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SEINI TAUFA

‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: Fatu fala e fale lalanga (Weaving Threads)

Abstract

This article explores the intertwined worldviews of Queen Sālote Tupou III and Tongan scholar Epeli Hau‘ofa on identity, kinship, and self-determination in the context of Tonga’s cultural preservation and artistic legacy. Through the lens of contemporary Tongan artists Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, the ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures project demonstrates how their artistic practices reclaim Tongan cultural narratives from colonial collections. This article examines their shared commitment to reconnecting with ancestral knowledge, navigating diasporic identities, and challenging institutional barriers to reclaim the koloa (treasures) and histories embedded in their art and practice.

Keywords: *‘Amu‘i ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Tongan diaspora, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, Queen Sālote, art, material culture, koloa, museums, decolonizing museums*

For his book, *The Friendly Islanders: A Story of Queen Salote and Her People* (1967), Kenneth Bain (Secretary to the Tongan Government from 1953 to 1956) interviewed Queen Sālote Tupou III (1900–1965) who said, “There is a generation of young people growing up, who do not know who they are and to whom they belong. If Tonga is to survive[,] the ties of kinship must be strengthened and not loosened.”¹ In a world increasingly influenced by Western views and ideologies, Queen Sālote understood the importance of identity—“being connected to, and belonging”; of not losing who we are as Tongan people even as we became a diaspora. Even then, she knew that to navigate forward, we needed to look back.

Three decades later, in *Our Sea of Islands* (1994), Tongan scholar Epeli Hau‘ofa wrote, “Whatever we produce must not be a version of our existing reality, which is largely a creation of imperialism; it must be different and of our own making. We should not forget that human reality is human creation. If we fail to create our own, someone else will do it for us by default.”² Hau‘ofa believed in an individual’s right to be the custodian of their “own knowledge” so that their realities would be not only learned and understood but also shared.

The worldviews of Queen Sālote and Hau’ofa, with their emphasis on the vital relationship between strong kin networks and self-determination, are shared by Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopolomalama Filipe Tohi, another daughter and son of Tonga, whose *nima mea’a* (arts) and *kalia* (vessels) are exhibited in the various ‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures exhibitions.

Background

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, distinctions were drawn between the written histories of the Western world and the storytelling or “myths” of non-literate communities. Tongan treasures gifted or traded to Europeans on voyages of scientific exploration into the Pacific traveled far from home. In Europe, they became the illustrations of histories narrated by explorers, collectors, and savants who neither thought like Tongans nor fully understood the cultural significance of the *koloa* (treasures) now in their care.

Work to remedy this situation began in earnest with projects launched by Queen Sālote under the auspices of the Tonga Traditions Committee, which she chaired from 1954–65, whereby Tongan scholars were sent into museum collections and archives to look for and repatriate Tongan knowledge. Concurrently, Queen Sālote established the Langafonua ‘a Fafine Tonga (Women’s Council of Tonga) with the vision to “work in one accord” —*Ngaue loto taha pe*— to ensure a better quality of life for all women of Tonga and their families. In the ensuing decades, Tongan and European scholars alike have researched Tongan arts in collections worldwide and in Tonga, including the poetic works and songs of Queen Sālote herself, which encode Tongan history in *lea heliaki*, the Tongan art of saying one thing but meaning another. There are now Tongan curators in key roles at Te Papa Tongarewa, the Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland War Memorial Museum, and others who work in heritage roles in Tonga itself. Tongan artists have been awarded prestigious residencies and held extensive exhibitions in museums and galleries worldwide.

In 2017, a research and art development project supported by the Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund and titled “Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies” set out to further contribute to the reclaiming of Tongan narratives in early collections by exploring late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan arts and their legacies through the eyes of Tongan artists Tohi and Dyck, and in conversation with academics. From the perspective of an outsider looking in, the differences in

Tohi and Dyck’s upbringing (male vs. female, Tongan-born vs. Aotearoa New Zealand-born, Tongan vs. Tongan–German) and the contexts they navigate reflect what Tongan society looks like today.

