emphasise in our discussion below, was nonetheless distinct in that it increasingly incorporated local choices of architectural detail, preceding traits and materials and representations of materials that link the prehistoric past to the present (Figures 6–7). For example, walls of asbestos board and other walls used for houses have sometimes been screed with cement and painted red in a way reminiscent of red scoria facings on some *ahu* (e.g. Seager Thomas 2014, fig. 10). Increasingly, house walls were clad with readily available – albeit increasingly pricy – local stone (Figures 6, 7.1 and 7.6), mirroring the walls seen in prehistoric architecture (Figure 1). Distinct details were incorporated into private domestic houses, such as one in the centre of Haŋa Roa, dating from the 1980s, with exterior walls encrusted with shell patterns and glass porthole "windows". Together these – and other – features portray a low-key and distinctly local Rapa Nui dialogue between the ancient past and the domestic present.

Allied to these developments and in many ways central to them was the visit, in 1955–1956, by the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition led by Thor Heyerdahl (Heyerdahl and Ferdon 1961). Heyerdahl was the first systematically to excavate and – more importantly – popularise Rapa Nui's rich prehistoric heritage (Heyerdahl 1958). One of his team members, William Mulloy,

returned in the 1960s and in the following two decades undertook restoration projects on several highly visible ceremonial complexes, notably Tahai on the periphery of Haŋa Roa (Mulloy 1970), and Oroŋo (Mulloy 1975) (Figure 1.1 and 1.3). This made standing *moai* a contemporary part of Rapa Nui's tourist imagery and realised the prehistoric architecture of stone houses, *ahu* and ramps to the sea as tangible architectural forms for the visitor and the Rapanui alike. Concurrently there was a returning sense of Rapa Nui identity. In 1965, the Chilean State supported the election of a Rapanui mayor (Alfonso Rapu) and council (Porteous 1981, 170–172). In 1966, the "Wall" was breached and the archaeology of the wider island landscape fixed in the Rapa Nui psyche. In the following decades, Sergio Rapu, the first ethnic Rapanui governor, who came with US archaeological training, supported excavation and restoration work at Ahu Toŋariki and Ahu Nau Nau (Powell 2002).

Contemporary Architecture

Today, the centre of Haŋa Roa has become a hotchpotch of development – shops, restaurants, prestigious public buildings in conspicuous places, increasingly individual designed homes, *cabañas* and hotels – beyond which is a quiet, leafy suburban sprawl, amongst which are a number of modest private houses that incorporate elements of Rapa Nui inspiration used in highly individual ways (e.g. Figure 7.5). The town is utterly different from what photos show it to have been as recently as the late 1960s and the 1970s. Though aspects of it may be familiar to the observer used to modern Chilean towns, it also has an identity of its own in terms of its scale, its simple, mostly one-storey, two- or three-roomed buildings and the elements of customisation outlined above.

Some of the most recent buildings are straightforward grafts from other regions (Europe, the United States, Polynesia), others are Rapa Nui developments of pre-existing colonial styles, and others

again – for the first time since the disappearance of the island's final prehistoric culture – are purposefully referent of, if not direct copies of, that past: stone, but not drystone; thatched, but with plastic palm fronds imported from Canada, not *mauku*; carved, but using angle grinders and chain saws, rather than by hand. Meanwhile, and as a direct consequence of this ongoing development, the simple everyday architecture of the colonial and early modern periods is disappearing unrecorded (Figures 4.4 and 5) and potential understandings of continuities – or otherwise – between the iconic heritage of Rapa Nui's past and the present lost.

<Insert Figure 5>
<Insert Figure 6>
<Insert Figure 7>

Interacting Conditions

The development of Rapa Nui's architectural trajectory as described above has wide relevance to current heritage issues of decolonisation, and the impact that emerging identity preferences have on surviving evidence of immediately preceding, sometimes controversial, architectural periods. Such trajectories incorporate intricate connections with economics, social politics and the closing down of suppressive pasts and potentially painful identities, in favour of deeper-time indigenous, and in the case of Polynesia, more prestigious identities.

For Rapa Nui, the current reality is the complex result of a diverse set of cross-period conditions that are, in part, peculiar to the island (Table 3). However, similar complexities might be expected in the isolated architectural trajectories of other remote islands, accompanying the growth of international tourism and large-scale impacts on funding and the economics of materials. For Rapa Nui, five issues are discussed below:

1. the limited availability and high cost of building materials, alongside a shortage of skilled builders;
2. the climate;
3. local social and territorial policies and practices;
4. funding sources for buildings including a local economy based on the accelerated growth of tourism and the associated growth of relative affluence; and
5. past and new aesthetic trends and inspirations of island-specific (Rapa Nui and Polynesian) identities.

Material Constraints

From the first introduction of Western architecture to Rapa Nui, the island's remoteness has meant that there has been only restricted and irregular access to external building materials and a dependence on a few providers only (the Company, the state and – now – a handful of private entrepreneurs). The result has been high prices and a restricted range of often poor-quality products. Today this is exacerbated by the superseding of traditional collective endeavour (*umaŋa*) by professional builders who, because of the island's remoteness and because of the particular skills required for Rapa Nui architecture, such as working with stone, are also expensive, few in number, and of variable quality.

The use of building materials in Rapa Nui's colonial and early modern architecture was largely pragmatic. Builders used what was available and cheap. For example, the practice of robbing and reusing stone from prehistoric building initiated by Dutrou-Bornier when he built his house in Mataveri on the foundation stones of a *hare paeŋa* (Routledge 1919, fig. 25) (Figures 2 and 8.2) continued through the earlier twentieth century (Appendix, Table 1). The wrecks of the *Black Eagle* in 1877, and of the Company ship, *The Falcon*, which foundered in 1924, provided a free source of wooden planks for the

building and rebuilding of rectangular houses (Porteous 1981, 149, 151; Ayres and Ayres in Geiseler 1995 [1883], n. 162; Pinart 2004 [1878], 127) (Figure 8.4).

As in prehistoric times, stone was plucked from the wider landscape: first, rough undressed flow lava (Figure 3.1), then red scoria, which was light, easily dressed and available in large sizes. (Some time after 1914/1915 when the Routledge team mapped the Puna Pau red scoria quarry, nine topknots disappeared from the site, most likely cut up for building material). Early 1950s buildings of red scoria included a pastiche of a European castle built by the Chilean Navy and a leprosarium (Figure 3.8; see also Figure 4.2). Likewise, coral for lime and the shelly-sandy aggregate typical of colonial-period mortar was collected from the island's beaches. Only corrugated iron (Figures 2–5 and 8.3) – an everyday and relatively inexpensive building material in Chile throughout the colonial period – wood (which early photos show being landed), metal (nails, screws etc.) and some glass were deliberately imported (Figures 2, 3 and 8).

