When I started studying Nahuatl with Dr. Garibay, a little over two and a half years ago, I began not merely the study of a fascinating language, but also what has proved to be an intellectual adventure. The translation I offer here of the Nahuatl proverbs, conundrums, and metaphors, collected by Sahagún, is part of the fruit of this adventure, and it is with the profoundest joy and profoundest humility that I dedicate it to Angel María Garibay K. in commemoration of his fifty years of distinguished scholarship.

Dr. Garibay has done many things in the field of the Humanities, not only in Nahuatl Literature, but also in Greek and Latin, Hebrew and Aramaic. However, there is one thing that he has not done, and it is this one thing that has made his work outstanding. He has never taken the “human” out of the Humanities. Dr. Garibay is not a “scholar’s scholar,” he is all the world’s scholar, and the knowledge that he has garnered in his lifetime he freely shares with all who are interested. He abhors “deluxe editions” and fights against them, preferring to see his own work published in less expensive editions or paper-back so that they may be economically accessible to people. His books — alas, much of his work is still unpublished — are a delight for any reader, as well as a mine of information for
investigators, no little achievement in a field considered reserved for "egg-heads."

His accomplishments as a scholar, however, are only the manifestation of what he is as a man. Dr. Garibay has never travelled far from Mexico City, but through his reading and meditation he has ranged over all the world and into the hearts and minds of people everywhere. Because he comprehends the universal paradox of man being the same everywhere and at all times, and different everywhere and at all times, he has been able to give us translations from the Náhuatl (not to mention his recent translations of the Greek plays) that make us feel the impact of a living culture. A true tlamatini —wise man— he is in the words of the Nahuas "a light, a torch, a great torch that does not smoke;...; he shines his light on the world." To work with such a man is truly an adventure, and it has enriched my life forever.

Book VI of Sahagún's monumental Historia de las Cosas de Nueva España is the most beautiful of the twelve books that comprise the work. It is a Book of Huehuetlatolli, or Orations of the Elders, containing forty prayers, exhortations, and orations, and ends with a collection of proverbs, conundrums, and metaphors. Being Huehuetlatolli of the nobles, it is the finest example we have of Náhuatl rhetoric and literary style which, in complexity of thought as well as beauty of expression, rivals any of the great literature that man has produced. Did Sahagún pattern this book after the Book of Proverbs of the Bible, a series of exhortations with a collection of proverbs at the end? We shall never know.

One of Sahagún's aims in preparing his great work was to facilitate the learning of the Náhuatl language by his fellow missionaries, and doubtless it was to this end that he appended to Book VI the proverbs, conundrums, and metaphors he had gathered in the course of his investigation into the pre-conquest life of the Mexicans. From their somewhat crude style and the conversational tone of the texts, it is apparent that they were jotted down verbatim, possibly for his own use at first. They are like an album of photographs, each proverb, conundrum, or metaphor a picture of some aspect of the life of the Nahuas, and since these are word pictures, we not only see something of their life but also something of their thoughts and feelings.

Like all proverbs, the proverbs of Náhuatl and truths they distilled from their investigations into simple, crystallized, and vivid and curious as their world may seem, Náhuatl proverb we have a similar Náhuatl conundrums which belong to like conundrums everywhere —charmed with everyday things.

The metaphors, however, are what intimate contact with the mentality of metaphors but images in words of situations, and experiences of a people. Sin and Religion, the all-pervading concept supreme dual god and duality in all ing that Náhuatl metaphors general or two phrases that combine to form they are redundancies, sometimes parietally unrelated words which in combiination with the proverbs which, these expressions, are merely swatches clips, vivid and imaginative embellishments of the Náhuatl language and little sample of the treasure over which Angel so long held his torch.
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City, but through his reading and medi-
everall the world and into the hearts
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Like all proverbs, the proverbs of the Nahuas are the wisdom
and truths they distilled from their experiences and observa-
tions into simple, crystallized, and witty statements. As strange
and curious as their world may seem to us, for nearly every
Náhuatl proverb we have a similar one of our own. And the
Náhuatl conundrums which belong to the world of children, are
like conundrums everywhere —charming, simple, and concern-
ed with everyday things.

The metaphors, however, are what bring us into direct and
intimate contact with the mentality of the Nahuas, for what are
metaphors but images in words of the concepts, beliefs, traditions,
and experiences of a people. Since, in Náhuatl Philosophy
and Religion, the all-pervading concept was that of duality —a
supreme dual god and duality in all things— it is not surpris-
ing that Náhuatl metaphors generally consist of two words
or two phrases that combine to form a single idea. Sometimes
they are redundancies, sometimes parallelisms, and sometimes
disassociated words which in combination have a meaning to-
tally unrelated to the individual meanings of the words. These
vivid and imaginative embellishments of the Náhuatl language
together with the proverbs which, themselves, are metaphorical
expressions, are merely swatches clipped from the rich bro-
cade of the Náhuatl language and literature. They are just a
sample of the treasure over which Angel María Garibay has for
so long held his torch.
1. **Moxoxolotitlan.**


2. **Tomachizoa.**

Itechpa mitoa: in aquin moch conmomachiztia in tlein mitoa, in tlein muchioa.

3. **Nonouian.**


4. **Oc nochicomatl, oc mochicomatl, oc ichicomatl.**

Iquac mitoa: intla aca tlaoanqui otemieti, in tle uel omic: auh inic tlaoanqui otemieti, oc ichicomatl: yehica ca ayocmo quima in temieti, in ma iuhqui matlac ouetz, inic otemieti: ic

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1. **A page is sent.**

This is said about someone who fails to return with an answer, or else sent. It is said for this reason: They was King of Tullan, two women were; he saw them he sent some messengers. And the messengers just stayed there, and did not take him the information another of his pages to see who the thing happened; he did not return with it at that time on they began, they started.

2. **Our know-it-all.**

This is said of someone who claims whatever is said and done.

3. **Here, there, and everywhere.**

This is said about a person who enters, sticks his hand where he should quickly takes part in whatever others

4. **Still half a net for me, still half a net for him.**

This is said when a drunkard ass died. At the time the drunkard killed still only in half a net because he d
1. **A page is sent.**

This is said about someone who is sent with a message and fails to return with an answer, or else does not go where he was sent. It is said for this reason. They say that when Quetzalcoatl was King of Tullan, two women were bathing in his pool. When he saw them he sent some messengers to see who they were. And the messengers just stayed there watching the women bathing and did not take him the information. Then Quetzalcoatl sent another of his pages to see who the bathers were and the same thing happened; he did not return with an answer either. From that time on they began, they started saying: *A page is sent.*

2. **Our know-it-all.**

This is said of someone who claims to know everything about whatever is said and done.

3. **Here, there, and everywhere.**

This is said about a person who enters where he should not enter, sticks his hand where he should not stick his hand, and quickly takes part in whatever others are doing.

4. **Still half a net for me, still half a net for you, still half a net for him.**

This is said when a drunkard assaulted someone who then died. At the time the drunkard killed the other person he was still only in half a net because he did not know that he had
motemachia, azo zan oc ic ma quizaz: in maca zan iuhqui matlac ocalac, azoquic matlacpa quizaz, ic mitoa: oc nochicomatl.

5. *Ixpetz.*


7. *Xoxocotioa (i)n tlalticpac.*


8. *Ayac xictli in tlalticpac.*

Ayac tictoxicizque, quitoznequi: ticteluchioazque: macíui in telchioaloni neci, ace mimatini, ace yolizmatini, ace mozcaliani.


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PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS AND Riddles

killed someone. He had not fallen into something and therefore was confident that that was not all the way into the net and was not. For this reason they say: *Still has*.

5. *Polished eye.*

This is said about a person who is confident of finding, of discovering, what is not one can dig a little in this world.

6. *One can dig a little in this world.*

This is said when one time we are something, and another time we are something, and another time we are something, and sometimes one cannot.

7. *To bear fruit in this world.*

This is said of a high functionary who is aged, due to something that is his fault that has ripened and then falls to the ground.

8. *No one on earth is an umbilical cord.*

We should not sneer at anyone; mankind anyone even though he appears to might be a wise man, or learned, or all.

9. *By nibbling away in this world.*

This is said when we persist in some knowledge and know it well even though we pains with it and know it well even though such as carpentry, sculpting stone, and some kind of knowledge, such as singing is very persistent, it is said: *By nibbling away in this world.*

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1 “...others kill others while drunk, and all the blame to the god of wine and to the wine, not to the did not do it but that the god did... they did not did while drunk.” Sahagún, *Hist. Gen.,* Ed. Frrúa,

2 I.e., something that is thrown away. There is umbilical cord, and *xictli,* to look down upon some
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PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS AND METAPHORS

killed someone. He had not fallen into the net for having killed someone and therefore was confident that he might get out; he was not all the way into the net and consequently might yet get out. For this reason they say: Still half a net for me.

5. Polished eye.

This is said about a person who is very astute in the manner of finding, of discovering, what is necessary, or who quickly sees what is difficult in an enigma.

6. One can dig a little in this world.

This is said when one time we are able to put away a little something, and another time we are in need. Sometimes one can, sometimes one cannot.

7. To bear fruit in this world.

This is said of a high functionary who is dismissed, discharged, due to something that is his fault. It is precisely like fruit that has ripened and then falls to the ground.

8. No one on earth is an umbilical cord.¹

We should not sneer at anyone; meaning, we should not disdain anyone even though he appears to warrant disdain, as he might be a wise man, or learned, or able.

9. By nibbling away in this world.

This is said when we persist in something, when we take great pains with it and know it well even though it may be difficult, such as carpentry, sculpting stone, and other arts; or perhaps some kind of knowledge, such as singing, grammar, etc. If one is very persistent, it is said: By nibbling away in this world.

¹ "...others kill others while drunk, and all these consequences are attributed to the god of wine and to the wine, not to the drunkard, as they say that he did not do it but that the god did; ...they did not regard as a sin anything they did while drunk." Sahagún, Hist. Gen., Ed. Porfía, 1956, Vol. 1, p. 75.

² L. e., something that is thrown away. There is a play on words here: xictli, umbilical cord, and xictio, to look down upon someone.
10. **Tlatolli itlaqual.**

Iquac mitoa: in aquin itlaton ic moyoilitlacoa, zan niman tehoaz: anozo zan achi ic onayo, ye uey inic quitecuepilia tlatolli, inic teaoa: anoce iquac in itla mitoa, zan niman no tehoan tlatoa.

11. **Tlani xiquipilhuilax.**

Itechpa mitoa: in aquir pani neci iuhquin anahuatl ixiienotzin, tlatlacatzintli, qualitzin: ahu tlacazo ye cenca tlueliloc, cenca teaoan, techicoitoan, yollocuicuitla: qualli en quitoa pani, ahu in itic amo qualli en quitoa teuicpa.

12. **Ye onquiza naoalli: anoce onquiz in naoalli.**


13. **Ixquauitl, uel ixquauh.**

Itechpa mitoa: in amo pinaoani, in amo temamatini: in uel yatuetzi imixpan in mauiztililoni.

14. **Tenquauitl.**

Itechpa mitoa: intlatol chiaoa, in auel tenpanauilo, in amo tlatolpanauiloni.

10. **A word is his meal.**

This is said about the person who says one thing and immediately starts quarreling or whenever anything is said he starts quarreling.

11. **Underneath he drags a bag.**

This is said about someone who on the surface is kind and appears good but may really be deceitful, a scandalmonger, and evil-hearted. On the surface people but inwardly he speaks nastily.

12. **The sorcerer is now passing there.**

This is said when some people have a livelihood and lay by something. Some are just shiftless; they dedicate themselves to late nothing, and when others begin to lay by they say: The sorcerer passed there. This can also be said about studying, if they learn quickly, then they say: The sorcerer passed there. They say that when one has a livelihood and lays by anything, then the devil.

13. **Brazenfaced, truly a face of wood.**

This is said about the person who is_workflow and does not worry about others. He just rushes ahead of illustrious people.

14. **Wooden lips.**

This is said about someone whose words cannot be refuted, no one can over-ride him in argument.

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3 Nahuali, means magician, sorcerer, conjurer, probably refers to *Tezcatlipoca* one of whose names or Magician.
10. *A word is his meal.*

This is said about the person who is wounded by any little thing and immediately starts quarreling with people. When lightly reprimanded he replies angrily and squabbles with the other, or whenever anything is said he starts arguing and shouting.

11. *Underneath he drags a bag.*

This is said about someone who outwardly seems like placid water, who has a kind face and appears to be compassionate and good. But he may really be despicable — belligerent, a scandalmonger, and evil-hearted. Outwardly he speaks nicely to people but inwardly he speaks nastily.

12. *The sorcerer is now passing there; or, the sorcerer passed there.*

This is said when some people by toiling hard, earn their livelihood and lay by something. Some people, however, are just shiftless; they dedicate themselves to diversion and accumulate nothing, and when others acquire things by working hard, they say: *The sorcerer passed there.*

This can also be said about studying something. Some just fritter away their time, but if others learn well what they are studying, if they learn quickly, then they say: *The sorcerer passed there.* They say that when one says this, *sorcerer* means the devil.

13. *Brazenfaced, truly a face of wood.*

This is said about the person who is not bashful or timid with others. He just rushes ahead of illustrious people.


This is said about someone whose words are firm. He cannot be refuted, no one can over-ride him in words.

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*Proverbs, Conundrums and Metaphors 101*
15. Pipilpan timalli.

Iquac mitoa: intla aca ye uey tlacatl, noma pipillotl qui-nemitia, in ye telpuchtli noma moteteomolhui, anozo mitzpe-petzinalhuia: ahu in ye ichpuchtli, noma icoconeuh yetinem, noma mozoquitlaxcalhuia: in yeboatl in, ca pipilpan timalli.


17. Oppa icuitl quiqua.

Itechpa mitoa: in aquin tla itla oquitemacac, azo itla qualoni, anozo tilmatli: ye no ceppa quitlani, quitecuilia.

18. Aonmati iixco, icpac.

Itechpa mitoa: in amo in imati itechpa inacayo, quapopol-tic, iitzocuicuitlatic, amo mamouia, amo mixamia.

19. Aommomatoaca.

Zan ye no yeboatl, in aommomati iixco, icpac.

20. Aoompa.


Iquac mitoa: intla itla ninomachtia, zan auel onicma: in ma ca zan nixochiqualquuatli, amo ninoxochiquallotl, ic mitoa: niquauhtlamelaoa, anozo oniquauhtlamelahu, anozo zan oniquauhtlamelahu, quitoznequi: atle onicma, atle onicnexti.

15. A reveler in childishness.

This is said of a grown person who digs holes with pieces of stone or a young woman who still carries and makes mud tortillas. That is, they glory in doing something.

16. I pull up my shoots, you pull up yours.

This is said when I love someone very much. I quarrel with him and he takes something that I had done secretly, I shame him and throwing it in his face they say: I pull up my shoots.

17. He eats his excrement over again.

This is said if someone gives someone food or a cape. Then he asks for it back from him.

18. He has no idea what is on his face.

This is said about someone who is not well mouthinged. He is unkempt and his face is filthy. I do not talk to him.

19. He does not put a hand to himself.

This is the same as, he has no idea what is on top of his head.

20. Scatterbrain.

This is said of a person who does not do exactly what he is supposed to get he does not get.

21. I am a fruitless tree, you are a fruitless tree.

This is said when I study something but I do not learn exactly as if I were a fruit tree that bears fruit. For the reason it is said: I am a fruitless tree, or if for some meaning, I have learned nothing, I have capitulated my efforts.
15. A reveler in childishness.

