

***ALCINA's Historia de las Islas ... (1668)***  
**[Part I, Book III, Chapter 18]**

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## Capítulo 18

### DE LOS BRUJOS, UNGLOS Y OTROS SEMEJANTES DE SU ANTIGÜEDAD, Y SI LOS HAY AHORA TODAVÍA

La materia de este capítulo es la más ruidosa de cuantas hay entre los bisayas, y la más dudosa. La fama común de que hay entre ellos brujos, que llaman en Leite, Samar o Ybabao *Aswang*<sup>1</sup>, y en Zibu y Bool, *Aloc*<sup>2</sup> o *Unglo*<sup>3</sup>, y en otras partes con otros varios nombres, es tan pública, que antes son notados los bisayas de que los más lo son; la verdad Dios la sabe.

El averiguar o saber quién lo sea es tan difícil que, en más de treinta años que he vivido entre ellos, y en casi setenta años que hay ministros nuestros, no sé que haya averiguado de ninguno en especial o en individuo que lo sea. Diré lo que a ellos he oído, y lo que yo he visto, en favor de los que dicen que los hay. Y diré, por la parte contraria, las razones que prueban que no los hay, y cada cual creará lo que quisiere, que yo siempre estoy con duda, y tal que ni me atrevo a negar que no los haya en algunas partes, ni a asegurar quienes y cómo, porque es materia dudosa. Y nuestro Padre Martín del Río, después de haber escrito largo y mucho en su *Magia de las Sagas* (que así se llaman en latín las brujas), últimamente en el fin de sus obras, lo deja con duda y no deter-

## Chapter 18

### CONCERNING WITCHES, *UNGLOS* AND OTHER SUCH IN THEIR ANTIQUITY; WHETHER SUCH STILL EXIST NOW

The material of this chapter is one of the most widely discussed among the Bisayans and one which is most questionable. It is common knowledge that there are among them witches who are known in Leyte, Samar and Ibabaw as *aswang*,<sup>1</sup> and in Cebu and Bohol as *aluk*<sup>2</sup> or *unglu*;<sup>3</sup> in other regions they are known by various other names. This is so widespread that the Bisayans bear the stigma that most of them are such; only God knows the truth!

To ascertain, or to get to know, who is such is extremely difficult. In more than the thirty years that I have lived among them, and in almost seventy years that our ministers have been here, I could not determine or be sure whether anyone was such specifically or could be considered such an individual. I shall relate what I have heard about them and what I have seen in regard to those whom they say are such. I shall also show reasons to prove that there are no such things. Everyone may believe whatever he wishes; I shall always be skeptical. I am always in a quandary about this matter so much so that I do not dare deny that they are not in some places, nor affirm who these are and how, since all of this is a suspect matter. Our Father Martin del Río, after having written much and extensively in his *Magia de las Sagas* (it is thus that the sorcerers are called in Latin), ultimately, near

mina si las hay verdaderamente o no, aun allá en Europa, cuánto más por acá, que ni tratan verdad ni saben lo que se dicen, y mañana niegan cuanto hoy confesaron.

Ciertísima cosa es que el mayor baldón y que más sienten nuestros bisayas de las islas dichas, y donde yo he vivido más de treinta años, es el que le llaman brujo, o *Aswang*. Y, al que es notado de esta tacha o raza, que dicen ellos se hereda, como luego diremos, lo miran todos de mala guisa, y señalan con el dedo, y nadie quiere casar a sus hijas con varón notado de ésto, ni dejan casar a sus hijos con mujer que tenga sospecha de tal. Y, aunque no son pocos a quien lo dicen por baldón, y tal vez de los más principales, es ocasión también entre ellos de muchos pleitos, y que les cuesta muchos dineros para satisfacer al agraviado, si es persona de vergüenza, y aun los esclavos llevan mal que sus amos les traten de brujos, aunque por otros baldones pasan fácilmente.

Veamos qué cosa sea brujo entre ellos y lo que ellos dicen de los tales, que es muy diferente de los que en Europa se tienen por tales y de lo que ellos dicen, aunque en algunas cosas convienen en las más con nosotros, se colegirá lo que son.

Dicen, pues, de ellos que vuelan de noche, y, así [los] que son brujos, tienen bajo del sobaco unas como alas de murciélago, las cuales jamás nadie ha visto, que, en levantando los brazos, se extienden, y con ellas vuelan; y ésto es mentira sin duda, pues algún rastro se viera de estas alas si de verdad las tuvieran.

A otros, dicen, les nace un pájaro en las entrañas (buena patraña), y que éste les hace volar.

