

Capítulo 5

DE AGRICULTURA; MODO DE LABRAR LA TIERRA Y COGER SUS FRUTOS QUE USARON, Y USAN, ESTOS NATURAES

Vinculó el Supremo Hacedor de todas las cosas al continuo labor humano el forzoso y necesario sustento diurno, carga inevitable de la naturaleza, costándole más gotas de sudor en el rostro que bocados en el plato, siendo tan necesario un continuo afán en cultivar la tierra cuanto forzoso el comer para pasar la vida.

Esta necesidad forzosa y esta fuerza necesaria hizo, y hace, a estos naturales bisayas generalmente labradores. Y así podemos decir de ellos que todos universalmente, desde el mayor al menor, desde el principal al esclavo, y aun hasta las mujeres todas, excepto las muy principales, que tienen esclavos o tenían en su antigüedad, se ocupan en el cultivo de los campos y en el repetido afán de juntar las mieses necesarias para su sustento, para su tributo y para sus siembras ordinarias; que, aunque como dijimos ya, la próspera naturaleza, en ellos nada escasa, les ha dado en los montes tanta variedad copiosa de raíces y frutos bastantes para su ordinario sustento, con todo, o ya por natural inclinación, sino precepto divino, de cultivar la tierra, o ya por asegurar mejor y con más abundancia el logro de su fertilidad, o ya por tener más cierto y a mano, en campo propio, lo que la prevención ajena hace más

Chapter 5

CONCERNING AGRICULTURE: THE METHOD OF WORKING THE SOIL AND HARVESTING ITS FRUITS WHICH THESE NATIVES HAVE USED AND ARE NOW EMPLOYING

The Supreme Maker of all things bound together the never-ending human labor with the demanding and necessary daily sustenance – an inevitable burden of nature costing more tears of sweat on the forehead than morsels of food on the plate. The need for constant care in cultivating the soil becomes as great as the need for eating to preserve life.

This demanding necessity and indispensable exertion has caused and continues to cause these Bisayan natives to just become endless laborers. Hence, we may state that all universally, from the greatest to the least, from the chiefs to the slaves – and even to all women – except the highest chiefs who have slaves or had them in ancient times, are occupied in the cultivation of the lands. [*There is*] a continual need for gathering up the harvest necessary for their sustenance, for their tribute and for their ordinary plantings. But, as we have said already, a provident nature, in no way limited among them, has given them such an abundant variety of roots and fruits in the forests as is sufficient for their ordinary sustenance. Nonetheless, they cultivate the land either by natural inclination, if not by divine precept, so as to be better assured with a greater abundance the result of its fertility. Or to have greater certainty and at hand in their own fields what an outside supply makes more doubtful, be it from the forest or some distant place.

dudoso, o en el monte o en el ajeno, raros son, aun de los más viejos e impedidos, los que no siembran y cogen, cultivan y plantan sus necesarias comidas, se previenen con tiempo para la falta de ellas; que, aunque es verdad – no se les niega – que la flojedad bisaya es grandísima y su pereza sin igual; pues, según corresponde la tierra en lo fértil y vario de sus frutos, pudieran abundar muchísimo y tener mucho de sobra, con todo hay algunos buenos trabajadores y grandes labradores que abundan siempre, y aun venden no poco; y de los más, rarísimo se hallará que no tenga su sementera, que, como veremos después, a todos les sirve de despensa y de mercado donde se proveen del ordinario sustento y pan cotidiano, que Dios quiere le pidamos siempre y cada día.

El modo de sus sementeras y de cultivar la tierra, sembrar sus semillas y coger sus frutos es muy distinto en todo del nuestro; y así será fuerza decirlo con alguna claridad y extensión para que los curiosos, y los que no lo son, tengan cumplidas noticias; y, aunque fuera cosa muy prolija decir todos los abusos y supersticiones que tienen desde que comienzan a elegir puesto, donde labrar, hasta que llegan a coger sus frutos, no dejaré de decir lo más especial y notable, dejando mucho de lo que no lo es tanto: que todo servirá de pasto a la curiosidad y de tener llenas noticias de la variedad de genios humanos, que no lo son menos que los rostros: que cada tierra tiene cosas singulares y muy distintas, que, según los climas, terruño, influjos y calidades diferentes, se diferencian sus moradores en la disposición, manejo y buen logro de sus trabajos, a que influyó con particularidad la primera y suma causa maestra universal de todos.

En cuanto a las tierras, no hay por acá la diferencia de mio y tuyo que en otras partes, y los pleitos ordinarios en casi todas ellas sobre el dominio y posesión; porque son tantas, tan extendidas y buenas casi todas y en todas estas islas, que para sus moradores no sólo sobran sino que pudieran dar a millares de labradores de los que en otras partes las mendigan, y tal vez por falta de tierra no labran, siendo por acá al contrario, que sobran muchas tierras y extendidísimas, y falta quien las cultive. Y

Rare are they, even among the oldest and most crippled, who do not sow and reap, cultivate and plant their needed provisions. They anticipate on time for a chance lack of these. However, it is a truth that they cannot deny that the Bisayan sloth is tremendous and their indolence without equal. Due to the fertility of the land and the variety of its produce, they should be able to bring about a great abundance and even have a surplus. All in all, there are some good workers and fine laborers who always have much and even sell not a little. As for the rest of them, it will be found to be a very rare individual who does not have his field for planting, as we shall see later, which serves all as a storeroom and a market where they are provided with the ordinary sustenance and daily bread which God wishes us to ask of Him always and daily.

