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**Concerning A Continuation of Other
Natural Characteristics of These Natives**

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Capítulo 21

Prosigue las otras calidades naturales de estos indios

No hallo menos oposición entre estos naturales en otros afectos del ánimo del que queda dicho. Son los bisayas de suyo pacientes y sufridos, aun parece que en demasía, pues rara vez se verán airados, pocas enojados, porque la pasión de la ira les predomina poco, y por esta causa hay pocas riñas entre ellos y rara vez se matan riñendo. Y, aunque oigan y vean palabras y cosas de suyo apasionadas, se alteran poco. Y de ésto nace el que por cualquier agravio, aun de los de mayor marca, como ver o saber que sus mujeres les guardan poca lealtad, y tal vez las hallan *in fraganti*¹ y oirse tratar con palabras muy afrentosas, etc., con que les den algo, y algunas veces cosas de bien poca monta, como un plato o dos, un bolo, cuchillo o lanza, o cuando más algún dinero u oro, quedan satisfechos y sosegados y perdonan en lo exterior con mucha facilidad. Y, por otra parte, nunca olvidan los agravios recibidos, aunque sean de palabra, sino que los conservan en su voluntad con un género de rencor u odio casi indeleble; y, aunque toleran mucho y lo pudren muchos meses y aun años, si no hallan ocasión de vengarse, en hallándola, la logran infaliblemente.

No es una vez sola sino es muchas las que yo he discurrido en estas calidades que parecen opuestas, y, a lo filosófico, he

Chapter 21

Concerning a continuation of other natural characteristics of these natives

I still do not find less contrariness in these natives concerning other tendencies of the spirit than I have found in the above-mentioned. The Bisayans are patient and long-suffering; it even seems beyond reasonable limits. For rarely are they vengeful or seldom angry, because the passion of anger has little control over them. For this reason there are so few quarrels among them and during the quarrels rarely do they kill each other. Although they may hear or see words and deeds of passion they are hardly affected. As a result, whatever the injury may be, even the most serious one like the infidelity of their wives or perhaps catching them *in fraganti*,¹ or hearing insulting words leveled against themselves, etc., they try [to appease] by giving something. Sometimes things of very little value like a plate or two, a *bulu*, a knife or a spear, or when something is more serious, some money or gold. Thus they are appeased and satisfied and they forgive outwardly and very readily. On the other hand, they never forget a hurt received, even if it be a word; but they keep it inside with a kind of unforgettable rancor or hatred. Yet, they have great deal of tolerance and suffer with it for months and even years, if they do not find an opportunity to strike back. Once they find it, they infallibly take advantage.

It is not only once but many times that I have made my reasoning about these characteristics which seem to be contradictory. In

adivinado si aquella insensibilidad natural que padecen en sufrir, es causa de la mala voluntad que conservan para se vengar; discurso que me parece se puede fundar no mal en las mismas calidades y efectos de ira, la cual es un ramo de locura, según el sentir de muchos de los santos y filósofos, desfogando la ira y prorrumpiendo en enojo exterior, parece que se desvanece y acaba.

De aquí se ve que tal vez los iracundos patean, se arañan y tal vez dan de calaveradas, y con ésto parece decansan.

En los bisayas obra en la voluntad esta pasión más mansamente, y, aunque parece que sufren es o pusilanimidad, o miedo, o cortedad de noticias que avive la aprensión. Y ésto mismo obra después como fuego lento en la voluntad y se fija en ella de modo que, cuanto les faltó de ira y enojo, convierten en odio y rencor, y así las más de las muertes que entre ellos suceden son a sangre fría.

Dejo algunas borracheras, de que luego trataremos, que en ellos obra más el vino que la pasión, y a traición de noches, por bajo la casa u otras semejantes, en que se echa de ver que el odio encubierto muchos días, prorrumpió y desfogó cuando halló ocasión acomodada; y de las noticias que de estos naturales tengo, juzgo que el odio entre todos ellos es el que se lleva muchos, aun hoy que son cristianos, al infierno; porque obra este más, y los dura más, que la mayor ira en las repentinas; y de ésto pudiera referir muchos casos individuales de que he tenido noticia, y que infaliblemente manifiestan lo dicho, que no traigo por no tener cosa especial de edificación; antes algunas de lo contrario.

