

A JOURNAL OF
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
AFFAIRS, IDEAS
AND ARTS

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BIKMAUS

THE LAUFI WORLD VIEW
By Paschal Waisi

GERMAN NEW GUINEA : A RELUCTANT
PLANTATION COLONY
Dr. Peter Sack

THE UNIQUE CATHOLIC CHURCH AT FANE
Fr. Theo Aerts

IMAGES
PICTURE STORY ON THE MAKING OF
A KUNDU DRUM
Photographs by John Himugu

KONGAN WAY
The Satirical Polity of an Emergent
Nation (Short Story)
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THE MAN WHO MARRIED A CASSOWARY WOMAN
(A Legend of the Abu Arapesh people of
the East Sepik Province)
Dr. Otto M. Nekitel

POETRY
Poems by Gideon Ginkawa

BOOK REVIEWS
Epeli Hau'ofa - *Kisses in the Netherlands*
Reviewed by Steven Winduo

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VOL. VII NO. 3 SEPTEMBER, 1987

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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LITERARY -

THE KONGAN

THE MAN WHO
A Traditional Fo
of the East Sepik

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BOOK REVIEW:
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THE MAN WHO MARRIED A CASSOWARY WOMAN

(A Legend from the Abu' Arapesh people of the Torricelli
Mountains as told to me by my father, the late
Andreas Nekitel of Womsis Village)

By Otto Manganau Nekitel

INTRODUCTION

This story is an Abu' Arapesh version of a story which is told in many villages in central Sepik region. Slightly different versions of the same story have been recorded at Ilahita, a Muhiang Arapesh village in 1973 by Don Laycock and Hambini (a Wam village) in 1981 by the author. Other versions have been heard among the Buki Arapesh and the Aruek speech community (see map). An interesting aspect of the story is that all versions share one basic theme namely transformation. In all the versions I have heard, there is transformation of story characters from cassowaries to human beings. There is also a gradual establishment of amicable relationship between humans and the non- or semi-human beings who are reported to live under the skins of cassowaries. As a matter of fact the Abu' folklore propagates that certain large animals of the area such as the pigs are not mere pigs but are also ghosts (mauras).

Cassowaries which are called unaruwa (singular unaru) in Abu', are regarded as female beings who simply wear the skins they have to deceive human beings. When on their own in the thick jungles, they are reported to live and enjoy their true physical form. This view is very much reflected in the story we present. It appears that the cassowary story of the Abu' Arapesh has some links with the dolphin woman story of the Kairiru. Both stories depict local beliefs about transformation and in this respect share this belief with other Melanesian communities.

The Abu' inhabit an area which covers roughly 300 square kilometres of mountainous land amid the Torricelli mountains of the central Sepik region. They number about 5,700 (1980 National Census) and live in nine main villages namely Balup, Malin, Aspeis, Welihika, Wolum, Womsis (the authors village), Amom, Womsak No.1 and Womsak No.2. The first six villages belong to the West Sepik Province. They are administered from Vanimo, the provincial headquarters via the

sub-provincial headquarters at Aitape. The last three villages belong to the East Sepik Province and are administered from Maprik, one of the main centres of the same Province.

Being landlocked, the Abu' share their northern border with the Suain, their eastern border with the Buki (Mountain) Arapesh, their southern border with the Muhiang (Southern Iahita) Arapesh, their western border with the Wam (locally known as Miye) and their north-western border with the Aruek. Suain is the only Austronesia speech community with whom the Abu' share a common border, the rest speak Papua (Non-Austronesian) languages which have been assigned to the Kombio Level Stock and subsequently have been assigned to the Torricelli Phylum (Laycock 1973).

Most of the Abu' landscape is mountainous. Steep slopes, scattered gorges and precipices abound and the altitude of the mountains ranges from about 150 metres at the base of the mountains to more than 3,500 metres above sea level. The rocks making up the mountains consist of limestone (called tatakwa) in Abu', to sedimentary rocks (si'eh) with the intermittent conglomerates (kein) and slate (sauleh) occurring through the entire area. Although at first glance, the mountains appear impenetrable, they have over the years been a most rewarding hunting ground for the sparse Abu' population. During periods of tribal warfare, sorcery accusations and other social threats, these mountains become idyllic hideouts. Because of the sparse population, most of the Abu' territory remains virgin land and is thus covered with tropical rainforest.

The entire area is traversed with numerous rivers and rivulets none of which are big enough to be navigable. They cut deep into the mountains and often collect in narrow gorges to form various size pools especially where they are trapped by hard basal rock. Many of the river pools are dark because of their cliffs and overhanging vegetation. This forbidding aspect makes people scared to go near them. Many of these dark pools are also believed to be the homes of spirits (walubis maurasi) and are, therefore respected and adored.

The story which follows was told to me by my late father Andreas Nekitel, in Erinikaka hamlet of Womsis village in December 1981.

