

## **A SAMPLE OF POPULAR TOYS FROM GUATEMALA, THEIR FUNCTIONS AND VALIDITY, AND THEIR POSSIBILITIES OF APPLICATIONS IN TEACHING**

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Little importance has been given to the study of popular toys, and proof of this is that scarce research that has been carried out on this aspect of popular arts and crafts. Pía Timón, Esperanza Sánchez, and Natividad Salmador recognize the importance of carrying out research on popular toys for two fundamental reasons: “On the one hand, they respond to a representation of the utensils that are part of daily life, adapted to the children’s mentality, that is, miniaturized; on the other hand, they create new elements suitable for their needs which, by not having a practical finality, would not have taken place.”<sup>1</sup>

The only specific work on the subject that is known is that of Francisco Javier Hernández, **El juguete popular en México**. In El Salvador, articles on popular toys that are in the magazine **Arte Popular** are important, a publication of the Art Directorate of the Ministry of Education of that country. Xinia Mora, in Costa Rica, makes an inventory of popular Costa Rican toys.

In Guatemala, there is no complete work on the subject; only some journalistic articles that appeared in the **Vocero del Folklore Guatemalteco** magazine, directed by the folklorist Marcial Armas Lara, are known.

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<sup>1</sup>Pía Timón Tiemblo, Esperanza Sánchez y Natividad Salmador. “*La cerámica en el ciclo de la vida humana*” en **Narria; estudio de artes y costumbres populares**, No. 8. Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid, 1977, p. 5.

In the following lines, we will approach the popular toys of Guatemala to specify their functions and demonstrate how they satisfy playful needs and their possible applications within the school.

Popular toys include all those made by children and adults from the popular classes for the entertainment of children. Those toys, unlike commercial toys, which are manufactured for profit purposes, are made, in many cases, as secondary activities by popular artists and artisans, so that the profits they obtain are not greater. In addition, the materials used are cheap and easy to acquire, such as wood, fabric scraps, paper, clay, etc.

Below we will discuss some generalities about toys and the role they play in the child's development.

Mauro Laeng says about this: "The toy conceived as an objective means, as an instrument of this playful activity, is in turn not just another object but a way of potentially using all objects."<sup>2</sup> Later, he states that the adults offer the child the means of play, the toys. "The toy that, in its objectivity, bears the burden of adult intention directed to the children's world."<sup>3</sup> The toy that the adult procures for the child is the imitative toy, in which the details are imitated with almost absolute fidelity, at least the most obvious and external ones, of certain objects of adult life. The imitative toy is the "response that adults give to the desire that they perceive in children to be like them, to imitate their fathers and mothers."<sup>4</sup>

Toys that adults from the popular classes offer to their children imitate their world; they are copies of this, and they reflect a particular reality. Commercial toys imposed by consumer society have very different characteristics. These toys, proper of industrialized society, are not denied the ability to stimulate children's imagination, but as Lombardi Satriani asserts, they are inaccessible to children from the popular classes. He says that most of these toys provoke desires for real objects that are internalized as values; "Just think of the wide range of small car models that are identical to real cars. The poor child will be able to have this toy (in fact, can be imposed to have it), but it is not likely that as an adult he will be able to have this type of car. In summary, these mass toys produce tensions and long-term needs

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<sup>2</sup> Mauro Laeng. **Esquemas de Pedagogía**. Editorial Herder. Barcelona, 1977, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> Mauro Laeng, **op. cit.**, pp. 115-116.

that cannot be satisfied.”<sup>5</sup> Later, he explains that “mass toy is produced for commercial purposes and is imposed on popular culture in more or less masked violent forms.”<sup>6</sup>

Paulo de Carvalho-Neto considers that there is a substantial difference between children’s folkloric games and toys and those that are not. Folkloric works are characterized by being “moral in their goal, magical in their means, imaginative in their development, and subjective in their total essence.”<sup>7</sup> Non-folkloric games and toys are characterized by being “moral or amoral in their goal (evil can triumph), technical in their means, for the same reason, practical in their development, and objective in their essence.”<sup>8</sup>

Currently, toys are considered by psychologists from two fundamental perspectives: in their cognitive aspect, as a learning instrument, and in the aspect of affectivity, or, as it is usually said, of the expression of personality, by their projective modalities.

From the cognitive point of view, as a learning instrument, the fundamental levels of learning should be considered, as indicated by the Harvard School of Cognitive Studies: “The first is a practical, manipulative, and sensorimotor coordination level; the second is an iconic level, that is, image representations; and the third is a symbolic level, which is reached through the conventional signs of language.”<sup>9</sup> The first level includes toys that are touched, struck, tossed, or thrown, such as balls, spinning tops, etc. In this first level, in a perceptive sense, there are also sonorous and musical toys. To increase and favor the conquest of the relationship in general and, in particular, the relationship with the environment, all the toys that provide special conditions of unstable balance are assigned, such as the horse, the swing, etc. At the iconic level of image representations, it includes toys to see shapes, colors, and dimensions, such as dolls. This second level at a determinant moment goes beyond objectivity and enters into dramatic representation with the image narration or, more completely, with puppet and marionette theater. The third level is the conventional level of language signs and has a considerable

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<sup>5</sup> L.M. Lobardi Satriani. **Apropiación y destrucción de la cultura de las clases subalternas**. Editorial Nueva Imagen, 1a. edición en español. México, D.F., 1979, p.111.

<sup>6</sup> **Ibid.**

<sup>7</sup> Paulo de Carvalo-Neto. **El Folklore infantil lúdico y los conflictos del niño**. Reunión de expertos sobre “*Estudio filosófico e interdisciplinarios de los medios de expresión lúdica como solución a los conflictos en el universo del niño*”. Caracas, 1979, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> **Ibid.**

<sup>9</sup> Mauro Laeng, **op. cit.**, p. 116.

Number of toys and games such as riddles, word games, calculation games, puzzles, etc.

In relation to the projective aspects of the affectivity of toys, Mauro Laeng says that “toys have as many valences as they present in the field of psychology and personality of the same projective test. For example, there are toys that have a very evident projective modality of a creative interpretative, cathartic, refractive, compensatory character.”<sup>10</sup> Examples of creative toys, he cites those ready-made from unstructured materials that is, plastics, modeling, painting, made with shapeless materials, apart from physical chemistry. Those materials provide an unlimited capacity for expression. Constructive toys include construction made from wood and other materials. Among interpretative toys and, to a certain extent cathartic, refractive, and compensatory, he cites dolls, marionettes, dresses, and costumes; he states that ready-made dolls, their clothes, and the articulation of dramatic scenes are clear examples of projective manifestations. Through these games and toys, children identify with the characters, make affective transfers, and, at certain moments, they love some people and hate others; on figurines, they unload their love, vent, and release their fears, aggression, loneliness, and frustrations.

The same author considers that there are two types of toys: natural toys and artificial toys. The first are all those objects that nature offers, such as space, light, earth, sand, etc. Artificial toys are made up of objects, such as paper, cardboard, cloth, rope, and sticks; also, toys made specifically for children.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, point out the characteristics of the ideal toy. He says that this “must be a stimulus and a challenge above all for the imagination and for action. Such a toy will be simple, semi-structured, modularly composable, and adaptable, lending itself to the infinite configurations of a fantasy that has no limits.”<sup>12</sup>

There are two types of popular toys: those made by children and those ready-made by adults for children. Below we will refer to the latter, that is, toys that adults from popular classes make for children to play with.

Because there is no specific study about popular toys in Guatemala, we dare to make a general classification of them taking

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<sup>10</sup> **Ibid.**, p.119.

<sup>11</sup> Mauro Laeng, **op. cit.**, pp. 119-120.

<sup>12</sup> **Ibid.**, p.121.

as a starting point, the role they play in the child's life. Various classifications could be made considering different aspects, such as the materials with which they are made, the places where they are made, etc.

The proposed classification is based on the gender of the child, as gender roles are established from childhood and their characteristics are clearly defined.

## **A. Toys for girls**

- i. **Ceramics:** complete sets of tableware or small dishes, such as pots, jars, cups, etc., which can be made of unpainted, painted, or glazed ceramic. Chinautla, Rabinal, Antigua Guatemala, and Totonicapán are producing centers of these toys;
- ii. **Wood:** small furniture such as chairs, tables, beds, wardrobes, etc.; kitchen utensils, such as pallets, grinders, etc. The main center where wooden toys are made is Totonicapán. In Antigua Guatemala, kitchen utensils and miniature fruits are produced;
- iii. **Basketry:** baskets of different sizes. Baskets for girls' games are made in places where basketry is produced, such as Sololá, Totonicapán, Chimaltenango, Chiquimula, Guatemala, etc.;
- iv. **Tinplate:** kitchen utensils such as strainers, funnels, watering cans, clothes irons, etc. Producing centers: Villa Canales (Guatemala), Antigua Guatemala, and Guatemala;
- v. **Other materials:** within this category, the main toy is constituted by rag dolls, whose main producing center is Antigua Guatemala;

## **B. Toys for boys**

- i. **Wood:** wagons, small trucks, cars, guitars, noisemakers, clowns (acrobats), horses, spinning tops, *guazapas* (small spinning tops), *capiruchos* [a juggling toy consisting of a stick attached to a ball by a string], and marimbas. Producing centers: Totonicapán and Antigua Guatemala;
- ii. **Other materials:** pinwheels that can be made of paper or other material, carriages, drums, paper or cardboard airplanes.

## **C. Toys for boys and girls**

- i. **Ceramics:** whistles and piggy banks of different sizes. The main producing centers are Antigua Guatemala and Totonicapán; shepherds and figurines for the Nativity are made in Chinautla, Rabinal, and Antigua Guatemala;
- ii. **Other materials:** piñatas made of paper and wire frame; paper “surprises”; rosaries made of corn leaf, filled with sugar candy (San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango). Cotton popcorn; monkeys of wire and bristles; different animals made of wool; wire shepherds (Antigua Guatemala); *chicharras* [air horns], *chinchines*, or rattles, *cibaque* blowers.

## **Importance and utility of educational applications of popular toys**

In general terms, popular toys constitute a very valuable educational resource that should be used in schools at different levels and subjects.

As a first observation, teachers must consider the innate playful activity of the students and take full advantage of it in the development of their teaching activities. In addition, they must consider as very important aspects and worthy of developing the imagination and

creative capacity of the child in all its evolutionary stages.

Therefore, popular toys are of great educational value inside and outside schools. Within this institution, it is possible to take advantage of it at all educational levels and in different subjects. Later, when we refer in detail to each of the researched toys, we will suggest their educational applications at each level and subject in which we consider them useful.

By using popular toys in school, in addition to achieving knowledge and appreciation of this important area of popular arts and crafts in Guatemala, teachers have a valuable educational resource that enriches the teaching-learning process.

To carry out the educational application of popular toys, it is necessary to take into consideration certain criteria, both of a folklorological and educational nature. Some of which we will explain below.

Brazilian folklorologist Paulo de Carvalho-Neto distinguishes two types of folklore for exclusively educational purposes, as follows:

The useful or positive, which is made up of all those facts that contribute to the student's development.

The disposable or negative, made up of all the facts that do not form the student but, on the contrary, can deform his personality and guide him in the wrong way in relation to the goals that education pursues.

The following facts are included within the useful folklore:

**Ethical:** those that have moral value, such as some animal tales, fables, and proverbs.

**Esthetical:** its objective is to form ideals of beauty. This includes couplets, romances, popular tenths, legends, music, and popular arts and crafts.

**Tests:** they include problems that serve to develop intelligence, such as riddles and tongue twisters.

**Mnemonics:** they contribute to exercising and developing memory. This includes cumulative tales and strings.

**Imaginative:** they stimulate the imagination, such as legends, romances, tales, and toys.

**Motivators:** they contribute to arousing students' interest in learning certain topics. Etiology legends, religious tales, the Devil

and Miss Jones, and in general, most popular arts and crafts lend themselves to this objective.

**Fraternizing:** their purpose is to socialize, fraternize, and unite. For this, one can appeal to poetic folklore, rounds, dances, games, toys, music, and parties.<sup>13</sup>

Alvaro Fernaud Palarea adds the following positive facts to Carvalho-Neto's previous classification:

**Motor:** which contribute to developing sensorimotor coordination, as well as manual skills. These activities included dances, rounds, games, playing musical instruments, and manufacturing of objects (popular arts and crafts, culinary, etc.).

**Structural:** these allow us to analyze literary or musical structures of popular culture. Literature in verse and music can be used here.

A folkloric fact can be included in one or more of the categories set out above. In many cases, its function is not limiting, since if it is considered in one of its aspects, it does not necessarily exclude the characteristics that correspond to another or others.

According to Alvaro Fernaud Palarea, the teacher must take into account when applying a folkloric fact in his teaching, in addition to the stated criteria; the following ones refer to how the fact is considered within the teaching:

- The fact as an end in itself. Seen in this way, folklore is the central element of the objective to be achieved; that is, a certain fact is taught with the purpose of making it known.
- As a motivational resource. The folkloric fact serves as a starting point to achieve non-folkloric nature objectives.
- As a correlating element. The fact of interests allows the correlation of different activities or different areas of learning.<sup>14</sup>

In my opinion, popular toys constitute esthetical facts since they contain conceptions of an esthetic nature; they are imaginative facts because they contribute greatly to stimulating the imagination. In

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<sup>13</sup> Paulo de Carvalho-Neto. **Folklore y Educación.** Buenos Aires: OMEBA Editores. Bibliografía, Argentina, 1969.

<sup>14</sup> Alvaro Fernaud Palarea, María Ramírez and Rita Segato Carvalho. **Algunas expresiones del folklore literario y sus aplicaciones en la educación.** Caracas, 1976. INIDEF, edición mimeografiada.

addition, we consider them motivational facts because they allow us to motivate aspects of various school subjects.

Toys are also fraternizing facts, because through play, students are socializing their activity and fraternizing with their playmates. They also contribute to developing sensorimotor coordination and manual skills through the manipulation of objects; they are motor facts.

Regarding how popular toys should be considered in education, I think that, like all other facts of traditional popular culture, they should occupy a prominent place within the educational system of Latin America. That is to say, positive folklore should be considered as an end in itself, meaning that its teaching should be independent of the objectives contained and activities of other school subjects. It is possible to make the previous statement, taking into account the value of traditional popular culture to configure the national identity of the inhabitants of Latin American countries.

The stated above would be possible through the reform or modification of the current study plans and programs. But considering the current situation of educational systems, it is only possible to consider the subject of popular toys as a motivating resource and a correlating element of various subjects.

To make use of popular toys in the teaching-learning process, it is necessary to distinguish the two ways in which they can be used:

- A. In the form of educational applications. In this case, the teacher will promote knowledge of these objects of popular art and crafts through the research that has been carried out on them, just as the information has been collected in the field by researchers.
- B. In the form of educational projections. In this sense, the teacher can, in addition to promoting knowledge of popular toys, project their production in the school as part of the subjects of industrial arts and drawing. This means that students in these subjects can create, under the teacher's direction, toys that imitate popular ones or create new models.

### **Popular toys from the department of Sacatepéquez**

The department of Sacatepéquez is one of the richest in artistic

and artisanal production in the republic. There are numerous popular arts and crafts, such as weaving, ceramics, woodworking, wrought iron, tinwork, etc.

Within the vast field of ancient popular arts and crafts, we find many artists and artisans who are dedicated to the making of toys as a complementary activity to their artistic and artisanal work and others who are dedicated exclusively to this task.

The objectives pursued in carrying out this research on popular toys in Sacatepéquez are the following:

### **General**

1. To know what type of toys are used by children of popular classes;
2. Establish the validity of popular toys in the community;
3. To know one of the main producing centers of popular toys in the Republic of Guatemala.

### **Specific**

1. To know the economic conditions of artists and artisans who made toys;
2. To know the main materials with which toys are made.

The popular toys investigated in the department of Sacatepéquez are the following:

#### **1. Ceramics:**

- 1.1. Small majolica earthenware dishes.
- 1.2. Painted ceramic miniature fruits and vegetables.
- 1.3. Painted ceramic piggy banks.
- 1.4. Painted ceramic shepherds and figurines for the Nativity.

#### **2. Wood:**

- 2.1. Miniature kitchen utensils: grinders, pallets, rolling pins, knives, etc.
- 2.2. Spinning tops and capiruchos of different sizes.

2.3. Miniature fruits.

### **3. Other materials:**

3.1. Rag dolls.

3.2. Wire shepherds.

### **1. Ceramic:**

#### **1.1. Small majolica earthenware dishes**

In Antigua Guatemala city, capital of the department of Sacatepéquez, there is a majolica earthenware workshop, that of Don Francisco Montiel, artisan heir to a long tradition dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

In addition to the large number of larger pieces, the following miniature dishes are made in this workshop: censers, mixers, apastes [deep bowl, made of clay and with handles], bowls, pots, jars, cups, plates, and vases.

The manufacturing process is the same as that used for large pieces. It proceeds as follows: the clay is obtained in lumps in El Tejar, Chimaltenango; it is then converted into fine powder by means of a large roller mill driven by a man; the pieces are then modeled on a pottery wheel; these pieces are then left to dry in the sun and then baked in ovens that produce a temperature of 900 degrees Celsius. The first firing, or cooking, takes place, which cooks the clay, which will then be painted with tin oxide, lead, copper, cobalt, and iron. The second firing is then carried out, in which the paint becomes a glazed varnish in white, grey, green, orange, yellow, blue, and black, respectively.

