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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

TOURING PACIFIC CULTURES

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
(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

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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
 to-disappear
 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

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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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