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## NOTE OF EXPLANATION

This manuscript was originally prepared in 1952 by my father-in-law Walter S. Miller the father of my wife Carol M. Stubblefield to be published in the US. It was determined that it would not be published in the US but instead it was published four years later in Mexico entitled Cuentos Mixes by the Instituto Nacional Indigenista Bilioteca de Folklore Indigena. The Spanish volume seems to have only 35 of the some 60 stories that are in the English manuscript. The English manuscript was missing the Final Conclusion but there seems to be comments at the end of most stories following the number of that story in parenthesis.

The stories were numbered 1-60. At that point I took the liberty to continue the numbering so that the computer in 1990 could easily handle them. Page numbers are entered by me on the right hand side of the table of contents so one can easily find the various stories.

Walter S. Miller deceased in February 1978, was buried in San Pablo Mitla del Valle. Many slides were taken by Walter over the years. Enclosed is one of José Trinidad that we found among the more than 2,000 slides. Early on Walter took pictures of most of the men living in San Lucas Camolán Mixes. Those pictures are very small (1 inch x 1 ½ inches) black and white photographs, affixed to 8 ½ x 11 paper with a roll number corresponding to the page. No names are given on the photograph page but Walter had notes in a notebook naming their full names which we have as yet to edit. The small pictures need to be photographed and then entered in a computer. Some of the pictures are in poor condition since the glue has filtered through into some of the pictures. Most of the original negatives disintegrated. The negatives were in rolls, were stored in metal containers.

The stories marked with an asterisk \* are stories found in Cuentos Mixes. The ones under III Beliefs and Customs have not been marked.

Underlined words in the stories were frequent but they have not be retained. They were mostly Spanish words and Mixe words. Accents are missing on many of the Spanish words.

The Appendices – glossary and Index seem to be missing from the 1990 computer version that I typed. The 1990 version was typed from the original but I have not located it in the SIL/ILV archives in Catalina, Arizona.

Morris Stubblefield  
June 30, 2010



José Trinidad

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## P R E F A C E

The material here presented was secured almost in its entirety in San Lucas Camotlan, in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico. In search of adequate texts for linguistic analysis, I encouraged the telling of experiences or tales in Mixe, since these would be least apt to vary from normal speech patterns. For grammatical analysis it was imperative that the word order and intonation pattern be those normally used and not the unnatural type often resulting in the informants' suggested translations for Spanish sentences such as "John wants Peter to sell him three bunches of banana leaves."

The stories were also ideal for providing obsolete greeting forms, indirect and direct quotation. They were not all recorded in Mixe, however, for at times they were told to me when there were neither facilities nor opportunity to record text. At such times, I secured them in Spanish with the idea of later recording them in text. In reality, then, the present paper was obtained as material incidental to the main project of linguistic research conducted, under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, in Camotlan and the vicinity during periods of varying length throughout October 1936 to August 1944 and February 1946 to July 1951, a total of more than thirty two months in residence in a Mixe town.

Mixes do not tell their stories to strangers. Of most help in winning their friendship and dispelling their distrust of me as an outsider, and a lone male at that, was the presence of my wife on the second and third periods in the village - my two longest stays. At the latter time, we took our four-month-old daughter and stayed for seven months. The task of gaining acceptance among them in order to study was made immeasurably easier by the presence of Vera with baby Carol during those months. The friendships made at that time have been strengthened through the years by Mixes visiting our home in Mitla where they found a welcome, shelter, a fire and the friendship of our children.

The following informants are responsible for the stories indicated:

1. José Trinidad, about sixty-two old, was one of the best storytellers in the village. He himself claims to have learned the tales from 'old folks', his father, his grandfather and others. He was equally proficient as a storyteller in both Spanish and Mixe, but sensed my inability to understand the fine shades of meaning in the latter and so never narrated as beautifully for me alone as he did for an audience of Mixes where my presence was just incidental. He also explained many of the customs and beliefs. Stories 5, 6, 10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, 48, 49, 56, and 59 are his.

2. Apolinar Robles, about fifteen years old, is the son of José Trinidad. When I first met him at ten or eleven years of age, he showed an intense interest in stories and legends of his people. At sixteen or seventeen, he began to adopt the attitude of the rural schoolteachers, whom he sought to ape, and scoffed at such things.

The next five years saw him become increasingly useless until he not only could not remember details of stories he had told me at fifteen, but even failed to remember he had told or even heard them. Stories 4, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 20, 27, 50, 51, 54, and 55 are his.

3. Camilo Miraflores, about twenty-five years of age, was able to recount some stories he had heard, but was never a real storyteller in his own right. Much to the disgust of other Mixes

listening to his narrating, he would misplace episodes - an almost unpardonable sin to a people who feel that a tale must be told as it has always been told. It became evident too that Camilo either lacked the ability to remember completely the tales he heard or else, ill at ease in his role of first informant and even more uncomfortable because of the jibes of his fellows, became rattled and forgot to finish episodes. He finally refused altogether to study, saying that he'd be glad to work in clearing land or anything that was a man's work. He told stories 1, 2, 44, 52, and 53.

4. Pedro Molino, about thirty-nine years old, was born in Camotlan, the son of a Yalalag (Zapotec) comerciante who settled in Camotlan and married a Mixe girl. Pedro was early left an orphan. He exhibits the natural Mixe zest for telling and hearing stories. A nephew of José, Trinidad, Pedro is one of the few younger individuals who exhibit exceptional talented storytellers. He explained customs and beliefs and told stories 36, 57, 60, and 61.

5. Alberto Jiménez, about twenty-five years old, is an example of Mixe resistance to extensive acculturation in the realm of the mind. Having spent several years in the home of a schoolteacher in Oaxaca, he had learned to cook and love it. He had learned also to sew on a treadle-model Singer and had acquired his own machine. Unofficially or semiofficially, he was the cook for priest, officials or others who came through the town as transient guests. Since I first knew him, he has constantly been connected with the Church in some way - as acolyte or sacristan, generally; as priest's cook, always. While he professes to hold the viewpoint of the church regarding brujerías, his practice in his own family life reveals the profession to be but a thin veneer and his hear-beliefs to be age-old Mixe. He told story 11.

6. Amado José, about thirty-two years old, is typical of Mixe reticence. An enjoyable and trustworthy companion on the trail, he abstains from the use of the Spanish he knows from his school years. Because of his reticence, it was with difficulty that I learned of his knowing stories and persuaded him to tell one. Even then, he insisted on telling it through Juan Reyes of about twenty-two years of age, a clever but unprincipled product of the village school who knew little about his own culture and cared less. Amado dictated the story of Juan in Mixe. He in turn dictated it to me with the necessary repetition to enable me to record it in text. Amado insists on stories being told "As they have always been told" and constantly monitored and corrected Juan in the telling of story 3.

7. Maximiano Olivera, about twenty-two years old, is a brother of Pedro Molino. Maximiano, Apolinar Robles, and Juan Reyes were schoolmates. A member of the town band and something of a tailor with his hand-turned Singer, Maximiano seems to be better acquainted with tales of the type told for entertainment than with origin stories. He helped in telling several of the stories of personal experiences which I have included in Part III under Beliefs and Customs. Of this collection, only story 58 is his.

8. Pablo José, about forty-five years old, was municipal president in 1948. He is reported to be the best tiger-hunter in town, although he himself says he no longer hunts regularly because he now has no dogs. He is an uncle of Pedro Molino. Jovial, tricky and sharp in business deals, he told many tales of hunting but only one story, 28.

9. Rosendo Juarez, about seventeen years old, was adopted as a baby into the relationship of cousin to Apolinar. Little addicted to study but intensely desirous of power, he became the assistant teacher and later was the first from Camotlan to become a rural schoolteacher. At the time he told story 45, he pretended to have cast off all the old beliefs, but his manner of telling the story



gave the lie to that. The ages given are approximately those of the storytellers at the time they told the first of their stories. They are based, in the case of the younger men, on the ages given in school or in the records used by the municipio in selecting the yearly quota of conscripts for military training. For the older men, in some instances their own estimates of their ages are used. In others, such factors as their appearance coupled with the greeting terms they use in speaking to other informants of known age, indicate whether they are older or younger than these. The relationships indicate as existing between informants, when other than son or brother, are according to Mixe kinship reckoning and not necessarily those which we might understand in our use of these terms.

It had been my plan to publish these stories in text form, with accompanying analysis in English or Spanish, either as separate papers or as an appendix to notes on Mixe grammar. However, Dr. George M. Foster urged me to collect as many stories as possible and to publish them in English. Since he first suggested this at the Anthropological Conference of 1947 in Mexico City and pointed out the relative paucity of and need for folklore collections from Mexico, I have collected several additional stories and translated the entire collection, adding as well the material comprising the section on beliefs and customs. Dr. Foster's *Sierra Popoluca Folklore and Beliefs* has been an inspiration and help in the compilation and arrangement of the present paper. Of far more value have been Dr. Foster's constant encouragement and very helpful suggestions as to format, terminology, and comparative notes. He has kindly read the manuscript from the earliest piecemeal draft to the final copy. Without his encouragement and help, these stories would have remained in my linguistic file and this paper would never have appeared.

Thanks are due to my colleague, Dr. William Wonderly, for suggestions and for introducing me to Aaree-Thompson's *Types of the Folktale* and urging my inclusion of references to these types. My colleague, Dr. Kenneth Pike, took the responsibility of assigning me the completion of the task, thus freeing me from other tasks to devote full time to this one. I wish here to thank him for the kindness.

Water S. Miller  
Prattsburg, N. Y.  
July 21, 1952.

## Introduction

My first contact with the Mixes was in October 1936. After consultation in Mexico City with various educators in Mexico's Department of Education and with officials in the department of Indian affairs, the Director of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Dr. W. Cameron Townsend, had assigned me the task of linguistic and related research in the Mixe region.

According to government census reports then available, the Mixes numbered something more than thirty thousand. It later became evident that this figure was far too low. In 1939, the estimate of the late Pbo. José Vasquez, who had served as priest throughout the region for about 30 years, was "about sixty thousand". So long as the Indians have the feeling that census figures will be used against them by the government, it will be almost impossible to get at the true facts. During the last census, the story was circulating that the government was going to kill off all those who didn't speak Spanish! Although the more enlightened Mixes were not likely to believe such a report, it was believed in many quarters with a resulting distortion both of the facts regarding monolingualism and total population count. In Camotlan, with no appreciable ingression of outsiders, the population has increased considerable during the past fifteen years. The same thing seems to be true of other towns. A conservative estimate of the total Mixe population would be from 50,000 to 60,000 at the present time.

The term Mixe means nothing in the language of the people so designated. Their own name for the tribe and its language is Aiyúk (eye-you-k).

There is abundant evidence of linguistic relationship between the Mixe of Oaxaca, the Popoluca of Vera Cruz and the Zoque of Chiapas. It is not surprising then to find many similarities in beliefs and customs also. That there are differences as well as similarities will be evident to those who may read Beal's Ethnology of the Western Mixe, Foster's Sierra Popoluca Folklore and Beliefs, and Wonderly's Textos en Zoque Sobre el Concepto del Nagual.

In regard to the stories, as I have observed elsewhere, the Mixes do not tell them to strangers. There seems to be no particular reverence in their attitude towards the folktales, yet even these are not told to outsiders. Perhaps it is because a feeling of camaraderie and fellowship is a necessary adjunct of the proper atmosphere for story telling. In the presence of outsiders, the necessity for being on guard and suspicious as well as the strain of conversing through Spanish would preclude the existence of such an atmosphere. Beal has pointed up the fact (pp. 2, 3). In another connection (p. 45 bottom), he observes, "I distinctly got the impression my informants were interested in establishing the good reputation of the town" (Juquila). I have found this to be equally true in Totontepac, Ayautla, Zacatepec, and Juquila. Beal's failure to secure much in the way of folklore and his conclusion that "Stories are very rare among the Mixe" (p. 134) are certainly due to a combination of these two influences – the secrecy bred of shyness and distrust plus the suppressing of data by would-be progressives, I am positive that in both Juquila and Ayutla there exist numerous tales and legends. A few samples of such from the former town are included in part III.

In contrast to Foster's findings among the Popoluca (p. 190 mid) middle-aged and old men seem to be the best Mixe storytellers. I feel certain that my not ridiculing their beliefs as hinted at in just for amusement. In fact, I learned that they would not tell the stories even to their own younger generation who ridiculed the beliefs or showed unbelief of the explanations given in them. It was only an occasional youth who knew these, as with the older raconteurs, there is a feeling identical with that of the Popoluca (Foster, p. 189 bottom)- the feeling that stories should be told exactly as they have always been told. Notice José Trinidad's lament, "Now they tell it any way...." Criticism from listening Mixe lads of his misplacing of episodes in one of the folktales led to Camilo's refusal to serve longer as my informant. True these tales were just for amusement, but they should be told just as they always have been told. To a Mixe there is just as much wrong with putting episode three before episode two in the possum and the tigre tale as there would be to an American historian

with a novice's placing the Civil War before the Revolutionary War. The stories are normally full of conversation and follow the pattern of everyday life. Direct quotation rather than indirect is the device most used. (Compare Foster p. 243 mid).

How does one establish the rapport necessary before one can secure the desired data? Since printed reports and private contacts reveal the fact that various investigators among various peoples have tried different methods, I shall present here an evaluation of some of them, insofar as they apply to the Mixes. A promiscuous and wholesome giving of gifts would not only not accomplish the desired end, but would immediately have the opposite effect of making one's objectives suspect. A few followers of an altogether undesirable sort might thus be secured but they would say anything for gain regardless of facts and their information would be worthless. Some have sought by active participation in fiestas, weddings, religious observances, or drinking bouts to become accepted as one of the people. That goal is a chimera! NO ONE will ever be accepted as a Mixe who is not one. Nor will mere conformity in externals be sufficient to win their friendship or one's acceptance as their friend, although it may gain a superficial tolerance of one's presence. The Mixe, however, is far too astute to be taken in by such a ruse. They have a way of plumbing one's real feeling toward them. A true desire to be their friend coupled with a genuine respect them as individuals and a willingness to lend a hand in everyday tasks if needed – a manifestation of friendship by a word of sympathy in time of bereavement, by the offer of medicine if someone is sick and would accept it (not forcing it upon them) –in short, proving one's self their friend with no ulterior motive will win one's acceptance by many and then little by little the real Mixe behind the externals will reveal himself. This I have proved. I made no attempt to dress or act as they do. Since I neither smoke or drink, I consistently refuse all offers of cigarettes and mescal (but accepted food no matter how hot with chile). When those who were at first offended in spite of my explanation “No es costumbre para mi”, (It isn't my custom), saw that it was not a personal matter but that I refused all offers, they became my defenders in succeeding instances where strangers would have sought to force these items upon me. And I have heard them explain in Mixe, “It's the truth: he never smokes or drinks! It just isn't his custom.” My nonconformity in this and in other things, such as a refusal to sacrifice chickens before clearing ground for planting or for constructing a house, in no way hindered or prevented their accepting me as a friend. Of that, the present collection of stories and data should be ample proof. Their continuing visits to us in our Mitla home is further evidence.

## II. Stories

### Origin Legends.

#### 1. \*Two Brothers Who Sold Tobacco.

A man had two sons, one called mugachugüiny and the other called Tumagüiny. Mugachugüiny always sold tobacco. Then he said to his younger brother, "Tomorrow let's leave and go sell tobacco in the plaza."

"Very well. Let's go tomorrow." so they left to sell tobacco, two of them. They came to the plaza there and began to sell tobacco. The younger brother sold his tobacco leaf by leaf. The older brother just rolled one leaf up and lit the point. The people just try it and then pay him.

They went out the second time to sell tobacco. Then they slept by the roadside on their way. When they lay down, the older said to the younger, "Put your head on this side from which we're coming now. Tomorrow when you shall have awaked, go ahead in that direction. You will come to a town that looks exactly like ours and whose inhabitants have exactly the same faces as our mother and our neighbors."

So the younger brother returned and came again to his own town without suspecting it. And he began to sell tobacco. He came to his own house and called, "Sir, good afternoon."

"Good afternoon, sir."

"Buy your tobacco."

"You are selling tobacco?" thus answered his mother, and she went out and said to her son, "What are you doing? What's happened to you? When have you done such a thing? Sit down here, you. In a little while your older brother will come. Then he'll see what will happen to him."

When the older brother came, that same night, the mother went and called a louse, "Come here!"

"Very well."

"Go see that man who lives there." And the louse went. He only went as far as the door and came back again.

"I can't go into the house. Right away he'll kill me."

"Then you, flea, go see. You are to go into his calzones (native type pants) there and bite him very much." So the flea went and bit him very much. And the man took off his calzones and threw them into the fire. The flea ran and returned home.

Then the mother called the rat and it came. "Vincent, you go see."

"No, because I won't be able."

"Make yourself wide awake."

"Very well, I'll go see." and the rat went. He chewed off the man's wife's braids and put them at her side. The woman awoke and told her husband, "Wake up, you, and look what's happened to me!" So her husband woke and saw the rat run and enter the grass-thatch roof. He got

up and set fire to the roof. But the rat ran and entered his corncrib. So he set fire to that and burned his corn too. But the rat ran and entered his well. So he filled his well up with stones. But the rat ran out the other side and ran home to his owner and there he married.

So Mugachugüiny was left poor. And he became very angry and went and found his younger brother and said to him, "You, little one, are indeed a man. That's why you did this. In three days we'll meet again."

"Very well, older brother, we'll meet again." And he went home and told his mother, "Mother, this is what your son told me."

"Very well, little one, here I am. Don't worry. Take your axe.

Go cut a tree and carve it just like your own face."

"Very well, little mother." And he went and cut the tree and carved it just like his own face. The tree was a kind of balsa. Obeying his mother's orders, he hollowed out the figure and filled it with bean soup. Then he put the image in the place where he usually slept and he himself slept at another place.

So the older brother went and found him and wounded him with his knife and killed him. But the younger brother did not die because the older brother stabbed the image and it was bean juice and not blood which ran out.

Again the older brother met the younger and they greeted each other: "Older brother, good afternoon."

"Good afternoon, little brother."

"You, older brother, are certainly a man. Now you have to be able to stand the same thing that I stood."

"Very well. It's nothing. It will be well." and the older brother went to his house. When he reached home, he said to his wife, "Let's flee because my younger brother is going to kill us." So immediately they went into a cave. And he struck his staff into the ground at the mouth of the cave. Then he said to his dog, "By this you will know - when my staff there has fallen, I'm dead. If anyone asks where I am, don't tell them. 'I don't know where he went,' thus you must answer anyone who may ask."

"Very well, sir."

Variant ending-

When the older brother and his wife fled from their house, they made all their possessions promise not to betray them - all, that is, except one, the mano of the chirmoler (small round stone pestle used to grind chili and tomatoes in a stone bowl). When the younger brother came to his brother's house and began asking for him, the mano said, "I know where he is, but I have no feet so I can't take you and show you."

"I'll fix that right now," replied Tumagüiny, and he pulled some hairs out of his armpit and put them on the mano for legs. Then it took him and showed him where the cave was. When he came to the cave, he saw the staff fall. His older brother had heard him coming and had died of fright.

(1) A variant portion is also given for the portion dealing with the rat's punishment of the older brother: The rat ran all over the woman's hair and urinated all over it. This woke the woman who in turn called her husband. He, on finding out what had happened, cut off her hair and threw it in the fire!

The discrepancy in that the elder brother is represented as burning up his house and at the end is represented as abandoning house and possessions, is either not apparent to them or of little importance.

The variant ending reminds one of a similar episode in the old Norse tales where Frigga fails to exact a promise from the mistletoe growing in the oak at the gate of Valhalla, a failure which led to the death of Balder the Beautiful by an arrow made from that same mistletoe. Thus the man betrayed the elder brother who failed to exact from it a promise. (Anderson's "Norse Mythology" and Guerber's "Myths of Northern Lands")

## **2. Buzzard Breaks His Beak.**

There was a man who had a son. When the boy was grown, his father said to him, "Son, you may marry. You're big now."

"No, father. Who will want me? People will say I'm lazy."

"Well, son, I can go ask and see what they say."

"Very well, father. You know best." So the father went to speak with the father of the girl. He went to him and said, "I come to tell you that my son wants to marry your daughter."

"My daughter can't marry your son because your son is very lazy."

He doesn't want to work. He only wants a new hammock to sit in daily and a new guitar to be playing each day. Go! Go to your house and don't come telling me that sort of thing!

So the boy's father returned. When he reached home he told his son all that the man had said. Then the boy replied, "Forget it, father. Don't bother yourself much about that man. We'll see what will happen to his daughter."

"All right, son." thus the father replied and they left it thus.

The next day the girl began to weave clothe. She was weaving clothe when a humming bird came flying and sat down on the thread. Quickly she picked up a corn cob and threw it at the bird's head. She didn't hit it but still it fell (as if) dead. The girl thought it was dead and immediately picked it up and put it in her blouse. The humming bird was still alive - it wasn't dead. Then it sucked the girl's breast and flew away again. Then the girl said, "Mother the humming bird deceived me. It sat on my thread and I threw the corn cob at it. It fell to the floor dead, so I picked it up and put it in my blouse. Right away it sucked my breast and flew away again."

"What sort of a bird is that?" replied the mother. The next day the girl went with her mother to bathe. When the girl undressed, the mother saw that her daughter's stomach was very full (swelled) and she became very angry. The poor girl was very sad. She didn't know why her stomach was full.

The next day, because of her sadness, the girl left the house and went to the mountain. There she met an animal named Martín. He was sitting on a vine. They greeted each other, "Good afternoon, Martín."

"Good afternoon, María."

"What are you doing, Martín?"

"María, I'm sitting on a vine. When one swings the vine, it feels very good."

"I wonder if what you say it true, Martín?"

"Yes, what I say is true, María. Try it if you don't believe me."

"I believe you're just deceiving me, Martín"

"No, María, why should I fool you? Now I'm going to tie it tighter so you won't fall." and Martín climbed up and cut the vine so María would soon fall. Then he came down and María climbed up on the vine. When María had seated herself on the vine, immediately Martín swung it and it broke and María fell in another place (far off).

Immediately the buzzard came and was going to eat the dead woman. Then the (unborn) child spoke, "Who are you?"

"This is the way I am," replied the buzzard describing himself.

"Well, you must be the buzzard."

"Yes, I am."

"Very well, but you must get me out very carefully. When I come out of here, then you can eat the dead women."

"Very well. I can take you out nicely." And he did.

When the child had come out, he said to the buzzard, "Thank you, buzzard, for doing me the favor of getting me out. Now you go and count one hundred peaks while I fix up the corpse."

"Very well," answered the buzzard and left to count the peaks.

But he only went and counted five or six mountains and came back very soon. When he returned to where the corpse was he said, "Well, here I am."

"Well, and did you finish counting one hundred peaks?"

"Yes, I finished," said the buzzard.

"You didn't finish counting one hundred and until you do, you can't eat the corpse," thus spoke the boy. So the buzzard went out again and finished counting. When he returned, the boy had buried his mother and had fixed up a rock in place of the corpse. The buzzard gave a pick at it and broke his beak. He began to cry.

Then the boy gave him advice, "You shouldn't eat people. You should eat dead animals - not people. If you try to eat people again the same thing will happen to you."

The buzzard kept on crying and said, "Pardon me, little boy. I won't ever do it again." So the boy went and brought a piece of hide and tied up the beak. Then the boy went off. When he came to the town, no one would give him lodging. So he stayed under a corncrib. He knew there was an animal that travels at night and eats people. So he thought and then put a stone onto the fire. The stone was very hot when the boy saw the animal spring at him with its mouth open. So the boy seized the hot stone and threw it into the animal's mouth and it died. Then the boy slept contentedly.

When it began to dawn, the boy started out again and went to another village. Here again no one would give him lodging so he slept outside. He didn't know there was an animal which ate people. Suddenly the animal came and seized the boy and carried him off to his cave. The boy didn't even feel it when he was carried off. When he awoke, he saw that there were many, many people there. Some were alive and some dead. They had died of hunger. Then the boy said, "What could it be that brought me here and what can we do to get down out of here?" Then he went and found the animal asleep in a tree. So he took aim and put a bullet in it. So the animal died and they got down out of there, the boy and the people who were still alive.

Once again the boy set out and came to the city. There the people fed him. He didn't go through there what he had experienced in the towns.



### 3. \*Why The Turkey Buzzard Has a Red Head.

When he had killed his older brother, tumagüiny decided to get married. So he sent his mother to the house of the girl's mother. But the girl's mother only scolded her, "Why that tumagüiny doesn't work." That's the way she talked to her, "All that son of yours cares for is a good guitar and a pretty song."

So tumagüiny's mother returned. When she reached home she said to him, "The woman with whom you wanted to marry didn't want to." And it was true that tumagüiny didn't work. He just held his hand up toward the sky and felt money in his hand. Just like that he found his money and clothed himself. So he said to his mother, "Let it be. Now it's up to me to see what idea comes to me. It's all right if she doesn't want to accept me."

He remained for a while and then went to where the girl was weaving. He made himself like a bird. And the little bird flew up on her loom. The girl struck the little bird on the head with her loom stick and it dropped dead. She picked it up and put it in her blouse. It was there a while and then it came to and picked at the tips of both her breasts. Then it flew out and away again.

The girl said to her mother, "Little mother, that little bird flew away."

And the mother replied, "You should have brained that manure-mouthed bird! What was it hunting that it came around here?" And when the bird picked her breasts, with just that she became pregnant. When her mother went to bathe, she accompanied her. Then the mother saw that her daughter was pregnant. Then her father and mother said to each other that their daughter was pregnant. Then the father became angry in his turn and they struck each other. And the father struck his daughter also.

So the daughter said, "Very well, I'm going out there to the mountain. There the tigre and all animals will eat me." And she went out. She came to where there was a squirrel swinging. The girl said to the squirrel, ¿Martín, what are you doing?"

He replied, "Takpút (greeting form), I'm swinging here. It's very, very good here. It satisfies me very much, it fills me very much. One feels as if he had eaten and drunk."

And the girl replies, "Is it true that it's really good?" And she climbed up into the vine swing. He pushed her and made her swing far out. Again she returned to where she had started.

The squirrel said, "Tukpút, wait a bit. I'll make the vine more secure. You are very heavy." Down came the squirrel after he had, as he said, fixed the vine well - actually he cut it. Then he said, "Takpút, now get in again. The vine will go straight indeed and not crooked."

"Very well. I'll get in." The second time he pushed it. She went very far out and returned once again to the starting place. The third time he said, "Takpút, wait again. I'm going to secure the vine more." And Martín climbed up to where the vine was hung and all but cut it in two. Then he climbed down and said, "Takpút, get in now. I've already secured the vine more."

So she climbed into the vine again. He pushed her again and said as he pushed, "Go again - once for all." The vine broke and she fell way down below at 'Blackbird Cave Place'. For three days she lay there. Then the turkey buzzard came flying and landed. He drew near to the dead woman and picked once at her. Immediately the little boy began to speak there inside his mother's womb, "Grandfather, don't hurt me."

The buzzard fell back and saw one other place. Once again he picked and again the boy spoke to him, "Grandfather, uncover me carefully! Don't hurt me! Pile the flesh up in one place." So he uncovered the little boy. Then, from their mother's womb, came out two, a boy and a girl. And he said to the buzzard, "Grandfather, you want to eat meat. Go, now, and fly around thirteen of the highest mountains." So the buzzard went and flew around only two, then he returned again. But the boy said to him, "Grandfather, I haven't fixed up older sister as I told you. I saw very well that you only went a little way and returned. Now do as I said."

"Very well," said the buzzard and went again. But he only flew around three and came again and landed, flapping his wings. Then the boy said to him anew, "You didn't do as I explained. I still haven't finished arranging. Now I want to cut and split ocote for the offering. It's not good for you to eat her just as she is."

"Very well," said the buzzard and this time he really left. The little boy saw him when he flew away very high. This time he went and flew around the thirteen mountains.

The boy had already buried his mother and put her white skirt over a rock when the buzzard returned and landed again. Then the boy said to him again, "Grandfather, now I've finished arranging. Eat quickly." So the buzzard approached the stone inside the skirt. Then quickly, because he was very hungry, he gave a tremendous pick and broke his beak. Much blood came out. Then the little boy said, "Grandfather, you can't eat people. That's why this happened to you. I'll fix your beak for you right away, but you must not eat people."

"Very well," replied the buzzard. So the boy fixed up his beak.

And that's why the turkey buzzard now has a red head.

(2,3) Those of Camotlan assure one that the incidents here related are true. Why, even today there remain in Quetzaltepec's land the marks where the girl fell, they say.

The episode here related is included also in 4 and 5. In this episode is the origin of nagualism when tumagüiny becomes successively a bird and a squirrel to punish the proud girl who had refused to have him as her husband. As to the bird, Camilo explains that it is a humming bird, "which all the world knows is many times the nagual of some brujo or bruja, (witchdoctor)." But Amado and Juan say that it is the salta-pared (canyon wren and that according to the belief of many people today, when one enters a house it means that the woman of the house has been with another man.

Here also is the origin of making brujerías or preparing offerings for the dead.

Some of the informants attribute the turkey buzzard's red head to the blood which came out when he broke his beak, others to the color of the hide with which the boy tied up the beak again.

#### **4. \*María's Children Become Sun and Mood.**

They tell that a woman, in times past, had two children, a boy and a girl, who were changed into the sun and the moon. The legend says that a family had an unmarried daughter. One day a young man presented himself and wanted to marry her, but the girl refused to marry him. The young man became angry and sent a bird. The girl was spinning thread when the bird presented itself. It was of a most beautiful color and seated itself on her thread. The girl seized a little stick and struck it and it fell dead because of the blow it had received. She was sorry that she had killed it so she picked it up and put it into the bosom of her blouse. But after it had been there a long while, it began to pick at the girl's breasts and then come out again.

The girl continued working without knowing what was going to happen to her. Why, as time passed, she went to bathe with her mother and the mother saw that the girl was pregnant. The mother became furious when she saw her in this condition and she began to abuse her and didn't let her alone even a moment without scolding her.

One day the girl went to fetch firewood. There she came upon a squirrel that was swinging happily. They greeted each other and right away the bad squirrel invited her to swing. She was afraid to get up, but the squirrel continued to insist that she get up. At last she became convinced and got up. The swing was in good condition and she got down again. After a bit, the squirrel told her to get up again. She said, "No." The squirrel, to trick her, climbed up saying he'd fix it so it would be even stronger, but what he actually did was to chew through the vine so the girl would fall. Then he said, "Now, indeed, it is much better than when you first got up." The poor girl, deceived, got up. Then the squirrel began to swing her rapidly and the swing broke. The girl fell at a distance of two kilometers, more or less, her body broken.

The buzzard, being hungry, came to eat her. When he was picking he heard voices of children saying, "Grandfather, don't hurt us much." He was frightened at those words. He didn't eat a single piece of flesh, but was piling it up in one place so that when the children had come out he might eat to his heart's content. When the children came out, they said, "You shall not eat until you have flown over a hundred mountains, plains and rivers. Meanwhile we will fix her up."

The buzzard went and flew over two or three mountains and returned again. But the children wouldn't allow him to eat. So the buzzard went again to carry out his assigned task. On this flight he carried it out. But the children immediately buried their mother so that when the buzzard returned he wouldn't find her. The children were very astute. Where they buried their mother, there they placed a white rock which looked like a corpse.

When the unhappy buzzard arrived, he was deceived into believing it was the corpse. He picked at it with great force and broke his beak because of such a terrific pick. And the poor animal began to whimper because of the pain. Then the children scolded the poor animal saying that he ought not to eat people. Then the boy said to him, "Well I'll fix your beak with the understanding that never again are you to eat human beings." He mended it with a piece of deerskin and it became well and whole and off flew the buzzard.

But the children remained hunting for the road to reach the village. When they reached town, they didn't know where to stay. When the townsfolk saw such children, they asked them from whence they came. They replied that their mother was the girl who had become lost. Then the townsfolk showed them their grandparents' house. When they arrived at their grandfather's house, the old folks were very much astonished. From then on the children remained in their grandparents' house and

were growing up. They made a business of hunting and killed many animals. But one day, when the little grandmother went out, they began to delouse the grandfather. The boy said to his sister that the back of the grandfather's neck was good to eat. The grandfather heard and asked what they were talking about. They replied that they were saying he had many lice. Another morning the little grandmother again went out to hunt for herbs for soup. The moment she left, they killed their grandfather and cut him up.

While the grandmother returned, they had already killed the grandfather. And they had called together different kinds of insects and put them in the sack and wrapped them in his petate (palm mat). grandfather well broiled. They told the grandmother to make broth for breakfast. When They put this where the grandfather used to sleep. When the grandmother arrived, they had the flesh of the old lady put the flesh in the olla, the water said, "You are cooking your husband." The grandmother heard but the children said that the water was crazy. Then they ate first. When they finished eating, the grandmother said, "Go call your grandfather." They went and returned saying that he didn't want to come. Then the grandmother said, "Take his breakfast out there." So they took it and when they came to where he slept, they poured the soup over their clothes and went crying to where their grandmother was saying that their grandfather had hit them.

Then the grandmother seized a stick to beat the grandfather and while she went, they ran away. When the little old lady came to where her husband slept, she began to beat the petate and thousands upon thousands of stinging insects came out. They stung her without stopping. She barely escaped from the danger and saw that the children had gone. Then she followed them.

They went running and came to a gully where a woman was washing herbs for her turkeys to eat. They said, "Hide us because our grandmother wants to kill us."

The woman said, "I don't have any place to hide you."

"In your mouth," they said. "And when my grandmother comes, tell her you have a toothache."

"Then the woman said, "But don't laugh, because if you laugh, I'll bite you."

They said, "We won't laugh."

When the grandmother came asking the woman if she had seen some children pass, she said, "No, because I'm sick with a toothache and can't lift my head up. I just heard some children whistling on a ridge up there."

Then the grandmother returned very sad. Afterwards they came out and thanked the woman and the boy said. "The repayment of your favor will be that you will turn into an animal and damage all the plants that have tubers. And your name will be gopher." And they put her very deep into the earth until the voice of the animal couldn't be heard. And they say that it's because of this that the gopher has two pouches in its cheeks.

Then they began to travel in the world, the two of them. They came to a town where there was a snake which ate people nightly. The people wouldn't give them a place to stay until at last in one house they gave them a place under the corncrib. The boy made a huge fire, placing a ball of stone in the fire. At midnight the snake came to devour the children. When the boy saw it, he seized the stone and thrust it into the snake's mouth because it was coming with its mouth open. With that the animal died and the town was saved from danger. So they stayed there in that town some days.

Afterwards they left to go to another town. When they arrived at the other town, they found an animal more dangerous than the former. This was an animal that carried people off into a high mountain where it ate them after they had died of hunger. Then they arrived there, the people didn't give them a

place to stay. But they saw a pile of bean hulls under a tree and they crawled into it there to sleep. They didn't feel a thing when that animal came and carried them off. It carried them off to a very high mountain where no one can get down and where there is nothing to eat. When it became daylight, there they were in that place that had nowhere to climb down. Since the boy had his slingshot, his sister said, "Loan me your slingshot. I'm going to kill that animal." And she began to shoot. She shot till only one more shot remained.

Then the brother said, "Give it to me. You've all but finished them up." So he aimed and hit it right in the head, because the animal was sitting in a tree, or it was sleeping there. So when he shot it, it fell to the bottom of the mountain. So all the people who were there were saved from that danger. But some were already dying of hunger. They couldn't even walk anymore.

Then the boy ordered his sister to go urinate, saying "I urinate vines of different kinds." And she went, but she didn't say anything of the sort. Instead, what she said was all to the contrary. She said when she was urinating, "I urinate bananas of various kinds." And at the foot of the mountain it became covered with bananas of different kinds full of fruit already ripe. When the boy saw that it didn't give any of the results that he had thought, then he himself went to urinate and said, "I urinate vines of all kinds." And immediately from that moment that place was covered with vines.

Since many were about to die, they wanted to climb down first.

But the boy warned all of those who were going to climb down that they were not to eat any fruit, but when they reached the foot of the mountain, many of them did eat. But some waited. When the boy climbed down, he saw that they had eaten. He became plenty angry and asked which ones had done the damage. Then he gathered all those who had eaten and turned them into animals of the field and immediately dispersed them. Those who had waited returned to their homes rejoicing. But the boy, what he did was to burn the animal.

When it was burned to ashes, he wrapped it up and packed it well. Then he called one who was named Lorenzo and who was a good swimmer so that he should take it to put it into the ocean without unwrapping it. And Lorenzo went. When he came to the ocean he said to himself, "What might it be? Why doesn't he want to show it to me?" And he went and unwrapped it. Many flies came out and Lorenzo was covered with flies. He went into the water with the little that remained. And in that moment he was changed into a toad and never returned to his town anymore. Because of this, they say there still exist flies and mosquitoes.

Then the boy and girl went to another town. Arriving there they found that there was a great fiesta for the forming of the sun and moon. They went to the house of little old man who gave them all they needed. And they went to the fiesta where the people were eating and drinking with a will. But to them they gave nothing. However, the boy knew he could swallow a peso and change into the sun. He told the little old man that he should make a well in his house so he would have water in the time when all the water would dry up.

One day they took their leave of the little old man to go to that fiesta. Then they went and came to where they were doing that work. Then the black bird said, "Among us we have those who are going to become sun and moon." But the people said would those humble ones be able when better people were trying and weren't able. Then that old man arrived and told them to give it to those children and see if they could. But many opposed it. However, at last they gave it to them.

As soon as they had seized the peso, immediately they swallowed it and then climbed up that ladder that the people had placed there. Then there began a strong heat that dried up every river and gully, except for just one gully in a big mountain. And there they gathered together, all the town to drink water. Meanwhile the little old man had his water hidden.

And the sun and the moon went together. But the sun saw that men weren't able to stand it. Then he hunted a way to leave his sister. So it was that he deceived her that he had his sandals. So the girl returned and found his sandals, but her brother had already gone on ahead. And passing one place he defecated there. When the girl passed, she shouted, "Brother!" and the feces answered, "Puh!" Then she seized a stick and struck it and many little birds came out.

And they say that that's the reason the moon passes with the sun each month.

(4) "passes with" - is seen in the daytime sky. She is trying to catch up with her brother. But always she is again left behind.

## 5. \*The Sun and Moon.

The girl's name was María. She had her thread set up for weaving. She was weaving pantalones (trousers) - that's what people used to wear - when a little bird came and sat down on her thread.

"Oh, you little bird! What are you doing? Why do you sit down on my thread that way?" And she scared it off. It flew away. But soon it came and sat down on the thread again. Again she scared it and it flew away. Soon it returned and sat down on the thread and defecated.

"Oh, you little bird, manure-mouth! Why do you act that way! Now you have dirtied my thread. Now I'm going to kill you." There between the threads she has a stick (to firm the weaving). She drew this out and hit the bird over the head with it. Of course, it dropped dead. There, quivering, it came rolling over and over down the threads toward the girl. She picked it up thus in her hands. "Ah, poor little bird. Now I've killed you. Why did you go and dirty my threads? But don't worry." And she put it inside her blouse.

There she was weaving when the bird began to move her breasts - both of them. Again he moved them. A third time he moved them. "You, little bird, what are you doing? Now indeed I'm going to kill you." She put her hand into her blouse to seize it when it flew out and away. And with just that she became pregnant. But her father and her mother became very angry that she was pregnant. She slept inside the sweat house. And thus, with the bird's moving her breasts, she began to be pregnant. It wasn't sin, nor was it carelessness - she just began to be pregnant. And her father and mother became very angry.

One day she went to fetch firewood. There she came upon a squirrel called Martínillo. He fixed a vine thus, just like a hammock. There he was playing, pushing himself, swinging.

"Martinillo, what are you doing?"

"Have you come here, María? Why I'm just here swinging. My but it's nice! Don't you want to try it?"

"Can you swing me?"

"Of course! Get up on it." So María climbed up on it. The squirrel pushed her. She swung far away and came back.

"I'm going to make it secure here above," said the squirrel and climbed up to where the vine was fastened to the tree. There he cut the vine with his teeth. "Now it's fixed," he said. And he pushed her again. The vine broke and the girl fell where it's called 'Flea Cave Place'. Far away she fell. But she died, poor girl. She fell dead there.

Immediately the buzzard came - the one called mahkweksh (turkey buzzard) - and was going to eat her. He began to pick at her when the boy spoke to him from inside his mother, "Very carefully you must open. You must not eat the flesh. Pile it up on one side. Afterwards you shall eat it. I know how I'm going to take up my mother. There I'm going to make my brujería, I'm going to make my offering for her."

"Very well." Very carefully he opened her. There to one side he piled up the flesh. When he had opened her, the children came out from inside their mother. There were two of them, a boy and a girl. About this size they were, about thirty centimeters high.

Then the boy said to him, "Now you must fly over more than a hundred ridges, peaks, mountains - about eighty, ninety, five hundred. That's the way you must fly - far. I know how I'm going to take up my mother. Then when you return, you shall eat."

"Very well." And he went and flew over five or six only. Very soon he returned.

"How is it you came back so soon? I haven't finished yet. You didn't go fly like I told you. Now go complete the number. When you return, you can see from up there if it's ready. Then you can drop on it from above."

"Very well." And again he went. Then the children, between the two of them, buried their mother. I don't know where they found it, but there where they buried her, there they put the stone. When the buzzard returned, he saw it from up above and dropped like a plummet at the white rock. He gave a pick at it and broke his entire mouth. There he was crying. Then he said to the boy, "Now you are to blame."

So now I'm going to eat you."

"No. You're not going to do that. Don't worry. I'm going to fix your beak right away." There the boy found a piece of deerskin. It was with that he tied up the buzzard's beak. That's why it's red around his mouth. Then the boy said to him, "Take this as a lesson. You are not to eat human beings. Animals of the forest you can eat - snakes, that sort of thing you shall eat. You may even eat human defecation. That far you may go, but you are never to eat human beings."

"Very well." and he left. Then the two children came into town. Down below there a man saw them. He said to his neighbor, "Hombre de Dios, there at Flea Cave Place are two children! Whose might they be?"

"Indeed, hombre de Dios, I understand that that María has gone. Either she went far away or she has died - who knows which? It might be these are her children."

"I'm going to tell their grandmother."

But the children already know where their house is. They went straight there. "Grandmother, here we've come."

"Is that so?"

"Yes indeed. Our mother has died. She got into the vine hammock.

That rascal of a squirrel is the one who tricked her. She fell far away. But I've already taken her up, already I've made her offering. Don't worry. We're going to grow up for you."

"Indeed! hombre de Dios, is that so?"

"Yes, that's the way that is."

"Very well, here you shall live." And they stayed with their grandmother and grandfather.

One day their grandmother went out all along the river hunting for herbs. Then you take a ball of corn dough like this (about the size of a golf ball) and lump by lump you cook it among the herbs. That's the way you eat it. That was the custom of the people in those days. Well, their grandmother went to gather herbs and the children stayed to take care of their grandfather. Then the grandfather said,

"You must inspect my head for me. It seems I have many lice."

There the boy was looking over his head thus, parting the hairs. Then he said to his sister, "Look! His neck and shoulders are very fat. Maybe he's delicious to eat. We better kill and eat him."

"You, boy what are you saying? What are you talking about there?"

"I'm saying that there are many lice. That's all I'm talking about." But the boy had his slingshot. With that he killed his grandfather. Then they roasted the flesh. Immediately they gathered a



lot of stinging insects - all sorts of stinging insects. These they put under their grandfather's blanket in the corner. That's where the old man slept.

When their grandmother came, he gave her their grandfather's testicles. "Cook this and eat it," he said. "It's deer liver." Thus they deceived their grandmother. Then she put the old man's testicles into the water to cook. There the water was talking in the pot, "myee mezo," that's what it was saying, "That's your husband you're going to cook." Because previously, everything talked - deer, the antelope, the peccary, stones, trees, the water - everything talked. Then when Jesus Christ was born, that's when everything became mute. That's what my father told me. But she paid no attention and she ate them.

When the herbs and dough balls were ready, the boy said, "I'll take some to my grandfather. I'll climb up and you hand it to me. Then I'll give it to him." But he just dumped it over his own head and began to cry, "Look what my grandfather did to me."

