

Capítulo 17

DE LOS PAGLIHIS DE ESTOS INDIOS. QUÉ COSA ERAN Y POR QUÉ CAUSA; EN ESPECIAL DE LAS MUJERES PREÑADAS Y EN LOS PARTOS

Esta palabra *lihi*¹, en lengua bisaya, quiere decir “observancia”, cual se da a las cosas sagradas. Y así *fiesta nga iglililihi*, quiere decir “fiesta de guardar;” y como ahora se prohíbe el trabajar días de domingo y fiestas de guardar a los cristianos, ellos guardaban sus *paglihis*, no trabajando los días tales, y eran tantos estos *paglihis* suyos que si los guardaban todos – y los guardaban mejor que la fiesta hoy – la mayor parte del año se les pasaba sin trabajar, porque sus *paglihis* eran sin número, y apenas hacían acción humana de considerción en que no tuviesen sus *paglihis*. Y ésta es la principal significación de esta palabra *lihi*.

También llamaban *paglihi* a cosas mezcladas con supersticiones o agüeros, como entre nosotros usan algunos, temiendo malos sucesos cuando se derrama la sal; cuando el cuchillo está el filo hacia arriba, y como los que no quieren comenzar caminos o navegaciones ni otros negocios en martes por tenerlos por días aciagos. Y a este modo están algunos de los *paglihis* de estos bisayas.

Chapter 17

CONCERNING THE *PAGLIHI* OF THESE NATIVES; WHAT THEY WERE AND WHY THEY WERE PERFORMED, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO PREGNANT WOMEN AND CHILDBIRTH

This word *lihi*,¹ in the Bisayan language, means “observance”, such as pertains to sacred matters. Hence, *Fiesta nga iglililihi* means “a feast of observance”. And just as today it is prohibited for the Christians to work on Sundays and holy days, so too these observed their *paglihi* by not working on such days. These *paglihi* of theirs were so numerous that, if they observed them all – and they kept them better than they do the feasts today – they would have to pass the greater part of the year without working. Hardly would they perform any human action of some importance in which they did not observe some *paglihi*. Hence, this is the central meaning of this term *lihi*.

Paglihi are also called thus when they are mixed with superstitions and sorceries. As it is among ourselves when some people, for instance, fearful of some bad outcome when salt is spilled, when a knife lies with the sharp edge turned upwards, or as it happens with those who do not wish to start a journey or a voyage, nor any other business on Tuesdays, because they believe that such days are ill-starred. So, in a way, these *paglihi* of the Bisayans are similar.

Apuntaremos los más célebres, porque todos fuera imposible, pues eran y son (que aún no los han olvidado) casi infinitos.

Comencemos por los más nobles. Todas las conjunciones y oposiciones de la luna las guardaban, dejando de trabajar, algunos tres días, otros uno, en la sementera los hombres, y en tejer y otros labores las mujeres. Y la causa era en la conjunción porque no enfermaban en aquel mes; que el que trabajaba el primer día que se ve la luna, que llaman *gimata*² (que monta tanto como “despertar o abrir los ojos”), decía enfermaba; y así era esta observancia de miedo.

Lo mismo cuando llena la luna, que llaman *dayao*³, que quiere decir “que está cumplida o digna de loa.” Y en este día de la oposición dejaban de trabajar, porque era este el día del *diwata*, por ser aquella noche clara toda y sin obscuridad; y entonces decían que bajaba el *diwata* al mundo y en reverencia suya, dejaban el trabajo, y, porque no les causase alguna dolencia o enfermedad, cuando hay eclipse de luna o de sol, que llaman *bacunaua*.⁴ Y decían que una grande culebra se tragaba entonces al sol o a la luna; daban recios golpes en los *luzones*⁵ y en el suelo de la casa para espantar la culebra y que no se tragase al sol o luna; y aquel día alzaban de obra, y nadie trabajaba ni en casa ni fuera de ella, y lo mismo cuando la luna se pone de color, colorado o sangriento, por miedo que tenía no los sucediese algún mal.

Cuando el cielo se pone colorado, como suele por acá muchas veces, de parte de tarde por la abundancia de exhalaciones cálidas y sutiles, etc., y a ésto llaman *andara* o *dangan*⁶. En Zibu tenían mucho miedo, porque decían que aquello era la sangre de alguno que habían de matar, o se había de herir él mismo. Entonces solían echar las mujeres puñados de ceniza bajo de su casa, y suelen impedir a sus hijos que bajen de la casa porque

We shall jot down only some of the more celebrated ones because to treat them all would be an impossible task, since they were and are (they still have not forgotten them) almost countless.

Let us begin with some of the most outstanding ones. They observed all the configurations and oppositions of the moon. Some stopped work for three days, others for one; the men in the fields and the women at their weaving and at other occupations. The reason was, as far as the conjunction [*of the moon*] was concerned, so that they would not become ill on that month. The one who worked on the first day that the moon was visible, which they called *gimata*² (this term is equivalent to “waking up” or “opening the eyes”) would become ill, they said. And so this observance was a result of fear.

In like manner, when the moon was full, which they called *dayaw*,³ meaning “full grown and worthy of praise”. On this day of opposition they terminated all work because this was considered the *Diwata’s Day*. Since such a night was altogether clear and without clouds they then said that the *Diwata* descended upon the earth; hence, out of reverence to him, they stopped all their labors. So that the [*Diwata*] would not cause them any harm or illness, when there was an eclipse of the moon or the sun, which they called *bakunawa*⁴ (for they believed that a large snake was then swallowing the sun or the moon), they began dealing heavy blows on the *lusung*⁵ and on the floor of the house in order to frighten away that snake so that it would not swallow the sun or the moon. On such a day too they ceased their labor and, no one worked, either in the house or outside of it. They did something similar when the moon changed its color into a reddish or a bloody hue – all out of fear that some evil would befall them.