Stone continues to be harvested both officially and unofficially from the landscape and, though no longer cheap, it remains popular for buildings of a wide range of roles and statuses (Figures 6–7 and 9). Analogous contemporary examples of material pragmatism can be seen all over: a spate of new wooden municipal buildings, occasioned by the approaching exhaustion of the island's only aggregate quarry (at Haŋa Hemū), which the authorities hope that Rapa Nui builders will emulate (Figure 10.1 and 10.5); the monopoly provision of plastic palm fronds (Figures 8.8 and 10.5–6); a floruit of curved roofs made possible by the arrival on the island of plywood (Figure 10.2); and, inspired by conscious ideas of sustainability, the use in two buildings (*Toki* music school and *Eco Hare*) of recycled rubbish (*La Segunda* 2013; Toki n.d.) (Figures 8.7 and 9).

<Insert Figure 8>

<Insert Figure 9>

The Climate

The natural environment of the island has imposed a number of features on the island's recent architecture. The sun in the South Pacific can be very strong, and the introduction and popular embracing of verandas, referred to above, is one response (Figures 2, 3.7–8, 4.2, 5 and 7.1). Another, in response to the heavy but intermittent rain and lack of freshwater, is the water cistern (*puna*). Built of stone and lined with cement, several of these dating from the Company period still exist (Figure 4.3). Piped water was introduced to Haŋa Roa in the in 1960s (Porteous 1981, 177) but the supply remained inconsistent and, until recently, was brackish, and many buildings are still supplied with plastic tanks to collect rainwater. Another is the big sloping and overhanging – Polynesian – roof, which most effectively throws-off heavy rain (Figure 10.2–3).

The Nature of Land Tenure

From 1926, "urban" Haŋa Roa was parcelled out to the Rapanui in 5 ha plots to which a provisional title was granted by the Chilean state and which were subsequently heritable according to traditional Rapa Nui practice. This was later extended to the periphery of the town. Permanent title to plots was available from 1979, applications for which were encouraged by the provision of subsidised social housing (McCall 1997, 120; Gonschor 2011, 181; Delsing 2015, 74–76). Further plots of land – again initially of 5 ha. – were made available outside the town from 1998. Such land ownership, however, is overshadowed and complicated by an idea of traditional Polynesian land tenure, according to which land is inalienable (McCall 1981, 69–71; Trachtman 2002, 7), and which implicitly challenges the right of the Chilean state to dispose of Rapa Nui land in the first place (Gonschor 2011, 186).

The implications of these developments for the built environment are threefold. Firstly, large parts of the town are now dominated by low-cost social houses, as many as 800 by the turn of the millennium (McCall 1997, 120; Fischer 2005, 251). These form the starting point for very many buildings (e.g. Figure 7.1). Initially, social housing on the island was built by the state to a standard design. More recently government support for it has come in the form of a financial subsidy, but house design continues to be constrained by the terms of this, and by the limited range and high price of the building materials available. Secondly, development has tended to take one of two forms: either individual plots are filled with a series of small buildings, each the dwelling of one member/branch of the family; or – less frequently – the development of the plot is overtly collective, more precisely reflecting traditional attitudes to family land. Lastly, with the expansion of overt private ownership, and – inevitably – a growing acceptance of it by individual Rapanui, plots are now being conflated or split through direct sale or exchange, allowing types of development – small and cluttered (such as off Main Street) or expansive (such as the Explora Hotel) – that were not possible before.

Sources of Funding and the Tourist Economy

On Rapa Nui, as elsewhere, what is built and when depends upon who pays. The pragmatic usage of materials and the proliferation of social housing referred to above reflects not only availability, but also the financial wherewithal, of individual Rapanui. For much of the island's recent history, most Rapanui have been financially poor. Owing to the growth in tourism, however, this is changing and so is vernacular architecture. Two current trends are apparent: the tearing down of old buildings, the form of which – in many cases – was insisted upon by the original funding body, and their replacement with new structures of local design; and the augmentation of existing

buildings with extensions, new verandas and other fashionable embellishments, which were not part of their original design (Figure 7.1–2). The conventional Western alternative of buying a bigger or better house elsewhere is complicated by the nature of land tenure alluded to above. These trends are seen from 1966 on, when the island was democratised and the number of government jobs available to the Rapanui grew; and they became more and more pronounced as the tourist industry took off in the 1990s and 2000s and Rapa Nui houses began to be extended to provide tourist accommodation or built with tourist accommodation in mind.

By contrast institutional and public buildings, as well as larger hotels, tend to be architect designed new-builds, although these too often replace a humbler predecessor. While a handful of business-savvy Rapanui have contributed to the development of large hotels, through the provision of land or via bank loans, the usual backers of these buildings are the state, external private individuals and groups, or business sponsorship. The iconic Catholic church in Haŋa Roa (*ca*. 1962 but remodelled in 1987 and recently saved from demolition and replacement by public vote) was funded by Thor Heyerdahl (Figure 6). The *Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert* (1985) was funded by private Japanese donation and the *Bibliotheca William Mulloy* (2001) by the Easter Island Foundation, the Andes Foundation and the Chilean Ministry of Culture (MAPSE n.d.). The *Toki* music school (2006) was funded by crowd-funded private donation (Toki n.d.), and the *Liceo Aldea Educativa Hoŋa'a o te Mana Rapa Nui* (2005) by the European Investment Bank (OECD 2011). The motivations of the investors in these projects are not always wholly clear, but they range from profit (the hotels), through idealism (the *Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert*, *Toki* etc.), to direct political/civic interest (the library and *Liceo*); they all also certainly include the prestige derived from contributing to Rapa Nui's global heritage profile.

Aesthetic Continuity

From the 1980s on, the walls of buildings have been increasingly fashioned from coarse stone, either set in the face of a concrete wall, or filling a reinforced concrete frame (Figures 6, 7.6, 8.6, 10.4 and 10.7–8). This was the first real departure from the pragmatic use of building materials in recent Rapa Nui architecture, and also the first overt acknowledgment in building of indigenous stone-using traditions (Figure 1). Early examples include a private house in Haŋa Roa, built by a Chilean resident (*ca*. 1980), the remodelled Catholic church (Figure 6), the *Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert*, the *Bibliotheca William Mulloy* and the *Gobernación Provincial Isla de Pascua* (1994). Most notable, however, is the *Liceo Aldea Educativa Hoŋa'a o te Mana Rapa Nui*, which echoes, in its entrance ramp, the reconstructed Tahai ceremonial complex with its paved ramp down to the sea (Figure 7.6). It also has a class-room block profile which takes inspiration for its profiling from rows of standing *moai* (OECD 2011, 105) – another product of the island's archaeological reconstructions (see also Figures 7.1, 10.4 and 10.7–8).