"Ah, what an old man!" exclaimed the grandmother. "Why did you do that to my sons? Now I'm certainly going to beat you!" And she went to hunt a stick. Up she climbed into the corner, and began to beat on the blanket with the insects under it. Then all those insects came out and they stung her here and there. All over her body they stung her. She came down swiftly, but the two children had already run away. They ran down toward low country and the boy said to his sister, "You must urinate. You must say, 'I'm urinating slipperiness.'" So she did so. All along the way she went urinating. The road became very slippery. There comes the grandmother. She can't walk well. She slips here, slides there. She falls here, she falls there. That's why in August the path is very slippery even to this day, they say.

There where it is called Crab Water Place, the children found a woman washing herbs for turkeys. "You must hide me," the boy said.

"But where? I have no place where I can hide you."

"I'm going to enter into your mouth," so he said. If anyone asks you, you are not to tell them. If you tell, I'll kill you." So they entered into the woman's mouth. I don't know how they were able to enter because by now they were so big. But I guess they made themselves little. This woman had been a person but now she is a gopher. Haven't you noticed that it has two pockets, one in each side of its mouth?

When the old woman arrived, she said, "What are you doing, María?"

"I'm washing herbs for my turkeys."

"Didn't you notice when some children passed here?"

"No. I didn't see anything. But up there above in the mountain they were whistling. That's all I heard." That's all she replied. She didn't raise her head. She didn't speak clearly. Just like this she was mumbling. She wasn't able to talk well because she had the children in her mouth. Well, the old woman turned back just there. She gave a turn through the woods, but didn't find them.

When she had gone, the children came out again. "Now I'm going to place a blessing on you," said the boy. "You're not going to lack food. You're going to eat squash plants, bananas, chayotes, sugar cane - every fruit that is planted. These you will use. That's the favor I'm going to do you." Then he began to strike the ground with his stick. He made a hole for her to enter. More than three days he was striking the earth so she could go further down. There that woman went in. Since then there is that animal. There it comes out. It has made its holes, now here, now there. That's why there are gophers today. It eats with a will.

Then the children went to another town. But the people there were very bad. They wouldn't give them a place to stay. From house to house they went. At last an old man said to them, "There you can sleep in my corncrib."

"Thank you very much, sir. I'll sleep there."

"But you must look out for yourself plenty because there's a snake that goes around at night. It's very big, this snake. It eats people. More than ten, twelve arm breaths, that's how it is."

"Hombre de Dios, is that so!"

"Yes, that's how big it is. Already it's eaten many people."

"But don't you worry. I know how I'll get the best of it. I'm certainly going to kill it." So the boy got together plenty of fire and in the middle put a stone this big - the size of a person's head. It's round, this stone. There it is heating. But the boy doesn't sleep. There he is in the corncrib of the old man. There he is waiting. Exactly at midnight there comes the snake. I think that's the kind that is called 'serpent'. Yes, I'm sure that's it. There it comes. It's hunting where there may be people so it can eat them. Then it saw the children. There it comes with its mouth open. It's just about to swallow them. Then the boy threw the stone right into its mouth. But the stone was already red hot. Right there it struck in the snake's throat. It can't stand it. How's that poor thing ever going to stand it! Right there it just died.

Two or three days only the children they won't give them place to stay. It was already late. There isn't a single house that isn't already closed up. There under a tree in the patio they lay down. But the boy doesn't know that there is an animal that goes around at night. It's very big, this animal - bigger than a tapir. This is what carries them off into the very high mountain. There it leaves them. But there is nothing there to eat. There those poor folks will die of hunger.

There the two children were sleeping when the animal came. They didn't feel anything, those poor things, when the animal carried them off. There he left them on top of that peak. When it was dawning, they woke up. "Indeed, hombre de Dios, where are we? There's no town here! There isn't anything! What could have brought us here?"

"Indeed, hombre de Dios, I don't know. I didn't feel a thing. I was just sleeping." And they saw that they were on top of the peak. There's no way to get down. There on top are many people which that animal had brought. Already they are very hungry. Some have already died of hunger. There the boy was looking around when he spied the animal. It was sleeping in the top of a very high tree.

"Now, indeed, I'm going to kill you." And he took out his slingshot and shot it one. Just right there was the end of that animal. It fell clear down to below. Dead it fell down to the bottom of the mountain. But the people can't get down. There they are dying of hunger. Then the boy said to his sister, "Go, you urinate. You are to say, 'I'm urinating vines of all kinds,' thus you are to say. You must think only of vines."

"Very well," and she went to urinate. But she is already very hungry. Already she is thinking of eating bananas. Just thus she is thinking. When she urinated, nothing but bananas trees resulted. There at the foot of the mountain they grew. A quantity of banana plants grew.

But the boy became very angry. "How is it you didn't say what I ordered you to? Now I'll go." And he went and urinated. Solely of vines he is thinking. Thus he says, "I'm urinating all kinds of vines." Very quickly those vines sprang up. Very quickly the mountain was entirely covered with vines. They lengthened out their tips very much. Haven't you noticed that from above they grow down? There they came growing down from the trees or cliffs where they start. That's the way those were. Quickly

they grew. Already they had touched the ground. There is where all those people are going to climb down.

“Only,” the boy told them, “none of you shall eat bananas until I come.” But they were now very hungry. As soon as they climbed down, they saw there the ripe bananas. There they went and ate plenty. Then the boy climbed down. Right away he saw that the people are eating bananas. Already they had eaten many. But right away that boy became angry. He became very angry. “Didn’t I tell you you were not to eat till I climbed down? Now indeed I’m going to punish you!” All the people who had eaten bananas, these he changed into coatis. There he seized them, turned them and threw them up into the trees. Haven’t you noticed that up above there they travel around? That’s why even yet there are coatis. They don’t wait. Even before the people get a chance, they go ahead and eat. That coati is very rascally. There in hot country they go around in big groups, thirty or forty, that’s the way they travel. Together they travel. Of course, there are those which are called ‘solitaries’. Those, truly, go about one by one. But that’s why there are coatis. Those are the ones who didn’t wait to eat bananas. That’s the way the very old people told it to me.

But right away the boy went and burned that animal. Right there where it was lying, right where it fell. Already it was good and dead. There he piled up the firewood, the trees which were dead. Just right there he went and burned it. He burned it completely. Afterward he gathered all the ashes together. There he wrapped them up in bananas leaves. He tied them up very well. Then he called one whose name was Lorenzo. That one it was who knows how to swim very well. Ah, like a fish he goes in the water. Of course, that’s the one he sent to call.

“You, Lorenzo, go take this bundle. Very carefully you must take it. There you are to put it into the ocean. You are not to pry into it. Don’t open it even a little. Just this way you are to take it. Deep you are to put it in, clear to the bottom of the ocean.

“Very well.”

“But you must not undo it. If you undo it, there you will find out what a punishment you’ll receive.”

“Very well, I won’t touch it.” And he left. There he goes carrying the bundle of ashes. But all the way he goes thinking, “What might it be” Why am I to put it into the ocean?” Then Lorenzo came to the edge of the ocean. He’s just about to enter to leave the bundle. There he put it on the edge a bit and he’s there looking at it. Again he’s thinking, “What does it have inside? How will he know that I opened it” Just a moment only I’ll glance at it. Then right away I’ll take it into the ocean.” Thus he is thinking. There he went and undid one side. Then he opened it just a little. But immediately a host of little insects came out - that mosquito, another black fly which bites hard, and all that kind of little insects. But with a will they stung and bit that Lorenzo. Immediately he closed the bundle again. But already plenty of insects had come out. Immediately he entered the ocean with what remained. But just right there he stayed. There it was that he received his punishment. He turned into a toad. Why, haven’t you noticed that the toad has many bumps? That is where the little insects stung him. That’s why there are still toads. That is the one who was named Lorenzo.

Then the children went to another village. There there were many people in the town square. There the boy entered. But there also the people won’t give a place to stay. There on the edge of town there is an old man. That is the one who gave them a place to stay. That’s the one who boarded the children. He was a very good man. Then he said, “They are going to see who will swallow the peso. That is the one who will become the sun.” Because as yet there was no sun. There was no moon. It was just that way only (without sun and moon). But when someone swallows the peso, that one right away will become the sun. Haven’t you noticed that previously the peso (silver coin corresponding in size

to our silver dollar) had the sun on the back? That was he kind those people were to swallow. There they are day after day. Many try to swallow it. There just in their throats it returns. Then can't swallow it.

Then the boy says, "I, indeed can swallow it. I'm going to become the sun." But the people don't want to give it to him.

"There are grown men trying to swallow it. You're just a boy! How are you going to be able to swallow it? You won't be able to!"

There when he went to eat at midday, he says to the little old man, "I can indeed swallow the peso. But those people don't want to give it to me. This afternoon I'm going again. Let's see whether they'll give it to me."

"I'm going to tell them to. There you shall try it. Let's see if you'll be able to swallow it."

"Of course. Indeed I will be able to swallow it. I know that I can become the sun. But now I'm going to do you a favor. You already gave me a place to stay, tortillas and everything. That's why I'm going to put a blessing on you. Here under your bed you are to dig a hole. Inside your house you are to dig - more than five, eight, about ten meters you are to dig. There you will have water, but you are not to say anything to anyone. Because all the water is going to dry up. Only far away there will be water. But there under your bed you will have it."

"Hombre de Dios, is that the way it's to be?"

"Yes, that's the way it is." So right away the little old man dug the hole. Deep he made it. More than ten meters he made it. There he had his water.

Then again the boy went there where the people were. Again he says, "I can swallow it. Give me the peso. I can become the sun." But the people don't want to give it to him. There they are trying to swallow it. But no one is able to swallow it. Then it was that a black bird came to tell, "Here we have one who is to become the sun. He indeed is able to swallow the peso." So then the people gave it to him even though they don't want to. The one who swallows it first, that is the one who is to become the sun. The other is to become the moon. But the boy seized it immediately. The girl also wants to swallow it. But the boy right away swallowed it. Immediately he changed into the sun. There he goes climbing up; both of them are going, sun and moon.

Then it is very hot. The sun is still very close. It's barely beginning to climb up. There it goes climbing higher up the mountain. It was very hot. All the water dried up. Only far away, in a high mountain, there there is water in a gully. There they go to fetch it. But the old man has his water.

Then the boy said to his sister, "There in the old man's house I left my sandals. Go get them. But hurry up about it." Right away the girl returned. There were the sandals. She grabbed them and goes again. She goes running but can't catch up with her brother. She doesn't know where he went. Then she saw some defecation in the road. She said to this, "Where is my brother?"

But the feces only said, "Puh!"

"Ah, so you don't want to tell me! Just a minute and you'll see!" And she grabbed a pole and struck the feces. There a whole bunch of little black birds came out. Those are what are called miras hoon, "you'll see birds". That's what came out of the feces of the sun. They fly on where the sun went. The girl follows them. She's just about to overtake her brother. "Here are your sandals. Wait for me a bit! Take them. Grab them!"

Then the boy became very angry. On purpose he had left his sandals. He doesn't want to walk along with his sister. He alone wants to be the sun. Because of that he seized the sandals and struck

the girl right in the face with them. "You stay behind!" thus he said. and that's why it is that the moon goes along behind. They don't go along together anymore.

But the mark still remains where he hit his sister with his sandals. Haven't you noticed that sometimes you can see a black spot on the moon? That's the sandals still - where her brother hit her.

Of course, that was previously. Already it's a long, long time ago. That's the way it was thus the old people told it to me. But that was lo-o-o-ong ago.

(4, 5) In explaining the girl's name and the name used for the woman who afterwards became the gopher, José Trinidad said that "In times past the people had no names. The women were called 'María'. The men, in Mixe were called xohhuun, "strong oak", tsinhuun, "strong pine"."

Some correspondences may be noted with the accounts recorded by Benedict in "Tales of the Cochiti Indians". There is recorded there, p. 211 top, that a girl was turned out by her parents because of her pregnancy, due in that case to the sun. On the same page - and the account deals with "the children of the sun" - we read that these twins "commanded the eaglets not to eat human flesh in the future", corresponding to the command of the sun-to-be to the buzzard.

While the Popoluca account, as recorded by Foster on p. 217, does not give the children as twins, yet it does speak of a boy and a girl as being the sun and moon. And we find that the Popolucas also believed that there was a time when all the animals could speak, p. 226 top. On p. 236, Foster records in a different setting (that of the flood) an injunction to the people there similar to that given by the boy to the people who were climbing down. The punishment for disobedience is similar - transformation into animals. For a color picture of the coati, see National Geographic Magazine for February 1945, plate II following p. 192.

The matter of the boy's killing the grandfather is similar to Foster's account of Homshuk's killing of his father, p. 192.

An interesting evidence of acculturation may be noticed by a comparison of 4 and 5 as to the language used. Even in the English translation this is evident. The former was told by the son of the man who told the latter. The father used the typical Mixe style, even in telling it in Spanish. The son, who had finished the three years available in the village school and then taken two years further in a government school in the capital city, used the affected Spanish he had learned in trying to imitate his teachers. For them it was correct - for him, it was beyond his age and culture. Yet the details of the story are the same and the Mixe used is the same.

It should be noted that stories 1 to 5 are all of the same origin legend, but give different episodes. Story 1 gives episode one; stories 2 and 3 give episode two and the former goes on to give something of episode four, the wanderings; stories 4 and 5 begin with episode two and continue through to the end, giving episode three, the stay with the grandparents climaxed by killing the grandfather - episode four, the wanderings - and episode five, becoming sun and moon.

Stories 4 and 5 give the origin of the pocket gopher, the coatis, the toad, biting and stinging insects, vines, bananas, flocks of little black birds, digging of wells and the sun and the mood, as well as the spot on the moon.

## 6. \*The Mixe Leader Who Came From an Egg.

In Woman's Knob is where there was a cave where the people used to put their corn after harvesting it. There is where they found the two eggs and took them to their house. There one day two people went, a man and his wife. There's a spring there. There they were eating their lunch. There in the spring the woman saw two eggs. She said to her husband, "Give me a pole. I'm going to get these eggs out of here." So he cut off a branch from a tree there and gave it to her. But she couldn't reach the eggs. There she was fishing and fishing for them but couldn't get them. There they were still in the spring just as before.

Then she turned around and there they were up above on the rock ledge. Right away she said to her husband, "You go get them down. They're up above there. They aren't in the water at all." So he went and got them down. They took them there to where their house was. In three days the eggs hatched. When they hatched, from one came Kondoy who was a person and from the other came his brother who was a huge snake.

Kondoy grew very fast. In two, three days he was already big. He ate with a will. They brought him his food by the basketful and he ate it all. One day he said to his mother, "Mother, I'm going to Tehuantepec."

"What are you going to do there?" asked his mother.

"Well, I'll see. I have a desire to see what it's like. Don't you worry. I'll be back again in a little while."

He went in one day; returned the same day and brought back a pack. Another day he said to his mother, "Mother, I'm going to Oaxaca."

"But what are you going to do there?"

"Well, I'll see. I have much sentiment in my soul. I want to see what there is where it's called 'Oaxaca'. Don't you worry. I'll be back again in a little while.

He went in one day; returned the same day. He brought three huge jars of money for his mother. He said to her, "Mother, here. You are to use this money. I'm going to travel now. I want to see how everything is."

"No, son. Why should you travel? Stay here."

"No, mother. I'm going now. Now I've grown up. Thank you for taking care of me. You have given me everything. Now I'm leaving you this money. You aren't going to lack anything."

Then he set out and travelled throughout the whole region. When he passed through Camotlan, there on a ledge on that cliff to the north of town he left an olla of money. Since he was a very tall person, he just put it up there like this, as a man would set something on a shelf about shoulder height. Afterwards he went into a cave at Trapiche de Chusnaban (to the west of Quetzaltepec). There he left a chest full of money. But they say that the people of Cacalotepec already went and took it out. They went many of them together. That's why Kondoy said, "The people of Camotlan are good people. The money which I left there when I passed through is still there."

There beyond Santa Cruz, on the road near to Trapiche, he had a great battle with one who was called King Moctezuma. There are the signs even today - the shot which the people of Moctezuma

fired. Don't you remember that I showed some to you when we were going to Oaxaca. Right there is where I picked them up and showed them to you.

It's true that they are rusty after all these years, but that is the shot which Moctezuma's people fired when they were fighting with Kondoy.

Kondoy was close to Trapiche, but the soldiers of Moctezuma were up above there. There near San Isidro, about three hours walk (probably 7 to 10 miles) up above Trapiche they were. Moctezuma had many people. Thousand upon thousand there they were. Kondoy, on the other hand, was all alone, of course. Then the soldiers of Moctezuma began to shoot those bullets. Kondoy just picked up huge rocks. That's what he was going to throw. Just this way, by hand he threw them. When the rock falls up above there, it will kill many people. There they were fighting for a long time. I think that more than three days they were fighting. Nothing happens to Kondoy. It doesn't matter when the bullets of Moctezuma hit him. Nothing happens to him. The bullets just drop off him to the ground. Indeed, there they are still. That's what we were picking up. But when Kondoy throws a stone up there, the people of Moctezuma are certain to die. What chance is there of their enduring it, those poor things. They aren't able to endure it. Just there they died, those poor ones. There are the rocks still. Haven't you noticed how rocky it is for more than half a legua (league).

Then Moctezuma went and returned again to Mexico. Just that way that battle ended. That's the way the old people told it to me. There in Trapiche, Kondoy sat down to rest after the battle. There are the signs even till today. When he got up he put his hands on the ground and thrust himself up to a standing position. There are his handprints. Even the finger marks are clearly visible.

Then he went on to Mitla. There in Mitla, Kondoy built his palace, but it was on solid rock and made of stone. Haven't you seen it? There it is to this day, they say. There in Mitla the ground is soft. He had on his crown that weighed more than five arrobas. That's how he knew the ground was soft. His feet sank in. The same was true of Tlacolula and in Tule. Nothing but soft ground. Just before arriving at Tlacolula, there at the place called today Caballito Blanco, "Little White Horse", he wrote on the rock there telling his people where he was going. Kondoy had no trouble drawing or writing it there for he was more than three meters tall. His machete weighed more than three arrobas and his walking stick more than five. He just stood on one of the large rocks at the foot of the cliff and wrote like this, lifting his hand and arm a bit above his head.

At Tule, Kondoy planted the huge tree there. The ground was very soft. There was too much water under it. Kondoy proved this by thrusting his walking stick deep into the ground there. It was this walking stick which took root, grew and is now the huge tree that is famous.

When he arrived in Oaxaca, there was solid ground. There he placed his capital. He said, "Even if there is war and they fire cannonades, nothing will happen. It is solid ground." When Kondoy was in Oaxaca, his brother the huge snake said, "I'm going to Oaxaca. I'm going to see what my brother is doing over there." Then he entered into the earth near Coatlan. There he left tracks, a huge hole which he made when he entered. There underneath the ground he went travelling along. The earth shook where he was passing. There he went entering into the flats just before coming to Mitla when the priest and the bishop went and put the blessing on the place. Right there he remained.

From there Kondoy went to Mexico and there he left his crown. He said, "When one comes who is able to lift it, (i. e., to wear it), then you are to change the government." But no one was able to lift it, since it is very heavy. There it still is today, they say. When you go to Mexico, you must hunt for it and let me know then if it's true that it's still there.

Then Kondoy returned. He entered with all his soldiers into a cave near a town which is called Comaltepec. He didn't die. There he entered into the mountain which is called Zempoaltepetl. There he still is.

### **VARIANT BEGINNING -**

It seems as though people tell it nowadays anyway they want to. Why, another old person told me:

"The woman heard a baby crying there inside a cave. Then she said to her husband, 'Oh, hombre de Dios, what might that be?'"

"Well, go and see.' So she went and found there a little child lying there crying. She picked it up and they took it home with them. Quickly it grew. Two, three days it was already big."

So who knows how it actually was. That was an old person too who told me that. Who knows how it was. That was long, lo-o-ng ago.

(6) The opening paragraph of this story is amazingly similar to that of Foster's story 1 concerning Homshuk, p. 191. Concerning the eggs, Apolinar explained that "the earth laid them.

As I discovered on my 1951 field trip, the place where the eggs - or the child, as the case may be - were discovered is near San José' Paraíso. We were passing a huge perpendicular cliff when Paciano said, "There is where the mother of The King live. It is an encanto, 'an enchanted place'. She is inside there, they say. At times the encanto opens up." Later, Paciano and Doroteo were discussing the history. They have heard both versions of the origin of Kondoy, but hold to that of the crying child's being found.

Don Teodosio, the head man of San José' a man of over seventy, added this detail about Kondoy's resting after his battle with Moctezuma and the signs that remain till the present day, "He sat on a big boulder. There is the sign, complete just as Kondoy was: his buttocks, his testicles, his penis - there is the impression of all of them." It seems that comparable accounts are given of Quetzalcoatl, by the Aztecs.

José Trinidad claimed that Kondoy's brother had made the ditch in the mountains called pasa culebra, "Snake Pass", from which Coatlan's Mixe name "Place of the Serpent's Road" is derived.

Paciano and Doroteo deny this for, as they point out, Kondoy's brother went to Mitla underground, while Snake Pass is above ground. The Snake Pass was made by a huge horned serpent, they say. They claim also that Kondoy's brother never got to the plains of Mitla. The priest and archbishop went out beyond Mitla to one side of San Lorenzo, to land formerly belonging to the Hacienda of Xaag, to a place known still as hierva el agua, "Boiling of the Water", a mineral spring which has built up a rock formation. Here at this place they placed a blessing and Kondoy's brother was turned to stone. There to this day, they assure one, he can be seen coiled up in a huge pile more than a meter high and as much across. Such a pile is there, the result of successive years of mineral deposit from the mouth of the spring which boils up in the center during the time of rains, only to dry up gradually in some places toward the end of the dry season. It does have the appearance of a coiled serpent.

Paciano and Doroteo said that the signs where the huge serpent crawled and where Kondoy sat are still there and became impressed because "the world was still new, then. It doesn't happen that way anymore. Today not even huge snakes leave a trail like that."

See for comparison to the origin of Kondoy, Foster's note on p. 194 bottom. See also Aarne-



Thompson 650 - I, c - and II, a, d. In regard to Moctezuma, see Foster p. 215 bottom.

## **7. The Three Seas To Be Made At Camotlan**

A long time ago, there were to be three seas in Camotlan. The first was there where today it is called "Sea Place". People say that this was to be a salt sea. The other, which is called "Water Cave Place", was where there was to be a shrimp sea. The third, "Fish Water Place", was where there was to be a fish sea.

People say that the three parts of the sea had already been begun. Then the mountains began to discuss it among themselves. And they said that they didn't want it there because the sea would stink so.

Then the seas went to where today is the salt sea, the ocean. At that time the mountains in Camotlan wouldn't accept them. And even today, some folks say, fish came out (appear) at midnight where it is called "Fish Water Place".

(7) The three names given are applied to three rather flat places - the bottom of bowl-like places surrounded by the mountains - which exist to the east of Camotlan.

There is a similar legend at San José' Paraíso, but there it is applied to a valley to the west of the town, at the foot of a high mountain. Don Teodosio says the mountains there decided there wasn't enough room for the seas at that place and so it was decided to move them down to where they are now - the Gulf and the Pacific.

## **8. \*The Girl Who Had a Snake Husband.**

People tell that once a Camotlan man had a daughter whose mother had died. The man had married another woman. But this woman didn't care for her step-daughter. The story goes that the girl had a hollow gourd full of little snakes. When the girl left the house, the step-mother uncovered the gourd and all the little snakes came out. When the girl returned, she picked up many of the little snakes.

After this happened, they say, the girl became angry and left home. She entered the place that is called Girl Cave and came out again at another place called Sea Cave.

When her father didn't see her anywhere, he set out to hunt his daughter. After three days he found her at Sea Cave. He greeted her, they say, "Daughter, what are you doing here? Why did you leave me?"

Then, they say, his daughter replied, "Father, you're not to blame. My step-mother wanted it thus. She didn't care for my children. That's why I left. But eight days from now I'll come with your son-in-law."

Then, they say, the father said to her, "What! You're married already!"

The girl replied and said, "My husband is a rayo. For that reason, when I come to your house, lay out two palm mats and five large boxes so you'll have money. And don't be afraid when you see your son-in-law looks like a snake, because afterward he'll turn into a person."

So the man returned and arrived at his house and began to buy boxes. When eight days were passed, the girl came with her husband. Her husband looked just like a huge snake but afterwards he turned into a man. And, they say, he left five boxes of money. Then he returned and went back to where even today he may be found living. Because of this, people say, that's why we have snakes. It's because the woman took the lid off them. If she hadn't uncovered them, we wouldn't have snakes. That's what people say, and thus ends this story.

## **9. The Girl Who Had a Snake Husband (second version)**

María, the girl was called. She was an orphan; her mother had died. She is the one whom the painted gourd bowl dragged under the water down to the east there where Pedro's banana patch is.

The girl went to bathe there and as she was about to bathe, she saw a beautifully painted gourd bowl in the water. When she reached for it she was drawn under and came out down below the Lake Cave. That's down to the east further where there is a waterfall. There there's a lake in the rock. There it is in the rock just like a big casuela, (earthenware frying pan).

It was a rayo who had taken her. It was a rayo who took the form of a gourd bowl to entice her. At that time she was joined to the rayo and from the union came the little snakes. She took these home with her in the gourd, but kept them covered. But the step-mother mistreated the girl. And when the step-mother meddled with her children, she caused some of them to be lost. Because of that there are snakes in the world. If the cloth covering hadn't been taken off, they still would be kept inside the gourd bowl. They don't travel about by day. Who knows why that woman did that. She was very troublesome.

When the step-mother meddled with her children and caused some to be lost, then the girl left home for good and returned to live in the cave with her husband the rayo. However, she loved her father and came home for a visit to keep him from feeling bad and also to supply him with money to live with. That's the way I heard the word (story). Thus it is that the people tell it.

(8, 9) Although the term rayo is used of the husband of the girl, he is represented as having the normal form of a huge snake, story 8, and the ability to change into a man when in the house. Yet, in enticing the girl, he had the ability to take the form of a gourd bowl.

The term orphan is used in several of the stories in referring to children where only one parent has died. It is commonly so used among the Mixe of Camotlan and San José' and, I have the impression, on occasions by the Zapotecs of Mitla. I have the feeling that the Spanish word is generally and more properly used of children whose both parents have died.

That they feel spirit beings can take the form of inanimate objects seems to be borne out by other stories. Compare with story 27, the boy turning into the ring and pomegranate, and with that in part III where Alberto tells of the demon taking the form of a golden malacate which drew the priest into the encanto. In the former instance, the boy was doing what was normally supposed to be possible only to the devil and solely by virtue of the fact that he had studied the devil's book on the subject and learned how to do it. In explaining why Cristobal the teacher had smashed the ollas they found in the caves, Apolinar and Rosendo said it was because spirits at times took the form of ollas in caves to pass the day. Cristobal was from the Mixteco and it is possible that he brought the idea from there. Yet I believe I have read of a similar idea existing among the Maya.

## **10. The Woman Who Poisoned Her Husband.**

Juan took the stomach of a cow to where his mistress was - down where my coffee grove now is. He was taking care of his cornfield down further by the edge of the river, down where the flat is. He said, "Here's this. Prepare a meal. When I return, we'll eat."

When he came back from watching his cornfield, he ate there with his mistress. He ate plenty. When he arrived at his house, his wife asked, "What do you want to eat? What shall I fix for your supper?"

"No, I don't want anything. My aunt already gave me supper."

That's what he said.

"Is that so? But you'll drink a little cooked pozole, 'a cornmeal drink', won't you?"

"Yes. That's all you're to fix."

Then into the jícara (gourd) of pozole the woman put the poison.

Just one jícara full he drink. In a very little while, there he was vomiting. Just right there he died. His wife already knew he had a mistress. She was there watching behind a huge oak tree. The tree's there yet. It's this big - more than a meter in diameter its trunk is.

That's the way my father told it to me. That's why there are poisonous snakes there, because there's a curse, that's why they're there. Just as that poor fellow died, that's the way she left him. That's why that animal (the poisonous snakes) is going around there.

(10) Several years ago, he killed several vipers there and buried them. He gave this same explanation then. It seems the poisoner is doomed to live on as a venomous snake, to be killed time after time. He did not say why he buried the snakes. It is against the ordinary custom. In the Llano and San José there is some belief against burying snakes.

## **11. The Tree With the Cross-shaped Leaves.**

The angel appeared to Joseph and told him that he was to take the baby Jesus and the Virgin and go to Egypt because the king was going to kill the baby. So he took his burrito and went that same night. The next day, the Jews and the demons who were the king's servants came hunting them with dogs.

As the holy family travelled along, the child Jesus asked the people they passed what they were doing. They were plowing and planting and some were clearing land. But some were bad people and didn't answer truthfully. One said, "I'm planting rocks." Another said, "I'm going to plant thorns." They were just ridiculing the baby. But He hadn't passed on His way very long until their fields were full of rocks or thorns or whatever they had said.

But many were good people and told the truth - "I'm clearing this land to plant corn." "I'm going to plant chili." And the holy family had barely passed on when the field was cleared and there was the milpa ready to harvest, or there was the chili patch ready to pick and dry. So whatever they were doing, it was completely finished.

Then when those who wanted to kill the child came along, they asked how long since the holy family passed. And the people answered, "This was good land when they passed and now it is nothing but a rock heap." Or, "My field was cleared ready for planting, but now, as you can see, it is grown up to thorns." Or, "I was barely clearing land to plant corn when they passed. And now the field is ready to harvest." "I was clearing land for my chili patch when they passed. And now I must hurry to pick and dry the chilis for they are ripe."

So it was wherever they went. When people answered truthfully and courteously, the thing they intended to do was done for them. But if they gave some smart answer, they got just what they said they intended doing.

They became very tired and drank pulque by the road. At that time pulque didn't ferment. It was sweet and good to drink. The holy family drank and went on. But the pursuers were close behind. When they asked the men in the field, the men answered, "They were very tired and rested here. We gave them some of this pulque. Then they went on again." The demons were so angry they urinated in the pulque. That's what made it bad. Ever since then, it makes men drunk. Ever since then, it ferments and doesn't stay sweet.

Almost the dogs had caught up to Joseph and the Virgin Mary and the child Jesus. They were just about to catch them when they came to a yahuite tree (maple-like tree). It opened up and they all went into it and it closed again. When the dogs and demons came there, they couldn't find them. They hunted around for several days and then went back. Then the holy family came out and went on their way but ever since then, the yahuite has had cross-shaped leaves. It's because it saved the holy family from the demons and the Jews. This is the sign the child gave it.

(11) There is an English carol which gives a similar idea concerning the flight into Egypt and the rewarding for those who answered truthfully.

Pulque is the milky juice of a type of maguey. It is said to be sweet and refreshing when first collected from the heart of the plant, but soon ferments and becomes intoxicating. Just as the plant is starting to put up the central shoot which would form the flower, this is cut out and a cup-like depression is formed in the heart of the plant. Several of the leaves are bent over this and tied to keep out dirt. The juice is collected by using a long gourd of about three to five inches in diameter. The gourd is two to three feet long. A hole is cut in both top and bottom. By sucking on the top hole, the

collector can without stooping much, draw up the liquid into the gourd, at the same time avoiding being struck by the sharp thorns of the plant. He then holds his finger over the top hole and thus transfers the liquid to his collecting jar, merely by releasing his hold on the top hold.

The story bears some resemblance to the magic flight motif, in that the answers of the amazed people who had seen the miracle of the transformed lands into finished product - fields ready to harvest, or rock heaps and thorn patches - were bound to mislead the pursuers. It does differ however, as will be seen by a comparison with story 35, where Matthew's escape is obviously of the magic flight type.

## **12. \*Story About the Rayos.**

They say that one time many, many years ago, there lived a man who had two children, a girl and a boy. Those children played constantly with short machetes (a long knife). Then the elders of that town thought that perhaps those children could become rayos.

They say that in those days it didn't rain. So they spoke to those children, or made arrangements with their father, whose name was Matthew. The children were very anxious to become rayos. When their parents accepted the proposal, then the children themselves told the townsfolk what things they must do.

They told them that the townsfolk must take turkeys and kill them in the highest mountains. Then must make the fiestas and after that they must go off and leave the children alone there. They must return to their homes to wait for the rain.

So it was that on the eighth day it began to rain. It rained for three days. And the children never returned anymore. When there is lightning, they say the rayos are playing with their machetes.



## **SPIRIT BEINGS.**

### **13. \*Wind Hill.**

The old people say that once upon a time the wind blew very hard. When the wind died down, then a man went out to get firewood. When he had climbed up to where today it is called Wind Hill, there, they say were many small boys sitting pulling out thorns from their bodies and they did not have clothes, they say.

Then the man greeted them and said to them, "Little ones, what are you doing?"

"Grandfather," they replied, "here we are removing thorns. We have already worked today."

Then they say the man asked, "What are your names?"

"We have none," they replied.

And he left them and went to cut firewood. When he arrived at home, then he told that thus he encountered those little boys. For this reason the people even today believe that the winds are alive, so they say. This is why that place is called Wind Hill.

(13) Apolinar explained that the winds are thought to be mischievous boys, or spirits who take the form of boys at times. They go about amusing themselves with their pranks. On the day referred to in the story, they were having such a good time that they raced through a thorn patch before they noticed it. That was why they were sitting there pulling out thorns.

#### **14. \*Youth and Dead Father Meet Near Pine Mountain.**

A man from Acatlancito went to Pine Mountain to bring back cattle. He didn't take a person. He arranged that he himself was to serve. That was the agreement. He was to serve the last ten years of his life.

"But how will I know when that is?" he asked the demon.

"Don't worry about it. I'll come tell you," answered the demon.

"Very well." So he received plenty of money and plenty of cattle. He had only one son. After a time he became sick. He died and left everything to his son. They buried him. That's the way it seemed, but that was the agreement. When the time came, the demon came to tell the man. Then it seemed the man became sick and died. Really, the demon took him off.

The son often thought, "Ah, what a pity that my father died! Here I am alone with all that cattle and all that money." One day he went out to the mountain to hunt some of his cattle which had strayed away. He came there near Pine Mountain. Then he came to a place where he heard chopping. He went to see. There he came to a place where a man was working. He was clearing land. When he saw the man he thought to himself, "I believe I know that man! I'm going to see." So he went closer and saw that it was his father!

"Father! How is it you are here? I thought you were dead!"

"Yes, son, here I am working."

"Let's eat, father. Here I have my tortillas, my lunch."

"No, son. The hour has passed. I've already eaten."

"But, father! You didn't bring your net bag! What did you eat?"

"Well, son, I don't eat now as I did when I was in the world."

"How do you eat then, indeed?" The father remained thinking a long time. Then he said, "Very well. Do you want to see how they feed me? Come tomorrow at exactly midday, at twelve o'clock."

"Very well, father. Until tomorrow, then".

The next day, the son came again. He went to the same place but he hid himself. Exactly at twelve o'clock, a man on horseback came. He was well dressed - he looked like a catrín. He dismounted and came to where the man was working. Then he began to strike the man with his quirt. His quirt had three pieces of lead, like balls for a shotgun tied to the lashes. He struck the man hard. With a will he beat him, until the man fell to the ground senseless.

When the boy saw the catrín strike his father, he drew his machete and went running there. "Why are you striking my father? Now, so-and-so, I'll teach you to be a man!" But when he went to slash the catrín with his machete, the catrín disappeared, horse and all. The boy didn't see where he went. He just disappeared.

Then his father said to him, "Let be, son. Don't try to do anything to him."

"No, father! I don't want him to treat you that way. Get up. Let's go home."

"No, son. This was the agreement. I'm paying for the cattle and the money. That's what you are using."

"Is that so, father!"

"Yes, son. That's the way it is. That's the way they feed me here. Thus it is I eat daily."

“Is that so, father!”

“Yes, son. You go back home. The cattle, the money - that you’re to use yet.”

“Very well, father.” And he returned again to his house.

## 15. Story of a Rich Man. (variant of 14)

They tell of a man who was very rich, but his riches came from the devil, for he asked the devil to give him cattle and money. But he had a son, and when the man died, the son became the heir of all the things his father had had.

Then one day - two or three years had passed after the death of the father - one of his cattle had strayed. And he went hunting for it day after day. At last he came to a mountain where no one goes and found his father working there. When he recognized his face, he spoke to him saying, "Father, what are you doing here?"

Then his father answered, "Son, what was once mine and now is yours - that's what I'm paying for."

Then the boy said to his father, "Let's go home. Why should you be here?"

The father replied, "No, son, I can't return home anymore. You continue to make use of the things I've left with you. And if you want to see what sort of meals I eat, come tomorrow before twelve o'clock noon."

So the boy came back the next day as his father had told him.

And, indeed, on the stroke of twelve there came a man mounted on a white horse. Immediately he dismounted and began to beat that man until he dropped to the ground. When the boy saw his father thus, he went to defend him. And the devil disappeared immediately.

Then the boy's father said, "If you have pity on me, buy me a mass and thus I will have rest. And you continue to use the things I've left you." So the boy said good-bye to his father and went and did as his father had said. He went back again to that place and found that his father now had rest. So the boy was then content.

(14, 15) For a discussion of *catrín*, the devil and related matters in connection with securing of and paying for wealth bargained for and received as in these two stories, refer to Part III under Spirit Beings.

No hint has been given as to just what benefit the *catrín* or devil gets from having people clear land for him. Nor is it even hinted that he intended to plant - the clearing being the hardest work connected with planting, may have been picked as punishment or labor.

## **16. \*Former Residents of Narro at Pine Mountain.**

People of the Isthmus, they are the ones who really know about Pine Mountain. Those from around here, the Mixes, they don't know so much about it. But long ago, the people of Narro also knew about it. Time after time they went there to make their petitions. Why, don't you know those people had very many cattle in time past. They were rich, in time past. They had cattle. They had horses. They had mules. They had everything - in abundance. But it was every bit of it a gift of the devil.

That was the person who was called Cantoya. He was the one who had a tail. He just rolled up his tail and stuck it in his pants, this way. I didn't see it. My step-father is the one who told me. But that is certainly true. He's the one who saw it. Just this long the tail was- about twenty-five centimeters.

He had many servants, that person. When he went to Pine Mountain, he would take his hired men. A group of them went. There they would take their gift - turkeys, chickens, ocote, copal incense, tepache liquor. All that they'd take. They'd go there then about midnight. There they would build their fire. Then they would put copal incense on it. But they wouldn't think about God.

First he would scold his hired men a lot, and warn them not to think about God. They were to think only about the demon. It was to the demon they were to pray. Indeed, that's the way that person was. There at midnight the enchanted cliff would open. There would come the demon.

"Did you bring me my gift?"

"Yes, Here I'm bringing it."

"Very well. Come along with it, then." Then the boss would go inside the enchanted cave to make the deal, according to whatever it was he wanted to ask for, cattle or mules or whatever. A while later, when he came out, there they would be all of them praying to the devil and thinking only of the demon. Then a great noise would be heard. The noise of a huge bunch of animals would be heard coming. But they were huge animals and so many of them that the earth trembled. It sounded just as when there is a landslide. Then is when they all had to work. They had to herd the animals and drive them to Narro.

One time he took among his mozos (hired workers) a youth whose name was Pedro. This was a new hired man. He had never gone to Pine Mountain before. Well, this night they went to make their petitions. The boss scolded them plenty as always, "You are not to be thinking of God. You're to think only of the demon. Everyone is to be praying to the devil. If anyone thinks about God, then the whole business will be ruined."

So they went to Pine Mountain. Almost midnight it was when they arrived there. There was no moon. It was completely dark. Well, they did everything as before but this Pedro was a bit afraid. Then began the noise of the animals and the earth trembled because there was really a herd of them. That was when Pedro really got scared.

Right away he thought of God. "Ai, Jesús! Jesús!" he said. No one heard him because of the noise of the animals. But in that very moment they all disappeared. My but the boss was angry!

"Who is it that thought of God? That's why this has happened.

Who did it?" But no one knew, and of course, Pedro didn't say a word.

The boss lashed them all with his quirt. But what could he do then. The animals were all gone. So, just that way (empty handed), he returned to Narro with his mozos. And that Pedro went someplace else to work. That's the way my step-father told it to me. Perhaps that Pedro is the one who told him.

## 17. \*Two Isthmus Compadres at Pine Mountain.

People of the Isthmus are the ones who know about Pine Mountain. They go there time after time. The Mixes almost don't go. That's because they don't know about it much. But some do know now. New Year's is when they go - exactly at midnight. You can't see the cave every day. It's enchanted that's why. That's what an old man told me. Also a Juquila man told me. Some of the Juquileños know about it too, just a few of them.

There were two of them, the compadres from the Isthmus who went there. That's the way I understood it. But they were poor, both of them. There they lived in Tehuantepec or Juchitan, who knows. I don't remember just exactly where it was, but someplace down there. Well, one year one came to hear about the enchanted place. Then he told his wife to make him a lunch, that he's going to go on a trip. He took his chicken and set out for Pine Mountain.

When he returned, he had money. He bought his house; set up business. Then his compadre came to see him. "Compadre, how is it that you now have all of this? Why, just a little while ago, you too were also poor as I am. Where did you go and bring so much money to buy all this?"

"Why, compadre, I know where there is an enchanted place. There is where I went to get it."

"Won't you take me? I also want to set up my business."

"Of course, compadre. At New Year's we'll go. Only you'll have to do just as I tell you."

"You explain it to me, compadre. I'll do just as you say." So they prepared their trip for the New Year. There they went, the two of them. It was still early when they arrived. I guess it was about the time of evening prayers when they arrived (5 o'clock). There they ate supper and then prepared their offering.

You see, there are two caves there. That's the way the old folks told me. I've never gone to that exact spot. But that's what they say. One is the cave of the rayo and the other is the cave of the demon.

When it is exactly midnight, then he says to his compadre, "As soon as the cave opens, you are to enter. It is huge, but that makes no difference. You are to enter stooped over. You have to go 'way, 'way in. There is where the money is. Basket after basket full is there. There you have only to take one and you're to come right out again. Stooped over you're to come out. Inside there you'll hear music. Just like a fiesta, or like a wedding it is. Up there above is where the sound comes from. But you're not to look up above. Don't even lift your head. Stooped over you're to seize your tenate (palm basket like container) and leave your chicken. You'll see what will happen if you don't do exactly as I tell you."

"Don't worry a bit, compadre. Just as you say, that's what I'll do."

"Very well, compadre. I've told you now. There inside it sounds very beautiful. Seems as though they're playing the flute or the clarinet. They play very beautifully. But remember, don't you look up."

"Very, well. Just so I'll grab a tenate full of money and out I'll come.

“Very well, then. It’s time now. There is where you go in.” And the compadre went with his chicken. There he went in. Much time passed. There outside is his compadre waiting, but he doesn’t come. I guess more than an hour passed. And already the enchanted cave closed itself. Then the compadre returned to his home again.

It was late when he arrived in his house and said to his wife, “That dummy of a compadre of mine didn’t do as I told him. Just there in the enchanted cave he remained.”

Next day he went to tell his comadre, “Comadre, good morning.”

“Good morning, compadre. Have you returned already? And where is your compadre?”

“Why, that’s what I’m coming to tell you. Just there he remained. Of a certainty, that one became spellbound there inside. He didn’t do as I told him. He went and looked up, that’s why he became spellbound. There inside he just remained.”

“Ai, my poor man! Now what will we do?”

“Well, for the present it was impossible to do anything. I saw that the enchanted cave was already closed. What could I do then, pray tell? Until next year I’ll go and bring him - until New Year’s.”

“Well, compadre, no helping it. What else can we do?”

“No helping it, comadre. He’s the one who’s to blame. I told him.”

The next year, the compadre went again to Pine Mountain. As soon as the enchanted cave opened, in he went. There indeed was his compadre. Actually he was stooped over, but he had his head turned looking up. He’s looking up where they’re playing the music. Right there he is like an idiot with his mouth open. Right away his compadre grabbed him by the belt and dragged him backwards. “Come on, Stupid!” he said to him. And on he went dragging him towards the outside. Like one in a dream it was that that one was following.

Then, when he had gotten outside there, he was rubbing his neck and his back. “Ai, compadre, a cramp has seized me! What a pity! I lost out. If I’d only done as you told me! Just for a moment I looked up. I was just about to grab my tenate when they began to play. But how beautifully they play! No helping it now, I lost out. Another year I’ll come and then I’ll get some money out.”

“Another year indeed! I ‘m not bringing you again. I suppose you think I’m going to bring you every little while!”

“Don’t get mad, compadre. Why it was just a moment I delayed there. Why are you getting angry?”