Si uno y otro es por maleficio, por él sólo volarán sin alas; que comen hombres vivos y muertos, a los vivos los hígados no más, y que éstos se los sacan sin hacerles herida; y, de haberles sacado los hígados, se les originan grandes dolores hasta que

the conclusion of his work, he leaves the matter unresolved as to whether they exist or not, even there in Europe. How much more so here where they neither deal with the truth or know what they say; for on the morrow they deny what they uttered today.

Definitely the greatest insult that can be leveled against our Bisayans, where I have lived for over thirty years, is to call them a witch or aswang. Anyone who is notorious for this sorcery or belongs to this class, which they say is inherited as we shall see later, is looked upon by everyone in an ill-mannered way and all point a finger at such an individual. No one dares give his daughter in marriage to such a one nor would they allow their sons to take for a wife a woman who is suspected of being such. Those who are called thus, by way of insult, are not a few; seemingly these are prominent *principales*. This is also, among them, an occasion for many litigations; to placate the offended party, they are forced to spend much money especially if such is an upright person. The slaves also feel offended when their masters label them as “witches”; yet, these oftentimes easily tolerate other insults.

Let us see what it actually means to be a witch among them and hence, we will be able to deduce what they say about such. This is all very different from those who in Europe consider themselves as such and from what they say about them. Nonetheless, in some respects, they agree with us to a great extent, as it will become evident.

Some say they fly during the night. Thus those who are witches grow under their armpits something like the wings of a bat; thus far, these supposed wings no one has seen. Undoubtedly, all this is a falsehood; for otherwise a trace of these wings should be seen if, in truth, they really had them.

Others say that a bird is born in their entrails – a fine tale – and thus makes them fly.

If one and the other are brought about by witchcraft, they will be able to fly without the help of any wings. [Still, others say] that such devour the living and the deceased: from among the living these consume only the liver – and they add – that they remove it without making an opening in the flesh. The living individual, however, feels an intense pain when this liver is removed until

mueren; de los muertos, que comen toda la carne, y así dicen que desentierran los muertos para comérselos. Y ésto cuentan mil mentiras que no prueban.

Dicen que chupan a los niños, como se dice también en España. Y por esto en algunas partes cercan a los niños pequeños, o al lugar donde duermen, con espinas, y hacen siete noches después que nació fuego porque huyan los brujos y no lleguen a ellos.

Dicen que tienen aquella hierba *tagonlipon*<sup>4</sup>, de que ya tratamos, y diremos algo más después, y que con ella se hacen invisibles; que se transmutan en caimanes, puercos de monte, culebras y otros animales para matar y hacer mal a los que les persiguen; y de ésto allegan varios casos y acaecimientos que no se comprueban.

Dicen más, que el ser brujo se apega de unos a otros, de modo que el que casa con mujer u hombre brujo, queda brujo, y aun el que se amanceba, quedó con la dicha comunicación hecho brujo o bruja; que los hijos nacen brujos, siéndolo cualquiera de los padres, porque el otro lo es *per comunicacionem* y los hijos *per generacionem*<sup>5</sup>, y de esta manera dicen mil disparates y cosas sin fundamento, que ni prueban ni las pueden probar, aunque ellos las tienen por ciertas.

Diré algo de lo que he visto en esta parte; que lo que se oye es tanto y tan sin traza, y mezclado con tantos disparates, que no se deben creer de hombres de maduro juicio.

Estando yo en cierto pueblo, de los mayores de estos de Bisayas, oimos gran ruido en la iglesia una noche. Los muchachos de casa se escondieron de miedo en un rincón todos juntos. En el pueblo sucedió lo mismo en todas las casas donde había gente. Yo no hice caso, aunque lo oí porque muchas veces se oyen por casos harto ridículos de animales que suelen entrar en la iglesia si no cerraron bien la puerta, o perros que quedaron encerrados dentro y después dan mil carreras y ahullan, etc.

they die. About the deceased, they further affirm, that these witches eat the flesh entirely upon recovering it from burial places. All this they report with a thousand untruths; none of this can be substantiated.

It is also their belief that these [witches] draw blood from children, as is similarly related in Spain. As a result, in some places, they encircle the infants or the place where they sleep with thorns. What more, they also build a fire around the place where they rest and keep it going for seven nights so as to make the witches flee and not give them an opportunity to get near them.

It is maintained that these people have a certain herb known as *tagunlipun*,<sup>4</sup> which we have already dealt with, and will even say more later, with which they make themselves invisible. Thus they transform themselves into crocodiles, wild boars, serpents and other animals in order to kill and harm those who irritate them.

