



## The God Tinirau in the Polynesian Art

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**Abstract.** – In this article, data concerning the all-Polynesian fish god Tinirau are collected. Tinirau was a chief or at least son of a chief. The study of the Proto-Polynesian rock picture of Fiji allows to realise main symbols and ideas of the Proto-Polynesians. On this basis, some rock pictures of different Polynesian islands are decoded. The cult of Tinirau was widespread in these places, and this fact is beyond question. This god was strongly associated with the moon goddess Hina. On the other hand, this brave hero was related and at one time was even equal to the lord of the ocean known as Tangaroa. The trinity structure of the sea deity is discovered. Besides, the semantics of two types of Rapanui wooden artifacts is understood. The Austronesian influence is revealed in the Ainu and Japanese cultures. At last, a selection of some *rongorongo* inscriptions (Easter Island) is read and interpreted. Such records serve as a reliable key to many Polynesian petroglyphs. [*Fiji, Marquesas Islands, Society Islands, Easter Island, Tinirau, Tangaroa, Hina, the rongorongo script*]

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### Introduction

The search for representations of the god (spirit, chief, hero) Tinirau (Tinilau, Tingilau, Tinlau, Kini-

lau, and Sinilau) is an important problem for an understanding of the nature of the Polynesian (Austronesian) religion.<sup>1</sup> Here I discuss in this connection results of my study of rock drawings on Vatulele of Fiji, Hiva Oa of the Marquesas Islands, Mo‘orea of the Society Islands, and Easter Island (Rapa Nui). Moreover, we present the interpretation of the carvings on Rapanui royal staffs *ua*. The destination of Easter Island wooden figurines *moai tangata* is also realised.

### Data about Tinirau

Tinirau “Innumerable” is a two-faced sea god, and his folklore images are widespread from Samoa and Tonga to Easter Island in Polynesia as well as on several atolls in Micronesia (Luomala 1955: 101–120). On Mangaia this personage looks like half fish and half man, is the king of all fish, and has an epithet, “royal husband” (Gill 1876: 4, 91, 94). On Mangareva Tinirau is a chief (Buck 1938: 219). On Hawaii Kinilau (Tinirau) is a son of a chief (Beckwith 1944: 189). The Maori represent the god Tinirau as a chief with a fine form and beauty of face (Andersen 1969: 236). On Rotuma this spirit is designated as Tinrau, and he is “a fine-looking man” and “the son of the dead king” (Titifanua and Churchward 1995: 41–44). Thus, the royal origin of this character is one of his properties in the Eastern and Western Polynesia.

1 The rules of alternating sounds of the Polynesian languages are well known (cf. Tregear 1891: xiv–xxiv).

Tinirau is known in many Polynesian areas as the tutelary deity of fish (Buck 1934: 12). In Maori beliefs, this personage is a son of Tangaroa, the lord of ocean (Tregear 1891: 513). He appears to represent the whale (Best 1924: 338 f.). The home of this god is located on the Sacred Isle. According to the Maori ideas, this territory is situated in the ocean in the north (Andersen 1969: 236). Besides, sometimes Tinirau lives on the northern part of Mangaia (Gill 1876: 100). Notice that every day the sun moves from the east (morning) to the west (evening) through the north (noon) in places that lie in the southern hemisphere. Therefore, Tinirau has a feature of the sun god. This is not surprising, an archaic Tahitian song connects the god Ta'aroa (Tangaroa) with the light (Tregear 1891: 29).

The meaning of the name of Tinirau is clear in the context of Maori mythology (Andersen 1969: 238). It is common knowledge that he once promised the people a plentiful supply of fish. Hence, a figurative sense of the god's name, "Innumerable," is "The Plenty (of Fish)."

### Tinirau in a Proto-Polynesian Rock Drawing

In some versions of the Tinirau cycle the priest Kae ('Ae) is of great concern. Kae got the pet whale of Tinirau called Tutu-nui (the Great Tutu) for his voyage, and later he killed it (Reed 1963: 154–157). The name of this magician can be traced to Samoan 'ae (to rejoice). One can suggest that archaic sacrifices of whales devoted to the sea deity are described in this story. Such marine mammals (whales, seals, dolphins) were important food resources.<sup>2</sup> In conformity with the myth, Tinirau killed later Kae. It means that in many cases whales and other large sea creatures were sacral animals always or during certain time, in another way, prohibited as food or *tapu* (Kirch and Yen 1982: 356–358; Métraux 1940: 173).

Let us examine additional materials. In accordance with a Hawaiian myth, the shark-man called Nanaue (< \*Nau) was conquered and hauled up by men on the hill of Pu'u Mano (Puku Mango) "Shark Hill". The shark flesh was cut into strips, partly dried, and then burnt (Thrum 1907: 267). In compliance with a Rapanui myth, Tangaroa, the god of the ocean, once appeared as half seal and half human being near the ceremonial platform Ahu Tongariki and was later killed by natives (Métraux 1940: 310 f.; Englert 1980: 23).

It can be said with confidence that in the first instance the god Tinirau is shown having a double nature. This story tells of a sacrifice of sharks to this deity on a hill. In the Hawaiian mythology, the name Kinilau-a-mano (Tinirau-a-Mango) means "Kinilau-son-of-Shark" (Beckwith 1944: 189). Similar rites – only with seals – were performed on Easter Island, where Tangaroa substituted the earlier image of Tinirau. Ceremonial platforms could play the role of sacral hills or mountains. At the platform *Ahu Naunau* (cf. Maori *nau* "to come") in the Anakena bay there is a stone with the drawing of a seal; seal bones were found in this area (Lee 1992: 95 f., Fig. 4.87). On a hill above Anakena there is a panel (Lee 1992: 93, Fig. 4.82) where two creatures are depicted, and they resemble, in my opinion, glyph 91 *taoraha*, cf. Rapanui *taoraha* "whale." The Easter Island *rongo* signs are read on the base of my own studies (Rjabchikov 1987: 362 f., Fig. 1; 1993: 126 f., Fig. 1; 1994b: 3, Fig. 1).

In conformity with an Ainu fairy tale, a whale once transformed itself into a mountain; archaeologists found bones of whales on mountains near the seashore at places where the Ainu lived earlier (Arutyunov and Shchebenkov 1992: 153). I suppose that details of an Austronesian ritual become apparent. I share a point of view that the archaic Japanese and Ainu cultures included Austronesian components (Sternberg 1933; Rjabchikov 1997a; 1997d: 4–10; 2009).

In compliance with Piłsudski's (1912: xx) records, there were two Ainu cultural heroes called Kasunre and Ikoresuye. One can surmise that both names bear on the all-Polynesian fish god Tinirau. The first name (\**Ko Sun-re* < \**Ko Sini-rau*) corresponds to a variant of this name, *Sinilau*, known on Tonga, Wallis, and Futuna. The name Ikoresuye contains not only the archaic Ainu noun \**iko* (fish) but also the verb *resu* (to feed), cf. Ainu *ikoibe* (fish) (< *iko ibe*), where *ibe* means "food," and PAN \**ika* "fish." This image might reflect in the Ainu pictographic script: in the plot represented on an Ainu special stick, *ikunisi*, a fish and a flower (the symbol of abundance) are shown (Rjabchikov 1997c: 35).

In a Japanese record of archaic stories, *Nihon Shoki* (Ermakova and Meshcheryakov 1997: 182 f., 431), the following passage is essential: a whale having the non-Japanese epithet "Isukupasi" lies on a high hill. I think that it is a track of Austronesian influence. One can decode this epithet thus: \**I suku* (< *siku pasi* (< *pahi* < *paki*) "at the tail of a whale." Here the form \**i* corresponds to POC \**i* (at), the form \**suku* corresponds to PMP \**siku* (extremity, end, tail – esp. of fish), but cf. also Mele-Fila *suku* (tail of fish), Penrhyn *suku*, *siku* (ditto),

2 Bellwood (1979); Anderson (2003); Ayres (1985); Martinson-Wallin and Crockford (2001).

and Takuu *suki* (tail). I offer my PPN reconstruction *\*paki* (whale; seal), cf. Rapanui *pakia* (seal), Maori *pakakaa* (whale; seal) (< *\*paka* < *\*paki*), and even Ainu *pakuy* (nerpa).

Old Japanese *isa* and *isana* may refer to the whale and large fish (Kato 2007: 290). If we accept the shifts of *k* to *h* and then to *s* in some archaic Japanese words, we shall obtain the initial Austronesian form *ika* “fish” (cf. PAN *\*ika* “fish”). It should be borne in mind that in the Ainu language the alternations of the sounds *s/h*, *k/h* are registered. I also take into consideration the following Austronesian lexical parallel: cf. Indonesian *ikan* “fish” and Vanunu *ihana* “ditto” (Schuhmacher et al. 1992: 85).