At times, when the sky becomes reddish, as it does here so often late in the afternoon, due to the great amount of hot vapors, etc., they call it *andaraw* or *dangan*.⁶ There in Cebu, they were very much afraid with this occurrence because they said that this was the blood of someone who was about to be killed or one who would soon wound himself. The women, then, would scatter handful of ashes under their houses and at the same time prevent their children from going down from the house lest some mis

les sucederá alguna de las dichas desgracias. Y dejaban de trabajar el día siguiente por la misma causa; y los mismos puñados de ceniza suelen echar las mujeres cuando llueve y hace sol, que llaman *malasabas*⁷ en Leite y Samar, y en Zibu *andaraao*, porque decían que entonces van los brujos en busca de alguien a quien se coma, o el *damat*⁸, que es la gente; y que con aquella ceniza les cegaban porque no viesen a los de aquella casa, y dejaban de trabajar por lo menos un día.

Cuando se ve el iris, o arco del cielo, a que llaman *balangao*⁹, mandan a sus hijos que no levanten el dedo ni le señalen, porque se les pudrirá la mano, porque de esto arco dicen unos que es un gran *diwata* el que está en su nacimiento; otros que es el vestido o ropa del *diwata* que lleva mal que le señalen, y por ésto también dejaban de trabajar un día.

Pero, cuando comienzan los primeros truenos, que entonces suelen estar en cierne en algunas partes los arrozces o comienzan a granar, en oyendo el primer trueno, que llaman *dalugdog*¹⁰, los que estaban en las sementeras alzaban de obra, y las mujeres que tejían, doblaban sus telares, porque decían que caerán enfermos. Lo mismo cuando cae algún rayo; y todo es de miedo.

Del temblor, que llaman *linog*¹¹, y entendían, o pensaban, que le causaba cierta mujer, meneándose los pechos que tenía muy grandes, hacían mayor caudal y le guardaban ocho días; y, en sintiendo algún gran temblor, decían en su lengua: “iros tras el temblor las fiebres, los catarros y todas las enfermedades y dejadnos a nosotros;” porque pensaban que con el temblor se huían todas, y por la misma causa cuando comienza algún viento general por acá – que los que más lo son es el vendabal que llaman *abagat*, y las brisas, o lestes, que llaman *amihan*, y a sus principios *sibua*¹² – dejaban de trabajar algunos nueve días, otros menos, porque en tiempo de aquel viento no les diese enfermedades graves, que pensaban que vienen con ellos y se van.

fortune befall them. On the following day, they stopped work for the same reason. The women were also accustomed to scatter handful of ashes when it rains and the sun shines at the same time. This they call *malasabas*⁷ in Leyte and in Samar but *andaraw*, in Cebu, because they say that the witches go about in search of someone to devour or the *damat*⁸ which is executed by the men. Thus, by means of these ashes they blinded them so that they would not be able to see those who were in the house. Again, they ceased working for at least a day.

When the rainbow appears, which they call *balangaw*,⁹ they order their children not to raise their finger nor to point to it lest their hand wither. About this rainbow, some say that it is a sign of the birth of the great *diwata*; others say that it is the vesture of the *diwata* and that it becomes disturbed when anyone points to it. For the same reason again, they stop working for a day.

When the first thunder begins at a time when the rice is beginning to grow well or even to ripen, those who are in the fields stop working and the women who are weaving fold their looms at the very first clap of thunder which they call *dalugdog*.¹⁰ They do this because, they say, that otherwise they would fall sick. It is the same reaction in the case of lightning; all this stems from fear.

Then again, they understood and thought that the earthquake, called *linog*,¹¹ was caused by a certain woman shaking her unusually large breasts. Since they took this earthquake very seriously, they refrained from work for eight days. And in experiencing some great tremor they would utter in their tongue: "Fevers, colds and all diseases go away from us together with the tremors"! They believed, it seems, that all these illnesses would disperse with the passing earthquake. In like manner, when the prevailing winds set in over here – the seasonal winds generally speaking are: the southwesterly or known as *habagat*; the northeasterlies which are called here the *amihan*, or in its initial stages as *sibua*¹² – some put aside their work for nine days, others less. All of this is done so that during the period of that wind they would not be afflicted with severe diseases which they believed came together with the winds, and also leave along with them.

Y, aunque es indubitable en todas partes, y en estas más, que, según los vientos son más y mayores, los achaques, como dijimos del norte, etc., no miraban tanto a ésto – pues suele ser acá la causa de las dolencias, la interpolación de los vientos, mudándose de repente de frío en cálido y al revés – sino a la mayor fuerza de ellos; y así es cosa averiguada, y lo he notado yo algunas veces que, viniendo un *baguio*, que llaman acá, y en otras partes huracanes, que son tan recios y grandes como ya dijimos, suelen irse o acabarse algunas dolencias que tenían a muchos en las camas, y eran medio pestes, y aun pestes graves; porque la violencia de dicho *baguio* barre y saca todo contagio y viento pestilencial. Y así he oído yo no pocas veces en tiempos semejantes a los más viejos y prácticos de por acá, que dicen cuando hay semejantes dolencias: “esto durará hasta que venga él *baguio*, que él lo limpiará todo.” Y la experiencia lo ha mostrado suceder así; y ésta es una de las causas mayores porque por acá no son las pestes tan grandes ni duran tanto como en otras partes del mundo, porque estos *baguios* las limpian, y purifican los aires, teniendo esto de bueno entre los muchos males que causan.

No sólo a estas cosas de que tanto dependen los tiempos y sus calidades; y parece hay algún fundamento; pero a las que no tienen alguno, temían y hacían estos *paglihis*.

De los hombres hacían *paglihi* al *tambalan*¹³, que es médico o curandero u hombre que tiene conocimiento de hierbas; pues, en pasando por su casa, y más si subía a ella, cesaban de obra y en todo aquel día no trabajaban, porque decían que se les hincharían los cuerpos; y lo malo es que tal vez sucedía esto, ocasionándolo el dicho herbolario o el demonio, y permitiéndolo Dios por sus altos fines.

Cuando va el herrero a trabajar a sus casas, que suele ser cerca del tiempo de las rozas y *kaingin*, dejan de trabajar y tejer, porque dicen que si no, los puercos comerán las sementeras.

