In recent workshops we’ve had people like Zhang Er discuss her book which chronicled her trip back to China to memorialize her paternal grandparents. Larry Dossey discussed the concept of “non-local mind.” Indigenous people believe the ancestors are available to guide our lives in this moment and it is only materialist dogma that suggests this is not possible. The realms entered in the best poetry do tend to share qualities with meditation as Allen Ginsberg said in a 1994 interview, prayer, and the receiving nature of the Latihan Kedjiwaan of Subud, a spiritual practice in which poet Bob Kaufman was initiated. See:

FURTHER NOTES
(taken from “Abomunismus und Religion” by Tom Man)

Krishnamurti can relax the muscles of your soul,
Free your aching jawbone from the chewinggum habit.
Ouspensky can churn your illusions into butter and
Give you circles to carry them in, around your head.
Subud can lock you in strange rooms with vocal balms
And make your ignorant clothing understand you.
Zen can cause changes in the texture of your hair,
Removing you from the clutches of sexy barbers.
Edgar Cayce can locate your gallstones, other organs,
On the anarchistic rockpiles of Sacramento.
Voodoo Marie can give you Loas, abstract horses,
Snorting guides to tar-baby black masses.
Billy can plug you into the Christ machine. Mail in your
Mind today. Hurry, bargain God week, lasts one week only.
(Who/what is the Muse anyway or is that some jive-ass metaphor?) Can you invoke, with a simple prayer, intention, or elaborate ritual, your ancestors and ask them to help you write a poem like the Kaufman poem above or something better? (Did you notice his poem is 14 lines?) Do you relate so closely to a poet, maybe who lived before you were born, or whom you never met, that you consider THEM one of your ancestors?

Write at least one 14 line (or more) poem after invoking ancestors, or artists/thinkers with whom you share deep convictions. You may want to keep this to your own ancestral steam and invoke certain qualities of specific ancestors. You may want to light candles, incense, make it a meditation, be as serious as possible (which means alone or uninterrupted.) You might want to have other sacraments there, a Grandmother’s scarf or a book by Diane di Prima, or other such objects. You could use repetition as Diane did in:

REVOLUTIONARY LETTER #68

LIFE CHANT
may it come that all the radiances will be known as our own radiance — Tibetan Book of the Dead
cacaphony of small birds at dawn may it continue
sticky monkey flowers on bare brown hills may it continue
bitter taste of early miner’s lettuce may it continue
music on city streets in the summer nights may it continue
kids laughing on roofs on stoops on the beach in the snow may it continue
triunphal shout of the newborn may it continue
deep silence of great rainforests may it continue
line austerity of jungle peoples may it continue
rolling fuck of great whales in turquoise ocean may it continue
clumsy splash of pelican in smooth bays may it con-
astonished human eyeball squinting thru aeons at
astonished
nebulae who squint back
may it continue
clean snow on the mountain may it continue
tierce eyes, clear light of the aged may it continue
rite of birth & of naming
may it continue
rite of instruction
may it continue rite of passage
may it continue
love in the morning, love in the noon sun love in
the evening among crickets may it continue
long tales by fire, by window, in fog, in dusk on the
mesa may it continue
love in thick midnight, fierce joy of old ones loving
may it continue the night music
may it continue
grunt of mating hippo, giraffe, foreplay of snow
leopard
screeching of cats on the backyard fence may it con-
tinue without police

may it continue without prisons
may it continue
without hospitals, death medicine: flu & flu vac-
cine may it continue
without madhouses, marriage, highschools that are
prisons may it continue without empire
may it continue in sisterhood
may it continue thru the wars to come
may it continue in brotherhood
may it continue tho the earth seem lost
may it continue thru exile & silence
may it continue with cunning & love
may it continue as woman continues
may it continue as breath continues
may it continue as stars continue
may it continue
may the wind deal kindly w/us may the fire remember our
names may springs flow, rainfall again
may the land grow green, may it swallow our mistakes
we begin the work
may it continue (he great transmutation

You could begin to feel the spirit
of Latihan Kedijiwaan which
Thelonious Monk was said to have
practiced for a time and maybe in
the oddest places like the
bandstand in Japan in 1963 & not
worry if your ignorant clothing
understands you.

peN
7:47am, 11—Oct—2021
Casa del Colibrí