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REVIEWS

ALIAGA, José Miguel Ramírez, Julio Hotus Salinas and Betty Haoa Rapahango: *El Manuscrito de Pua Arahoo* [in Spanish]. Viña del Mar: Rapanui Press, 2021. xx + 296 pp., ack., gloss., intro., lang. notes, photos. \$16,000 Chilean pesos (softcover).

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In the early twentieth century, Rapanui produced manuscripts written in Roman script, some including Rongorongo signs copied from scholarly publications. These manuscripts, written by Rapanui for Rapanui, were intentionally hidden from the eyes of outsiders until the arrival of the Norwegian Expedition in 1955 (Heyerdahl and Ferdon 1965). They embody the core esoteric knowledge of the island that did not find its way into ethnographic descriptions.

Eight manuscripts have been uncovered so far. The longest of them, Manuscript E, is 110 pages long. It was found by Chilean school teacher Lorenzo Baeza Vega, photographed by Gastón Bejarano and published in retyped version by Thomas Barthel (1974). According to the name repeated on every page, Manuscript E was composed by the birdman Araki Pua ‘a Rahoa ‘a Rapu (1840?–1912?) of the Tupahotu tribe. There are some uncertainties regarding how his name should be transcribed. He authored Manuscripts B, E and H sometime after Walter Knoche’s expedition of 1911 (Horley and López Labbé 2014: 36, 44; 2015: 42). Manuscript E narrates the story of the discovery and settlement of Rapa Nui (Easter Island); its significance for Rongorongo studies is evidenced by its structural parallels with the text on the Large Santiago Tablet (Davletshin 2022: 204). It was published in German, Russian and Spanish (Barthel 1974; Fedorova 1988; Alarcón Frontier 2008); Barthel’s work was translated into English (1978). Legible photographs of only six pages of the manuscript were previously published (Barthel 1974; Solsvik 2016). Barthel made his transcriptions on the photographs taken from the manuscript in the possession of Timoteo Pakarati in 1957. Subsequently, these photographs and the manuscript itself were believed lost. Translations by Irina Fedorova and Arturo Alarcón Frontier were based on Barthel’s transcriptions. A rumour circulated in the Rapa Nui community that Barthel had fabricated them. Now, Aliaga *et al.*’s book presents photographs of 103 pages recently rediscovered in Chile, side-by-side with their transcription and translation into Spanish. These photographs pre-date the photographs published by Barthel, which show the name of the manuscript’s author clipped.

The book under review includes an introduction by José Miguel Ramírez Aliaga; a two-page note on the Rapanui language by Jesús Conte Oliveros; a pronunciation guide by Margot Hotus Salinas; transcriptions and translations side-by-side with photographs by Margot Hotus Salinas, Julio Hotus Salinas, Lorenzo Morena Berroeta and Betty Haoa Rapahango; a chapter on Rongorongo signs by Paul Horley; and another on the correspondence between Thor Heyerdahl and Max Puelma Bunster by Reidar Solsvik.

The edition does not include palaeographic analysis or interlinear glosses, nor does it discuss obscure words and contexts. This makes it difficult to gauge how much of the translation is derived from the authors' personal knowledge. Fedorova's book (1988) remains unparalleled in this regard because it provides philological commentary, discusses problematic interpretations and takes into consideration lexical data from other islands of East Polynesia.

The authors rightfully emphasise the importance of glottal stops and long vowels in representing Rapanui (pp. 22–25). Nevertheless, these are not always indicated in the transcriptions, as can be seen from the following examples, among many others: *ariki* for 'ariki 'chief', *puoko* for *pū'oko* 'head', *tatou* for *tātou* 'we (inclusive)', *uri* for 'uri 'black' (see also *ho'onu* for *honu* 'turtle'). Vowel length and glottal stops are not randomly distributed in Rapanui: (i) glottal stops cannot co-occur in lexical roots, (ii) lexical roots are at least two morae long and therefore monosyllabic lexical roots bear long vowels, (iii) long vowels cannot appear to the left of an odd number of morae in a root, (iv) prefixing reduplications of three-mora roots show long vowels in their first syllable, and (v) postposed grammatical markers are two morae long (Davletshin 2016; Kieviet 2017; see also Weber and Weber 1982). These rules are frequently violated in the transcriptions in this book: *pu* for *pū* 'hole', *ōho* for *oho* 'he goes', *kapuapua* for *kāpuapua* 'misty', *āi* for 'ai 'sequential, postposed', *no* for *nō* 'just, postposed', etc. Importantly, uncertain vowel length and glottal stops are not indicated. The use of accents is unjustified because stress is not phonemic in Rapanui.

I want to conclude by raising a few research questions. The diacritics of Manuscript E are intriguing and may mimic transcription systems employed by missionaries and early ethnographers. Punctuation marks would merit a study of their own. The text is full of words and place names unattested elsewhere (*kekepu* 'an animal', *tori* 'hundred', etc.). Some may be explained with lexical data from Polynesian languages: 'ariki 'iti 'lesser chief' (see 'iti 'small'); 'ariki *ma'ahu* (sage, expert in star lore, see **ma'afu* 'Magellanic Clouds'); etc. Others, some descriptive, may be esoteric, invented ad hoc or obtained in dreams by the composer (*manu tara* 'tern' is used as 'bird, generic', etc.). A few neologisms and Tahitian loans may form part of the

ritual lexicon too (*manu va'e e hā* 'sheep', *pāta'uta'u* 'recitation', etc.). Finally, vowel shifts to "o" may reflect a poetic device documented in other Polynesian traditions (Moyle 2007: 174–76): *hoko'ou* for *haka'ou* 'again', *toko'a* for *tako'a* 'also', *ko roto ko* for *ki roto ki* 'inside', etc. These are but a few of the intriguing questions that can be addressed thanks to this book.

I wish to congratulate Rapanui and Polynesianists on the rediscovery and prompt publication of Manuscript E. *Māuruuru*—thank you—to the authors and the editorial house.

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