Nonetheless, it cannot be doubted that everywhere, especially here, the diseases are greater and more prevalent as a result of the winds coming from the north, etc. They were not so concerned here about the changing of the winds from cold to hot and viceversa, but with their great ferocity! It is a well-known fact – and I myself witnessed it sometimes – that when a *bagyu* strikes, as they call it here, (for in other places they are known as hurricanes, which are very fierce and violent winds, as we have already stated), it customarily eliminates or terminates some diseases which confined many to their beds and were like moderate epidemics and even serious ones. The violence of the said *bagyu* sweeps away and carries along with it every contagious and pestilential air. That it was so, I heard it not a few times, in similar circumstances, from the eldest and most experienced individuals here who speak thus when there are such diseases: “This will last until the *bagyu* comes and then it will clean-up everything”. Experience has proven to us that it is so. This is one of the major reasons why there are no such extensive pestilences over here, nor do they last as long as in other places in the world. It is because these *bagyu* clean and purify the air, producing this good effect in spite of many evils that it causes.

These [*Bisayans*] feared and performed these *paglihi* not only as a result of these circumstances of weather and its conditions – there seems to be some basis for this – but also in regard to other matters which had no foundation at all. The people also performed the *paglihi* in deference to the *tambalan*,¹³ who was a medicine-man, a healer or a person who was knowledgeable in the use of herbs. Whenever he passed their houses, and especially if he came in, they stopped work and did not toil during that day because, they said, if they did, their bodies would become swollen. What is even more terrible is the fact that sometimes this actually happened; per chance, brought about by the ‘*herbolario*’ or Satan himself with the permissive will of God bound-up with some exalted purpose.

Whenever the blacksmith goes to their houses, customarily during the season of the cleaning of the fields or the *kaingin*, they would also cease working and weaving because otherwise the wild

Nunca he podido entender qué conveniencia tengan con el herrero los puercos del monte. Lo mismo sucedía, y por la misma causa, cuando subía algún huésped a su casa, que llaman *dumaruong*¹⁴, o si alquilaba algún peón para trabajar, que el primer día cuando llega, y el último cuando se va, deja de trabajar por temor de los puercos, que de otra manera, dicen, se les comerán los frutos que tienen plantados y de que se sustentan. Y en esto de los puercos tienen un sinnúmero de abusos y supersticiones; y todas de temor no les coman las sementeras.

Cuando uno soñó que le coge un caimán, en todo aquel día no baja de su casa, ni va al río o mar, porque teme será el sueño verdadero; y en esto particular de los sueños, o buenos o malos, tienen muchas más supersticiones que suelen contar en España las viejas, creyendo mucho en ellos, teniendo por verdadero lo que sueñan. Y esta es una de las más ordinarias materias de sus conversaciones y pláticas, contándose sus sueños y alegando de otros tiempos sucesos prósperos y adversos, sucedidos así como los soñaron. Y no cuesta poco en las confesiones el darles a entender la falacia y engaños que en ésto hay, y cuán sin fundamento creen en ellos; y así por no alargar y porque mucho de ello es como aun en Europa se cree, lo dejo de contar.

De los animales y cantos de aves y lagartijas son sinnúmero sus observancias y *paglihis*. Si cantó el *corocoro*¹⁵ que es cierta especie de palomas pequeñas, o el *limocon*,¹⁶ que es como tórtola, la lagartija que llaman *taguto*¹⁷, y otra multitud de varios animalejos; si, al bajar de la casa, estornudó alguno de ellos, o, al pasar por otra, oye estornudo; por cualquiera cosa de estas se vuelven atrás, o de la misma escalera o del camino, aunque haya, andado mucho, y tal vez de muy lejos y cerca del término donde iban; porque todo aquello (sea ésto o lo otro) dicen que son avisos de

boars would destroy the planted fields. I have never been able to understand what connection the blacksmith had with the wild boars.

It was their same reaction and for the same reasons when a guest arrived at their house whom they called *dumaruong*.¹⁴ Or if a peasant is hired to work, he must not labor on the first day of his arrival nor on the last day of his departure; otherwise, the wild pigs will devour the crops which are meant for their sustenance. Concerning this matter of the wild hogs, they have a limitless number of abuses and superstitions, and all spring from the fear that their crops will be eaten up by them.

When someone dreamed that a crocodile seized him, such a person did not go down from his house during that entire day, nor would he go to the river or to the sea, because he feared that the dream may come true. Now, in this matter of dreams, be they good or bad, they have many more superstitions than the old women in Spain are accustomed to recount. These [*Bisayans*] too give credence to these dreams, thinking what they dream will certainly come true. This is one of the most frequent topics in their discussions and conversations. Mutually, they relate their dreams and recall the prosperous or adverse happenings of bygone days which took place exactly as they saw them in their dreams. It is no small task when they make their confessions, to convince them about the fallacy and deceits that are found in them and how groundless is their belief in them. Hence, in order not to prolong [*this narrative*] and since a good deal of it is similar to what they also believe there in Europe, I will not continue reporting this.

Their observances and *paglihi* regarding the animals, the singing of the birds, and small lizards are numerous. If the *kurukuro*¹⁵ sang, which is a kind of small dove, or the *limkon*,¹⁶ which is like a turtledove, or the small lizard, which they call *tuguto*¹⁷ and a multitude of various small animals. Or if going down from the house somebody sneezed, or on walking past another's house he hears someone sneezing, it is enough for one, for any of these reasons, to retrace his steps back upstairs, or down the road, even though he may have traveled far and was just about at his destination. They believe that all these, be it one or the other, are

la desgracia que le sucederá si prosigue en sus intentos, sucediéndole no pocas veces volverse re *incoepta*¹⁸ y cansándose en valde, porque una vez uno, otra vez otro animal o ave cantó o gritó. Y en ésto son casi generales y comunes estos miedos; y los tienen tan creídos que apenas se los puede persuadir lo contrario, alegando muchas ocasiones y lances en que sucedieron infortunios, muy acaso, como suelen suceder, que atribuyen ellos a no haber creído al aviso del ave, etc.