PPN reconstruction *\*tu-tu'u* (dolphin, porpoise) is well known, but Samoan *tutuu* means “whale,” cf. also Maori *Tutu-nui* “pet whale of Tinirau” and Old Japanese *Tutu-no wo mikoto* “common part of the names of three sea deities” (*Nihon Shoki*). In Ebisu (Ainu) beliefs, the whale and shark appear as the master or owner of marine animals (Nauermann 1974: 14). It is unquestionably an Austronesian idea. I propose my PPN reconstruction *\*tu-tu'u* (whale, dolphin, porpoise). This form might be composed from two early forms, *\*tu* and *\*tu'u*, cf. PCP *\*tutu* (to set fire to) < *\*tu tu*, PPN *\*tugi* (to light) < *\*tu gi* (cf. Rapanui *ngii* “blinding brightness of the sun,” *ngiingii* “hot; burning hot”), and PAN *\*tu'u* (to stand; to be upright). Hence, the whale was compared with the heat, with fire, and even with the sun (the symbolism of fertility and abundance). The archaic Polynesians could compare PMP *\*tafu-ra'a* (whale) with POC *\*tapu* (prohibited, under ritual restriction, taboo), PFJ *\*tafu* (to light a fire), and PPN *\*la'aa* (the sun).

On the strength of the obtained data, let us examine a Proto-Polynesian rock picture (Vatulele, Fiji). The drawing has been made based on a photo (Ewins 1995: 41, photo 14), see the following Fig. 1.<sup>3</sup>

If we trace all the signs from the hand depicted at the bottom to the hand depicted at the top left in a counter-clockwise direction, the following sequence of the signs will appear with my readings and interpretations:

(1) Hand lifted. PPN *\*loa* (long). Cf. also Samoan *fa'a-loalooa* (to make long, to extend), Tuamotuan *roa* (raised), and Rapanui *roarooa* (to grow). This sign here reads *\*loa* (*\*roa*) “to rise.” In the Japanese literary monument *Yamato Monogatari* the non-Japanese word *ryo* is written down together with the

<sup>3</sup> Two other Fijian rock drawings have been studied earlier (Rjabchikov 2001).

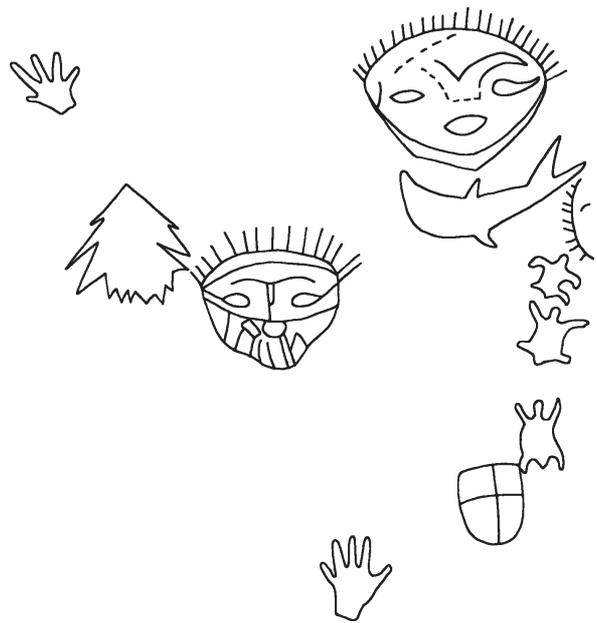


Fig. 1: Proto-Polynesian Rock Picture from Vatulele, Fiji.

term “hand” (Ermakova 1995: 152). One can suppose in this connection that the Austronesian form *\*ro(a)/lo(a)* “long; lifted” is preserved as this *ryo*. What is more, Ainu *roski* (to raise) derives from the Austronesian expression *\*ro(a) ki* (to raise to).

(2) Oval with a cross. It is a solar sign, cf. PPN *\*la'aa* (the sun). So, this sign and the previous one read *\*loa* [*roa*] *la'aa* (the sun is rising).

(3)–(5) Three turtles. PPN *\*fonu* (turtle). In the Samoan mythology, turtles were animals of Tingilau (Tinilau) (Andersen 1969: 241).

(6) Face (a part of the sign) decorated with feathers. PPN *\*mata* (face, eye). It is an image of the solar deity.

(7) Whale. PPN *\*tu-tu'u*.

(8) Face decorated with feathers. PPN *\*mata* (face, eye). It is above the previous sign.

(9) Face decorated with feathers. PPN *\*mata* (face, eye). It is the face of an old man.

(10) Breadfruit tree. PPN *\*kulu* (breadfruit).

(11) Hand lifted. PPN *\*loa* (long). So, the previous sign and this one read *\*kulu loa* (*roa*) “the large breadfruit tree.”

The face (*mata*) denotes the sun. Rapanui *matatohio* means “eastern wind” < “eastern direction” < *mata tohi oo* “the face (= the sun) was born (and) came,” cf. Tuamotuan *totohi* (to be born). In the Maori religion, Te Taumata (*Te Tau mata*) is the highest point of the path of the sun and the moon in the sky (Tregear 1891: 626). Hence, the term *mata* (face; eye(s)) is connected with the ecliptic and the

sun. Further still Indonesian *matahari*, Madurese *mata are*, and Balinese *matanai* signify “the sun” < \**mata*.

On Easter Island, the paramount god Tiki-Make-make was related to the sun and to the fire; his rock images often look like big-eyed faces (Ferdon 1961; Métraux 1940: 271, 314). It must be emphasised that the following lexical items exist: Maori *mataki* “to look at” (< \**mata ki*), *matatau* (*mata tau*) “looking steadily,” Rapanui *mata u’i* “to watch,” and Ontong Java *make* “to see,” and all they are Austronesian words.

The three faces in the Proto-Polynesian picture describe the movement of the sun during a day. Here three positions of the sun appear: in the morning (on the east), in the noon and in the evening (on the west). Consequently, the great breadfruit tree was located in the western part of the world in Proto-Polynesian beliefs. The whale is depicted at an imaginary height near the midday sun. From the above reasoning it is clear that the whale is the symbol of the sea god Tinirau (PPN \**Tini-lau*) or his sea creature situated on a mountain.

This author has found a plot in the Tinirau cycle where a fairy tree was mentioned. Such a story exists in fact in the Tongan mythology (Polinskaya 1986: 236–238). Longo-poa, a companion of 'Ae (the same Kae), once travelled to the end of the world. There a tree, a source of different food, grew surrounded by small palms on an island. It is obvious that the dimensions of the palms had to show the great height of the general plant. I compare this marvellous tree with the breadfruit one (a marker of the west) depicted in Fig. 1.

In this connection the information about a Hawaiian mythological plant called '*Ulu-kapu-a-Kane* (*Kuru-tapu-a-Tane*) “Tabooed breadfruit tree of *Kane* (*Tane*)” (Thrum 1907: 284), which grew in the traditional homeland, is attractive for us. Furthermore, the breadfruit is an important symbol of hidden divine islands located in the west according to Polynesian ideas (Beckwith 1970: 70–80).

In conformity with the Tongan myth, when Longo-poa swam later together with ghosts, he had to throw a great number of fish into a box to achieve Tonga. I suppose that in such words the presence of the god Sinilau (Tinirau) “Innumerable” appears in the story, though this name is not mentioned whatsoever.

It is significant that the Hawaiian god Lono (Rongo) and the Maori god Rongo are associated with the waters (Beckwith 1970: 31; Best 1922b). The Maori god Roko (Rongo)-Mai is the owner of the whales (White 1887: 22, 108). Besides, in the Mangaian mythology Rongo is the god of war

(Gill 1876: 311). The hero Longo-poa is an early variant of the all-Polynesian god Rongo. The name Logo-poa is comparable with PAN \**rogo* (to hear; news) and PMP \**poa* (fish odour). It is common knowledge that the god Rongo is a messenger of the gods. It is valid to say that the Proto-Polynesian god \**Rogo* or \**Logo* with the epithet \**poa* was an image of messengers-fishermen (and warriors) who conquered new mysterious islands.

### Tinirau on Hiva Oa

I reported earlier about Tinirau and Hina in the Marquesan rock art containing *rongorongono*-like symbols. At the left of a large rock picture, a final scene appears: the moon goddess Hina, represented as the crescent sign, is located near the god Tinirau, represented as a man united with a shark (Rjabchikov 2000). Now one can continue our study. Let us consider this panel with petroglyphs again (Edwards and Millerstrom 1995: 15, Fig. [panel EIA-75h]). At the right side of the drawing, the moon goddess Hina is represented as the crescent sign, too. Near this sign, a fish appears. It is the beginning of the myth. The same fish appears in the centre of the drawing. The crescent is absent in this scene. Consequently, the moon girl transformed herself into this fish. It is evident that here the fish appears on which Hina (Hine, Ina) travelled to Tinirau according to the Polynesian mythology. In some versions, the goddess became partially a fish.<sup>4</sup>

### Tinirau on Mo'orea

To examine petroglyphs represented on Mo'orea (Millerstrom 2003: 156, Fig. 17), see Fig. 2.

