

**ALCINA's *Historia de las Islas ...* (1668)
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CANTIUS KOBAK, OFM † – LUCIO GUTIÉRREZ, OP

Capítulo 19

SI HUBO O NO HECHICEROS, QUÉ SEAN LOS QUE LLAMAN BARANGAN Y DALONDONGAN Y SI LOS HAY AÚN

Son tantas las cosas y tan varias con que los Bisayas solían, y suelen aún, hacer mal a otros, que con mucho fundamento se piensa que son no pocos de ellos hechizos e invenciones del demonio. Diremos de algunos de ellos, que aún hoy duran lo que se dice, sin repetir lo que ya dejamos dicho del *tagunlipun*, que ellos dicen, es hierba; y del *lumai*¹, y otros semejantes, por no alargar.

Lllaman algunos de ellos a los hechiceros *tambalan*. Y ésto es corruptela, porque *tambalan* quiere decir “herbolario y médico que cura con hierbas y raíces,” que se llaman en esta lengua *tambal*; porque casi todos sus remedios son con hierbas o raíces. Y así a los que usan de ellos, los llaman con dicho nombre. Y es lo corriente y usual de esta lengua.

Tambal es “todo remedio o medicina”; pero, porque en algunas partes son los tales médicos y dañosos en ellas, este nombre de *tambalan* es malo y lo toman in malam partem²; en éstas no, si no in bonam.

Chapter 19

CONCERNING THE SORCERERS WHETHER OR NOT THEY EXISTED; WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THOSE WHOM THEY CALL *BARANGAN* AND *DALUNDUNGAN* AND IF THEY CAN BE FOUND TODAY

The means that the Bisayans utilized, and still employ, in bringing about harm to others are so many and so varied that one has a solid reason to think that not a few of them are sorceries and inventions of the devil. We shall speak of some that still endure to this day and what they say about. However, we shall not repeat what we have already narrated about *tagunlipun*, which they say is an herb; and about the *lumay*¹ and similar others so as not to prolong this.

Some of these people call the sorcerers *tambalan*; this is an error already because *tambalan* means a “herbalist” and a medicine-man; one who heals with herbs and roots. Such individuals are called *tambal* in this language for all their healings are done with herbs or roots. Thus, those who use them are called by this name in the present usage of this language.

Tambal means “any kind of remedy or medicine”. However, because in some places these are poisonous and harmful to them, this term *tambalan* has an ill-connotation and is taken in malam par-tem;² here, on the contrary, is taken in *bonam*.

También les dan casi todos los nombres a los hechiceros que a los brujos, que no son pocos, según varias islas y pueblos; y, si estos brujos, que ellos llaman por acá, fueran como los de España, que pocos brujos hay que no sean hechiceros, aunque algunos los diferencian aun allá, parece que les vendrían bien dichos nombres; pero, como dijimos, de la duda en si hay o no brujos, y de las calidades con que ellos los pintan a los suyos, parece que es otra cosa acá ser brujo que hechicero, pues de que hay, y ha habido, varios hechizos no hay la duda que de que haya brujos. Y, así juzgo que son diferentes acá los que llaman brujos y los hechiceros.

Dos nombres hay solemnes acá, que hemos apuntado, de los hechiceros: a los hombres llaman *barangan*³, y a las mujeres *dalondongan*⁴; y, a la verdad, juzgo que éstos – si hay algunos que de verdad lo sean – son los que corresponden a los que en España se llaman hechiceros; y, aunque estos indios confunden, uno y otro nombre, y no usan en todos los pueblos de una misma manera de ellos, diré lo más general y lo que los más entendidos entre ellos dicen y diferencian, pues de ellos hemos de sacar las mejores y más bien fundadas noticias de sus cosas, aunque el vulgo las confunda.

Es, pues, *barang* en esta lengua un género de hechizo mortal y que mata irremediabilmente sino le acude el mismo que le hizo el maleficio; y es una de las mayores maldades que usaban antiguamente estos indios, y usan hoy aún, aunque no tanto, y con que mataban muchos. Si lo hacían de varias maneras ¿quién lo sabe? Lo más cierto es que no era una sola, pues pocos tenían remedio, aun de los mismos que los usaban, para el que otro hacía.

Era muy general su uso y poníanlo casi en todas las cosas que querían: en el camino por donde se había de pasar; en la escalera por donde se había de subir y bajar: en los postes o *harigues* donde se arriman; en el vestido que se visten; y en casi todas las cosas. Cuando eran sólo hierbas que, como dijimos, mataban con el soplo y aliento, era más fácil la contra. Cuando llevaban mezclado maleficio, era muy difícil el remedio.

What more, they also give all the names to the sorcerers which they attribute to the witches, which are not a few according to the various islands and towns. If these witches, as they call them here, were like those of Spain, there are a few that are not sorcerers. Although some differentiate between them even there. It seems that such names would fit them well. However, as we have stated, taking into account the doubt whether or not there are witches and the qualities which they attribute to their own, we may infer that here it is not identical to be a witch and a sorcerer. There is no doubt that there are and have been various sorcerers and the doubt that there are witches does not apply. Thus, I judge that those they call witches and sorcerers are different beings here.

There are two well-known types of sorcerers here as we have shown: that of the men is known as *barangan*;³ that of the women as *dalundungan*.⁴ The truth is, in my opinion – if they really exist – are similar to those called “*hechiceros*” [witches] in Spain. However, these natives confuse one name with the other, and they do not use them in the same manner in all the towns. I shall note what is more widely used and what the more knowledgeable among them say and how they distinguish them. For we must obtain a more solid information about their doings because the common folk do not distinguish well.