Furthermore, they contend that to be a witch is something that can be passed on to another in such a way that one who marries a witch – be it a man or a woman – becomes a witch. Even those who live in concubinage become such through the said relationship. What more, they say, that the offspring too is born a witch, if any of the parents is so; because the former situation happens *per communicationem* and the latter *per generationem*.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in this manner, they utter a thousand absurdities which they neither prove or substantiate and yet they hold them as certain.

I shall say something of what I have seen in this regard; for what one hears is oftentimes so much and so senseless and frequently mixed with so many absurdities. Such matters should not be given any credence by people of mature judgment.

When I was in a certain town, one of the largest in these Bissayas, we heard a great noise, one night, in the church. The houseboys, out of fear, hid themselves all together in a corner. In the town the same happened in all the houses where there were people. I did not mind this, although I heard it, because such noises are heard due to certain incidents, quite ridiculous, of animals entering the church perhaps when the doors were not locked properly; or dogs which were locked in and then begin to run to and fro, howling, etc.

Venida la mañana, no se atrevían a bajar a rezar a la iglesia los muchachos de casa, como suelen, por el miedo que de noche habían concebido. Amaneció, y, cuando estaba ya claro, el sacristán que fue a abrir la iglesia para disponer la misa, se volvió desalentado antes de entrar porque vió gotas de sangre frescas aún, y en el *dindin* o pared las huellas de los pies de un hombre.

Avisóme y bajé yo allá, cuando ya del pueblo habían concurrido el fiscal mayor, que era indio de mucha razón y principal, con otros hombres (que las mujeres hasta misa no se atrevió a llegar alguna a la iglesia). Y vimos todos las huellas (de buen tamaño era el pié) que, porque era tiempo de lodos, las de más abajo estaban totalmente señaladas, y cuanto más subían, menos. Estas comenzaban desde el suelo y subían por la pared, que acá llaman *bung-bong* o *dindin* de tablas, y tenía cerca de cuatro brazas de alto, y las de la parte de fuera estaban claramente señaladas, las de dentro no tanto, estando éstas los dedos del pie hacia bajo y las de fuera hacia arriba en la distancia de un paso humano, de modo que mostraba que subió por afuera y bajó por adentro, aunque allí no había señales de haber salido y sí de haber entrado; saldría por otra parte.

Las gotas de sangre negra y como de cosa muerta no eran muchas, aunque frescas aún. No vimos sepultura alguna cavada ni alterada, ni señal de que se hubiese abierto una en que el día antes se había enterrado un difunto, ni cerca de ella había rastros de sangre sino fuera solo de la iglesia cerca de la puerta y del lugar donde estaban las huellas señaladas.

Todos ellos dijeron que era brujo y que había ido a comer del muerto. Si lo fue o no, no lo aseguro; sí que naturalmente no puede un hombre subir ni bajar por una pared como si fuera por el suelo llano, y las huellas eran como de hombre que caminaba a pie llano sin estar borradas o prolongadas como habían

At dawn, the following day, the houseboys did not have the courage to go down to the church to pray as was their custom because of the fear that overpowered them during the night. So, as it dawned and when there was sufficient light, the sacristan who went to open the church to prepare it for Mass, returned terribly disturbed. Prior to his entrance he noticed drops of blood, still fresh, and on the *dindin* or the wall, footsteps of a person.

He [i.e. the sacristan] notified me and I went down. Already from the town there had come together the “fiscal mayor,” who was a native of sound judgment and a principal, together with other men (because from among the women, not even one dared to get close to the church, until it was time for Mass). We all saw the footsteps, and the foot was quite large since this happened during the rainy season the footsteps were clearly marked-out, those on the inside were less clear. These began on the ground and went up over the wall which they call *bungbung* or *dindin*, which is made of wood and about four *brazas* in height. While the footprints on the outside were clearly marked out, those on the inside wall were less so. The toes of the feet of the latter were pointing downwards, while the footprints on the outside wall were pointing upwards, all in the normal stride of a human being. All of this was clearly evident that he went up along the outside wall and came down along the inside wall. However, there were no traces of the creature going out, perhaps he went out another way.

The drops of black blood, as if of a deceased, were not plentiful even though fresh. We did not find any graves disturbed or tampered with; neither was there any sign that a recent grave has been dug-up where a burial took place a day before. There were no blood stains near it either, but only outside of the church near the door and the place where the footsteps were left behind.

Everyone believed that it was a witch and that it had gone there to feed on the dead. If that was its intention or not, I cannot affirm. What I can say, however, is that a person cannot naturally go up and down a wall as if one were walking on level ground. Obviously the footsteps were like those a human who was, as if, stepping on level ground, without being blurred or lengthened,

de estar naturalmente caminando hacia arriba y en lugar tan inhuesto.