“Just a moment? Just a moment indeed! A whole year you were there inside! Didn’t I have to go back home alone and tell my comadre you remained inside and the cave had closed? Let’s go! There at the water (river or spring) we’ll eat breakfast.

And so they went. Just that was the dummy returned home with nothing. That’s just the way it was. That’s the way the old man told it to me.



## **18. \*Man Gives His Wife To The Devil For Cattle.**

It's a long time ago - I guess it must be all of a hundred years that Juanico went to procure cattle where the demon lives. He didn't take a person, but promised to secure someone and bring one by following year. But the year went by and still he had not secured anyone.

Then the New Year came and Juanico went again to Pine Mountain where the demon lives. He entered the enchanted cave and said, "Sir, I don't know what we're going to do about our bargain. I haven't been able to find anyone to bring to you. I'll hunt for someone this coming year and if I find anyone, I'll bring him."

"But the time is up, Man! You well know that that was the agreement - one year's time. Now I'll have to take back the cattle and you'll be poor again. Then people will see that you're poor and you'll be ashamed."

"No! I don't want you to do that! Let me think a bit. Where can I find someone?"

"Why, you have your wife, don't you? Bring her."

"No, sir. I'm going to live with her. She's still useful to me, yet. She's going to wash my clothes and make my tortillas."

"You bring her. You can get another. If you don't, I'll take the cattle away from you."

"No! I prefer to turn her over to you. But I'm not going to bring her myself. You send your servant tonight to fetch her."

"Very well."

So Juanico returned home. He lived on a little ranch beyond Estancia de Guadalupe. He had told his wife he was going out to hunt some of his cattle that were lost. When he reached home, he said to his wife, "Hurry up and make my tortillas and fix my supper. I'm very hungry for I've been walking all day hunting the cattle."

"Very well."

After supper Juanico said to his wife, "Hurry finish your work.

You're to get up at dawn and make me more tortillas and another lunch. I'm going again to hunt the rest of the cattle that are lacking."

"Very well."

"Get the coals together and fix your fire so it doesn't go out."

So the woman fixed her fire and covered it with ashes. A bit later, when she was asleep, Juanico got up and poured water over the fire. He put it out completely.

Very early, before dawn, he called his wife, "Get up. Fan up your fire and fix my lunch and my coffee."

"Very well." And she got up but found no fire. "Juanico, loan me your matches. The fire is completely out."

"I don't have any. What happened? Didn't you do as I told you last night? I told you to fix your fire well so it wouldn't go out!"

“I did. But who knows what happened. Now there’s not even one live coal. But get up and make a fire with your flint and steel.”

“I lost it yesterday. Go to the neighbor’s and ask for fire. I’m still sleepy. I’m not going to get up.”

There was another little ranch farther down the hill, but it was quite a little distance away. So the woman took two pieces of charred firewood and went out. But she never returned.

Later on Juanico acted as though he didn’t know what had happened to her. He took neighbors to help him hunt her. The poor woman had pulled out branches of her hair and hung them on the branches along the way by which the servant of the demon took her. Juanico and his neighbors followed these signs till they came to the demon’s cave on Pine Mountain. There at one side of the entrance they found the two pieces of charred firewood which the poor woman had taken with her. On seeing them, Juanico exclaimed, “That’s why she didn’t come back! The demon seized her and carried her off!”

So he and his witnesses returned home. Afterwards he found another wife to live with. And he still had the cattle that he paid for with his first wife.

## **19. Istmeño and Blind Girl at Pine Mountain.**

A man from Juquila told me that he was hunting his animals there near Pine Mountain. He had his mules and horses there pasturing them. He saw a man from Tehuantepec going along with a little blind girl. He was treating her very kindly. When the Juquileño met them, they were eating by the roadside. The man was giving her meat, bread, cracklings. He gave her everything and told her, "Eat well." The man was carrying a heavy pack because he had all those foodstuffs.

Then the Juquileño thought to himself, "Where are they going? I'm going to find out." So he followed them. Right straight to the cave they went and the two of them entered exactly at midnight. The man came out alone with a tenate full of money.

He had left the little girl there with the demon.(18, 19) Concerning the making of a deal with the devil including the turning over of a person in return for cattle or money, see also Foster p. 183 mid.

In regard to Pine Mountain, José Trinidad says, "There are two caves. One is that of the rayo, the other is that of the demon. The demon, truly, asks for people. He has much cattle and much money. They say that the money he has never runs out. But it's true, he does ask for a person. That's why they take there little children with twisted or withered arms, little lame children, or blind ones.

Exactly at midnight on New Year's eve is when the demon's cave opens. It's enchanted, that's why it opens then, they say. It isn't open all the time. Of course, it's true the rayo doesn't ask for people. Those who go there take turkeys or chickens. They burn ocote and copal incense. The rayo also gives money.

## **20. Cattle and Money Given by the Dueño del Cerro.**

There is a huge cave, they say, between Ocotepec and Juquila. There is where many people go to ask for cattle. The dueño del cerro is the one who has them there. Inside there he keeps them. But the cave isn't open all the time. That's why we couldn't find it even if we went to hunt for it in the daytime. I think it's what they call an encanto, that's why. Only once in a while does it open up. It's at night that it opens when they go there to make their petitions. Then there is the door of the cave, they say. But it is tremendously big, they say. There's room for a huge number of cattle and beasts of burden inside there. I think it's bigger even than the church.

Well, many people have gone there to get cattle from the dueño del cerro. The Juquileños, they're the ones who know how to go ask there. That's why they have so many cattle, they say. I don't know what arrangement they make with the dueño del cerro. Perhaps it is that they take an offering - chickens, or turkeys with tepache and tamales, ocote and copal incense. That's what some folks do some places. Also, they say that the dueño del cerro gives money when one goes and asks for it. They say that some who were formerly poor have gone there to ask and are now rich. There are many enchanted places, they say, but they look just like any other mountain peak. Only those who know are the ones who know where to go. But I believe that not all encantos are places where one can ask for money and animals.

When one goes by night to make his petition, he must go inside there, they say. Then a little old man will speak to him inside there. He is the one who is called dueño del cerro. He will ask, "What is it you want? Then we must tell him if we want money or pack mules or cattle. Some folks ask for all of them and he actually gives them. According to what one asks, that's what he gives. But I think it's obligatory for one to take him a gift.

It's actually so, they say that that encanto is there. Just to one side of the trail it is. Let's see if some day we have luck, maybe we'll find it.

## 21. The Huge Corral.

Yes, there it is still. That's what they still call the Grand Corral. There it is near Estancia de Guadalupe. The one who made it was named Juan. He was from Santa María Nisaviguite. Juan only had two burros. But you can't do much with two little burros. Then he thought, "Ah, if only I had good animals, I could really do business. It's when one has plenty of mules that he can make money. Then one can really make profitable trips. What a pity I have no mules!" Daily that's what the poor fellow was thinking. Then one day a friend said to him, "Juan, why don't you go ask for mules from the catrín? He's sure to give them to you."

"Is that so? Where must I go? How do I ask for them?" And his friend told him everything, how to ask, where he must go to find the catrín.

"Yes indeed! I'll go! This very night I'll go." And he went to see the catrín. And, of a truth, he found him.

"What do you want, Juanito?" asked the catrín.

"Why, señor, I have been thinking that I want a lot of mules. I only have two little burros and I can't do any business with just them. If I had plenty of mules, then I could go and make trips with profit. I could go where ever I wanted to with mules. I could carry anything - corn, fish, salt, coffee - no matter what it might be, I could carry it with mules. That's what I've been thinking, señor."

"Is that so, Juanito?"

"Yes, señor. That's what I'm thinking. That's why I have come to make my petition."

"But where are you going to put the mules? You have no corral. You can't leave them loose. They'll all go away. Go home and make a huge corral. When it's made, come and tell me again and we'll make a deal."

"Very well, señor. I'm going now. As soon as it's done, I'll come tell you." And Juan went home. Right the next day he began to make his corral. He made it of piled up stones. Just like the wall of the cemetery here, that's how he made it, because there were plenty of stones! Of stones there was no lack. More than seven days, I believe, he was working very hard there. Daily that Juan was working, from dawn till dark he was carrying stones with his two burros.

When his friends passed, they would tease him, "What are you doing, Juan?"

"I'm making myself a corral. I'm going to keep my mules here."

"What mules? Are you going to make it so huge for just two little burros?" And that's the way they made fun of him. But Juan knew what he was doing. He paid no attention to their jesting.

When he had finished his corral, right away he went to the catrín. "Here I come again, señor."

"Have you made it? Is it ready?"

"Yes, it's ready."

"But did you make it large?"

"Yes, it's large."

"Very well, then. You go on back to your corral. There you will I find it already full. But you are not to close the gate. Be careful! I've warned you. Don't shut it, for if you do, you'll find out. I'll not be to blame for what happens to you."

“Don’t worry, señor. I’ll not close it. Well, I’ll go now. Thank you for telling me.” And Juan went to his corral. Oh but how that boy was frightened! There was the corral but clear full of animals. Nothing but fine fat mules. There went Juan all around it looking at the animals. Ah but he was contented! At last he came to the gate and began to think, “What if they should get out during the night! Something just might frighten them and they’d all run away. What beautiful mules they are! And if they get out, I’ll have nothing again!” That’s what that Juan was thinking.

At last he couldn’t stand it. He’s sure they’re going to get out during the night. “No! They’ll all surely run away. I’d better close the gate.” You should have seen it. Why he had barely put the poles into place across it when the demons seized him! They were the catrín’s mozos. But how they did beat that poor young fellow! With a will they beat him. Why, senseless they left him lying there!

A little while later came daylight and at last the poor fellow got up. There was his corral. It was empty. There was nothing in it but the two burritos. The gate was closed. But there inside were the tracks. There had been plenty of animals inside there. They were large mules by their tracks. And when he closed the gate, they all disappeared! So he remained as poor as before, having just his two little burros.

## **The Female Demon - 22, 23, 24.**

The following three stories will be better understood if we consider first a few of the characteristics ascribed to the female demon. Here is José Trinidad's description of her, "Wuginy is in reality a demon, but seems to be a Spanish woman with auburn hair and is well dressed in fine skirts. Many times, the people to whom she talks become confused (demented, unhinged mentally - either a temporary or permanent condition). For the most part, she speaks to men, appearing to them on their trail or in the field where they are working."

From some of the things said in discussion about these stories and from some things appearing in several narrations of personal experiences which are given in Part III, it is evident that there is more likelihood of her appearing to lone men - especially to those keeping night watch in their cornfields just about harvest time to protect them from the destruction wrought by wild animals.

Summarizing the elements presented in all these, two aspects of wuginy seem to be presented. First, there are the daytime appearances, and, second, there are the experiences related by those who have seen her at night. Both aspects are represented in the stories. In the daytime appearances, wuginy seems to take always a single distinctive form - that described by José Trinidad above. Her appearances, then, is that of a Spanish lady - as distinguished from one of Mixe countenance, I take it - with auburn hair instead of the black tresses of the Mixes, and with skirts of very fine material as contrasted with the often shoddy material handled by traders. Her daytime activities seem to be the feeding of men and talking with them as they work in their fields. In story 23 she even helps with the planting. There is no hint that sex enters into the matter in these daytime encounters.

The night-time appearances are a different matter. In both story 24 and in the narrations of personal experiences, these are connected wholly with the sex element. Another distinction is noticed too, that the appearance is changed from that of the being seen during the daytime. In 24 it is not this Spanish woman who is seen, but one who looks just like the man's Mixe mistress. In the experience of Pablo of Ixcuintepac, two of the beings appeared at one time, both in the form of Mixe women of the town. In both these cases the man was deceived into following the wuginy. Here we have a correspondence with the folklore of other Mexican peoples. Barlow described a similar female being which the Aztecs called *Matlasiwa* whose technique for deceiving the unwary male was just this - the appearing to the man in the form of his sweetheart and leading him to a precipice. If he saw the precipice and drew back, she turned and he saw that she had no face. Later he would find that the real girl had never left the village but was all the time in her own house. The Maya spoke of a female being which enticed lone men to follow her. She succeeded in keeping just beyond their reach and left them lost in the woods, as in 24: was called *Xtabáy*, as some have written it.

There are also many points of correspondence with the Popoluca *Makti* - see Foster p. 180 bottom and p. 202, his story 11. The notes to this tell also of the Maya siren.

In Albino's experience, the wuginy did not take the form of someone he knew, and the inference is that she appeared, perhaps, as she is normally seen in daytime. The sex element entered into the account and there was even the attempt to lead him off to someplace else, possibly to an experience similar to that in story 24.

In the Mixe lore, there is no hint that a person will die because he has been with wuginy or eaten her food. In 22 and 23 the men returned to their homes none the worse for the encounter. Some may become demented, as José Trinidad points out, either temporarily or permanently but presumably this is due to some weakness inherent in the man meeting her and not an inevitable accompaniment of the encounter.

## 22. \*The Female Demon (first instance) .

Wuginy appeared to a man who was clearing land off to the north of town there. She came right at twelve o'clock noon bringing her tenate, the kind they sell in Mitla with the designs in red, full of good food. There were beans, fried eggs, fried fish, hot tortillas. And she invited the man to eat. She carried the casuela on her head. In it she had the fried fish. The hot tortillas were in her tenate, her basket had fine plates and cups. It was a long time ago. The name of the man isn't known any more. But it was off to the north there that he was planting when he ate what wuginy brought him. That's the way it went several days when he was clearing land. That's why he took his tortillas home again. At last his wife scolded him.

He answered, "I don't want to eat them. Don't you see I'm tired? I'm working."

"You, since when don't you eat! It's because you already ate! You have another woman out there, that's what's the matter!"

"No! No, I don't have another woman."

"That's what you say."

"No, I don't have. It's true that I've already eaten. For three days now, day after day, a charming woman brings me food. But I believe that she isn't human! Tomorrow you shall go with me and take the dog. Only, you must tie the dog and hide yourself there. Then you shall see."

That's what they did, and the woman hid herself in the woods at the edge of the land he was clearing. There she tied the dog. Exactly at midday, there comes wuginy again with her tenate. Again she invited the man to eat.

"But here I have my tortillas," he said.

"Take them home again, or give them to your companions," she told him. So they started to eat. But just then his wife came out with the dog which she had turned loose. Right away that wuginy got up and went running over the brush that had been cut down! It just looked as if her feet didn't even touch the brush. She just went right up over the tops of the trees and disappeared. But she left the tenate and the food.

Then the man said, "Let's eat."

"No. Who knows but what it might harm us."

"There's nothing the matter with it. Don't you know I've been eating it for three days already? It's good." So the man and his wife sat down and ate. There was not a thing the matter with it. It was just like the food we eat. And they took the tenate, the casuela and the basket home with them.



## 23. \*The Female Demon (second instance) .

Another man was clearing land and the same thing happened to him, only he didn't tell his wife. This wuginy didn't bring him anything to eat. She was just keeping him company. She said, "Hurry up so the work advances."

When the brush was burned, then wuginy said, "I'm going to plant chilacayotes (*Cucurbita bicifolia*)."

"You can't," said the man. "Can't you see it's still burning in places and it's very hot." But she went right in among the fire and smoke and planted the chilacayotes.

Then they sat down and she said, "What will we do now? Shall I plant corn?"

"You can't," said the man. "It's a huge piece of ground. Tomorrow I'll bring my mozos and plant it."

Wuginy replied, "It isn't big. Don't you realize that you worked very slowly in clearing it? Why, in one day I could plant it by myself!"

"No," said the man. "Tomorrow I'll bring mozos to plant it."

"All right," said wuginy, "you know what you're doing." (in the sense of, "If that's the way you want it, it's up to you!").

The next day the man went with fifteen mozos and took his turkey to kill. An old man was about to kill it when wuginy came up.

"Are you going to kill a turkey?" she said.

"Yes," said the old man. "It's a big piece of land and I'm going to sacrifice to the earth."

"That's all very well," said wuginy, "but it's mine. I gave this man to eat all week."

"Very well," said the old man, "but that was voluntary not compulsory."

"But you must give me the half of the turkey," insisted wuginy.

"Very well, but you're not to come back here again ever," said the old man.

"Very well," she said. "Only you are not to leave any of the crop in the field. Don't let anything go to waste. All the chilacayote, all the beans and all the corn you're to take home. Even if some grains of corn are already sprouting or rotting, it doesn't make any difference. You must take it home."

"Very well," said the old man. And he gave her the half of the turkey and away she went. So the man remained contented and wuginy went away contented.

That's the way the old man who killed the turkey told it to me. Even today, calabaza and chilacayote spring up there although no one plants them.

23) One must learn not to expect nor to insist on consistency in their telling of the tales. In the first paragraph, José' says "she didn't bring him anything to eat." Yet, in a later place, when she tries to claim the turkey for her own, she said, "I gave this man to eat all week."

This story comes closer down to the present time than the former one. José' says the old man - probably a brujo - who killed the turkey told him the story. Brujos are as a rule engaged to kill the turkey

or roosters, especially in the case of an especially large piece of land. The killing is done, presumably with certain prayers, and in a certain set way, the blood being spilled out on the ground.

“Sacrifice to the earth” was given in the Spanish as “convidar la tierra” which literally means “to invite or share with the earth”. An offering is made thus before planting to ensure good crops. See the section on Brujeras - offerings, in which further explanation is given, Part III.

## 24. The Female Demon (third instance) .

There was an Ixcuintepec man who had a family. It was the time for keeping watch on the cornfields. The ears of corn were ripening.

This man and his children were in the cornfield. But he also had a mistress - another woman who is not his wife. At times he told his wife he was going to stay in the cornfield during the night, but he'd go to the other woman's house.

This night the children were asleep when his sweetheart came. At least, it seemed to be his sweetheart. "Let's go to my house," she said to the man.

"I can't. The children are here and I can't go."

"But they're asleep. They won't wake up." And thus she at last convinced the man. So he went with her. It seemed as if they were going along the road to town, but they weren't. About midnight they passed through Chimaltepec. There he went following the woman. But it wasn't his sweetheart. It was wuginy. There in Chimaltepec lived a man who was his compadre. That man heard his dog barking and went out to see what was the matter. There he saw that his compadre was passing. But he didn't see the woman, since she was a demon. It was his dog who saw her and that's why it was barking.

Well, the man went on. Three days later he came back again to his compadre's house. But he was just about done for. His face, his hands were all scratched up by the thorns. His clothes were completely in tatters. He greeted, "Compadre, good morning".

"Good morning, compadre. But, compadre, hombre de Dios! What has happened to you?"

"Well, compadre, thus and thus it has happened to me. When I came to myself it was to find myself in a huge brier patch. Two days already I've been lost out there, trying to find my way out."

"Well, compadre, I saw you when you passed here about midnight. It was the dog which barked and that's why I went out to see."

"Why didn't you speak to me?"

"Well, compadre, since you were going on past ---" I said to myself, "'That's strange how my compadre is going in the middle of the night. Perhaps he's going on an errand, that's why.'"

"No, but it was because I was following that evil wuginy. I didn't even know it when I passed here!"

The Chimaltepec man was my compadre too. He's the one who told it to me. Of a certainty it's true. That's the way it happens sometimes. Sometimes one can't see the demon, but the dogs, they know when one is passing. That is the way people become confused when they speak with wuginy. Just see how that man travelled all that distance and didn't even realize it! That's just why folks are afraid of wuginy.

## 25. \*The Male Demon.

There is also a male demon. He has a form just like a man. But they say that his feet are both the same. He doesn't have feet like a person's. Both big toes are on the same side, just as if he had two left or two right feet. Whenever he meets us, he will speak just like a person. But he is the one who carries people off. It is by night that he carried them off. Who knows where he takes them. But it's certain that he does it. That's what an old man told me and he knows very well. When he is going to carry off a person, he'll take off his shirt there next to the fire. There he will heat up his back, they say. That's the way he does. And right away his back gets sticky. Then he seizes the person who is sleeping and puts him on his back. Right there that poor person stays stuck fast. Then the demon goes and carried him off. He can't escape.

Some time ago, two Chimaltepecanos saw him. It was a married couple - a man and his wife. They were my compadres. He's the one who told me about it. They still live there in Chimaltepec. I don't know where they were going, but it was to some fiesta. That's why they had a bundle of food with them. There they carried their tortillas, their cheese, their ground chili paste. It was already late when they fixed their fire at the side of the road. There they were eating supper when they saw a man coming.

Then he greeted them, "Good evening."

"Good evening, señor," they replied.

"Won't you loan me your fire? I want to eat a little supper."

"Certainly. There it is." And they gave him tortillas. Then the man went to roast fish on the coals, because fish was all he had. When the fish was roasted, he began to eat supper. But right away they saw that he didn't eat like people eat. He would break off a piece of tortilla and a piece of fish and throw it over his shoulder this way. And that's the way he did until he had finished up the tortillas and fish. Right away my compadre knew that this was a demon because that's the way a demon eats. He doesn't eat like people do. He just throws the food away, first over one shoulder and then over the other. He doesn't eat it.

Then my compadre said, "Well, señor, it's already late. I believe that we'll just stay here to sleep tonight."

"Don't you want to lie down over here near the fire?"

"No. It isn't cold yet and anyway we have a blanket here."

"Very well. Then I'll just lie down here."

But my compadre and his wife weren't going to sleep. He was watching to see what the demon was going to do. A while later, the demon sat up again beside the fire and took off his shirt. Then he put more wood on the fire to make plenty of fire. There was my compadre watching him. Then, when there was plenty of fire, that demon began to heat his back. Immediately my compadre got out his salt. That is what he had been expecting. There he was just watching when the demon's back began to change a bit. It looked something like frog's egg, (a clear gelatinous mass) and it quivered and seemed wet and sticky.

Then my compadre threw all his salt into the fire. How that demon shouted! Right there he ran away. Shouting he ran off. There into the woods he ran shouting, "Burnt salt! Burnt salt!" Of course, that's what demons can't stand - when we burn salt. That's why he ran off. Right there he left his pile of fish.

When the demon had gone, then my compadre got up and said to his wife, "We'd better go. I certainly don't want to stay here." And they fixed their bundle up again. Then they saw the pile of fish.

"What we'll we do?" asked the woman. "Shall we leave them there? Or shall we take them along?"

"We might better take them. There's nothing the matter with them. They're good fish." So they took the fish along too. It was fresh fish. The demon must just have caught them. Who knows how he caught them.

That's the way the demons does. He tries to carry off people. He just carried them off on his back when it gets good and sticky.

(25) Compare Foster's story 10 and note, p. 201, in regard to kidnapping of people. As to the manner in which the demon eats, the following story 26 gives the fact that the Salvajo also eats in this way, although he is specifically said not to be a demon.

## 26. \*The Salvajo.

They go everywhere. They don't enter the town here. But in Playa Vicente (town in State of Vera Cruz), I understand they do even enter the town. There the people put good clothing or good shirts in their yards. There the Salvajos come to steal it. But they don't come into town here. They don't eat tortillas. They don't eat anything as we do, so people say.

On the trail to Quiavicusas - but that was a lo-o-ng time ago - there was one of them that spoke to a man. The man was watching his cornfield there. It was above the ladders on the trail, up where there is a flat meadow. The peccaries were causing a great deal of damage to the cornfield there. So the man was shouting every little bit to scare them off, when this Salvajo spoke to him from the woods at the edge of his clearing, "What do you want, mister?"

"Nothing. I'm just looking after my cornfield. The peccaries have about finished it."

"No, it isn't done for yet. There's still plenty left."

"Only a very little remains. They've almost finished it."

"No! They're not going to finish it. There's still plenty left. You'll still gain something from your labor. You shall make your corncrib. Make it more than one abrazado square (distance from finger-tip to finger-tip with the arms outstretched to the limit)."

"You don't say!"

"Yes. Only you shall bring me a pair of chickens, a hen and a rooster. And bring me a shirt and a pair of pants."

"Very well. I'll do it." So the man brought him the shirt and pants. Immediately the Salvajo put them on. Before, he didn't wear clothes. Then he said, "Let's go kill the chickens."

"Well, mister Salvajo, you know how."

"Yes, I know how. Have you brought an olla in which I'm to cook my meat?"

"Yes, here I've brought it."

"Good."

Then he killed the chickens and put them in the olla. When the meat was done, the man gave him three tortillas. Then the Salvajo tore them up like this and threw them away thus, first over one shoulder and then over the other. He didn't eat the chicken either. He just threw it away that way along with the tortilla. When he had finished eating, he said, "Let's go to the other side of the hill. There is a corral full of peccaries." The Salvajo was looking after these. Then he rolled up his shirt sleeves and his pants legs. Thus he entered the corral. He seized a peccary, a huge one this big, about the size of a burrito. He killed it right there on the fence of the corral. Then he gave it to the poor man. "Take this along home with you."

"Thanks a lot," and he took it home. He made his corncrib after all. Sure enough, he filled it! It was huge! More than one abrazado square he made it. He did get something for his work after all. The peccaries didn't finish up his corn.

That's the way my father told it to me. But that happened long ago. The Salvajo looks the same as tekytyuk the demon. There are many of them. They live in the woods. The demons are something different.

(26) It is not apparent exactly what José' meant by the Salvajo's looking the same as the male demon. It may refer to stature and general appearance. It seems that if the Salvajo also had both big toes on the same side, the fact would no longer serve as sure method of knowing a demons, as was intimated. Their manner of 'eating' is identical. The Salvajo wears no clothes but often asks for them. Contrast with Foster p. 208 bottom.

## **NAGUALS OR TONOS.**

### **27. The Boy Who Transformed Himself.**

There was a man who has a son who very much wanted to go to school. But his father didn't want to let him go just to learn some recitations. So the boy said to his father, "Father, I'm going out to hunt my living. I'll go until I find work."

So he went out to make his living. Three days had passed when he met a catrín who asked him, "Where are you going, Boy?"

"Señor, I'm hunting for work," he said.

"Don't you want to go to my house?" asked the catrín.

"If you have work for me, I'll go."

"The work isn't hard; just to watch the house."

"Very well," said the boy and they returned to the catrín's house. They had walked only a short distance when a cliff opened up and in they went. The catrín said, "You watch the house. I'm going out."

"Very well," said the boy. And the catrín wasn't a person. He was a demon. So the demon went out and the boy was left alone. The demon had many books and the boy began studying. A month passed and the demon didn't return. The third month the boy found a book which said that a person can transform himself into animals. So the boy studied it until he had learned it all by heart.

When he had learned it all he went home to his father and said, "Here I am, father. I went and learned a little bit more. Neither you nor I have any money. Let's go to the city. I can change myself into an old rooster. But if a catrín or some other man wants to buy me, don't sell me."

"Very well," said the father.

When they reached the city, a man said to him, "If you have a rooster, let's play him against my rooster and we'll bet a hundred pesos. If my rooster is killed, you win them." So the roosters began to fight and, in three jumps, the old rooster stuck his knife into his opponent and it died. So they won the hundred pesos and returned home again.

The next day he said to his father again, "Let's go run a race in the city. I can change myself into an old horse."

"Very well," said his father.

"But don't sell me. Not even if someone wants to pay two hundred pesos for me."

"Very well," said the father. When they reached the city, he said to those who had horses, "Let's run a race,"

"Of course," said the man. So they ran the race and each one bet five hundred pesos. Again the father of the boy won.

He had the horse tied up when a catrín came. It was the demon.

He said, "Won't you sell that horse?" and he seized it by the reins and said, "sell it to me!"



"I don't want to sell it," said the father. But the demon mounted the horse and rode off. When he came to the little ranch, he tied up the horse and asked for tortillas.

Then he entered the house and was eating when the rancher said to his son, "The man's horse wants to drink. He's pawing the ground."

"Very well," said the demon, "Take him to the river so he can drink." When they loosed the horse at the river, he turned into a fish. The demon sensed it and went to see. He turned into a snake and went in pursuit of the fish. Just as he was about to catch it, the fish leaped into the air and changed into a dove. The snake turned into a hawk. He was just about to seize the dove when they reached a city. There was a lady on her roof and the dove said to itself, "I'm going to turn into a ring." And he fell at the lady's feet. She picked up the ring and put it on her finger. The hawk was unable to seize the dove so he changed back to his form and went into the city and opened a store. Much sickness came to the city and the demon went about curing people. The woman who had the ring became sick and the demon went to see her.

"I'll cure you if you'll give me your ring."

But the lady didn't want to give him the ring. She was just about to die when one day the ring spoke to her, "I am a person," it said. "But you must give me to the demon. Otherwise you'll die and so will I. Only don't hand me to him. You must move me in your hand."

The next day the demon again went to see the lady and said, "I'll cure you if you'll give me the ring."

"Yes, I'll give it to you," said the lady and he cured her. When he finished curing her, he asked for the ring.

"Give me the ring. I've cured you," he said. So the lady moved her hand and a pomegranate fell to the floor. The demon changed into a turkey and began to pick at the pomegranate. The skin of the pomegranate turned into a dog and bit the turkey and killed it.

(27) The general tenor of the story fits the pattern of Mixe belief about the matter of transformation. It is learned, it is connected in some way with the devil, it must be accompanied by motion at the moment of transformation. But other elements are definitely not Mixe. I have never heard of Mixes fighting roosters. Apolinar had never seen a match of fighting cocks, yet the description is exactly that given by eye witnesses. In some few places, Mixes may run horse races, on occasions. It is done in San José' in connection with a certain fiesta. An impromptu race may be staged by young owners of horses in villages where there is sufficient flat space to do so, but it will be as a matter of showing off who has the better horse or is the better rider. I have never in fifteen years heard of a Mixe betting on anything. It is absolutely foreign to their culture pattern.

Further discussion on the subject of transformations will be found in part III; compare also Foster p. 183 mid.

## 28. Women Who Turn Into Turkeys.

Yes, it is true that there are people who can change their bodies into another form. Not only do they change into tigers, although it is true that some folks have the tiger for their totem, but there are also tigers which are not totems of the people - they are just tigers. Why, I myself have killed various tigers. Only now I don't have dogs anymore. But here I have the hide of now which I killed a long time ago. It almost comes to three meters in length, from nose to tail tip. Look at it!

What other form can people change into? Well, there are those who have as totem the viper! Others the rattlesnake! But there are also those who change themselves into turkeys. These are women and they are called 'suckers'. It's at night that they change their form. But these have a different manner of changing form. In the middle of the night, when they are going to change into turkeys, they take off their feet at the ankle and leave them in the house. Then they change into turkeys and go to the houses of people who have children. But first, before changing into turkeys, they put a casuela on the fire (or near the fire) to heat.

When they come to where the children are sleeping, they suck their blood. Afterwards they return to their own houses and vomit up the blood into the casuela. There it is that they cook it. Then right away they put their feet on again and turn back into people again. That's how the person who is a chupador (sucker) acts. But they have to return to their own houses before daybreak.

There was a woman who was a sucker. Only her neighbors didn't know it. But the woman who lived near her, that's who it is that thought, "Who knows what is the matter with my neighbor. Could it be that she's a sucker? Why she doesn't answer when we speak to her in the middle of the night. It seems just as though she isn't in her house. Where might she go? Tonight I'm certainly going to see!"

Since the house of the sucker (wall of the house) is of poles, it is noticeable right away when the woman builds up her fire. Just about midnight it was when she built up the fire and put her casuela there to heat. There her neighbor is watching when suddenly she took off her feet and changed into a turkey. Immediately, when that one (the sucker) went out, her neighbor went into the house. She seized the feet where the sucker had left them, near the fire, and threw them into the fire! She burned them up completely!

The next day, there outside in the patio the turkey was found dead. Its feet were burned up to the knee! That's how that evil woman was finished off. I believe that there are none of that kind of people around here. But there are still some in other towns, they say.

(29) In *Tongues of the Monte*, Frank Dobie records a similar belief in bloodsucking from the north of Mexico. But in that case, I believe, the sucker took the form of a bat.

Barlow mentions a similar belief (among the Aztecs?) even to the matter of the suckers' becoming turkeys or using turkey wings or feet in their nefarious practice.

In the matter of revealing or destroying a nagual, see Foster p. 184 and the related discussion in this work, part III.

## 29. \*Shooting of a Nagual Rayo.

There was a man from here who had an enemy. I don't know what the falling out was that they had between the two of them. But they became very angry. This man who was the other man's enemy was a very bad person. That's the way many of them were formerly. This one had rayo for his tono. Maybe there are some like that here even today. But one doesn't know. The one who has it for his tono, he knows what it is, of course.

Well, one day the man who was a good person was going to Quetzaltepec, I think. Or maybe it was that he was going to hunt wild turkeys. I don't know for sure. I only know that he went up that way with various companions. And he took his muzzle-loader along. There they went climbing up and up the trail. A little farther on than the place where one catches the last glimpse of town here, there is where it began to thunder. It was a beautiful day. It wasn't that it wanted to rain. Right away that man thought, "That certainly is my enemy. It's that he intends to do me harm. That's why the rayo is thundering!"

Then he said to his companions, "Stand still a minute. In a little while we'll see who's going to get the better of this. If it thunders again, I'm going to shoot one there." In a little while it began to thunder again and immediately that man shot at where it was thundering. Well, do you know that right then the thunder stopped! Then they heard that there's some noise there in the woods. He loaded his shotgun again and they went to see just what might be making that noise.

Well, when they had gone a little ways into the woods they heard something like a person who is hurt - groaning. There they went and found that enemy of the man who had shot the rayo. There he is badly wounded. Well, right there he died, that one. It was that his tono was rayo and when the man shot it, his enemy whose tono it was also died. Right there that one was finished off. Yes, both of them were from here. Maybe there are still people here who have rayo tonos. But not many folks have rayo tonos.

(29) While the matter of nagual, tono and rayo and their connection one with another will be taken up at length in part III, it might be well to mention here that among the forms which a witch may take is that of rayo, a form of lightning. This form is then referred to as nagual rayo to distinguish it from regular, natural lightning as well as from other forms which are spirit beings. The tono is the guardian spirit, or spirit beings. The tono is the guardian spirit, or spirit counterpart of a person. When one transforms himself into the form of his tono, it is possible to say for example, that he has rayo for his tono and also that the manifestation of his transformation, as in the case above, is nagual rayo.

### 30. \*The killing of a rattlesnake Nagual.

Some time ago there was also a very bad man who had a rattlesnake tono. He was a big sorehead. He was always wanting to fight with his neighbors. He was completely bad, that one. He was the one who knew what his tono was. His neighbors didn't know that his tono was a rattlesnake.

Well, one day that fellow became angry with the neighbor who lived next to him. I don't know why he began to quarrel. But the neighbor didn't want to quarrel. He was a good person. He just answered with good words. He didn't want any bad feeling. He didn't want an argument. So he was just talking, saying to his neighbor not to be angry, that the matter could be fixed up however he wished in a friendly way.

But that bad fellow didn't want this. "You'll see what will happen to you!" was all he said, because he wanted to fight. He was very vicious.

The good man had his field there to the south on the road to Quiavicusas. About two hours away his field was. A while later, after the argument, he went to give a look at his cornfield and the bad fellow saw him go. Right away he also went to do him damage. There where the side trail goes off to his cornfield, suddenly a rattlesnake came out! It didn't rattle! It struck at the good man and barely missed him! It was a huge rattlesnake, that one. Right away, the good man jumped to the side. He pulled out his machete and then killed that rattler. With a single slash he almost cut off its head.

When he returned to his house, he learned that his neighbor, that bad fellow, had died. "His head was almost cut off with a machete," they told him. They don't know how it happened. Just that way, lying in his patio behind the corncrib, that's the way they found him about noon." Right away he knew that that's who went to attack him there in the woods. It was because he had a rattlesnake nagual. When he killed the snake with his machete, his neighbor whose tono it was was also killed slashed with the machete.

That's just what happens. When we kill the tono of a person, the person whose tono it is dies also. He dies in the same way. If the tono dies by machete, or shotgun, or stoning, the person whose tono it is will die with the same sort of marks on him.

### **31. \*The burning of Malacatepec's Church.**

They were very rascally, those people of Malacatepec. They were still some what bad, but formerly they were even worse.

There was a Camotlan man who was called Manuel Pablo. He had one son. The son lived in Malacatepec. Well, Manuel Pablo went to Malacatepec to see his son. But the people mistreated him - they hit him. Right away he turned around and started back. When he arrived over this side of Chimaltepec, higher up where one can see the town of Malacatepec, there is where he settled the account. There is where he put a curse on them. Right then a rayo struck the church of Malacatepec. You who went there, didn't you see that today their church is smaller? There is the old wall still. Formerly it was very much bigger! Well, the reason is that right then it burned down.

But that's because rayo was the tono of that man, Pablo. That's what he did. That's the way the old folks told it to me. It was a long time ago that it burned. I guess it's more than fifty years ago.

### **32. \*The Burning of Quetzaltepec's Church.**

It's a long time ago that this happened. The church that was in Quetzaltepec - that one of zacate (grass thatch) - before they made the one of sheet iron, that wasn't the first church there. Why, before that one there was another one, also of zacate. That was a long time ago. Then, they say, there was one there who was called konk (chief, cacique). That's what they've told me. That one is the one who is called 'governor', I believe. Or maybe it's alcalde mayor (mayor, justice of the peace). Who knows exactly how he would be called in Spanish. But that konk is the one who gave orders there.

It was people from Mazatlan who passed there. It was, I think, that they had gone as mozos. Perhaps they were returning from San Pablo Mitla or from Oaxaca. I believe that's where they were coming from. Well, anyway, four of them were passing in Quetzaltepec. And they didn't greet the konk. They just raised their hats. They didn't greet him.

Why, do you know, that that konk became very angry. Immediately he gave orders to go after them - to bring them back again. Well, he had them beaten. They didn't answer a word. They just went on together. There they went walking along. Then one of them said to his companions, "There when we pass here again there won't be any church!" That's what he said.

And it was true. In a little while, a rayo struck the church. It was completely burned. But that person had a rayo tono. That's the one who did it. That's what I learned about the matter.

### **33. \*Attempted Burning of Camotlan's Church.**

One time they tried to burn the church here too, but they were not able.

There was a man from Camotlan who went to Tutla to teach them to play the Clarín (bugle). He was a young fellow who was named Miguel Pedro. That's the one who went to teach. They agreed on thirty-five pesos. Afterwards they didn't want to pay. Then there arose against him four men from there who are rascally. Rayo, tigre, snake, whirlwind - thus they had their tonos. Well, those four mistreated and spoke harshly to Miguel.

Immediately he began sharpening his machete. A whole day he was sharpening it. He sharpened it both sides. Then he came to Playa Vicente. At four o'clock in the morning he arrived there. He went to the church. He burned his candle in front of the Saint James. At five o'clock he left there. He arrived in Camotlan about the hour for the evening prayers (5 P. M.)! Running he was travelling. He was afraid.

He had barely arrived when the lightning began to strike. On all four sides of town it struck, on the highest peaks. But it didn't manage to touch the church. Just rayos were fighting. Once and for all they got the best of those four rascals from Tutla. This was done by the Creator Rayos, the Father of the Town. This is a pair, a man and a woman, who were placed under the main altar when the church was built. These are the ones who take care of the town.

When they were going to build the church, they dug something like a well where the main altar is. The hole was about this big across - about a meter in diameter. It was about five or ten meters deep, who knows. There was an opening through up to the top in the middle of the altar. That's the way they made it. Of course, now they have covered it, because the priest was going to move the main altar. That's when they covered it.

When those two were going to enter there, the town feasted them, Then they entered. There the townsfolk put in tamales, the kind like a man's fist with beans and turkey meat and chicken meat. Of course, those changed into rayos. Those are the ones who are the Fathers of the Town, who look out for the town. That's why no one can get the best of it. That's why those rascals from Tutla weren't able to burn the church. Four times the lightning struck, but always off to one side. Just that way the four of them were finished off. As always, the Greater Rayos, Fathers of the Town, gained the victory.

## ***CANNIBALISM.***

### **34. Camotlan Youth Who Ate Supper in Mixistlán.**

There was another young fellow from Camotlan who also went to Mixistlán. I don't remember his name anymore. Who knows what it was. But he did go there. I don't believe he was carrying anything. Who knows what he went to do there. Anyway, he got there late in the afternoon. He went to a house and they gave him a place to stay. When they were going to eat, they invited the young fellow to eat with them.

"Of course!" he said. And he thought to himself, "How is it my fellow countrymen say that the folks here are bad? Look how they invited me to eat." Why, they even gave him meat! He ate exceptionally well. He was filled up. Then he lay down on his petate. By chance he glanced up.

There in the roof (vacant space under the thatch roof is used for a loft or left open and things are hung from the roof poles) was a child's leg hanging! That was the kind of meat they had given him for his supper!

Well, he wanted to vomit! And he was scared, but PLENTY! "What am I going to do?" he thought. "Probably these people want to kill me too. It's a sure thing that's what they do. That's why they gave me a place to stay. That's why they were so nice in inviting me to eat!"

Well, what he did, they say, was to think of going to the toilet. Right away he got up. "Where are you going?" they asked him.

"I'm going to the toilet," he said. "Who knows what's the matter with me. Seems as though I have to vomit." And he went out into the woods. There he was vomiting until he threw up all that supper. Right there is where he ran away. He just returned to his own village. He left his petate and little bundle right there in that house. He never did return there.

I think that also was a while ago when it happened.



### 35. \*Camotlan Man Who Escaped from Temascal.

It is true that those of Mixistlán previously ate people. They don't do it so much anymore, I don't believe. Perhaps all that race which ate people have already died. Perhaps it's just that they don't do it anymore. But previously, yes! Why the men from here didn't pass through there when they were alone. When there were three or four, then they could pass through. But in the daytime. At night they wouldn't pass through.

A long while ago one passed through there. That one was called Matthew. He lived here but had formerly been from Cotzocon. His son was called Zoriano. Zoriano's son was called Pedro Celestino. It was only a short time ago that Pedro died, he who was the grandson of Matthew. I don't know what that Matthew was carrying when he passed through Mixistlán. But he was carrying a pack. That fellow always carried a heavy load. I think he used to carry seven or eight arrobas (one arroba was twenty-five pounds). He was really a MAN, that fellow! He carried a full load.

It was almost night when Matthew arrived in Mixistlán. There he went to a house and spoke, "Good evening, señor."

"Good evening," they replied.

"Won't you give me a place to stay for the night?"

"Of course! Come in. Put your load there in the corner. Rest yourself, here is your bench."

"Won't you loan me your fire to make my coffee?"

"Yes, there it is." So he made his coffee and ate his tortillas.

When he finished eating, he was going to lie down beside his load.

Then the man of the house said to him, "Señor, here it gets very cold. You won't be able to stand it. It will be better if we put fire in the temascal (sweathouse) doorway to heat it. There inside you will sleep warm."

"Very well," said Matthew. So that's what the man did. Matthew lay down inside the temascal and they put fire at the doorway so it would stay hot. But a little while later, when that Matthew was sleeping, the man threw chili on the fire. Well Matthew began to choke. He woke up! But he couldn't get out by the door. There was the fire and they had covered up the doorway. Then that Matthew put forth his strength. He got up crouched over this way and pushed up this way. Just that way he broke apart that temascal, they say. Because truly that Matthew was very strong. Just that way he got out and ran. He didn't wait for anything. He didn't ask for his bundle. He knew by then that those people wanted to kill him to eat him. And he ran.

But that man also came out. There he comes running to seize Matthew. Truly he was going to kill him. But that Matthew was very clever. He just took off his sash and threw it behind him. Immediately his sash turned into a snake, so they say. There it was when that man came along. It almost bit him, because it's poisonous. But that man carried his machete. It was with that that he got the best of the snake. There he killed it. By that time, that Matthew was going a long way off. But again that man followed him. He was just about to come up with him.

"What am I going to do now?" thought Matthew. Then, he seized his sweet pad. That's what he had used for a pillow. He had put it over his shoulder when he was about to tear the temascal apart.

Well, that is what he threw behind him. Immediately it turned into stinging insects and when that man came along, they stung him plenty. That man, believe me, he didn't win out with his machete. Then it was that Matthew escaped, since it was night time. Immediately he escaped. He ran off. All night he went. Through the woods he went. When dawn came, he went to the Municipio at Villa Alta and reported the affair. I think that there was the garrison of Federal soldiers. Immediately the authorities rose up. They took soldiers. Soon they came to the house of those people. There was Matthew's bundle. There was the evidence where he had broken out of the temascal.

Well, just there they killed all those people and burned their house. That's what they did. Indeed, I saw that Matthew. He was still alive when I was a boy. He was an old, old man. The story, of course, is true. Matthew himself is the one who told it. His son Zoriano also knew the story well. But they don't eat people so much anymore. Maybe it's because all that kind of people have been finished off.