Barang, then, in this language, is a kind of a mortal spell which inevitably causes death unless the one who cast it comes to the victim’s rescue. This is one of the greatest evils which the natives practiced in ancient times and still employ today, although not to such a great extent. They killed many this way. Whether they are killed in different ways, who knows? What is certain is that it was not done in one way only, because few could find a remedy even among those who were practicing this.

Its use was very widespread and they placed the spell on anything they desired: on the road one had to travel, upon the ladder they had to go up and down, on the posts or *harigi* on which they leaned, on the clothing they wore and almost on anything. When this was caused only by the use of herbs, as we have said, poisoned by vapors or intake, the finding of the antidote was easy. When the evil caused was a mixture, the remedy was difficult.

Háse hallado una vez sola enterrado este maleficio delante los umbrales de las puertas de las iglesias; traza quizás del demonio por sus ministros los hechiceros para ponerles más horror a ellas del que ellos tienen. Y es ésta una de las cosas en que deben velar mucho los ministros, pues nunca duerme el malhechor de este maleficio.

Se da el nombre de *barangan* a los hombres que usan de él; y, aunque es palabra muy afrentosa entre ellos llamarse así es cosa muy cierta que en su antigüedad los mayores principales eran los que más sabían y usaban de estos maleficios; que, como no tenían superior y eran señores absolutos, como veremos, se salían con todo y no había quien les castigase, hasta que Dios permitía que con ellos se hiciese otro tanto; y de aquí ha quedado tan entablado, como dijimos, el entender a unos que los más mueren por maleficio; y, aunque yo al presente juzgo que no es así pero de aquel uso, tan común y general antiguamente entre ellos, ha quedado viva la presunción de que hasta hoy dura. ¡Ojalá se acabara este tan detestable abuso!

El otro maleficio era el que llamaban *dalondong*, y a los que usaban de él, que eran comúnmente mujeres, llaman *dalondongan*; palabra también de mucha afrenta entre ellas, y no menos que la de bruja y la dicha de herbolario, que todas son de una categoría.

El origen o autor de este *dalondong*, si es verdad lo que dicen éstos, era el demonio, del cual dicen que en los nefandos congresos que tenía con las mujeres, era este el esperma que les dejaba, que ellas guardaban para hacer maleficios.

Para dichas juntas infernales – dicen – tomaban figura de una grande serpiente – cosa horrenda – y de otra fiera, que mucho más lo eran ellas, pues consentían en cosa de suyo tan horrible a la naturaleza.

De una de estas mujeres, que alcancé yo aún viva y se había bautizado de mayor edad, oí decir públicamente que se le había hallado, o ella había manifestado cuando se bautizó, una vasija,

Such an evil spell has been cast only once at the shadow of the church doors; it was, perhaps, a trick of the devil to stir up greater horror than what was already felt through his cohorts, the sorcerers. This is one of the matters about which the Ministers of the Gospel must be watchful, for the main agent of these evils never sleeps.

The term *barangan* is given to the men who practice this evil. However, this word is very offensive among those who are called so. It has been well established that in their ancient times the most prominent *principales* were the best acquainted with and made use of these evils. Since these had no higher authority or power over themselves and were absolute masters, as we shall see, they acted as they pleased and there was no one to punish them unless God permitted that somebody else would do the same thing to them. Here it is an established fact, as we have said, for I heard from some that a majority of these people die from an evil spell. Although, at present, I judge that it is not so. But from that practice so common and widespread among them in their ancient times, there has remained a lively presumption that it still lasts till today. Oh, would that such a detestable abuse would cease!

The other evil spell was one known as *dalundung* and those who practiced it were commonly women and called *dalundungan*. This was also a very offensive term among them and not even less insulting than that of a “witch” and the so-called “*herbolario*”, for all belong to the same category.

The origin or the author of this *dalundung*, if what they say is true, is Satan. About him they say that in the most abominable unions that he had with the women, he left them the sperm which they preserved and made preparations for evil spells.

For these infernal [sexual] unions, so they say, the devils assumed the form of a large serpent – a horrendous thing – or of some other kind of wild beast. The women were even more vile because they consented to such an ugly act against nature.

Concerning one of these women, whom I was able to know when she was still alive and had received baptism in her advanced age, I heard it publicly said that they had found in her possession –

y no muy pequeña, en que guardaba semejante triaca del infierno, y que nadie se atrevió a verlo ni destapar la vasija, sino que se quemó públicamente. Y yo he estado en el pueblo donde se quemó, y vivía ella más ha de treinta y cinco años cuando esto escribo. Si fue verdad o no, Dios lo sabe, o, si ella lo fingió, que suelen hacerlo con facilidad para ser temidas por este camino.

De lo tocante a estos congresos del demonio diré lo que me contó a mi otra mujer, aunque en otro pueblo, bien lejos del dicho; y es lo siguiente.

Vino a mi algunas veces, muy afligida, una mujer casada, moza aún y no de mal talle (dudo llegase a veinticuatro años), y pidióme remedio contra el demonio que la perseguía; y, cuando su marido no estaba en casa, le tenía siempre en su cama. Nunca le vió ni supo que figura tenía. Sentíase cuando llegaba y la obligaba a que consintiese a tan nefando acto, pues sentirlo y verse oprimida era todo uno, dejándola, según decía, tan feos y asquerosos vestigios que no había duda en la opresión, quedándola no pocas horas después sus accidentes. Nunca, según me dijo, tuvo ni sintió gusto o deleite; mucho dolor sí y como un fuego que la abrasaba y dejaba aquellas partes lesas y muy doloridas.

