

## Capítulo 6

### DE LA OTRAS ARTES MECÁNICAS QUE SABÍAN EN SU ANTIGUEDAD Y CONSERVAN HOY CON MEJORAS

Aunque, como veremos después en el *Libro* siguiente, la república de los bisayas era tal que no mereció nombre ni tuvo visos de serlo, con todo, porque para lo forzoso de la vida humana son necesarios muchos, o todos, los oficios mecánicos que la ilustran y dan ser de tal, suplieron en su cortedad y modo de vivir casi silvestre, los útiles que su ejercicio atrae. Y de unos más y de otros menos, según su condición y calidad, tuvieron no solo ciencia sino las experiencias y el uso necesario para su conservación y modo de vivir. Y así a dos órdenes podemos reducir los oficios y artes mecánicas necesarias para este modo de vida humana, a que es fuerza se apliquen los hombres todos que viven como tales – que los que viven en cueros, sin el debido respeto a la naturaleza y a la vergüenza que ella naturalmente infunde, como se ve en muchas naciones bárbaras e incultas, no necesitan de ellas.

El primer orden es de lo tocante a la persona, su decencia y honestidad, y la compostura personal que depende de los vestidos y otros adornos necesarios a la naturaleza en cuanto tal y el segundo de lo demás que ellas con su industria, y tal vez con la codicia, necesita para el modo político y que imita al republicano en cuanto a las habitaciones, adornos de galas, embarcaciones y otros vasos necesarios para la vida doméstica, con los instru-

## Chapter 6

### CONCERNING OTHER MECHANICAL ARTS WHICH THEY KNEW IN THEIR ANTIQUITY AND HAVE PRESERVED TILL TODAY WITH IMPROVEMENTS

Although, as we shall see later in the next *Book*, the 'Republic' of the Bisayans was such that it did not merit the name nor did it seem to be so, nonetheless, because of the demands of human life there are many or all the mechanical operations necessary which demonstrate and give substance to such. [*These arts thus*] provided their insufficiency and an almost primitive manner of life an advantage that their usefulness brings about; some of them more, others less. According to their condition and state, they not only had the knowledge but the experience and the needed practice for its preservation and their manner of life. Hence, we are able to reduce the operations and mechanical arts necessary for this mode of human life into two categories. There is a need for all people, who live as they do, to apply themselves to these [*arts*]. Those who live in stark nakedness, without due respect for the propriety of nature and the shame which she naturally injects, as can be seen in many barbaric and uncivilized peoples, have no need for them.

The first category is in reference to the person, his decency and integrity and his personal modesty, which depends upon his clothing and other necessary adornments to nature, such as they might be. The second [*category consists of*] the other things which one requires for his undertakings and at the same time for one's desires so necessary for a well-ordered life. It reflects the citizenry insofar as the dwellings, dresses, vessels and other utensils necessary for domestic life, as well as the tools which are needed for

mentos que, así para la fábrica de lo dicho como para sus labores, necesitaban. Y de uno y otro veremos en este capítulo, y en los dos siguientes, lo que alcanzó su industria, perfeccionó su arte y logró su curiosidad; aunque en su modo de vivir, menos político que muchas otras naciones, aunque no menos prevenido.

La artes que eran comunes a todos, y aún hoy lo son, que entran en la primera orden natural son las siguientes, dejando la agricultura, de que ya trataremos, y de la arquitectura de sus casas, de que después diremos.

En lo tocante a sus vestidos necesarios, así hombres como mujeres, todos eran sastres y lo son hoy: y, aunque es verdad que no todos igualmente saben cortar de vestir, porque se han acomodado, acomodan, cada día más a nuestro traje, cuando los españoles dejan cada día el suyo y toman el de otras naciones, no sé con que crédito de la nuestra, si ya no lo es el ser amiga de nuevos trajes con ultraje del español, que con tanta honestidad usaron nuestros mayores.

De modo que aunque tal vez busquen ayuda para cortar sus vestidos, raro se halla que necesite de ella para coserlos, porque todos ellos y ellas saben lo necesario para el efecto, con que ahorran todos este gasto de sastres y les duran más sus vestidos, porque cada cual los cose con más cuidado, pues es suyo, y se libra de las marañas repetidas de los tales.

Como todos son sastres, son todas las mujeres tejedoras – que acá sólo las mujeres usan este oficio, raro hombre sino es afeminado, más para acudir a su precisa necesidad de vestirse que por el logro de vender a los otros; aunque ni éste les falta ahora a las más trabajadoras, que tejen para uno y otro.