Vengamos a la sensualidad o lujuria. Y, aunque este vicio parece red barredera que en todo el mundo, en todas las naciones y gentes, se lleva muchos tras sí, y en estas y otras partes de Indias es el lazo mayor que arrastra y acaba con muchos europeos; porque los climas, la facilidad de las mujeres, la

a philosophical manner, I have come to conclude certainly that natural insensibility that they bear in their sufferings is the cause of the ill-will that they keep within in order to take revenge. It seems to me that this reasoning can be based, not without foundation, on the characteristics and effects of anger, which is a kind of madness according to the opinion of many saints and philosophers. Giving vent to one's anger and permitting it to burst forth into outward wrath seems to make it vanish and come to an end.

Perhaps, from this it is obvious that such individuals, overpowered by anger, kick, scratch and even knock their heads together; in this fashion, calm seems to settle in.

Among the Bisayans, this passion works on the will more slowly. Although it seems that they suffer, this may be due to cowardice or fear or a lack of knowledge that may set their apprehension in motion. All of these, later acts as a slow fire on their will, clings to it in such a way that they turn it into hatred and bitterness. Thus, the majority of their deaths that take place are committed in cold blood.

I bypass some of the drinking bouts now, which we shall treat afterwards. Wine stirs them up more than passion and this happens in a treacherous way at night, beneath the house, or in other similar ways. From this we may see that hatred, hidden for many days, breaks out and finds an outlet at an opportune occasion. The knowledge that I have of these natives, I believe that hatred among them is the factor that carries off many off to hell, even today when they are Christians. All this goes deeper and lasts longer than the most violent anger in sudden outrage. In reference to this, I could relate many individual incidents that have come to my knowledge and which prove infallible all I have said. I do not jot them down because they are not especially edifying; rather, some are just the opposite.

We now come to sensuality or lust. Although, this vice seems like a dragnet which throughout the world, in all nations and peoples carries many along in it; yet, in these and other parts of the Indies it is a greater trap which pulls down and brings an end to many Europeans. This is due to the climate, the looseness of the women, the idleness, and even the very nature of

ociosidad y cuanto hay de comidas y bebidas parecen ayudan a ellos, y más en los poco templados, que en los que lo son dijo bien el otro gentil: *Sine Cerere et Baco friget Venus*², con todo, aunque a estos indios no les falta alguna pasión en esta parte, juzgo que es menos, y aun en los hombres más que en las mujeres, que a ellas tengo por más sujetas a él que no a ellos.

Nunca en su antigüedad se supo qué era sodomía, y, aunque de los *asog*³, que ya dijimos, se presumía algo por verlos huir de las mujeres y allegarse más a los hombres, no se cuentan cosas indecentes en esta materia. Y ahora, si algo se halla de esta calidad, se les ha apegado del trato mayor y comunicación con los chinas, nación notada, y aun demasiadamente manchada, de este nefando vicio, o con algunos españoles que, de puro viciosos en esta parte, ya no se contentan con la Venus ordinaria.

Congresos incestuosos los aborrecían, y no sólo para sus casamientos, de que trataremos en el otro libro, pero aun para bureos los excusaban y tenían por demasiadamente feos; y, si no es estando borrachos (que, como veremos, en este vicio se encierran todos los males) no se sabe que llegasen a parientes de primer grado, que fue siempre para ellos y entre ellos prohibido, y aun la simple fornicación, que a gentes y naciones más entendidas pareció lícita, nunca entre los bisayas se tuvo por tal, sino que siempre la tuvieron por mala y por pecado, aun cuando no sabían tanto qué cosas lo eran y que no como saben después que son cristianos.

Y es cierto que hubo en su antigüedad, y hay hoy mucho mejor que tienen ya luz de fe y noticias de Dios, y conocen de lo malo y de lo bueno, muchos hombres y muchas mujeres que no conocieron a otros que a sus consortes; y, aunque sus matrimonios, como después veremos, juzgan algunos que no fueron verdaderos matrimonios (después diré mi sentir), con todo pasaron y se contentaron con sólo lo permitido en ellos y por ellos antiguamente, mucho mejor ahora, y, aunque juzgo que ni antiguamente ni ahora se estimó entre ellos la castidad, ni antes la

food and drink which promote such a vice, especially those who cultivate little restraint. About those who are such, the other gentile poet stated: *Sine Cerere et Baco friget Venus*.² All in all, even though these natives are not totally free from passion in this regard, I believe that it is less; but in the men more than women. Because I am convinced that the women are more subject to it than the men.

