Nopeyakas N'äyhäy

(The prints of the image)

This Zine was created by the Kalay'i collective and includes a reflection written by Catalina Delgado Rojas

1. The Origin of the Pilcomayo river

**TEWOK TES P'ANTE**

W'AHAT WUK –W ́AHAT WUK- TATA ́Y ́AJ P ́ANTENLÄ

TSEMLHÄK, TA W ́AHAT IHI, LHÄÄS IFWENHO P ́ANTE

WICHI TA IS KYE TIWOKYHI WET ILÄÄN FW´AHAT T´AK

HÄPE, HÄP TA N ́AYEJ KYEK NOLÄÄN ATSA.

TOKFWAJ T´AS P´ANTE´PE NOLHÄMET, IWAT

P´ANTEHLA YENE WON´A ATSA KYÄS LHAWO. TIYAJEJ

P ́ANTE NOCH ́ÄHA WET TAJ P ́ANTE ́PE LAWHOO WET

LAKYÄS IWASTI P´ANTE TSEMLHÄK, WET NITSÄY

P´ANTE FW´AHAT TA IHI.

**THE ORIGIN OF THE PILCOMAYO RIVER**

There, in front of the immense Tsemlhak, the silk floss

Tree where W'ahat Wuk had all his fish

his son said to the Wikyi that they could

fish whatever they wanted, but that it was

forbidden to spear the Atsa or the big fish that

They called gold.

Tokfwaj disobeyed, he wanted to make a

Cap with its shiny tail. He pierced the fish with an arrow, and the great Tsemlhak

Left with the tail. The

water and the fish spilled from the river.

W'AHAT WUK FWITSAAJ P ́ANTE, LAW HIW ́ENHO

P ́ANTE TOKFWAJ NOTSUT TA NOKAJYHAYAJ

, YAMTILAK T'IKYUNLÄ INÄÄT TA TIYAJKYE TAYHI,

YAMP ́ANTE KANHI TA AND ́ELH WET AP NIKYUYU,

ITSÄNHI HONHAT NOTSUT YAMTILAK INÄÄT TAKASIT,

WET TAKYUMA W´AHAT WET TUJ. TOKFWAJ INUKE

P ́ANTE W'AHAT WUK LHÄMET TA NECH ́E, HÄP TA

N'IHI P'ANTE LAWEKY ́AJ TA NOWOYEJE, HONAJ TA

HÄPE IWAT P ́ANTEHLÄ YENLHI MAT TA IFWALAPEJ

YENLHI IKASTAYEN INÄÄT, WET INÄÄT TOK TAKASIT.

The angry W'ahat Wuk, by way of

punishment for the disobedience, gave to Tokfwaj

a wooden rod with supernatural powers.

He said to him, "With this rod you will guide behind you the

water by the mountain, and when fatigue and

hunger impede your steps after a long

Day, vertically you will nail the rod in

the soil, thus the water

will stop, then you will get fish on the shore

from the river for your food."

TOKFWAJ NOWAY P´ANTE, WET INULHIT ALHOHO, HAP

TA LHIP KYE TIYÄJKYE INÄÄT YAHÄNT´AT. YAMP´ANTE

KANHI TA INÄÄT IFWIT WET ICH ́ALHI.

TA LHAKL ́I IHI WET TAHUY TA YOK: "OHAPEHLA HAL ́Ä

TA LAFWETTSIL ATOSKYENKYA YAMTILAK TOK INÄÄT

IKYÄJ” IHI LAJTUMFWAYA TA IWOYETSO WET WELANE

P ́ANTE MAK TA IWATLÄ WELANE. HE SHY HE PAAJ HE

INÄÄT YAKALHIKYE LAFWETTSIL WET WEY´AKE P´ANTE.

WET YAKYAJO TA TAHUUN WET YOK: “OL´ATAJ

Y'AMUKLA, OL'ATAJ Y'AMUKLA, OL'ATAJ Y'AMUKLA".

WELANE P ́ANTE L ́ATAJ AND ́AMUK WET YIKKYE P ́ANTE

INÄÄT, TA Y ́OOT WET and ́UHKYA P ́ANTE.

Tokfwaj fulfilled at the beginning what

he had commanded W'ahat wuk, but his

fate was marked by a tragic punishment.

One afternoon he decided to do the usual thing,

Holding back the water, but he failed to do so.

