

PHILIPPINIANA RECORDS

**ALCINA's *Historia de las Islas ...* (1668)
(Part I, Book II, Chapters 7 and 8)**

Capítulo 7

De los Cocodrilos o Caimanes; Su Fiereza, Tamaño y Costumbres o Mañas

El Egipto, con su Nilo, se levantó en los primeros siglos con la fiera carnícera y espantosa fama de los cocodrilos, porque entonces no se conocían otras partes que en cantidad y braveza les igualasen. Pero ahora podemos decir que en estas partes cada río es un Nilo, cada laguna una de sus crecientes, y todos estos mares un Egipto en la abundancia, variedad, ferocidad de estos animales; que, si hay algunos en la naturaleza, a mi ver, tremendos, son estos.

Llámanlos estos naturales *buaia*, y los españoles por acá *caimán*, traído quizás el nombre de la América, donde se hallan con abundancia, aunque pienso que estos exceden en fiereza, número y crueldad a aquellos.

Muchos han escrito de estos animales, y aún de los de acá, cosas que o no las vieron bien o se informaron mal. Diré lo que he visto una y mil veces, tocado con las manos y con varias experiencias he alcanzado, con deseo de ver si se verifican de ellos algunas, o muchas cosas, de las que se dicen y han escrito. Y de lo que aquí dijere, nacido todo, como digo, de experiencias propias, se verá cuán lejos anduvieron algunos de la verdad y cuán fácil es de engañarse el hombre (aunque *alias*² muy entendido) que oye rumores del vulgo, cree su consejas y sigue su sentir, o decir, de los que miran sobre peine las cosas y añaden lo que quieren.

Es, pues, este, que llamaremos caimán, o *buaia*, siguiendo las voces con que por acá le nombran, un animal fierísimo, un dragón o lagarto espantoso. Su grandeza y tamaño no tiene límite, pues se ven cada día portentosos y mayores de los que se esperaba. Hélos visto yo,

Chapter 7

Concerning the Crocodiles or Caimans; Their Size, Habits, Ferocity or Cunning

It was from Egypt, with its Nile, that there sprang in the first centuries, the vicious, bloody and frightening account of the crocodiles, because then other regions were unknown where they might be equal in quantity and ferocity. But now we can say that in these regions each river is a Nile, each lake one of its flooded areas, and all these seas an Egypt in the abundance, variety and ferocity of these animals. If there are terrible creatures in nature, in my opinion, it is these.

The natives call them *buaya*, and the Spaniards here *caiman*; the name, perhaps, was brought from America where they are found in abundance, although I think that these here surpass those others in ferocity, numbers and cruelty.

Many individuals have written about these animals; yet about those here they have written things that either they did not see accurately or were badly informed about it. I shall tell what I have seen not once, but a thousand times, touched with my hands, and gained through various experiences, with the wish to see if some, or many, of the things that they say and have written about them can be verified. All that I shall say about the matter here, all of it, as I say, is derived from my own experiences; one will judge how far some have wandered from the truth, and how easy it is for a person to deceive oneself (although in other respects very wise). He listens to stories from the people, believes their advice and follows their opinion or the word of those who examine things superficially and add what they wish.

This what we call *caiman* or *buaya* by which words it is called here, is the most ferocious animal, a dragon or a frightful lizard. Its size and dimension have no limits for every day can be seen larger and

y medido por mis manos, de seis y siete palmos³ de vara⁴ lo ancho del pecho; de largo de siete a ocho brazas⁵. He oído a algunos que dicen haberlos visto de más de braza el pecho, y a proporción lo largo.

Es animal escamoso, y las escamas, maxime⁶ del espinazo, son anchas como real de a ocho⁷ y más, y durísimas. Tiene el espinazo como una grande sierra de dientes o alones, que sobresalen desde el colodrillo hasta la extremidad de la cola, durísimos todos. No habrá lanza, aunque sea en manos de un Hércules, que le haga mella en el espinazo, por su grande dureza. Y aun es mayor la de la cabeza, que es muy grande y larga, y tan dura que ni una bala de mosquete en el casco de ella hará mella considerable. Hélo visto yo y experimentado.

La boca es horrenda, así por sus dientes, que son muchos y todos redondos y puntiagudos, que parecen hechos a torno. Es su forma de colmillo de perro, y entre ellos tienen cuatro mucho mayores que llaman los indios *sava*⁸, que encajan arriba y abajo las puntas en las quijadas y es imposible se le escape la presa en cerrando la boca, así por lo dicho y que los colmillos y dientes encajan unos en medio de los otros⁹ a lo opuesto, como por su profundidad y hondura.

Una persona grave y de puesto, y de los primeros en la milicia de acá, tratando del vasto y fiero hiato de la boca de estos animales, me dijo que él mismo había, estando en pie, con su sombrero en la cabeza, puestos los pies en la parte superior de la boca, donde está la cabeza (que esta parte es la que se abre, sube y baja, y no la de abajo como en los demás animales), estando el caimán que habían acabado de matar, fuera del agua, y la parte superior¹⁰ que se le abrió, le sobrepujaba a su cabeza más de un jeme¹¹ (con ser, como era) hombre de grande estatura y de alto talle. De lo cual se colegirá lo formidable de su boca.

No tienen lengua, y, si algo tienen, es unido a la garganta, que sólo sobresale cerca del tragadero, una punta como lengua, pero tan corta que, si lo es, es sólo como el remate de ella. Tiene el tragadero muy grande, pues se puede engullir una cabeza de hombre entera (de donde se verá que no es verdad lo que se dice que lloran porque no la pueden partir y comérsela, pues si la engullen, comida está aunque no mascada) y el muslo entero.

more portent ones than we can ever expect. I have seen them and measured them with my hands from six to seven *palmos de vara*, across the chest, and seven to eight *brazas* in length. I have heard from some individuals, who claim to have seen them with the chest more than a *braza* wide and the length proportionately so.

It is a scaled creature; the horny scales especially those of the spine are as wide as a '*real de ocho*' sometimes even more and very hard. The spine has a kind of a ridge of teeth or wings which protrude from the back of the head to the extremity of the tail. All are extremely tough. There never was a lance even though it might be in the hands of a Hercules, which could make dent on the spine because of its hardness. Yet, that of the head is harder; it is very large, elongated and so tough that not even a ball from a musket could make any considerable impression in the skull. I have seen it and tried it.

The mouth is hideous on account of the teeth which are numerous, all round and pointed and seem to be fashioned by a machine. They are shaped like the fang of a dog, and among them they have four much larger ones that the natives called *sawa*. The points are enclosed above and below the jaws, and it is impossible to escape their grip when the mouth is closed. The reason is that the fangs and teeth are each inserted between the others opposite to it, as well as because of their height and depth.

A distinguished person of position, and one of the leaders of the army here, treating of the huge fierce cavity of the mouth of these animals, told me that he had stood with his hat on his head, placing his feet on the upper part of the jaw (this is the portion that when opened moves up and down and not the lower one, as in the rest of the animals). The crocodile which had just been killed, was out of the water and the upper part of the jaw, which he raised, extended beyond his head more than a *jeme* and he was a man of a large stature and tall. From this one may realize how formidable was the mouth of that animal.

They have no tongue; if they have a vestige, it is joined to the throat and only a portion resembling a tongue protruding near the gullet. But it is short and if it is a tongue then it is only like the end of it. The animal has a very large gullet for it can swallow a person's head whole — from this it can be seen that what is said is not true, that they weep because they cannot crush the head and eat it; for if they swallow it, it is eaten, although not chewed — and an entire thigh.

Soy testigo de vista de haber hecho sacar en mi presencia los dos huesos del muslo y de la pierna de un hombre que se había comido, y estaban aún unidos, aunque la carne gastada, excepta la de la planta del pie, por ser más dura, y los nervios de la corva. Y en el mismo pueblo donde yo cogí este y otros muchos caimanes, se había hallado (aunque yo estaba ausente cuando sucedió) la cabeza de una mujer, que se estaba bañando, y se la llevó un caimán, y juntamente se hallaron las arracadas, que acá llaman *Panca*¹², y son muy grandes, de oro, que ella tenía en las orejas, sin estar abolladas; señal clara de que tragó la cabeza entera.