Judging by a Marquesan rock drawing of a woman (Millerstrom 1990: 34, 36, Fig. 9, *b*, type 105 *f*.), three scenes with a woman appear in the figure. Besides, petroglyphs depicting the crescent appear in all three cases. I conclude that here the moon goddess Hina is described. The right segment of the whole picture is the first plot, and so on. In the beginning, Hina was connected with a turtle. In the mythologies of Mangareva, Tuamotu (Polynesia), and Kapingamarangi (a Polynesian atoll in Micronesia) Hina once swam on the back of a turtle to Tinirau.<sup>5</sup> The central scene is relevant to the meeting of Hina and Tinirau, and the latter personage is

4 Gill (1876: 91–93); Andersen (1969: 237); Reed (1963: 146).

5 Buck (1938: 218 *f*.); Stimson (1957: 137 *ff*.); Flood, Strong, and Flood (1999: 69 *ff*.).

Fig. 2: Petroglyphs on Mo'orea after Millerstrom (2003: 156, Fig. 17).

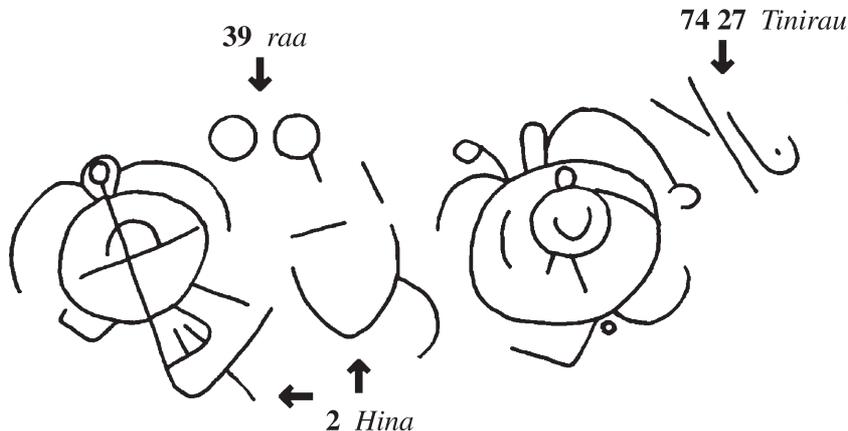
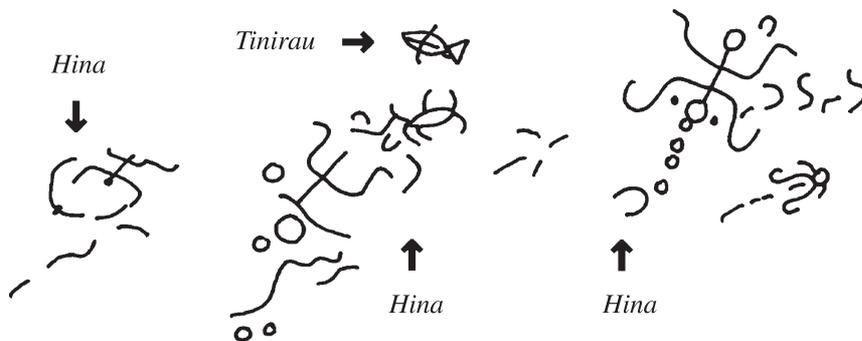


Fig. 3: Petroglyphs on Mo'orea after Millerstrom (2003: 156, Fig. 16).

incarnated into a fish. It is possible that a lobster is Hina's personification (cf. Fijian *vula* "the moon" and PAN *'ura* "crayfish"). The third scene is pertinent to Hina who left Tinirau. Notice that one of the religious places of Mo'orea was named for Tinirau (Emory 1928).

Let us consider other petroglyphs also represented on Mo'orea (Millerstrom 2003: 156, Fig. 16), see Fig. 3.

Both turtles are associated with signs of the crescent. Thus, one can suppose that here a plot is shown concerning the moon goddess Hina associated with god Tinirau. Two signs, resembling the Rapanui glyph 2 *Hina*, are distinguished. Two rounds may denote the solar signs (cf. Rapanui glyph 39 *raa*). On the right part of the picture one can pick out two signs resembling the Rapanui glyph combination 74 27 *Tinirau*.

### Tinirau on Easter Island

The Rapanui folklore text "Apai" taken down by Thomson (1891: 517f.) on the island as an oral version of a *rongorongo* inscription contains the following segment: *Houa kata-kata hura matini rai,*

reconstructed in this manner: *Haua katakata hura ma Tinirau*, "The happy (moon goddess) Haua appeared for Tinirau."

Old Rapanui *hura* (to appear) comes from PPN *\*sula* (to appear). Interestingly the name of the Rapanui deity Haua has been related to the moon goddess Hina based on several *rongorongo* records: glyph 14 *hau* depicts a hat, cf. Rapanui *ha'u* "hat" (Rjabchikov 1987: 364f., Fig. 2, number 5; 1988: 314f., Fig. 1, numbers 5–8).<sup>6</sup>

Now one can offer other evidences of my hypothesis starting from the Polynesian folklore. First, according to the Tuamotuan mythology (Buck 1966: 452), the name of the moon goddess was Hauone (Hau one). In the Maori mythology her name is Hine ahu one (Buck 1938: 265). In the Hawaiian mythology a pair of deities, Kane-hoa-lani (Tane) and Ka-hina-li'i (Hina) – or Haumea (Hau mea) –, is known (Beckwith 1970: 170). This goddess Hau

6 I prefer not to mark the glottal stop in Old Rapanui words. Knorozov decoded the Maya script correctly, but he did not mark vowel length in the Old Maya words on numerous occasions (Knorozov 1975: 4). Hence the problem of the determination of the glottal stop in Old Rapanui words is important not for epigraphers but for comparative linguists. I leave its solution for my colleagues.

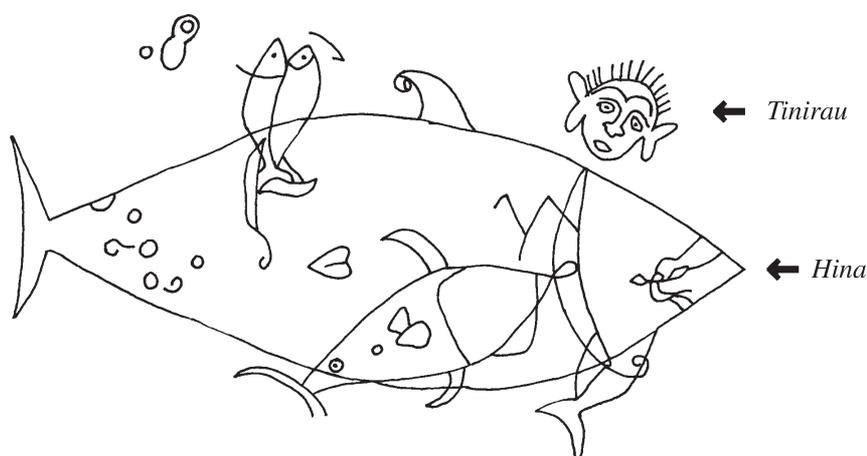


Fig. 4: Rapanui Rock Drawing (after Lee 1992: 103, Fig. 4.100).

apparently coincides with Hina whose epithet reads Haua in Old Rapanui. In an Easter Island legend (Felbermayer 1960) this character is called Hina Hau Mara as well. In any case, the Rapanui text exists written down by Thomson in which the name of Tinirau appears.

Let us examine a Rapanui rock drawing (Lee 1992: 103, Fig. 4.100), see Fig. 4.

Here a big fish appears associated with the crescent: the moon goddess Hina arrived to the god Tinirau. A head decorated by feathers (see the upper right part of the drawing) represents the latter hero. A mask (see the upper left part of the drawing), corresponding to glyph 60 *mata* (face; eyes), demonstrates the country of the sun. It is an illustration of the local legend about the god of feathers or a chief wearing a feathered headdress (Tinirau) and the goddess Hina (Hina Hau Mara) called *taana vi'e* "his woman (or wife)," and *vi'e maitaki* "beautiful woman (or wife)." At first, Hina appeared as a big fish. Later the heroine taught Rapanui women to make hats and clothes all decorated with feathers and to manufacture ropes. In the Maori mythology, Hina associated with Tinirau is the patroness of women as well as domestic arts; the name of Tinirau's son is Tu-huruhuru, cf. Maori *huruhuru* (feather) (Reed 1963: 146, 152). These coincidences are significant.

Let us consider a Rapanui rock drawing (Lee 1992: 86f., Fig. 4.70), and see Fig. 5 illustrated in two parts.