Al principio me pareció embuste, y lo tuve por cosa de sueño; pero insistió tanto en pedir remedio que, además de agua bendita que dije tuviese cerca de su cama, y que la salpicase con ella, le di un *Agnus Dei*⁵ que se colgase al cuello y una medalla de nuestro Padre San Ignacio, cuya virtud contra el demonio ha sido, y es, en todo el mundo tan experimentada y célebre. Y lo que más importaba, la aconsejé y enseñé a que hiciese una buena confesión general. Y no dudo fue este muy eficaz remedio, pues, hecha esta diligencia, de que necesitaba no poco, me dijo no había vuelto más el demonio, y se vió libre de semejante opresión.

or she herself declared this when she was baptized – a vessel of some proportion which contained this hellish antidote. No one had the courage to look at it or even uncover the vessel; it was burned in public. I have been in the town where it was burned and she has lived there more the thirty-five years, as I write this. Whether this was true or not, or if she feigned it, only God knows! They oftentimes do such things with great ease so as to be feared more in this manner.

Regarding these unions with the devil, I shall report what another woman told me. This occurred in a town different from the previous and a great distance from it. It is as follows.

Several times there came to me a married woman, still young and well-proportioned, I doubt whether she was yet twenty-four years old, who was greatly afflicted. She was requesting help from me against the devil who was tormenting her. Whenever her husband was not home, she always felt him present in bed, but she never saw him nor ever knew how he looked. She sensed when he arrived and compelled her to consent to a very immoral act; for to sense it and feel herself forced was one and the same matter. He left in her, as she said, so ugly and unclean vestiges that the assault could not be doubted. For several hours afterwards, she felt its consequences. Never, according to what she told me, did she ever experience pleasure or satisfaction. On the contrary, she felt much pain and as if a fire had singed her and left the genitalia wounded and in deep pain.

At first it all seemed to me like something made up and I looked at it as some nightmare. However, she persisted so much in begging for help that aside from the holy water that I told her to keep near her bed and to sprinkle herself, I also gave her an *Agnus Dei*,⁵ to wear around her neck, and a medal of our Father Saint Ignatius, whose efficacy against satan has been and is so well-tested and known throughout the world. What mattered more than anything else, I advised and instructed her how to make a good general confession. There is no doubt that this was the most efficacious remedy; for when she fulfilled this requisite, which she necessitated very much, she informed me that the devil had not returned anymore and that she was freed from that violence.

Si ella había dado alguna causa, o beneplácito, antecedentemente, tuve en duda; pero es cierto que en figura horrible, ni de culebra u otro animal, ni le vió jamás ni consintió. Sí supe entonces, que su madre había sido *daitan* de las afamadas, antes de ser cristianos, y con opinión de que había tenido con el demonio mucha comunicación; pero la que me contó lo dicho, ni lo había sido, tratado en eso, y la había bautizado recién nacida; si bien no dejaron de pegársele algunos resabios de su madre, no tan conformes a nuestra santa fe. Y a ésto atribuyo la posesión que el demonio quiso proseguir en la hija, que, cuando escribo ésto, está viva, y ha procedido después muy a lo cristiano. Y tiene algunos hijos, y uno de ellos me vino a ver, no ha muchos meses, a otro pueblo, harto lejos de donde viven sus padres, porque su madre se lo encargó.

Vengamos ya a especificar algunos maleficios, o hechizos, de más nombre, además de los que dejamos apuntados arriba; que el demonio en todas partes y siempre es el mismo, y hace de las suyas.

*Tiutiu*⁶ llaman en algunas partes a un género de hechizo que dicen se lleva tras sí no sólo a los hombres sino aun a las bestias; de modo que, si es mujer la que lo tiene, se lleva perdido al hombre con quien lo usa, y lo usan siempre *in malum*⁷: si es hombre y va a cazar con él, dicen que no huyen los puercos, antes le siguen; y lo mismo los peces si va a pescar, cogiendo toda la cantidad que quiere.

En otras partes tiene otro nombre este hechizo, y es distinto del *humay*⁸, que dijimos que es hechizo amatorio solamente entre hombres, y el otro es general. No sé de nadie que lo usase; que esto siempre lo encubren; pero, pues tiene su nombre y ellos dicen que lo hay y que tiene estas propiedades, habrá algo, cuando no todo lo que se dice.

Otro hechizo de más célebre aún entre ellos, a que llaman en unas partes *cabul*⁹, y en otras *cubul*.

I had my doubts about whether she had given any consent to all this beforehand. It is definite, however, that she never saw him in the horrible appearance either of a snake or any other animal, neither did she ever consent to this. Her mother was one of the more well-known *daitan* before they became Christians, and enjoyed the reputation that she had frequent communication with the devil. The individual who related this to me had not been such nor did she engage in such affairs; she had been baptized shortly after birth. Yet it seems that something from her mother was transmitted to her, not all too conducive to our Holy Faith. Hence, to this I attribute the possession that the devil wished to continue having, on the daughter. As I write this, she is still living and has continued afterwards to lead a very fine Christian life. She has several children, and one of them came to see me some months ago from another town, quite far from where his parents live, because his mother urged him to do so.

We come now to describe some of the evil spells or sorceries which are better known even than those we have jotted down above. The devil is everywhere and is always the same and does his own thing.

