



Essarye

Gunadule (Kuna Tule) – Panama, Colombia

The liana climbs by waving on the stalks of large trees –Nakekiryai said– and, from above, he begins to cry, to moan

‘Nanapiyiye, nanapiyiye...’

And the mother, the great Mother Earth, shouts at him from below,

‘Essarye!’ (‘Come into my arms, my son!’)

And the liana falls confident and silent on Mother Earth.

Mother Earth gives confidence to everything. She is the serenity of what Papa created. For this reason, when the liana falls to the ground, he becomes hard and resistant, because the Mother has already kissed him, given him consistency into her arms.

This is how we all come. This is how we all move –Nakekiryai sang–. We all came from Sappipeneka. From up there, we started crying, shouting «*Mupipiye, mupipiye, nanapiyiye*». We seek security. We seek confidence. And our great Mother Napkuana has shouted to us *‘Essarye’* (‘Come my daughter, come my son, into my arms’).

Our great Mother Earth offered us her breasts, *‘Essarye’*, she said to us. Every time we cry over there, the Sappipeneka, she made us go down, giving us confidence, and so we came to her bosom ... We cry when we are children, and our Mother will get to know us according to our cries. □

Words attributed to the Great Nele Olonakekiryai (2010).

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Comments

According to Miguel Rocha Vivas, researcher and profesor of Literature at the Universidad Javierana in Bogotá, Colombia, this tradition should be attributed to the great nele Olonakekiryai, from the Gunadule People. Rocha (2010, p. 528) writes:

Olonakekiryai came to perfect, design and refine art, and taught our parents at Ukkupneka. So Olonakekiryai called all the old women in the village and began to instruct them. She sat in the middle of the hammock, combed her hair gently, and spoke loudly. She began to sing about our origin, about Mother Earth, about what really happens between man, the plant and Mother Earth. She took the case of the liana.

The great nele Olonakekiryai was, according to the legend, a wise woman who brought abundant ideas and discoveries about food and fabric design, and all sorts of blessings to make life easier for her people. All this despite the obstacles and envy that the male neles felt about her because the fact of being a woman. According to her,

The great neles present here, when they knew that I learned in other *kalus*, that I went up and down various stages like them and more than them, because I came to places that were prohibited for men and because I am a woman they admitted me, those great *nelekan* wanted to close my way. (ibid., p. 527)

However, she faced the great *nelekan* and, people say that

... the old men listened to her, they feared her. She spoke loud and determined. She was not silent when she saw that our guides were not on the way of the Papa. (ibid., p. 529)

The Gunadule are an Indigenous people from Panama and Colombia. They speak the Guna or Kuna language, and call themselves Dule or Tule. When the Spanish invasion, they lived in the region of

Uraba, in Colombia, but they went north, to Panama, due to a conflict with the Spanish and other indigenous peoples.

Sources

Rocha Vivas, M. (2010). *El Sol babea jugo de piña: Antología de las literaturas indígenas del Atlántico, el Pacífico y la Serranía del Perijá* (pp. 525-529). Bogotá: Ministerio de Cultura.

Associated text of the Earth Charter

Preamble: Earth, our home.- Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution.

Other passages that this story illustrates

Principle 2: Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.