La sangre hice lavar por quitarles el asco y el horror; las huellas las dejamos intactas, y lo estuvieron muchos meses con admiración de cuantos lo veían, y aun de otros pueblos vinieron a verlas después que corrió la voz, y el tiempo las borró, cayéndose el lodo que se había quedado en las tablas y que las daba la figura de planta de pié.

En otro pueblo, donde hay más fama que en el pasado de que tiene brujos, me mostraron otro *dindin* o pared de la iglesia, en la cual dijeron habían subido muchos brujos, grandes y pequeños, y sus huellas grandes y chicas. Cuando yo llegué a él ya había días, y me pareció se veían aun alguna que otra huella, en especial pequeñas y como de niño de ocho años, poco más a menos, y algún rastro de mayores; y añadieron que de hecho habían desenterrado un muerto y llevado pedazos de él para comer.

No puedo averiguar la verdad ni sacar en limpio cosa, porque los imputados negaban a pie juntillas; y, en no cogiendo (que nunca sucede) *in fraganti delicto*<sup>6</sup> es difícil de averiguar; y, aun los que deponen, tienen miedo no les coman a ellos; y así siempre se queda todo dudoso.

De que se vuelven caimanes y otros animales dicen más, y se hallan partes. Siendo yo superior de una de estas residencias y con las voces del Señor Obispo de Zibu me enviaron un indio que decían se convertía en caimán, y un hijuelo suyo en caimancillo, y que les oían hablar dentro del río, imputándoles se habían comido no sé cuantos hombres y mujeres.

Hice varias diligencias para sacarlo en limpio, y no pude sacar rastro ni aun fundamento alguno. Y detuve al dicho indio, su mujer o hijos en otro pueblo muchos meses, harto lejos de donde le imputaban lo dicho, y avisé estuviesen con cuidado y velasen

as they normally would have to be walking upwards on such a steep incline.

I caused the blood stains to be washed out in order to take away from them the terror and horror. The footprints, however, we left untouched and they lasted for many months to the wonderment of those who saw them; people even came from other towns to see them once the rumor spread. Time obliterated them so much so that what remained on the walls was an appearance of a sole of a foot, as if falling off.

In another town, where there are more well-known at present than in the past for having many witches, they pointed out to me another *dingding* or a wall of their church which had footprints, both large and small. When I had arrived to that town already several days have elapsed; it seemed to me that one or another footprint was still visible, especially the small ones seemingly of a child of eight years and some traces of adults. They added that as a matter of fact, the witches had dug-up a cadaver and taken along some portions of it for consumption.

I could not ascertain the truth of it all nor come to any definitive conclusion, because the accused ones denied everything outright. Not catching them (this never happens) in the very act – *in fraganti delicto*<sup>6</sup> – it is difficult to find anything out. Even those who act as witnesses are afraid lest they themselves be eaten. Hence, everything remains doubtful.

About changing themselves into crocodiles or into some other type of animals they say even more and participants are not lacking. While I was superior of one of these *residencias*, by the authority of the Bishop of Cebu, they sent me a native who, they said, transformed himself into a crocodile and one of his small sons into a small crocodile. They heard them speaking out from the river accusing them that they had eaten, I do not know how many, men and women.

I tried hard to clarify all this and could not find a trace or even any basis for it. I kept the said native, his wife and children in another town for many months and quite a distance from the place where such misdoings were laid on them. Also, I left word that the [townspeople] be particularly concerned and watchful over

sobre ellos; y nunca se vió rastro ni conoció tal maña, ni tampoco en el pueblo de donde me los enviaron dejaron los caimanes de coger gente como antes; de donde se saca que mucho es falso.

Y al dicho indio años después le imputaron un hurto considerable y estuvo preso; y, si supiera transformarse, no dudo lo hubiera hecho por librarse de un cepo donde lo tuvieron muchos meses sin probarle cosa.

De otros varios pueblos y en diferentes ocasiones me han remitido otros Padres ministros, para que lo averiguase, varias personas, así hombres como mujeres, a quienes tenían por brujos e imponían muchas brujerías: que volaban y se mudaban en pájaros nocturnos; que comían gente, mataban niños etc.; y jamás pude averiguar cosa.

Lo que más respondían era, “Si soy brujo o no, yo no lo sé ; y si mi alma vuela y va a otras partes, tampoco; sólo sé que, a donde me echo a dormir de noche, amanezco por la mañana; y mi cuerpo se está siempre en el mismo lugar. Han dado en decir que soy brujo o bruja; ellos lo sabrán, que yo de la misma manera me estoy siempre.”