I sat down with both artists to *talanoa* (talk critically yet harmoniously) about their journey and what they learned leading up to ‘*Amui ‘I Mu’a/Ancient Futures*. Throughout the *talanoa* it became clear that their practices complemented each other, and that while *Ancient Futures* was a four-year project, what was on display in the exhibition of the same name has been an evolution of their lifetimes’ work. While at a surface level, it is easy to determine differences between these two individuals, the *talanoa* provided insights into how similar they are. The following sections explore aspects of their shared worldview.

The Love of Art

The love of art was engrained in both Dyck and Tohi from a young age. Dyck loved art, loved everything about it, and Tohi covered the pages of his school books with drawings of his surroundings. Despite growing up in different parts of the *moana* (the Pacific Ocean)—Tonga and Aotearoa New Zealand—art was not encouraged nor considered within their social spheres as a viable career path. However, it was the belief from a teacher who saw the potential in their artistic creativity that made a difference.

I had Judy Darragh as my art teacher. Judy did something critical. She said to the counselor, “When Dagmar comes to choose her subjects, please encourage her to take art because I can see something in her and I would love for her to keep going.” That critical moment was the first time someone had seen me like that and validated that part of me. (Dyck)

When I went to school, my books were covered in drawings. One of my teachers took me to the principal’s office to complain. At fifteen years old I was scared because I thought I was going to be suspended. The principal saw my art and asked me to draw a cat and a portrait of him. At prize-giving, I was surprised when they called my name, and I received an art award. (Tohi)

In the words of Aristotle, “Those who know, do. Those who understand, teach.” Both teachers understood the raw gift that was waiting to be harnessed,

and for a boy running around in Tongatapu and a girl whose ethnic background was constantly mistaken, it was the water that was needed to grow a seed.

Longing for Home

As they progressed as artists, Dyck and Tohi found themselves in environments that often felt foreign. Where words were not adequate to describe their feelings, art became their voice. While both in Aotearoa New Zealand, there was a personal yearning for things “Tongan,” an internal longing to find oneself and to connect.

I can still remember when the *Art of Tonga* (Keith St. Cartmail, 1997) book was released.³ I remember seeing it at this bookshop and for me, it was the most amazing thing—feeling connected to something like that. That book held me for two or three years. (Dyck)

Speaking in English and the written text was foreign but using my hands [and] creating—it was a natural part of who I am. I used to always go to the beach, where I would cook, draw, and watch the ocean, longing for home (Tonga), thinking of the vast ocean and how somehow these shores connected with the shores back home. (Tohi)

This longing also influenced Tohi’s interactions with other Indigenous artists.

As a boy, my dad was lost at sea and my grandmothers raised me. One [grandmother] grew up before missionary arrival, so she shared stories of Maui and Tangaloa. When I worked with Māori artists, I was drawn to them because their stories reminded me of home. (Tohi)

Working Together on *Ancient Futures*

Ancient Futures provided an opportunity for two Tongan artists to add to their basket of knowledge; to “see, feel, touch, and connect (mind, body, and spirit)” with the *mana* (prestige, ancestral power) attached to the *koloa* in front of them;⁴ an experience that would not have been as rich had only one Tongan embarked on the voyage as opposed to two. Their insights, passion, and ability to connect to

the team and the *koloa* on an emotional level allowed for deep meaningful engagement, true reflection, and creative inspiration.

