

[00:00:01.4]

Arturo Lindsay: Speaking with Raul, he told me that the tradition of the Devil -- which is now the Congo tradition -- started here in the village of Portobelo with the man named . . . What was his name?

[00:00:17.0]

Raúl Jiménez: Devil. Alejandro Devil.

[00:00:18.3]

AL: Alejandro Devil. Is he someone you knew?

[00:00:22.2]

Celedonio Molinar: I didn't know him.

[00:00:23.4]

AL: You didn't know him! Then how did . . . but?

[00:00:28.1]

CM: I arrived here in 1945.

[00:00:30.0]

AL: Uh huh.

[00:00:30.8]

CM: And I started to dress as Devil in '45.

[00:00:33.6]

AL: In '45? So then did the tradition already exist here in the village?

[00:00:38.2]

CM: Yes, but not like it should've been.

[00:00:41.2]

AL: He started in 1945. So the tradition was here but not the way it should have been.

[00:00:45.0]

Renee Alexander Craft: Ok

[00:00:46.3]

AL: Tell me about that. How was the tradition when you arrived here? [Repeats in English]

[00:00:51.4]

CM: The tradition that they had here was that when I would come on Ash Wednesday, Ash Wednesday is the day that they should dress as Devil.

[00:00:59.2]

AL: He said on Ash Wednesday . . .

[00:01:00.9]

AL: So on Ash Wednesday is when they would dress as Devil?

[00:01:03.5]

CM: Yes.

[00:01:05.3]

AL: He said on Ash Wednesday is when the Devil was dressed . . .

[00:01:11.8]

CM: So I realized that they weren't doing it like it should be done.

[00:01:17.0]

AL: He noticed that they did not do what they . . . the way it was supposed to be done.

[00:01:21.0]

RC: Ok. What were they . . . what were they doing?

[00:01:23.3]

AL: What were they doing that wasn't supposed to be done that way?

[00:01:26.4]

CM: Well it's what they weren't doing. What they were doing was when the Devil dressed during carnival, when one dances with the Devil, the Congos should already know that the Devil is going to come out . . .

[00:01:44.6]

AL: When . . . ah . . . ah . . . when . . . On Ash Wednesday when the Devil was you know, getting dressed, the Congo should already know that he was getting ready.

[00:01:55.5]

CM: . . . so that the Congo can play with the Devil. The game is between the Congo and the Devil.

[00:01:58.0]

AL: So . . . the . . . the . . . tradition is . . . the game is between the Devil and the Congo.

[00:02:04.8]

CM: When the Devil plays with the Congos, a group of people come, called Angels, to get the Devil for baptism.

[00:02:19.1]

AL: So . . . ah . . . when the Devil is playing with the Congos is when the Angels are supposed to come out, you know, so, to make sure the Devil is blessed.

[00:02:28.3]

CM: After they tie up the Devil . . .

[00:02:32.0]

AL: So once they catch the Devil and tie him up . . .

[00:02:45.3]

CM: . . . they go over to the table where the priest is going to baptize the Devil.

[00:02:38.3]

AL: He is taken to the table where the priest is to bless the Devil.

[00:02:43.6]

RC: Ok.

[00:02:44.8]

CM: Then they baptize him and the Devil is let free.

[00:02:48.6]

AL: Once he's been blessed then the Devil is free.

[00:02:51.6]

CM: He's free. That's where the association between the Devil and the Congos ends.

[00:02:56.7]

AL: And that's where, you know, the whole thing ends. That's when the Devil and the . . .

[00:03:00.7]

CM: This happens every year on Ash Wednesday.

[00:03:03.7]

AL: . . . and that's the way it's done every year on Ash Wednesday.

[00:03:07.4]

RC: Ok.

[00:03:08.7]

AL: So in those days they didn't used to baptize [the devils]?

[00:03:11.6]

CM: No.

[00:03:12.5]

AL: No. He's saying back then . . .

[00:03:14.4]

AL: That was in '45 that they weren't baptizing the devils?

[00:03:17.8]

CM: Yes.

[00:03:18.3]

AL: And you were the person that started the baptizing?

[00:03:20.7]

CM: Correct.

[00:03:21.9]

AL: Uh huh. So how did you hear that the devils had to be baptized?

[00:03:26.7]

CM: Because I'm from Nombre de Dios

[00:03:28.5]

AL: He says I'm from Nombre de Dios . . .

[00:03:30.7]

CM: . . . and there . . .

[00:03:32.3]

AL: Y allá se bautizaban. And back in Nombre de Dios they . . . they did the baptism there so he brought the tradition of blessing, you know, here. Pero? Go ahead.

[00:03:42.0]

RC: Before . . . When you saw it here, how did the game end if the Devil wasn't baptized? How did the game end when you first saw it?

