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Capítulo 26

BREVE RESUMEN DE LAS RAICES, HOJAS O PLANTAS MEDICINALES MAS CONOCIDAS, ETC.

No es mi intento hacer tratado de estas que llamamos *tambales* acá, que fuera cosa larga y se pudiera extender mucho. Remítolo a varios tratados que andan manuscritos, y no faltó quien redujese acá, o conchabase, con las hierbas medicinales de que tratan Dioscórides,¹ Laguna y otros, las de estas Islas, aunque juzgo no convenir muchas de ellas con las que en Europa se saben. Y la experiencia ha mostrado que muchas de ellas, que acá se han traído, o las de esta tierra, que les semejan, no tienen la misma virtud, por la diferencia de este suelo y su clima, que, con diferentes astros, tiene distintos influjos.

Haré catálogo, breve y sumario, de las raíces que acá, o la experiencia —que es la mejor maestra— o las noticias que de los indios más prácticos en ellas me han comunicado, me han dado a conocer, que podrán servir a los que por acá viven para valerse de ellas y lograr sus virtudes. Si bien advierto que no en todas partes tienen el mismo nombre, aunque sí el mismo efecto.

Dejando, pues, las cuatro dichas, quiero comenzar por un árbol llamado *anonang* entre los bisayas y tagalos, aunque en Ibabao o

¹ *Dioscorides*. A Greek doctor and naturalist, known as Dioscorides Pedanius. He travelled extensively within the Roman Empire during the time of Nero (54-68) and contemporary emperors. His main work was *Perites yatrikés*, or *Medical Things*. The work was translated into Spanish by Andrés Laguna, with the title *Dioscórides Anazarbeo, acerca de la materia medicinal y de los venenos mortíferos*, which can be rendered in English as *Dioscorides Anazarbeo on Medical Matters and Deadly Poisons* (Cf. *Enciclopedia Espasa-Calpe*, vol. XVIII, p. 1348). It is clear from Alcina's reference that the book of Dioscorides-Laguna was known to him and was probably found in the library of San Ignacio University, Manila, where Alcina finished his *Historia* in 1668.

Chapter 26

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE BEST KNOWN MEDICINAL ROOTS, LEAVES AND PLANTS, ETC.

It is not my intention to do a treatise on these plants which we call *tambales* over here. This would be a lengthy matter and could be extended greatly. I refer to some manuscript treatises found here, and there are some who might confuse or mix up the herbs here with these medicinal plants discussed by Dioscorides, Laguna and others. I do not believe that many of the ones in these islands correspond with those known in Europe. Experience has demonstrated that many of these which have been brought here, or those of these lands which may resemble them, do not have the same characteristics as the European because of the difference of soil and climate. Different heavenly bodies have distinct types of influence.

I shall make a brief catalogue and summary of the roots here which either my experience, which is the best teacher, or the information from the natives most expert in them have told me. These natives have given me reason to believe that the herbs will be useful to those who live here by evaluating them and taking advantage of their benefits. However, I well know that they do not have the same names in every region, even though they have the same effect.

Omitting, then, the four mentioned above, I wish to commence with a tree called *anonang*² among the Bisayans and the Tagalogs.

² *Anonang*. Bisayan and Tagalog word. The *anonang* tree can reach a height of over thirty feet. It has broad, long, pointed, rough leaves, usually full of worms. The thin bark of the branches can cure immediately mouth blisters. The juice of the tree is medicinal. The water boiled with the bark of the tree soothes ulcers and stomach ache. According to Sánchez the juice of the tree is used by the natives as a substitute for glue. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.* p. 18-19, Bisayan Part).

Palapag le llaman *avili*,³ de cuya virtud me consta por la experiencia lo siguiente, (que, aunque me lo había dicho un indio herbolario, no la creía, y con el uso conocí ser verdad).

Es el caso que muchas veces nos traen los enfermos a la iglesia, o nos llaman al pueblo, (cuando no se pueden menear sin peligro), para que los confesemos; y ya por la agitación del camino, o ya por la fuerza de la enfermedad, llegan sin sentidos y como absortos, que ni hablan ni responden a propósito; cosa que impide el poderles confesar.

En estas ocasiones, pues, quitando la corteza de este árbol (que, por ser muy fácil en prender y de cualquier estaca nace, le llaman *avili*, que quiere decir que "tiene cariño con la tierra") y, escogiendo la que mira al oriente y torciendo dicha corteza (calentándola antes), que es correosa y jugosa, o machucándola⁴ y, exprimiéndola, dándosela a los sin sentidos, aunque sea abriéndoles por fuerza la boca, en llegando al estómago, luego abre los ojos y vuelve en sí, de modo que se puede confesar y está capaz de recibir los sacramentos.

Hélo experimentado no pocas veces, y con esta experiencia remediado a muchos que se murieran sin confesión si no fuera la eficacia de este zumo. Y tiene otra cosa especial, que, si la tontera o enajenación de sentidos es de borrachos (que sucede no pocas veces) no hace efecto alguno.

Salacsalac llaman acá a una como estopa, que tiene dentro una calabacilla que algunos en español llaman "pepinos de San Gregorio", no sé por qué causa. Los bisayas le llaman con dicho nombre, que quiere decir "nido chiquito" (porque se semeja a los nidos que hacen algunos pajaritos acá, colgados en las ramas de los árboles). Es tan medicinal que se puede decir que excede, pues, en usando de él sin tiento, es dañoso.

Dos o tres hebras de dicha fruta, puesta en infusión y bebida el agua, es purga eficacísima. Lo mismo hacen una o dos pepitillas que tiene dentro como pepitas de pepino, si bien son negras, y uno y otro es

³ *Avili*. The word is not entered in Sánchez' *Diccionario*. Probably, as Alcina suggests, it was used only in Ibabao (Eastern part of Samar) and more so in the region of Palapag.

⁴ The text of Alcina clearly says *machúcanla*, but the sense seems to demand *machucándola*, to go with *calentándola*, *exprimiéndola*, *dándosela*.

However, in Ibabao or Palapag they call it *avili*. Its properties I discovered through experience to be the following. Even though they were described to me by a native "*herbolario*" I did not believe him but, with its use, I found it to be the truth.

It is a fact that many times sick people are brought to us at the church, or we are called to the village when they cannot be moved without danger, so that we may hear their confessions. Whether because of the shaky road, or the seriousness of their illness, they arrive sometimes unconscious, or as if out of their minds. They neither speak nor answer properly, a matter which hinders the possibility of hearing their confessions.

In these circumstances then, they cut the bark of this tree, which is very easy to secure and grows on every twig. They call it *avili*, which means to say 'that it has an affinity with the ground.' Taking the portion which faces east they mash it or squeeze it out, giving the juice to the unconscious person, even though it may be necessary to open his mouth by force. As soon as it gets to the stomach, he opens his eyes and revives so that he may be confessed and is capable of receiving the sacraments.

I have tried it very many times and with this knowledge I have helped many who would have died without confession, except for the efficacy of this juice. It has another singular feature. If the lack of sense or loss of faculties is due to drunkenness, which happens very often, it has no effect whatsoever.

*Salacsalac*⁵ is what they call here a tow-like material which has within it a small gourd. Some call these in Spanish "cucumbers of Saint Gregory", I do not know for what reason. The Bisayans refer to them with the above name, which means little nest, because it resembles the nests which some birds make here fastened in the branches of trees. It is so medicinal that it can be said that it, so in excess, because using it without restraint is dangerous.

Two or three of these fibers from that fruit, when soaked in water, and this is drunk, makes a most effective purgative. One or two of the little seeds have the same effect. Another variety has cucumber-like seeds which are, however, black. Both are so effective that they

⁵ *Salacsalac*. Vide *Salac*. A tree with this name. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 279, Bisayan Part).

de tanta eficacia que deshacen durezas de vientres y cóleras requemadas o endurecidas en el estómago con notable facilidad.

Hánse visto hidrópicos, enfermedad que da acá muchas veces y se teme no sin fundamento que nace de hierba, que con este solo remedio han curado sin haber experimentado en otros provecho. Sólo es menester mucho tiento⁶ en su uso, porque algunos que, por asegurar el remedio, cargan más la mano que debieran, se han muerto. Tan grande como esto es su eficacia.

Es contra-veneno y contra-ponzoña, y uno de los mejores *tambales* que hay por acá, usado con dicha moderación. Yo he curado a muchos (con las pepitillas dispuestas de mi mano, y mezclando con ellas una poca de tierra de San Pablo), de enfermedades casi desesperadas de remedio, porque hasta gusanos de más de tres palmos de largo y peludos han llegado a echar, o por arriba o por abajo, y otras cosas de malísimas calidades que se crían en los cuerpos humanos.

*Lobag*⁷ llaman a otra raíz, que quiere decir que "tuerce las entrañas", porque, bebida, hace salir las cosas ponzoñosas y cualquiera género que sean, y es eficaz remedio para cámaras de sangre, que por sí sola esta raíz suele atajar, y también usan de ella para mordidas de culebras u otros animales ponzoñosos, y para maleficios venenosos.

Salibutbut llaman los bisayas, y los tagalos *pandacaque*, a otro arbolillo que es de los más medicinales que hay por acá.

Hay dos diferencias de él. Es mucho más eficaz el de la corteza blanca para algunos remedios, y el que la tiene negra para otros. Para heridas frescas es como bálsamo el zumo de las hojas exprimidas en la herida, y, si se pone la raíz quemada y hecha carbón, mucho más que preserva de pasmo y en pocas horas enjuga la llaga. Aun para heridas viejas, lavándolas y aplicando estas hojas, es eficaz, y la experiencia nos ha enseñado por acá su bondad y eficacia.

⁶ In the text of Alcina *tiendo*.

⁷ *Lobag*. Vide *Lubag*. Sánchez uses it as a verb, meaning to twist, which fits well with Alcina's meaning. *Lobag* for Alcina is a root with the power to twist the entrails (*op. cit.*, p. 193, Bisayan Part).

relieve constipation and burning and irritating bile in the stomach with notable ease.

People with dropsy, an illness which strikes here very frequently and is feared, undoubtedly stemming from herbs, have been healed with this single remedy without having tried the assistance of others. But it is necessary to have great caution in using it because some, in order to assure a cure, have taken more than they should and have died. So powerful is its effect.

It is an antidote for poison and venom and is one of the finest *tambales* that there is here, when it is used with moderation. I have cured many sick persons almost beyond hope of any remedy with the little seeds dispensed from my hand and mixed with a little "*tierra de San Pablo*." For even worms of more than three "*palmas*" in length and hair-like have been ejected below or above, as well as other matter with very bad effects that develop in the human body.

Lobag is the name of another root. It means to twist the intestine because when it is drunk it causes the ejection of all the poisonous and venomous matter of any kind whatever that may be there. It is an effective remedy for blood stools which can be stopped by this root alone. It is also used for bites of snakes and other poisonous animals and against poisons of witchcraft.

*Salibutbut*⁸ is another little tree thus called by the Bisayans and *pandacaque*⁹ by the Tagalogs, and is one of the most curative that there are here.

There are two different kinds. The one with the white bark is much more effective for some remedies and the one with the black, for others. For fresh wounds the juice of the leaves squeezed out into the wound is like balsam. It is even more effective if the root is burned and made into charcoal. It prevents convulsions and dries out an ulcer in a few hours. Even for old wounds, washing them and applying the leaves is effective. Experience has taught us here its value and efficacy.

⁸ *Salibutbut*. Vide *salibotbot*. A small tree, with medicinal powers. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 280, Bisayan Part).