Aun a algunos de los Padres ministros he oído decir que han visto gatos muy grandes de noche, cuando todos los gatos son grandes y de un color, y perros negros mucho mayores que los ordinarios, y otros espectros, o que los juzgaban por tales; y, hallándome yo en los mismos pueblos y lugares en otras ocasiones y solo, jamás he visto cosa, y aun llamándome tal vez para que los viera, y escondiéndose todos los indios, nunca vi cosa; antes, por algunos sucesos, después se descubrían no ser así las cosas como se decían o pensaban; porque el miedo, como dice el refrán, es grande de cuerpo.

Y, por no alargar, no cuento varios casos con que quedaron algunos, aun de los más incrédulos, corridos, y confesaron se habían engañado.

them. However, no evidence was ever found nor has any such evil tendency ever surfaced, not even from the town from which they sent them to me. The crocodiles continued to snatch the people as before. About the aforesaid, we may state that a great deal of it is not true.

The said native, some years later, was charged with considerable theft and was incarcerated. If he knew how to transform himself, I have no doubt that he would do so in order to set himself free where they kept him for many months without finding him guilty of anything.

Also, from various other towns and on different occasions, so that I might discover the truth regarding this matter, other Father Ministers have sent to me several persons, men as well as women, whom they considered as witches and accused of many acts of witchcraft. As, for example, that these flew and transformed themselves into nocturnal birds, that they devoured people, killed children, etc. Never was I able to verify anything for certain.

The most they would answer would be: "If I am a witch or not, I do not know; whether my soul flies and goes elsewhere, I do not know either. I only know that where I lie down to rest at night, there I am in the morning; my body is always in the same place. They have spread rumors that I am a he-witch or a she-witch; it is up to them. I know that I remain the same being always."

I have even heard some of the Father ministers say that they have seen some very big cats at night – all cats seem big and are of the same color at night – and black dogs much bigger than ordinary ones and other specters or which they thought to be such. When I was in the same towns and other places on occasions, I have never seen anything. And even when I was called, perhaps, to see such things while the natives would be hiding, I never saw anything. On the contrary, due to some occurrences, later it was found out that the things were not as they were reported or thought to be. Because "fear," as the saying goes, "has a big body".

So as not to prolong this, I will not jot down the several incidents in which some, even among the most incredulous, were put to shame and acknowledged that they had been mistaken.

Y no se acabó de desengañar cierto ministro nuestro que dió en que había muchos brujos y brujas. Hizo varias diligencias y pruebas; tomó sus confesiones a muchos y muchas, que dijeron en este particular cosas feísimas e increíbles; encantaron a tantos que no sólo los indios sino aun muchos españoles y españolas eran notados de tales; y al cabo y a la postre, después de mucho tiempo, perdidos muchos pliegos de papel, gastadas muchas horas, y muchas honras tiradas, en pareciendo delante de juez competente y que les podía castigar, lo negaban todo; de modo que jamás se pudo, ni ha podido, hasta hoy jurídicamente averiguar cosa con fundamento ni castigar a nadie con bastante mano, porque todo son mentiras, y a cada paso se desmienten a sí y a otros, de modo que siempre me he quedado yo, y quedo, con mi duda en si hay o no brujos entre estos indios.

De sus nefandas juntas de noche en los *nonoc*,<sup>7</sup> ya dijimos lo que se dice, y, aunque a todos los cuartos y días de la luna tienen sus nombres estos que llaman brujo, a su modo; pero todo ello cae *en* la misma falacia.

Y, supuesto que yo en mucho tiempo y muchos otros ministros del Evangelio, de virtud, ciencia, experiencia y celo de estas partes, no hemos topado ni una sola mujer que confiese tal pecado, confesando todos los demas de *paganito*, *bubas*<sup>8</sup> o maleficios para matar, con otros pecados feos, es señal clara, o de que no los hay, o de que están totalmente dejados de la mano de Dios; pero de su infinita misericordia no se puede creer que nadie se confiesa de ello ni se arrepiente; y lo mismo he oído a otros jueces eclesiásticos y seculares, tratando de este punto, de modo que no lo tiene fijo esta materia.

Vengamos a los que llaman en Leite, Samar ó Ybabao *onglo*; que en Zibu es palabra esta con que se significa el brujo, acá es muy diferente, y puede ser que de estos haya más probabilidad (certidumbre no la hay) que de los otros.

Yet, a certain minister of ours could not arrive at the realization that he was in error for he continued believing that there were many witches, men and as well as women. He made various investigations; took down numerous dispositions and sought proofs. These revealed the most ugly and most incredible happenings. They bewitched so many that not only the natives but also many Spanish men and women were considered as such. Ultimately, and after a long time, after having wasted countless sheets of paper, spending many hours, and blackening many fine reputations, when they came before a competent judge, who had the power to punish them, they denied everything. So, until this day, nothing could be juridically or concretely proven nor was anyone punished as he deserved, since all were untruths. At the slightest move [these natives] contradict themselves and others in such a way that I have always remained and still remain reluctant in believing whether or not there are witches among these natives.

