

An Ancient Warning, A Global Message, From the End of the Last Ice Age

© By **ROBERT M. SCHOCH, PH.D.**

At the end of the last ice age, some 12,000 years ago, Earth underwent dramatic cataclysmic changes. It was not simply a matter of the climate gradually warming and the glaciers melting. No, something very sudden and very unusual took place, unlike anything, by orders of magnitude, which we have experienced since.

The civilisations and high cultures of that remote time were either utterly destroyed, or thrown for a mighty setback. Knowledge was lost, order devolved to chaos, and a dark age lasting thousands of years ensued. Yet, not all records were lost.

Unrecognised until recently, consistently repeated petroglyph forms (engravings on rocks) around the globe reproduce what ancient peoples observed. Mirroring those petroglyphs is a mysterious and barely known text that may record in greater detail what happened when our world was thrown into turmoil.

The Younger Dryas

Approximately 15,000 to 11,000 years ago Earth experienced a series of climatic fluctuations. It had been extremely cold, with continental glaciers extending much further than they do today, but the climate started to warm. Then there was a short cold spell, known as the Younger Dryas, before the final warming and the “official” end of the last ice age. Geologists have long argued over how quickly or gradually Earth’s climate can change from very cold glacial conditions to modern-like conditions, and vice versa. The classical view is that such changes may happen very quickly from a geological perspective, perhaps over a few hundred to a thousand years or more, but relatively gradually from a human perspective. The latest research indicates otherwise.

Studying Greenland ice core data, from which temperature and climatic history can be extracted by analysing changes in various isotopes and dust content at a virtually year-by-year scale, J.P. Steffensen (Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen) and his colleagues determined that such climatic transitions can in some cases occur in only a few years.¹ They also pinpointed precise dates for the



Catherine Ulissey and Robert Schoch standing next to a moai on Easter Island. (Photograph courtesy of R. Schoch and C. Ulissey.)

climate changes. According to their study, the cooling that marks the beginning of the Younger Dryas dates to about 10,900 BCE. This cooling was very rapid from a geological perspective, but while some parameters show transitions over just a few years, other factors (for instance, changes in the dust record) are more gradual and seem to have responded much more slowly.

The warming at the end of the Younger Dryas, which also heralds the end of the last ice age, began about 9,700 BCE and may have occurred within an incredible three years – for all practical purposes instantaneously; given our current inability to resolve the finest details of something that happened so long ago, it may have literally happened overnight.

How do we explain this pattern of abrupt climatic shifts? Some years ago I hypothesised that comets bombarding Earth initiated the end of the last ice age.² A comet hitting the land or shallow ocean, or exploding about the land's surface, may have scattered dust and debris into the atmosphere causing global cooling, which, although relatively sudden, would take some years to reach its full extent. This pattern fits well with the cooling at 10,900 BCE. Since I first hypothesised such an event, compelling evidence of a comet exploding over North America at 10,900 BCE has been presented.³

What about the warming event of circa 9,700 BCE? Initially I hypothesised that comets hitting not the land or shallow water, but the deep oceans, may have brought about this warming. A comet, I speculated, might break the thin oceanic crust, releasing heat from the hot magma beneath.

Vaporised and displaced water would rain down on Earth, and tsunamis would wash across coastal areas, all serving to warm the planet and bring the ice age to a final end. But even with a comet, or a series of comets, bombarding the oceans, could the warming happen as quickly and dramatically as the Greenland ice cores suggest? Should comets be implicated in a warming transition, or does the evidence rather suggest that comets will in most cases cause a cooling event? If not comets, what?

The Fourth State of Matter

My attention turned to another outer space phenomenon: Plasma – ionized particles and associated intense electrical and magnetic phenomena that may originate as an outburst from our Sun, or possibly from the interactions of other extraterrestrial objects, such as a close flyby of an electrically charged asteroid or comet, or maybe even due to a large object colliding with our Sun. The concept of a big chunk of rock or ice from outer space – a meteor, comet, or asteroid – colliding with Earth is easy to grasp. But plasma?