Never in their ancient times was it known that there was sodomy. Although from the *asug*,³ about whom we have spoken, something was suspected, because they were seen avoiding women and getting attached to men, however, nothing indecent regarding this matter is reported about such. Now, if something of this sort is found, they got it from their more frequent dealings with the Chinese. This is a nation well-known for this and even completely corrupted by this ugly vice; or from their dealings with some Spaniards who, having given themselves to the vice in this regard, do not seem to be satisfied with the ordinary Venus.

They detested incestuous unions and avoided them not only in their marriages, which we will deal with in the other *Book*, but even in flirtations and considered them to be excessively indecent. Unless it happens in a drunken stupor, as we shall see, all evils are included in this vice – it was never known that they had ever sexual dealings with first degree relatives, which were always prohibited among them. Even ordinary fornication, which seemed licit to more cultured peoples and nations, was never held to be such among the Bisayans. They always considered it as evil and sinful, even when they did not understand very well what it was all about, until they became Christians.

It is a fact that in their antiquity, and more so today, when they have the light of faith and the knowledge of God, and know how to distinguish good from evil, there were many men and many women who did not know anyone but their own partners. However, as we shall see later, some opine that their marriages were not true marriages (later I shall state my opinion). All in all, they practiced and were satisfied with what was only permitted among them in ancient times, and even much more so today. Although I maintain that neither in ancient times nor today chastity is esteemed among them, nor did they recognize it as a

conocieron por virtud, ahora sí que la admiran y tienen por santos a los que la guardan, aunque no son entre ellos muchos.

Con todo castigaron a los que en esta materia hallaban culpados; y por lo menos, aunque fuesen soltero con soltera, pagaban su culpa con cosas de valor a su modo y uso; de modo que podemos con verdad decir que siempre entre todos nuestros bisayas se tuvo por malo este vicio y por bueno su opuesto, aunque pocos lo seguían; que, como gentes sin luz ni noticias de premio o castigo, no es mucho se dejasen llevar de una pasión tan natural al hombre como ésta; antes es de maravilla de que no hubiese muchos más; y es cierto que los hubiera si no les penaran y castigaran antiguamente por este pecado, como consta que lo hacían.

Más añadido aun, y ésto lo he oído a muchos bisayas, así hombres como mujeres, de los más entendidos entre ellos y de mayores noticias de su antigüedad y de lo que hoy pasa, y es que dicen que en este vicio de la lujuria hay más exceso hoy entre los bisayas que había antiguamente; y, aunque parece proposición dura, la tengo por muy cierta, y la proposición es casi evidente.

Antiguamente vivían, como veremos en el Libro siguiente, en *gamoros*⁴, que eran juntas de poca gente, y estos casi todos o parientes por consaguinidad o por afinidad, y de éstos no pocos eran esclavos unos de otros; de modo que, como eran pocos y todos tenían sus mujeres y concubinas, los que tenían poder y caudal para sustentarlas, tenía cada cual lo que había menester.

La gente moza, y más si es holgazana, a sus parientes tenían honor, de modo que o con las esclavas de sus padres (y si estas eran *sandiles*⁵, que son concubinas, les iba mal y las castigaban) o con otras pocas mujeres podrían lograr lances amorosos; y no era fácil fuesen muchos y frecuentes, porque estaban todos vecinos; y, cuando por otra cosa no, por el interés, y porque a los padres o parientes les dicen algo, se publicaba presto.

virtue before, now, however, they admire it and hold as saints those who practice it; those who do so, however, are not many.

Yet, on the other hand, they punished those who were found guilty in this regard. Nonetheless, even if they were single men or single women, they had to pay for their guilt with things of value, as was their custom and practice. So in this way, we may say, in all truth, that this vice was always looked upon among our Bisayans as evil; its opposite as good, even though few practiced it. As a people without much enlightenment, or knowledge of reward and punishment, it is not surprising that they allow themselves to be carried by a tendency of natural passion as this. Rather, it is amazing that there was not much of this. It is certain that there would have been more of this if they did not punish and penalize them in ancient times for this sin, as it is obvious that they did.

However, I may add even more. This I have heard from many Bisayans, men as well as women, especially the more knowledgeable among them about their ancient practices and what transpires today. They say that concerning this vice of lust there are more excesses committed today among these Bisayans than there were in the ancient past. Although it seems like a severe judgment, I hold it to be very true. That proposition is clearly obvious.