Tonga is a country built on kinship and connections, and while both Tohi and Dyck recognize the “privilege to see what most cannot” due to geographic divides, there was a sadness in seeing how institutional walls and rules can restrict the sharing of the *koloa* with their *kainga* (family, village, community). They note:

Each piece we saw has a story, there is history tied to it, and when it left Tonga we lost a part of ourselves . . . [Europeans] came and brought their ways and we adopted them, and we put our traditional beliefs [and] our *koloa* to the side, and slowly we forgot. We were told that our ways of thinking were dark and not civilized, and we conformed. Yes, they took our *koloa* and preserved it but they’re confined to their walls, and in turn, we lost our knowledge and our stories. We need to give people, our people, the opportunity to reclaim what is creatively ours. (Tohi)

We’ve documented all of this beautiful stuff, but we often cannot share our photos taken in museum storerooms on social media. On the one hand, we are seeing the *koloa* because museums have been able to hold them in good conditions and for that, we are extremely grateful. But then you ask, how did they get there? How were they acquired? Under what process? While many were gifts made by chiefly people, some of those stories and connections are lost. We have also lost how things have been made, and that is heartbreaking. But we are makers, if they had it, it is in us. (Dyck)

While every request from the project team for access to collections was met with generosity and open doors, experiences varied from institution to institution depending on operational and insurance policies and staffing availability. Various, these included whether or not children could enter the stores (Tohi’s daughter, Dakota, was part of the touring group, and on only one occasion was not permitted into a museum’s stores); if gloves had to be worn by Dyck and Tohi (often they didn’t unless chemical treatments made skin contact unsafe); if large textiles could be unrolled for viewing (usually possible only when museums were closed, so that gallery spaces could be used for this purpose); and, perhaps most significantly, whether forms had to be signed restricting photos to use for “research purposes only.”

Dyck reminds us: “Then came the question, *who does it belong to and are they really the real deal about decolonizing and indigenizing museum practice. . .?*”

If we can get more eyes on this it would be wonderful.” Thus, *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures* is not the end of a project, but a departure point—a continuation of their lifelong work. In true Tongan fashion, it is the *hala manga‘ono* (intersection to six roads), a proactive way of moving forward and creating more. With their passion for arts and Tonga, it is my hope as a Tongan that emerging Tongan artists throughout the *moana* are inspired to look back, reflect, and, with confidence, navigate forward.

‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: *Fatu fala e fale lalanga* (Weaving Threads)

‘I he tohi ‘a Kenneth Bain (Sekelitali ‘o e Pule‘anga Tongá meí he 1953 ki he 1956) ‘oku ‘iloa ko e *The Friendly Islanders: A Story of Queen Salote and her People* (1967) na‘e faka‘eke‘eke ai ‘a Kuini Sālote Tupou III kuó ne unga fonuá, pea na‘á ne folofola ai ‘o pehē: “Kuo tupu hake ‘a e to‘utangata ‘o e kuongá ní ‘o ‘ikai ke nau ‘ilo‘i kinautolu mo honau tupu‘angá. Kapau ‘oku tau mahu‘inga‘ia hotau Tongá, kuo pau ke toe vāofi ange ‘a e nofo ‘a kāingá.” ‘I ha kuonga kuo toe mālohi ange ‘a e fusi kitautolu ‘e he tō‘onga mo‘ui faka-Uēsité, na‘e ‘afio‘i ‘e Kuini Sālote ‘a e mahu‘inga hoto kitá (‘ilo‘i kita mo hoto tupu‘angá) ke ‘oua ‘e mole pea tukuange hoto Tongá tautefito ‘i he ngaahi fonua mulí. ‘I he taimi ko iá, na‘e mahino kiate ia, ‘e makatu‘unga ‘etau laka ki mu‘á ‘i he‘etau ako meí he kuohilí.

Hili mei ai ‘a e ta‘u ‘e 30 tupu, na‘e pehē ‘e ‘Ēpeli Hau‘ofa ko e tokotaha Tonga mataotao ‘i he mala‘e ‘o e akó: “‘Oku totonu ke tau fononga fakatatau mo hotau ngaahi fa‘unga motu‘á pea ‘ikai hē he ngaahi ākenga mo e fakalakalaka mei he kau mulí. ‘Oku totonu ke tau manatu‘i ke tau tataki hotau fonongá kae ‘oua ‘e tākiekina kitautolu ‘e ní‘ihi kehe. Kapau ‘e ‘ikai pukepuke mo tauhi ‘a hotau fa‘unga motu‘á ‘e taki hala‘i ‘a e to‘utangata ‘o e kaha‘ú.” ‘Oku tui ‘a ‘Ēpeli, ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e totonu fakafo‘ituitui ki hono fakatolonga ‘o e ngaahi fa‘unga motu‘á pea ‘ikai ngata pē ‘i hono vahevahe atú ka ‘oku mahino ngofua.