A relationship between prehistoric traditions and early modern and contemporary architecture can also be discerned between the island's prehistoric sculpture and aesthetic elements of the modern townscape of Haŋa Roa. The former comes down to us in three forms: *moai*, rock art and woodcarving. Of these, best known are the *moai*. As we have seen, these are referenced in the layout of the *Liceo Aldea Educativa Hoŋa'a o te Mana Rapa Nui.* They are also referred to in a rejected design for a new Catholic church, and occur again and again in association with tourist industry infrastructure and local marketing and other imagery. Rock art is aped by moulded reliefs – recalling sculptures at the Oroŋo ceremonial complex – applied to the exterior of the existing church during its 1987 remodelling (Figure 6), and in the motifs employed in floors and wall

decoration made from broken, differently coloured modern glazed tiles. Most pervasive in modern architecture, however, is the influence of woodcarving. Whereas the carving of monumental *moai* halted during prehistory (Van Tilburg 1986), that of wood probably did not, and although its integrity as an art form has from time to time faltered (Métraux 1971 [1940], 249; Delsing 2015, 149), it has continued to develop, through the adoption of newly introduced wood types such as *Eucalyptus* and *Melia azedarach* (chinaberry tree, known locally as *miro Tahiti*), which occur in shapes and sizes not previously available, as well as new tools, such as the chainsaw, and new combinations of traditional and introduced motifs (from other art forms and elsewhere in Polynesia). For architecture, the culmination of this is the carved post, often employing both two- and three-dimensional carving, used mostly in verandas (Figure 7.1–2), but also in both indoor and outdoor roles. These posts first appeared in the 1970s, their use took off in the 1990s and they are now widespread in all sorts of domestic buildings and other modest structures, such as recycling stations (Figure 7.4), as well as more prestigious architect-designed hotels and municipal work (Figure 10.1).

Finally, of note is the re-emergence in contemporary Rapa Nui architecture of the curve. As noted, the island's prehistoric architecture – *hare paeŋa*, the Oroŋo houses, *manavai* – incorporate curves, whereas colonial and early modern architecture on the island was dominated by right angles and straight lines. In the late 1970s, however, the curve reappeared. A notable early example is a private house modelled on the upturned boat-shape of the *hare paeŋa* (1976) (Figure 1.5–6), located inland of the Tahai ceremonial complex just where one would expect to find a prehistoric *hare paeŋa* (Figure 7.3). Curves are also central to the designs of two major resort hotels: the Hangaroa (2012), which explicitly references Oroŋo and the *hare paeŋa* (Figure 7.7) (Hangaroa Hotel n.d.); and the *Explora* (2007), which combines traditional Rapa Nui shaping, in this

case reminiscent of *manavai* and the Oroŋo houses, with modern stone cladding (Explora Hotels n.d.). Curves are also a major component of the design of the aforementioned *Liceo Aldea Educativa Hoŋa'a o te Mana Rapa Nui*.

The most recent municipal and state-funded Rapa Nui buildings – such as the Haŋa Roa *Centro Lector Katipare* (with a polygonal shape and slatted wood external walling, to support living plants) (2019) (Figure 10.1), the new Haŋa Roa hospital (2012) (Hildebrandt Gruppe n.d.) (Figure 10.8), the new *feria* (2019) (Figure 10.5), which has a Hawaiian-style high-hipped Dickey roof (see also Figure 10.6) and a proposed *Teatro Municipal* – reference Rapa Nui and other Polynesian forms, but are not directly modelled on them. Also of note in this context is the Mana Gallery (2002), now swallowed up by Haŋa Roa's urban sprawl, which, though incorporating both stone and wooden posts in its construction, is also of generic Polynesian rather than Rapa Nui inspiration (Figure 10.3). The Rapa Nui present through these buildings expresses an internationalism and idealism that increasingly overlays former, smaller-scale twenty-first century Rapa Nui traditions.

<Insert Figure 10>

Wider Polynesian Perspectives and the Case of Rapa Nui Architecture

More than 30 years ago, the anthropologist Robert Keesing observed that contemporary Pacific peoples were reviving pasts and myths of ancestral ways within the rhetoric of postcolonial nationalism. His view was that "[p]erhaps it does not matter whether the pasts being evoked are mythical or real […]. Political symbols radically condense and simplify reality" (Keesing 1989, 19). With this in mind, how does the influence of Rapa Nui's prehistoric architecture on its early modern and contemporary buildings relate to trends and discourses

of identity elsewhere in Polynesia? In considering this, it is important assess how exceptional or otherwise the circumstances of Rapa Nui are, and how the architectural trajectory that we have documented, contributes to, or provides additional perspectives of, current issues of heritage and decolonisation.

The geographic scale of any general evocation of ancestral Polynesia is challenging. The Polynesian triangle, drawn by connecting the points of Aotearoa / New Zealand, Hawai'i and Rapa Nui, is huge, encompassing approximately 300,000 sq km of the southern Pacific and more than 10,000 islands. The popular use of the terms "Polynesia" and "Polynesian" imply the existence across the region of a common cultural identity, and it does indeed share some ancestral cultural similarities, particularly in its language(s) and its traditions of seafaring and navigational expertise. However, the idea of Polynesia as a coherent unit today exists in spite of locally articulated pasts and presents, and of particular interest here, it lacks a coherent overall architectural epistemology. Such stereotyping has left traditional architecture open to a homogenisation that challenges deep-time indigenous island identity and variability (Austin 2001a), while obfuscating acts of identity affirmation that are chosen by local communities in creating new architectures from their past, an authentic hybridity that differs from concurrently emerging pan-Polynesian architectural styles.

Analyses of Polynesia's pre-colonial regional building traditions have been neglected in modern assessments of world architecture (McKay 2016, 399). One way in which Western architects have engaged with the decolonial movement has been to learn from and reference local pre-modern architecture in their designs (von Osten 2011). However, outside Rapa Nui, this local engagement with architecture remains peripheral to the contemporary presentation of a Polynesian identity. The current referencing of Rapa Nui's prehistoric architectural past by architects and builders working on the island

suggests similar or contrasting architectural affordances in the objectification of identity creation elsewhere in Polynesia.

Aotearoa / New Zealand

Despite an early appreciation of indigenous Māori architecture by nineteenth-century European settlers and visitors (Angas 1849, 88–89), in Aotearoa / New Zealand, this was very soon supplanted by British architecture, first Georgian colonial in wood, then Victorian, with which the new settlers were comfortable, and which was well-suited to island's climate. Thereafter, the island's architectural trajectory closely tracked that of the UK, and Western architecture generally, so that to the British visitor to it today, it seems very familiar. However, Māori architecture, represented at the time of contact by the *whare* – a closed, rectangular wooden structure with a sunken floor, which for some purposes was elaborately carved on the front (e.g. Oliver 2002, fig. 24.9) – never wholly disappeared. The contact-period *whare* evolved into the well-known hybrid Māori-European *wharenui* or "meeting house", which, unique to Aotearoa / New Zealand, has become inextricable from Māori identity, and has and continues to influence Aotearoa / New Zealand architects, albeit mostly indirectly and in a small number of buildings only (Austin 2001b, 95–96). Beyond the *wharenui*, indigenous architecture in Aotearoa / New Zealand remains insignificant in the articulation of Māori identity or the establishment, for the tourist, of a Polynesian sense of place, which has been conveyed instead through such elements of cultural display as *hongi* (nose rubbing), *haka* (performance) and traditional dress (Amoamo and Thompson 2010, 42).

