MUAMUA SOFI STRICKSON-PUA

Unfinished business
New Zealand-born dreams
Whakapapa
Some modern poetry from Western Samoa

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS, 2002
by Rev. Mua Strickson-Pua

FOLAFOLAGA
Declaration verse 1

Prime Minister Helen Clark expressed these words
"On behalf of the New Zealand Government, I wish to offer today a formal apology to the people of Samoa for the injustices arising from the New Zealand administration of Samoa in its earlier years, and to express sorrow and regret for those injustices."
Apia Samoa 2002.
Whilst noble were her intentions New Zealand Samoa historical relations sadly also speaks of colonialisation racism inequality and injustice selected history of Palagi New Zealand.

MEAMONI
Reality verse 2

Today on Waiheke island a first generation New Zealand born Samoan Chinese grandfather reflects stirred on by his Mokopuna third generation Aotearoa Ngati Hamoa Saina Cantonese Irish French Palagi English Whakapapa Gafa Cheden Ah Yek Strickson-Pua [15yrs] is "doing" his Dawn Raids assignment to him it is about collecting data just doing another assignment yet for me we lived that reality which is my story your family history a chapter of urban Pacific Tala Fa’asolopito Great grandpa Pua Sofi was Chairman of Samoan Advisory Council one of the many community leaders whose task and role to Tautua our various Pacific nations’ communities in those difficult times when the government of the day practised racism against our people state-funded state-run Dawn Raids of terror fed by ignorance and injustice scapegoating a vulnerable part of society for economic downturn and electioneering knowing they would be powerless but Moko Cheden your ancestors were people of Fa’atuatua Faith were people with a Fa’asamoa, a culture were migrant ethnic working-class proletariats already engaging with the host society becoming worthy New Zealand citizens who believed in the Egalitarian Ethos Tupuga were very proud of their Labour Party membership inner-city Auckland was back then a red mark on the electoral map an ethnic working-class ghetto but as a child what an amazing place at the factory mum worked Palagi
they were telling lies
while we lived the reality
Moko Cheden to say we were annoyed
would be an understatement
our communities were now being
targeted by huge Police presence
with mobile jails to take our people away
and for some to be deported quickly
it was not safe to be a brown citizen
walking around in public without
identification
and knowing you would have to answer Police
questions
court by media really made the blood boil the
racial stereotypes and slurs really?
Moko Cheden our hood was literally on lock-
downs
knocks at the door with Policemen and dogs
charging through the homes
people dragged off to Police stations spending
hours in the cells to be released
then this case scenario would be repeated the
next day again and again
so yes our people got angry
yes we did feel discriminated against
we felt disappointed with Palagis
who could not understand
why we felt betrayed and violated
yet your great grandparents
challenged us about Faith and Justice
Moko Cheden I don’t want you
to just collect data for another assignment.
FA’ATUATUAGA HOPE AROHA
verse 4

Moko Cheden
you challenge
and inspire me
to be a better Papa
it is about relationships
then we can do the story
becoming our history
reclaiming our family
but Aotearoa society
Helen Clark’s right
there is a lot of
Unfinished business....

NEW ZEALAND BORN DREAMS
THREE GENERATIONS OF DREAMS
by Moko Che, Dad Feleti & Papa Mua

TOLU TUPULAGA
3RD GENERATION

Fast flying shooting star
changes through the past
goes onto the future
never stops forever, Alofa.

Cheden Sofi AhYek Strickson-Pua
6yrs, Grandson & Son

LUA TUPULAGA
2ND GENERATION

With these eyes I have seen the past
with this mind I see the future
with these feet I create stability
with these hands I create change.

Feleti Sofi Strickson-Pua
27yrs, Father & Son

TASI TUPULAGA
1ST GENERATION

Dreams open the door
freeing our searching spirit
allowing us to fulfill
a life of Alofa.

Muamua Sofi Strickson-Pua
54yrs, Grandfather Papa & Father
WHAKAPAPA
by Mokos Wilco, Jayda, Mayer
and poet editor Papa Mua

Verse 1
Wilco, 5yrs

My name is Wilco
Whakapapa is being family
we are doing poetry
Jayda is my cousin
Mayer is my sister
Whakapapa is good for you...

Verse 2
Jayda, 8yrs

Jayda is my name
Whakapapa is peace and family
doing poetry at Home street
with my cousins Wilco and Mayer
we are family
I am Fijian Maori Pakeha
Jayda Elle Pocock
Whakapapa...