*Tiutiu*⁶ is known in some places as a kind of an evil spell which, as they say, powerfully holds in its grip not only people but also the beasts. This in such a manner that if it is a woman who casts this spell, she irresistibly draws a man to perdition, for it is always *in malum*.⁷ If it is a man who has this spell and goes hunting, they say that the wild boars do not flee from him but follow him. The same is true when he goes fishing; he makes as big a catch as he desires.

In other regions, this evil spell has another name; it is different from *humay*,⁸ as we have said, and which is a love spell and for men only while the other is for general use. I do not know anyone nowadays who are using it; such things they always conceal. However since it has a name and they say that there is such a spell and that it has such qualities very likely there must be something to it, although not as much as they say that there is.

There was another evil spell more widely known, even among them, which in some places is called *kabul*⁹ and in others *kubul*.

Este, decían, se hacía con las hojas de una hierba que tiene este nombre; pero no con solas ellas sino con ciertas deprecaciones y palabras que el demonio les enseñaba, y el efecto de este *cabul* era hacer a un hombre impenetrable y que ni con lanza ni otro hierro o arma le podían herir; y del tener o usar de este hechizo dicen que salía entre ellos antiguamente el ser valientes.

La señal que, según dicen, tenían para saber si estaba ya el hechizo ejecutado en su cuerpo era que, cuando volvían, después de hecho, a sus casas, gritaban antes de llegar a ellas para que les tengan dispuesto el *luson* (ya hemos dicho que es un palo grande, largo y pesado, en que muelen el arroz).

Al llegar a la escalera de su casa, y antes de subir a ella, les echaban encima el dicho *luson*. Si no les hacían daño alguno y lo recibían como si fuese una paja liviana, era señal de que ya tenía su efecto, y quedaban impenetrables y más duros que Endimión, el hijo de la tierra, que a éste, por las plantas, le mató Hércules. Si es este acaso el nombrado *Anfión* preparado, o el otro hechizo de que usan los terrenates y mindanaos, y otros que dicen tienen dicha virtud, no lo sé; aunque, si no lo es, se semejan mucho.

De este hechizo me dijeron en uno de estos pueblos de bisayas que usaba cierto indio viejo, llamado *Humanbut*, que tenía mucha fama de valiente y lo había mostrado en cierta ocasión que, habiendo muerto a un español, hermano del corregidor de esta jurisdicción, le fueron a prender a su casa, y, tomando su lanza y *calasag*¹⁰, se bajó por medio de los que habían ido a prenderle, españoles e indios, sin que nadie se atreviese a llegar a él, aunque lo tiraron algunos arcabuzazos, no le hicieron daño alguno.

Era aun hombre mozo, de buena edad y fuerzas, cuando ésto le sucedió y estuvo después muchos años en el monte hasta que, con el tiempo y con al miedo que le tenían, se olvidó lo pasado y le dejaron, sin decirle palabra.

This, they said, was concocted from leaves of a herb by this same name; to this they joined some incantations and words which they learned from the devil. The intent of this *kabul* was to make a person invulnerable in such a way that neither a lance nor any weapon or instrument of iron could wound. Whoever had this power and practiced this spell was reputed in ancient times as the brave one.

A sign which they had in order to know that the spell was already effective in their body, was when they were returning to their houses, they would shout before reaching them so that those inside would prepare the *lusung* (as we have already said, that is a large, long, heavy pole with which they pound their rice).

Upon arriving at the staircase of their house and before going up, they threw the said *lusung* at those coming. Now, if it did not harm them in any way and they would catch it as if a piece of straw, they took it as a sign that the spell was producing its effect. Thus, they were considered invulnerable and even tougher than Endymion, the son of the earth whom Hercules killed by striking at his heel. Could this, by chance, be the spell called *anfion* prepared with another mixture which the people of Ternate and Mindanao use, I do not know. If it is not, still there is a great resemblance.

Regarding this sorcery, they informed me in one of these Bisayan towns, that it was practiced by a certain elderly native called Humanbut. He was renowned for great valor and had shown this on one occasion when he killed a Spaniard, a brother of the corregidor of this jurisdiction. They went to his house to arrest him, but he, getting hold of his spear and *kalasag*,¹⁰ threw himself at them, Spaniards as well as natives, and no one dared to oppose him. Although they fired several shots from an arquebuse at him, they did not wound him at all.

He was a young man of good age and strength when this occurred. Afterwards he lived in the forest for many years until, with the passing of time and due to the fear they had of him, the past was forgotten. He was left alone and no one said a word to him.

Era ya viejo, de más de sesenta años, cuando yo lo conocí; hombre alto y enjuto, pintado todo el cuerpo y de buen rejoy y abientos, al parecer.

Preguntéle yo después que fuimos amigos, y lo mostró como luego diré si era verdad lo que se decía que tenía dicha hierba o hechizo; y, aunque no me dijo que sí tampoco lo negó. Díjele yo que en su persona yo no quería hacer la experiencia, pero que pusiese en un perro el hechizo, o hierba que llaman ellos, y que yo le daría una lanzada al perro; si no le hería, que creería yo que tenía tal hierba; pero que si lo hería, que con eso se vería que no era verdad.

Lo que a ésto me respondió fue: “Padre, yo con los Padres no quiero pruebas, que, como sois ministros de Dios, sabéis mucho y podéis mucho; si fuera con otros indios como yo, y aun españoles, ya habrás oído decir lo que me pasó con ellos en mis mocedades; sólo le digo que nadie, ni hombre ni bestia, me ha herido hasta ahora; y está cierto, Padre, que si viniere el enemigo a este pueblo, aunque ya estoy viejo como me ves, todos te dejarán sino es yo, y te aseguro que estando yo vivo y a tu lado nadie te cautivará.”