The manner of cultivating their lands, planting their seeds and harvesting their craft crops is quite different in every way from ours. Hence, it will be necessary to describe it with some clarity and extent in order that those desirous of information and those that are not, may have complete information. However, it would be a very tedious matter to relate all the abuses and superstitions which they have from the time they begin to choose the spot to work until they come to gather in the harvest. I shall not fail to tell about the most peculiar and notable, omitting much of what is not. All will serve as food for curiosity and will contain full information on the variety of human talents which are not less evident among them than ourselves. Each land has special and very distinct features; depending on the climate, poorness of the soil, different influences and qualities, their inhabitants differ in the disposition, management and attainment of advantage from their labor. All this is guided closely by the first and greatest cause, the Universal Master of all.

In as much as the lands are concerned, there is no difference here about mine and yours, as in other places, along with the usual litigations in almost all of these about their dominion and possession. So great and so extensive and fine are these lands in all these islands that for the inhabitants not only is there a surplus but could be given to thousands of workers from other regions where they are begging for them and where, due to lack of land, do not work. Here, the contrary is true for many and very extensive

aunque es verdad que cada pueblo, o vecindad, tiene sus términos propios y que son como tierras propias suyas y no de los otros pueblos, pero a cualquiera que llega y se avecinda entre ello, aunque sea nunca visto ni conocido, le dan opción para que escoja a sus voluntad toda y cuanta tierra quisiere, sin que le pidan por ello una blanca ni correspondencia alguna, siendo tierra por labrar; que de la labrada o cultivada, el que la labró o cultivó es dueño, y más si plantó cocos o árboles frutales, que estos siempre son suyos, sin que en esto haya entre ellos diferencias ni pleitos hasta ahora. Quiera Dios que esta sinceridad y conveniencia les dure siempre; que estos días parece ha habido quien la ha querido alterar algo: que como van entrando en ladinecos, algunos se van manchando con bellaquerías, pierden su antigua bondad y conveniencias con que vivían, sin arrebatarse los unos a los otros, antes cediendo fácilmente al que llegó primero a escoger, y mucho más al que plantó primero cocos, árboles frutales, *abacá*, y otras cosas: que a ellas tienen siempre derecho y dominio, aunque se alejen y vayan a vivir a otro pueblo.

Asentado, pues, que cada cual escoge la tierra, para labrar sus sementeras, a su albedrío, no siendo en tierra ocupada ya, o sus cercanías, que en esto se guardan respeto; el que quiere que otro no ocupe la que él escogió, hace su señal, y suele ser comúnmente rozar algún poco y cortar algunas ramas de árboles, que con aquello basta para que se entienda que aquel pedazo está ya escogido.

Varios eran los modos que tenían en su antigüedad para escoger, a su parecer, con acierto, y todos supersticiones y sin fundamento alguno. Uno era coger de aquel puesto que querían escoger una vara larga de un género de carrizo que es acá muy común, llamado *tigbaw*¹. Esta la hacían, sin cuenta ni orden, muchos pedacillos de tres a cuatro dedos de largo, iguales todos. Estos pedazos los iban poniendo en orden de tres en tres o de cuatro en cuatro, haciendo dos órdenes de cuadros de ellos, como caían: si salían parejos los cuadros y enteros en dichos dos órdenes,

lands remain lacking someone to cultivate them. However, it is true that each town or populated area has its own boundaries and is as if belonging to it. Not belonging to other towns, anyone who comes to settle among them, even though one was never seen or heard of, is given a chance to select freely all and as much land as he might wish without asking them for a cent nor making any agreement whatever, the land being for cultivation. As for the labor and cultivation, one who worked or cultivated it is master of it and especially if one planted coconuts or fruit trees. These always belong to such a one without there being in such a case any disputes and litigations, down to this day. God grant that this sincerity and good will would endure among them always. Nowadays it seems that there have been some who have desired to change matters somewhat; they arrive to be more conscious and thereby corrupt the natives in a cunning way that they are losing their ancient goodness and well-being with which they were accustomed to live without robbing one another. Previously they easily yielded to such a one who came first to select [*a piece of land*] and much more to such a one who planted first his coconuts, trees, fruits, *abaka* and other things. They always have a right and dominion over there even though they may go and live in another town.

It is obvious, then, that each one who selects land in order to cultivate crops at his own choice, not being on land already occupied or adjacent to it, is protected in this matter. One who desires that another does not claim what he has selected, makes his sign. Normally, this is to clear some ground a little and to cut some branches from the trees. This is sufficient so that it may be understood that portion is already selected.

In antiquity they had various ways of selecting land in their judgment; certainly all their superstitions are without any foundation whatsoever. One had to pick from that spot which they wished to select, a long stalk of a kind of reed called *tigbaw*.¹ This they made without counting or measuring into many little pieces three to four fingers in length and all equal. They placed these pieces in the order of three on three or four on four, making two arrangements of squares as they fell. If the squares came out even and complete in these two arrangements, they said that it was

decían que era buena tierra y fértil y así comenzaban a labrarla: si los cuadros no salían parejos y quedaban una o dos de las astillas o pedacillos, las dejaban porque decían que no rendirían bien; y, si hechos los dichos cuadros quedaban dos o cuatro pedacillos, de modo que venían a estar iguales los dos órdenes en que los dividieron, decían que podría ser saliese bien o mal, y así solían probar ventura y proseguir bajo de aquella duda en su cultivo.

Otros disponían los pedazos, cerrando los ojos, e hincándolos en el suelo; y, cuando, por dicha, salían parejos e iguales, decían era buena tierra, y, si desiguales y con altibajos, que no, y la dejaban. Con tan poco fundamento como ésto escogían o dejaban la tierra en que habían de sembrar.