‘Oku kau fakataha ‘a Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck mo Sopole- malama Filipe Tohi ‘i he vīsone fakamamani lahi na‘e ma‘u ‘e Kuini Sālote mo ‘Ēpelí. Ke tau tokanga makehe ke vāofi ‘a e nofo ‘a kāingá mo e ngāue fakatahá. ‘E faka‘ali‘ali atu ‘a ‘ena ngaahi lavame‘a ‘i he ngāue fakamea‘á mo e ‘aatí ‘i he kātoanga ‘a e *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures*.

Talateu

‘I he senituli 18 mo e 19, na’e fakamahu’inga’i ‘a e ngaahi fakamatala ne hiki tohí. Kuo ‘i ai ‘a e tō kehekehe ‘i he ngaahi- hi lekooti kuo hikí mo e ngaahi fakamatala fekau’aki mo e koloa fakamea’a mei Tonga kuo ‘ave ‘e he kau papālangí ‘i hono ma’u ko e me’a’ofa, ngaahi fakafetongi koloa pe fefakatau’aki. Na’e hoko eni lolotonga ‘enau folau mai ki he Pasifiki ‘i he ngaahi fakatotolo fakasaianisi. ‘I ‘Iulopé, na’e fakafalala ‘a e ngaahi fakamatala na’e hiki tohí meí he ma’u ‘a e kau folau tahí, kau fakatotolo fakasainisi mo kinautolu na’a nau tauhi ‘a e ngaahi koloá. Na’e ‘ikai kakato ‘a e ngaahi fakamatala na’a nau hikí he na’e ‘ikai ke nau ‘ilo’i ‘a e ngaahi koloá fakatautaha mo hono mahu’ingá.

Kuo fakahoko mai eni ‘a e ngāue ke fakamā’opo’opo mo fakatonutonu ‘a e ngaahi me’á ni ‘o kau ai ‘a e polokalama ngāue na’e kamata ‘e Kuini Sālote fakataha mo e *Tonga Traditions Committee* ‘a ia na’á ne hoko ko e sea ai mei he 1954-65. Na’e lava ke folau ai ha kau mataotao ‘i he mala’e ‘o e akó ki he ngaahi misiume kuo tauhi ai ‘a e ngaahi koloá ni ke toe vakai’i pea ke fakafoki mai ‘a e ngaahi ‘ilo ko ‘ení. ‘I he taimi tatau, na’e fokotu’u ai ‘e Kuini Sālote ‘a e Langafonua ‘a Fafine Tonga (*Women’s Council of Tonga*). Na’e fakataumu’a ke ngāue loto taha pea tokoni’i mo hiki hake ‘a e mo’ui ‘a e fefine Tongá mo honau ngaahi fāmilí. Talu meí he taimi ko iá, kuo ngāue fakataha mai ai ‘a e kau ‘Iulopé mo e kāinga Tongá ‘i he mala’e ‘o e akó ke fakamā’opo’opo mo fekumi ki he ngaahi ngāue faka’aati kuo tauhi ‘i Tonga mo e ngaahi fonua mulí. ‘Oku kau heni ‘a e ngaahi maaui mo e ngaahi ta’anga ‘a Kuini Sālote ‘oku kau ai ‘a e ngaahi heliaki fekau’aki mo e hisitōlia ‘o Tongá. Kuo ‘i ai eni ha kau tu’ukimau’a Tonga ‘i he mala’e ‘o e ‘ātí ‘i he *Te Papa Tongarewa, The Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland War Memorial Museum* pea mo e kau tauhi fonua ‘i Tongá. Kuo toe foaki foki ki he kau ‘aati Tongá ha ngaahi fakalāngilangi makehe mo ha faingamālie ki he katoanga faka’ali’ali lalahi ‘i he ngaahi misiume mo e fale faka’ali’ali ‘i he opé.