This is said of a grown person who still clings to childish things; someone who is already a young man and takes delight in digging holes with pieces of stone or painting himself up, or a young woman who still carries around her dolls and makes mud tortillas. That is, they glory in childishness.

16. I pull up my shoots, you pull up your shoots.

This is said when I love someone who perhaps hurts me in some way. I quarrel with him and humiliate him. If there is something that he had done secretly, I reveal it in public, thus shaming him and throwing it in his face. When this occurs, they say: I pull up my shoots.

17. He eats his excrement over again.

This is said if someone gives something to another, such as food or a cape. Then he asks for it back, ha takes it away from him.

18. He has no idea what is on his face and on top of his head.

This is said about someone who is not careful of his person. He is unkempt and his face is filthy. He never uses any soap on himself nor does he wash his face.

19. He does not put a hand to himself.

This is the same as, he has no idea what is on his face and on top of his head.

20. Scatterbrain.

This is said of a person who does not have his wits about him. He is sent somewhere but goes elsewhere, and what he is supposed to get he does not get.

21. I am a fruitless tree, you are a fruitless tree.

This is said when I study something but cannot learn it. It is exactly as if I were a fruit tree that bears no fruit. For this reason it is said: I am a fruitless tree, or, I was a fruitless tree, meaning, I have learned nothing, I have nothing to show for my efforts.
22. Mazol.

Itchpa mitoa: in tlatlacuitiuetzi, azo temacueh, azo teamauh, anozo itla ocen tlamanlli cana mopia, ompa concuitiuetzi, intlanel tanaco, intlanelnozo canin: in ompa mopia in itla pialoni.

23. Notzotzon, motzotzon, anozo cuiz no cuile notzotzon in nouauhtzon.


Iquae mitoa: in amo uel melaoac niquitoa notlatol, in azo itla ic nitlatlanilo, in melaoac ic nitlananquilizquia: auh ye zan niqixneloa in notlatol, tan campa nocontlatlamia: cequi nictlatia, auh cequi melaoac in niquitoa: anoze zan aca itech nocontlamia.

25. Campa mixco.

Iquae mitoa: intla aca nechcocoli, nechteixpauia in ma nictolinilo, in ma cana altepetl ipan nitotoe: zan amo uel muchoa, amo uel ic nictolinilo, amo no nitotoe: ic noconilhuia in notecocolicauh: campa mixco.

26. Can noyacauh, can moyacauh.

Iquae mitoa: intla aca onechtolini, ono nictolinizquia: zan nixpampa oyoac: in manel campa oya, ca nictoliniz in iquae neciz: ic mitoa: can noyacauh.

PROVERBS, CONUNDRUM:


This is said about a person who is belonging to others, such as bracelets or other object that is safeguarded some from the basket or place where the basket or place is.

23. My hair, your hair; or, Is mine.

This is said when I do someone something. In consideration of mine, but instead he repays me with all of it is said: My hair; or, my hair also.

24. I twist something, you twist something.

This is said when I do not speak, and I am asked a question which I should instead I repay me with all the thing and stating another word falsely about someone.

25. With what face do you look at some.

This is said when someone hates me against me, for which I might him some city. However, absolutely not be harmed or persecuted for this. For person who hates me: With what face.

26. My very nose, your very nose.

This is said when someone has done me harm, also, but he runs from me gone, when he turns up I shall torment.

The Amaranth has spikes that are covered, not picked at a certain time, simply blow away zontli, Amaranth, form a play on words and rooms, an amaranth whose seeds have dried and fallen Like my nose, I shall never lose him.
22. *Hand-dipper.*

This is said about a person who swiftly snatches things belonging to others, such as bracelets or paper adornments, or some other object that is safeguarded somewhere. He swiftly takes it from the basket or place where the valuables are kept.

23. *My hair, your hair; or, Is my hair my amaranth?*

This is said when I do someone a favor, or else, I teach him something. In consideration of my help he should love me, but instead he repays me with abuse and disdain. Therefore it is said: *My hair; or, my hair also, your hair also.*

24. *I twist something, you twist something.*

This is said when I do not speak plainly. For instance, I am asked a question which I should answer clearly, but instead I muddle my words; in some instances I am ambiguous, concealing one thing and stating another with clarity. Or else I speak falsely about someone.

25. *With what face do you look at me?*

This is said when someone hates me and makes an accusation against me, for which I might be harmed or persecuted in some city. However, absolutely nothing can be done; I cannot be harmed or persecuted for this. For this reason I say to the person who hates me: *With what face do you look at me?*

26. *My very nose, your very nose.*

This is said when someone has done me harm and I would do him harm, also, but he runs from me. No matter where he has gone, when he turns up I shall torment him. Therefore, one says: *My very nose.*

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*The Amaranth has spikes that are covered with seeds which, if they are not picked at a certain time, simply blow away. *Tsonitl* is heir, head, and *huaht*sonitl, Amaranth, form a play on words and roughly mean, *my head droops like an amaranth whose seeds have dried and fallen.*

*Like my nose, I shall never lose him.*
27. **Totlanitz.**


28. **Centzon, uel acic.**


29. **Uel nomiuh, uel momiuh.**


30. **Icnopillotl ommomelaqu.**

*Iquac mitoa: intltla uccauhctica onicninixexitlil: ahu no aca, zan quioalichetqi: anozoit cana temac nietlazu otlic.*

27. **Our shin.**

This is said about the person who says to someone, “I am a captain,” he says to someone, “I and am experienced in war.” And perhaps he is and has a scar somewhere he shows to people, saying, “These are for combat.” This is when one says: *Our I boast falsely, you boast falsely.*

28. **He succeeded in achieving four limbs.**

This is said about someone who knows such as painting on paper, or such crafts as carpentry, and goldsmithery. He knows all this reason it is said: *He succeeded in doing.*

29. **Strictly my bone, strictly your bone.**

This is said when I hold fast to something strictly my own possession which I acquired in the past when someone took a captive in his second that he seized by the hand or foot and a fourth, that he also seized by the hand or foot this the captor said to the novice assistant. And if someone else came along and took captives by the hand or foot, they said...

30. **He marched straight to poverty.**

This is said when I manage to accumulate a long time and someone comes along and throw it away on the road and it falls into...
**27. Our shin.**

This is said about the person who speaks of his prowess. "I am a captain," he says to someone. "I have captured prisoners and am experienced in war." And perhaps he is not a captain. Or perhaps he is and has a scar somewhere on his body which he shows to people, saying, "These are the wounds I received in combat." This is when one says: Our shin. And we also say: I boast falsely, you boast falsely."

**28. He succeeded in achieving four hundred.**

This is said about someone who knows a great many things, such as painting on paper, or such crafts as forging metal, carpentry, and goldsmithery. He knows all these things well. For this reason it is said: He succeeded in achieving four hundred.

**29. Strictly my bone, strictly your bone.**

This is said when I hold fast to something that belongs to me, my own possession which I acquired by hard work and toil and which I did not take or steal. It meant the same in the past when someone took a captive in battle, and then came a second that he seized by the hand or foot, and then a third and a fourth, that he also seized by the hand or foot. With this the captor said to the novice assisting him: Strictly my bone. And if someone else came along and seized one of the captives by the hand or foot, they said: It is not his bone. 

**30. He marched straight to poverty.**

This is said when I manage to accumulate something after a long time and someone comes along and steals it, or else I throw it away on the road and it falls into someone else's hands.

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6 Motlanitztli, to boast, and tlanitztli, shin, are from the same root. Less protected than the rest of their bodies, the warriors probably received more wounds on the legs.

7 In Nahautl, the number 400 figuratively means an incalculable number of anything and is used the way we use a thousand or a million.

8 After a captive had been sacrificed, the flesh was distributed. The captor did not eat the flesh of his own captive, since the captive was considered his alter ego and the sacrifice of himself. However, some of the bones were returned to him and he kept them as trophies.

Iquac mitoa: intla aca tlatoani, anozo aca mauiztiliiononotlatlauhtilia, itla ipampa, inic nechpaleuix: auh zan ye ic qualani, zan itlauelpan nonuetzi: azo ye ompa no nechaoa, iuhquin ma tetitech noneoa, nonnouitequi.

32. *No tlepapalochiuhtiuht.*


33. *Ixnex.*


34. *Icniuhmoyactli.*

Itechpa mitoa: in aquin zan tltauvelililoc, in auel teitta, in zan teaoa: intla cana necentlatic in oncan teoan motlalia, zan ipan tlaceacaaltili, quicauihiquz, quimaecaci in ma teaoa: ic mitoa icniuhamoyactli.

35. *Onen oncatca.*


31. *I dash myself against a rock.*

This is said when I ask a ruler or someone to do me some favor, and as a result he has his wrath, and perhaps he berates me. It is as if I dash myself against a rock.

32. *Like a moth into the flames.*

This is said about someone who is bil­­li­­lies and rages, but then, in turn, is broken. It is as if he has fallen into the fire; for him and he thinks the fire has consumed who has fallen into the fire, and he sits with people who are always quarreling and fall into the hands of the other and per­­rants.

33. *Ash-face.*

This is said about someone who has done thing, such as an iniquity or thiever. He is about it, but his disgrace is already bruited about. Therefore they say about him.

34. *Friend-dispeller.*

This is said of a person who is bellige­­e­­no­­e­­one without fighting with him. If he and he sits down among the people there­­rants, they leave him quickly as he might fight with someone. For this reason he is called a friend dispeller.

35. *It was in vain.*

This is said when I desire something we cannot do. For example, if I am studying for­­er, i.e., from *ixtl*, face. *Nestli* means to show, to reveal.
31. *I dash myself against a rock.*

This is said when I ask a ruler or some illustrious person to do me some favor, and as a result he becomes angry. I provoke his wrath, and perhaps he berates me. It is as if I beat myself, I dash myself against a rock.

32. *Like a moth into the flames.*

This is said about someone who is always quarreling with others. When he bullies people and squabbles with them, he fumes and rages, but then he, in turn, is bullied and put to shame. It is as if he has fallen into the fire; flames are shooting from him and he thinks the fire has consumed the other, while it is he who has fallen into the fire, and he soon dies there. So it is with people who are always quarreling with others; they may fall into the hands of the other and perhaps be killed.

33. *Ash-face.*

This is said about someone who has done or committed something, such as an iniquity or thievery. He thinks no one knows about it, but his disgrace is already widely known, it has been bruited about. Therefore they say about this person: *Ash-face.*

34. *Friend-dispeller.*

This is said of a person who is belligerent, who cannot look at anyone without fighting with him. If there is a gathering and he sits down among the people there, they just draw away from him, they leave him quickly, as they are afraid that he might fight with someone. For this reason they say: *Friend-dispeller.*

35. *It was in vain.*

This is said when I desire something with all my heart that cannot be done. For example, if I am studying, I cannot learn anything. Therefore one says: *It was in vain.* Or conversely, *it was not in vain.*

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9 A play on words. *ixtli,* face. *Nextli,* means ashes. The verb *nextia* means to show, to reveal.
36. **Ompa onquiza'n tlalticpac.**


37. **Mocicinoa.**

Itechpa mitoa: in mochachamaoa itla itechpa, azo necuiltonolli, anozo tlamatiliztli: quitotinemi. Ca ninocuiltonoani, ca oncan naxca, notlatqui: anoce quitoa. Nitlamatini, etc.

38. **Cuix iquich quitta in huitzitziltzin.**

Iquac mitoa: intla ce tlaxcalli, azo tleuh ye amo cenca uel icuc, tiquiciuhcaquituetzi, in mitoa cenca ye tonteuciui: in iuh quichioa coyotl in zan xoxouhqui quitetexoa elotl: zan no iuh muchioa in iquac aca cenca ye onapizmiqui: intlanel ayamo cenca uel icuc tlaxcalli, anozo nacatl, iuhqui quirquituetzi: auh intla aca ce tl-

39. **Tlatoluilax.**

Itechpa mitoa: in aquin aiiellatoa, in amo cenca uellananaquilia, in iquac notzalo.

40. **Teneucuitzca.**

Itechpa mitoa: in cenca tlatlatoani, in cenca tlatole.

41. **Cuix tleuh yetinami in coyotl.**

Iquac mitoa: intla itla aayamo cenca uel icucie, tiquiciuhcaquituetzi, in aquin cenca ye tonteuciui: in iuh quichioa coyotl in zan xoxouhqui quitetexoa elotl: zan no iuh muchioa in iquac aca cenca ye onapizmiqui: intlanel ayamo cenca uel icuc tlaxcalli, anozo nacatl, iuhqui quirquituetzi: auh intla aca ic tla-

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PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS

36. **The world spills out.**

This is said when we are very poor, as mantles or robes are barely covering one; one’s body is spilling out. The world spills out; one’s body spills out.

37. **He brags about himself.**

This is said about the person who is wealthy; there are my goods and I learned, etc.

38. **Can a humming-bird see that many?**

This is said when we share a tortilla into tiny pieces. If someone says, “With so small,” he then adds, “Can a humming-bird see that many?” For a humming-bird has a very thin beak, even from a tiny flower, he sips very little.

39. **Word-dragger.**

This is said about a person who is slow to reply volubly when spoken to.

40. **Swallow’s beak.**

This is said about a person who talks full of words.

41. **Does a coyote carry his fire around?**

This is said when we are ravenous and that is not fully cooked. Like a coyote bearing corn, a person who is starving bears down through going to cook the food, or would like to...
36. The world spills out.¹⁰

This is said when we are very poor, when hardly anything comes our way, such as mantles or food, by which it is evident that someone is poor and in great want. One’s rags are very old and torn, barely covering one. They are worn thin, falling apart, and one’s body is spilling out. As a result, it began to be said: Now the world spills out; or, now the world is spilling out.

37. He brags about himself.

This is said about the person who brags about himself, such as about his riches or knowledge, saying: “I have become wealthy; there are my goods and possessions!” Or else he says, “I am learned,” etc.

38. Can a humming-bird see that much?

This is said when we share a tortilla or some food divided into tiny pieces. If someone says, “What you have given me is so small,” he then adds, “Can a humming-bird see that much?” For a humming-bird has a very thin beak and when he sips nectar even from a tiny flower, he sips very little of it.


This is said about a person who is slow in speaking and who does not reply volubly when spoken to.

40. Swallow’s beak.

This is said about a person who talks a great deal, who is full of words.

41. Does a coyote carry his fire around with him?

This is said when we are ravenous and bolt down something that is not fully cooked. Like a coyote biting into a green ear of corn, a person who is starving bolts down tortillas or meat even though they may not be cooked through. And if someone is going to cook the food, or would like to humiliate the other,

¹⁰ *Tlalticpac*, which means the earth, the world, also means the penis.
tlatzouiz, anozo ic tepinaultiznequiz: ic mitoa iquae. Cuix itleuh yetinem in coyotl.

42. Cuix no nen nipatzactzintl.

Iquac mitoa: in amo qualli inemiliz intla no teachcauh tecoaanotza, anozo itla quitemaca: ahu no iuh nicchioanequini ni­tecoanotzaq, anozo itla nietemaca: ic mitoa. Cuix no nipatzactzintli, anozo, cuix no nen nipatzactzintli.

43. Ipal nonixpatlaoa.


44. Tequitl nitotolpixqui: cuix niquinchopini, mochopinque.


45. Quennel, tla nel toconilhuiti in quennel: amo zan no quioalitoz: quennel.


46. Ma quimichpil oconaltlic.

Iquac mitoa: intla itla oticpeoaltica, ahu zan no onitlacauh. In iuhqui iquac acame moquauahuhtelolomomotla: ahu zan then the hungry one says: Does a coyote come with him?