Pero aun era menos malo esto; peor era cuando, después de haberse cansado en hacer *kaingin*² – así llaman a limpiar la tierra de sus malezas, hierbas, espinas, ramones y todo lo que no es árboles – , que van limpiándolo con un *bolo*, que es un cuchillo ancho, romo y de particular hechura, como en su lugar diremos, y cosa bien prolija, porque por acá ni han usado hasta hoy de arados, azadones y otros instrumentos nuestros, ni son a propósito, porque hacen en montes o espesuras de muchas arboledas sus rozas, o *kaingin*, incapaces de semejantes instrumentos por la multitud de raíces que tienen toda esta tierra.

No digo aquí cómo a los dichos *bolos* untaban con un género de gachas que acá llaman *linugaw*³, hecho de arroz con mucha agua, que los españoles llaman *atole*, o *canje* los portugueses; y esto decían en su lengua, que era *iquinalemo*⁴ que quiere decir que “ablandaban y hacían fácil el trabajo,” con que habían de cortar y rozar las dichas hierbas, o malezas, con poco juicio al parecer, pues el *bolo* habían de untar con cosa dura para que lo fuese más y no con las gachas dichas, que ablandan; cosas de gente ciega y que parece no alcanzaban las cosas ni discurrían.

Y así, si después de haberse cansado muchos días en rozar o limpiar, como hemos dicho, encontraban con un montón de tierra,

good, fertile land and thus they began to cultivate it. If the squares did not come out even and there remained one or two of the cuttings or pieces they left, they said that land would not yield well. Now if after making the squares, there remained two or four little pieces so that the two arrangements into which they were divided came out equal, they said that the outcome could be good or bad. Thus, they proceeded to try their fortune and attempt with that doubt its cultivation.

Others arranged the pieces by closing their eyes and driving them into the ground. When through chance they came out even and equal, they said that it was good land; if unequal and with variations in height, that it was not, and they abandoned it. Hence, with such little foundation as this, they selected or rejected the land in which they were to plant.

However, this was a lesser evil; it was even worse after having tired themselves in making *kaingin*,² which they call clearing the lands of their briars and weeds, brambles and fallen branches and everything except the trees. In this clearing they used a *bolo* which is a wide blunt knife with its own features, as we shall see when we treat of it in its place. It is a tedious procedure because here they have used neither plows nor hoes nor our other tools to this day. Neither are they suitable because their clearings or *kaingin* are made out of forests or thickets of many trees. These tools would be useless because of the numerous roots which this entire land has.

I shall not speak here about how they rubbed these *bolo* with a kind of paste which they call here *linugaw*,³ made of rice with much water and which the Spaniards call '*atole*' or the Portuguese '*canje*'. In their language they said that it was *iquinalemo*,⁴ which means to say that it "*was softened and made work easy*" of cutting down and clearing these weeds and bushes. Seemingly this was done with little judgment, for the *bolo* should have been rubbed with a hard substance so that it might be more so and not pastes that soften. These are doings of blind people; it seems that they did not understand these matters nor conjecture about them.

Thus, if after tiring themselves out for many days in clearing or cleaning out a field, as we have said, they come upon a mound

que llaman *pusgo*⁵, que son las casas de las hormigas, como ya dijimos, dejaban dicha sementera, porque decían que, o se moriría el hombre o la mujer, y quedaría viudo el uno de ellos.

También la dejaban si encontraban en dicha roza un caracol de tierra, que llaman *balingaguko*⁶, que es al modo de los caracoles comestibles de España, o algo mayor, que acá no se comen; porque suelen dar un género de chillido le temen, y es uno de los *paglihis*; y por esto, en topándolo, dejan la sementera porque temen les suceda algún mal.

Más solemne era cuando topaban en dicha roza un *balagon*, ya dijimos lo que es que, son por acá muy frecuentes, y suelen naturalmente echarse un nudo, y suelen ser de varios tamaños, desde el gordor de el dedo hasta el del brazo, y aun más según son de crecidos y antiguos.

En hallando, pues, uno de estos anudado, lo miden, y, si sólo se levanta del suelo hasta el tobillo, dicen que es buena señal y prosiguen su rozado; si a la garganta del pie, que es malo y que le han de poner en el cepo, porque no sacará para pagar tributo: si llega a la pantorrilla es peor, porque dicen que es medida del alto del ataúd, que llaman *lungon*⁷, con que es señal y que se morirá; si llega el nudo a la rodilla, dicen que es buena señal y que tendrán mucho arroz, por ser los cestos en que lo ponen como la rodilla de altos; si llega a la cintura, era malo porque decían que había de enviudar; si a la boca, bueno porque era señal que había de comer mucho arroz y lo mismo a la cabeza, porque en ella asientan los vencejos, o correones, con que cargan el arroz en sus cestos; si sobrepujaba la cabeza, era peor, porque decían se morirían sin falta. Y de esta manera otros disparates o consejas de viejas que les daban a entender, sin fundamento, estas cosas que ellos creían y tenían por muy ciertas, porque las mamaban con la leche; cosas todas de que ya ahora se rien los más y que tienen fe; aunque los que no la tienen, las observan siempre.

of earth which they call *pusgo*⁵ and are the houses of ants, as we have stated, they abandoned the field because they said that the man or the woman would die and one of them would be widowed.

They would also abandon it if they discovered in this clearing a land snail which they call *balingaguko*;⁶ it is similar to the edible snails of Spain or a bit larger. Here they are not eaten because they usually give off a kind of a squeak which they fear and is one of the *paglihi*. For this reason upon encountering one, they abandon the field because they fear that something evil will befall them.

