CUICATEC TALES ABOUT WITCHCRAFT

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The three Cuicatec texts recorded here come from Concepción Pápal, Oaxaca.\textsuperscript{1} They were told by Margarita Guevara de Zúñiga, a bilingual Indian about 45 years old. While the informant was a child she heard these stories from her grandmother, though the second tale deals with something that actually happened to her.

The following are resumés in English of the three stories:

I. There was a time of a great famine. Two old ladies lived in a certain town, each of them with a son. One of the men had a good harvest that year. His mother used to go every day to his house to ask for corn. Sometime later the son got tired of giving his mother corn. When he saw his mother coming he said to his wife, "I'm going to hide in the corn crib. Tell my mother I'm not home." The man hid in the corn crib. When his mother asked to see her son in order to obtain corn, the wife answered, "Come back some other time." After the old lady departed, the wife opened the corn crib and the door made a tremendous noise. Many locusts appeared and there was her husband. The locusts had only left his skeleton, for not giving his mother corn.

\textsuperscript{1} The Cuicateco language is written phonemically. Symbols which do not occur in the Spanish and in the English languages are as follows: nasal vowels are written with the vowel plus a small raised n, as ṽn, ṽm, and ṽñv. The re-articulated vowel has the small raised n following the first vowel and the nasalization carries through the second rearticulated vowel. The glottal stop is written with the symbol [ʔ]. There are three tones, high, mid, and low. The high tone is written with a symbol ['], the mid tone is shown by the absence of a symbol, and the low tone is written with the symbol [·]. These tones are written over the vowels and each vowel has its separate tone.

Concepción Pápal, is a large town of Indians with a population of about 1,550 people. About 150 years ago the inhabitants of the town ran all their witches out of town by throwing dung at them. However, today, one can find a few witches in the town who do all their witchcraft practices secretly.

The first person singular pronoun I is in brackets because it is not a separate word. It is a fused form and is indicated by a raised tone of the final vowel of the preceding morpheme. (M. D.)
II. There was a woman who went down to wash clothes. She became hungry but she did not go home to eat. When she finished her washing she was no longer hungry. After a week she went crazy. She showed her insanity by her wild laughter. On lying down to sleep her hair became tangled and wild. Even though her mother combed and brushed the woman's hair with oil, in a moment it was unruly again. Every one who went to visit her saw her vomiting clothes. Her mother then obtained a witch doctor to cure her and soon she got well again.

III. A certain man had two wives. One day on leaving for Oaxaca he told his wife to await him at Rancho Grande. The wife was lazy though and she never went to Rancho Grande to meet him. When the man finally arrived at the meeting place, his wife was there awaiting him. She asked, "Why did you take so long?" She then brought out a chicken, tortillas, tepache, all of which she gave him to eat and drink. As the husband started to eat, he noticed that the meat had no salt. He asked, "Why didn't you salt the meat?" Then he remembered that he had brought some salt with him. He took out the salt and began to put it on the chicken. At that moment the woman turned into a snake and the meat turned into rotten wood. The tortillas turned into oak leaves and the tepache became muddy water. The snake disappeared and the man was unable to catch up with it in order to kill it. When the man got home he found his wife there. It was not his wife that he had seen at Rancho Grande but a ghost.

The first story is perhaps of European extraction, dealing with a moral theme.

The second tale treats of a common pre-Spanish theme and is an excellent example of nahualism. Not only did the second wife of the protagonist turn into an animal but also the tortillas, tepache and the chicken reverted to nature. The idea that salt is an weapon against sorcery is possibly taken from the Christian rite of baptism.
I.THE STORY OF THE LOCUSTS

1. Arrived one time that was hunger strong. 2. Are-she two old she land this that are one son-person man. 3. Are much corn of-his. 4. And mother-his went-person asked-person corn man day day. 5. And was one day that was lazy-he person. 6. Saw-he person that was coming-person. 7. Then tells-he says-he. 8. “I go (I)³ will-hide (I) inside house where are corn. 9. And will-tell you (familiar) mother (my) that no (I) house.” 10. And man went-he will-hide-he in house that are corn. 11. Then mother-his ask-person man. 12. “Where went child (my) because gave-he corn me.” 13. And then said woman-his this. 14. “Went-he and soon will-come-he. 15. In-the-meantime that arrived-