Es cosa digna de admiración, y aun de imitación el ver que apenas saben andar las niñas cuando las comienzan sus madres a imponer en el atar o juntar las hebras de la *abacá*, que es de lo que hacen comúnmente sus tejidos, poniéndoles una rajita de *bacacai*, que ya dijimos son las cañas delgadas de acá y que sus

construction, as well as for the needs of their work. We shall examine the one and the other in this chapter and in the two following ones what their occupation has developed, their skill improved and their interest accomplished. [And this] even though in their manner of living they are less politicized than many other nations but not less capable.

The arts [*skills*] which were common to all, and even are so today, when set down in a natural order are the following. I pass over agriculture, which we will discuss later, and about the construction of their dwellings, about which we shall speak later.

As regards to their needed clothing, both men and women, were tailors even as they are so today. However, it is true that not all know equally well how to make the cut for clothing because they have adopted our manner of dressing and with every passing day, more do so. Although the Spaniards, with each passing day, cast aside their own and take on that of other nations. This is no credit to us if one is not a friend of new clothing but an outrage of the Spaniard who does not deal honestly with the custom of our elders.

In this manner, although they sometimes seek assistance in cutting their clothing, rarely do they have help for sewing them because all of them know what is needed for this purpose. All avoid the expense for tailors. The clothes they wear last longer because each of them sews with great care, for it is his own. And he is freed from constant entanglements with these [*tailors*].

As all are tailors, so all the women are weavers. Here, only the women are engaged in this capacity, unless in rare instances it be an effeminate man, more for their precise needs of dressing themselves than for the purpose of selling to others. Nonetheless, not even this undertaking is now lacking to the more ambitious and they weave for one another.

It is a matter worthy of admiration and even of imitation seeing how the little girls, when they scarcely know how to walk, begin to be required by their mothers to tie or join the fibers of the *abaka*. Ordinarily, this is the fiber from which they make their cloth with a kind of a split *bagakay*. We have already said

rajas las sirven de cuchillejos y tijeras, etc. – en la una mano para que, como van atando las hebras (es el modo de anudar que usan todas ellas, muy particular y que nunca falta por el ñudo), vayan cortando los dos cabitos que sobran porque no sirvan embarazo a las hebras, ya juntas, que no recogen en ovillos ni madejas sino en unos cestillos de hojas de palmas, que llaman *tacuyan*; las van asentando y doblando unas sobre otras hasta cierta cantidad, que llaman *tinagac*<sup>1</sup> (después trataremos del modo de su urdimbre y telares, que es propio suyo y fácil).

Del mismo modo que las niñas comienzan de muy pequeñas a juntar estas hebras que llaman *panugot*<sup>2</sup>, acaban las viejas, y aun las ciegas, y las que ya no se pueden menear, con la vida el dicho ejercicio, pues rara se hallará, estando buena, que no esté ocupada en esto, o en hilar algodón, donde lo hay, y usan el tejer mantas de él; que no es igual su abundancia en todas partes y menos el uso de tejerlo, aunque siempre hay quien lo usa. Además de las niñas y viejas es entretenimiento de todas las mujeres de día y buena parte de la noche, si son trabajadoras, el dicho *panugot* hasta que han juntado lo necesario de dichas *tinagac*, que corresponde a nuestras madejas, que, cuando es algodón, hacen de lo hilado ovillos y madejas a nuestro modo para hacer sus mantas, una o dos, según les alcanza el ánimo o las fuerzas a las que no están impedidas con la cría de sus hijuelos; que pocas pueden tejer teniéndolos, no sólo por lo mucho que les ocupa su crianza sino porque, siendo pequeños, les echan a perder y enmarañan y rompen las hebras, con que no pueden tejer a su salvo.

De modo que, en general, todas las mujeres bisayas saben tejer, porque en ésto tienen sus madres mucho cuidado, y las más principales mejor, enseñándolas, aun cuando apenas tienen de nueve a diez años, a tejer, y haciéndoles telarillos al propósito, que les es fácil; pues, como veremos, no tienen de mucho sus telares la armazón y aderentes forzosos que los nuestros, sino todo es muy fácil.

that these are the choice bamboos here and their splinters are utilized as little knives and scissors, etc. on the other hand, so that while they proceed to tie the fibers they are cutting the two ends which are left over because they do not serve to bind the fibers already joined. This is the mode of tying that they use which is peculiar and never fails because of the knot. These are not gathered into balls or skeins but into little baskets out of palm leaves which they call *tinagak*.<sup>1</sup> Later we shall treat of the manner of their weaving and their looms which are peculiarly their own and easy [*to use*].