It was more serious when they turned up in the clearing a *balagon*; we have already related what this is. They occur here very plentiful and are accustomed to make themselves into a knot. These are usually of various sizes from the thickness of a finger to that of the arm, according to their maturity and age.

Upon finding one of these knotted, they uncover it. If it straightens up from the ground as far as the ankle, they say that it is a good sign and they proceed with the clearing; if to the instep, it is bad and they will have to be placed in stocks because they will not get enough yield to pay the tributes. If it reaches to the calf of the leg, that is worse, because they say that if it is half the height of the casket which they call *lungon*,⁷ they say it is a sign that they are going to die. If the knot comes up to the knee, they said that it is a good sign and that they will have much rice because the baskets in which they put the rice are up to the knee in height. If it reached to the waist, it was bad because they said that they would become widowed; if to the mouth, good because it was a sign that they would have much rice to eat. The same held for the head because on it they placed the bands or straps with which they carry the baskets of rice. If it exceeded the height of the head, it was bad because they said that they would die without fail. In the same way [*one can mention*] other absurdities or old wives tales, things which they used to believe without any basis, and which they considered to be most certain because they took them in with their mother's milk. All these things are now laughed at by the majority and those who have the faith. However, those who do not have the faith always observe them.

Hecho el *kaingin*, y dejado secar, cortaban las ramas de todos los árboles, y aun los troncos de los medianos; que los muy grandes los dejaban, y dejan, porque no tienen tiempo, ni tal vez hachas a propósito para cortarlos. Muchos de ellos se secan con el fuego con que queman todo lo rozado y cortado, de modo que el que más trabaja en las sementeras de los bisayas, o el que más hace, es el fuego; y de quemarse bien o mal lo rozado, les es más fácil, o más difícil, el hacer mayores o menores sementeras; porque después de quemado todo, entra el *pagdurok*⁸, que ellos llaman y es ir amontonando lo que quedó por quemar de los palos o troncos, y apartando los que pueden servir para cerca, que llevan a la extremidad o remates de la sementera, amontonan lo demás con la hierba que quedó o volvió a nacer; que todo lo queman en grandes hogueras, que llaman *tapong*⁹. Y de esta manera dejan la sementera tan limpia como la palma de la mano, excepto los troncos grandes, que, como dijimos, no los pueden cortar, antes suelen arrimarles uno de los dichos montones que se queman, y quedan muertos para siempre.

No son pocos los indios que mueren por causa de estos árboles que caen en sus sementeras; unos porque se caen cortando las ramas y se quedan en el suelo hechos tortilla, y otros se los suele llevar la rama que cortaron consigo, y, a bien librar, quedan cojos o tullidos. A otros les cae, estando abajo, otra rama grande y los revienta las cabezas; y no son pocos los desastres que en este género de labor les suceden, así por ser de suyo peligroso como por su poca providencia y atención prevenida.

Hecha ya y limpia la roza de la sementera, que, aunque hay determinada medida de largo y ancho por cada uno, pocos la cumplen, así por su flojedad, como por otros muchos impedimentos que fuera largo de contar, disponen la siembra, que es también muy de otra manera que la nuestra; y, dejando un montón de supersticiones que tienen tocantes a la semilla, que ponen en remojo dos días antes ó tres de sembrar en dichas partes, aunque en otras no la remojan.

Upon completing the *kaingin* and permitting it to dry, they used to cut-off the branches from all the trees and even the trunks of the average sized ones. They would leave the very large ones, and still do, because they do not have the time or perhaps the axes necessary for cutting them down. Many of these [*stumps*] are dried out by the fire with which they burn the brambles and cuttings so that the greatest laborer in the fields of the Bisayans, or one who does the most, is the fire. Accordingly as the undergrowth is burned off well or poorly, it will easier or more difficult to make greater or lesser plantings. Because after burning everything, the *pagdurok*,⁸ as they call him, enters and piles up everything that was left for burning of the branches or trunks. He separates what can be used for an enclosure, and they carry them to the borders of the fields, piling up the rest with grass which remained or began to sprout again and burn it all in a grand bonfire which they call *tapong*.⁹ In this manner, the patch becomes as smooth as the palm of the hand except for the large stumps which, as we have stated, they are unable to cut-down. And so they are accustomed to pile all this up around them and thus destroy them totally.

Not a few of the natives are killed as a result of these trunks because they topple into their fields; some because they fall to the ground flat as pancakes, while cutting down the branches. Others are accustomed to carry the branch which they cut down and in the attempt become crippled or maimed. Still upon others, who are beneath, there falls a large limb on them and splits their heads open. The accidents in this type of work are not few because it is dangerous in itself as well as their lack of forethought and caution.

When the field has been cleared of the brush, although there may have been determined a length and width for each one, seldom is it complied with. [*This is due*] both to their indolence and to the many other obstacles which would take too long to describe. They go on with their planting which is also much different than our way. I omit the mountains of superstitions that they have concerning the seed. Prior to sowing, they soak the seed for two or three days in these regions; in others, they do not soak them.

El modo de sembrar no es a puñados, esparciendo por la tierra los granos que solo la *daba*,¹⁰ que dijimos ya ser género de mijo, siembran esparciendo la semilla que llaman *sabuag*.¹¹ El arroz es en dos maneras; porque o es en tierra aguanosa, como se siembra también en el reino de Valencia, y en ella se va plantando el arroz, ya nacido, de un palmo poco más o menos de alto, de que tenían hecho almacigo en unas como heras y éste le plantan de mata en mata, que es cosa prolija, antes que se llene de agua; y, en cuando ya prendido, va creciendo hasta que da su fruto, dentro del agua siempre. Y a este género de siembra llaman *tubigan*¹², que quiere decir “de agua”. En Bisayas no es tan usado este modo como en la Isla de Manila y otras. El otro modo, y es acá el ordinario, y el arroz es mucho mejor, como el trigo de España de los montes y que no se riega. Es prolijo, pero, pues es suyo, digámoslo como es.