En sus siembras y cosechas, en las labores de las mantas, en sus cazas y pescas, ya apuntamos algo; como del *baliyo*¹⁹ también, y otros *pangasas*²⁰; que de todo tenían miedo y huían. Y apenas hay acción humana, aun ni de las forzosas de la naturaleza, a que no tuviesen estorbos por miedos sin traza ni fundamento.

Si ponía la gallina el huevo con la cáscara blanda, como sucede, y si acaso ella se comía alguno de sus huevos, todo eran temores, y la mataban luego y echaban lejos de su casa.

Si alguna perra paría todos los hijos hembras, los mataban, y lo mismo de las puercas cuando paren todas hembras. En los perros y su casa es un laberinto lo que observaban.

Si cogen puercos, tienen supersticiones en dar y a quién; si no cogen puercos, otra multitud de ellas, y remedios hasta hacer *paganitos* por los perros al *balatic*,²¹ que es un ballestón con que matan puercos; a las redes con que los cogen, que llaman *batong*,²² hacen sus supersticiones y *paglihis*, dejando de trabajar las mujeres en casa cuando van los hombres a cazar o pescar; que yo no me puedo persuadir sino que la innata flojedad de los bisayas les dictaba trazas para no trabajar, y no echaban de ver que todo lo pagaban sus vientres, pues, no trabajando, no tenían que comer ni lo demás necesario.

warnings of the misfortune that awaits them if they persist in going their way. And so it happened to them, not a few times, that they must return – re *incoepta*¹⁸ – and begin all over again from where they had started, tiring themselves uselessly simply because another animal or bird shrieked. In this regard, their fears are almost common and widespread; they hold so firmly to these things that hardly can they be convinced of the contrary. They bring forward many situations and cases in which misfortunes took place simply because they failed to heed the warning sounds of the birds, etc.

In their sowing and harvests, in their weaving of blankets, in their hunting and fishing we have already mentioned something, as for example, about the *baliyo*¹⁹ and the other *pangasas*.²⁰ Somehow they were afraid of all these things and avoided it all. There is hardly any human action, even the unavoidable ones of nature, in which they were unable to see some obstacle, all stemming from their unreasonable and unfounded fears.

If a hen laid an egg with a soft shell, as it happens or if, perhaps, she ate one of her eggs, all this brought about fear and they killed her and threw her far out of the house.

If any she-dog gave birth to all female puppies, they would kill them; the same if a sow gave birth to females exclusively. About their dogs and their manner of hunting, there is a whole complicated web of observances.

If they trap any wild boar, they have superstitions about the way of sharing it with others; if they do not catch any, then they have a multitude of other beliefs and how to solve them to a point of making *paganitu* in favor of the dogs and that of the *balatik*²¹ (this is a large crossbow with which they kill or trap wild pigs). They also perform their superstitious rites and *paglihi* for the hunting nets which they call *batong*.²² The women bring their work at home to a stop when the men go out hunting and fishing. I cannot but think that it is the innate indolence of the Bisayans which dictated the ways and means for not working. Yet, somehow, they failed to realize that their stomachs had to suffer the consequences; for, by not working they did not have anything to eat or any other necessities.

En sus casas, cuando las hacen nuevas, tienen no pocas supersticiones. Si los postes, que llaman harigue, tienen nudos, los dejan, porque es *macababalo*²³, que quiere decir “que enviudará el dueño de la casa”. En el atar de las casas y su maderaje; en el cubrir con las hojas de palmas que llaman *paver*,²⁴ que sirven en lugar de tejas, y en casi todo tienen de estos y suelen no pocas *paglihis*, porque si no, dicen que morirán. A veces, después de haberse cansado en hacer sus casas, dejarlas, porque a la mujer u otro de ella se le antojó que un palo estaba mal puesto u otro mal atado, y que enfermarían luego, y cansarse en hacer otra de nuevo.

Lo mismo hacen con las embarcaciones, como apuntamos ya, que, por los ñudos que suelen tener las tablas, dicen que será pesada, o que la cogerá el enemigo, o se hundirá en la mar, o le cogerá el caimán al que fuere en tal *baluto*, y las dejan o deshacen.

Cuando se han de embarcar para viaje lejos, se suelen cortar los cabellos, y dejar dicho en su casa, que no coman ésto y lo otro hasta que ellos vuelvan; y a ésto llaman *balata*²⁵, que lo usan también cuando se apartan los que se quieren bien, o in *bonum* o in *malum*²⁶, concertándose que el uno no comerá esto o lo otro; que no se bañará o untará los cabellos, y otras cosas a esto modo, que observan con toda puntualidad.

En tiempo de langosta – que muchas veces hay tanta que cubre el sol – hacen *paglihi* porque no les coman las sementeras. No matan a las langostas algunos de ellos, antes procuran coger una de las mayores y la engalanan con oro y otras cuentecillas y la sueltan en casa, y beben y comen largo, y le hacen fiesta a la langosta para que con ésto las compañeras no se coman las sementeras.

Cuando florece el *laban*²⁷, de que ya dijimos, o el *parasan*, en las isletas donde hay más abundancia de este bejuco, hacen un

They have not a few superstitions concerning their newlyconstructed houses. If the posts, which they call *harigi* have knots, they discard them for that implies *makababalo*;²³ that means to say, that “the owner of the house will become a widower”. In the latching of the houses to their frames, in roofing them with palm leaves which they call *pawod*²⁴ and which serve in place of shingles, in almost everything they have these *paglihi*. Otherwise, they say, that they would die. It is customary for them, oftentimes, that after having tired themselves in building their houses, they abandon them simply because the wife or another member of the household felt that some post was out of place or another was poorly latched and therefore they would surely fall ill at once. Hence, they tire themselves by building anew.

It is the same with the sea-craft, as we have already pointed out. Due to the knots that the boards usually have, they say that the vessel will be heavy, or that the enemy will seize it, or that it will sink at sea, or that a crocodile will snatch someone who might be in the *balutu*. Therefore, they discard or dismantle the whole thing.