The small majolica earthenware dishes made in Mr. Montiel's artisan workshop are sold at relatively high prices; thus, censers are Q 0.75, the large pieces are Q 0.25, and the small pieces are Q 0.10. The small dishes are distributed for sale in the local market of Antigua Guatemala and in Guatemala City.

## **Suggestions for its application**

This topic can be used as a motivational resource and a correlating element for different subjects. It constitutes an esthetic and motor fact. It can be applied in all cycles of the primary level and in the secondary level in the following subjects:

### **Spanish**

The following activities are suggested for this subject:

Reading and researching the fact.

Using the dictionary.

### **Mathematics**

In this subject, it is possible to pose problems that contain data on the prices of toys made of majolica earthenware.

### **Science**

In this class, you can classify the specific types of soil and other elements used in the production of ceramics.

### **Social studies**

With this topic, it is possible to study the historical aspect of the subject, the antecedents of this ceramic in Spain and in other countries, and how it arrived in America.

### **Geography**

Geography class allows the localization of:

- a) the place where the raw material is found;
- b) the workplace; and
- c) the place or places in which the ceramics are sold and distributed.

## **Art**

In drawing class, the topic allows for drawing toys made of majolica earthenware.

## **Industrial arts**

In this subject, students can create some examples of the studied ceramics or create new models.

### **1.2 Painted ceramic miniature fruits and vegetables.**

In the department of Sacatepéquez, there are several artists and artisans who are dedicated to the elaboration of painted ceramics, this being representative of the region. The majority are concentrated in the city of Antigua Guatemala, the capital of the department.

In several of the artisan workshops visited, various types of painted ceramic objects are made, such as piggy banks, candlesticks, ashtrays, ornaments, miniature fruits and vegetables, etc.

The elaboration of miniature fruits and vegetables will be described below.

The raw material is clay obtained in El Tejar, Chimaltenango; this is milled and strained to convert it into a fine powder; it is then moistened with water to obtain a moldable mass. The miniature fruits and vegetables are hand-shaped, then dried in the shade and baked in a small oven. They are then coated with paints mixed with glue (these paints are obtained in powder form); they are then varnished and left to dry. Generally, women (wives, daughters, etc.) and children are responsible for making miniatures. Some of these workshops hire the services of apprentices to help with the making of the miniatures.

Prices for miniatures range from Q 0.50 to Q 0.25, depending on size. These miniatures are distributed in the sales of San Felipe, a municipality in the department of Sacatepéquez.

The products obtained are vegetables, avocados, corn, etc. Fruits: bananas, pears, peaches, pineapples, sapotes, mangoes, hog plums, cashews, sugar cane, etc.

## **Suggestions for its application**

These miniatures can be used as a motivational resource and a correlating element for different subjects. They constitute an esthetic and motor fact in the following subjects:

### **Spanish**

Using the dictionary.

Vocabulary formation.

### **Mathematics**

In this subject, it is possible to pose problems that contain data about the prices of miniatures. In this sense, it is possible to practice mathematical operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division).

### **Science**

In this subject, the following activities are suggested:

Classification of certain types of soil and elements used in the elaboration of miniatures.

Knowledge and classification of vegetables and fruits.

### **Social studies**

With this topic, it is possible to study:

The relationship or relation of this in the elaboration of this type of ceramic.

**Geography** class allows you to locate:

- a) the place where the raw material comes from;
- b) the work site; and
- c) the place where the miniatures are sold.

## **Art**

In drawing class, it is suggested that student:

Draw the miniatures and paint them, thus learning the colors used and their mixtures.

## **Industrial arts**

In this subject, students can model some examples of the studied ceramics in clay and other materials and create new models.

### **1.3 Painted ceramic piggy banks.**

In Antigua Guatemala, there are several artisans who are dedicated to the production of painted ceramic piggy banks, these being some of the main objects of this type of ceramic that are produced in the area and of which they are representatives. Currently, the models have varied, and piggy banks are made with figures outside of traditional popular culture, imposed by consumer society, such as Walt Disney characters. Traditional models include figures such as fruit bowls-piggy banks, fruits, vegetables, frogs, skulls, chickens, owls of various sizes, and other animal figures such as rabbits, etc.

The production process is similar to that described when referring to miniature fruits. The clay that constitutes the raw material is obtained in El Tejar, Chimaltenango. This is strained and milled to convert it into fine powder. It is then moistened with water to obtain a mass, which is poured into baked clay molds that have the required shapes. They are placed in the molds to dry in the sun. Then they are removed from the molds and placed in a wood-fired oven to carry out cooking. Once this is done, they are allowed to cool and are colored with powder paints dissolved in water (sometimes mixed with glue). When the pieces are dry, they are varnished to give them shine.

The price of the piggy banks varies according to their size. They are sold in some cases, in the same workshops where they are made, or in the sales of San Felipe. Some artisans take their products to the stores in Guatemala City, even though many consider that little profit is made there; according to one artisan, resellers or intermediaries

“do not pay a fair price and want credit.”<sup>15</sup>

## **Suggestions for its application**

Painted ceramic piggy banks can be used as a motivational resource and a correlating element for different school subjects. The subject constitutes an esthetic and motor fact. Its application is suggested in the three cycles of the primary level and in the basic cycle of the secondary level in the following subjects:

### **Spanish**

The following activities are suggested for this subject:

Writing compositions about these painted ceramic objects, as well as what they represent.

Using nouns and adjectives.

Forming sentences.

### **Mathematics**

Pose and resolution of problems containing data to find out the process of the materials used in the manufacture of piggy banks and their prices.

Promote the habit of saving through classroom activities.

Solving problems that contain data about bank accounts and other types of operations.

### **Science**

In this subject, it is possible to carry out the following activities:

Classification of specific types of soil and other elements used in the elaboration of piggy banks.

Classification of vegetables and fruits.

Classification of animals.

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<sup>15</sup> Informant: José Guillermo España. Antigua Guatemala, October 1979.

## **Agricultural education**

In this subject, the topic lends itself to carrying out certain activities, such as:

Growing vegetables and fruits.

Raising and caring for domestic animals.

## **Social studies**

With this topic, it is possible to study:

In **geography** class:

The place where the raw materials are found.

The workplace.

The places where the piggy banks are sold.

The main sites where vegetables and fruits are produced.

## **Art**

In drawing class, the topic allows:

Draw the piggy banks and the different objects that they represent, paint them, and know the colors used.

## **Industrial arts**

Students can make some examples of this type of painted ceramics, using molds and various types of materials, such as clay, plaster, etc.

In addition, it is possible that new models of piggy banks will be created in this subject.

### **1.4 Shepherds and figurines for the Nativity.**

One of the most important and representative items of painted

ceramics from Antigua Guatemala are the shepherds and figurines for the Nativity that are made in that locality. There are many artists and artisans who are dedicated to making this type of painted ceramics. In this case, due to the beauty and quality of the works, we will refer exclusively to the work of the Rodenas family, specifically to Mrs. Angela Rodenas Pérez, a prominent member of a family of popular artists with a long and fruitful tradition in this field. She elaborated on around 50 different models of Christmas shepherds.

The procedure for making it is similar to that described above when referring to piggy banks. The variations consist of the type of ovens used to bake them, which are smaller. The shepherds are hand-modeled and painted with very fine brushes, some of which are made from human hair.

“Doña Angelita’s” shepherds are sold only at her home, where numerous buyers come months before Christmas. The price of the shepherds ranges between Q 1.25 and Q 2.00 each unit, depending on the size and ornamental detail of each one.

### **Suggestions for its application**

The topic of painted ceramic shepherds and figurines for the Nativity can be used in teaching as a motivational resource and a correlating element for different school subjects. It constitutes an esthetic and motor fact, as well as a fraternizing fact, because of what the shepherds represent. Its application is suggested in the three cycles of the primary level and in the secondary level. It can be used in the following subjects:

#### **Spanish**

With this topic, it is possible in this subject:

To achieve correct oral and written expression about facts that are presented to the student; to make oral stories and compositions to appreciate their observation capacity.

Enrich the student’s vocabulary by learning about the people represented by the ceramic shepherds.

Suggest the use of nouns and adjectives.

## **Mathematics**

It allows the teaching and recapitulation of numerical operations through the pose problems related to the purchase of raw materials and the sale of shepherds.

## **Social studies**

This subject includes teaching about some traditional festivals; in this case, it is suggested to learn about Christmas and, in particular, about the Nativity scene and everything that its elaboration implies: various jobs that the shepherds represent, etc.

## **Geography**

With the mentioned activity, the student is able to locate the areas where painted ceramic shepherds are made in the republic and the sites where the materials for their production are obtained.

## **Science**

With this topic, it is possible to study the different types of clay used in the elaboration of ceramics, which can include their chemical analysis in higher grades.

## **Art**

In this subject, painted ceramic shepherds constitute an appropriate topic to introduce students to popular art. In addition, students can use them as models to draw.

## **Industrial arts**

As part of this subject, students can make shepherds with different materials, such as plasticine, plaster, or clay, modeled by hand or with molds.

## 2. Wood

In the department of Sacatepéquez, there are several artisans who are dedicated to producing woodwork, especially turned wood. In this sense, numerous objects are made, such as furniture, doors, altarpieces, balconies, gates, processional floats, kitchen utensils, fruits, fruit bowls, etc.

### 2.1 Miniature kitchen utensils

One of the crafts that has acquired greater importance and demand among the woodwork produced in Sacatepéquez is that of miniature kitchen utensils.

The raw material for making these miniatures is constituted of various types of wood, such as white sapote, grevillea, jacaranda, cypress, and guanacaste, which are generally bought from estates near the departmental capital.

The equipment used is the following: saws of various sizes, circular saws, handsaws, hammers, electric lathes, chisels, and drill bits (“*gurluas*”).

The manufacturing process used is as follows: pieces of fresh wood of the appropriate size are prepared and cut, rounding them to make the work easier. They are then placed on a lathe in which they are worked with great care, due to their size, until they are given the required shape. They are left to dry in the sun and then are decorated.

The utensils obtained are small grinders, small rolling pins, small mashers, small spoons, small pallets, small forks, small knives, etc. The size of the utensils is approximately 5 centimeters long x 1 centimeter wide.

The price of a dozen miniatures is Q 0.60. These utensils are mainly sold in Antigua Guatemala and Guatemala City. In recent years, the existence of other uses for these toys has been observed, one of which is to serve as souvenirs for the teas that women from the dominant strata usually hold, especially at the so-called “bachelorette parties.” These souvenirs are sold in the craft boutiques of Guatemala City. In addition, according to the data provided by the

informants, a large number of these toys are exported to the United States as typical souvenirs.

### **Suggestions for its application**

In teaching, these toys can serve as a motivational resource and a correlating element for different subjects. They constitute an esthetic and motor fact. Their application is suggested in the three cycles of the primary level and in the basic cycle of the secondary level in the following subjects:

#### **Spanish**

In this subject it is possible to use these wood toys for:

Enriching the child's vocabulary.

Using the dictionary.

Using nouns and adjectives.

#### **Mathematics**

These toys are applicable in teaching measurements and geometric figures, sets, etc.

It is also possible to pose problems that contain data on the cost of materials, sales, etc.

#### **Social studies**

With this subject, it is possible to learn about the various jobs performed by people according to their gender, which are represented by shepherds.

In **geography**, students can locate:

The place where the toys mentioned are made.

The sites in the republic with the largest timber production.

## Science

With the knowledge of these toys, it is possible to motivate the teaching of some of the programmatic contents of this subject, such as levers (movement that man makes when working with wood), types of wood, and knowledge of forests as a natural resource.

## Art

In this subject, wooden toys are used by students to take models to draw.

## Industrial arts

As part of this subject, students can make kitchen utensils, not only in miniature, but also in large sizes, with or without a lathe.

### 2.2 Spinning tops and capiruchos

Generally, the people who are dedicated to making spinning tops and capiruchos for sale in large quantities are carpenters who also make marimbas, furniture, miniature toys, fruits, and fruit bowls of various sizes.

The raw materials, work instruments, and manufacturing process are the same as described in section 2.1. The variation consists of the size of the pieces of wood used and the products obtained, in this case spinning tops of various sizes and capiruchos. The spinning tops have a nail at the tip so they can spin. Spinning tops are made in three sizes: large, medium (called "*monas*"), and small ("*guazapitas*"). They are sold per thick, a measure that contains 144 units. The prices are as follows: small ones Q 12.00; medium ones Q 18.00; and large ones Q 24.00.

Spinning tops are sold in Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala, Totonicapán, and Quetzaltenango.

Capiruchos are sold in Antigua Guatemala. They are produced in smaller quantities, as they are carved and painted. Their prices vary; the carved ones are sold at Q 0.75 each.

### **Suggestions for its application**

These toys can be used as a motivational resource and a correlating element for different subjects. They are fraternizing and motor facts. Their use is suggested in the three cycles of the primary level in the following subjects:

#### **Spanish**

In this subject, it is possible to form a vocabulary with the various terms used to designate these toys in different Latin American countries.

#### **Mathematics**

Pose problems relating to the cost of toys.

#### **Social studies**

The spinning top in this subject can be used to establish comparisons with the rotation and revolution movements of the Earth.

#### **Geography**

Location of the place where toys are made and the sites where they are sold.

#### **Nature study**

Knowledge of the different types of wood and their uses.

Knowledge of forests.

## **Industrial arts**

This subject requires practical activity. In this sense, students can make spinning tops and capiruchos with wood and prepare the strings that are required.

## **Physical education**

Playing with these objects requires the development of motor coordination, which can be put into practice, mainly in the first years of primary school.

### **2.3 Miniature fruits.**

This category constitutes one of the representative crafts of Sacatepéquez. Life-size and miniature fruits and fruit bowls are produced; both life-size and miniature fruits achieve attributes that are highly appreciated inside and outside the country.

The raw material is made up of various types of wood, such as jacaranda, guanacaste, and cypress, which are purchased from estates near the departmental capital.

For the elaboration of fruits, an electric wood lathe, saws, chisels, etc., are used. They are ready-made on the lathe, where they are worked with great care. They are then polished by hand and left to dry in the sun. After this process is completed, colors based on varnish and aniline or powder paint are applied. In some cases they are only varnished, leaving the natural color of the wood.

The fruits that are made are peaches, limes, plums, pomegranates, cashews, avocados, pineapples, etc.

The fruit bowls with the little fruits cost Q 3.00 and are sold in Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala, and exported to the United States.

## **Suggestions for its application**

Miniature wooden fruits can be used in teaching as a motivational resource and a correlating element for different school subjects. It is also an esthetic and motor fact. Its application can be

made at the primary and secondary levels, in the following subjects:

## **Spanish**

Using nouns and adjectives.

Forming sentences.

## **Mathematics**

In this subject, it is possible to raise and solve problems about the costs of the materials used and about the purchase and sale of fruits.

## **Science**

Promotes knowledge of fruits.

Knowledge of forests and different types of wood.

Applications of electricity to the wood lathe.

## **Social studies**

The topic allows us to study the family and community of the artisan; the artisan workshop.

## **Geography**

Locate the department of Sacatepéquez and the fruit distribution sites on the map.

## **Art**

In this subject, it is possible to promote knowledge of textures and contours.

Primary and secondary colors.

Different types of paints.

## **Industrial arts**

Manufacture of miniature wooden fruits with or without a lathe.

### **3. Other materials**

#### **3.1 Rag dolls.**

Antigua Guatemala has been known for many years for its production of rag dolls, despite the fact that toys, especially mass-produced plastic dolls, have significantly decreased the consumer market for them. Despite this phenomenon, it is still possible to see girls from the popular classes having fun with these beautiful dolls.

Generally, women of various ages are dedicated to this activity and carry it out in a complementary way to other tasks, such as knitting, sewing, etc.

The materials used are fabric scraps of various colors, corn leaves, and sawdust.

The work instruments consist of scissors, a needle, and thread.

The elaboration process is as follows:

Some dolls are made with a corn leaf frame inside covered with a strip of cloth, which in many cases can be a blanket. Others contain the same cloth frame inside but are filled with sawdust. After the body is ready-made, the dresses are made with fabric scraps of various colors. The eyes, nose, and mouth are marked with thick stitches of thread.

Currently, dolls (men and women) and clowns are made from rags. The price per unit is Q 0.40 and per dozen Q 4.00.

Rag dolls are sold in the market of Antigua Guatemala. Sometimes, by special order in Guatemala City.

### **Suggestions for its application**

The theme of rag dolls is a motivational resource in teaching and a correlating element for various subjects. It is an esthetic, motor,

and fraternizing fact. Its application is suggested at the primary and secondary levels: basic cycle and diversified teaching course in the following subject:

### **Spanish**

Suggests the use of nouns and adjectives.

Forming sentences.

Writing compositions.

### **Mathematics**

Pose problems related to the costs of the materials; purchase and sale prices.

### **Science**

Rag dolls can be used to motivate knowledge of the human body.

### **Social studies**

Allows the study of the family and its members.

### **Art**

Rag dolls can be used as models for drawing.

Promote the knowledge of colors, shapes, etc.

### **Industrial arts**

In this subject, students can make rag dolls.

In the diversified teaching course, they constitute extremely useful teaching material.

### **3.2 Wire shepherds.**

According to Roberto Diaz Castillo<sup>16</sup>, the wire shepherds are as old as nativity scenes. This author relates that Mrs. Basilia Carrillo began making shepherds of this type in 1903.