⁹ *Pandacaque* (Tagalog). Vide *pandacaqui*. A herb, synonymous with *campupot*. (Cf. Juan de Noceda - Pedro de Sanlúcar, *Vocabulario de la lengua tagala*, Manila, 1860, p. 236).

Juntando éste con el que pusimos arriba y con el que se sigue, sirven para expeler enfermedades graves y prolijas. A solas, la lehecilla (que las hojas arrancadas sacan consigo) puesta con tiento en los ojos que tienen nubes, las quitan a pocos lances (aunque escuece mucho).

Y en fin, es contra la raíz de este arbolillo que, cuando mucho, tendrá una braza de alto el que más crece, y hace una frutilla colorada como media luna, con dos piquitos a la extremidad para todo género nocivo, y más la que está a la parte del Oriente, como hemos dicho de otros.

Mananbu es otra mata, cuya raíz quita las ponzoñas de culebras o cientopies, y cura de calenturas.

Lo mismo hace otra llamada *maglimba*,¹⁰ que es algo colorada, según su nombre, y que, juntas con el *salibutbut*, son más eficaces y muy saludables.

*Agonoi*¹¹, que los españoles acá llaman hierba del Maluco (de donde, por ser grandes herbolarios, han venido acá muchas noticias de la virtud de las hierbas), es acá muy ordinaria y muy medicinal.

Es una mata de color verde claro, con flores amarillas y de buena hechura, aunque no huelen. Imita algo a las malvas la hoja, aunque no es tan redonda sino algo larga. Es muy a propósito para llagas y heridas, y, aunque¹² unas y otras sean antiguas, mezclada esta hoja, molida con aceite de coco y hervida con él, las limpia, saca la materia y renueva la carne con brevedad. La raíz quita dolores de barriga, y, cocida con agua, quita hinchazones de piernas y de otras junturas, bañándose con dicha agua. Sacada por alambique, el agua de las hojas deshace las piedras, y es remedio que quita la dificultad de la orina.

*Igbuhat*¹³ se llama otra raíz que a menos costo tiene buenos efectos. Raspada y bebida con agua fría, quita dolores de cabeza y de todo el cuerpo, y junta con otra que llaman *pangoro*, quita el pasmo de

¹⁰ *Maglimba*. Vide *Limba*. Red thing, with more or less intense red color. Something dyed or painted in red (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 186, Bisayan Part).

¹¹ *Agonoi*. Vide *Agonoy*. A plant with this name. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 9).

¹² In Alcina *aun*, yet the sense demands *aunque*.

¹³ *Igbuhat*. A plant of long, broad and hairy leaves, of purple color, full of small beans. When open in season they give a seed of orange color. The root is a good

Joining together this with the one above and the one that follows serves to eliminate serious and troublesome illnesses. The milky substance which the leaves alone when picked have in them, if placed with caution in the eyes which are blurred, remove them in a few applications, although it burns fiercely.

Finally, it is an antidote the root of this little tree. It will rarely ever be more than an arm in height at the tallest. It develops a little red fruit like a half moon with two points at the end, a most complete antidote against poisonous things, especially that which grows to the east, as we have said about the others.

Mananbu is another shrub whose root relieves the poison of snakes or centipedes and cures fevers.

There is another one called *maglimba* and does the same. It is somewhat reddish, as the name indicates. Together with the *salibutbut* they are very fine remedies and very health producing.

Agonoy, that the Spaniards here call herb from the Moluccas (it comes from there for they are great "herbolarios,"¹⁴ from whom we have received much information about the properties of herbs) is very ordinary here and very medicinal.

It is a deep green shrub with yellow flowers of fine shape but with no odor. The leaf somewhat resembles the mallows, although it is not as round but a bit long. It is very suitable for ulcers and wounds, even though both may be old ones. This leaf ground up and mixed with coconut oil and boiled in it, cleanses the sores, draws out the matter and restores the flesh quickly. The root stops the pains of the stomach, and boiled in water stops swelling of the legs and other joints when bathed in this fluid. Drawn off by distillation, the fluid of the leaves dissolves kidney stones, and it is a remedy for difficulties of urination.

Igbuhat is the name of another root which, at minor expense, has fine effects. Scraped off and taken with cold water it stops headaches and those of the whole body. With another, which they call

purgation for phlem, given in limited quantity. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.* p. 404, Bisayan Part). Sánchez brings as reference the Jesuit Clain.

¹⁴ *Herbolario*. In Philippine history the *herbolarios* have played and still play a great role in the lives of the people. Some of them, as we can see in Alcina, had a great knowledge of the medicinal power of many trees, shrubs, plants, herbs, etc. They cannot be called, at least all of them, quack doctors.

los miembros u otros achaques que los tullen o amortiguan, que acá es muy común por los malos vientos; y uno y otro es contra culebras y su ponzoña.

*Balocas*¹⁵ y *ronas*¹⁶ son dos diferentes arbolillos, aunque conformes en servir para ablandar durezas de vientre. Quitan la esteticueza y todas las demás dolencias de barriga, mientras no sean cámaras, que con estas raíces se añaden, pero para todo lo que es durezas y otros males, las ablandan y sacan fuera con su virtud.

Su opuesta es (aunque provechosa) otra raíz llamada *manigaia*, que estanca las cámaras y facilita los partos dificultosos, y fortalece los dientes (enfermedad acá muy ordinaria, causada de las reumas que suelen desmenuzarse las bocas de dientes y muelas) a que esta raíz se opone, y otro arbolillo llamado *panhacar*¹⁷, cuya raíz también fortalece a unos y otros. Y yo he experimentado algunas veces su virtud, aunque usándolo mucho, escalfa la lengua.

Para las recaídas y dolores repentinos tienen variedad de hierbas, hojas y raíces, que llaman *pamugat*, que quiere decir "contra recaídas". Las hojas de un árbol, llamado *argao*, sirven para esto, aplicadas calientes, y sirven también para remedio contra el romadizo, bebiendo el agua caliente en que se hayan cocido estas hojas, y, puestas ellas calientes en la coronilla de la cabeza, entre cejas y al cuello, quitan los dolores de mal aire, y, aplicada encima de la vejiga, facilitan la orina, y así para otros dolores.

Hay muchas diferencias de estas hojas, como de las de la *tangan-tangan*, que suelen llamar en España "higuerillas del infierno", que acá son muy medicinales, y ésta lo es tanto como la que más para frialdades de estómago, dolores de barriga y pecho y otras partes, que es raro el achaque que no curen con estas hojas los indios. Las que tienen el tronco, o pezón, colorados, son de más virtud. Y de la frutilla

¹⁵ *Balocas*. Vide *Balucás*. A shrub of thin, broad, long and pointed leaves. The water in which the leaves have been boiled at a moderate temperature is applied to women who have just delivered and also to people suffering from other ailments. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 392, Bisayan Part).

¹⁶ *Ronas*. A climbing plant of this name. It is medicinal. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 415, Bisayan Part).

¹⁷ *Panhacar*. Vide *panhacad*. A purgative concoction used to clean the stomach (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 237, Bisayan Part).

pangoro, it stops convulsions on the limbs and other failings which may cripple or paralyze them. This is very common here because of the bad winds. Both are effective against snakes and their poison.

Balocas and *ronas* are two different little trees, yet similar in their value for easing constipation. They prevent “*estetiquez*” and all the other disturbances of the stomach, provided they are not stools, which are aggravated by these roots. But for everything that constitutes constipation and other similar ills, these soothe and cause elimination by their powers.

The opposite of this, though also beneficial, is another root called *manigaia* which stops diarrhea, facilitates child births and fortifies the teeth. It is a common ailment here caused by the rheum that ordinarily causes the loss of all the teeth. This root is a remedy for this. Another little tree called *panhacar* has a root which is good for all these things. I have tried its effectiveness a few times, even though using it frequently burns the tongue.

For relapses and repeated illnesses they have a variety of herbs, leaves and roots which they call *pamughat*,¹⁸ which is to say “*against relapses*”. The leaves of a tree called *argao*,¹⁹ applied hot, is used for this. It is used also as a remedy against a cold in the head, by drinking the hot liquid in which these leaves have been boiled. Placing the latter while hot over the top of the head, from the eyebrows to the neck, stops the illnesses from bad airs. Applied over the bladder they facilitate urination and other illnesses.

There are many varieties of these leaves, like those of the *tangantangan*,²⁰ which in Spain are ordinarily called “little figtrees of hell.” Here these are very medicinal and they are as good as any other for coldnesses of the stomach, illness of the abdomen, chest and other parts. It is a rare sort of condition that the natives do not cure with these leaves. Those having a reddish stem or twig are more effective. From the little fruit is made an oil which has medicinal qualities. It is

¹⁸ *Pamugat*. Vide *Pamugat*. Medicines used by the Bisayans to heal relapses in sickness. From *bughat*, to fall again sick, to relapse. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 60, Bisayan Part).

¹⁹ *Argao*. The word is found neither in Sánchez nor in Encarnación's *Diccionario* of Bisayan from Cebu. *Argao* is a town of southeast Cebu, a tourist resort today.

²⁰ *Tangantangan*. Vide *tangan tangan*. A plant or a shrub called *palma* or *palma Christi* (figtree of hell). (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 342, Bisayan Part).

hacen aceite, que es medicinal y les sirve a las mujeres para curar cabellos y cabezas. Llámamla los tagalos *lingansina*.²¹

No quiero añadir acá otros nombres de raíces medicinales por no alargar más, pues de las que yo tengo noticias y apuntadas sus virtudes, que son más de sesenta, pudiera decir mucho. Aunque todas coinciden en lo dicho, solo añadiré otras cosas particulares y extraordinarias, que algún tiempo yo no creía, y ya con la experiencia no sólo las creo, pero me hago testigo de vista de su verdad.

Sea la primera, que es notable, de un árbol que acá llaman "suelta" los españoles y los indios *patcot*,²² del cual dio un acaso su conocimiento. Y fue que, habiendo muerto en una isla de estas unos que navegaban, un puerco a la orilla del mar y cogiendo de los árboles que allí hallaban acaso, hojas para poner los pedazos de carne encima de ellas, los pedazos que vinieron a caer encima de unas hojas anchas como la mano, largas y muy lisas, se volvieron a juntar y consolidar, de manera que, cuando quisieron sacar los pedazos, los hallaron unidos y juntos unos con otros. Admirados para ver cual era la causa, aplicaron dichas hojas a otros pedazos, que se fueron de la misma manera uniendo y soldando.

Uno de los que se halló allí me contó este caso, y me dio de la corteza de dicho árbol un buen pedazo, que apliqué yo muchas veces, y mandé aplicar molida a varias heridas, que luego las cerraban, y en particular la di para varias mujeres que del parto quedaban heridas; enfermedad acá irremediable y de que han muerto no pocas, y todas a cuantas aplicaron este remedio, y más si era luego, sin duda guarecían, hasta que se me acabó dicha corteza.

Después de muchos días, contando este caso a un español de calidad de estas partes, me dijo la había en Terrenate,²³ y que es constante entre los que allá han vivido o estado algún tiempo por varias experiencias, y en estas Islas se ha hallado en Bantayan, pueblo de la isla de Cebú, según me dicen; con que en breve se sabrá de él en otras

²¹ *Lingansina* (Tagalog). A plant called figtree of hell (*higuerilla del infierno*). (Cf. Noceda-Sanlúcar, *op. cit.*, p. 184).

²² *Patcot*. Vide *Patco*. Plaster, piece of gauze or similar thing to which ointment, balsam or similar things are attached and placed on the affected part to be healed. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 242, Bisayan Part).