Plasma is not necessarily readily familiar to the average person. Sometimes referred to as the fourth state of matter (in addition to solids, liquids, and gases), plasma consists of ions (electrically charged atoms or particles) and constitutes such familiar phenomena as lightning, fire, and the glowing material in a neon tube. The northern and southern polar lights – the aurora – are plasma phenomena, caused by the interaction between the solar wind (plasma emitted by the Sun) and Earth's magnetic field and magnetosphere.

Today lightning is a relatively minor weather phenom-



Figure 1. Rongorongo tablet. (Photograph from: William J. Thomson, "Te Pito Te Henua, or Easter Island," Report of the U.S. National Museum, Under the Direction of the Smithsonian Institution, for the Year Ending June 30, 1889, 1891, 447-552, plate XLII.)



Figure 2. Rongorongo tablet. (Photograph from: Katherine Pease Routledge, The Mystery of Easter Island: The Story of an Expedition, London: Hazell, Watson, and Viney, 1919, figure 98.)



Easter Island moai. (Photograph courtesy of R. Schoch and C. Ulissey.)

enon, and the aurora are little more than pretty lights in the sky, offering no threat to the inhabitants on Earth, but I do not believe this was always the case. In particular, our Sun is not as stable as most generally believe. It undergoes relatively regular small-scale variations, such as the 11-year sunspot cycle, as well as longer-term patterns (perhaps on the order of millennia and more). Presently unpredictable instabilities of the Sun can result in mass ejections of plasma (solar storms) that may reach Earth with far-ranging consequences. An 1859 solar storm, the Carrington Event, though relatively tame from a geological perspective, resulted in unusual aurora seen around the world. Additionally, telegraph systems failed. If an equivalent solar storm hit today, possibly our modern electrical grids and communication systems would be devastated with untold consequences. Arguably, the Carrington Event was minor compared to other past events.

In 1962 the astrophysicist and professor of astronomy at Cornell University, Thomas Gold (1920-2004; recipient of the Gold Medal of the Royal Astronomical Society, 1985) wrote:

The question I would like to tackle is whether solar outbursts of the present day [such as the 1859 event] are representative of all that has happened in geologic times or whether much greater outbursts have occurred from time to time. Our evidence that nothing very violent has taken place in historic times is concerned with

such a short span of time only that it cannot answer the question.

For one big outburst every ten thousand years, for example,... The Earth's magnetic field could clearly not hold up the incoming gas, and it would indeed drive down to the atmospheric level... This breakdown would be in the form of a series of sparks, burning for extended periods of time and carrying currents of hundreds of millions of amperes. One might search whether there is any geological record of fusing and vitrification of rock or sand which cannot be accounted for by volcanic or meteoritic events.⁴

Records Engraved on Rocks

Four decades later, Dr. Anthony L. Peratt (a plasma physicist with Los Alamos National Laboratory) addressed the topic that Gold discussed.⁵ Powerful plasma discharges, much more powerful than the aurora observed in the present day, form structures known as plasma columns that can expand in some places and constrict or narrow in other places (due to "pinch instabilities"). In profile these plasma columns can form donut shapes and may look like intertwining snakes, a stack of circles, or even resemble human stick

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Peratt's Plasma	Peratt's Petroglyphs	Rongorongo

Peratt's Plasma Pinch Instabilities	Peratt's Petroglyphs	Rongorongo

Peratt's Experiments	Peratt's Concepts	Peratt's Petroglyphs	Rongorongo

*Inset images: Plasma configurations, petroglyphs, and rongorongo glyphs. (Plasma and petroglyph illustrations courtesy of Dr. Anthony L. Peratt, reprinted with permission from IEEE Transactions on Plasma Science, December 2003, vol. 31)
Background image courtesy of R. Schoch and C. Ulissey.*

figures. In some cases the stick figure will have an upper cup shape (head) that has the appearance of a bird in profile. Peratt and his colleague W.F. Yao record that observers of the Carrington Event reported seeing “figures in the sky as if drawn with fire on a black background.”⁶