Otto M. Nekitel.

ONCE a young village now stands. C next day. It did not dawn. At this time th

It was still dark, into the forest. He spe for any signs of wild g rivers and streams th and listening, but to r

The morning ho foliage the sun was u river pool he knew wa water. Just as he was further up the forest tr laughter grew louder standing. This was to second set of branch

To his astonish passed beneath him a the time wondering w where he was sitting a tree which we call 'a the pool at just the r

Suhurinim guess arrived at the pool sid more amazed when be begin to dive into the

Although all the v was stunned by her be all the cassowary wo the pool. It was a d

Suhurinim wonde wife. He knew she w the belle escaping he when she ran away. T being seen by the cas give his chances awa

As he was thinki of brushing it off, he th "Can you do me a ver

The ant replied, " The man said, "Li

THE STORY

ONCE a young man called Suhurinim lived alone. His house was not far from where Womsis village now stands. One evening he decided if the weather was fine he would go hunting wild game the next day. It did not rain during the night. Suhurinim was so keen to start that he left his house before dawn. At this time the first cries of the morning birds and insects were welcoming the new day.

It was still dark, so he had to use his hands and feet to feel his way along the bush track leading into the forest. He spent the early morning hours in virtual silence listening for any noises and watching for any signs of wild game. He climbed up and down many hills and mountains and crossed the numerous rivers and streams that traverse this mountainous country. He kept on walking, all the time watching and listening, but to no avail.

The morning hours were fast disappearing and it was soon noon time. In spite of the thick green foliage the sun was unusually hot. Suhurinim was so hot and sweaty that he decided to visit a large river pool he knew was located nearby. He looked forward to taking a dip in this beautiful pool of clear water. Just as he was about to plunge into the pool, he heard laughter and other sounds coming from further up the forest track that led to the pool. He stopped and wondered who it might be. The din and laughter grew louder and louder as whoever it was drew closer and closer to where Suhurinim was standing. This was too much for Suhurinim. He quickly crept to a nearby tree and climbed up into its second set of branches. There he sat in a comfortable spot and waited for the strangers to arrive.

To his astonishment he saw a long queue of cassowaries walking briskly along the path. They passed beneath him and continued towards the pool. Suhurinim did not move. He kept very quiet, all the time wondering what these strange cassowaries were going to do once they got to the pool. From where he was sitting, Suhurinim could see the entire pool as well as the river banks. He had chosen a tree which we call 'a'abuak in Abu because of its branch structure. Fortunately for him it tilted towards the pool at just the right angle to give him a clear view of the whole pool.

Suhurinim guessed that the cassowaries were going for a swim in the pool. When the cassowaries arrived at the pool side, they stopped and to his amazement started sloughing their skins. He was even more amazed when beautiful women stepped out from the beneath the skins. Before he could blink, they began to dive into the pool.

Although all the women were beautiful there was one who was the most beautiful of all. Suhurinim was stunned by her beauty. He watched as she lay her skin down by a bush covered with berries. Soon all the cassowary woman had plunged into the pool. They played about and chased each other in the pool. It was a delightful sight for a man who lived all alone in the forest.

Suhurinim wondered whether he could get the most beautiful cassowary woman to become his wife. He knew she would not come with him willingly. Suddenly it occurred to him that to prevent the belle escaping he must steal her skin so in her human form he would be able to catch up with her when she ran away. That all worked out, he then thought of the best way to steal her skin without being seen by the cassowary women. To go and get the sloughed skin himself, he thought, would only give his chances away because he would be seen given the open and clear space around the pool.

As he was thinking about what to do an ant approached him and crawled up his hands. Instead of brushing it off, he thought why not ask the ant to see if it could do the job for him. He asked the ant, "Can you do me a very special favour, oh my dear ant?"

The ant replied, "Much obliged sir. What is it that you want done?"

The man said, "Listen my friend, I am really in love with that very beautiful cassowary woman.

I want you to go down the tree and fetch her skin and bring it up to me."

The ant told the man, "Yes I will help you, but first of all you have to tell me where the skin is."

As soon as the ant learnt that her skin was placed next to the bush with the red berries, the ant set off to fetch it. In no time the ant was back with the skin and handed to the man. The man thanked the ant very sincerely and promised to do something for the ant if it was in need of help sometime. The ant nodded its head in appreciation of the thanks given by the man and then left in search of its next meal.

To hide the skin Suhurinim shoved it down a bamboo water tube he was carrying. He then picked a fruit from the tree he was sitting on and threw it into the centre of the pool. The cassowary women saw the fruit drop, but did not take notice, so it floated away. A few seconds later the man picked off another fruit and threw it at the cassowary women. They saw it drop and some became suspicious. They asked each other about the direction it had come. One of them picked up the fruit and found that some latex was dripping off its stem. To add to their ill ease, the man picked another fruit and threw it at them. This really upset them, and in no time they were out of water and made straight for their skins. As quickly as they could they jumped into them and fled.