The Cook Islands

The architectural trajectory of the Cook Islands has been similar to that of Rapa Nui. Traditional architecture in the form of the *ʻare*, a

rectangular house thatched with pandanus or coconut leaves (Buck 1971 [1944], 35–42), survived the islands' colonisation, but for social and practical reasons (Curson 1972, 100; Borofsky 2014) it subsequently fell from favour. The dominant architecture became Western colonial, at first coral-block or wooden houses with verandas; then – from the 1950s on – box-like houses with concrete or asbestos sheet walls similar to Rapa Nui's social houses, and which like these, were encouraged by the provision of financial grants (Curson 1972, 100–102; Intertect 1982, 14–16). Today, these structures are "enhanced", including with faux Polynesian thatching, but most additions and new builds remain essentially Western, rather than Polynesian (a plan for a pan-Polynesian *'are korero* or "house of history and learning" by a local architect remains unrealised – Nia 2010), while paradoxically, the "indigenous" in architecture is taken to include the islands' nineteenth-century churches (Hill 2016), which superseded indigenous *marae* (the Cook Islands' equivalent to the Rapa Nui *ahu*) and originally incorporated traditional features (Budgett and Dixon 2015), but are now mostly Western in inspiration. Traditional *'are*, which in 1966 comprised a fifth of the capital's housing (Curson 1972, 101), survive in small numbers only and mostly on outlying islands, maintained in large part by outsiders (e.g. Borofsky 2014) and for tourist consumption only. Otherwise, the islands' local and Polynesian identity is signalled through food, crafts and, as in Aotearoa / New Zealand, public performance (Küchler 2014). The survival of traditional Cook Island architecture into the colonial period and the social stigma that accompanied it, it seems, directed aspirations for an indigenous identity elsewhere.

Hawai'i

Hawai'i's traditional *hale*, originally a single-roomed grass-thatched rectangular structure with no windows and a low door, largely disappeared in the nineteenth century, with only a few examples

surviving into the twentieth century in a modified form (Apple 1971), and neither it, nor the many archaeological reminders of the islands' architectural past, such as stone *heiau* (Hawai'i's equivalent of the *ahu*), have had any significant influence on modern Hawaiian architecture. The dominant architecture of Hawai'i today is the product of a conscious attempt by US architects to develop a modern "Hawaiian" architecture appropriate for the region (Sandler and Mehta 1993, 36). Its success has contributed a keen sense of place to the islands and provided to the world a repertoire of Hawaiian architectural motifs. This architecture, however, is essentially a Western imposition, and remains so in spite of the *hale*'s recent revival (Hunt 2016). The Hawaiian-style Dickey roof introduced by the architect Charles Dickey, for example, is of southeast Asian, not Hawaiian, inspiration (Neil 1975, 103; Leong 2007), as is a high jutting roof famously showcased in the Waikikian Hotel and falsely claimed in local architectural sales literature to be derived from the *hale*. In Hawaiian architecture, "Hawaiian" and "Polynesian" are a matters of geography, not ethnicity. In Rapa Nui, where both these roof forms have been reproduced, they are considered "Polynesian" and form part of the contemporary presentation of "Polynesian" identity.

Sāmoa

The long-established villages of independent (Western) Sāmoa and American Sāmoa continue to make extensive use of indigenous traditional architecture (UNESCO 1992; Van der Ryn 2008). Traditional Sāmoan architecture is embodied in the multi-purpose *fale*. Sāmoan *fale* are open, and of oval or circular shape, with wooden posts supporting a domed, thatched roof. Built by a family directed by a traditional craftsman, the lineage of today's *fale* can be traced back to the eighteenth century, when a Sāmoan village and its houses were described by La Pérouse (1969 [1789], 107–108), and is

evidenced in photographs of standing buildings taken throughout the modern period (Van der Ryn 2008; Schnoor 2016). German colonisation in the early twentieth century introduced Western colonial styles to Sāmoa, with some specifically German architectural elements mixed in (Schnoor 2016, 290). The influence of Western architecture on the islands was further reinforced by military building during World War II, and – in American Sāmoa – by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency, which, after a devastating hurricane in 1966, provided financial aid to rebuild houses to a Western design (Van der Ryn 2008, 83). In a close parallel to the Rapa Nui experience, these new buildings introduced the right-angle, exterior walls and concrete, and replaced traditional building methods such as vegetable lashings and thatched roofs with, respectively, nails and corrugated iron. Despite this, however, traditional building techniques and forms survive. In part, this is because they better disperse heat than Western buildings, but it is also because aspects of the *fale*'s form, such as the lack of walls, and their overall conception are essential expressions of an original Polynesian – in this case Sāmoan – cultural identity (Austin 2001a; Van der Ryn 2008; McKay 2016, 400). For this reason, even when new materials are used, traditional forms are retained (Van der Ryn 2008, 84–88). The fundamental difference between the architecture of Sāmoa and Rapa Nui is this continuity of traditional building forms into the present in the face of introduced Western architecture. It is suggested that for Sāmoa, this introduction led to gradual organic change, which allowed household-related customs and associated architectural traditions to be maintained. The re-creation of a Polynesian identity in opposition to Western architecture, therefore, did not happen.

Authenticity, Hybridity and Identity

In Polynesia, the revival of traditional local architectural styles is a powerful tool in reasserting indigenous identity and in signalling

"authenticity". It also increases the marketability of tourist destinations. This raises the issue of what authenticity is and of the relevance of traditional architectures to contemporary island identities. Study of indigenous architecture frequently focuses on traditional practice, which is considered more authentic than the hybrid structures and practices of today (Boorstin 1964). Authenticity, however, is a "slippery" concept (Belhassen and Caton 2006, 845) when entwined with its currency as a sought-after quality of a tourist destination. In a tourist context, authenticity is situationally defined and needs to be plausible enough to ensure successful communication between the subject (architecture) and reader (tourist) and is part of the dialogue between the tourist's "pre-travel" and "on arrival" expectations (Reisinger and Steiner 2006).

Present-day Rapa Nui's eclectic range of "local builds" indicates and affords self-determination at a household scale. It shows an ease of mixing-and-matching forms and shapes derived from its prehistoric past, but in combinations and scales that did not exist in prehistory, and which use contemporary building techniques. Little remains of the island's colonial architecture, but this had, and has, foundational value in that it preserved a link between past and present through the incorporation of discrete elements of Rapa Nui's earlier building traditions and imagery – building on *paeŋa* foundations, thatched roofs, *poro* pavements etc. (Figures 2 and 3). In doing so, it created a local tradition of hybridity, which today is stimulating the emergence and flowering of a new architecture at a residential level, conceived of and mostly built by the Rapanui, that is both original and filled with overt mnemonic references to the island's prehistoric past. For the Rapanui builder, this accords with Amoamo and Thompson's (2010) discussion of contemporary Māori cultural tourism in Aotearoa / New Zealand. In this, hybridity – for example in cultural performance – is used to promote counter-representations, and new strategies of self-determination and resistance, which, alongside

tourist images of Māori, not in traditional costume but as they live their everyday lives, re-articulate indigenous culture and identity through acts of "critical post-colonialism" (Amoamo and Thompson 2010, 44, 50). In a different medium, contemporary Rapanui builders, by combining the old and the new, achieve the same end.