‘I he 2017, na’e fokotu’u ai ‘a e polokalama ngāue fekumi mo fakalalakala ‘oku ‘iloa ko e *Ancient Futures*. Na’e fakapa’anga ‘a e ngāue ni ‘e he *Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund* pea na’e fakataumu’a ia ke fakato- nutonu mo fakafoki mai ‘a e ngaahi ‘ilo fekau’aki mo e ngaahi koloa mei he kongā ki mui ‘o e senituli 18 mo e kongā ki mu’a ‘o e senituli 19 fakataha mo e ngaahi faka- matala ‘a Tohi mo Dyck mo e kau taukei ‘i he mala’e ‘o e akó. Ko Tohi na’e fā’ele’i ‘i Tonga pea fā’ele’i ‘a Dyck ‘i Nu’u Silá ni; ‘oku ou tui kuo tokoni lahi ‘a e ngaahi a’usia mei hona tupu’angá ki he ngāue ‘okú na fakahokó.

‘I he teuteu eni ki he kātonga ‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/*Ancient Futures*, kuo lava ke fakahoko ‘a e pōtalanoa mo e ongo me’á ni fekau’aki mo ‘ena ngaahi lavame’a pe

a’usiá. Na’e mahino mai mei he pōtalanoá ‘a e fengāue’aki lelei ‘a ‘ena ngaahi ngāue. Neongo ‘oku ta’u ‘e fā ‘a e polo- kalama ngāue ‘a e *Ancient Futures*, ko e ngaahi koloa ‘oku faka’ali’ali atu ‘i he katoangá, ko e ola ia ‘o ‘ena ngāue ‘i he ngaahi ta’u lahi. Neongo ‘a e kehekehe ‘a e ‘ātakai na’a na tupu hake aí, ‘oku mahino mai mei he talanoá, ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e ngaahi me’a lahi ‘okú na faitatau ai. ‘Oku kau ‘i heni ‘a e:

‘Ofa mo e mateaki’i ‘a e ngāue faka’ātí.

Na’e talu pē ‘ena manako ki he ngāue faka’ātí mei he’ena kei si’í. Na’e manako ma’u pē ‘a Dyck ‘i he ngāue faka’ātí mo ha fa’ahinga me’a pē ‘oku felāve’i mo e ‘ātí. Na’e fonu ma’u pē ‘a e pepa ako ‘a Tohi he ngaahi tā valivali hono ‘ātakaí. Neongo ‘ena tupu hake ‘i ha ongo fonua kehekehe (Tonga mo Nu’u Sila), na’e ‘ikai ke fu’u poupoua ‘a e talen- ití ni ko e pehē ‘e ‘ikai ma’u ha mo’ui mei ai. Na’e tupu meí he fakatokanga’i ‘e he faiakó ‘a e talēniti ‘oku na ma’ú na’e fakaava ai ‘a e matapā kiate kinaua.

Na’e hoko ‘a Judy Darragh ko ‘eku faiako ‘aati. Na’e tokoni lahi ‘a e tokotahá ni kiate au. Na’a ne fekau ki he tokotaha fale’i ‘a e apiakó (counselor), ‘i he taimi ‘e ha’u ai ‘a Dagmar ke fili ‘ene ngaahi lēsoní, fakalotolahi ki ai ke ne fili ‘a e lēsoni ‘ātí he ‘okú ou fakatokanga’i ko hono talēniti eni. Ko e me’a mahu’inga eni he ko e fuofua taimi ia ke fakatokanga’i ai hoku talēniti. (Dyck)

