

KO ÑI NEWEN YENEENEW

Zewm a fychan iñche aliwen
rayilelu mu
azkintulenfiñ ti afpun mapu
Tunten kvrvf mew miyawken?
kimlam
Nome lafken mew petu konchi
antv mew
werkvlenew zewma ñi Kallfv Kyyen
amuan ka ñi llowmeafiel
pu Fvchakecheyem
Kallfv, kallfvley tati mapu
chew yiñ amuan
Kq ñi newen ñochikechi yeneenew
Wenulewfv kiñe pichi troykeley
mvten tuwaykvlelu kom
afpun Mapu mew
Tyfachi Pewma mew mvlewean:
Remumvn pu remukelu! Ñvkvfsvlen
amutuan
lakenochi vlkantun mogen mew.

THE SPIRITS OF THE WATER CARRY ME

I am old, and from a blooming tree
I look at the horizon
How many airs did I walk? I do not know
From the other side of the sea
the setting sun
has already sent out its messengers
I am departing to meet my ancestors
Blue is the place where we go
The spirits of the water carry me step
by step
Wenulewfv / the River of the Sky*
is barely one small circle
in the universe

In this Dream I shall stay:
Stroke, oarsmen! In Silence
I move away
in the invisible song of life.

* Wenulewfv / the River of the Sky / The Milky Way

Wenulewfv the word that dreams us



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My elders and I shared many nights under the stars. Long silences, long stories about the origins of our people, of the descent of the first spirit of the Mapuche from the Blue, of the souls hanging in the infinite sky like stars. Stories that taught me the paths of the sky, the rivers and the signs...

Our daily life was centred around a large cooking fire. This is where we received, often without realising, the transmission of our culture in every form: the art of conversation, and the wisdom and advice of our elders. Ritual conversation, which, as our grandparents taught us, is the source of total sensory awakening, occurs with the sharing of chant and song, food, drink, and occasionally, the sweet sound of musical instruments, whilst our vision burns in the flames of the imagination. Everyone at the fire – adults as well as children – found their most comfortable position in order to withstand the necessary conditions of this difficult and ongoing process of learning, and learning to listen.

In the mornings, our elders asked each other of their dreams. Mapuche culture continues to be a culture where their language of dreams plays a very important role. It is often said that is where new words come from. Real dreams have a way of announcing that which is to come. They relate the process of our passing. This is why they are regarded as predictions, as crisp future trails can be “read” more easily than those of the past, especially those now covered by the dusts of memory and of the earth.

By listening to our elders, children begin to learn the art of illuminating our dreams, so that as the years go by we are able to benefit from the wisdom of their knowledge. As we are just one small republic in the Universe, there is nothing within us that is not also present in this universe. The people live in a world where the gestures that are expressed by the initial murmur between the spirit, the soul, and the heart are truly understood. Our dreams transcend the circle of time (we exist because we are the past, and for this reason, the future) in the manner of the earth dreaming in the legend of our origins, our legend of the Blue. Indeed, it is said that “*the first spirit of the Mapuche came down from the Blue*”, not just any blue, but that which flows from the East. We hold Blue energy within us, and when we ultimately leave

our bodies, this energy continues its westward journey to join with the spirits of those who have recently died, to run together towards the original Blue, and complete the circle of life. Indeed, our “north” is, and has always been, the west.



Huekecura, Puelwillimapu

«Wenulewfv» Mural painting made in the Metawe Mapuche Cultural Community Center, Llifén, South of Chile.

Itro Fil Mogen is the centre of our philosophy, and its significance is “totality without exclusion” – the unfragmented integrity of all life, and all living things, that which contemporary Western culture often refers to as “biodiversity”. We are merely a small part of the universe – but one more aspect of nature, of the earth, from where we derive our words. Just one small part, an existence implicitly dependent on reciprocity. The elders say that this is why we must take of the earth only that which we truly need for survival. We have no utilitarian purpose for the earth. We each take what we need during our brief existence, just as the earth takes back from us, bit by bit, as we are converted back into water, air, fire and verdure. Our elders continue to call for Silence, for us to achieve deep Contemplation, and in doing this, to fully understand the language of nature. This will increase our capacity for the synthesis of thought, the architecture of poetry, the song of life that allows each of us to commune with others.

That is how our new-born wisdom teaches us that Life is the expression of duality. By looking around and above us we find out that each of us is a constellation of the inner and outer cosmos. We are an ephemeral body trying to find a connection with what is visible and invisible. We project our energy and spirit towards the inconceivable space as we hold on to the path of luminous dots – both external and internal – called the stars.

We have received the gift of the Word, and we have chosen to embed ourselves in its tender, but sometimes difficult, path. Our stance is a solitary one – but filled with the voices of our people and the infinite universe. We draw strength from the observation that silence invites us. And though we write solely for ourselves, we write in the borders of our orality of our elders, who taught us the meanings of sound. They give us the right to do this – the simply spoken or written word is as bright as a star, they say.

The single most important aspect of creation, and of scientific method, is observation. In the search for uncertain answers, generated by an infinite quantity of questions, the respect for the manner of our arrival on our land flows on from the respect of our right to be, to exist. Observation has defined our vision of the world from the beginning of all cultures. This circle of thought – Silence, Contemplation, Creation – has allowed each and every society to perceive, to listen, and give name to their surroundings in their own ways.

The Word is what constructs these names, and it is what constantly impulses our attempt to understand the mysteries of life. The wonderful and constant impulse to scan the infinite / the universe is the wonderful and constant impulse of the Word trying to grasp the mystery of life. The Word – water that flows over and through the hard rock of our heart. The Word – the only instrument that allows us to touch the spirit of another person. The Word – is what brings us closer to the comprehension of the spirits of other living beings, as well as those that are apparently inanimate.

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