Currently, wire shepherds of various sizes are made in Sacatepéquez: one, five, eight, and ten or more inches long. Those measuring eight inches or more are known as “typical dolls,” which are part of the so-called “families.” These families are in high demand among tourists who visit Antigua Guatemala, especially foreigners.

The materials used are cibaque, wrapping paper (“kraft”), wire, mana [a type of thread or fiber for craft activities], traditional indigenous textiles, fabric scraps, wood, cardboard, wool, and river sand.

The work instruments consist of handsaws or saws, pliers, and scissors.

The manufacturing process begins by cutting a piece of wire to the required size, then covering it with kraft paper and tissue paper, which forms the body. The head is made from a piece of cloth and covered with paper. The eyes and mouth are painted black, and the hair is simulated with black river sand. They are then dressed in traditional indigenous textiles. They are attached to a piece of cardboard or wood.

Wire shepherd prices vary depending on size; they are generally sold by dozen. Small ones cost Q 1.50 per dozen, and large ones cost Q 2.50 per dozen.

They are sold in Antigua Guatemala and in Guatemala, especially at Christmas time. The “families” throughout the year.

#### **Suggestions for its application**

Wire shepherds constitute a motivational resource and a correlating element in teaching. It is an esthetic, motor, and fraternizing fact. Its application is suggested at the primary level in the following subjects:

<sup>16</sup> Roberto Díaz Castillo, **Artes y artesanías populares de Sacatepéquez**. Centro de Estudios Folklóricos, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, Editorial Universitaria, Guatemala, 1976.

## **Spanish**

The topic allows in this subject:

Using nouns and adjectives.

## **Mathematics**

Pose problems relating to the costs, expenses, and sales prices.

## **Science**

Knowledge of the materials used in the elaboration of wire shepherds.

Knowledge of the human body.

## **Social studies**

Promote knowledge of the various indigenous costumes of the republic.

Allow the study of the family.

Knowledge of traditional festivals: Christmas and Nativity.

## **Art**

Motivate the knowledge of colors; they serve as models for drawing.

## **Industrial arts**

Students of various grades can elaborate wire shepherds.

## **Conclusions**

In general terms, it is possible to affirm that popular toys play a

very important role for children of the popular classes, such as fully satisfying their playful needs.

Popular toys are current within the popular classes, despite the imposition of mass-produced plastic toys to which such classes are subjected. Imposition that is made especially through the media.

The school, as the main educational institution, should be responsible for preserving and maintaining popular toys, as well as other aspects of traditional popular culture. This will be achieved through the proper educational application of these, since this allows for their assessment and knowledge.

The economic condition of popular artists and artisans who, in the department of Sacatepéquez, are dedicated to the elaboration of toys, as in all other cases, is bad, although in relation to other departments of the republic, they are better. Nevertheless, at no time is it possible to say that the earnings obtained from their work satisfy their basic needs and allow them a decent life.

In the particular case of the artists and artisans interviewed in Sacatepéquez, they do not dedicate themselves exclusively to the elaboration of toys. They are also involved in other aspects of popular arts and crafts. However, it was observed that some do only dedicate themselves to artistic and artisanal work.



# **THE CYCLE OF *COMPADRE* TALES IN THE LITERARY FOLKLORE OF GUATEMALA**

*Celso A. Lara Figueroa*

## **0. INTRODUCTION**

The area of literary folklore of Centro de Estudios Folklóricos is the repository of an inexhaustible vein of samples of Guatemalan popular literature in both prose and verse.

Its careful analysis has led us to select, group, and refine several hundred versions of folkloric tales, most of which have already been archived and transcribed.

The immense volume of material collected in the field (more than 1,300 samples, of which 90% came from rural areas) has led us to confront theoretical and technical problems. At first we thought that, methodologically, it was convenient to follow the example of the great compilations of folkloric tales (Susana Chertudi, Yolando Pino Saavedra, Stanley Robe, among others), but the permanent economic crisis of our high house of studies, of which we are part, and the little use that such voluminous works have for the population sector to which Centro de Estudios Folklóricos intends to bring its results made us desist from following this path.

Therefore, and after subjecting the original material to a new and thorough analysis, we find that, as has been pointed out so many times, theoretically folkloric tales have been grouped into cycles, the basis of the typology of Stith Thompson, Aanti Aarne, Steele Boogs,

and others. Guatemalan folkloric tales could not escape this rule. Because of this, we tried to study the stories by grouping them according to the most representative cycles that the samples yielded.

We have already made attempts in this study: the analysis of the cycle of Padre Urdemales tales (tale of rogues), 1980, and that of Uncle Rabbit and Uncle Coyote (animal tales), 1979. With this article, we want to show a third cycle: compadre [friend] tales.

On this occasion, due to the limited space we have, we will not go into further analysis, but rather we will focus on making known some versions of this cycle, with the desire and commitment to offer a more exhaustive study later.

## **I. THE CYCLE OF COMPADRE TALES. BRIEF COMMENTS**

Folkloric literature, as one of the most profound manifestations of traditional popular culture, accurately reflects the worldview and life concept of marginalized social groups. The social reality of these groups is transformed, through literature, thanks to orality, tradition, and creativity, ultimately determined for reasons of an economic nature, into a literary reality loaded with fiction. This crude objective reality, concrete, is transparent in these tales through the literary figures and the imagination of the storyteller, as well as the traditional forms of literary expression (types and motifs), which, linked by the skills of the narrator, express all the feeling of his community, both in its esthetic creation and in its social and personal frustration.

In other words, the magic of the tale replaces reality and promises a less unjust world.

On the other hand, popular culture is in particular challenging to the values of erudite culture created by the dominant classes of a society divided into classes. It is also a melting pot where values specific to the subaltern classes in the literary field are forged and whose roots are collective.

The esthetic and protest message – as defined by Antonio Gramsci – is presented explicitly or implicitly, both at the levels of contestation and in the daily task of creating authentic, non-alienated esthetic patterns.

Thus, for example, within the cycle of animal tales, the contestation of values is presented in an implicit form, clothed in the subtle garb of metaphor and in the colloquial form of the narrator. This is further emphasized in the cycle of wonderful tales.

It is more explicit in the tales of rogues and vagrants, such as Pedro Urdemales and Don Chevo.

However, it must be made very clear that not all expressions of popular culture should be conceptualized as challenging values. Many of them serve a purely esthetic, recreational, or entertainment function, if not a moralizing one.

In the case of the cycle of compadre tales, the contestation of the values of the hegemonic classes is openly explicit and is expressed from the first moment the narrative appears:

The compadres are two: one poor and the other rich. Between the pole of extreme misery, on the one hand, and opulent wealth, on the other hand, walks the plot of the tale. The traditional narrator, as can be seen from the versions that follow, emphasizes the misery of the poor friend, but, as a palliative to his precarious economic conditions, he exalts his spiritual values, his balance and restraint, but, above all, he emphasizes the value that work has for this character.

The opposite happens with the rich compadre: miserly, he hoards money without ever satisfying his ambition. The storyteller, of course, emphasizes all these defining facets of the personality of each of the two characters in the tale:

The life of the poor compadre is subject to work, which is not pleasant for the rich compadre. The wealth of the latter comes from illegal means, an attitude that the storyteller frequently lets float in the environment or else expresses clearly.

In the development of the tale, the poor compadre is supported by supernatural forces and other similar incentives, and those who deposit all their wisdom and power in his hands. The poor compadre, with moderation, work, restraint, and a high degree of responsibility, manages to obtain money, which he administers with probity. For his part, the rich compadre tries to wield the same forces, but he cannot use them to his advantage since he is blinded by miserliness; that is

why in all the tales he is punished and loses all signs of power and wealth.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that all the magical objects and supernatural characters that appear in the plot do not act on their own but are provided to the characters in the story as a tool to achieve an end. It is the ingenuity and the stubborn will of a man that make them useful or useless. In these samples of tales, such situations are represented in varying forms.

Six versions are offered that represent the most significant variants found in the sample analyzed.

Let us, then, leave the word to the popular narrators and storytellers.

## **II. THE TALES OF THE RICH COMPADRE AND THE POOR COMPADRE**

### **1. The Compadres and Saint Anthony**

Once upon a time, there were two compadres; one was poor and the other was rich. The poor one always... bothered the rich compadre, and... the rich one, as he had means, gave him the facilities; but over time, uh... the rich compadre got bored of... of helping his compadre. But one time, the godson reached... a certain age, around eight years old, and the rich compadre said to his wife:

-Look, darling -he said - we are going to give a heifer to our godson.

And...

-But we have to look for the most skeletal ones, - said the... the wife of the rich compadre.

So they did it, they gathered all the cattle and the most skeletal heifer there was; they gave it to the... to the godson. This heifer over time was superior to... all the cattle that the rich compadre had. So, it began, and the... the comments... the comments began of the rich compadre with, with the wife about how it could be that when they had given him the heifer, more skeletal and now among all the... among

all the cattle it was the superior one, and how they would get rid of it. Then the woman said to him:

-Only by killing it, in a moment of carelessness when, when the kid is not... is not taking care of it.

Well, one day, he woke up... uh... the godson woke up with... with a fever... and he did not have the opportunity to go out to herd his... his heifer; that was when they took advantage of taking the heifer home, and at night they killed it. The leather was buried under a loft, and... the meat was kept on top of the loft. There was a woman who was the housekeeper of... of the hacienda house, of the... of the rich, she noticed the way in which they had killed the heifer. Another day when it dawned, the kid got up early to look for his heifer, and he was looking for it like a lunatic, he could not find it. Two or three days passed, and he looked for his heifer, crying because he loved it very much, and he could not find it. Uh... uh... finally, he got tired and returned to his... to his house crying, and he said to his mother:

-Mom, my heifer is lost.

-Oh, my son –she said- how could it get lost?

-And I have not found it.

That is when she arrived; that is when those comments were made when the housekeeper of the rich compadres arrived at the house. And she said to the lady, the mother of the, of the kid, the owner of the, of the heifer, that if she did not report her, that she, that the woman who was the housekeeper of the rich people, would tell her where the heifer was. Well, she... made her a promise, at the feet of Saint Anthony, that she promised her that she would not... that she would not report her. Then it was when the woman... when she told her that... that they had killed the heifer; they had the meat in the loft and the leather buried under the loft.

The poor... the poor *comadre* [female friend] comes and... buys a candle for a penny, and by... by coincidence, the rich compadres have a Saint, Lord Saint Anthony, in bulk. She bought the candle for a penny and went to the house of the rich comadre.

-Hey, comadrita, - she said- I have come to ask you a big favor.

-What a favor, comadre – she said- come in.

-I came to ask you a favor, -she said- that you give me permission- she said- to light a candle for Lord Saint Anthony, since he is the lawyer of animals, is what she said. Maybe he will... grant the miracle of making my heifer appear – she said-.

-Well, come in, with pleasure, come in – she said-, there is Lord Saint Anthony.

-That is good, she said.

-Then she lit the candle and knelt down, and she... and she put it close to where he was... Saint Anthony in bulk. She knelt down and began to... to ask him.

Then she says she was misleading, right? She said to him:

-How do you say, Lord Saint Anthony –she said- they killed it? - she said-; and that they, that... eh... that they buried its leather... under the, under the loft! Oh, yes? That is what she was saying; and that the... the meat is on top of the loft.

So then the... the rich comadre was stunned because she heard that... that Saint Anthony was talking to her.

Of course, she made that up so as to... so as not to... so as not to instill the... report the... housekeeper that she had been the one who had gone to tell her how, how the loss of the heifer had happened.

So:

-It must be, comadre –she said- that Saint Anthony told me the truth? – (said the poor comadre).

-How can that be, if Saint Anthony is very gossipy! –said the rich comadre to her.

-Well, well, well, let us see, even if it is not like that– she said-, I thank Lord Saint Anthony, she said, maybe he will grant me the miracle of bringing it to me.

She went out, said goodbye to the rich comadre, and left.

When the... the rich compadre arrived at the house, he was already arriving and, and his wife told him the news.

-Listen, man –she said- that, that the comadre came -she said to him, with a, to light a candle for Lord Saint Anthony -she said- so that our godson's heifer would appear, and do you believe that Lord Saint Anthony told her the truth –she said-.

-And what did Lord Saint Anthony say to her?

-Ah, that we had killed the heifer and that, that we had buried the leather under the loft and that we had the meat in... ah... up in the loft.

-See what a gossip Saint Anthony. Get me a charcoal there! - he said- I'm going to burn his mouth –he said-.

And they took out Saint Anthony; he grabbed the charcoal and burned... Saint Anthony's mouth with... the charcoal.

-For being a gossip, I will... I will burn your mouth –he said-.

Then, he threw it away.

Well, the next day the rich compadre's cattle began... began to die. In the end, with time, they ended up on the street.

And the poor comadre had a small picture of Saint Anthony, and she adored him a lot. So, when the rich man saw that because of the poor compadres all the cattle were dying, he, he kicked them off his land, despite... seeing the calamity that the poor compadres were in. Eh... they had no other alternative; they just decided to leave the rich compadre's land, and they went to make their own, their own little hut, on vacant land. And the poor comadre always lit a candle for Lord Saint Anthony every day so that one day he would help them and all that. But for them... for them there was no such thing as envy.

Until one time, the poor compadre arrived to a... to a paddock, and night... night fell; it was around seven at night, when he stood looking a light, that illuminated. A bush of... of, a tree, at the foot of a tree, there was a bush, and there... there, there was the light (the luminary, the luminary), yes. Then he comes and... he grabs a stake and goes to... to put a sign on the bush. Another day he went to dig to see what the, the foot of the tree had; he had dug a little when he found the jar, and he... and he opened it, and it was only gold coins that it had; then he said:

-This is a pure miracle of Lord Saint Anthony, and he took it; he took it... he took the jar to the house and then with that money that... he began to make... to build a house, to make it like a temple to Lord Saint Anthony, because he, he had been the one who had granted the miracle. So, from there he began to, to rebuild a village, and then... it became a town, at that moment was already... quite civilized when the (rich) compadre came, begging for alms. It was worse because... at that time, they would go to ask for a bite, let's say a tortilla, but he was already going directly begging for alms because he had been left on the street due to the ingratitude he had shown to... to the poor compadres; after he had given the heifer to the godson, they killed it out of envy since it had been better than their COWS.

And so, they still gave him a hand and built him a house, so... so that he could live and spend his life; they gave him money so that he could support himself for the rest of his life. Uh... he died shortly after; they gave a... a Christian burial to the rich compadre, and near... near the establishment where they lived, it is said that over time they found another jar, anyway, they were very rich, and all that, and... that is where the story ends... (Inf. 1).

## **2. The compadres and the advice of the monkeys**

It is about a man who was very poor and had nothing to eat, but one time, his wife, angry, sent him to bring firewood to the forest, with an axe; he put it on his shoulder, and since he was so lazy, he decided to leave it behind and went into the forest with nothing. Then... night fell, and he climbed a tree to spend the night; after a while, some monkeys... a monkey arrived, with three little monkeys, and... they began to tell some tales, then the biggest little monkey said:

-Mommy, tell me a tale.

-Very well, son. Look, in a city, a princess does not speak; she is mute, and... the man who makes her speak... this... this man will be rich because the king will pay him a fortune.

Then the poor compadre came and took out a notebook that he had and started to write, and the biggest little monkey said:

-Mommy, what city is it in?

-Well, near Asia.

-Well – said the little monkey.

-Now, Mommy, it is my turn for the second tale.

-So, in a city near Alaska, there is a king, and he is... sick.

-And how could he be cured, Mommy? -said the little monkey.

-Well, there is a toad under his bed; a man should put on a dance and at midnight take the toad out from under the headboard and... that way the king would be cured and the man would make a lot of money.

So, the poor compadre thought that it was his chance, and he also wrote it; then the third little monkey came and said:

-Mommy, now it is my turn to listen to a tale.

-Well, look, son, in a city that is very big, there is no water, and people are killing each other to drink blood instead... instead of water.

-And how would water come out, Mommy?

-Well, a man would have to find the highest hill, and with one blow of the axe, water would come out, and he would be very rich because the government pays very well.

But then it was already dawning, and the monkey went home, to... to the town, and... the poor compadre got down from the tree and said he was going to try it, and he went to the first city, which was Asia, and there he said that he was a great healer who would make the queen talk, and they offered to give him ten mules loaded with gold; then, he... the poor compadre ordered her to dance, and at midnight he was going to give her a hit to the heart, and they began to dance, and all was very happy, and the man came and put a hit in the queen's heart, and when she got up, she began to talk and mistreat him; then he won the first ten mules loaded with gold.

Then he went to Alaska; already well dressed, he bought new clothes and became... a great doctor, and he would cure the king; his relatives agreed and began to throw a party, and just as the little monkey had said, he was going to... light a lot of firewood, and at midnight he was going to take the toad out from under the headboard, and so he did; then the king immediately got up and was cured.

They gave him another ten mules loaded with gold; then he went to the another city where there was no water and... he said that he was very wise and knew where to get water; he hired some men and they went to the highest hill and with two blows of the axe the water came out; then they also gave him another ten mules loaded with gold and all the people were grateful.