Y es cierto que en varios rebatos que hubo en dicho pueblo el primero que acudía siempre fue él; y, cuando había peligro, ni de noche se quería volver a su casa, con ser casado, sino que dormía delante de mi aposento con las armas al lado siempre. Pero no llegó el enemigo al pueblo.

Si tenía o no dicho hechizo, no lo sé; la fama era que sí, y que era grande *herbolario*; pero nada le valió para no morir, pues después supe, estando yo en otros pueblos, que había muerto, aunque con muestras de buen cristiano y recibidos los Sacramentos.

Más universal que ninguno de estos dichos es otro hechizo (y lo es sin duda éste) a que llaman *avug*¹¹. Este lo ponen más que

He was already well up in age, past sixty, when I knew him. He was a tall and lean person who had his entire body tattooed and still full of vigor and courage, it seemed.

After we have become friends and he proved his friendship. I asked him whether it was true what was being said that he had such a herb or spell. Although he did not answer “yes”, he did not deny it either. I assured him that I did not wish to make an experiment upon his person, but it would be up to him to place the spell or herb, as they call it, on the dog and I would spear it; if it would not be harmed in any way, I would conclude that he had such a power; but if I did wound the dog then it would be obvious that all that is not true.

To all this, he answered me thus: “Father, I do not wish to experiment; since you are ministers of God, you know much and you can do much more for you have great power; but I would do so over other natives like myself and even Spaniards. You, perhaps, must have heard what happened to me in regards to them in my youth. Only I will tell you that until now nobody, neither a human or beast, has harmed me. And you, Father, be sure that if the enemy [Moros] were to come to this town, although I am an old man as you can see, all others would forsake you except I myself. I assure you that as long as I am alive and by your side, no one will capture you.”

It is true, that during some sudden raids that took place in the said town, the first one to assist was he. When the situation grew very dangerous, even though it was night and he was married, he did not wish to go home but stayed and slept in front of my room, with his weapons always by his side. However, the enemy did not reach the town.

Whether or not he had this spell, I do not know. It was well-known that he did; and he was a grand “*herbolario*”. All in all, this did not prevent him from dying, as I learned afterward when I was in other towns, that he had died but with the signs of a good Christian and after having received the Sacraments.

More widespread than any of the above-mentioned spells is another kind (and this one is without doubt, truly so) which they

en otras partes, en las palmas de cocos, porque suelen hurtar su *fruta* muchas veces, y tambien en las sementeras de *gabis*¹², o *lagueies*¹³, y en otras frutas que quieren tener más guardadas.

El efecto de este hechizo es que el que coge cocos, o *lagueies*, otra fruta, se hincha todo, pero más en especial el vientre, de tal manera, que les crece más de dos veces que a ninguna mujer preñada, aunque lo sea de mellizos.

He visto yo, ya sacramentados, no pocos para morir, y entre ellos algunos bien principales que causaba horror verles los vientres – que no los pueden tener tapados aun con ropa muy liviana – tan grandes y duros que parece quieren reventar y de hecho, aunque no revientan, se suele abrir el pellejo o resquebrajar, y echan una agua amarilla y hedionda; y jamás he podido con ninguno de los aceites de contrayerbas u otros *tambales*, curar a alguno de ellos si llega a apoderarse el hechizo de modo que se acabe de llenar el vientre. Si es luego al principio, alguna vez u otra alivia, y suelen trocar cosas hediondísimas; pero, en llegando a abrir grietas, nadie escapa.

Es fama común entre estos naturales que solo el que hizo el hechizo lo puede curar, y la experiencia muestra que raro cura ni escapa.

*Sapil*¹⁴ le llaman a este hechizo en otras partes, porque dicen que, aunque toque solo la ropa en las hojas de los *gabis* u otras raíces donde esté causa el mismo efecto, y al así hichizado llaman *simasapilan*¹⁵, o *inavugan*¹⁶; y, aunque suelen decir que luego que sienten el dicho daño, se puede atajar si en el lugar o sementera donde lo hay ponen, sin que lo vea el autor del hechizo, unas hojas del *laguai* o del árbol o palma que lo tiene, encima de uno de los zoquetes, o de los troncos, que suelen dejar mal cortados en las sementeras, que llaman *tuor*¹⁷, y las pulverizan y tapan con ceniza, que es contra, con todo no he sabido que

call *awug*.¹¹ This they place especially on the coconut palms more than anywhere else since these fruits are most often stolen. They also place it on the *gabi*¹² and *lagway*¹³ plantations and other fruits which they wish to protect.

The effect of this herb (or spell) is that the man who steals these coconuts or *lagway* or other fruits becomes swollen all over, especially in the belly, to such a degree that it grows twice as large as that of any pregnant woman, and even one who has twins.

I have already seen, and have administered the sacraments of the dying, to a number of them, some of whom were even *principales*. It was a horrible sight to see their bellies over which they could not even wear the lightest clothing. So bloated and so hardened were their tummies that they seemed on the verge of bursting. Even though these did not burst, the skin opened in places and gave off a kind of a watery, yellowish fluid that is stench-producing. I have never been able, with the oils used as antidotes or other *tambal*, to cure any of the spell that has seized them to the extent that the belly was already well infected. If, however, it is caught at its earliest stages, then, the remedy gives some relief at times. It causes, the afflicted ones to vomit the most awful substances; but when the skin begins to erupt, no one remains alive!

It is a common understanding among these natives that only the one who cast the spell is able to cure it. Experience teaches that rare is the one who becomes healed of it or escapes from it.