Also, when they must embark upon long trips, they are accustomed to cut off their hair and leave word at home that they must not eat this or that particular food until they return. This [*observance*] they call *balata*²⁵ and they also perform it when they are separated from those whom they love dearly, either *in bonum* or *in malum*.²⁶ That is, they agree that one of them will not eat this or that; that one will not bathe, nor anoint one’s hair and other things of this sort which they observe will all exactness.

In times of the locust-plagues – oftentimes these are so abundant that the sun is obscured – they also perform the *paglihi* so that these may not destroy their crops. Some of the [*Bisayans*] do not kill the locusts; rather, they try to catch one of the largest ones and deck it out with gold or other little beads and let it free at home. Next, they eat and drink abundantly and feast the said locust so that in view of this, its companions may not destroy the crops.

When the *laban*,²⁷ about which we have already spoken, and the *parasas* are in bloom on the islets where these bamboos are in

paglihi de los más solemnes, y suelen estar algunos días sin trabajar. El intento no es sólo para que se logre la flor, sino que no los salgan bubas, que ellos llaman *capatas*²⁸, ni les den calenturas; y por que no coja el marido a su mujer *in fraganti*²⁹; porque todas estas cosas dicen que trae consigo la flor del *laban* cuando florece mucho, y a la del *parasán* hacen mucha fiesta porque se logre y haya mucha cera.

Y, finalmente, en casi todas las cosas que sembraban para sus comidas: en la caña dulce, en el *buyo* y sus *mamon*, en las ollas que hacen, y más cuando las queman, nadie se ha de acercar ni dar castañeada con la boca, porque se quiebran las ollas. Y apenas hay cosa en que no tengan sus *paglihis*, que dejo por no cansar más.

Vengamos a los de las mujeres preñadas y sus partos e hijos; que no tenían menos supersticiones.

En sintiéndose una mujer preñada no come tortuga de la mar, ni galápago de la tierra, ni *pagi*³⁰ o *raya*, ni *gibia*³¹, ni cazoncillos y otro pez que no tengan escama, porque todos estos géneros, dicen, dificultan el parto.

Tampoco comen venado, por la misma causa, y algunos géneros de plátanos y otras comidas, porque dicen que dañan a la criatura dentro de la barriga, y aun tocar a algunas no quieren. Otras se enroscan por la barriga tripas de gallina, y a esto llaman *timalio*³², que quiere decir “poner obstáculos al *balio*,” que ya dijimos que transforma o mata las gentes; y que, poniéndose la madre dichas tripas de gallina, le da virtud al niño contra el *balio*, que no le hará mal.

En pariendo añaden más, dejando las supersticiones en el encubrir la sangre y otras cosas asquerosas de aquel caso. En saliendo las pares, que llaman *inulanan*³³, las ponían dentro de una olla y las colgaban en la rama de algún árbol en algunas

greater abundance, they perform a most solemn paglihi and customarily do not work for several days. Their purpose was not only that these plants come to full bloom, but that they themselves may not be plagued with postules which they call *kapatas*,²⁸ nor contract a fever. Also, so that the husband may not catch his wife *in fraganti*.²⁹ It is said among them, that when the *laban* blooms fully it brings along all these things. They pay honor to the *parasan* by a great feast so that it may bear fruit and produce much wax.

Finally, in almost everything that they cultivated as a source of food, the sugar cane, the *buyu*, and their *mamun*; in their pottery that they fashion and more so when they fire them, no one must get near nor clack their tongue otherwise the pots will crack or break. There is scarcely a thing for which they do not have their *paglihi*. Here, I shall stop with all this lest it all become tiresome.

Let us now come to those [*paglihis*] concerning the pregnant women, deliveries and infants, for their superstitions were no less numerous.

When a woman finds herself pregnant she must not eat sea turtles, nor gálapago of land, tortoise, nor *pagi*³⁰ or ray-fish, *gibia*,³¹ sharks nor any other kinds of fish that have scales because these make the delivery difficult.

Then too, for the same reason, they should not eat venison and certain varieties of bananas and other foods, because they say that these cause harm to the fetus. In fact, they even shun to touch any of these. Other women wrap around their abdomen the entrails of a hen and call this *timaliw*,³² which means “to obstruct the power of the *baliw*” and which we have already said transforms or kills people. So, if the pregnant woman puts on the entrails of the hen, she will safeguard the infant from the *baliw* so that it will not cause it any harm.

At the time of birth, they add even more [observances] – let us omit those pertaining to the concealing of the blood and other unclean matter [or afterbirth]. When the afterbirth emerged and which they call *inulanan*³³ in some regions, they placed it in a pot and strung it up in the branches of some tree. In other places,

partes; en otras las mandaban llevar a una isleta apartada a enterrar. Otros las entierran al pié de uno de los mayores *harigues* y que llegan hasta el caballete de la casa, y todos los de ella vacaban de trabajo tres días, o más, en honra del niño y de las pares.

Para que el ombligo, que llaman *pusod*³⁴, se la caiga, hacían el mismo *paglihi* tres días, y al del niño lo enviaban lejos y mandaban colgar en un *nonoc*, porque saliese vigoroso y de fuerzas; al de la niña a otro árbol, llamado *pandan*, que hace la flor olorosa, porque con eso decían que se casaría algún gran *principal* con ella.

En los dichos tres días, no comían almejas asadas, ni las abrían, porque decían que el niño se encogería o saldría desmedrado. Y, para remediar o atajar ésto, cogían cangrejos, que se ponen colorados, u otro pescado, colorado de suyo, y de esto hacían *dasag*³⁵, que es *paganito* en honra del niño. Y con esto decían sería fuerte y valiente.

También los suelen bañar, luego que nacen, con el agua de los cocos, que con eso dicen que no ensordecerán, y sin esta diligencia sí.

Nadie que tuviese vestido colorado podía llegar cerca del niño recién nacido hasta haber hecho la diligencia de los cangrejos; después podían.