Na’á ku ‘alu pē ki he akó mo ‘eku pepa akó kuo fonu he ngaahi tā valivalí. Na’e lāunga’i au ‘e he taha ‘eku kau faiakó ki he pule akó. Ko hoku ta’u tahananima ia pea na’á ku ilifia he na’a ku pehē ‘e tuli au he akó. Na’e vakai ‘a e pule akó ki he’eku tā valivalí pea na’á ne kole mai ke u tā ha pusi pea mo hano ‘īmisi. Na’á ku ‘ohovale hono ui hoku hingoá mo e foaki hoku pale lolotonga ‘a e tānaki tu’ungá. (Tohi)

Na’e pehē ‘e *Aristotle*, “Ko kinautolu ‘oku nau ma’u ‘a e ‘iló, ‘oku nau ngāue. Ko kinautolu ‘oku nau ma’u ‘a e mahinó, ‘oku nau vahevahe atu.” Na’e mahino ki he ongo faiakó ni ‘a e tufakanga kuo foakí ‘a ia na’e fiema’u ke tokonia mo ngāue’i. Na’e fiema’u ha vai kae tupu ‘a e tenga na’e tō ‘o ha ki’i tamasi’i tupu hake ‘i Tongatapu pea mo ha ki’i ta’ahine na’e fa’a ma’u hala’i ‘e he kakaí hono fonua tupu’angá.

Manatu ki he tupu‘angá

‘I he kamata ke fakalalakaka ‘a ‘ena ngāue faka‘ātí, ‘okú na fakatokanga‘i ‘oku ‘i ai e taimi ‘okú na ‘i ha ngaahi ‘ātakai ‘oku ‘ikai ke na angamaheni ki ai. ‘I he taimi ‘e ní‘ihi na‘e faka‘aonga‘i pē ‘a e ‘ātí ke vahevahe‘aki ‘a e me‘a ‘oku ‘i hona lotó mo e fakakaukáu. Lolotonga ‘ena nofo ‘i Nu‘u Sila ní, ‘oku ‘i ai ma‘u pē ‘a e vilitaki ke toe vāofi ange mo hona “Tongá.”

‘Oku ou manatu‘i ‘a e paaki ‘a e tohi ko e Art of Tonga ‘a Keith St Cartmail ‘i he 1997. Na‘e fakafiefia ‘aupito kiate au ‘eku vakai ki he tohi ‘i ha fale fakatau tohi. Na‘e hoko ia ko ha fakalotolahi kiate au. (Dyck)

Na‘e fo‘ou kiate au ‘a e tohi mo e lea faka-Pilitāniá ka na‘e faingofua pea hoko ko hoku mālohinga ‘eku ngāue‘aki hoku nimá ke fa‘u ha me‘a pē. Na‘á ku fa‘a ‘alu ma‘u pē ki he matātahí ‘o ngaohi ai ha‘áku me‘atokoni, tā valivali pea mo siofi ‘a e ‘ōsení mo faka‘amu pē ‘okú te ‘i Tonga. ‘I he‘eku fakakaukáu ‘oku fehokotaki ‘a e potu tahi ‘oku ou ‘i aí mo e potu tahi ‘o Tongá. (Tohi)

Ko e ‘uhi ko e fuoloa ta‘u ‘ene mavahe mei Tongá, mo ‘ene manatu melie ki he tupu‘angá, na‘e hoko ia ko ha me‘a ke toe vā‘ofi ai mo e kau ‘aati Māuli ‘o e fonuá ni.