On its left side one can see a turtle surrounded by faces. Besides, faces (cf. glyphs 60 *mata*) appear on the turtle's body. On the right side of the picture, one can see a fish surrounded by several house foundations. Petroglyphs, corresponding to glyphs 60 *mata* (face; eyes), 30 *ana*, 103 *pe*, 1 [*tiko*] *komari* (vulva), 110 *vie, uha* (woman), and 39 *raa* (the sun), surround the fish. On its body there are

petroglyphs corresponding to glyphs 60 *mata* (face; eyes), 64 *mea* (red), 1 *komari* (vulva) (Rjabchikov 2010b: 7), and 110 *vie, uha* (woman).

The red colour denotes the sea god Tangaroa (Tregear 1891: 464). The name Mea Kahi (The Red Colour of the Tuna) of the god of fishermen appears in the Easter Island folklore (Thomson 1891: 533). Glyph 30 *ana* with the meanings "abundance; many times; too much" is recognised in local rock designs together with drawings of fish, cf. Hawaiian *ana* "to have enough or too much" (Rjabchikov 2001–02: 215; 2010b: 24f., Fig. 7). I have read the glyph combination 64 30 *kahi ana* (numerous tunas) near the sign of a fishhook in a Rapanui rock drawing (Lee 1992: 178f., Fig. 6.15).

And now remember a Rapanui myth about Uho and a turtle (Métraux 1940: 372f. ). A young girl, Uho, returned to the beach of Easter Island since she forgot her belt there. However, a turtle stole it and swam off with it. The girl swam after the turtle. It landed on the beach of another land, and then Uho did. There she married a man named Mahuna-tera'a and gave birth to a girl. Once at dawn the young woman swam on the turtle's back to her homeland. She promised a sexual payment for this help.

Though Luomala (1955) does not point to her source of the identification of an Easter Island myth about Tinirau, the myth told it. The strange name Uho reads *uha* "woman" (the alternation of the sounds *ola* is possible and very frequently in the Rapanui language). It is a hint of the name of the moon goddess Hina, as Mangarevan *ahine* (woman) exists, cf. also another Hina's marker, the term *vie* (woman; wife) or *uha* (woman) (see above). The name of Uho's husband, Mahu-na-te-ra'a, means "(It is) the Abundance because of the Sun," cf. Rapanui *mau* (abundant), POC \**mahu* (to be abundant, plentiful [of food]). I suppose that here the name of the god/chief Tinirau (Innumerable) is encoded.

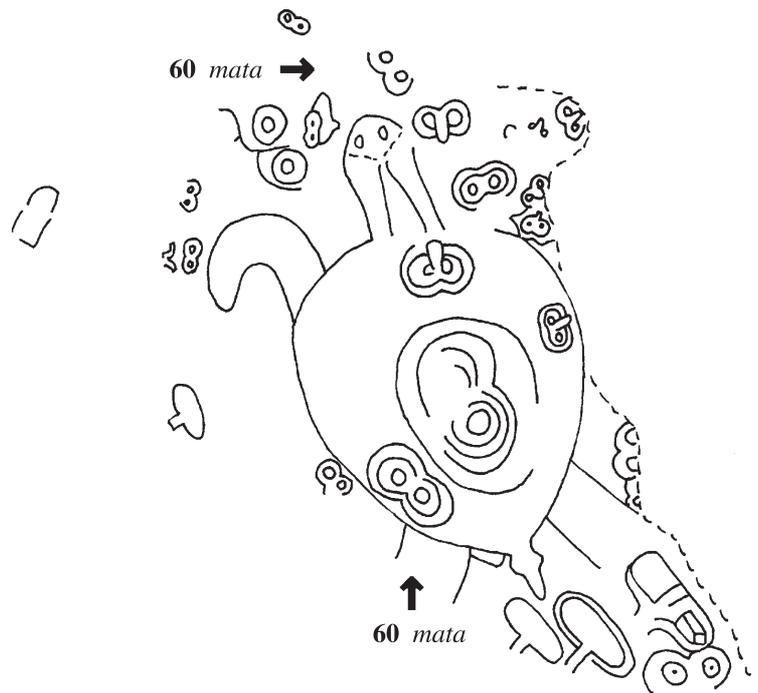


Fig. 5a: Rapanui Rock Drawing (after Lee 1992: 86f., Fig. 4.70).

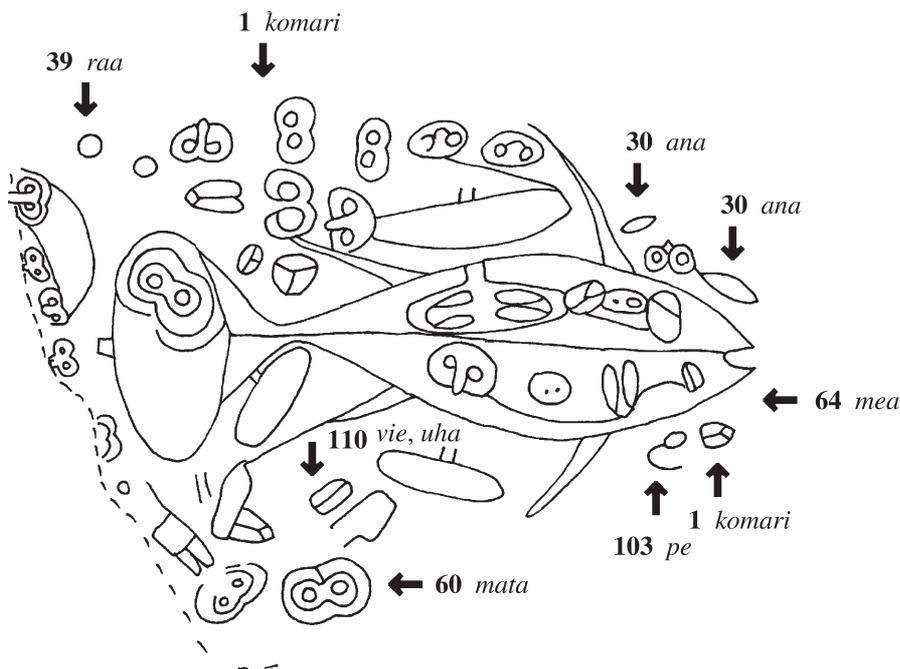


Fig. 5b: Rapanui Rock Drawing (after Lee 1992: 86f., Fig. 4.70).

In the rock drawing in Fig. 5 glyphs 30 *ana* denote figuratively the name of the sea god Tinirau (Innumerable). Glyph 103 *pe* (cf. Tahitian *pee* “ripe” and Rapanui *hakape’e no kai hoao* “abundance”) is his other marker. Glyphs 1 *tiko* (menstruation) or *komari* (vulva) are connected with the sexual payment of Uho. Therefore, this plot describes Uho (= Hina) who intended to return to her homeland.

Uho was still near Tinirau, but the turtle was ready to swim away.

Luomala (1977: 145 ff.) suggests that certain of two-faced Polynesian figurines depict Tinirau. I suppose that one can add Rapanui royal wooden staffs *ua* (Orliac and Orliac 1995: 36, photo; 78, photo; 79, two photos) decorated by two faces to such objects.

Consider a common pattern depicted on several Easter Island wooden figurines of young men called *moai tangata* (statue of a man): three beings with human faces and bodies of whales appear in such instances (Heyerdahl 1976: Fig. 33, plates 32, 35a, 36, and 37). I surmise that it is the image of an Austronesian god of the ocean (\**Tini-lau*, \**Tagaloo*) who appeared as three gods at the same time.

The trinity structure of the sea god is preserved in the Tahitian beliefs. In compliance with a version of the “Creation Chant” (Henry 1928: 355–359), the god Ta’aroa (Tangaroa) is associated with a lord for the ocean, Tino-rua (Dual-Body), otherwise Tinirau, and with two gods of the sea, Ma’a-tahi (First-Branching) and Tua-ra’a-tai (Ocean-Sacredness). Therefore, one god correlates with three gods of the same nature. As often happens, the translations of some proper names need further correction. The name Ma’a-tahi signifies “First Food” (cf. Tahitian *ma’a* [*manga*] “food”), and the name Tua-ra’a-tai signifies “The Great Open Sea Raises up (Its Wealth), The Ocean (Does It),” cf. Tahitian *tua* (great open sea), Samoan *laga* (to raise up).

In the Japanese culture, this trinity deity is called Sumiyoshi (Suminoe), and his specific names are Soko-tutu-no wo mikoto (The Man-Lord, The Spirit of the Bottom of the Sea), Naka-tutu-no wo mikoto (The Man-Lord, the Spirit of the Middle of the Sea Waters), and Upa-tutu-no-wo mikoto (The Man-Lord, the Spirit of the Surface of the Sea) in Old Japanese (Ermakova 1995: 166; Ermakova and Meshcheryakov 1997: 410f.). For the three last names, the term *tutu* is translated as “spirit” by convention. As has been shown above, Old Japanese *tutu* (< Austronesian \**tu-tu’u*) means “whale” in fact. Ainu *tukara* (nerpa) is comparable with Austronesian \**tu-tu’u* (whale, seal, etc.) and \**kara* (fish odour), cf. Morioki *kara* (aromatic) and Samoan *’alalaa* (to smell of fish) < PPN \**kakala* (my PPN reconstruction is \**kara* or \**kala*). Austronesian \**tu-tu’u* could stay in Ainu *tuma* (harpoon for catching the nerpa). A reflex of this archaic word was preserved in Rapanui *tutu’u*, *tu’utu’u* (fin), too.