The belle likewise ran for her skin but found it was missing. She grabbed someone else's skin but was told that it wasn't hers. She then ran to the next nearest skin but the owner reached it before her. The belle subsequently got another one and tried it on only to find that it was too small to fit her beautiful body. The owner came and was angry with the belle for trying to steal her skin. She snatched her skin back, put it on and fled after the others leaving the belle standing all alone in her transfigured form. This was a terrifying experience. Shaking with fear, the beautiful cassowary woman remained where she had been abandoned by her companions.

In the meantime, Suhurinim quickly descended from the tree and ran to the belle. She did not know what to do, but stood there looking askance at him in view of the nude display of herself. The man did not care, he went straight to her, grabbed her hand and begged her to go with him. The belle said, "I can come with you, but are you aware that I lack the thing that attracts men?"

The man said, "Never mind let me escort you home and see what we can do to meet the lack." The woman showed little resistance so they left and walked home. During the journey home, the man kept thinking about what he could do so that the woman would have a vagina. On arrival at his settlement, the man made sago soup and gave it to the transfigured cassowary woman. She quickly drank it down, but the warmth of the soup caused her to vomit all the fruit and everything she had previously swallowed.

The man then went to the open latrine and got his stone knife and slit open a piece of bamboo. It was a variety we call *nuketefikl* in Abu'. He took a fairly sharp strip and tied it onto the main post in the latrine and returned to their house. After vomiting, the cassowary woman wanted to go to the toilet. The man showed her the toilet, but did not tell her what he had done. The woman went to the toilet and after doing her business, she got up and wanted to clean her arse on the post. In so doing she slit herself between the legs and started bleeding. On seeing the bleeding, she hurried to the house and told the man that she could not return to the house because she was menstruating. The man quickly built a hut on the edge of their hamlet. The woman confined herself there until she stopped bleeding.

When she returned a week later, the man was very happy because he knew the woman now had what he had hoped she would have. The man wasted no time. He took her at night and after doing that for some time the woman told him that she was having a baby. Indeed she was pregnant and soon they had their first child. They then had a girl, then a son followed by a daughter. The family lived happily together and never once faced any hardship. During the dry season, the father made gardens and hunted

wild game in the forest for his family. During the

One day Suhurinim went out hunting, the elder called *abutohin*. The child was making. His mother yam. The child insisted his mother would not let him sobbing any more. He realized that his derelict promised that if his mother but the crying child all the other children climb the king post

She brought it down had lost for many years that skin. She then said. Having decided on some green coconut mother did not hesitate up the tallest coconut she got to the top, she their hamlet was looking go down and look for another and threw it

While the child their house. She got rehearsing for the vast, thick jungle. the clearing of their sight of the behaviour become of their mother the rest of the child. The father who was wondering what he

He made his way started showing signs hundred metres away kind in the vast, thick called his wife, but nowhere to be found. Suhurinim immediately her but being in hurry climbing one mountain the mountain tops joined them to roar returned in utter bitterness wife that he eventually

wild game in the forest and fished in the numerous rivers that traverse the surrounding district to feed his family. During the wet season, they made sago and hunted possums for food.

One day Suhuranim went out hunting. As usual he left before daybreak. While their father was out hunting, the eldest child felt hungry and demanded his mother to cook one of their best yams called *abutohin*. These were being kept in their house by Suhuranim to plant in the garden they were making. His mother flatly refused this request. She then asked the child if he wanted to eat another yam. The child insisted that he liked no other yam but the *abutohin*. However, when the child saw that his mother would not change her mind, he started crying very bitterly. The mother could not bear his sobbing any more so she went to their nearby garden. This naturally infuriated the child, but he also realized that his demand was difficult to meet, so he came to a compromise with his mother. He promised that if his mother cooked the yam for him he would tell her a secret. The mother agreed, but the crying child would not tell her until all the other children left the house. The mother then told all the other children to go and play outside. When they had gone, the eldest child told his mother to climb the king post and pull out a darkened bamboo from the roof of the house.

She brought it down and pulled out its contents. His mother was greatly surprised to see what she had lost for many years. She stood there for a long time reflecting her past life when she was living under that skin. She then started thinking of running away to join her own kind if she adorned her old skin. Having decided on this action, she called her children together and asked them if they wanted to have some green coconuts. The children were quite happy and greeted her query with a loud 'Yes'. The mother did not hesitate, straight away she looked for a rope to wrap around her feet to support her climb up the tallest coconut in their hamlet. She found a rope and started to climb up the coconut palm. When she got to the top, she grabbed a ripe green coconut and threw it down the slope of the ridge on which their hamlet was located. The coconut rolled many times down the slope. She ordered her children to go down and look for the cococut she had thrown. When they were about to go down the ridge she got another and threw it a little further and subsequently a third one.