He hecho¹³ anatomía especial y cuidadosa de este animal, porque he cogido muchos (y día hubo en que me sucedió coger tres horrendos; luego diré el cómo) para averiguar lo que se dice de ellos. Y lo que he visto es lo siguiente. Tiene el hueso, o juego de la garganta, en cuyo medio está el tragadero, como una argolla grande y con unos encajes en medio que sirven para abrir y cerrar la boca por la parte de arriba, como dije¹⁴, y se ensancha y cierra de modo que a buen bocado (no buen grito) sino grande ahujero, y a menor menos.

Tienen desde el tragadero una como bolsa, o saco grande, a modo de red, muy nerviosa que sirve, a mi ver, para meter allí de golpe lo que cogen cuando están hartos y llena la panza. Está muy extendido este saco y, cuando no, está encogido. Este, a mi ver, es como ventrículo, porque allí en digiriendo, no queda cosa, ni aún los huesos.

Luego tiene sus tripas y redaños con sus intestinos, y el ordinario de la vía común por donde se purgan (lo cual no había visto el que escribió¹⁵ que no tienen por donde purgarse).

No se conoce por afuera el que es macho o hembra, porque solo una vía se les vé y junto a ella están, en los que son machos, los testículos apegados a la parte interna, y el nervio que sirve para la generación; en las hembras no se ve sexo, como ni en las aves. Y pues estos las imitan en poner sus huevos como ellas, también imitan en la diferente disposición del sexo.

Tienen en el buche, o vientre de aquel saco dicho, mucha bazofia. He hallado yo dentro de él culebras que poco antes había engullido y posado allá; monos, unos medio digeridos, otros los huesos mondos;

I am an eye witness to an effort made in my presence to draw out the two bones of a thigh and leg of a man which it had eaten. They were still joined, although the flesh was digested except for the sole of the foot, because it is tougher and the nerves of the fleshy part of the leg. In the same town where I caught this and many other crocodiles, there was found in one (although I was away when it happened) the head of a woman who had been bathing and a crocodile carried her off. In it were found the earrings, which they call *panka* here, and they are very large and of gold, which she was wearing in her ears. They were not bent, a clear indication that the head was swallowed whole.

I have especially and carefully studied the skeleton of this animal because I have caught many. There was a day in which I succeeded in capturing three frightful ones, as I shall tell how. I did so as to determine the truth about what is said about them. What I have seen is as follows: the bone or joint of the throat in the middle of which is the gullet has a kind of a large collar with joints at the center. It enlarges and closes so that with a good mouthful there will be a large opening and not a big shout and for a smaller one, a lesser opening.

They have from the gullet on a kind of large bag or sack like a very strong net, full of nerves. It serves, in my opinion, to put there at one swallow what they seize when they are satiated and the belly is full. This sack is very flexible and when not extended it is contracted. This, in my judgment, is like a stomach because in digesting not a thing remains there, not even the bones.

Then the animal has its bowels and cauls with their intestines and the ordinary passage by which it evacuates. This was not seen by the one who wrote that they do not have the means of evacuating the body.

One is unable to tell by outward appearance whether one is a male or female, because only the passage can be seen in them. Next to this, in those that are males, are the testicles fasted to the inside and the vessel which serves for generation. In the females the sex is not visible, as in the case of the birds. For these resemble them in laying their eggs, as the birds to. They resemble them likewise in the different arrangement of the sex organs.

They have in their craw or stomach, outside of that sack already mentioned, much rotten food. I have found snakes in it which had been swallowed shortly before and passed there; monkeys half-digested,

piedras rollizas, o guijarros, en unos más en otros menos. Dicen los indios que los engullen cuando se ven livianos, y son como lastre para irse a pique. Otros dicen que cada año se engullen un guijarro y que de ellos se sacan sus años. Y ésto no lo tengo por verdadero, pues en menores he hallado yo más piedras que en otros, que eran dos veces más grandes. (Mejor dicen los que les cuentan los años por el espinazo, y cerro, o dientes, como almenillas, que por ellas conocen cuántos años tiene, porque cada año añade una, y de las antiguas crece otra hasta cierta proporción).

Hallé más: varios burujones como pelotas grandes, y aún como balas de artillería, en lo grueso y rollizo, hechos de pelos o de cabellos de los animales que comen, o hombres, porque comen puercos y venados, perros y gatos, monos, aves, peces, y cuanto hay comestibles; hasta nudos, o argollonones de bejuco, que llaman *baclao*¹⁶ los indios; y atados de revoltijos¹⁷ de dicho bejuco, con que estaría algo amarrado, les he hallado yo en el vientre, con otras muchas cosas y vascosidades. De donde colijo que estas cosas sólidas, como huesos y piedras, etc., que no las mascan por su dureza, no se digieren sino que se quedan en el buche. Y las otras que se digieren y pasan a los intestinos, esas las expelen por la vía común, que no hay duda que la tienen todos. Y la he visto yo.

Dicen algunos de estos animales que tienen cuatro ojos; dos con que ven, como todos, lo que pasa arriba, y están en el lugar competente y ordinario, debajo de la frente, y ésto es cierto que los tienen, aunque muy pequeños respecto de su grandeza; otros dos dicen tienen a la parte inferior y debajo de la mandíbula. Y habiendo con toda diligencia buscádoslos¹⁸, nunca tal hallé.

Es verdad que tienen dos ahujeros a que los indios llaman *mata*¹⁹, que quiere decir “ojos,” pero no lo son, sino dos caños para respirar, pues tienen su correspondencia (que los miré, con este cuidado, muy [d]espacio) con las agallas. Y no les hallé señal de niñeta ni de cosa que indique potencia visiva, antes están cerrados aquellos ahujeritos (en que no cabrá el dedo meñique); que, si no es con mucha fuerza, no se puede meter aun un palito; señal que son sólo para ayudar a la respiración, de que le previno la naturaleza, como a los demas peces, con sus agallas.

Más dicen algunos²⁰, que tienen en las agallas, o en los sobacos, dos bolas de fino almizcle. Y habiéndolo buscado con cuidado, no en uno ni en dos, ni en diez solos, sino en muchos que he cogido, y todos los

others with the bones already clean; round stones or pebbles, more in some and in others fewer. The natives say that when the feel light, they swallow the stones, which act as ballast to hold them down. Others say, that each year they swallow a pebble, and from these can be determined their age. This I do not hold to be true, for I have found more stones in some smaller ones than in others that were twice as large. Those who determine their age by the spine and its ridge or teeth like little battlements, do much better. By these then, they know how old the animal is because each year it adds one and from the old ones grow others in regular proportion.

I also found various large lumps, like large balls in size and roundness, made of fur or hairs of the animals or people that they eat. They eat pigs, deer, dogs and cats, monkeys, birds, fish and whatever there is to consume. They have knots, tangles of large rings of rattan which the natives call *baclao*, bundles of pieces of the said rattan, bound together, have I found in the belly with many other filthy things, from which I gather that these solid things, like bones and stones, etc., which they do not chew because of their hardness, are not digested but remain in the crop. The rest, which are digested, pass to the intestines and are expelled through the ordinary tract. There can be no doubt that all of them have one and I have seen it.

Some say that these animas have four eyes: two by which they see, like other animals what is going on above them and located in the suitable and usual place below the forehead. It is certain that they have these, although they are very small in proportion to their size. They say that they have two more lower and under the jaw. I have sought for these with every diligence, but I have never found any such.

It is true that they have two holes which the natives call *mata*, which means "eyes," but they are not, they are two short tubes for breathing. They have correspondence with the gills. I looked at it, with great care and very slowly. I found no sign of a pupil or anything which indicates the power of sight. Rather, these holes are closed. Even the little finger does not fit into them. Unless one uses much force, not even a little stick can be thrust into them, a sign that they solely to aid the breathing, which nature provides, as in the case of other fish with their gills.