After a short time he went home and knocked on the door of his ranch and... and after knocking on the door he asked for lodging; then the woman told him that it was fine, that she would give him lodging but that he would stay in the corridor, because her husband had gone to the forest some time ago and had not returned, but she respected him very much and the man stayed in the corridor with his thirty mules that he brought loaded with gold; then, the next day he told her that she was a great woman for her honesty and that... and that he was her husband but that he had come back rich and he told her everything that has happened to him in the forest; he told her everything that happened in the forest.

Then she became happy, but they sent someone to the neighborhood, where the rich compadre lived, to borrow a scale, so the rich compadre said, why would they use it since they did not even have beans? But with doubt, he put a piece of wax under the scale to see what they had, and then they began to weigh in pounds all the gold they carried, and they went to hand over the scale, and a coin had remained stuck in the wax. Then the rich compadre... he ran to the poor compadre's house and asked him... why there was that coin? The poor compadre told him everything, and then the rich compadre would do the same thing; the wife of the rich one sent him the following week to go to the forest to get firewood, and she gave him an axe; but since he was so stingy, he did not want to leave the axe; he took it all the way up to the forest.

Then, night fell and he climbed the same tree; after a while, the monkeys arrived and said:

-Well, Mommy, are you going to tell us a tale now?

-No, children –she told them– because... when I came last time, there was someone up there, and now he is a millionaire.

So, uh...

-That is why I am not telling you anything.

-That is very simple –said the little monkeys- let us go up and see if there is anyone in the tree and kill him, and then you tell us the tale.

And the three little monkeys and the mother monkey climbed up and saw that there was a man; they took him down and... killed him; then later the mother monkey told the tales, and that is why envy is useless, because there are always regrettable results. (Inf. 2).

### **3. The compadres and the magic rock**

On one occasion, there was a rich compadre and a poor compadre; they lived in the same place, but on one occasion the poor compadre uh... thought in the afternoon to go and bring a little load of firewood to the mountain, and it turned out that he could not find any firewood, and he went to the hill and he went up when he felt he was coming to a big rock, and there he was when he heard some voices that came and said:

-Mule, mule!

Then the whistles, driving the mules; when he saw that a pack of mules of about forty mules and forty men was coming, but their leader came ahead, mounted on a mule, and then he came close to the rock and said... and the poor compadre was listening:

-Open Sesame.

The big rock opened at that moment, the leather of these men entered there, the forty mules entered with loads, and about two hours later, perhaps, when the rock opened again, the mules and all these men came out and left. Then the poor compadre stayed saying:

-Open Sesame.

Immediately the rock opened, and he saw that inside that rock was a large, incomparable house; there was a large warehouse, as well as money, clothing (jewelry), and many luxury things (jewelry). Many jewelry...

Well, then:

-This is my lucky –He said-.

And, instead of carrying firewood, what he did was tie a rope to a box, and he loaded it and took it home, and when he got home, he said to his wife:

-Look, I found a fortune, and I will tell you about it later, but here I bring a box with what I found, and let us open it to see what it contains.

And when they opened the box... the box was completely full of money, pure money. Then, he was very excited and said to a boy:

-Listen, boy, go over there with the rich compadre and go lend him a bushel. Let us measure how many bushels of money I have in this box.

He was quite excited, but since the rich compadre was envious, he already knew that he was envious; then the rich compadre said:

-Look, oh- he says to his wife- before sending the bushel to the compadre, put a wax paste sewn on the seat of the bushel inside and out. Come on... there has to be a sign of what the compadre is going to measure, because the compadre has nothing to measure; he has no beans, corn, or anything to measure. Where from...?

Then the comadre came, put a little melted wax into the bushel inside and out, and the boy took the bushel; but as it was already night, the poor compadre no longer noticed that the bushel had that wax there, so they measured the money and... and early the next day, very early in the morning, he went to leave the bushel; anyway, they received the bushel, and... then the rich compadre noticed a coin was stuck in the wax paste.

-Look here, oh, this is the mark of what the compadre measure; where did he bring the money? This money, this coin that comes... that comes here in this wax of the bushel, this money, the compadre does not know how much this coin is worth. Look, this coin is worth so much. And where did the compadre bring the money from? He is poor. Ha, tomorrow I am going to ask him a question, and you, tomorrow you ask the comadre a question too; they have to tell us where they brought this?

Indeed, the next day the rich compadre went with the poor compadre and said to him:

-My compadrito, where did you get money? Look, in my bushel's seat there was a large coin worth so much; where did you get money, compadre? Now... you are not going to tell me that you measured corn or that you measured beans or that you measured... if you don't have anything to measure, I have seen money, compadre. Where did you bring it?

-Ah, compadrito, well, look... I'm quite poor and... and you know that I do not even have enough to clothe my family or anything; so I went to make a big commitment to the... to the town; I promised to be a bricklayer's assistant and I took out money in advance and that money was what I... I measured; so I'm sold, compadre, and from now on I have to go to the town to work, but I only took out money to clothe my family, because we are very poor.

-Ah, well, compadrito, if that is so, compadre, that is fine.

Eh... the rich compadre turned around and went home; but suddenly the poor compadre went... went back to the rock and went back in and took out another box, and he went back again and brought another box, and all the boxes he had were full of pure money; so when he had enough money there, he ordered the bushel to be lent again... the same thing: at the seat of the bushel there came the sign that money had been measured.

The compadre came back again and then they saw that... in fifteen days onwards. The compadre was already dressed well, the comadre was well dressed and all the compadre's children were well dressed, everyone with good footwear and... well.

Suddenly the rich compadre came and said to him:

-Compadrito, what did you do to get rich so fast? If you had nothing, you, compadre, you are poor, where did you get this money? I do not believe that they gave you so much money for your work; compadre, when are you going to get back all that money you took?

-Ah compadrito, well... you know that when you are poor you get into big debts and you do not even know how you are going to get out of them, compadre.

But suddenly it happened that the poor compadre went to bring more money, and suddenly he already had enough money, so he paid some bricklayers and went to draw up the construction of a house in

the town, and there the poor compadre began to build the best luxury house in that town, because he no longer wanted to live there against the rich compadre; he thought of moving to the town.

But when the rich compadre heard that the poor compadre was building a house in the town, and he had news that it was the most luxury house, then he came and said to the compadre:

-Compadrito, look, I already know that you are building a big house in the town. Where did you get the money from, compadre? Tell me, if you trust your compadre, which is me, look, tell me, I am not going to say anything, compadre; instead of me... instead of me saying, or me envying you, I am going to help you, compadre.

And then, of course, the comadre also questioned the other comadre in the kitchen, how the story went, what they had done and everything; then the poor compadre comes and become careless.

-Compadrito –he said to him- look, I am only going to tell you how it was... the fortune I found, but do not you go saying anything, compadre, because it is dangerous. Well, look, one afternoon I was going to get firewood and there I found... I heard the voices of some men who were approaching a rock and they were muleteers and when they got to the rock they said: "Open Sesame," then I watched when they left and there are great thing in that rock, there is a large warehouse and only... only I know where it is, he said, but... I do not want anything to be said, because if not, God forbid, they will kill us.

-Compadrito, look, I know how to keep secrets, and I will not say anything. Where is it, compadre?

-Well, in such a place it is.

-Compadrito, I am going to go tomorrow.

-Well, that is good compadre, but look, be careful because if they... if they look at you, they can kill you, compadre.

-No, compadre, do not worry about that.

The next day the rich compadre calculated the time and left, all the way he kept saying:

-Open Sesame, Open Sesame...

And when he arrived at the rock and said the phrase, the rock opened and this man looked at that warehouse that was inside of... of that large house and there were boxes of different sizes; then he said:

-The compadre –he says- must have brought boxes of money, but the smallest ones because this one cannot hold enough; I am big, I can handle it.

He picked up the biggest box, the one that weighed the most, and he put it in the *mecapa* [Belt worn across the forehead designed to carry heavy loads on the back.] and... and he took it. When he got home he opened the box full of nails, it was not money, only nails. Then he went back again to get another box, he loaded another big box as well and when he was going to leave, he forgot the phrase for the rock:

-Open parsley –he told- open coriander, open onion and open...

He called it different names and the rock did not open. So there he was with his loaded inside, when the boss of the men came and said:

-Open Sesame.

The rock opened and they found him inside with the big box. Immediately the boss ordered that he be captured, tied up and thrown into a sack and... they were going to... to shoot him; then he said:

-Gentlemen, do not kill me! It is just that I have a compadre who is poor and he taught me that there was... there was money here and that is why this is my first time I have come here, gentlemen, but... but my compadre was the one who showed me that here... Ah, my compadre! He has been carrying money for some time; this is my first time here, gentlemen, do not kill me.

-Okay, we are not going to kill you, but you are going to show us who your compadre is.

-Well, look –he said- there in the town, the compadre with all the money he came to bring... here in this house, he built a big luxurious house, and next Saturday he is going to have the inauguration of the house. There is going to be a big party; there is going to be firecrackers, there is going to be marimba, there is going to be a big dance, and it is the most famous house in the town.

-Well, then we are not going to kill you and you are going to wait with us until that date. We are not going to kill you, but we are going to kill your compadre, we are going to kill him and we are going to take away everything that he has taken; but you are going to go with us to seal the house, at one in the morning –the boss said-.

-Okay –he says-.

Well, the compadre, as long as they did not kill him, was there with them, until the day came when they were going to celebrate the poor compadre's house, but... the day before they went to quiet hours and went to seal the house. So, but... the poor compadre had a young girl who was very clever, and she came and went out the back of the house early in the morning, before it was light, no doubt... she went to the bathroom, and she saw that the house was sealed. So she went in and she says to her... to her father:

-Daddy, I noticed that the house is sealed.

- How could that be, my dear? Look, take this seal and go seal all the houses in the town, the ones you can.

So, the girl took a seal and went to seal most of the houses in the town.

Well, after eight days he had sealed the house, he celebrated the house; he brought the marimba; they were having a great party there when that man, the owner of the cave, arrived; he arrived with forty mules and forty barrels; each mule was carrying a barrel, but the barrels were too big, and he arrived at that house where the party was, the house of the poor compadre. And in one of the barrels there was the rich compadre, and that boss also hid all his people in barrels.

So they were at the big party and they unloaded the mules... the mules were there in the corridor of the house, and then they went to tie the mules on one side; they left the barrels all over the corridor of the house. And this... this boss entered the party and went to the owner of the... of the... of the house and began to talk with him; a long talk, because he knew that late at night, he was going to break the barrels, that big crown was going to come out to kill those who had been there. But then, while they were there talking, the girl came out again and went and looked at the barrels, there in the corridor of the house. Then the girl came and said:

-One...

-It is time... -someone answered inside-

-Two...

-It is time.

And she counted the forty barrels and everyone answered if it was time, then the girl came in again and secretly said to her father:

-Daddy, I already counted those forty barrels in the corridor of the house, from one to the last, and everyone inside answered me if it was time.

- Ah... mmmm... it is probably the thieves are coming to kill me. Go to the kitchen and get a barrel of oil and when the oil is boiling completely, you are going to pour a jet into each barrel.

-Well, the daughter went to get a barrel of oil and when the oil was boiling, she went to pour some oil into each barrel and after a while she went to count, there was no more answers inside; without a doubt all those who were there died, because they did not answer anymore.

Then the owner of the house came and said to the daughter:

-Look, dear, go pick out a... a bottle of wine, we are going to give a... a glass to all these people who are here, marimba players and all. Then comes this... this owner of the house, the poor compadre and... he uncorked the bottle of wine and began to fill the first glass and the first ones to be served were the marimba players and then, the others, and then that... that boss who arrived.

At that moment, everyone passed out, so then the poor compadre came and killed the boss, the owner of the barrels, and at that same moment, when everyone passed out, he went and threw all the mules into the river, along with the barrels and he was left completely alone with that wealth. The next day, he began to transport the last of the wealth that was in that rock and became a very rich man, while the rich compadre, who was in the barrels, was destroyed that night as well. (Inf. 3).

#### 4. The compadres and the money bags

There were two compadres, right? A poor shoemaker, his name was Samuel, very poor, he had two little children and his wife and the poor man always spent his time... just mending and making some shoes, but he could not do anything; but the other compadre, Juan, had a lot of money, right? And was very fond of the poor compadre and one day he said:

-Look –he said- I am going to see my compadre – he said- Samuel, the compadre Samuel.

-Yes, -the wife said- I am sure you are going to leave him money.

-Yes, my poor compadre, maybe so he can make his workshop nicer – he said and left.

He arrived... right? Because he lived far away, he arrived.

-How are you, compadre?

-Ah, well compadre, come in, and sit on this stool, compadre.

He does not... doing...

-My poor compadre –he said-.

-Oh, my compadrito. Do you want a cup of coffee? Because you know, compadre...

-Do not worry.

Already with the... the bag of money.

-Look, compadre, take this bag of money –he said- for something, let us see what you do.

-Oh, thank you very much compadre –he said- and he says goodbye.

He, always hiding the money from the children, put it in a jar of ashes. Then... while he went to the... to the street, right? Some people passed by there...

-There is no ash? Is not there any ash for soap?

-There is a jar, mom.

-Ah, sell it to them.

And they take the jar of ashes with all the money inside (Yes, well). Oh, God, when he arrives...

-And the ashes? Oh, who was it sold to?

-We do not even know them, they just came by bringing ashes.

-Oh, God –he said-

He was left in misery again, (Yes, well).

-Oh, I will not say anything to my compadre, because he will be upset; about eight... about eight days later, he said:

-I am going to see my compadre, to see if he bought everything that...

He arrived, and he saw his compadre.

-Come in, compadre, he began to...

-Why are you crying, compadre?

-Oh, compadre, what do you think? –he said- always fleeing – he said- I... I put... my... the bag of money in a jar of ashes, because of those children –he said- and they... they sell the jar of ashes, and they do not know to whom, compadre...

-Oh, compadre...

He lets himself go.

-I will be back, compadre.

After about fifteen days he arrived.

-Compadre –he said-

-What is up, compadre? Sit down, compadre because...

-I have got you another bag of money here –he said- Let us see...

-Wow, thank you very much, compadre –he said- and... and he went to get some meat, right? But, he... he always took the bag of money, always because... because he did not... did not... did not... right? And... and since he had a couple of puppies, well... whether

he wanted it or not, the bag... filled up with... you know... with the scent of meat, right? The dogs... the dogs took the bag of money to the corner of the forest, right there on the same site, right? The same site by the house. (Yes, well). In a corner, they left the bag of money. And now the...

-Oh, I dropped the bag of money on the road –he said to his wife.

-Oh, my poor compadre. Oh God –he said- and, now?

Oh, he started...

-Oh, what do I do now?

He came back after about eight days.

-Let us see if my compadre bought anything yet.

He left. The same thing happened to the compadre

-Oh, compadre –he said- Now I don't even have the courage to tell you, compadre... look –he said- and he starts crying, the poor man, right? He wanted... -you want me to plant... what should I do? –he said- look, compadre –he said- this and this happened to me – he said- and what should I do?

The other one tells him... -the dogs took it away.

-Oh, compadre.

They came back again... the compadre is so good, right? (Yes, well). He came back... he arrived; and he says to his wife:

-Look at what... what is happening to my compadre...

-If you are always giving money to my compadre... I wonder if... I wonder what he will do.

-My poor compadre; it could be –he said- that he is so unlucky –he said- Well, this is the last bag of money I brought to him.

The compadre...

-Thank you very much, compadre, I do not know what –he said- he brought him another bag of money.

Oops... he hid it, he put it among some old rags, which he always had... later, during the attribution, he forgot where he had put the money.

-Oh God. Where did I put the money? Do not you remember?

-Ah, and what? If you... you did not tell me anything ... do you think I am going to steal the money –the wife told him- or what?

-Oh God. And now? Now we are really screwed because the compadre said that is the last bag, anyway, may God's will be done...

And always mending. One day he saw a neighbor who was going fishing, the neighbor's wife told to his husband at about seven in the evening:

-Go –she said- with the shoemaker Samuel –she said- to see if he has a piece of lead that he can give you –she said- to mend the cast net –he said-.

And he arrived.

-G... Good even... Good evening.

-Good evening.

-You did not have... My wife says, you do not have a piece of lead that you gave her –he says-.

-Of course, here it is –he said- he gave him the piece of lead. –Well, here is the lead, right...

-Oh, poor shoemaker, this is going to fix the... cast... The first fish I catch is his. Remember that –he said to his wife- no selling it, I will bring it separately, in a bag.

Casually then... he left. A fish... a big fish fell on him, a snook about this big, ah!

-A promise made is a promise kept –he said... the fisherman. (Yes, well). -Otherwise, God will punish me –he said-. –I offered that fish to the poor shoemaker, let him eat it, poor, with his children –he said-, -poor, he can barely eat it with *chirmol* [kind of traditional sauce] and tomato... -he said- No.

And they give him the fish, right? Ah, well, when she opened the fish, the shoemaker's wife found a beautiful diamond.

-Ah! Look –she said- the stone that had the... had the fish.

-Ah! Yes, how beautiful! –he said- Put it there on the table.

She put it on; at night, the diamond gave a better light than a... a fifty-candlepower bulb.

-Ah! He said... Did you see? What... and why waste light! See that... I do not know what that was. (Yes, well).

-What luxury! –he said-. Put it there, so... the children do not get tempted, with that... and why waste light and now I can work well –he said- with that great light, right? Then... a jeweler passed by; he stares at the... he recognized that one (yes, well), he looked at the stone.

-Friend –he said to him-.

-What is up?