Tokfwaj, frightened, desperately began to

run back and forth, whereever he ran the

water ran too. Until the water ended up

Drowning him.

In desperation, he said, "I will be a tree with

very deep roots so the water

won't be able to remove me." Repeating three times

this wish, he became what was said.

However, he is suddenly carried away by the river.

WET YAKYÄJO TA TAHUY WET YOK: “OWOTSOTAJLA,

"OWOTSOTAJALA, OWOTSOTAJLA""." PAGE P ́ANTE WOULD BE

WELANE, AP HATE INÄÄT IKYÄJ, TIYAJKYE TAYHI PAGE

PANTE TA WASI. TOKFWAJ NEMHIT YAHANEJ MAK

KYE IWOYE, TSI INÄÄT TOK ILEKYE PAJ P´ANTE TA

HICH´A WET Y´IL. NILHAK´ALHI P´ANTE W’AHAT WUK

TAKE THE HIFW ́EN INÄÄT TA I ́PE HONAT TOK IFW ́EN HIN ́O

KYE YIKKYAFWI, WET INUNKYA P´ANTE TA IYAJINPE

HAT MAC TA TATAMENEJ. IYAHIM P ́ANTE KANI TA

IFW ́EN HILENHAS TA I ́PE INÄÄT, TA TAKYUMA

P´ANTE WET NITAFWELEJ TA TOKFWAJ W´OLEY. Y´ILH

P´A TOKFWAJ!! TAJ P´AT LAWHÄY TOKFWAJ!! IWOYE

TSO TA LATAHYAJ IHI.

TÄLHE IFWALATSO, TOKFWAJ LHAKLHI P´ANTE WET TA

INULHI ALHOHO TA INÄÄT YAHÄÄNLHI, HAP TA

TAMENEJ TA TOK IS ALHOHO LAN ́AYIL TEWOK

IFWALASNA.

LAW NECH ́E P ́ANTE LAHI W ́AHAT LAW NOWUNTEJ

PILCOMAYO.

Then he began to say, "I will be porongo, I

I'll be Porongo, I'll be Porongo." And he is

transformed into porongo. He was also carried away by the

river, he went against the mountain full of sticks,

Ending up in pieces this time. Tokfwaj

with nothing else to do and followed by water

Whereever he went, drowned. Then W'ahat

Wuk worried to see so much water scattered without

Being guided by anyone, and he went down to see what had happened.

Only, in the distance, in the middle of the river

He saw some hair floating, which he then

grabbed with his fingers and recognized that they were

of Tokwaj. "Tokfwaj died!! The end of Tokfwaj!!",

He said sadly.

From then on, in the face of the desperation and the flight of Tokjua'j the course of the river was never correct.

Thus was formed the new great house of the

fish, the Pilcomayo River.

Díaz, E. – Villagra, O. "El origen del Río Pilcomayo" in Berganga, M. A.  *The immortality of our millenary cultures*. Salta: CEUPO, 2013.

1. Zine Transcript

PAGE 1

**Vignette 1. Color**

Morning. Francisco’s face out of focus. In the background you can see a house made of materials from the land. In front of the house, four children of different ages play with a ball. They are: Cristian (10), María (14), Daniel (7) and Elena (10).

PAGE 2

**Vignette 2**

One summer in the afternoon, in the Wichí community of Tsetwo P'itsek in the north of Salta, Argentina

Cristian, María, Daniel, Elena and Francisco arrive at the Community School. Mary carries Francisco in a cloth hanging from one of her shoulders. Elena is ahead of them.

**Vignette 3**

Daniel is dressed in a T-shirt and shorts. He always wears his catapult around his neck. He's running straight ahead.

DANIEL (IN WICHÍ)

There is no one!

**Vignette 4**

Elena is dressed in long jeans and a striped T-shirt. Her loose hair reaches her shoulders. She is standing on her back, and points to the side.

ELENA (IN WICHÍ)

Let’s go up the window over there!

**Vignette 5**

Children are seen running through the halls of the school with their backs turned. They go to the back windows. Mary walks with Francisco in the sling.

**Vignette 6**

Cristian climbs to the window. He is seen from behind, dressed in jacket and long sweatpants. Elena is behind him.

**Vignette 7**

Maria wears a T-shirt and a long skirt with a flower print. She has a yica (Wichi handmade bag). As she puts one arm around Francis, she points to the floor.

MARÍA (IN WICHÍ)

Look! Look Dani!