Peratt has studied ancient petroglyphs found around the world that are not only remarkably similar to one another, but apparently record with a high degree of accuracy the configurations that intense electrical and high-energy plasma phenomena would form in the skies. Peratt et. al.⁷ have recorded and analysed the orientations of innumerable petroglyphs spread over 139 countries, and not only do they share many similar morphologies, but they are also characterised by similar orientations. The petroglyph locations share a distinct southern field-of-view, and Peratt and Yao concluded that the associated plasma phenomenon showed “relativistic electron flow inward at Earth’s south polar axis and hypervelocity proton impacts around the north polar axis.”⁸ Intense radiation, including x-rays and synchrotron radiation would have been given off.

The Easter Island Connection

I was aware of Peratt’s work, and through Peratt I knew of Gold’s speculations, but until recently I had not given them ample consideration – not until my wife, Catherine Ulissey, and I returned from a brief excursion to Easter Island (January 2010), home of those strange giant heads, the moai, as well as a perplexing undeciphered “script” carved on wooden tablets, known as rongorongo. One evening, Katie suggested that we re-watch a video written and narrated by David Talbott, *Symbols of An Alien Sky*,⁹ which features Peratt’s work connecting petroglyphs and plasma. As we watched the video, Katie turned to me and suggested that the rongorongo script, too, is a record of plasma phenomena in the ancient skies. This insight spurred me into action. Studying the

rongorongo intensely, these enigmatic hieroglyphs, just like the petroglyphs, indeed appear to reproduce intense electrical and plasma phenomena. We see the same donut-like and intertwining shapes, the same odd humanoid figures, the same bird-like heads. The similarities are undeniable.

Although the Western discovery of the island (often referred to by its Polynesian name, Rapa Nui) dates to Easter Sunday 1722, not until the 1860s did Europeans become aware of rongorongo. Unfortunately, between missionary zeal attempting to separate new converts from old pagan ways, and internecine warfare, almost all of the rongorongo tablets were burned or otherwise destroyed. Today just upwards of two dozen remain.¹⁰ Furthermore, natives literate in rongorongo were killed in fighting, succumbed to disease, or were carried off in slave raids. By the late nineteenth century, no one could genuinely read the rongorongo script.

Not only do the rongorongo tablets remain undeciphered, but there is no agreement among researchers concerning even the fundamentals of rongorongo. How far back in time it may go is a subject of debate. Some scholars assert it was invented on Easter Island during the late eighteenth century, in imitation of European writing the natives had observed. A researcher in this camp is the linguist Steven Roger Fischer. After

years of study, Fischer concluded it was a post-European contact invention. Furthermore, according to Fischer, the majority of surviving rongorongo texts are cosmogonies or procreation chants that repeat, over and over, the generic formula of X copulates with Y to form Z. An example: “All the birds copulated with the fish: there issued forth the sun.”¹¹ In other words, the rongorongo tablets are an Easter Island kama sutra! Fischer’s “decipherment” has not received widespread acceptance.