-I will give you so many thousands for that stone.

-Ha, ha, ha! –he burst out laughing- I gave... a stone for...

-I will give you that much.

-Ah, hahaha! –the shoemaker laughed again.

-Look, my friend, so much and... and I will buy you that house where you are –he said to him.

-He Pay! –he said then, right?

Ah, then the woman said to him:

-Did he pay? Yes man, yes –said the woman.

-He paid! –he said-.

Ah, there was she; she counted the money, that large sum of money that... he had more money than the compadre who carried the money bags, a lot of money and... and the house was his own. (Yes, well). He already fixed it, that... that big shoe store, right? He... he... he told one of the workers, no... so he looked for a boy to fix the place for him.

-You are going to fix the place for me –he said-.

-Of course –said the boy with a machete. And the shoemaker was there behind him:

-Fix this for me, fix that for me.

And he found the bag of money, where the dog had left it.

–Oh! Look, the bag of money, -he said and he took it, right?- The... the... the bag of money of my compadre and poor –he said- my...

Of course, that big shoe store now.

-Now, we have to buy ashes –he said- to fertilize the land and we are going to plan some crops, do you hear?

-That is good –the boy left.- Are not there any ashes?

That the... well, the luck that the...that the... the jar of ashes that he had... that he had sold had not been used and they sold it back to him. Then... the boy sprinkled the ashes, right? To... to... to the earth... (yes, well). Yes, at that moment the bag of money falls.

-Another one! Oh, my poor compadre –he said now... so then... -oh, God –he said- my poor...

-He, he had already replaced two bags, right? (yes, well). Already the luck... ah –he said-.

-Fix all that, all that... old junk, we need to set them on fire, that... I want... those old sacks.

He says to take it out and ah... taking it out he finds in an old sack; he finds another bag that he had hidden.

-Oh wow! –He says- Here is the other bag, my poor compadre...

About... two months later, the compadre arrived; and he saw that beautiful house and that...

-Look, my compadre was waiting for... was waiting for three... waiting for three bags of money, he wanted to have enough money –he said- look, my compadre, if he is not fool. Ah, but I am going to ask him.

Already in the big shoe store, ah! the big... the big living room and... when he arrives and:

-How are you, compadre? –He went and hugged him-. -Come in, compadre. I am not the same now. Let us see –he said- go get a bottle of liquor for my compadre and a good lunch, here...

He already had employees, eh...

-Come in, you are not going to leave right now, compadre, because we have a lot to talk about, compadre. Look, compadre, do you remember that you brought me the first bag?

-Yes –he said-.

-I put it in the ash jar. What a coincidence! Come and see, compadre, now that I fertilize here to... nourish the land, look, the bag fell out of the jar, compadre. I told this boy –he said- that the dog had been taken by force, it smelled like meat, when cleaning all that bush there, look, he found the other bag of money –he said- compadre. Oh! Compadre, yes, luck, here are the two bags. Look –he said- and the day before yesterday –he said- I was searching through those... all that old junk, what did I need it for, I had hidden the money among a sack, always for the... the... so that they would not steal the money from me –he said- I put it among the sacks –he says- and I found the bags of money, here are the three compadre –he says-. And now I will tell you the other one –he said-. You must believe –he said- that the neighbor\* Ah, the neighbor, the fisherman, bought him a house, then... he bought... (Yes, well) yes... He arrived and said: -Oh, and how about that –he said- well, oh... but he did not tell him anything about the stone, only about... (only about the fish). He said: -look –he said- do not you know how much they want for that house?

-Ah, ask –he said-.

-Ah, but...

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\*This part of the tale is not correctly located in the storyteller's narrative. It should be located after the compadre Samuel finds the bags of money and before his benefactor visits him.

-They want so much –he said-.

-Buy... here is the money, buy –he said-.

-But, you?

-Ah...

-But, where did the shoemaker get the money? -The wife asked him, right?

- Where from?

But they did not know about the stone, right? Where would he get it?

Until he bought the house, he put his furniture in; the shoemaker also came to them and that compadre, right? Very happy, said to him:

-Compadre, if you want... if you want I will give you back, your three... bags of money.

-Compadre –he said- it is yours –he said- it is your luck.

-Well, compadre, thank you very much. But you know –he said- you have your house and as soon as –he said- you find a need, you can count on me.

-Yes, compadre.

Now... compadre Samuel was very happy, right? (Yes, well). And the other friend who had helped him was also very happy, poor guy, with a good heart (He was good-hearted...) yes (He... the compadre). Yes, and compadre Samuel lived very happily with his great workshop. (Inf. 4).

## **5. The compadres and the sale of *caites***

In a certain... in a certain place there were two compadres, one poor and the other rich, but... he was... besides being envious, he was bad; he had a bad character, and he did not like to see his compadre, who had his... his... his pair of oxen, and he began to plow his little piece of land; he did not like it. He wanted him to finish his things; he only wanted to be the rich man there, and on one

occasion he went to visit him; he said to him... uh... the rich man said to the poor man:

-Look, compadre –he said- look that in such city – he said- it is said that the *caites* [sandals made of leather] have a value but... high –he said- high –he said- uh... the caites are worth a lot, why do not you kill your... two oxen that you have –he said- and... go sell the caites? There you will become rich. And so –he said- you stop lending me money, you ask me for money every now and then –he said to him-.

-Really, compadre?

-Yes –he said- the caites are worth it there.

-Thank you very much, compadre –he said- I am going to do everything possible –he said- to go and see if... if I become rich too.

The next day the poor... the poor compadre came, and he sacrificed his... two oxen that he had and... he took off their skin and make caites, so with the fresh leather he made two nets of caites and he had a mule, he loaded his mule with the two... the two nets of caites and he went to... to that city, but it was far away, he had to walk for three or four days. During the journey, there with the heat and everything, the... the... the caites rotted, everything was stinking, right? And he arrived at... at that city; when he entered the first store...

-Madam –he said- will not you buy me some caites?

And when she smelled the stench:

-Get out of here! –She said- get out of here! Before I report you to the authorities –she said to him-.

He was surprised that they had not bought the caites, since they were selling well, and he went to another store:

-Madam –he said- do not you buy caites?

-Get out of here –she said- or I will call the police.

And... well, he went through so many stores so much that one of the many people reported him to the police and they... captured him, put him in jail and sentenced him to... to one hundred days in jail, giving him a hundred beatings a day, oh! The miserable, they

put him in jail; every day they took him out, gave him a hundred beatings and then locked him up again.

This poor man was already skinny and broken; so he served his jail sentence, his sentence and... they confiscated his... his mule that he had and he took his way, and it was four days and he did not have a penny in his pocket or anything to eat. Finally, he passed by a ranch and... he said:

-Maybe I can get something to eat here.

The ranch was empty, and... in a corner there was a bag hanging, and he went to see if there was something to eat, a mask was there, made of wood. He put the mask among the bag, among his shirt and said:

-Maybe it will help me on the way.

And he kept walking, but already dying of hunger. And in a certain place that he passed, somewhat mountainous, he saw a... bunch of muleteers who were with mules, but the mules had already been unloaded, the mules were eating and all the... the suitcases were... the loads, were over there, where the muleteers had the.. the fire; then he approached, right? Greeting everyone.

-Gentlemen -he said- give me a tortilla, I am dying of hunger, please, and let me spend the night with you.

Well... these muleteers brought out a cup of broth, gave him a piece of meat, some tortillas and he began to eat; he ate well. And to sleep, well...

-Here you just lie down on the ground –they told him-.

Everyone... each one of them had their blankets; now he... stayed like that and around midnight, the man felt... the night air on his face and he remembered the mask and took it out from his shirt and put the mask on; but the mask was like a devil's and then one of the muleteers remembered (woke up) (?) and stared at that face and said to everyone:

-Guys –he said to them- there is the owner of the mules, guys, there is the owner of the mules...

And he reminds everyone (wake them up) (?) and they all... and they run away and when everyone was running ways, he also joined them running behind.

-Wait for me! Wait for me!

-No sir, your mules are there.

-Wait for me!

-No! Your mules are there, sir.

And they all left and he said:

-Then, these must be thieves.

It was a gang of thieves, they left the mules, and everyone went away. Well, then it was already dawn, he got up and as God helped him, he began to load all the mules with merchandise and things, right? (Yes, yes, yes) He... loaded up all... all the mules, right? A big pack of mules, then, and he went to... to his house.

After about three days, he arrived at his village and passed in front of the house where his compadre was. And he begins:

-Turn that black mule around! Stop that dapple-gray mule! Look at that other mule!

And so he went alone. And he came out... the compadre came out, right? All scared:

-So, what happened to you, compadre?

-Ah, compadre –he said- it is a pity I did not have more... more animals –he said- only my two oxen, so... I could only buy these mules –he said- and...

Then, he said to him:

-And did you really sell the caites?

-Ah, shut up –he said- it is a crazy sale –he said- of... caites.

Shhh... and then he said... he said to him:

-Well, thank you very much, compadre –said the rich compadre- and... he called his servants and said:

-We need to kill a few oxen –he told them-.

They killed about twenty oxen and then they began to make caites and they loaded about ten mules with all the caites and they left for that place; when he looked into the first store and they smelled the stench, they went to report it; they told him:

-Yeah –they said- so you are a recidivist? The other time we told you that if you came back, the punishment... would be worse. So, for being a recidivist, you will go to jail.

And they put him in jail. They then sentenced him to... two years in jail and... to be beaten twenty-five times a day. And so they had him until... finally, he served his two-year sentence and he headed home. When he arrived... he was wreck, skinny... without a penny (yes, yes, yes), all broken and... he came to see his compadre.

-Oh, my compadre, you are ungrateful –he said to him- you screwed me.

-well, no –he said- you were the one who wanted to get take my things away from me -he said to him- I did not sell the caites –he said- such and such thing happened to me.

-Well yes, and to me... that is what they did to me –he said- I was sentenced to two years.

-You see –he said- you do not have to be bad in this life –he say... -here –he said- (unintelligible phrases) I just bought it... live and be happy –he said- and never be envious. (Inf. 5).

## 6. The compadres and Sunday seventh

This, Sunday seventh.

Two compadres, one poor and one rich. The poor man spoke to the rich man so that he would be his compadre. And he accepted. But the poor guy, besides being poor, had two big *güegüechos* [fleshy lumps in the throat].

And it turns out that over time, the rich man started to dislike the poor man because of the *güegüechos*. To the extent that one day the rich compadre said to him:

-Compadre, I want us to go to the mountain.

And since the poor man did not know what evil he wanted to do to him, he said yes. And then he took him on the back of the beast to the mountain to see his livestock. But he was thinking of seeing a cross among the mountain; and God knew what thoughts he had against the poor man.

Then (...); right there it looked like a pure cross, the size of him.

Then the rich man says to him:

-Compadre -he said- what if I tied you up there -he said- on that cross like Jesus Christ.

-Well, if you tie me up there like Jesus Christ, compadre –he said- tie me.

Then he tied him up with vines, and there was mountain, with vines he tied him up. Once tied up he says to him:

-Well then, take care of yourself, compadre.

With the evil ideas that the beasts would devour him at night.

It is true that this story is sad.

(Yes man).

Then the rich man went away, without any regret, to lie down in his hammock without any regret, and happy because the animals were going to eat the poor compadre; hated by the güegüechos.

He will see what God is.

At midnight, instead of coming beasts to devour him, music came. The organ from heaven, sent by God, played above him, he noticed that it sang three days of the week, very beautifully, and he said:

-Oh, how nice! he said –tied there- that only three days of the week sing, he said, even if God illuminated me. How will I add the other three days so that the song is already bigger, he said. To the same term.

Well, for the other, the other... concurrence of music and singing. The poor compadre noticed that they sang all three days of the week:

-Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday three. (singing).

Then he was ready, the one of the güegüechos; and... and he replied:

-Thursday and Friday, Saturday sixth. (singing).

-Is not it the same term?

(Yes).

And they loved it.

-Oh, how nice, they said.

And look there, the starlight was coming through the leaves.

And one says to the other:

-Bring the knife, he said.

And he brings him that knife that was gleaming over the compadre.

-They are going to kill me, but instead of Jesus Christ, I am here, he said, he also died on the cross, he said.

Ah, then he gets closer and grabs, look: Chop, Chop, chop; even the scribble were there, he had them.

(To hang them...)

To... to put the, the bag of suet he was carrying. And then they did the same with the other side.

The two balls of suet remained there in the scribble.

And he did this, look:

(Healthy).

Healthy.

Then they say to him:

-Who has you here?

-A compadre of mine, he said.

-Uh huh.

They untied him and gave him a sack of sterling money, the money that was in use before, tied with a silk cord.

-You go away –they told him- and pay those you owe –they told- have this.

And they untied him and he went away.

And since he was not at all greedy or bad, he paid all those to whom he owed money, and went to his compadre. And he said:

-Compadre, he said, you went to tie me up there, he said, to, to the mountain, he said, with evil ideas, compadre, so that the beasts would devour me. Compadre, understand, instead of, of wild beasts come to devour me, a music comes from heaven, he told him, and they sang three days of the week; I asked God with all my heart how to add the other three days so that the song would be bigger, he said, and God illuminated me. So now, compadre, they sing all week long.

When they said, compadre: “Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday three” (singing); “Thursday and Friday, Saturday six” I said, there on the cross, he told, tied up.

Then they untied me, compadre, and they gave me a sack of money, he said. (My so much).

Yeah. Yes, but not yet, they were already there; it was probably God that uncovered that.

(Mmmh).

-Yes, they were there. You will see.

-Well, so they untied me, compadre, and they gave me money and I paid the people, and now, he told him, because it was a good idea, I added the, the three days and now they already sing the week, he told him.

-Compadre, the rich man said to him, let us go and you are going to tie me there.

So, the two of them left, and they took corral lassoes, it was not, it was no more (uh-huh).

And there it was, the cross was waiting for him. Here comes the poor compadre and he tied up the rich man with the... the lassoes.

(To the rich man).

To the rich man.

And the güegüechos he did not see them, God did not give him the opportunity to see them.

(Yes).

Nor did he notice that he no longer had güegüechos either.

(Uh-huh).

He, he hindered that point.

Well then:

-Well, compadre, have grace, he said to him. So, I am leaving and you are staying, he said.

Right there at midnight, instead of the beasts arriving, the same music also arrived. But... they sang the whole week, and then he said yes, just like my compadre told me, they sing the whole week.

Then they sang the week; and then he asked to, to, to know who.

(The week they sang).

How to add a little bit more.

(Ah).

Uh-huh. So when they had already sung the whole week; they said: "Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday three; Thursday and Friday, Saturday six" (the informant sings).

-Sunday seventh, said the compadre up there.

-This one really got on our nerves, they said then. Uh-huh. Who has you here?

-My compadre.

-Yeah.

They untied him. Oh, no, before untying him:

-Bring me the knife.

The same knife; Chop, Chop, chop.

Bring me where the güegüechos of the man from last night are, he tells him.

Snap, they put the first on him. Then, snap! The other one; and they did so (and they stuck them on him) it was exactly as God's will, right?

(The güegüechos stuck together).

Stuck together! Yes.

And they untied him and instead of giving him money, they gave him some (laughter). Yes (laughter) that is what they gave him.

(Mmm).

And he left, yes, he is foolish. He arrived at his house, and he had two daughters from marriage and they said:

-He is not my father!

(Laughter).

They left him outside. (They threw him out). Yes.

That is the story. (Inf. 6).

### **III. TABLES OF INFORMANTS AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION.**

- 1. Informant: Bernabé Campos. Place: Marajuma village, municipality of Morazán, department of El Progreso. Date: July 17, 1977. Transcriber: Vilma A. Fialko. Revision: Celso A. Lara Figueroa. Cassette 87/L. 1. Phonogram 362.**
- 2. Informant: Adriana Cano, widow of Castañeda. Place: Santa Rita village, department of El Progreso. Date: June 21, 1979. Transcriber: Anantonia Reyes Prado. Revision: Celso A. Lara Figueroa. Cassette 248/L. 2. Phonogram 1130.**
- 3. Informant: Ricardo López Tomás. Place: Santa Rosa Estate. Municipality of La Democracia, department of Huehuetenango. Date: June 24, 1979. Transcriber: Anantonia Reyes Prado. Revision: Celso A. Lara Figueroa. Cassette 250/L. 2. Phonogram 1134.**

4. **Informant: Antonio Ramírez (Tío Chío). Place: Escuintla, department of Escuintla. Date: May 14, 1977. Transcriber: Anantonia Reyes Prado. Revision: Celso A. Lara Figueroa. Cassette 146/L. 2. Phonogram 672.**
5. **Informant: Gonzalo Baldomero Ríos. Place: San Ildefonso Ixtahuacán, department of Huehuetenango. Date: June 14, 1979. Transcriber: Anantonia Reyes Prado. Revision: Celso A. Lara Figueroa. Cassette 256/L. 2. Phonogram 1161.**
6. **Informant: Agustín Orellana Arriaza. Place: San José Teculután village, municipality of Teculután, department of Zacapa. Date: January 1978. Transcriber: Vilma A. Fialko. Revision: Celso A. Lara Figueroa. Cassette 104/L. 1. Phonogram 420.**

#### **IV. LIFE OF THE STORYTELLERS**

##### **Adriana Cano widow of Castañeda**

She is 29 years old. She was born in San Pedro Soloma. Currently she lives in Huehuetenango. She works as a cook's assistant in a house in the city. She is the mother of three children. She narrated the phonogram 1130.