‘I he‘eku kei tamasi‘í, na‘e mole ‘eku tangata‘eikí ‘i tahi pea na‘e tauhi au ‘e he‘eku kui fefiné. Ko e taha ‘o ‘eku fanga kuí, na‘e tupu hake ia kimu‘a he tū‘uta ‘a e kau ngāue fakamisinale. Na‘á ne fa‘a vahevahe mai ‘a e fanga ki‘i fananga ‘o Maui mo Tangaloá. ‘I he‘eku ngāue fakataha mo e kau ‘aati Māulí, na‘á ku vāofi mo kinautolu koe‘uhí ko e fehokotaki ‘i he tukufakaholó pea hoko eni ko e fakamanatu ‘o ‘api. (Tohi)

Ko e ngāue fakataha mo e Ancient Futures

Kuo hoko ‘a e polokalama ngāue Ancient Futures ko ha faingamālie ia ki ha ongo ‘aati Tonga ke tānaki ki he‘ena ngaahi a‘usiá mo e ‘ilo ‘okú na ma‘ú ke sio tonu, ala mo vakai‘i pea fehokotaki mo e ngaahi koloa fakamea‘a ‘o e kuohilí. ‘Oku toe makehe ‘a e faingamālié ‘i he‘ena fakahoko fakataha ení. Kuo hoko ‘a ‘ena ‘iló,

taukey pea mo e ngāue fakataha mo e timi ngāué ke fehokotaki vāofi ai mo e ngaahi koloa ‘o e kuohilí pea ke tokoni ki he ngāue ‘oku hanga mai mei mu‘á.

‘Oku tokoni ‘a e nofo ‘a kāingá mo e feveitokai‘akí ki hono langa hake ‘o Tongá. Neongo ‘a e ma‘u faingamālie makehe ‘a Tohi mo Dyck ke sio tonu ki he ngaahi koloá, na‘e ‘ikai ke na fiemālie koe‘uhí ko ‘ena ‘ilo ‘oku ‘ikai ke ma‘u faingamālie ‘a e kāingá ke nau mamata tonu ki he ngaahi koloá ni koe‘uhí ko e ngaahi feitu‘u kehekehe ‘oku tauhi aí mo hono ngaahi tu‘utu‘uní. Na‘á na pehē:

‘Oku ‘i ai ‘a e hisitōlia makehe ‘o e ngaahi koloá fakatautaha, pea ‘i he taimi na‘e mavahe ai mei Tongá, hangē kuo mole atu ha kupu ‘o kitautolu... Na‘a nau omi (‘a e kau papālangí) mo e ākenga fo‘ou pea tau tali ‘a ‘enau ngaahi tō‘onga mo‘uí. Li‘ekina leva hotau fa‘unga motu‘á, ko ‘etau ngaahi koloá, pea iku ai pē ‘o mole. Na‘a nau talamai ‘oku tau fakapo‘uli mo fakapāpeliane pea tau tui ki ai. ‘Io, na‘a nau ‘ave ‘etau koloá ‘o tauhi pea mole ai ‘a e ngaahi ‘ilo mo e taukey ko iá. ‘Oku mahu‘inga ke ma‘u faingamālie ‘a e Tongá ke mamata mo sio tonu ki he ngaahi ngāue ‘a hotau kāinga ‘i he kuohilí. (Tohi)

Kuó ma lekooti ha ngaahi fakamatala mo faitaa‘i ‘a e ngaahi koloá ni, ka ‘i he taimi lahi ‘oku ‘ikai ke ma ma‘u ha ngofua mei he ngaahi misiumé ke vahevahe atu he ngaluopé. Neongo ení, ‘okú ma hounga‘ia kuo lava ‘e he ngaahi misiumé ‘o tauhi malu mo fakatolonga ‘a e ngaahi koloá ni. ‘I he taimi tatau ‘oku totonu ke tau fehu‘ia, pe na‘e ange fēfē ‘enau ma‘u ‘etau koloa? Ko e lahi ‘o e ngaahi koloá, na‘e foaki ‘e he hou‘eiki ‘o e taimi ko iá, ka ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e ngaahi koloa lahi ‘oku ‘ikai ‘i ai ha fakamatala pau ki ai. Kuo mole atu ‘a e ngaahi taukey ngāue ‘o e kuohilí pea ‘oku hoko eni ko ha me‘a ‘oku ta‘efakafiemālie kiate au. Ka ‘oku tau malava pē, kapau na‘e lava ‘i he kuohilí ‘e lava pē he lolotongá ni. (Dyck)

