

Masculine Crab & Mosquitoes

TWO CHONTAL TEXTS

Published by KATHRYN KELLER and MARGARET HARRIS

INTRODUCTION

THE following texts were collected among the Chontal of Tabasco, under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The Chontal are a branch of the Maya. Our informants were Zenon Luciano, about twenty-four years of age, and Catalino de la Cruz, a middle-aged man, both of Tapotzingo, near Nacajuca.

Some problems of Chontal word division and orthography remain to be worked out. As nearly as possible, the symbols used are phonemic. The mark (') following a voiceless stop indicates glottalization. The symbol /Δ/ is used for an unrounded vocoid, nearly approaching the high back open unrounded vocoid /i/.

I

1. ahyΔš

ahni ump'e ahyΔš. 2. naφ'A ti? pa? yotot. 3. ahyΔš ump'e ik'sapan
4. uyali yakaše ta wawa?ne. 5. y biši ta wawa?ne pan hi? 6. y
unuk'tan untu išmuč. 7. upekan ta φ'ahi. 8. išmuč uyale? tan
uk'ahalin 9. yakaše kašik'e? ahyΔš. 10. uyalbi kada aše 11. lo?
yΔš t'ok noh k'enel te?. 12. ahyΔš k'en uk'Δb. 13. hinuk'a uyalbi

1. Masculine Crab

There was a masculine crab. 2. Near mouth river his house. 3. Masculine crab one early morning 4. he said, "I am going for walk." 5. And he went for walk on sand 6. and he meets a feminine frog. 7. He calls to conversation. 8. Feminine frog she says in her mind, 9. "I am going I make fool of masculine crab." 10. He said, "Where are you going 11. Masculine crab with big many stick?" 12. (Masculine crab many his arms. 13. It is why she said like this.) 14. Masculine crab just yes

THE CRAB AND THE FROG

There was a crab. Near the bank of the river was his house. One morning early the crab said, "I'm going for a walk," and went for a walk on the sand and met a frog. He spoke to the frog.

The frog thought, "I'm going to make a fool of the crab." She said, "Where are you going, friend crab, with that big bundle of wood?" (The crab has a lot of appendages. That's why she said this to him.)

ka? hini. 14. ahyAš sančičti tu k'ahalin kua? uk'a. 15. ahyAš uyalbi
16. yakaše ta wawa?ne 17. ti? ump'e pa? uk'aba? išhepti?. 18. išmuč
taKa sančičti tu k'ahalin 19. ke une ni?uyalbinte. 20. bišihob tu
yotot. 21. sanušik?lubahob. sančičubuhlubahob.

II

1. a?učahob

yali č?upim, aše ta k?Ankan. 2. a?uč?ahob uhak?esankahin, uk?u-
še?on. 3. aše ačoke? nat. 4. biši, išmuč, ubisi a?uč?čahob tan buš.
5. nat aše ačoke?. yali 6. išmuč, yakaše ta čanen waška ya?an tama
buš. 7. nač?Δ ti? kah, uha?bi upam buš 8. ta čanen waška ya?an
tama. 9. pasi, a?uč?ahob tan buš, ta mulukna. 10. išmuč nume
uk?eče? a?uč?ahob. 11. uyak?e? tan buš a?uč?ahob. 12. bišihob yo
pasi. išmuč biši ča?num 13. ka ahni č?aupim. uyali, 14. sanahnet
ta čoke? nat, 15. ahnet ačoke?, uyali išmuč. 17. mač nat ahnon,

arrived to his mind why. 15. Masculine crab he said to, 16. "I am going
to walk 17. mouth one river its name feminine big mouth." 18. Femi-
nine frog also just yes arrived to mind 19. that she just now she was
told. 20. They went to their house. 21. They just made a fool of each
other. They just yes made a joke of each other.

1. Mosquitoes

She said old woman, "You go to errand. 2. Mosquitoes, they cause
me worry, they eat me. 3. You will you throw out far." 4. He went,
she frog, she took misquitoes in covered gourd. 5. Far you go you throw
away. She said 6. she frog, "I surely will to look what there is inside the
gourd." 7. Near edge town, she opened its lid gourd 8. to look what
there is inside. 9. They went out, mosquitoes from gourd, to pile up
many. 10. She frog goes, she catches mosquitoes. 11. She replaces in
gourd mosquitoes. 12. They went want they left. She frog went second
time 13. where she was old woman. She said, 14. "Recently you went
to throw out far, 15. you went you throw out," she said she frog. 17.

The crab realized why, too. The crab said, "I'm going for a walk beside a
river called 'big mouth.'"

The frog also knew why she was told this. They went to their houses. They
were both made fools of. They both teased each other.

THE FROG AND THE MOSQUITOES

An old woman said, "Will you go on an errand? Throw this far away." The
mosquitoes were worrying and eating her. The frog left and took the gourd. Near
the edge of town he thought, I'll look and see what is inside. He opened the lid to

kʔoti aʔučʔahob ka ahni, iščʔupim ta. 18. yalbinti išmuč, mač nat ahnet ačokeʔ 19. sanhuli, ta čaʔnum aʔučʔahob. 20. načʔa ahnet ačokeʔ, hin ukʔa asuhni, ta čaʔnum. 21. mač ahaʔbi upam buš. 22. bada aʔučʔahob ane, aše alahkʔušeʔ. 23. kraš čʔupim tihakʔo išmuč. 24. hin ukʔa išmuč unumi akʔab, ukʔušeʔ aʔučʔahob.

"No far I went, arrived mosquitoes where she was, she old woman to." 18. She is told she frog, "No far you went you throw 19. recently returned, to second time mosquitoes. 20. Near you went you throw out, it is because recently returned, to second time. 21. No you opened for its lid gourd. 22. Now mosquitoes you, you will soon all eat." 23. Mad old woman against her she frog. 24. It is because she frog she passed night, she eats mosquitoes.

look at the contents. The mosquitoes flew out. He tried to catch and replace them in the gourd. The frog came to the old lady again.

Said the frog, "I did not go far." The arrival of the mosquitoes to where the old woman was told her the frog had not gone far.

The mosquitoes came the second time. The old lady was mad. She said, "You did not go far to discard the gourd. Why did you open the lid?" Now you will eat all the mosquitoes."

It is because of this the frog goes out at night eating mosquitoes.