While the children were all busy searching for the coconuts, she climbed down and ran back to their house. She got her skin and adorned it. After all these years it still fitted perfectly. She then started rehearsing for the trip she would be making when she left their hamlet to return to her own kind in the vast, thick jungle. When the children returned, they found a strange animal running up and down in the clearing of their hamlet. It whistled and looked curiously at the children who stood aghast at the sight of the behaviour of this cassowary. All except one of the children were wondering what had become of their mother. The crying child knew what had happened and started weeping bitterly. Soon the rest of the children figured out what their mother had done and so they all started crying as well. The father who was returning from his hunting trip heard the cries from a distant ridge and began wondering what had happened.

He made his way home in haste. Meanwhile the cassowary began to bid her children farewell and started showing signs of sadness. When the cassowary woman knew that her husband was about a hundred metres away from their hamlet, she left. She now began the long journey to return to her own kind in the vast, thick jungle of the Toricelli and Prince Alexander Ranges. The man got home and called his wife, but his call was greeted with abject silence and the cries of his children. The mother was nowhere to be found. He knew at once what had happened when he saw the cassowary's footprints. Suhuranim immediately started to follow his wife who was now in her cassowary form. He ran after her but being in human form he could not catch up with his former wife. For three days he kept on going, climbing one mountain after another. He never caught up with his wife. She called several times from the mountain tops to farewell her children and was not seen again. She found her former relatives and joined them to roam the vast jungles of the Toricelli and Prince Alexander Mountains. Her husband returned in utter bitterness and never lived a normal life again. He was so worried about his cassowary wife that he eventually got lost in the forest. It is said rejoined his wife in another form, her form. #

Poems by

Gideon Ginkawa

ABOUT THE POET

Gideon Ginkawa, 30, comes from Nelikum village in the East Sepik Province. He received all his primary and high school grades in Maprik and graduated in 1978 at School Certificate level from Maprik High School. In 1979 he took up Library Studies at the Administrative College. The following year he started work with the National Library. In 1982 he enrolled for Preliminary Year at the University of Papua New Guinea but withdrew and returned home. The poems included here are a selection from a much larger collection written since his University days.

- Editor

PACIFIC VIDEO CASSETTES

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THE PACIFIC ISLANDS AND THE PACIFIC

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THE ORIGINALS

DEDICATION

The girl who mothered this came only in a dream,
When only clothed in inspiration flame,
Herefore one child of no dream,
And, so may any generous Papua New Guinean claim.

TUKANA

A film of the Tukana people of Papua New Guinea. The film shows the life of the Tukana people in their traditional villages. The film is a beautiful example of the art of the Tukana people.

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A film of the Angels of War, a group of young women who fought in the Pacific during World War II. The film is a beautiful example of the art of the Angels of War.

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A film of the first contact between the Europeans and the natives of the Pacific. The film is a beautiful example of the art of the first contact.

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HEKSEN

A film of the Heksen people of Papua New Guinea. The film shows the life of the Heksen people in their traditional villages. The film is a beautiful example of the art of the Heksen people.

DOOM DOOM DRUM

Doom Doom Doom Doomdoom,
The sound of the distant drum,
Rolling the valleys,
Sailing over the hills.
Far and away a village celebrates.
Into the stark deep night.
Lights of joy shining bright:
Logs of excitement burning deep
A girl's laughter
No '
But let the winds scatter the dying embers,
Tormenting the far away hearts,
Wounding the lingering on souls distance
Doom Doom Doom Doomdoom.
The Doomdoom drum:
Can you travel far enough?
To the land of Hula-hula; with my hearts message?
Tell her I love her.

PEARLS GIVE BIRTH TO RAINBOWS

And I saw my old men carving his treasure,
From shell clam.
First he hacked and he sawed,
Then he rubbed and he scrubbed,
Next, twelled and polished,
Until his "ringed treasure" mirrored clear.
"To make a ring money with a heart beat,
And in the night you'll see stars germinate" he said.
And he was not wrong.
Then later by coincidence came to discover
Another shell - pearly shell - only made in
the South Seas.
I did not have to hack and saw,
Or rub and scrub,
Nor twell and polish,
To get that result clear
Because this treasure has been duly made,
Only by hands divine,
And just only to see it, got a heart tremor,
As from it; rainbows were germinating.

ELSIE OF THE SOUTH SEAS

Alias and did see me,
Almost a rare she,
Borne with ease,
Like the morning sea;
But give me no peace,
She is Elsie !

WONDERLAND

Her smile is like Alice's wardrobe into wonderland.
And when she smiles, you could see stretches
of plains; of rivers and plains.
Like the Paradise singing,
Or like the sound of mountain well licking,
And falling to yet a bigger pool below.
Or even like angels trumpeting.
Her smile is like bringing heaven a little closer
A smile that is music by itself,
One reality,
Yet, and still an elusive allusion.