With Western concepts of authenticity in mind, one could conclude that the hybrid builds of Rapa Nui's Haŋa Roa – along with Māori *wharenui* and the Sāmoan *fale*, adapted to the use of modern materials – are not authentic. Their authenticity, however, lies in the fact that they were not imposed on, but come out of, Polynesia (Schnoor 2016, 306). Yes, they incorporate non-indigenous traits, but they are also authentic outward representations of local indigenous cultural identity. In this, they differ from the pan-Polynesian styles that have been favoured in many externally funded public buildings and hotels, which combine conscious and unconscious references to iconic Rapa Nui forms with internationally recognisable – and therefore plausible – contemporary pan-Polynesian motifs, and global themes of sustainability. Whether or not this architecture is also authentic is a matter for ongoing debate.

Why Has the Prehistoric Been so Influential on Contemporary Rapa Nui Architecture?

Present-day Rapa Nui exists in the shadow of prehistoric cultural traditions which have acquired a life of their own in both archaeological and popular narratives of the island. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that references to these have become incorporated into contemporary modes of architectural expression there, be these a response by architects to the perceived expectations of the tourist or an authentic expression of local identity. But why particularly is the influence of its *architecture* so strong? In large part, it is simply a matter of survival: an abrupt disjunction between Rapa Nui's modern and past areas of settlement,

resulting from a dramatic nineteenth-century decline in the island's population and the subsequent corralling of this in Haŋa Roa, saved the island's prehistoric architecture for posterity. Also surely influential is the use in Rapa Nui's prehistoric architecture of *moai*, which, owing to their size, form and numbers have a charisma much greater than that of most physical manifestations of Polynesian culture (only the voyaging canoe matches it). This charisma enabled it to capture the popular imagination of the world – including that of the Rapanui. Finally, perhaps, it is because there was no continuity of prehistoric architecture into the present, and it brought with it no social baggage, no stigma, no inhibiting requirement to be traditional or to use an exclusive traditional craftsperson in its contemporary realisation, allowing the Rapanui and non-Rapanui alike to take from it what they want and nothing else.

Conclusion

Except among professional architects active on the island, and between archaeologists, whose focus is on the prehistoric period, Rapa Nui architecture is not widely discussed. The new architecture and its references to past architecture are described, but the reasons behind these references are not articulated. When asked, nobody says explicitly that by using these elements they are reclaiming the island's Polynesian identity. However, architecture generally is widely seen as an instrument of cultural change (e.g. Le Corbusier 1931, 1, 6) or, conversely, a product of cultural change (e.g. Rapoport 1969, 47), and both trends can be inferred from aspects of the recent Rapa Nui architecture described here. In the absence of any theorisation of their architecture by the Rapanui themselves, we attribute it to the interaction between a consciousness of prehistoric Rapa Nui architecture vitalised by Mulloy's restorations, a search by the Rapanui for independent identity, the physical, and recent architectural, environment of the island and the development of a

tourist milieu, which favours one kind of architecture over another. The ubiquity of these elements of Rapanui life, their everyday familiarity, turned them into the island's everyday architectural *koine*.

Through a mixture of survivals, inventions, revivals and borrowings, a contemporary idea of Rapa Nui and of being Rapanui has developed on the island, which more and more is shared and developed by Rapanui and non-Rapanui alike. In the island's architecture its key elements are the veranda, stone cladding, the curve, the carved post and various types of "Polynesian" roof. It is important to emphasise, however, that for the most part in architecture, it is a perception of Rapa Nui and pan-Polynesian forms that is being reproduced, and *not* the methods traditionally associated with these. These developments are ongoing, and how they will develop in the future, whether into something still uniquely Rapa Nui or something more pan-Polynesian, is uncertain. The ubiquity of both prehistoric architecture and the idea of Polynesia probably means that their influence on the island is secure. However, many of the inputs discussed above are changing. The nature of Rapa Nui's architecture therefore is likely to change, and, given the small size of the island, probably quite quickly.

Architecture has a prominent role in capturing a contemporary renaissance of indigenous identities and aesthetics. This is of relevance to understanding the social and psychological roles of colonial and postcolonial architectures generally, including – as in the case of Rapa Nui – those that retrospectively draw from deeper-time community identities. Contemporary Rapa Nui architecture is the outcome of continuity of development, from that of the first Western settlers to a renascent Polynesian present. But there is a disjunction between the island's prehistoric and present architecture. The neglected architecture that fills this period and its impact on what succeeded it require consideration. In Haŋa Roa, its remnants are fast being replaced by a new architecture more congruent with the

island's prehistoric past and which to varying extents expresses ideas about being culturally linked to, or part of, Polynesia. The insights that analysis of this overlooked past generate contribute significantly to our understanding of the nature and development Rapa Nui today, of Rapa Nui architecture and of Rapa Nui cultural identity. The developing architecture meanwhile impacts on Rapa Nui's future heritage, in making the island more universal in a Polynesian world and a less overt product of what were, for the island, historically challenging times.

Appendix

<Insert Tables 1 to 3>

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Captions of illustrations

FIGURE 1: Prehistoric architecture: (1) the reconstructed Tahai ceremonial complex, showing Ahu Vai Uri (left) and the ramp to the sea; (2) a typical *manavai* complex; (3) reconstructed Oroŋo; (4) the cyclopean rear wall of Ahu Vai Mata; (4) facsimile *hare paeŋa* at Ahu Haŋa Tee o Vaihu; (6) *hare paeŋa* foundation and (right) associated *poro* pavement (photos: MST).

FIGURE 2: The Company manager's house at Mataveri, *ca*. 1911–1918) (photo: Henry Percy Edmunds – © the Edmunds family).

FIGURE 3: Colonial architecture: (1) drystone house, *ca*. 1915; (2) weatherboard house, *ca*. 1911–1929; (3) rendered stone and cement house (*ca*. 1927); (4) horizontal planked house with thatched roof, *ca*. 1916); (5) stone pavement and *paeŋa* step in front of Haŋa Roa church, *ca*. 1916–1927; (6) corrugated iron hut and horizontal planked house, possibly 1934–1935; (7) corrugated iron house with veranda, 1946; (8) stone and cement leprosarium, *ca*. 1950 (photos: 1–2: Henry Percy Edmunds – © the Edmunds family); 3–5: probably Henry Percy Edmunds (Museo Histórico Nacional Chile); 6: possibly the Franco-Belgian expedition; 7: Robert Gertsmann (Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert); 8: Daniel Camus Gundian (Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert).

FIGURE 4: Colonial and early modern architecture: (1) Company hut of corrugated iron; (2–3) rendered stone and cement houses – note the probably pre-1965 *puna* to the left of the lower picture; (4) wooden government house, *ca*. 1950s–1980s (demolished 2017–2020); (5–6) 1980s Chilean social housing (photos: MST).

