

## River

by marra *Wednesday, Dec 26 2012, 11:48am*

international / poetry / post



sitting by the bank  
the water snaps  
a tail whips  
a gleam catches  
the sunlight  
in a flash a fish disappears  
into the depths

perfectly adapted  
to the medium  
freshwater fish  
appear and disappear at will  
evading traps and lines  
which they tangle in  
the rushes and  
roots of water trees

i've sat and watched  
from this bank countless  
times, it is never the same  
though we imagine  
the river is constant

we've given it an English name  
and mapped it  
yet the river evades  
our feeble attempts to fix it  
in any lexicon

it once teamed with  
aquatic and amphibian  
life  
singing frogs,  
flashing fish  
and cunning cod  
have evaded extinction  
for thousands of years  
though today their days  
are numbered

the river unhappily accepts  
runoff from rains laden with  
toxic sprays and fertilisers

modern man has no connection  
to the land/environment  
he sees it through words, stats  
litres, dams and forced production

for thousands of years  
it supported the originals,  
no better stewardship exists  
than native people inextricably  
linked to the land

we killed them off  
before we killed the river,  
what do primitives know  
of modern farming methods  
and aquaculture?

very little, but they knew how  
to harvest its bounty without  
upsetting the delicate balance  
that sustained all manner  
of life

and what do we know?

how to exploit, pollute  
and kill everything we touch

we continue to regard the originals  
as ignorant primitives.

<http://jungledrum.hopto.org/news/story-317.html>

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Underground Oz Poetry. <http://ozpoetry.lingama.net/news/poem-301.html>