In ancient times, they lived in *gamuru*,⁴ as we shall see in the next Book. These were gatherings of few people, all related either by consanguinity or affinity and not a few of them slaves of one another. Hence, in this way, since they were few in number and all had their own wives and concubines and the ability and means to support them, each one had what he felt he needed.

The young unmarried individuals, especially if they were loafers, were afraid of their relatives so much so that they could have amorous relations either with the slaves of their parents or with very few other women. If these would be the *sandil*,⁵ that is concubines, it would fare ill with them and they would be punished. It was not easy to have many and frequent [affairs] because they were all neighbors. If for no other reason, at least because of self-interest and because if it came to be known by the parents and relatives, it would become known very soon.

Ahora, reducidos a mayores poblaciones y con muchas mezclas, sin parentesco ni dependencia, son las ocasiones más y los lances más ciertos, porque las casas de sus semejantes están lejos y apartadas unas de otras, con que, con menos nota o menos testigos, se frecuentan.

Ahora se juntan muchas veces en los pueblos e iglesias a misa y fiestas, y se ven, conocen y reconocen mejor; que antes nada de esto tenían. Ahora salen muchos hombres *barigados*⁶, que quiere decir conducidos a faenas de astilleros de navegaciones y otros obrajes forzosos e inexcusables, por la dependencia y sujección con que viven de los españoles, quedando las mujeres solas; y muchas veces, sin otro compañero en sus casas, quedan más expuestas a semejantes lances, porque nunca falta quien las busque.

Y a este tener añaden los dichos otras razones que, con mucho fundamento, prueban su propuesta, y yo añado otra, y no es la menor, y es que ven, por nuestros pecados, tan disolutos comúnmente a los españoles, que viven entre ellos, en esta materia, que es compasión y confusión; y, como lo malo se pega mejor y más presto, no es mucho se pegue éste, y más siendo tan pegajoso de suyo que, aun huido y detestado, persigue, ¿qué será buscado y hallado con facilidad?

Dije que tenía a los indios por menos lujuriosos de suyo que a las indias; a los hombres que a las mujeres. Por lo menos a estas por más impacientes de esta pasión que a ellos; y lo tengo por cierto, enseñado de la experiencia de tantos años de ministerio y conocimiento de sus costumbres.

Y, dejando el juicio de muchos físicos que tienen sus razones no poco eficaces, que dicen en general de todas ellas y en todas partes lo mismo, la experiencia por acá nos lo muestra, y ojalá fuera en las indias sólo, que a otras tengo por peores que a las meras indias (hablo en especial de estas), pues vemos acá a las veces, más empeños en ellas que en los hombres; y, si es porque

Now, that they are gathered in larger *poblaciones*, with all sorts of people mixed together, without any relationship or dependence, the occasions have become more numerous and opportunities more at hand. And this, because the houses are farther apart and away from one another. Hence, being less noticed and with fewer witnesses, they frequent them.

Nowadays, they come together quite often in the towns and in churches for Mass and *fiestas*. Thus, they get to see, know and understand one another better. Prior to this, they did not have such opportunities. Presently, many men are leaving as *barigadu*⁶, which means to say “for manual labor at the shipyards and other indispensable and necessary tasks.” This is due to the dependency and subjection that tie them down to the Spaniards, while the women stay behind alone. Oftentimes, without a male companion in their houses, they are exposed to such incidents, because there is never lacking someone who pursues them.

In this tenor, the mentioned ones bring forth other reasons which, with good reason, prove their contention. I shall add another and it is not less [important]. It is because they see our sins; how dissolute the Spaniards, who live among them, generally are. In this regard, it is a pity and a shame. Since evil takes root easily and very quickly, it does not take long for this to spread. Especially since all this is so alluring, how can it not be searched for and found with ease?

I have stated that I considered the male natives to be in themselves less lustful than the females. At least, I find the latter more inclined to this passion than the men. I am certain about this, having been taught by experience of so many years of ministry and knowledge of their habits.

I bypass the judgment of many philisophers who bring forward their own by no means less reasonable. Who state about them that in general and in all places all is the same. Experience shows us here, and would to God that this would concern only the native women! I believe that the others are much worse than the pure native women (I especially refer to these) since, we see here greater proclivity to lust in these than in men. But if this happens, because they are afraid of being cast aside (something

sienten más el ser dejadas (achaque general de todas las mujeres) no es por ser muy castas, que las que lo son antes procuran el serlo.