In this manner, the young girls start to join these fibers at a very early age, which they call *panugot*,<sup>2</sup> until old-age. Even the blind and those that are unable to get around make a livelihood out of this occupation. Rarely can one find a healthy woman who is not preoccupied with this manner or in spinning thread out of cotton where it exists and where they weave cloth out of it. [*The latter*] is not equally plentiful in all regions and even less so the practice of weaving it. Yet there are always some who cultivate it in addition to the little girls and elderly women. This said *panugot* is a diversion of all the women during the day and a good portion of the night, if they are workers, until they have spun what is needed for these *tinagak*, which corresponds to our skeins. When the thread is cotton they make spindles and skeins of what has been spun in our manner, using one or two for making their blankets in accord with their energy or stamina among those who are not impeded by the crying of their infants. Those who have children can do little weaving, not only because of their being occupied with raising them, but because, being small, they spoil and entangle and break the fibers so that they cannot weave properly.

In general, all the Bisayan women know how to weave because in this matter their mothers are very attentive; those of a higher status even more so. They teach them to weave little pieces of cloth which is simply for them, when they are hardly nine or ten years of age. As we shall see, their frames for weaving do not have many sections and needed parts as ours; everything is very simple.

Como todas las mujeres son tejedoras son todos los hombres carpinteros, porque, dejando las embarcaciones mayores, de que después trataremos, que necesitan de mayor arte y ciencia, todo lo necesario para sus casas, de mesillas, bancos, platos de palo, bateas o barrenos de palo y otros vasos, cada cual hace para sí lo que ha menester, y con tan pocos instrumentos que causa maravilla, porque con solo el *bolo* – que es el más común y ordinario instrumento de hierro, como ya dijimos, hacen tantas cosas, y con curiosidad suficiente, cuantas nuestros carpinteros con tanta variedad de instrumentos como usan.

Las demás cosas de bejuco, como esteras o petates, que acá llaman cestos, de varias hechuras, carcostrojes con que guardan su arroz, y, en fin, todo cuanto tienen desde la casa a sus alhajas, cada uno se lo hace todo y todo con dicho *bolo* o cuchillón, de modo que acá solemos decir muy de ordinario aludiendo hacia dicho cuchillo, como al querer, que, cuanto quieren, saben hacer. Y pocos son los bisayas que para su casa y lo tocante a ella necesiten de otros oficiales ni de gastar en pagar, esta recíproca correspondencia hacen sin gasto lo que han menester para su vivienda.

Del modo de sus casas ya dijimos algo; añadiremos lo demás tocante a su arquitectura y varios modos cuando trataremos de las poblaciones tales que tenían en su antigüedad.

Fuera de lo dicho, todas ellos eran barberos, pues no gastaban ni navajas ni peines para ello; que unos a otros se afeitaban los que usaban quitarse el cabello, y lo mismo hacen hoy, que la mujer quita el cabello a su marido y unos a otros con mucha facilidad; pues, con sola una rajita de caña, como dijimos ya, que ponen debajo de las tijeras, quitan el cabello muy parejo y bien, sin necesitar de otros oficiales.

Las barbas ya hemos dicho que se las pelaban con unas alme-cillas o rajuelas de *bacacai*, que sirven de pinzas, y así no necesitaban de navajas. Ya las usan ahora los que crían la barba a nuestro modo, aunque no son muchos; pero cada cual de ellos

Just as all women are weavers, so all the men are carpenters. For, aside from the larger vessels, which we shall treat later, which require a greater skill and knowledge, each one makes for himself what is necessary for his house: small tables, benches, wooden plates, trays or pans of wood and other vessels. They do this with so few tools that it causes wonderment; with only a *bolo*, which is the most common and ordinary tool of iron as we have stated, they make as many things and with sufficient artistry as our carpenters do with the great variety of tools which they utilize.

They do the other things of rattan, such as mats or *petates* and baskets of various types *carcostrajes*<sup>3</sup> in which they keep their rice. In short, everything that they have from the dwelling to the decorations, each one makes it all by himself. Everything is made with this *bolo* or large knife; thus we Father ministers here are accustomed to say as an adage: "*the Bisayans are able to do anything with the bolo*" when referring to this knife affectionately. Whatever they want, they know how to make; rare are the Bisayans who need others assistance for their house or anything in it. Neither spending or paying, etc., because for what one alone cannot do the other helps him and with this reciprocal cooperation they do without any expenditure all that they need for their livelihood.

About their dwellings we have already said something; we shall add the rest concerning their architecture and various styles when we speak about the towns that they had in ancient times.

Aside from what has been stated, they are also all barbers, but they do not use either the razor or a comb for it. One shaved the other who were in the practice of cutting off their hair; they do the very same thing today. The woman cuts her husband's hair and he, hers with great facility with a piece of bamboo, as we have said already. They place it under the scissors and cut off the hair very evenly and well without the need of other instruments.

Their beards, as we have stated, are plucked with some '*almecillas*' or chips of *bagakay*, which serve as tweezers. Hence, they did not require clasp-knives. Today those who grow their beards in our manner use them, but there are not many. However,

se la quita, y aun a los ministros que entre ellos vivimos, nos es necesario hacer lo mismo.