42. Am I good-for-nothing, am I a wither

This is said if a captain, who is not very brou­quet or serves a metal to another. I want to give a banquet or serve a meal to someone: Am I a withered ear of corn? Or, am I a withered ear of corn?

43. Because of him my face becomes wi

This is said when someone's child — a young man or serves a metal to another. I want to give a banquet or serve a meal to someone: Because of him my face becomes white?

44. My job is watching over the turkey

This refers to the turkey hens when they pluck out each other's feathers. The hen does not provoke this; they start fighting among themselves. Accordingly, this is common people when they brawl with each other, come to blows over their lands or houses. It is not the authorities who fight of their own accord, join issue and fight them.

45. What can be done? If we just say, “W

This is said when I have been divested lose something that does not turn up and excited and say, “What can be done?” But the other person will only say, “What can be done?”

46. Possibly a mouse drank it.

This is said when we are fighting for something such as, when players, competing in a game.
42. Am I good-for-nothing, am I a withered ear of corn?

This is said if a captain, who is not very well off, gives a banquet or serves a metal to another. I want to do the same. I want to give a banquet or serve a meal to someone. For this reason, one says: Am I a withered ear of corn? Or, Am I good for nothing, am I a withered ear of corn?

43. Because of him my face becomes wide.

This is said when someone’s child—a boy or girl—or else someone’s pupil, was well-taught, well-brought-up, and is commended for his good up-bringing. Consequently, the child’s parent or teacher is also being commended. Therefore, they say with regard to the child: Because of him my face becomes wide. Or, I make someone’s face wide, you make someone’s face wide.

44. My job is watching over the turkey hens. Did I peck at them? They pecked at each other!

This refers to the turkey hens when they peck at each other and pluck out each other’s feathers. The keeper of the turkey hens does not provoke this; they start fighting by themselves and peck at each other. Accordingly, this is also said about the common people when they brawl with each other, when they come to blows over their lands or houses or for some other reason. It is not the authorities who fight with them, but they, of their own accord, join issue and fight with each other.

45. What can be done? If we just say, “What can be done?” the other person will only say, “What can be done?”

This is said when I have been divested of something, or I lose something that does not turn up anywhere. I become excited and say, “What can be done?” But if we just say, “What can be done?” the other person will only say, “What can be done?”

46. Possibly a mouse drank it.

This is said when we are fighting for something and give up, such as, when players, competing in a game of throwing wooden
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oniltlacauh, amo uel omotlanque: ic iquac quitoa: ma quimich-pil oconatlic.

47. Cuix nixilotl nechititzayanaz.


48. Icnococotzin.

Itechpa mitoa: in zan motolinia, in amo cencua mocuiltonoa, in zan quezquichtzin quimopialia iaxca.

49. Oc nocetonal, oc mocetonal.

Iquac mitoa: intla tequani onechquazquia, anozo tequani coati ipan onicholo, zan achi in onechquazquia, oninotlalotiuetz, anozo toro onechquauazquiza; ahu oixpampa neoac, ic oninomaquixti: yehicà, intlaca'mo onicchioani in izquitlamantli: ca onimiquizquia, az'oe quezquiluitzintli nonnemiz: ic mitoa. Oc nocetonal.

50. Quen uel ximimatia in titeocuitlamichin.


51. Tla alaui, tlapeetzcaui in tlalticpac.

Zan ye no iuhqui in omito: aoz quiniquinpa qualli inemilio: zatepan itla ipan uetzi tlatlaculli, in ma iuhqui omalauh zo-quitlitan.

52. Ayemo quatlatatzta.

Itechpa mitoa: in amo zan centlamantli quimotequitia, zan amo tle netli: aoz quimomachtia cuicatl, zan auel quichiao: ye-

PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS ANI
balls, simply give up and lose the game.
Possibly a mouse drank it.

47. *Am I an ear of corn that they can scrape my belly?*

This was said when someone was in trouble: a robbery or adultery, or he seduced something that was wrong, and then said to anyone about what you have seen.”

*I am an ear of corn that they can scrape*

48. *Poor little dove.*

This is said about someone who is wrong in anything, only a few things to call him.

49. *One more day for me, one more.*

This is said when a wild beast was a poisonous snake was going to bite me and fled, or a bull was going to eat me and escaped danger. If I had not done all that, died, or I might have lived only a few more days, one says: *One more day for me, one more day for me.*

50. *What happened to you, fish of gold?* Be careful!

This is said when someone had lived a certain time and then something came up, or he struck someone who he was put in jail. Then one says: *What happened to you, fish of gold? Be careful!*

51. *Things slip, things slide, in this way.*

This is the same as the above. Perhaps one’s way of life was good and then he got as if he had slipped in the mud.

52. *He has not yet set his head.*

This is said about someone who does one thing exclusively, who does not stick
47. **Am I an ear of corn that they can scrape the kernels off my belly?**

This was said when someone was in trouble. He had committed a robbery or adultery, or he seduced someone, or did something that was wrong, and then said to me, “Don’t say anything to anyone about what you have seen.” I then reply to him: **Am I an ear of corn that they can scrape the kernels off my belly?**

48. **Poor little dove.**

This is said about someone who is poor. He has scarcely anything, only a few things to call his own.

49. **One more day for me, one more day for you.**

This is said when a wild beast was about to devour me, or a poisonous snake was going to bite me and I leaped over him and fled, or a bull was going to eat me, but I ran away and escaped danger. If I had not done all these things, I would have died, or I might have lived only a few days. For this reason one says: **One more day for me, one more day for you.**

50. **What happened to you, fish of gold? Be careful!**

This is said when someone had lived a life of propriety until a certain time and then something came over him. Perhaps he took a lover, or he struck someone who took sick or died and he was put in jail. Then one says: **What happened to you, fish of gold? Be careful!**

51. **Things slip, things slide, in this world.**

This is the same as the above. Perhaps until now, someone’s way of life was good and then he goes astray. It is exactly as if he had slipped in the mud.

52. **He has not yet set his head.**

This is said about someone who does not devote himself to one thing exclusively, who does not stick to anything. Perhaps
ne quimomachtia Latin, a no uel quichioa: yene Castillantlatolli quimomachtia, amo no uel quimati. In aquin iuh quichioa y, uel iteca mitoa. Ayemo quatlatlaztza.

53. Ayac matlacpa teca.


54. Tepal nitzopiloti.


55. In oalquiza tonatiuh amo tononqui: quin iquac iye(1)iz yetiu = tetoonqui.


56. Can machpa tiuitze.


57. Quen tehitto.


1 Should read: ayac matlacpa teca.
he studies singing; he does not master it. Then he wants to learn Latin and he does not master this either. Then he studies Spanish and he does not learn this either. About a person who does this, they say: *He has not yet set his head.*

53. *No one beseeches another ten times.*

This is said when someone, who holds a post and serves in some capacity, likes to be coaxed and cajoled. “Oh, if I could only relinquish my post!” he says, thinking that by so doing he will be loved and esteemed. But when he is removed, he becomes downcast. He leaves his post and someone else is put in his place. The person who now offers to do the work, does it better, does it with greater care. This is when it is said: *No one beseeches another ten times.*

54. *With someone’s help I became a vulture.*

This is said when I have nothing to eat and through the offices of a friend I eat a little of his food. Should someone ask me if I have eaten, I reply: *With someone’s help I was “vultur­ing.”*

55. *The sun is not hot when it has just risen; after it has been travelling its course a while, then it becomes hot.*

This is said about a person who has just married, as he is still very poor when he starts out in life. However after a little time has gone by he is consoled as he may now have laid by something.

56. *Where have we come from?*

This is said when someone hurts us deeply or wants to do us harm and he is not our enemy but our friend. Hence, one retorts: *Where have we come from?*

57. *It’s the way people are regarded.*

This is said when someone is greatly admired, honored and esteemed. When someone says, “Why do they make so much of him?” The other then replies: *It’s the way people are re­garded.*

11 That is, “Weren’t we friends?”
58. Ye iuhqui itoch.


No itechpa mitoa in aquin tetoliami: in anozo tla­tlacatzimli, in muchi tlaclatl quitlazotla: maciui in amo tlaoan­qui, no mitoaya: ye iuhqui itoch, quitoznequi: ye iuhqui iyeliz.

59. Ixtimal.


61. Campa xompati.

58. *Such is his rabbit.*

This is said about people when they get drunk. One weeps copiously, another fights with people and shouts at them. And so, when a drunkard shouts at people or starts weeping, they say: *Such is his rabbit,* because in the past, *pulque* was consecrated to the rabbits whom the ancients worshipped as gods.\(^\text{12}\)

This is also said of someone who is extremely belligerent, or of someone who is very kind and loves everyone. Though he is not a drinker, they say: *Such is his rabbit,* which means, such is his nature.

59. *A glorious face.*

This is said about a person who, outwardly, makes a good appearance but does nothing well, executes nothing well. He can do absolutely nothing. This is especially said of women who appear to embroider and spin well but in reality can do nothing well; they just deceive people. For this reason they say: *A glorious face.*

60. *Does a black look hurt?* One also says: *Is my face mortified, are my innards also mortified?*

This is said when I am very hungry, when I am ravenous, and others are eating. I ask them to give me a little something to eat but they will not give me anything. They become angry and look at me askance. However, because I am starving, I quickly sit down with them and eat, or I snatch some tortillas. This is when one says: *Does a black look hurt?* For looking askance at someone does him no harm; only starvation kills a person and causes death.

61. *Where can one be healed?*

This is said when someone quarrels with me and stings me with his words. I then seek out one of my friends, I go to see him so that he can console me, but he upbraids me and also hurts my feelings. He does the same thing to me; I fall right into his mouth. This is when one says: *Where can one be healed?*  

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\(^{12}\) *Pulque* is the fermented juice of the *maguey* or *agave.* The *Cemontostochin,* the 400 (or innumerable) rabbits, were the gods of wine. They also represented the innumerable types of drunkenness. For a lively description of many types of drunkenness, see Sahagún, *Hist. Gen.*, Ed. Porrúa, 1956, Vol. I, p. 324.
120 Noyollo yiztaya, moyollo yiztaya, etc.


63. Patlachilpitica.


64. Ayatle iueliyaca.


65. Tlacoqualli in monequi.

Amo cenca tzotzomatli in totech tietIalizque: amo no cenca titoyecquetzazque: zanipan qualli inic titochichioazque: in itech-pa in tlaquemitl.

66. Tlacaitleoa.

Iquae mitoa: in iquae pipixco, in muchi tlaeatl yauh mopixquiliz: no uel mitoa, in iquae muchi tlacatl yauh, in imilpan, in iquae elimico.

67. Quin in nicoyutl: ma ica niquitta.


-- Should read: tlacoyotl eoa.

62. My heart turns white, your heart

This is said when we long for someone much. For example, when I am either or when I desire something agreeable. rejoices. Then one says: My heart turns white.

63. It is loosely tied.

This is said when someone makes an excuse saying many things to bring me harm, then I am unable to reply but, nevertheless so that I might defend myself. If and don't you defend yourself? I reply, say And even if it were tightly tied, he has not know how I shall take revenge for harm.

64. His nose has lost its power.

This is said when certain tidings are imparted wildly and cannot be proven true. So, one says: His nose has lost its power. And even if it were tightly tied, he has not know how I shall take revenge for harm.

65. Moderation is proper.

We should not dress in rags, nor strips on the matter of clothing, we should dress.

66. Everyone goes off.

This is said at harvesttime when everyone, the harvest. It can also be said when fields at the time of tilling.

67. When I am a coyote, I shall see it!

This is said when someone claims to have For example, he says: I went to Castile, mala.” Or, he says: I was mayor.” But just lying. For this reason, they say: Where see that he went to Castile, or Guatemala he was mayor!
62. *My heart turns white, your heart turns white,* etc.

This is said when we long for something that we like very much. For example, when I am either very hungry or thirsty, or when I desire something agreeable. When I see it my heart rejoices. Then one says: *My heart turns white.*

63. *It is loosely tied.*

This is said when someone makes an accusation against me, saying many things to bring me harm, and treats me with disdain. I am unable to reply but, nevertheless, I deliberate about it so that I might defend myself. If anyone should say, “Why don’t you defend yourself?” I reply, saying: “*It is loosely tied.*” And even if it were tightly tied, he has trumped it up; he does not know how I shall take revenge for his deceit.”

64. *His nose has lost its power.*

This is said when certain tidings are untrue, when they are imparted wildly and cannot be proven anywhere. For instance, if someone says, “They say the Emperor is dead,” this is not true. So, one says: *His nose has lost its power.* But if it were true, then one would say: *His nose is certainly powerful!*

65. *Moderation is proper.*

We should not dress in rags, nor should we overdress. In the matter of clothing, we should dress with moderation.

66. *Everyone goes off.*

This is said at harvesttime when everyone goes off to gather the harvest. It can also be said when everyone goes to the fields at the time of tilling.

67. *When I am a coyote, I shall see it!*

This is said when someone claims to have done something. For example, he says: “I went to Castile,” or, “I went to Guatemala.” Or, he says: “I was mayor.” But this is not true, he is just lying. For this reason, they say: *When I am a coyote, I shall see that he went to Castile, or Guatemala, or that at sometime he was mayor!*
68. **Ma Chapultepec ninaalti.**

Iquac mitoa: intla nopen muchioa uey cocolitzli, notech omo-

tlali, anozo itla notequiuh tetolini cenca niqueleuia in ma ni-
pati: in ma iciuhea tzonquiza in notequiuh. Auh intla oquentel

nipatie; anozo otonquiz in notequiuh: niman ic niquitoa. Ma

Chapultepec ninaalti.

69. **Aicnopilpan nemitiliztli.**

Itechpa mitoa: in aca tlatoani, ipan calaqui anacoa nal-
tzintli: niman mitoa. Inin tlatoani: amo icnopolpan nemitilizti, quitoznequi: amo icnotlacatl ichan calaquiz, zan no tlatoani in

monequi ichan calaquiz. No itechpa mitoa: in aca amo tlamaui-
zoani, aozotlatzin maco, aozotlaqualtzintli zan atle ipan quitta, zan qutelchoa, aozotlatzin maco, aozotlin quinequi: niman ic mitoa. Aicnopilpan nemitilizitl.

70. **Telchil, anozo, atelchil.**

Iquac mitoa: intla aca tictitlani, ayaxcan oitcicillitique azo

itla oquicuizquia: zan atle oquicuito, quioalitotiuh: ca tle in

oniecuizquia, aozotlaquieequi: ic onmolui. Atel-

chil.

71. **Omotlatziuiz eoac.**

Iquac mitoa: intla aca tictitlani, aca quinotzaz: auh amo qui-

nequi in yaz: auh zatepan uel ticecillitia: auh in mache qui-

notzaz, aozotlaquieequi: ic onmolui. Omotlatziuiz eoac.

72. **Muchi oquicac in nacel.**

Iquac mitoa: in aca itla quiteneoa, mitiepa quicuicuitlacue-

pa in atztzan quitoa in tlalolli.
68. Oh, that I may bathe in Chapultepec!

This is said when I fall ill, when I am stricken by a grave illness, or when I have a burdensome duty to perform, and I long to be well, or for the task to be soon completed. If I am a little better or my work is done, then I say: Oh, that I might bathe in Chapultepec! 13

69. It is no life among the poor.

This is said of a king who enters the house of a commoner. They say: Among the poor is no life for this king. This means that he should not enter a poor man’s house, that it is only proper for him to enter the house of a king.

This is also said of an ungrateful person who is given some object or some food and he thinks little of it, he disdains it. He wants something expensive, or turkey. Hence, they say: It is no life among the poor.