[00:03:48.8]

AL: When you arrived here they weren't baptizing the devils so how did the Congo game end?

[00:03:57.5]

CM: Well they kept dancing, but they didn't baptize them. The Congos and the devils kept playing with each other.

[00:04:03.6]

AL: They just continued you know, playing.

[00:04:05.6]

AL: Until they tied them up and then they let them go and kept playing?

[00:04:08.6]

CM: Yes.

[00:04:10.3]

AL: How strange. (Laughs) I'm glad you came with this new custom.

[00:04:15.0]

AL: He said they just kept, you know, they'll tie him up and let him go and then they'll just tie him up again.

[00:04:21.2]

RC: When he first saw the tradition here was the Devil already crossing his feet?

[00:04:26.1]

AL: And when you arrived here and you saw the devils playing, the Devil was already crossing his feet [while dancing]?

[00:04:33.6]

CM: Yes.

[00:04:34.6]

AL: They were crossing them?

[00:04:35.2]

AL: Ok. He says, ah, he saw them, ah you know, they were crossing, you know, when he first got here.

[00:04:41.0]

AL: But Mr. Celedonio in what year did you begin to . . . ?

[00:04:45.3]

CM: 1945

[00:04:46.8]

AL: No. No. No, that there in [Nombre de Dios.]

[00:04:48.4]

CM: Back there? I was 23 years old.

[00:04:51.1]

AL: He was 23 years old when he was, ah, started.

[00:04:53.5]

AL: You were 23 years old when you began to dance Congo, that is, to go dance as a Devil, to go out as Devil in Nombre de Dios?

[00:05:00.2]

CM: 23 years old.

[00:05:01.0]

AL: He was already 23 years old

[00:05:02.8]

RC: When he was playing, um, Devil in Nombre de Dios.

[00:05:05.0]

AL: In Nombre de Dios.

[00:05:05.2]

AL: In what year was that?

[00:05:07.1]

CM: That was in 19 . . . ?

[00:05:12.2]

AL: What year were you born?

[00:05:13.3]

CM: I was born in '16. 1916. March 3rd.

[00:05:18.8]

AL: He was born March 3, 1916.

[00:05:21.0]

AL: So 23. 16 plus 23 are 39. So you started in 1939 then?

[00:05:29.1]

AL: In 1939 he started.

[00:05:30.9]

AL: And that tradition already existed for years in Nombre de Dios?

[00:05:35.3]

CM: Yes, from before.

[00:05:37.0]

AL: Oh yeah! Until when, in what century did the whole question of the devils begin?

[00:05:41.2]

CM: In the century . . . 19 . . .

[00:05:45.3]

(A family member of Celedonio responds): 16th (century.)

[00:05:46.0]

AL: In the 16th century?

[00:05:46.8]

RJ: The 16th century

[00:05:48.4]

AL: The 16th century.

[00:05:50.6]

AL: So that . . . I don't know. The 16th century.

[00:05:54.2]

RC: I don't know what you asked though.

[00:05:55.4]

AL: Oh I'm sorry. I said, I asked him when he . . . He said he started in 1939.

[00:06:01.2]

AL: Let me explain it to her.

[00:06:03.3]

AL: He said in 1939, when he was 23 years old is when he first started coming out as the Devil. I said, well then, how long . . . [When did] the tradition in your village begin? He says, aw man, forever. So, ah, somebody back there [someone inside Celedonia's house] yelled out "16th century."

[00:06:19.2]

AL: The question of the game of the devils and Congos starts in the 16th century. With the devils too?

[00:06:32.4]

CM: Yes. It was here that it started.

[00:06:35.2]

AL: Here in this village?

[00:06:36.3]

Yes. The man that taught us to dance the came from here and went there.

[00:06:41.4]

AL: Ahhhh.

[00:06:41.6]

CM: He married a woman from there but he was from here.

[00:06:43.7]

AL: It could be the same man. Do you know the name of that man? What was his name?

[00:06:49.2]

(A family member of Celedonio responds): Viudo Ceballos

[00:06:50.1]

AL: What?

[00:06:50.3]

RJ: Viudo Ceballos.

[00:06:51.8]

AL: What?

[00:06:52.0]

CM: Viudo Ceballos.

[00:06:52.8]

AL: Viudo

[00:06:53.4]

CM: Viudo Ceballos.

[00:06:54.0]

AL: Viudo. Viudo Ceballos

[00:06:55.0]

AL: Oh. So the tradition started here in the village in the 16th century. But it wasn't until the 20th century that the tradition left here for Nombre de Dios.

[00:07:06.0]

CM: Yes, sir.

[00:07:07.2]

AL: I don't understand.