Vemos acá muchos indios que se van a los montes y se llevan mujeres, y de los demás siempre he averiguado que salió de ellas el instarles y procurar que se vayan ellos, por darse más libremente y con menos impedimentos a su sensualidad, y mucho más siendo casadas, que, aunque esto puede nacer también de que están malcontentas con sus maridos (las causas diremos cuando tratemos de sus casamientos), yo juzgo que la mayor nace de esta pasión, pues, a tenerla más templada, se pudieran contentar con los lances y ocasiones que les sobran, estándose aún en sus casas, para sus liviandades; a más de que acá vemos algún exceso entre las mujeres en juntarse entre sí, y es con más pasión, lo que no hallamos entre los indios bisayas, que su sexo y calidades permiten, y ha habido ocasiones, y pocos años antes que yo fuese a uno de los pueblos que he administrado y dominado algunos años, en que han mostrado más celos en esta parte que los hombres con sus amoríos; pues en dicho pueblo mató una mujer a otra, con quien tenía comunicaciones como si fuera hombre; porque, dejándola a ella, se había amancebado o admitido la comunicación con un hombre; señal clara de su demasiada y desenfrenada pasión. Y de otras se pudieran traer excesos en otras partes, pero no quiero manchar con estas fealdades, poco decentes, este papel.

Basta lo apuntado para que se conozca, además de la poca resistencia que ellas en común tienen, para calificar su mayor pasión en esta parte, ni por esto quiero notar a las honestas – que es cierto las hay en grado superior, aunque pocas – que merecen sus alabanzas como las Lucrecias, de que diremos algo en otra parte.

De la gula tienen algo menos que de otros vicios, porque verdaderamente en las comidas suyas son parcos, aunque prolijos. Digo parcos, porque comen comúnmente poco y pocas viandas, y muchas veces sus raíces, o arroz, a solas o con un poco de sal, y no todos la tienen siempre; y suelen pasarse días enteros sin

common to all the women), this does not happen because they are chaste, in as much as these who are truly so, do not mind if they are put aside.

We see here many natives who flee to the hills and take women along. I have learned, from those who were left behind, that it was always the women who urged them and solicited to join them so as to have more freedom and less hindrance in their sensuality. This is even more so if they are married; although this might be the result of discontent with their husbands. We shall speak about the causes when we treat about their marriages. I am inclined to believe that this originates mainly from their passion. If they had this under better control, they could be satisfied with the many opportunities and occasions for libidinous acts right at home. Moreover, we see here greater excess among the women in meeting with one another and all this is with even greater passion. This is something that we do not find among the Bisayan men. Their sex and characteristics permitting, there have been a few occasions. A few years ago before I went to one of the towns which I have administered and which were under my jurisdiction for many years, where they showed themselves more zealous in this regard than the men with their concubines. For in this town, a woman killed another with whom she had liasons as if she were a man, for she left her as a lover with a man. This is a clear indication of their excessive and unbridled passion. Other excesses could be reported elsewhere, however, I do not wish to stain this chaste paper with these ugly things.

May what we have pointed out be sufficient to know, aside from the little resistance they [women] have, how to pass judgment, strong passion in this region. In saying this, I do not wish to cast a stain on the chaste ones. It is true that there are some, although few, with high ideals who deserve praises as the Lucretias [of old]. We shall say something about this elsewhere.

Concerning gluttony, they have less of this than other vices because truly they are moderate in their eating habits, but take a lot of time. I say sparing, because normally they eat little with few viands; many times, they have their root-crops and rice along with a bit of salt and not all always have this. They are able to

comer, estando buenos, cuando en navegaciones, o caminos, les sucede faltarles repuesto, y con apretarse el *bahaque* los hombres (ya dijimos que es *bahaque*) sienten menos la hambre y la sufren más, porque, a la verdad están hechos a mal pasar; y aunque, cuando hallan un buen día, lo meten en casa como solemos decir; y, si cogen un jabalí, o venado, o mucho pescado, comen largo, pero esto les sucede pocas veces; lo contrario lo más, y de ellos se puede decir muy bien lo de Horacio que cada uno es *contentus vivere parvo*⁷, y que naturalmente, toleran más la hambre que ninguna de las naciones que yo he visto, no dejando de bogar la gente de esquipazones ni de caminar los viandantes, aunque no coman en un día entero. Y de ésto pudiera contar muchas cosas que con ellos me han sucedido, navegando o caminando, bien particulares; que, como acá nos sucede no pocas veces salir de unos pueblos para otros con la prevención sólo necesaria para uno o dos días que se tarda de uno a otro pueblo comúnmente, y por temporales y vientos recios detenernos dos o tres veces más de lo que se suele, y no se hallar ventas ni mesones donde buscarlo, es fuerza a ellos, y a nosotros también, acomodarnos y pasar con lo que se puede; y, aunque he dicho ya algo de ésto, contaré lo que entre otras muchas me sucedió una vez.

