

Vernice Wineera Pere (Ngati Toa) works with the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii. This poem is one of several which won her first place in the poetry competition for the 1980 South Pacific Festival of Arts held in Papua New Guinea.

The representatives gather in council.
They are the new chiefs
knowing the new ways,
the new needs.
That they could forget the old is unforgiveable.
But the new demands recognition,
confrontation, and courage
born of great deeds.
The new chiefs will meet the new
face to face
and in the new way discuss
the issues at hand.
They will plan expenditures and stand
to disapprove the disregard
of invisible nets two-
hundred miles from land.
They will lament the loss
of language splintered
among islands scattered
like fallen leaves
on the sea.
They will protest the pollution
of an atmosphere of aroha
by capitalism's insidious cloud
of greed.
They will be freed from the sale
of ancient birthrights, the jail
of modernity.
The new chiefs will meet the new
face to face,
and prevail.

VERNICE WINEERA PERE

PATTERNS

They carried my ancestors ashore taught them to make a
raupo hut smoked pipes on their doorstep.

They sang us their waiata taught us about Ruahine and
Ruataniwha taught us to heed the tapu,
and I cannot follow the white line
which does not see the taniko woven on the water
the moko on the tree trunks
the koru of my mind.

LOIS BURLEIGH

YOUR SURE WAYS

I can see your ways in these waters:* warm,
inviting here, dark and secretive there;
at each instance a peculiar charm,
as though the hardy shores with rippled care,
taste of a goodness, lend it to the trees.
The air, delectable, tantalizing,
unblended potency, keeps all one sees
unsullied, definite unimposing.
And when the sun goes down, leaving velvet
shades and grey tones to mingle, the ripple
incessant, it has me wondering you let
all bias colour beliefs and people.
Your sure ways were of one I've never known,
cultivating what you loved as your own.

Robin Kora

*Waikaremoana

A THOUGHT

A thought is different from a poem.
It crawls up your legs,
Then right up your spine,
It creeps over your shoulder
like the sun coming up,
Then on silent haunches it walks down your hand
And you write it.

Aroha Harris
(Ngapuhi)

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