

Words with [š] in the Sandoval dictionary: Caxtoque

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Caxtoque

*CAXTOQUE, m. = El diablo. Se usa con el verbo llevar. "Llevarse lo a uno **caxtoque*".

Sandoval is the only source that cites this word. It is a clear borrowing from Kaqchikel, a local highland Mayan language. In Kaqchikel, the word would be spelled (in the modern official orthography) *k'axtok'* and it means 'demonio.'

My linguist colleague Ajpub' Pablo García Ixmatá writes (electronic communication 24 October 2006) that the etymology is as follows (my translations):

k'ax = sufrimiento, dolor, más dolor (suffering, pain, mostly pain)

tok' = tocar, o atacar (touch or attack)

According to Licenciado García Ixmatá, today the word is used in Kaqchikel primarily to refer to the Christian devil, but in traditional Mayan spirituality, it refers to the negative energies that exist in the air or nature around us. It is also the immaterial substance that accompanies people in the underworld. His specific comments are as follows:

Sobre la palabra k'axtok', en la actualidad, se está utilizando para el demonio cristiano, pero la verdad viene de las energías negativas que están sobre el espacio, o lo que unos lo llaman el aire que pega, o la mala hora que pega y lo toca a una persona. Y también [se refiere a] todas las cosas sobrenaturales negativas que se da en la naturaleza. Y eso es lo que le lleva a la gente también al inframundo, en la obscuridad.

No other citations have been found, but field notes from 2004 and 2005 confirm some limited usage still among Guatemalans who are monolingual in Spanish.