Más de treinta y seis años me he quitado yo mismo la barba con un espejo, o por la falta que hay de quien sepa, y, si alguno sabe algo, más pela o acepilla las barbas que las quita; porque, como no lo usan y están hechos a escardar en sus sementeras, hacen lo mismo con las barbas de quien se las pone en sus manos; y así es fuerza, cada uno así mismo, o quitarla con tijeras, que es más fácil y con menos riesgo de heridas, que las suelen dar bien grandes.

En todas estas artes que se reducen a la persona humana, eran todos ellos diestros bastantemente; y, dejando del modo de sus medicinas y curas lo especial para otro lugar, y si tuvieron o no médicos que supiesen serlo, para juntarlo con las *divatanas* o sacerdotisas, que eran las curanderas más afamadas, aunque nada científicas, vengamos a las otras artes de la segunda orden, que dijimos necesarias para los demás ministerios forzosos a la conservación y aumento del común, y de que necesita cada particular, o para sus labranzas y obras, o para sus galas, arcos y adorno de sus personas, a que se endereza la otra multitud de tan diversos oficiales como se ven en todas las repúblicas bien ordenadas, y que dijimos tenían estos naturales.

La más noble arte entre ellos antiguamente, y aun hoy ninguna se desdeña de serlo, era la de los herreros, que comúnmente lo eran, y lo son, los mayores principales: y, aunque es verdad que el hierro que en su antigüedad alcanzaban, o ya por mano de los chinos, o de los burneyes u otros que con ellos comerciaban, era tan poco que raro era el que alcanzaba a tener lo necesario para sus labranzas, con todo tuvieron siempre herreros que les labraban los *bolos*, cuchillos, hachas y todo lo demás necesario para sus sementeras; y también lanzas, los *crises* o *cris*<sup>4</sup>, (que luego diremos lo que son), *baladio*<sup>5</sup>, machetes y lo demás de armas ofensivas para sus guerrillas, que siempre tuvieron entre si, como después veremos, supliendo para uno y otro ministerio, de palos duros

each one cuts his own, and even among us missionaries who live among them, it is necessary to do the same.

For more than thirty-six years I have cut my beard myself with [*an aid*] of a mirror because there is no one who knows how, and if he knows a little he either plucks it out or brushes the beard rather than cut it. In the same manner that they practice and do the weeding of their fields they do the same with beards of whoever entrusts them into their hands. Therefore, it behooves everyone to cut it for himself with scissors, which is easier and with less risk of the large cuts which they cause themselves on occasion.

In all these arts which affect the appearance of the human persons they were all rather skilled. I shall leave the type of their medicines and cures especially for another place. Also, whether or not they had doctors who knew how to be such and whether to connect them with the *diwatanas* or priestesses, who were the most noted healers even though in no way scientific. We come to another secondary category of arts, which we said were necessary for the other of the required ministrations in the preservation and development of the community. Thus each individual requires either for his toil and labor or for his festive attire, dress and adornment of his person to which another least varied worker is devoted, as is the case in all well-ordered states such as we have said these natives had.

The most notable art among them in ancient times and today, which no one may deny, is that of a smith. The more renown 'principales' were and are such. However, it is true that iron, which in ancient times was acquired either through the hands of the Chinese or the Borneans, or others who trade with them, was so scarce that it was a rare individual that came to have what was necessary for his trade. Nonetheless, they always had iron workers who fashioned the *bolos*, knives, axes and all the rest needed for the fields. Similarly lances, *kris*es or *kris*<sup>4</sup> (we shall next tell what these are), *baladiaw*,<sup>5</sup> machetes and the other offensive weapons for their petty wars, which they were always waging among themselves, as we shall see later. They substituted for one or another purpose hard wood which lessened their problem in

lo que les escaseaba la falta del hierro, que ya con la compañía de los españoles y el comercio con que todas las naciones comarcanas, y aun lejanas de estas Islas, que acuden a los reales de a ocho, que acá se traen de Méjico, abundan de todo género de armas y demás instrumentos, así de hierro como de acero, de que hay entre ellos oficiales primos, que les labran todo género dicho con harta facilidad y comodidad. Digamos el modo y diferencias de sus instrumentos en ambos géneros.

El más socorrido de todos es el que llaman *bolo*, o *pirang*<sup>6</sup> en otras partes. Su hechura, aunque con alguna diferencia, es casi conforme. Tendrá de largo lo que es de hierro, palmo y medio el mayor. Junto al cabo, o empuñadura, es más estrecho, tendrá como dos dedos, y cuanto más va, ensancha más. Tendrá su remate como cuatro; la punta es chata, y lo más ancho de todo él no tiene filo más que por una parte, y, siendo el lomo o cancho por la otra, grueso, es a propósito para cortar y dar golpes, por ser pesado.