In the *Nihon Shoki*, there is an Austronesian myth about the god Kuni-no soko-tati-no mikoto who created himself from a certain space that existed after the separation of the Sky from the Earth. Old Japanese *soko* (bottom) is comparable with PCP \**soko* (thick, of a liquid), cf. also Rapanui *okooko* (to pour over). A Polynesian (Tahitian) myth contains similar ideas; the god-creator is called Ta’aroa (Tangaroa) there (Buck 1938: 69f.).

In the same Japanese source, the name of the god Ama-tu-piko-piko-piko-po-no ninigi-no mikoto “The Lord, the Celestial Trinity Young Man of

the Fire (and) of the Man” is found. We affirm with confidence that this character has an Austronesian origin. In the religious system of the Western Polynesians Tagaloo (Tangaroa) is the solar god living in the heavens (Polinskaya 1986: 131). According to the “Apai” chant, the god Tangaroa has some features of the sun god (Rjabchikov 1996b: 6). In another Rapanui myth, there is a report that this fisherman god lives in the location of the dark sky (Métraux 1937: 46f.). The name Tangaroa (Tanga Roa) means “The Tall Young Man,” cf. Rapanui *tanga* (young man) and *roa* (long; tall) (Fedorova 1978: 339).

It is proposed that the god-fisherman Umisati-no biko, mentioned in the *Nihon Shoki*, has an Austronesian origin (Ermakova 1995: 36). In this name, the component *biko* (young man) may be connected directly with the name of the Polynesian god Tangaroa. According to another Japanese record of archaic stories, *Kojiki* (Ermakova 1995: 36f.), the god Kusiyatama-no kami of an Austronesian origin was a descendant of the deity of sea straits; his characteristic colour was red. In my opinion, it is distinctly a hint of the PPN (Austronesian) sea god \**Tagaloo*, perhaps known as \**Tamaloo* (\**Tamaroo*) or \**Tama* earlier.

Based on present knowledge, the Rapanui wooden figurines *moai tangata* depict a progenitor of the people, a young and nice chief, called Tinirau or Tangaroa. Both deities constituted probably one personage in the distant past.

### Excursion 1: Ainu-Austronesian Lexical Parallels

One can compare Ainu *ape* (fire) (cf. Old Japanese *pi* “ditto”) and PAN \**afi* (ditto); Ainu *ta* (to strike) and PEO \**taa* (ditto); Ainu *tutu* (to arrive) and PAN \**tu’u* (to stand, to be upright), cf. Rapanui *tu’u* (to arrive), Marquesan *tuu*, *tuutuu* (ditto); Ainu *arki* (to come) (< \**ara ki*) and PAN \**hala* (road, path), PFJ \**ki* (preposition indicating motion towards, to); Ainu *ara* (to accomplish a goal) and PAN \**hala* (road, path); Ainu *iki* (to come) and POC \**siki* (to lift); Ainu *eh*, *ek* (to come) (\**eh*- < \**ek*-) and PPN \**heke* (to mount), cf. Rapanui *eke* (ditto); Ainu *atuita* (10) and Rapanui *kauatu* (ditto); Ainu *po* (child) and Rapanui *poki* (ditto); Ainu *na* (more, also) and PPN \**gaa* (plural marker); Ainu *tono* (chief, lord) and PPN \**ta’ane* (male) (cf. the name of the Polynesian god Tane as well); Ainu *ho* (verbal prefix) (< \**he*) and PNP \**se* (non-specific article); Ainu *hokonu* (to marry someone [of woman]) (< \**he kenu*) and Rapanui *kenu* (hus-

band); Ainu *hoko* (husband) and Tuamotuan *oko* (penis); Ainu *koro* (to own) and PEP *\*koro* (father, old man); Ainu *ona* (father) (< *\*he na*) and Mangarevan *nana* (to create; to produce; to grow); Ainu *uriwahne* (kindred) (< *\*uri waka* “descendants [of a common ancestor] from a boat”) and PNP *\*huli* (descendant, offspring), PAN *\*waka* (canoe); Ainu *unu* (mother) (< *\*u nu*) and Old Rapanui *nua* (ditto); Ainu *tekehe* (hand) (< *\*te keke*) and Rapanui *keke* (ditto); Ainu *kat* (to build) and Rapanui *kato* (ditto); Ainu *tuf* (to grow) and PMP *\*tupu* (ditto); Ainu *poru* (cave) (< *\*po ru*) and PMP *\*poo* (night), *\*lua* (hole, pit); Ainu *ku* (I) and PAN *\*-ku* (first person singular [possessive]), cf. Rapanui *ku* (I); Ainu *pake*, *bake* (head) and PPN *\*poko* (skull, head); Ainu *ari* (to burn) and PPN *\*’ali* (clearly visible); Ainu *ima* (to roast) and POC *\*’umu* (earth oven), cf. Maori *imu*, *umu* (ditto); Ainu *pohke* (warm, hot) and PMP *\*paka* (dried); Ainu *nohke* (hot, warm) and POC *\*nofo* (to sit, to dwell); Ainu *kapaci* (eagle), *cikap* (bird) and POC *\*kapa-kapa* (to flap wings); Ainu *taha* (this) and PEO *\*tasa* (one); Ainu *puy* (hole) and PPN *\*puu* (perforated, punctured, holed); Ainu *apto* (rain) (< *\*to*) and PPN *\*too* (to set [of sun]; to fall [of rain]); Ainu *mauki* (east) (*\*mau ki*) and PPN *\*Maui* (name of a legendary hero), this personage is the sun god (Best 1922a); Ainu *koiki* (to kill; to hunt; to beat) (< *\*kai ki*) and PNP *\*kai* (sharp), cf. Rapanui *ka’i* (sharp; cutting), *kahinga* (< *\*ka’i-ga*) (edge of a weapon); Ainu *koiritaku* (relatives) (< *\*kai*), *okkay* (man) (< *\*kai*), and PXW *\*kaaiga* (kin, family, relative); Ainu *atte* (bearing, producing) and Rapanui *tetea* (to have many descendants); Ainu *ipe*, *ibe* (food) (< *\*i pe*) and POC *\*’i* (preposed locational particle, at or from a position), *\*pe’e* (over-ripe, soft [of breadfruit]); Ainu *an* (to be; to be situated) and Hawaiian *ana* (to have enough or too much); Ainu *ni* (tree) and PMP *\*niu* (coconut palm [*Cocos nucifera*]); Ainu *honive* (oar) (< *\*he niu*) and PMP *\*niu* (coconut palm [*Cocos nucifera*]); Ainu *kew*, *keu* (bone) and Rapanui *kavakava* (rib); Ainu *poni* (bone) and PSO *\*pena* (back of a neck); Ainu *kam* (meat; food) and Rapanui *kokoma* (guts) < PCE *\*koma*; Ainu *niste* (strong) (< *\*nis-te* < *\*nih-te* < *\*nik-te* < *\*nuk-te*) and Tahitian *nu’u* (army), Penrhyn *nuku* (war party); Ainu *omante* (to give, to pass) (< *\*he mana te*) and POC *\*mana* (power, effectiveness, prestige); Ainu *tomba* (to close) and POC *\*tampu* (sacred, forbidden); Ainu *tukap* (ghost) (< *\*tua kapa*) and PMP *\*’atua* (deity); Ainu *yukara* (song; religious song) and PTA *\*karakia* (incantation, charm); Ainu *tusu* (to practice witchcraft) and PPN *\*tufuga* (expert, priest) (< *\*tufu-ga*), cf. Old Rapanui *tuhu* (priest) in the name Tuhu Patoea (Routledge 1998: 277); Ainu