We have already said something about their licentious gatherings at night near the *nunuk*.<sup>7</sup> Yet, all of these whom they call witches are named after all the phases and days of the moon, in their fashion. But all this comes down to the same fallacy.

Thus, taking into account that I, for a long time, and many other ministers of the Gospel, trained in virtue, knowledge, experience and zeal in these parts, have not come across any woman who confesses such a sin while confessing all others. Such as, for example, all that pertains to the *paganitu*, *bubas*<sup>8</sup> or an intent to commit murder along with other ugly sins. This is a clear sign that either such sins are not committed, or that such sinners are totally abandoned by the hand of God. But due to His infinite mercy one cannot believe that if one did not confess he has not repented. This is the same I have heard from other ecclesiastical and civil judges regarding this matter when the subject is discussed. As a result this matter is not settled.

Let us proceed to those which they call in Leyte, Samar or Ibabao *unglu*. In Cebu, this word is used to signify "a witch"; here it is very different and it may be that there is a greater probability in favor of the existence of these than of the witches.

De este *onglo* dicen que no es brujo, ni *divata*, ni alma sola o espectro, sino uno como hombre negro, de estatura más alta que la ordinaria, vez y media, flaco y de mala quisa, y que vive en los montes siempre, y, si no es demonio, no sé yo lo que será si es verdad que lo hay.

Dicen de ellos que se llevan niños y niñas pequeñas, y aun mujeres grandes a los montes lejos, que allá los tratan bien, dándoles de comer y todo lo necesario; que ven varias casas allá, y otro modo de habitaciones lóbregas; que no hablan o que no los entienden, y que a las veces vuelven los niños y niñas que se llevaron, después de meses o años, pero bien tratados y crecidos, y que lo mismo hacen de las mujeres mayores sino se acomodan a vivir entre ellos.

De esto cuentan mil casos sucedidos, y los que los así llevados suelen contar. Yo nunca he visto a ninguno de estos, llevados del *onglo*; aunque he oído a los indios que los han visto, y refieren dónde y cuando y lo que contaban, restituidos a sus casas, nombrando los pueblos donde sucedió; los padres del que desapareció, el tiempo que se echó de menos, y los nombres aun de los llevados, con que parece habrá algo de ésto.

Diré lo que sucedió pocos meses ha, después que yo voy disponiendo esta obra, y lo que pude averiguar, que es lo siguiente:

Estando yo en la cabecera de Palapag, me vinieron a preguntar unas principalas que lo supieron antes que yo, si era verdad que en el pueblo de *Baiug*, que era visita mia, a que yo iba no pocas veces al año, se había desaparecido un niño, cuyos padres me nombraron, y de quien se decía que el *onglo* se lo había llevado.

No tenía yo noticia aun del caso; antes me informé de lo que se decía para hacer la diligencia competente cuando fuese a dicho pueblo, que fue en breve. Estando en él, mandé llamar a una principala que era ama del niño que se había desaparecido, que era medio esclavo; y, después que le pregunté lo que había

About this *unglu*, they say that it is not a witch nor a *diwata* nor even only a soul or a specter but something resembling a black man, who in stature, is taller by one and a half times of an ordinary person. He is thin and ugly in appearance and always dwells in the mountains; if it is not a devil I do not know what it may be, if it is true that there is such a being.

They relate about them that these carry off small boys and girls and even adult women into the distant mountains. There, they treat them well providing them with goods and all they need. There [in the hills or mountains] they see various different kind of houses with other kinds of dark dwellings. These [i.e. *unglus*] do not speak or are not understood and at times they return the little boys and girls that they carried off after months or years, well treated and grown up. They do the same with the grown-up women who do not adjust to living among them.

About this, they report a thousand different incidents which are narrated by those who were supposedly carried-off by the *unglu*. I have heard it from the natives who have seen them; they reported where and when it happened and what they recalled in their houses, naming the towns in which it happened and giving the names of the parents who disappeared. They also recalled the time during which such were missing and even the names of those who were carried off. It seems as if there something to it.

I shall jot down what happened a few months ago, as I am preparing this work and what I was able to ascertain. It is as follows.

While I was in the *cabecera* of Palapag, some of the *principals* who knew something before me, came to inquire if it was true that in the town of *Bayug*, which was a *visita* of mine and which I visited several times a year, a boy had disappeared whose parent's names were given to me. News was spread that the *unglu* had carried him off.