²³ *Terrenate*. One of the islands of the Moluccas. During the Spanish period (1582-1662) it became the center of government. The contacts between Terrenate and

used by the women to treat their hair and scalp. The Tagalogs call them *lingansina*.

I do not want to add here other names of medicinal roots, so as not to prolong this further; for I could say much concerning those of which I have information and data on their properties. Of these there are more than sixty. Yet all corresponds with what has been said. I shall only add special and extraordinary details, which for some time I did not believe, but now with experience I not only believe but have become an eyewitness of their truth.

The first notable point concerns a tree which is called "vulcanizer" here by the Spaniards and *patcot* by the natives. A chance circumstance gave the opportunity for learning about it. It happened that some persons who were sailing past one of these islands killed a hog on the shore of the sea, and they plucked leaves from the trees that were found there by chance in order to place the pieces of meat on them. The pieces that happened to land on some of the leaves, which were as wide as a hand, long and very smooth, became joined together and united with other pieces. Wondering what might be the cause, they applied these leaves to other pieces. In the same manner these became joined and fused.

One of the persons who happened to be there told me this story, and he gave me a good sized piece of the bark of the tree which I have used many times. Ground up I ordered it to be applied to various wounds which subsequently closed. In particular I gave it to several women who had been left injured from childbearing — an illness which has no cure here and from which not a few have died. All who have applied this remedy, especially if it was promptly done, recovered without fail, until I ran out of this bark after many days.

When I related this case to a Spaniard of high station in this region, he told me that it was to be found in Terrenate and that it is known among those who have lived there or stayed for some time through various experiences. In these islands it has been found in Bantayan,²⁴ a town of the Island of Cebu, so they tell me. Therefore,

the Philippines were frequent. Alcina mentions this name and the Moluccas in general many times in his *Historia*.

²⁴ *Bantayan*. An island north of the main island of Cebu, separating this island from Negros Island. A town of the same island, near the north-west part of Cebu island. *Bantayan* in most languages of the Philippines means place of vigilance, or simply vigilance, from *bantay*, guard, sentinel.

partes donde lo hay. Tráenla también de Macasar²⁵ con otras muchas contras.

Con ocasión de tanta multitud y diferencias de serpientes ponzoñosas como hay en esta tierra, se han hecho varias diligencias en saber las contras, y, aunque arriba pongo muchas, que son remedios, pondré acá una que es prevención, y experimentada, para que dichas culebras no hagan mal.

Esta es una raíz de un arbolillo pequeño (no me supieron decir su nombre, que es cierto lo tendrá entre estos naturales; añadiráse al margen si alcanzo su nombre).

Llámanla con nombre general de *panobol sa halas*, que quiere decir "remedio preservativo con las culebras". El tamaño de una raíz, que a mi me dieron y tuve muchos años conmigo, era como el dedo meñique; de color negro la corteza, el meollo, que era algo blando, blanquizco.

El que me dio esta raíz cogía con la mano cualquier género de culebras ponzoñosas sin que le mordieran ni hicieran mal; y, aunque yo no quise hacer la experiencia por mi mano, hízola otro español, que estaba conmigo, y muy tímido en este género, y las cogía en la mano ya sin miedo, después de haberlas cogido algunas veces; de modo que no hay duda en la prueba y efectos de ella.

El cómo impide a las culebras, si o con eficacia de la virtud embebida en esta raíz, o si adormeciéndolas y atontándolas, que es a lo que yo me inclino, para que no usen de su veneno, o si por otra fuerza extrínseca, no lo sé, si bien no me falta mi recelo de que hay algún pacto, aunque sea implícito, con el demonio, como veremos en otra hierba, que diré luego; y si el haber de ceder primero a él, por no concurrir con él, fue motivo para que yo no hiciese la pueba dicha; que la ignorancia crasísima de los indios les podrá tal vez escapar.

Otra hierba famosa (si fuere sin pacto) hay en estos indios bisayas, y que ellos celebran mucho y lo creen más, que llaman en su lengua

²⁵ *Macasar*, also *Makassar*. A city in the northernmost part of Celebes Island. It was an old kingdom. The Portuguese arrived there in the sixteenth century. It was absorbed by Holland when Spain left the Moluccas in 1662.

shortly there will be news of it in other parts where it exists. They also bring it from Macasar along with many other medicines.

On account of such a multitude and so many different kinds of poisonous snakes being found in these islands, much effort has been made to learn about antidotes. Although above I have set down many which are remedies, I shall now speak here of one which is a prevention. It has been tried and proven that the snakes are prevented from doing evil by it.

This is a root of a little tree; they did not know how to say its name; it is certain to have one among the natives and it will be added in the margin, if I chance upon it.

It has a general name, "*panobol sa halas*",²⁶ which means a preventive remedy against snakes. They gave me a root and I carried it with me for many years. It was the size of a little finger and the bark was black; the marrow which was somewhat soft was very white.

The person who gave me this root seized various kinds of poisonous snakes with his hand without their biting him or doing him any injury. Although I did not wish to try the experiment with my own hand, another Spaniard, who was with me and who was very fearful of this kind of animal, did so. He caught them in his hand now without fear, after having taken a few times, so that there was no doubt about the proof of its effects as a preventive against snakes.

Whether because of the effectiveness of the medicinal quality embodied in this root or because it put them to sleep or stunned them (this is the opinion to which I am inclined, so that they do not use their venom) or by some extrinsic power, I do not know. Although I am not lacking in suspicion that there is some pact, although implicit, with Satan, as we shall see in the case of other herbs about which I shall speak next. Thus the first cause must be assigned to him, and to avoid cooperating with him was the reason for not getting proof. The crass ignorance of the natives will enable them, perhaps, to escape.

Another famous herb (if it were not for the pact) among these native Bisayans, which they praise very highly and believe even more,

²⁶ *Panobol sa halas*. *Halas*, snake. A figure of a snake. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 135, Bisayan Part). I have not been able to find *panobol sa halas*. In Tagalog, *panghabol sa ahas*, something to scare the snakes away.

tagunlipun,²⁷ que quiere decir que “encubre o tapa”. Dicen de ella, o sea raíz o sean hojas, que hace invisible al que la trae consigo, de modo que, subiendo el dicho a una casa de día o de noche, dicen que ve a cuantos hay y cuanto se hace, pero nadie le ve a él; y de esta hierba dicen ellos que usan los brujos, y que el que la tiene es brujo. Llámala también *tagunlivan* [*sic*],²⁸ que quiere decir que “muda uno por otro.”

Muchos de los bisayas entienden y creen que es cosa natural y que es eficacia de dicha hierba (como creen en otras de que luego diremos algo), aunque los que mejor discurren dicen son prestigios, o hechizos, con pacto del demonio, y así a los hechizeros llaman en esta lengua *tagunlipunan*, que quiere decir que “usan de estos prestigios”. Y a este sentir me acomodo yo mejor, porque, según lo que me he informado y lo que dicen, es hierba que la da el demonio, o la enseña donde está. Y siendo el autor o inventor de tal, dicho se está que es cosa suya. Con todo, he oído dudar a hombres entendidos, que juzgan ser efecto natural. Dios sabe lo que es. Y yo me quedo siempre en mi sentir; que, si fuera natural, algún rastro hallaríamos y no encubrieran tanto como encubren este hechizo, de que sólo usan personas de mal vivir y nada cristianos.

Contra este hechizo que hacía invisibles, tenían otro que llamaban *daligmata*, que “hacía abrir los ojos”, que eso quiere decir en esta lengua; y el que lo tenía veía a los que tenían el otro.

También a un *diwata*, que decían tenía muchos ojos, como el fingido Argos de la antigüedad, llamaban *daligmata*, que era lo mismo que “el que todo lo veía”: nombre a propósito para nuestro Dios, a quien nada se le esconde, etc.

Alguna duda puede haber en otra hierba (cuyo nombre no me supieron decir) la cual, teniéndola consigo, aunque coja uno con las manos, o pise con el pie, un hierro ardiendo, dicen que no se quema ni la empece, como si fuera hierro frío.

²⁷ *Tagunlipun*. Vide *Tagonlipon*. To bewitch through magical words or formulas. *Tagonlipon* conveys the idea of deception used by witches to attain their evil desires. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.* p. 330, Bisayan Part). *Tagunlipunan*. Vide *Tagonliponan*. Witch, charmer, bewitcher.

²⁸ The words *Mananbu*, *Pangoro*, *Manigaia* and *Tagunlivan* are not found in Sánchez' *Diccionario*.

is what they call in their tongue *tagunlipun*. That means to say, “*what covers or chokes up*” They say of it, whether it is the root or the leaves, that it renders invisible the person who carries it with him. Thus when he goes up to a house in the daytime or at night, they say that he sees who is there and what they are doing, but no one sees him. They say that the sorcerers use these herbs and that whoever has it is a sorcerer. They also call it *tagunlipunan* which is to say that “*it changes one into someone else.*”

Many of the Bisayans understand and believe that it is a natural phenomenon and that this is the power of this herb, as they believe about others, of which we shall say something next. Yet those who have greater intelligence say that these are deceptions and spells of a pact with the Devil. For this reason the sorcerers are called in this language *tagunlipunan*, which means that they “*use these deceptions.*” I am most inclined to this view because from what I have inquired and what they say, it is an herb given them by the Devil, or else he tells them where to find it. Since he is the author and inventor of this, it is his doing. With all this I have heard learned men doubt it and judge it a natural phenomenon. God knows what it is, and I remain steadfast in my opinion that, if it were a natural thing, we would find some track on the ground and they would not conceal as much as they do this spell, which is exercised only by persons of evil life and not very Christian.

Against this spell which rendered persons invisible, they had another which they call *daligmata*,²⁹ which means “to cause the eyes to open” in their tongue. The one who had it could see those who had the other herb.

There is likewise a *diwata* which they said had many eyes, like the mythical Argo of antiquity. They call him *daligmata* which is the same as saying, “one who sees everything”; an appropriate name for our God to Whom nothing is hidden.

One can have some doubt about another herb whose name they did not know how to tell me. If one has it with him, even he seizes with his hand or steps with his foot upon a burning iron, they say that it will not burn him nor injure him, as if it were cold iron.

²⁹ *Daligmata*. Witch, night animal. According to the Bisayans this nocturnal animal had flashing eyes. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 104, Bisayan Part).

Confesóme un indio principal y herrero (que acá los más principales usan este oficio, que es el más provechoso que hay entre ellos) que era verdad que él tenía esta hierba, y muchos le vieron hacer la experiencia de pisar el hierro, hecho ascua, y sacarlo con la mano de la fragua con no poco espanto. Yo le dije que hiciese delante de mi la prueba, y nunca quiso; y, como yo juzgo que estas cosas no se hacen sin pacto, no quise apretarle por no cooperar en él, aunque mi intento era hacerle decir, o que mostrase que abstraía de todo pacto y que renunciase a él, o explícito o implícito.

Otro indio tenía también hierba tal que, aunque lo pusiesen en prisiones con grillos de hierro, o en cepo de palo y cerrado con llave, se las quitaba sin quitar la chapeta ni abrir el candado, sin que jamás se le sacase otro cosa sino que él sabía el cómo. Hierba con esa virtud, si es sin pacto, júzguelo quien quisiere.

He oído decir que la piedra del águila (de que trataremos en otro lugar), que yo tengo una, puesta en remojo con aceite un día o una noche, y untándose la parte que se hiriere²⁶ que escurra, con dicho aceite, la vuelve tan deleznable que sale y entra con facilidad por cualquiera parte. No he hecho la prueba, y así no sé qué verdad sea.