*hetuku* (origin) (< *\*he tuku*) and Rapanui *tukitu-ki* (to copulate); Ainu *horiko* (above) (< *\*he ruga*) and PPN *\*luga* (above, top [locative noun]); Ainu *mak* (side of a mountain) and PPN *\*ma’uga* (ditto); Ainu *hur* (mountain; hill) and Kapingamarangi *uru* (top, summit), Maori *uru* (top, upper end); Ainu *tumam* (ridge) and PPN *\*tumu-tumu* (top, tip, summit); Ainu *siri* (mountain) and Sika *ili* (ditto), cf. Rapanui *hiri* (to rise); Ainu *kim* (wood at a mountain) and Chanogga *kumbo* (mountain); Ainu *nan* (face) and Nembao *niniro* (eye), Mangarevan *nana* (to look at; to view); Ainu *horai* (to live) (< *\*ora i*) and PPN *\*ola* (to be alive); Ainu *ronno* (killer) and Mangaian *Rongo* (name of the god of war); Ainu *tomine* (military) and PFJ *\*tama-i* (father) (< “ancestor-warrior”); Ainu *sina* (to connect; to tie) and Tikopian *sisina* (to sew) (< *\*sina*), Ririo *suin* (rope) (< *\*sina*); Ainu *ison* (hunter’s luck) (< *\*i kona*) and PEP *\*i* (past tense marker), PPN *\*kona* (satiated, satisfied); Ainu *atui* (sea) and PPN *\*tu’a* (ocean side of reef, far out to sea); Ainu *tomari* (bay) and PPN *\*tomo* (to enter, to penetrate), cf. Rapanui *tomo* (to land from a canoe); Ainu *o* (to swim) (cf. Old Japanese *o* “water”) and Tongan *oo* (deep); Ainu *heyao* (to swim to the seashore) (< *\*he ao*) and PPN *\*’alo* (paddle or row of a boat), cf. Rapanui *ao* (ceremonial paddle); Ainu *repun* (offshore) and PMP *\*lapa* (flat object), cf. Rapanui *rapa* (ceremonial paddle), Tahitian *rapa* (blade of a paddle), Tuamotuan *rapa* (ditto); Ainu *ap* (fishhook) and Maori *pa* (ditto), Samoan *afo* (fishing line); Ainu *peray* (to angle) and Maori *pero* (head of a fish); Ainu *mare* (hook-harpoon) and Samoan *mala* (to leave a fishhook of misfortune); Ainu *tamo* (net) (< *\*ta mo*) and Maori *ta* (to net), *tata* (kind of a net); Ainu *kasup* (scoop [for fish]) (< *\*kahup-* < *\*kaup-* < *\*kup-*; the shift of *u* to *au* was quite possible, cf. PEP *\*niuifi* and PPN *\*naiuifi* “shark sp.” where *i* > *ai*) and POC *\*kupega* (net) (< *\*kupe-ga*), Maori *Kupe* (name of a Polynesian voyager) (Net). The alternations of the sounds *hl-*, *h/s*, *h/k* and *h/f* are noteworthy in the Ainu language.

## Excursion 2: Samples of the Easter Island Script

Here some *rongorongo* records, see Fig. 6. I use the nomenclature of the Rapanui classical inscriptions and the tracings of the *rongorongo* glyphs offered by Barthel (1958).

Three *rongorongo* boards – the Great Santiago (H), the Small St. Petersburg (Q), the Great St. Petersburg (P) Tablets – were things from the *rongorongo* school of the king Nga Ara (Rjabchikov

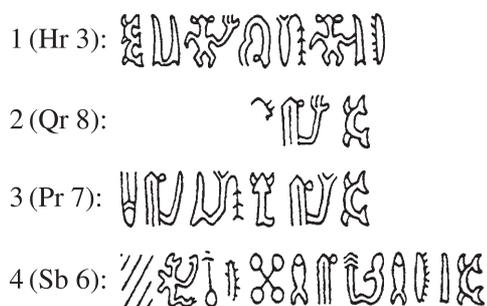


Fig. 6: Rongorongo Glyphs after Barthel 1958.

2009: 4). Let us examine some sequences of glyphs engraved on them.

1 (Hr 3): 8-8 5-5 6 13 9 24 6 5 46

*Matuamatua Atuaatua, a Tuna, niu ai a Tuna*

(It is) Atua-Matua (both reduplicated forms), (it is) Tuna (Eel), (it is) the coconut existing because of Tuna (Eel).

This record was one of main keys to the *rongorongo* written language. It correlates with a sentence of the Rapanui “Creation Chant” (Métraux 1940: 321):

*Atua Metua ki ai ki roto ki a Riri Tuna Rai ka pu te niu*

Atua Metua (= Matua) by copulating with Riri Tuna Rai produced the coconut.

The article *a* of the proper name Tuna is presented in the *rongorongo* text (glyph 6) and in its oral version. This name is written down as an ideogram (glyph 13) and as the glyph combination 5 46 “*tu-na*. If glyph 5 (or 4) plays the role of a syllable, the initial *a* is not read, and the morpheme *atu* reads *tu*. Besides, in some instances both allographic glyphs read *ati* as a morpheme and *ti* as a syllable (the alternation of the sounds *uli* is possible).

Such a method of the reading of some Easter Island glyphs based on vowel shifts corresponds to an analogous method of the reading of some Maya glyphs. I put forward this parallel to stress only that it is a phenomenon of highly developed writing systems. For example, the Maya glyph K465 (T574) reads *h’u* and *h’a* according to Knorozov (the alternation of the sounds *ula* is possible). Letters K and T preceding the numbers of the sign are related to Knorozov’s and Thompson’s catalogs of the Maya script respectively (Ershova 2004; Thompson 1962).

2 (Qr 8): 21 26 15 8

*Komari matua*

(They are signs) “The vulva – the parent”.

This record cf. already in Rjabchikov 1988: 316f., Fig. 3, 8. Rapanui *matu’a* (father; mother; parent) is noteworthy.

Glyph 1 reads not only *tiko*, but also *komari*. It comes as no surprise. Direct again the attention to the universals of scripts. Some Maya signs have two entirely different readings: for example, the Maya glyph K218 (T17) reads *ho* and *yax* according to Knorozov (1975).

3 (Pr 7): 1 26-4 5 15-24 21 26 15 8

*Komari matua, ati ro ai komari matua*

(They are signs) “The vulva – the parent,” carve (the signs) “the vulva – the parent”!

It is a parallel record of the previous fragment. However, in the first record the segment 1 26-4 5 15-24 is omitted. It is clear, that in the long instructions for pupils, at first the conjunction of the word 1 *tiko* (here it reads *komari*) as a morpheme and the word 26-4 *matua* as a glyph combination (quasi-syllables) is taken down, and then the conjunction of the word 21 26 15 *komari* as a glyph combination (quasi-syllables) and the word 8 *matua* as a morpheme is taken down. This special exercise was dedicated to the learning of quasi-syllabic signs.

4 (Sb 6): 72 103 4-40 12 26-4 33 11 12 46-4 8

*Manuia, pee ature IKA matua VAI. Mango (or niuhi, or mamama niuhi), ika nati matua*

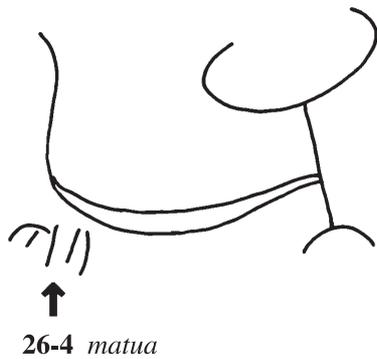
(It is) a good result, it is the great number of *ature* fish in a canoe. There is a shark or dolphin (and) angled fish in a canoe.

In this text written down on the Great Washington tablet (S), both the glyph combination 26-4 *matua* (cf. the marker *vai* “water”) and 8 *matua* denote canoes, cf. Maori *matua* (hull of a canoe). Fish *ature* are Mexican scads (*Decapterus scombrinus*). Old Rapanui *nati* (to connect, to tie or to bind with a cord, with a fishline) is consistent with Tahitian *nati* (to tie or to bind with a cord), Marquesan *nati* (to tie), and Mangarevan *nanati* (to tie with a cord).

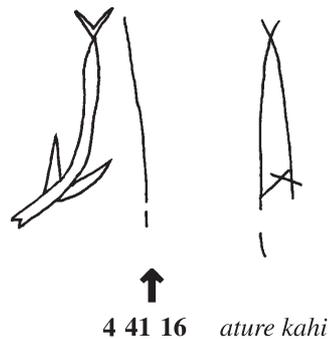
Such readings as *ha’u* and *Hau(a)* (glyph 14) as well as *matu’a* and *matua* (glyph 8, the glyph combination 26-4) provide a convincing proof that Easter Island scribes ignored the glottal stop in *rongorongo* inscriptions.

Two next inscriptions containing parallel segments for fragment 4 are beyond the classical corpus. First, let us consider a rock drawing of a canoe (Lee 1992: 178f. Fig. 6.15), see Fig. 7.

Such boats with hoof-shaped frames at their ends have been found among petroglyphs (Métraux 1940: 205). The inscription written down in



26-4 *matua*  
 Fig. 7: Rock Drawing of a Canoe (after Lee 1992: 178 f. Fig. 6.15).