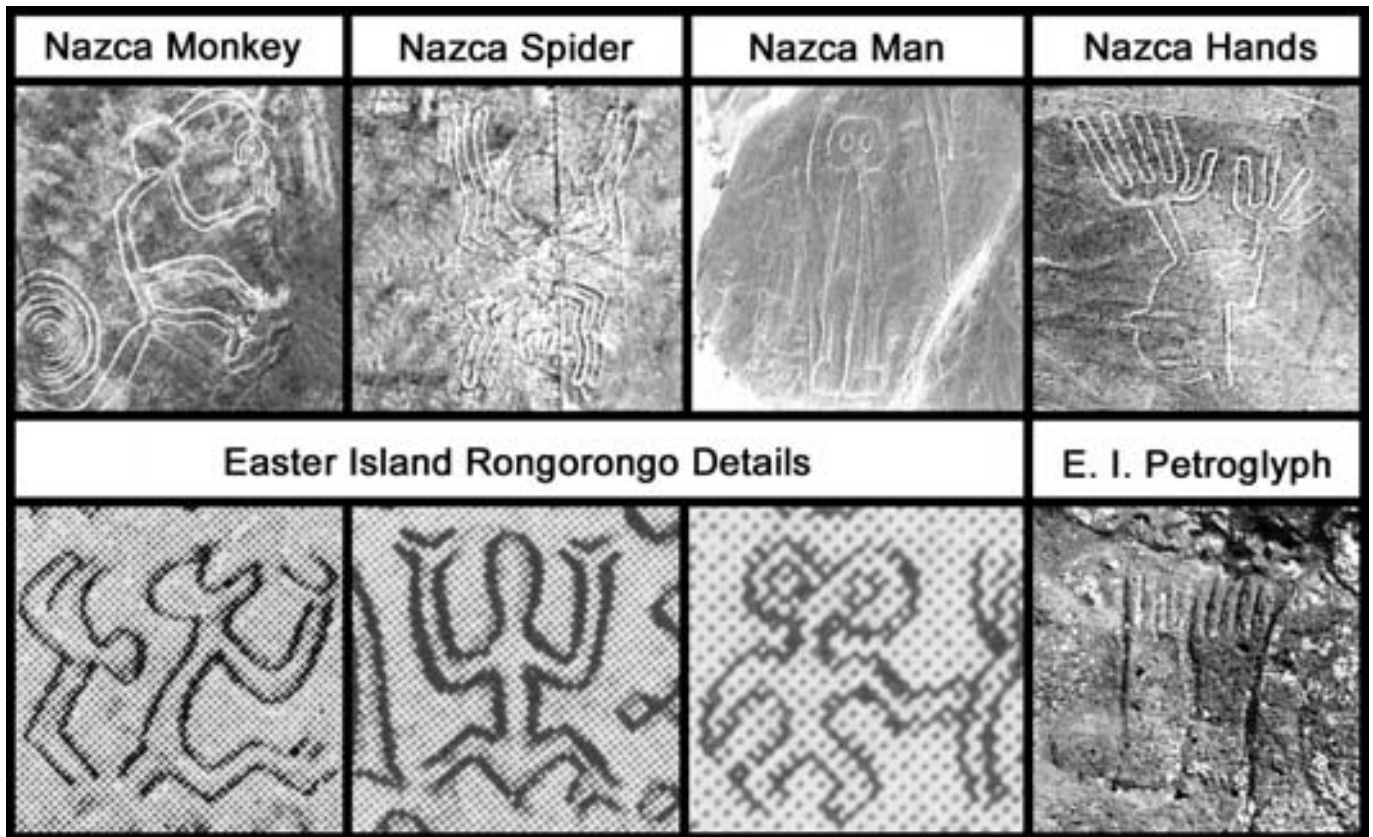
Other researchers believe the rongorongo script has an ancestry thousands of years old, though the surviving

...these enigmatic hieroglyphs, just like the petroglyphs, indeed appear to reproduce intense electrical and plasma phenomena.

