

The Andean Cosmovision

Indescribable...but not imperceptible.

The Andean Cosmovision is a way of perceiving and interacting with reality that is found in the indigenous culture of the high Andes. The Cosmovision provides a path for exploring profound aspects of ourselves and the Cosmos. In our modern, Western culture it resonates with people who are drawn to its simplicity, its beauty, and the loving connection it nourishes between ourselves and Nature.

Unlike the Western worldview the Andean Cosmovision is not intellectual in nature. It is not a set of ideas or beliefs. It simply cannot be defined, described, or encompassed with word or thought. It can, however, be experienced and it can be explored. Eventually you come to understand the Cosmovision, but this understanding is not intellectual, it is an understanding that develops at a deeper level of your Being.

This path is one of experiential exploration. The experiences come from trying out various experiential processes that I label as meditations. They are not exactly meditations as you may have encountered them in other traditions, that is just the closest term in English. They are processes by which we can change our experience of reality. After a meditation, you evaluate its effect on you and then decide whether or not to include it in your repertoire of ways to face the vast mystery of your existence as a Being in the Cosmos.

In addition to the immediate effects of the meditations there are also beautiful and deep changes that slowly emerge as we continue down this path. The meditations nourish a more loving and mutually supportive relationship with Nature and the Cosmos. It is a relationship that is not conceivable within the Western view of reality. From this relationship, new facets of our existence and new aspects of Nature and the Cosmos come into our awareness. Following the path provided by the Andean Cosmovision leads to a sense of our belonging in the Cosmos and to a heartfelt appreciation of Nature. There also arises a strong sense that this path is not just for our benefit alone, but is also beneficial to (and appreciated by) Nature and the Cosmos as well.

There are some basic concepts associated with the Cosmovision. These concepts don't define the Cosmovision, for it is not a set of beliefs. These concepts simply help you have the experiences that the Cosmovision makes possible, and it is those experiences that make up its heart.

Imagine that the Cosmos consists of a vast three-dimensional web of interconnected filaments of energy. Where these filaments of energy come together to form a bundle (a node) is what we experience as an object. I am a bundle of filaments in this vast network of filaments, as are you, as is the coffee mug sitting next to me as I type. Everything that exists is a node in this vast web of interconnected filaments, and everything is connected to everything else. The Cosmos is thus one, unified whole (the vast web of filaments), and it is also a bunch of things (the bundles of filaments within the web).

Consciousness is viewed very differently in the Andean Cosmovision than it is in the West. We in the modern, Western world tend to equate our consciousness with our brain's ability to think. Because of this we assume that it takes a sophisticated nervous system, or at least some sort of nervous system, for consciousness to arise.

In the Andean Cosmovision, however, consciousness is seen as an inherent attribute of the

filaments that make up the Cosmos. This means that everything is conscious since everything is made up of those filaments. I am conscious, you are conscious, my cat is conscious, the tree outside my window is conscious, the sun is conscious, the planet earth is conscious, the stones in the rivers are conscious, and the Cosmos as a whole is conscious (i.e., the Cosmic Consciousness).

The various nodes within the Cosmos each have their own consciousness. The most important node in our neighborhood of the Cosmos is the *Pachamama*, the conscious Being who is our mother, the planet earth. She is not a transcendent spirit who lives in a big rock called the planet Earth, she is the conscious planet Earth herself. While she may be only part of the Cosmos she has her own consciousness. The *Apus* are the great conscious Beings who are the majestic mountain peaks. While they are but part of the Pachamama, they have their own consciousnesses.

Other important conscious Beings are *Tai Tai Inti* (the sun), *Mama Killa* (the moon), and *Mama Tuta* (the dark, the void, who holds the stars in her embrace). Then there are the stars themselves, and the trees, and the river that tumbles so beautifully down the side of the mountain. They are all conscious, and we can connect with them, and when we do our relationship with the rest of the Cosmos begins to blossom. This is the territory that the Andean Cosmovision opens up for us to explore. The exploration itself is carried out through the simple meditative-like processes that open the portal to the heart of the Andean Cosmovision.

All of the Andean meditations are performed within the context of our relationship with the Cosmos. The most essential element of this relationship is the Andean principle of *ayni* (reciprocity) where to receive is always balanced by giving in return and to give is always balanced by receiving in return. Ayni is not an intellectual or ethical concept, but rather something that arises from the heart. On this path we frequently give offerings to the Pachamama or to the Apus or to other Beings of the Cosmos as expressions of gratitude. These offerings are not bribes or payment for services rendered, they are like giving flowers to the Cosmos. They complete the circle of ayni and they nourish our relationship with the Cosmos.

The Andean meditations get us in touch with our *salka*. Salka is a Quechua term for undomesticated energy. The wolf is salka while the dog is domesticated. The condor is salka while the chicken is domesticated. The deer is salka while the sheep is domesticated. All Beings have salka, in domesticated animals the domestication is like a veneer through which the salka has to shine. Salka is part of our heritage as living Beings in this Cosmos. There are times to be domesticated and interact with our society, and there are times to be salka and dance with the ineffable and beautiful mystery that is the Cosmos. Our salka and domesticated aspects are like two facets of a diamond. We, however, are the diamond, we get to choose which facet to turn towards reality.

For More Information:

Book: [The Andean Cosmovision: A Path for Exploring Profound Aspects of Ourselves, Nature, and the Cosmos](#) by Oakley Gordon, available at the King's English Bookstore or it may be ordered through local bookstores, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Apple (printed and ebook versions available). **Web site:** www.SalkaWind.com. **Email:** SalkaWind@comcast.net. **Salt Lake Salka** may be found on Facebook and at www.SalkaWind.com/SaltLakeSalka