### **36. Girl Mating With Dog.**

Some of the people of Mixistlán are very bad. Previously, they say, they would put travellers in the temascal to sleep. Then they put chili in the fire. With that they killed them and afterwards ate them. But that kind of people is coming to an end (dying out, being finished off).

Of course, it isn't all the people who are that way. A very long time ago, they say a man there had a daughter. This man also had a dog, a huge one. That dog was the girl's companion, they say. She went to the field with the dog. She played with the dog. All the while she was with the dog, they say. At last, they say, she had offspring by the dog!

From there it is, they say, that those people came who ate people. But now they've almost died out.

#### ***VARIANT -***

That's the one who was their grandfather, the brown dog. It was because a person lay with that dog! Then from that union came those who ate people. But that's why they ate people, because the dog was their grandfather. That's the way I was given to understand the story.

### 37. Man Who Visited Dog-faced Idol.

Not all the people of Mixistlán ate people. But those who did eat people had their santo (in sense of 'image', 'idol'), they say. It was very ugly - it had a face like a dog, they say.

Well, one man there, one who didn't eat people, went to see this santo. The next day he had an overpowering desire to eat human flesh. Didn't he go cut off his wife's breast! Right away he ate it! Raw he went and ate it!

Then the woman went and informed the comisión (garrison of soldiers in charge of the region). The Serranos (soldiers who were Mountain Zapotecs) went and seized him.

"But I wasn't that way before. I went to see the santo. That's the thing that's to blame."

They threw him into the fire and burned him up. That's the way they did formerly. Those (the ones that ate people, the ones they burned) were heretics. They weren't baptized.

(36, 37) The variant of 36 is by José Trinidad as is 37. Here we have two different attempts at explaining the cannibalism at Mixistlan. It is quite possible that they did have a dog-faced idol there.

The punishment meted out in 37 would correspond with the death penalty for attempted killing and for cannibalism suspects in 35. Padre Gay seems to indicate that according to Burgoa, this was the punishment. Doubtless, they also collected the idol and burned it. This too was common practice.

The comisión was probably in Villa Alta and would be the same as the garrison referred to in one of the preceding stories (35).

### 38. \*Pre-conquest Eating of Contest Losers.

In Malacatepec also they previously ate people. That's what I have been given to understand. I have a compadre who lives there in Malacatepec. He's the one who told me.

Previously, he says, those people didn't wear clothes. They didn't have clothes. They went naked. Also, they didn't each one of them have names like now. All of them were called the same name, he says. Their name was tuundim. That's what they were all called, men and women. Who knows what those people were like. They didn't act like people of today. They had very peculiar customs, he says. They played in a very ugly way, those people. Well, he says, they would dig a place like a ditch. More than an arm's - stretch broad they'd make it, and deep. Then they would make some stakes and sharpen them like we would a pencil. That's the way they did, he says. Then they would plant the stakes in the ditch, but with the sharp point up. They made the ditch deep.

Then every eight days, week by week, all the people had to come to play the game. If they didn't come, they would go out to the person's ranch and seize him and eat him. That's just what they did, he says. When all of them had come, then they began to play. They had to leap across the ditch. Those who gave a mighty leap landed on the other side. Nothing happened to them. But those who didn't, landed in the pit there on top of the sharp stakes. Then they would take him out, kill him and eat him, he says.

That's the sort of custom they had. Even if one didn't want to play, he was forced to play. If he didn't come in to play, they'd seize him and eat him of a certainty. If he played, it might be that he'd escape with his life, if he was a good jumper, that is.

Some of the Malacatepec people are still very bad. They still don't want to give one a place to sleep. But formerly they were far worse yet. Well, that's what my compadre told me. And he lives there. That's how he knows what the people were like formerly. Of course, they don't do that kind of thing now! That was a long time ago - before the Spaniards, even - before the friars.

(38) Compare with Foster's story 27, p. 215, in regard to not wearing clothes. Jose has made special mention of this fact in regard to Salvajo. Apolinar made special mention of it in regard to the spirits who make up the wind. Yet in the story about the sun and the moon, he says "pants is what the people used to wear".

### 39. \*Killing and Eating of a Priest.

The people of Malacatepec also ate a priest. That's what my compadre told me. That's also a long time ago, but not so very long (as the events in 38). By that time the people didn't run around naked. They had a priest then. They say that that priest brought seed corn. Those people didn't know what corn was, he says. Well, the priest explained to them how they were to clear land, how they were to prepare the ground, how they were to plant the corn. A while later, the corn sprouted. Then the people asked, "What is it good for?"

"It's to eat," answered the priest.

"I think that priest is crazy," that's what the people were thinking. But they didn't say anything. They were just waiting to see what the priest would do. But when the cornfield was only a meter or a meter and a half high, the priest had to go to another place, for a visit.

"But you are to take good care of the cornfield," he said before leaving on his trip. "Don't let anything damage it!"

As soon as he had gone, they began to say one to another, "Now let's see if it's true. Perhaps that priest is just telling us a lie. Maybe he's crazy. It doesn't look as though it were good to eat. But let's see." Well those brutes went and pulled up the whole cornfield. Just that way went and ate it. Stalk and all they ate. Then they said, "Well, really, it's true! It really is good to eat!"

It's sweet."

When the priest returned, there wasn't a sign of the cornfield.

They had gone and finished it up completely.

"What happened to the cornfield?" shouted the priest. "Who pulled it up! Why did they pull it up?" Why, he was completely wild, that priest.

"Why, it's that we ate it," they replied.

"What brutes!" shouted the priest. "That isn't to eat!"

"That fellow has a demon!" said the people. "How is it he told us that it was to eat. Look how much work we did. And we've already tasted it and know that it is indeed delicious and sweet. And now he wants to beat us and he talks to us in a very ugly way. Now he says that it's not to eat. Of a certainty he just wants to deceive us! Probably it's because he himself wants to eat it all alone. Well, it's a sure thing he has a demon!"

Then they said among themselves, "That fellow is certainly very angry. He could do us harm. He might even want to put a curse on us. We better kill him and eat him." And that's just what they did, he says. Then is when they killed and ate him because he didn't explain clearly how corn is and also because he scolded them and beat them. He was a very bad person, that priest, they say. But it's really true that they ate him. My compadre himself lives there and he is the one who told me. He knows all about it.

## **SERPENTS.**

### **40. The Horned Serpent.**

What is the “bull-snake” like? Don’t you know? Well, I’ll tell you. The ‘bull-snake’ has two horns. It grows very big! But the thing that lives inside the earth, inside the mountain it lives. There above the calvario there’s one. But that one is certainly very big! It has lived there for a long time. When it moves there underneath the ground, that’s what makes the earth quake. That is what caused the landslides up there above. It’s that it is moving there underneath. Inside the earth it wants to travel. So they say. Three or four places there were landslides but then the priest came and blessed the place. So then it quieted down.

It was the “bull-snake”, the horned serpent, which entered there in San Juan Guichicovi, they say. I think there is a place where the water enter into a hole. It’s like a cave, they say. There is where the horned serpent entered and dammed up the water. Right away the water rose and flooded the town. But how it scared those people! Immediately they began talking, “What shall we do? How are we going to get that horned serpent out of there? It’s nothing but bone.” They don’t know how they’re going to get it out.

Then a man from Juquila is the one who told them how they must get it out. He’s a trader. He was there when that horned serpent entered there. He’s the one who told me how it happened. First that Juquileño went and burned candles in the church. Then three or four of them got together. Together they went to where that horned serpent entered. But each one of them had his tono. Their tonos are of different kinds - whirlwind, eagle, I don’t remember what the others were. That fellow from Juquila is the one who had the eagle tono. That’s the one who won out.

About four hours they were there. The three of them, four with the Juquileño, were working to tear apart that horned serpent. But it’s very tough, that one is. Well, they were a long time but at last they won out. And that’s the way they saved that San Juan Guichicovi. That’s where those folks live that are called “San Juaneros.”

Well of course, that’s indeed true. That’s the way it happened.

That’s the way an old man told it to me. But it happened a long time ago - a very long time ago.

(40) From his last paragraph, I take it the J. T. didn’t mean that the same Juquileño who was an actor in the drama is the one who told him, although that is what he seems to say in the third paragraph.

He generally uses the closing sentence in cases where things happened before his time and even before his father’s time, although this could be an exception. Conceivably an old man from Juquila might have been a young trader at the time covered by the tale. It may be that it is just one of those discrepancies due to faulty Spanish.

For similar beliefs compare Foster p. 216 and Beals p. 94.

J. T. is definitely of the opinion that these horned serpent exist even today. There is a little confusion as to the exact cause of the landslides of 1945. In the present story, he attributes them to the horned serpent. At other times he spoke of serpents - culebra de agua (literally, water snake) - falling from the sky to cause the slides. Once he said to me, “Don’t you have a telescope? Let’s see what there is inside the mountain there above the calvario (calvary - the shrine at the edge of the village). Why, up there there’s a huge snake which is called “Bull-snake”, the horned serpent. One time a priest came.

He had a telescope. With that he could see what's inside the earth. That's what he said. He's the one who saw that there is that snake. But it is sleeping. When it moves, then is when there's going to be an earthquake."

I can't explain this last paragraph. In all fairness, this should be said - there need be no basis in fact for the story to be told. I well remember the time a report came back to us that we had said there was going to be a dragon come out of the ground in the center of town and the whole town would be destroyed! We had never mentioned the word dragon, but afterwards found out there is some belief connected with them and a crested iguana which happen to be found out of its habitat, encountered at the edge of town was called a dragon and killed.

I have never seen a priest, or anyone for that matter, in the Mixe region with a telescope or binoculars. Yet J. T. must have seen them to have know the term for them. A true explanation of the alues and use of telescope or binoculars could easily have been perverted into such a belief because of inability correctly to understand Spanish.



## 41. The Palm Mat Serpent.

It was the Palm Mat serpent and not the horned serpent which dammed up the river near Coatlan. There where the San Andres river joins with the Trapiche river is where it dammed it up. Then is when it endangered the town. No one knows why, but that huge snake entered right there where the two rivers meet. There are high mountains on both sides. The cut is rather narrow there. There is where it entered.

Its body is very broad. Where it entered it dams up everything.

Just like a palm mat it covers, that's why it is called the Palm Mat serpent. Well, that animal dammed up the river there. All the flats of Llano de Potrero were covered. The water was just about to enter into the town of Coatlan. Then the people got together to see how they were going to kill that animal to save the town. Then they were going to see who are really the tough people. That's the kind who will win out. That's the way they talked it over. But by means of their tonos they would win out.

The first one to try was whirlwind, but he wasn't able. Everyone who seemed to be tough tired, one by one. Several tried but they couldn't kill it. They weren't able even though they seemed tough. And the people were very sad.

Then they saw a thin man coming. He doesn't look as though he had any strength at all. The crab is what he has for his tono. Then he said, "Don't worry. I'm going to kill it."

"But will you be able to?" they said.

"Yes, I'm able," he said. And he went there where that serpent was damming it up. There he entered. He went down below the water. There he made a hole in the stomach of that serpent. It was there he went into its stomach. Don't you know that the crab has pincers like scissors? There he is inside the snake cutting its intestines to pieces. He left it nothing but pieces. Of course it's clear that the serpent couldn't last. Immediately he killed it and came out again. Well, it died, that serpent died and away it went with the water.

That man with the crab tono is the one who did it. And it did not seem that he was a tough person. But it's that he has the crab for his tono. It was the crab that won out.

## THE ANCIENTS.

### 42. \*Two Men Who Rode Tigres.

Two Camotlan men, named Alonso and Pacheco, are the ones who kept watch of the boundaries of Camotlan. But they mounted tigres when they went the rounds. Alonso lived there on that high peak to the east. Pacheco lived on that one to the west. There they would call to each other. Alonso would call and Pacheco would answer. Or Pacheco would call and Alonso would answer.

“Pacheco!” called Alonso.

“Alonso!” called Pacheco.

“Come here!” shouted one to the other. Then each would rise up from where he was and go flying to the other mountain peak. Just like a buzzard, that’s the way they flew. When each came to where his companion had been, he wasn’t there. He too had risen up and flown to the other peak. That’s the way they played.

They would shout to each other, “Rise up!”

The other would answer. Pacheco would answer, “Let’s exchange places.” But Pacheco couldn’t leave there. There he’d just stay sitting. That’s how they played, they say.

When they went to look over the boundaries, they went a great distance. I don’t know the names of all the places in Spanish so I can’t tell you all of them in Spanish. There they went mounted on tigres. To the west they went. They passed through Santa Cruz, San Isidro, Cacalotepec. From there they came to Juquila Mixes. The boundary line passed right where the church is. From there they went along the top of the mountains and dropped down into the valley to a river called Lizard River. From there they went to Santo Domingo plantation and, passing through the huge river there, came to Narro plantation. From there they went through the guava plains in front of Jalapa. From there they went by Three Crosses and came to Guichicovi. From there they passed by Mazatlan and Tierra Negra and then came to Cotzocon. From there they went through Alotepec. But it was a very long trip. A whole month they needed to make the rounds. But then Camotlan was very huge. It had much land.

### 43. An Ancient Riddle

And ancient riddle goes thus:-

Where is the roasting ear?

The roasting ear is underneath a metate.

Where is the metate?

The metate is inside a gopher hole.

Where is the gopher hole?

The gopher hole is covered by a crab.

Where is the crab?

The crab has been eaten by a heron.

Where is the heron?

The heron is seated in a dead tree.

Where is the dead tree?

The dead tree has fallen into the water.

Where is the water?

The water was drunk by a deer and has dried up.

Where is the deer?

The deer was run off by a forest fire.

Where is the forest fire?

The forest fire was put out by the rain.

Where is the rain?

The rain was carried away by the wind.

Where is the wind?

The wind blew away behind the mountain.

#### 44. \*The Snake Bridge In Camotlan's Cave.

When you went into the cave, did you find the road which goes through to the other side of the mountain? You didn't? Then what road did you take? Because they say that there are two roads. Did you find the road that went to the underworld? I'll bet you didn't! And you didn't find the place where money falls into your hand either?

Don't you know the story of how things are inside the cave? Well, I'll tell it to you then. Of course, we young fellows of today who have gone to school don't believe in those things. But many old folks still believe that it is true. But we young fellows know that such things don't exist. Didn't you even see the huge snake inside there? You didn't see anything? Didn't you hear any noise inside there? How strange! I certainly wouldn't go inside there.

Well, I'll tell you how it is in there, according to the way they tell it. I don't believe it; I don't know about it. I haven't been inside there. And I certainly am not going. What if a huge snake should seize us, or a tiger! Well, there are two roads inside there, they say. One is that which goes through to the other side of the mountain. That's what they say. One woman already went by this road. She travelled solely with candles. At last she came out on the other side of the mountain, they say. There's one place where there is treasure. That woman is the one who told them. But that's another story. But it is true that there is a road which goes to the other side of the mountain, for that woman came out there.

The other road goes to the underworld, they say. Which road did you take? How is it that you didn't see one of those two? Well, they say that the road to *infierno* goes down and down. Maybe it's that you did not go as far in as possible. How is it you say that the cave just ends there! There way down below, they say, one comes to a river which is plenty big. There of a certainty one can't swim. But there's a bridge there. If one wants to cross the river, he has to cross by the bridge. The trouble is, it's a huge snake! That's what they say. But it's immense! Why it's bigger than the log bridge there by your house, over eighty centimeters in diameter. One can very easily walk on its back. But they say that if one goes to cross who is a bad person, if he's a thief or if he has done evil deeds, when he comes to the middle of the river on the snake, there is where the snake turns its head and swallows him! Only if one is a good person, if he hasn't done evil deeds, then of a certainty, he can pass to the other side. Nothing will happen to him. The snake won't do a thing to him. But that road is way down. Maybe that's why you didn't see it.

Also, up higher, near the entrance is where they formerly took their offerings. Some still do it. They say that one takes his offering and there inside he must leave it. Then he makes his request, whether it be burros or turkeys or roosters and hens or dogs which he's asking for, or perhaps a baby, anyway, there he makes his request. Then he will hear the voice of whatever it was he is requesting. He'll hear a burro bray, or a turkey gobble, or a child cry. But that's when his requests are going to be answered. If one hears nothing, it's that he isn't going to receive his request. But almost always one hears the voice, they say. Didn't you hear anything inside there?

(44) Rosendo had become a rural schoolteacher before his death, but at this time he was still just an assistant teacher. However much he felt like denying belief in the story the old folks tell, yet his manner showed belief. After much persuasion, and more to prove his bravery to some of his fellow schoolmate than for any other reason, he finally went with us into the first part of the cave because with the gasoline lantern "one could see everything". But he soon decided to turn back and several others joined him.

As he says, offerings are still made in the cave, and, as I have explored it further and further during the years and have brought out potsherds of the Ancients, the brujos have risked going further in to place their offerings. It may quite possibly be that the fact of their now having kerosene lanterns has had something to do with this. They were formerly not a family possession but were limited to the Municipio and school and to a few rich folks. The advent of flashlights as common property may also have something to do with it.

It is commonly told that after the coming of priests, some of them took advantage of this belief to secure for themselves various things - requiring that the people bring chickens, turkeys and similar things for offerings in connection with their requests at the cave. They did this as though the spirit in the cave was making the requirement. Then the priest, hiding in the interior - at times with his sacristan - would make the demands and collect the offerings. He would imitate the sound of the thing requested or indicate that the wish would be granted.

In a little side chamber at the very entrance are remains of a number of old faroles which had become rusty or broken and would no longer be used in calendas (processions). These were brought to the cave and apparently deposited with offerings much as it is still done with the bamboo framework of Santiago's (St. James) horse. There are also the pieces of broken vases which once held flowers on the various altars. The faroles are much like the old gas street lights and were made of tin with glass panes and have a center well in which to stand a candle thus protecting it from wind and rain in the night processions.

The average Mixe would not think of entering the place. Bats and brujos alone frequent it - and only the bats are unafraid there.

#### **45. The Woman Who Went Through the Cave.**

Muyuuník was the name of the woman who entered the cave. But that was a very long time ago. I didn't see that lady. That was before my time. But that's what she was called, they say. I don't know what her name would be in Spanish. I think it couldn't be translated. It's in Mixe that she was named thus. Well, that lady went into the cave with just candles. She had no flashlight or kerosene lantern. Just with candles she went in. There she went, walking, walking. Further and further she went in. She came to a place, they say, where she just held up her hand thus and it was filled with money. But she was very long time there inside the cave, that woman. Why it's a very long road. She had to walk a very great distance inside there. About three days she was just walking, walking. There she carried along her lunch. At last she came out on the other side of the mountain. You who have gone into the cave, haven't you found that road? Well, it's because you haven't gone into it completely.

Well, that woman received the blessing there inside. She was a very good person, they say. When some poor person came to her to ask for help, she would always give it. That lady didn't scold the poor folks. "Of course," she said, "I'll give you something. Wait a minute." Then she just would raise her hand like this and her hand was filled with money. Immediately she lowered it again and that money she would give to the poor person who was asking for help. That's the way that woman was, they say. She was a very good woman.

Why she's the one who paid for the building of the church, they say. She paid for all of it. But that was many years ago. That was a long, long time ago. I wasn't here when they built that. But the building of the church is another story.

## 46. Building of the Church in Camotlan.

The church-building has been there for many years. I don't remember when they built it. That was before my time. It was before my father's time and my grandfathers. It was a very long time ago that they built it. More than a hundred years - more than two hundred years, I believe. My grandfather didn't see when they built it. There it was just like now when he was still a little fellow. But it has its story how they built it. Of course, that story I know very well. Old people are the ones who told it to me. I still remember how my father and my grandfather told it. They knew very well how they built it. Maybe their grandfathers told it to them formerly. Perhaps they were just boys when the church was built.

But they didn't begin to build it here where it now is. It was on another site that they were going to make it. It is a long story, but I'll tell it to you.

At first they were going to build the church over there to the north where it's still called "Church Knob". That Pedro should know the place well since he goes hunting a lot. It's a long time now that I haven't gone there. But they say that there are still signs of the wall there. Well, there's where they were going to build the church. They had the stones and were already building the walls. But the fox entered there and defecated there on the altar. And right there is where they left off work. It's because that place was no good. That's why it happened.

Then they were going to make the church where there is a flat place behind the first mountain on the road to Chimaltepec. They were already going ahead with the work when the same thing happened again. This time it was a deer that entered and right there they left off working. Afterwards they were going to make it down there in the flats to the east. But an animal entered there also. I think it was tacomixtle or mapache (ring-tailed cat, or raccoon), but I don't remember exactly. But an animal went and entered again. That's why they didn't make it there.

At last they made it where it is now. But they didn't just up and make it there. It wasn't as simple as that. They hunted around everywhere for a place where it would be good to build. But they didn't find anyplace where it would be good to build. But they didn't find anyplace. Then one night, exactly where the church now stands, they heard a child crying about midnight. But at that time the place wasn't like it is now. There weren't any people there then. It was nothing but thick forest. Then they told the priest that a baby is crying there. Right away the priest said that there is where they have to build the church. "There it will be all right," he said.

Then they called one who was named konk - "governor," I think, or "Alcalde mayor" (mayor). Who knows how we would say it in Spanish. He's the one who yells when they are going to have tequio (town work, community labor). The next day he went to where it's called Konk's Knob - that mountain off to the west there. That's why it's called that, because it was formerly where they 'yelled orders from'. Well, up there's where he went to yell, since there were many people and they lived far off. Not like now, because then the people lived even at a distance on their ranches. But the konk yelled so they could come together to build the church.

For more than thirty years, they say, they worked to fix up the church. Then it was finished. Here in town they made everything. At that time there were those here that knew how to do everything. They had carpenters, painters, masons. Why, here also they made the bells. There where stands the house of the late Manuel Simón is where they made the bell. That's why that place is called Place of the Oven, because that's where they melted the metal to cast the bell. That lady who went into the

cave, she's the one who stood the expenses when they made the church. She's the one who paid. That's what they say.

There underneath the main altar they made a well, they say.

That, truly, I myself saw. It was about a meter wide and five or ten meters deep, who knows; that I don't know very well. At the time they made the church is when they made the well. Then they feasted a pair, a young man and a young woman. There was a big fiesta. After that the two of them entered into that well. There they put in tamales, tepache, different kinds of food. Those two turned into rayos. Those are the ones who are called "Fathers of the Town". They are the ones who take care of the town. Also at each corner of the church they put a youngster. They were orphans. There they walled them up in the wall, they say.

Well, that about the well, I actually saw the well. They've covered it now. The priest was going to move the main altar. Then is when they covered it so the priest wouldn't see it. But formerly it was there. There was an opening up through to the top of the main altar. There on top of the wall behind the main altar is a place like a box in the wall. There is where those rayos live. There is where they go to feast them every New Year's eve. They take tamales, tepache, cigarettes. They just leave them there. That's the way that is. They still do that. That's the custom they have.

But who knows how long a time it is since they made the church.

No one now knows. But I believe that it's more than two hundred years, perhaps.

(46) Pedro Molino said that in hunting a place for the church after the three failures, they were to look for a place where the bell would ring by itself. Not that they but a bell there. They were to hear one ring even though there was none there. Pedro says it was the priest who heard it ring there. Then they leveled off the present patio and build up the place on which the church was constructed.

The box-like place is in the wall behind the main altar. I've seen it. Each New Year's eve the main brujos, among them the cantor and chaplain of the church, take a turkey up there. Tepache (liquor of fermented fruit or cane juice) is poured in, a few cigarettes and tamales are left there - for the rayos.



## **47. Camotlan Priest Driven away.**

It's a long time ago that this happened. Of course, the church was here already. That had been built before. But it's a very long time ago that they ran off the priest who had been here. Why, when there were many people here. There weren't just a few. There were those of all trades. There were carpenters, painters, sculptors who knew how to make images, masons. Why do you know they even made the brick here to build the church buttresses with! Also, then, there were tanners and people who know how to make fine pottery and dishes. There were even blacksmiths, for it was here they made the bells. People of all trades there were, but they've all died off. Now they don't know how to do anything.

Well, it was the priest who is the blame. He was going to baptize some babies. There were the godmothers, each with a child. When he came to one who wasn't holding the baby just right.

"Hold it nicely!" said the priest. But the madrina paid no attention. Perhaps it was because that poor woman didn't understand any Spanish, that's why. Again the priest told her, but she continued to hold the baby the same way. I believe she had it lying down and he wanted it sitting up. Then the priest was going to hit the madrina, but instead, he missed her and hit the baby on its ear. I don't know if it fell to the ground but anyway the child died.

Then when the child died, the people became angry. They saddled the priest's mule. Then they picked him up and set him on the mule. Then he said to him, "Go on! Go! If you return we'll kill you like you killed the child."

Well, he went. When he reached Quetzaltepec, they asked him, "Where are you going?" Then the priest told them that those of Camotlan didn't want him anymore - that they wanted to kill him.

Then they told him, "But you remain here, señor priest. Here they won't do anything to you. We will do just as you say." That's why he stayed there. There it was that he put a curse on Camotlan. No one knows just how he does it, but he did it. Right away sickness came upon the town and the people died. Before that there were many but that almost finished them off. Just a few remained. But the priest is the one who was the blame. He's the one who put the curse on the town. That's why.

### **ADDITIONAL: -**

Don Teodosio Figueroa of San José gives the following: Yes, it's true what José Trinidad says. Why I understand that they all died except just one family of five or seven persons. Then, these people decided that that it would be better to make peace with the priest. "We better go tell him that all the rest have died. Let's beg his pardon. If we don't do it, we'll die too!" That's what they said among themselves. So right away they went hurrying to Quetzaltepec and begged him forgive them. They said that they were the only ones left in Camotlan - that all the other had died. Then the priest removed the curse again. And the present inhabitants are descendants of that family and of other people who have moved in there.

#### 48. \*Deer-skin and Squirrel-tail Tally of Census.

As I already told you, previously Camotlan was a very large town. Now it has very few people. Also there are not many houses now. But formerly certainly it was plenty bit. I told you, didn't I, how Alonso and Pacheco were. Well, that was a very long time ago, but at that time there were many houses. Why even now there are sign where they had their houses. When we go to clear land, then is when we find traces of where houses were. Here to the east and north, more than an hour by trail, there are many traces; there are places which they leveled off to build their houses. Also to the south, behind the mountain there, there are traces. There are like rock walls there and ditches where they took water to irrigate their milpas, I believe. Those people surely were workers. They knew a lot. Then they had all kinds of trades here. There were those who knew carpentry. But they were truly carpenters, not like those who now call themselves carpenters. They don't know anything, those today. Also there were blacksmiths, those who knew how to paint, those who knew how to work stone. Why there to the north, about two hours distance, there is something like a huge plaza. There indeed they worked huge stones. But those people had a way of doing. They didn't carry stones like people of today do, they say. That's what they've told me. Those people just spoke to the stones. By themselves the stones would climb up wherever they were wanted. By themselves they would pile themselves up, they say. That's how they made that place. There are stones of an arm's stretch (what a man can stretch between fingertips with arms extended to either side), placed one on top of another. There they are until this very day. When will you go to see them?

Well, in those times they had what they called a "Central Government", I believe. There it was in Oaxaca or Mexico. I don't remember exactly about that part of it. But that's what they called it, I believe. That's what wanted to charge taxes and assess fines. That's the way it was. That's why they called it that. Well, the central government sent word. It was a letter they sent. It was asking to see how many taxpayers Camotlan has. Of a certainty it was because it wanted to charge taxes. That's why it was asking that,

Do you know what the town authorities did? Well, they were very smart. They took the tail of a squirrel and the hide of a deer. These they sent to the central government with this answer, "As are the hairs in these two, so are we: a deer skin and a squirrel tail. That's how many are the contribuyentes (taxpayers) of Camotlan." Oh but they were smart in those days, the people of this place. Who's going to count the hairs in the tail of a squirrel or in the hide of a deer! Why you can't begin to count them! Well, that ended that. Just that way the matter calmed down. The government never even answered.

Yes, indeed they were very smart people here then. But afterwards came those who were called "friars". They're the ones who wanted to baptize the people. Many of the people went to the woods. There they hunted caves or dug holes. They entered into these and just they died. Those didn't want to be baptized. But some didn't run away. Those indeed were baptized. Then is when they became stupid, they say. That's what the old folks have told me. But previously they were very smart. That's why they sent the word, "A deer-skin and a squirrel-tail. Count the hairs - that's how many we of Camotlan are."

(48) Gay, Vol. I, p. 179 mid, records a similar incident reported by Burgoa concerning Jaltepec, a Mixe town on the northwest border of the region.

## **49. The Miraculous Creature the Wind Brought.**

Have I told you about the immense animal that the wind brought to down below town here? Then I'll tell you what I know about it. I don't know the story very well but I'll tell it to you.

It was a long time ago that this happened. I don't know just when, but they told me that truly the animal came there below town where I told you they were going to make the seas (story 7). It came there, I believe, where they were going to make the salt sea. Well, they say there had been a very great wind. But it was indeed what you call a wind. It was terribly strong. It knocked over trees, took the roofs off of many houses and even knocked over some that were very old. The wind can do a lot of damage. Don't you know what happened in Ocotepéc in 1940? Why the wind knocked over a house and killed the people who were in it. And it blew off the sheet metal roof of the church in Quetzaltepec, beams and all! It just missed dumping it on the priest's house! That's the way, then, that this wind was, they say, because the animal was immense that it brought.

It was an animal or a fish or, more accurately, a thing like a huge whale. I believe it was called "María". Previously it had been in San Mateo del Mar, I believe. It was the suerte (good luck, talisman) of that place. I don't know what happened - why it left there. But it became angry with them, it is said. That's why it left there, that's why it came. It came with that terrific wind, or maybe with a waterspout. Down below there it came to stay, where I told you.

Well, when it left its town, they lost their good fortune. Then they couldn't do anything. They had no luck in their work. But here the people indeed had luck. Then the Istmeños came to know that it was here. Immediately they came to fetch it with candles, with incense, and they took it back to their town again. That's why it isn't here yet. As soon as they found out where it was, they came to fetch it. It may be that they have it there yet. I don't know. Almost certainly it's there yet, since it was their suerte.

## 50. The Olla of Gold Turned To Water.

Truly, there is treasure! Various people have found it in different places - in caves, in the countryside, at old house sites. There was a man who found it, they say. I think it was a long time ago. I don't know what his name was. But he had his field there on the road to Quiavicusas, they say. There's where he was clearing land to plant. One day while he was clearing land, he found there, next to a tree or a big rock, a cover olla (round, clay or earthenware pot). Immediately he uncovered it with his machete. Well, it was full of gold coins.

In the afternoon when he left off clearing land, he was taking home the olla of money on his back with a mecapal (tump line). There he went thinking what he would do with the money. Then he thought, "Why, my woman is old now. She's no good anymore. What I'll do is to get me a young woman, now that I have money; a pretty young woman. Then I'll sleep with her. That way I'll be happy."

Well, do you know that the minute he thought that, he felt the olla move. And right away he heard it sound as if he were carrying water. Then he lowered his net bag to the ground and saw that the olla now had not a bit of gold in it. It contained nothing but water. It had changed into water when he was thinking about getting himself a young woman. The man was very angry. "What am I carrying this for? Why it's nothing but water! It's just that it wasn't my luck to have the gold it contained, that's why it changed to water." But really it was because he was a bad person and wanted to leave his wife for another. Well, just there he threw away that olla. He threw it hard, off to one side of the trail. Of course, it broke to pieces completely. It completely shattered. Right there he returned to his house empty-handed, they say.

The next day, a little old woman was going by there early when she saw something among the grass at one side of the trail. She went to see what it was. Well, just imagine! She found there the broken olla and among the potsherds was a pile of gold!. She's the one who gathered up the money. She's the one who got the good of it, they say. But the man lost it because he was a bad person.

(50) So far as the finding of the treasure is concerned, the story is completely in accord with present-day Mixe psychology and beliefs -as to the existence of treasure. It is a rare Mixe, however, who would touch such a find or bring it home. Several other things are foreign. First, the idea of leaving one's wife to take a younger one. I have never heard of such a thing in Camotlan. Older men may have affairs with younger women - clandestine relations. They may have them even with married women, but this does not entail leaving one's wife, be she older or younger or of the same age as the other woman. As will be noted in others of the stories, mistresses figure in - but not with the idea of leaving the woman they already have. It is also observable in everyday life. Several young married but this does not entail leaving one's wife, be she older or younger or of the same age as the other fellows from Camotlan came to the States as farmhands and returned with "wealth" in comparison to local standards. They used some of their affluence in securing favors from women in town, but didn't leave their own wives.

In Juquila, which has the name of sophistication - especially in regard to underhanded politics, evasion of the law, thievery, murders and general immorality and lack of ethics, I have known of a prospering trader who used his means to purchase favors from a young woman in town. He now has a ranch a day's trip to the south of town, where he has a "housekeeper" who has a child or two by him. But his wife remains in charge of the Juquila house, which he speaks of as home and to which he is

royally received whenever he returns. The idea of discarding a woman because of age or lack of good looks is not in harmony with Mixe practice as I have observed it. Incapacitation for the tasks of tortilla-making and washing of clothes might lead some to hunt younger and stronger women, but even in several such instances, where the man had married daughters, one or more of these arranged to come help out the parents.

As for moralizing, it too is completely foreign to Mixe culture in the aspect here evident. Mixes will say "I told you so!" in connection with bad fortune resulting, as they will say, because of breaking over the lines of tabus or public opinion. So, it will be common to hear some such thing as, "You see what happens because you didn't sacrifice the chickens before clearing land!" or "That's what happens for taking things left by the Ancients in the caves!" But moralizing in our sense of the word, as evidenced here and in story 60, smacks to me of European acculturation - perhaps through the friars.

## Folktales

### 51. \*The Tigre and the Possum.

The possum had climbed up in the mamey (fruit) tree to hunt ripe mameys when the tigre came and said to him, "You, possum, what are you doing?"

"Why, tigre, I'm hunting ripe mameys."

"Very well, possum. Won't you do me the favor of giving me one?" said the tigre.

"Certainly," said the possum, and began to hunt some big green mameys. Then he said, "Here it is, tigre. I've found a good ripe mamey, but this fruit, if it falls on the ground will be a total loss."

"Of course, possum," said the tigre. "Tell me what to do."

"Better open you mouth."

"Very well, but open your mouth very wide," said the possum.

Then he threw one of the green mameys right into the tigre's mouth. The whole thing went right into the tigre's mouth and stuck there. The possum hurriedly slid down the tree and ran off to another place. With much difficulty the tigre removed the mamey. Then he set off to hunt up the possum.

He found him and said to him, "Ah, there you are, possum?"

"Yes, tigre, here I am."

"Now I've found you here and I'm going to eat you!"

"Why, tigre?" asked the possum.

"Because you deceived me greatly."

"No, tigre, it couldn't have been me because I never go anywhere. I can't leave the work I'm doing. It must have been some other of my companions, because we all have identical green suits." Thus he deceived the tigre.

"And what are you doing, you?" asked the tigre.

"I'm pounding hard on my testicles. Don't you want to try it? Because it's delicious," said the possum.

"Really?" asked the tigre.

"Yes, really," answered the possum. So the tigre seated himself on a huge rock. He seized another rock and pounded it down very hard on his testicles and fell over in a faint. The possum laughed and laughed. Then he ran away to another place where there was a sort of hollow or cave under a huge stone. There he was, pushing with all his might when the tigre came.

"Here you are, possum?" asked the tigre.

"Yes, here I am."

"God willed it that we should meet each other here. And this time, I'm not going to forgive you. Now I'm going to eat you!"

"No!" said the possum, "because I'm having bad luck. This rock is going to fall into my house. That's why I'm here pushing it. Do me a favor. You stay here pushing the rock while I go to bring some poles to prop it with."

"Very well," said the tigre.

"When you can't hold it any longer, give a jump clear over to the other side of the river."

“Very well, said the tigre. “Hurry up and bring them and return quickly.” So the possum left and the tigre remained holding up the huge rock with all his might. When he became tired out, he shouted to the possum, “Hurry up, possum, because I’m all tired out.” But the possum answered not a word. When the tigre’s strength was all gone, he gave a leap and fell on the other side of the river. Then he saw that the rock was still standing.

“That possum was merely deceiving me,” he said to himself.

Meanwhile the possum had arrived at another place and was making some very beautiful baskets when the tigre arrived again.

Then the tigre said, “What are you doing, possum?”

“Why, tigre, I’m making some baskets. It’s very nice when we sit down in the basket.”

“Really?” asked the tigre.

“Yes, really. Come sit in one a little while and you’ll see how nice it is.” So the tigre sat in the basket and immediately the possum clapped a lid on it and he rolled the basket, tigre and all down the hill into the gully. Then he ran off to another place. There he caught various stinging insects - bees, wasps, bumblebee, yellow jackets, hornets, giant wasps - and place them in a box. He had already gathered these when the jaguar came again and said to him, “What are you doing, you possum? This time I’m not going to pardon you. You have deceived me many times. Now I’m going to eat you.”

“No, tigre, because I never go out anywhere. It must have been others of my companions, because we all have identical green suits. Why, I’m a school teacher and I’m teaching my pupils. I can’t leave, not even to buy tortillas. Do me a favor and look after my pupils here while I go buy my tortillas, because I’m very hungry.”

The insects were humming and buzzing in the box. They made a noise like school children studying. Therefore the tigre believed him. “Now I’ll be a teacher,” he thought to himself. So he replied, “Very well, teacher.”

“Take this stick,” said the possum, “and if the boys make too much noise, you whack them with it. Whack them good and hard so they quiet down.” So the tigre took the stick and off went the possum. The tigre heard the noise, all the insects were getting angry, and he struck the box and it broke. All the insects swarmed out and began stinging him all over his body until he ran and hid himself. The tigre was very angry and set out again to hunt for the possum.

When he found him, he didn’t pardon him, he ate him. When he found him he said, “Here you are, possum?”

“Yes, here I am.”

“This time I’m not going to forgive you. You’ve deceived me greatly many times. Don’t tell me it was one of your companions! God willed it that we should meet here and now I’m going to eat you!”

“Very well, tigre. But you must promise not to chew me. You must swallow me whole.

“Very well,” said the tigre and he swallowed him whole. Next day when the tigre defecated, out came the possum whole and off he ran. He never encountered the tigre again.

(51) For a discussion of the Tar Baby stories in other Mexican tribes, see Foster p. 221. The present story is comparable in many ways to his story 32. I know of no Mixes making baskets with lids. In Camotlan they make a type of rustic basket of vines for carrying mud and for making wattle-and-daub walls.

One item in the tale is not understandable without knowing the Mixe names of the objects - the matter of the “identical green suits”. Here is a Mixe play on words. The name for possum is po?o, identical with the name for a tiny green iridescent beetle! The beetle is actually a metallic blue, but

the Mixes have no term for blue. They use the same word as for green, unless they borrow the Spanish azul to describe it, a thing seldom done among themselves. The Mixes chuckle with glee at the thought of the tigre's confusion, for obviously the possum does have on a green suit. While the tigre is puzzling over the connection, the possum has trapped him again.

The tigre is the jaguar (Felix Hernandez). School teachers are comparatively recent innovations among the Mixes, yet the story is old enough that everyone knows "how it ought to be told", that is, what sequence is correct traditionally for the episodes.



## 52. \*The Cricket, the Possum and the Tigre.

A cricket met a possum and the possum began to tell the cricket what had been happening to him. He told the cricket the following story:

What difficulties I've had! One day I met a tigre where I was eating ripe mameys. He said to me, "Throw me a ripe mamey." So I hunted a green one and threw it into his mouth. There it stuck and I ran off quickly. The tigre set off to hunt me and found me the second time. I was in the cave and he asked me, "What are you doing, you possum?"

I answered, "Why, tigre, I'm just looking after my house, because it's just about to fall down. Won't you do me a favor of looking after my house while I go bring post to hold it up?"

"Well, I don't know, you possum. Maybe I won't be able to. I believe your house is very heavy."

"No, tigre, it's not so heavy. Look how I'm holding it up, and I'm not as big as you are."

"I'll stay, but you hurry back," he said. And the tigre remained while I left and went straight to another place. And I didn't return to where I had left the tigre. When the tigre became tired, he jumped clear across the river and fell on the other side. Then he got up and looked back at the house. Of course, the house hadn't fallen because I was just deceiving the tigre. Then he became very angry and again set out to hunt me.

He found me again and said to me, "You possum, now we've met here. Now I'll never forgive you. I'm going to eat you because you've deceived me very much."

"That's all right, tigre," I said. "You shall eat me but you must not kill me." Then I entered into the tigre's mouth and I was three days in his stomach. When he went to the toilet, I came out and immediately ran away.

Then the cricket replied, "Had it been I, I wouldn't have stood for what you stood for. Immediately I'd have killed the tigre."

"Maybe so, you cricket, but I didn't think so because you're smaller than I. How would you kill the tigre?"

"Well, now you'll see how I'm going to play with the tigre." So out they went to hunt the poor tigre. They found him and greeted him. Then the cricket said to him, "You tigre, don't you want to play with me?"

"Of course, you," said the tigre, because he likes very much to eat crickets. Then he asked the cricket, "You cricket, what game will we play?"

"Why tigre, I'll sit here on the ground and let's see if you manage to catch me. If you catch me you can eat me."

"Very well," said the tigre. So the cricket sat on the ground and the tigre sprang at him and tried to grab him. But the cricket jumped too and entered into the tigre's nose. Then the tigre began to paw at his nose with his claws until the cricket reached his brain. Then the tigre died and the cricket came out again.

And he said to the possum, "Now you see, possum, how I got the best of the tigre!"

"How you did kill him! I didn't laugh when you told me you were going to play with the tigre and were going to kill him."

“Now you see how I killed him! And the tigre is big! Not just anyone would be able to kill him!” So the two of them, the cricket and the possum, went away contented.

(51, 52) In both these accounts, the mamey takes the place of the tuna or pitahaya which, in the version of my Mitla Zapotec friend, are the fruit the rabbit was picking. This is due, doubtless, to the absence of both of these in the major part of the Mixe region. The tigre and the possum are far more common animals than the rabbit and coyote, although they have names for these and they probably are met with in some parts of the region. I have seen only one rabbit, and that, near Ayutla.

### **53.\*Juan, the Fortune-teller.**

A man named Juan, when he married, didn't work. His wife supported him. He just bought one book and studied it, he said, but he learned nothing. He didn't 'know paper', he didn't know letters.

Then his wife said to him, "Why don't you work?"

He replied, "Almost I'm able to go to work."

There was one person, his compadre, where his wife went to work, who had a turkey gobbler. Then he went and stole the turkey and went and tied it up at the door of an empty house on the edge of town and left it there.

Then he said to his wife, "Go tell your compadre that here I am. I'll tell him where his turkey is. But he's to pay me ten pesos." And his wife went. She went and told his compadre.

Then his compadre said, "Go call my compadre Juan to come." So Juan went to his compadre's place. When he arrived there, then he told his compadre the turkey was at such and such a house; that the thief was about ready to make off with it to another town, so he'd better hurry. Then his compadre went and found his turkey there. So Juan found his first ten pesos.

The second time he deceived was when he went and hid the king's animals while the servants of the king were sleeping. When it dawned, the animals were nowhere to be found - not a one of them. And the king's mozos hunted but didn't find them anywhere. Then they said to each other, "People say that there is a man who is a fortune-teller. Let's go see him." So they went.

When they arrived at Juan's house, there he was walking on his veranda. They greeted him and asked him, "Why don't you find where our animals have gone?"

Then Juan replied, "If you will pay me five hundred pesos, let's go tomorrow and I'll take you and show you where your animals are." When it dawned, he went out with them and took them and showed them where he has put the animals, and they paid him. He was deceiving much every place.

Then the king also lost his ring. His servants had hidden it.

Then various fortune-tellers came but none found it. Then the king learned that there was a fortune-teller in another town. And word came to Juan that the king wanted him. Then he said to his wife when he was ready to leave, "We'll meet each other if I come again, and if they kill me, we won't see each other." For the king had ordered that if they failed to tell him the whereabouts of his ring within three days, they were to be killed. If his ring was found by one of them, they would all be spared.

Then his wife said to him, "Go on you fortune-teller of feces, to the feces you're going." And he left with fear.

When he reached there where the king is, they shut him up. Then the women who did that sort of work there, who had hidden the ring, brought him his breakfast. When he saw her, then Juan said, "Ah me, the first one comes. Two more are lacking."