70. So much the better, or, So much the worse.

This is said when no sooner do we send someone for something than we receive it. Or when someone is supposed to go for something but does not get it, and comes back saying, “What was it I was supposed to get?” Or else, somewhere he stumbles and falls. Hence, they say: So much the worse.

71. Your laziness turned out well.

This is said when we send someone to call another, but he does not want to go, and a short while later we receive the very person he was to have called, or he meets him just outside the door, or else the person is just coming along. Therefore, he is told: Your laziness turned out well.

72. Everyone of my nits have heard it!

This is said when one person tells another something and he repeats it many times, he says the same thing over and over again.

13 There was a spring in Chapultepec where Moctezuma bathed, and therefore, it was considered non plus ultra.
73. **Muchin quimomolchioa in tapayaxin nicaci.**

Iquac mitoa: in aca itla tequitilo, in amo oui: cenca couica itta: anozo quicaqui itla tepiton tlaltolli, couicamati, ic motequipachoa: ic monanquilia. Muchin quimomolchioa, etc.

74. **Niltatlilpataoa.**


75. **Iuh quito atecocolpil, aye nel toxaxamacayan.**

Iquac mitoa: intla aca itla oquichiuh tlaltacalli: auh ye oltazacuiltiloc, anozo aca canapa oya, ompa omomiquili: ic mitoa: iuh quito atecocolpil, aye nel toxaxamacayan.

76. **Canpaxo'n naoalli.**


77. **Ompa ce zotl ommopilo.**


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9 Should read: nictetchiulilia.
73. *He makes a stew of all the chameleons he catches.*

This is said when someone is given a task to do that is not difficult, but he regards it as difficult; or he receives an insignificant order which he considers dangerous and is upset. For this reason one replies: *He makes a stew,* etc.

74. *I make a smudge.*

This is said when we do something in a way that it should not be done, or say something rude and thus spoil or make a botch of something. It derives from the painters. When they are painting, sometimes they do it poorly, sometimes they make a smudge.

75. *So said the little water snail: Truly, the hour for our being crushed is never.*

This is said when someone committed a crime and was punished, or went away somewhere and was killed. For this reason, they say: *So said the little water snail: Truly, the hour for our being crushed is never.*

76. *The sorcerer bit into it.*

This is said when I sell something that is expensive, that has a price of 5 pesos, for example, and I charge only 1 peso for it. Or perhaps I put a low price on something small; I do not make anything, I make no profit from it. For this reason, one says: *The sorcerer bit into it.*

77. *He hung himself with a piece of rag.*

This is said when I make an accusation against someone because of some trifling thing and he retaliates with something serious that puts me in difficulties; or when something, such as a cape or a cup is slightly ripped or cracked, and when I want to repair it, it rips or cracks more. Then one says: *He hung himself with a piece of rag.*

14 The text reads *nicaci,* which would make this read, ... *I catch,* but this does not appear to fit the context.

16 A play on words. *Compaxoa* (compaxoa), means to bite, to eat something, and also to evaluate something.
78. Canin mach coyonasazco.


No itechpa mitoa: in aequin quittance, azo itlla quicuiz, anozo tenotzaz, oppa, expa in iluilo, zan nel amo quicauiqu: ic iluilo. Canin mach coyonasazco.

79. Ye oyauh in itlatolhoaz.

Iteehpa mitoa: in aca cenca mochicacoa, teteixpauia, in cenca motlalochicacoa: ahu in iquac in auel quichia inic teteixpauia, in zen iuvian mocauhtiiuh.

Ioan uel itechpa mitoa: in aca aequen tlatla, moquaquatlaza, in aya tle ipan quitla: ahu inic mieepa nonotzalo, ye iuianzti in mocnomattiuh, in maca zan potro, zan iuian ye tlacaciuhtiiuh: ic mitoa. Ye oyauh, etc.

80. Zan ixquich motlacatili.


81. Aca icuitlaxcoltzin quitlatlamachica.


82. Occepa iuhcan yez, occeppa iuh tlanamiz, in iquin, in canin.

In tlein mochioaya cenca ye uecauh, in ayocmo mochioa: ahu occeppa mochiaz, occeppa iuh tlanamiz, in iuh tlamanca ye uecauh: in yehoantin, in axcan nemi, occepa nemizque, yezqu.
78. *Where, perhaps, in a coyote's ear?*

This is said when someone derides and openly criticizes another, but what he says does not reveal much, it discloses very little. Hence, one replies to the derider: *Where, perhaps, in a coyote's ear?*

This is also said about a person who is sent to fetch something or to call someone, and is told a second and a third time but simply does not comprehend. So they say to him: *Where, perhaps, in a coyote's ear?*

79. *His talker has run down.*

This is said about a person who is very forceful when he makes accusations against others and argues with great vehemence, but when he finds he can do nothing to the people he accuses, little by little he quiets down.

This is also said about someone who is overweening, who arrogantly tosses his head up and down, and who has no regard for anything. Thus, he is reprimanded many times over and little by little he becomes subdued. He is exactly like a colt that is gradually tamed. Therefore, they say: *His talker has run down.*

80. *This is all that was born.*

This is said when we say something that is brief, not long and drawn out, and it is quickly concluded. When it is over, we say: *This is all that was born.*

81. *Someone who arranges his intestines artistically.*

This is said of an artisan, such as a feather-artist, who does his work beautifully and designs it well, so that it goes, so that it is sold quickly.

82. *Once again it shall be, once again it shall exist, sometime, somewhere.*

What happened long ago and no longer happens, will happen another time. What existed long ago, will exist again. Those who are living now, will live anew, will exist once more.
83. *Ma amo ixiloyocan taci: ma amo imiyaoayocan taci.*


83. *You never ripen into an ear of corn tassels.*

This proverb is understood in two ways, the other is not. It is favorable when applied favorably, of course is implicit. The text ends abruptly here. The second meaning applied unfavorably, of course is implicit.
IS DE CULTURA NÁHUATL

ntaci: ma amo simiyaoayocan taci.

antli inic mocqui: centlamantli qualli,
qualli. Auh in iquac qualli: iquac intla,
motlamachtiani, in muchipa quipia in
llonoll: mano in tlacayotl in nican
kie in simiyaoayocan, in ixiloyocan: cen-
halo: mitoaya ca oimaceoil mochiuh, in

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83. You never ripen into an ear of corn, you never sprout
corn tassels.

This proverb is understood in two ways; the first is good,
the other is not. It is favorable when someone is illustrious,
rich, and possessed of wealth and abundance, or rules a kingdom
here on earth. They say: He has ripened into an ear of corn,
he has sprouted corn tassels. He is esteemed and praised. They
said that this kind of person achieved this on his own merits.37

37 The text ends abruptly here. The second meaning of the proverb, when
applied unfavorably, of course is implicit.
IC OMPAALLI OMOME CAPITULO, ONCAN MITOA: CEQUI ZAZANILLI, IN MITOA, ZAZAN TLEINO, INIC MA ZAZANILUIA: IN IUIQUI MA MONOAALTOTOCOA.

1. Zazan tleino, xoxouhqui xicalztintli, mumuchitl ontemi. Aca quittaz tozazaniltzin, tla ca nenca iluical.

2. Zazan tleino, icuitlaxcol quiuilana, tepetozcatl quitoca. Aca quittaz tozazaniltzin, tla ca nenca uitzmallotl.


5. Zazan tleino, matlactin tepatlacltli quimamamatimani. Aca quittaz tozazaniltzin, tla ca nenca tozti.


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PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS A:

1. What is a little blue-green Someone is sure to guess our riddle: Someone is sure to guess our riddle;

2. What is it that drags its intesti foot-hills of the mountain? Someone is sure it is a sewing needle.

3. What is a two-tone drum of Someone is sure to guess our riddle; it is a sewing needle.

4. What is a warrior’s hair-dress the region of the dead? Someone is sure it is a jug for drawing water from the

5. What are ten thin slabs of stone ing around? Someone is sure to guess our nails.

6. What is it that is seized a white stone slab? Someone is sure to a louse that we take from our head, pull a kill.

7. What is a hollow straw that mar.

---

1 *Tzotzocolli* is a water jug and also the name of the warriors dressed their hair —pulled up on the side— a water jug.

2 A horn instrument, forerunner of the slide tr
Some Conundrums which they tell and try to guess.

1. What is a little blue-green jar filled with popcorn? Someone is sure to guess our riddle; it is the sky.

2. What is it that drags its intestines as it ambles along the foot-hills of the mountain? Someone is sure to guess our riddle; it is a sewing needle.

3. What is a two-tone drum of jade ringed with flesh? Someone is sure to guess our riddle; it is an ear-plug.

4. What is a warrior’s hair-dress that knows the way to the region of the dead? Someone is sure to guess our riddle; it is a jug for drawing water from the well.

5. What are ten thin slabs of stone that one is always hauling around? Someone is sure to guess our riddle; they are our nails.

6. What is it that is seized in a black forest and dies on a white stone slab? Someone is sure to guess our riddle; it is a louse that we take from our head, put on our nail and then kill.

7. What is a hollow straw that makes songs? It is a sack-butt.\(^1\)

---

\(^1\) *Tzotzocalli* is a water jug and also the manner in which distinguished warriors dressed their hair—pulled up on the sides into a topknot and resembling a water jug.

\(^2\) A horn instrument, forerunner of the slide trombone, Post-Columbian.
8. Zazan tleino, cacatzactli temetztica tlacuiloa. Teccizma-
maque.


10. Zazan tleino, icezocuetzin, moteahatemilia. Tziquaoaz-
tli.


13. Zazan tleino, teocuitlapolotziquitzin yapalichtica meca-
yotica. Ayeli.


16. Zazan tleino, tecpatica texoa, cuetlaxtli oncan onoc, na-
catica tzacqui. Tocamac.


18. Zazan tleino, ixnaca quechomiyo. Zan ye no yehoatl in
tomapil.

19. Zazan tleino, ixtexolochtitzin quintopeuhtiuh. Totlan-
qua.

Cuezcomatl.


1 Read: in centzoncuentzin.

8. Wath is a little darky who write.
   A snail.

9. What is it that points its finger at a thorn.

10. What are 400 furrows in search of.

11. What is it that is bending over corn tassles.

12. What is a frightful old lady that.
   A mole.

13. What is a tiny silver speck that.
   A nit.

14. What is a little mirror in the eyes.

15. What is a mountainside that.
   In it? Our nose.

16. What is it that grinds with a stone.
   Are over it, and it is surrounded by flesh.

17. What is it that has soft flesh in a bell on the back of its neck? The finger.

18. What is it that has a face of flesh.
   For it is the same, the finger.

19. What are they that go pushing.
   The knees.

20. What is an old woman with straws.
   The door of the house? The granary.

21. What is long, hard, and red, and.
   Any trouble? An ant.

* The granaries had straw roofs. They are over Mexico.
8. What is a little darky who writes with a piece of lead? A snail.

9. What is it that points its finger at the sky? A maguey thorn.

10. What are 400 furrows in search of lice? A comb.

11. What is it that is bending over us all over the world? Corn tassels.

12. What is a frightful old lady that gnaws into the earth? A mole.

13. What is a tiny silver speck tied with a black thread? A nit.

14. What is a little mirror in the middle of fir trees? Our eyes.

15. What is a mountainside that has a spring of water in it? Our nose.

16. What is it that grinds with a stone, strips of leather are over it, and it is surrounded by flesh? The mouth.

17. What is it that has soft flesh in front and a little clay bell on the back of its neck? The finger.

18. What is it that has a face of flesh and a neck of bone? It is the same, the finger.

19. What are they that go pushing along wrinkled faces? The knees.

20. What is an old woman with straw hair standing before the door of the house? The granary.\(^3\)

21. What is long, hard, and red, and bites people without any trouble? An ant.

\(^3\) The granaries had straw roofs. They are still constructed this way all over Mexico.


34. Zazan tleino, cuezali teyacana, cacali'n tetocatiuh. Tlacchinolli.

22. What is a “you jump and I drumstick.

23. What is a “I go this way, you shall meet?” A breachcloth.

24. What is a little white stone having feathers? An onion.

25. What is a white-haired pulque stone having feathers? It is the same, an onion.

26. What is that we enter in the only one? Our shirt.

27. What is a screeching locust eating its ribs? A bone scraper.

28. What is it that has ribs outside on the road? A carrying-frame for loads.

29. What is it that you quickly turn on the ground stiff? It is the mucous.

30. What is it that goes into a tree and coming out? An ax.

31. What is it that knocks its big stone? A ladder.

32. What is it that has a shirt stuck behind? Something burning.

33. What is it that comes out of a stone? Excrement.

34. What is a red cardinal going behind? Something burning.

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4 The musical instrument.
5 Portable shelves in a frame.
6 A variety of tomato that is green when ripe outer covering.
DE CULTURA NÁHUATL

pa niyauh, nipa xiyauh, ompa toncanacatl.

tzet Zac tetzintli, quetzalli conmantica. Xo-

macad.

Ptcanpa ticalqui, zan oecni tiquiza. Ca

omieicuilltataca chiquilichtatzitzin. Omi-

omicieicuilpapanpul otlca moquetzicac.

titlacoyec tenpan tiemacuituicetzi, tlalli ic

quauhla calaqui nenepilotiuh. Tepuzti.

tetlapenteco moquequetza quateconpol.

huipiltitich. Tomatl.

ye calquiza xicci moteuh. Cuitatl.

cuezali teyacana, cacali’n tetocatiuh. Tla-

PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS AND METAPHORS

22. What is a “you jump and I will jump?” It is a rubber

drumstick.

23. What is a “I go this way, you go that, and over there-

we shall meet?” A breachcloth.

24. What is a little white stone holding up quetzal feathers?

An onion.

25. What is a white-haired pulque jar holding up quetzal

feathers? It is the same, an onion.

26. What is that we enter in three places and leave by

only one? Our shirt.

27. What is a screeching locust lying down and scratch-

ing its ribs? A bone scraper.*

28. What is it that has ribs outside and is standing upright

on the road? A carrying-frame for loads.†

29. What is it that you quickly take from its hole and cast

on the ground stHí? It is the mucous from the nose.

30. What is it that goes into a tree and its tongue is hang-

ing out? An ax.

31. What is it that knocks its big head against the edge of

the roof? A ladder.

32. What is it that has a shirt stuck to it? The green tomato.⁴

33. What is it that comes out and now you have your

stone? Excrement.

34. What is a red cardinal going first and a crow following

behind? Something burning.

* The musical instrument.
† Portable shelves in a frame.
⁴ A variety of tomato that is green when ripe and is encased in a thin yellow outer covering.
35. Zazan tleino, itetecac, tecaltenpan moquequetza. Tla-quetzalli.


42. Zazan tleino, tetepac totolon cuicaticac. Nexcomitl.

43. Zazan tleino, otlica tequatica. Ca titotecuinia tetl.

44. Zazan tleino, otlica eoatica paltetzcoton. Chichi icuitl.

45. Zazan tleino, aco cuillayaoalli, mouiuixoa tzatzi. Aycachtli.

46. Zazan tleino, i(n) neitotiyan quittique, cotztique. Ca malacatl.

PROVERBS, CONUNDRUM

35. What are up-ended stone columns?

36. What is that in one child? A spindle.

37. What is that is standing upwards? A dog’s tail.

38. What is that is filled with chile, as its seeds are in the form of chile?

39. What is it that goes along patting out tortillas with its hands?

40. What is a black stone standing ear toward the region of the dead?

41. What is a red stone that goes over?

42. What is on round stones cooking the corn with the lime?

43. What is on the road biting people?

44. What is a little multi-colored dog’s excrement?

45. What is it that has round ears, it shakes it cries out? A round rattle.

46. What is in the dancing place kicking its legs? The spindle.

* Shaped like a poppy.

