

BETWEEN THE BORDERS

(A response to John Bevan Ford's 'Taniko Border 6')

Ammon Apiata

There are worlds between the borders of my cloak.
Twisted into union by weavers who know
how to make strands that can hold the sun.
Heaven and ocean are turned in on each other,
so I can sink into the twelfth sky or
scale the poutama until I touch the seabed.

My cloak is held together with stories.
Every thread is knowledge hard-won.
Weft and warp are generations interlocked.
All of its fibres speak of the land
as I trace the patterns woven by careful hands.

I wear a cloak that protects bloodlines
that stretch endlessly backward and
potential that reaches infinitely forward.
I am wrapped in whakapapa
and know I am safe
between the borders of my cloak.



John Bevan Ford, "Taniko Border 6", 1999, liquid acrylic and pencil on paper, The University of Waikato Art Collection