When the woman heard this, she said to her two companions, "The fortune-teller has come! Thus he said, 'Two are lacking.'"

And another of the women went the next day. When he saw her, he said, "Ah me, here is the second. One more is lacking!"

When she returned, then she said to her companion, "When you go, then, tell him right away that we have it so he won't tell the king."

So when the third woman went, then she said to him, "We have the ring. Don't tell the king."

Then Juan replied, "If you had not told me, I would have told the king. If I don't tell, how much will you pay me?"

Then the woman replied, "Three hundred, because there are three of us."

And Juan said to them, "Go give the ring in a cornmeal ball to the peacock and break its wing." So the women went and did it.

When they took Juan out of prison, then the king said to him, "Find where my ring is."

And Juan replied, "If you will give me two thousand pesos, I'll tell you right now."

Then the king said, "I'll give it to you now."

So Juan said, "Go seize the big peacock with the broken wing, kill it and look in its crop. The peacock has it there." So the king seized the bird and opened it up. And he found the ring in the bird's crop.

Then the king said, "Truly this man is a fortune-teller!" and he paid him the two thousand pesos. Then he said to him, "Now we will eat dinner - all of us, including those prisoners there (the fortune-tellers who had failed and been jailed)." Then the king defecated in an olla and tied it up nicely in good cloth and put it in the middle of the table. When dinner time came, then he called all the people and they sat down at the table.

When they were all seated, then the king said, "Who will tell me what's inside the olla there?" And all the people passed by. No one discovered what it was. The only one left was Juan, the one who had told where the ring was.

Then Juan said, "Señor king, when I left my house, my wife said to me - Fortune-teller of feces, to the feces you're going!"

Then the king said, "You indeed are a fortune-teller, because there inside the olla is feces." So Juan came out very well after all.

So ends this story.

(53) This story was told in Spanish. What Juan's wife said to him just before he left is, in Spanish, "Adivinador de mierda, a la mierda vas." I have given the literal interpretation in the story because that is what makes sense in the light of the final action. The latter part of the expression - a la mierda vas - is heard often in many situations. Urchins or loafers gambling by pitching pennies to a wall or crack in the pavement use it; boys playing marbles; mechanics to a bragging companion who is at last given a task they feel is too hard for him and will insure his failure - in all these, the literal sense is lost sight of, and the meaning is, "This time you're certainly going to lose out!" The king, the peacock and the saying are not Mixe.

This story is comparable in psychology to Foster's story 39, Juan Cenizas, and Foster's comments in the last paragraph on his p. 232 are peculiarly fitting to the Mixe attitude also. Compare both with my story 60, which is of the same type, "laziness rewarded".

## **54.\*The King and His Three Sons.**

This was a king who had three sons. One time his sons wanted to marry and the three of them asked for a hundred pesos each to get married. So they went out and came to a road which divided into three. The younger brother took the middle road and the others followed the other two roads. They went on walking and the two brothers found their wives.

But the youngest found a frog. He came to the sea and there was the frog. The boy was thinking and the frog said to him, "What are you thinking?"

"Why, I wanted to get married but I didn't find my wife."

"But here I am," said the frog.

"But how am I going to take you? You're just an animal."

"No! Take me. You have a cord," said the frog, "and you shall take me on your shoulder."

"Very well," said the boy and returned.

His brothers had already reached the road and saw that their brother had an animal and said, "But our brother has an animal! He didn't find a wife! He's already finished with father's money. He's going to receive a good punishment."

They rejoined each other and said to their younger brother, "Younger brother, didn't you find your wife?"

"No, I didn't," he replied.

"We already found wives."

"That's good," said the youngest one and they each arrived at his room.

One day they went to see their parents and said to their father, "Father, your youngest son didn't find a wife!"

"Is that so?" said the father.

"Your son found an animal."

"Very well. You are each to bring me a dinner."

The youngest was thinking and said to his frog, "But my father says we have to bring him a dinner."

"Don't worry much. Go buy banana leaves and come back by the people's chicken coop and bring chicken manure." So he brought it and the frog wrapped it up in the leaves and made a whole pile, as of tomas, and tied it very well.

Then the frog said, "When you come to the door, you are to strike these very hard." So he took them and when he got to the door of the king's house, he struck them very hard and out fell excellent foods. He picked them up and took them inside. And the king ate them all but wouldn't eat the food of the brothers.

He said, "Those are not delicious. You told me my son didn't find a woman. But he brought good food. Your foods are no good."

The next day the king said, "You must present your wives."

The youngest son was again very pensive and said, "But, little animal, my father said that I have to present my wife. You are a little animal."

"I am your wife." said the frog. "But I want to eat oranges.

I'm going to pick an orange." So the frog climbed up into the tree.

The boy said, "But if you fall, you'll die."

"No. I'm not going to fall." There was a huge orange. She picked it and said, "Catch it very carefully."

So the boy caught it very carefully. The frog climbed down again and said, "Very carefully take out the pulp and save the skin very carefully." So the boy did it. Then the frog said, "Put me into this." So the boy put her into the orange skin and tied her up well. Then the frog said, "But when you come to your father's door, you are to strike me very hard. Don't be afraid I'll die." So the boy went.

When he reached the door, he gave her some terrific blows and a lovely woman came out of the orange skin. They went into the house. All evening the king danced with his youngest son's wife. And he said to the other brothers, "Your wives aren't as beautiful." And he said, "How is it that you told me my son found an animal when his wife is so lovely?"

(54) See Aarne-Thompson - 402 and 552, II, c. and 440, III, d.

## 55.\*The Poor Woodchopper.

This is a different story. Anacia Ventura was the name of the boy. He was an orphan. He went to the woods to fetch firewood.

One day, when he had gone to get firewood, he heard an animal yell. There it was yelling and yelling out there in the woods. Anacia thought, "What could be the matter with that animal? I'm going to go see what's happening to it." and he went. When he arrived there, he saw that a snake had seized a deer. It was the deer that was yelling and yelling. Then he came closer. He saw that the snake has seven heads. It is trying to bite the deer but how will it ever be able to kill the deer with its small mouths.

So Anacia said, "Poor little animal! How are you going to eat that way? I'm going to help you! So he killed the deer and cut it up very nicely. Piece by piece he was giving it to each little mouth of the snake until he finished with the deer. Just a pile of bones and the head were all that remained.

Then the snake said, "Thank you very much that you gave me to eat. Now let's go. I'm going to take you to my father's house." And they went. It took him to its father. But it changed its form. It was no longer a snake but a beautiful woman. When they came to the house, she said to her father, "Father, here I'm bringing a young man. He helped me very much. I very much wanted to eat a deer. I seized it but wasn't able to kill it. He killed it for me and gave me to eat very nicely. Now I'm full."

"How good! daughter. Now what shall we do for him? We'll give him cattle."

"No, father."

"Well then, we'll give him money."

"No, father."

"Then what shall we give him?"

"Father, you must give him that which you have in your pocket."

"No, daughter, then what would I do?"

"That's what you must give him, father. You can get yourself another someplace." So he took from his pocket a little round mirror. And he said to Anacia, "This you shall use. Just this way you are to do it. Thus you are to move it - with a short waving motion from right to left and back, just about shoulder level and close to the body. Then you are to command, 'Bring me money!', 'Bring me food!', or anything you may want; 'Do this!' thus you are to say."

"Very well, sir." And Anacia went to his house. He didn't work any more. He just moved the mirror thus and ordered, "Bring me food; bring me money."

One day he said to his mother, "Mother, I want to marry the daughter of the king."

"You do, son!"

"Yes, mother. You must go arrange the marriage bargain."

"Very well, son." And she went to the king. "Señor, here I come. My son wants to marry your daughter."

“He does!”

“Yes, Señor king.”

“Well, very well. I’ve heard that he’s very clever. We shall see. Let him come to work a while. Then he shall marry my daughter.” So the woman returned to tell her son and Anacia went to work at the king’s house.

The first task which the king set him was to give him sacks of corn, beans and squash seed mixed. Three or four sacks he gave him and said to him, “These you are to put, each kind in its own sack. One night you are to work. Tomorrow you are to turn over to me the beans, corn, and squash seeds - each in its own sack.” And he gave him plenty of candles so that he might work all night.

Then when the king left, Anacia took out his mirror. He commanded, “Separate these for me, each in its own pile.” The leaf-cutting ants are the ones who helped him. There they went separating them each into its own pile - beans, corn and squash seed. Just an hour they worked. Then Anacia lay down to sleep.

The next day the king came. “Wake up! Get up! Have you completed the task already?”

“Yes. There they are, sack by sack.”

“Well, you are clever indeed! Now you are going out into the country to clear land for planting. You’re to clear land for three days. I want to plant three or four fanegas of shelled corn. We’ll see how much I shall plant.” One day only Anacia clear land. The king planted four fanegas.

Then the king said, “Now we’re going to see if you are really clever. Tonight you are to sleep with my daughter. About midnight you are to have a son.”

“Very well,” said Anacia, and the king left. Then Anacia began to think, “Now who will help me!” He took out his mirror and then called a big bird - that one which brings the children. About four o’clock in the morning the bird brought the children. There they were crying and the king awoke. There was the king taking care of the children, changing diapers.

The next day he said, “Of a truth, you are indeed clever! This very day you shall marry my daughter!”

(55) Although the serpent here differs from the one in Foster’s story 28, there are many similar elements - the serpent talking, the man going home with it and being given a magic article, the serpent’s parents being humans (the father of the girl in this story took the mirror out of his pocket). See Aarne-Thompson 560, I and II. Even the reluctance of the parent to part with the magic object is the same.

Neither before nor since have I heard among them of a bird bringing babies. I was unable to get a description of the bird so as to ascertain if the stork was meant. ‘There aren’t any like that around here.’ was the reply to my request for a description.



## **56. \*Two Brothers Want To Marry the King's Daughter.**

There were two brothers, they say, who thought to marry the king's daughter. The daughter of the king was very beautiful and many men thought to marry her. But when they went to work in the king's house, they didn't last (weren't able to do the work). It was because the king didn't want to marry his daughter to just anyone, that's why. So it was that the king gave them very difficult tasks.

Then too, the girl didn't want to get married. That's why she played tricks on them so those men wouldn't accomplish their tasks. In spite of everything, the two brothers decided they would have a try at it. First the oldest went.

Immediately the king said to him, "So you want to marry my daughter!"

"Yes, señor king."

"But you know that you have to work! My daughter is not going to marry a loafer!"

"Don't you worry, señor king. I'm no loafer! I certainly know how to work!"

"Well! that's good, indeed! In a little while we'll see whether you know how to work like a man. First, go eat breakfast and then chop down that big tree over there."

When he had finished breakfast, right away the king took him to where was a tree more than a meter thick and it was very high. "Here's your axe. Hurry up with the work."

"Very well, señor king." And right away he began to chop at the tree. But he was the whole morning. Midday came and still he hadn't yet felled the tree. But it was almost ready to fall. Just a little was lacking. Then they called him to eat dinner. So he just left his axe there and went to eat. He was already worn out and was plenty hungry. He reached the king's house and they gave him his dinner.

But while he was eating, the king's daughter went to where the tree that he was going to chop down. There she went and urinated against the tree that was about ready to fall, and the place where it had been chopped closed up again. It was just as it had been at the start. There wasn't even a sign that the boy had been going to fell it. When the boy returned, there was his axe, but he had to start anew. Well, he wasn't able to fell the tree. But even so he stayed as a mozo in the king's house.

Then the younger brother came. Right away they greeted each other, "Good morning, big brother."

"Good morning, little brother."

"How did you make out, older brother? Did you win out?"

"Ah, little brother! It's just that I have no luck. You should have seen how I worked. I worked, worked, worked all morning. I was just about to win out. But I don't know just what happened. Just a small piece was lacking to fell the tree when I went to dinner. But when I finished eating, it had closed up again where I had chopped it before."

"Very well, big brother. Now I'll go try."

"But you won't last out! Don't you see what happened to me!"

"It doesn't matter. I'll have a try at it. Let's see what kind of luck I have. I know already what I'll do."

So he went to speak to the king. "Good morning, señor king."

“Good morning, lad. What do you want?”

“Why, I’ve come to work. I want to marry your daughter.”

“Is that so? Go eat breakfast and then I’ll give you your task.”

Right after breakfast the king took him to the same tree. “This is what you’re to chop down and split up for firewood. Let’s see if you’re really a man. At midday they will call you. You’re to go eat at the house.”

“Very well, señor king.” Immediately he began to work. There he was chop, chop, chop. But it was true what his big brother had said. It was an exceedingly tough tree. When the tree was just about to fall, there they come to call him to eat. Then he thought to himself, “Aha! So that’s what they want to do again. Now they’ll see!” And he took off his sash and threw it down against the foot of the tree. Then he went to eat dinner.

As soon as the boy reached the house, the daughter of the king went to where the tree was. She went close to the tree to urinate on it. Then the sash turned into a snake and raised its head. Oh how it scared the girl! She went running away from there. She didn’t stay to urinate at all. When he finished eating, the boy went back to his work again and right away felled the tree and split it up for firewood. More than a hundred loads it made. But it was what could really be called a load - a mule load, not a burro load. He finished early and returned to the house.

“Here I come, señor king.”

“Did you finish already?”

“I finished already.”

“Very well. Tomorrow I’ll give you another task.”

But the older brother became angry because the youngster had gotten the better of him. So he came to the king and said, “Why don’t you send him to the mountain tomorrow to seize tigers. Let’s see what luck he has then! Let’s see if he’s really a man!”

“That’s just what I’ll do!” said the king. And right away he ordered the boy to fetch a hundred male tigers.

“Very well, señor king.” And he went to the big mountain. Right away he seized the tigers where there was a huge cave. Very soon he returned to the king’s house, but he came mounted on the largest tiger. There he came with tigers. He had tied them as though they were beasts of burden. There they came making their noise - yelling, making more noise than a bellowing bull. Oh how the king was frightened once and for all. And also the older brother and the king’s daughter. The king didn’t want the tigers to stay there. All day long they were howling and howling.

Well, the king ordered the youth to take them back to the mountain and turn them loose again. “Truly, you are a man. But I’m not going to be able to sleep with so many tigers bellowing. Better take them and let them loose again. Then come back and eat supper.”

“Very well.” And he took them to the mountain and let them loose again.

The next day the king said, “Today we’re going to see if you’re really a man. My daughter is going to make chili sauce. I like chili. But you’re to eat it without crying at all. If you manage to eat it all, then you shall marry my daughter.” Well, you should see how the girl made that chili sauce. She put in nothing but chilis of all kinds. Whole she ground them up in her grinding bowl. A whole huge casuela full she made. Just like fire, that’s how that sauce was. A whole big bowlful she gave the

youth. Nothing but sauce she gave him. She didn't make another thing. But that chili sauce burned something awful!

He was just about to cry when he thought, "Now what will I do?"

"I know!" so he covered his eyes with his sleeve and said, "Ah señor king! How good you are, and how beautiful is your daughter, and how delicious is this sauce! But how I miss my own country! Why it almost makes me cry when I think of my country. Why, señor king, there we have some things which are very beautiful! You should see how it is in my country!" and again he dried his eyes with his sleeve.

Then he felt that water was going to drop out of his nose, and he said, "Why, señor king, in my country we have huge birds with great beaks like this," wiping his nose on his sleeve from wrist to elbow as though showing the measurement, "and huge tails as long as this!" wiping his sleeve on the seat of his pants as though showing the length of the tail. "That's how it is in my country!"

And that's how he finished all the sauce. Each time he had to cry, he would dry his eyes on his sleeve, saying, "Ah, but señor king, how homesick I feel for my country. And to think you haven't see it! Why, like I tell you, in my country there are huge birds with great beaks like this and large tails this long!"

And he got away with it. He won out and married the king's daughter.

## 57. Between the Three of Us.

There were three young fellows. I believe they were orphans, they say. These decided to go to the city to earn money. They were discussing among themselves how they would make out there since they knew very little Spanish.

Then one of them said, "I know one sentence."

"What it it?" asked the others.

"There's a reason.' Now you, what is it that you know? You say you know one too. Let's hear yours."

"Yes. I know one - 'Because of his misdemeanor.'"

"Ah, good! Now you, little one, let's hear yours."

Well, I know - 'Between the three of us.'"

"Good! Then we're ready. Let's go right now."

On the road to town, they came across a corpse lying there. They stopped to see what had happened to the dead man. They were discussing about where he had been hit. There they are turning the corpse over and over - looking at it on all sides - when the soldiers come up.

"Did you kill him? Who killed him? Why did they kill him? Speak! Answer! What do you know about the matter?"

The young fellows remained silent. Then they began to argue among themselves, "Go ahead, speak, you! You who know so much! Don't you see that they're talking to us?"

So at last the oldest said, "There's a reason!"

"Aha! So that's it! So there's a reason, eh? Then you are the ones who killed him? Who killed him? What do you mean, 'There's a reason!!?'"

"Now you! Answer him! I already said mine."

So at last the second boy answered, "Because of his misdemeanor!"

"Oho! Because of his misdemeanor, eh? Then it's almost a sure thing you (plural) killed him. Who was it killed him? Quick! If it wasn't you (pl.), who was it?"

"Now you, little one. We already said ours to him. Now it's your turn to answer them."

So at last the little fellow said to them, "Between the three of us."

"There you have it! You're the ones who killed him! Let's go! March! Off to jail with you!" And they seized those three poor fellows and took them off. to jail. Just that way ended their trip to the city to earn money.

(57) The story is an old one and is found in different dress among different tribes. Pike (IJAL - Oct. 1949, pp. 251-257) found it among the Mixtecos. But the same motif was present in a story in schoolbooks thirty years ago, a story concerning Napoleon's guard. Only those over six feet tall were accepted for service in this elite guard. A Prussian of acceptable qualifications applied and was

accepted. Soon after, Napoleon was to review and inspect his guard. So they prepared the Prussian. "The Emperor always asks three questions. We will teach you what to say."

"First, he will ask, 'How old are you?' and you must answer 'Thirty-five, Sir.' Then he will ask, 'How long have you been in my service?' and you must answer, 'Three months, Sir.' And last he will ask, 'Are you satisfied with the food and quarters?'" and you must answer, 'Both, Sir.'"

Napoleon, however, was surprised at the bearing of the handsome young Prussian and exclaimed, "Why, that's a fine looking fellow! How long have you been in my service?" The Prussian who understood not a word, repeated that he had been taught to answer, "Thirty-five years, Sir."

"What! Impossible! I never remember seeing you before. How old are you?" And the Prussian answered, "Three months, Sir."

"What's this! Are you crazy or am I?" and the Prussian answered, "Both, Sir."

In the same vein of "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing", was the story told of the Italian vender in New York City. He had come first to this country and learned English. Later he sent his brother who came to help him with the business. But the brother knew no English. So the first man said, "Well, people always have three things to say about my fruit, so I'll teach you what to answer and then you can take the push-cart and sell by yourself."

"First they will ask, 'How much for one?'" and you must tell them. Then they will say, "How much for a dozen?" and last, 'That's too much, I won't buy!' But now I've told you what to say, you go out and sell these bananas."

The newcomer went with his three answers. His first customer asked, "How much a dozen?" "Five cents." "What! How much for one?"

"Fifty cents."

"You think you're smart, don't you? I've a notion to give you a swift kick!"

"If you don't, someone else will!"

Mixes constantly laugh at those who know less than they do. My observation is that this trait is worldwide and as old as human nature. It is an attempt to inflate one's ego by reminding one's self that there are those who know less. This is the basis, it seems to me, for the possum's tricking the tigre through the play on Mixe terms for possum and beetle. In the present story there may even be a bit of wry humor at the things that befall the primitive when he ventures out of his own habitat into the ways of civilization. It might well be a Mixe type moral, "If you know when you're off, stay home where you belong!" The origin, then, may well lie in human nature rather than in European folklore.

## 58. Fourteen.

When the boy was born who was called "Fourteen", he ate a tortilla. The second day, he ate two. That's the way it went. When he was one month old, by the basketful he ate his tortillas. He ate with a will.

But his mother was a widow. She went to talk with her compadre.

"Compadre, here I come to talk with you."

"Good, comadre, sit down."

"Compadre, don't get the idea that I'm complaining. I'm just coming to ask what I shall do. That one, your godson, eats a quantity. By the basketful he eats his tortillas. Where am I going to get so much corn?"

"Don't worry, compadre." And she went to bring her son.

There his godfather gave him to eat. He killed his bulls for him, he killed his pigs for him to eat. With a will that Fourteen ate.

When he grew up, he asked for his axe and his machete, "Godfather, I want an axe which weighs more than an arroba. I want a machete which weighs more than an arroba. That's the size I like." He was a tall person, a huge person. Why, he was almost the size of Kondoy. With a will that Fourteen worked with his axe and his machete. His godfather had one hundred burros. Fourteen would take the hundred burros to the woods and return with a hundred loads of firewood.

One day he was splitting firewood for his loads when a hundred tigers came and ate all his burros. They left only the heads and the pack saddles. When Fourteen finished splitting his firewood, he went to bring his burros to load them. He came to where he'd left them - nothing but heads and pack saddles where there. Then he saw that the tigers had come. He followed the tracks. He came to a cave and there was a huge tiger.

Then Fourteen spoke to him, "So there you are! Call your companions."

"But if I call my companions, they'll eat you."

"Call them. I want to talk to them." Then the tiger called his companions. There they came, all hundred of them. So Fourteen said to them, "So you're the ones who ate my burros, aren't you?"

"Yes, we ate them."

"Let's go then. You'll have to serve me in place of my burros."

And he took them to where the back saddles were. He saddled them and loaded them with the firewood and took them to the house of his godfather. There went the tigers falling, tripping with their loads of firewood. When his godfather saw him coming with purely tigers, he became frightened. There came Fourteen to the house. He just tied them up there. They only lasted for work for two weeks. All of them died.

Then his godfather thought, "I'll send him to jail." The town authorities came with soldiers. That Fourteen just grabbed them by the neck. Just like this he shook them. Just that way he threw them down dead and came home again. Not even one hour did he remain in jail. Then his godfather wrote a letter and sent it to where the devil is. Fourteen went off to deliver the letter. Then the devil read the letter and put Fourteen into his jail. Five hours only was Fourteen there. With one hand he broke the

door. It was entirely of iron. He left it nothing but pieces and went away. Again he came to where his godfather was.

“He put me into jail, that devil. But I got out all right. Here I am again. Don’t you worry.

“But that one has his lucky piece (amulet, talisman),” thought the godfather.

A little while later, Fourteen wanted to marry the daughter of the king. Since the king had heard of the good luck he had, he accepted him and married him to his daughter. Then the king received a letter that his enemies were already coming. There was going to be war. He was very sad. Then he thought of Fourteen and sent him. He won the war by himself. That happened many times. Just Fourteen went to war.

One day the king said to his daughter, “That one has good luck piece. You’re to hunt where it is. You’re to take it from him and give it to me.”

“Very well, father.” And when Fourteen was sleeping she began to feel all over his body - his head, his chest, his arms. Then she found that he had some little stones in bags under his arms, in his armpits. But the bags weren’t of cloth. They weren’t in his shirt, but in his flesh. On the right side he had one stone, on the left side he had three. So his wife took them and gave them to the king. When Fourteen awoke, he was very sad. He had no valor, no strength.

There he was seated in the field when a bird spoke to him.

It was a bird like an eagle and it said, “Fourteen, why are you sad?”

“Do I look sad to you?”

“Yes, you surely are.”

“Well, I don’t know what happened to me. I didn’t have any strength or valor.”

“It’s that your wife took your lucky piece from you. She gave it to her father and the king sold it to another king.”

“Won’t you do me a favor? Won’t you go bring them to me?”

“But I’m tired. If you’ll give me to eat, I’ll go see.” So Fourteen brought him his turkey, his hen. He ate. Then he said, “I’ll go see. I saw them in the patio of that king. Only it’s far away. There they were sunning them. I’ll be back in a while.” There they were sunning the stones in the patio.

The king who had them had bought them thought, “Since a person was carrying them, maybe it would be a good idea to sun them.” And he ordered his mozo to watch them carefully. But that mozo didn’t see when the bird came, since it was flying very high. It spied that the stones were there. So it swooped down and seized them, two in each foot, and immediately flew and mounted up again and came to where Fourteen was. Immediately Fourteen put his good luck pieces back in his pockets again. He was content once more. Always he went to war - always he won.

Once again the king told his daughter to search him and remove his good luck pieces, so she did. This time the king threw the little stones into the lake. Afterwards he killed Fourteen. He hacked his head off with a machete and threw him into the lake too. They put a huge stone on his chest so he shouldn’t come out again.

A bit later the big fish found him. Then they said, “Let’s get this Fourteen out.” Five or six huge ones got under the boulder and threw it off. Afterwards they raised Fourteen up on their backs and took him up onto the shore of the lake. There they seated him. They went and found his head also. There where it was cut they put their scales and afterwards set his head on very carefully. With their scales

stuck it on and they left him there in the sun to dry. That's the way Fourteen came alive again. Then they went to hunt his talisman.

"How shall we pick it up? We don't have hands," they said to Fourteen.

"In your mouths," he told them. They went and found two of the little stones. Afterwards, down deeper, they found the others. Fourteen was very happy again. He went home again then. But the king was now very much afraid. Right away he sent him off to war again. That Fourteen fought much. He loved being a soldier very much. He fought with the French, with the English. These were the ones who were making war.

Then the king said again to his daughter, "That fellow is very happy. It must be that he once again has his talisman. Now as soon as there's war again, you must search him, take it away from him, and give it to me again."

"Very well, father."

Fourteen came home and went to sleep. He sleeps with a will, that fellow. He sleeps very deeply. He doesn't feel a thing. Then his wife took his talisman away from him and gave it to a king again. This time he didn't let go of the little stones. He guarded them well. For always the animals had helped Fourteen to find them. That's because Fourteen was a good person. When he went to the lake he took a big ball of meal along and there he went throwing it into the water little by little. That's what the fish were eating. That's why they helped him. But this time the king guarded them well.

Then he said to Fourteen, "You're to go to war again."

"Yes, but first you're going to tell me why you killed me and threw me into the lake. Why have you taken my talisman away from me again?" And he became angry with the king. He seized him by the neck and threw him to the ground. He was already dead.

Then the army gathered together, for the king had many battalions of soldiers, and seized Fourteen and threw him into the fire. Since he didn't have his talisman, how was that poor fellow to defend himself? And just that way that Fourteen came to his end.

(58) Maximiano also referred to this story, which is apparently well known, but he called it Catorce Fuerzas, Fourteen Strengths or, the man with the strength of fourteen.

Aarne-Thompson 650 - II, a -V, a, b.



## **59. The Boy Who Killed His Father.**

There was a man who had only one child, a son. He gave his son everything the boy wanted. Always he let him have his own way. He never corrected him. He never beat him when he did wrong. He just let him have his own way. And the boy was no good. He was very bad, just like Ponciano's son, I think. He was very clever, they say, but sneaky and bad.

After he was grown up, his father tried to correct him. Then the father would scold him for his bad deeds. But the son just became angry. Then, one day, the son took his father out into the woods. He took him to where there was a large, crooked tree. He pointed it out to the father and said, "Straighten it for me."

"Why son, that's impossible! It's a full-grown tree."

"Straighten it for me, or I'm going to kill you!"

"But, son! You're just saying that! Surely you can see that it's not possible to straighten a full-grown tree!"

"Father, when I was small, you didn't correct me. You didn't teach me. You just let me do as I pleased. It didn't matter whether it was wrong. Now I'm like that tree - crooked and no good! But now you want to correct me. Now you want me to be different. But you can't straighten me now! I'm grown. That's why I'm going to kill you!"

And he did kill him, they say. And he took out his heart, they say, and took it home. He made his mother cook it and he ate it.

Truly he was a bad one, that fellow.

## 60. \*Laziness Rewarded.

Do you know that story about “when God wants to give me something, He’ll give it to me in my own house”? Well, I’ll tell it to you then.

There were two compadres. One was a hard worker. Every day he went to the field. He worked his piece of ground, brought home his firewood. He was never just sitting around. But the lazy one never wanted to work. He doesn’t go to the field, he doesn’t plant a cornfield, he doesn’t bring firewood. He does nothing but lie in his hammock. Every day his wife is saying to him, “Hurry up, lazy bones, get up! Go to the field with your compadre. Clear your piece of ground and plant a cornfield! Bring home some firewood! Don’t be so lazy! Get up!”

But the lazy fellow always answered, “Shut up, woman! Here I’m staying. When God wants to give me something, He’ll give it to me in my own house.”

But the poor woman got disgusted with seeing that lazy fellow just lying around and her having to bring all the firewood and all the water. She’s the one who kept him by working for other folks. At last, one day she said, “Now indeed, I’m not going to put up with you any longer! Hurry up and get up! Today you’re going to work with your compadre. He’s going to clear over on that side of town. Here! Take this machete, take your lunch! Now hurry! Get going!” And she put him out of the house.

“Ah, what an old woman,” he replied, “haven’t I told you ‘when God wants to give me something, He’ll give it to me in my own house’. In vain I’m going to the woods to clear land. Work doesn’t set well with me.” But regardless, he had to go because his wife was plenty angry. So he went with his compadre. But once they had arrived where the one who was a worker intended to clear land, the lazy one made a little house - just a bit of a roof, in fact, for shade - and hung his hammock. There he lay all the day.

The next day he took along an old olla. There in a secluded nook he set it. That’s what he used for a toilet. He was lazy to the extreme, that one. Every day his compadre was working. But the lazy bones didn’t clear even a little piece of land. When his compadre would say, “Come on, compadre, get up and work. Don’t you see that the time is passing. Why it’s almost time to plant. If you don’t clear your field in a hurry, it won’t burn off and then you can’t plant your corn.” he just answered, “Skip it, compadre. I’m not going to clear any land. When God wants to give me something, He’ll give it to me in my own house.” And he just remained seated under his little roof.

Some days later, when his compadre had planted his corn, the lazy fellow no longer went to the field. The worker came to say to him, “Compadre, there where I went to clear land I saw an olla full of money. Don’t you want to go get it?”

“When God wants to give me something,” replied the lazy bones, “He’ll give it to me in my own house.”

The worker had become very angry because of the laziness of his compadre. He was thinking of the olla he had seen the lazy one use as a toilet. Then he went to fetch it with great care. His compadre and comadre were already sleeping when he went and placed it right in the doorway of the house in such a way that when someone would open the door, the olla would fall inside and dump all the filth that was inside. “Now,” he thought, “let’s see if he’ll say, ‘When God wants to give me something, He’ll give it to me in my own house.’”

The next morning very early, the lazy fellow was seized with the necessity for running out back. When he hauled open the door, the olla fell inside and broke. All that was inside it was scattered over the floor of the house. When he returned, the lazy fellow took a piece of ocote (pitch pine) to see what it was that had fallen when he went running out. Well, there was a pile of gold pieces.

Immediately he woke his wife. "Look, you! Haven't I told you a thousand times! And yet you're scolding me daily. Now you see? Exactly like I told you, that's the way it is. When God wants to give me something, He'll give it to me in my own house. This must be the olla my compadre spoke of. It must be he's the one who brought it. Good take this big gourd full of gold pieces to my compadre and give him our thanks."

Immediately the woman went. Well, it was barely getting light when she spoke to the compadre, "Compadre, compadre. Here your compadre sends you this gourd of money. Thanks so much for bringing us the olla of gold."

"Gold! Gold, indeed!" thought the compadre. And he got up and opened the door. There was his comadre with a huge gourd full of gold pieces. Immediately he went to his compadre's house to see. There was the old olla. Just exactly as he had thought, it had fallen inside and broken all to pieces. But in place of the fifth it should have scattered, there was nothing but gold.

"Now you see, compadre? You also are always scolding me and bothering me about getting to work. Haven't I told you? When God wants to give me something, He'll give it to me in my own house!"

(60) Laziness is NOT a Mixe trait. A Mixe will not do what to him seems like useless or unnecessary work, but he is not lazy. In fact, work in the field is held to be the mark of a man. Alberto, who is both a cook and a tailor, and who doesn't seem able or inclined to do heavy manual work in clearing land while he can sew and make more than enough to hire that work done, is looked down on by many. Brain work or ability in a trade is seemingly admired only as an adjunct to ability in clearing land, fetching firewood, raising and carrying in crops. Foster's remarks in his last paragraph of notes on his story 39, p. 232, apply well here also.

### **III. BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS.**

#### **61. Introductory Remarks**

It is impossible to measure or estimate the exact degree to which present day beliefs among primitives have been influenced and molded by legends, stories and accounts of personal experiences such as we have here recorded. The weight of influence which they wield is certainly far from insignificant. To the Mixes, these are not merely fairy stories. They are referred to much as we would appeal to history for proof of some statement; cited as precedent in the same way that a judge would refer to some court decision.

In the following pages, it has been my purpose to deal particularly with those beliefs and customs suggested in the legends themselves. The work is by no means an exhaustive treatise. It is not intended to be. While some topics not inherent in the stories are included, others suggested by the stories are outlined only, since separate papers dealing with them are in preparation.

While, like those in connection with the Stories, the notes here are not comparative in scope, I have taken the liberty in both sections to call attention to similarities in stories from other tribes of Mexico, and especially to those existing between Mixe and Popoluca folklore, beliefs and customs, as well as to give occasional references to Aarne-Thompson's Types of the Folktale.

Acculturation of various periods is evidenced in the legends, as also in customs and beliefs. Some of the elements doubtless came by way of the friars. Others have most certainly entered by way of traders and rural school teachers. Moralizing in the legends is one of these elements that is completely foreign to Mixe custom and culture.

In the compilation of Part II. Stories, it became evident that in addition to Legends and Folktales there was another class of narratives which might best be called Personal Experiences. For the most part, these dealt with extraordinary experiences which differed little in quality and character from the legends. In fact, interpreted according to Mixe feeling, some of the stories I have classed as legends would doubtless find themselves placed in this category. But in the case of such legends, the human actors or participants are dead and, in some instances, even their names are forgotten - so the narratives are properly legends. Most certainly, with the passing of another generation or the death of the persons figuring in these I have classed as personal experiences, the narratives so classed would become legends. Feeling that a present distinction should be made, these narratives of personal experience have been included in this Part III. Beliefs and Customs, in the places in which they seemed most logically to fit as documenting the themes discussed. Under Folktales are grouped those stories which are told solely for amusement (or teaching, as in the case of story 59). It should not be concluded, however, that the Legends are therefore not the source of amusement and entertainment. Listening Mixes roar with pleasure at the trickery of the bird and squirrel, the difficulties of the grandmother at the hands of the twins, and the cries of the buzzard as he breaks his beak - all in the various episodes of the origin of the sun and moon. Speculation about treasure and the prospect of something for nothing or at someone else's expense is always pleasant entertainment. As for tales about spirit beings, for the Mixes they seem to furnish the same sort of amusement that ghost stories provide to many readers.

Mixe names furnish an interesting study in acculturation. Post-conquest people, in Camotlan at any rate, lacked surnames which were handed down in the family. Saint's names were used

almost exclusively and with bewildering results so far as tracing relationship by name was concerned. José' and María seem to have been almost universally used, so much so that they are still acceptable in addressing an unknown man or woman. In general, two names were given but both were what we would consider first names. There is José' Pablo and Pablo José' Juan Pedro and Pedro Juan, Manuel Simón and Simón Manuel, Felípe José' and José Felípe, Pedro Rafael and Rafael Pedro. It is understandable that this practice should have resulted in confusion for the school teachers in their valiant efforts at teaching young Mixes in the unknown Spanish tongue. The pupils who had been baptized with such names were not used to being called by them, but were rather familiar with the Mixe-ized abbreviations of them or the nicknames given them by their playmates. Even those who recognized their name, sensed also the inability of the teacher to pick them out by it with certainty. The teachers were not long in giving surnames to the pupils. Among those who have gone to school one may find, to his amazement, such surnames as Juarez, Gonzales, Carranza, Miraflores, Robles, Jiménez, Cortez, Lopez, García, Hernandez. Indeed, there is even a Francisco Franco! In the case of the girls, the school given surnames are less likely to stick. Girls, less than boys, play on school ground where the teacher can exercise jurisdiction over their speech. They seldom use Spanish outside of the classroom, have almost no reason for ever signing their names, are spoken to by parents either as daughter or by the Mixe form of their baptismal names.

The practice of the teachers resulted in additional confusion as is evident in the family of José Trinidad who now finds himself to be the father of Apolinar Robles and Pedro Gonzales.

Several years ago, a visiting priest in questioning preliminary to marrying couples, was disgusted to find that the bride-to-be, María Tomasa, was the daughter of Juana Rosaria and Pedro Francisco. In spite of her protests by way of the sacristan as interpreter, she was inscribed as María Francisca in the records and summarily informed that from now on that was her name. Those who have been to school now hand down these surnames, as a general rule.

In regard to ancient usage, we have only such hints as are found in legends. In story 5, the name María was used of the woman who was later turned into a gopher. It was the name of various others in other stories. José' explained "In times past the people had no names. The women were called María. The men, in Mixe were called xohhuun, tsinhuun, (strong oak, strong pine)." In story 38 we find that the people of one town were all called the same name. "Their name was tuundím (significance unknown today). That's what they were all called, men and women." There is the possibility that formerly people of a certain group were known by the designation of that place or group much as we might speak of folks as Bostonians, New Yorkers, or Philadelphians. When men meet on the trail today, one of the first questions is apt to be, "What is your town?", generally even before he is asked what his name is. There is also to be considered this, that an individual name might have been less important than the term serving to designate ones relationship to the person spoken to or speaking to one. Even today, among those who have reached marriageable age, in-laws are addressed by terms designation relationship existing between them. In addition to this, there is that relationship growing out of the godfather-godchild system of the Catholic church. The Mixes terms for these relationships are used in addressing the individuals involved, rather than their given names. If the same individual were both brother-in-law and compadre, the former term would be given preference over the latter, the tie with blood relationships being the more important in this sense.

In this connection, we should not overlook the possible effect of the tono. In Camotlan, there is still in use today, by one of the brujos at least, a calendar which he described as nagueles or tonos of women born on certain days. Detail concerning the activities of brujos are exceedingly well kept secrets and hard to come by. Even more closely guarded, if possible, are the facts concerning the tono of

an individual. Indications are that the *tono* of each person was determined at his birth. This is still the case in some villages and is practiced by individuals or families even in towns where it is not the general practice. Nothing was said about naming the child according to his *tono*. Their failure to mention it does not eliminate it as a possibility. The *brujo*'s designation for the calendar mentioned, as well as the very form of the calendar - a name for each day - would seem to indicate that some connection formerly existed. Perhaps formerly there was over each day a *nagual* or *tono* for women and also one for men. Children then might have been given, in addition to or in place of any other name, the name of the *tono* of their birth day, just as they are now given the name of the saint which appears on the calendar for that day.

One of our children might conceivably say to its mother, "What's the matter with Daddy? He told me to go away from him! and receive the answer, "Your father is tired and wants to rest." Mixe children would say My father and the mother would use the form your father as we do. In Mixe, especially in the case of blood relationships within the individual family, the terms designating the relationships are always possessed forms, unless used vocatively. It is not just son or father but my son, your son, my father, your father. In true adherence to the Mixe pattern of use, it is doubtful if plural designations such as our father would ever be used. The informants speak truthfully when they say there is no such form, for they would never use it. It is this feeling that these relationships must always be possessed, just as parts of the body are, which has led to the differences in the word lists gleaned by different investigators. The more nearly monolingual the informant and the less aware the investigator of this custom, the more likely is it that the resulting vocabulary list will be full of possessed forms where the investigator has indicated only simple forms in his definitions.

It is difficult to give an ironclad rule regulating the form to be used. Perhaps we might state it thus - if the thing under discussion emphasizes most the relationship existing between the person spoken about and the person addressed, that is the form used, and it would be your father, your older brother or sister. If, however, when two members of the same family are talking, the thing to be stressed is the relationship existing between the person spoken about and the speaker, then that would be the form used, and it would be my son, my father, my older brother. It is interesting to note that not only United States folks say MY son when the boy has done something notable and praiseworthy and YOUR son when the little rascal has gotten into mischief! I have heard Mixe fathers call to the mothers, "YOUR baby is crying." and Mixe women say to the man returning from the field in the evening, "YOUR grandson broke the *casuela*!" or "YOUR son dropped the dish and broke it." If we are to consider the matter in the light of the form which would normally be used when no particular emphasis is being expressed, then the form used would be that expressing the relationship between the person spoken about and the person spoken to.

In the light of these observations, the sense behind the use of such terms in the legends becomes clear. In story 1, the younger son tricked into returning home and then threatened by the older brother as a sequence to the mother's punishment, uses the term your son to indicate the mother's responsibility in the matter. She, however, upon his returning to sell tobacco in his own village, uses the term your older brother in accordance with normal unemphasized speech. Compare this with story 8, where the daughter, careful of her father's feelings, uses the term my step-mother as the natural complement to the statement "Father, you're not to blame." In a case where the facts were to the contrary, it would have been your woman and not my step-mother. When the girl speaks of my husband, it is because the emphasis is on the fact that she is now married. When she says your son-in-law, it may be interpreted as being merely the normal pattern of unemphasized speech or it can be also interpreted as showing that the girl cares for the father and is emphasizing his now having a son-in-law and still holding a place in her life even though she has left home. In the light of the succeeding events in the tale, the latter may be the more correct interpretation.

The lament *O tempora! O mores!* belongs not alone to the old Romans. José Trinidad, joined, I suspect, by many others of the oldsters, laments the good old days. All of them, upon occasion, lament the loss of their youthful strength. Very infrequently one may catch a hint of regret at the absence of one who had died, especially if that one was a child. In general, however, there is little of that for the attitude seems to be somewhat fatalistic - they lived; they died; when one's hour comes, what can one do? for neither medicine nor doctor can save one when God says "That's all." José's main lament is that people are no longer respectful and courteous as they once were! "Formerly," he says, "if one met an older man on the trail, the younger would step to one side, remove his hat, cross his arms on his breast and stand with bowed head, greeting the older man with respect and waiting till he had passed before replacing his hat and going on. Now, often times the youngsters don't even speak to an older man or speak jestingly and disrespectfully." The present disregard for proprieties is further manifested, José' points out, by the misuse of certain terms of address. Two terms in particular, which are properly used by older men in addressing boys, have come now to be used indiscriminately among boys of school age in speaking to one another, and even, in jest and jibe, in speaking disrespectfully to their elders.

Courtesy to strangers and visitors, hospitality in general, has also suffered according to José. On this point, I fear José' in his reminiscing is prone to make retroactive and universal customs which in actuality were prevalent only within groups (whether based on family or clan line is not here a matter of consideration) or, between members of groups allied by ties or treaties, and in post-conquest times extended to friars and priest and their entourages. That the present village-type set-up is not of Mixe origin is of historical record. They were forced into villages, with the church as the center of things, that they might be the more easily controlled, watched and subjugated. Within individual groups, I doubt not that there existed a system of etiquette with rules regarding hospitality and courtesy. But everything I have observed on numerous trips through the region, as well as the indications in the legends and the Camotlaners' appraisal of various application of those principles, unless indeed it may have been under the reign of Kondoy. Hostility and not hospitality toward the stranger, even though he be a Mixe from another town, has long been the rule in the Mijada, and persists, veiled though it be, to this very day. In this the Mixe exactly parallels his language relative, the Popoloca. Foster's description on p. 178 also fits the Mixe perfectly, "Hospitality to any stranger is grudgingly given, it at all; .....shows no overt hostility to the traveler, but he clearly shows by passive resistance to all suggestions of aid that the stranger's presence is not desired." On several occasions, a Mixe responded to my request that he sell me a few tortillas with the words *No hay*, "There are none", while within sight through the open door his wife squatted in front of her metate patting them out and placing them on the *comal* to bake. This was not just because I was a gringo. On numerous other occasions, one of the carriers from Camotlan would go on ahead and seek to augment our provisions with fresh tortillas. With very few exceptions, the answer was *No hay*. It made no difference that the carrier was Mixe. He was from another town and he was a stranger as much as I was.