El hombre o mujer que había de tener el niño recién nacido en brazos, no había de estar en pie, sino sentado, porque decían que causaba al niño flaqueza. Y así se sientan primero que los tomen en brazos, que este es *paglihi* suyo inviolable. Y de esta manera otras cosas largas de contar.

Acabaré este capítulo con un caso que pasó en un pueblo de estos bisayas, y yo fui testigo. Habíase casado una *principala* de las grandes de por acá, ladina y entendida, porque se había criado en Zibu entre españoles. A pocos meses de casada se hizo

they ordered this afterbirth to be taken to an out-of-the-way islet to be buried there. Still others bury it at the foot of one of the largest *harigi* which touches the very ridge of the house. All the household stop work for three days or more in honor of the infant and its afterbirth.

Now, in order that the umbilical cord, which they call *pusod*,³⁴ may fall off readily, they perform *paglihi* for three days. That of the male is sent-off to a far-away place and ordered to be hung upon a *nunuk* so that the child would grow healthy and strong. Now that of the female infant would be ordered hung upon another kind of tree called the *pandan*, which bears a fragrant flower. As a result of this observance, they say, she would marry some great *datu*.

Also, during this said period of three days, they would not eat roasted clams nor would they open them because they said that the male child would shrink or remain a weakling. So as to remedy or prevent this, they caught crawfish which had already become red, or other naturally reddish fish. Then, out of these they performed the *dasag*,³⁵ which is a *paganitu* in honor of the infant boy and thus he would become valiant and strong.

What more, they were accustomed to bathe the newly-born in coconut water with this observance they would not become deaf. Without this they would surely do. Nobody who was wearing red clothing should come close to the newly-born until the precaution of the crawfish observance had been performed; afterwards they may get near.

The man or a woman who had to hold the newly-born infant in their arms should not be standing but in a sitting posture, because, they said, that this would cause weakness in the baby. And, therefore, they sit down before taking the infants in their arms – this is their indispensable *paglihi*. So in this fashion there are other practices too lengthy to relate.

I shall end this chapter with an incident that took place in a town of these Bisayas and where I was a witness. There was a *principala* who was one of the most prominent here; intelligent and very knowledgeable since she had grown up in Cebu among

preñada; y, como se había criado entre españoles, no creía ni observaba los *paglihis* que suelen las otras bisayas preñadas; y esto era causa de que tuviese voces y pleitos con su suegra, que no quería que tocase ni comiese etc, de los que ellos por acá huyen, y en su presencia lo guardaba así, aunque juzgaba que era cosa sin traza. Y varias veces me contó a mi lo que le pasaba con su suegra, y como la perseguía por ésto; y una de ellas le dije yo sin pensar: “anda, que tu suegra quiere que paras algún monstruo pues no te deja hacer lo que las mujeres buenas cristianas hacen, y quieren que guardes sus *paglihis*.”

Salí profeta sin querer; porque, llegado el tiempo del parto, que le costó muchos dolores, y ella se previno en venir a parir al pueblo, que es lo que las demás bisayas excusan, y no quieren parir en él; quizás porque no se les impidan con la cercanía del Padre sus abusos.

Estuvo no pocas horas batallando con los dolores, y a la casa tenían prevenido todo recaudo para bautizar la criatura luego que naciera; pero no se logró esta diligencia porque nació muerta y de figura extraña. Y así luego que nació la labaron y me la trajeron a casa envuelta en un paño blanco todo el cuerpo desde el cuello a los pies. Salió muy bien hecho y formado, sin deformidad alguna. Era niña. En la cabeza parece se juntaron todas las deformidades, porque ni tenía forma humana, ni aun de bestia o pez, sino un agregado de todas.

La cabeza era chata, sin cogote. Los cabellos que habían de estar en ella, estaban en las espaldas, porque todo corría de un parejo, solo en el cuello adelgazaba. Los ojos los tenía encima de la que había de hacer frente, muy salidos, y el uno a un lado y

the Spaniards. After a few months of marriage she became pregnant; since she had grown up among the Spaniards she did not believe in nor observe the *paglihi* as other pregnant Bisayan women did. As a result of this attitude, she had altercations and quarrels with her mother-in-law who did not want her to comb her hair [*during pregnancy*], nor to touch or eat this and that food, etc., – all which they avoid here. In the presence of the mother-in-law, the woman was careful to do what was expected of her, but she was certain that it was all senseless. Several times she reported to me what happened to her regarding her mother-in-law and how she persecuted her on account of all this. On one occasion, I told her, without any due reflection, “It seems to me that your mother-in-law wants you to give birth to some monster insofar as she does not allow you to do what the good Christian women do; rather she wants you to keep their *paglihi*.”

I became a prophet without knowing it because when the time for her delivery arrived – which was a very painful one – she prepared herself for such an eventuality by moving into the town. This is something the other Bisayan women tried to avoid, and do not wish to have their delivery in the *pueblo*, perhaps so that the observances may not be impeded by the presence or nearness of the Father.

She spent not a few hours struggling with her birth pains; in her house they had everything prepared to baptize the baby upon delivery. However, this precaution was futile since it was a stillbirth. It had a strange appearance. As soon as it was born they washed it and brought it to my house, with the entire body wrapped in a white cloth from neck to the feet. The entire body was wellshaped and without any deformity and it was a girl. All the deformities were limited to the head only; it had neither the form of a human, a beast nor a fish, but a seeming combination of them all.

The head was flat and without an occiput. The hair that should have been at the top was at the back; all was flat and slender at the neck. It had eyes over what should have been the forehead and very protruding ones; that is, one on one side and

otro al otro; como las orejas, que no tenía, sino es dos agujeritos en lugar de ellas.

Tampoco tenía nariz, ni mejillas, ni barba sino un conjunto de todo. La boca era muy chiquita y redonda, y alrededor de ella tenía unas puntas o pelos gordos, semejantes a las barbas que tienen los *bagris*, y del mismo modo, sin quitar ni poner, carnosos y blandos, de modo que cuanto lo demás del cuerpo estaba bien hecho y proporcionado, estaba deforme la cabeza, y yo la hubiera hecho pintar porque fue figura rara y nunca vista, si hubiera tenido pintor a mano.