Y fue que en distancia de cinco leguas navegamos por mar, que en otras ocasiones solíamos pasar en tres o cuatro horas, nos detuvimos cinco días sin poder, por los recios tiempos, pasar adelante ni volver atrás, ni salir ellos al monte a buscar con qué sustentarse; y en esta ocasión y en otras semejantes me admiraban no poco de ver con cuán poco se pasaban, y con gusto o alegría, sin que echare de ver en ellos enfado ni pesadumbre (que la tenía yo no poca de monta) sino que se alegraban y cantaban como cuando bien comidos. Y lo más que dicen en su lengua es: “Ea, que esto no está en nuestra mano. Acomodémonos; que, para padecer más y sufrir más, nos hizo Dios varones, no hembras.”

Lo mismo experimentamos en temporales recios de *baguios* (que son tal vez recísimos), que suelen estar en cueros con solo

pass an entire day without eating and manage well. When they run out of provisions while sailing or on the roads, the men tightening the *bahagi* (we have already said what a *bahagi* is) a bit more thereby lessen the hunger pains. Truly, they can withstand many difficult situations. However, when they run into a good day, they limit it to the house, as we are accustomed to say. If they catch a wild pig or a deer or plenty of fish, they eat a lot. This, however, does happen very rarely; the opposite more frequently. Very appropriately it can be said of them with Horace that each one is *contentus vivere parvo*.⁷ Quite naturally, they are able to deal with hunger better than any of the peoples whom I have seen. The individuals at the oars do not stop rowing nor the travelers from continuing on the road, even though they do not eat for an entire day. About these matters I could narrate many instances that have occurred to me while traveling at sea or land which are very unusual. Here very often we are accustomed to go from one town to another with provisions good for only one or two days. Oftentimes there is a delay in moving from one town to another; this is due to either the seasons or strong winds which hold us up two or three times longer than usual. One cannot find a store or an inn wherein to see provisions. It is necessary for them and for us to adjust and get along as best as we can. Even though I have already said something about this, I shall tell what, among many other occasions, happened to me in one occasion.

A distance of five leagues which ordinarily took three to four hours travel by sea, delayed us for five days. Due to some violent weather, we were not able to proceed or turn back. Neither could the natives go into the forest to search for something to sustain ourselves. On this occasion and on similar other ones, they were a source of marvel to me in seeing how little they can get along with even with delight and joy. No evidence among them of displeasure or irritation; I had myself a great one; rather, they sang and rejoiced as if well fed. And the most they could say in the language was: "Be what may, this is not in our hands. Let us go along with it. In order to struggle more and suffer more, God made us men, not women."

We have experienced the same things during the destructive seasons of the *bagyu*, which are most violent. Usually, they are

un *bahaque* y una hoja de palma en la cabeza – que sienten mucho el mojarla – un día entero con su noche – que es lo que suelen durar comúnmente – al viento y al agua, haciendo casillas bajas con que amparar a sus mugeres o hijuelos, y a nosotros también muchas veces; que nos solemos quedar en estas ocasiones sin casas e iglesias, expuestos a la inclemencia de los tiempos y a la misericordia de Dios, que sola ellas nos guarda, y ellos gritan – costumbre suya en los mayores aprietos – y se alegran y animan. Cosa que, a los que no la ven como nosotros, no les maravilla, y yo suelo repetir en estos lances y decir a otros europeos que para ellos vale más un bisaya que diez de otras naciones. Y estíbase más esto, y se conoce, cuando vemos en otras su flema, flojedad y pereza; pero para estos lances, en estas tierras forzosos y ordinarios, parece les ha dado Dios todo lo que para los ordinarios y comunes y de poco riesgo les falta. De que pudiera contar muchos casos que dejo por no alargar; porque podemos decir acá con más experiencias que en otras partes: *Qui navigant mare, enarrant pericula ejus, etc.*