I was not yet aware of the incident; rather I tried to get information about what was being said so as to make the due investigation when I would go to the said town. Briefly, it was this. Upon my arrival there, I called for the *principal* who was the one in charge of the child who had vanished and which was a half-slave. After inquiring from her what had really happened and had learned that, in truth, the child was missing and who was about three or four years old and whom I had baptized, I sent for his

pasado, y supe que de verdad faltaba el niño, que sería de tres a cuatro anos, y yo le había bautizado, mandó llamar a sus padres, y lo que me contaron fue, que un día de domingo, que no hubo allí misa, pues no había allí Padre que la dijese, habiendo ido el padre del niño a pescar, y la mujer a no sé qué diligencia, algo lejos de su casa, cuando ésta volvió a ella, ya serían como las cinco de la tarde.

En llegando a su casa, no halló a ninguno de dos hijos que en ella había dejado: la una era niña de seis a siete años, y el otro su hermanillo de la edad dicha. Dió veces, y aun gritos y alaridos, viendo que llamados no acudían. Después de un gran rato apareció la niña, llorando. Preguntóla por su hermanillo, y dijo; que, a cosa de las dos o las tres de la tarde, segun se coligió que era declinado ya el sol, según dijo, llegó a su casa un hombre alto, de pocas barbas y mala catadura, y que ella, así como le vió, se escondió adentro; y que llegó a su casa y tomó en los brazos primero al niño y le alhagó y que luego le puso en el suelo y se lo llevó de la mano, y se metieron por la espesura adentro, y no había vuelto hasta entonces; y que, así como se había desaparecido, ella de miedo no la llevase también, se había escondido en la espesura, y, hasta que oyó los gritos de su madre, no se atrevió a volver.

Llegó antes de la noche el padre del niño, y, oyendo lo dicho, se fue en su busca, dando veces; pero ni en toda la noche ni el día siguiente (que hasta medio día buscó) no vió más rastro que unas huellas muy grandes, cerca de un arroyo, y otras muy chiquillas. Al tercer día fueron muchos hombres y mujeres a ver si hallaban el niño, y no pareció ni sé que haya parecido hasta ahora que escribo ésto; y ya ha un año que sucedió.

No contento con lo que me había dicho la gente grande, hice traer a la niña que había visto al *onglo*; y, aunque como poco hecha a ver al Padre (que pocas veces habia venido al pueblo), hablaba con miedo; sosegada un poco, contó la figura del hombre

parents. They related that on Sunday on which there was no Mass, since there was no Father there, the father of the child went fishing while the mother left the house too, on what business I do not know. When she returned there, it was about five in the afternoon.

When she returned to her house she found neither of the two children which she left behind. One child was a girl about six or seven years of age; the other, her little brother whose age I mentioned already above. Calling and shouting for them and seeing that they did not show up, she began shrieking and screaming. After a prolonged lapse of time, the little girl appeared crying. When the [mother] asked her about her little brother, she related that about two or three in the afternoon (as they were able to determine from the narrative) when the sun was moving downward, a tall man arrived near the house who had a thin beard and an ugly face. Immediately upon seeing him, she hid herself inside the house. He entered the house and took the boy into his arms; he then took him out, set him on the ground, took him by the hand and both went deep into the thicket and never returned. As soon as they were out of sight, fearing that he might carry her off too, she hid herself in the thicket and did not dare to come out until she heard the screaming of her mother.

The father of the child arrived after dark and upon learning what has transpired, went in search of him, shouting. Neither that entire night or the following day, till noon, did he find any trace of his whereabouts except for some big footprints near the creek, together with little ones. On the third day, many men and women went out to see whether they could find the child, but he could be found nowhere. It is already about a year since this occurred and as I am writing this [*Historia*].

Not content with what the more prominent people were relating, I sent for the girl who had seen the *unglu*. Since the girl was unaccustomed in dealing without the Fathers, because she had come to the town rarely, she at first spoke with reluctance because of fear. Later, having regained her composure she described the shape of the man about whom she had spoken before, as already described above. And although it was already more than fifteen

que había dicho como queda referido. Y, aunque había ya más de quince días que había pasado, mandé ir hasta bien lejos al padre del niño y otros hombres, y se volvieron sin haber hallado cosa alguna, de modo que fue sin duda el que desapareció dicho niño, pues ni en casa de parientes ni otros se supo de él.

De donde se saca, que lo que dicen de estos *onglos*, parece tiene algun mayor fundamento. Entre los tagalos cuentan también algo de ésto, aunque pintan muy de otra manera a estos robadores de niños, a que llaman en su lengua *tigbalan*<sup>9</sup>.

