

on” . . . Like the Sua gifting custom we present to you the manifestation of the words of today’s apology. May our words continue to live on and offer strength and confidence to all future generations of Pacific Aotearoa.’

Faux footnotes and a false frontispiece

Dakuwaku, by Anurag Subramanai. Honolulu: Lo’ihi Press, 2021. 327 pages.

THIS book tries very hard to be very clever, with a thousand literary, Pacific and other allusions dripping from every page and a writing style that is (I think) intended (perhaps) to mirror the comic prose of Swift and Boswell.

There are copious faux footnotes, a false frontispiece, addenda, exhortations to the reader and other literary devices that have not been seen since the steam press was invented. It is, in short (possibly) an attempt at what we used to call a picaresque novel in first year lit.

It is clearly intended to be very clever and very creative and is, alas, utterly impenetrable.

I suspect that it was intended (maybe) to be a sort of Indo-Fijian version of *Tales of the Tikongs* with much satire and a vast cast. Alas, I suspect that the satire—and indeed much of the book’s meaning—will be apparent to nobody but the author (who, incidentally, apparently has a pet mongoose called Slinky).



DAKUWAKU

A True Account of the History, Peculiar Customs and Strange Rituals of the Inhabitants of Dakuwaku of the Ebononēsos Sphere of The Great Antepus Basin. In Two Books. Book One, by Beejoo Lala, First of Rambeehar, Dakuwaku, then of Kookooberra, Dingroodum: Gentleman, Chronicler, Yarn-Spinner and Friction-Maker.

A NOVEL BY ANURAG SUBRAMANI

Too much is going on and too much has been attempted for the average reader, or at least one with limited patience, to persevere much beyond the 12th footnote on page 51 about the life of Chin-Choonamma who caused a great scandal by becoming the kept woman of the up and coming Khattakuttu MadRapper Samir K. Chambee.

It is to be earnestly hoped that the author’s next project, a people’s history of Fiji, will be blessed with greater clarity.