Dije antes que son prolijos en sus comidas, no porque coman mucho y de muchas viandas, que lo común es una cosa sola, y muchas veces muy insulsa, sino porque comen muy despacio, y ahora caminen y ahora naveguen – cosa que los europeos a los principios estrañamos no poco – se sientan a comer tan despacio, y más cantan poco a poco, quizás por engañar el apetito, como si estuvieran en sus casas muy de asiento. Y entre estos naturales es cosa sacrosanta – digámoslo así – el no levantarse ni dejar la comida, que una vez empezaron, por acontecimiento ninguno; de modo que aun a sus criados, o gente de servicio, suele suceder a uno de nosotros, y más aún entre sí a sus mayores, alguna cosa precisa o forzosa, y les llaman cuando están comiendo, y suelen responder con mucha paz: “Espera, que estoy comiendo”. Y si acaso les riñen después de cómo se tardaron, o no acudieron, responden con mucha flema: “Pues, si estaba comiendo!” Como quien dice: “La comida es una ocupación que, además de ser necesaria y forzosa, es precisa y que no se puede dejar.”

just about naked, with only the *bahagi* and a single leaf over their heads (they dislike getting wet) throughout the entire day and night. It is during such times that they must put up with the winds and rains. They construct small, low huts in order to protect their wives and children. Many times, too, they do the same for us also. On such occasions we are resigned to remain without houses or churches which are exposed to the inclement weather and mercy of God. Only the latter protects us. In time of great danger, their custom is to shout, show excitement and be joyful. This is something that those who do not experience, cannot believe. In such instances, I usually repeat and say to other Europeans that one Bisayan for them is worth more than ten from other nations. Such will be appreciated more and understood better than when we see in other places his lethargy, sloth and sluggishness. In these primitive and unavoidable lands it seems that God has given them everything they need for the ordinary and common situations and at little risk. About this I could tell many instances which I omit so as not to prolong this. For here, we can say with greater evidence than in other places: “*Qui navegant mare, enarrant pericula ejus,*” etc.

I mentioned earlier that they take time with their meals. This is not because they eat plenty and with many viands, (ordinarily they have only one item and is often tasteless) but rather because they eat very slowly whether traveling by land or by sea. They sit down very slowly to eat and even sing a little, all as if to deceive the appetite and as if they were right in their own homes at great ease. Among these natives this is a highly privileged time; we say outright, no one must get up or leave for any reason once they have begun the meal. When some compelling need may arise to one of their servants or household help or to one of us, and especially among them to their elders, and they call them while they are eating, they normally reply very calmly, “Wait, I am eating.” If later, perhaps they quarrel how they were delayed or did not come, they reply with much passion: “Well, was I not eating?” As if to say: “The meal is an occupation that, aside from being necessary and indispensable, is a must and one cannot leave it.”

Y, a la verdad, no van fuera de camino, si advertimos a lo que van, que es comerse los que quedan (si algo se divierte) toda la comida; y así, cuando vuelve después, no halla cosa cuando son iguales los que comen; que cuando es a mayor de ellos le tienen respeto, si alguna vez sucede – que será muy rara – dejar la comida por algún caso ocurrente o inevitable, guardarle su parte; mas lo común, no.

En la sed son aún más sufridos y menos asquerosos; porque, además de que beben cualquiera agua turbia, mala y hedionda (y aun de la mar les he visto yo beber no pocas veces) se pasan muchas horas sin beber, sino es cuando navegan con mucho sol, si tienen agua en la embarcación; si no la tienen, sufren mucho.

Y no pocas veces, por los accidentes dichos, me ha sucedido a mi, navegando con ellos – que en los caminos de tierra cada bejuco, como dijimos ya, de los grandes que cortan, es una fuente, no poder tomar tierra o, tomada, no hallar agua ni traerla nosotros, y cocer ellos su comida de arroz con agua de la mar, y pasarse sin beber tal vez un día, hasta que, en hallando agua, se satisfacían: que, aunque tal vez como he dicho, les he visto beber agua de la mar, esta no templa la sed antes la aumenta, y sólo mientras está en la boca humedece o quita la sequía no satisface ni refrigera; de modo que, en lo que toca a comer y beber, no se puede negar sino que son los bisayas muy sufridos y que toleran mucho estas y otras necesidades forzosas tanto como lo que semejantes funciones.■



Certainly, they act reasonably if we understand what they mean. For those who stay behind may eat all the food; so if one leaves and returns he will not find anything, if those who are eating are of the same rank. However, if he happens to be of a higher rank, they have consideration for such. Should something like this happen, and it is rare, they would guard his portion if he left. But ordinarily, they don't.