Acabemos este capítulo con otro género de faunos, sino son demonios, que, dicen los bisayas, se ven tal vez en el monte, a que llaman *ugima*. La figura, dicen, es humana, aunque muy fiera, el cuerpo muy peludo, y casi concuerda todo lo que dicen de ellos con los faunos o sátiros de la antigüedad. No saben decir los pies, si son de hombre, de cabra, como decían de los otros antiguos; sí que corre mucho y se transponen muy en breve en llegándolos a ver, aunque ellos huyen, huyen no menos de otra mala figura.

Llaman *guima*, en su lengua, a los muy mal afaccionados y a las máscaras que se suelen poner, para danzar en fiestas grandes, los salvajes, como suelen en la de Corpus y otras, a que llaman con el nombre dicho de *guima*, o de *ogima*.

Si es demonio, que se les aparece en esta figura, quién lo sabe; si bien el huirse y transponerse, luego indica que no; que, si fuera demonio, parece les hablaría.

Ya dijimos del *lihi*, cuando tratamos de los *nonoc*; y de lo demás extraordinario, como si hubo gigantes o pigmeos, trataremos en los últimos capítulos del Libro Cuarto.

days since all this had transpired, I ordered the father of the child and other men to go as far as possible; however, they returned without any success. The situation was such that there is no doubt that the said child vanished, since neither at the house of his relatives nor anywhere else could anything be known about him.

We may draw a conclusion, from all that has been stated about these *unglu*, that there seems to be some solid foundation. Among the Tagalogs there is something similar reported about all this; although such thieves of children are described in a very different manner and call them *tigbalan*<sup>9</sup> in their language.

Let us bring this chapter to an end with another type of fauns, if they are not devils, about whom the Bisayans say that they are seen in the forest. They call these *ugima* and state that in appearance they are human although very fierce-looking, with a hairy body. The way they describe them is almost in conformity with what we are told about the “fauns” or satyrs of the ancient times. They are not very certain as to whether these have human feet or those of a goat, as the ancients have believed. They do admit, however, that they run fast and disappear quickly from sight. Although they flee from people, they flee just as quickly from other monsters.

Those creatures that have ugly or deformed features are called *gimas*; these resemble the savage masks which they wear during their *fiesta* dances, they also wear during *Corpus Christ* and other celebrations. They refer to these masks as *gima* or *ugima*.

If it is the devil who appears to them in this form, no one knows! On the other hand, the fact that it flees and disappears from sight, shows that it is not; for if it were a devil, it seems that it would speak to them.

We have already spoken about the *lihi*, when we have discussed the *nunuk* and about other extraordinary occurrences as, for instance, whether there were giants or pygmies. But we shall discuss this matter in the last chapters of Book Four.

## CHAPTER 18

### ANNOTATIONS

- [1] *Aswang*. Or *pangaswangan*, *pagaswangun*: witch, a wizard, a sorcerer, also known as *aluk*, *unglu*, *bakbak* which are the same. It is believed that the *aswang* eats up the sick and the dead. “*Aswangay*, apart from being the diminutive of *Aswang*, it means a tree that sprouts red branches; the leaves applied to the *uguihap* [a type of illness], are medicinal; the water in which the root is boiled is good, serves as a purgative. Also *aswangan*, big *karakua*.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*
- [2] *Aluk*. It seems that the *aluk*, which is also a witch, is derived from a certain tree named *alukaluk*: “which is known as *aswangan*”. Ibid.
- [3] *Unglu*. Under the entry *unglu*, Sánchez identifies it as ‘a *diwata*, *yawa*.’ Under the entry *aswang* he holds it to be synonymous with *aswang* and *aluk*. Ibid.
- [4] *Tagunlipun*. Not *tangunlipun*. “enchantment or magic; *tagunlipunan*, one who knows or cultivates this art. *Panagunlipunan*, *pinanagunlipunan*, those who cast spells; those who bewitch. *Nanagunlipun*, to bewitch or *pasapasa*.” Ibid.
- [5] *Per communicationem*. *Per generationem*. Latin phrases: ‘*through communication... through generation*’.
- [6] *In fraganti delicto*. A Latin phrase meaning: ‘*in the very [immoral] compromising act*’.
- [7] *Nunuk*. Also called *dalakit* and *baliti* tree. This is an incredibly large tree. This served as a Bisayan temple, a place for ritual and communion with the *diwata* or spirits. Alcina dedicates an entire *Chapter 22*, in *Book One* to this significant element in the life-ways of the Bisayans. Also see the extensive annotations which enrich Alcina’s presentation.
- [8] *Paganitu*, *bubas*. Called *bubo* in English. An inflamed swelling of a lymphatic gland, especially in the area of the armpit or groin.
- [9] *Tigbalan*. Unable to find this word.