In some places, they call this spell *sapil*¹⁴ because, they say, even if only the clothing comes in contact with the *gabi* leaves or other roots where it is planted, it produces the same effect. One who suffered the effects of this spell is called *sima* [?], *sapilan*,¹⁵ or *inawgan*.¹⁶ They also say that as soon as the harm is felt, this can be prevented if they place in that area or in the field where this was planted, without the perpetrator seeing it, some leaves of the *lagway* or the coconut palm branches. This mixture was to be placed on top of one of the stumps or trunks which they usually leave badly cut down in the fields and which they call *tuur*.¹⁷ These are pulverized leaves which they sprinkle with ashes and utilize as an antidote. Yet, as far as I have known, this precau-

haya aprovechado esta diligencia; de muchos sí, que han muerto con sospecha; que ellos mismos lo dicen, aun sin haber hurtado sino que se lo pusieron en algún lugar donde él se sentó o pasó, no más que les había hecho mal con dicho hechizo; y, como no se sabe cómo, cuándo, ni quién, ni dónde se sintió – que no se siente luego el dicho contagio – no es fácil el averiguar quién lo hizo ni de buscar el remedio necesario.

Otro semejante a éste, si no es el mismo, usan, a que llaman *igso*¹⁸, el cual hace enflaquecer todo el cuerpo al paso que crece la barriga; y usan, según dicen, más de él los indios *irayas* de la isla de Leite que otras de otras partes.

Digamos de otro maleficio, no menos usado que éste; y, aunque no mueren tantos de él como del dicho, porque tienen más prevenciones contra su fuerza, padecen no pocos, y algunos mueren por la causa. A este llaman *coro*¹⁹ en algunas partes, en otras *coco*; y llámase así más por el efecto que causa que por la causa, que unos dicen es hierba sola; otros que es hechizo.

El efecto es hacer encoger la lengua, de modo que apenas pueden usar de ella; pero lo más común es en las partes de la generación, impidiendo su uso, dándolo más comúnmente en un *buhio* o en un cigarro, causando no solo el encogimiento dicho sino muchos dolores en aquellas partes, haciéndoles orinar sangre podrida y otras vascosidades.

Suelen algunas mujeres, o cansadas o temerosas que las han de dejar, y algunas porque las despreciaron antes, ponérselo en sus partes, y de ellas saca el hombre dicho contagio, y aun los varones se lo suelen poner para vengarse de las mujeres, causando los mismos efectos en ellas, y algunos y algunas han muerto, pudriéndoseles dichas partes por no haber acudido presto, o acertado con el remedio, que el más eficaz lo da el que fue autor del daño.

tion has proven useless. Many have died under suspicion, as they themselves attest to this, even without having stolen anything. But it so happened that the spell was planted in the place where the victim sat down or passed by and he thus felt the harm caused by the said spell. Since it cannot be determined how, when, by whom and where it was contracted, it is not easy to find the needed remedy.

Another one similar to this one, if not the same, which they employ is called *igsu*.¹⁸ It causes the entire body to waste-away while the belly grows bigger. This one is used most by the natives in the *irayas* [inland] on the Island of Leyte, while the other kind are used in other regions.

Let us treat with another kind of spell not less widely practiced than the previous one; however, not so many die from this one as from the former because they have more antidotes. Nonetheless, not a few suffer from it and some die as a result. This one is called *kuru*¹⁹ in some places and *kuku* in others. It is so called more for the effect it produces than for the cause. Some say that it is only a herb, while others that it is a spell.

The purpose of the above-mentioned is to make the tongue shrivel so that one hardly can make any use of it. The more common purpose of this is to damage the reproductive organs and thus impede their use. Most frequently they administer it in the *buhyu* or in a cigar, causing not only the said shrinkage but also much pain in those parts, making them urinate putrid blood and causing other lesions.

Some women either tired or fearful that they may be abandoned [*i.e. by their husbands*] and some because of neglect, would place this on their genitalia from which the male would catch the contagion. Also men would do the same to themselves and thus take revenge upon the women, causing the same results. As a result, some men and women have died from this since their organs have putrefied from later treatment or from being unable to find the proper antidote. The most effective remedy can best be sought only from the one who produced the evil spell.

Ha cundido esta maldad no solo entre los indios e indias sino aun entre los españoles y españolas, aunque en estos sólo suelen impedir el uso de dichas partes, y aun del matrimonio, no causar comúnmente los dolores y contagio que entre los indios.

Pudiera contar de ésto muchos casos. Diré solo uno por ser en parte de edificación y enseñanza en esta materia. Fue cierto principal de un pueblo (era casado, y bien casado, y temeroso de Dios) a otro pueblo a casos de su importancia. Pasó en casa de unos parientes suyos. Estando en ella, subió cierta mujercilla soltera y suelta, que le dió a entender sus malos deseos repetidas veces en pocos días que allí estuvo, a que nunca se dió por entendido. Llegó hasta acostársela una noche al mismo lado de su principal, procurando atraerle a su mal deseo, a que resistió volviéndose de otro lado, sin darse por entendido.

Venida la mañana, se levantó ella antes que él, y previno unos *buhios* (en el uno de ellos estaba el maleficio), y, recelosa que no los había de recibir de su mano – que en ésto están ya advertidos – los dió a una parienta del dicho principal, para que, en pidiéndolos, como suelen, se los diese. No reparó ella en la malicia porque no sabía su gracia. Dióle los *buhios* al principal después de levantado, y él con ellos se fue a misa, y sin recelo comió de ellos hasta que topó con el maleficio, y a pocos lances sintió sus efectos. No pareció más la mala hembra.