* The distaff was sometimes set in a clo when the thread was being spun.
35. What are up-ended stones standing in the doorway? Columns.

36. What is it that in one day only becomes big with child? A spindle.

37. What is it that is standing by the hearth curving upwards? A dog’s tail.

38. What is it that is filled with round shields inside? A chile, as its seeds are in the form of round shields.

39. What is it that goes along the foothills of the mountain patting out tortillas with its hands? A butterfly.

40. What is a black stone standing on its head, cocking its ear toward the region of the dead? The darkling beetle.

41. What is a red stone that goes jumping along? A flea.

42. What is on round stones and is singing? The pot for cooking the corn with the lime.

43. What is on the road biting people? The stone we stumble over.

44. What is a little multi-colored jug sitting in the road? A dog’s excrement.

45. What is it that has rounded hips above and when it shakes it cries out? A round rattle.

46. What is in the dancing place getting pot-bellied and kicking its legs? The spindle.

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* Shaped like a poppy.

* The distaff was sometimes set in a clay vessel and thus danced around when the thread was being spun.
1. **Tictetezoa in chalchiuitl, ticoaoazoa in quetzalli.**

Inin tlatolli: itechpa mitoa: in aquin itla cenca tlazotli quitzontlan, in cenca malhuiloni, in amo quimalhuia: in iubqui yehoantin, in aquique quimocellia sanctisimo sacramento in amo tlamauitztilia, in amo mopechteca, in amo choca, etc. In anozo aca inin tlatolli: otite zo in chalchiuitl, oticuazo in quetzalli.

2. **Canin mach itzontlan, iquatla(n) oniquiz in totecuyo.**

Quitoznequi: cuix itla ic onicnoyolitlacui in tootecuyo: inic nechmotonilla.

3. **Motzontlan, moquatla(n) nitlapachoa.**

Quitoznequi: inic iuh nimitznonotza, in: ic niemalhuia in moteyo, inic amo tle ic (c)aulquizaz, inic amo tle tetolini mopan muchioatiuh.

4. **Ca nauh, ca notlaqual.**

Quitoznequi: ca naxca, ca notlatqui, ca nonetlayecotiliz.

---

**Some figures of speech, called difficult phrases accompanied by explanations and interpretations.**

1. *You scratch the jade, you tear a quetzal feather.*

   This is said about someone who is malicious, who dishonors something worthy as an example, those who receive the Holy Sacrament and do not pray or with any reverence - without showing respect, etc. - or a commoner who dishonors someone: *You have scratched the jade, you have torn a quetzal feather.*

2. *Where have I walked over the haunch of our lord?*

   This means: Have I offended Our Lord, has he brought misfortune upon me?

3. *I put something over your hair, or over your head.*

   This means: When I admonish you, I put something over your honor and good name, so that you will be saved, and so that no adversity shall befall you.

4. *It is my food and drink.*

   This means: These are my lands, these are my means of livelihood.

   *Jade and quetzal feathers were the two most precious objects in the Aztec culture and were synonymous with anything precious.*
1. **You scratch the jade, you tear apart the quetzal feather.**

   This is said about someone who mutilates something precious, who dishonors something worthy of great honor. For example, those who receive the Holy Sacrament without showing it the proper reverence — without bowing, without weeping, etc. — or a commoner who dishonors a noblewoman. They are told: **You have scratched the jade, you have torn apart the quetzal feather.**

2. **Where have I walked over the hair, over the head of our lord?**

   This means: Have I offended Our Lord in some way that he has brought misfortune upon me?

3. **I put something over your hair, over your head.**

   This means: When I admonish you like this, I am protecting your honor and good name, so that you shall not be degraded and so that no adversity shall befall you.

4. **It is my food and drink.**

   This means: These are my lands, these are my tools; these are my means of livelihood.

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1. Jade and quetzal feathers were the two most valued objects and therefore synonymous with anything precious.
5. *Natzauh, nometxicol.*  

*Quitoznequi:* inic onechtequimacac in altepetl; ic in itlacauh oninochiuh intla niquitlacoz, intla itla ic nicouitiliz: nictzacutiiaz.¹


*Quitoznequi:* omitzmotlacoaati in altepetl.

7. *Onicitzpanti, onicitzeteteuhti.*  

*Iquae mitoa, in aca za(n) i(n) nexiuhtlatico, za(n) tlatzacan quilhuia: onicitzpanti, onicitzeteteuhti.*

8. *In muztla, in uiptla.*  

*Quitoznequi:* in ye ompa titziui, in za(n) quezquilhuitl.

9. *In ye quauhtica, in ye mecatica tanotiui.*  

*Quitoznequi:* axcampa nimitznemachitia; auh in iquac ye tilpitiuh, cuix uel oc ompa itla nimitziluitliuh, cuix oc imonequia.

10. *Ixtlapal, nacacic.*  


³ Probably an error and should read: nechtzacutiiaz.

5. *My heron-feather headdress,*² my *flag and staff.*  

This means: When the city gives me a slave. If I hurt the city in some way, I must be put in jail.

6. *You have been dressed in your headdress!*² *Your jacket of ropes.*  

This means: The city has made a slave of you.

7. *I have given you your flag and staff.*  

This is said when someone has received a flag and a staff. Finally he says to the other: "I have strips of paper."

8. *Tomorrow, the day after tomorrow.*  

This means: We shall be seeing each other eventually.

9. *When you are already trapped in a net.*  

This means: I am starting to warn you: if you are already tied up, can I go and say so? Is it still be opportune?

10. *Obliquely and askance.*  

This was said when someone was saying something over but turned a deaf ear and regarded the other as if he was tied up and taken away. These words were followed by: *Do not glance at me obliquely or done my duty.*

² When a slave was purchased, he was given feathers to indicate that he was sold. Both word servitude.

³ The captive went to be sacrificed carrying a figure of speech roughly means, "I have talked through."

⁴ Here, *sticks* are synonymous with *jail,* which is figure of speech that is used to indicate thick timbers. When they caught a culprit, they then took him off to jail. See Duran: *Historia de la Nación,* Mexico, 1951, Vol. II, p. 222.
5. My heron-feather headdress,\(^2\) my jacket of ropes.

This means: When the city gives me a responsibility I become a slave. If I hurt the city in some way, if I endanger it, I shall be put in jail.

6. You have been dressed in your heron-feather headdress, in your jacket of ropes.

This means: The city has made a slave of you.

7. I have given you your flag and strips of paper.\(^3\)

This is said when someone has reached the point of despair. Finally he says to the other: "I have given you your flag and strips of paper."

8. Tomorrow, the day after tomorrow.

This means: We shall be seeing each other in just a few days.

9. When you are already trapped in sticks and ropes.\(^4\)

This means: I am starting to warn you now, but when you are already tied up, can I go and say something to you? Will it still be opportune?

10. Obliquely and askance.

This was said when someone was admonished many times over but turned a deaf ear and regarded it with disdain. When he was tied up and taken away, these words were said to annoy him: Do not glance at me obliquely and askance, for I have done my duty.

\(^2\) When a slave was purchased, he was given a headpiece of white heron feathers to indicate that he was sold. Both words are synonyms for slave and servitude.

\(^3\) The captive went to be sacrificed carrying a flag and strips of paper. The figure of speech roughly means, "I have talked and talked and now I am through."

\(^4\) Here, sticks are synonymous with jail, which were cage-like affairs made of thick timbers. When they caught a culprit, they bound him in ropes and then took him off to jail. See Duran: Historia de las Indias de Nueva España, Editora Nacional, Mexico, 1951, Vol. II, p. 222.

Inin tlatolli: intech mitoya, in aquique in ye onmictilozque, in ye ontlecauilo, inic miquizque: anozo tlecuilixquac ontlatilozque, ye inman in miquizque: uel acho ye nemachtlioya, inic ayac iuhqui in muchioaz in.

12. In ye techinantitlan, in ye tequiyaoac.


15. Tzonuaztli, tlaxapuchtli neuitzoloc in ixpan petlatl, icpalli.


² This appears to be an error.

³ Latin: or.
11. **Now in front of the fire, now on the step.**

This was said about those who were to be sacrificed and were taken up the pyramid to die, or were placed before the fire when the moment came for them to die. Previously, they had been counselled so that this should not happen to them.  

12. **New beside the walls of strangers, now in the doorway of strangers.**

With these words they instructed and warned either children or commoners to keep them from doing what they should not do, from doing something bad, so that they would not be banished, not forced to live beside the walls of strangers, in the doorways of strangers. The person was told: “If you do something and are banished, you shall pass your life beside the walls of strangers, in the doorways of strangers.” We also say this: You shall be forced to live in others’ cities; you no longer shall live in your own city.

13. **Unkempt and filthy; or, Straighten your wig a little!**

This is said to a person who derides his king or ruler, or makes an accusation against another, or ridicules his father or mother. He does not want to live the way his father or grandfather lived. Thus he is reprimanded and told: Straighten your wig a little! Or, You are making your father or grandfather live unkempt and filthy!

14. The person who ridiculed his father and mother, or his king or governor, was also told and thus reprimanded: **Do not stand the king, or the throne, or your father, on their heads!**

15. **The snare and the trap are a-flutter in the presence of the throne.**

This was said to someone who made an accusation against another before the king, or to someone who went about with the king. He was told: **Be careful! Before the throne, meaning the king, the snare and the trap are a-flutter.**

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† Ibíd., The Nahuas had several forms of capital punishment, one of which was the sacrifice of the offender to the gods. This took place at the top of a pyramid; however sometimes they threw the victim into the fire first, and when he was half-burned, took him out and removed his heart.
16. **Coloyotoc, tzitzicazzotoc.**


17. **Teuhyo, tlazollo.**


18. **Mitzoalixtlapaliltztica, mitzoalnacasitztica.**

Inin tlatoalli, itechpa mitoa in uey tlatoani, anozo uey teupix-qui: in iuhqui uey aueuetl, uey pochetl ic tlatoati: yehica iuic-pa uel netemachilotoc.

19. **Mixtitlan, Ayauhtitlan.**


20. **Poctli, ayauitl: tenyotl, mauizyotl.**


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16. **Full of scorpions, full of nettles.**

This was told to the person who others before the king, or to someone company of the king: "Be careful!" king deals out punishment as well as

17. **Full of dirt, full of filth.**

This phrase is said about a person usurping the throne, or someone who nery or becomes rich by thievery. Such you become king in the proper way? you become king with the food you eat—is full of dirt, full of filth.

18. **They are looking at you out of the arc looking sidelong at you.**

This was said of the principal rule, being king, he was like a great cypress the people put their trust in him.

19. **Out of the clouds, out of the mist.**

This was said about people very ill who had never been seen, who had never been beheld anywhere before. And came here, throughout all Mexico it was out of the mists. It was also said about esteemed and very rich.

20. **Smoke and mist: fame and glory.**

This was said about a king not long a mist, meaning his fame and glory, had about someone who had gone far away glory had not faded.

* The people were not permitted to look directly hence in their great expectation, they looked at his eyes. The king was thought of as the cypress and its shade and protection.
16. **Full of scorpions, full of nettles.**

This was told to the person who made accusations against others before the king, or to someone who went about in the company of the king: “Be careful!” they told him, “for the king deals out punishment as well as favors.”

17. **Full of dirt, full of filth.**

This phrase is said about a person who becomes king by usurping the throne, or someone who acquires goods by chicanery or becomes rich by thievery. Such a person was told: “Have you become king in the proper way? Have you acquired wealth or the things you eat in the proper way? Your kingship—or the food you eat—is full of dirt, full of filth!”

18. **They are looking at you out of the corner of their eyes, they are looking sidelong at you.**

This was said of the principal ruler or the high priest. By being king, he was like a great cypress, a great ceiba, because the people put their trust in him.\(^6\)

19. **Out of the clouds, out of the mists.**

This was said about people very illustrious and very great, who had never been seen, who had never been known, who had never been beheld anywhere before. And so, when the Spaniards came here, throughout all Mexico it was said: Out of the clouds, out of the mists. It was also said about those who were highly esteemed and very rich.

20. **Smoke and mist: fame and glory.**

This was said about a king not long dead whose smoke and mist, meaning his fame and glory, had not yet vanished; or, about someone who had gone far away and whose fame and glory had not faded.

\(^6\) The people were not permitted to look directly into the face of the king, hence in their great expectation, they looked at him out of the corner of their eyes. The king was thought of as the cypress and ceiba, huge trees that provide shade and protection.


22. *Ocelopetlatl, quappetlatl.*


23. *Cuitlapilli, in atlapalli.*

Quitoznequi: maceoallí. Ic notzaloya in maceoalti cuitlapilltin, atlapaltin. Cuitlapille, atlapalle.

24. *In atzopelic, in ahautac.*

Itechpa mitoa, in aquin amocenilmatini: azo totoco maceoalli, ihuiloya: xiyah, xictlaleau in altepetl: ca atzopelic, ca aauiyac ipan tiemati in altepetl: ano zo aca tlatoani ihuiloya: amo titzopelic, amo tauiae ipan timachio.

25. *In auitzyo, in ahauayo.*


This was said when a great war or a great pestilence occurred. They said: Divine liquid and fire have overcome us, have swept over us. This means pestilence or war itself.

22. The jaguar mat, the eagle mat.

This means where the strong and valiant are whom no one can vanquish. For this reason they say: "The eagle mat and jaguar mat are laid out there." And they also said: "There stand the jaguar wall and the eagle wall which protect the city," which means water and mountain.

23. The tail and the wing.

This means the common people. For this reason the subjects are called tails and wings, and the King, lord of the tails and wings.

24. Foul-tasting, stinking.

This is said about a person who is ungrateful, or a commoner who is banished. He was told: "Be off! Leave the city! It regards you as foul-tasting and stinking!" Or, a ruler was told: "You are not regarded as savory, you are not regarded as fragrant."

25. Not full of thorns and briers?

This was said of a ruler or noble who was very august. No one could get very close to him as he was thought of as a wild beast. For this reason one was told not to misprize the king. "Do you think that the king or the throne has no thorns? When you bring your disputes before him or when accusations are forever being made against others, do you think he has no briers? He is extremely vexed!"

Blood.

"And for those who unaided took four captives... from then on they could sit on the mats they used and ycpailles (seats) in the hall where the other captains and valiant men sat." Eagle and Jaguar were high ranks in the army, a kind of knighthood. Sahagün, Hist. Gen. Ed. Porrúa. Vol. II, p. 332.

Altepetl, the word for city is compounded of atl, water and tepetl, mountain.
26. **Tzopelic, autiac.**

Itechpa mitoaya in altepetl: in oncan netlamachtilo, pacoa: anozo itechpa mitoaya in tlatoani, tepapaquitian.

27. **Tetzon, teitzti, teuitzyo, teaoayo, tetentzon, teixquamul, teticueuhea, tetlapanca.**

Quitoznequi: in aqun oncan tlacati tlatoamecayopan, pilpan: ioa nel no motocayotia. teezzo, tetlapallo.

28. **Teix, tenacaz.**

Inin tlollo ipan mitoaya in tlatoctitlanli, anozo tecuitlanli in canapa concaaya tlatoallilolli: ilhuiyoy in titlanli: mazo nel iui in amo uel yeboatl oualla tlatoani: ca in tebaatl otualla, ca tix, ca tincaz, ca titlacaacauh in tlatoani, ca titlachixcauh.