BOUGAINVILLEA REACH

Reaching out into the world empty, South Seas -
... with a present so to offer,
The hands of one indigenous plant - Bougainvillea
And clutched into its graceful arms - "so ripe a bunch"

Still rippling, and with morning temperance dripping,
And with enough grandeur,
And splendour
to make chill and freeze -
The Pacific breeze.

Yet tell me good Bougainvillea,
For whom does your good hand reach -
Or is it that a Prince foreign will sail by,
Just so to reap that gorgeous crop,
Now so copious in your hands?

MIDNIGHT POETRY

You lady Ngatakua,
Have at last borne fruit;
And on sides too, gain'd weight and beauty,
For the wealth of crest you've grown,
You are more - "a restless pride",
You display them in excess

Good feathers, fair flumes;
Your homes are Kuarugne and Sagnemik
Me; but a Kuk'le flume, a G'lawei bird,
Devoid of Songs and Beauty -
And, yet here I come . . .
Emerging
Riding high in Holy Rites Esteem
Buried deep in ornamentals ceremonial

Still in vain, I have waited on you;
And waited on you to come
Bird of unknown species,
And if you do come,
I will take you to Ceremonial Grounds, Sagnemik
Buds of Bamboo,
Shoots of Bamboo,
You pose in sleepy recline,
And rock on lazy decline,
In the land, Kuarugne and Sagnemik

Also in the Dancing Ground Kuarugne,
And in the Ceremonial Ground Sagnemik,
This is the song they sing:
The virgins sex are cut and dispersed,
The colours too withdrawn and strewn

Yet in Kuarugne and Sagnemik,
It is the herald of the ever- vigilant Gwawi Bird,
It is the dawning call of the Se'rra fowl

But my southern Manui,
If you'd come,
I would've taken you to the Dancing Ground,
Kuarugne,
And if you'd come,
I would've taken you to the Ceremonial Ground,
Sagnemik.

FEELINGS

Your assumptions,
Your interpretations,
Your feelings,
Your healings
Me 'always kneeling
For you'

SIRENS MURUROA

My friend, the beauties of the South Seas are paradise,
The silky, silky, the silkiest paradise, the night's fire.
My friend, the beauties of the South Seas are the day's stars,
My friend, the beauties of the South Seas are sun-adored objects,
And when the sun admires, will burn,
glowing yellow and gold all over,
And brighter than the burning magnesium.
So, my friend, don't admire the sun adored beauties without protective goggles,
Because they have enough radiation to melt your eyes down.

My friend, if you chance to walk beside one,
Don't walk too close,
Because the beauty of the Pacific is likened to a preying- mantis,
And with deadly arms concealed.
Beware, she will catch you like a fly unaware.

My friend, the beauties of the South Seas
are sun adored objects,
And they burn with magnifying glories,
And in secret sachets are their glories all concealed,
My friend, when she reveals it,
It's an awe,
You are bound to shrivel,
or just go blind by matter of seeing,
And touching it is almost too impossible,
But, again my friend, the scent of her secret
sachet will give you a kick to the lands of Utopia.

My friend, the worst is they automatically steal
souls, by matter of walking,
And they sing as sweetly: the legendary Sirens
And are reputed to eat men's heart raw.
And, my friend, always take caution,
Because, the ladies of the South Seas,
are life and moving atomic bombs,
And with the brightness of only one of them,
We will still outshine all the explosions of Mururoa.

PERFUMED PEARL

Painted intricate with colours ochre,
With ceremonial plumes lustre,
She became the perfume of the show.
And like bees the multitude sight in relish,
And savoured in breaths deep.
Still like leeches sucking blood,
The crowd glued to her every movement with high
emotions
And imaginations to drink in those
ever-bountiful wells.
Then she swayed;
And her grass skirt swirled in great arcs;
Like a spotlight - to light every dark corner,
Again she twirled, harder this time,
And her grass skirt sailed out further
Like octopuses hands - deadly,
To ensnare a passing prey.

But the mystery in code was to reveal
 a sunken treasure;
 One mother of pearl shell,
 Tucked in amidst the bowing seaweed
 And it glints to outvalue all the pearls
 of the Torres Sea.
 Still like waves she receded,
 With the tides of her protecting male,
 And to return to assault the granite faces even harder,
 With the intentions to drown once and for all
 this time over.
 And the drowning of her man's drums,
 Were like thunder in the distance.
 Now to concentrate on her lower bodice treasures
 That she forgot the two most prized possessions
 upper;
 Voluptuous buds!
 Perching and riding on waves high
 With radiance like emeralds,
 Like the Mekeo Mountains in the distance,
 And still at closer range,
 They welled with pride like ripened mangoes.
 And she felt the lull of attention was everchanging
 now.
 She felt the lull,
 But the lustful eye of the hurricane had
 focused with the intention of plucking,
 Those two over-ripened and tantalising treasures
 juicy.
 And with dainty hands she tried to smother
 these opulences.
 Still an attempt; it wasn't too late!
 the richness spilled into her own hands
 And the wind ground its teeth and hoped
 never it was
 This one heart-melting episode
 Indeed, no mind easing one
 Oh! This cool beauty from the South Seas.