Antiguamente estos *bolos* los hacían de palo lo más, y sólo los ponían de hierro en la una parte como un dedo que servía de filo para cortar, y eran tales (hoy en día lo cuentan los viejos) que, cuando cansados de trabajar en la sementera, se iban a bañar, – que este es su refrigerio y su mudar camisa cuando están sudados – tiraban encima del agua el dicho *bolo* y no se hundía; tan poco era su peso.

A otro instrumento llaman *basay*<sup>7</sup>, y es el que corresponde a nuestras hachas de cortar, si bien de muy diferente hechura que las nuestras, porque la falta dicha de hierro los enseñó otro modo que siempre es gran maestra la necesidad. Este es que, haciendo la parte de bajo moderadamente ancha, de dos dedos, poco más, y sacándole su filo, la superior hacían cuadrada y en punta, que remataba como un clavo de un dedo de grueso. El cabo, o mástil, donde encajan este hierro, que llaman *pati*<sup>8</sup>, le hacen más grueso en el remate, de modo que será algo más o menos como el puño cerrado. Buscan palo algo recio y que no se raje fácilmente, y en la mitad de dicho palo hacen un agujero cuadrado donde encajan

the lack of iron. Today, with the association with the Spaniards and the commerce with the neighboring peoples, and even those distant from these Islands – together with the accumulation of “reales de ocho” which are brought here from Mexico – there is an abundance of arms and all kinds of other weapons both of iron and steel. In this matter there are first class artisans who make every variety of these with special ease and skill. We shall speak about the manner and differences of these instruments in both categories.

The most common of all is one which they call the *bolo* or *dipang*<sup>6</sup> in other regions. Its shape, although with some differences, is almost uniform. In length of the part that is of iron it is about a *palmo* and a half at the longest. At its tip or pointed portion it is narrow and will be about two fingers. As it extends it widens more and at the other end is about four [*fingers*]. The point is blunt and at the widest portion it does not have an edge except on one side. The back or *cancho* on the other side is thick. It is useful for cutting and striking blows because it is heavy.

In ancient times, they made these *bolos* of wood for the most part, and they only put iron along the one side for about a finger's width, which served as the edge for cutting. These were of such a quality – the old folks today tell about it – that when tired of working the fields and they would go off to bathe (this is their refreshment and their occasion for changing shirts when they are perspired), they threw this *bolo* on to the water and it did not sink, so little did it weigh.

Another tool they call *basay*<sup>7</sup> is one which corresponds to our axes for cutting. However, it is made very differently than ours because the mentioned lack of iron has taught them a different method. Necessity is always a great teacher. This consists in making the lower portion moderately wide, about two fingers or a little more and shaping it to an edge. The upper portion they made square and to a point which ended like a nail of a finger's thickness. The extremity or handle where they encase this iron, called *pati*<sup>8</sup> they make thicker at the end so that it will be somewhat like a clenched fist. They search for wood that is rather strong and will not split readily. In the middle of this stick they make a square

el remate, o punta, de la hacha cuadrada, con la cual está fija y sirve muy bien; que, aunque suele saltar muchas veces y aun herirles, y más si yerran el golpe con el hierro y les llevan una espinilla, que con este riesgo se sirven dichas hachas, las cuales, les sirven también de azuelas, pues, volviendo el filo al medio y atravesándola, con ellas limpian las tablas como azuelas, de modo que un mismo hierro, y harto pequeño, hace los dos oficios de hacha y azuela.

También usaban antes mucho más que ahora de hachas, que llaman *paracol*<sup>9</sup>, de la hechura de las nuestras, con su ojo arriba para encajar el mástil, y éstas se estiman mucho más y tienen más valor, por ser su uso menos expuesto a heridas y su golpe mejor y mayor, por ser más pesadas.

Estos dos instrumentos de *bolo* y *basay* eran los más ordinarios, y son los más necesarios para sus labranzas; si bien no les faltan otros menores para escardar, que suelen hacer de hechuras de *bolos*: pero aquel remate chato y con filo algo embotado, porque los sirve como de azadoncillo para la escarda, sirviéndoles lo largo del filo para cortar, si se ofrece, y el remate para escardar y arrancar las hierbas.

Las mujeres tienen otro género de cuchillos, de varias hechuras, aunque todos de hierro; unos como los *bolos* dichos, otros a nuestro modo, que llaman *sipol* en algunas partes, y en otras *dipang*, y suelen ponerlo sus anillitos de hierro en los remates con que hacen su sonecillo. Es alhaja de mujeres, y rara se verá que esté sin ellos. Y en algunos pueblos los traen siempre en la mano cuando salen de sus casas, con que van prevenidas para lo que se puede ofrecer de cortar algo y aun de herirse tal vez cuando riñen; y en un pueblo mató una mujer a otra por celos con uno de los cuchillejos, que poca herida es menester para sacar el alma de un cuerpo.

