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Letters

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spending of public funds. Other ex-functionaries are René Lues, ex-executive secretary of CORE (Regional Council); Jorge Negrete, ex-local magager of SERPLAC, Sergio Valenzuela, ex-chief of the Division of Analysis of Negotiations and Control of the Regional Government; and Mario Atán, ex-functionary of the Municipality of Easter Island. All are free on bail. The lawsuit was initiated when investigators detected irregularities related to the use of money from FONDART (the National Fund of Regional Development) in the amount of US \$84,300 which was destined for two projects on the island. These dealt with the payment of US \$57,600 for the construction of mobile scenery for the fiesta "Tapati Rapa Nui," and the payment of US \$26,500 for travel expenses of a folklore group to the Aconcagua Fair in Mendoza. The Valpo court can resolve the matter either by confirming the Auo-process, revoking or changing the resolutions dictated by the judge of the First Criminal Court.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 14 May 1997

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

☒ Dear Editor,

As a linguist and language teacher specialising in Pacific languages, I must disagree on one point with your reviewer of *Speak Rapanui!*, Steven Roger Fischer, in *RNJ* 10(3).

He makes light of the decision by the authors to ignore most glottal stops and all vowel lengths, implying that such matters are of interest only to professional linguists, and that ignoring them simplifies the task of language learning.

In this case, 'simplicity' most definitely has its price. It means that the learner has no way of determining which vowels are long and which are short, and where the glottal stops are, so that he or she is condemned to sounding forever like a foreigner. This is hardly compatible with what is usually considered the aim of the language teacher, which is to impart native-like competence.

It is as if a teacher of English decided to write all instances of *th* as *z*, as in: *zis is ze way*. It would certainly simplify the language for most learners, but it would be, in a word, wrong.

It's as simple as *zat*.

*Dr Paul Geraghty, Director,
Institute of Fijian Language and Culture*

☒ Dear Editor,

The report presented in the *Rapa Nui Journal* by Edwards et al. (1996) is very significant. It contains a number of facts and solutions which throw light on some disputable problems of Easter Island's prehistory. Unfortunately the authors were not aware of the Russian sources on this topic (Krendelew 1973; 1974; 1976; Krendelew and Kondratov 1990; Krendel'jow and Kondratow 1990). The Russian geologist F. P. Krendelew, together with his team, performed research on the island, and the collected data were a base of their theory. A.M. Kondratov, a specialist on deciphering the ancient writing systems, assisted in his studies as a linguist. *Rapa Nui Journal's* version repeats many ideas and conclusions of the Russian scholars. Interestingly, N. A. Butinov agreed with

Krendelew's opinion, and at the same time Thor Heyerdahl did not. I should like to offer such linguistic evidence of the previous geological activity on Rapa Nui. First, in a place-name, the word *vovo* is included, and it means "split; vibration; wave" in Marquesan (Krendel'jow, Kondratow 1990:14). The name of the stone figure Virovovo consists of the terms *vir* (*viriviri* "peak") and *vovo* as well. This name is mentioned in a story about a priest (a symbol of earthquake) who initiated the falling of the statues of Ahu Tongariki (Métraux 1940:87). Second, according to Y.F. Lisiansky's map and modern ones, one islet near Easter Island was lost (Krendel'jow, Kondratow 1990:124), and this can be reflected in the neighboring islet's name Motu-ke-hepoko "The other islet near the islet which disappeared in the deep" (Rjabchikov 1996:258).

Sergei V. Rjabchikov, Krasnodar, Russia

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- Bulletin of the International String Figure Association*, Vol.3, 1996. ISFA Press, PO Box 5134, Pasadena CA.
- Le Bulletin du Cercle d'Etudes sur l'île de Pâques et la Polynésie*. No. 14, May 1997. Délégation de la Polynésie Française à Paris, 28, boulevard Saint-Germain, 75005, Paris. The yearly subscription for this bulletin amounts to French Francs 250.00 or US \$60 for six issues and specialized papers. They can now be reached via email: hlb@ppm.u-psud.fr
- Jumeau, Michel-Alain. 1997. *Bibliographie de L'île de Pâques*. Société de Océanistes, Musée de l'Homme, Paris. Available from the author, 20 rue de Bourgogne, 21 121 Fontaine des Dijon, France. Price f 395. This long-overdue bibliography is most complete and up-to-date with 4422 entries ranging from the most serious academic publications to the *Hardy Boys on Easter Island*. The work goes beyond: it also contains a list of 239 ships, their captains, and duration of visit from 1722 through 1935; and a catalog of ethnographic holdings from some 62 museums around the world. The index enables both the serious student and the hobbist to zero in on a particular topic. Thank you, Michel-Alain Jumeau!
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