##### **Gonzalo Baldomero Ríos**

He is 65 years old. He was born in Aguacatán, department of Huehuetenango. He completed his early elementary school studies. He is a farmer and day laborer. He has worked in agricultural labor in Aguacatán, Santa Eulalia, San Sebastián Coatán, San Rafael La Independencia and currently in San Ildefonso Ixtahuacán. He worked as a laborer in Quiriguá, Izabal, and was a foreman of Roads in Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa and Retalhuleu. He is married and is the father of 11 children.

His biography is in the phonogram 1157. Cassette 256/L.1.

He narrated the phonogram 1161.

##### **Agustín Orellana Arriaza**

He is 75 years old. He was born in San José Teculután village, Teculután, department of Zacapa. He lived 22 years in Puerto Barrios, Izabal, and worked as a guard for the railroad company in Zacapa; he was also a watchman when the railroad line between Zacapa and El Salvador was laid in 1923. He can read and write. He is a day laborer and does not own land. He had a daughter whom he has not seen for a long time. Since 1960, he has lived alone in the village.

His biography is in the phonogram 410.

He narrated phonogram 420.

##### **Bernabé Campos**

He is 33 years old. He born on an estate in Pueblo Nuevo Viñas, department of Santa Rosa. He lived there until he was 17 and then he went to the capital. He has lived in Marajuma village in Morazán, El Progreso, for the past 3 years. He did not attend school, but he can read and write. He is a bricklayer, plumber, carpenter, and he knows a little about electricity. He is married and has no children.

His biography is in the phonogram 361.

He narrated tale 362

**Antonio Ramírez**

He was born in Villa Nueva, department of Guatemala. He moved and went to live in Escuintla with his parents when he was two years old, and he never left its limits again. In Escuintla, he was known as “Tío Chío” and the children call him “Don Conejo.” Don Antonio is illiterate, and he is 75 years old. A brick maker by trade, he works as a clerk in a store in the San Pedro of Escuintla neighborhood. The stories he knows he learned “out there” and from the lips of a colonel whose name was Julián Ponciano –his boss- “who told them to him while he removed the seed from the squash.” Don Chío is a specialized storyteller. He tells his stories at funeral wakes, at the end of the novena, or at the end of nine days.

**Ricardo López Tomás**

He is 23 years old. He works on the Santa Rosa estate, in La Democracia, in the department of Huehuetenango. He is illiterate and a day laborer.

He narrated phonogram 1134.



## ZODIAC OF COLORS

José Rodríguez Cerna

The tutelary ceiba tree of Jocotenango has the maternity of the capital's fair. It nursed it with native sap, sheltered its colorful initiation, and saw it rise under its graceful and enormous wings. Likewise, it presided gigantically, based on *gentus locis*, over urban growth. It resembled the towns of the Popol-Vuh during their ancient eras.

For the celebration, he shelled sun-corn, bathed in the sweetness of *chirimias* [shawms] melodies and warmed by the glow of bonfires. It felt it under her canopy, where words in Quiché and Cackchiquel languages were known to intertwine. The bovine tumult reached her in vast plaintive mooing. At the foot of its trunk, strengthened with cosmic juices, the nomadic merchants raised light tents. They murmured to its immemorial shadow, as the ceiba itself would have done. The mud from which Icbalam, Majucutaj, Quicab el Grande, and Tecún Umán came remained at his feet. It was a plant deity presiding over exchanges and pilgrimages. It was then on the outskirts of the city, to which he had given nourishing milk. Full of beard like the god Terminus or the rivers in classical sculpture.

The ceiba tree was as numerous as a forest; it stands over the towns, protecting them and showering them with the blessings of its oval capsules and white flowers. Celtic worship is given to it like the Gallic oak. It was, therefore, the venerable mother of the celebration, which developed initiations under her green and murmuring aegis. Beneath it and in its surroundings sprang the framework of fabric and pennants of the bars, the restaurants, and the shacks where drunks would entertain for hours with white drinks and guitar strumming.

They meandered chords of Strauss and Waldteufel. Fried food squeaked in kitchens sheltered by stalls. There were rounds of stray dogs, who would then flee, dragging screams behind them. And sometimes the light ensemble, the ephemeral canvas city, was crushed by the storm.

...Young ladies in hats with fruit and flowers, anxious grooms at every door of a marble restaurant, marimba on a wooden platform, and waiters with clinking trays. Wedding parades: he, a respected official; she, a distinguished matron. Pink faces, floating blouses with sailor anchors, roll to the beat of a piano on the merry-go-round of painted horses with teeth that bite.

Sitting on the ground, almost disappearing among the crowd that presses back and forth, the Indians spread fabrics, colorful rosaries with the yolk of *rapaduritas* [traditional candy made with sugar cane], and containers scratched with fretwork. Greedy shivers tremble at the roulette wheels. Bloodshot eyes, pale faces, clenched hands: the Chinese make complicated calculations. Illusionists with dice and marbles or cards exploit the open-mouthed provincial candor. With wind rifles, they shoot at wooden ducks that are passing in a row at the back of the stand. In a stand, there are knives at the service of skill, while the old owner rejoices and rejoices shamelessly. There is the proof of the rolled belt: "If you thread it, you lose, and if you do not thread it, you lose."

Positively, those soldiers who are off duty do not know what to do. They stop for a moment in front of the halls. They pinch the maids in yellow shawls, who insult them ("Licked Indians, why do they not tempt their mother!") They stand ceremoniously in front of a passing captain; they emerge amazed from the spider woman's den and end up sitting on the benches of a restaurant to eat white tamales and drink shots of aguardiente. They meet with neighbors from their hometown; they continue the party and end up going back to the barracks, where reprimands, beatings, and imprisonment await them.

The city squeezes, kneads, sweats, and becomes denser as evening falls. Onlookers crowd the wooden railings to watch the same couples dance as they pass by endlessly. The gentlemen who give fine liquors look at the public with the all-encompassing pride of potentates. Those who want but cannot are mockingly called "Tipsy too soon."

Some ragged men with three-day beards and alcohol saturation and tremors, lend a hand to each other's hangovers and are great friends to everyone who passes by them. They have malaria, they have just left the hospital, they have to bury their dead child who lies in the miserable room among sad candles –or his wife is dying of

childbirth-. A disheveled and “very manly” drunk struggles with police officers, refusing to pass. The lights envelop everything in halo, dirty with smoke. The ceiba tree keeps the toast of stars.

But the fair moved away from it with emancipated steps, offering itself in maidenhood to the winds that carry the taste of peasant fare and arrive cloaked from the distant mountain range. The canopy of the sky sheltered it, going mad with its rotating wheel of constellations, anointing it with moonlight or refreshing it with downpours that leave the garments of clouds clean and hanging in the sun. It had bare feet and springtime weeds tangled in its hair. It drank clean, fresh water from clay bowls. It steadied the fervor of a bull with a roping lasso and commanded the sluggish pace of cattle with shouts. It restrained the fiery impulses of a young steer with a lasso and, with shouted commands, guided their bovine slowness. It rambled through the Plain of the Picture, filled with horns; it wore sandals of mud and in its ancestral home, there were vases of twilight.

It shouted and laughed like the streams between the rocks. Muscles strong like braided leather. In its lungs was the horizon, and it absorbed the first hours of dawn, when the brightest stars go to sleep. Heart in the breadth of an open hand, eyes full of arduous paths, a will for joy like a St. John’s bonfire. Simple and cordial, it smells like ripe banana, like hot tamales, like fireworks. Satiated with the burning liquors of the earth, gambling away piles of silver in raffles and held by the waist by the polka and the waltz. Dissolved into streamers and melted into youth. Sitting on the edge of the city and offering its lips to the lips of the mountains. Urban, mountain, and pampas. And in prayer in front of the Virgin of the Assumption, blue and luminous as El Greco left it in Toledo.

It continued without stopping, carried away by time and leaving behind what was. From the ranch it went to the bedroom and from the *tapexco* [rustic bed made of boards or sticks] to the couch. The crispy starch garment, greased hair, and celluloid comb is carmine from Max Factor, flapperizes the hair and vampirizes the dark circles under the eyes. The gourd marimba was left far away, under *mediagua* [lightweight assembly construction] porches with dirt floors and pillars. And the ears become radio-electrified. The rancher, who ate at the friendly tablecloths of Don José Milla after having jumped over country trots, leaves at the gates of the city –in transformation like him- whips, bloody spurs, and saddles sweaty from exhaustion. Car sirens instead of the broad bellows that sweetened the eclogue and peace, the West and the early mornings, undulating over the still enchantment of the green fields.

“Don Segundo Sombra” bets on the totalizer, while his orphan pupils of the pampas push equine exhalations –the jockey on the swift neck- and moisten his wiry mustache not with mate but with a highball. Instead of Chinese paper lanterns, there is electric fluorescence. The spotlights tremble on the edge of the ravine. In stands and shop windows, the countryside, workshops, and mountains are industrialized. The horizon becomes entangled in the incipient wheels of Chicago, which ruffle Juan Chapín’s hair. Legends and traditions are distant and blue like the mountains. Holsteins, to feed a town, succeed dusty groups from Honduras, slaughtered by vultures on endless roads. Tripping over each other, jumping youthfully over each other, tying their legs and horns together, the cattle came like Scythian hordes towards the capital. Batilo and Nemoroso become disoriented among the agricultural machinery, complicated and wise as a brain. The master artisan finds that his unfulfilled hands are becoming useless. Samuel Butler would proclaim again that the machine was created by man not to free him but to enslave him.

Gaicho groups of sculptural liveliness flaunted along the streets toward the fair. A quick glimpse of prairies, of regions where beef is eaten and wild horses are tamed. The young city dwellers loved the swirling turns, all full of overshoes, large hats, open shirts, and scarves around the neck, to admire the families in the iron-barred windows. They were close to the mockery of horses and the harshness of packsaddles. The futility of heel blows on limp horses tarnished the pair of gentle daring moves that “brought out the feathers” of the fast colt.

Near the city, clinging to the last house, the fair was rural, dressed in humble folkloric vegetation. It smelled of pasture and mountains. Rusticism was established in the outskirts, with cattle ranchers and Indian reservations. And conversely, as it moved away from the city, as it approached the swaying horizon that urged it on, it became industrialized, modernizing.

Contact with nature turned it into an urban place, on the edge of abysses with ferns and plants that desperately grasp its intricate instinct for self-preservation. Closer to the stupefied crest of the mountain range.

The countryside came to the city: the city has gone to the countryside. Beyond its pomerium, the capital is filled with unlimited oxygen. The small transaction of the noisy village revelry goes from the tent to the exhibition hall. The sample becomes an exhibition. The fair was founded under Catholic patronage. The patron saint of the city generates and protects it. It began as a cult but spread in increasingly practical and distant waves. Fairs have always been

associated with tutelary deities, religious gods. On the steps, in the porticoes of the temples, the merchants set up their tents. Priests sacrifice while coins flow on transaction tables. Denarii, drachmas, sesterces, dollars, a change of what the land produces or industry transforms or extracts. Collective actions always go beyond their origins and eventually forget them. Our Lady is somewhat of an outcast from the celebration: the vital wave surpassed the maternal devotion.

But in the rainy August, the umbilical cord tugs at us, and nostalgia returns to the old, original fields. To the south, there are already splendors and achievements of authentic modernity. But in Jocotenango, not the fair but its primitive evocation, it continues to see itself in winter puddles and rolls up his sleeves to avoid getting covered in mud. The Indigenous people still bring their autochthonous traditions of huts, milpa fields, living hedges, and naive pottery.

There are groups of disastrous "*güiriches*" [people living in poverty], commoners, impoverished populace, and indigenous people. Fair rolls, confetti from a children's toy store. On brown necks, circular caresses of *chachales* [necklaces associated with indigenous traditions]. In the background, Minerva vibrates her golden spear in blue. Paths where rabbits meet at night, and they rear up in fear at the edge of ravines with dizzying clouds of smoke. Beyond, fires that become more evocative, further away, to the first mercy of the shadows calm the plain where small villages are. And limiting everything, magnifying everything, the mountain range, which constitutes the last point of the landscape and unfolds pythonic rings until it reaches the waters of the sea.

But if the spirit is moistened with the dew of simple emotions, it goes towards the other splendid field of stimulating modernity, wide and cheerful, to see the new and to feel new also in the machinery of what was, is, and is to come, facing the horizon that leads toward the mountains and the waters of Balboa. Jubilant Coney Island mechanics. Palaces overwhelmed by art, agriculture, and industry. Princes of the blood of livestock, on whose pupils Jersey waves crash or the windmills of Holland spin. The jazz band gesticulates near the sad shawm. Luxury vibrates and revels.

The air is light itself on the fields of the day. Clarity is desired. And this morningism communicates divinity to us, like the athletes who went to the acidic stadiums to compete in the muscle competitions, laurels for their foreheads, their parents, or the native

demos. Rainbow-like movements of the bursting and light crowd. At night, the Cosmopolis suburb is bombarded with colors.

On the near horizon, the popular front of volcanoes clenches its fists.



## **ZEAL AND LOVE\***

### **Love speaks, after chaining both rows**

*I come from the East to this celestial land  
beholding the purity of universal brand.  
Inviting Christians with a happy melody  
to celebrate the purity of Mary.  
Christians who follow this holy creed  
shall be reconciled and freed.*

### **Zeal speaks, after chaining**

*From the west to this one I go and come  
walking with harmony, sorrow and distrust  
I am the lucky Zeal that walks carefully  
for the ruler science of losing spouses.  
I do the task of enraging the concealed  
I confine myself when the soul's fate is sealed  
I live all over the world, I pamper myself  
in harmony with Christian life, I find true wealth  
I am a man who receives experience clear  
With just a little sleep, contingency is near.*

### **Love speaks**

*I am the sweet Love with a tender heart  
by heaven's command, religion I impart.  
I am a man of preserved awareness  
linked with heaven and earth*

\* Compiled in 1996 by Ida Bremmé de Santos. Copied verbatim from the original, which is signed by Isauro Estrada.  
GRANADOS, Baja Verapaz.

*zeal today is widely entwined  
among widowers, singles, and married combined  
this is a barbulent man (?) who came unexpectedly  
to put people in argument and... into tasks  
the being of this man whom all people deceive  
looking with four eyes day and night. Shrew.  
Answer me right away, ugly man. Infamous  
may your forehead be that plea from all who set forth.*

### **Zeal speaks in its place**

*Let Harmony answer quickly and not be lazy  
for an insult of wind has come to my chest today.*

### **Harmony speaks**

*By higher order, I come to answer the insult  
You will only have to prove it to me.*

### **Love speaks**

*Tell me who you are, so I can speak with reason*

### **Harmony speaks**

*I am Harmony, the distrustful woman, I am an agent of Zeal and I feel  
aggrieved.*

### **Love speaks**

*Go to the quinta, oh troublesome dame  
I lack the harmony of God's true name.  
Goodbye, I bid to time and the mighty lamb  
in the future, you will see if I am the sham.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*From the East you have come, now rested and bright  
tell me, Harmony, of your joyful flight.*

### **Harmony speaks**

*Ill-founded statement from the stranger  
who chased me away and called me troublesome dame  
with liberal words of a different measure  
to ease my pain, sent me to the requinta place.*

**Zeal speaks**

*And you did not give it a resolution as is my opinion.*

**Harmony speaks**

*Yes, I told him, my lord, because I do not tend to boast  
that in the future to come, my opinion will be made known.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Today, head of fuss, nose on display  
when the time comes near, my opinion will play.*

**The Will speaks**

*Ardent, Zeal friend, I come to congratulate you  
and after all this, I want to talk to you.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Tell me who you are, I want to know you now  
if you are not deceitful, and it is clear that you are a woman.*

**The Will speaks**

*I am the Will that currently walks throughout the world  
wherever I want because only I am.*

**Zeal speaks**

*You have come to this deserted place  
now I am satisfied, and it is clear  
but before you go, give me my comforting  
relationship with life, what is the profession.*

**The Will speaks**

*Crowned with flowers and virtues of love  
I am the queen of sinners and of Zeal for being a betrayer.*

**The sorrow speaks**

*I consent from this moment, for today it is permitted  
as ignorance arrives, all has been submitted.*

**Love speaks**

*Tell me who you are, what is your importance.*

**The sorrow speaks**

*Lord, I am just the sorrowful woman  
who lives with so much sorrow and embodied Zeal*

**Love speaks**

*If harmony you feel, though Zeal has been displayed  
to avoid all questions, go forth and evade  
farewell I say to time and love's devotee  
the future will show who the best shall be.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Why did you come here, the heart had foretold,  
to tell me about this opposing hold.*

**Sorrow speaks**

*I feel so much sorrow and my heart feels pain  
I cannot say it, but to myself I explain.*

**Zeal speaks**

*And you did not give me an answer according to my worth.*

**Sorrow speaks**

*I quickly replied, my lord  
and to relieve my sorrows you sent me to Ecuador.*

**Zeal speaks**

*I am the pure Zeal, unmatched in its price  
and forever linked to feminine paradise.*

**Faith speaks**

*By order and mandate, here I stand,  
to judge if your reason is carefully planned.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Tell me who you are, and make it plain*