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Nazca geoglyphs compared to rongorongo glyphs and an Easter Island petroglyph. (Photographs courtesy of R. Schoch.)

wooden tablets are at most a couple of hundred years old. The known tablets are copies of copies of copies... For many centuries scribes, not able to truly read the script, piously copied and recopied something they knew was important and held in reverence. Brother Joseph-Eugène Eyraud wrote in 1864, "But the little they [the Easter Islanders] make of these tablets persuades me to think that these characters, probably a script in origin, are for them now just simply a custom they preserve without attempting to account for it."¹²

Far from being an indigenous creation of the Easter Islanders, some researchers suggest the rongorongo script originated in parts of Polynesia well west of Easter Island, or perhaps even in China. Others look to South America. Still others have seen similarities between rongorongo characters and the enigmatic ancient scripts of the Indus Valley civilisation. One researcher seriously suggested that rongorongo is related to Egyptian hieroglyphics.¹³ I have long advocated that there is good evidence supporting cultural contact across both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans in remote ancient times, but looking carefully at such rongorongo analyses, I do not find them particularly convincing. A stylized fish, human figure, Sun, or vulva could conceivably look similar across unconnected cultures.

Perhaps treating rongorongo as a script, as a form of writing comparable to an alphabetical language, or even as a script based on pictographs, ideographs, or hieroglyphics, is a wrong or incomplete approach. This brings us back to the plasma hypothesis. Like the petroglyphs that Peratt has

studied, I believe the rongorongo tablets record plasma configurations in the very ancient skies. Each glyph may show one of the forms the plasma column took. In sequence, they record, like a scientific record, what was happening in the skies. Supporting this interpretation are Rapa Nui words and legends. Explorer Francis Mazière recorded an indigenous name for the island as "Matakiterani," or "eyes gazing at the sky."¹⁴ He also recorded a legend of the sky falling:

In the days of Rokoroko He Tau the sky fell.

Fell from above on to the earth.

The people cried out, 'The sky has fallen in the days of King Rokoroko He Tau.'

He took hold: he waited a given time. The sky returned; it went away and it stayed up there.¹⁵

This legend could refer to strange plasma configurations, perhaps even manifested in part as tremendous bolts of lightning, seen in the sky and making contact with the land. Subsequently the plasma "went away" and the sky returned to normal. The legendary king's name bears a striking similarity to "rongorongo" and "Tau" is similar to "ta'u," a category of inscriptions commemorating a series of deeds or events.¹⁶ When a staff covered with rongorongo texts was collected in 1870 by Chilean naval officers, the commander Don Anacleto Goñi reported that the natives could not decipher them but "we, in asking explanations of the natives about said staff, were shown the sky and the hieroglyphs that [the staff] contained with such respect that I was

inclined to believe that these hieroglyphs recalled something sacred.”¹⁷

Curiously, the few surviving rongorongo tablets have many sequences of glyphs in common. This suggests they are based on a common source, they are recording the same phenomena, and they fit together to form a complete whole. It is similar to finding ancient manuscripts in the Middle East. Piecing together fragments of the Book of Daniel, for instance, the entire work emerges.

Here is another enigma: Easter Island lies some 2,300 miles (3,700 kilometres) west of the coast of South America. On the mainland, in modern Peru, are found the Nazca lines and geoglyphs – huge drawings on the ground. Curiously, some of these drawings are hauntingly reminiscent of both Peratt’s petroglyphs and rongorongo glyphs. Are the Nazca geoglyphs part of the same story? Peratt et al. mention the Nazca lines and Nazca pottery decoration as possible depictions of plasma phenomena. I see similarities between Easter Island petroglyphs, rongorongo glyphs, Nazca geoglyphs, and plasma configurations.

A Plasma Cataclysm

Returning to the end of the last ice age, although there have been climatic fluctuations since then, the last major global warming event occurred around 9,700 BCE. I hypothesise a major plasma event occurred then, one that had dramatic, catastrophic, cataclysmic, effects globally. Plasma hitting the surface of Earth could heat and fuse rock, incinerate flammable materials, melt ice caps, vaporise shallow bodies of water, and send the climate into a warming spell. The release of pressure that follows the melting of thousands-of-metres-thick ice sheets can induce earthquakes and even cause hot rock under pressure to melt and erupt to the surface as volcanoes. Interacting with the magnetic field and magnetosphere, this extreme plasma event may have even affected the rotation and axis of Earth. This is the event recorded by petroglyphs, geoglyphs, the rongorongo texts, and other artistic depictions around the world. (Admittedly, there may have been

less dramatic plasma phenomena since 9,700 BCE, which may have also been recorded. Some of our physical records may preserve oral traditions passed down over many generations, or like the rongorongo, may be copies of copies...)