29. **Teixiptla, tepatillo.**


30. **In itconi, in mamaloni, in tecuexanco, in temamaloazco yetiu.**


31. **Texillan, tetozcatlan oquiz.**

Inin tlollo itechpa mitoaya in aqun itech oquiz tlatoamecayotl.

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**PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS**

26. **Sweet and fragrant.**

This was said about a city where we are led by joy, or about a king who brought joy.

27. **Someone's hair, nails, thorns, on a sliver.**

This means someone born of no nobility. He was also designated as, *someone's.*

28. **Another's eyes and ears.**

This phrase was said of a royal emissary who bore the king's orders to other regions. "It may be true that the king himself come and you are the eyes, you are the ears, you are his hearing and his sight."

29. **Someone's image and surrogate.**

This was said of the king's emissary when his father died, for image, the son was acting as his surrogate.

30. **Borne on the arm and on the back; and in the cradle of the arms.**

This was said of the common people who are led. They said: "The common people are governed, they are carried in, they do not lead themselves."

31. **From someone's entrails, from so forth.**

This was said about the person who is the opposite of the previous organism, the throat gives the orders. The noble people.

This was said about a city where there was prosperity and joy, or about a king who brought joy to the people.

27. *Someone's hair, nails, thorns, briers, eyebrows, chip, and sliver.*

This means someone born of nobility, of a noble family. He was also designated as, *someone's blood, someone's red ink.*

28. *Another's eyes and ears.*

This phrase was said of a royal emissary or ambassador, who bore the king's orders to other regions. The emissary was told: "It may be true that the king himself has not come. You have come and you are the eyes, you are the ears of the king. You are his hearing and his sight."

29. *Someone's image and surrogate.*

This was said of the king's emissaries. It was also said of the king's son when his father died, for in his son the king left his image, the son was acting as his surrogate.

30. *Borne on the arm and on the back, carried in the mantle and in the cradle of the arms.*

This was said of the common people, the subjects, those who are led. They said: "The common people are carried in the mantle and borne on the arm and on the back. They are led, they are governed, they are carried in the cradle of the arms; they do not lead themselves."

31. *From someone's entrails, from someone's throat, he came forth.*

This was said about the person who comes of nobility.¹⁰

¹⁰ This is the opposite of the previous metaphor. The entrails sustain the organism, the throat gives the orders. The nobles sustained and directed the people.
32. Ihiyo, itlatol.

Inin tlatolli uel itech mitoaya in tlatoque intlatol: mitoaya: ihiyotzin itlatoltzin in tlatoani, ayac itlatol uel totecuyo itlatoltzin, ihiyotzin.


34. Toplli, petlacalli.


35. Xicoti, pipiyolti.


Inin tlatolli intechpa mitoaya in cioa, anozo oquichti: in zan canin oli ipan manaya, in amotle quimiliaya in inanean, in itaoan: zaan monomauia in campa ollica manaya, zaan monoma yacanaya.
m Iitoaya in tlatoque intlatol: mItoaya: tlatoani, ayac intlatol uel totecuyo intlatol, in machiotl, in octacatl, in coyaoac nicmana.

m Iitoaya: in aquin tecutlatoaya, in iuicqualli tlapotli ixpan quillalitli a macoa apan niequetza in iuhqui ocol, in iuhqui itezcatl mixpan nicmana, ano za nimitzmaixiuhqui moctacaun, in itech timomachiotizc uel tinemiz, anoza inic uel titlatoz.

m Iitoaya: in aquin uel quipia in ichtacatlato in itla aqualli iixpan muchioaya: ayac toptli, uel petlacalli: mItoaya: uel quipia emiliz.

m Iitoaya in aquique inpallaqua, atli piao motlauhtia, anoza in tein quiqua: ni no ic ximopoa, macamo ic xatlamati: caitxicoti titlachichina ipaltzinco in altehi.

Ptlamaxalli nicnonantia, nicnotatia.

m Iitoaya in ciao, anoza oquichti: in zana ya, in amole quimiluiya in inanoan, in uia in campa otlica manaya, zan monoma

32. His breath, his words.

This was said only about the words of kings. They said: The king’s venerable breath, his venerable words. It was not said about anyone else’s words, only the illustrious breath, the illustrious words of our lord.

33. I set before you a light, a torch, a model, a measuring rod, a great mirror.

This phrase was said of a lord who spoke to the people and placed before them excellent words. He told them: “What I raise before you is like a torch, a light, and what I hold before you is like a mirror.” Or, “What I offer you is your model, your measuring rod. You shall take it as a model, you shall take it as an example so that you may live properly or that you may speak well.”

34. A basket, a coffer.

These words were said about someone who could keep a secret, who was close-mouthed; or if some wrongdoing happened before his eyes, he did not reveal it to anyone. He was just like a basket, a coffer. They said: “He guards words or another’s life perfectly.”

35. Horneting, bumblebeeing.

This was said of those who eat and drink at the expense of the nobles or the city, either asking for it or being given it. They are then told: “Do not put on airs because of this, do not be presumptuous, as you are just bumblebeeing, you are just horneting, sipping at the expense of the city or the king.

36. I have made my mother and father the garbage heap, the crossroads.

This was said of women or men who congregated on the roads. Their mothers and fathers did not tell them to do this; it was by their own choice that they congregated on the roads. They took themselves there.

11 Topili is a basket with a handle, Petlacalli, literally a container of straw, is a deep basket with a cover, in which things were stored.
37. **Anitlanammati, anitlatamati.**


38. **Mixtlaza, motlan tlaza.**


39. **Moteyotia, mitauhcayotia.**


40. **Mixtilia, momauiztilia.**


41. **Cuix topyo, cuix petlacallo.**

37. I think nothing of my mother, I think nothing of my father.

This phrase was said of someone who was admonished over and over but did not listen, he disregarded the admonition. It was expressed in this way: “He regards his mother and father as if they were nothing. He just wants to live as he pleases.”

38. You are stepping on your face, you are stepping on your teeth.

This was said about a king or noble who said something that was not proper, that mortified someone, something that he ought not to have said. He was told: “Be still! Be prudent! You are stepping on your face.” This means.. “You have disgraced yourself.” And he was also told: “You dirty yourself, you dishonor yourself, you mar your life and your words.”

39. He makes himself famous, he makes himself celebrated.

This was said of the person who did something estimable either in war or by fashioning something well. Therefore it was said: He made himself famous, he made himself celebrated, and thus the memory of his fame, renown, honor and glory shall remain.”

40. He regards himself highly, he holds himself in great esteem.

This phrase is said of the person who is not friendly in speaking to others. He also loves his own words very much and he does not lower himself by smiling or bantering. Therefore, they said: He regards himself highly, he holds himself in great esteem.

41. Is it basketable, is it cofferable?

This phrase is said of women who do not safeguard themselves, whether they have gone astray or not. Thus it was said: “Perhaps they have gone astray, perhaps not. Are they basketable, are they cofferable? Gold is something that can be kept in a coffer, it can be carried in a basket; it is able to be protected. But not women, they cannot be protected.
42. Uel chalchiuhtic, uel teuxiuhtic, uel acatic, uel otoliuhqui.


43. Ontetepeoac, onchachayaoac.

Inin tlatolli, intechpa (sic) mitoaya: in aquin cenca uel te­nonotza, tecutlatoa: auh in iquac ontenonotz: niman iluiloya in tenonotzani, inic ienelilmachoya, in iquac ontenonotz. Onmotlamachtic, onmocuiltono in maceoalli: ontetepeoac, onchachayaoc in uel chalchiuhtic, etc.

44. Otonmotlamachtic, otonmocuiltono: onpopouh, onixtla­uh inic monantzin, inic motatzin.

Inin tlatolli, inteehpa mitoaya in maceoalti in miequintin: no uel itechpa mitoaya in zan ce tlacatl: in iquac onnonotzale­que, iluiloya: otonmotlamachtic, otonmocuiltono in timaceoalli: onpopouh, onixtla­uh inic monantzin, inic motatzin in altepetl, anozo in justicia otoconca, quitoznequi, tlatolli.

45. Itzuitequi, acamelaoa.

Inin tlatolli, itechpa mitoaya: in aquin tecocolitinemi, teuey ye­cotinemi: in quitotinemi. Quenin nicchioaz in tlaueliloc: cen­ca tlatemotinemi, tetlachichiuilitinemi in tlein tetechcopa, teuic­pa muchioaz amo qualli.

46. Ontlatepeuh, intlachayauh in petlapan, in icpalpan.

Quitoznequi: in iquac aca moteiulua iixpan tlatoani, azo zan itla ic omoyolilacalui in tlatoani, itechpa maceoalli: mitoaya: ont­latepeuh, ontlachayauh in maceoalli, in ixxpan tlatoani, quitoz­nequi: oquimoyolilacalui, oquitequipacho in tlatoani.
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i el teuxiuhtic, uel acatic, uel otolihqui.

mioyai: in aquin cenca uel tecutlaatoa,
eca mauiztic inic otoli: iuhquin chal-
li: in iuhqui chalchiuitl, uel acatic, uel
latolli.

achayaoac.

a (sic) mioyai: in aquin cenca uel te-
bi in iquac ontenonotz: niman iluiloya in
lmachoiva, in iquac ontenonotz. Onno-
lo in maceoalli: onetepeoac, onchacha-
tic, etc.

achayaoac.

a mioyai in maceoalti in miequintin:
ca zac ce tlacati: in iquac onnonotzal-
dlamachi, otomocuitono in timaceoalli:
inic monantzin, inic motatzin in altepetl,
ecn, quitoznequ, tlatoalli.

acac.

a mioyai: in aquin tecocolitinemi, teuey
emi. Quenin nicchiao in tlauelibo: cen-
chichiuitinemi in tlein tetecceopa, teucic-
li.

achayauh in petlapan, in icpalpan.

ac ca moteiluix iixpan tlatoani, azo zac
a tlatoani, itechpa maceoalli: mioyai: on-
h in maceoalli, in ixpan tlatoani, quitoz-
calui, quiteequipacho in tlatoani.

42. Precisely like jade, precisely like turquoise, long as a reed
and very round.

These words were said of a royal orator who counselled
the people very well. They said: “He spoke magnificently—like
jades, like turquoises— and his words sounded like precious
stones, long as reeds and very round.

43. There was a sowing, there was a scattering.

This was said of a royal orator who counsels the people well.
After he spoke, after he exhorted the people, they were grateful
and they told him: “The people have been enriched, they have
become wealthy. There has been a sowing, there has been a
scattering of something exactly like jade, etc.”

44. You have become rich, you have become wealthy; with this
your mother and father have discharged their duty, have
fulfilled their obligations.

This was said of the commoners collectively and it can also
be said of one person. When the people have been advised they
are told: “You, the people, have become rich, you have become
wealthy. With this that you have heard—meaning the speech
your mother and father, or the city, or the authorities, have dis-
charged their duty, have fulfilled their obligations.”

45. An arrow that wounds, a reed that is straightened.

These words were said about one person who hated another
and was constantly plotting to do something monstrous to him.
He went about saying: “How can I do something to that scoun-
drel?” He was always looking for a way to do something infam-
ous, to do something against the other.

46. He flung something, he spilled something on the mat and
seat.

This meant a commoner who brought an accusation against
another before the king or perhaps offended the king in some
way. They said the commoner flung, he spilled something before
the king, which meant he offended or displeased the king.

12 The arrow shafts were straightened and hardened over a fire.
13 Mat and seat is a metaphor for the throne.
47. Ontlaxamani, ontlapostec.


48. Tezo, teuipana.


49. Tecuic, tetlatol.

Quitoznequi: in aqiu amo iilitol quitotoa, azo uecuatlatolli, pillatolli: auh zan maceoalli in quimotlatoltia, iluiloya: cuix molatatol, cuix moccui in tiquitoa: ca amo menequi in tiquitoz.

50. Pipillo, coconeyo, iuincayotl, xocomiccayotl.


51. Tlachpanaliztli, tlacuicuiliztli nicchioa.

Inin tlatolli, itechpa mitoaya: in tlatequipanoliztli, anozo netitlanaliztli itechpa altepetl, anozo in teupan: ic mitoaya: zan tlachpanaliztli, zan tlacuicuiliztli muchioa in ixpantzinco in totecuyo, anozo altepetl.

47. She smashed it, she broke it.

This phrase was said of a wet-nurse who suckled the child of a noblewoman and reason it was said: She smashed it, she broke it. She wanted to cure someone and the patient was told: You smashed him, you broke him.

48. He threads people, he arranges people.

This means a person well-versed in nobles. Thus it was said: He threads people in order. And nobles and sons of nobles, necklace, someone’s quetzal-feather plume.

49. Another’s song, another’s words.

This meant a person who did not speak the words of the elders or of nobles. And one who made a speech he was told: these your words that you speak? It is not to say them!"

50. Childishness and puerility, drunkenness.

These words were said about a person who spoke poorly or who spoke poorly, or by a person poorly or who spoke well but was modest. Who thing well, or spoke well, he did not say: I spoke well, or I spoke well.” He said: “What I have said it.” Or “It less.” Or, “I may or may not have done what I have said it.”

51. I sweep, I gather up the sweepings.

This was said by someone who perform the city or the temple. It was said thus: For the city55 one just sweeps and gathers up the

14 Xocomiccayotl means inebriation induced by others.

15 That is, the nation.
47. She smashed it, she broke it.

This phrase was said of a wet-nurse or mid-wife when she suckled the child of a noblewoman and the child died. For this reason it was said: She smashed it, she broke it. Or when a doctor wanted to cure someone and the patient died under his care, he was told: You smashed him, you broke him.

48. He threads people, he arranges people in order.

This means a person well-versed in the genealogy of the nobles. Thus it was said: He threads people, he arranges people in order. And nobles and sons of nobles were called: Someone's necklace, someone's quetzal-feather plumage; someone's son.

49. Another's song, another's words.

This meant a person who did not speak his own words but the words of the elders or of nobles. And when it was a commoner who made a speech he was told: Is this your song, are these your words that you speak? It is not appropriate for you to say them!

50. Childishness and puerility, drunkenness and inebriation.  

These words were said about a person who did something poorly or who spoke poorly, or by a person who did something well or spoke well but was modest. When someone did something well, or spoke well, he did not say: I did something very well, or I spoke well. He said: What I did was childish, puerile, drunken, and inebriated." Or, "It was witless and senseless." Or, "I may or may not have done it, I may or may not have said it."

51. I sweep, I gather up the sweepings.

This was said by someone who performs a task or service for the city or the temple. It was said thus: Before our Lord or the city  one just sweeps and gathers up the sweepings.

14 Xocomicayotl means inebriation induced by drugs or mushrooms.
15 That is, the nation.
52. **Aompa nicquixtia, aompa nicnacaztia.**


53. **Iztlaclti, tenqualactli.**


54. **Ye ontimalihui, ye ompa onquiza in toneuitliztli.**

Quitoznequi: cenca tonedoatinemi in noyollo, in nonacayo: atle notech monequi, atlei in notlaqual, atlei in notzotzoma.

55. **Netloc, nenaoac, netzitzquilo, nepacholo.**

Inin tlatoalli; intechpa mitoa in pipilti, anozo tlatoque, in monepanpaleula, cenca motlazotla: ic mitoa: netloc, nenaoac, motzitzquia, mopaehoa in pipiltin in tlatoque.

56. **Anezcalicayotl, xolopicayotl.**

Quitoznequi: in aqun amo muzcalia, amo uellatoa, amo uel quichia in tein tequitilo: ipan nemi in amo nezcalicayotl, in xolopicayotl.