In regard to thirst, they even have greater endurance and are less fussy. Aside from the fact that they drink any sort of muddy water or foul water (I have seen them drink sea-water a number of times), they can carry on for many hours without drinking, except when sailing under the heat of the sun. They bring along water in their vessels; if not then they suffer greatly.

Thus, not a few times, due to these misfortunes, it happened to me, while sailing with them – in their travels overland, each bamboo of the larger size, as we have said, when cut becomes a source of water – not able to go ashore and, if this could be done, not able to find water or have failed to bring some, they would cook their meals with sea-water. They would pass an entire day without drinking until they find water and satisfy themselves. As I have said, I have seen them drink water from the sea; this does not quench the thirst but increases it. It moistens the mouth and takes away the dryness but does not quench one's thirst or cool. Therefore, whatever pertains to eating or drinking, one cannot deny that the Bisayans have a great endurance in difficulties and a lot of tolerance. They have a great capacity for bearing up in needs better than others in similar situations. ■



ANNOTATIONS

[1] *In fraganti*. A Latin phrase: “in a compromising situation” or “in an immoral act;” “red handed”

[2] *Sine Cerere et Baco friget Venus*. A Latin phrase: “Without Ceres and Bacchus, Venus gets cold.”

[3] *Asug*. Or *bayug*, *bantut*: An effeminate individual. It is also applied to animals and trees which do not give fruit, called female, not male. *Nanhingasug*, to call one effeminate; *buyayaw* is an insult. *Babayinun*. Sánchez [1711], op. cit. De la Rosa-Alcázar simply give this entry: “*asug*: Infertile female.” op. cit., p. 22.

[4] *Gamuru*. Obviously a pre-Hispanic settlement and forerunner of the pueblo or Bisayan *bungtu* or *lungsud* [or *lungsud*, the same]. Alcina discusses this *gamuru* in Book Four, Chapter 1, Part One.

[5] *Sandil*. This is the second wife of a *datu*; when he is married with a *principala* and later he gets married with a slave, she is called *sandil*, quasi, concubine. Sánchez [1711], op. cit. Again, a later edition of the lexicon offers this entry: “*Sandil*: bastard, spurious, born of illicit union.” De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], op. cit., p. 285.

In another entry by Sánchez and under *sindil*, Vid. *Sandil*. – The slave with whom the *datu* gets married after the marriage to the *binukut*. Ibid.

This word *bukut*, *bukutun*, *buktun* means: seclusion, a room or sulur. Idem. *Dugu*, to the famous, *Binukut*: This is the first and foremost of the wives of an ancient Bisayan *datu*; greatly shielded, protected and sheltered; she is the only *principala* and all others are mistresses. [She is the principal who is always secluded; this is not common, also like to carry her when she gets out.] Sánchez, 1711, op. cit.

“*Binukut*: (*de bukut*) adj. A secluded person, rarely seen people who live in enclosure. – s. Nun. One of the varieties of banana has this *binukut* for its name. De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1714, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

This *sindil* also has still another meaning – *Sindil*: To work, and be diligent so as to become rich and have as high a dignity as anyone else. *Nagasindil*.

[6] *Barigados*. *Barigadu*. “Individuals who manage cargo, baggage and navigation vessels or mission travels into the interior. *Binariga* or *binarigaan*, the one ordered, commanded. With the *an* it is also the place or person to whom the order/command is given, like the slave, son, etc.

the person ordered to will be un, or an, or in, Like *binariga*. *Namatay kami sin gutum didtu sa pinamarigaan namun.*” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

De la Rosa-Alcázar show us that the *bariga* are laborers or rowers on an armed vessels during the Moro depredations. Person or people who carry them superior or other people by sea or by land, *bariga*.” [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 38.

[7] *Contentus vivere parvo*. A Latin phrase meaning “content to live with little”.

[8] *Qui navegant mare, enarrant pericula eius*. A Latin saying meaning “those who sail in the sea can tell of its dangers”. ■



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