**Vignette 8**

Daniel crawls under the benches.

PAGE 3

**Vignette 9. Color**

In the afternoon. Photograph of a coyuyo (giant cicada) on a girl's hand. Below, on the ground: an old soccer ball and a doll without an arm.

PAGE 4

**Vignette 10**

Maria crouches down and looks under the benches. Francis is squatting imitating her.

**Vignette 11**

Daniel crawls under the benches, in the direction of where Maria is looking.

**Vignette 12**

Cristian and Elena stand near the benches under which Daniel stands. You can see his bare feet.

CRISTIAN (IN WICHÍ)

What's up?

**Vignette 13**

Daniel is still on his knees. He gives something to Cristian. The other children approach him.

**Vignette 14**

Cristian holds in one hand an old cell phone with a cracked screen. The other kids come to see it.

CRISTIAN (IN WICHÍ)

It only has two bars of battery.

**Vignette 15**

Photograph of grandfather Rubén in his house, looking at the photos of grandmother Petrona.

PAGE 5

**Vignette 16**

At sunset, Cristian arrives home...

There is a construction located to one side, surrounded by a spacious courtyard. It has a high ceiling, two bedrooms and an additional space. In the yard, a boy of about three years pushes a baby carriage. From the side, a young woman heads towards them. There are also two dogs and some chickens distributed around. In the distance, you can see the fence of sticks that surrounds the house.

**Vignette 17**

Cristian walks to the side of the house. He is approaching a space with goats.

**Vignette 18**

Cristian sees his older brother among the goats. He is a young man, dressed in a T-shirt, jeans and flip-flops.

CRISTIAN (IN WICHÍ)

Hello! What are you up to?

CRISTIAN'S BROTHER (IN WICHÍ)

Hello! Where do you come from?

**Vignette 19**

Cristian and his brother sit next to a large plastic table nearby. Behind them, there is an adobe house with the door open. Under the table, there is a parrot walking.

CRISTIAN (IN SPANISH)

Look! We found something at school.

CRISTIAN'S BROTHER (IN WICHÍ)

No way! Who threw it away?

**Vignette 20**

Cristian smiles.

CRISTIAN (IN SPANISH)

Do you have a charger?

CRISTIAN'S BROTHER (IN WICHÍ)

Look inside. In the corner, on the floor.

**Vignette 21**

Cristian leaves his brother's house smiling with a charger in his hand, his cell phone in his pocket and a colourful parrot on his shoulder.

PAGE 6

**Vignette 22. Color**

In the afternoon. Photograph of Cristian wearing black glasses, smiling and waving, with two fingers open near his face. Behind, you can see some cans of water and piles of dishes to wash.

PAGE 7

**Vignette 23**

That night...

Cristian is at his brother's house. You can see the house and the yard. The sky has many stars.

CRISTIAN (IN WICHÍ)

Without internet, I can only take pictures.

CRISTIAN'S BROTHER (IN WICHÍ)

Oh well, at least something can be done with that.

**Vignette 24**

Cristian is in bed, thinking. Next to him, you can see the feet of another child sleeping.

**Vignette 25**

Cristian falls asleep and dreams of a path in the bush.

**Vignette 26**

Cristian is flying over the path where he was walking. You can see the community from the air. The layout of the houses. The river to one side.

**Vignette 27**

Cristian flies very high, he can see the river. He carries his cell phone in his hand.

**Vignette 28**

Cristian flies low, near the water. He is ready to take a photo.

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**Vignette 29**

The next morning, very early...

Maria and Francisco are in the house of a Civil Registry officer. There is a sign. The man emerges from above a fence with the birth record book in hand. Maria is wearing the cloth with which she usually carries Francisco. He is standing next to her, holding onto her legs. They are behind a group of women and children. She looks to where the registry officer is.

MARÍA (THINK WICHÍ)

Do we need to talk to him?

**Vignette 30**

Maria and Francisco are closer to the registrar ready to make their consultation. She looks at Francisco.

MARÍA (THINK WICHÍ)

Will his name be in that book?

**Vignette 31**

Maria and Francisco are in front of the Registrar.

REGISTRAR OFFICER (IN SPANISH)

Come back later.

My wife has something for you.

**Vignette 32**

Maria receives the bag that the woman gives her above the fence. She is a **criolla woman** of about fifty years. She wears her hair tied up in a bracelet.