Y es como se sigue: juntando los que han de sembrar, muchos o pocos, según se ayudan, y tal vez es uno solo que no tiene quien lo haga; llevan los hombres unos palos o cañas, algo combadas por abajo y puntiagudas, y son como bordones, que llaman *bakul*¹³ o *bakur*, según varias partes. Con ellas van dando al sesgo unos golpes en el suelo, y queda hecho un hoyito del ancho del dedo pulgar, poco mas o menos. Van los hombres, pocos o muchos, en ringlera haciendo dichos hoyos, y las mujeres por el mismo orden detrás de ellos, echando en cada hoyito cinco o seis granos de arroz: que cada cual lleva en la otra mano un *hunguti*¹⁴, o *paya*¹⁵ (ya dijimos son las cáscaras del coco limpias, que les sirven de tazas y platos, etc.), lleno de él: y es de ver cómo, sin bajarse al suelo, sino sólo combándose un poco y siguiendo siempre a los hombres, aciertan siempre, sin echar, sino raro grano que salta, fuera del hoyo. Y aun tiene otra atención, y es de ir poniendo el dedo pulgar, o todo el pie, encima de dichos hoyos, que, como están al soslayo y socavados, con facilidad se cae la tierra, y con eso quedan cubiertos los granos que en cada hoyo van echando; y de esta manera van sembrando sus sementeras, ayudándose unos a otros con solo convidarles a comer aquel día, haciendo el gasto el dueño de la sementera; que este es uso suyo muy antiguo, con el cual,

The method of sowing is not to scatter the seed abundantly but to scatter it on the land like the *daba*;¹⁰ that is, as we have already stated, a kind of a millet which they sow by scattering the seed called *sabuag*.¹¹ Rice is sown in two ways: in swampy lands just as they also plant it in the Kingdom of Valencia. Into these they plant the rice already sprouted to about a *palmo*, more or less, in height and which were prepared as seedlings in a kind of drained plots. These they plant one sprig after another prior to filling it with water, which is a tedious task. Then it takes root and begins to grow until it yields its harvest in the water. This kind of planting they call *tubigan*,¹² which is to say "from the water". In the Bisayas this method is not used as much as in the Island of Manila and others. The other method, which is employed here and is the customary one and a better rice and similar to the wheat of Spain from the mountains, is not by irrigation. It is a tedious undertaking but since it is their own we shall relate how it is done.

It is as follows. Those that must plant come together as helpers, many or a few. Sometimes, there is only one who has no one to help. The men carry some poles or bamboo a bit curved at the bottom with a sharp point. These are like a pilgrim's staff which they call *bakul*¹³ or *bakur* depending on the region. So, with these they give the curved end some blows on the ground and there results a little hole of the width of the thumb more or less. The men proceed making these holes, few or many in a row. The women follow in the same manner after them, placing in each little hole five or six grains or rice. Each one carries in the other hand a *hunguti*¹⁴ or a *paya*¹⁵ full of rice. We have already said that these are the shells of the coconuts cleaned out, which serve them as cups and platters, etc. It is incredible how, without stooping down to the ground, but only bending a bit and following the men, they always hit the mark. Rarely does a grain miss the hole. Along with this there is another matter to heed: this is to go along putting the big toe or the whole foot on top of these holes. Since these are sloped and turned up, the earth falls readily back with the result that the grains are buried in the hole. In this manner they go about sowing their lands, helping one another with only the invitation to eat on that day at the owner's expense. This is a very ancient practice of theirs and along with it, aside from the

además de la huelga de comer y beber bien, se concilian las voluntades y fomentan para ayudarse unos a otros con mucho gusto: que, de otra manera, fuera muy difícil y casi imposible, y de esta en pocas horas siembran sementeras muy grandes, pues, cuanto mayor es, tiene cuidado de convidar más el dueño de la sementera; y, en especial, los mayores principales lo hacen con más ostentación, y tienen por género de vanidad y jactancia decir “cien hombres o doscientos, etc., ayudaron a Fulano y les dió de comer y beber con mucha abundancia,” etc.

Acabada la siembra del arroz al modo dicho, en que suelen entremezclar algunos *gabi*¹⁶, en algunas partes; en otras *maiz o dawa*¹⁷, que se dan más presto y se cogen uno o dos meses antes del arroz, y uno y otro lo siembran a las orillas de la sementera que ellos llaman *daplin*¹⁸, comienzan a cercarla (prevención necesaria para lograrla, que de otra manera no lo hicieran).

El modo de hacer estas cercas también es vario. Dos son los ordinarios; el uno llaman *tarloc*¹⁹, que es hincando palos como el brazo, más o menos también de grandes, unos al lado de otros, como los dedos de las manos o algo más anchos, de modo, empero, que el puerco de monte, contra quien se hacen las cercas, no pueda meter el hocico, que luego las derriba.

Estos palos van amarrando, que serán como una braza poco más a menos de largo, con los *balagon* que dijimos son género de zarza sin espinas, o de mimbres, aunque más largos y más recios que ellos, dando de esta manera vuelta a su sementera; que es cierto cosa prolija y de trabajo.