Even more, others say that they have in the gills or in the armpits two balls of fine musk; I have looked carefully, not in one or in two or even in ten, but in many which I have caught. I ordered all of them

mandaba abrir y buscar con cuidado, jamás tal hallé, ni rastro de tales bolas, ni de tal almizcle, que es sueño de algunos. Es verdad que en los dos sobacos, o en su vacío, tienen unas durezas negras, algo larguillas, como riñones, pero antes son hediondas que olorosas, de almizcle; de modo que dos escritores que yo he visto, que lo dan esto por asentado, se siguieron del vulgo, que lo dice así pero no de la verdad que yo he especulado con cuidado y con atención.

Tiene este animal, a más de esto²¹, la carne muy blanca y ninguna sangre, porque, habiéndolos cogido vivos y mandádoslos matar a lanzadas (que en los hijares y vacíos son fáciles de herir) jamás vi rastro de sangre.

Tiene el redaño muy gordo y las tripas muy mantecosas, y su manteca es muy medicinal, en especial para baldados y tullidos, untando con ella las junturas, y para opilaciones de vientre, untándose y sobando con él, y aun para heridas he oído decir es famoso, echado caliente en ellas.

Acá no lo comen los indios, que tienen asco y horror. Cómenlo, empero, en el reino de Camboja, y es comida real y que se vende en pública carnicería, tomando primero para el rey y para los más grandes lo que quieren y saben que gustan²². Y dicen que es buena comida por lo blanco, por lo menos, y de buena carne; y 'impia no será mala, aunque el olor nunca es bueno²³, sino peor que de berrengo²⁴.

Vengamos a la generación y aumento de estos animales. Nunca se juntan dentro del agua sino fuera (contra lo que dijo otro historiador que los machos no salen fuera, pues salen y se van muy lejos de los ríos, siguiendo a las hembras y juntándose con ellas) para el dicho efecto.

Ponen ellas no un huevo (como dice otro autor) sino muchos (y más de ochenta, y aún ciento, mandé yo sacar de un nido). Los huevos son como de ganso, aunque menos gruesos; la cáscara superior más dura aun que los huevos dichos, pero se deshace y ablanda, cayéndosele el casco duro, y quedando una como membrana o pergamino, menos sólido, cuando están ya empollados.

Los nidos, o vivares, son en parte donde no llega la marea. Hacen de lodo unos como hornillos redondos, o como bovedillas por lo alto, y con un solo ahujero a un lado, y, dentro de aquel como hornillo, dejan

opened and searched with care; never have I found such a thing, not even a trace of these balls or of any musk. It is only people's dreams. It is true that in the two armpits, or in the hallowed part, they have some black hard rather elongated balls like kidneys, but they are fetid rather than with the smell of the musk. The two writers that I have seen, who state this, were guided by the ignorant who say this, but not by reason of facts which I have examined as an eyewitness and with care.

This animal, apart from this, also has very white flesh and no blood, because having caught them alive and ordered them killed by lance blows (they are easily pierced in the flanks and sides) never did I see a trace of blood.

They have a very plump caul, and the intestines are very fatty and their fat is medicinal, especially for cripples and those with impaired use of the limbs. They loosen the joints with it and for obstructions of the stomach by applying as ointment and by rubbing. I have heard that it is very good for wounds, when applied hot to them.

Over here, the natives do not eat this animal and they have loathing and horror of it. They eat it, however, in the Kingdom of Cambodia and it is a royal dish and is sold in the public meat market. They first take some for the king and for the highest nobles what they wish and they know what they will like. They say that it is a good meal because of its whiteness at least, and tasty meat. When clean, it might not be bad, although the odor is never good, but not as bad as that of the boar.

We come now to the generation and propagation of these animals. They never mate in the water, but out of it for this very purpose. Contrary to what another historian said, that the males never come out. Well, they do and they are seen very far from the rivers, following females and mating with them.

They lay not just a single egg, as another author says, but many. More than eighty and even a hundred have I ordered taken from a single nest. The eggs are like that of a goose, although not so large; the outer shell is harder even than these goose eggs, but the hard shell dissolves and becomes soft and falls off, leaving a kind of membrane or parchment, less hard, when they are ready to hatch.

The nests or breeding areas are in places where the sea does not reach. Out of mud they make little things like little round ovens, or like little vaults in their height and with a single hole at the side. Within

sus huevos. Hélos visto yo muy de cerca y mandado desbaratar y deshacer algunos en ausencia de la madre, la cual comúnmente (excepto cuando va a buscar qué comer) está tendida a la larga al lado de dicho hornacho²⁵, a la parte que tiene la boca, que dijimos.

El sol empolla con su calor los huevos. A mi me los han traído algunes veces los indios ya cerca de salir, y está dentro un lagartillo menor que el dedo índice, como las lagartijas más pequeñas que se suelen ver (que de una cosa tan poca y tan pequeña llega a la grandeza y corpulencia que hemos dicho).

Llegado el tiempo en que salen del cascarón y se van busca del agua natural²⁶, como lugar más ordinario de su vivienda y donde hallan qué comer. Está la madre al paso y en la boca del dicho hornillo, con la boca algo abierta. Todos cuantos se entran por ella, los engulle y vuelven a su seno, o vientre, sirviéndole de comida, y acabando allí su vida tan al principio de ella. Los que se escapan por un lado u otro, que son los menos, estos quedan con ella y se van al río, o arroyo, donde los he visto ya a veces bien chiquillos.

Providencia grande de Dios, que, a salvarse todos, fuera tanta su multitud que llenaran estos ríos y mares, aumentando tantos peligros cuantos son ellos, y fueran casi inevitables.

Vengamos ahora a sus mañas y al modo de cogerlos. Nunca comen debajo del agua porque engulleran con ella tanta que les ahogara. Y así salen siempre a tierra, o a arroyos de poco hondo, a comer, y allí se hallan los vestidos, a veces, cuchillos y otra alhajas de la gente que cogen. Su comida ordinaria son todos los animales, peces, aves y sabandijas que encuentran, sin perdonar a ninguno. Son muy amigos de perros más que de otros animales. Y así es cosa sabida que, si pasan por un río en una canoa (que acá llaman *baloto*²⁷) hombres y perros, el lance lo hace[n] primero en los perros. Y entre hombres escoge[n] primero por el color²⁸; si pasan un indio y un español, al indio antes que a éste; pero, cuando están ya carniceros y hechos a comer carne humana, a nadie perdonan, y todo lo llevan por un rasero.

Una cosa particular tiene[n] los bisayas observada y es digna de este lugar. Y es que ningún caimán que es natural del río, o laguna,

this, like a little oven, they leave their eggs. I have seen that at close range and ordered some of them broken and destroyed in the absence of the mother. Ordinarily, she is stretched out full length at the side of the little oven, on the side which has the opening, as we said, except when she goes in search of food.

The sun hatches the eggs with its heat. The natives have brought them to me sometimes when about ready to emerge. Inside is a little lizard smaller than the index finger, like the smallest of newts that can be seen. And from such a slight thing and so small, it comes to the huge size and corpulence which we have described.

The time having come when they emerge from the eggshell, they instinctively go in search of water as the ordinary place for their livelihood and where they find food. The mother is there at the opening of this little oven, with her mouth partly open. As many of the young as enter her mouth, are swallowed, return to their womb or stomach making a meal for her, and their lives end there, although they just began. Those which escape by one side or the other, which are the minority, stay with her, and they go off to the river or stream where I have seen them at times still very small.

It is a great providence of God, because if all were saved there would be such a multitude that they would fill these rivers and seas, increasing the dangers in proportion to their numbers, and they would be almost inescapable.

We come now to their cunning and the method of capturing them. They never eat under water because they might swallow too much of it and it would drown them. Hence, they always go to shore or to shallow streams to eat. There are found, at times, the clothing, knives, and other possessions of the people whom they seize. The ordinary food is all the animals and fish and birds and reptiles which they encounter, without any exception. They are more fond of dogs than of any other animals. Thus, it is a well-known fact that if dogs and people should be passing on a river in a canoe, which here they call *baloto*, they make the first attack on dogs. Among the people, if there should pass a native and a Spaniard, they select the native by the color in preference to the latter. But when they turned people-eaters and have already tasted human flesh, they make no exceptions and all are measured by the same standard.