57. **Oc xonmotlamachti, oc xonmocuiltono.**

Inin tlatoalli, itechpa mitoia: in aqun cenca mauizti, anozo mocuiltono, onca quiquani: ic mitoa in itechpa: oc xonmotla-
Nowhere do I hit the mark, nowhere do I hear acutely.

This phrase was said when someone accused another before the king and if the accusation was false then a protest was made before the king. As a result the king was humiliated; because he had been challenged he was mortified. Therefore they said: "This person has humiliated the king. Nowhere did he hit the mark, nowhere did he hear acutely." This means that he did not hear straight and he did not see straight.

Saliva, spittle.

These words mean falsehood and untruth. It was said to the king or noble who believed all the lies he heard. "Do not tell lies and falsehoods in the presence of the king," the liar was told. "Investigate it thoroughly, look at it closely." And they said to the king: "Oh King, do not listen to saliva and spittle. Be so good as to look sharply and listen to the words carefully, as you are believing, you are taking in lies."

It has now swelled, it has now reached the point of affliction.

This means that my heart and my body are sorely afflicted. I am lacking nothing, as nothing is my food and nothing are my rags.

Together, side by side, clasping and embracing.

These words are said of nobles or rulers who serve each other and love each other very much. Thus it is said: "The nobles and rulers are together, side by side, clasping and embracing."

Ill breeding, stupidity.

This means a person who is not well-bred, not well-spoken, and whatever he is ordered to do he does poorly. He perseveres in ill breeding and stupidity.

May you continue rich, may you continue prosperous.

This phrase is said to a person who is very illustrious, or someone rich who has the all necessities of life. For this reason,
machtí, oc xonmocuiltono ipaltzinco in totecuyo, in tloque, naoaque.

58. *In uel patlaoac, in uel xopaleoac quetzalli.*


59. *In popocatiuh, in chichinauhtliuh.*

Inin tlaltolli, itechpa mitoaya: in aquín cenca chicoaoac tlaltolli ic tenonotza, ioan tecoco tlaltolli, amo zan iuian tlatoa; ioan cenca muchi tlacatl momauhtia, aocac naoati, cenca muchi tlacatl uel quicaquit.

60. *Tauueuetl, in tipochotl motlan moceoulhuiz, moyacaluz, in maceoalli.*

Inin tlaltolli, intechpa mioita in tlatoque: iuhquin aueuetl, pochome ipan pouí: intian neceoualuilo, intlan neyacaluilo.

61. *Motenan, motzacuil.*

Inin tlaltolli, intechpa mitoaya in tlatequipanoa: azo calpixcati, azo achcacauhti, anozo tlatoani pilli, in quipachoa maceoalli, iuhqui in intenanoan, intzacuiloan, quitenantia, quitzaquilia: yehica achtopa ipan muchioa in tlatoani, anozo pilli: in tein ipa muchioaquilia maceoalli.

62. *In ye imecac, in ye iquauic in totecuyo, in zan ticamatlapul, in zan tixtalapul.*

Inin tlaltolli itech mocaqui in cocoliztli, yehica ca iuhquin techmolpilia totecuyo: ipampa in mitoa: oc xompaqui, oc xon-
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58. A very broad and very green quetzal plume.

This was said of the king, or a noble, or a royal orator. The person who was counselled was told: "May you capture the words. They are like a quetzal plume, very wide and very green. The Lord King has done you a service.

59. He is smoking, he is sizzling.

This was said of the person who reprimanded others in very harsh words, words that stung. He did not speak calmly and everyone was very frightened. He did not speak clearly so that everyone could understand.

60. You are a great cypress and a ceiba; under you the people shall have cover, they shall have shade.

This is said of the rulers. They are thought of as great cypresses and ceibas; under them there is cover, there is shade.

61. Your wall, your enclosure.

This was said of those who served in some capacity, such as tribute collectors or captains. Or it was said of a king or noble who governed the people, as he was like their wall and enclosure, encircling and surrounding them. For whatever would befall the people would first befall the king or noble.

62. Now in the ropes, now in the stocks of our Lord, your mouth like earth, your face like earth.

These words are understood as sickness because it is as if our Lord binds us fast. For this reason they say: "May you

16 Prisoners of war, criminals, and slaves were put in wooden collars and bound in ropes. The wooden collars jutted straight out in back and there were holes in the ends through which a stick passed. Another stick was laid above the holes and the two sticks were lashed together. The collar was so devised that a person could not reach the lashed ends with his hands. See Motolinia, Memoriales, Mexico, 1903, p. 325; Duran, Historia de las Indias de Nueva España, Editorial Nacional, 1951, Vol. 1, p. 438.
motlachiti, oc xonatli, oc xontlaqua: cuix quin iquac tocon- quaz, in muztl, in uiptla, in omitzan, in omitzontzitzqui co- coliztli, in ye iquauic, in ye imecac totecuyo, i(n) za(n) tixtlal- pul, i(n) za(n) tiamatlatlal pul tonoc, imac cocoliztli.

63. In ticitacatinemi, in timeltzotzinemi: in iuhqui mixitl, in iuhqui tlapatl otiquic.


64. In tamoyauatinemi, in tecatocotinemi.


65. In otitochtiac, in otimazatiac.


4 Probably: tamatoyauatinemi.

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63. You are panting and beating you drunk a potion of Jimson weed.

This is said about someone who no re to admonition. He is just like a drunk has taken Jimson weed. He lives without he has been told. As he does not come manded in this way: "What the devil ha devil have you been sucking on? Nothin ing remains fixed in your heart. You sp monition!"

64. You are borne by the water, carri

This was said of a person who just w place. He did not settle down anywhere home anywhere but just went from hous you up to? What are you doing?" they if you were carried by the wind, borne somewhere, do not be wandering about!"

65. You have turned into a rabbit, you ha

This was said about someone who no ran away when they wanted to correet l elsewhere. He had become like a rabbit he was told: "You have turned into a rab into a deer. You have become a fugitiv have taken the road of the rabbit and th

17 Datura stramonium. It has narcotic properties.
continue to enjoy yourself, may you continue to be happy, may you continue to eat and drink. Later, perhaps tomorrow or the day after, when you eat you may take sick, you may be stricken by illness. Then you will be in the stocks and ropes of our Lord; you will lie in the clutches of sickness, your mouth like earth, your face like earth."

63. You are panting and beating your breast as if you had drunk a potion of Jimson weed.\(^{17}\)

This is said about someone who no longer wishes to listen to admonition. He is just like a drunkard, like someone who has taken Jimson weed. He lives without recalling anything that he has been told. As he does not come to his senses he is reprimanded in this way: "What the devil have you taken, what the devil have you been sucking on? Nothing stays with you, nothing remains fixed in your heart. You spurn, you reject all admonition!"

64. You are borne by the water, carried by the wind.

This was said of a person who just wandered from place to place. He did not settle down anywhere, he did not make his home anywhere but just went from house to house. "What are you up to? What are you doing?" they said to him. "It is as if you were carried by the wind, borne by the water. Settle down somewhere, do not be wandering about!"

65. You have turned into a rabbit, you have turned into a deer.

This was said about someone who no longer lived at home. He no longer paid any attention to his father and mother but ran away when they wanted to correct him. He did not stay at home but went away, spending his days elsewhere, sleeping elsewhere. He had become like a rabbit, like a deer. And so he was told: "You have turned into a rabbit, you have turned into a deer. You have become a fugitive and a savage. You have taken the road of the rabbit and the road of the deer."

\(^{17}\) *Datura stramonium*. It has narcotic properties.
66. Azoe uel a chic, azoe cemiluitl in ipaltzinco in totecuyo.


67. In atl ittic, in atl cecee topan quichioa in totecuyo.


68. Otimatoyaui, otimotepexiui.

Quitoznequi: otimoutili, ayac omitzouitili: in aquin tlein quichioa amo qualli, azo miquitzli, anzo in tlein oui, temamauitl, amo chiaoioni.

69. In amoyaoalli, in tlamatzoalli.

Inin tlaltoll, itechpa mitoa: in aquin motequipachoticia in aho tlatoani, anzo pilli: iuiloyoia: macamo ximotequipachotzi­no, ma ic tiemcauili, in amoayaoaltzintli, in tlamatzoaltzintli, in achitzin ma xoconmocuili, ma xoconmanili, macamo xicmo­cauili: ilhuiz cocoliztli mocuepaz in monetequipachol.

70. In youalli, in checatl in naoalli in totecuyo.

Inin tlaltoll, itechpa mitoya: in tlacateculotl Tezcaltipoca: mitoya. Cuix uel amechnotzaz in tlacatl in Tezcaltipoca, in...
66. Perhaps a few minutes, perhaps even a day, with the help of our Lord.

These words were said to the ruler, to the person who governed, whereby he was exhorted, fortified, and given courage. He was told: “It is now that you must glorify our Lord in some way and perhaps you shall have one more day, perhaps a few minutes more on our Lord’s earth. If not, then the sticks and stones shall soon come.” This means sickness, pestilence, or death. And he was told that with this his renown and glory would decline and disappear.

67. Our Lord dashes cold water, icy water upon us.

This is said when our Lord causes some misfortune to happen to us, such as a disaster, pestilence, or famine. At this time it is said: “Our Lord has dashed cold water, icy water upon us. He is pinching our ribs and pulling our ears.” Or, like a thorn, like a needle, our Lord pricks and punishes us.

68. You hurled yourself into the water, you flung yourself from a precipice.

This means that you alone have gotten yourself into difficulties, no one else put you there. Someone does something wrong, such as committing murder, or something dangerous or frightful which he should not do.

69. The straw base of the jug and the folded tortilla.

This is said to a king or noble who is beset by sorrow. They told him: “Do not grieve so, do not turn away from the straw base of the jug and the folded tortilla. Take a little, take something. Do not neglect yourself, as your grief may turn into sickness.”

70. Our Lord, the Night, the Wind, the Conjurer.

These words were said of the idol, Tezcatlipoca. They said: “Do you think that Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli speak to
Uitzilopochtli: ca zan iuhqui in checatl, auh in youalli quimonoaaltia: cuix uel amechtlacanotzaz.

71. Tlaalaoa, tlapetzcaui in ixpan petlatl, icpalli aquineuhian, aquixoaian.

Quitoznequi: auel nemaquixtloyan: ayac uel ixpan momaqixtia in tlatoani.

72. Iuian, yocuxca ximonemilti: ma motolol, ma momalcoch, in tetloc, in tenaoac.


73. Iitzitzin quitlanquatinemi, imatzin quimocozcatitinemi.


74. Atitlanonotzalli, atitlazcalli, atitlauapaoalli, atimuzcallia, atitlachia.

Inin tlatolli, intechpa mitoaya: in amo muzcallia, in amo tla chia, xolopiti, amo tlacaqui: iluiloya: nellie mach amo mnan, mota mitznonotz, amo mitzicalli in quenin tinemiz, atitlanonotzalli, atitlazcalli, atitlauapaoalli.

75. Uel ixe, uel nacace.


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PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS

you like humans? They are as invisible wind. Do you think they speak to

71. It is slick and slippery before the

This means that in the presence of salvation, it is no place of refuge.

72. Live tranquilly and peacefully

This was said to the nobles or children, they were exhorted and told: “You

73. They are chewing their nails, they

This was said of those who live in misery, said: “Have pity on the needy, on

74. You are undisciplined, coarse, senseless.

These words were said of the person and no sense. He was stupid and under:

75. Possessed of good eyes, possessed

This means a person who is very keen and understands everything clearly. He

20 See no. 12.
ubqui in ehecatl, auh in youalli quimocozcatitinemi.

Imonemilti: ma motolol, ma momalcoch, nac.

Ppipilti, in anozo tecutin inpiloan, ic inic anemizque: zan iuian, zan yocuxca amo anmopouhinemizque, amo amatlaqualli, amo yecltli in nepoaitzli: amo ic tli in totolica, in malcochtica nemoa.

Quatinemi, imaztin quimocozcatitinemi.


Atitlactlili, atitlauapaalli, atimuzcalia,


Quin cenca muzcalia muchi uel quitta, muchi coa uel ixe, uel nacace: amo le iztlacatlael neltinizli in quicui.

You like humans? They are as invisible as the night and the wind. Do you think they speak to you like human beings?"

71. It is slick and slippery before the throne; there is no door, no way out.

This means that in the presence of the king no one finds salvation, it is no place of refuge.

72. Live tranquilly and peacefully with others and beside others, your head lowered, your head bowed.

This was said to the nobles or children of nobles. In this way they were exhorted and told: "You must live tranquilly and peacefully with others and beside others. You must not be arrogant, you must not be presumptuous; arrogance is not proper, it is not right. One does not live with others in this manner. It is proper to live with one's head bowed, one's head lowered."

73. They are chewing their nails, they are hugging themselves.

This was said of those who live in misery, of the poor. They said: Have pity on the needy, on the poor, who go about chewing their nails and hugging themselves. They pass their lives beside the walls of others and in the doorways of others." 20

74. You are undisciplined, coarse, unseemly, uncouth, and senseless.

These words were said of the person who had no up-bringing and no sense. He was stupid and understood nothing. They said to him. "Assuredly your mother and father did not instruct you and teach you how to live. You are undisciplined, coarse, and unseemly."

75. Possessed of good eyes, possessed of good ears.

This means a person who is very knowledgeable, who sees and understands everything clearly. He is said to possess good eyes and good ears. He does not believe any lies but only accepts the absolute truth.

20 See no. 12.
76. *Iuian tecuyotl, iuian tlatocayotl.*

Inin tlalolli, itechpa mitoya: in aquin uellatocati, iuian in tecuti, pilti, cenca mimati, cenca tlachia, cenca mozcalia, cenca tetlazotla, cenca temauitzilia: ioan ayac quitelchioa in motolinia: ma nel ixpupuyotzin, macueuetzin, uilatzi, quapupultzin, i(n) tzotzomatzin, icno tlacatl, in aoalneci in icochca, in neuhca: ahu in aoalneci in iquezpan pilcaz, in iquechpan onpilcaz, in techinantitan, in tequiyaoac moquequetza, in imatzin quiman. in tequiyaoatla, in tecaltech, in aoalnece, in aoalneci.

77. *Yollotl, exlil.*


78. *Quauhyotica, oceloyotica.*

Inin tlalolli: mitoya itechpa in yaooytli: yehica in pipilti amo uel teneoloya, muauiztili: intlacamo yaoc iani, intlacamo quichiltl, intlacamo tiacauh, intlacamo tlamaani: zan no iuhqui in maceoalli: ca zan quauhyotica, oceloyotica in pauetzia,
I, José de la Cueva NAHUATL

76. A gentle reign, a gentle rule.

This is said of someone who governs well and who is a benign ruler and noble. He is exceedingly wise, discerning, and cultivated. He loves the people greatly and respects them very much. He is not contemptuous of such unfortunates as the blind, those with maimed hands and crippled legs; or the unkempt and the ragged, the poor who have nothing for supper and breakfast and who have nothing to put around their waists and hang on their shoulders; or those who lean against the walls of others and in the doorways of others; or those who are in the doorways of others, and beside the houses of others, holding out their hands; those who go nowhere and arrive nowhere.

77. Heart and blood.

These words were said of chocolate because in the past it was precious and rare. The common people and the poor did not drink it. For this reason it was said: Heart and blood, worthy of veneration. They also said it was deranging and it was thought to be like the mushroom, for it intoxicated people, it made them drunk. If a commoner drank it, it was considered scandalous. In the past only the rulers or great warriors, or the Commander of the Army, or the Commander of the Arsenal, and perhaps two or three people who were rich drank it; it was considered something grand. They drank chocolate in small amounts, it was not drunk immoderately.

