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LEE, Georgia and Paul Horley: *The Rock Art of Rapa Nui*. Rapa Nui: Rapanui Press, 2018. 313 pp., illus., US\$25.00 (hardcover).

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Rock art is an important archaeological research area all over the world. No different is the Pacific region, and Polynesia in particular, where rock art is studied in many areas. Of all the Polynesian islands Rapa Nui (Easter Island) possesses the richest and most diverse set of rock art. With *The Rock Art of Rapa Nui*, Georgia Lee and Paul Horley aim to comprehensively document all the rock art present on Rapa Nui.

This book, although published in 2018, has only been generally available since late 2020. Amid covid pandemic restrictions its availability outside Chile, where it was printed, was very limited, but it is now finally reaching more and more researchers. It is the third monograph on the rock art of Rapa Nui, after the pioneering work of Henri Lavachery (1939) and the seminal study of Georgia Lee (1992), the latter having been, until now, the benchmark reference work for anyone interested in Rapanui iconography. From now, however, all publications should be referring to this new work by Lee and Horley.

In its preface, the book states that it is merely a second edition of Georgia Lee’s 1992 book *Rock Art of Easter Island: Symbols of Power, Prayers to the Gods*. The actual product, however, delivers much more than this. Although the general outline of the 1992 book has been preserved, with the same

chapters and much of the text remaining untouched, there are substantial differences. First, direct research on Rapa Nui's rock art has continued in the intervening years and new rock art panels have been discovered, and secondary petroglyphs applied to moai 'monolithic human statues' and pukao 'topknot of red scoria on moai' have received much closer attention. Continuing archival research has also revealed previously unknown historical photographs and drawings of Rapanui rock art examples which have since surrendered to the elements. In addition, cheaper and more readily available printing options since the first edition meant that much more of the original material from fieldwork in the 1980s, such as photographs of sites and revised field tracings, were able to be included in the new publication. Also, some text was revised and expanded, especially in discussions of such rich rock art sites as Ōrongo and Tongariki, as well as in the very interesting iconographic comparison between rock art motifs and their analogues in the forms of the glyphs in the rongorongo writing system, important in the discussion on the native or non-native origin of the unique phenomenon that is rongorongo.

Multiple figures in the rock art designs have been redrawn, adding previously omitted details. Sometimes isolated designs are put into the wider context of the rock panel to see how different designs from the same site interact. Some designs have been redrawn with the use of photogrammetrically obtained models of the rock panels. The famous large panel of petroglyphs in the 'Ana o Keke cave has been redrawn and expanded to include all the new documentary work published by Steiner (2008).

The book includes 11 chapters, one more than in the 1992 edition, with the addition of a completely new chapter dealing with secondary petroglyphs and rongorongo. The second author, Paul Horley, is a renowned specialist in rongorongo script and is well positioned to delve into the iconographic similarities between Rapanui rock art and rongorongo. Secondary petroglyphs are those applied to already finished monumental architecture like moai, pukao and ahu 'stone ceremonial platform' slabs. Although these were discussed to some extent in previous works, here they are the subject of dedicated study. Other chapters are sometimes greatly expanded. Thus, the original chapter "Rano Kau and Orongo" has been renamed to "Rano Kau, Ōrongo and Motu Nui",¹ with Motu Nui sites put in the spotlight and the treatment of the Ōrongo boulders greatly expanded. The 1992 edition included 23 drawings of the designs from Ōrongo village; this new edition offers 43 drawings, and these are often larger, owing to the new edition's larger format, in its aim of rendering as complete a documentation as possible of all the designs.

The main drawback of this book is that material that is now outdated has largely been left unchanged. The decision to run the project as a second edition of an already published work instead of starting anew no doubt gave

the authors a significant head start, pushing publication forward perhaps even by few years. This might have been the only option possible, as Georgia Lee passed away during final stages of book preparation in 2016. However, this means that large chunks of the text remain exactly as they were written in the 1980s. As such, narratives and assumptions that were popular then, for example, the ecodisaster narrative, but which have since fallen out of favour with subsequent research, continue to feature prominently in the book. The reader should be aware that they will be reading text that is largely outdated in terms of scientific development. This primarily affects the Introduction and other parts of the book focusing on general descriptions of Rapa Nui's history; it does not affect the presentation and interpretation of the rock art. All in all, the publication represents an obvious and tremendous improvement in the state of documentation of the petroglyphs and other rock art encountered on Rapa Nui.

This book is recommended to all Rapa Nui scholars as well as to anyone interested in iconographic representations and motifs of Pacific peoples. Finally, rock art scholars from any geographical region can benefit from studying the work of Lee and Horley. The way rock art is discussed, motifs catalogued and different carving techniques graphically outlined can be used by any researcher preparing to embark on a rock art project.

NOTE

1. The spelling of place names has been updated to conform to the latest work on Rapanui grammar, Kieviet's from 2017.

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