THE FALLEN WONDER

The next morning saw it lying there,
And the ants were all at work crawling,
More like building a King's pyramid,
Instead now with the intentions of dismantling
Another artwork in earth's wonders.
And the wonder called by like a ghost in the night.
And flying to the light bulb was drinking
With all the delight, an artificial bud flowering
Its rainbow hue of complications,
And of intricate design,
Beyond an artist's imaginations
So it fed on the electrical dine.
And yet it was caught in the magnetic trap.
I watched as it counted its last night of flight
And with passing hours its current of power to sap,
By tomorrow, it's worth only a shadowy lie,
The beautiful marvel that embalm the tree's bark
Would have fallen to naught,
Because it ventured beyond its woody dark
And so by bright city light got caught!
The ant fraternity pities your soul.

FINER SANDS DO MELT

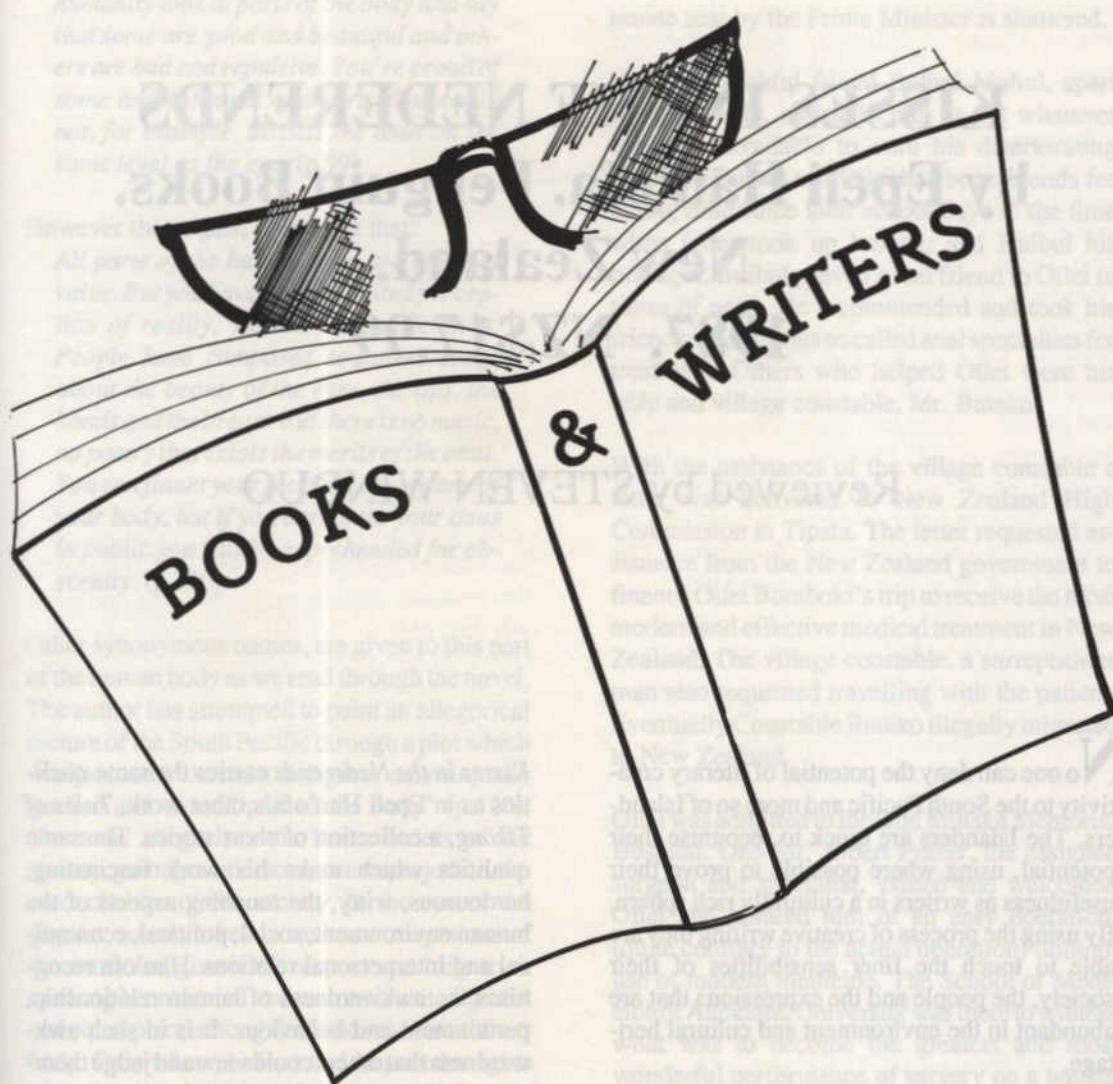
Swear never saw the sands so fine,
Licked and lapped clean with figures defined
Polished and vanished with hands divine,
They glistened on the inviting bays
The inlets of South Seas.
Still like manna
Only the blessings from heaven.
And soluble enough,
To melt at the lover's touch;
Just to quench the lover's thirst.