Verse 3
Mayer, 11yrs

Dremayer
but everyone knows
me as Mayer
Whakapapa Ah Yek to Strickson-Pua
art to poetry at Home street
spending quality time with family
cool cousin
funny brother
they are never dull
I am a part of this family
this heritage this history
my Whakapapa...

Verse 4
Papa Mua, 59yrs

Muamua Sofi Strickson-Pua
Aiga Purcell Maleala Upolu Samoa
Aiga Pua PapaSataua Savaii Samoa
Aiga Laiman Canton China
Aukalani Tamaki Makaurau
Auckland New Zealand Aotearoa
recording Whakapapa creating Fatusolo
living the “Art of Aiga”
being Aiga Whanau Family
blessed by Atua’s Alofa
our Whakapapa....
Absolve me
from any charges
of unintentional
plagiarism.

Tate Simi
1992, ‘A deeper song’

I scurrilously
respond thinking
there’s a poem
here.

Mua Strickson-Pua
2017, ‘Homage’

Is good to have me
think of me
for there no one to
think of me but me
my wife and kids.

Eti Sa’aga
1974, ‘Me, the labourer’

He is our kin conned into believing
a new era existed in this foreign land
borrowed ideas and westernised views
have created mud pools of confusion
but salved by visions of easy money.

Tautalatasi Malifa
1974, ‘Brown pakeha’

Someone’s tearing
the leaves away
that hide my nudity
someone’s exposing
my heart
to the sun.

Momoe Malietoa Von Reiche
1979, ‘My privacy’

Mama and papa grew
poorer and poorer
and my kidnappers grew
richer and richer
I grew whiter and whiter.

Ruperake Petaia
1980, ‘Kidnapped’
There are no islands in the sun
only my perceptive daughter asking
‘Hey, dad, how come you’re a Mister?’

Albert Wendt
1974, ‘No islands in the sun just misters’

Sua presentation
A symbol
A mingle of cultures
A mess of ideologies
A lost reality

Fepai Kolia
1982, ‘Lost reality’
Notes

Miti: Samoan dream
Tolu: Samoan number three
Tupulaga: Samoan generation, young people, intergenerational
Lua: Samoan number two
Tasi: Samoan number one
Alofa: Samoan love
Tala: story, account of events

Tupulaga poementary, intergenerational tala, narrative poetry-as-research, provides us with findings, rediscovered and reclaimed possibilities, and new conclusions and reconnections. Our Samoan dictionary provides toe fai for reconstruct, while the Tongan dictionary gives fa‘ufa‘u fou for reconstruct, yet the Maori dictionary notes hanga hou[ti]a for reconstruct. This, from my perspective, highlights the potential contribution of our peoples, our region, our languages, and our old-new literature at this stage and time. I have been traversing the roles of Ngati Hamoa Saina Cantonese Irish French gafa whakapapa creative poet editor to social scientist from Te Moananui a Kiwa or, as previously noted by Professor Albert Wendt, Fa’a Pasifika, the Pacific Way, but may I also extend this to include the Pacific Wave metaphor and imagery. [Apologies to Albert: I have chosen the Tongan spelling to show my commitment to the latest regional generic Pacific identification which will be reclaimed reshaped and reconstructed by our future tupulagas.] Through tupulaga poementary we are attempting to capture a moment, an aiga doing poetry and covering an important tikanga fa‘avae. We are also able to reintroduce students, teachers, lecturers, practitioners, and our Samoan communities to other Pasifika nations, ‘oloa taua, treasures, taonga, to iconic Samoan pioneer poets who are worthy of our attentions and affections.

Some modern poetry from Western Samoa – after which this collection is named, and from which the 1970s poem-fragments gathered here come – was published by Mana Publications in, Fiji, 1974.

Mua Strickson-Pua is an Aotearoa-born Samoan Chinese poet, short story writer, artist, story-teller, comedian, freestyle rapper, social commentator and ordained Presbyterian PIC minister. Aiga Pua from PapaSataua Savaii, and Purcell from Malaela, Upolu, Samoa. He is married to Linda, father to Ejay and Feleti (of Nesian Mystik fame), Papa to Reuben, Wilco, Jayda, Chloe, Dremayer, Cheden and Jane Filemu. His first collection of poetry, Matua, was published by Pohutukawa Press in 2006. Matua is the first installment of Strickson-Pua’s ‘New Zealand born’ trilogy to be followed by Fiapoko: Confessions of a Brown Bourgeoisie later in 2018, and Fofoga Samoa 2: New Zealand born calling.