Perhaps the status of hospitality among them is best evaluated by the Mixes of Camotlan who have had occasion to travel through the region either as *mozos*, "carriers", on municipal errands or as individuals in search of corn or *panela*, "native brown sugar". Camotlan folks are the least given to political intrigues, even of a local nature, of any of the towns I have visited. They breed no thieves; wrongdoers of other towns find no asylum there. They are not abusers of hospitality and do show proper appreciation for favors rendered them. Of all travelling Mixes they should be the most likely to find hospitality extended to them. Yet of many of the Mixes towns they say *No dan posada, ni aún cuando está lloviendo*, "they won't give one a place to sleep, not even when it's raining" - *Son necios*, "they are very ignorantly stubborn and mean" - *Son muy cerrados*, "they are very retiring" (in the

derogatory sense of being energetically and ignorantly opposed to all progress and to all that comes from outside or differs from their own particular set way of thinking or doing).

It is in this light that one must understand story 34. The narrator and the listeners have no sympathy for the young fellow involved. The very fact that they gave him a place to stay and then, to top it off, offered him food should have made him suspicious because it was so unusual. In story 35 also, the same is true. Solicitude for a stranger is so rare among the Mixe as to be practically non-existent. As one who has found friends among them, I am positive that this attitude is due more to shyness and fear than to perversity. From what little is known of their past history, it is apparent they have small reason to trust outsiders.

Hospitality and courtesy within a town are something different. Custom dictates that if a man come to visit, a seat made of a squared and hollowed out piece of log be placed for him just inside the doorway, if the family be inside, or just outside the doorway, if the family be in the patio. If the visitor is a woman, she is given a small petate, "palm mat", or a piece of bark instead of the little seat. If it is mealtime, a flat gourd bowl, jicalpestle, with several tortillas or tamales and a bowl of coffee will be set before the visitor. Even though he has eaten before coming, they will insist on his drinking the coffee at least and may even insist that he take the tamales with him on leaving. In his turn, when he has finished eating, he will say Dios kuhuyip, "God will repay you", if its derivation be considered but which is used as the equivalent of the Spanish muchas gracias, "many thanks". Obviously an innovation of the friars, it nevertheless is the only way of saying thank you in Mixe. The rejoinder, in the case of thanks for food, will be ti tuk ?aa, "it was just a bite" or maksh, "excuse it" or perhaps a combination of the two.

In case of compadres living in different villages, this hospitality is practiced in disregard of town boundaries. Compadres, godfathers and godchildren are always welcomed in the homes of those included in this reciprocal relationship. In some instances this is true even of mere friends where friendships have been formed with those in other towns. In many instances, this reciprocal hospitality is called into exercise only during the fiestas of the patron saints of the towns involved. This is however, as they would put it, por voluntad y no por costumbre, "a matter of wanting to (on the part of the individuals involved) and not a matter of custom". As is evident in story 35, a person may come from another town, marry and raise a family. He may pass the age of sixty and become exempt from paying the contribución, "town taxes", and yet be known as the Juquileño, the Cotzoconer, the Tamazulapa and not be accepted among the principales, "town elders" with voice and vote of equal weight with that of natives of the town.



## 62. The Ancients

Los Antiguos, “the Ancients”, los Antepasados, “the Ancestors”, are known both by legend and by the physical traces of their houses, irrigation ditches, altars, mounds and tombs. Without constant vigilance and work on the part of the farmer, the jungle soon takes back the land formerly cleared for planting. Occasionally, as present-day Mixes clear once again the land once used by past generations and now covered with tropical growth, the remains of a mound or stone-lined ditch or stone wall come to light. Then it is that they are impressed with the industry and ability of their forefathers and tell again scraps of legends or speculate upon the source of their ability to work and move huge boulders. Stories 43, 46, and 48 are some of these. Even in Juquila Mixes which boasts itself of being progressive, the matter of the Ancients is still a theme of interest. It was Abram of Juquila, about thirty-eight years old, who told me “How the Ancients secured water in dry places:

These mogotes, “mounds”, belong to the Ancients. No one knows why they made them. But they say that they lived here. Perhaps it’s that they built their houses on top of the mounds, who knows.

Yes, as you say, it is very dry along here. No, there is no water along here. The river is way down below there and there are no springs. You can see the river way ahead there. There’s no water closer than that.

How could the Ancients live so far from water? No, it wasn’t that they had to carry their water from the river there. The Ancients had a way of doing, they say. They say that they just called the water (the river) as we would call a dog. Immediately the water of the river rose up and came to the mountain from which they were calling. That’s the way they did, they say.

Concerning the stonework - walls made of huge boulders - said to exist in various places on ridges to the northeast of Camotlan, José Trinidad explained, “They spoke to the stones just as we speak to a dog. The stones climbed into their places of themselves, so they say.”

What was the daily life of the Ancients? their food? their various pursuits? their amusements? their religious rites? All these we can but deduce from the legends and from some few archeological remains. And even these tell us little at present. The remains must be studied and their evidence correlated with that of the folklore before we can begin to see something of the picture. Of the extremely few Ancients named in the legends, Kondoy is the most famous and the one about whom most details are given.

Kondoy is considered to have been an actual person. His exploits are reminiscent of Paul Bunyan, see story 6. But to the Mixes there is nothing fantastic about them. They are told as actual facts and not as tall stories to amuse the listener. And they assure one that Kondoy did not die but went into a cave or tunnel with all his army and on to another land where he is now. This cave is supposed to be to the north of Zempoaltepetl. In Camotlan region there are those who tell of him. In Juquila there are those who speak of caves bearing his name because he hid treasure there. In Zacatepec they speak of him and on one occasion a drunk from Cotzocon sang a song about him at the fiesta there. Later, when he was sober, he would not sing it. I’ve never heard of any other Mixe song.

When did Kondoy live? The chronology of Mixe tales is unreliable for anything that lies beyond the experiences of the immediate ancestors of the informant and even in those it is reliable

only in a general sort of way and not as giving year and month of an occurrence. Story 6, places Kondoy as contemporary with Moctezuma. While this is suggestive, it is by no means conclusive that the two were contemporary. Mixe raconteurs of today might just as easily make them both contemporaries of Christ.

Of Moctezuma we do know that he actually fought against the Mixes (see Gay's *Historia de Oaxaca*, Vol. I, pp. 197-182) and failed to conquer them. The Mixes themselves do not admit to having been conquered but claim rather that Kondoy conquered the Mexicans. Even in these days, a modern army deprived of air support would find it almost if not quite impossible to conquer them. They know their country and are not limited to trails. They need no supply lines for they can live off the country. The country itself will fight against an invader. The mountains are no more penetrable today than they were in Burgoa's day or in Moctezuma's.

Story 49 speaks of a Central government and its inquiries as to the numerical strength of Camotlan. Perhaps it was in those days of Moctezuma's taking of tribute from those he conquered that his emissaries sought to find ways of taxing the indomitable Mixe. I know of no record of the Mixes' ever having paid tribute to anyone. Even today they resent interference by any outsider, be he even a government official. The Mixe of today pays tax, but he pays as little as possible and that out of necessity.

Unlike the Popoluca, the Mixe does not attribute anthropophagous tendencies to other races nor, indeed, to the Salvajo, the demons or any other spirit beings. Instances of occasional cannibalism occur in stories 4 and 60. The former of these instances corresponds in some particulars to that recorded by Foster (p. 192) but contrast in that, in the Popoluca story, the boy practicing it becomes Maize while in the Mixe story the children eating their grandfather are destined to become Sun and Moon. From the legends it would seem that cannibalism as a matter of custom occurred only in Malacatepec and Mixistlan. In Malacatepec, the tradition is that those eaten were members of their own group who were losers in a contest - see story 38 - and the matter seems to have been periodically recurrent and openly indulged in as group activity. This was in pre-Spanish times. Story 39 relates an occurrence of cannibalism there in post-Spanish times, purportedly. There is some doubt about this being the case, however. As Foster pointed out, "...this is undoubtedly an origin legend mixed up with Christianity. The priest....(has replaced)....a bungling culture here." In contrast, stories 34, 35, 37 deal with post-Spanish times in Mixistlan and nothing is said of earlier customs. Here the eating was done by individual families in secret, and it was not one of their own member but the unwary transient who was trapped and eaten. Burgoa, I believe, speaks of the existence of cannibalism in Mixistlan and Belmar, at the very beginning of the twentieth century, asserts that one instance had occurred there as recently as thirty years previously. I know of no record of any succeeding instances, but the fact remains that even today Camotlan folk avoid the place. If there are at least three or four of them in a group, they might pass through the town by day. One man alone would not consider passing through it. And, by their own declaration, nothing could induce them to pass the night there.

The Mixe lives in close contact with nature. His ears are attuned to the sounds of the forest around him. His eyes are quick to take in details which would escape the city-dweller. Though ignorant of textbook explanations of natural phenomena, he is wise in the lore of his race. Often he attributes supernatural causes to the effects visible in nature. His reaction to these phenomena is governed by his explanation of their origin or cause.

An eclipse of the sun or moon must have an explanation in Mixe lore, but I have not heard it. In Camotlan they are aware in advance of the occurrences of these through the use of the *Calendario Galván*, a sort of almanac which gives the time of the rising and the setting of the sun, the saints' names

for each day, and other data. In 1938 there was to be an eclipse of the moon at 2 A. M. Both the evening before and the morning after the church bells were rung calling the people to special prayers and far more people turned out for them than normally went to regular morning prayers.

For earthquakes and landslides the Mixe does have an explanation. A huge horned serpent lives underground in a certain place and when it awakes and moves around it causes the earthquakes (story 40, notes). That the horned serpent is found in various places and is connected also with floods is evident from the story itself. There is even a hint that the horned serpent is more than just a snake. This ties in with Foster's story 28, page 216, and with the belief which Beals recorded at Ayutla (Beals page 94).

In 1945 there were unusually heavy rains throughout the Mixe region. There were three separate landslides in the mountains above and to the west of Camotlan. Two of these were within sight of town and the other and largest was at some distance up the one branch of the river which flows through town. From the slide, trees more than a meter in diameter were washed down into town, one of them grounding on the river bank right in front of our house. Granite boulders whose exposed portion measures roughly seven or eight feet square and the same in height were washed down river into the edge of town. A small stream on the north edge of town, usually less than knee-deep at the height of the rainy season, became a raging torrent and brought a huge glacier of boulders and earth right into the heart of town, damaging several houses. A mound three times as wide as the former gully it now fills it, its top about eight feet above the former stream bed level. Houses, coffee groves, log bridges - all went downstream with the torrent and the river bed which was in places at the most three meters wide was gouged out to seven meters wide for almost its full course through town. What caused it? Horned serpents, says José Trinidad. Three different ones fell, the largest of them is the one which caused the huge landslide farthest from town. The townsfolk built a shrine above the two nearer slides and sent to the neighboring town of Quetzaltepec for the priest to come and bless the place. This, says José, quieted the serpent and put an end to any further sliding of the land there. Now each year at that time they have a repetition of this special service.

There seems to be no clear distinction, nor even the realization of a difference existing, between a cloudburst and waterspout. Gay refers to the latter as a *manga o sifón de agua*, "sleeve or siphon of water". The more common term, at least in the Zapotec and Mixe Castellano, is *culebra de agua*, "snake of water", literally, or "water snake" in some instances, but which actually has no such meaning as used in this connection. Perhaps it came to be so named because of the twisting, turning motion associated with a waterspout. Certainly it is more apt as a descriptive term than "sleeve" or "siphon" which may be scientifically descriptive of the formation of a waterspout but certainly not of the object itself. But the term *culebra de agua* has been seized upon by the Mixe mind as corroborative of his own ancient beliefs in regard to water serpents. So, the cause of necessity being commensurate with the effect, he attributes the largest landslide to the fall of the biggest snake, although no one saw even those which fell nearest town, it being night.

The year 1945 saw perhaps the greatest number of landslides in the Mixe region in decades. The majority were on heavily forested mountain slides and could not be attributed to deforestation and resulting erosion. From the description given, it seems that tons of water are suddenly dropped in a mass on one spot, smashing down and washing away anything before it. In 1950 a waterspout fell at San Bartolo, about six hours to the east of Mitla (Zapotec) on the trail to the Mijada. At this place there are two gullies whose streams join at a Y and flow on to the southeast. At the junction there is a *paraje*, "camping site", where the Mitla *arrieros*, "muleteers", often stop for the night. A Mitleño with his boy helper and his five burros had stopped here. They were packing in salt to the Mixes and were carrying with them two thousand pesos in silver to buy coffee for their patrón. About dusk it began to

thunder and lightning, and the river began to rise with the downfall of rain. Then they heard a roaring noise and saw a dark mass off toward the mountain. They both climbed into a tall tree at the riverside and the boy shinned to the top, but the man, remembering his patron's money, went down to get it. That cost him his life for before he could regain the tree the wall of water struck and carried him and his burros and their packs away. The boy says that the water was several meters higher than a fifteen to eighteen foot ridge of rock to one side of the campsite. The tree shook and bent under the fury of the wind and under the impact of blows from things which the water swept against it. Dark forms swept by on the water. He expected his tree to be uprooted at any moment. Terror-stricken he spent the night in the tree. A ranch family half a mile to the east on the other branch of the stream heard the boy's shrieks above the sound of the tempest but no rain fell there. They had to pry the boy's fingers loose and help him down.

Parsons has recorded a Zapotec story about a horned water serpent connected with lightning. Yes, be he Mixe or Zapotec, one who has seen the lightning's glare the twisting form of a descending waterspout, or who may have seen nothing more than the almost incredible destruction wrought by the waterspout, will not easily be convinced that the horned water serpent of his ancestor's legends no longer falls from the sky.

A pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow? Not in Mixe land. And even if there were, no Mixe would go after it. The rainbow is a dangerous thing. It plays tricks on folks. He who unwarily comes too close to one will be made confused and bewildered and then will be tied up!

The dictionary will tell you that rayo means "lightning" or "thunderbolt". Tell that to a Mixe and he would probably shake his head and remark, "You see! A lot of good it did for a man to know how to write a book! Poor fellow, he just didn't know any better. It's a sure thing no one ever explained to him just how those things are." For any Mixe could tell you that rayo is only sometimes just natural lightning or a thunderbolt. Why, anyone who knows anything at all is well aware that this is the least important of its meanings! There are also nagual rayos - a sort of spirit manifestation of a person, particularly of a brujo, "witch". Then there are rayos menores, "minor rayos" and rayos mayores, "major rayos". And who can tell by seeing a rayo that it is not one of these spirit beings? But more of that later in its proper place, for here we are dealing with natural phenomena. Yes, a rayo may be just a thing of nature - a flash of lightning or a thunderbolt, BUT, and the Mixe will shake his head wisely, more often it is not.

Indeed there are many strange things in the world. Just look at the animals. Who, to look at them would think that they once could talk! Yet everything talked once on a time, even things which today we consider to be inanimate objects: water in story 1, the mano de chirmoler, "pestle of the sauce grinding bowl" in story 1 - everything could talk once. And, of course, the animals all could talk formerly as in stories 2, 3, 4, 5, and Foster, page 226 top. "Yes," says José Trinidad, "formerly everything talked - the deer, the antelope, the peccary, stones, trees, the water - everything. Then when Jesus Christ was born, that's when everything became mute. That's what my father told me." Others tell it a bit differently:

The animals were all ordered to keep a watch and to call out the news when the child Jesus should be born. But all of them except the rooster went to sleep. He remained awake and on watch. The moment the Christ child was born, rooster's clear voice cried out, "Jesucristo nació-o-o! Jesucristo nació-o-o-o!" Jesus Christ is born! Jesus Christ is born! At this repeated cry, the other animals began to wake and give voice to their regrets at their failure in the assigned task. The voice of each was different but all expressed sorrow like the burro which cried out, "Ai-i-i-i, ai-i-i-i-i, ai-a-a-i-i-i-i! - Alas,

alas, alas! - and from that time on, they still keep repeating what they said then. And only the rooster still talks. The school books will tell you that he says Ki-kí-ki-kí, “Cock-a-doodle-doo”, but what he really says is still Jesucristo nació-o-o! Jesus Christ is born! You listen to him and you’ll hear for yourself.

To the Mixe there is nothing impossible or incongruous in the unborn child’s calling out to the buzzard to be careful, nor in the buzzard’s answering him in story 2, for after all, that was a long, long time ago.

Though the animals no longer talk, there are still many strange things about different ones of them. In fact, if one only knew, each animal probably has his own peculiar tricks and powers. Take the armadillo, for instance. Who would think to look at him that he is extremely powerful. But he is! He is actually stronger than a strong man. He has terrific force. Several men from Camotlan have found that out to their surprise. If a man grabs his tail as he seeks to escape into his hole, the armadillo will give a tremendous kick and knock the man downhill. The armadillo is good to eat but one must be very careful in eating him because he eats snakes. As soon as you kill one, you must open his stomach to be sure he hasn’t been eating snakes. If he has, you must throw him away, because if you eat him he will poison you. Two Mitla men and a boy were camping at Laguna to one side of the trail east of the river of Santa María Albarradas.

One of the men caught an armadillo and they cleaned it and ate it, they say, that same night. But the boy didn’t eat any. The next morning the two men were dead. They found them when other Mitleños were passing and the boy told them. They thought the boy had poisoned his father and the other man. But he told them about their eating the armadillo. So they went to where the man had cleaned it and opened the stomach. Sure enough, it had been eating snakes and there they were in its stomach. So they knew that’s what killed those men and that the boy was not the blame. Those fellows didn’t know about that. But folks here know to look for the snakes in their stomachs before them.

The tigre, “jaguar”, too is dangerous. It can bewitch people just like it did with José Trinidad’s compadre (see nagual - transformation). Maybe it’s only when the tigre is a nagual that it can bewitch one. Who knows for sure. But it’s a sure thing there are tigres which are naguals. Maybe that’s why not everyone can kill a tigre. Just certain folks have suerte, “good fortune or lucky charm”, which enables them to kill a tigre. Pablo José had the power to kill them. He killed a number of them when he was younger. The monkey too has its own share of beliefs. Listen while José Trinidad tells about some of them:

The monkeys are the devil’s angles. My father is the one who told it to me. They say that in times past there was one who was called Luzbél (Lucifer). But this was a long, long time ago. That one was very beautiful. Also he had his work (his position). Because of that he was called Luzbél.

But that is what I don’t remember well - just what happened. What is certain is that today he is the devil. And just as God has His angels, so the devil has his. But they are the monkeys. That’s the way I’ve had it explained to me. Haven’t you noticed that the monkey is very bright? But they were even brighter formerly. They’re still bright. If we say to a monkey, “Play the guitar.” he does this way (raising one arm and scratching chest with the other hand) as though strumming a guitar. When one says to him, “What is it you have under your tail?” he’ll put his hand under there. Then if one says to him, “Now smell your hand!” right away he smells it. He still understands some. But formerly he was even more intelligent. That’s the way I’ve had it explained to me. Thus it was my father told it to me.

God turned them around. He put their buttocks where their faces were and their heads where their buttocks had been. There He pulled out a tail and threw them up into the trees. Haven't you noticed that they travel along thus, hanging upside down with their buttocks up and their heads down?

But the monkey is very rascally. When we go into the woods, he scolds us. If we come close, he throws rubbish and dead sticks - that's the way he does. He will even urinate or defecate on top of us if we get underneath him. Indeed, he is very rascally.

True it is that if we eat monkey meat, it will give us an itch all over our body. But that's what's really an itch! We won't be able to stand it. That's what happened to one young fellow. More than three days he had the itch. Nothing would stop it. That's what the old folks told me. Because of that, no one ever eats monkey meat.

This explanation of God's forming of the monkeys is identical with what Foster recorder among the Popoluca (Foster pages 236 mid and 237, 238), except that here the inference seems to be that the change was worked on those angels who followed the devil in his rebellion against God. That much of the account is certainly of Old World origin. However, the idea that the monkeys and various other animals are the result of the transformation of people who have disobeyed a command given to them by a cultural hero or supernatural being, seems to be a New World belief of ancient standing. Note the explanation in story 5 for the origin of coatis. In story 4, Apolinar says the people who disobeyed were turned into animals of the field and dispersed. In both of these tales, the origin of the toad is similar change due to disobedience on the part of the man who had been strictly charged with specific instructions and had disobeyed them. Of the gopher alone is it said that the change from the form of a person to that of an animal was wrought as a reward for services rendered. The pattered, with this latter exception, is clearly - transformation into the form of an animal as punishment for disobedience. It is clearly an accepted New World origin. Its application to an Old World story is merely incidental and perfectly in accord with the acceptance and assimilation of certain elements which were originally foreign. Now, however, they are an integral part of Mixe lore. Such is the case with the devil, Jesus Christ, the king, and other characters and incidents. It is noticeable that these assimilated items seem merely to have complemented the original body of Mixe lore, as in the present case, and not to have supplanted a Mixe explanation for something they might reasonably be expected to have been acquainted with or to have felt the necessity for explaining previous to contact with the friars. (See story 11.)

There are other kinds of monkeys too, about which there are special beliefs. But let José Trinidad tell it:

In the mountains to the west of here, there is another kind of monkey that goes alone, not in bunches. That is, it travels in pairs, the male and the female. The female is called Mona and the male is called Mugón. When they have a little one and it grows up, it goes by itself. They are the same size as the other monkeys but they have a white neck. It has a tail too, just like monkeys. Santiago Alejo killed one over there in the mountain on the road to Chimaltepec. Santiago is still alive but he's an old man now. (1948).

I was given to understand - my father is the one who told me - that there on the trail or in the woods, when ill fortune strikes, they seized people. They just seized people and scared them. Yes, at times they carried off people, but only when ill fortune struck. Mona the female would carry off men and Mugón the male would carry off women.

Once I saw one there when I was working (clearing land) in the mountain. My compadre is the one who spied it. He said to me, "Compadre, there comes that monkey which is called Mugón."

"Is that so, compadre?"

Yes, let's grab it."

"But how are we going to be able to do that, compadre? That one travels very high among the trees," I said to him.

"But it just may come down."

"Very well! Let's grab it."

There was my compadre scaring it with sticks and stones. Suddenly it entered into the burned over area. There are nothing but dry trees there. Suddenly it grabbed a branch and the branch broke. It fell to the ground. They don't walk like people. One or two steps it takes and then down on all fours like a dog. I was just about to grab that good-for-nothing when it came to a huge rock peak. It climbed up that and away it went - it escaped. I didn't grab it. But people tell me that Mugón is very strong.

### **63. Birds, -crows, buzzards humming bird**

There are three kinds of buzzards - the black vulture, the turkey buzzard and the king vulture. The latter occasionally makes an appearance in the neighborhood of Camotlan. The first two are always present although the black vultures seem to be in the majority! The breast down of the king vulture, a pure white down, is much prized for use in making the headdresses for the dance of the conquest. How the turkey buzzard got his red head is recounted in stories 2 and 3. The chogón, a bird about midway in size between the English sparrow and the robin, is thought to be either a spirit in bird form or the messenger of a spirit being. Its job is to keep a watch for wastefulness at harvest time and to report on it.

Another bird, about the size of a large hawk or buzzard, is called cometa, "comet", or in Mixe maizhits. It is said to have two heads, one looking forward and the other backward. Apolinar says this is "due to the crest of light colored feathers on the back of the head which looks like a beak pointing backwards." He has seen one of the birds once just below town to the east. It doesn't really have two heads as most folks think, it just looks that way. José Trinidad says, "It comes at night to steal chickens or turkeys roosting in the trees or on house roofs or in the tops of corncribs. Sometimes one can hear it when it alights on the house roof, even when one is inside. Sometimes you just know it is there by the noise the chickens or turkeys make. It is probably the tono or nagual of someone."

"When a number of crows pass over," says Alberto, "it's a sign that plenty of traders are coming." While the Mixe seems not to be preoccupied about becoming gray, it is interesting to note that they have a recipe for a color restorer for white or graying hair! Yes, it is connected with that black rascal, the crow. Here is the recipe just as Alberto gave it to me: "Kill the crow and make a soup of it. Eat its flesh with the broth - at midnight and without light. Then grind up the feathers and, with (the liquid from) these ground feathers, wash the hair. This takes away white or gray hairs."

"The humming bird is, as all the world knows," says Camilo, "many times the nagual of some brujo or bruja." I believe the Quech' of Guatemala also held the belief that the humming bird was the tono of certain people. Compare this with the several Popoluca beliefs given by Foster.

The saltapared or canyon wren, when it enters a house, is said to be a sign of infidelity on the part of the woman of the house. This in itself would have been reason enough for the girls trying to kill the bird in stories 2 and 3.

It is not surprising to find snakes among those things to which special beliefs are attached. Some beliefs are of a general nature. Why do snakes exist? The answer is given in stories 8 and 9 - a jealous step-mother meddled with her step-daughter's children by a rayo, snakes and left some of them escape. These lost snake-children are the ancestors of all the snakes. Why are there poisonous snakes in some places? José Trinidad suggests that it is because, as in story 10, there once lived someone there who poisoned another person. As stories 4 and 5 suggest, there have been certain huge snakes of an unnamed species which had the habit of eating people. It is altogether possible that some of them still exist in places. One instance, in times more recent than those of the two stories mentioned, was told me by Abram of Juquila concerning an excellent stretch of mountain trail to the south of Juquila:

Here is where we leave the river trail. Here is where the trail goes which is called in Mixe what in Spanish would be The Old Road. But it would be better translated Road of the Ancients. Who knows when the Ancients made it. It was a long time ago. That's why it's called Road of the



Ancients. Since long years ago, this is the road which they used when they went from Juquila to Acatlancito and Narro. It was afterwards that they made the camino real, "royal road" (in sense of main highway or trail), which goes along the river road. The bad part is that there are times in the rainy season when the river rises and one can't travel there. But nevertheless they had to abandon the old road.

Why? Well, it was because there was a huge snake which lived in the mountain up here on one side of the trail. It used to eat many people. When they would pass here, before making the other road, that huge snake would come down and seize the people and eat them. It was immense, they say. It could swallow a man whole! Why it didn't let people pass here in safety. Daily it was eating the people when they went to pass.

At last they made the new road there down below, next to the river. But the Road of the Ancients is a very good road. Of course, now there isn't any danger. That's a long time ago that that snake lived here. It's not here anymore. Who knows what happened to it. Perhaps it died. Or maybe it went someplace else. No one knows. But it isn't here anymore.

Abram had spent a number of years in Vera Cruz state. Discrete questioning of others brought the suggestion that his absence from Juquila had been obligatory and due to his having killed someone there. In spite of his having been in the outside world, Abram seriously believed this story and the others he told me. It was definitely not just a case of spinning a yarn to pass the time. To him, the stories were historical accounts connected with the various places we passed on the trail from Juquila to Narro.

There are also beliefs connected with particular species of snakes. The Coral snake will at times come into town in the daytime. Some of them are a meter long or more. If it crosses a person's path and turns black before one, it is a sign of death, either for the one who sees it or for some relative. José' Trinidad's wife, the mother of Apolinar, saw this thing happen. The snake began to cross the road in front of her. It was of various colors as a coral snake is. But then it stopped in front of her and turned its head to look at her. While she watched it, it turned black and crawled on off the path. She told them at home what had happened. They didn't know, says Apolinar, whether his mother would die or not. They did know that someone in the family would die. Well, the next morning his brother-in-law, the husband of his oldest sister Tomasa, took sick. A day or two later he died. It always happens that way. Several others have seen the same thing. It's a sure sign of death - sometimes for the one who sees it, sometimes for a member of the family. Compare this with the Popoluca belief, Foster page 210 story 19 and page 185 bottom.

Several snakes that have different names in Mixe are referred to in the Spanish by the term vibora, "viper". The largest of these, reportedly reaching a length of as much as four meters - over 12 feet - is called xóox. It may be the Bushmaster (*Lachesis muta*) (?). When one is bitten by it he dies with blood coming out his eyes, nose, ears, and out of every pore, they say. The uncle of the former town secretary of Chimaltepec was killed by one just the day before I visited there in December of 1940. Most instances of its biting people occur during the time for clearing land for planting. José Trinidad tells of one such occurrence in Camotlan:

Espíritu Antonio was weeding his coffee grove in the neighborhood of Rio de Naranja, "Orange River". It was late afternoon - the hour for quitting had passed already - when one of them bit him in the face. Right here on the upper lip it bit him. That's why all its poison entered right into his stomach. That's why he didn't survive, that poor fellow. Right there (in the river) he washed his face. He didn't even get home to his house. On the way he died. About midnight he reached home, but he

was already dead. Carried he arrived - his mozos carried him. It was xóox that bit him. The mozos killed it. Just as though he were sweating blood Espirito died.

That viper doesn't rise up immediately (to strike one). There close (to one) it may lie, it may sleep. But when ill fortune strikes, then it rises up from far away (to strike one). That's what happened in Espirito's case. He was crouched down weeding when that animal rose up about fifteen feet away and right away bit the poor fellow.

Over at Mazatlan it is the tono of the people, they say. But those folks keep looking here and there (with a shifty gaze) just like the viper. That's what I've been given to understand that the tono of those people is the viper.

Another large snake, a black one which is also said to attain a length of ten or twelve feet, is called huundyóh. "There are those which are just snakes," says José Trinidad, "but some have ears. But that is because they are the tono of people. They are black, just like the others which don't have ears. But the ones which have ears are the tonos of people." José de la Cruz says, "It's the very demon himself. It can't be killed with a machete." A number of young fellows were discussing it. Some said it could be killed with machete. One told of trying to kill one that came into a piece of land he was clearing. "I took a vine and lassoed it and dragged it out of the clearing. It would come back. I had to do that several times. Then I got disgusted and when I took it out the last time I told it, 'If you come back you'll see: I'm going to kill you.' I kept on clearing land and, do you know, in the afternoon there was that snake again! So I took my machete and went after it. It raised its head and began sticking out its tongue but I swung at it hard and off went its head. It is possible to kill them with a machete." Another young fellow said that one had once come into his clearing too. "But it didn't wait for me to drag it out. It was angry and started after me across the clearing. I swung at it time and again with my machete. But every time its head wasn't there where I had swung. It would dodge. And it kept right on coming. I finally ran and got away." They decided that maybe the snake which was killed was just a snake and the other one was probably a demon and that's why the young fellow could never hit it with the machete. And some jested that the second fellow was afraid and never struck where the snake was to begin with.

There are in Mixe country some insects like our own walking sticks. If an unmarried man will pick one up by the body and say to it, "Where can I find a wife?", it will raise one of its front legs and point in the direction where he much look for his wife. This is remarkably similar to the belief which the Comanches held concerning the granddaddy longlegs. At the Summer Institute of Linguistics in 1946 at Norman, Oklahoma we had Comanche informants from the vicinity of Lawton. One of them said that it was a belief among them that when buffalo were hard to find, they must hunt for a granddaddy longlegs. If they would take one up in their hand and ask it where the buffalo could be found, it would raise one of its feet and point out the direction they must take. The old men who had hunted buffalo claimed that it never failed, said the informant.

Stinging insects have been used as aids to escape as in story 4 where the twins who are to become the Sun and the Moon are fleeing from the grandmother, and in story 52 where the possum wants to escape from the tigre. But in these instances the insects were collected and imprisoned. In story 35, it was magic which caused the sweatcloth to turn into stinging insects. But they say there are still folk today who can perform that sort of magic.

A belief about food plants which the Mixe holds, seems to be prevalent at least throughout much of Oaxaca. It is that certain fruits, plants and foods are hot while others are cold. This has nothing whatever to do with actual heat nor even with such a thing as chili peppers being hot in our sense of the use. A number of articles of food would fall into one or the other of these categories.

It is impossible to explain what is meant. But in trying to aid them by medical treatment, one comes much in contact with the belief. Certain things should not be eaten when taking certain types of medicines. Certain of these foods must not be eaten on cold days. A complete study of the subject among the Mixes alone would be a paper in itself. It is possible that the thought behind it is something like what we express by hard to digest vs. easy to digest. But there are other connotations also which cannot be so easily expressed and for which we may not have terms.

Twinned fruits or vegetables such as bananas or corn or chayotes and also double-yoked eggs are not eaten. Of the corn, José Trinidad says, "My father said that on Christmas eve one should give it (twinned ears) to the chickens so they would be prolific. People don't eat it." The reason behind this custom appears in his explanation about a twinned banana:

The twinned banana you must give to the chickens too.

People don't eat them. At times people may eat them, but old people (women) who aren't going to give birth any more. It's not good to eat them. It might cause a stroke of ill fortune. The woman is the one who doesn't eat them. It might cause her to give birth to twins. That's the way the word (explanation) is. Who knows if it's true. Some folks say so." But it was noticeable that not even José's wife was around sixty was interested in eating the twinned fruit. It went to the chickens. This is the only hint I found that the birth of twins is considered a stroke of ill fortune. Nor did I hear of twins being among them. The only reference in legends to the birth of twins is that in the Sun and Moon episodes, unless, of course, one should chose to consider Kondoy and his snake-brother as twins because they hatched out of the pair of eggs.

Of mushrooms there are various kinds. There is an orange colored one which is eaten for food. But there are others, whose names they do not know in Spanish, which are used for other purposes. One kind has been used for a medicine, says José Trinidad. His nephew, Alefonsa, had been sick for five years with an unspecified sickness. He was unable to walk but just moved around on a stool. Apparently he could be out in the patio too, and just slid the stool around from place to place. Then they gave him a type of mushroom to eat and he was cured and could walk again as before.

He says there is another special kind of mushrooms about which there is a belief that it will induce a dream. It always induces a particular kind of dream - one in which two little dwarfs, a boy and a girl, appear to the eater. They talk with him and he may ask them questions which they will answer. They will tell where lost things may be found again. If something has been stolen, the pair of dwarfs will reveal who is the thief and where he has hidden the stolen article. If one is planning on a trip, they will tell what luck one will have on his journey. Cerilo of Sta. Margarita Huitepec has eaten these mushrooms several times. The first time they didn't give the desired result. Cerilo has a son named Delfino. When he was going to eat the mushrooms, he was afraid something might happen so he had Delfino watch him so nothing would happen to him. Then he ate them and sure enough the pair of dwarfs appeared to him. He talked with them and asked them about a trip he was going to take, for he had five burros and was about to set out for the Isthmus with Delfino. The dwarfs told him not to go for his burros would all die. They talked about different things. Then the boy dwarf said, "We must go now for the cock is crowing." (about 4 A. M.). The dwarfs disappeared and Cerilo awoke. Right away he asked his son if the cock had just crowed and was told that it had. But he didn't believe the dwarfs and went on the trip anyway. Sure enough, just like the dwarfs told him, all five of his burros died on that trip.

Another one who used these mushrooms was a woman of Camotlan named Rosa. She was of a family from Zacatepec who had moved to Camotlan to live. Later she lived with her own father as his woman. He finally died in Huitepec. This Rosa ate the mushrooms and began to tell people that the

world was coming to an end. And she began to say that she was the mother of the Virgin. She was really deceiving the people very much. Many folks went to her place daily and there they were all day wailing and weeping about their sins. Then some of the younger ones who had been to school talked to the town authorities and got them to threaten to jail her if she didn't stop it. The authorities told her they'd run her out of town if she ate any more of those mushrooms. Why, people were taking offerings to her and getting her to pray for them. That was in 1945. She stopped it then, but some say she seemed to go crazy and wandered around in the woods. She died several years after.

Tobacco is grown by a few people in Camotlan. The fact that it is used in marriage arrangements is in story 3 and, daily, as part of the wage of *mozos* in land-clearing time makes it an item in much demand. Since the supply grown in Camotlan is by no means sufficient to meet the needs, tobacco in the form of bundles of dried leaves is an item of trade between towns. People from Coatlan bring it to sell or trade, often for coffee. Two leaves of tobacco daily are given to each *mozo*. When a man has from three to eight *mozos* working daily, both at land-clearing and planting time and then again at cultivating time, it requires quite a supply of tobacco. It is also used in making cigarettes for *brujeías* where they serve as part of the offering to the spirits. Huge quantities are used also in making cigarettes to be used in the *mayordomías*, "festivals of special saints", and also to keep the dancers supplied during the practices which they stage at regular intervals during the year in preparation for the fiestas when their services are called for. In the case of the dancers and the *mayordomías*, paper for wrapping the cigarettes is bought in large sheets. Then to certain assigned persons, often to the *principales*, "town elders", is given a certain amount of paper and tobacco and an assignment to make so many hundred cigarettes. The tobacco in this case is crumbled off the larger veins of the leaf and is wrapped in tightly twisted paper. But in the case of the *mozos* it is smoked in the form of a cigar, which is made by drawing the leaf through the mouth to moisten it sufficiently to prevent crumbling when it is rolled. Then it is doubled along the middle vein and rolled into what might appear to be a shaggy cigar butt. It is smoked veins and all. If smell is any indication, Mixe cigars are as hot as their chili! But mildness is not a quality they desire in their cigars. They prefer strength and body, for they claim that a good cigar gives strength for work and they smoke one good cigar in mid-morning and the other leaf in mid-afternoon. Even his fellow Mixes remark with amazement about Manuel Reyes who, while carrying a heavy pack over the trail, will smoke his cigars as far down as he can without burning his lips and then calmly chew up and swallow the remainder. And he does it even on a climb, when most of them say it is bad for the wind even to smoke a cigar on the climb. But then Manuel is just different, for he eats his bananas skin and all too.

## **64. Idols – narrations of personal experiences.**

Burgoa and Gay describe the manner in which the friars dealt with idols. Starr and others have also written about idols in the Mixe region. The best and most sensible general treatment - devoid of bias and sensationalism - is that given by Beals page 64. It is difficult to say exactly what many users of the term idols mean by it today. It is applied to petroglyphs, clay funeral urns, animal effigies, and decorated incense burners as well as to those images which probably represented deities and were at one time worshipped by the primitives. The term is used too loosely as to be not only almost meaningless, but actually misleading in many instances. Of remains of pottery utensils, both in the woods and in caves, there are many - but they are not idols. Offering to and worship of carved figures and actual representations of deities was only a part of Mixe worship. By far the larger part of their offerings and worship was to spirit beings for which no images were made. But more of that in the section on Spirit Beings and offerings to them.

The term idol will be used here in that limited sense of referring only to a figure carved from stone more or less in the round (as opposed to relief carvings on cliffs or cave walls) or similarly formed effigies of clay (as distinguished from funeral urns) - figures which were in all probability worshipped as deities or their representations.

Some of these figures still exist in various parts of the Mixe region. I myself found one in a cave to the north of Camotlan. It lay face down in the extreme rear of the low and narrow cave of not more than fifty- or sixty-foot extension. The Mixe youths who accompanied me were as amazed as I was at the find. The cave is still used for occasional offerings as was evidenced by candle drippings, bundles of ocote and two no-longer-current five cent pieces. There was no sign whatever that the offerings, which were very near the mouth of the cave, were in any way connected with the image. Nor was there any objection to my taking it away. Some say there is an idol on the south side of the river to the east of Camotlan, but Apolinar says it is just an outjutting of natural stone eroded into a semblance of a human figure. He says that some folks do take offerings there and burn candles there too. But this is by no means a general practice in the town.

I know of only two other idols in Camotlan. Maximiano tells of them:

Daniel's father-in-law has two idols also. He's the one who was presidente municipal several years ago. He found them a long time ago down near the place where the water comes out from under the hill there at the cave. It was just after the rains and the water had risen. Who knows from where the water brought them, but there he found them cast up on the bank where the coffee grove is now. He used to keep them on his altar. But he won't let you see them anymore. He keeps them hidden now. It's because of what that Pedro Jacobo did that he now keeps them hidden away in a chest. Did you hear about that? Well, I'll tell you.

You knew Pedro Jacobo, didn't you? He's the one who lived just below your house in the hill. He died last year only. He was a good man, but he liked to drink and when he was drunk he became silly. He was the compadre of Daniel's father-in-law.

Well, one day - I think it was a fiesta day - Pedro Jacobo got drunk, quite drunk. He went to his compadre's house with his bottle to share with him. But his compadre was not at home. I think he too was out drinking because he also likes to drink. So Pedro Jacobo went into the house and sat down. The comadre must just have gone off for a minute or else the door would have been tied up, but it was open so he went in. There on the altar were the two idols, so he picked them up, one in each arm just

like babies, and off he went with them through the town. He was carrying and calling for his compadre and then laughing and telling folks to look at the images which were his compadre's luck-charm.

When the woman came back, the idols were gone and someone came and told her that her compadre Pedro Jacobo was going through town with them. She went after him right away. Finally she found him sitting in the street with them, talking to them or to himself. So she took them from him and took them home. Ever since then, Daniel's father-in-law has kept them hidden and locked up.

You see, he thinks they are his luck-charm. He says that because of them he became wealthy. It was because he kept them and took good care of them. It was intended for him to find them - that's why he and not someone else found them. That's the way his fortune was supposed to be. Each New Year's eve he takes them out into the mountain and makes a fiesta for them. He kills turkeys for them and offers them cigarettes, tamales, tepache, copal and things. He really makes a fiesta for them. That's what people say. I asked Daniel about it. He lives in his father-in-law's house now. But he says he doesn't know about it. He hasn't seen the idols. But that's the way the old man is. He's afraid to let people see them ever since Pedro Jacobo did. He keeps them hidden. But lots of people saw them before that, and they know how he keeps them and about his making those fiestas for them. There are two idols and they're very well made. One is a boy and one is a girl. Like little babies they look. But they're carved out of stone. I saw them when I was little, but he won't show them to people anymore. They were better made than the one we found in the other cave.

In many instances, I suspect that the altar serves as a catch-all since it is apt to be the only shelf in the house. It is by no means a justified assumption that all that is on the altar shelf is being worshipped or is an offering to the santos, "saints", as the papers with the messily-printed woodcut-type representation of the apostles or the Virgin car called. A belt knife or flashlight will normally be placed there as will a pencil or the son's copy book or the primer used by the adults participating in the government campaign against illiteracy. But none of these is either an object of worship or an offering. The placing of any relics of the ancients on the altar is more widespread than merely among the Mixes. It was prevalent custom in Mitla in 1937 and many there still do it, I believe. Friends there said it was a belief among them that to give all such things a good scrubbing on New Year's eve was obligatory for it was thought that failure to do so would anger the spirits of the old people or the things represented by the artifacts and would bring bad luck to that home in the ensuing year. In San Lorenzo Albarradas there are still many who place such cosas de los antiguos, "belongings of the ancients", on their altars. I have seen several carved stone figures of eight or nine inches in height which were smoky and odoriferous from copal incense that had been recently burned before them.

Among the Mixe, this is still done on occasions, even in the progressive towns like Juquila. For several days in 1949 I stayed in the Municipio of Juquila Mixes. High up on a cross-beam against one end wall I saw what seemed to be an idol in a little square box. Upon inquiry, the presidente, Don Constantino Dominguez, told me the following story:

About two years ago, two brothers were plowing a piece of ground off to the northeast of town here when the plow turned up that idol. They immediately stopped plowing and took it home to show to their mother. She washed and took the idol and put it on her altar, they say, and began to burn candles to it and put offerings and incense before it. Then she went out and told her neighbors that her boys had found this old dios, "god", and that they too had better bring candles and offerings to it lest, if they didn't offer it proper worship, it become angry with the town and as a result the corn crop would fail. The people listened to her and before long there were people flocking to her house with candles and offerings.

Of course, the priest soon heard of it and he scolded her and the other people for it. But they still continued. Then he came to the Municipio and asked us to do something about it. But that really isn't the business of the town authorities to meddle with people's beliefs. We didn't know what to do. We didn't want the priest to be angry with us. And also we didn't want the town to be angry with us.

Then the brothers began to fight about the idol. You see, one was married and had his own home. The other was single and still lived with his mother who was a widow. Well, they had taken the idol to their mother's house and so she and the single brother had it. Now the older brother wanted to take it to his house. "After all, it was I who found it for I was plowing at the time!" he said. "Why should you two receive all the benefit from it? I'm going to take it!" But the mother wouldn't let it go. And the younger brother was fighting for it too. Well, the Municipio has a right to settle disputes, so we took the idol from them and put it up in that box there. That way the people couldn't keep on worshipping it, so the priest was satisfied. Also, the brother and the mother had nothing to fight over so the peace was restored.

Certainly you may take pictures of it. We'll take it down for you. It's very curiously made. The hair is tied in the back, it seems. Of course, it's just made of stone. It's granite, I believe, something like the ancients used for making their metates.

This figure was about ten inches high. The account of another figure about a meter high, also in the Juquila region, will be given under Spirits Beings - rayo. Story 37 mentions a dog-faced idol which formerly existed in Mixistlán. There are accounts of other figures still standing along side trails or in the woods on certain peaks. An occasional offering may be made to some of these. There is no hint that cult is rendered to them by any considerable group or with any regularity. However, any such worship would be surreptitious, at least in the more progressive towns, and especially so during the presence of an anthropologist in the town. The correct statement, then, is not that such cult to the ancient figures does not exist but, rather, that present information in no way warrants the postulation of anything more than individual and sporadic worship of such figures. It should be borne in mind that any interpretation of their culture must be made in the light of THEIR culture and NOT of that of the investigator.