No se olvidó la madre de lo que yo le había dicho, porque luego que vió la criatura, comenzó a dar voces y decía: “Verdad ha salido lo que el Padre me dijo; y ésto me he merecido yo por seguir vuestros *paglihis* mentirosos, etc.”

another on the opposite side. It did not have any ears except for the two holes in its places.

Neither did she have a nose, cheeks nor a chin but a gathering of all together. The mouth was very small and round and circling it some thick hair comparable to what the *bagris* have. Notwithstanding how well-proportioned the rest of the body was, the head was awfully deformed and shapeless. If I had a painter at hand, I would have had it painted since it was a rare sight and never seen before.

The mother did not forget what I had told her earlier, because as soon as she saw the baby, she began to scream aloud saying: “What the Father had told me, has come true; I have deserved this for following your deceitful *paglihi*, etc.”

CHAPTER 17

ANNOTATIONS

- [1] *Lihi*. Or *paglilihun*, *paglilihun*: an ancient Bisayan religious observance. The *paglihi* was a superstitious practice [from the missionaries perspective]... *palihi*: superstitious or conjuring; *nakalihi*, one who destroys or who breaks the *paglihi*. *Hinpalihan*, *hinpapalhian*, those who were forced to break the *paglihi*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*
- The term *lihi* passed from a pagan concept to a totally Christian one as can be seen from this entry: “*Lihi*: to sanctify or make holy the feasts; to observe or safeguard what has been commanded; to abstain from work or some other matters. *Paglihian mu an mga domingo ngan san mga adlaw nga iglilihi*.” De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 185.
- [2] *Gimata*. Should read more properly as “*ginmata*: a full moon. The first day that one can see. The term stems from the word *mata* which means ‘an eye’. *Magmata*: to open one’s eye... *daligmata*: they say that it is the *diwata*, a partner of the *damat*; others say that it is a certain *paganitu* that is made to wish evil or cuasi *daligmata*.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*
- [3] *Dayaw*. The word first has reference to the ‘full moon’; secondly it means praise, exaltation. When one reads Sánchez’s entry under *moon*, in the *Vocabulario*, there is given an extensive thirty-seven line description of the various phases with Bisayan sentence examples. It is indicative what a significant role the moon and its phases played in the life-ways of the Bisayans.
- [4] *Bakunawa*. The Bisayans also believe that when there was an eclipse of the sun people would become ill: *Binabakunawahan an adlaw mag saquit na an mga tawu, sinibad na an adlaw (kunu sa bakunawa)*. This is indeed the deception in which they live. *Ibid.*
- [5] *Lusung*. *Lusones* (plural in Spanish) Also called *lurusungun*, *lurusngun*: a mortar used in pounding rice. The term *lusung* also means: “a certain heavenly constellation which we know as the ‘The Big Bear or the ‘Carro.’” *Ibid.*
- [6] *Dangan*. The word should read properly as: “*andarahaw*: reddish light in the sky at the time of sunset. Northern lights. – v. (*aurora borealis*).” De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- [7] *Malasabas*. Perhaps it should read: “*malasibas*: the break of dawn; morning rays of light breaking through.” *Ibid.*, p. 202.
- [8] *Damat*. “To shout aloud with a voice of fear. – To contaminate. – s. Pestilence, mortality.” *Ibid.*, p. 105. See above the annotation # 2 where a reference is made that *damat* is a companion of the *diwata*.
- [9] *Balangaw*. Bow of God or rainbow. *Nagbalangaw na* – it is similar to the rainbow. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*
- [10] *Dalugdog*. Thunder, thunderclap or a loud raport – *Kudug* or *kakudug* and many, many other terms, see below.

- [11] *Linog*. As Alcina states, this is an earthquake. Sánchez has no entry. Interesting De la Rosa-Alcázar have no entry under *linug* in the Bisayan-Spanish; however, under the Spanish-Bisayan the entry offers a variety of terms for earthquake and tremors: *kudug*, *kakudug*; *kurugkurug*, *kakurug kurug*; *kutuykutuy*, *pangutuy*, *kutuy*; *kiriu*, *kakiriu*; *kirugkirug*; *kuyu*; *linug kun daw an tuna*. 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 569, Spanish section. Perhaps, all these tremors refer not only to earthquakes but all other sorts of tremors or trembling of the body, etc.? E.g. “*Kudug*: A quake coming from anything. v. To tremble due to anything. De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
- [12] *Sibua*. To blow, wind blow, to feel that. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 295. “*Sibua*: tail of any wind. *Sibua sin habagat*, amihan.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*
- [13] *Tambalan*. The base word is *tambal* which means ‘medicine’; one knowledgeable about herbs is called a *tambalan*. There is also a tree by this name. *Ibid*.
 “*Tambal*: To cure, to apply to the infirm or seek a corresponding remedy. – To attend medically; to administer to the sick. s. Medicine, medicament, remedy against certain sicknesses. De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 338.
 The one doing the healing or administering some medicine or healing power is called a ‘*tambalan*’; this is the Asian version of the so-called ‘medicine man’.
- [14] *Dumarung*. *Dumaruong*. Perhaps it should read: “*dumuruung*: stranger, outsider, guest. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 117.
- [15] *Kurukuro*. “A bird so-called which is edible.” The root *kuru* means to hide, to retract like the head of a turtle, etc. Also *kuru* means a disease of the male organ; if not quickly remedied one dies.
- [16] *Limkon*. Perhaps it should read “*limukun*: a wild dove with a red beak and claws.” De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 186.
 “*Limukon*: or *limukunan*, *limuknan*: A certain bird like the turtledove. The *iglilihi* of the Bisayans was like that chant of the crow among the Romans.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*
- [17] *Tuguto*. Should read *tagutu*: a certain species of white lizards, they shriek and because of them the Bisayans had *maglihi*. Again, the later edition of the Bisayan lexicon has the entry simply as a lizard with this name. It is greatly imperative that we consult the ancient lexicons for true meanings in documenting Alcina’s *Historia*.
- [18] *Re incoepta*. A Latin word which *having started already*. The meaning is that on account of the superstition and fear they stopped the trip and had to start again.
- [19] *Baliyo*. The word should read *baliw*, perhaps. Already explained.
- [20] *Pangasas*. Should read *pangasa* for *pangasas* is pluralized. Something awesome. De la Rosa-Alcázar [1914], *op. cit.*, p. 236.
- [21] *Balatik*. “A trap or *ballestón*, a crossbow or a pole; at other times a bamboo about four to five spans in length in a form of a flexible arch with a string running from tip to tip; when released with power to a shooter which is in the middle of the pole, when released it wounds or kills with the arrow or harp cane. – v. To place or set-up this *ballesta*. Also: the seven stars that seem to have the form of a *carro*/cart or the ‘Big Bear.’ In Spanish *las siete mulillas*: the seven little mules or *el carrillo las mulillas*, the little cart of the seven little mules. *Ibid*., p. 30.
- Sánchez offers us an extremely long list of these traps and crossbows. We shall not give in to the temptation of omitting this valuable entry and hope the readers bear-up with it. “*Balatik* or *balatikun*, *balatkun*: a crossbow or trap to catch wild boars or other animals; and