78. Like eagles, like jaguars.

This was said about combat because the nobles did not gain renown and honor if they did not go to war, if they were not brave and valiant captains and did not capture prisoners. It was the same for the common people also; only like eagles, only like jaguars did they achieve honor and renown.

The Nahua ate only twice a day, about 9 a.m. and after sundown when the day's work was done. A metaphor for the sustenances of life.

21 The Nahua ate only twice a day, about 9 a.m. and after sundown when the day's work was done. A metaphor for the sustenances of life.

22 I. e., before the conquest.

23 Like the heart and blood of the sacrificed man which nourished the sun, they thought chocolate gave strength and courage to those who drank it.

24 Like the valiant warriors who were elevated to the ranks of Eagle and Jaguar, a kind of knighthood, by risking their lives in combat, the commoner could also achieve honor through his efforts. The merchant who travelled for and wide...
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in mauiztiliylita, in teneoaloya: auh tel no ihuqui in motlamachtiani, in mocuiltonoani: in azo tealtiani, no ic pauetzia: macanelmotlacauh, zan tlatquotica in yecleneoaloya: yehica ca miliecpe tecoanotza, tetlauhtia.

79. In tetlaoan, in apazti.


80. Otontlalililoc in uel chamaoc, in uel tetziliuhqui.


81. Pollocotli, zacaqualli.


82. Acan ail ic timaltiliz, ic timochipaoaz.

Inin tlatolli, iluiloya in aquin teclin amo qualli oquichiu: azo oichtec, azo otetlaixin: ic iluiloya: quen oc timuchioaz: ye

the same for the rich or the wealthy person. He was also celebrated, though he was not in his esteem by his riches because he gave banquets and regaled them with gifts.

79. *The cup and the bowl.*

This means *pulque* and these words were said when he was drinking, such as a child—a boy or woman.25 He was reprimanded and you little boy or you little girl! Beware of *pulque* (meaning pulque) which will make you an old man? Are you an old woman? You have been strongly and tightly bound, you have had your shoulders.”25

80. *You have been strongly and tightly bound.*

This was said either to a noble or comitted and thus given courage. He was given, you have now received very tightly bound, you have had your shoulders.”26

81. *Chaff and straw.*

This means lies, which are something hateful. It was said to someone who was rotten, a shrew, and deceitful. “Lies, which are evil and you like chaff and straw.” To someone who voted himself to lying, they said: “Chaff, you feed on, you liar, you agitator!”

82. *There is no water anywhere with which to drink and cleanse yourself.*

This was said to someone who committed stealing or adultery. They said to him: "Exposing himself to danger, could not capture slaves to earn the esteem of others with his largesse. Drinking was forbidden except on certain religious occasions, and drunkenness was punishable by death. One was not to drink as much as they wished. They bound the infants tightly to give them strerength, also means discipline.
tecatlquitica in yecteneoleoya: yehica ca miiecuhitia.

n apaztli.


i in uel chamaaco, in uel tetziliuhqui.


acaquali.

tlein amo qualli, amo yecalli, iztlacatliltli: in quichioaya tlataliuil, atetlanemililtli, in izbo tech muchiuin, in aquali in ayecitli: in ihuichuqui pollocoztli, iztlacatliltli. In aquin zanquitia iztlacatliltli; ilhuiloya: pollocoztli, zaal, tiztlacatini, tetla(n) tinemini.

inaltit, ic timochipaoaz.

iluiloya in aquin tlein amo qualli oquichiu: tetlaxin: ic iluiloya: quen oc timuchioaz: ye the same for the rich or the wealthy person who sacrificed slaves. He was also celebrated, though he was not a captain. He earned his esteem by his riches because he often invited people to banquets and regaled them with gifts.

79. The cup and the bowl.

This means pulque and these words were said to someone who was drinking, such as a child—a boy or a girl—not an old man or woman. He was reprimanded and told: “Stop drinking, you little boy or you little girl! Beware of the cup and the bowl (meaning pulque) which will make you drunk. Are you an old man? Are you an old woman? You are just a stripling!”

80. You have been strongly and tightly bound.

This was said either to a noble or commoner who was admonished and thus given courage. He was told: “You have now been given, you have now received very precious advice. You have been tightly bound, you have had a rope wound around your shoulders.”

81. Chaff and straw.

This means lies, which are something bad, something wrong. It was said to someone who was rotten, a disturber of the peace, and deceitful. “Lies, which are evil and wrong, have stuck to you like chaff and straw.” To someone who dedicated and devoted himself to lying, they said: “Chaff and straw is what you feed on, you liar, you agitator!”

82. There is no water anywhere with which you can wash and cleanse yourself.

This was said to someone who committed an offense, such as stealing or adultery. They said to him: “Now, what are you exposing himself to danger, could not capture slaves but could buy them and earn the esteem of others with his largesse. 25 Drinking was forbidden except on certain religious occasions and during pregnancy, and drunkenness was punishable by death. Only the old were permitted to drink as much as they wished. 26 They bound the infants tightly to give them strength. Mecatl which means rope, also means discipline.
omachœ in mollatlacul, cuix zan cana atl ic timaltiz, ic timuchipaaaz: tle tiez, tleoc timuchioaz: timotolinia.

33. *Toyomotlan, tonacaztitech mopipiloa in totecuyo.*


34. *In tlacaquimilli, in tlacacaxtli, oitlan tonac otoconmama.*


35. *Tetl oatococ, quauitl oatococ.*

Inin tlatolli, itechpa mitoaya in cenca uey tequitilitizli, in tlatequipanoliztlili, in netolinilitril, in cenca tetequipacho, tetlinitl tlatequipanolitzli: ioan in azo uey cocolitzli.

36. *Intil, intlapal in ueuetque.*

Inin tlatolli, itechpa mitoaya in intlamanitilitzli in ueuetque, in tlein oquitlaliteoaque nemiliati, zan ipan nemoa, acanozomo ipan nemoa: ic mitoaya: macamo poluiuz in intil, in intlapal

 PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS AND METAPHORS

going to do? Your crime is known. Is with which you can wash and cleanse you come of you? What shall you do? You a

83. *Our Lord is pinching our ribs and pers.

This was said when our Lord caused s

fall us as a frost which ravaged the cro

this reason it was said: *Our Lord has pul

84. *A bale of people, a cargo of people, you and loaded on your back.*

This phrase was said of someone wha

as king and ruler. He was told: "You ha

loaded on your back, a bale of people, a

shall become fatigued, you shall become peo

you a great burden. What shall be the will

or the day after? Shall it be sticks and s

85. *The sticks and stones have been car

This was said of arduous work and toil.

86. *The black and red of the ancients.*

This was said of the traditions of the li

one lived by it, or by it. Therefore it wa

"Do not let the

27 A naughty child had his ears pulled and rib

persists in Mexico today.

28 See no. 66.

29 Meaning that the punishment was over.

30 Red and black were the inks used in writing anc

sion in this case they mean a code of conduct. Mor

colors red and black symbolize light and darkness,

death, the active and the passive, male and female—

d death that pervades all Nahuatl religion and phi

therefore wisdom implies a knowledge of, or conta

divine truth.
UDOS DE CULTURA NÁHUATL

I acul, cuix zan cana atlc ic timaltiz, ic timu-
tleoc timuchioaz: timotolinia.

tonacaztitech mopipiloa in totecuyo.

I ha mitoaya: in iquac itla topan quimuchiu-i-
petl quiquia in tonacayotl, azo mayanailzthl:
ztitech mopilo in totecuyo: toyomotlan omo-

ILLI, in tlacacastli, oitlan tonac otoconmama.

I cha mitoaya: in aquin tlato.catlalili, azo te-
: oitlan tonac, otoconmama in tlacaquimilli,
quitiiciuz, ticiamiquiz in quitlapilll, in atla-
amalli in otoconmama, in oitlan tonac: quen
totecuyo in muatla, in uiptla, acazotle in tetl,

. quavitl otocon.

I cha mitoaya in cenca uey tequitiltzli, in
in netoliniltzli, in cenca tetequipacho, tetol-
l: iox in azo uey cocoliltzli.

pal in ueuetque.

I cha mitoaya in intlamaniltz in ueuetque, in
aque nemililtzi, zan ipan nemoa, acanoizomo
mitoaya: macamo poluiuz in intil, in intlapal

going to do? Your crime is known. Is there water anywhere
with which you can wash and cleanse yourself? What shall be-
come of you? What shall you do? You are ruined!”

83. Our Lord is pinching our ribs and pulling our ears.27

This was said when our Lord caused some such thing to be-
fall us as a frost which ravaged the crops, or a famine. For
this reason it was said: Our Lord has pulled our ears and pinch-
ed our ribs.

84. A bale of people, a cargo of people, you have taken upon
you and loaded on your back.

This phrase was said of someone who had been instated
as king and ruler. He was told: “You have taken upon you and
loaded on your back, a bale of people, a cargo of people. You
shall become fatigued, you shall become weary because of the
people. You have loaded on your back, you have taken upon
you a great burden. What shall be the will of Our Lord tomorrow
or the day after? Shall it be sticks and stones? 28

85. The sticks and stones have been carried off by the water.29

This was said of arduous work and toil, and affliction. The
labor oppressed the people greatly, it brought misery and per-
haps pestilence.

86. The black and red of the ancients.30

This was said of the traditions of the ancients, the way of
life they established. One lived by it, or perhaps did not live
by it. Therefore it was said: “Do not let the black and red of the

27 A naughty child had his ears pulled and ribs pinched, a custom that
persists in Mexico today.
28 See no. 66.
29 Meaning that the punishment was over.
30 Red and black were the inks used in writing and signify wisdom. By ex-
tension in this case they mean a code of conduct. More profoundly, however,
the colors red and black symbolize light and darkness, day and night, life and
death, the active and the passive, male and female,— etc. the concept of duality
that pervades all Náhuatl religion and philosophy. It is a divine duality and
therefore wisdom implies a knowledge of, or contact with, a universal and
divine truth.

87. Intlaacouh, inzacapech in ueuetque.


88. Teizolo, tecatzauh.


89. Nopuchco, nitzac nimitztlatiz.

Inin tlatoll, itechpa mitoaya: in iquae aca tlatoani ic te-nonotzaya: quitoaya: in tehoat in azo tipilli, azo titecutli: uel ximoquetza nonoaac, nopuchco, nitzac: tinechopuchtiz, tinechitzcactiz, in tla xitlachia, in tla timozcalia: uel xinemi, no-

ancients perish!” This means, the tradition destroy the way of life, the black and the ancients?”

87. The beds of twigs and straw of the ancients

This was said about the ancient Chichimec when they arrived. It was still forest and open plains and their beds of twigs and of straw. It was our ancestors, our grandfathers, the Chichimecs beds of straw, their beds of twigs. Where in the forest and on the open plains in and magueys.

88. Something that mars and soils people

This was said about a way of living. It was said if some noble or lord at people savagely like a dog. He was told, “Hold your words! Do not speak vulgar people.” Or perhaps someone was adulterous. The person who did this was said, “It is unseemly for you to do this, for soil yourself. One should not live this, this—it is not right, it is not proper. So did not live like this, they did not leave. They lived peacefully and tranquilly, an to you and to all the people.”

89. I shall put you on my left, in my black sandals.

This was said when a king exhorted some noble, or lord, stand close to me, at my left.” (Or, “You shall put me at your in your black sandals.”) “Be cautious, live properly, and put yourself at my left, put me at my left, your black sandals.”

31 Codice Matriense de la Real Academia, fo- quient in caci, amo tlahmacyo, amo cuicatilte, azo uitsecutli, anozo chicchiclit culcintli. “At that had risen to high rank) began wearing sandals that not figured, but plain black ones with orange or red color.”

32 The informant gives an example of oopoachtli, verbalized.
DE CULTURA NÁHUATL

PROVERBS, CONUNDRUMS AND METAPHORS

87. The beds of twigs and straw of the ancients.

This was said about the ancient Chichimecas when they first arrived. It was still forest and open plains when they laid down their beds of twigs and of straw. It was said: "There our ancestors, our grandfathers, the Chichimecas, first laid down their beds of straw, their beds of twigs. When they settled themselves in the forest and on the open plains it was still full of cactus and magueys.

88. Something that mars and soils people.

This was said about a way of living or speaking that was wrong. It was said if some noble or lord spoke rashly or snapped at people savagely like a dog. He was reprimanded and told: "Hold your words! Do not speak vulgarly. What you say mars and soils people." Or perhaps someone committed a sin, or adultery. The person who did this was admonished and told: "It is unseemly for you to do this, for you mar yourself, you soil yourself. One should not live this, one should not be like this — it is not right, it is not proper. Stop this! The ancients did not live like this, they did not leave you this way of life. They lived peacefully and tranquilly, and that is what they left to you and to all the people."

89. I shall put you on my left, in my black sandals.¹¹

This was said when a king exhorted someone. He said: "You, noble, or lord, stand close to me, at my left, in my black sandals." (Or, "You shall put me at your left, you shall put me in your black sandals.)¹² "Be cautious, conduct yourself well, live properly, and put yourself at my left, in my black sandals."

¹¹ Codice Matritense de la Real Academia, fo. 21v.: iquac yancuican quicii in cactli, amo tlahmachyo, amo cuicuiltic, zan tliltic, in icuetlazmecayo azo uitzteculli, anozo chichiltic cuetlazti. "At that time he (the person who had risen to high rank) began wearing sandals that were not tooled, that were not figured, but plain black ones with orange or red laces."

¹² The informant gives an example of opochtli, left, and itzcacitli, sandals, verbalized.
90. *Inamox, intlacuilol.*

Zan ic no yehoatl quitoznequi: intil, intlapal.

91. *Matsayani in iluicatl, tentlapani in tlalli.*


92. *Xomolli, tlayoualli tiemotoctia.*

And also, when someone spoke for the king, he was told: "You stand at the king’s left, in his black sandals." This means, he assists the king and speaks for him; he gives his orders and delivers his words.

90. Their books, their writings.

This means the same as, their black and their red.33

91. The heavens rip open, the earth rends apart!

These words were said about something extraordinary that happened, something that did not happen very often, such as, when the body of Our Lord is received.34 This is what they said: "A miracle is happening; the heavens rip open, the earth rends apart! No one could laugh or be merry. Every was awe-struck and frightened because of it. They quivered and trembled in the presence of the divinity, the king.35

92. You hide yourself in a corner, in the dark.

This was said when some able person, perhaps an experienced and renowned noble or official, lost his good name. He just went off somewhere and no longer sat down with the nobles or rulers. He no longer showed himself anywhere but kept himself hidden. A person who did this was told: "Why do you go away? You no longer show yourself anywhere. Why do you hide yourself in a corner, in the dark?" This means: "You keep yourself hidden and no longer appear among people. You do not show yourself anywhere in order to be sent on a mission, to perform a service for the city. You, of your own accord, destroy yourself; you, of your own accord, destroy your glory. You are being an imbecile just lying in the corner, in the dark!"

33 See no. 86.
34 This can either refer to Holy Communion or the eating of the flesh of the sacrificial victim.
35 The king was considered the representation of the deity.
Los colores, núm-
mandial en los co-
mágico del nativo
una función precisa
prema trinidad del
días, la fusión de la

La vida materia
antoja un mural co-
en que se logra la a
y cada uno de los
y su razón de ser, y
dad y belleza al co
idad indígena. No ca
armoniosa y total
base de la integrid

El simbolismo de
cido en observació
parte esencial de lo
otéricas: el canto

Las observaciones
miento y Religión,
turas clásicas meso