WILLY WAG TAIL

Happy Willy Wag Tail;
Willy, wiggie, waggie wag tail,
Happy go lucky Willy,
I stole to see you,
Deep in your favourite drama
One, two, three steps forward.
One, two steps back,
One step to the right,
Two steps left:
Take to the air,
Somersault and back to start again.
Very much satisfied? If not march
Tip-toe tip-toe one two three
Tip-toe tip-toe one two three
Head high, wings down, tail spanned
Why not salute to your respectable audience .
Tilt your head a little higher,
Wings straight down,
And conceal your underbelly.
Give a mighty salute, There -
And with all your pride walk passed;
Like you never trespass . . .
I am just another invisible admirer.

BOYHOOD DREAM

My liking you is beyond scope,
When I see you as my only hope
Fell for you the first time I saw you,
Down by the crossroad Konedobu.
Like the moon you emerged,
And anchored deep - alighted all in a gleam;
Yet in me dawned that boyhood dream:
"If only I can hide and deflect,
And "capture" that one rare golden beam,
Of higher elevation,
And destined for a better destination".



MILLENIUM TOUCHES AND KISSES

KISSES IN THE NEDERENDS
by Epeli Hau'ofa. Penguin Books.

**New Zealand.
1987. NZ\$17.99**

Reviewed by STEVEN WINDUO

No one can deny the potential of literary creativity to the South Pacific and more so of Islanders. The Islanders are quick to recognise their potential, using where possible to prove their usefulness as writers in a culturally rich sphere. By using the process of creative writing they are able to touch the finer sensibilities of their society, the people and the expressions that are abundant in the environment and cultural heritage.

Kisses in the Nederends is one example of some of the best works by the Pacific Islanders. The author, Epeli Hau'ofa is a distinguished scholar, who had previously taught at the University of Papua New Guinea and the University of South Pacific where he heads the Department of Sociology. In 1978-81 he was appointed Deputy Private Secretary to the King of Tonga and subsequently was also appointed Director of the Rural Development Center in Tonga in 1981.

Kisses in the Nederends carries the same qualities as in Epeli Hau'ofa's other work, *Tales of Tikong*, a collection of short stories. The same qualities which make his work fascinating, humorous, witty, the touching aspects of the human environment, social, political, economical and interpersonal relations. Hau'ofa recognises the awkwardness of human relationship, pertainment and behaviour. It is in such awkwardness that others could view and judge themselves. They could either jubilate or depress themselves to live in that awkwardness, and make the worst of it. However, this does not mean Hau'ofa is cruel to his characters, he is very cautious with them and treats them with the utmost humanity.

Hau'ofa's protagonist is Oilei Bomoki, who we learn is suffering from an anal problem. Oilei wakes up one morning with excruciating pains in his most sensitive part. As the yogai (another

character) describes
The problem with
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this stance, the h
parts and assign
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no poetry that e
You can flaunt
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scenity. (p.100)

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(p.101).

As the worst o
suffering Oilei
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character) describes it:

The problem with your anus is in the inherent human tendency to isolate and the divide manifestation of One Infinite, in this stance, the human body, into different parts and assign to each of them different values. You and most of the rest of the humanity look at parts of the body and say that some are good and beautiful and others are bad and repulsive. You're proud of some and ashamed of others. You would not, for example, discuss the anus on the same level as the eye. (p.99)

However the yogaist points out that:

All parts of the human body are of equal value. But you have in your limited perception of reality, viewed them differently. People have composed countless songs about the beauty of the eyes, the lips, the hands and the breast. But there is no music, no poetry that extols the merits of the anus. You can flaunt your face and other parts of your body, but if you dare bare your anus in public you will be apprehended for obscenity. (p.100)

Other synonymous names, are given to this part of the human body as we read through the novel. The author has attempted to paint an allegorical picture of the South Pacific through a plot which works around "the most maligned, most unjustly loathed and abused part of the body" (p.100). The anus allegorises the lower orders of the society, garbage collectors, a class prejudice, the untouchables of the society. In the eye of the yogaist, we are asked to review our opinions of the anus, and give it the respect and "dignity it has long been denied and restore it to its rightful and equal place among the honoured parts of our body. Only when you love and respect the rights of the lowliest member of the least members of your body, can you really love and respect the rights of the least members of your society", as Mahatma Ghandi did to the untouchables of his country by calling them, "children of God" (p.101).