*you look like a man but present yourself as a dame.*

**Faith speaks**

*I am the great faith of preferable harmony  
I venerate with love the purity of Mary.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Everyone's purity today is love  
.....(?) for that sinful man.  
I am the fortunate Zeal and the troublesome man  
who is the attribute in the bars .....(?)  
passengers say I am the tempting part  
without me, no love, no will, no heart.*

**Faith speaks**

*You speak without foundations; your relation is ancient  
today you walk on the winds like the spirit.  
Dragon, faith in God first we will have  
forever is the one that destroys demons  
and all his agents.*

**Contingency speaks**

*The guy you saw today came from the East  
I ask you to hear everything I feel.*

**Love speaks**

*I am king of every word, a man who does reside  
tell me your grace and all you feel inside.*

**Contingency speaks**

*I am the contingency, the woman of messages  
coming to these countries from foreign spaces.*

**Love speaks**

*Don't tell me, messenger, do not lie to me, contingency  
go back to your countries, and restore the consistency.*

**Contingency speaks**

*Of course I am going to.....(?) my retirement.*

*oh, then you will remember me, even if it is just a sigh.*

**Zeal speaks**

*You have come, messenger, so much time has passed  
answer me immediately, about the life of the East.*

**Contingency speaks**

*Those people from the East are usually quite impertinent  
they treated me with contempt and made me flee in a hurry.*

**Zeal speaks**

*And you did not tell him for fun that I am a man of distrust.*

**Contingency speaks**

*Yes, I told him, my lord, that you are a great might  
who will take his head off without second sight.*

**Zeal speaks**

*That reason suit me because it has no consequence  
one day will come, I will leave him without grace, for  
in women's hearts, I have found my place.*

**Hope speaks**

*Ordered from the East and from the people of Caranciate (?)  
comes to congratulate this green hope.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Hope is your name, I am filled with delight  
could it be by chance you descend from the skies bright.*

**Hope speaks**

*Do you have doubt that I come from heaven  
I am our hope and that of Christ, the .....(?)*

**Zeal speaks**

*Your comfort today is the will that you share  
to love one another and always take care  
for the life of Christians, oh, what a delight..... (?)*

*that by thinking about love they no longer see the creator  
only Zeal for virtues today has five degrees  
with armies now formed and ranks to fill.*

### **Hope speaks**

*The armies formed by .....(?) cantoneros  
to trap the Christians so that they fall  
and they die from your warned chest  
of the bad conditions to the enthusiasm  
of the Christians and remove devotions.*

### **Distrust speaks**

*I come from the west and from carrancia land (?)  
Mrs. Distrust arrives to shake your hands.*

### **Love speaks**

*Good heavens, pirates in excess  
I have no need for gentiles or devices with distrust that impress.*

### **Distrust speaks**

*Of course, I am kind, for true Zeal I reveal  
with distrust, no hand goes for bags of bills.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*You already came distrust to remove my doubt  
do not stay there silently, it is as if you have nothing to talk about*

### **Distrust speaks**

*Because I am so memorized, my head is so rough  
I cannot define you or get you out of doubt.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*To what has he sent you to the eastern meadows' embrace  
to tell me of love, if a man it should face (?)*

### **Distrust speaks**

*Because I am so memorized, my head is so rough  
I cannot define you or get you out of doubt.*

*To the East today, they claim we are abundance pure  
and gentle devices in challenges unsure.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*They are contrary to my home and my cherished trust  
but zeal and distrust are the core of what is just  
I am a man of firm values, precise in stride  
processing all within five or six seconds applied.*

### **Charity speaks**

*By order of the heavens and the immense Trinity  
She comes to bless you, dear little charity.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*"Ah! You are Charity, the woman who makes hope survive  
Remove my doubt because faith is so alive.*

### **Charity speaks**

*For she is keeper of religion's flame  
faith and hope her lasting claim.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*Your devotion today is the mighty faith  
protected by the church, though coffee they won't taste  
no mass they give, as lofty they appear  
but leaving the church, humble cheeks sincere  
chatting so content, they float as though on air  
what a man of three stones—surely, the father is there.*

### **Charity speaks**

*In the world, charity is the mother of all beings  
without faith and charity, the world is already lost.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*As the median passes, the west does shine  
with yellow clouds that the world refine  
that today it is necessary that .....(?) their women  
all the little men.*

### **Love speaks**

*Shut up, vile traitor, in your judgment you are lost  
I am a man of deceit and of a very prostituted condition.*

### **Zeal speaks**

*I am the... Zeal and I confess myself true  
if your highness is careless, I will take you head off.*

### **The Will speaks**

*Hold on, vile fury, to your forest... ..  
I come to rebuke you with my ripe fruits  
and by order and command, here I am, sacarrial (?)*

### **Love speaks**

*Disarm him and arrest hat infernal traitor  
by order of our king and my steadfast decree  
this written command is carried by my brave loyalty.*

### **The Will speaks**

*By command of our king and his steadfast decree  
I bring this written order of his brave loyalty  
and by order and mandate of unique science's reign  
surrender, my friend, for I shall process you again,  
loosen you heels, I say from your arms  
for I will capture you, as you are a sinful man,  
and you women too shall feel the blow  
for you are the conquest of that sly fellow  
let the gentlemen musicians play me a piece  
I want to dance it in front of the foreign nuns  
(He will hand over the garments to his king with these words):  
At your command, my lord, within the cells of creation  
I deliver these tokens of that man's devastation.*

### **Love speaks**

*I receive them in kind and I keep them as deserter  
come to my side, Miss Defender.*

### **Zeal speaks in its place**

*Oh, God of mine, oh, how sad is my fate*

*I beg my lord to grant me death, no wait  
let the marimba players play me a piece  
I want to continue to where sweet love is  
I am going to introduce myself to it.*

**Zeal chain both rows and say:**

*Pardon me, my lord, if I am not mistaken  
you are the sweet love, before you I am forsaken.*

**Love speaks**

*Stand up, vile traitor, what a miserable plight  
for being a man .....(?) oh, prison holds you tight.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Forgive me, my sweet love, this plea I humbly send,  
to brighten the act with my sword I intend.*

**Love speaks**

*I give myself, my servant, and will not offer anew  
let them seize him again for being interest's true.*

**Zeal speaks**

*Thank you so much, my dear, from your immaculate being  
I receive this sword as a kind of gratuity.*

**(When Zeal arrives at its place, Love speaks, saying thus to the Will):**

*Take these garments to the young Vanderine maids (?) let them return  
to their lands, as tipping aids.*

**(The Will speaks with Zeal)**

*Here I bring you these garments for true love  
may the foreign nuns go back to their countries  
let them be buried one day when they die, in an airfield so wide  
or in the mule-drivers' graveyard, where a tune will be played  
to dance together in joy, celebrating Mary, the Immaculate  
Conception's aid.*

**(Both lines pass and then form a walk, taking their places, and the contra dance begins)**

**And as the contra dance ends, Love speaks, saying thus:**

*From the heavens descends this lily pure and bright  
the most sincere of men, from God's omnipotent light  
in Spain villas and in Italian temples  
they venerate them with love like faithful scapulars  
I speak with faith and a willing heart  
these are the springs of all Christian art  
with hope in God and sacred chastity  
may we reach eternal glory in unity  
sweet love is what triumphs, igniting eternal light  
may the cross endure forever in its sacred might.*

**(Zeal says goodbye)**

*From north to west there is quite a variety  
among perfidious humans  
ah, what an ungrateful lie, the men of this time  
they look charitable in their zeal to guard their wives  
they are certainly positive, in the transitory life  
zeal turns into the mouths of women  
ah, how happily he has fun, now I bid you farewell  
happy in unity, venerating the Holy Cross  
and asking for forgiveness. **The end***



**Talking about the colors of the dresses**

**Love:** purple, white lace, wreath of bouquets.

**The Will:** white, wreath of flowers.

**Faith:** white, pink ruff, imperial crown.

**Hope:** green, imperial crown.

**Charity:** white, blue ruff, imperial crown.

**Row of zeal**

**Zeal:** green, red ruff and red franks (?)

**Harmony:** pink, imperial crown.

**Sorrow:** pea green, imperial crow.

*Contingency: sad blue, imperial crown.*

*Distrust: cream color, imperial crown.*



**Place of Love with its row on the right side and Zeal on the left**

*A chain of love is formed in this way, dancing behind the will, forming a chain in both rows, until reaching the place where zeal resides. Form of the chain of zeal, to narrate when presenting oneself to love, stepping back, and follow in this manner:*

*With disdain, you would hear my song  
poor payer of love's sweet deal  
I, for loving you so long  
only earned a thousand wounds to feel.*

*My mother's voice, steady and clear  
offered wisdom on love's trials  
an older heart holds love sincere  
youthful passions may bring denials.*

*You will be deemed a heartless payer  
by those who trace your tracks  
the bitter sting of a betrayer  
will be the cause of your cracks.*

*Watch your aims and intentions  
and choose the one who's sincere  
do not provoke the bold  
for they might bring your end near.*

*Carry always a little charm  
to keep you safe from harm  
pray to the Virgin divine  
that marriage soon will align.*

*With disdain, you would hear my song  
poor payer of love's sweet deal  
tears won't take long  
as the executioner of pain's trace.*





## TZUTUHILES STORIES

Luis Batz

### A FAMILY OF TZUTUHILES VICTIMS OF EVIL

A newly married couple, the anemic woman has infected her husband; they had consulted their evils without satisfactory results, going from warlock to warlock to know the origin of evil. A friend comes to greet them and finds out about the couple's misfortune, but not content with that, he invites them to a meeting around the fire so they can tell him the tragedy, event by event. My wife was only fine for about six months, and then she started to get worse; she turned pale without a drop of blood, she did not have much energy, she was yawning day and night, she closed her eyelids even when walking, and she just wanted to lie down; I felt I was infected by the same illness, I felt sore and had no desire to work, I lived dreaming horrible things, and every night a plague of fleas under the *petate* [a traditional woven mat made from natural fibers, employed as a sleeping mat] kept us awake.

I have called healers and warlocks, and they have told me there is evil buried in the house, but they cannot figure out where it is hidden to dig it up or expel it.

The host suggests that he knows a friend capable of such tasks, but he lives very far away, but we will make every effort to get there in exchange for consulting on the matter. Would you be willing to pay for the after-dinner drink? Would you pay for a few bottles of liquor or *chicha* [fermented cereal or fruit drink]? Would you not refuse to buy him some good bread? Would you give him a hundred cigars? This gift would not be for the good man but for the mysterious people he

will invite, men clothed with power and authority, those who decide life and death, those who control the darkness, those who look upon the righteous and the sinners, and those who punish evil and reward goodness. This gift would be for them not to be drunk or eaten but simply served in cups to inhale, and its aroma would please their deities; the tallow candles with their weak lights delight the characters.

Prepare for the trip a bunch of strong pine well coated with turpentine so that the rogue who has infiltrated the place abusively cannot follow our steps, because he will be repelled by the red pine that your wife will carry inside her *huipil* [traditional indigenous dress].

As they tell me, the annoyance begins at bedtime; touching their face with his cold, cadaverous fingers, he pulls them from head to toe; in a word, he does not leave them alone; well, we will go together with the man to consult.

They left with all the recommendations, and when they arrived late at night, they knocked on the ranch door, from which a sleepy man emerged. They informed him of the purpose of the visit, and the man accepted the proposal on the condition that they would go to a relative's ranch so as not to offend the owner of the ranch where he rented. When they arrived at the place he told them, he proceeded to lift all the inhabitants; even those who drank breast were awakened because of the delicate nature of the task. It was necessary that everyone be awake.

The service began: he lit the tallow candles, poured the liquor into clay cups, placed the bundle of cigars on the small service table, he blew the clay censer with remnants of embers from previous rituals, piled up the bread. Immediately afterward, he extinguished the wicks of the candles, claiming they were of good quality and not those made or adulterated with water that emit a bad smell and drip when extinguished, the masters do not accept those. Then they were once again immersed in complete darkness.

He seated the distressed spouses and instructed them not to be afraid, assuring them that he would be ready to help, but the important thing is to be confident; the characters, when they see the weakness of the spirit of the masters of the task, they leave or do not act because they understand that the patients themselves drown in suggestive recklessness. At that moment, they heard coming down from a second floor the sound of high heels and the steps of shoes. Where is the second floor? If they were doing the task in a rickety straw hut. The characters have arrived at the invitation. The man apologized for not having sent the invitations in due time, but given the case of an emergent situation, he did not have time to fulfill the formalities required by the ceremony. Once again, they were asked to forgive

him and to take their respective seats to serve themselves at their leisure, delighting their spirits with the aroma, flavor, and vapors of what was served.

He told them about the sorrow of the grieving spouses, there was a moment of silence until one of them said: the person who caused this mess is not a stranger here; he is a family member of the same victim, his older brother, offended to see the couple's progress, who in a short time turned their lives around in contrast to his miserable situation, angry at his brother's diligence despite his young age; he has food, clothes, and his pennies to spend, a little business in the ravine that he makes himself even if it contradicts the justice of men but that is only his concern; maybe the day will come when he finds himself in troubles with the police and they take him to jail or let him go depending on his skills, but the truth is that he is working, he is not stealing from others or taking food from the needy, and since diligence is permitted, then what is there to lament. Now the brother's attitude is to understand his bad faith; his mind is only capable of malice.

Now that the perpetrator has been discovered, we want to know what the victim's intention would be, the warlock whispered into the invisible ear of the man of the night. Well, we will call that rogue who is bothering. One moment... cold and penetrating night air, please, it is urgent to go fulfill a mission and make our presence known with reference to the distance to the rogue who is inside the home of the Sagach couple. At that moment, they heard a fluttering over the ranch: Let's see, rogue! Come here and tell us: with what authorization did you rise from the grave and go with your skeletal body to dwell in a place where you are detestable? You are a damn abuser; you defied the mandate of creation that each dead person will remain faithful to the place where they fell, whether buried by a rock, swept away by a flood, drowned in the river, in the puddle, lake, or sea, crushed by a tree, split by a greater force, bitten by a snake, attacked by a fever, etc., etc., ... You were required to rest there until the day of the trial, or did you not know this mandate? And if you ignored it, you could not plead ignorance to a command from God. Maybe because you coveted a glass of shady ravine or because someone lit a candle for you, you promptly stood up accepting the ridiculous offer. In exchange for losing the last opportunity of the second coming of the Son of God, you were excluded, simply for going to offer your evil services.

Well, since it is within our power to punish this rogue, today he will get what he deserves; we will go in a few seconds, carried by the same night messenger, to extract his bones; the one present here is his spirit, but his skeleton remains buried in the home of the Sagach

couple, as he confessed, saying he was hiding under the bed, we will turn him upside down and whip him until we break the bones of his light feet that were quick to do evil, and then we will take him to the ends of the earth, we will sink him like a pigeon to the heart of the fierce ocean, where everything is panic, distress, and lamentations, so that he will never rise again to offer his wicked services, touching their faces with his cadaverous hands, making them suffer until they were forced to abandon their homes or die swollen, limp, and with their heads lost from thinking about how to defend themselves from this malevolent spirit.

We want to know the opinion of the master of the task, as this villain is humiliated, submissive, and whimpering cowed by having been caught in the act by the power of the night. I ask that you take him to the ends of the earth; then the spirit intensified its wails, screaming like a pleading child, begging not to be taken far away but to be returned to its place of origin, asking the offended couple to grant it a mass, promising by a thousand oaths never to engage in another dirty maneuver, preferring instead to wait for centuries for the command of the second coming.

Then said the master and the ruler of the night: Better I will send you to the place of the one who paid for you to be raised from your grave, and I force you, without gift or offering of mythological smells, emanations, and flavors, to remain as a sentinel day and night through the entrance and exit door, beneath the rustic bed, near the grinding stone, by the fire. You will control all his movements; when they want to taste their food, a profound look will be enough to terrify them. At night you will touch their faces and knead their muscles as you know how to do to feel sore when going to work; thus, you will experience in life the evil they wished upon the brother. Do you accept? Yes or no? I will go, my lord. Tell us, how deep are you? They have left me for four hundred prayers recited aloud, so I will pray in reverse to leave the place and go to the spot where I have sent you. Who went to lift you from your grave? The K'isom of the little bell invited me, pronouncing my name, saying he knew me in life and hired me if I accepted as a sentinel, offering me many gifts of divine smell and flavor: liquor, incense, storax, and tallow candles; many of us rose, tempted by the offer, but he accepted only my services, considering that the others did not meet the requirements; the others were older or too young, he wanted a young agile bone for the services, since just five years ago I had bid farewell to this life, but I also did not remember the person I had to watch over, he indicated me the site, the place, the position of the house, its boundaries, but since my mind has dried up, it has erased all traces of that past where

I found solace for a mere twenty-five years, where I was running up and down, so I needed to be taken; they knelt down begging the place for permission to let us enter until, after many pleas, it agreed, the three of us entered, he forced me to open the door for them by throwing dirt from my own substance; after a while, they were deeply asleep, hypnotized by my presence; they began the tasks illuminated by the faint light of tallow candles; he placed my bones under the bed and prayed as he progressed in the mystery; my bones kept descending until I reached a prudent depth, then he closed the magic little book and they left satisfied with their work and disappeared I do not know where.

### **ACULAX (NICOLAS)**

Aculax, an illiterate man, speaks about indigenous myths, making various divisions and classifications of K'ISOMES (ghosts).