The Bisayans have observed a curious matter and it is worthy of note here. It is that no crocodile, which is a native of the river or lake

donde está el pueblo, hace mal a indio alguno de él. Y así los hemos visto bañar muchas veces a chicos y grandes, y pasar los caimanes, y, en preguntándoles por qué se bañan así, responden: “estos no nos hacen mal, que son de nuestro pueblo,” y así lo que tienen notado es que siempre es forastero y de otros ríos o lugares el que sube a los ríos donde hacen su presa y comen gente y a estos los conocen los indios y suelen avisar y decir: “guardaos, que hay caimán forastero en el río, que viene a hacer *paggaat*²⁹, que es en su lengua lo mismo^{30(**)} que a “robar o matar a escondidas”. Y estos son los mas dañosos y malos.

Pero, si en el río donde este entró a hacer sus presas, hay caimán más valiente que él, le huele luego y sale en su busca y pelean desatinadamente, que dura días, hasta que alguno de ellos es vencido, y, si es forastero, se huye o queda muerto; pero, si es el propietario, le queda el campo franco al ladrón, si ya no es que se junten muchos para echarle de su río, como suele suceder.

Sea, para prueba, el caso siguiente que sucedió en el pueblo de Catubig³¹, estando yo en él, y lo pude ver porque me avisaron los indios; pero, por estar algo lejos del pueblo, no fui a verlo; y fué que de otro río llamado Panbuhán³², donde ha habido siempre muy fieros caimanes y muy sanguinarios y que mataban mucha gente (después diré lo que en él me sucedió con ellos), vino al de Catubig uno ha hacer presa.

Había ya subido más de tres leguas el río arriba, donde se encontró con otro caimán tan grande como él, del mismo río. Envistiéronse con notable braveza y pelearon todo un día hasta la noche.

Su modo de pelear es saltando uno contra el otro, de modo que se ponen casi en pie y se dan barriga con barriga y se arañan, por ser sola aquella parte capaz de eso, y se dan bocados en los hijares y sobacos hasta que rasgan el pellejo y se destripan.

De este manera pelearon una semana entera, saliendo el sol para que ellos comenzasen y lo dejaban en poniéndose. Viéronlo muchos indios que me lo contaron, aunque todos de lejos porque me decían que causaban horror y que el río, con la agitación, hacía olas como cuando hay mucho viento. Finalmente, fue vencido el forastero y no le vieron más ni supieron si murió o no.

where the town is, will harm any native belonging to it. So we have seen them bathing many times, both young and old and the crocodiles pass by. When we asked them why they bathed in this way, they reply, "These will not harm us, they belong to our town." Thus what they have noted is that it is always a strange animal from other rivers or locations who comes up to the rivers to seize and eat people. The natives recognize them and are accustomed to warn and say, "Be careful of yourselves, there is a strange crocodile in the river which is coming to make *paggaat*. In their language this is the same [**] as to rob or kill by stealth" and these are the most dangerous and evil.

But, if on the river where the latter came to take his captives, there is a braver crocodile than he; he scents him out and goes in search of him and they fight wildly. This lasts for days until one of them is conquered. If it is the stranger he flees or is killed, but if it is the local one, the field is left to the marauder unless now many of them join to expel him from their river, as usually happens.

The following can be used as a case in point. It happened in the town of *Catubig* when I was there, I could have seen it because the natives informed me of it, but because I was some distance from the town, I did not go to see it. It happened that from another river called *Pambuhan* where there had always been very fierce and bloodthirsty crocodiles which killed people, one came to the *Catubig* River to hunt victims. Afterwards I shall tell what happened to me among them.

It had already gone up the river more than three leagues where it encountered another crocodile as large as itself from this same river. They attacked one another with notable fury and fought all day until nightfall.

The mode of fighting is to leap, one against the other, so they are almost standing on their hind legs and their bellies pressed together; they claw each other, since only that part of their body is vulnerable to this. They bite each other on the sides and flanks until the skin is torn away and they are disembowled.

In this manner they fought all week; they began when the sun rose and they stopped when it set. Many natives saw it and told me about it, although all were at a distance because they said that it caused them horror. The river was whipped into waves by the agitation like when there is a strong wind. Finally, the stranger was conquered and they did not see him again; they did not know if he died or not.

Ya dije que he cogido yo muchos y en muchas partes, porque en cualquiera parte que me hallaba, en sabiendo que algún caimán cogía o vaca o puerco casero u otro animal que no fuese perro (que estos son su pan cotidiano), y mucho más si embestían o cogían algún hombre, le mandaba armar unos corrales o armatostes, que ellos hacen. *Atub*³³, le llaman y es, poniendo el paso estrecho con estacas, armar dentro de palos (y si hay piedras grandes a mano, añadiendo algunas encima para mayor peso) una trampa, o armatoste, que está suspensa y cae en pisando o tocando a un palo menor que allá llaman *guisiu*³⁴, cogiendo debajo y abrumando con su peso al caimán.

Pónenle detrás de dicho armatoste, amarrado, un perro que, en ladrando o ahullando (que es su ladrar), acude el caimán, y, pensando llevar presa, él queda y aprensado.

Este es un modo con que cogimos muchos, pero más con anzuelo, cuya medida al propósito es, teniendo dos garfios opuestos que el asta de en medio arrimada en mitad del pecho de un hombre (ya ha de ser del grosor del dedo pulgar) alcance con lo corvo, y que forma el anzuelo a las dos tetillas, quedando una y otra dentro de las dos puntas que ha de tener dicho anzuelo. Esta es la medida necesaria para que, en habiendo engullido el caimán el anzuelo, aunque haga mucha fuerza (como suele, y diré luego) no se puede escapar, porque coge dentro de las dos puntas al hueso que dijimos tienen en la garganta estos animales.

Este anzuelo, aunque se amarra a un recio mecate³⁵, o maroma, y ésta a una balsa de cañas (que lleva consigo el caimán en haciendo presa), se amarra inmediatamente a un mano, o monojo de hebras de *abaca*³⁶, de que tratamos arriba, que tenga más de una braza de largo y como la muñeca de grueso, porque, como todo es hebras, se le meten entre los dientes que, como dijimos, son puntiagudos y redondos, con lo cual no lo puedan cortar; que, de otra manera, si fuera maroma torcida, la cortara con ellos como a un rábano.

Pónese, pues, en este anzuelo por carnada medio perro, o lo que pareciere, muy bien amarrado porque no lo pueda sacar con facilidad. En la balsa dicha se pone uno como árbol con su verga, que saca colgado al anzuelo fuera de las cañas y lo tiene pendiente cosa de una vara, poco más o menos, alto del agua, y la balsa se pone en hondura competente, de modo que sea necesario dar salto para alcanzarlo, con

I have already said that I have caught many and in many places because wherever I happened to be, on learning that some crocodile had seized either a cow or domestic hog or some other animal, other than a dog (these are daily bread), and especially if they had attacked or seized some person, I ordered some enclosures or snares prepared for him which they make. They call the process *atub*; it consists in forming a narrow passage with stakes and setting a trap between the stakes (and if there are any large stones at hand, adding some on top for greater weight) which is suspended and falls by walking over or touching a smaller stick, which they call there *guisiu*, catching the crocodile beneath and crushing it with the weight.

Behind this trap they place a dog tied up; when it barks or howls (at which the crocodile approaches) and, thinking to carry it off as captive, is himself taken and crushed.

This is the manner by which we caught many, but we captured even more with a small gaff hook. The way this is done is to have two gaff hooks opposite each other and the shaft joined in the center, held at the middle of a man's breast (it has to be the thickness of a thumb) it must reach, at the curved part which forms the hook, as fast as the two nipples. These are both inside the two points which this hook must have. This is the necessary means, so that the crocodile, having swallowed the hook, even though he uses great force (as he usually does, and I shall describe it next) cannot escape because the hook catches between the two points of the bone which we have said these animals have in the throat.

This hook, although it is tied to a strong '*mecate*' or a strong cable of rope and this to a raft which the crocodile carries off with him in making the attack, is directly tied to a bundle or a bunch of *abaca* fibers, which we discussed previously. This is more than a braza in length and about the size of a wrist in diameter. Since these are all fibers they become inserted between the teeth which, as we said, are pointed and circular. As a result they cannot chew through the rope. Otherwise, if it were a twisted rope, he would cut it with his teeth like a radish.