FIGURE 5: Ruinous wooden house with a veranda, *ca*. 1950–60s (demolished 2019) (photo: MST).

FIGURE 6: Haŋa Roa church remodelled in 1987 with stone cladding and Christian and traditional Rapa Nui motifs (photo: MST)

FIGURE 7: Contemporary "Rapa Nui" architecture: (1) much extended Chilean social house; (2) another modified house (of older date); (3) modern take on the prehistoric *hare paeŋa*; (4) recycling point, with carved columns and a faux traditional roof; (5) small house with Rapa Nui motifs; (6) stone ramp at the *Liceo Aldea Educativa Hoŋa'a o te Mana* (cf. Figure 1.1); (7) the Hangaroa Hotel (photos: MST).

FIGURE 8: materials (and techniques): (1) traditional hut thatched with *mauku* (1886); (2) re-used *paeŋa* "columns" on the site of the Company manager's house; (3) corrugated iron sheeting; (4) reused wood planking (*ca*. 1911–1929); (5) local lime mortar; (6) modern stone cladding; (7) drinks cans in *Toki* Music School; (8) faux palm thatch (photos: 1: USS Mohican expedition (Smithsonian Institution); 2–3: MST; 4: Henry Percy Edmunds – © the Edmunds family; 5–8: MST).

FIGURE 9: *Toki* Music School (photo: MST).

FIGURE 10: Contemporary, generic "Polynesian" architecture: (1) *Centro Lector Katipare*, with reused carved columns flanking its entrance; (2) a shop and a small hotel; (3–4) high "Polynesian" roofs (a garage and the Mana Gallery); (5–6) Dickey roofs (high-hipped roofs with wide overhanging eaves) added to an old building and on the new *feria*); (6) a new stone clad private house incorporating reused (?)Company period timbers; (7) the hospital, also partly stone clad (cf. 4) (photos: MST)

TABLE 1: Photo sources.

No	Attribution	Source	Description of building(s)	Comments
1	USS Mohican expedition 1886	Archives of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, Rome PH-A, PAQ.I, photo 42; McCall 1976, pl. 6	Rectangular house with a high, steeply sloping planked or – possibly – shingled, hipped roof extending over a columned veranda. Very large gutter.	Vaihu. Probably the former parsonage. Shows Alexander Salmon Jr.
2	USS Mohican expedition 1886	Bishop Museum SP-117234; Thomson 1891, fig. 1	Two thatched huts: one boat-shaped with a low door at one end; one rectangular with a high door in the side.	Figure 8.1
3	Walter Knoche 1911	Ruiz Tagle Collection; MAPSE: Ruiz Tagle 2; Knoche 1925, pl. 1	Twelve or 13 scattered rectangular buildings, including the church. All are roofed with corrugated iron. In the middle of the photograph, a house of rough vertical planks without windows or gutter (cf. photo 17).	Haŋa Roa.
4	Henry Percy Edmunds 1911–1915	Bishop Museum SP-39871	Traditional boat-shaped thatched hut.	Portrait of Te ʻOho a Neru (d. 1915).
5	Henry Percy Edmunds 1914–1915	Bishop Museum SP-39843, SP-40035	Company manager's house, clearly showing its up-ended *pu paenga* foundations to the side of the steps up to veranda.	Mataveri. Shows Governor and teacher José Ignacio Vives Solar. Figure 2
6	Henry Percy Edmunds 1914–1915	Bishop Museum SP-40029	Small rectangular hut with horizontal planked walls, a corrugated iron roof, a metal gutter, a chimney and a planked door but no (visible) windows.	Mataveri. Shows the 1914–1915 Mana expedition's cook.
7	Henry Percy Edmunds 1914–1915	Bishop Museum SP-40033	House with a small modern *moai* in front, roof and walls of corrugated iron, casement window – possibly *without* glass – and partial columned veranda projecting beyond the house.	Haŋa Roa. The teacher's house. Shows Governor and teacher José Ignacio Vives Solar.
8	Henry Percy	Bishop Museum SP-	Same house as photo 7.	Haŋa Roa.

No	Attribution	Source	Description of building(s)	Comments
	Edmunds 1911–1929	40044	Big *paeŋa* used as step.	
9	Henry Percy Edmunds 1916	Bishop Museum SP-39845	Church, with a stone pavement in front.	Mataveri. Shows an ordained priest, probably one of those that accompanied Bishop Edwards.
10	Henry Percy Edmunds 1917–1918	Bishop Museum SP-39834	Wooden house with glass in (?)sash windows and a rough stone block foundation.	Shows Governor Acuna and family.
11	Henry Percy Edmunds 1911–29 (*ca*. 1914)	Bishop Museum SP-41796	Rectangular, horizontal planked house on a drystone foundation, with a thatched roof, a central door and small windows (cf. photos 18 and 25).	Haŋa Roa, attributed to *ca*. 1914.
12	Henry Percy Edmunds 1911–1929 (*ca*. 1916)	Bishop Museum SP-39854	Small hut with drystone walls, a gable of horizontal wooden planks with a wooden shuttered window and a corrugated iron roof.	Appears to show one of the women in dated photo 21. Figure 3.1
13	Henry Percy Edmunds 1911–1929 (*ca*. 1916)	Bishop Museum SP-40028 Rocuant 1916: 35	Huge "store house" and adjacent stone and cement *puna* and sheep dipping facilities.	Haŋa Piko.
14	Henry Percy Edmunds 1911–1929	Bishop Museum SP-39867	Rectangular house of overlapping horizontal wood planks (weatherboard) with a very narrow door, an unglazed window and a corrugated iron roof without a gutter.	Figure 3.2
15	Henry Percy Edmunds 1911–1929	Bishop Museum SP-126050	Irregular lengths of narrow planking reused vertically in a house wall (cf. photo 3).	Figure 8.4
16	Unattributed but probably Henry Percy Edmunds 1916–1927 (*c*. 1916)	MNH PFA-443, PFA-444 & PFA-446	Stone pavement in front of the church.	Haŋa Roa. Shows the catechist Nicolas Pakarati (d. 1927). Figure 3.5