[00:07:09.1]

AL: He's saying . . .

[00:07:10.0]

AL: One moment. (Laughs.) I'm leaving her (Renee) behind, and I have to catch her up.

[00:07:15.0]

AL: He was saying that, ah, Viudo Ceballos brought the tradition from here to Nombre de Dios, and so I'm saying, wait a minute, you're telling me that the tradition started here in the 16th century, and it just went to Nombre de Dios with this guy Viudo Ceballos. And he say, well let me explain.

[00:07:28.0]

AL: Explain.

[00:07:28.8]

CM: When he arrived there he organized the Congos and the Devil. He himself dressed as Devil.

[00:07:37.1]

AL: He himself dressed (as Devil)?

[00:07:38.0]

CM: He himself dressed (as Devil).

[00:07:38.6]

AL: Uh huh. So he says, this guy, you know, took the tradition from here to, ah, ah, Nombre de Dios, and he's the one that showed them, how, you know, to dress.

[00:07:48.7]

AL: So there wasn't a tradition of devils and Congos in Nombre de Dios before that man came?

[00:07:54.0]

CM: No. They would play but they didn't dress as devils.

[00:07:57.0]

AL: They played but they didn't dress as devils. Oh! Now I understand! They played Congo but not the Devil?

[00:08:02.4]

CM: Yes.

[00:08:03.0]

AL: Oh! I understand better.

[00:08:04.6]

AL: He said that, um, you know, back then, you know, in his town, in Nombre de Dios, you know, there still was the Congo dance etc., but the tradition of the Devil, you know, with the Congo, you know, was not until this guy, Viudo Ceballos, ah, went to marry somebody in Nombre de Dios. And he's the one that taught him [Celedonio] how to dance.

[00:08:26.3]

AL: Oh! Now I understand better. So then . . . but the tradition . . . I understand better. The Congo tradition all started here in this area, no? In Portobelo? But the tradition of the Devil, that started in Portobelo too?

[00:08:41.2]

CM: Yes. Exactly.

[00:08:41.8]

AL: But the tradition of the Devil in Portobelo started in the 16th century or the 20th century.

[00:08:47.8]

CM: No. That was a change that they made.

[00:08:50.7]

AL: A change. Uh huh.

[00:08:52.2]

CM: They didn't do it like where he had come from. They didn't do it. Here they did it differently from there when they baptized [the Devil].

[00:08:59.4]

AL: When did the devils begin in Portobelo?

[00:09:04.0]

CM: In Portobelo? When I arrived here and began to dress in 1945, because nobody else dressed [as Devil].

[00:09:10.8]

AL: Yes. So it comes out of the 20th century then. So there didn't exist a Devil in colonial times?

[00:09:16.4]

CM: No. Really, no.

[00:09:18.3]

AL: Ok so the Devil tradition begins in the 20th century.

[00:09:22.4]

CM: Yes.

[00:09:22.8]

AL: Ok. I understand.

[00:09:23.7]

AL: I'm sorry but we had to clarify a lot of things here. The Devil, the Congo tradition has been in the area since the 16th century. The devil tradition doesn't really begin until the 20th century,

you know, with, you know, here in Portobelo. Ah, but the guy that, there was a guy that went from Portobelo to Nombre de Dios and brought the devil tradition over there. And that's when he [Celedonio] learned it. You know, ah, but when he got here they weren't doing the tradition the way he had learned it. Which is the actual blessing [of the Devil] and so he brought the blessing here.

[00:10:05.8]

RC: Ok. Ok. Who was the Devil in Portobelo when he came? Who was the Diablo Major?

[00:10:10.6]

AL: Who was the Mayor Devil when you came to Portobelo?

[00:10:14.0]

CM: Me.

[00:10:14.6]

AL: No. From before?

[00:10:16.8]

CM: They didn't know about the Major Devil.

[00:10:18.0]

AL: Oh! They didn't know about the Major Devil!

[00:10:19.6]

CM: No. They dressed and put on their Congo costumes but they didn't know about the Major Devil.

[00:10:23.6]

AL: Ah! He says that there was not a Major Devil when he came here there were just, you know, the devils coming out whipping people, etc.

[00:10:30.0]

CM: They learned about it when I arrived here in '45.

[00:10:33.6]

RC: So you were the first Diablo?

[00:10:34.9]

AL: You are the first Major Devil of Portobelo. Yes

[00:10:38.7]

RC: How did you decide on Diablo Major, Diablo Segundo and then the minor devils?

[00:10:45.1]

AL: So how did you decide to have a Major Devil, Second Devil and Lesser Devils?

[00:10:52.0]

CM: It's because the Major Devil is the oldest that dressed [as Devil] first.