Those who unknowingly and unwittingly embark on their wanderings suffer changes according to circumstances demands; the *nahual* [spiritual guide] struggles to leave the body, as is the case for those who, while sound asleep, begin to grunt, fight in an unconscious state, and turn and turn to expel the small creature that insists on coming out but sometimes gets stuck in the throat and finally jumps out as a little mouse, a kitten or a bird, a puppy, etc. this smallness is subject to sudden changes, like the case of the little mouse who could not cover great distances without facing many sacrifices in its run along the paths, subject to so many dangers due to its miniature size, then his very nature forces him to undergo an extraordinary change, he could very well become a ram or a goat with light legs and bulging eyes, running at great speeds to reach his goal in a dizzying race evading all danger, or in the case where there is only an open hole and he has to enter through that opening, then is when he returns to his smallness as when he was expelled from the body; the human mass continued its sleep rhythm, but the *nahual* being inside where it had entered, grew again to eat until it was full of everything it found in its path; already satiated, looks for a way out.

### **IN A LITTLE FISHERMAN'S HUT**

Night after night, they prepared a panful of fish, well-seasoned, keeping them on the fire until the juice was consumed, leaving them hanging over the *tapexco* [a wooden beam used for hanging items],

and by dawn, the fish were all nibbled. It was too much to bear until one night they decided to keep vigil over the intruder. The women put their clothes on inside out, and the armed men waited and only saw a little mouse pass through the courtyard illuminated by the moonlight, but as it approached the ranch, they heard the posts crack as if a monster were sinking the earth with its weight. They waited for a moment, and when they deemed it convenient, they came out of their hiding spots to surround the ranch while others futilely tried to light torches. Upon entering, they were surprised to encounter a huge, well-woolly ram, the ram wanted to resist and escape but it was impossible because the little entrance hole was guarded and they did not give him time to concentrate to take the miniature size because the women had their hair disheveled over their chests and lifted the skirts of their garments inside out, pressing the animal's snout to their bare rear ends and with their hands, they slapped their buttocks, the bovine beast of the night was bewildered by the women's tricks and submitted to its captors, who tied a noose around its neck and dragged it to the yard, trying it to a stake they had in the yard for their daily tasks of twisting ropes; when he saw his life in danger of losing it, those hoarse words came out: please do not kill me, it is my destiny, my star, my lunar day, my birth is that I obey when I leave, so I am not guilty of what you want to attribute to me, I beg you to let me go, I swear I will never bother you again and I will repair the damage caused, if you want, with coins or objects, but grant me this grace.

If I confessed in human words, it was due to the cunning of your women because we are forbidden to do so even if we lose our lives, but on this occasion, my tongue let slip a word revealing my origin. I am from San Pablo, and my name is IXTANTUN. That whole confession was of no use to her, and the men took their justice into their own hands, they smashed the head of the sheep woman, blood dripped from her snout, her body took the shape of a burlap sack due to the beating, leaving her battered and bruised, and for greater security, they hung the sack high on a branch and began to keep vigil over it, but they could not explain how it happened when they rubbed their eyelids, near dawn they found themselves so bewildered that they did not even know why they were keeping vigil and tried to think it over, it seemed like a dream what had happened to them; they arrived at the branch, found no signs of anything, they looked for the blood dripping from the snout, and did not find it either; there were no signs of violence, not the slightest trace of their bare feet where they had trampled the place, everything had vanished as if by magic and it seemed to have been a confusing dream of the ranch's inhabitants. They sent their wives under the pretext of going to sell oranges in the

town of Ixtantún and found their parents sad and grieving, a row of candles planted in banana shoots; the corpse of the sheep woman was wrapped in a filthy petate stuffed inside a rustic coffin hastily made from old and worm-eaten wood; the women returned to give their men the news of the confusing night.

### AKUL (NAME)

It was this kind of K'isomes. His wife left him because of his fondness for Barranqueña drink. He completely neglected his household responsibilities.

She got together with another man. Akul, in his smallness, was going to spy on his wife alongside his rival. On Thursdays, the man would bring meat from Santa Lucía, and she would cook it. This Akul watched from above the ranch in the form of a little mouse. The couple served themselves the whole pot and dispatched it accompanied by a stack of tortillas fresh off the griddle; the little mouse from its hiding place suffered the effects of the heat and the smoke that was trapped in the rustic construction of wattle and daub with a thatched roof. With his tearful eyes, he kept swallowing saliva and more saliva simply because he could not take part in the feast of his enemy, who was eating so slowly, unaware that the intruding little rodent was watching from above him.

Akul arrived every Thursday to see the same routine; enraged, he thought of changing tactics, using another method. He thus abandoned his surveillance.

He called six elders who had long since died, but he had their names present in his diabolical head; he asked them in a ritual to do a job for him. The job consisted of capturing the spirit of his rival, who had committed the grave crime of filling his wife's head with lies and winning her over, knowing that this woman rightfully belonged to Akul. In exchange for that work, he would take care of moistening the lips and gray mustaches of the elderly with the divine nectar while also lighting some candles for them, burning *pom* [type of incense or resin used in traditional ceremonies and rituals], etc. The six ancient deceased accepted the wicked Akul's job of trapping their rival's spirit among them. After a few days, the rival began to feel unwell; his temperature was abnormal, he was generally lethargic, his feet hurt when walking, and he complained about his waist, and his back. His ailment was of a sexual nature; he felt a sharp pain in his penis, and when urinating, an excruciating pain almost made his member burst.

And so it continued. In desperate days, the poor man wasted what little he had on healers and warlocks.

Finally he went to San Simón of Santiago Atitlán, who told him: Your name is already on the list of candidates for the deceased, and it was very difficult to get it off because it was out of time.

The warlock Akul had tied his rival's member from the throat with the hair of a recently deceased woman, and this was what tormented the poor man, that the head of his member was strangled with that fine binding, which did not allow him to urinate; the strands he had were removed, Don Macario clearly saw the strands coming out of a trench on his member, and the warlocks of San Simon said that they did not take responsibility if Akul came back to hang him like that again. The old man spent his time changing bandages until parts of his penis began to detach under the effects of the infection, and one day, the rival of Akul died.

### **THE AJCUM (ZAHORI) ZOTZ (LAST NAME)**

(Zotz means bat). The man Zotz thought of going to the coast with the intention of dedicating himself to his job as a man of the table, of the staff and the chair, a seer of lives and deaths; at the same time, he was a good laborer; he could easily pass for any of the jobs. Upon arriving, he spoke of his fame and knowledge until many began to take notice of his boastfulness as a man from the cold lands. Little by little, they started confiding their secrets to him and sought his protection, telling the newcomer all the abuses committed by the sunburned *Atiteco* [person originally from Atitlán], who intimidated everyone, even the master of the estate, who was more gullible than any child; At payment time, they discreetly showed the bad man to see if he dared to take him down from his pedestal; everyone hated him, but they also did not dare to declare war on him. The naive one from the highlands accepted the trust and favor that the afflicted asked of him to confront the Atiteco warlock, but it wasn't long before another came to relieve him. The Atiteco waited a few days, worried about getting to know up close the man from the cold lands. One night the Atiteco began to cast lots to see if the stranger was truly well versed in his job, as he boasted so much. He took out all his divination

tools, lined them up on his workbench, named all the days that make up the Indian calendar, and shuffled strong days and weak days to see where the stranger's luck would fall, until finally he found her hidden among the days too weak, where the Atiteco least expected. He kept counting and shuffling now to find out the day of her birth and the hour. He found that the stars did not protect the day and hour. The warlock burst out laughing, now confident in himself and knowing his power would last longer. Today, he had no choice but to call upon the blessed souls of purgatory, and in a solemn procession, they would carry the weak and unprotected soul of poor Zotz, inept warlock of the cold lands. You will never escape this trap set by the warlock.

A few days later, he began to feel terribly threatened by his health; his feet became stiff, his hands trembled, his body ached, he lost his appetite, he felt afraid of himself, and a cold and a heat absorbed his body. He decided it was better to leave the coast, but not before starting to help the poor people who had trusted him. As best he could, leaning on a crooked cane, he made his way to the summit with a slow and labored breath. Three or four days later, he arrived home alive. The neighbors were surprised to see him, as he had quickly become swollen as if he had been inflated, his skin shiny yellow, his teeth black, his eyes the same color as his skin, AND his voice barely perceptible. When the endearing warlock learned that his adversary had fled, he set his miniature machinery in motion again on his table, placing the magical and transparent little ball on different sides. With some glasses, he managed to see the different stages the poor man was going through in his chaotic escape until he finally placed him in his ranch, all finished. Then the man of evil was not satisfied with all these sufferings, so he called upon the master of life and death, the master of flow and static, to ask for a favor, saying to him: Man, it is you who looks closely as well as to the ends of the earth, allow me to borrow four of your messengers and take the form of birds of prey, carrying a message to the cold land in pursuit of Zotz, who fled leaving his spirit trapped among the souls of purgatory residing in these lands, may they carry his spirit and deposit it in the cemetery of that locality, making their entrance where the sun sets and on the highest hill they will stop in the air and together let out a loud caw announcing the end of Zotz; Immediately afterwards, they will descend, circling around my victim's ranch, and head towards the

cemetery where they will draw several increasingly tighter circles to determine where Zotz will load the earth.

Having ventured through everything, the vultures will return to submit their reports. Zotz died after the macabre visit of the birds of prey; Zotz had his soul stolen on the coast, his coming was simply obeying matter, his body walked but without a soul, and he was nothing more than the vessel abandoned by the soul of Aculax Zotz. He arrived at his destination without spirit; not everything he did was governed by will but simply unconscious acts. His memory was absent. It was a foolish mass without hope of ever inhabiting again that soul, which, due to guilt for not having restrained its tongue in constant boastfulness, lost the most precious thing in its life, and this tormented soul will never be able to reconcile with its matter, that is, the temple where it dwelled for a long time. Aculax Zotz died while searching for life in his unpleasant profession.

When the warlock of the cold lands died, only his children remained, who inherited the same wickedness, stripping their neighbors of their belongings, threatening them that if they did not go seek life elsewhere, they would inevitably die; the smartest ones sought defense, they went to ask another Zahorí [a person with mystical or intuitive abilities] what they had to do; he told them that the work the descendants of Zotz had done was greater: they have hired all the lines and they are at their service in such a way that wherever they went, they were always watched day and night, not a single line was free, they first spoke of the strong deceased, that is, those who in good health lost their lives, those who, having just finished their meals, were caught off guard by the scythe of death, like the one who, while climbing a sturdy tree, lost his balance and fell from such a height, crashing to the ground like a ripe fruit bursting upon impact; those who were struck by lightning; those who, in the fullness of life, fell into the abyss of the lake or whose canoes sank into the depths of the blue lake; those who, due to some fight, were spat out by the deadly gunpowder. These spirits are strong, and if called to act, they are capable of throwing a stone over a long distance; but the deceased who languished on their deathbeds lost all energy before dying and were no longer able to utter a single word. These spirits are rendered useless for these tasks.

As I already told you: everything is being watched, any business, job, outing, the spirits control all your steps; if you go over the lake, they will be on the lookout to spring into action, taking advantage of any oversight or mistake on your part. A companion encountered the legion of souls at the place of Tzan Zotz (Bat Peak), but he was lucky, first for being hard of spirit and that the souls had already passed through the place and had only left the path impregnated with their nauseating stench. There lies the palace of the souls, and they seep through the rocks like the very air; that was the reason why my companion's nose oozed for many days, emitting an unbearable stench from the very disintegration of the souls of the palace, but they did not defeat him because he is strong in spirit.

This belief is in vogue among the indigenous people; it is a remnant of the past, and it has not undergone any change. While it is true that the religion imposed from beyond the seas has seemingly modified the structure, that is, a veneer of faith, at the same time the profound silence continues. There are gaps without explanation, and this continues to fester in the very mind of the native; the magical power finds no response in the new faith but rather is silenced and condemned as a satanic work by those who try to erase in the indigenous mind their culture, their tradition, and even their own gods; but the only thing the indigenous person has done is keep silent while at the same time believing in the supernatural power deep within their being, and in turn, they have spread this belief to the environment by saying, The mestizo, a product of two cultures, does not have an exact definition, like in the case of saying, I do not believe, but I do not stop believing either, here there is no solid foundation to counter the current of indigenous science, but on the contrary, that whirlwind is absorbing a large part of the human mass that struggles to find an answer to the phenomena, which daily attracts more followers. Despite being the feeling and belief of a millennia-old generation, it continues to stir up confusion, increasingly clouding the conscience of many who claim not to accept it.

San Pedro La Laguna, December 1976



## CRISIS OF GUATEMALAN TEXTILE CRAFTSMANSHIP

Agustín López López\*

I am deeply moved by the problems that artisans are currently facing. The reason why I share the opinion of the radio newspaper **El Independiente**, which was broadcast on April 30 of this year. This editorial focused on one of the problems that current artisanship suffers from. Specific case: that of Antigua Guatemala, which I can call the buying and selling of the secrets of crafts and popular arts or the folklore of Guatemala by strangers or tourists. The case of Antigua Guatemala, I believe, was an example of highlighting, because in many parts of the republic, these cases are observed.

I am aware of the importance that tourism represents for us artisans and for the national economy. But I am against the commercialization of the secrets of the teaching-learning process of crafts and folk arts, specific in the case of fabrics. The existence of this phenomenon is clear evidence that in Guatemala there are no specific laws protecting crafts and folk arts, which is why there are so many abuses by outsiders. Crafts, first, are part of Guatemala's cultural heritage, and secondly, they are a source of employment for thousands and thousands of artisans. These phenomena must be examined carefully, because in just a few days and for a small amount of money paid by tourists, they learn to weave. And, subsequently, these people exploit and make the acquired secrets and knowledge their own. The buying and selling of the secrets of crafts and folk arts

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is harmful because in this way, part of a country's heritage is being sold. I am aware that those interested in learning to weave surprise many people. As I also know that people like us, who have a bit of knowledge and work in crafts, have what I can call artisanal zeal within us, in terms of a lot, medium, and little. And I dare to assert that no craftsman is indifferent to this zeal in any of the three mentioned terms. I clarify: the people who reveal artisanal secrets are not always the true artisans but rather third parties. Sometimes true artisans make these mistakes, these acts, even though they are aware that the secrets of the trade should not be revealed. But the truth is that what forces this are the very subsistence needs of the person and their entire family, etc., etc.

It is fine that tourists enjoy freedom of movement. But it is wrong for it to be unlimited. Of course, not all tourists are harmful. But some do or can do a lot of harm to our country by stealing the secrets of crafts under the pretext that they pay for the teaching. Therefore, it is urgent to launch a national awareness campaign about the cultural and material value of crafts and folk arts, because many of us artisans do not know what the loss of our secrets means for ourselves and for the country. Of course, these are not the first to be lost; many objects or relics of our ancestors of incalculable value have been lost. When these objects are already outside our national borders, we make a lot of noise. But then we remain silent, and little is done to recover them.

I ask, where is the original of the Quiché book called Popol Vuh? Where are our Mayan codices? There are many more things I could ask. Now, for example, about crafts. Where are they headed? It is true that there is a single specific regulation for crafts, folk arts, and national folklore, which is Article 109 of the Constitution of the Republic. But it is not enough to stop or slow down these problems that are constantly observed. As an immediate measure, it is necessary for some institution or ministry to take this problem under its responsibility so that it can control and make the corresponding recommendations.

I request the good intervention and legislative awareness of the Congress of the Republic. Take the issue of crafts under your responsibility. To analyze the current laws and agreements. If they agree with the current needs or not. To issue new laws to protect handicrafts, folk arts, and national folklore for national benefit or

incentives to raise the standard of living of the thousands of artisans in the country.

I hope that someday the promises of some deputies who participated in the electoral campaigns come true. Promises were made, it was said, for the benefit of artisans, mostly in the highlands.

In contrast, in other countries, based on regulations and laws, there are places where taking photographs, filming, and even more so revealing artisanal secrets in all their forms is prohibited. This prevents the exploitation of these secrets. Textile artisanship is constantly dwindling due to various factors. I believe it is still time to safeguard what we currently have. But the collaboration of efforts, experiences, and ideas is necessary to give a new structure to crafts at the national level. People knowledgeable in the field, pre-cooperative associations, cooperatives, federations of artisanal cooperatives, and private and state institutions whose objectives are related to crafts must participate in this. In this way, it will be possible to unify criteria and provide a positive solution to the artisanal problem.

It is advisable that the institutions and the current Congress of the Republic analyze the initiative for a law protecting the typical Guatemalan creation, presented by the former deputy from Antigua Guatemala, *Licenciado* [Guatemalan degree] Leonel Rodríguez Obregón, during the presidential term of *General* [Guatemalan degree] Kjell Eugenio Laugerud García. As that bill states, it is not possible to sanction the effects of the events without first determining and resolving the problems that give rise to these events.

Guatemala is the richest country in Latin America in textile artisanship. It has a good number of traditional costumes with multiple and varied patterns and a unique colorfulness.

I believe it is very fair that the higher authorities attend to this important sector of the country, which is dedicated full-time and part-time to the work of crafts. The artisans demand positive and adequate incentives that meet current needs for the benefit of crafts. So that we have greater economic and social stability.

Regarding the number of artisans, I assert that they are in the thousands. The number can be determined based on the artisan census conducted in 1978.

I also suggest the good guiding help of the press: spoken, written, and televised. Because it plays a very important role in national life. May the press help raise awareness of the cultural and material values of crafts and popular arts and national folklore.