MARÍA (THINK WICHÍ)

It looks like clothes.

When do I have to come back?

**Vignette 33**

The registrar’s wife looks at her with pity.

LADY OF THE MANAGER

It's for the little one.

PAGE 9

**Vignette 34. Colour**

Dusk. Selfie of Cristian with a colourful parrot standing on his shoulder. His face and smile are only partly seen. The parrot is shown complete with its bright colours, opening the beak. To one side, you can see his brother's house and some goats.

PAGE 10

**Vignette 35**

In the middle of the morning...

Maria and Francisco go along a path on the mountain. She is carrying him in the cloth. In one hand she holds a bag.

FRANCISCO (IN WICHÍ)

Mum!

**Vignette 36**

Someone appears on the side of the path. It's Cristian.

CRISTIAN

Maria!

MARÍA (IN WICHÍ)

Cristian!

What did you do with the phone we found?

CRISTIAN (IN WICHÍ)

Here it is!

I charged it!

Do you want to take it with you?

**Vignette 37**

Cristian extends his hand handing over the old device. Mary opens her hand it. Francisco grabs it.

FRANCISCO

Cristian! Phone!

**Vignette 38**

After a while...

Maria and Francisco arrive at a house built with materials from the land. A dog sleeps next to the pole that supports the roof. By the fire, an old woman raises her head and looks at Maria and Francisco.

OLD WOMAN (IN WICHÍ)

What did they tell you?

What did they give you there?

**Vignette 39**

Photo of two men.

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**Vignette 40**

That same morning, Daniel accompanies his father and grandfather.

The men of the community walk into the river with their nets on their backs.

**Vignette 41**

Daniel looks at his father and grandfather who, before entering the river, hold their nets on the shore.

FATHER OF DANIEL (IN WICHÍ)

The river is good today.

**Vignette 42**

At the river, a group of men laugh. One man stands still against the tide holding his equipment. The other dives showing his feet on the surface.

**Vignette 43**

A little further, two men fish together. One of them is standing holding his net. The other is up to his neck in the water.

**Vignette 44**

A while later, Daniel's father looks at him showing him his great catch. Behind, you can see the other fishermen.

**Vignette 45**

Daniel's grandfather fishes with a scissor, traditionally used by the community.

PAGE 12

**Vignette 46. Colour**

Dusk. Photograph with the river in the background. To one side, you can see the photographer's finger. Four children of different ages pose in a group photo. Maria with Francisco on her shoulders, Elena, next to Daniel, with her arm over her shoulder. Everyone smiles at the camera.

PAGE 13

**Vignette 47**

At noon...

At Daniel's house, his mom is drinking mate next to the house. She is with her younger daughters. One of them is sitting eating, the other is the baby carrier. There is a dog under the table and a duck a little beyond.

**Vignette 48**

Daniel approaches his mother by walking next to the ram. His hand is on the animal.

**Vignette 49**

Daniel lifts a jerry can that is under a chair.

DANIEL (IN WICHÍ)

Is there water?

DANIEL'S MOM (IN WICHÍ)

Yes. How was the fishing?

What do you have in your pocket?

DANIEL

The fishing was fine.

We found something lying around in the School.

DANIEL'S MOM

Can you show me?

**Vignette 50**

Daniel's mom is washing the dishes in a bowl on the table. Next to it, there are the jerry cans in which they collect the water.

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**Vignette 51**

At the same time, at Elena's house...

At home, Elena turns on the water tap but nothing comes out.

**Vignette 52**

Elena's mom is knitting when she approaches her.

ELENA (IN WICHÍ)

There is no water.

**Vignette 53**

You can see the clean clothes hanging.

**Vignette 54**

The pot of food hangs from a tree.

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**Vignette 55**

Elena's mom lights the fire.

ELENA'S MOTHER (IN WICHÍ)

Your dad is on his way back from the river.

**Vignette 56**

The fish is cooked over the fire.

**Vignette 57**

Elena touches something rectangular that she keeps in her pocket.

**Vignette 58**

Photo of Elena’s sisters and grandfather.

PAGE 16

**Vignette 59**

In the afternoon...

Elena walks in the bush.

**Vignette 60**

Elena bends down to see something small on the ground.

**Vignette 61**

Elena takes the phone out of her pocket.

**Vignette 62**

Elena approaches a carob tree.