Más célebre es, por ser más común, otra hierba, llamada *lumai*, que es hierba amatoria *in bonum et in malum*. Usanla las mujeres, o para que las quieran bien los hombres para mal fin y pecar, y úsanla también para que no las tengan mala voluntad o su marido o sus padres, y aún el Padre ministro, porque no las azote o castigue.

He visto yo esta hierba, porque a una persona que usaba de ella, le dije que me la mostrase. Es la hoja larguilla, delgada y blanda y dividida, de modo que en cada pezoncillo se dividen tres hojillas más estrechas y menos largas que el dedo meñique.

Pero esta hierba no la usan³¹ en su ser solo, sino que la ponen otros aceites y raicillas como cabellos, y en aquella confección dicen está la dicha virtud, que no debe de ser mucha ni alcanzar siempre a

³⁰ The text says *siriese*.

³¹ The text says *usa*.

A native chief and ironworker (here the chiefs of highest rank enjoy this office and it is the most profitable that there is among them) told me that this was so, that he had this herb. Many saw him perform this experiment of stepping on the iron made and of drawing it out with his hand from the forge with no little fright. I told him to do it in front of me as a proof, and he never cared to. Since I consider these things cannot be done except by a pact with the Devil, I did not wish to press him so as not to cooperate in it. Yet my intention was to make him say or demonstrate that he would abstain from any such pact and would renounce it both explicitly and implicitly.

Another native also had an herb that although they might put him in iron fetters or wooden stocks, locked with a key, he would free himself of them without opening the metal plate or taking off the padlock, although he never told us how he did it except to say that he knew the trick. Whether or not an herb with this property is due to an evil pact is anyone's guess.

I have heard it said that the eagle stone (which we shall discuss in another place, and I have one of them) put to soak in oil for a day or a night, if the wounded part is rubbed with the oil and let it soak with it, makes it so effective that goes in and out with the greatest ease, through any part. I have not experienced this, so I do not know what truth this has.

Better known, because it is more common is another herb called *lumay*.³² It is an amatory herb used for good and for evil. Women use it either because they desire that men would love them for evil purposes and for sin, or they use it so that their husbands, their parents or even the *Padre* minister might not be displeased with them or punish them.

I have seen this herb because I told a person who was using it to show it to me. The leaf is rather large, thin, white and divided so that in each little stem there are three separate little leaves, narrower and not as long as the little finger.

But this herb is not used by itself alone. They put with it either oils and small roots like hairs. In this mixture they say is this property, which can not be very strong nor always have an effect. It

³² *Lumai*. Vide *Lamay*. Witchcraft. A herb used to bewitch and compel a person to correspond to impure love. (Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 195, Bisayan Part).

efecto, pues me sucedió en uno de estos pueblos, queriendo castigar a una mujer de mal vivir, que ya había amonestado varias veces, que vino prevenida con un botecillo de dicha confección (que le había costado su dinero) y con seguridad, a su parecer, de que no sería castigada, pero no valió porque le mandé dar una buena vuelta de azotes, y, como le dolieron, despechada echó el botecillo y me contó lo que era (aunque no hubo remedio que me dijese quién se lo había vendido) que luego, delante de ella lo hice quemar, y la desengañé que no creyese en cosas semejantes, y que supiese que a los Padres, que están en lugar de Dios, nada les daña, porque Dios los guarda.

Máxima es esta, que la tengo por infalible, que no se sabe de cierto hasta hoy que a Padre ninguno hayan dañado ni con sus hechizos ni con sus ponzoñas, aunque tal vez se ha presumido. Y no pocas veces han confesado, después de mucho tiempo (y yo he topado algo de ésto) intentaron hacerlo y aplicaron sus raíces, etc. y no salieron con ello; que es bien clara señal de la protección y asistencia divina en el amparo de sus ministros, que sin ella muchos murieran sin duda.

Lo opuesto a querer bien, que es causar odio y mala voluntad, dicen hacer otra hierba, o confección, a que llaman *buringut*,³³ que es un arbusto pequeño, algo espinoso.

Acabo este capítulo con otra hierba que presumo tiene alguna eficacia natural para dementar, o abstraer del verdadero uso de sus sentidos por muy largo rato, a los que beben su zumo o sus pepitillas machucadas y mezcladas con vino o agua u otro licor.

Llámase *taibong*³⁴ en esta lengua, y, por semejanza con otra de Castilla, la llaman los españoles *talanpona*. Es mata de tres a cuatro palmos de alto; las hojas imitan a las de las parras [en lo] esquinado, aunque son de verde oscuro y algo vellosas; la flor es una campanilla blanca de un jeme, poco más o menos, de larga, y ancha en proporción. Hace unas como berengenas redondas, pero llenas de puntas, como de erizo, y las pepitas de estas dicen son de tal virtud que dementan. Y la experiencia ha mostrado no pocas veces que,

³³ *Baringut*. Vide *Baringot*. Courage in front of danger. Witchcraft to help people to hate. A climbing-plant of this name. Its extracted juice is given to hunting dogs and coward carabaos to help them become bold and brave. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 68, Bisayan Part).

³⁴ *Taibong*. Vide *Tayobong*. Name of a plant. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 349).

happened that in one of these towns I wished to punish a woman of evil life who had been warned various times. She came provided with a little flask of this mixture, which had cost her money and with assurance, in her opinion, that she would not be punished. But it did not avail her because I ordered that she be given a good whipping. Since she was hurt, enraged, she threw away the flask and described to me what it was, even though I was not able to compel her to tell me who had sold it to her. Then, in front of her I had it burned so that I might undeceive her and she would not believe in similar things and that she might know that nothing could hurt the *Padres* who stood in the place of God, because God would guard them completely.

I hold this to be absolutely true because it is not certainly known up to now that a single *Padre* has suffered injury either by sorcery or with their poisons, although sometimes it has been assumed. Not infrequently they have confessed after a long time and I have chanced upon some of this; they have attempted to do evil and have applied their roots etc., but without avail. This is a very clear sign of the Divine protection and assistance in aid of His ministers. Without it many would doubtless die.

The opposite to wishing well, which is to cause hatred and ill will, results from another herb or concoction, they say, which they call *buringut*. It is a little shrub a bit spiny.

I shall complete this chapter with another herb, that I assume has a natural power to cause insanity, or to compel the loss of the proper use of the senses for long periods of time in those who drink its sap or its little seeds ground up and mixed with wine, water or other liquid.

It is known in this language as *tayobong*; due to its similarity with another of Castille, the Spaniards call it *talapona*. It is a shrub of three to four *palmos* in height; the leaves resemble those of vines in their pointed edges, although they are of a dark green and somewhat fuzzy. The flower is a little white ball of about one *jeme*,³⁵ more or less, in length and proportionately wide. It bears a kind of small eggplant, round but filled with points like hedgehog. The seeds of these, they say, have the quality of causing dementia. Experience has

³⁵ *Jeme*. From the Latin *semis*, half. The distance from the thumb to the forefinger, separating the two of them to the maximum. (Cf. *Enciclopedia Espasa-Calpe*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 2634).

habiéndolas dado a sus maridos a beber, o en el *buyo* que ellos llaman *mam-un*³⁶ a mascar, quedan de modo que estando ellos en casa, hacen cuanto quieren las mujeres, por estar tan enajenados que, aunque vean no reparan, y aunque sientan no juzgan mal ni atienden a lo que ven.

No sé si esta misma raíz, de que hablando un extranjero en un librito que intitula *Thaumatographia*, y trata de las cosas admirables de la naturaleza, dice que en la India se halla una hierba dicha *dutroa*,³⁷ *qua maritos efficit cornutos*,³⁸ por el mal efecto que de su abstracción de sentidos se sigue, y por el abuso de las mujeres. Dicen que dura su efecto veinticuatro horas, y que, lavándose los pies con agua fría, se suspende o quita.

Si es la misma que acá dijimos, no sé; sí que el diablo, que conoce bien sus efectos, los enseña en todas partes para que, con su uso y abuso, se hagan muchas maldades, que sin ellas no se hicieran, y Dios lo permite para prueba de la virtud de los que le conocen y siguen.

Cantius J. Kobak, O.F.M.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
September 30, 1994

Lucio Gutiérrez, O.P.
University of Santo Tomas, Manila
July 1, 1996

³⁶ *Mam-un*. Vide *Man-on*. Mixed and prepared *buyo*. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 202, Bisayan Part).

³⁷ *Dutroa*. Vide *Dutra*. Vide *Datura*. It has more than fifteen species distributed in hot zones, the majority in Central America. Also in India, the Malay Archipelago and Central Africa. (Cf. *Enciclopedia Espasa-Calpe*, Vol. XVII, p. 1066-1067).

³⁸ *Qua maritos efficit cornutos*. This herb called *dutroa* made the husbands 'horned', that is, affected them so much that they lost their restraint in sex. The herb made them loose the sense of reason, thus making them behave like animals, with excessive passion.

shown that not infrequently the wives have given them to their husbands to drink in their *buyo* which they call *mam-un*. When they chew it they come to such a state that when they are in the house they do everything the women want them to do. They are so transported that even though they can see they cannot pay attention, even though they may sense things they cannot judge evil or attend to what they see.

I do not know if this is the same root of which a foreigner spoke in a little book entitled *Thaumatographia*. Discussing the remarkable things of nature, he said that in India there was an herb called *dutroa* that made husbands 'horned', for reason of its bad effects, where because of its causing a loss of the senses, it results in the abuse of the women. They say that its effect lasts twenty-four hours and washing the feet with cold water relieves and stops its action.

If it is the same as the one we have spoken about here, I do not know. It may be that the Devil who knows its effects well, teaches its use everywhere. In this way its use and abuse create many evils which would not occur without it. God permits it as proof of the virtue of those who know and follow Him.

Cantius J. Kobak, O.F.M.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
September 30, 1994

Lucio Gutiérrez, O.P.
University of Santo Tomas, Manila
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Capítulo 27

RECOPÍLANSE OTRAS FRUTAS, HIERBAS, RAÍCES O PALOS, DE VARIOS EFECTOS NOTABLES Y EXTRAORDINARIOS

Quiero comenzar esta capítulo con una mata que ha dado Dios en estas Islas a los naturales de ellas, y es reloj natural. Llámase *dalopang*,¹ que imita mucho a las malvas de España en las hojas y mata, aunque ésta crece más; y las flores (que son las que sirven de reloj y las da todo el año sin faltarle) son hermosas del tamaño de la mosqueta² de España, con cinco o seis hojas como ella, aunque ésta es de color amarillo, con los fondos colorados o encarnados, que parece muy bien, y un fluequecillo en medio, de hebras coloradas.

No huele, pero tiene una propiedad: que se está cerrada siempre esta flor hasta que son las nueve de la mañana, salga el sol, o no salga (por los nublados); de modo que, en abriéndose, saben las mujeres que es ya hora para preparar su comida, con que, pilando su arroz y disponiendo todo lo necesario, comen a medio día, poco más o menos. A las tres de la tarde, o algo más, se vuelve a cerrar poco a poco; de modo que, al ponerse el sol, ya ella lo está totalmente. Y esto es siempre. Y las flores duran muchos días, con la repetida mudanza en todos ellos. Plantan esta mata cerca de sus casas, y, por lo abierto o cerrado de ella, saben las horas que pasaron del día y las que quedan hasta la noche, dándoles Dios este reloj natural, sin horas; que fuera difícil saberlas cuántas son sin tenerle artificial.

¹ *Dalopang*. Vide *dalupang*. A plant with red flowers. The juice of the root, mixed with wine, is a good medicine against bleeding ulcers. If there is fever or high burning feeling, it is better to mix it with water (Cfr. A. Sánchez, *Diccionario español bisaya para las provincias de Samar y Leyte*, Manila, 1914, p. 400, Bisayan Part).

