Statued (stat you?) Traditions
Selina Tusitala Marsh

The ‘Golden Past’
Is
Frozen Fast
In
anthro-pological
socio-logical
ethno-graphical
historio-graphical
feminist-epist-o-mological
bio-logical
psycho-logical
audio-logical
edu-cational
environ-mental
human-biological
pharma-co-logical
theo-logical
gyna-co-logical
crimin-o-logical
scientifically
geothermically
text-booked
documented
locked-fast
bound-cemented
rock-hard
she wears lei
around Gauguinesque
blossoming breasts
sweeping brown
round and around
looping above
firm flat belly button
peeking over
see-thru hula skirt

(not from her island – but what does it hurt?)
she swings her hips
with lips
slightly parted
lip-stick red
with ‘come-to-bed’ eyes
highlighted by REVLON
black sheen of hair
sweeps the air

(come if you dare
to these mysterious islands)
frozen in glossy post-card form
she is adorned
with dreams
ready for you / to
fantasise
romantisise
over gorgeous big brown eyes
gorging thighs

(gorged out eyes from forging lies!)
‘Lovely hula hands’
always understands
make good island wife – for life – no strife
(no hy-phenated name!)
always to sing
island lullaby song
petals caressing wind
all night long
drowning in
frangipani scent
dreaming, seeming
hours spent
in islands aphrodisiac
  no lack
  no loss
  in these
‘Lovely hula hands’
  always understands
make good island wife - …
multiplying
in silhouetted
still-water of
  rippling
text and
  image
  history unchallenged
  mystery ‘solved’.
We have evolved
from Noble Savagess
to Tropical Princess
moremore
fantasise
romanticise
mesmerise
  metamorphosise your own image
  planted before we shed seeds of ourselves in the Pacific
(\textit{and not the seed of Margaret Mead nor the semen of Derek Freeman})
Moremore
Fantasise
Romanticise
Frankensize
  the monster of you
  into
  our flesh
stitching parts of islands together:
Solomon beads
Hawaiian lei
Kakala seeds
of perfume spray from Tonga
Fijian salusalu
Samoan ula
Hawaiian hula
skirt
(you don’t wear it that way – but what does it hurt?)
Cook Islands head dress
and coconut breasts
from the Marquesas
(just to please us / and the camera)
‘So colourful the way they sit together!’
stat you tradition?
picture post-card / history diagram
stat you tradition?
stat me in you?
Who
is that Pacific Princess?
always waiting
warm bare breasted
anticipating
between ‘jungle’ leaves
waiting weighting
looking out to sea
fating the sight of you
on the site of me
aaah – moment of ‘discovery’ –
stat you tradition?
the glossed publications
of island salutations
‘Talofa!’ ‘Kia Ora!’
‘Bula Vanaka!’ ‘Malo e Lelei!’
‘Kia Ora Ana!’ ‘Aloha!’ and
‘Have a nice day!’
forever static
forever still
motion-less
meaning-less
not my past
not my blessed
genealogical
‘tis fantasy
& will freeze itself apart
as disciplines crack under heated pressure
of our golden rays
tropical sun melts the haze
  breezed island days
  blow away petrified images of
no-people
no-where
no need
no more
  to hypothesise
  theorise
or
  romanticise
my tradition is here, within my eyes
  and those of my mother
For tradition
  Eludes
  Precludes
  Concludes
  stasis
tis ‘anti-stasis’
ever-moving
ever-grooving
to beaten drum of lali soothing
  voices in fagogo telling
tales of old and new
ever-revolving
ever-solving
mysteries of itself
  by itself
ever-growing
ever-knowing
of itself and other worlds
  incorporating
  investigating
  revitalising
  unto itself
TOURING PACIFIC CULTURES

indigenising
outside selves
Statued traditions
stun still water
swimming through
our son and daughter
break the surface
breach the haze
of cemented tradition
of Golden Age
till
looking with new eyes
nothing is left
she on the post-card
has Frozen to death.¹

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