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**Vignette 63. Colour**

Afternoon. Photograph from the roof of the school taken by Cristian. Below, the courtyard is empty. There, Daniel is standing facing the photographer. A little further, sitting on the tile floor, raising their hands to the sky, are Elena and Francisco.

PAGE 18

**Vignette 64**

Cristian walks to the community.

**Vignette 65**

Cristian meets Daniel on a community trail.

CRISTIAN (IN WICHÍ)

Do you know who has the phone now?

DANIEL (IN WICHÍ)

I gave it to Elena in the river this morning.

**Vignette 66**

Cristian and Daniel walk through the community.

**Vignette 67**

Daniel slingshots something near a puddle. Cristian looks over there.

CRISTIAN (IN WICHÍ)

There is nothing there.

Let's go to the river. Elena must be there.

PAGE 19

**Vignette 68**

Evening...

A group of women are seating by the river. One of them arranges the clothes of a three-year-old boy standing next to her. Another weaves. Another combs the hair of a young woman. Maria is standing holding Francisco in her arms.

**Vignette 69**

Women talk and laugh.

WOMAN (IN WICHÍ)

Here comes Elena.

**Vignette 70**

Elena approaches the women.

ELENA (IN WICHÍ)

Hello.

**Vignette 71**

Francisco looks up to see Elena and smiles.

**Vignette 72**

Photo of a young man and an older man

PAGE 20

**Vignette 73. Colour**

Mid-morning. Photograph of Francisco standing, smiling in front of an adobe wall. The floor is dirty. His hair is wet and combed to the side. He is wearing a new, brightly coloured T-shirt and shorts. His feet are barefoot. Behind, you can see a part of the house built with materials from the land.

PAGE 21

**Vignette 74**

The phone falls into the water.

**The end**

1. Reflection written by Catalina Delgado Rojas

It is a popular believe that in Argentine the indigenous populations were almost exterminated during ‘The Conquest of the Desert’, a military campaign that intending to establish dominance over the Patagonian Desert. Comics set in this period represent white settlers under the stereotype of ‘good Christians’; Indigenous people, on the other hand, are generically represented as a threat, enemies that kill Christians, steal cattle, and kidnap women and children. Nevertheless, the extermination of a large part of the indigenous peoples during pampas’ colonization and the rape of indigenous girls by white *criollos*, questions this type of representation. Nowadays, according to the latest census, the remaining 31 indigenous communities in the territory represent 2.4% of the Argentine population.

More than 130 years after the settlers’ colonization of the pampas most of the territory is occupied today by white *criollos*. Well, not entirely, a small Wichí community in the north of the province of Salta resists. Life is not easy for the Wichí due the inequalities resulting from colonization. Their exclusion form society can be evidenced in the difficulties the Wichí have in accessing state institutions due to policies that do not recognize the cultural diversity of the region. Researchers of the project Comics and Race in Latin America argue that these can be also perceived in comics. Indeed, the inclusion of indigenous characters in Latin American comics is limited to certain spaces, periods and roles. Their representation in comics tend to legitimize them in certain spaces such as the jungle and depict them as outsiders in the (white) city. Furthermore, the indigenous’ communities' anachronistic representation also limits their role in society. In most of these comics the colonial past and crimes against this population are not acknowledged.

Unlike other comics representing indigenous peoples, in *Nopeyakas N'äyhäy* the characters have agency over the content they want to share with us. Through language and image, they reclaim their right to exist and express themselves on their own terms. The comic allows us to fly over moments and spaces of the Wichí community, their communal practices linked to the river, and their territory, abundant in natural resources for survival as well as human and non-human allies. The creators of this comic, Osvaldo, Pamela, Lourdes and Luis, are part of the Kalay'i collective. Their first publication, Hätäy (2021), received the Comic Award from the Ministry of Culture of the Province of Salta.

Their collaborative work is the result of the bonds of friendship of its members and feeds on communal practices. The bilingual and bicultural scripts in the hands of Osvaldo and Pamela are accompanied by the exploration and production of images at the hands of Luis and Lourdes. As Rita Segato points out, communal practices response to the failure of the patriarchal state to recognize and include other forms of existence. The communal worlds and collective practices stand out in the process of elaboration as well as the content of this comic. With this comic Kalay'i s accompanies Wichí and non-Wichí grandparents in the preservation and transmission of the practices and knowledge of the communities in the north of Salta.

Catalina Delgado Rojas

Manchester, a spring day of patchy clouds with rain and showers.