² *Mosqueta*. Rosebush with flexible and very thorny branches, of three to four

Chapter 27

A COMPILATION OF OTHER FRUITS, HERBS, ROOTS OR WOODS OF VARIOUS REMARKABLE AND EXTRAORDINARY QUALITIES

I wish to begin this chapter with a description of a shrub which God provided in these islands for the natives and which is also a nature's clock. It is called *dalupang* and it resembles closely the mallows of Spain in its leaves and as a plant; however, this grows larger. Its flowers, which serve as a clock, bloom all year long without fail. They are beautiful and of the size of the white rose of Spain and just like it, have five or six petals. The latter, however, are yellow in color, with a reddish or flesh-like color of fine appearance and having a little fringe about the reddish fibers.

This flower has no fragrance but has an unusual characteristic: it always remains closed till about nine o'clock in the morning whether the sun is out or not, due to the clouds. And so, when it opens, the women know that it is time to prepare their meal, so that after grinding their rice and making all the preparations, they eat at approximately noon, more or less. At three in the afternoon or a little later, the flower begins to close little by little so that by the time the sun sets it is completely closed. This takes place all the time. The flowers last many days with this change taking place in all of them. They plant this shrub near their houses and by its opening and closing they know how many hours of the day have elapsed and how many remain till nightfall. God gave them this natural clock, without the indicated hours; otherwise it would be difficult for them to determine the time unless they had ones made by hand.

meters in length luscious leaves, composed of seven oval leaves of light green and small, white flowers, with the smell of musk. (Cf. *Diccionario de la lengua española*, h-z, Real Academia, Madrid, 1984, p. 93).

Juntemos a ésta otra flor, o rosa, que también pudiera servirles de reloj, aun estándose en su casa y sin bajar de ella; si bien no tan regular como la otra. Esta es una mata que crecerá de alto una *brazo*³ y media, poco más o menos, cuando más crece. Las hojas imitan a las malvas marinas de España, y la mata también. Excédelas ésta en la hermosura de la flor, que es una muy grande rosa, encarrujada al modo de las ligas que antiguamente se usaban en España. Será tan grande como las dos manos cerradas y juntas.

Por la mañana, que sale el sol y ella sale, es de color blanquísimo, como que se levanta sin mota ni mancha alguna. A las nueve comienza a sonrosearse y ponerse colorado, de muy vivo color encarnado; como va bajando el sol, se van poniendo colorada, más que las amapolas de España, por ser el color de ésta como sangre pura. Con esto acaba su vida, porque al día siguiente ya no queda de ella sino el pezón, y las hojas tan amortiguadas que no se sabe de qué color sean, si moradas o negras y sin lustre ninguno. No tiene nombre esta mata entre los indios, sino que la llaman del nombre de otras que se le parecen en las hojas.

Yo la he plantado en muchas partes; y, para que dé semilla, es menester al segundo día quitarle las hojas amortiguadas con suavidad, que en medio de ellas está un botoncillo como un garbanzo, que después crece hasta hacerse como una bala de mosquete, y se abre en cuatro partes, y dentro tiene unos granitos dos veces mayores que nuestro anís, y estos nacen; pero, si no se le quitan las hojas, ellas pudren a dicho botón, por estar encajado en medio de ellas, de modo que de veinte no se logrará uno, y por esto no cunde mucho esta mata, si bien prende de estaca.

Y, aunque estén cogidas las flores y puestas en el altar, (como solemos, porque adornan mucho en pocas) o en casa, a su tiempo, aunque no vean el sol, se va[n] vistiendo sus nuevos colores, de modo que cada día se viste tres diferentes, como son blanco, encarnado y rojo, todos muy encendidos.

No sabemos si ha llegado a España esta flor, si bien he oído decir que en algunos jardines de Italia se suelen ver con dichas variedades.

No carece de ellas, aunque sin mudanza, otra mata que, por su hermosura, la llaman estos naturales *calipaián*, quiere decir "alegría o

³ *Brazo*. A measure of longitude. Originally from the Latin *brachia*, the plural of *brachium* (arm). It meant the distance from the forefingers of both arms extended horizontally. The precise measure now is 1,6718 meters.

We shall connect with this one another flower or a rose which might also serve as a clock even when one is in his house and without going out of it. But it is not as reliable as the other one. This is a shrub which will grow to the height of a *braza* and a half, more or less, when it attains its largest size. The leaves resemble the marine mallows of Spain and the bush as well. It surpasses these in beauty of the flower, which is a very large crinkled rose like the mistletoe which in ancient times were familiar in Spain. It is as large as two hands closed and joined.

In the morning when the sun rises and the flower opens, it is a pure white in color, as if arising without defect or blemish whatsoever. At nine it begins to take on a rose color and becomes tinted with a vivid red. As the sun lowers it becomes redder than the poppies of Spain; its color becomes like pure blood. With this, its life ends because on the next day nothing remains of it except the stem; the leaves are so deteriorated that one cannot tell what color they may be, whether violet or black and without any luster whatever. This plant has no name among the natives, unless they call it by the name of others which resemble it in its leaves.

I have planted it in many places. In order to make it germinate it is necessary to take off the dead petals with care on the second day, because in the center of these is a little bud like a pea. This grows afterwards until it becomes like a musket ball. It opens in four sections and within it has four little seeds twice as large as our anise and these are for planting. But unless the petals are removed, they rot the bud because it is enclosed in the middle of the petals. As a result, from twenty, only one might be obtained; therefore, this bush does not spread widely but it does so when fastened down with stakes.

Even when these flowers are picked and placed on the altar, as we usually do, or at home, at the proper time, even though not exposed to the sun, they continue to dress themselves in their changing colors so that everyday they change to white, pink and red, all very lively.

We do not know if this flower has reached Spain, although I have heard it said that in some gardens in Italy it can be seen in all its variations.

There is no lack of variation in another bush, although it does not change. By reason of its beauty, the natives call it *calipaián* and which

gozo", que, según su modo de hablar, es lo mismo que decir "cosa que causa gusto".

Son las hojas largas, como el dedo de la mano, poco más, y algo más anchas. El tronco corto -pocos llegan a braza- y es de color negro. Echa muchas varas, y su copa como una grande albahaca. No cría flor vistosa, auntes toda la mata es una flor, porque todas las hojas son verdes y amarillas, con tanta variedad que en una mata (que despacio lo he mirado yo) no se hallarán dos hojas que se semejen totalmente.

Unas son todas verdes, con las venillas amarillas; otras, al revés, todas amarillas con las venillas verdes; otras rayadas de unas rayas verdes y amarillas, alternativamente, que parecen más pintadas con medida correspondiente que nacidas acaso. Otras tienen la una mitad amarilla totalmente y la otra verde, sin mezcla, de modo que de su disonancia en la composición se forma un objeto muy alegre y consono a la vista, y que merece el nombre que le han dado estos naturales. Si acá se labrara y, como en los jardines de España se usa, se [sic] *tondirla*,⁴ fuera de alegrísima vista.

Alguno[s] dicen que esta mata es del Maluco y que tiene muchas virtudes medicinales, en especial para dolores de estómago, aplicando dichas hojas calientes. Acá la plantamos para alegría de los ojos, y por su hermosura natural.

No quiero pasar en blanco otra rosa muy colorada, que acá llaman *arogangan* en algunas partes, y en otras *tagurangan*, y es tan fino su color que entre estos naturales, para alabar una cosa muy colorada, dicen se parecen [sic] a esta flor.

Es una mata que se viene a hacer arbolillos, aunque no muy altos, copados. Las hojas se semejan a las hojas de las rosas de España, pero son tres veces mayores, sin espinas, y el verde más claro y más hermoso.

⁴ *Tondirla*. Vide *Tundirla*. The word comes from the Latin *tondere*, shear, shave, cut off. *Tundir* means to shear the hair of a cloth, cut off the edges, level them, etc. (Cf. *Diccionario de la lengua española*, Real Academia, Madrid, 1984, h-z, p. 1351). The word *tondirla*, used here in Alcina's manuscript, was probably read to the *amanuensis*. In most Filipino languages there is no basic distinction in pronunciation between the 'o' and the 'u' and between the 'e' and the 'i'. Thus the *amanuensis* wrote *tondirla* instead of *tundirla*. The word as used by Alcina means to shear the plants, cut off the edges and prune them. If the natives were to cut off the plants called *calipaian*, as they do often in the gardens of Spain with other plants, they would look extremely beautiful.

means to say, "happiness" or "joy." In their manner of speaking it is equivalent to saying, "a thing which brings delight."

The leaves are about as long as the finger of the hand and somewhat wider. The stem is short, few reach a *brasa*, and it is black in color. It sprouts many small twigs and its top is like a large sweet basil. It does not produce a showy flower but rather the entire plant is a flower, because all the leaves are green and yellow in such a variety that in a single plant, which I have examined closely, there might not be found two leaves that are entirely similar.

Some are completely green with the veins yellow; others the reverse, all yellow with green streaks; still others streaked with green and yellow stripes alternating. They seem to be more like painted with corresponding differences than developed by chance. Some have a half completely yellow, and the other green, without mixture, so that their discordant arrangement produces a very delightful effect. It is harmonious to the sight and merits the name which these natives have given this plant. If it were cultivated here as it is customary to tend plants in the gardens of Spain, it would be a beautiful sight.

Some say that this shrub comes from the Moluccas and that it has many medicinal qualities especially for illnesses of the stomach, for which they apply these leaves heated. Here we plant them for the delight they bring to the eyes and for their natural beauty.

I do not intend to omit entirely another very red rose which they call here *arogangan* in some places, and *tacurangan*⁵ in others. So fine is its color that among these natives in praising a very vivid color they say it resembles this flower.

It is a shrub that comes to produce bushy little trees, but not very tall. Its leaves are similar to the roses of Spain, but they are three times larger without spines and the green is lighter and prettier.

⁵ *Tagurangan*. Vide *tacuranga*. A shrub of narrow leaves. The flower is large and very red. The water in which the root is boiled is given to drink to women who suffer from the rule of menstruation. The flower, just before opening, pounded and mixed with a little aloe, can be applied to the forehead of women for the same reason. Also the said flower, before its opening, mixed with lime, can be applied as emplaster to growths and inflammations for them to burst out. (Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 418, Bisayan Part). Alcina says that, according to some people, the flower *tacurangan* was brought from Japan. He doubts it. And we can say that he is right. The fact of having local/native names is a clear sign of having been coined by the local/native people. Local/native names truly speak for antiquity and the existence of culture.

Las flores las da, o como campanillas, al modo de la amapola, o encarrujadas, como las rosas de que decíamos que mudan colores, aunque éstas son mucho menores, pero dan en mucha abundancia y todo el año. A la vista es muy agradable esta mata, porque entre el verde muy fino salen tanta cantidad de flores coloradas, que la dan hermosura deleitable.

Dicen algunos que es género traído acá de Japón. Puede ser; aunque al tener nombre propio entre estos naturales es cierta señal de que es cosa suya antigua. Es, empero, muy medicinal esta hoja; y su flor, con las hojas machucadas, o con el cogollo —que ha de ser flor— aplicado a cualquiera hinchazón, con un polvillo de cal, la madura muy breve.

La flor, ya abierta y cocida con agua, sirve para dar sudores, y es eficaz para el efecto. Y también la aplican para otros remedios. Y no es el menos usado el renovar con estas flores el color a los zapatos negros que, untados con ellas, recobran el color antiguo y los vuelven como nuevos.

Es mata que nace con mucha facilidad, y cualquiera rama hincada en el suelo, prende.