A otro cuchillejo, casi al modo de nuestras navajas, aunque acaba con punta que levanta hacia arriba y tiene el cabo de casi dos palmos de largo, siendo el hierro de un gеме, y aun menos,

hole where they bury the end or point of the square hatched so that it is fastened and serves very well. However, it is accustomed to spring loose many times and even to wound them, and especially if they miss the blow with the iron and a splinter is produced. With this risk they use these axes; they are also used as adzes. In turning the edge to the middle and drawing it across them, they smooth the boards as with an adz so that the same very small piece of iron does the two tasks of a hatchet and an adz.

Formerly, moreover, they were accustomed to use much more than today axes which they called *parakol*,<sup>9</sup> in appearance like ours with their opening at the top for holding the handle. These are valued much more because their use is less apt to cause wounds and their blow is better and greater since these are heavier.

These two tools, the *bolo* and the *basay*, were the most common ones and are the most needed for their workers. However, they are not lacking other smaller ones for weeding which they are accustomed to make in the shape of *bolo* but with the end flat and the edge somewhat blunt, because they are used like a kind of small pick-axe for weeding. The long edge serves for cutting, if required. And the end for the rooting out and for the pulling up of the weeds.

The women have different types of knives of various shapes, but all are of iron. Some resemble the *bolo*, others are like ours which they call *sipul* in some regions and in others, *dipang*. They are accustomed to place their little rings of iron on the ends so that these make little sounds. These are valuable to the women and rarely will one be seen without them. In some towns, they always carry them in their hands when they go out of their houses so that they travel prepared for whatever might occur in the way of cutting something and even of wounding each other perhaps when they quarrel. In a town one woman killed another with one of these little knives because of jealousy. A very small wound is required to draw the soul from the body.

There is another small knife, almost the same fashion as our clasp knives, although ending with a point which turns upward and whose tip is about two *palmos* in length. The iron [*portion*] is

llaman *baiar*<sup>10</sup> en unas partes, y en otras *pisaw*<sup>11</sup>; con él limpian y adelgazan el bejuco, y, aunque el hierro es pequeño, el cabo y hierro vienen a formar casi medio arco. Este encajan entre el brazo y el pecho, con que cortan con más fuerzas, y también le asientan de filo en la planta del pie, estando sentados, y, pasando por entre ambos las vetas del bejuco, lo adelgazan y como acepillan y ponen muy liso. Instrumento éste único y necesario para limpiar, adelgazar y disponer el bejuco para hacer tantas cosas como – dijimos ya – hacen de él; que cierto es de admiración y casi increíble a quien no lo ve.

De las otras herramientas que les sirven de armas, que no son pocas ahora que tienen más hierro, y no de poca curiosidad y arte, trataremos cuando de sus guerras y las armas que usaban, y usan, para ellas.

Concluiremos, empero, este capítulo con los instrumentos que tiene uno de estos herreros bisayas, que son tan pocos y tan insuficientes, al parecer, que sólo la experiencia de los que cada día lo vemos nos desengaña por una parte, y por otra nos manifiesta con cuán poco hacen mucho estos indios, pues con muy pocos y malos instrumentos vemos que hacen lo que con muchos nuestros oficiales, y tal vez tan bien como ellos.

Es, pues tal todo el aparato que tiene para su oficio un herrero de éstos que lo suele cargar él solo cuando va a trabajar a otros pueblos, apartados del suyo, a costas sin mucho trabajo; y el que más lleva es un muchacho que lo ayuda a cargar su petate, que le sirve de cama y ropa de vestir, si es que la tiene, y el dicho muchacho le sirve allá de soplillo, que así llaman al que les menea sus fuelles.

Estas son la mayor carga que tienen, aunque no la más pesada. Hácenla de troncos de árboles enteros, que vacían por

one *jeme* and they call it *baiar*<sup>10</sup> less frequently in some areas and in others *pisaw*.<sup>11</sup> With it they clean and thin out the *bejuco* and even though the iron is scarce, they put on it a long round end like a thumb or a bit larger. The end and the iron come to form almost a half circle. They insert this between the arm and the chest so that they can cut with more force. They also place the sharp edge on the sole of the foot when sitting down, and they pass the fibers of the *bejuco* between them and clean them off. And so, thus burnished, they become very smooth. This is the only device necessary for cleaning and combing and preparing the *bejuco* for making the numerous things that we have mentioned are fashioned from it. It is certainly a matter of admiration and almost incredulity for one who has not seen it.