I. CUENTO DE LAS LANGOSTAS

Llegó un tiempo en el cual había un hambre muy fuerte. En un pueblo vivían dos abuelitas y las dos tuvieron hijo. Pues uno de los hombres tuvo mucho maíz. La mamá de uno de ellos se fué a la casa de su hijo cada día y pidió maíz. Llegó el día cuando el hijo se fastidió de ella. Cuando vió a su mamá que venía por su casa, entonces le dijo a su esposa, “Voy a esconderme en la casa donde hay maíz y diga a mamá que no estoy aquí.” Pues el hombre se fué y se escondió en la casa donde había maíz. Entonces su mamá preguntó por él y dijo, “¿Donde se fué mi hijo porque tiene que darle maíz?” Entonces la esposa contestó. “Vaya y regrese, mientras que llega su hijo.”
II. ?áámá kueentó yeⁿʔe ?áámá nʔtaataʔ chí chʔeeⁿ-no

1. cheⁿʔë-tá naahn-ta. 2. miku chi kuiiku taave-tá. 3. miku nkúáá chi naⁿʔa-ta cheʔë-ta luékô. 4. miku dátaáchí chi chinunaá-ta ?äämtá kuiikú-ta. 5. miku nantaâ tantoʔo niin ne guuve kuagiivi kentáá guuve yeⁿʔe-ta tachi lóká-ta. 6. tachi chinkaʔá chi nigéeⁿ yeⁿʔë-

he. 16. And old-she this went-person. 17. When two little-time went-person and woman this went-her opened-her house where was-he. 18. Until much sounded there. 19. Came-out locust plural. 20. Finished ate-animal man. 21. Already only bone-he slept-he that no gave-he corn mother-his.

II. THE STORY OF ONE WOMAN THAT HAPPENED

1. Went-she washed-she. 2. And that hunger much-she. 3. And no that went-she ate-she soon. 5. And completed meanwhile eight day afterwards arrived day of-her when crazy-she. 4. And when that finished-washing-she no-longer hungry-she. 6. Then began that showed

Pues la abuelita se fue. Después de un tiempo la mujer abrió la casa donde estaba su marido. Cuando abrió la puerta, tronó la puerta con un ruido muy grande. Salieron muchas langostas. Acabaron de comer el hombre y puro huesos estaban tirados porque él no dió maíz a su mamá.

II. CUENTO DE UNA MUJER QUE PASÓ

Una mujer fue a lavar y la dió mucha hambre. Pues no se fue luego a comer. Cuando ella acabó de lavar ya no la dió hambre. Entonces después de los ocho días le resultó que la mujer se volvió loca. Ella misma comenzó a
III. **THE STORY OF A GHOST THAT HAPPENED**

1. One man that with-him two women. 2. One day went-he Oaxaca. 3. And says-he tells-he woman of-his that will-wait-she man ranch mostrar que ya era loca. Empezó a reír mucho. Pues cuando se acostó se puso muy mechuda su cabeza. Cuando su mamá lo peinó con aceite y lo alisó, al buen rato se volvió a mechudarse. Y cada gente que fué a visitarla, vió a ella vomitando su ropa. Pues entonces su mamá fué a buscar un brujo para que la curara. Y entonces ella sanó.

III. **CUENTO DE UN FANTASMA QUE PASO**

Un hombre tuvo dos mujeres. Un día se fué a Oaxaca. Y le dijo a su mujer que esperara en Rancho Grande. Pues la mujer tuvo flojera. No quiso
a ir hasta Rancho Grande a esperar el hombre. El hombre creyó que la mujer estaba esperandole arriba del Rancho Grande. Cuando llegó, entonces la mujer le dijo a él, “¿Porque tanto te dilataste? Ya hace un rato que estoy esperando aquí.” Pues ella trajo una gallina, trajo tortillas, trajo tepache que le dió a él que se toma y come. Pero cuando el hombre se fué a sentarse y a comer tortillas, la carne no tenía sal. Entonces él dijo, “¿Porqué no echaste sal en éste carne?” Pues se acordó que tenía un poquito de sal en su servilleta. Entonces se fué y lo agarró y echó sal en la carne. Entonces vio que la mujer se volvió culebra. Y la carne se volvió palo podrido. Y las tortillas

tepachi this turned water dirt. 20. And snake this went-animal. 21. No caught-he animal that killed-he animal, 22. And man this turned-he went-he. 23. And when arrived-he was woman of-his house. 24. No woman this that saw-he but she ghost.

se volvieron hoja de encino. Y el tepache se volvió agua de lodo. Y la culebra se fué. Pues el hombre no alcanzó la culebra para matarla. Entonces el hombre regresó a su casa. Y cuando llegó la mujer estaba en la casa. No estaba ésta mujer que la vió, pero era un fantasma.