[00:10:57.0]

AL: Uh huh.

[00:10:57.6]

CM: He's the one that's been dressing as Devil longest. That's why they call him the Major Devil.

[00:11:02.0]

AL: The Diablo Mayor is the one that has been alive, I mean, the oldest, you know, and has been, and has more knowledge, and has greater knowledge, etc. and so he is called Diablo Mayor.

[00:11:14.0]

CM: There doesn't exist more than one devil. No. The Major Devil is the one that has the most years of service.

[00:11:29.5]

AL: Uh huh. But in your time there didn't used to be a Second Devil?

[00:11:23.3]

CM: No. No. No. No.

[00:11:24.4]

AL: Ok. Go ahead. There was not a Second Devil. There is only a Major Devil.

[00:11:29.2]

AL: And how many devils were there? There was the Major Devil that was you . . .

[00:11:33.0]

CM: Yes

[00:11:33.7]

AL: And . . .

[00:11:34.0]

CM: There were a lot.

[00:11:35.1]

AL: A lot of Lesser devils?

[00:11:36.0]

CM: A lot of devils. But the oldest one was the Major Devil.

[00:11:40.5]

AL: So when he came here, he established the tradition as the Major Devil. He, being a Major Devil, because he knew more, knew the tradition and there were several minor devils but there was not a Diablo Segundo.

[00:11:50.0]

RC: When did the tradition of Diablo Segundo start?

[00:11:52.7]

AL: When did the tradition of the Second Devil start?

[00:11:55.5]

CM: I don't have . . . when . . . in '45 when I came here. That was when the Major Devil [tradition] was established here.

[00:12:02.0]

AL: But then, the Second Devil. When did the Second Devil start? Today a Second Devil exists in the village, right, because Raul was the Second Devil?

[00:12:11.1]

CM: Yes so it means after that, in '45 is when it came, when I came as Major Devil.

[00:12:20.4]

AL: Yes.

[00:12:21.3]

CM: To baptize myself.

[00:12:22.4]

AL: But after you came as Major Devil?

[00:12:26.8]

CM: No I became the Major Devil here.

[00:12:28.7]

AL: Huh?

[00:12:29.5]

CM: I got the title here.

[00:12:30.7]

AL: Oh! You got the title of Major Devil here.

[00:12:33.1]

CM: I brought that tradition from there to here.

[00:12:35.8]

AL: He brought the tradition of the Diablo Mayor here so, you know, he as . . . was made Diablo Mayor here.

[00:12:44.8]

AL: And who made you Major Devil?

[00:12:46.3]

CM: There.

[00:12:47.5]

AL: Oh! You were the Major Devil from there?

[00:12:50.0]

RC: In Nombre de Dios?

[00:12:51.0]

AL: In Nombre de Dios. He was Diablo Mayor in Nombre de Dios already so when he came here, he came as Diablo Mayor and since there weren't any other Diablo Mayors, he took that position.

[00:13:01.2]

AL: Ok, but a question . . .

[00:13:03.7]

AL: Let me ask a question.

[00:13:05.4]

AL: A question. It's that when I came here to village, seven or eight years ago, I found that . . . well I saw you as the Major Devil but I also saw Carlito as the Major Devil.

[00:13:20.8]

RJ: He came after you.

[00:13:22.0]

AL: He came after you. So I also understood that Raul was the Second Devil. So when did the tradition of the Second Devil start?

[00:13:36.2]

CM: Yes, well but here there's a misunderstanding.

[00:13:38.2]

AL: There's a bad understanding here.

[00:13:40.6]

CM: Remember that the Major Devil isn't . . . it's earned. And you play more and better than Carlito.

[00:13:47.3]

AL: Uh huh. There is uh, there's a jealousy here that we are talking about here. Conflict.

[00:13:50.0]

CM: The people can't choose the Major Devil. I appoint the Major Devil. I ask him who appoints the Major Devil. It's earned.

[00:13:56.4]

AL: Yes.

[00:13:56.7]

AL: He says you win, meaning, you earn.

[00:14:00.1]

CM: No. No. No. It's earned.

[00:14:01.5]

AL: You earn it!

[00:14:02.0]

CM: That one. What's his name? Fulo! He played well. Chanchancito. He played well. All of them could've been the Major Devil.

[00:14:10.7]

AL: Chanchan?

[00:14:11.8]

RJ: Chanchancito, that one. How is it? Lino. The deceased Lino.

[00:14:15.4]

CM: No. No. The first Chanchancito. The son of Chanchan.

[00:14:19.6]

RJ: Une? Chanchancito. Une. Une. [This is a person's name]

[00:14:20.4]

CM: Yes. He played like me. If I'm here he would've been the Major Devil. You would've followed him. You would've followed him. It's that there are many that played. Chanchancito. When he started. No. No. He wanted to be but couldn't. [somewhat inaudible]

[00:14:41.0]

AL: But is there an election or how is it done? How does one become . . . ?