4 41 16 *ature kahi*  
 Fig. 8: Drawing and Glyphs from Ahu Tongariki (after Cambell et al. 1985: 279, 282 f., table I, c).

a cursive style is presented below the drawing of the canoe in the figure: here one can read the word 26-4 *matua* (canoe). It is of interest that this cursive glyph 26 *ma* correlates with another cursive glyph 26 *ma* (a mirror image), which has been decoded in the Easter Island rock art earlier (Rjabchikov 1997c: 32 f.; 1997b). Glyph 4 *atu* formed by two non-parallel lines is registered in the classical *rongorongo* records (Rjabchikov 1993: 128 f., Fig. 3, 1–7). It is well to bear in mind allographs of *rongorongo* glyphs in all the inscriptions. I recommend using not only my tables of the glyphs (e.g., Rjabchikov 1987: 362 f., Fig. 1), but also the large body of my research where different *rongorongo* texts are transcribed. In these sequences of signs, additional allographs have been distinguished.

According to the “Apai” chant, the canoe is called by the words *vake*, *vakevake*, *vake rei*, *rei*, and *matua*, cf. Rapanui *vaka* (canoe) (the alternation of the sounds *ela* is possible), Maori *waka* (ditto), *waka whakarei* (canoe with elaborately carved figurehead, bust and arms), and *matua* (hull of a canoe). Glyph 8 *matua* represents the *rei-miro* pendant, which is an image of a canoe (Rjabchikov 1987: 365, appendix). The boat often symbolises the counting of time in local religious system (Rjabchikov 1996a: 255 f.; 2010c), so that the presence of the lunar sign (Hina’s name) on some *rei-miro* pectorals is natural.

Let us examine a drawing of a fish and three cursive glyphs incised on a stone, 24 × 14 × 4.4 cm, which was found at Ahu Tongariki (Campbell, Hermsilla, and Ramírez A. 1985: 279, 282 f., table I, c). These signs have been depicted in Fig. 8, based on a photo of this artifact.

The fish at the left is *ature* (jack), a bait for catching tuna fish. Three glyphs to the right of it read 4 41 16 *ature kahi* (an *ature* fish, [a bait for catching] a tuna fish). It is important to keep in mind

that the cursive glyph 4 *atu* (a vertical line) correlates with another cursive glyph 4 *atu*, which has been deciphered in the Easter Island rock art earlier (Rjabchikov 1997c: 32 f.; 1997b). Notice that some drawings of tuna fish are presented on panels near the platform Ahu Tongariki (Lee 1992: 83, Fig. 4.65; 127, Fig. 4.134; 184 f., Fig. 6.20); two drawings of fishhooks are registered in this area (Lee 1992: 32, Fig. 3.4: table). Hence, the rock figures reflect the cult of fishery. Moreover, according to Rapanui legends, the great person Kainga lived near Ahu Tongariki, and expert fishermen were in his tribe (Routledge 1998: 282–288; Felbermayer 1948: 23–36). It is clear that the stone covered with the signs was an amulet (a sinker for a large net for catching *ature* fish?) of such specialists.

Let us examine inscriptions on the Tahua Tablet (A), on the Mamari Tablet (C), on the Great Santiago Tablet (H), on the Aruku-Kurenga Tablet (B), on the Santiago Staff (I), and on the Small Santiago Tablet (G) now, see Fig. 9.

1 (Ab 7): 17 65 17 1 72 44 17 2 110

*Te Rangi, te Tiki MANU Ta(h)a, te Hina VIE (or UHA)*

(The god) Rangi, (the god) Tiki – BIRD the Frigate Bird, (the goddess) Hina WOMAN.

This record has been partially decoded earlier (Rjabchikov 1987: 364 f., Fig. 2, 3). Here the term *vie* (woman; wife) (or *uha* “woman”) is a marker of the name of the moon goddess Hina (cf. Rjabchikov 1994a: 8, Fig. 6; 1997c: 36).

2 (Ca 5): 11-11 30-30

*Mangomango anaana*

(There are) many sharks.

Here the word *anaana* denotes a great number of the sea creatures. On a Rapanui panel (Lee 1992:

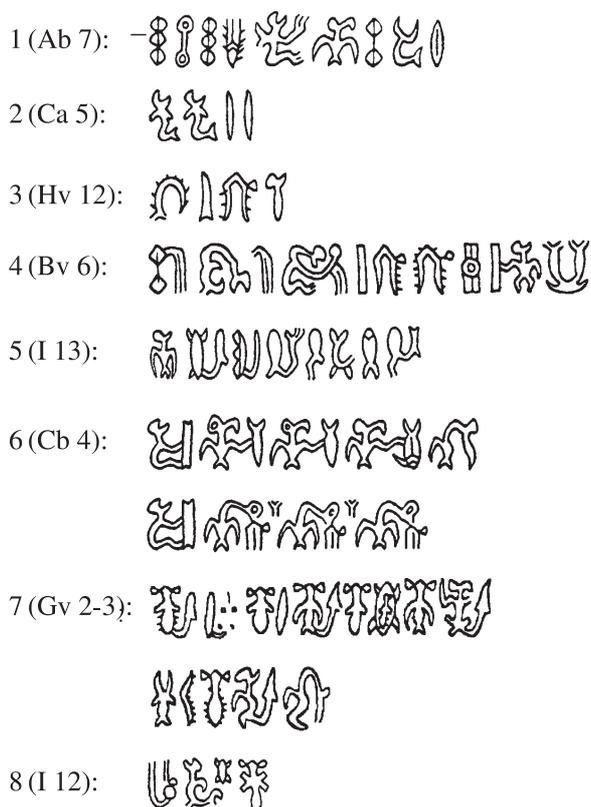


Fig. 9: Different Glyphs from Tablets.

76, Fig. 4.53) one can distinguish the drawing of a whale as well as a sign corresponding to glyph 30 *ana* (the symbol of plenty).

3 (Hv 12): 14 5 74 27

*Haua, atua Tinirau*

(The moon goddess) *Haua*, the god *Tinirau*.

The inscription can be read in this manner, too: *Haua atua, Tinirau* “(The moon) goddess *Haua*, (the god) *Tinirau*.”

In this record, glyph 27b is used. Glyph 27a *rau* depicts a standard fishhook (*rou*) (Rjabchikov 1987: 365, appendix). I believe that glyph 27b *rou*, *rau* represents the shank of a composite fishhook (cf. Métraux 1940: 180f., Fig. 11, *d*; Ayres 1979: 81, Fig. 4, *g*).

4 (Bv 6): 17 32 62 32 62 32 4 74-74 38 (= 34 39) 4-6 3 53  
*Te ua, to ua, to ua. Atua tinitini raa RAA tuha HINA Maru*  
(It is) the rain, it rains, it rains. (It is) a deity of the sun in the zenith during the month *Maru* (or *Maro*: June for the most part).

Old Rapanui *to* (to rain) corresponds to Rapanui *tonga* (< *to-nga*) (rain season) and Maori *tonga*

(< *to-nga*) *o te ra* (sunset), cf. PPN \**too* (to set [of sun]; to fall [of rain]). Old Rapanui *tuha* (time, period [figuratively]) correlates with Rapanui *tuha* (to distribute; to divide; part). The Old Rapanui expression *tinitini raa* (the sun in the zenith) is comparable with the Rapanui expression *ki te tini te ra'a* (zenith). Glyph 38 (= 34 39) represents the sun united with a sail (Rjabchikov 1987: 366, appendix; 2000). Old Rapanui *hina* (the moon; month) is a determinative in this inscription. It is a report about the day of the winter solstice. This message could reflect certain data from sun observatories at Orongo and at Mataveri.<sup>7</sup> According to the “*Apai*” chant, *Maru* (late *Maro*) was the first month of the year; an additional proof of this statement has been recently obtained (Rjabchikov 1993: 134; 2010c: 68).

5 (I 13): 44-28 (102) 18-4 48-15 (102 123) 12 (102) 4

*Tanga TE ATUA Uri – Ika-atua*

(The month) *Tanga* THE GOD *Uri* – the Fish-god.

The Old Rapanui expression *Tanga Uri* denotes the name of the month *Tangaroa Uri* (October for the most part) that includes the name of the lord of the ocean, *Tangaroa* (i.e., *Tanga Roa*), as well as Old Rapanui *uri* (offspring, descendant), cf. Maori *uri* (ditto). The segment *te atua* (the god) is a determinative here, it marks the deity’s name. Glyphs 102 *ure* and 123 (= 27) *amata, rau* or *rou* (Rjabchikov 2010a: 50) are also determinatives in this text as well as in many other segments of the inscription on the staff,<sup>8</sup> and they denote fertility and abundance. Fish is a symbol of the sea god *Tangaroa* in the Maori mythology (Buck 1966: 439). Therefore, it may be deduced that Fedorova’s (1978: 24) opinion is correct that in the Rapanui religious system the tuna (*Thunnus alalunga, Thunnus albacares, Thunnus obesus*) is an incarnation of this deity. One can assume that all the fish might represent this god in some cases.