Más cierto es haber venido de Japón a estas Islas un género como el jazmín nuestro, pero mucho más oloroso, por lo menos por acá, que aquel, que también se da aquí, pero no tiene que ver con el de Castilla, que si allá dicen “el jazmín por el olor es el mejor”⁶, acá se puede decir del jazmín lo contrario.

Llaman los indios *marol*⁷ en su lengua a dicha flor. En Manila la llaman *Sampaga*, y es antigua de estas Islas, la cual, aunque es buena y muy olorosa y medicinal, la que nuevamente dicen vino de Japón le hace muchas ventajas en la hermosura y olor.

⁶ *El jazmín por el olor es el mejor* is used here as an idiomatic saying. The meaning is that one judges the jasmine by its fragrance. Since it has a good fragrance, it is a good flower.

⁷ *Marol*. With this spelling there is no entry in Sánchez' Diccionario. We have two entries: first, *maroc baroc nga cahuy*, a large tree, with small leaves. The bark has small fissures and grated is used by the Bisayans as medicine in certain sicknesses. The second entry, *maroc baroc nga balagon*, an ivy of small leaves. It is medicinal, especially for women who suffer from interruption of the rule. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.* p. 410, Bisayan Part).

It produces flowers either like little bells in the manner of the poppy, or fringed, like the roses which we described as changing in color. Yet these are much smaller, but they are produced in great abundance and all the year around. This plant is pleasant to behold because in the midst of the fine green of the leaves it develops such a quantity of reddish flowers creating a delightful beauty.

Some say that it is a species brought here from Japan. It may be, although having its own name among these natives is a certain sign that this is something native to them. The leaf has great medicinal qualities and the flower, with its leaves ground up or the bud which is to become a flower, applied to any swelling with a little powdered lime, heals it very quickly.

The flower when open and boiled in water is used to cause sweating and is effective for this purpose. They also apply it for other remedies. This flower is likewise widely used for renewing the color of black shoes. Rubbed with it they recover their former color and become like new.

It is a plant which sprouts easily and whatever branch is thrust into the soil takes root.

It is more certain that another kind of species has come from Japan to these Islands. It is like our jasmine but much more fragrant, at least here, than our own, because if there, it can be said: "the jasmine, by its fragrance, is the best"; here we can say of the jasmine the contrary.

The natives call this flower in their language *marol*. In Manila they call it *sampaga*.⁸ It has been in these islands for a long time and although, it is good and fragrant and medicinal, that which they say has recently come from Japan surpasses it in many ways in beauty and fragrance.

⁸ The old tagalog dictionaries, like those of Blancas de San José (Manuscript, UST Archives), Noceda-San Lucar de los Santos, have only the entree *Sampaga*. Jose Villa Panganihan's *Diksiyunaryo-Tesaurus Pilipino-Ingles* differentiates *sampaga* from *sampagita*. *Sampaga*, jasmine-type shrub with white flowers bigger than those of the *sampagita*. *Sampagita*, jasmine-type shrub with white flowers smaller than those of the *sampaga*, referred to often as 'tropical rose', adopted as the National Flower of the Philippines. (Cf. *op. cit.*, Quezon City, 1973, p. 878). I suspect that the term *sampaguita*, spelled with an 'u', has come into Philippine languages through Spanish. *Sampaguita* comes from the Arabic *zanbag* and means jasmine, lily.

Son las hojas de esta mata, que también trepa y se enrama, si quisieren, como el jazmín, aunque acá lo más común es limpiar para macetas y hacerle a modo de arbolillo, de color muy verde y algo encarrujadas, anchas moderadamente y muy lustrosas o como bruñidas, y salen muy vistosas con lo blanco de las flores.

Las de Japón no son sencillas como el *marol* de acá, sino que tienen cuatro órdenes de hojas, con mucha proporción, de modo que semejan a las rosas blancas de España y aun son algo mejores, por ser estas hojas más menuditas y redondas, que hacen uno como lechugado, curioso y hermoso.

Esta es, a mi ver, la flor que por acá huele más y mejor de cuantas se dan en estas Islas. Y, fuera de ésto, es muy medicinal la planta.

Es cosa muy probada que la raíz, desleída⁹ en agua, facilita mucho los partos, pero ha de ser en poca cantidad, porque en mucha obra de con demasiada violencia, y dañosa. Cocida esta hoja en agua y, lavándose con ella las llagas, aunque sean muy viejas, y poniendo encima de ellas una hoja o dos verdes del mismo tamaño, según fuere, que la tape, en breves días la sana. Y es cosa que yo he experimentado con muchos, a quienes, después de otros muchos remedios sin provecho, mandándoles aplicar éste, les fue eficazísimo, y en breve se hallaron sanos, habiendo estado muchos meses, y aunque años, sin poder curar sus llagas, impedidos.

Volvamos a las hierbas de acá particulares. *Macaapag* llaman estos indios a una mata que es particular, pues nace donde quieren, mientras no sea en la tierra, porque en ella se muere luego. Y así, lo más común, es hallarla arrimada a troncos de árboles o a postes viejos. En hallándola, se la suelen llevar los bisayas a sus casas y la amarran con un cordelito a un poste o arigue, y allí crece y echa sus flores hermosas, que son a modo de azucenillas pequeñas, pero en medio se cierran y forman como una boca de hombre. Y de estas flores fingieron que antiguamente era un hombre, a quien convirtieron sus dioses en esta flor, y que por esto vive y florece en las casas, sin riesgo ni beneficio alguno, pero con una singularidad mayor que la de la flor de la maravilla,¹⁰ y es que al salir el sol se abre su flor y al ponerse se

⁹ *Desleída*. Vide *desleir*, from the Latin *delere*. Here it is used in the sense of *diluir*, diluted.

¹⁰ *Flor de la maravilla* is a specific kind of flower, known with the common name of *Tigridia*. This flower has a very short span of life. Hence in Spanish we have the

The leaves of this plant, which also creeps and can be made to climb, if desired, are like the jasmine. Yet the most usual custom here is to trim them for flower pots and to fashion them like little trees of very green color and somewhat curled, many moderately lustrous like they were polished. They appear very striking with the white of the flowers.

These from Japan are not simple like the *marol* here but has four rows of petals arranged with great symmetry, so that they seem like the white roses of Spain. Yet they are somewhat better because these petals are much smaller and rounder and form a kind of curious and beautiful pattern like lettuce.

In my view this is the flower which has a greater and a better fragrance than any others which grow here; besides this, the plant has great medicinal characteristics.

It is a well proven fact that its root dissolved in water greatly aids in childbirth, but it has to be used in small quantity because in large amounts it works with too much violence and it is harmful. When this leaf is boiled in water and sores are washed with it, even though they may be old ones, and when a green leaf or two is put over them, it closes the wounds and in a few days heals them. It is a thing that I have tried many times; after other remedies have failed, I have ordered them to apply this one and it was very effective. In a brief time they were well, although they have been for many months and even years unable to cure their crippling wounds.

Let us go back to the peculiar herbs found here. One of these unusual shrubs is called by the natives *macaapag*; it grows anywhere provided it is not placed in the ground, because in the ground it dies. Thus it is ordinarily found joined to the trunks of trees or old posts. When they find it, the Bisayans are accustomed to take it to their homes and then, fasten it with a little cord to a post or a *harigue*. There they will grow and produce its beautiful flowers, which are like little white lilies, but in the center they are closed and form something like the mouth of a person. As regards these flowers, the natives imagine that in ancient times they were a man whose gods changed into this flower. For this reason it lives and flourishes inside the houses, without risk or assistance whatever. But it has a more remarkable quality than being the flower of the legend. When the sun comes out the flower opens;

saying: *La flor de la maravilla, cáatala muerta, cáatala viva*. It simply means the lack of stability of anything in life, the shortness of life.

cae en el suelo; que sólo tiene de vida doce horas, sin quedar rastro de ella.

Tiene[n] sus supersticiones con esta flor, que en su lengua quiere decir, "cosa que causa envidia o codicia" y por esto deben buscarla.

Vengamos ya a otras hierbas, que parece participan en algo de sentidos, dejando muchas de ellas, que todas las noches se recogen con el sol y se enmuestran de modo que no parecen de día las mismas que de noche, de que podría contar cinco o seis diferencias que yo he advertido muchas veces, topándolas¹¹ acaso a unas y otras, con cuidado, para verlo e informarme mejor con la repetida experiencia.

A algunas de estas llaman *torogtorog*,¹² que quiere decir que "se duermen" porque, en anocheciendo, cierran sus hojas¹³ y florecillas, que son amarillas, y a la mañana los vuelven a abrir.

Las más notables son dos o tres matas pequeñas y de hoja menuda, algunas como arraian,¹⁴ otras más anchillas, que no una vez sino muchas he visto yo que se recogen y retiran y se cierran e incorporan en sí mismas con notable presteza.

Suelen estar los niños bisayas, sin saber su calidad, tal vez jugando cerca de ellas, y, viendo que se encogen, se apartan un poco y luego vuelven a desplegarse. Echanle la mano y luego se vuelve a recoger una y dos y tres veces, pues parece que tiene más sentido esta hierba, pues, habiéndola engañado (si así se puede decir) una o dos veces, se entupece más y no vuelve a abrir sus hojillas sino cuando parece que no hay cerca quien se puede llegar; y no solo la mano, la ropa que se llegue basta; que yo le he probado varias veces.

¹¹ *Topándolas*. The text is quite clear. We can read *topándolas*, meaning find them, come across. But again it seems the text of Alcina was read to the *amanuensis*, or *escribano*, or transcriber and he heard '*topándolas*' instead of '*tocándolas*' (touching them). The text demands *tocándolas*. By touching them softly, Alcina discovered how the plants closed or went to sleep for a while.

¹² *Torogtorog*. Vide *Torocotoroc*. To paint or spray something with stains or small marks. Mark, point or small natural or artificial stain. Mold that grows on things. A grass of this name. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 365, Bisayan Part). As we can see, the first definition of Sánchez does not fit with Alcina's meaning. The second is presented as the name of grass, but Sánchez gives no explanation of the nature of the *torocotoroc*.

¹³ *Hojas*. In the text of the Museo Naval, the copy we follow in our transcription, we clearly read *ojos*, eyes, and not *hojas*, leaves. We have said it before, and we have

when it sets, the flower drops to the ground. Thus it has a life of only twelve hours, then there remains no vestige of it.

They have some superstitions about this flower whose name in their language means "cousin envy or desire"; for this reason they go out searching for it.

We come now to other herbs which seem to share in something like feelings. We shall omit many of them which every night withdraw with the sun and hide so that they do not seem to be the same during the day as during the night. Five or six varieties of these can be counted. I have observed them many times, touching and observing them with care in order to watch and inform myself better with the repeated experience.

Some of these they call *torogtorog*, which is to say "they are sleeping." That is because when night falls they close their buds and little flowers, which are yellow and in the morning they open again.

The most notable are two or three small bushes with small leaves, some like the myrtle. Others are a little wider, which I have seen open and close not once but many times. The close and fold up with remarkable speed.

The Bisayan children, without knowing their characteristics, perhaps playing near them and seeing that they close, will withdraw a little and then the flowers display themselves again. On getting hold of them, they again close, once, twice, or three times. Whereupon it seems that these herbs get better sense because having been deceived (one may speak thus) once or twice they tighten up more and do not open their little petals again until the time when it seems that there is no one nearby who may approach them. Not only the hand; the clothing is enough to cause the same result; I have tried it several times.

to repeat it here, that the *amanuensis* of Alcina's text played by the ear, so to speak. Someone may have read to him from Alcina's original text and he understood '*ojos*' for '*hojas*'. Hence the mistake. Yet, I still think that the text might be right, that is *ojos* and not *hojas*, because right after the Spanish words *cierran sus ojos y florecillas, que son amarillas, y a la mañana los vuelven a abrir*, the word "los" might refer to *ojos*. Perhaps Alcina spoke anthropomorphically, and put *ojos*, eyes, in the plants called *torogtorog* that closed their *ojos* at dusk and opened them again with the dawn.

