

Background information to the oral story: “Pokali and the Hammock of God’s Word”.

This fictional Pokali story is written for the indigenous people in South and Central America.

You will soon recognize that it is written in the style leaning towards story telling and language use of the indigenous people. Therefore, in the beginning the style and wording may be a little strange to you. Words like "maybe, maybe not" and "uselessly good" as well as many repetitions may therefore be perceived as rather annoying (maybe, maybe not?!?). There are no chapters in the oral story. Only in the original written German script chapter titles are inserted in brackets. These are omitted in the scripts of the other languages. Instead, the recorded oral story for the indigenous people include "word markers" to indicate the end of a "chapter". These final sentence begins with "As far" and add a brief summary of what has happened so far. This story style and language use are necessary to help build the bridge between theology and culture.

The Pokali story is already translated into Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, English and French and then recorded in audio for these indigenous people to make it an oral story to be listened to. This is offered at www.pokali.ch both as a whole story and also in 6 parts. As of now, one team is translating the Pokali story into “their” indigenous language.

An oral story that is listened to in audio, must contain repetitions. These would be unnecessary in a written story.

Various illustrations by Willi Signer, a member of our Christian Church, as well as all memory verses are available for download in a PowerPoint presentation, under the respective languages, to make the story more "vivid" and livelier. The photos under the "Fotos" menu also serve this purpose. A contact email address for any feedback is given under the menu “Contact”.

This above mentioned PowerPoint presentation could also serve as food for thought for more or less literate indigenous people to encourage them to formulate their own theological thoughts in writing. This can be done in a village or Bible school setting.

My wife, Anneke, created this story. She has lived as a single missionary in Suriname with the Wayana indigenous people for six years and still speaks the Wayana language today. Through my studies, I was able to provide the building blocks for this story.

“Graças a Deus” (praise and thanks be to God), Anneke and I were able to conclude the story together.

We hope that the English-speaking listeners of this story will enjoy diving with us into the world of indigenous people and get a whiff of “jungle air”. You may pass the story on where it might be useful or endeavor a translation into yet another language.

PS.: For the Bible verses in the written German version of this story, I used the revised Elberfelder Bible (1985). Such a translation would be rather difficult for indigenous people. However, they will not listen to the story in German, because we do not know of German speaking indigenous people. They will hear it in the relevant national languages. The choice of Bible translation in the recorded languages was made after consultation with people serving with indigenous people in these countries.

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Source information: MA Culture and Theology, Friedrich (Fritz) and Anneke (story) Lauffenburger
AWM (Akademie für Weltmission – www.awm-korntal.eu/en/index
Pokali homepage: www.pokali.ch