[00:14:44.2]

RJ: It's for years.

[00:14:45.8]

AL: No. I understand. I understand that it's for years but . . .

[00:14:47.5]

CM: The one that plays best is the Major Devil.

[00:14:49.8]

AL: Yes but who decides who plays best?

[00:14:51.8]

CM: That's why I say that it's the Major Devil who decides.

[00:14:54.3]

AL: The Major Devil is who decides who is going to follow him?

[00:14:57.2]

CM: Yes and he tests you. Back there in order to dress (as devils) we had to walk with the Major Devil, Eladio, because Viudo had died. Eladio became the Major Devil. It's not like what that guy has done. He really displeased me when he said he was challenging me. What challenge! What! If you don't know how to play. You don't know the steps. You don't know the steps and what they mean. When the Devil finishes and goes to his home he has to make the cross. You don't know! You don't know! How can you be the Major Devil? It has to be one that understands over the other one.

[00:15:34.3]

AL: So the question about the Devil is like a school. The Major Devil has to . . .

[00:15:37.3]

CM: Exactly! It's earned!

[00:15:38.4]

AL: Oh so it's like a school. One has to learn the steps?

[00:15:43.0]

CM: Exactly. Yes.

[00:15:44.0]

AL: You taught Raul, no?

[00:15:45.7]

CM: Yes. He imitated me. There were three or four like him, before him. There were three or four that played like me. They could've been the Major Devil. Like a chain. Today the ones that are here . . .

[00:15:56.4]

AL: Yes.

[00:15:57.0]

CM: The only one that's here is him. Nowadays there has been some disharmony in the sense that various (devils) formed a group, without knowing the game, and they named a Major Devil. If I'm here dressed (as Devil) and a devil is over there, he has to defend that he's the Major Devil. But if I'm the Major Devil . . . [Laughs]

[00:16:21.0]

AL: Oh! Now I understand. Let me explain it to her [Renee].

[00:16:24.0]

AL: He was saying that you earn being Diablo Mayor you don't just . . . [inaudible] You have to go through a training, you have to know, you know, the steps, you have to know what you need to be doing. You need to go through all of that. [inaudible].

CM: I'm the one that has to give it. It's earned. You don't know well enough to become the Major Devil. These are the people that don't know the game like it was before. Simona told me last year, Celedonio this has to get organized because we're not in agreement with this, how they dress, what they've done. The people had to leave it, they left the drums because this is not the game. The few that come dressed from Colon, they don't know here, they also around whipping people. It's not that way. They have no idea what the game is.

[00:17:10.0]

RJ: The Festival of the Devils that I'm organizing has that proposal. The Festival of the Devils that I'm organizing has that proposal.

[00:17:18.0]

AL: Since you're the promoter you have to use Celedonio as a teacher.

[00:17:20.6]

RJ: It has the proposal that the devils come to learn their . . .

[00:17:26.8]

AL: Let me ask you this question. Are you the Major Devil now? Yes or no?

[00:17:32.2]

CM: He says that . . . that . . .

[00:17:33.4]

RJ: He's not going to play this year.

[00:17:35.1]

AL: Carlito isn't coming out? Carlito isn't coming out?

[00:17:38.0]

RJ: No he's not going to play this year.

[00:17:39.7]

CM: Every year I dress (as Devil) so the people see how we're doing it. So that when I've left the people, as you say, because he's the one that's coming up now. That's what I've always wished for. You know? That they do the steps well. The people come to enjoy themselves with what the Devil's doing. How the Devil plays with the Congos.

[00:18:05.8]

CM: It's lovely.

[00:18:07.5]

AL: He say it's beautiful tradition, it needs to be done.

[00:18:10.5]

AL: Sr. Celedonio, we were talking earlier about the question of the grunt. What does the grunt mean?

[00:18:22.2]

CM: Well the grunt is something that comes out of a person when that person puts on the costume before going out. It comes out of you. It comes out of you. It's an arrogance that you didn't have before but the moment you put on the costume a different emotion comes out of you. An emotion of how you're going to walk, what it is that you see. When you make it seen that you're the Devil, you're going to put fear into the people with the grunt that comes out of you.

[00:19:08.6]

AL: Yes.

[00:19:09.0]

CM: A grunt that, if it doesn't end up being what you wanted it to be, doesn't work.

[00:19:13.6]

AL: It's something like a possession, something like that?

[00:19:16.9]

CM: Yes! Exactly.

[00:19:17.5]

AL: Uh huh!