On the Great St. Petersburg (Pv 6) Tablet the name of the god *Tangaroa* is taken down as *a Tanga* (glyphs 6 44-28) with the epithets *taua-atua* (glyphs 44-33 4) (warrior-god) and *taua-nga* (glyphs 44-33 28) (warrior-progenitor), cf. Rapanui *tau’a* (warrior), *mata’u* (*ma-ta’u*) (ditto), and Mangarevan *nana* (to create; to produce; to grow).

6 (Cb 4): 6-4 44-16 44-16 44-16 44b 6-4 44-26-15 44-26-15 44-26

*A atua Ta(h)a Kahi, ta(h)a Kahi, ta(h)a Kahi tua, a atua Tamaroa, Tamaroa, Tama*

<sup>7</sup> Ferdon (1961, 1988); Liller (1989); Rjabchikov (2010c).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Mangarevan *mata* (end of a fishhook) and *matau* (fishhook).

(It is) the god “The shore of the Tuna, the shore of the Tuna, the shore of the Tuna of the sea,” (it is) the god “Tamaroa = Tangaroa, Tamaroa = Tangaroa, Tama(roa) = Tanga(roa).”

This record cf. in part already in Rjabchikov 1988: 316 f., Fig. 3, 9. Now, I offer a new improved version of its reading and interpretation: the description of the ceremonial platform *Ahu Atanga* located near the sea, and its name indeed consists of an article of proper names, *a*, and the word *tanga*, otherwise the contraction of the name of the sea god Tangaroa. It is important to remember that the trinity structure of this deity is designated in this inscription. According to a Rapanui folklore record, taken down by Roman letters (Heyerdahl and Ferdon 1965: Fig. 143–146; the interpretation in Rjabchikov 2010a: 39 ff.), the whole religious place *Ahu Atanga* (< *Ahu A Tanga*) played the role of the god Tangaroa. Obviously, the spirit (deity) of the platform acted as natives believed.

Careful analysis of the *rongorongo* records allowed me to read glyph 44b as *tua*. Glyph 44a *ta(h)a* is usually indicated as 44. Old Rapanui *taha* (shore) corresponds to Rapanui *taha tai* (ditto) (cf. *tai* “sea, ocean”), Maori *tahatai*, *taatahi* (seashore) and *tahatika*, *taatika* (coastline) (hence, the forms *taha* and *tai* correspond respectively to the forms *taa* and *tahi*). Old Rapanui *tua* (great open sea) corresponds to Tahitian *tua* (ditto).

It is instructive to understand the etymology of the Rapanui fish name *kahi matatata* (tuna species) (Randall and Cea Egaña 1984: 12). It can be read as *kahi ma ta(h)a*, *ta(h)a*, *ta(h)a* (tuna [that is important] for the coast), here the thrice repetition of last word reflects the trinity nature of the god Tangaroa.

In the folklore text mentioned above, the god Tangaroa (Tanga Roa) is several times called *Kope Roa a Hanga* (The Tall Young Man from a Bay), cf. Rapanui *kope* (young man; son), *kope tungutungu* (youth); the variants *tungutungu* (ditto) and *tumutumu* (ditto) occur because of the alternation of the sounds *ng/m*. Rapanui *tanga* (young man) corresponds on the basis of the same phonetic evolution to Rapanui *tama* (child), Maori *tama* (son; child), Tongan *tama* (son; boy), Mangaian *tama* (son), Marquesan *tama* (ditto), and Mangarevan *tama* (ditto) (the meaning “son” is principal).

The sound alternation of *ng/m* deserves additional consideration. The Spaniards wrote down the strange word *gerami* with the meaning “sky” on Easter Island in 1770 (Mellén 1986: 113, 120, 311). Knowing as they transliterated Rapanui words, one can read it in the following manner: *he* (an article) *rami* in 1770 = *rangi* (sky) in other records and dic-

tionaries. Thus, the names Tangaroa and Tamaroa are permissible phonetic variants in principle (cf. also Rapanui *tangata* “man” and Fijian *tamata* “human being”).

7 (Gv 2-3): 132 (= 13) (102) 30 92 132 (= 13) 30 132 (= 13) (102) 132 (= 13) 28 132 (= 13) 132 (= 13) 41 44 (102) 11-50 56 19 (102) 44b

*Koreha ana. (H)ere koreha ana, koreha-koreha, nga koreha-koreha! (H)ere ta(h)a! Mangai poo ki tua*

There are numerous eels. Capture the numerous eels, eels, many eels! Capture (them) along the shore! There are fishhooks (for catching) *poopoo* fish in the sea.

(This reading and translation are ambiguous. Alternatively, one can set glyph 11 as a determinative, SHARK, and glyphs 56-19 *paki* as a phonetic variant of this word.)

Glyphs 102 *ure* are determinatives in this text, and they are symbols of plenty. Old Rapanui *ana* means “numerous, many.” The particle *nga* is the plural marker. The Rapanui expression *here koreha* (to capture eels with snares) is registered. The information concerning eels is of immediate interest to us (Métraux 1940: 190 f.; Ayres 1979: 70). It follows from the text read that fishhooks called *mangai poo* (*poopoo*) were made for catching *poopoo* fish in offshore zones. Rapanui *po’opo’o* signifies “whitefin trevally, or jack” (*Carangoides equula*).

This fish species (glyph 56 *poo*) among others is mentioned together with the determinative 12 *ika* (fish) in parallel records on the Great Santiago (Hr 10–11) and the Small St. Petersburg (Qv 1) Tablets. In the third parallel record, on the Great St. Petersburg (Pr 10) Tablet, this name is replaced by the name of more valuable fish, tuna (glyph 16 *kahi* with the same determinative). The contents of all three lists bear witness that such sea creatures (including seals and/or dolphins: glyph 11 *pakia*, *mamama niuhi*<sup>9</sup> etc. with the same determinative) were brought to the Anakena bay (cf. Martinsson-Wallin and Crockford 2001: 260, table 5; 263–267, table 6) and were destined for the king primarily.

8 (I 12): 173 19 35 28 132 (= 13)

*KUPENGA kupenga koreha*

Net (for catching) eels.

Here the word *kupenga* (net) is written down twice as an ideogram (determinative) and as a sequence of syllables (*ku-pa-nga*). The Easter Islanders used nets for eeling (Ayres 1979: 68).

9 Cf. Samoan *mumua* (dolphin).

## Conclusions

This article is devoted to the search for plots concerning the god Tinirau in the Polynesian art. To understand the archaic base of the Proto-Polynesian mythology, the folklore, linguistic, and archaeological data on the ancient Ainu and Japanese cultures are taken into account. Images of Tinirau (\**Tinilau*) are distinguished in a Proto-Polynesian rock drawing on Vatulele, in Polynesian petroglyph complexes of Hiva Oa, Mo'orea, and Easter Island. The author thinks that Rapanui royal staffs *ua* were relevant to this personage. The wooden Rapanui statuettes *moai tangata* depicted the ancestor Tinirau or Tangaroa. Images of the Polynesian goddess Hina are closely allied to the moon symbols.

In the beginning, the archaic Polynesians (Austronesians) invented an image of a sacral whale (seal) that was a symbol of fertility, abundance, fire, light, and the sun. They sacrificed whales and other marine animals to it. The god Tinirau (PPN \**Tinilau*) was an image of a handsome chief who distributed the catch among fishermen and other members of a tribe. His features were jointed to descriptions of numerous fish and other sea creatures in the people's beliefs (cf. Maori *ika* "fish; victim; principal chief of a tribe"). The goddess Hina (PCP \**Sina* < \**Hina*, cf. also PPN \**ta'ahine* "girl") could be an image of the chief's bride, originated from a neighbouring tribe of another island. It is important to keep in mind that no more than few details of an archaic Austronesian sacrificial ritual are reconstructed. In this case, the poetics of the Polynesian mythology is of no interest.

Several Ainu- and Japanese-Austronesian parallels exist in the fields of linguistics and anthropology.

*Rongorongo* inscriptions of Easter Island are predominantly investigated in this work to demonstrate the meanings of some signs that are presented in rock pictures. Cross-readings of several words in the records demonstrate the correctness of the decipherment. The derived data furnish convincing proof that the Rapanui hieroglyphic writing system has Polynesian origin.

## Abbreviations

See the following abbreviations mentioned in the text by using the reconstructed lexical forms published in the POLLEX (Biggs and Clark 2006).

PAN Proto-Austronesian  
PCE Proto-Central-Eastern Polynesian

PCP Proto-Central Pacific  
PEO Proto-Eastern Oceanic  
PEP Proto-East Polynesian  
PFJ Proto-Fijic  
PMP Proto-Malayo-Polynesian  
PNP Proto-Nuclear Polynesian  
POC Proto-Oceanic  
PPN Proto-Polynesian  
PSO Proto-Samoic-Outlier Polynesian  
PTA Proto-Tahitic  
PXW Proto-West Polynesian

Many thanks to all my friends and colleagues around the world who support my researches.

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