

Petersen describes. But it is fair to say that a more explicit attention to theory could have strengthened the analysis.

At several points the main theoretical thrust of the book seems to be near the surface but never quite breaks through. It appears to be related to the controversy between Harris and others about the correct way to conceptualize the relations between the means of production on the one hand, and political organization on the other. A strict cultural materialist interpretation would lead one to predict that following the abolition of the tie between chiefdom and land ownership the institution of chiefdom should have withered away. Yet as Petersen remarks, in several places it has flourished and shows no sign of decreasing in importance. Because this point is developed without any explicit discussion of the theoretical literature, this part of Petersen's contribution may have less impact on the development of anthropological ideas than it deserves.

Despite this flaw the book stands on its merits as a well realized description of Ponapean political processes and will well repay reading by political anthropologists and Pacific specialists.

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J. Douglas Porteous, *The Modernization of Easter' Island*. Western Geographical Series Volume 19. Victoria, B.C.: Department of Geography, University of Victoria, 1981. Pp. xli, 304, 29 color plates, 50 half-tone plates, 36 figures, 24 tables.

This volume deals with Easter Island since the middle of the nineteenth century in terms of its geopolitical history, the activities of foreign intruders with diverse intentions, recently imposed deliberate modernization policies, and the effect of air transport and tourism. The color plates and many of the half-tones aid the reader unfamiliar with the distinctive appearance of this isolated land mass and the economic activities practiced there. Some of the half-tones are misleading in that they depict artifacts known only from a highly specialized collection not reflecting the typical art produced by the islanders. The figures in the form of maps and graphs add much to the text, as do the tables. The distorted perspective displayed in one of the sketches (Fig. 3.9) made by Routledge in 1914-15, not 1916, is misleading.

The approach is that of a geographer with a strong historical bent. Porteous eschews an anthropological perspective involving prehistory,

ethnography, linguistics, and human biology, but cites many of the basic sources in his introductory section. After summarizing the activities of the first missionaries, the ruthless mid-nineteenth century commercial exploiters, and the attitudes of European powers toward the island, the author concentrates on what happened in more recent times. The alteration of the environment is also covered.

Exploited by French, British, and Tahitian entrepreneurs, the island remained unclaimed by any nation until Chile, flushed with victory in the War of the Pacific, took formal possession in 1888. Lying more than 2,000 miles to the west of South America, Easter Island became *La Isla de Pascua*, the only island in Polynesia under Latin American sovereignty. Still the bulk of the land remained the private property of one John Brander, a Scot who was "not disposed to sell." Attempts at colonization by Chileans failed by 1892, and soon thereafter the island was leased to Williamson, Balfour and Company, a British enterprise which used it as a sheep ranch until the lease was revoked in 1953 and Chilean naval authorities took over. There was a brief period of civilian administration in the 1960s, but the island reverted to military control in 1973.

Porteous introduces the term "company state" to characterize control in Third World countries by foreign enterprises rather than by colonial governments. The concept is quite applicable to Easter Island during most of the century of intensive contact with the outside world. Control was in the hands of aliens, not even of Chilean nationality, and the indigenous people were under the dictatorship of a purely profit-oriented enterprise until the shift to naval control in 1953. With this shift, the situation was not really changed because the emphasis was still on the production of wool for export and the needs of the islanders were ignored. Local unrest finally precipitated a revolution of sorts and ushered in a brief period with some local control from 1964 to 1973. The coup on the continent terminated democratic government after September 11, 1973.

An airstrip was constructed and by 1967 weekly air service from Santiago was instituted. Previously the island depended on an annual supply ship from Valparaiso. Coincident with the airstrip came a contingent of U.S. Air Force personnel, ostensibly for the purpose of tracking satellites. The steady influx of tourists from all over the world combined with resident North American military people exposed the islanders to life styles quite different from earlier contacts. Furthermore, profound changes began to appear in the form of improved housing, a public water supply, electric lights, small stores, bars, and expanding hotel facilities.

Tourism is now the dominant activity. Intensified by the introduction of air service, the main attraction has always been the fact that the island

serves as an open air archaeological museum. The author discusses the impact of tourism on the population, occupational choices, and indigenous social structures. He observes such byproducts of modernization as the unaesthetic placement of fuel tanks and the vandalizing of archaeological sites and sandy beaches. Protest and discontent are evident not only among the native islanders but among the “continentals” as well, often for different reasons based on their respective world views.

Porteous is pessimistic concerning the effects of the steadily increasing emphasis of tourism on the populace, the ecology, and the archaeological sites. Better control of tourist activities is needed in order to protect the very core of what attracts visitors in the first place.

I find that the author has provided scholars and the public with important insights into what has happened to the people, the environment, and the economy on one of the most isolated islands in the world. In reviewing the work and in considering it in retrospect I sometimes find it difficult to disassociate his written words from my own observations gleaned from fourteen visits to the island between 1955 and 1978 as a member of Heyerdahl's Norwegian Archaeological Expedition and as lecturer and guide for Lindblad Travel and Norwegian America Line.

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