The plasma event of 9,700 BCE eradicated advanced civilisations and high cultures of the time (the mythic garden of Eden and the very real builders of Göbekli Tepe come to mind), and the radiation emanating from the plasma may have affected mental and psychical abilities. Perhaps this is the basis for a universal myth of a Golden Age, a

time when beings on Earth had mental abilities far surpassing those of later times. The 9,700 BCE event may be the original basis for the Atlantis legends; the timeframe fits well with Plato’s account. People cowered for their lives; they sought shelter in caves, under cliffs, in dwellings built of thick stone or carved into mountainsides. Humankind was thrown into a dark age for thousands of years, only to reemerge with vague and scattered memories of what had happened. Some of those memories took physical shape in the megalithic architecture found around the world – what better way to attempt an escape from fierce skies than in a protective

solid stone “fallout shelter”? While most memories were vague, becoming little more than forebodings and legends of the fury of the gods against the ancestors, there may be one record that precisely details exactly what happened in the skies 11,700 years ago: the rongorongo writings.

The rongorongo tablets may constitute the oldest surviving texts, thousands of years older than the Judeo-Christian Bible. Isolated on their tiny island, the Easter Islanders can be compared to medieval monks closely copying and recopying their treasured written archives. Maybe that is why, of all places, the detailed record survives on this remote little Pacific island. The sequences of the rongorongo glyphs may record the plasma configurations seen in the skies as they writhed and twisted, morphing from one form to another. Extremely accurate observations, meticulously recorded,

The plasma event of 9,700 BCE eradicated advanced civilisations and high cultures of the time...

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may store valuable scientific information. Now it is important to assemble the surviving tablets, currently scattered among museums around the globe, and decipher the details of their message. This is not just an exercise in reconstructing the past, but could be crucial to the survival of modern civilisation. The rongorongo tablets may record not just the plasma configurations, but information on the first signs to expect, perhaps instabilities on the Sun's surface or subtle changes in the atmosphere, before a cataclysmic plasma outburst.

Thomas Gold, in an offhand way, guessed that major plasma events might affect Earth approximately every ten thousand years. It has been 11,700 years since the last one; the next one could arrive at any moment! Let us fully understand what the ancients had to say to us – the warning and instructions they may have left for us – before it is too late.

In the next issue of New Dawn, Robert Schoch discusses the Easter Island connection to the southern Turkey Neolithic site Göbekli Tepe.

Footnotes:

1. Jørgen Peder Steffensen, Katrine K. Andersen, Matthias Bigler, Henrik B. Clausen, Dorthe Dahl-Jensen, Hubertus Fischer, Kumiko Goto-Azuma, Margareta Hansson, Sigfús J. Johnsen, Jean Jouzel, Valérie Masson-Delmotte, Trevor Popp, Sune O. Rasmussen, Regine Röthlisberger, Urs Ruth, Bernhard Stauffer, Marie-Louise Siggaard-Andersen, Árn E. Sveinbjörnsdóttir, Anders Svensson, and James W. C. White, "High-Resolution Greenland Ice Core Data Show Abrupt Climate Change Happens in Few Years", *Science*, vol. 321, 680-684 (1 August 2008).
2. Robert M. Schoch with Robert Aquinas McNally, *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders: The True Origins of the Pyramids from Lost Egypt to Ancient America*, New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2003.
3. R. B. Firestone, A. West, J. P. Kennett, L. Becker, T. E. Bunch, Z. S. Revay, P. H. Schultz, T. Belgya, D. J. Kennett, J. M. Erlandson, O. J. Dickenson, A. C. Goodyear, R. S. Harris, G. A. Howard, J. B. Kloosterman, P. Lechler, P. A. Mayewski, J. Montgomery, R. Poreda, T. Darrah, S. S. Que Hee, A. R. Smith, A. Stich, W. Topping, J. H. Wittke, and W. S. Wolbach, "Evidence for an Extraterrestrial Impact 12,900 years ago that Contributed to the Mega-

