


2000

The Sixth Polynesian Languages Forum on Rapa Nui

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seum, Moscow, Fond 99, op.1, ed.khr.59, l.1.

¹² Because of Matvejs' theoretical interests, a number of images were omitted from his book. Nine images of Hoa Haka-nanai'a have survived and are in the Latvian National Library collection. In several of them, some parts of the sculpture are out of sequence, and not all are in good condition. One more detail—the images for the book are on a far smaller scale and don't show the surroundings, which are so important and interesting from a contemporary point of view.

¹³ See: Vladimir Markov (Voldemars Matvejs), "Iskusstvo ostrova Pashi", Izdaniye "Soyuz Molodezhi", Saint Petersburg, 1914: 32.

¹⁴ Ibid., 32.

¹⁵ Ibid., 35.

¹⁶ Ibid., 37.

¹⁷ Ibid., 43.

¹⁸ Cited in: *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde. Theory and Criticism. 1902-1934.* [see Note 6]:26.

Editor's Note: The catalogue, "Voldemars Matvejs, Latvian painter, art historian and critic, 1877-1914," is written by Irēna Bužinska. Parts of the catalogue are in 3 languages: Latvian, Swedish and English – (the main article and Matvejs' biography). Other sections are in Latvian and Swedish. Published by Gotland Art Museum; April 14-June 18, 2000. Only 500 copies of the catalogue were printed; a few are left. For information concerning the catalogue, contact Irēna Bužinska at <ibuzinska@parks.lv> As for the original book by Matvejs, this is more than 'rare': of the 500 copies printed in 1914, and aside from Bužinska's copy, only one other is known to exist, at the National Library of Russia in Moscow.

All photo reproductions are by Georgij Jemelyanov. Bužinska wishes to express her gratitude to Steve Cotton for help and corrections with the English text.

Notes From Our Readers

The Sixth Polynesian Languages Forum on Rapa Nui Kaliko S.C. Trapp

The 24th day of March 2000 saw a group of about 50 people descend upon Rapa Nui in a wave of excitement and anticipation, as the 6th meeting of the Polynesian Languages Forum was to be held in Hanga Roa from the 27th to the 30th. Coming from all corners of Oceania, the delegates and their associates found themselves quickly welcomed to the homes of local residents, and it wasn't long before all were happily settled in with the Rapa Nui hosts.

The Polynesian Languages Forum is led by president Rodrigo Paoa Atamu of Rapa Nui—who is also the president of Mata Nui 'a Hotu 'a Matu'a o Kahu-Kahu o Hera—and secretary general Larry Lindsey Kimura of Hawai'i. The Forum was founded as a non-governmental assembly of representatives of all Polynesian peoples. It concerns itself with the preservation of the native Polynesian languages in the modern day and into the future. Due to the broad use of English, French, or Spanish in the education of young Polynesians today, as well as the coming

of television and other forms of mass media into the home, young generations are turning away from their native languages as principal forms of communication. The general movement towards English has affected all levels of society in both Hawai'i and Aotearoa, where the ratio of native speakers to English speakers is very low; and it is precisely those two island groups that now lead the way in "immersion education" of the local children in their native tongues.

Prior to the meetings, the visitors were treated to a two-day tour of the island, from Hanga Roa to 'Anakena, from Tongariki to Ahu Te Peu. Legendary stories were told in the traditional language of Rapa Nui, and adeptly translated by cheery local interpreters. Those same translators were on hand throughout the meetings to provide simultaneous translations of the proceedings. While sight-seeing, all were in high spirits, despite the occasional impetuous rain squalls. The meeting was officially blessed on the 26th, in the blackness of night before the *moai* at Tahai, the only light being that which lit the stony face and torso of that great statue as it watched over the activities below.

The Rapa Nui delegation consisted of 12 people, including Alberto Hotus Chávez, president of the Council of Elders; Sergio Rapu Haoa, archaeologist; Hilaria Tuki Pakarati, immersion preschool teacher; and several other Rapa Nui language teachers. Also in attendance was one member from American-Samoa; six from Aotearoa; two from the Cook Islands; six from Hawai'i; seven from the Henua 'Enana (Marquesas); three from Mangareva; two from Rurutu; three from the Tuamotu Islands; and about eight from Tahiti. Both Governor Jacobo Hey Paoa, and Mayor Pedro Edmunds Paoa made appearances. The meeting was convened at the new "Hare Korohua" just uphill from the church at the top of Te Pito o Te Henua Street, and the recently established Rapa Nui branch of the Chilean Red Cross (see *Rapa Nui Journal* Vol. 14:1, p.26) took responsibility for distributing refreshments.

The meeting of the ten island groups provided for the discussion of matters ranging from the socio-linguistic pressures in language choice and the viability of native languages in the modern day, to immersion-education pedagogy and the creation of new lexicon and lesson examples. Proposals were made for mutual assistance, and significant news from the Polynesian islands was heard. On a more personal level however, it was an opportunity to get together and share stories and videos with one another and talk of life in the islands. It was a time for "the universal language of mankind", as Longfellow put it, as all enjoyed the musical harmony of so many Polynesian voices.

Indeed, right up to the last minute at the Mataveru airport, the gracious Rapa Nui people would burst into song, and the other delegations would give extemporaneous speeches or dance for the moment. The whole experience was heart-warming and enlightening, and helped to further the bonds of aloha and friendship that continue the legacy of Polynesian brotherhood and mutual respect. The next meeting is to be held in either American-Samoa or in the Cook Islands in March 2002.

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