No	Attribution	Source	Description of building(s)	Comments
17	Unattributed *ca*. 1916	MNH PFA-403	Windowless house of rough, apparently reused vertical planks with a corrugated iron roof and a partial gutter, acquired after it was photographed in 1911 (photo 3).	Haŋa Roa. Date unknown but many in the photograph wear a tall straw hat characteristic of the late teens and the early 1920s. Additionally shows a moustachioed white man wearing a broad flat cap, possibly Enrique Merlet (d. 1918).
18	Unattributed, probably Henry Percy Edmunds *ca*. 1918	MNH PFA-479	Rectangular, horizontally planked house with a thatched roof, a central door and small windows (cf. photos 11 and 25), next to a house built of vertical planks, with a corrugated iron roof, a central door and no windows (not that shown in photo 17).	Haŋa Roa. Said to show Henry Percy Edmund's godson and attributed to 1925. Suggested to be earlier by the clothing shown and the presence of a boy, possibly shown in dated photo 21. Figure 3.4
19	Unattributed *ca*. 1925	MNH PFA-563	Traditional boat-shaped thatched hut	Attributed to 1925.
20	Unattributed, probably Henry Percy Edmunds *ca*. 1927	MNH PFA-470	Cement rendered end of a – presumably – mortared stone house.	Shows Alberto Paoa and Carmela Languitopa, with their four children, one a baby. The earliest photo of a cement rendered house. Figure 3.3
21	Prinz Eitel Friedrich December 1914	Gunter Hartnagel Collection	Same house as photos 7 and 8. In this, the overlapping horizontal corrugated iron sheets used to fashion its outer walls are clearly visible. Partial gutter to the front.	
22	Mana expedition 1914–1915	British Museum Oc,G.T. 1546, 1648; Scoresby Routledge 1919, pl. 26	The church built of horizontal planks on a drystone foundation, and with a step fashioned from reused *pu paeŋa*.	Haŋa Roa. Prior to the laying of the pavement shown in photo 16.
23	Mana expedition 1914–1915	British Museum; Oc,G.T. 1545; Scoresby Routledge 1919, pl. 25	Company manager's house, with a columned veranda, sash windows and a corrugated iron	Mataveri.

No	Attribution	Source	Description of building(s)	Comments
			roof. It sits on up-ended re-used *pu paeŋa*,	
24	Visit by the Corbeta General Baquedano May 1900	Armada de Chile 1_11080_8	Veranda of the manager's house showing its glazed, sash windows, rectangular columns and horizontally planked walls.	Mataveri. The earliest surviving photo of this house
25	Visit by the Corbeta General Baquedano 1918	Jorge Mella Rodhis Collection; Armada de Chile 1_5377	A rectangular house with horizontally planked walls, a central door and two windows, and a thatched roof without a gutter (cf. photos 11 and 18).	
26	Visit by the Corbeta General Baquedano December 1930	Jorge Mella Rodhis Collection; Armada de Chile 1_5076	Long rectangular drystone with thatched roof and no gutter.	
27	Visit by the Corbeta General Baquedano 1917	Skottsberg 1956 [1920], pl. 10	Traditional boat-shaped thatched hut.	"Nr Haŋa Roa". The most recent unambiguously dated photo of a traditional hut
28	Possibly the Franco-Belgian expedition ?1934/5	Bishop Museum SP-208191	Rectangular house built of horizontal planks with a corrugated iron roof, a gutter and square, shuttered windows next to a windowless corrugated iron shack.	Haŋa Roa. Figure 3.6
29	Robert Gertsman 1946	University of Antofogasta; MAPSE: gertsman 71/ 199	Rectangular house on a mortared stone platform with corrugated iron walls and roof, a narrow columned veranda all round, a gutter and inward-opening casement windows.	Probably Mataveri. Figure 3.7
30	Robert Gertsman 1946	University of Antofogasta; MAPSE: gertsman 88	Shepherd's hut with weatherboard walls, a corrugated iron roof and gable end, and a window in the gable end.	
31	Unattributed	Archives of the	Rectangular house on a	Shows the teacher who

No	Attribution	Source	Description of building(s)	Comments
	ca. 1954	Capuchin Order, Chile; MAPSE: capuchino-228	mortared stone platform with horizontally planked walls, corrugated iron roof, mortared stone steps, columned veranda to the front and inward-opening casement windows.	drowned during the Heyerdahl expedition 1955–1956.
32	Daniel Camus Gundian 1951	Camus Gundian Collection; MAPSE: MPR5012, 5016, 5024, 5029	Building of large squared stone blocks, with veranda supported by square mortared stone columns	Leprosarium. Figure 3.8
33	Dr Valenzuela 1952	Valenzuela Collection; MAPSE: Valenzuela_022, 023	Navy castle.	Haŋa Roa. The earliest photo of the castle.
34	Ignacio Aguirre 1962	Ignacio Aguirre Collection; MAPSE: ignacio aguirre 27	Well-built rectangular house fashioned from fitted horizontal planking with a veranda with square pillars, and a stone foundation.	Said to show Margarita Huke.
35	Ian Martin 1963	Ian Martin Collection; MAPSE: Hanga Roa 18 September	Rough corrugated iron house with columned veranda.	Haŋa Roa.

TABLE 2: The development of colonial, early modern and contemporary Rapa Nui architecture

Date	Development/ notable buildings
1864	Arrival of Brother Eugène Eyraud and the erection of the first European-style hut on the island.
1865–1871	Missionary villages with chapels and Western-style houses built at Haŋa Roa and Vaihu.
ca. 1868	Dutrou-Bornier builds a colonial-style house with a veranda at Mataveri.
1872	Illustration and description by Pierre Loti of a *hare paeŋa* (boat-shaped hut) in use. No recorded use by the Rapanui of western-style houses (Loti 2004 [1872]).
ca. 1880–1917	Coexistence of European influences (small rectangular wooden and – later – corrugated iron huts) and pre-European typologies.
1882	Geiseler reports that the *hare paeŋa* went out of use "only very recently" (Geiseler 1995[1883], 76).
1911	Corrugated iron in widespread use in Company and everyday domestic architecture.
1917	Most recent (reliably) dated photograph of a boat-shaped hut in use.
1918–1927	Earliest evidence for mortared stone domestic houses.
1932	Haŋa Roa "a cluster of "clapboard and sheet iron huts" (Casey 1932, 114).
1934-1935	Stone (presumably drystone) houses described as "obsolete".
1935–1945	No evidence.
1946	Photo of a well-built, wholly corrugated iron house with a veranda. Information on the architecture of this period remains sparse.
ca. 1950	New stone-built leprosarium; the Navy castle.
1951	Twenty-five stone and cement houses under construction (Camus Gundian 1951, 26).
mid-1950s–1960s	Photos of well-built wooden and corrugated iron houses on cemented stone foundations.
1967–1968	The development of "downtown" Haŋa Roa.
1968–1972	Reconstruction of Tahai.
1974	Reconstruction of Oroŋo.
1970–1980	*Ad hoc* shacks along Haŋa Roa seafront.
1976	House built at Tahai modelled on a prehistoric *hare paeŋa* (architect: José García Huidobro). Around the same time the former Company manager's house at Mataveri demolished.
1986	The "Plan Hanga Roa" and the introduction of modern Chilean social housing/
1985	*Museo Antropologico P. Sebastián Englert* (architect: *Dirección de Arquitectura del Ministerio de Obras Públicas*)
1987	Re-modelling of the porch of the present-day Holy Cross church in Haŋa Roa with overtly Rapa Nui motifs using an applique technique which recalls Orongo's semi relief rock art.
2001	*Biblioteca William Mulloy*.
2002	Mana Gallery (architect: Johannes Van Tilburg, Holland/USA).