El segundo modo es el que llaman *saroc*²⁰, que quiere decir “cosa junta y sobrepuesta”; porque el modo de hacerlas es ir clavando de media en media braza, poco más o menos, dos palos, uno delante del otro, como un palmo distantes. En medio de estos dos palos van echando a la larga, o cañas o palos de los que ya dijimos iban apartando cuando hacían *duroc*, y poniendo unos sobre otros hasta el altor que quieren – suele ser de una braza comúnmente; y, puestos dichos palos a la larga, van amarrando

relaxation of eating and drinking, they settle their differences and increase good will so as to help each other with much pleasure. By any other means, perhaps, it might be very difficult and almost impossible. In a matter of a few hours they plant very large patches; the larger the sown lands, the more help the owner takes care to invite. [*This is*] especially true of the greater *principales* who do all this with more show and have a kind of vanity or ostentation saying, "a hundred men or two hundred, helped So-and-So and he gave them food and drink in great abundance, etc."

Completing the planting of the rice in the manner described, they are accustomed to mix in some *gabi*¹⁶ in some regions and in others, maize or *dawa*¹⁷ which matures more quickly and is harvested one or two months before the rice. They sow both of these at the edges of the sown lands which they call *daplin*.¹⁸ They begin to enclose them, which is a necessary step to preserve them, for there is no other way out.

The manner of making these enclosures is also varied. Two of them are common: one they call *tarlok*¹⁹ which consists in driving in stakes the size of an arm, more or less, with the large ones at the side of some about the size of a finger or somewhat wider. This is done in such a way that the wild boars, against whom the enclosures are erected, cannot squeeze his snout through and then tear them down.

These stakes, about an arm in length more or less, are tied down with the *balagon*, which we said is a kind of vine without thorns, or like wicker (osier) but much longer and thicker than these are. In this way they surround their fields which certainly is a tedious matter and work.

The second manner is one which they call *sarok*,²⁰ which is to say: "*something close and added on*" because the method of making them is to fasten two poles of about half a *braza* each. One in front of the other at about a *palmo* distant. In between these two poles they place lengthwise either the bamboo or branches which we have said they removed when they were making *durok*. They place one over the other up to the height that they desired; ordinarily this used to be about one *braza*. Having placed these poles lengthwise, they proceed to tie together those

aquellos dos que se hincaron, careados con dos o tres amarras, al modo dicho, para que no se esparzan los que se encajaron dentro, quedando con esto las dichas cercas, aunque fuertes, no bastantes aún para defender los sembrados de los puercos de montes, que son una de las mayores persecuciones y plagas que padecen estos naturales; y así es menester estarlas aderezando y fortificando siempre y casi todos los días, y las noches voceando y auventándoles a voces y con otros ruidos, haciéndoles cayas y poniéndoles púas de *bacaies* en los pasos y aberturas que hacen en las dichas cercas. Y nada de ésto basta. Y más cuando están ya engolosinados; y no son pocos los sembrados que ellos echan a perder totalmente.

Y dejando el tedio de escarbar o desherbar los arroces, que acá llaman *dalos*,²¹ que por ser estas tierras tan fértiles es casi forzoso limpiar dos veces una misma sementera; porque es tanta la priesa que se da a crecer la hierba que al segundo día está casi tan alta como cuando se quitó (propiedad de lo malo, que crece siempre y cunde más de lo que fuera razón), y así ahogan el arroz si no se menean bien los manos; y, el pobre indio que es solo, no puede acudir con tiempo a hacerlo este beneficio, sin el cual no es poco el que se malogra, y queda ahogado de las malezas que se dieron más prisa a creer que el arroz.

El instrumento con que limpian o desherban las sementeras es el mismo bolo con que las labraron u otro menor, si es que lo tienen – que no todos alcanzan a tener dos – sin haber azadoncillos ni otros instrumentos como en España, propios para dicho efecto; y así como casi los más cortan y no arrancan de raíz las hierbas, tal vez quedan por las espaldas, casi parejas. Las cortadas con las que no lo están aún; con que hace más prolijo y menos provechoso este trabajo.

En llegando el tiempo de la cosecha, se repiten las supersticiones, que no son menos al coger que al sembrar. Diré algo de las más comunes; que otras apunté arriba, tratando del arroz.

two which they drove into the ground, holding them with two or three windings in the manner mentioned so that those which are enclosed inside will not separate. Notwithstanding, these enclosures, even though they are strong, are even yet insufficient to protect the planted lands from the wild boars. These are one of the greatest torments and plagues that these natives suffer. So it is necessary to be prepared at all times. Almost day and night they go shouting and filling the air with cries and shouts and digging ditches and filling them with spines and *bagakay* along the pathways and openings which the boars make in these enclosures. None of this suffices, especially when they already have a strong desire for these delights. There are not a few of these fields that are completely destroyed.

What more, there is the need of cultivating and weeding the rice paddies, which are called here *dalos*.²¹ Since these lands are so fertile, it is almost mandatory to weed the plantings twice because so great is the speed with which the weeds grow. On the second day they are almost as tall as when they were taken out (a characteristic of evil, which is always growing and propagating more than there is any reason for it). And so the rice is choked-out unless they keep their hands active. The poor native who is alone cannot find anyone in time to help him accomplish this. As a result many are disappointed and the paddies are choked by the undergrowth which developed more readily than the rice.

The instrument with which they clean and weed the paddies is the same *bolo* with which they cultivated them or another smaller one, if they have it. Not everyone can afford to have two, much less to have small hoes or other tools, as in Spain appropriate for this purpose. Hence, since almost all of them cut and do not pull out the weeds from among the rice, there remain along the rows, in almost equal amounts, the weeds which are cut and those that are not. Thus, the work is tedious and of little profit.

Upon the arrival of harvest time, they repeat the superstitions; there are not less of them at harvest than at the time of planting. I shall say something about the most common ones; others I have referred to above in treating of the cultivation of rice.