Onto this hook as bait is then placed half a dog or whatever seems fitting, very well fastened so that it cannot be taken off easily. On the raft is placed something like a mast with its yard which holds the hook suspended above the bamboos. This is held about a *vara* above the water. The raft is placed in a suitable depth so that it is necessary for

atención a que pueda hacer pie con la cola en el suelo el caimán, porque con ella afirma en él y da el salto, que de otra manera no puede.

Con la violencia con que dió el salto, y con el temor de que no se lo escape la presa, la engulle luego y queda él hecho presa del anzuelo. Con eso se lleva consigo la balsa que estaba levemente amarrada, y con ella se va río arriba y río abajo hasta que se cansa, y entonces van en su busca los indios con *balotos* que, con el indicio de la balsa, se sabe donde está, porque él se va a lo hondo. Amarran a sus embarcaciones la balsa y la maroma que en ella estaba y traen a remolque al pueblo, donde, en llegando, lo matábamos. Y no es tan fácil el matarle.

El modo que nos enseñó la experiencia (porque con la fuerza que él hace, y como se hunde, las lanzas no bastaban ni hacían golpe) fue con los *bacacaies*³⁷, de que ya hablamos arriba, hechos punta, herirle por dentro la boca, el tragadero y garganta, que, en entrando dos o tres en lo carnoso, aflojaba luego de su braveza, y le sacábamos fuera del agua, y allí lo acabamos fuera del agua, y allí lo acabamos de matar.

Sucedíome más de cuatro veces no poder varar en la orilla y sacar fuera del agua con veinte, y más personas, un caimán, y en el río no poder dos embarcaciones, con más de doce personas cada una, traer a chorro o arrastrando al caimán vivo, por la fuerza que hacía en contrario; que, si era sola una embarcación, se la llevara tras sí como una flecha, hasta que se cansaba con la fuerza que hacía el anzuelo en el tragadero.

Contaré un caso raro que me sucedió una vez con uno de estos animales. Puse una tarde tres anzuelos (enfadado de que el día antes había un caimán seguido un *baloto* y embestido a los que venían dentro (que, aunque no llevó alguno por las voces que daban, ahogaron los dos de ellos). Armados los tres anzuelos del modo dicho, aquella misma tarde (tomaba yo siempre la medida a buen ojo desde la orilla, enseñándoles dónde y cómo se había de poner, con que jamás se me escapó alguno que llegase a hacer presa en el anzuelo; que los indios no acertaban tanto). Hicieron presa todos tres aquella noche. Avisáronme, envié en su busca y trajeron los dos que eran de anzuelos de la medida dicha y con dos garfios. El tercero era de tres y sin dicha medida (porque se hizo antes que la experiencia nos enseñase cómo se habían de hacer).

the crocodile to jump to reach the bait taking care that he can get a footing with his tail on the ground, because with it firmly planted it can jump, which it could not otherwise.

With the violence with which it springs and the fear lest the prize escape, it then swallows it and he becomes a prisoner of the hook. With this he carries off with him the raft which was lightly fastened and makes off with it up the river and down the river until he is tired. Then the natives go after him with *balotos*, and with the raft as a marker, they are able to know where he is, because he goes to the bottom. They fastened the raft to their boats with the rope that was on it and they towed it to the town by rowing. On arriving there we kill the crocodile but it is not easy.

Experience has taught us the way to do it, because with the strength that he can employ, and since he goes to the bottom, lances are of no avail even to strike him a blow. This was by means of *bagacay* about which we have already spoken previously. These so fashioned to a point, wound him through the mouth in the gullet and throat. When two or three pierce the fleshy part his ferocity then diminished. We drew him out of the water and there we finished by killing him.

It has happened to me more than four times that with the help of more than twenty individuals I was not able to ground a crocodile and to draw him out of the water. In the river two boats with more than twelve persons in each could not force the live crocodile against its will by tiring him out because of the resistance he made against it. If there were only a single boat he would pull it after him like an arrow, until he was tired out by the pressure which the hook made in his throat.

I shall relate a rare instance that happened to me once with one of these animals. One afternoon I set three hooks (annoyed that the day before a crocodile had followed a *baloto* and attacked those who were going inside. Although he did not carry off anyone because of the shouts they gave, two of them drowned. I set the traps, in the manner described (I always took pains to have a full view from the bank, telling the natives where and how it must be set. As a result none has ever escaped me that I have been able to capture on the gaff hook and the natives never attained this record). All three made a catch that night, they told me. I sent the natives to get them, and they brought the two which were on the mentioned two hooks. The third was of three hooks and not of the said size, because it was made before experience had taught us how they must be made.

Sintió lo más blando este caimán, y, aunque no lo pudo echar ni arrancar solo, se salió a tierra, y, como si fuera capaz de discurso, dio la vuelta con la maroma en que él estaba asido a un pie de cañas que estaba en lo alto del ribazo que hacía la orilla, y con violencia se echó al río. Con ella se torcieron los tres garfios, o ganchos del anzuelo, y, estando ya derechos, se sajó él, dejando la balsa y todos sus adherentes en el dicho lugar, que me la trajeron a mi los que fueron testigos de su ardid, aunque él no se libró por eso, porque de la herida murió, y el día siguiente le vieron sobre aguado y tan flaco que murió presto.

De estos caimanes que entonces se cogieron, el uno era manco de una mano que le faltaba totalmente, y el otro de un pie que lo tenía también cortado. Y en otra ocasión cogimos también con media cola no más. Dentro del uno hallamos el muslo, que dije, del hombre (y era de un mozo que había seis días se lo había llevado el dicho caimán) y lo enterré juntamente con los dos muchachos que la tarde antes se habían ahogado huyendo de él; con que pagó todas tres muertes, o las pagaron otros tres caimanes que murieron aquel día, aunque al uno, por lo dicho, no lo trajimos al pueblo.

Con ocasion de ver al uno cojo y al otro manco, pregunté a los indios cuál sería la causa, y entonces me dijeron que estos caimanes suelen pelear con algunos peces grandes, en particular con el tiburón que, como no puede hacer presa en él por lo grande del cuerpo, porque no tiene más armas³⁸ [**] el tiburón que sus dientes (hélo visto yo con tres órdenes de ellos, muy agudos, y como tres asieras muy aguzadas) hace presa en los pies o manos o cola, que es lo que puede abarcar con la boca, y se los corta a cercén. Y esta es la causa de quedar mancos y con las colas cortadas.

También me dijeron los indios entonces, y en otras ocasiones semejantes, otra cosa notable, y es que, por cualquiera herida en el buche que se le haga al caimán, o acaso o con lanza, o riñendo con el pez-espada (de que trataremos en su lugar) muere[n] infaliblemente, porque los pececillos, aun los muy chiquitos se le pegan y van royendo y acrecentando la herida hasta que llegan a las entrañas, con que muere o ahogado con el agua que le entra, o de la herida que llegó a parte mortal; de modo que tan flacos instrumentos³⁹ como unos pececillos que no llegan al tamaño del dedo, matan a una bestia tan feroz; cosa

This last crocodile was wounded in the softest part, and although he could not expel or draw out the hook by himself, he came out on land, and as though he were capable of reasoning, he made a turn with the rope around a stalk of bamboos that was at the top of a mound and sloping toward the bank so that it was fastened there. With a violent effort, he hurled himself into the river so that the three barbs or gaffs were twisted. These, now being straightened out, it was drawn out leaving the raft and all things fastened to it at that point. Those who were witness of his cunning brought the raft to me. However, he was not freed by this because he died from the wound. The following day they saw him water logged and so weak that he soon died.

Of these crocodiles which were captured at that time, one was lacking a forefoot, which was completely gone; the other a rear foot which was also cut off. On another occasion we also caught one with no more than half a tail. Inside the one we found the thigh, as I said, of a man (he was a young one whom the crocodile possibly had carried off six days before), together with the two boys who had been drowned the previous afternoon while fleeing him. Thus all three deaths were avenged, or three other crocodiles paid for those who died that day, although the one, as I described, we did not drag to the town.