even men the parts are *ligwatan*, or *aligwatan*; they are two poles in the shape of a cross well sunk in the earth. The crossing of these is called *panlangbid*.

“*Habid*: it is a little perch placed in between these two poles; on the edge they place a sharp *bagakay* which serves as an arrow called *pangudiung*. *Dalasdasan* is a pole along which the arrow slides. *Lagpakan* is a stake sunk in the earth, in which it is placed the *dalasdasan* and also there what they call the *agaw*.

“*Kisiw* is a little pole that when they mount the *ballestón* or *balatik*, one part is placed in the *agaw* and this were one touches the perch or *hawid*. *Gahid* is a pole called *daraitlan*, through which the hog crosses. *Guum* is a little pole that they cross over the *kisiw* and the *pangudiung* when they do not want to shoot. *Sangasanga* is a stake through which the arrow passes and shoots.

“*Mabingata*, *mabuyuk*, means to shoot the arrow or throw the perch. *Mabukas* is to shoot. *Hahingal*, *nabingal*, *naulhas*, means the hog might jump that *habuang* or stakes that make a way. *Magbalatik*, to make and prepare the *ballestón*. *Pangusa* is a *balatik* for wild hunt.” Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

- [22] *Batong*. Or *batungun*, *batangun*: a large, heavy net for trapping wild pig. *Hababatung*: is a hog so big that if it enters the net, it will never come out, it's age of about five to six months. *Pamaratngan* or *baratngan*, the place where they hunt. *Butungun*, the one who has the nets. *Daw nawara nga batungan*: it is said of what slips from our hands without any profit and also of those who loose their chance that once gone will never pass again. *Ibid*.

- [23] *Makababalo*. Derived from the word “*balu*: To deceive. 2) A weak knot that easily looses itself. 3) Big noise, as of war, fire, etc. *Mabalu*, the one who causes the noise or din and places an escape for people. *Nagbalu*, to play up a false weapon. *Ginhimaluan*, is what causes them unrest, as for example a ship that is thought to be an enemy ship. *Nagkahimalu*, the vigil against those who make noise.

- [24] *Pawod*. Also *sibit*: A kind of *nipa* palm, as we usually call it. *Ibid*.

- [25] *Balata*. A decision not to eat certain things when someone or a friend goes away, until upon their return. *Namalata*, to bring about the mourning. *Ibid*.

- [26] *In bonum* or *in malum*. A Latin phrase: “whether for good or for evil”.

- [27] *Laban*. The Bisayan word for the Spanish supervisor is *patiga*, *paraataman*, *tinatapuran*.

- [28] *Kapatas*. Also *pangapatasun*, *pinangapatas*. A kind of postule; sickness of these Bisayans. One who has this illness is called *kapatasun*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

“*Kapatas*: A skin disease so-called; a type of *bubas*, pustules; A contagious disease. *Kapatasun*: with postules, with wounds, filled with infections.

- [29] *In fraganti*. A Latin phrase meaning “in a compromising situation; in the act, red handed.”

- [30] *Pagi*. “A skate; a species of fish one ordinarily catches in the *hunasan*. There are various species: *banugu*, it is said like this because it flies like the flying fish *kilkigan*, a fish called *raya*, with the skin very rough in which they smoothen the *tambales*, and also others. *Ibid*.

- [31] *Gibia*. This is a Spanish word and means ‘cuttlefish’.

- [32] *Timaliw*. Unable to find the term, but Alcina sufficiently describes it.

- [33] *Inulanan*. Correctly *inulnan*: placenta or afterbirth. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

- [34] *Pusod*. The word *pusod* also has the following meaning: center, half or half-part of something. v. To throw, to fling a stone, etc. De la Rosa- Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

- [35] *Dasag*. “An offering, *hadang*, *bating*, *bayaw sa diwata*. E.g. *Dasag ngani an manok an babuy, ngan san linangang kun ibubutang sa paganituan, nga baga idayag na sa diwata*. 2) *Madasag*, to

bring together as when bones are disjointed. 3) *Dasag*, *dinasag*, something of square shape: *nagdadasaga*, *pagdasagun mo inin harigi*. Sánchez [1711], *op. cit.*

This *hadang*, cited above as a synonym for *dasag*, has this meaning: “*Hadang*: an offering of food to someone. – the superstitious peoples, call to the evil spirits to come nearer to partake of the food offered to them. De la Rosa-Alcázar, 1914, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

Bating; to invite, to treat; and *Bayaw*: to eat or drink together.

The 1914 lexicon has this entry: “*Dasag*: To shout. – To offer to the devil food, pork, hen or anything else placed along the boundaries of the planting fields, so that the devil will receive them and grant them a good harvest.