As the worst of pains develop in the part of the suffering Oilei, he is forced to seek treatment from 'dottres, pastors, medical doctors, surgeons, psychiatrists, acupunturists, magicians,

yogaists and self-proclaimed curers'. The various treatments prove failures and costly for the patient. Along with the cost and pain inflicted on Oilei went the glorifications, esteem and shattered hopes of all those who attempted to cure Oilei Bomboki's physical as well as spiritual decline. Even his hope of occupying the vacant senate seat by the Prime Minister is shattered.

His most faithful friend Bulbul Mohul, apart from his wife, assisted Oilei to get whatever treatment available to cure his deteriorating problem. Bulbul and Oilei had been friends for a long time since their school days to the time when Oilei took up boxing, and Bulbul his manager. Bulbul proved a real friend to Oilei in times of need. He recommended and took his friend to the various so called anal specialists for treatment. Others who helped Oilei were his wife and village constable, Mr. Butako.

With the assistance of the village constable a letter was delivered to New Zealand High Commission in Tipata. The letter requested assistance from the New Zealand government to finance Oilei Bomboki's trip to receive the most modern and effective medical treatment in New Zealand. The village constable, a surreptitious man also requested travelling with the patient. Eventually Constable Butako illegally migrated to New Zealand.

Oilei was admitted to the Dun Mihaka Memorial Hospital. One Mr. Albert Frazer, the assigned surgeon and specialist, visited and welcomed Oilei and assured him of an easy operation, (quite contrary to the actual operation) through use of modern medicine. The School of Medicine of Auckland University was there to witness what was to become the greatest and most wonderful performance of surgery on a human anus. Mr. Albert Frazer intended to transplant another human being's anus in place of Oilei's. The surgeon described Oilei's case as:

...twenty-two fistulae in the patient's anus, which is almost certainly the largest number ever found in a single such orifice at any one time. The whole complex is shockingly lacerated and ulcerous owing to rough treatment he got at home (p.145-146).

No spare anus of a Polynesian was held in reserve to be used for transplanting onto Oilei's maltreated one. Shockingly Oilei's operation was a failure. His body refused to accommodate the only available spare anus held in the laboratory (that of a white woman). At the failure (witnessed by the whole New Zealand School of Medicine) there was an uproar. Mr. Albert Frazer refused to deal with another anal case ever.

Oilei was transferred in a coma to the Whakapohane Clinic. He remained under careful examination and went through a thorough treatment. After six weeks he awoke, surprised to find "familiar faces in a large room with only a few pieces of furniture....". There was Makarita, Bulbul Bohut, Losana Tanoka, a newly slim Marama Kakase, Domoni Thimailomalangi, Seru Draunikau, the ex-constable Dau Butako and friends of the highly praised movement, the Millenarian (p.148). They belonged to the International School of Traditional Medicine, situated initially at Nanggaralevu, an island in Fiji. Much of the Third Millenium Foundation. The founder, the great Babu Vivekanand who:

For many years had worked clandestinely in Asia, America and Europe, developing and propagating his unique philosophy for peace. Fabulously generous donations from people and organisations had enabled him to establish the Third Millenium Foundation (TMF) for the purpose of sponsoring, among other things, grand international conferences that gave him the opportunity to spread his message widely (p.150).

The climatic atmosphere of the book escalates to a seemingly simple and well fashioned treatment of Oilei's anus, which was as wide as the "Portals of Paradise" (p.150) by the simple yoga approach coined by Babu Vivekanand. This approach abandoned by Oilei becomes the only effective treatment available for mankind. As the renowned Babu remarked: "we will bestow on you the collective kisses of love and respect, the best known treatment there is for every sickness known to human kind". (p.149).

The "KISSES IN THE NEDERENDS" seems strikingly humorous and enjoyable for a read-

ing audience, but we must not be easily content with its clear plot and tale of a man in search of treatment for his diseased anus.

It is wise we be advised that Epeli Hau'ofa's work is an important work with complexity that stretches beyond the comprehension of the novel. There is heavy discursive language that colours the fable, dialogues that cut across the cultural boundaries, characters that are real in the contemporary Pacific society. In the face of the changing world the Pacific Islander is in search of an assertion that makes him what he is. He wants an identity that makes him the component of this humanity. Oilei's predicament in fact can be alluded to his inability to believe in himself, and his identity in his environment. It is Babu Vivekanand who makes Oilei realise who he is. However Oilei's identity is displayed very well, when his body refused the anus of a white woman during the operation.

The apparent reason to discourage the pleasure reader of this wonderful and important novel is the underlying aspects of the novel. It seems to this reviewer that it seems very much a political novel as well as a critical perspective of the Pacific Islander becoming fully aware of the influence of foreigners, particularly New Zealand, Australia and the superpowers of the world. How appropriate is the help given by the former colonisers to develop our country (ies)? What about our own culture, traditions and values? The voice of the Pacific man is to be heard in the world and respected and given the equal treatment it deserves. Such are questions one should have in mind when reading KISSES IN THE NEDERENDS. #

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