[00:19:18.5]

CM: That's what scares the girl.

[00:19:21.0]

RC: Yes. Exactly.

[00:19:21.3]

CM: The girl was scared of me. When she came here, she didn't want to dress me.

[00:19:24.5]

AL: From when Celedonio went out [as Devil]. I know you because I see you in church . . . I always see you as very dignified person, walking around dressed in white, etc., but the moment that you dress as Devil, I get out of there!

[00:19:40.2]

RC: Is it something that's already inside of you that gets amplified or it is something that comes from the outside?

[00:19:46.8]

AL: A question, the young lady [Renee] wants to know -- Ok, yes it's a possession but is it something that's inside the person that comes out or something that comes from outside that the person catches hold of?

[00:20:01.0]

CM: No. No.

[00:20:02.0]

AL: No. It's the opposite?

[00:20:03.5]

CM: In me, no. In me, no. In me, it comes out.

[00:20:04.4]

AL: He says that, you know, it is something that's in him, you know, and comes out.

[00:20:09.5]

CM: It's comes out. [somewhat inaudible]

[00:20:09.6]

AL: [somewhat inaudible]

[00:20:17.1]

CM: That's why one is up in the air.

[00:20:20.0]

AL: He says, you can actually fly, you know.

[00:20:22.0]

CM: You can throw yourself from a house and land softly.

[00:20:25.8]

AL: Uh huh. He says you can jump from houses and land.

[00:20:28.8]

CM: Because it's something that comes from inside of a person.

[00:20:29.0]

AL: It comes out of you is just like . . .

[00:20:30.0]

CM: It's like a genie. A genie that comes out of you.

[00:20:33.8]

AL: Each person is . . .

[00:20:36.0]

CM: [Note: Because of the real-time translation, some of Mr. Molinar's response is obscured] He that doesn't really know what the devil costume on a person is, shouldn't put it on. It's not anything miraculous, because it's has something that you can't see but when you do the movements . . . You see that it goes up in the air. You fly without wings, but you do it. You start jumping, like in the sea. Like when the waves from the sea are coming in, like that. It comes from inside you. You don't know what you're doing. The people see, the people see you. You don't know what you're doing. You are like, what's the word, like a bird. You do the steps as if you were a bird that was flying like that.

[00:21:23.9]

AL: But returning to what is the grunt.

[00:21:27.6]

CM: Yes.

[00:21:28.8]

AL: They tell me that the Devil, before leaving his house, has to grunt three times. Correct? Tell me about that.

[00:21:37.5]

CM: The grunt comes causally from you. You grunt and you leave in accordance with what you see. You are going to go out and you see and atmosphere that can change a person.

[00:21:47.8]

AL: It depends on what's around you. [somewhat inaudible] You see what's out there, and what's out there is what really makes you change.

[00:21:56.4]

AL: So that grunt, (makes grunting noise), what is that?

[00:21:59.7]

CM: It's inside also. (Grunts like a horse) The people get scared but it comes from inside.

[00:22:04.6]

AL: That sounds more forceful than a horse sometimes, right? That grunt sounds like a horse. And what does that mean? Does it have something to do with a horse?

[00:22:12.5]

CM: That's when you want to jump, so you (grunts). It comes out and you jump, jump up high. Then you're changed.

[00:22:25.7]

AL: Uh uh. So, explain it to me. So the grunt . . .

[00:22:31.5]

CM: Yes!

[00:22:32.0]

AL: Helps the transformation of the person from Mr. Celedonio into the Major Devil.

[00:22:38.8]

CM: Yes.

[00:22:38.9]

AL: Is that what is happening?

[00:22:40.4]

AL: He said . . . you heard that?

[00:22:42.2]

AL: Good. She (Renee) understood that! [Laughs] Now I understand. Some people have told me that it could be a threat.

[00:22:50.8]

CM: No. No. No.

[00:22:52.4]

AL: It's not a threat. No. It's that thing that helps the person make the transformation?

[00:22:59.0]

CM: Yes.

[00:22:59.9]

AL: From a human being into the character of devil in that moment? How interesting!

[00:23:05.2]

CM: It's a mystery.

[00:23:05.0]

AL: Uh huh. A mystery. Yes. How interesting.

[00:23:08.8]

RC: How does it feel when you are blessed at the end?

[00:23:11.5]

AL: How do you feel when the game ends and they baptize you? How do you feel?

[00:23:21.8]

CM: Even after the game is finished and I am laying down in bed alone, I jump up in the bed.

[00:23:28.1]

AL: He says, he comes, even when he's back home in bed he starts to jump. His body begins to move.

[00:23:33.2]

AL: Uh huh. So, but, in the moment that they are baptized? Is there a change that happens to you in that moment?