Tres días antes de comenzar a coger el arroz, con las preven- ciones que ya dije, suelen estar sin llegar al fuego, ni los maridos a sus mujeres, porque dicen que esto es necesario para que el arroz grane bien, y si no será paja todo, sin grano; y el fuego con que en estos tres días cuecen su comida no se ha de buscar de otra casa, sino que se ha de encender en ella con *bagir*, que es uno de los modos que ya dejamos dichos.

Tampoco dejan aquellos días subir a sus casas otro que no viva en ellas, y aun en otras partes, ni los mismos moradores suben a ellas sino que se quedan en el campo; porque, subiendo – dicen – merma el arroz, y que se huía, agraviado de que no les dejen toda la casa sola. Y a este modo otros disparates sin traza ni conveniencia alguna, que en todo seguían a ciegas las pisadas de sus antepasados, más ciegos que ellos, y así era fuerza seguirse lo que dijo Cristo: *Si caecus, etc.*

Demos fin a este capítulo de las sementeras con el instru- mento que les servía antes de azadón, y aun ahora, porque pocos son los que le tienen y usan.

Este era un palo rollizo como el brazo, y de una vara de largo, de madera fuerte, que adelgazaban, quitándole por el un lado más de la mitad, y haciéndole una punta, no delgada ni aguda, sino chata y como de tres dedos de anchos y uno de grueso, dejando la una parte entera, y sólo en lo bajo la emparejaban. Este palo hincan con fuerza en el suelo; y, cargando con él hacia un lado, levantan la tierra o la ablandan; y, repitiendo tres o más veces en el mismo hoyo el hincar el palo y ladearle hasta que queda todo a la redonda la tierra conmovida, en el hoyo que queda, plantan uno de los hijos de los *gabis*, que dijimos ya llamarse *ubi*²² o el cuello del *gabi* que cogieron, que llaman *sulang*²³ [inc], sin taparle, sino solo le dejan caer dentro, dejando el cogollo hacia arriba, y allí lo dejan hasta que va echando sus raíces, hojas y meollo, que con lo blando de la tierra crece más.

Three days prior to commencing the rice harvest, with the preparation which I have already spoken about, they customarily live without approaching fire, and men stay away from their wives. They say that this is necessary so that the rice will seed well and may not become all straw without grain. The fire with which during these three days they cook their meals may not be brought from another house but must be kept burning in it with *bagir*, which is one of the methods which we have already spoken about.

Nor will they allow, during those days, anyone to go into their houses who do not live there. In other regions, not even the dwellers themselves may go into them but remain out in the field. If they go up they say the same will happen to the rice. They were afraid to leave the house alone. In this way there were many other absurdities without any scheme or usefulness whatsoever. In all of this they were following blindly in the footsteps of their ancestors and were even more blind than them. Therefore, there is a lot of truth in what the Lord had said: "*Si caecus... etc*". (If the blind...)

We may conclude this chapter about the sown lands with the instrument which they utilized as hoe and even now because there are very few who have the latter and use it.

The former was a round pole, the size of one large *vara* in length of strong wood. They thinned it down taking off one side more than half and making a point, not thin or sharp but flat and about three fingers in width and one in thickness, leaving one side whole. Only at the lower end did they level it off. This piece of wood they drove forcibly into the ground and leaning on it towards one side, they raised the earth and loosened it. They repeated this three or more times in the same hole, driving in the pole and pushing it to the side until the earth had been completely loose around it. In the hole that is made they plant one of the sprouts of the *gabi* which we have said they call here *ubi*,²² or else the stalk of the *gabi* which they had picked, and which they call *sulank*.²³ They simply let it fall into the ground with the bud upwards and without covering it. There they leave it until it sprouts roots, leaves and stalk which because of the looseness of the earth grows larger.

De la misma manera plantan los *ubis* y *apares*²⁴, etc., excepto que estos los cubren con tierra; porque, como son trozos solo del meollo, o carne, no se los coman las gallinas, perros y otros animales caseros, que, como hechos a comer de estas raíces, ni aun a las crudas perdonan.

Y esto baste de lo tocante a las sementeras, que fuera cosa muy prolija decir todo lo que en ellas pasa, y más lo supersticioso.

In the same manner they plant the *ubi*, and the *apari*,²⁴ etc., except that they cover these with earth because since they are only pieces of flesh or fiber, the chickens, dogs and other predatory animals eat them. Once having made a meal of these roots, not even the greenest ones are spared by them.

This is sufficient concerning their planted fields. It would be very tedious to tell everything that happens there and especially the superstitions. □

Chapter 5

ANNOTATIONS

[1] *Tigbaw*. A reed grass or known by another Bisayan name as the *talahib*; cf. Annotation #3 in Chapter Four.

[2] *Kaingin*. Or *kainginon*, *kaingnon*: A clearing; clearing in a forest made by cutting trees and setting them on fire; grange; swidden. v. to farm by cutting down trees and grass and burning. Tramp, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Kaingin: The clearing where the sowing is to be made. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[3] *Linugaw*. Derived from the word *lugaw*: something with a lot of water, like rice, *kamoti* or some other item when boiled s. A rice-soup with a lot of stock and without any lard or salt; plain boiled rice." De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 194. Nowadays, the Samareños add many other ingredients along with a lot of chicken in it and call it *arroz caldo*.

Lugaw: Cooked rice with food or other ingredients. *Linugaw*, the said boiling. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[4] *Iquinalemo*. We have not been able to find the meaning of this word. We trust in Alcina's description.