Obligado él de sus dolores, se volvió a su pueblo, que no estaba muy lejos. Aplicáronle varios remedios, porque le apretó mucho; y, viendo su mujer lo que pasaba, le apretó a que le confesase si había tenido algún descuido. Refirióla lo dicho, y ella me dió parte a mí para que la apremiase a dar el remedio.

Escribí al ministro de dicho pueblo con diligencia. El las hizo allá amenazándola que me la remitiría a mí que era el Superior,

This evil has taken root not only among the native men and women, but also among the Spanish men and women. However, in the latter it only hinders the use of the said organs and even the use of marriage rights. It does not cause the pains and the infection that it does among the natives.

About this I could relate many incidents. I shall report only one because it may partially be a source of edification and instruction about the matter. There was a certain *principal* of a town, well married and God-fearing, who went to another town to deal with some important matters. He took up residence with some of his relatives. While there, a certain unmarried woman of loose morals came up to the house; she let him understand her wicked desires repeatedly during the few days that he tarried there. But he did not mind her at all. One night, she went to the point of lying next to the *principal*, hoping to attract him to her evil desires. He resisted by turning away from her to the other side, without minding her.

When morning came, she arose ahead of him and prepared some *buhiyus* (the spell was planted in one of them) and, fearing that he would not receive them from her hand – in these matters they have so much foresight – she passed them on to a woman relative of the said *principal*. In asking for them, as they are accustomed, she would give them over to him. She was not aware of the malicious intent of the woman and had no suspicion about the kind gesture. When he arose, she gave the *buhiyus* to the *principal* and he took them along to Mass. Upon returning he ate them without any misgiving but shortly thereafter, he began to feel its effects. And the evil woman was not seen around any longer.

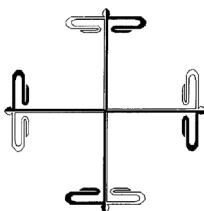
Compelled by the pains, he returned to his town which was not very far away. They tried various remedies on him because he was in great pain; his wife seeing what was happening to him, insisted that he confess if he had committed any immoral act. He related to her what has already been said here. She notified me so that I might exercise pressure on her [i.e. the immoral woman] to apply the proper remedy quickly.

I wrote at once to the minister of the said town. There, he took the matter in earnest, threatening her that he would send her to

si no lo atajaba. Tuvo buen efecto, pues, sin venir acá, (si envió algo no lo averigué) deshizo el hechizo, y dentro pocos días cobró entera salud. Y al paso de este pudiera contar muchos casos semejantes.

Tampoco cuento el que no es menos usado entre estos indios, y aun entre otros que no lo son, en estas islas todas, y corresponde al que llaman liar en España, a que también estos lo llaman curu, por el efecto de volver impotentes para los actos del matrimonio y otros ilícitos, de que pudiera referir hartos casos bien particulares, y que he sabido de las mismas personas pacientes, de varias calidades, indios y españoles; pero de ésto hay mucho en Europa y coincide en lo mismo, y, por no alargarme, lo dejo.

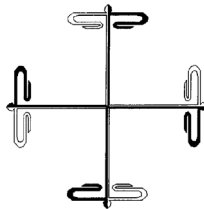
Sólo digo que quizás hay más en estas islas de ésto que en otra parte del mundo, porque, como acá concurren tanta variedad de gentes y naciones infieles, moros, herejes, malos cristianos, que es lo mismo, en cuanto a esto hay muchísimo, y aun otros hechizos más bestiales, enseñados de los macasares y malucos en orden a mayor potencia o más bestial lujuria, que, por ser soeces o indignos de saberse, cuanto más de usarse, no quiero manchar con ellos estos escritos, y aun los dichos excusara si la obligación de la historia general y especial de los abusos de estos bisayas no obligara a decir todo lo que, sin ofender los oídos castos, es digno de saberse.



me (I was the Superior), if she did not stop the evil spell. After a few days, he regained his full health. In this same tenor, I could relate many similar situations.

I shall not dwell too long either on another practice which is not less widely used among these natives and even among others who are not part of all these islands. This is comparable with something they call *liar* in Spain and which the people here call *kuru*, because it renders one impotent for the marital act and other similar acts that are immoral. Regarding this, I could report many cases, worthy of note, which I have learned from the very same persons who suffered this. These came from various social levels, natives as well as Spaniards. However, there is much of this in Europe and it is quite similar to this here; so as not to prolong this narrative any more, I omit it.

I only say that, perhaps, there is more of this in these Islands than in any other part of the world, because here such a variety of peoples and pagan nations come together. Moslems, heretics, bad Christians, which is all one and the same. What more, there are many, and even more bestial spells among the *Macasares* and *Maluccos*; all ordained to a greater and more beast-like lasciviousness. Since these are so vile and unworthy of being known, much more so of being practiced, I do not wish to soil these writings. I would even by-pass them if I were not duty-bound to narrate all that, without offending the chaste ears with such abuses which, in turn, are a part of the general history and especially of these Bisayas.



ANNOTATIONS

[1] *Lumai. Lumay*. Or *paglumayun, paglumyun*: A love-spell, charm, ointment or love-potion which the Bisayans prepare or make. Love-spell. The one receiving it cannot rest without the person who gave it to him. *Naglumay*, to give the charm to someone. *Lumayan*, the sorcerer who knows how to make it, *linumay*, or *ginlumay*, the one bewitched. Metaphorically it is said of those inclined to something. *Daw ka ginlumay na*, or *ginlumayan*. *Ilulumay nga pulung*. Sánchez [1711], op. cit.

