

## The Coyote Spirit in Native-American myth



‘In North American Indian mythology, Coyote is the trickster deity who assumes innumerable names and forms. It is believed that it was his desire to make the life of man more interesting, which caused the creation of sickness, sorrow, and death. Destructive natural phenomena, as well as inventions which are of benefit to mankind, are believed to be the outcome of Coyote's creative but mischievous power’

*‘Before humankind’s arrival on the planet, the Great Spirit presided over all the animal people. One day it summoned them all together to tell them that they would all receive new names in preparation for the arrival of humanity. Coyote, whose name means “trickster” or “imitator,” was determined to snatch a nobler title, like “eagle” or “salmon.” But the next morning, when titles were to be redistributed, Coyote overslept and was granted the only remaining animal name: his own. Great Spirit, however, had different plans for Coyote. Showing the chosen creature all the earth, it gave him the unique ability to form the planet the way he deemed necessary in preparation for the soon-to-arrive humanity, over whom he would serve as chief. So, off scampers Coyote, landscaping the terrain and stealing the gifts of fire and water from the evil forces that possess them and securing them for humans’.*

‘... Coyote, with laughter, humour and irony, explains the unexplainable. With actions that reveal his ambivalent nature, Coyote is creator and destroyer, constantly at the mercy of his desires and appetites. The result of his actions brings the world into being with Coyote, the trickster, always fooling others yet in the end being fooled himself’