¹⁴ *Arraian*. Vide *Arrayán*. Spanish word from the Arabic *ar-raihan*, the mistletoe. Famous in Spanish art and architecture is the *Patio de los arrayanes*, one of the most beautiful in the Alhambra de Granada.

No la saben el nombre los bisayas comúnmente, aunque se admiran de su propiedad y encojimiento, que unos la llaman miedo, otros vergüenza, y algunos las aplican sentido y dicen cosas ridículas y supersticiosas. Lo cierto es que no son ordinarias en otras hierbas; que si acá pusiéramos todas las otras cosas que de otras cuentan los indios, fueran más increíbles, pero yo no escribo lo que sólo dicen ellos sino lo que he visto u oído a otros, de cuya verdad no tengo duda.

De la otra hierba del mar, como col, que se encoje, etc., de quien se escribe algo en la historia de esta provincia, cuanto tratemos de las cosas especiales del mar, diremos lo que hemos visto.

No quiero dejar de apuntar en este lugar las diferencias que hay en estas Islas, de albahaca, hierba conocida en España aunque no más que la común (que yo sepa) y de que se hacen las macetas, que sabemos todos; pero acá la albahaca de allá se estima poco, aunque se dé con tanta fertilidad, que he visto yo una mata sola de más de tres brazas de ruedo, y en algunas partes donde se junta[n] muchas, hacen manchas de ellas de muchas brazas.

De esta hacen poco caso los indios sino para olerla, aunque poco, porque la dan algunos efectos que en España no los hay, o no los tiene, y el uno de ellos es que esteriliza a las mujeres que usan de ella, y a los hombres reprime la potencia generativa. No sé qué verdad sea. Los que tratan de eso lo habrán experimentado.

La albahaca que ellos estiman más y plantan con cuidado es una que llaman *sangig*.¹⁵ La hoja es como [la] nuestra, más menuda, pero el olor muy otro, que huele a clavo, aunque con más suavidad, y el sabor, que es comestible, sabe algo a toronguil, y dicen tiene opuestas calidades a las que dijimos de la otra.

Usan éstos de este *sangig* en sus guisados, porque les da buen olor y un agrito gustoso, y, cuando huyen de la otra, buscan ésta. Lo que he experimentado yo es que es aromática. Y, seca o verde, siempre huele como el clavo de especias, cuyas veces suplen ellos con esta hierba.

Coloncogon llaman a otro género que se da en más abundancia por los campos. Las hojas y florecillas es [sic] como el albahaca, pero

¹⁵ *Sangig*. A plant of this name. The leaves are used to dress the food. It is also used to reduce swellings and inflammations. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 286; p. 417, Bisayan Part).

The Bisayans for the most part do not know its name although they admire its ability to close itself. Some call this fear, others shame, and some attribute feeling to it and say ridiculous and superstitious things. Certainly these are properties not found in other herbs, and if we put down here everything the natives say about them, they would be incredible. But I do not write simply what they say but what I have seen and heard from others of whose truthfulness I have no doubt.

About the other herb from the sea, like cabbage from the sea which closes up, etc. about which something is written in the history of this province when we treat the extraordinary things from the sea, we will tell what we have seen.

I do not wish to omit pointing out here the different kinds of sweet basil that there are in these islands. It is an herb that is known in Spain although there it is just the common variety (which I know about) from which are made the tool handles we all know. But over here that basil is little esteemed even though it grows so luxuriantly that I have seen a single shrub more than three *brazas* in circumference. In some place where they grow heavily they grow in masses many *brazas* about.

The natives make little use of this except to smell it, even this rarely, because it produces some effects which those in Spain do not have. One of these is that it renders sterile the women who make use of it and in men it suppresses the generative faculties. I do not know what truth there is in it; those who treat of this will have experienced it.

The basil which they esteem most and plant with care is one which they call *sangig*. The leaf is like ours, smaller, but its fragrance is very different. It smells like the clove, although less harsh and the taste (for it is edible) is something like the lemon-balm. They say it has the opposite qualities of those we have just described about the other.

They use this *sangig* in their stews because it gives them a good color and a tasty sourness. As much as the other is avoided, this is sought after. I have discovered that it is aromatic and whether dry or green always smells like the clove of the spice family for which at times they substitute with this herb.

Another variety is called *coloncogon*,¹⁶ which grows in great

¹⁶ *Colon cogon*. Vide *Colong cogon*. Rough basil. It grows wild and cultivated. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 92, Bisayan Part). *Colong cogon*, *Hernandia sonora*. This tree

menos verde y algo vellosa. Huele a orégano, y sirve acá en su lugar para adobos y otros guisados donde se suele gastar el otro. Es muy medicinal para dolores de estómago, y muchos han probado su virtud, echando o las ramas, o la raíz [en cocimiento o bebiendo el agua ordinaria en que se haya echado esta raíz].¹⁷ Dicen deshacen flatos y crudezas y que compone los humores. Los indios la usan también contra dolores de cabeza, y a los niños recién nacidos suelen estregar con estas hojas y envolverlos con ellas, que dicen fortalece los miembros y que ahuyenta los brujos, aunque con esto último pienso hay algo supersticioso, o que lo hubo antiguamente. Pero si la ruda tiene virtud natural para lo mismo, y contra malos espíritus, no será mucho la tenga esta hierba. *Locoloco* la llaman los tagalos, y los españoles "albahaca montés". Y no es ésta sola.

Concluyamos este capítulo con las varias frutas de que acá hacen estos naturales varios aceites no conocidos en otras partes y no poco provechosos [para varios usos]¹⁸. Y dejando el aceite de cocos, que es el más general, y de que ya tratamos, y otros que se hacen en menos cantidad para varios usos, como el de *ajonjolí*, que acá llaman *lunga*,¹⁹ que es el más ordinario para las cabezas; el de la fruta *tangantangan*,²⁰ que sirve para el mismo efecto y es más medicinal, el de los *piles* y otros

is a third class tree, that is, the wood is poor. The fruit cannot be eaten since it is bitter and extremely sharp. (Cfr. Ibidem, p. 400, Bisayan Part). *Colongcogon*. A plant with small leaves. The pounded leaves and trunk, heated with fire, are applied as em plaster against headaches. (Cfr. Ibidem).

¹⁷ The words in brackets are found in the *Copy Palacio Real*, not in the *Museo Naval Copy*. We believe that the copy we follow, the *Museo Naval*, demands the missing words, otherwise the sense is incomplete.

¹⁸ Found in the *Muñoz Copy*, not in the *Museo Naval Copy*.

¹⁹ *Lunga*. A plant of little less than three meters in height, with narrow leaves. The flower is small and white. The fruit has very fine seeds from which oil is obtained. This oil, mixed with water, is a good remedy against burns. The Bisayans toast this fruit in the fire, pound it a little, clean it and then grind it to use it as chocolate. They also prepare it as preserve and in melted calamay (sugar). (Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 407, Bisayan Part).

²⁰ *Tangantangan*. Vide *Tangan tangan*. A plant or a shrub called *aceite ricino* (castor oil), *palma de Cristo*, or *higuera del infierno*. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 342, Bisayan Part). *Tangan tangan*. A small tree with shield-shaped leaves, with seven or even nine cleft lobes, lanceolated and serrated. The fruit is bristly with thorns. This small tree or plant reaches a height of three or more meters. From the seed, a most useful oil is extracted, making up for the lack of olive oil used against malignant

abundance in the fields. The leaves and the little flower are like the basil but less green and somewhat pretty. It smells like the wild marjoram and they use it here in its place for pickling and other stews where it is customary to apply the other. It is very medicinal for pains of the stomach and many have verified its power, applying either the branches or the roots. They say that it dissipates congestion and indigestion and fortifies the humors. The natives use it also for pains in the head and they are accustomed to rest newly-born children on these leaves and wrap them up in them. They say that it strengthens the limbs and drives away witches. But regarding this last, I think that there is something superstitious or that there was in ancient times. But if the rue has a natural power for this purpose and against evil spirits, this herb could not have less. The Tagalogs call it *locoloco* and the Spaniards call it "mountain basil" and it is not the only one of its kind.

We shall conclude this chapter with the various kinds of fruit from which the natives here make different oils not known in other places and not a little useful. We will omit the coconut oil which is the most general and which we have discussed, and others which are made in smaller quantities for various purposes, like that from the *ajonjoli*. This is called *lunga* here and is the most ordinary for the head and the fruit of the *tangantangan*, which serves the same purpose and is very medicinal. Also those of the *piles*²¹ and other similar kind. We shall

fevers or the cure of dropsy. The said oil from the seeds, known as castor oil, is a marvelous cure for sickness. It kills the worms, even the tapeworm. Some doctors advice to remove the heart of the seed to extract the oil. The leaves, boiled with milk, speed up the suppuration of boils better and faster than any catapasm. The leaves are also most effective to heal the wounds and blisters even the most rotten and full of worms. The leaves smeared with sesame and applied to the swollen legs remove the pain coming from perspiration. The same effect is caused by the oil. Sánchez, who has been our guide in defining and describing the local Samarnon names, also calls the *tangan tangan*, *higuerilla del infierno*. The fruit grows in bunches and has in its interior part some seeds even bigger than chick peas (*garbanzos*). From them a very medicinal oil can be extracted. The oil is also good for lamps. The leaves, applied to the forehead, reduce or even eliminate headaches. The vein, at whose end the leaf is found, is round and hollow. Applying to the ear that is aching one extreme of the leaf and blowing from the other extreme, it heals the ache or the fluxion. The cause of this effect is a kind of foam that is probably the sap of the leaf, that is expelled by blowing and goes to the ear. (Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, pp. 419-420, Bisayan Part).

²¹ *Piles*. We have said before that the Spaniards all over their empire, and thus also in the Philippines, hispanized and pluralized the natives names. One concrete case here is *piles*. *Pili*. A tree also called white canary (*canario blanco*). Resin from the *pili* tree. The fruit of the *pili* tree. (Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 246, Bisayan Part). A

semejantes, trataremos de otro a que suelen llamar los españoles "aceite de palo", para distinguirlo del de los cocos; no porque sea de palo sino por ser de árboles muy grandes y que dan en cantidad una fruta del tamaño de avellanas, aunque la cáscara es blanda y llaman estos naturales *lunban*.

Nuevo es comestible y de buen sabor, si se hace con limpieza. Es mucho más craso que el de cocos, y por eso muy a propósito para el aderezo de los navíos, en especial de los champanes, de que usan los chinos acá, en que no gastan brea sino con cal hacen una que llaman *galagala*, mezclándole raspaduras de cañas. Y la experiencia suya está tan en su abono de este aceite que le compran, o la fruta para hacerlo, o el aceite hecho en grandes cantidades, para llevar a la Gran China, porque dicen que una ganta de este aceite cunde más que dos de cualquier otro, y es mucho más a propósito para defenderse de la broma.²² Y así suelen untar por afuera sus embarcaciones con él; y si los indios fueran amigos de trabajar, ganaran mucho con este aceite, pero su flojedad es tanta que si no es a no poder más, para buscar su tributo, no se quieren cansar. Y lo mismo les sucede en todas las cosas con que pudieran enriquecer[se] mucho.