The other farming implements which they use as arms are presently a fair number. They have more iron in them and are of curious shape and design. We shall treat these when we speak about their wars and the weapons which they used to have and still using.

We shall conclude this chapter, however, with the tools which one of these Bisayan iron workers has. To all appearances these are so few and insufficient that only the experience of those of us who see them daily disabuses us; on the other hand, it shows us with how little means these natives do so much. For, with very few and poor implements we see how they do what for our artisans require so many, and perhaps as well as the latter.

This, then, is all the equipment that one of these iron workers has for the task. He customarily carries it by himself on his shoulders and without much trouble when he goes to work in other towns some distance from his own. The one who carries more is a boy who assists him in carrying his *petate* which is used as a bed, and clothing if it happens that he has any. The boy helps out there as a *bellow*; this is what they call the one who manages their bellows.

This is a lot of baggage they have, even though it is not very heavy. These [*bellows*] are made from the entire trunks of trees

dentro al modo de los corchos de las colmenas de España. Tendrá de alto de cinco a seis palmos. Por la parte de abajo las tapan muy bien con sus tablas, dejando sólo un agujero, por donde sale el viento, dentro de dichos palos vacíos, que llaman *asuansan*<sup>12</sup>. Encajan un trozo de palo chato por abajo y algo alto por la parte superior, bien labrado; en medio de este palo, que imita la hechura de un plato, boca abajo, encajan un pedazo de bejuco entero u otro palo como el pulgar, que esté firme, pero tan largo como los palos rollizos y vacíos. En el bordo de dicho palo, para que el viento no se salga, ponen muchas plumas de cola o cuello de gallo y le rodean de ellas todo. Con esta disposición juntan los dos palos – que dijimos son como colmenas nuestras – y en lugar alto poco menos que ellos se sienta un muchacho u hombre grande, que, levantando y bajando las manos, ya con ellos subiendo y bajando el palo, que dijimos tienen con plumas el bordo, y con este movimiento se concibe el viento dentro de los dichos palos rollizos y huecos que son sus fuelles, y les sirven de tales, disponiendo el viento a la voluntad del oficial; con que se ve cuan otros son sus fuelles que los nuestros.

El yunque, que llaman ellos *landasan*<sup>13</sup>, es tal a las veces que apenas es mayor que el puño de la mano, y el mayor no llega al tamaño de la cabeza de un niño de seis años. Con éste, que encajan en un zoquete grande y cuadrado para que le dé la resistencia que le falta al hierro, y con dos martillos, uno algo grandecillo para desbaratar el hierro, y el otro pequeño para ir labrando la herramienta de que usan y necesitan para sus sementeras y usos domésticos, las templan con muy buen temple, sirviéndoles de acero que acá no hay otro si no le traen de España. Los caraes, que ya dijimos son como sartenes de hierro colado que traen los chinas a estas Islas, y de los pedazos de ellos, quebrados, que desmenuzan cuando les ponen al fuego, y derriten como acero, dan los filos – y algunos cierto tan fuertes y buenos como del mejor acero de Castilla – a todos sus *bolos*, hachas y cuchillos y otros

which they hollow out inside in the manner of the cork beehives of Spain, about five or six *palmos* in height. They close off the bottom portion very thoroughly with boards leaving only a hole through which issues the air from inside these hollow logs called *asuansan*.<sup>12</sup> They enclose a piece of wood that is rounded off at the bottom and somewhat thick at the top, carefully fashioned. In the middle of this piece of wood, which resembles the shape of a plate turned upside down, they fasten a whole piece of rattan, or other wood, the thickness of a thumb. It is hard, but as long as the round hallowed out logs. Around the edge of this piece, so that the air will not escape, they put many feathers from the tail or neck of a rooster. Thus, with this done they completely join the two pieces, as we said, which are like our beehives. In a spot a little higher up than they, a boy or a grown man seats himself and raising and lowering his hands he causes the stick which we have said has feathers around its edge, to go up and down. With this movement, there is a generated wind within these round hollow logs. These are their bellows and are used as such. The air can be controlled by the will of the worker. Consequently, we can see how different are their bellows from ours.

The anvil, which they call *landasan*,<sup>13</sup> is such at times that it is hardly larger than a closed fist. The largest does not come to the size of the head of a six-year old child. This they place in a large square leather sack so that it will offer the durability that is lacking in iron. With two hammers, one somewhat large in order to break up the iron and the other small to fashion the iron work which they use and need for their fields and domestic uses, they harden it with very fine temper. This serves them in place of steel of which there is none here except what is brought from Spain. The *karayang*,<sup>14</sup> as we have stated already, are like frying pans of pure iron, and are brought over by the Chinese to these Islands. Out of the broken pieces of these which crumble when they put them into the fire, comes a kind of steel. They give them edges, some certainly are as strong and fine as the best steel of Castile, for all their bolos, hatchets, knives and other implements. As a

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instrumentos, y con precios acomodados; pues, por hacer un *bolo* de nuevo, dándole el hierro y el acero, lleva el oficial un real; por aderezar uno viejo y renovarle, poniéndole acero, etc. medio; y así por los demás instrumentos mayores o menores que, según son, llevan la paga.