Among the Mixes as well as among their neighbors the Zapotecs, there exists belief in the nagual or tono. The belief extends also to the Zoques of Chiapas. For a concise yet comprehensive discussion of Nagualism see Foster's Nagualism in Mexico and Guatemala.

The Mixe seems to make a slight distinction between tono and nagual, in some respects. Yet there seems to be an overlap and the terms are used at other times in what practically equal synonymity. A person may take on the form of his tono, in which case it becomes his nagual.

Tono is the term used to designate the spirit counterpart or companion of a person. What the tono of an individual is is determined at his birth and he himself has nothing to do with its selection. In contrast, the intimation is that he has everything to do with the matter of selecting his nagual. The tono, of which apparently there is one for every person born, is something automatically belonging to one. And a man may have only one tono. The nagual is something one is or has as the result of study and practice, as in story 27, or as the result, it is intimated, of a bestowal of the requisite knowledge by some Spirit Being. Even this latter fact does not militate against the evidence that the power to become a nagual is a power acquired by the individual's own efforts, for some offering or favor would be required to merit such bestowal. Foster found among the Popoluca this distinction between tono and nagual (his page 183 top).

One other contrast should be pointed out. As to the character - the goodness or badness of the thing represented - in reference to people in general, the term *tono* is devoid of implication, since the *tono* bears a relationship solely to him whose *tono* it is. This relationship is one in which both the person involved and the *tono*, for reasons of self interest, mutually protect one another; with respect to the two involved in the relationship - *tono* and human - the connotation is the one of good, of protection, of benefit. For example, a man may have as his *tono* a *tigre*. It will be a certain *tigre* and not the species as a whole. The man is in no way responsible for the actions of the *tigre* which is his *tono*. But he himself will never kill a *tigre* because in so doing he might kill his own *tono*, which would be the same as committing suicide, for when the *tono* dies so does the individual whose *tono* it is. The reverse is also held to be true - that if the individual is killed or harmed, the *tono* suffers the same fate. It is only as one might have evil designs upon a man that that *tigre tono* of the man would be certain to harm him.

On the contrary, the term *nagual* carries always the connotation of badness running all the way from mischief to downright malevolence. The mischief to others may be incidental to a man's bettering himself through the powers of his *nagual* even at the expense of others, or, as Wonderly recorded in his texts II and III and as in stories 31 and 32 of this collection, it may be a matter of revenge. In other cases, such as stories 29 and 30, it may be a matter of malevolence without cause. The term *nagual* seems to be applied equally to the person transforming himself as well as to the resultant transformation. One may say that the man IS a *nagual*; that the animal is a *nagual tigre*, in contradistinction to a natural *tigre*; and also, that the man HAS a *tigre nagual*. It is also thought possible that a person may be able to change into more than one form, although for the most part it seems that the person chooses a certain animal as his *nagual* for a reason such as its power or cunning and then sticks to that form in his transformations. A man may also choose to have as his *nagual* the same animal or thing which is his *tono*, but nowhere is the necessity for doing so implied. A *brujo* may be a *nagual* and since to become a *brujo* one must have studied, it follows in a sense that *brujos* are the most likely to be *naguals*. It is not however true that a *brujo* must be a *nagual* or that all *naguals* are also *brujos*.

Among those things mentioned as *naguals* are *tigre*, humming bird, squirrel, rattlesnake, *rayo*. As *tonos* are mentioned various types of snakes, the *tigre*, crab, eagle, *cometa*, *rayo*, whirlwind.

How is one to know what the *tono* of a person is? José Trinidad answers:

Well, there's a way. Today many folks don't know how. I do know. I saw how one must do. Also old folks told me how they did formerly.

Formerly they did it everywhere. They still do it in Mazatlan. I have a *compadre* who lives in Malacatepec and he told me that they also used to do it. Now only a few folks do it. That's the way it is here too. Only a few folks still do it.

Exactly when the child is going to be born, you must place ashes at the four corners of the house. There is where you will see what is the *tono* of the child. Then you must make a *fiesta* for the *tono*. There in the ashes it will leave its tracks. Every *tono* has a different track. If one's *tono* is to be a snake or viper, there will be seen a track just as if a snake had passed. The sign of the *tigre* is exactly like his footprint. Of course, that of a *cometa* or *maizhits* is a bit different. It looks something like the track of a chicken, but it's much bigger. The sign of a *rayo* is like this - a counterclockwise (perhaps not significant) mark like a piece of rope laid in a spiral on the ground. For one who is to have a whirlwind *tono* a sign something like a conical hole will be found in the ashes (about like that made by an ant-lion). Each *tono* has its own special track.



Although he does not mention it, there are also remnants of the use of a calendar for determining the tono. See discussion under Names. This coincides with Foster in his Nagualism .... pages 92 mid and 93 bottom. Compare with Beals page 97 mid.

On top of the tarima or plank ceiling of the church at Camotlan, in the northwest corner, was a pile of rubbish consisting of parts of the gilded retablo, "altarpiece", of former times, grass thatch, and odd scraps of boards and planks from repair work on the alters and niches. When I asked why they didn't remove that rubbish, I was told that that was the place where the naguals of the people lived and that it was purposely left there so they would have a place to stay. This suggested the belief in the actual existence of the nagual in spirit form even during the time that the person is not using it as a visible transformation.

Transformations of two kinds are mentioned. The first of these is accomplished by the power of another. Of this type we find examples in the origin stories - the manito, "pestle", turned into granddaddy longlegs; the woman into a gopher; disobedient people into tejones, "coatis", and other animals of the fields; a man into a toad. In story 35, the sweatcloth is turned into stinging insects to aid in the escape of Matthew. In story 56, the sash is turned into a snake to scare away the king's daughter. Various motives for the transformations are evident. To none of these transformations just mentioned would either nagual or tono be applied.

The second type of transformation is that by one's own power.

Story 27 concerns the case of a boy who learned to transform himself by reading from the devil's books. It is doubtful that the term nagual would be properly applied to the forms assumed in his transformations. While the term is not applied in the legends to the bird and the squirrel in stories 2, 3, and 4, their damaging activities indicate that this is what they were and in free discussion informants agree that they were. Stories 29, 30 and 33 deal with other instances which, in connection with 28, 31 and 32, illustrate the overlap in the ideas of tono and nagual. This can perhaps be stated thus, a tono may also be a nagual if an individual chooses to take the form of his tono - i.e., transform himself into a tigre, if that is his tono, or into a rattlesnake as in story 30 - and uses that form to do damage to others.

A nagual may be killed. In the case of a rayo nagual, a sharpened machete may do the work. This is used by slashing the air in the direction from which the rayo is thundering. Lazaro Quero of Mitla mentions a similar belief among the Zapotecs which he referred to as cutting the weather. He said that one should sharpen his machete very well and slash back and forth a dozen times or so in the direction of a gathering thunderstorm where it was lightning and thundering. The storm would then not materialize, but one's arm would ache the next day. In the case of animal naguals, they may be killed in the same way that one would kill them if they were only animals, with a machete or gun. One case is given of a rayo being killed with a gun. In the case of the blood-suckers which take the form of turkeys, they are killed by burning the feet they have left at home by the fire.

The informants spoke of fighting by means of one's tono as in stories 40 and 41. The indications are that the individuals concerned took the form of their tonos - not that they sent the tonos to do the fighting while they looked on. If that is so, it illustrates what we have said about overlap in the terms tono and nagual, and would indicate a belief that in such instances the nagual may perform services beneficial to others. This seems to be the sense of the incident where the slim man with the crab tono kills the snake which endangered Coatlan. I have not heard a Mixe express himself on this point and it did not occur to me at the time to ask. Yet, undoubtedly, the man took on the form of a crab, according to the sense of the story, and in that form killed the snake. All other stories give the bad aspect of nagual.

José Trinidad tells of an actual experience of his compadre and his step-father with a tigre and explains that the tigre in question may have been a nagual. It serves to point up some of the things we have been discussing. Here is is:

Today two hunters went out with their muzzle loaders to kill a tigre. To the north of town they went. As you know, there is where some of the townsfolk have their cattle. Well, there has been a tigre bothering the cattle. I think he has already killed one or two of the calves, but I'm not certain of it. But several folks have seen his tracks when they went to look after their cattle. These two hunters went together. Well, there they found the tracks and they were fresh tracks. They didn't have dogs with them. They just took their muzzle loaders. There they went following the tracks. When they had gone some little distance, they suddenly went around a turn in the trail and right there was the tigre sitting looking at them. They were plenty scared, those poor fellows, they say. Why they just threw their shotguns off to one side and off they ran.

That's what happens sometimes. That tigre is a very rascally animal. I think that it's a nagual. That's why sometimes it makes a fool out of a person. Didn't I ever tell you what happened to a compadre of mine? Well, I'll tell you. Why, out in that same direction is where he went. He also went with a companion, with the one who was my stepfather. And each one of the two also had his muzzle loader. They had gone for some distance into the woods when they said to each other, "You go on that side and I'll go more to this side. Let's see if we don't find him. Further above there we'll meet again. If you see him, shout to me. If I see him, I'll shout to you. That way we'll be helping each other.

Well, my stepfather went in one direction and my compadre went in a slightly different direction. Time passed and my stepfather found nothing. He arrived at where they were going to meet again. There he waited, but that compadre of mine didn't come and didn't come. Then my stepfather shouted, but the other didn't answer. "That brute's gone and got himself lost. Or who knows what's happened to him. He's not worth anything to go hunting with. Now I'll have to hunt him. Who knows what bad fortune may have overtaken him."

Well, my stepfather went back again to hunt for him. Where they had separated, there he went for him. Where they had separated, there he went to follow my compadre's tracks. There he went climbing up and up the mountain among the trees when suddenly he came to a bit of an open space. He had just about reached there when he saw his companion seated under a huge tree. But he was naked! There he had hung up his clothes and his machete on a branch. There was this shotgun against the tree. And he was just sitting there.

"What a fool!" thought my stepfather. "What the devil is the matter with that fellow! Now you can bet I'm going to give him a good beating! Why didn't he answer me when I was shouting?" My stepfather was just about to shout at him when he saw the tigre. There it was jumping. Right over my compadre's head it jumped. Then it turned around and jumped back again. And the man just sat there like a fool. Well, my stepfather didn't shout. Right away he went to where he could shoot the tigre. Right in the heart he gave it to that tigre. Right there it fell over in front of my compadre.

"Now, fool," said my stepfather, "get up! Why did you take off your clothes? You're some fine hunter! Why a little more and that animal would have been eating you! What

good does it do you to carry a shotgun? You'd far better have brought a club or better yet your hoe! Ha diantres! You won't answer me anything? Get going! Get up in a hurry or I'll give you a good one!"

Then, he said, my compadre began to tremble a bit. He was just like someone who's dreaming. He began to move himself a bit. At last he said, "Well, Uncle, I don't know what has happened to me. I was following the trail of that animal when I came here. Suddenly, there was the tigre looking right into my eyes. I was just about to shoot. But I don't know what happened to me. I don't remember anything from then till just now when you spoke to me."

Well, it was the tigre that had stupefied him. He put his shotgun to one side, hung his machete up, took off his shirt and pants and hung them on the tree. Right there he sat down and the tigre was jumping back and forth over him. Haven't you noticed that's just the way a cat does with a mouse? But that animal was just about to eat my compadre! What if my stepfather hadn't come along to kill that tigre! That's what happens sometimes. Maybe that's why those two men ran away. It's that they were afraid the tigre would eat them. Only a few people can kill tigras. But this story is indeed true. My stepfather himself is the one who told it to me. I was young yet when it all happened. Perhaps that tigre was a nagual. Who knows.

It may be that their belief that a tigre may be a nagual is the reason for his statement that "not everyone can shoot a tigre". He never explained what the qualifications are for tigre hunting, nor even suggested that any special preparation was necessary for killing even a nagual tigre.

## **65. Spirit beings – narrations of personal experiences**

As one of the divisions in Part II. Stories, I used the title Spirit Beings.. Perhaps Supernatural Beings might be a better term, yet the difficulty would not thus be resolved, for either of the two terms must here be used in an accommodated sense and neither carry with them here all the connotations attached in our usages. Let me make this a bit clearer. For all his extraordinary origin and feats, the Mixe would not consider Kondoy a supernatural being in our sense of the word. He was to them a human being with extraordinary powers. If by Spirit Beings the reader understands only incorporeal beings, then there will be a misunderstanding with resultant confusion. By supernatural beings, however, the reader would be most apt to think of something like the gods or demi-gods of Greek mythology. That would be even worse, for no such idea exists among the Mixes. It seems best to retain the term Spirit Beings with the explanation that it is used in a restricted or accommodated sense and is to be understood only in the light of the accompanying illustrations found in the stories and in the additional explanations of them given in the notes.

As an introduction to a detailed study of these non-human beings, let us consider a general summary of the distinguishing characteristics of each. The devil and demons are thought of as having or using certain definite and characteristic forms, but they may take other forms or vanish from sight. Mayor rayos, though once people, are now spirit beings and are not represented as taking visible form - unless it might be that of lightning flashes as they fight to protect the town. Minor rayos do take form, sometimes human, sometimes that of a snake. The dueño del cerro and Salvajo are spirit beings only in the sense of being not human. The former may have the power of appearing and disappearing at will. This is not clearly established but merely hinted at. The Salvajo does not have this power.

Demons are of several types. Some are described as in stories 13, 22, 23, 24, and 25. Others are not described as in story 21 where the demons who beat Juan seem to be invisible. The demons who are the wind are not generally seen. It is only on rare occasions that they become visible as little boys - perhaps dwarfs - who have been prankishly bent on mischief. There is also the male demon which is referred to by the Mixe term tekytyuk which means "a single (kind of) foot". There is a female demon named wuginy. In speaking of these in Spanish informants used the terms los demonios, "the demons", and era demonio, "It was a demon", or un demonio, "a demon". The term el demonio, "the demon", or el mero demonio, "the very demon" were used only of the devil himself.

Tekytyuk, the male demon, seeks to carry off people on his back.

Various people now living have met up with the male demon and have escaped him. José Pablo told Apolinar, Pablo Aracén and me of one instance as we sat around the campfire in the deep woods:

Don't you know what happened to Manuel Simón? You haven't heard? Well, I'll tell you how that was. He was out here, just about where we are now, because it was out here that he had his cornfield. He was alone in his patch. It had become late and he was going to stay the night under his cornercrib. He had gotten his fire going and had finished supper. Then he made himself a cigar and there he was smoking near the fire. The cigar was almost gone and that Manuel Simón was half asleep when suddenly he saw that there

on the other side of the fire there was a man. That man was looking at him. Then he said to Manuel, "Let's go. I've come here for you."

Well, that Manuel Simón was scared stiff. But he was really scared. He was almost unable to move. He didn't answer a single word. He just began to sweat. It was because he knew right away that this was a demon and that the demon was going to carry him off. He knew very well that he couldn't shoot the demon. And I don't believe he had any salt. Anyway, what he did was begin to pray. Well, there that poor fellow was praying in Mixe - all the prayers that he knew. But there the demon was still. So he began in Spanish and there he was praying all the prayers he knew in Spanish. But still the demon didn't go. There he was on the other side of the fire.

Well, by this time that Manuel was already soaked with sweat, and he was just trembling with fright. There he was thinking, "What will I do now? Of a certainty that demon is going to carry me off! It's just that prayer doesn't get the better of him." Then he remembered that people say the demon isn't able to stand our praying in Latin. Manuel knew one prayer yet - in Latin. So, trembling, he began to pray *Nuestro Salud*, "our health", in Latin. Well, just for an instant the demon stayed and then away he went, once and for all. He just disappeared. And immediately that Manuel got up and went home. That very same night he went. He didn't stay there in his cornfield because he was plenty scared. He just barely escaped.

Apolinar and Pablo, after some little discussion among themselves - "What prayer could that be?" "I don't know." "I never heard of one called that!" - decided that it was actually *Yo te saludo*, "I greet you" - at the meeting of Mary the mother-to-be of the child Jesus and Elizabeth her cousin. The roar of laughter that came from them at this conclusion banished any ghost-story aftermath as effectively as the Latin prayer had run off the demon. Foster mentions the use of Latin prayer as a magical form of protection (page 210 top).

Manuel Simón was not the only one to see the male demon. Pedro Molino and Maximiano tell of Albino's meeting the demons:

Pablo José's son Albino had his corn field at some distance from town. As you know, he is a hunter. He's not afraid to go some distance to clear land. Since his patch was quite a way from town, he often slept there under his *coscomate*, "corncrib", even before it was time to be keeping watch (on the ripening corn). One night he was eating supper when a man came up to him by the fire. Right away Albino sense that there was something the matter - that this was not a person but a demon. Albino had his gun by his side. Then the man said, "Let's go, I've come for you."

"What do you mean you've come for me? I'm not going any place. I'm staying right here."

"No. Come along, I've come for you."

Then Albino says he pointed his gun at the demon and said, "you get going! I'm not going anywhere, but if you don't get going, I'm going to shoot you!" And the demon didn't say anything but he left and went off into the woods.

A few days later, Albino had eaten supper and was almost asleep under his *corncrib* when he sensed that someone was near. Then he saw that the fire was burning more brightly. There was that demon putting wood on the fire. He took off his shirt and Albino saw him heating his back. It began to get like jelly. So Albino quickly took his banana

leaf full of salt and threw it into the fire. Immediately the demon ran off into the woods shrieking, “Burnt salt! Burnt salt!” And Albino never saw him again.

But weeks later, when it was time to be keeping watch, he was sleeping there in his patch one night when he awoke to see a charming girl looking at him. It was already past eleven o’clock at night. “Why do you stay here alone?” she asked.

“I’m watching my cornfield.”

“Every night you sleep here, don’t you? I’ve seen you as I go past. That’s why I’ve come for you. Let’s go to my father’s house.”

“Why? No! I’m not going anyplace.”

“Very well. Then we’ll sleep (together) here.”

“No! Go away! I don’t want to sleep with you.”

“Why? Is it that I’m so ugly that you don’t like me? Or is it that you’re not man enough to sleep with a woman?”

Then Albino seized his shotgun, because he had by this time figured out that it was a wuginy, “the female demon”, and he said, “go away, you! Beat it, or I’ll shoot you!”

“No! No, you can’t shoot me. Even if you do shoot at me you can’t hit (harm) me. But if you don’t want to sleep with me, no one is forcing you to. I’m going now.” And she went, climbing up the trail there. But when she had gotten up there above a way, she was laughing very much. It echoed on all sides as she went. And it continued to echo for quite a while. That’s the way she went. But it was wuginy.

After that Albino didn’t want to sleep out in his patch. That’s just why many men won’t sleep alone in the field (or woods). They are afraid wuginy will speak to them. That’s the way my compadre, Albino’s father Pablo Jos, told me.

Foster mentions the use of salt against witches, page 203 top and 206 mid.

José Trinidad tells of another Camotlaner’s encounter with a “female demon”:

It was Simón Pedro who saw wuginy on the trail to the southeast of town. You see, each year it is the responsibility of the town authorities to clear brush from the sides of the trails. Well, that time they were going to clear the trail that leads to Quiavicusas. That’s tequio, “town works”, and the night previous the town employees had shouted out the news. This Simón had left earlier than the others. He was going ahead when he saw it. They were going to fix up the road there where the ladders are. When he saw it, Simón sat down at the side of the trail to wait his companions. He looked scared so his companions asked him, “What happened?”

Then he answered, “I saw ‘wuginy!’”

Immediately the rest went to see if they could find her.

She hadn’t spoken to him. He just saw a woman with auburn hair and fine skirts going walking up the trail a little bit ahead of him. Since there is no such woman around here, right away he knew it was wuginy. The others didn’t find her. She had disappeared.

Whenever there is to be tequio, the topiles, “unpaid town employees”, stand on the edge of the patio in front of the town hall, church and school and shout over and over again the news that all the men

are to come tomorrow to help in the work. The men bring their own implements such as axes, hoes, machetes, shovels. Only the town band is excused and it must practice those days. In the section of trail referred to in the above story, the terrain is so accidental that in several spots it has been necessary to make notched log ladders. Brush and vines must constantly be hacked back if a man with a pack is to pass at all. During the rainy season folks seldom attempt to travel by it because of the danger of falling.

The belief in wuginy is not confined to Camotlan. José Trinidad tells of an instance from Ixcuintepéc, about five hours to the southeast:

Don't you remember that Pablo who was the presidente municipal when you went there with Pedro and Maximiano? Well he also saw wuginy. He himself is the one who told me about it. He was not in his own house. He was someplace else - maybe it was a mayordomía or something like that. He said that they had drunk a little but that he wasn't actually drunk. He was still sober (en juicio, "in his senses") when he left the house to go to his own house. Then he met two women in the street there. They seemed to be fellow town folk. It even seemed to him that he knew them. Then one of the women said to him, "Come along and sleep with us." So he went with them.

It seemed to Pablo that they were going along the very streets of his own town and he was going to pass the night with them. He didn't notice anything strange until all of a sudden he noticed that the women had disappeared and that neither the houses nor the streets of his town are to be seen! He was at a distance of some three hours walk from town - in a pine woods! That's just the way wuginy deceives people.

That there are other demons which have the power to take different forms to entice or trap people seems to be suggested in the tale told by Alberto:

There was a priest riding his mule over toward the Mixteco. When he came to an arroyo along the trail, there was a pool of water at the foot of a rocky peak. He rode the mule into it so it could drink. As the mule was drinking, the priest looked down into the water and saw a golden malacate, "Spindle whorl", down there in the water. He leaned down to try and pick it up and right there it drew him under the water and into the encanto, "enchanted peak", for the malacate was a demon. The demons wanted a priest. Now the priest is inside the rocky peak there, but really it's an enchanted place. There's where that priest has his church now. He's priest for the demons who live in the encanto, they say. At times, when travelers go by the encanto, they hear bells ringing, they say - calling for mass or vespers. But the priest never comes back. Once and for all he disappeared into the encanto, they say.

Then in regard to the devil himself, various terms are used; el demonio, "the demon", el mero demonio, "the very demon", have already been mentioned above. In addition there are: el diablo, "the devil", el catrín, "the dandy", literally, but actually used in the sense of a mounted man of charro, "rancher, cowboy", type. The latter term is used in stories 14 and 21 and a description is given in story 15. See also Foster page 182 mid.

The devil is contrasted with tekytyuk, the male demon, in that the latter is represented as eating while nowhere is eating mentioned in connection with the former. Tekytyuk is said to go naked at times while the devil is represented as well dressed and even mounted. The devil is said to give treasure while tekytyuk is not. The devil bargains for people, giving gold or cattle which must be paid for by

turning over a person within a set time. Tekytyuk seeks to carry off unwary folks he may be able to find along the trail or sleeping in the woods at their cornfields.

Mass is said to the devil, on occasions, in the cemetery at midnight in order to bring about the death of an enemy - the words and accompanying ritual are unrevealed. Some brujos who wish to perform a type of cure known as "sucking" pray to the devil "to give them powers such as he himself has in his mouth and jaws, that they may be able to suck out of the sick person's body whatever is causing the trouble." They then profess to suck out rocks, pieces of roots, balls of hair, and such things. A brujo named Lucas claimed to have this power and when one of the young fellows told him that he first hid the things in his mouth, he offered to let him choose a chilacayote which would have seeds in it, shaking it to hear them rattle. He, Lucas, would then suck the seeds out of it without leaving a mark on it - without in any way opening it - and spit them on the ground. The others could then cut it open and see that there was not a seed left in it! He demanded payment for the exhibition, however, and no one was willing to pay, so he refused to do it.

Story 16 mentions prayers to the devil for cattle. It is possible to make a contract or agreement with the devil. He punishes those who do not keep the agreement with him. Wilfrido Cruz in Oaxaca Recondita has a story of a Mixe who was turned into a figure of stone by the devil as punishment. Every so often he would be turned back into human form and beaten till he dropped and then returned to his rocky prison. Story 15 suggests that the saying of a mass in the church in behalf of the person will secure his release from contract with or punishment by the devil. This belief is also common at Mitla where it is thought the devil gives wealth, which must be paid for after death, in some instances at least. A well known rich man of the last generation is said to have appeared to an out-of-town Zapotec who was working for the present owner of the rich man's property. He told the poor laborer where his wealth was buried and that it should be his if he would have a mass said for him to give him rest. The man was so frightened that he refused to divulge the whereabouts of the treasure, refused to accept even the wages due him, and left for his home town to die of fright within three weeks after the experience.

When cattle have died in Camotlan, the owner of them waits until near the end of the year to be sure no more are going to die, or to get all which do die within the year included in a single ceremony which is referred to in Spanish as llevarlos al diablo, "take them to the devil". This is done lest at some later date, perhaps even down to the days of the grandson of the one whose cattle died, the devil should come and kill some more. The offering seems to be made only once a year and includes all the cattle which may have died since the last offering. Strangely enough, the offering is almost identical with that made for a deceased human. Perhaps the "prayers" differ, for I was unable to find out what they say in connection with either of the offerings. The count of ocotes and the number of bundles might also differ slightly.

Rayos are various sorts. Some would come under our definition of Spirit Beings, while others would not. Mixes believe that there is lightning (rayo) which is natural and not a spirit being. But there are minor rayos, nagual rayos and rayos mayores, "mayor rayos", all of which would be spirit beings in one sense or another. Minor rayos are spirit beings which can take human or other forms and with whom humans may sometimes marry as in stories 8 and 9. (See Foster page 197 mid.) In the light of this belief one can understand the following account by Apolinar Robles:

I was there in my house when two boys came and said, "Let's go take out the rayo's children at Worm-eaten Peak."

Then I said to them, "Where are the rayo's children? Have you tied them up?"

"No," they said. "Your namesake says there are a rayo's children."



“There he is waiting at the cemetery.” So I went.

When I came to the cemetery, there was Apolinar Juárez waiting for me. When he saw me he said, “Son Apolinar, if you’re really a man, go and take out that animal.”

Then I said to him, “It takes a man, does it? Why it’s only a bird. It isn’t anything to take it out.”

“Very well. We’ll see.” And we climbed up and came to where Manuel Hairy-chest was planting.

He said, “Where are you going?”

Apolinar Juárez answered him, “Up above here. My namesake wants to go take out the rayo’s children.”

Then Hairy-chest said, “Seeing how he doesn’t want to live-! He’s just talking! WHEN will he take them out!”

Then Apolinar said, “Let’s go see.”

When I climbed up there, I took off my shoes. Then I said to Apolinar Juárez, “Give me the rope.” And I tied it around my waist. I went to where the animals were. When I reached there, they hissed terribly. I went into the cave and saw where the animals were, and I lassoed one with the rope and pulled it out.

Then I said to Apolinar Juárez, “Grab your dinner.” And he replied, “Have you taken it out already?”, and he seized it and said, “What demon is this?” And they let it go and it escaped. When I came out, the animal had gotten away.

Then I said, “Where did you put that animal?” And Apolinar Juárez said, “It’s gone!” So we left there and came back to town and Apolinar Juárez deceived the people and told them, “Apolinar already went and got the money. He wants to take it to Oaxaca to sell it.” And the people really believed him. That’s how it was when I went and took out the rayo’s children.

Apolinar Robles lived in our house for more than four years in Oaxaca City while we gave him advantage of two additional years of schooling to complete his sixth year and receive a certificate. He had visited caves with me and was the only young fellow in town who would have dared touch the birds in question - birds which he says were not buzzards but were as large as buzzards.

As seen in stories 8 and 9, it is a current belief that money can be secured from a rayo. See also the notes with story 19. This explains the connection of money with the above story. It is thought that by taking a gift or offering of chickens, tamales, tepache, copal or similar things, one can secure treasure from the rayos who live in caves at various places.

There are nagual rayos, which of course are not actual lightning. Story 27 mentions their trying to kill an enemy and along with stories 31 and 33 speak of destroying the property of an enemy. (See Foster p. 207). Major rayos are said to be Fathers of the Town and are represented as being protectors of the town of Camotlan. Compare story 12 with 47 and the notes. Rayos are also thought to protect the things of the ancients, although José Trinidad doesn’t specify that it is major rayos who do this:

About forty years ago, the town tequio was to bring cedar planks for use in the making of furniture chests, altar boards, pillars, niches - for the church. So almost all the men left very early in the morning. The stand of cedar lay to the southeast on the trail to

Quiavicusas. Many of the men felled their trees, hewed out their planks and returned late the same day. Some were lazy and decided to spend the night there since they had not finished their planks. This small group slept in the mouth of a cave. One of their number, more venturesome than the rest, took a pitch pine torch and went a bit farther back into the cave. He found a number of earthenware vessels of different sizes and shaped and some clay figurines in shapes of animals and people. He picked up a number and put them into his net bag. (Pedro Molino says it was an incense burner he took).

When he showed them to his companions and told them he intended to take them home, they warned him to put the things back lest some ill fortune befall them. He refused and almost immediately a terrific thunderstorm broke and instantly the cave was filled by a huge rush of water. The frightened companions told him to put back the things or they would kill him and put them pack themselves for they didn't intend to be drowned. The minute he put back the dishes and figurines, the cave dried up completely.

The account is commonly known in Camotlan and is told by different ones with only slight variations. It has come to me from two other sources also. Quite a few men who went to work that day are still alive.

The idea that the rayos protect the things of the ancients is also held in progressive towns like Juquila. In 1939 Fidel Santos, a Juquila trader, came to our house in Camotlan to sell hammocks, lariats, bridles and cinches made of maguey fiber - wares he had purchased at the fiesta of Yalalag, a Sierra Zapotec town. Seeing some fragments of pottery and a crude stone idol which I had brought out of the cave, he warned me that it is risky business to fool with the things of the ancients:

I was working a piece of land off to one side of Juquila.

The morning I'm telling you about, I left early to go there to work. There were several of us going in that direction for many folks were planting out that way then. About half an hour's walk from town we decided to rest. There was a clearing there and we saw this idol. It was about a meter high. It was of stone and it had a hat of stone on it. In fact, it looked something like they say the friars dressed. We were fooling around there and making remarks about the idol. I said, "Poor fellow. His head must be tired by now after wearing that heavy stone hat all these years." So I took it off and set it down at his feet. Then one of the other fellows defecated right next to the idol.

Well, do you know it started to thunder and lightning! And it hadn't been cloudy at all. It hadn't looked as though it were going to rain. We knew right away it was because we had been fooling around with that idol. I decided I was going home and not to the field. I started home but three different times the rayo knocked me off my feet! I certainly was scared. Why, it was after midday when I finally got home and it had taken only half an hour to get there. I guess I was a couple hours getting back home. That was because the rayo was very angry at us for bothering the idol. That's why it was there knocking me off my feet and thundering around all the way home. And it never did rain! It wasn't the lightning which goes with rain. It was the rayo. That's why I say it's risky business to fool with the things of the ancients.

In the trails and in the street of many of the towns can be found pieces of obsidian blades which they call navájas, "razors", and which are undoubtedly like the ones described by Bernal Diaz as being used for shaving at the time of the conquest. Mixes call these anáabúhxt, "machetes of the rayos" and firmly believe they are pieces broken off as the machetes are clashed together (story 12). This belief is not limited to Camotlan. It is prevalent also at San José Paraíso in the flats below

Coatlan. So much so that grown men will listen to the scientific explanation of the origin of obsidian, listen politely and patiently, all the while exchanging smiling and knowing glances among themselves as if to say, "Poor fellow, he believes that stuff. But then what could you expect? He's a foreigner." And when the explanation is done, they will say, "Yes, and when we see lightning, if one goes to where it strikes, one can find these little "machetes of the rayos". And sometimes we find big ones in the woods where the lightning has been."

Science makes little headway against tradition. This belief corresponds exactly to that of the Popolucas as recorded by Foster p. 184 bottom, and 185. Foster has pointer out also that "In Europe, prehistoric blades were called 'lightning stones'. This apparently is a very ancient world-wide belief."

## 66. Underworld

The underworld - inferno as they refer to it, using a Spanish loan word - is the place of the demons and the devil as is seen in story 58. In story 45 there is a reference to the road which leads there as being in a cave just to the east of Camotlan. No description is given except that the devil has a jail there in which Fourteen was put.

In the sense in which we are using the term, there are two other types of beings that belong in the list - that called *dueño del cerro*, "owner of the mountain" and that called *salvajo*. The latter term would normally mean "a savage" but the description shows them to be different than the Mixes themselves, except in size and in the fact that they control and corral animals such as the *jabalí*, "peccary". See story 26 and Foster p. 209 for a comparison of Mixe and Popoluca beliefs. The Mixe *salvajo* does not eat people as the Popoluca report of the grand *salvajes*. Nor is the *salvajo* so tremendously big.

The *dueño del cerro* has some traits much like those of the *salvajo*. By some he is thought to have in his charge wild animals such as deer and *jabalí*. However, he is much less mentioned in Camotlan than the *rayo* or *de demonio* or *catrín*. He appears to be a wrinkled little old man, of normal stature for a Mixe, so that he is not distinguishable from an ordinary person. Apparently various ones of these beings have control of certain regions, their domain being limited, and there are numbers of them. Story 20 gives one instance.

*Brujerías* is a term which includes offerings for a number of varied purposes. It seems possible to divide these offerings arbitrarily into two general classes which of necessity overlap or are interrelated to some extent. The two classifications are PROPITIATION - in the sense of preventing the spirits from being angry with the maker of the offering and at the same time making them favorably inclined towards granting his requests; this group would include petitions - and REMUNERATION - in the sense of payment or thanks for value received; in that these latter are essential if the spirits are to be kept in a favorable mood, they also partake of a propitiatory nature. In fact, one is impressed with the feeling that everything they do in the nature of offerings or sacrifices is by way of propitiation. It is notable that there is no truly Mixe word for "thanks", the term used - *Dios kuhuyip*, "God repay you" - being evidently introduced by the friars. The incongruity of the term appears only when desiring to thank God, for *Dios kuhúyiba Dios* "God repay you God", is the form that must be used. It is indeed doubtful, then, if any of the offerings are in the sense of thanksgiving as we know the term. The idea seems rather to be that unless these certain prescribed offerings are made, there will be no *suerte*, "good fortune", for the individual in the future. Moreover, it is very definitely felt that by these prescribed offerings the spirits are obligated to grant the petition, whether they will or no. Foster (p. 185, last of second paragraph) points out that this idea is applied to the saints: "...a witch who knows the proper techniques can by means of magic enlist their services for nefarious purposes. The witch lights a candle in a spot in honor of a specified saint, and mutters the request that the saint aid him in bringing death to a specified victim. Though it may be against his wishes, the magical spell is so potent that the saint is not able to help himself." The general theory behind this statement certainly applies to the Mixes, although I know of no instances of their enlisting a saint's aid in killing an enemy. I am certain they would not hesitate to do so if their end could not be effectively accomplished by their black magic, and would see nothing incongruous in doing so for it is in keeping with their practice in regard to the spirits.

In discussing *brujerías* one day with José Trinidad, he remarked that the ream of paper I had at hand would be insufficient to record all that just one *brujo* might tell me about them and that each *brujo* had his own formulas or recipes for treating various things and for making the various offerings. It is my impression that certain *brujos* have concocted what they feel are the most effective ways of ensuring the aid and cooperation of the spirits. These are trade secrets and, while they may be passed on to an apprentice, they are not made known generally. While José' had reference mainly to offerings made for healing different diseases, it applies also to some extent to other offerings as well. There are, of course, certain broad lines of precedent and custom which are not departed from. The variations are in the nature of refinements or additions to these. It may be in the order of preparation of the elements of the offering, or in the manner of setting it up for offering it, or the location at which it is offered - the depth to which it is taken into the cave. It is evident, then we can here give no final and exhaustive treatment of the matter, but rather suggest in outline form those things which are readily observable to one living among them. The explanations given are those received from the ordinary Mixe and not those of a *brujo* who might be considered to speak as an expert on the subject. Such treatment will be the aim of a latter paper for which research is being carried on.

There is sacrifice or offering by way of PROPITIATION AND PETITION for; protection, rain and good crops, mules, wives, babies, luck in hunting, success in journeys. At the time of clearing land, especially the clearing of land destined for the planting of crops, offerings are made to the earth, *el mundo*. A white male turkey is the superior offering but, lacking that or the means to secure it, white roosters are next best and any young chickens will do if white roosters are not available. It is felt that if an offering is not made before the beginning of the land clearing, there will be bad fortune, *desgracia*. A snake might bite one, or a tree might fall on one during the clearing process, or axe or machete might hit a knot or become entangled in a vine and so swerve from their intended mark to cut one's foot or hand. A tiger might even spring on one. The proposed patch to be cleared is first marked out by four token patches cleared at the four corners of the field-to-be. This is a necessary precaution since land is held communally and the likely spots throughout the mountains will be in demand. Next, several small chickens, the most common sacrifice, will be taken to this site - sometimes one for each corner of the plot - and will be killed there, either by slashing their throats or by cutting off the entire head which is then left there. The blood is allowed to run out on the ground, the fowl being loosed "to make his noise", squawking until bled dry. In the case of a large fowl, where only one is being offered, some of the blood is let out at each corner. At times some liquor, mescal or tepache, is poured out too. The fowls are then taken home to be made into tamales for the consumption of the family. Copal is often burned at each corner.

House sites, known as *solares*, are generally within the confines of the town or on the edges of an expanding town. In either case, the clearing of *monte grueso*, "thick woods", is seldom necessary. The offering here seems to be limited to a sacrifice made when the roof is up. In the case of thatch-roofed houses, the roof is raised first. In Camotlan there are no exceptions to this regardless of the type of wall to be used, wattle-and-daub, adobe, hewn planks, or vertical or horizontal poles, or even *ocopetate* which is a tough fern-like leaf used for filling in between widely spaced horizontally placed rods which have been tied to uprights just as for the wattle-and-daub wall.

When our first house was finished, according to them, with the completion of the roof, Pedro Rafael who had formerly been a Juqueleño but had for years lived in Camotlan, wanted to sacrifice a turkey and put its blood on the four corner posts (there were six post supporting the three-beam roof). I asked why. He said *Para librarnos*, "to free us", and would give no further explanation. More recently, I mentioned this to José Trinidad in asking what the custom is. "That fellow knows nothing," he snorted. "When one finishes a house, right in the middle (of the floor space) he digs a hole. There he places five bunches of pine needles - he knows how he's to count them. There is one huge bunch, about

this size (nine to twelve inches in diameter), which is the cabeza mayor, "main head". Then there are four smaller bundles (about four to five inches in diameter). These are placed in the hole in the middle of the house. Then a turkey is killed also and they let his blood go there in the middle. There they will bury it all."

There were no offerings for rain in Camotlan, that I know of.

When rain was excessive or long continued, special times of prayer were called in the church. One or two years when rain failed to come in season and the crops were threatened by its lack, they did the same. Offerings are reputedly made for rain by other towns nearer Zempoaltepetl. Those of Tlahuitoltepec sacrifice turkeys on the highest knob on the east side of the south end of the ridge. The main ridge runs northeast southwest. There are said to be at least three altars on Zempoaltepetl, one in the middle and one at each end of the ridge. There are probably more. I have seen only one, for the Yacoche guide and carrier who accompanied us from his ranch some distance above Zacatepec until we descended the south end of the mountain into Yacoche refused to take us to the main shrine because it was too far off the main trail, not to my way of thinking the real reason. It is altogether possible that those of Yacoche also sacrifice there. He refused to divulge any information about practices or identity of the users of the one shrine we found not far from the place where the Zacatepec-Yalalag trail reached the summit and joined with the trail running along the top of the ridge. This central shrine was situated on a small hummock at the base of a cliff on the southern or eastern side of the ridge. The shrine itself was made of slabs of flat stones piled up to form a rough circle with an opening in the one side. The whole was roofed with a huge slab. Turkey feathers littered the ground and the gully to the west of the altar. In the gully were also the remains of carrizo baskets in which the turkeys had been brought. Inside the shrine itself were beans, grains of corn, coffee beans, tamale leaves, candle drippings and blood splashes. Our Yacoche friend did offer the information that the shrines on either end of the ridge were more used than this. As Beals pointed out, these offerings are of a personal rather than of a village nature. That seems to be true of all Mixe offerings. It is an individual and not a tribal or communal matter.

While Zempoaltepetl is said to be the source of rain and the proper place for offerings for rain, by Mixe and also reportedly by Zapotecs of the Villa Alta area, it seems not to be limited in that matter of rain. It is evident that the petitions are for good crops also, or perhaps for sufficient rain for good crops, and the sign of that is the presence in the shrine of beans, corn and coffee beans. The first two of these are what we might call the subsistence crops of the region and the third is the cash trading crop. In the Camotlan area it is coffee which forms the basis of trade with the outside world by way of the Zapotec traders from Mitla in the Valley and Ixtaltepec on the Isthmus and, to a lesser extent, though the Juquila and Tamazulapam buyers and traders.

Offerings to ensure good crops of corn, beans, chilis are made at planting time which follows immediately after the clearing and burning over of new land or the reworking of last year's corn patch for the chili patch of this year. Once again chickens or turkeys are sacrificed. Which it will be depends on the affluence of the sacrificer and the size of the piece of land to be planted (see story 23).

On the Ocoatepec-Juquila trail where it is joined by the trail from Estancia there is a group of crosses. At certain times of the year, folks enroute to fiestas to the west of there will make prayer effigies there exactly like the ones made by Zapotecs at the shrine on the Mitla-Matatlán boundary. It is possible that Zapotecs from Guevea and Guegovelaga enroute to the fiesta of Juquila Mixes are the main ones to make them. Prayer effigies of a different sort are made annually during the fiesta of Ixcuintepec in a cave on the edge of town. The cave is now known as the Cave of the Virgin because of a reputed apparition of the Virgin there. Annually thousands attend this fiesta, coming from all the Mixe towns and from the Isthmus Zapotec towns as well. One had not "done" the fiesta until he has

made his visit to the cave, bathed in the water of the sacred mountain. Previous to my visit to the cave, outside of the rush season, this was described to me as being a spring of crystal clear water encircled by a natural white rock parapet. What wonders imagination and a smoky pine torch will work! In the light of my gasoline lantern it looked like a hog wallow. There was no spring at all, the place being filled by surface seepage and probably drying up completely by March or April. Whether folks actually bathed there I am not sure. If they do nothing more than wash their hands in the mud hole, it is a highly unsanitary practice. Before leaving the cave, one is supposed to make a prayer effigy from mud scraped from the bottom of the pool and to stick it in one of the little natural niches or crevices anywhere in the cave. The cave was littered with them. One is supposed to stick a coin in the effigy. The boys accompanying me collected a few coins from the figures, all small coins, but they called attention to places where there had been pesos and tostones (silver fifty-cent pieces) stuck in some of the figures. They said that during the fiesta there is a sacristan who is in attendance there and that without a doubt he removes the larger coins and takes them to the priest, an interesting sidelight on commercializing paganism! Some of the effigies were figures of animal such as mules or oxen, some were of houses. One was of a woman kneeling at a metate grinding corn - either a petition for a wife or one that a wife would learn how to grind. It is almost unthinkable that a Mixe girl would not know how, so it was probably the former. Some things were unrecognizable. One group was well done and represented a couple, man and woman, standing before a figure in a long gown with a book in its hand and certainly representing a priest. A silver peso which had originally been embedded in the priest's stomach had disappeared but the group was otherwise intact. So long as the effigies remain intact, the petitions continue in effect. To whom are the petitions directed? No answers are offered.

We have already mentioned and described the offerings made to various spirit beings for the securing of cattle and treasure.

For luck in hunting it is necessary for the hunter to keep the skulls of the animals killed during the year. They are boiled in an olla and flesh removed. Then they are hung under the eaves or in the loft until a sufficient number is collected for taking to a special place in the mountain where they are left with an offering. Each hunter has his own place for leaving the skulls of the animals which fall to his luck. At least once a year, oftener if a sufficient number of animals is killed, this offering is made. Here again, it seems, the emphasis is on propitiation for they do not speak of giving thanks for good fortune but claim that if they fail to make the offering and deposit the skulls they will have no more good luck in hunting. Perhaps, in this light, it might be considered also as a petition for future hunting luck.