faunal Extinctions and the Younger Dryas Cooling", *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, of the United States of America*, vol. 104, no. 41, 16016-16021 (9 October 2007).

4. Thomas Gold, "Large Solar Outburst in the Past", Conference at the Vatican Academy of Sciences, October 1962, *Pontificiae Academiae Scientiarum Scripta Varia*, vol. 25, 159-174 (1963); material in brackets added by R. Schoch; quoted in Peratt et al. 2007, 778-779, and Peratt and Yao, 2008, 2 [see endnotes 6 and 7].

5. Anthony L. Peratt, "Characteristics for the Occurrence of a High-Current, Z-Pinch Aurora as Recorded in Antiquity", *Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Transactions on Plasma Science*, vol. 31, no. 6, 1192-1214 (December 2003).

6. A. L. Peratt and W. F. Yao, "Evidence for an Intense Solar Outburst in Prehistory", *Physica Scripta* (The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences), 13 pages (December 2008); quote from page 3.

7. Anthony L. Peratt, John McGovern, Alfred H. Qöyawayma, Marinus Anthony Van der Sluijs, and Mathias G. Peratt, "Characteristics for the Occurrence of a High-Current, Z-Pinch Aurora as Recorded in Antiquity Part II: Directionality and Source", *Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Transactions on Plasma Science*, vol. 35, no. 4, 778-807 (August 2007).

8. Peratt and Yao, 1.

9. David Talbott, *Symbols of an Alien Sky, Episode One* [video], MIKAMAR Publishing, 2009.

10. Steven Roger Fischer, *Rongorongo: The Easter Island Script*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.

11. Fischer, 1997, 259. For another recent approach to deciphering rongorongo, which has received strong criticism in some quarters and is not generally accepted at this time, see M. de Laat, *Words Out of Wood: Proposals for the decipherment of the Easter Island script*, Delft, The Netherlands: Eburon, 2009.

12. Fischer, 1997, 12; material in brackets added by R. Schoch.

13. For a discussion of these various theories, see Fischer, 1997; Alfred Métraux, *Easter Island: A Stone-Age Civilization in the Pacific*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1957; Werner Wolff, *Island of Death: A New Key to Easter Island's Culture through an Ethno-psychological Study*, New York: J. J. Augustin, 1948.

14. Francis Mazière, *Mysteries of Easter Island*, New York: W. W. Norton, 1968, 9.

15. Mazière, 1968, 57.

16. Fischer, 1997, 288.

17. Fischer, 1997, 26; material in brackets added by Fischer.



ROBERT M. SCHOCH, Ph.D., is renowned for his work on re-dating the Great Sphinx. Based on his geological studies, he determined that the Sphinx's origins date prior to dynastic times. He has also focused his attention on the Great Pyramid and various other temples and tombs in Egypt, as well as studying similar structures around the world. Dr. Schoch is an author and coauthor of both technical and popular books, including the trilogy with R. A. McNally: *Voices of the Rocks: A Scientist looks at Catastrophes and Ancient Civilizations* (1999), *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders: The True Origins of the Pyramids from Lost Egypt to Ancient America* (2003), and *Pyramid Quest: Secrets of the Great Pyramid and the Dawn of Civilization* (2005). Dr. Schoch's most recent book is *The Parapsychology Revolution: A Concise Anthology of Paranormal and Psychic Research* (2008, compilation and commentary by Robert M. Schoch and Logan Yonavjak). Website: www.robertschoch.com.