Neongo ‘a e talitali lelei mo fakangofua ‘a e timi ngāué ‘e he ngaahi misiumé, na‘e kehekehe pē ‘a e founga ngāue (tu‘utu‘uni) ‘o e ngaahi feitu‘ú, pea mo e taimi ‘oku faingamālie ai ‘a e kau ngāue ‘o e misiumé. Na‘e ‘i ai e ngaahi misiume ‘e ni‘ihi mo hono tu‘utu‘uni makehe ki he fānau iikí. Koe‘uhí na‘e kau ‘a e ‘ōfetine ‘o Filipé, Dakota, ‘i he kau folaú, ko e misiume pē ‘e taha na‘e ‘ikai ke ngofua ke hū ai. Ko e taha ‘o e ngaahi tu‘utu‘uní ko e tui ‘o e ngaahi kofu nimá ka ‘i he taimi lahi na‘e fakangofua pē ‘a Dyck mo Tohi ke na ala ki he ngaahi koloá ta‘e tui ha kofu nima tuku kehe pē ‘a e ngaahi koloa kuo fakatolonga ‘aki ha ngaahi kemikale. Na‘e toki fofola pē ‘a e ngaahi koloa faka-Tongá (fala mo e ngatu) ‘i he

hili ‘o e tāpuni ‘o e misiumé ke ‘ataa ‘a e ngāué, pea ma‘u mo e ngofua faitā ke ngāue‘aki ki he fakatotoló ka ‘oku ‘ikai ko ha toe ‘uhinga kehe.

Na‘e pehē ‘e Dyck: “Ko e fehu‘í leva, ko e koloa ‘a hai? ‘Oku mo‘oni ‘a ‘enau tala ‘oku nau fie ngāue fakataha mo kit- autolú, he ‘oku ‘i ai ‘etau totonu ki he koloa? ‘E toe fakafiefia ange kapau ‘oku lava ke mātā ‘e he Tongá ‘ene koloá.” Ko e polokalama ngāue ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘á/Ancient Futures, ‘oku ‘ikai ko e faka‘osi pe ko e ngata‘anga ‘o e ngāué ka ko ha makatu‘u ke toe hokohoko atu ‘a e ngāue ‘o e kaha‘ú. Hangē ko e fekolosi‘aki ‘o e hala manga‘onó, ‘oku ne ‘omai ha faingamālie ke tau laka ai ki mu‘a. Fakataha mo ‘ena mamahi‘i ‘a Tonga mo e ngāue faka‘ātí, ko ‘eku faka‘amú ke u hoko ko ha fakalotolahi kiate kinautolu Tonga ‘i he mala‘e ‘o e ‘ātí pea ke nau ako mei he kuohilí, ko e sio ki he kaha‘ú.

Translation by Alioth Helu

Dr. Seini Taufa is general manager for the Research Vaka within Moana Connect, a consultancy group committed to making children’s first five years the best start in life possible. Dr. Taufa has more than sixteen years of research, evaluation, and teaching experience at the University of Auckland. She is passionate about incorporating Pacific frameworks and worldviews into her work and is committed to elevating the voices of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad. Her long-term goal is to be an effective advocate for vulnerable families, women, and children in Aotearoa through research that highlights the needs of these populations and solutions for their improved well-being.

Notes

¹ Kenneth Bain, *The Friendly Islanders: A Story of Queen Salote and Her People* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1967), 32.

² Epli Hau‘ofa, “Our Sea of Islands,” in *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands*, ed. V. Naidu, E. Waddell, and E. Hau‘ofa (Suva, Fiji: School of Social and Economic Development, University of South Pacific, 1993), 128–29.

³ Keith St. Cartmail, *The Art of Tonga* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1997).

⁴ All quotes are from *talanoa* with Tohi and Dyck. Where not attributed to one artist, it is because the quote was a shared utterance.