On one occasion upon seeing one lame and another maimed, I asked the natives what might be the cause. They then told me that these crocodiles were accustomed to fight with various large fish, especially with the shark. Since the latter cannot seize the crocodile because of the size of its body, because the shark does not have any other weapons than its teeth [**] (I have seen it with three rows of very sharp ones, and like three very sharp-toothed saws), it seizes the feet or paws or tail. This it can clasp in its mouth and cut them off at the roots. This is the reason for their being maimed, and having their tails cut off.

The natives also told me then, or on similar occasions, another remarkable thing. It is what whatever wound in the abdomen may be given the crocodile, either by accident, or with a lance, or by fighting with the sawfish (of which we shall treat in its place), they infallibly die because the little fish, even the very smallest of them, attach themselves to it and aggravate and enlarge the wound until they get to the entrails so that the crocodile dies, drowned by the water which flows in, or from the wound which has reached a vital organ. In this way such weak instruments as little fish, which are not even the size of

ordinaria en el mundo suceder por pocas cosas muchas desgracias, y vencer Dios por cosas muy viles alcázares muy fuertes y hombres muy soberbios.

Concluamos este capítulo y demos fin a estas bestias fieras con lo que apunté arriba me había sucedido en el pueblo de Panbuan que es de la residencia de Palapag. Era este pueblo muy infestado de estas bestias. Fueron muchos los hombres y mujeres que dieron fin a sus días entre sus garras y dientes, y parece que iba[n] escogiendo los mejores del pueblo y los más robustos.

Fui a él, hice mis esfuerzos con trampas que arriba dije, llevé mis anzuelos (que siempre yo iba armado con ellos; prevención que valió mucho en otros pueblos y mató no pocos caimanes, y de los más fieros). Armélos y púselos como siempre, y, aunque a la mañana los hallábamos sin la carnada, de que yo me maravillaba no poco, nunca cayó alguno. Comencé entonces a dudar si era verdad que fuesen brujos (que así corría entre estos⁴⁰ indios; después diré mi sentir en si hay, o no, brujos entre estos indios).

Hice armar delante de la casa del Padre que estaba muy cerca del río, un corral con toda la fortaleza y prevención necesaria, y con unos palos y piedras muy pesados, porque no se escapase si acaso cayese en la trampa. Pusimos un perrillo (cebo y añagaza a que acude[n] presto). Gritó de noche. Llegó el caimán, y bien grande según los rastros, entre las estacas que sirven como de camino para que dé sin duda en la trampa. Metió la mano para coger, o alcanzar, al perro que estaba dentro y muy cerca del palo, que es como quicio y con que cae el armatoste en tocando a él, y, sin disparar, porque pasó⁴¹ solo la mano por abajo, se volvió hacia atrás, que no podía dar vuelta ni escaparse de otra manera, y, al volver al agua, dio un grande salto e hizo mucho ruido, que lo oí yo desde la cama.

Pareciéndome que habíamos presa, apenas amaneció cuando fué la gente a ver y no hallaron más que al perrillo que con el miedo de haberse visto tan a pique estaba tan encogido en el último ángulo. Fui yo a verlo y vi el rastro del pecho que tendría de cinco a seis palmos (haylos de más de una braza en dicho río, aunque no son ellos los más fieros por ser naturales de él). Vi las huellas y señales de las uñas de ida y vuelta, con que me persuadí que había algo más que natural.

a finger, kill such a ferocious monster. It is a common occurrence in the world for many disasters to result from slight causes and God conquers great fortresses and proud people by very mean things.

Let us conclude this chapter and have an end of these ferocious beasts with what I mentioned above that happened to me in the town of Pambuhan, which belongs to the Residence of Palapag. This town of Pambuhan was much infested with these beasts. There were many men and women who ended their days between their fangs and teeth. It seems that the animals went about selecting the best and healthiest persons of the town.

I went there and tried my fortune with snares, as I described above. I brought my hooks (I always went armed with them, a forethought which was very worthwhile in other towns and killed many crocodiles of the most ferocious kind) and baited and set them as usual. However, in the morning we found them without the bait, at which I was not a little amazed. Not one had fallen. I began then to wonder if it were true that there might be witches. This was the opinion among these natives. Later I will give my opinion as whether there are or not witches among these natives.

I set up a snare in a corral in front of the house of the Father, which was very close to the river with all the strength and planning necessary and with some logs and very heavy stones so that the crocodile might not escape if it should fall into the trap by chance. We put a little dog (a fat lure to which they come quickly). He howled all night and the crocodile came, of a good size according to the tracks between the stakes which served as a road to lead him without failing into the trap. He thrust out his forefoot to seize or take the dog who was within and very close to the pole, which is like a prop, and by which when touched the snare falls, but without discharging it because he only put his forefoot underneath and back out. On returning to the water he made a great leap and caused much noise. I heard him from my bed.

Since it seemed to me that we had captured him, when it was hardly dawn, when the people went down to look, they found nothing except the little dog, which though fright at having seen the beast at such close quarters was shrinking with fear in the farthest corner. I went to look and I saw the tracks of the beast which were from five to six *palmos* (there are some more than a *braza* in this river, although they are not the fiercest because they are natives to it) and signs of the claws, going and coming, so that I was persuaded that it was something

Armé de mil modos los anzuelos y jamás pude coger alguno; cosa que jamás me sucedió en otras partes y pueblos donde yo siempre había cogido muchos, con que desesperé de hacer lance.

Mudóse después este pueblo, como veremos, y no fue el motivo menor el huir de estos fieros carniceros, y no sé si diga endiablados caimanes.

Cantius J. Kobak, O.F.M.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
January 2, 1997

Lucio Gutiérrez, O.P.
University of Santo Tomas, Manila,
June 1, 1998

more than natural. I set the hooks in a thousand ways and never was I able to catch one, an experience that never happened in other places and towns where I had always caught many. I despaired in casting my net successfully.

This town was moved later, as we shall see, and not the least of the reasons was to flee from these ferocious flesh-eaters; I do not know whether to say, "devil-possessed crocodiles."

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Chapter 7 – ANNOTATIONS

¹ *Buaya*. A crocodile or cayman. These lay their eggs in the earth just like the *tabon*; when fully developed they break open the shell and hurriedly make for the waters. The mother waits at the shore with an open mouth and many of these walk right in and are swallowed up.

These are large aquatic reptiles of the *genus crocodylus* and related genera, of tropical regions. They have thick armor-like skin and long tapering jaws; the alligator and gavial are of the same family.

'*Dao nagpapalango nga buaya*'. It is said of those who are idiotic, with their mouth open. Cfr. Antonio Sánchez, *Diccionario español-bisaya para las provincias de Samar y Leyte*. Manila, 1914, Bisayan Part, 57.

² The Latin term used is *alias*, meaning another or other.

³ *Palmo*. From the Latin *palmus*. A measure of longitude, almost a fourth of a meter, divided into twelve equal parts of fingers. It is equivalent to 21 centimeters and it is supposed to be the length of the extended hand of a man from the tip of the thumb to the little finger, with the hand fully extended. Cfr. *Diccionario de la lengua española*, Real Academia, h-zuzon, Madrid, 1984, 1000.

⁴ *Vara*. From the Latin *vara*, crossbeam. A measure of longitude divided into three feet or four palms and equal to 835 millimeters and 9 tenths. Cfr. *Diccionario de la lengua*, h-zuzon, 1367.

⁵ *Braza*. From the Latin *brachia*, plural form of *brachium*, arm. The distance from the two forefingers of a man, extending the arms horizontally. Cfr. *Ibidem*, aguzpatarra, 213.

⁶ *Máxime* is used in Spanish as an adverb. It comes from Latin and it means: in the highest degree; most of all; as much as possible; principally; mainly, etc.

⁷ *Real de ocho*. A piece of eight. Old Spanish silver coin, valued at eight reales of old silver. Cfr. *Diccionario de la lengua*, h-zuzon, 1148.

⁸ *Saua*. Boa constrictor. Cfr. Tramp, *op. cit.*, 392. The largest snake known. Its length can reach ten meters. The color of the skin is multiform, but always mixed with pleasant and beautiful colors. It is not poisonous but it is so strong that, according to the natives, it can hold a carabao. The excrement is medicinal. Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 298.

⁹ In the Muñoz text '*he hecho yo*'.