[2] *In malam partem... in bonam*. Two Latin phrases: ‘in a bad sense... in a good [sense]’.

[3] *Barangan*. Or *barangun, badngun*: its secondary meaning is the charm that kills. *Nagbarang*, to give. *Gunbarang ni kuan an anak ku*. *Barangan*, the sorcerer. *Nanhimarang*, to call the person a sorcerer. *Ibid*.

Another view: “*Barang* – witch, sorcerer. – It is said that it is a smoke which the ancients placed in a jug, thus they believed nothing wrong will happen to them. *May barang dinhi, kunu*. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], op. cit., p. 37.

[4] *Dalundungan*. Properly “*Dalungdung*: A spell or curse – a herb that kills. *Dalundungan*, the sorcerer. *Nagdalungdung*, to kill with a spell. *Dindalungdung ada ni kuan an akun anak*. *Pagdalundungan ka didtu, kay mga dalundungan itun mga tawu*.” Sánchez [1711], op. cit. Also known as *turaw*. cf. # 17 below.

[5] *Agnus Dei*. A representation of the Lamb of God – Christ – derived from John’s Gospel 1:29. It is an emblem made from wax which began in the 9th century and blessed first by the Popes. These are devotional objects comparable to the medals of Christ, the Cross, Mary or Saints worn around the neck. The Poor Clares in the Philippines still make these, have them blessed and pass them around among the devotees.

[6] *Tiutiu*. Sorceries, also a certain herb similar to thisel, which grows in salty water. *Ibid*.

“*Tiyu tiyu*: a vine with spines or thorns, or a plant that spreads out much. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], op. cit., p. 421, *Suppl*.

[7] *In malum*. A Latin phrase: “for evil purposes”.

[8] *Humay*. This word should read *lumay* and not *humay*; see annotation # 1, above.

[9] *Kabul*. A certain spell which is invoked in the name of a tree known by the same name *kubul* which is said that it has this characteristic: *nga bisan kusutlun an dahun diri dudutlan: kublan*, the one who has the *tambal*. 2. *Kubul*, some people say it should be *ubul*, *hulup*, to start, to doubt when initiating something; to reject. *Kinmubul aku ngadtu, kay harayu*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

“*Kubul*: a tree so-called and known; a spell which is invoked in the name of this tree and if an individual carries some of its leaves or any part of it, will surely be free from all harm, bullets or even from any other weaponry.”

Interesting how to this date – 1914 – this practice endured. Even more interesting is the fact that was still practiced among the older folks living in pueblos, not only in the remote areas in 1959-1970, where one editor lived and ministered in Samar [i.e. Cantius Kobak].

[10] *Kalasag*. An oval or heart-shaped leather shield; a buckler. *Ibid.*

“*Kalasag*: A buckler, a shield of wood or any other material, very high and wide in shape. *Pangalasag*, to defend oneself with the shield, broquel.” De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[11] *Avug*. Better “*awug* or *aawugan*, *aawgan*: A spell invoked upon the coconut palms and fruit trees so that nobody will climb the tree to steal the fruit, so that the stomach will get swollen (so they say). Nor will they be able to digest these. *Inawgan ining lubi*. *Naawug* or *nagawug*, one who invokes this curse or spell. *Inawgan*, is the palm or tree upon which the curse or spell was placed. *Nakaawug*, or *inawug*, the bewitched. *Hinawgan*, or *hiawgan ka di ka sumaka*. 2. It is to point out something, like with whom to get married. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[12] *Gabi*. See Chapter 5, annotation # 16.

[13] *Lagway*. See Chapter 5, annotation # 6.

[14] *Sapil*. A sore or a small eruption or ulcer formed in the mouth and usually white in color or many appear in the alimentary canal. – *Sapil sapil*: to touch something without getting hold of it, like when one chases someone very near, but never is able to catch it. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 289.

[15] *Sapilan*. Seemingly one who causes the *sapil*.

[16] *Inavugan*. *Inawgan*. *Inawagan*. Perhaps, it should read as *inarugun*: the *taro gaway*. *Ibid.*, p. 168.

[17] *Tuor. Tuur.* Probably it should read as *tuud*: the trunk or the stump of a tree that has been cut-down. – Tree uprooted by the current and stuck in the rivers, etc. – Trunks of trees, already cut or on the floor; logs or trunks that hinder the way. *Ibid.*, p. 365.

Unable to locate this word in Sánchez; however, there is an interesting one again under *turaw*: Mortal sorcery. *Dalungdung*; *turawan*, the sorcerer.” *Op. cit.*

[18] *Igsu.* Or *irus*: to stretch the lower portion of something a bit wider so that it resembles a pyramid, etc. Most often referred of the mother to the son, when angry with him. Were you to become bewitched? *Magaigsu ka, mairus ka.* May you be bewitched of this evil spell. *Igsu, ba itun pagigsuun malatud itun tiyan, ngan matariwis sin kaniwang itun bali-atang.* *Igsuan*, The sorcerer. *Nakaigsu*, to bewitch. Sánchez, 1711, *op. cit.*

[19] *Curu. Cucu. Kuru.* Or *kuku*: may you shrink, vel absolute. *Nakuru inin dila, kun diri na makatingug.* 2. *Kurukuru* or *kurugkurug*: to crush the teeth, when shaking due to cold or fear: *nagkukurukuru inin akun sulang, nagtalutaku.* – Also known as *tarandan*: [Unable to locate this word]. *Ibid.*