Y es cierto que ningún oficio de entre los bisayas es más provechoso que éste, y así es el más honrado y estimado entre ellos, pues los mayores principales son los mejores herreros.

moderate price, the workman demands about one *real* for making a new *bolo*, including the iron and the steel; to restore/repair another, adding steel, half-a-real. And thus more or less for other bigger or smaller instruments. They are paid according to their nature.

It is certain that no artisan among the Bisayans is more profitable than this kind, as he is the most honored and esteemed among them; the greatest chiefs are the best smiths. □

## Chapter 6

## ANNOTATIONS

[1] *Tinagak*. Derived from the root *tagak*: in its primary meaning the word means honor, regard, reverence but in a varied form such as “*nakatagak*: what is spread out, like crumbs of bread, grains fallen over the floor.” Another meaning of the word *tagak* is: “to guard something.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[2] *Panugot*. This *panugot* cannot be found anywhere; however, there is a term in Bisayan as *panuhug* (*tuhug*): to thread; to pass a thread, a rope or a line through; to string. Cf. De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 362.

[3] *Carcostrojes*. A strange looking term. Unable to locate it anywhere but it sounds Spanish in its ending; *trojes*: containers. The types of baskets woven from various leaves are extremely numerous in the lexicons.

[4] *Cris*. *Kris*. This is a Malayan hispanicized term: *keris*, *cris*, *caris*, *kris* – A wavy 18 inch, blood-channel knife of the Muslims [earlier called Moros]; a type of a *barung*. Tramp [1995], *op. cit.*, p. 114. The Filipino Muslims in southern Mindanao and in the Sulu Archipelago take pride in more than 20 types of bolo-type weaponry: *Gunung*, *Kalis*, *Barung*, *Kampilan*, *Janup*, *Susuwat*, *Sanggut*, *Banjál*, *Gayang*, *Pinsawali*, *Laring*, *Puñal*, *Kris*, *Pira*, *Utak*, *Panabas*, *Binakuku*, *Bangkun*, *Kambantuli*, *Lahut*, *Pamarilan*, *Balasiung*, etc. All of these and more, it seems, were meant to preserve peace...

“*Kris* or *Caris*: A knife called *Kris*; some are straight, others are snake-shaped.” De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 87.

[5] *Baladiaw*. A double edged knife, sword. *Ibid.*, p. 29. A knife, dirk, dagger, a short weapon with two sharp sides. Tramp [1995], *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[6] *Dipang*. This *dipang* or *pirang* is a small sharp knife. De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 112. Tramp describes it as a *bolo* or *bolo* variety but it is much smaller than any *bolo*.

[7] *Basay*. Or better “*wasay*: an axe, an iron implement; in the lower part it has the blade and in the upper a pointed part, inserted in the hole of the wooden handle. – v. To work with the said ax. *Ibid.*, p. 375.

“*Uasay*: more properly *wasay*: Ax sickle.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[8] *Pati*. A handle of a knife. “*Pati*: It is the *kawu* of the ax or rake. *Patihan*: the one that has the *pati*.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.* The above-cited *kawu* seems to refer to the handle of the knife or an axe. Today, the *kawu* has reference

to a sling; shoulder strap. v. to carry a big basket with a shoulder strap, as Tramp offers it for us in his entry. 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

[9] *Parakol*. "An axe; an iron implement, it has the cutting edge on the lower part; in the upper part a ring to place the cover'." De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 239.

[10] *Baiar*. Unable to find an entry under *baiar* but there is one under *pisaw*.

[11] *Pisaw*. A knife that has a long, twisted *kawu* or handle made in a certain shape to cut. Clean and shave bamboo – *Pinisaw*: Another kind of machete, the blade in the form of a *pisaw*. It is big and hard." Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[12] *Asuansan*. This *parakul* is another type of an ax: "*Parakul*: ax; axe; hatachet; tomahawk." Tramp, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

"*Parakul*: Ax instrument of iron; the cutting edge is in the lower part and in the upper one a ring to place the cover. De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

[13] *Landasan*. "Two-headed anvil, or iron anvil to work on it the metals with a hammer." De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 178.

[14] *Karayang*. Better *karaha*: An iron frying pan; steel; the frying pans made of steel are called *karaha*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

"*Karaha*: *Carajay* or a kind of big frying pan with a short handle." De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 86.