For calling deer, Pedro Molino at times uses a gamitadera made of a bat's wing. Whether this material is used merely because the membrane makes a good call or for some other reason, he did not say. When we were killing some bats in one of the caves, he made some remark about hijos del mundo, "sons of the world or earth", at which the other fellows laughed, but he did not explain it later. The bat is thought to be in some way connected with the devil and for that reason it is very difficult to keep them from sucking blood from the horses, mules and burros. In speaking of them one must not use the term siega, derived from the Spanish murcielago, but must use the word tush, "palm", so they won't return and suck blood again.

Offerings for healing of sicknesses are varied in accord with the malady. It may even be, from what José Trinidad said, that there is a separate offering or variation in the offering for each sickness. In addition to the physical elements which make up the offerings, there are the prayers or sacred formulas to be repeated in each case. José promised that sometimes he would tell me the prayers and describe the offerings for some sicknesses but that he'd have to do it in Mixe for he didn't know the

Spanish words for the things. He has put off doing so, and has given only general facts. Some offerings are made in caves, some in the tops of certain mountains depending upon the section of town in which the sick person lives. Some are merely left there, other are burned, while for espanto, "fright", which most often occurs in small children who accompany their mother to the river, the offering is thrown into the river.

For some offerings ocote-pine is used. This is split up in pieces of uniform length and thickness - comparable in size to a thick lead pencil - to an accompaniment of certain prayers. The number and size of the bundles of ocote are specified by custom - a big bundle of a set number of sticks and smaller bundles of uniform size, also of set numbers of sticks. Each offering must be accompanied by one egg at least, and that one a turkey egg. More eggs are often used but the total number is always an odd number resulting from adding even numbers of hens eggs to the original turkey egg. While they may use their own eggs for these offerings, it is believed that the hens whose eggs are so used will stop laying, so unless they want to kill the hen they will try to purchase eggs from others without their knowing how they are to be used. They will not knowingly sell eggs for this purpose.

Ocote is not always used. Some offerings may use split carrizo pieces of uniform length. In other instances the needles of a certain type of long-leafed pine are used. They are of species whose needles come in clusters of five or seven and the resultant bundles are calculated as to the number of such clusters of needles. The offering made by a childless or newly married woman to ask for a baby will use neither of these but instead a certain special zacate, "grass", which grows in clumps. A set number of such clumps forms each bundle and a knot is tied in each bundle about the middle, the number of bundles also being prescribed. Some offerings are accompanied by the killing of chickens, some by tamales, some by cigarettes, some at least by the burning of copal.

In spite of brujerías, people die. But the brujo is certain of employment for death requires too that offerings be made. The bundles of ocote are of one count if the dead person is a man, another count if a woman. The term levantar el muerto, "raise up or pick up the dead person", is used to refer to this, as is seen in stories 3 and 5. A similar offering in connection with cattle that have died has already been described in connection with the devil since the term used in that connection llevarlos al diablo, "Take them to the devil". It is said that similar offerings are also made in connection with old manuscripts of the dances when these are outworn and have had to be recopied and with the bamboo framework of Santiago's horse, used in the dances. These outworn things are left in some cave, it is said, with appropriate ceremonies. I have looked in vain for the manuscripts.

As was previously mentioned in passing, the offerings are at times nefarious in purpose. Of that type are those related to what seems to be referred to as magia negra, "black magic", when spoken of in Spanish. Perhaps the magia blanca, "white magic", is that used for healing or what might be considered beneficent purposes. Another type is referred to as magia roja "red magic", but the terms are seemingly not translations of Mixe terms used as designations of categories of offerings or activities of brujos. These offerings and activities are always referred to merely as brujerías. A person may have a spell cast on him and so be embrujado, "bewitched". It was by means of a brujería that this was accomplished. There are various ways of doing this. Once beyond Juquila on the road to Ocotepéc I found a bundle of sharpened bamboo sticks with a match box tied to it. The bundle lay inside a hollow in a tree by the trail where folks always stop for a drink at the spring. It was, so my carriers informed me, a brujería - the sharp sticks were meant to cause stabbing pains in the body of the victim and the match box to cause him burning fever.

Then there was the case of José de los Santos. I knew him as a member of the school's Committee of Education in which capacity he served during my first two years in Camotlán. A friendly



man, we saw much of him in those days since we lived in one room of the school building and his task was to be there daily to help the teacher in directing others in the repair or clean-up of school property or in planting or gathering the school crops. He was short, stocky and strong. He had a strong constitution to thank for his still being alive for his face was very deeply marked with the scars of smallpox. His father, he said, had taken him to another town where many had the disease. There he had taken a thorn and pricked one of the pox to get the pus which he then rubbed into some scratches made on José' with the same thorn. The oldsters of that time had somehow gotten the idea that this would protect the lives of their children. José lived, but not all who received this type of vaccination were so fortunate. Then we heard that he was sick and we no longer saw him about town.

Apolinar told us:

He's had a spell cast on him; he's bewitched, they say. An old woman did it. She put some kind of a hard lump in his stomach, they say. That is why he doesn't want to eat. And she put great big worms in him. The other day, his son Juan says, when José' was lying down one started to come out of his nose, but it went back in when they tried to catch it. So it's probably true what they say. Juan says you can feel the lump in his father's stomach. They have gone to other brujos to get the spell taken off, but José still doesn't get any better. He will probably die.

Later Apolinar again brought the news:

José died. And his wife Juana had the old woman arrested. They put her in jail and the town authorities were going to cut José open to see if it was true that the old woman is a bruja and had put something into his stomach that killed him. They'd have done it too, but I told the teacher and he went over and scolded the authorities and told them if they did that and didn't let the old woman go right away, he'd write to the governor. So they let her go.

But Juana (José's wife) is a bruja too. And Rosa says that right after the authorities released the old woman, Juana met her down at the river and cursed her and said, "Don't think you'll get away with it! I'm casting a spell on you, now. And you'll just swell up and die too." Well, it's true that the old woman is swelled up in her face and neck and she can scarcely walk. Her face is the color of ashes. I saw her down at the river. And when I greeted her she could scarcely mumble an answer. But who knows if it's really because Juana put a spell on her or maybe just espanto, "fright". Who knows but what they really might have killed her if they's cut José open and found something in his stomach.

The teacher confirmed Apolinar's report:

Yes, they had the old woman in jail. I didn't know what's the matter with these crazy people! They certainly intended to cut José's body open, for they claimed this bruja had put something in his stomach. Almost certainly they'd have found a mass of round worms. Everyone out here has them. That's what they saw coming out of his nose the other day. And if they had found a tumor, they might actually have killed the old woman because of their ignorance and superstition. They would have claimed she put the mass in him.

When Apolinar told me what they were going to do, I went right over to the Municipio. They turned her loose - I stayed there till they did. Now they say another bruja is putting a spell on her. Seems they never will learn! Compare with this the Popoluca nagual "inserting an animal in the body of another to kill" (Foster p. 184 top) and Foster's story 12.

People constantly fear such things. Women stuff their combings into cracks in the mud wall of the house - never throw away lest someone use them as a means of casting a spell on them. Old articles of clothing are likewise saved. Bandages with pus and blood are not thrown into the fire. That would cause a terrific burning in the affected part. When I have thrown them away in a trash heap, they have been picked up and stuffed into a crack in the wall, just like the hair.

Alberto became my cook and informant in October 1936 when I began my study of Mixe in Camotlan. The friendship then formed continues. He spoke as much and as good Spanish as anyone in town outside of the teacher. During the years he has been either sacristan or acolyte and can lead in the chants for funerals, Lenten processions, and similar affairs. He was one of the best educated people in town in spite of his youth.

The friend who had accompanied me on my first trip in the fall of 1936 and had made arrangements for Alberto's being my cook, again accompanied me in the spring of 1949. We found Alberto in his hammock, sick with a high fever and unable to get up. He explained that he had been sick for several weeks and thinking the fever and chills might be malaria, had taken medicine for that, but was no better. We gave him more malaria medicine, suggested alcohol rubdowns to reduce the fever and, at Alberto's request my friend who is an osteopath as well as a medical corpsman during the war gave him several treatments. On former occasions these treatments had knocked chills and fever immediately for more than one sufferer. Now they had no noticeable effect. Then Alberto, seeming to sense more than he was ready to admit about his sickness, said "Only God can take it away. Won't you please pray for me that He will take it away and make me well?"

We were glad to pray with him and we continued with the other remedies. There were no spectacular results from any of our efforts. But during our week there he did get steadily better and was able at last to get up, bathe and sit in a chair for several hours a day although he continued to complain of headache and dizziness. Before we left he asked us to continue praying for him.

Some months later, Alberto visited us in Mitla and told us the following story of his experiences subsequent to our departure from Camotlan:

Do you know, the week after you left, I became sick again! I was more sick than before! I can't tell you exactly how it was. But I thought I was going to die. I couldn't get up. I couldn't eat. I could barely talk sometimes. Sometimes I couldn't even talk. I just drank a little coffee. I couldn't swallow tortillas or bread. My head ached; my whole body ached as if I'd been beaten with a club. At times I felt terribly hot inside me but my body was cold to the touch. And when I'd be feeling cold or having chills, sometimes the outside of my body was hot to the touch, they said. I've had malaria before, but this wasn't malaria. It was far worse. At times it seemed as though my body were dead. I couldn't move. I could hear people talk but I couldn't answer.

For three weeks or more I was like that. Medicine didn't help me at all. I had no strength. I constantly remember God (*recordaba yo mucho de Dios*, "thought much about God" or even, perhaps, "cried out to" in the sense of an unformulated cry for help). And surely it was God Who kept me from dying.

Why, do you know, it wasn't malaria or anything like that!

It was a spell that had been put on me. That's why the medicine did no good! That Eusebio Manuel is to blame. Different folks have told me. He envies me. He told different people, just after I got my last lot of merchandise to sell, that he was going to fix me. Now I know what he did. He told other folks and some of them were my friends and have told me. He went to the graveyard at midnight and said a mass to the

devil. He burned incense and all just like in a mass at the church. Only he prayed to the devil! And there's one place in his prayers where he asks the devil to make the person on whom he's casting the spell just like all these people who are there in the graveyard! I don't know what all else he says. But the man who has helped him sometimes is the one who told me about that part.

That's what he did against me. That's why I was so sick and why I almost died. That's why the medicine didn't do any good. It wasn't just malaria. It was that spell, and the devil was doing it. But God is stronger than the devil. It was remembering God constantly that saved me.

Eusebio is also connected with the church as maestro de capilla, "chaplain", and can read Latin as well as recite by memory, so they say, Quintana's Doctrine in Mixe. The priest himself told me that they had even been saying mass without a priest (there is no resident priest in most Mixe towns), and it seems Eusebio is the one who had taken charge in the matter. Recently he has been Presidente Municipal. The jealousy between them is deeper than a matter of Alberto's prosperity in selling merchandise.

Some say that at times in connection with this mass to the devil, a little figure is made which represents in effigy the intended victim of the black magic and that this effigy is buried in token of the fate petitioned for the victim. Is not this similar to some of the practices of voodooism?

## 67. Treasures: Three kinds

There are also those offerings which seem to be by way of REMUNERATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT - remuneration for and acknowledgment of value received.. As was already pointed out, the thought of propitiation is still present because unless these offerings are made no future good fortune can be expected. Of this nature are those offerings or gifts taken to the cave of the rayo or dueño del cerro or the clothes given to the salvajo (story 26). In these instances, good fortune in whatever shape sought is strictly on an exchange or pay-in-advance basis, depending on one's point of view. The idea is basic in stories 16, 17, 19, 20, 21 and even in 14, 15, and 18 the bargain was sealed in advance and the human beings involved had no way of getting out of paying. To all intents and purposes it was still exchange or even pay-in-advance although the actual payment would not become due and would not be exacted until later.

At time of harvest of the crops planted yearly, there is once again the sacrifice of turkeys or chickens. In the case of hunting, as we have mentioned, there is an offering at least once a year in connection with which the skulls of those animals already killed are carried out to the woods to be deposited in a special place. In almost all these offerings mentioned, copal incense figures. Copal incense is by no means a church innovation. Rather the friars took on an old Mixe custom. And still today copal figures just as much in the offerings to the demons, spirit beings, the earth, and the devil himself as it does in church ritual.

The Mixe seem to be quite treasure-minded. There are several kinds of treasure spoken of. One is that buried or hidden by people who have previously lived and died in the neighborhood. Those of today may come upon the hiding place while clearing land, hunting, or taking refuge in some cave. At times, a green or blue light may be seen at night - something like flames of a color similar to fire in which copper is being heated, flames which leap high and then subside to almost nothing only to leap high again and again subside. Upon digging at the site from which the flames emanate, the treasure will be found. Various ones of Camotlan claim to have seen this light on the ledge to the north of town near the spot where Kondoy is said to have left his money. No one has ever found anything although several even went there to dig. This belief in a blue light showing where there is treasure is far more widespread than merely among the Mixes. It is found in Yucatan. I found it also in San Lorenzo Albarradas and in Mitla. A friend in the military entourage of the general in charge of central Oaxaca state, told me of a friend of his in Durango who saw the same kind of light and actually found treasure in an old house. Around Santa Maria Albarradas the light is said to reveal even the tombs of the Ancients and such treasure as jade beads and pottery as well as gold and silver ornaments. On occasions only bones are found where the light was seen. The tomb under the hacienda of Xaag to the east of Mitla, as I believe Parsons also reports, was found by a mozo's seeing such a flame at night. But all these are found accidentally and not by design and are therefore no sure source of certain riches.

The sure sources of supply of riches are the demon, the rayo, or the dueño del cerro. We have already touched on the offerings requisite for securing treasure from these. One manner of securing wealth, mentioned in stories 3 and 45, was that of merely raising the hand and finding it filled with money. The place for receiving this ability is thought to be the cave just to the east of Camotlan, but no hint as to the donor was given. They seem to feel that it might still be possible to receive such ability. There was no hint that the woman who built the church made any offering to receive this gift.

Caves are much associated with treasure. A number of narratives of personal experiences will reveal actual present-day Mixe belief in regard to treasure, as seen in various towns. The late Don Martín Ponciano of Alotepec told the following:

There are caves in many places throughout the Mixe region.

I know of some near Alotepec. But I have a compadre in Cacalotepec who told me of one near Chusnabán. Do you know about one there? It is on the right side of the trail and in Mixe is called "Oak Felled Doorway".

There was one who was formerly called the Political Chief. He is the one who decided to enter the cave there. And he took with him his underlings. There were men from different Mixe towns. And my compadre was one of them. He's the one who told me the story later on. The Political Chief told them he wanted to go to the cave and had them gather pitch pine and candles for light. In those days they didn't have gasoline lanterns like they have now. Well, my compadre said, they started into the cave although some were afraid and didn't want to go. Before long they came to a big room, he said, bigger than the church. There were a lot of cedar chests, blankets, petates, - everything. So the folks with the Political Chief said, "Let's take these and go on out again."

"No. Leave them. I'm going back in further. I want to see my Tio, "uncle", and talk with him. Then I'll find out what he'll give us." So they started on back into the cave. Now that they saw there were a lot of good things there, they were all anxious to speak to the Tio and ask for them. They had gone on quite a distance when, SPLASH!, they all suddenly fell into water and out went their candles and pitch pine and they were in complete darkness! They were soaked and couldn't light them again.

Then they began to wail and lament, "Why did we ever come?"

Why didn't we just take the chests and things and go out again? Now we'll just die here in the dark. We won't ever get out!" And the Political Chief said the same thing.

But my compadre said, "Are you crazy? Maybe we won't ever get out. And maybe we will die. But I'm not going to stand here and die. I'm going to try to get out at any rate. Didn't you notice that there was water running out of that other cave down below where we came in? Well, haven't you noticed that this is a river we're standing in? Maybe it comes out there. Anyway, I'm going to follow it. Maybe we won't get out, but I'm not going to stand here and die. Don't be cowards! Come on, follow me!" So they started out. Since they had no light, they could not go very fast. Often they fell. And many times they banged their heads and scratched themselves on the rocks. Sometimes they had to crawl on hands and knees and down over falls. But at last they came to light and got out. But their clothes were ruined and they were bruised and scratched all over.

My compadre says he never went back in there again. But they say that people from Cacalotepec have since gone there and taken out all the chests and blankets and other things. They say they're not there anymore.

Juquileños differ in regard to the name of the cave Don Martín spoke of. They say he confused two very similar Mixe words and claim that it should be Chief Father's Doorway, referring to Kondoy. They are in accord with his beliefs in the existence of treasures and in caves as likely depositories for them. This is evident in a narrative by Benito Herrera of Juquila:

You know Luis, the brother of Rodolfo, don't you? Well, he's the one who went into the cave up there where you say. He's very untruthful, that Luis. That's why we call him Luis Mentira, Luis the Liar, because he almost never tells the truth. If he had told me what I'm about to tell you, I wouldn't have believed it. But he has never said one word about the matter. It was his companion who at last told me what happened to them. He's a very different kind of fellow, that one; he doesn't talk much. But when I asked him what had happened to them, he told me.

One day this other fellow said to Luis, "Let's go up there. They say there's an Ocotepc man who has his ranch up there and he's selling a yoke of oxen. If I buy them, you are to help me bring them back." And they went. But when they got to the ranch, they found that the oxen had already been sold by their owner. Then the other said to Luis, "Let's rather go back by way of the river. Why should we go back the way we came? Don't you know they say there is treasure? Let's see if we find someone who knows where there's a good cave."

"Well, let's go," said Luis. "Let's see what we find." There they went, up and up along the river, until they saw off to that side a rancher irrigating his banana trees. "There's someone who may know," said Luis. "Shall we ask him? Maybe he can show us where a good one is."

So they went and talked to the rancher. "Don't you know where there's a good cave - one where there's treasure?"

"Yes, I know."

"Well, then, take us."

"No. I have my work to do. And anyway, you couldn't go in.

You'd be afraid." Luis and his companion insisted that he take them and that they wouldn't be afraid. At last the rancher said, "Very well. I'll take you, but only if you give me five pesos."

Luis and his companion began to bargain and at last they said, "We'll give you a fifty-cent piece."

"Very well. Let's go. But are you sure you'll go in? Lest arriving at the cave you'll be afraid to enter and then won't pay me!"

"Here, take your fifty-cent piece now," said Luis's companion. "Now let's go!" They went on up above there on one side of the river, but I believe it was on the opposite side from where you went (the same cave mentioned in Don Martín's story). Well, of a truth, there was a cave.

"Here it is," said the rancher. "Now let's see if you're really men. Inside there someone will talk to you. I've warned you."

There were Luis and his companion almost fighting to see who would be the first to go in. They both want to go in first so they'll be first to grab the treasure. The other one is the one who won out because he's the one who paid the fifty cents. Well, he says, they entered and it was big there inside. The passageway was wide. In a little while they saw there to one side of the road a pile - it was a huge snake. How they were scared! They stopped and stood still for a long time, but the snake didn't move a bit. It was just watching. At last they got as far to the other side as possible and

little by little edged their way past. The snake was just there watching. It didn't seize them.

A little further along they saw a tigre. Almost they were wanting to go back. Once again they stood paralyzed - almost they were plastered to the stone which formed the wall of the cave. But the tigre was just sitting there. He didn't spring at them. He paid no attention at all to them. He was just there watching.

"Let's go, you," said the other one to Luis. "After all we did pass the snake. Maybe we can pass the tigre in the same way. At any rate, the treasure is on inside there and that's what we came for."

So they went on inside further. A bit further on they heard a noise like an earthquake. Moment by moment they feared that the cave was going to close up and that they'd be caught inside as if in a trap. But nothing happened, and they went further in. At last they came to a big room. There they saw the treasure. But who would be able to take all of it! Why there it was piled up by the barrel there!

There they were just looking, thinking what they were going to take, when they heard a voice, "What do you want? Why have you come here?" Well, they were the same as turned to stone. They were stiff with fright. They didn't see a soul!

"Answer! Why did you come?"

Luis didn't say a word. But the other at last said, "Why, Señor, we just came to take a look - just to see how it is inside here."

"That's a lie! Do you think I don't know why you've come?"

I know very well you came for treasure."

"Well, yes, Señor. That's the truth. That's why we came, to see if there was any."

"You see now that there's as much as you might want, if you actually want to take it." Then they saw a form like that of a man who was standing on the far side of the treasure.

"Yes, señor." replied Luis's companion, "We'd like to take some."

"Very well, you may take all you want," and they were about to fill their buckets and their hats when that one went one, "only - come here a minute so I can hang this ribbon around your necks."

Immediately the two of them looked up. Ribbon! Ribbon nothing! The demon had a chain, almost at white heat it was! That was the ribbon he was going to hang around their necks.

Neither of them moved a bit.

"Ah! Then you're afraid - you don't want to, eh? Well! If you don't want me to hang this ribbon around your necks, beat it! Get out of here!"

Turning from him who still had the incandescent chain held out, the two of them went running. Falling down, getting up - that's the way they went running till they got outside again. They paid no attention at all to the snake and the tigre. All that they wanted was to get outside - to escape from the demon.

Well, would you believe it, they were so scared when they arrived again in Juquila that they couldn't even speak! Not even a word could they utter - neither Luis nor the other. Two or three days they were that way without being able to speak. Then the other one is the one who told me what happened to them. Like I told you, if Luis the Liar had told it to me, I wouldn't have believed it. But the other didn't even want to say anything. I forced him to tell me. He was still afraid when he told me. That one certainly won't ever go in a cave again.

Here, although the person who spoke to them is specifically called "the demon", it was not the emphatic use of "the" and there is no bargaining for the turning over of some person in payment for the treasure to be given. It might be that it was intended to mean the devil himself as is usually the case in speaking of THE DEMON. In this case, it would be the wearing of the hot chain - visible, doubtless, only to the wearing of the hot chain - visible, doubtless, only to the wearer and felt only by him - which would pay for the treasure. This would correspond to stories 15 and 16 where a period of torturous labor under punishment and beating "after death" was exacted in payment of the wealth and cattle bestowed.

The other narrative concerning treasure were told also by Juquila men and had to do with the treasure's being guarded by a huge snake. The first of these was told by Sotero Nolasco who was aided in translation it into Spanish by Ricardo Castañedo:

But I don't think the cave of which you speak (the one in Don Martín's story) is actually the one called by that name in Mixe. The one you visited is another cave. Who knows what it's called. But the Chief Father's Doorway is further up and on the other side of the river. There are many caves in that region, so it's difficult to find a certain one unless someone who knows it well takes you. It's true that there's treasure in some of the caves. I myself have seen it in one of them! No, I didn't take any - but I'll tell you about that. If you ever come to Juquila again, I'll take you to the cave and you can see for yourself. But aren't you afraid of snakes? You catch them! You're lying!

Who would be crazy enough to catch a snake!

"No, Sotero, he does catch them," interposed Ricardo, "He has big jars full of them in Camotlan."

Well, but you just catch the small ones. This one must have been four or five meters long! How could you catch anything like that?

Well, I'll tell you how it was. Two of us were going along the trail and we decided to hunt for a cave. We found this one and went in. We had flashlights and some ocote. When we got inside some distance, there I saw the treasure. It was in ollas or barrels and there were a number of them. There was gold and silver. But I didn't get to see very well what it was in - round tops they had - because when I started to go close, then I saw it. It was a huge snake lying on top of some of the treasure. It raised its head and stuck out its tongue like snakes do. I was scared. The other fellow saw it too. It didn't do anything to us, but we didn't go real close and we didn't try to take any of the treasure after we saw it there.

Yes, there is treasure. Who knows, perhaps that snake was the demon. Or maybe it was just a snake. But I'm afraid of snakes. You who say you're not afraid of them, maybe you'd like to try to get the treasure away from it! Well, you come to Juquila and I'll take you there. You bring the treasure outside and we'll divide it, but I don't want anything to do with the snake. I'm not going inside again.



Here again is the reflection of the belief that the devil himself may take the form of a huge snake. In stories 8 and 9 a rayo took the form of a snake and he also had treasure. But, as Sotero says, a snake might be nothing more than a mere snake.

The other story was told by Abram:

This is the boundary post which marks the line between Acatlancito and Narro. Near here also, there used to be a huge snake. No, this snake wasn't in the habit of eating people. Who knows what it ate. It was just another kind of a snake. This one lived in a cave, they say. It was just a little way from here. There are caves in many places. I don't know exactly where the one is where that snake lived but it isn't far from here. It's a sure thing that the cave is there yet. Who knows if the snake is there.

But there was treasure in the cave, they say. That's why that snake was there. It was what guarded the treasure. I didn't see it myself, but folks say that people saw the treasure. There were many gold and silver coins and stones of different colors. There they were inside the cave. On top of the pile was this snake. When one would go inside there, there was the snake just watching one. It didn't do anything. It was just guarding the treasure, watching a person. But then too, the people were very much afraid. I don't think anyone would touch that treasure. Perhaps it's there yet. Or maybe by now neither the treasure nor the snake is there. Who knows?

Although they don't really come under the designation of treasure from a Mixe's standpoint, archeological artifacts may best be considered here.

It is the firm belief of many that certain death will result from the appropriation of the things of the Ancients which may be found. Some would-be moderns among the younger generation profess not to believe this and perhaps some actually do not. Their actions generally belie this declaration and as a rule they prefer not to handle such things and will not have them in their own possession. Many of the younger ones, when questioned about the belief, shrug and say, "Who knows. They say it's true."

Aristeo Diaz told of an old man who was clearing land on Stone Peak to the north of town and facing the plaza. He came upon an opening. Being curious, he enlarged this enough to make possible his entrance into the cave of which it was a mouth. Here he found red iron (copper) utensils which looked like frying pans. There was also an olla of coins and some clay figurines. He decided to take these things home with him. The metal pans could be used and he would spend the money if need ever overtook him. The figurines? Oh, those would do as playthings for the children.

As is always the case in a small town, it was not long before the neighbors knew of his find and of his bringing the things home. They were highly incensed. Why this might even bring bad fortune upon the whole town! So they did their best to persuade him to return the things. He obdurately persisted in retaining them. "Mind what we tell you," they warned him angrily, "someone in your family will die for this!" "Bosh!" he replied.

But, sure enough, about ten years later his wife died. "See!" they triumphantly reminded him, "didn't we tell you?" He was in no mood to reason or argue. If only he hadn't brought the things home in the first place! So he took them all back - the money too, for he hadn't needed it yet.

Then there was the member of the School Committee. I learned about him from several people. He had gone off to the north of town to get firewood. At some place not exactly known he found a cave and inside he found "like an altar with candles and an instrument". The typeplace of instrument is not certain, but some have said it was a violin. At any rate the man decided he'd take it home so he picked it up and put it into his net bag. Immediately he was pounced upon by the demons and

beaten. He threw away his axe and mecapal, “tump line”, and ran yelling through the woods. Somehow he found his way home and for three days was out of his head - screaming and thrashing about. He went back later to get his axe, but would never go near the cave again. He died a few years later, his life shortened, they say, by his great scare.

Not always does death ensue after the handling of the things of the ancients. Fidel of Juquila was merely knocked down by the rayo and the Camotlan man and his friends were in no further danger after they put back the things where they had been found, as we recounted under Spirit Beings - rayo some pages back. Very few people will take anything found in a cave or on an old house site, however.

## 68. Evil Eye

Lucas, a young brujo of Camotlan, was about thirty-seven years old when he told me of his experiences. He and his wife went out one day to the north of town where he was clearing land for a cornfield. A sudden downpour in the early afternoon forced them to seek shelter. They got under an overhanging ledge and then noticed that their little dog had disappeared. They found he had gone into a little hole in pursuit of a squirrel or something similar. Lucas enlarged the hole a bit and found it was the entrance to a cave. Inside he found a huge olla full of old Spanish silver pieces "with the face of people on them". When I asked him what he did with them, he said, "Nothing." "Didn't you bring them home?" He looked at me as if I were demented. "Of course not!" he said emphatically, "what good were they? One couldn't spend them. And beside," getting down to the real reason, "one would die if he disturbed things like that."

He went on to say that two times after that, in other places, he had found ollas of money that was good. He merely looked at it and left it. Yet, this same Lucas had twice jumped off a fifty or sixty-foot cliff to escape from jail where he was serving a term for killing a man in self-defense when they were both drunk and the other fellow attacked him with a machete. He was not lacking in courage, but he would not touch the things of past generations.

Most folks feel that even taking people to where such things have been found will result in death or misfortune for the one who acts as guide. So strong is this belief that it is almost impossible to hire a person to take one to caves. And the younger men who might not fear death from touching the artifacts have a very healthy respect for public opinion and therefore refuse to go because "people will talk".

There is also a belief in the evil eye although it is not called that. Pedro Molino called it ojo caliente, "hot eye". One day a woman from the neighboring town of Quetzaltepec came to buy corn and sat in the doorway to do the dickering and shell the corn. She kept looking at Pedro's little boy Camilo. The next day Camilo had a fever and Pedro attributed it to this woman. "Didn't you notice how she kept looking at him. Those folks from up at Quetzaltepec are very envious. It's because of her hot eye that Camilo is sick."

The parents or godparents of the boy make the marriage arrangements with the girl's parents. In speaking of stories 2 and 3, it was remarked that the mother of the girl refused the first time out of custom: that the custom was to refuse the first two times. It was not made clear if this refusal is still the custom. The intermediary takes a gift for the parents of the girl, a gift which includes tobacco. The boy must go to work in the house of the girl's parents - see stories 55 and 56. Formerly the girl had to weave cloth from thread she herself had spun - probably in addition to proving herself adept at cooking and making tortillas. In Camotlan the period of working is followed by prescribed gifts of woman's clothing which the boy must have taken to the girl's parents. At each visit of the intermediaries, they and the girl's parents smoke together. After the third installment of the gift is complete, the final arrangements are terminated. The couple may live in the house of the groom's parents. Marcelino Juan's son had to go to his wife's home because she refused to remain in his. Marcelino highly lamented this as being improper and not according to custom. Aristeo Diaz formerly lived at his father's home but, due I believe to his father's irascibility, has moved into his father-in-law's home where he is treated as a man instead of as a child. Daniel García also lived for a time with his wife's folks. If there was at one time a definite custom, it seems today to have given way

to a matter of convenience and compatibility. Some young fellows build their own houses, but more often they live with one or the other of their families for a period of years before doing so.

There are several special beliefs connected with pregnancy. The woman must not eat twinned fruits or vegetables lest she give birth to twins. She must not pass where adobes are being made, for that will cause them to crack and be of no use. If, however, she can be persuaded to eat a bit of the mud of which they are being made, no harm will come to the adobes. This same holds true for the smearing of the mud in the wattle-and-daub type of wall and of the laying up of the walls being made from finished adobe bricks. There is no lessening of a woman's work merely because she is pregnant.

Woman's work in some sections includes helping with planting. In Camotlan I have not seen women planting. The women of Tamazulapam do work in the fields and even hire out to other towns for such work. These women also are accustomed to carrying on the trail loads which are comparable in weight to those carried by men of other towns. They work in the fields in ranches of Ayutla and Tepuxtepec where I have seen them. In Ayutla I have also seen women of the town helping with the planting - using a long pole as a dibble and dropping the seed into the hole thus made and covering it with the foot. One of the two women had a baby strapped on her back as she worked. In all sections, it seems to be the woman's task, and the children's too, to aid in the daylight watching of the ripening corn to scare away parrots or other marauders.

It is by no means true that the woman does all the work while the man loafs. The woman may be up at 4 A. M. to make tortillas, but the man is also up and out to the woods for firewood or to give a quick look at a field of corn not too far distant. Few men return from the day's work without bringing a load of firewood. But the fire is never out so the women also will probably make one or two trips into the nearby woods to gather up dead sticks. She may spend much of the day sitting in the patio with her children, bathing them, combing herself, lousing the children and being loused, mending clothes and at the same time tending the drying coffee or corn or feeding the pigs and chickens while seeing to it that none of the neighbors' animals get a free meal. In midday, if the man is not working too far off, either the wife or one of the children will take him his taco, "lunch" of fresh tortillas and some other things such as black beans or scrambled eggs.

The woman figures in a negative way in the making of lime.

According to Pedro Molino, one of the few Camotlan men who make lime, the belief is that the men working on the lime-making must not live with their wives during that time or the lime will not turn out right. Women are not even permitted to come around where the lime is being burned. The men must not eat chili or wash their hands during the process. Pedro holds none of these ideas. He says it all depends on knowing what kind of rock to use, making the kiln properly and firing it sufficiently and in the proper way. He has, with the help of other young men for breaking the rock and chopping the firewood, burned twenty-five fanegas of lime at one time. That is about five times the amount usually burned in one burning.

Formerly, the women of Camotlan spun thread and wove cloth. Some in Quetzaltepec still do. This spinning and weaving is now limited to the cloth used in huipiles and similar items of women's apparel. They no longer make men's clothing of handwoven stuff. Some few in Camotlan and San José may still weave, but the necessity for doing so is gone since trade goods can be bought. Cotzocón folks still make woolen blankets of the type called *cotón* or *bocamanga*, which have a slit in the center where the two halves are not sewed together. This is slipped over the head and used by the man as both overcoat and blanket in cold weather. Those of Tlauhuitoltepec also make a distinctive blanket and *cotón* of this type.

Cotton for spinning is first beaten on a leather cushion with a small round stick to arrange the fibers. Some use is made, they say, of the tree-cotton which seems to be something like kapok. Cotzocon and Tlahuitoltepec use wool. Mixistlán and Yacoche women are said to weave and dye their own huipiles. The latter wear a very long huipil of a deep green color said to be produced by boiling the cloth in the leaves of a bean which they get in the mountain. That the ancients in Camotlan did spinning and weaving is proven by the malacates, "spindle whorls", I have found in the cave and others I picked up right in the streets of the town after rains.

The loom is a simple cone - one end is tied to a tree or post, the other to a belt or sash around the weaver's waist. The set-up is either very similar to or identical with that described and drawn by Beals p. 117, and 118. In addition to the reasons Beals gives for feeling that weaving is possibly pre-Spanish among the Mixes, we add the indication from the spindle whorls in the cave plus the spinning and weaving mentioned in stories 2 3, 4 and 5 which deal with times long before the conquest - and, what may carry even more weight, the fact that weaving was one of the tasks in which the girl must prove herself proficient during the marriage bargaining, which was totally Mixe and showed no Spanish influence whatsoever, there being a conspicuous absence of any mention of the church of any ceremony such as the church prescribes.

The clearing of land for planting has already been described to some extent in connection with the matter of offerings. As a general rule, land so cleared will be used for corn one year only since they feel it is necessary for an area to be burned over that the ash may act as fertilizer. An old *rastrojo*, "last year's cornfield after harvesting", is often cleared by hoe to be used for a chili patch. If the initial clearing was thoroughly done, this task is not such a strenuous one as regular clearing, since weeds rather than brush are being cleared. In Ayutla, Juquila and also, I believe, in Tepuxtepec and its ranches the type of plow shown in Beals' plate 8 is used. Some of the Mixe towns to the north of Zempoaltepetl may also use it. Within the last several years, two or three Camotlan men have secured oxen for plowing the flats below town. In the majority of the Mixe towns I have visited, plows are not used. The land is prepared with hoe or mattock. Chiles are planted first in small beds as seed and then transplanted with the use of a short dibble, the planter kneeling or squatting. Black beans are sowed separately but one type of bean will frequently be planted with corn and squash seed in the cornfield.

The seeds of the three are mixed in a *morál*, "hennequin fiber bag with carrying strap of same material". The planters then walk through the piece to be planted - each person taking a row - and jab a hole in the ground with a pole sharpened and hardened in the fire. The seeds are then dropped into or at the hole and shoved in and covered up with the foot. When one has seen the steep hillsides they plant, some of them more than sixty degree grades and others almost eighty, the question is one's mind ceases to be "Why do they use such antiquated methods?" and becomes "How in the world do they stick in the field while working and harvesting it?" On the whole, Camotlan's fields are less steep than those of Cacalotepec, Ocotepec and some Ayutla ranches. But I have visited one or two fields even there where I had to hold on with both hands to keep from falling out. Yet they walk through it with baskets on their backs picking ears with both hands and throwing them over their heads into the baskets. Falling out of a Mixe cornfield and injuring oneself is not a tall story or a joke. It happens yearly. And more than one or two cattle are killed by falling out of these same patches when they are turned loose after the harvest to graze there.

Several times in these stories I have used the term *corncrib*. The *corncrib*, properly so called, is *coscomate* (from *cuescómatl* of the Aztecs) and is generally constructed on the same patio with the house. In some instances, however, these have also been constructed in the cornfield. The *coscomate* is built on posts which raise it several feet above the ground. Generally it is built of notched poles of a

special kind of tree which has a pithy heart and is lightweight. And the poles used are generally not more than four inches in diameter and are peeled. These are notched as were poles for our log cabins and laid up in the same way to form a square, doorless, walled box about six feet in depth. This is roofed with thatch in the same manner as a regular house except that at least one end of the roof is left open and more often it is constructed as a two-shed roof with both ends open. The coscomate when filled with corn, or when it has received the crop even if this did not fill it, is covered over with poles or planks to form a loft under the roof. One of the family will sleep there to guard the corn, if necessary. The space underneath the coscomate, between the four posts which serve as its supports, is often used as pigpen or chicken coop. This space may be walled up with stones, poles or pieces of plank to form a protection for chickens against possums and foxes. For pigs it is often left open. Corn is stored on the ear, not shelled as in the custom with the Aztecs of Tetelcingo, Morelos.

In Tepuxtepec, in at least some cases, the walls of the corncrib are made of notched pine planks set horizontally to form the box of the structure. In some of the ranches they stored their corn in the tapanco, "loft", of the house itself. This is true also in the town of Ocotepéc. Some made a raised platform inside the house and stacked up the corn much as we might firewood. This may be due to there being less security in these places and a feeling there that the corn is safer right inside the house under the owners' eyes. The coscomate described above is used in San José and the Coatlan region.

The house normally built to hold the harvested corn in the field is called a troje, "granary" and is formed of poles cut in the clearing process, sharpened on one end and rammed into the earth on a levelled-off spot which is ditched on the uphill side for protection against rains. These upright poles are tied to horizontal battens by means of vines or majahua, the inner bark of the jonote tree which I believe is a type of balsa. The roof, seldom of grass thatch, is often of cornstalks or in some cases of tree bark. If grass is available, it is used. The house serves as shelter in time of rain and in the season of day and night watching of the ripening corn as well as for storage of the corn until it can be carried home.

Since very often the half of town is short on corn by the time the new crop is ripening, stealing is not unknown. The shortage is not necessarily due to crop failure. It seems that Mixes never figure, "Now it might not give well, so I'll plant more than I think I'll need and I can sell the surplus, if any." No, from observation I would say that if any planting is done in the matter the thought is, "Now this year there just might be a miracle and the corn might give so well that less would see us through. So I'll not plant so much this year." In addition to this, the constant selling to the Mitleños or Ixtaltepecanos for their animals and to Quetzaltepecanos who buy it up cheaply and later return to sell it at three prices in time of scarcity - this has some in the town always in need of corn. Then if there is widespread crop failure as there was last year, the entire region is on the verge of starvation. In Camotlan corn went to six pesos an almud, "measure which contains about three and a half kilos of dried corn", in San Jos' to four or five; in Cotzocón to eleven! In such times, Mitleños and Ixtaltepecanos pack in corn from the Valley and Isthmus. In Camotlan, those who still had corn to keep their own families going had to guard it closely for it was constantly being stolen from corncribs just ten feet from the houses. The town folk felt it was all the work of less than a dozen folks in town. Most of the towns folk would have starved before stealing. Instead they borrowed corn in advance for a promise to work in the field whenever called on. And very few fail to keep their bargain.

In the case of corn stolen from the field, the custom is for the owner to pull up all the stalks from which the ears have been stolen and pile them in the form of a cross, or of three crosses. He then sets fire to these with certain prayers or maledictions to bring retribution upon the thief.

In the light of the almost universal need among them before the ensuring harvest, it is small wonder that there is little waste at harvest time. Even grains of corn which fall to the ground as the nets of corn are loaded on the mules - even these scattered grains are picked up. This is true also of

beans. There is a bird called chogón, thought to be a spirit being or the messenger of a spirit being or perhaps of the earth, who watches to see if anything is wasted. Any waste will be reported and will be punished by subsequent failure of the next crop planted. See story 23 also.

Nor is wastefulness in hunting and fishing let go unpunished.

There is no limit on the things caught and killed. But they must not be wasted. On one occasion Pedro, Maximiano and I had accompanied two men from Ixquintepec to fish. They used dynamite. The catch was taken back to town while we went hunting for several days. But the folks there failed to salt and sun the fish, and it was spoiling when we got there. Pedro and Maximiano insisted in carrying it the six-hour trip to Camotlan and made tamales out of it in spite of my urging them to throw it away. Pedro afterward explained that they didn't dare let it waste for then they would never have caught any more. Contrast this with the Popoluca idea concerning a first catch, Foster p. 181 bottom. Compare it also with his story 8 on page 200.

An idea which may be related to this is some sense is that if one chases and catches a chicken or turkey, mistakenly thinking it is the one he wishes to kill, he might as well kill it for it will die anyway - he chased it with the intention of killing it.

Wells were mentioned in the stories 1, 4, and 5. In all these the term for a dug well was used. Yet I know of not one dug well in all the Mixe country I have visited. In some places there are dammed up springs; in most places water is carried from the river. For a time in Ocatepec, water was brought in canoas, "hollowed out logs", right into the school patio. But this was due to the labors of one of the best teachers the region has ever known, Don Antonio Herrera of Villa Alta. Where water is gotten from the river, a small pit or well about a foot or so deep may be formed in the sand or gravel at one side of the river itself. From this depression, sometimes roofed over with slabs of rock or with planks, water is dipped with jícaras into clay cantaros, "water jugs", which in Camotlan area come from Juchitán or San Geronimo (Ixtepec) and are almost entirely of the black ware although occasionally one of the reddish brown ware will be seen. Sometimes shallow depressions are dug at the base of hills at the rear of the patios of homes built on steep slopes. These would be called by the term meaning dug well since their purpose is to catch surface filtration for use in washing corn or clothing or for bathing the children. Only rarely would such water be drunk. None of these would, however, answer the description of a well into which the rat could have run for hiding and which would have been filled with stones.

The Mixes have been much maligned, especially by those who have not lived among them and have seen them only after a four-day trip over the mountain trails to town, where they had come to secure and carry back purchases totaling eighty to one hundred pounds per carrier - purchases ordered by the Municipio or school. The fact that they often understand very little Spanish and merely present a note with a list of items desired causes them to be termed "ignorant" in addition to the epithet "filthy" which their clothing often suggests. Neither is a fair appraisal. Take some of those self-styled wise city-folk away from their showers or bathrooms and from their paved streets and stores and dump them in the heart of the Mixe region with an axe and a machete to shift for themselves and it would soon be evident who is the ignoramus and who the filthy one. Anyone when taken from his own environment and placed in a totally foreign one is the same extent ignorant. And one can scarcely walk the Mixe trails for fourteen or sixteen hours a day and sleep in his clothes by the trail side at night and still look fresh and clean at journey's end. In rainy season it is even worse, as I know from experience. Soaked all day and muddy to the knees, sleeping in wet clothes at night, there is little incentive to change into dry clean clothes - even if one had them available - and less sense in doing so for tomorrow will be but a repetition of today. It is not true that the Mixe as a whole are a dirty people. Lacking in sanitation they may be - dirty they are not. Many Mixe women go daily to the river in sunny

weather and wash every bit of the family's dirty clothing as well as what they themselves are wearing - and take a bath and wash their hair. Many men take a daily bath in the river and I knew one fellow who took a bath in the icy stream both morning and evening in every kind of weather every day of his life unless he was sick in bed and unable to do so. He said it kept him healthy. In the rainy season, on their return home from the fields they will perhaps change into dry clothes, especially if the ones they have been wearing are muddy. These will then be put to dry - perhaps rinsed out some if the wearer had fallen in the mud - and put on again in the morning for another day's work in the rain and mud. On a trip, they always take time out to bathe whenever they come to a river.

But the only ceremonial bathing, if it could be called that, of which I am aware is of Spanish origin. This is in connection with Todos Santos, "All Saints". The day before this celebration, the last day of October, the entire length of the river through town is occupied. All the clothes they own, including blankets, are washed and everyone takes a bath regardless of rain or cold, of which there is generally no lack at that season. If they do not do so, it is believed that the demons will come and carry off everything not washed and use it for old rags. What would happen to an unbathed person was not mentioned. There is also a general shaving and haircutting time for the men.





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