[00:23:40.6]

CM: Yes, there's a change but it doesn't last. It doesn't last in me. When I arrive home, there's something strange in my body. I'm left feeling restless.

[00:23:50.5]

AL: He says . . .

[00:23:52.0]

CM: I'm left feeling restless.

[00:23:53.5]

AL: You aren't left feeling calm? So, you need more than a baptism to reassure you? To calm you down?

[00:24:00.3]

CM: Yes. To calm me down.

[00:24:00.5]

AL: So that grunt creates the transformation . . .

[00:24:03.2]

CM: Yes.

[00:24:03.4]

AL: From a devil, to, from a person to devil and the baptism starts the transformation back to human being once again?

[00:24:11.2]

CM: Exactly. Yes.

[00:24:11.7]

AL: But this [the baptism] is more gentle. It's not fast like the grunt?

[00:24:16.1]

RC: Oh. Ok.

[00:24:16.9]

AL: Ah. It's a slower process. It's a slower transformation.

[00:24:19.4]

AL: So when the game ends, they baptize the Major Devil, then they sell the Major Devil in the village, right?

[00:24:27.5]

CM: That's, that's what I took out. It's not like that.

[00:24:30.5]

AL: They don't sell [the Devil] in the town?

[00:24:33.1]

CM: When they baptize the Devil, everyone donates based on their generosity, like they do in Nombre de Dios. They buy drinks, no money, to have a party that night and they make a big pot of soup so that all the Congos can eat and that way everyone feels satisfied because everyone participated.

[00:24:54.4]

AL: And so how did it start the grabbing of the Devil, baptizing and selling him? Where did that start?

[00:25:01.0]

CM: Here. It's not from Nombre de Dios. [somewhat inaudible]

[00:25:04.5]

AL: I don't understand. Here the tradition is to grab, capture the Devil, tie him up, baptize and sell him?

[00:25:15.2]

CM: No.

[00:25:15.4]

AL: That tradition exists here now? When did it begin?

[00:25:20.0]

CM: Well that tradition started in '19.

[00:25:25.1]

AL: When?

[00:25:26.0]

CM: In '19. In 1919.

[00:25:27.5]

AL: In 1919! Ok. The thing that I find interesting . . .

[00:25:34.3]

AL: The thing that I find interesting is when they tie up the Devil. Well the Devil represents the Spanish that were whipping the Africans, but it appears to me that when they tie up the Devil -- it's what the Spanish did to the Africans, right? They tied them up in Africa, and then when they brought the Africans here they baptized them. So that's the second thing that they do after they tie up the Devil and the third thing is to sell him. And here in this village they had to baptize the Africans before they sold them. So it appears to me that they same three things that they did to the Africans, today the Congos are doing to the Devil, but the Devil as representative of the Spanish. What do you think of that?

[00:26:23.0]

CM: Well that shouldn't be like that either, because it takes away the value of the Major Devil. Because the Major Devil represents a controller of the Congos. You know? A controller of the Congos.

[00:26:42.6]

AL: The Devil represents what?

[00:26:44.4]

CM: A controller of the Congos. If someone acts bad with their father or mother, if they act bad then the Devil comes to punish them.

[00:26:51.0]

AL: Yes. I saw you do that one day. You jumped through the window and scared (laughs) a little boy.

[00:26:59.5]

AL: He says that's not so much in his tradition. He says, the um, the Devil . . . It takes away the beauty of some of the social action that the Devil . . . [somewhat inaudible]. In the community if a child is behaving bad the mother will say, well the Devil is gon' come get you. And so that's what the Devil also represents. An idea. Did you have any other questions? We could always come back to visit him.

[00:27:31.0]

RC: OK. I'd like to do that. I guess the last one would be, how have you seen the tradition change over time, and if . . . Have there now been three Diablo Mayors in the tradition?

[00:27:42.6]

AL: She (Renee) wants to know, because she didn't understand a lot of what you said. She wants to know, from your point of view, how has the tradition changed here in the village.

[00:27:54.0]

AL: And what was the other one? And how would you like to what?

[00:27:56.7]

RC: Uh . . . which one did you ask?

[00:27:57.6]

AL: How have you seen the tradition change?

[00:28:00.0]

RC: Oh, and have there now been three Diablo Mayors in Portobelo?

[00:28:05.1]

AL: And what? What he thinks about three Diablo Mayors?

[00:28:06.5]

RC: No . . . I'm just making sure that there are now three Major Devils.

[00:28:09.9]

AL: She wants, the question is, well actually there are two questions. The first . . . Why don't we do it . . . we're going to do one question at a time. Why don't we do one question at a time. The first is: How have you seen the tradition change in the village from when you first arrived until now?