Date	Development/ notable buildings
2004	*Gobernación Provincial Isla de Pascua*.
2005	*Liceo Aldea Educativa Hoŋa'a o te Mana* Rapa Nui (architects: Hugo Molina, Gloria Barros and Marcelo Sarovic, Chile).
2005–2007	Explora Hotel (architect: José Cruz, Chile).
2012	New hospital (architect: Rolando Quinlan, Chile).
2012	Eco-*hare* (architect: Andy MacDonald, *Departamento de Dirección de Obras Municipales de Isla de Pascua*).
2014	*Toki* (architect: Michael Reynolds, USA).
2016	Plan for a new Catholic church incorporating many overtly Rapa Nui themes and motifs in its design (architects: Juan Purcell and Pedro Pablo Gonzáles, Chile).
2018	Public vote rejecting the demolition and replacement of the Holy Cross church.
2019	*Centro del Lector Katipare* and new *Feria* (architect: *Departamento de Dirección de Obras Municipales de Isla de Pascua*); demolition of the last colonial-period wooden houses on Main Street (Atamu Tekena).

TABLE 3: Influences in modern Rapanui architecture.

Inputs			**Architecture**	
General	***Specific***	***Material***	***Design features***	
The island environment	Locally available materials	Stone (massive and tabular), vegetable thatch	Design, material and quality constraints	Contemporary Rapa Nui architecture
	Restricted range of (and monopolistic control of) imported building materials, shortage of builders etc.			
	The climate			
Prehistoric Rapanui architecture; modern restorations of this	*Hare paeŋa* (boat-shaped houses) *manavai* etc.; the stone houses of Orongo		Curved walls. *Imitation* drystone, corbelling and vegetable thatched roofs	
	Ahu (ceremonial platforms), *moai*		*Imitation*, closely fitted cyclopean stone walls	
The missionary, Dutrou-Bernier and Company periods	Western (nineteenth–twentieth century colonial) architecture	Lime mortar, corrugated iron, wooden planking	Rectangular bungalows, upright doors, upstanding rectangular water tanks (*puna*), verandas with wooden posts, windows	
	Introduced materials			
	Introduced vegetation	*Eucalyptus*	Irregular, rounded wooden posts	
The Chilean state	Subsidised (social) housing	asbestos board; glazed floor tiles	Limited range of Chilean house styles, then free design or cheap construction; tiled floors	
	Rural building regulations/ the town plan		Single-storey houses	
Contemporary Rapanui culture (continuity from the past)	Collective work (*umaŋa*)		*Ad hoc* rather than designed buildings and modifications to buildings	
	Traditional Polynesian collective approaches to land ownership		The family compound	
	Gardens and communal space			
	Wood carving		The carved wood post	
Modernity	Later twenieth-century architectural		Curved roofs, eco-design, large covered areas, stone	

	styles		cladding	
	New introduced materials	Modern hydraulic cement; reinforced concrete, plywood, plastic, rubbish		
	The *idea* of Polynesia		The adoption of decorative motifs from other parts of Polynesia and other Rapa Nui and Polynesian arts and crafts. The high "Polynesian" and Dickey roofs, the Tiki bar, etc.	

Figure 1

Figure 2

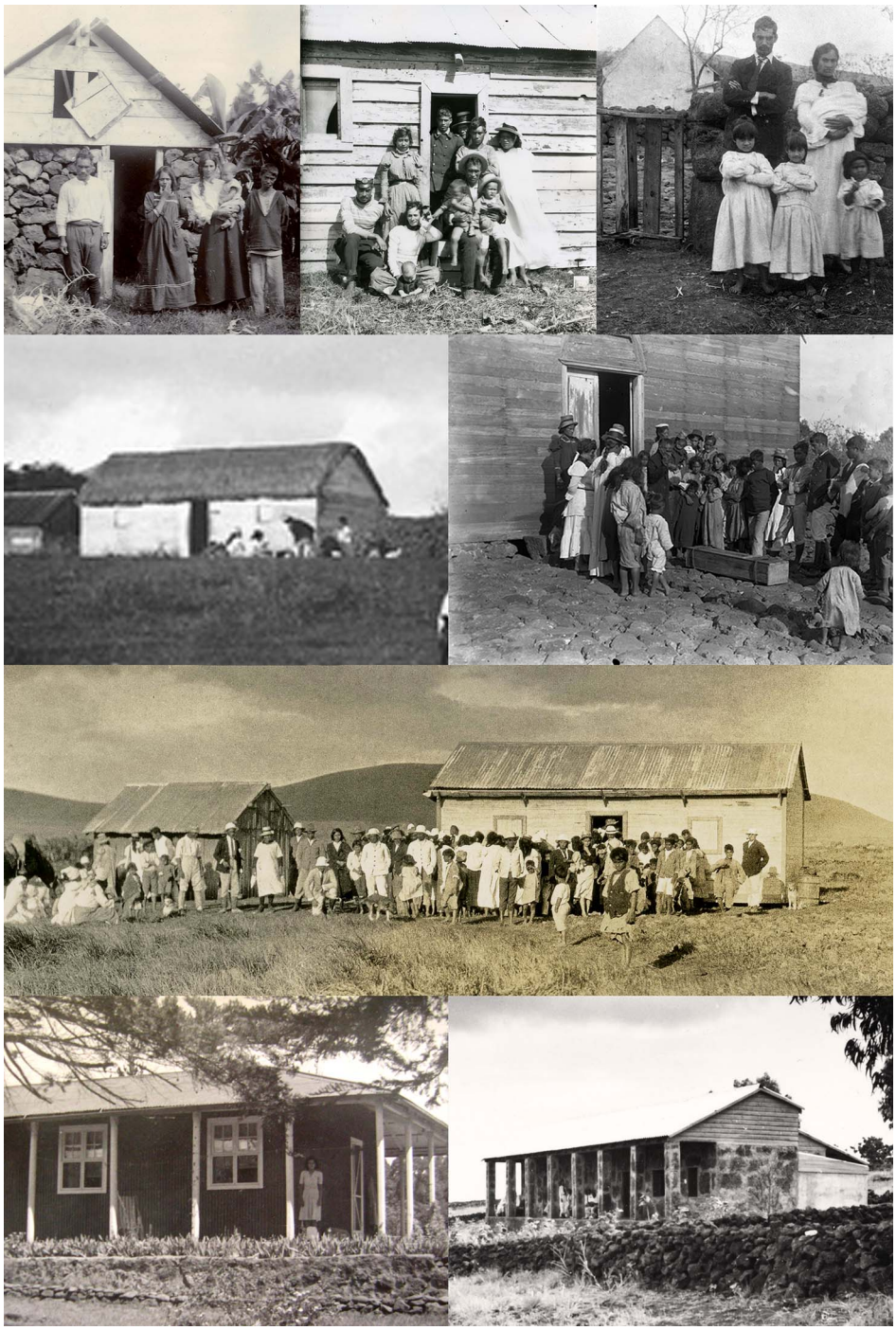

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

Figure 10