De otra fruta y árboles, llamados *balocana* hacen también muy buen aceite y casi tan bueno como el dicho y, en parte, mejor, porque puede servir para pintar como el de linaza de España. Y éste es mucho más claro y de mejor olor.

Hay de esta fruta (cuyos árboles son como nogales de España y la fruta como una nuez grande, aunque la cáscara es gruesa y colorada,

tree of wide and long trunk. The leaves are egg-shaped, long, sharp and glabrous. The fruit is fleshy, with a very hard three-cornered nut. The resin, distilled in abundance, is white and aromatic. It is used by the Bisayans as light. Sometimes they wrap it in *nipa*, *bigo* or *anahaw* leaves; at other times they mix it with rice husks and place all in the said leaves. This tar which has strong odor is called *pili* tar (*brea de pilis*). Some people mix the fruit, which looks like the almond, with chocolate. Its oil is excellent and is like the oil of sweet almonds. The emplaster of the *pili* tar, applied to the feet, helps in the swelling of the legs. The *pili* tar, melted before, and applied to the stomach, helps stomachache; placed at the back, it helps in perspiring and removes resistant coughs. The tar, which is very sticky, is also used as incense. The water in which the *pili* root was boiled is given to women who have just delivered. The oil of the *pili* fruit is a medicine for those who evacuate blood by smearing the stomach with it. It is also medicine against rheumatism by smearing the affected part (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 414, Bisayan Part).

²² *Broma*. A marine mollusk. It can perforate submerged wood by opening small

speak of another which the Spaniards customarily call "wood oil," to distinguish it from that of the coconuts, not because it is from wood, rather it is from very large trees which yield quantities of a fruit of the size of the hazelnut although the hull is soft. The natives call it *lumban*.²³

When new, it is edible, tastes good and is digestible, if it is prepared with cleanliness. It is much more oily than that of the coconuts and for that reason is very useful for the dressing of boats, especially for the sampans which the Chinese use here, on which they do not use pitch, but with lime they make what they call *galagala*,²⁴ mixing with it shavings of cane. Their experience is so in favor of this oil that they buy it either in the nut from which they make it, or the oil ready prepared, in great quantities for export to China. They say that a *ganta* of this oil makes up for more than two of any other kind and it is much more effective as a defense against barnacles. Thus they are accustomed to coat their vessels with it on the outside. If the natives were inclined to work, they could make much from this oil but their laziness is such that unless there is no other option to procure their tribute they do not wish to grow tired. The same thing happens in every thing by which they might be able greatly to enrich themselves.

*Balocanar*²⁵ is another fruit and tree from which they also make an oil almost as good as the one above and in some ways better because it can be used for painting like that from the linseed of Spain. This one is much more transparent and of better odor.

There is a great quantity of this fruit. The tree is like the walnut tree of Spain and the fruit is like a very large walnut, although the hull

galleries, thus causing serious damage to naval constructions. (*Diccionario de la lengua española*, Real Academia, a-g, Madrid, 1984, p. 26).

²³ *Lumban*. Vide *lumbang*. A tree with this name. The fruit is aromatic and it is used to wash white clothes. (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 195, Bisayan Part). *Lumbang* is a town in the province of Laguna, Luzon, near the mouth of the Pagsanhan River, on the fringes of the Sierra Madre and the Eastern, South-Eastern shore of Laguna de Bay.

²⁴ *Galagala*. Vide *Gala gala*. Bitumen made out of lime, oil and tar. (Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 120, Bisayan Part).

²⁵ *Balocanar*. Vide *balocanad*. A plant of this name. (Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 32, Bisayan Part).

el meollo entero y sin gajos, y así tiene mucho más migajón) mucha cantidad, y se saca de ella asoleada muy buen aceite.

Las mujeres bisayas usan también de él para sus cabezas, porque dicen mata los animalillos que en ellas se crían, y con él untan las de sus hijuelos.

Es árbol que se nace de suyo en los montes (como el *lumban* en las playas), y sin trabajo ninguno hallan a su tiempo mucha cantidad. Comen una y otra fruta los puercos de monte y engordan con ella muy bien. Y aun en tiempos de necesidad la comen los indios, curando la del *balocanar*; que de la otra, sin curarla, pueden comer, como comen otra fruta y hacen de ella harina y aceite, si quieren, que llaman *pitogo*.²⁶ Es esta planta un género de palma baja, pero muy hermosa a la vista, porque las hojas son como palmas que tendrán cuatro palmos, poco más o menos de largo. Su color es un verde finísimo, y tan sólido que resplandecen las hojas como si tuvieran algún betún de los que por acá se usan, como el chalán, y duran más de quince días después de cortadas del pie, sin perder su color y lustre; de modo que con mucha facilidad se hacen con dichas hojas ramilletes vistosos y poco costosos.

El cogollo de esta palma que no nace sino entre piedras o peñas, a la orilla del mar, imita a los espárragos mejores de España, y los excede en la blandura y sabor más suave. Hélos comido muchas veces. Son más gruesos que el dedo, y, si se dieran todo el año, fueran de grande refugio a los pobres.

Da la fruta en racimos, como unos coquillos del tamaño de un huevo de gallina, la tez sólida y blanca, que les sirven a los bisayas para guardar sus hijuelas y oro menudo. La carne emborracha, si se como fresca. Seca y molida, como ellos la suelen comer, hecha harina, dicen es gustosa. No la he probado como los cogollos, y así no sé su bondad. De los cogollos he visto muchos, muy apasionados; y con razón que son regalados.

²⁶ *Pitogo*. A palm of very beautiful leaves but smaller than the leaves of the coconut palm. The fruit is also small. The grated meat is used as em plaster to cysts and tumors (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 414, Bisayan Part). *Pitogo* is a town of Quezon Province, Luzon, formerly of the province of Tayabas, on the coast of Ragay Gulf, overlooking the Bondoc peninsula. *Pitogo* are also two small islands of the Caramoan Peninsula, Camarines Sur, West of Catanaguas Islands, in the Island of Luzon.

is thick and reddish. The pulp is whole and without divisions and so it has much more marrow, and from it when dried in the sun is taken a very fine oil.

The Bisayan women also use it for their heads because they say that it kills the little animals that grow there and they anoint the heads of their little children.

It is a tree which grows generally in the forests, like the *lumban* does on the shores. Without any labor they can find in time a large number. The wild hogs of the forests eat the nuts of both kinds and get very fat on them. In times of need the natives eat them. They have to cure those of the *balocanar*, but the other they can eat without curing. Also, they eat another fruit and make flour and oil from it, if they wish, and it is called *pitogo*. This plant is a kind of low palm but very pretty to the sight, because the leaves are like the palms and are four *palmos* more or less in length. They are a very delicate green in color and very compact. The leaves shine as if they were waxed with bitumen of the kind that they use here, like the *chalan*.²⁷ They last more than fifteen days after being cut from the stalk without losing their color and luster. As a result they can easily make with these leaves showy bouquets which cost very little.

The heart of this palm does not sprout except among stones or rocks at the seashore. It resembles the better asparagus sprouts of Spain and it excels them in tenderness and pleasantness in taste. I have eaten them many times. They are thicker than the finger and if they would yield all the year round they would be a great recourse for the poor.

They grow fruit in clusters like very small coconuts of the size of a hen's egg and the surface hard and white. They serve the Bisayans for storing their palm seed and bits of gold. The meat causes intoxication if taken fresh: when it is dried and ground into flour as they are accustomed to eat it, they say is very good. I have not tried it, as I have the palm hearts, and so I do not know its goodness. I have seen many very fond of the palm hearts and with reason because they are a delicacy.

²⁷ *Chalán*. We have not been able to decipher the meaning of *chalán*, as used here by Alcina. The normal meaning of *chalán*, horse/animal dealer, does not fit Alcina's sense.

No quiero pasar en silencio, por lo extraordinario, otro árbol de estas Islas, que es de tal calidad que su leña, aunque sea muy seca, jamás se enciende ni echa llama ni cria brasa. Llámánle los naturales *tubug*,²⁸ y les ha enseñado la experiencia que, aunque está muchas horas en el fuego, jamás arde y sólo se resuelve en humo; y, aunque estén un día entero guisando su comida con esta madera, nunca se cuece ni sazona, y así tienen mucho cuidado de no llevarla a sus casas.

Hay pocos europeos que sepan esta calidad, aunque muy conocida de los indios, y muy acaso reparé yo en ello, viendo desechar algunos trozos rollizos y buenos, a mi parecer, y, preguntando la causa, supe el misterio.

Y, pues, este árbol es singular en no dejarse quemar, no lo es menos en esta tierra por otra virtud otro llamado *binongan*. Es de hojas muy verdes al principio y después muy coloradas, cuya goma, que es como sangre sirve recién sacada, sola y amasada con vinagre, mejor de cola fortísima que pega mejor que la de España, que acá sirviera poco por la mucha humedad, como lo muestra la experiencia, y esta está siempre fortísima, sin que la humedad le empeza.

De este modo hay otras gomas y raíces que sirven de cola con particular provecho, porque la de España, acá o sirve poco o se despega presto. De ella sirve también otra raíz, como cebolla, a que llaman *binongan* los tagalos y los bisayas, y nace cerca de las playas areniscas.

Cantius J. Kobak, O.F.M.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
March 5, 1994

Lucio Gutiérrez, O.P.
University of Santo Tomas, Manila,
January 27, 1997

Tubug. In Sánchez' *Diccionario* we have the following entries: *Tábug*, *Tubag*, *Tubog* and *Tubúg*, with four different meanings. *Tábug*, a shrub of broad, long and pointed leaves. The resin harms the body if one is stained with it. The leaves, applied to the forehead, soothe headaches and boiled in water is used to bathe the sick (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 418, Bisayan Part). *Tubag*, a tree of this name (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 422, Bisayan Part). *Tubog*, a tree of this name (Cf. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, p. 368,

I do not wish to pass over in silence, because of the strange qualities, another tree of these islands. It is of such a character that its wood, even though it may be very dry, never burns or emits flame or becomes live coals. The natives call it *tubug* and experience has shown them that although it might be over the fire for hours, it never burns. It simply becomes smoke and although they might be a whole day in cooking their meal with this wood it will not cook nor become soft. Thus they are very careful not to carry it to their houses.

There are few Europeans that know of this quality, but it is well known among the natives and quite by chance I found it out from them. On seeing them throw away some round and good pieces, in my opinion, and asking them for the reason, I found out the mystery.

And if this tree is peculiar for not being burnable, another called *binongan* in this country is no less so because of another quality. It has very beautiful leaves, the size of a plate and of similar shape and very green in texture in the beginning; afterwards, they become very red. Its sap, which is like blood, is used alone when it is recently extracted and better when kneaded with vinegar to make a very strong glue. It adheres better than that from Spain which would be of little use here because of the great humidity, as experience shows. The former is always strong without the humidity hurting it.

In this fashion there are other resins and roots which serve as glue with advantage, because that of Spain is either of little use here or separates itself quickly. Another root called *binongan* by the Tagalogs and the Bisayans and like onions, is used also for this purpose. It grows near the sandy beaches.

Cantius J. Kobak.O.F.M.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
October 7, 1994

Lucio Gutiérrez. O.P.
University of Santo Tomas, Manila
January 1997

Bisayan Part). *Tubúg*, a tree of thick and high trunk, with broad leaves. The wood is of poor quality. (Cfr. *Ibidem*, p. 422, Bisayan Part).

N.B. The terms *Calipaian*, *arogangan*, *macaapag* and *binongan* are not found in Sánchez' *Diccionario*.