[5] *Pusgo*. A termite nest. "*Pusgu*: A mound rising from the ground where the so-called *anay*, the termites or white ants, build their dwellings. Indoors, they make their way into wooden walls, posts, partitions destroying a structure completely within a short time. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

Anay: A very dangerous ant. Some are white, others black. The white become red in time and they are the most pernicious.

Pusgu: Earth house built by the ant *anay* – *anay*, with a multitude of cavities and receptacles. – The ant *anay*, and the small ones; they are good food to feed the turkey chicks. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 253.

[6] *Balingaguko*. Properly *balinkukugu* or *balinguguku*: A tree snail. Sánchez, 1711, *op. cit.* Tramp presents in his entry this *balinguguku* as a land shell variety. 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[7] *Lungon*. Or *paglulungunun*, *paglungnun*: a coffin, a casket. "*Larungun*: tree, or heavy log from the tree. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

Lungun: casket, funeral box. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 191.

[8] *Pagdurok*. A term derived from the root *duruk*: the sticks from the clearing of the *Kaingin* piled up in a bunch and burned. Duluk durudkun, *tapung*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[9] *Tapong*. Same as the *durok*: "A pile of brush, sticks and vines which were gathered-up in cleaning up the fields for planting." *Ibid*.

[10] *Daba*. Should read *dawa*: a kind of a millet whose fruit is very small and edible. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 110. Sánchez's entry: *Dawa*: millet.

[11] *Sabuag*. To sow seeds or to cast them this way and that way." Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[12] *Tubigan*. "That which has water, puddles; a watery place. – s. A game of children. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 368.

[13] *Bakul*. Perhaps it should *baku*: A type of a curved bolo, the downward cut. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[14] *Hunguti*. Better *Hungut*: The shell of a coconut cleaned out to serve as a vessel for drinking water, etc. *Ibid*.

"A half-coconut shell used as a bowl or a cup; when cleaned out it is called a *paya* and serves as a plate or bowl. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[15] *Paya*. Just as Alcina described it; this is the half-shell of a coconut cleaned-out.

[16] *Gabi*. This is a taro or root-crop, *Colocasia esculenta* known as the *lagway* or *gaway*: "this is the common, ordinary food of the Bisayans; others call it *sule*. Parts of the *lagway*: *unud* the flesh, or *purut*, the husk; *surulhan*, *susulhan*: the upper part or head *itungud*, the point; *lungaw*, is also the head; *papa*, the cover or the *palwa of the leave*; *tayubung*, the stem inside stem, *an бага unud*.

Burukon, the leave not yet open. *Apayud*, *panginayawon*, the open leaves. *Mangiyaw*, vel, *mahirak san lagway*, *agud di mamatay*, *pangiyawun an dahun*. *Dagmay*, the old leaves, *an lagas na*.

Qualities of the *gabi* or *lagway*: *Matari*, the watery one, of bad flavor. *Mabuga*, *mabuka*, or *mapuka an mapurut*, *an mamara an hagna*, *kun sa kabasan in maayu*.

The kinds of *gabi* are: *iriwan*, *tumaw*; *kabatu*, *kubkub minaya*, *an gurangon kay maraut kun sayon pan gabihun*, *kay matari yadtu kaburungan*, *binugiu-runun*, or *binukidnun liniswik*; *kulusan uwak*, *linawaan*, *pakpak balud*; *talaud*, *binagung*; *minawas*, *kinilala*, *sumilikay sa alad*; *dumatug*, *daku itun nga lagway*; *makagbang*, *gangiun*, *nipis*, *sunugan tikaw*; *buris*, *bakutan*, *magsaluru lingun*; *initlug*, *batud*, *magkuma linunut*, *tinampukaw*, *inabuka*; *bankas*; *gatak*, *alalaha*; *minarugang*, *sinuatan*, *kirupi*, *hipkaw*; *labuhan*; *lupaw*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[17] *Dawa*. Cf. # 10 annotation above.

[18] *Daplin*. Edges of a field; also shores of the sea or rivers, the edge of the dress is called *sidsid*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

[19] *Tarlok*. Or “*Tadluk, burubugsuk, talabugsuk*: Hedges in a corral or *panasag, pagtadlukan agud magadigun, tadluk*. Also a tramp to catch wild pigs, or in the corral of the atub. In general any hedges, called *luk*, if not very high. *Ibidem*.

[20] *Sarok*. The only meaning found for the work *sarok* is to catch or draw water with a bamboo or any other thing, which does not agree with what Alcina is describing. *Ibid*.

[21] *Dalos*. “To clean or to cut-down the brush with a *bolo*, or a similar thing. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 105.

Tramp offer us this entry: *dalus*: to weed; to cut the grass with a bolo; to cut grass to the roots with a broad-tipped knife. *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

[22] *Ubi*. A yam; tuber, vegetable tuber whose pulp is generally of a purple color, *Diocoreaceae* family. Tramp [1995], *op. cit.*, p. 460.

[23] *Sulang. Sulank*. It seems that the word should read properly as *sula* and is a reference to “*Surulhan san gaway*: Stalk of the *gaway* or *palawan*, which separated from the body of the root is once planted. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 319.

[24] *Apari*. This is a tuber or an edible root crop. “*Apari*: An edible taro, which in Borongan, Samar, is known as *baribaran*; its flesh is white and has an excellent taste. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 20.

“*Apari*: a certain edible and sweet taro, but not as much as the *baribaran*. *Aparihan*, the sowing field of this root or the one who has it, vel, *aparihun*, vel, *aparihanun nga tawu*’.

“The species of *apari* are: *agugukay, hinigda, batangun, purikut, balibarun*.

“The various parts of the *apari* are: *tugud*, the birth or branch of the *lunga*, the pointed end; *dawahug*, the branch around which it grows. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*