[00:28:37.3]

CM: It has been without rhyme or reason. They're doing what they want to do.

[00:28:42.0]

AL: It's being done without reason.

[00:28:43.3]

CM: It is not the way it should be done.

[00:28:44.3]

AL: It is not the way it should be done.

[00:28:45.3]

AL: So you're dissatisfied with the execution but now you and Raul are going to change it?

[00:28:53.5]

CM: Yes. Of course. Because now it's reorganizing itself totally.

[00:28:56.4]

AL: Yes, because frankly, one of the things that have always bothered me since I've been here trying to work is that a Devil comes up to me and hits me. Why are you hitting me? I'm not a Congo. I'm not in the game. I'm working.

[00:29:07.8]

AL: He's saying he's not satisfied with the way things are turning out over the years. I said, yeah me too. Particularly since, I'm, you know, it has happened to me. I've been hit, you know, while I'm out there trying to document. And everybody knows I'm not a Congo [somewhat inaudible].

[00:29:22.0]

AL: The second question was, she wanted to know, if today, from your point of view, there exist three Major Devils.

[00:29:30.5]

CM: No. No. No. Only one. It's always been one.

[00:29:33.0]

AL: Only one.

[00:29:33.3]

AL: So then from your point of view, who is the Major Devil today?

[00:29:39.9]

CM: It's me. There is no other. Two or three years ago the group created an organization for the March 20th games.

[00:29:51.2]

AL: Uh huh.

[00:29:51.9]

CM: That organization, the board -- that doesn't know -- judges the outfit, the crown, to name a Major Devil. They're not . . . the Major Devil isn't named that way. It's earned. It's a school.

[00:30:06.9]

AL: Yes.

[00:30:07.0]

AL: He says that, you know, there have been some groupings that have been coming together and naming things and all that kind of stuff. Uh, the only person that, he's the only real Diablo Mayor.

[00:30:20.7]

AL: So Mr. Celedonio, Mr. Celedonio, you have told him that it's Raul. Because you have to pass it on, right?

[00:30:28.3]

CM: Yes.

[00:30:28.5]

AL: Because as we all know each one of us has to go see our Father.

[00:30:34.3]

CM: Yes.

[00:30:34.9]

AL: To continue as Major Devil are you going to prepare Raul as the Major Devil so that he can be the Major Devil?

[00:30:43.0]

CM: Of course. It's not hard?

[00:30:46.2]

AL: How's that?

[00:30:46.7]

CM: Because he's already started.

[00:30:48.4]

AL: He say yes will train . . . I was asking, because we all know we've got to meet our maker. You know, and he had said to me that Raul is the guy to follow. Are you going to train him? He said, yeah.

[00:31:00.9]

AL: So that soon Raul will be it? Ok. Very good.

[00:31:06.5]

CM: It's that every Wednesday, even not being Major Devil, I go out. So that the people . . .

[00:31:13.5]

AL: See what's real.

[00:31:14.8]

AL: He says every Ash Wednesday he still goes out. So that the people know who the real Devil is.

[00:31:20.3]

RC: So you still go out as Diablo Mayor?

[00:31:23.0]

CM: And it came to me, it came to me because it depends on each person, the resolution that this doesn't end, that the tradition doesn't end.

[00:31:30.9]

AL: Yes. Ok.

[00:31:32.9]

CM: [somewhat inaudible].

[00:31:36.8]

AL: Well, Mr. Celedonio, we just came to your house and interrupted what you were doing so we'll leave you know, but the young lady (Renee) just told me that she's really interested and is going to do a lot of thinking about what you just said and wants to see if we can return another day to sit with you and see if there's other stuff that you can tell us, if there's any other questions.

[00:32:03.8]

CM: Yes. Of course.

[00:32:03.9]

AL: Thanks so much.

CM: It would be best if she came, for example, on Ash Wednesday.

[00:32:08.2]

AL: How wonderful it would be if you came on Ash Wednesday.

[00:32:12.8]

AL: I believe that she is going to come.

[00:32:14.0]

CM: So that she'll be happier and amplified.

[00:32:18.6]

RC: I'm going to try my hardest.

[00:32:19.8]

AL: She says that now that she's spoken with you she's going to do everything in her power to come, to see you make that transformation. Ok. Thanks so much Mr. Celedonio.

[00:32:35.4]

CM: I feel bad. I feel bad about how the things are going. Now I know why the people are leaving. The people are leaving and not coming back. Each year fewer people come.

[00:32:49.4]

AL: Less and less. Yes. And those that come, just come to whip.

[00:32:55.5]

CM: Yes, because they see the ones from here.

[00:32:56.6]

AL: Yes, that's the way it is. Well, we'll leave it there. Thanks so much.

[00:33:04.4]