¹⁰ In the Museo Naval text '*inferior*'. The sense seems to demand the use of *superior* instead of *inferior*. What Alcina wants to prove is the formidable size of the mouth of the animal, bigger than the height of a tall person.

¹¹ *Jeme*. From the Latin *semis*, half. The distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the forefinger when both are extended. Often spelled *geme*. Cfr. *Diccionario de la lengua*, h-zuzon, 796.

¹² *Panka*. Its primary meaning is 'to stumble'; it is also a type of vessel among the Cebuanos. *Panko*: a Moro vessel. Tramp, *op. cit.*, 331.

¹³ In the Muñoz text '*he hecho yo*'.

¹⁴ In the Muñoz text '*como dicen*'.

¹⁵ In the Muñoz text '*escribe*'.

¹⁶ *Baclao*. A hoop; ring around objects to hold them together, usually of rattan. Sánchez describes it as a bracelet or a band worn on the wrists. *Op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 25.

¹⁷ In the Muñoz text '*y atados y revoltijos de dicho bejuco*'.

¹⁸ In the Muñoz text '*y habiéndolos con toda diligencia buscado*'.

¹⁹ *Mata*. An eye; sight; v. To arouse; to waken. Tramp, *op. cit.*, 267. Sánchez also gives two variables for *mata* as *matahan*, or *mathan* as an eye. It takes on a metaphorical form for many things. The mesh of a net is called an 'eye'. The holes that remain in the lattice work of baskets, the rattan work on chairs or cots, an abscess on the mouth, the whole in a button, crest where a bud begins to sprout, the eye of a needle, the openings on a coconut where it is meant to sprout, etc... *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 206.

²⁰ In the Muñoz text, '*otros*'.

²¹ In the Muñoz text, '*además de esto*'.

²² In the Muñoz text, '*que les gusta*'.

²³ In the Muñoz text, the expression '*es bueno*' is lacking.

²⁴ In the Muñoz text, '*berrango*'.

²⁵ In the Muñoz text, '*hornillo*'.

²⁶ In the Muñoz text, '*naturalmente*'.

²⁷ *Baloto*. A boat with short paddles used by the natives of the Bisayan Islands. It is made of one piece and without keel, with the prow and the bow pointed.

It is also used as a verb. For example: *Nagbabaloto sira*. They are building a *baloto*. *Pagbabalotohun co inin cahuy*. I will build a *baloto* from this piece of wood. Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 33.

²⁸ In the Muñoz text, '*olor*'.

²⁹ *Paggaat*. Perhaps, this is a variable of what Alcina gives in Chapter 11, Part 1, Book 4; namely, *pangahat*, which is a raid on land. *Mangiyaw*, he states further, is at or from the sea.

Tramp has this entry: *maggad*: to abuse; to depreciate; to use improperly. *Op. cit.*, 261. The particle '*pag-*' indicates an infinite of the word and it can read *pag-gad*, perhaps.

³⁰ It is from this point that the *Copia Naval* manuscript has an omission of three folios or six pages. The manuscript was published by Ma. Luisa Martín-Meras and Ma. Dolores Higuera in *La Historia de las Islas e Indios Visayas del Padre Alcina - 1668*, Madrid, 1974. The omission falls between the last line and word of folio 154, '*mismo*'

and before the first word 'el tiburon', of folio 155. (In our English translated text we have indicated it with two asterisks [**] both at the beginning and at the end). The omission was discovered by one of the editors of this Alcina manuscript — Cantius J. Koback; the omitted text is supplied from the Muñoz copy: beginning with folio 40v and with the words 'que a robar...' and ending on folio 43v, with the words 'que no tiene más armas...'

³¹ *Catubig*. Situated now in the province of Northern Samar on the great Catubig River. It was one of the only two ancient *pueblos* situated in the interior of the Island of Samar; the other was Gándara or Bangahon, as it was known upon the arrival of the Augustinians and Jesuits, now in the province of Western Samar.

³² *Pambuhan*. Situated at about the central portion of Northern Samar and near a river of the same name. The ancient name of Pambuhan is Bayog and it fell under the jurisdiction of the Palapag Residence, during the Jesuit administration up until 1768, when the Franciscans were assigned.

³³ *Atub*. This is a trap fashioned to catch hogs and crocodiles. The word *talibugsuk*, means stakes or poles well anchored and *talogpatay*, which are crossed poles the weight of which or the stones placed in such a manner that it falls upon and holds the prey. *Alimaras*, is a pole that holds the weight and when touched, it releases the weight which falls upon the prey and holds it. *Paun* being its bait or lure: a food given to animals; fattening food. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 23.

³⁴ *Guisiu*. Perhaps, the word should read: *Gisi* meaning, to tear, to rip, to rend; to break; to shatter, to smash. Tramp, *op. cit.*, 162 and Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 129.

³⁵ *Mecate*. From the Mexican *mecatl*, rope, cord, as used in the Philippines, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua. Cfr. *Diccionario de la lengua española*, h-zuzon, 890.

³⁶ *Abaca*. Manila hemp, *Musa Textili* and related to the banana plant; fibers are drawn from it to make rope and cloth. Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 389.

³⁷ *Bagacay*. Alcina pluralizes and hispanizes the word *bagacay*. In the many instances where the word is used in his *Historia*, the spelling is not uniform. We have *bacacayes*, *bacacaies*, *bacacay*, *bacacai*, *bagacay*, *bagacai*, *bagacayes*, *bagacaies*, etc.

Bagacay. Bamboo cane. This cane can reach a height of more than eight meters. It is very common in the mountains of Samar. It is beautiful, very straight and clean and it is used in looms and to make thorn, pointed things and for other usages. There are varieties of this cane, like *caraye*, *damoluan*, *macaranas*, *guigacye* (strong c) and other species. Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 392.

³⁸ The *Museo Naval* copy, the basis of our text, lacks from 'que a robar o matar a escondidas' all the way to 'porque no tiene más armas'. There are three folia missing (six pages). Here we follow the Muñoz copy.

³⁹ In the Muñoz text, 'animales'.

⁴⁰ In the Muñoz text, 'los'.

⁴¹ In the Muñoz text, 'puso'.

Capítulo 8

Chapter 8

Capítulo 8

Segunda Especie de Caimanes y Otras Varias de Lagartos de por acá

Otra especie de caimanes hay por acá, menos conocida, y así la confunden con esta otra, siendo muy distinta. Llámanlos los indios *barangitao*¹. Son mucho menores, aunque [de]² la misma hechura que los grandes, y, cuando más crecidos, nunca pasan del tamaño de un hombre, ni tienen el pecho que llegue a dos palmos de ancho, y así son mucho más cortos, viven más comúnmente en arroyos o lagunajos, apartándose de los mayores, y andan mucho más por tierra que los grandes.

Son cazadores de puercos, de venados y de monos y otros animalillos, sin perdonar a chico ni grande que ellos puedan sujetar. He oído decir de ellos que gustan de oír a los hombres cuando hablan, y así se acercan. No suelen comúnmente embestirles por serles más amigos, o amigables, que eso quiere decir su nombre. También he oído decir que, en acostumbrándose a carne humana, son más amigos de ella y más carniceros que los grandes y que aunque son menores de cuerpo en gran diferencia, son más audaces y atrevidos que ellos.

No tengo por verdad lo que he oído decir tal vez (como otro delfín) prestan sus escamosas espaldas para pasar de una parte a otra de las lagunas donde viven, a los hombres que se sirven de su ministerio para esto, [por]que³, aunque es factible, no lo he podido averiguar con certidumbre, como ni que sean muy amigos de música, como se dice también del delfín, porque las músicas de los bisayas son sordas y se oyen muy poco de lejos, y así tengo por apócrifa[s] estas y otras cosas que se dicen de esta especie menor de caimanes que, como dijimos, llaman *barangitao*.

Chapter 8

A Second Species of Caimans and Other Varieties of Lizards over Here

There is another species of caiman over here, less known and thus people confused it with this other one, but it is quite different; the natives call them *barangitaw*. They are much smaller but of the same shape as the large ones; when full-grown they never surpass the size of a person. Neither do they have a breast which comes near to two *palmos* in width. They are much smaller and live ordinarily in rivulets or shallows, separate from the larger ones and travel more on land than the bigger variety.

They are hunters of hogs, deer, monkeys and other little animals, without excepting anything small or large that they can overpower. I have heard that they like to listen to people when they are talking. Thus they approach them and normally they do not attack because they are more friendly or amiable; that is the meaning of their name. I have also heard it said that, on becoming accustomed to human flesh, they are very fond of it and are greater flesh eaters than the large ones. And although they are smaller in the body by a substantial amount, they are more aggressive and daring than the former.

I do not hold it to be true what I have heard said, that they, like another dolphin, offer their scaly shoulders to people so they may pass from one place to another on the lakes where they live and that the latter make use of their services for this. Although this is possible, I have never been able to verify it with certainty. Similarly the story that they are very fond of music, as is likewise said of the dolphin, because the tunes of the Bisayans are quiet and seldom can be heard at a distance. And so, I consider these and other stories which are told about this smaller variety of the caimans, which we have said they call *barangitaw*, as apocryphal.

No dejaré, con todo, de decir lo que he oído de su ligereza en el correr (y lo mismo son los grandes, aunque al parecer tan torpes y pesados), pues dicen que corren tanto como un caballo, siendo escampado⁴ y carrera derecha, y así ningún hombre se les puede escapar por pies, corriendo derecho, sí muy fácilmente con dos o tres vueltas que les hurten, que no siguen más porque se cansan y desconfían de alcanzar la presa, que de otra manera no se les escapara.

Es también cosa cierta que nunca duermen, ni estos ni los grandes, dentro del agua porque se quedarán ahogados, así se salen a dormir a las orillas de los ríos o del mar, en los arenales o bancos de arena que deja el mar descubiertos en sus menguantes. Hélos visto yo muchísimas veces tendidos, unos de espaldas y de barriga, otros de pechos y de lado también.

Casi todos tienen bocas abiertas moderadamente cuando duermen, que suelen estar llenas de moscas y moscardones grandes. Y es su sueño tan recio que ni voz ni ruido alguno los suele despertar, y la causa es que, como no duermen sino cuando el sueño les obliga, y pasan a veces muchos días sin dormir, cuando se ponen a ello, lo toman despacio.

La experiencia y lo que vemos muchas veces nos muestra que, cuando hay avenidas grandes en los ríos, después de ellas es cuando salen muchos a dormir, porque, como se cansan más en romper las aguas y su corriente arrebatada, porque se los lleva y arrebatada tras sí, ha[n] menester hacer más fuerza para romper contra ella, y así se cansan más y necesitan después de descanso, y esta es la causa de que en semejantes ocasiones salen más a dormir.

Según los colores y tamaños tienen diferentes nombres todos los caimanes entre estos naturales: *bayo*⁵ llaman a los prietos de escamas, que algunos lo son mucho; *bancariun*⁶ los de color amarillo, por cierto bejuco, de que ya tratamos, que es de este color; *batangan*⁷ a los de mediana edad y que son mozos, aunque no han llegado a su total grandeza, y *binatang*⁸ a los que cuando nadan, por ser muy grandes, sacan el espinazo muy grande y largo, que parece viga, o llave, de las que ponen en sus casas.

En la extremidad del cuerpo, o como cintura, donde comienza lo rollizo de la cola, tienen todos una púa como almenilla, más dura y

I shall not omit, all in all, to tell what I have heard about their agility in running. And the same is true of the large ones, even though they are so torpid and heavy in appearance. It is said that they run as fast as a runaway horse and on a straight course. Hence, no person can escape them on foot by running straight; however, it can be done with two or three turns which leave them behind. Then they follow no further because they get tired and loose confidence in capturing the victim, which otherwise might not escape.

It is also certain that neither these nor the large ones ever sleep in the water because they would drown. So they come out to sleep on the banks of the rivers or of the sea, on sandy beaches or sand banks which the sea leaves exposed during the ebb tide. I have seen them very many times stretched out; some of them on their backs; others on their breasts and also on their sides.

Almost all have their mouths moderately open when they sleep and they are full of lies and large gad flies. Their sleep is so sound that no voice or noise whatever can wake them up. The reason is that they do not sleep except when the need of sleep obliges them; they spend many days without sleeping too. When they finally do sleep, they remain so for a long time.

Experience, and what we see of them often, shows us that when there are great floods in the rivers, that is the time when many come out to sleep. This is due to the fact that they tire in beating through the waters and its fierce currents. Since it carries them away, drags them after it, they need to use greater force to break through against it. Thus, they become more tired, and need to rest afterwards. This is the reason why, on similar occasions, they come out more often to sleep.

What pertains to their color and size, all the caimans have differences in names among these natives. Those with very dark scales, they call *bayu*, and some are very dark. Those of yellow color are called *bancariun*, after a kind of reed which we have treated, and which is its color. Those of middle age and still young are called *batangan*, even though they have not yet attained full size. *Bina-tang* are those which, because they are very large, show while swimming a large and long backbone which seems like a log or wedge, like those they put up in their houses.

At the end of the body, something like a belt, where the round part of the tail begins, all of them have a sharp point like a small

larga que las demás, a que llaman *tobotobo*⁹, y dicen es venenosa más que las otras.

He visto yo¹⁰ un caimán que tenía en dicha punta, nacido un zacatillo, o yerbezuela, algo colorada que parecía un plumaje, y dicen estos naturales que cuando muy viejos, les nace lo dicho. Lo cierto es que algunos crían en sus espaldas varios mariscos y almejas que, asidas allí, crecen como en las peñas y, cuando los matan, las sacan los indios y se las comen.

Quiero acabar lo tocante a los caimanes con un caso raro y que nació de una mujer, y, porque se sepa, que es caso notable, pasó así.

En el pueblo de Tubig¹¹, de la costa de Ibabao que mira a los mares que vienen de Nueva España, había un indio casado, llamado *Pacotolon* (que había servido a los Padres siendo muchacho. Es indio entendido, y así se puede creer con menos duda de verdad lo que él mismo me contó, y su mujer después y vi yo la niña hermana de vientre de un caimán). Estaba preñada su mujer de éste, con la barriga tan grande que todos juzgaban pariría dos o más hijos. Llegó el tiempo y parió una niña de buena proporción y con todas las calidades de semejantes partos.

Nacida ésta, sintió la madre que se meneaba dentro de su vientre otra cosa, y, pensado ser segundo hijo, con ayuda de la partera, parió no niño ni niña, sino un caimancillo que tenía más de palmo y medio de largo, con cola y todo, como suelen ser a los cinco o seis meses después de salidos del cascarón los de esta especie.

Pasmáronse todos viendo el monstruo. Trataron entre si qué harían del caimancillo. Algunos dijeron que lo matasen; que aquello era *pangasa* (“cosa extraordinaria y portentosa” quiere¹² decir entre ellos) a que ellos temen mucho, pero el padre de la niña dijo que no, sino que lo dejaran vivo y viesan en qué paraba.

Llevólo él mismo al río, y, para conocerlo, le cortó un pedazo de la cola y echólo en el agua. Luego nadó el caimancillo y se escondió. Volvióse el hombre a su casa, que estaba bien cerca de la orilla, y atendió al sobreparto de la mujer, hasta que en breve estuvo buena, sin que le quedase achaque ninguno malo de los que en semejantes ocasiones suelen acontecer y sobrevenir a las tales.

merlong, harder and longer than the rest, which they call *tubotubo*. They say that it is more poisonous than the others.

I have seen a cayman which on the point sprouted a little bush or a herb, a bit red, which seems like a plume. These natives say that this takes root on them when they are very old. The fact is that some grow various mollusks and mussels on their backs which have become attached there and grow just as among the rocks. When they kill the animals, the natives take them off the back and eat them.

I wish to finish the matter on the caymans with an unusual thing that was born to a woman and why it is thought to be remarkable. It happened this way.

In the town of *Tubig*, on the coast of *Ibabao*, which faces the ocean whose other side is New Spain, there was a married native known as *Pakotolon* (who had served the Fathers when a boy). He is an intelligent native, and so one can believe with little doubt of the truth what he himself told me and his wife afterward. I saw the child, the womb sister of the cayman. His wife was pregnant from him, and her stomach was so distended that everyone judged that she would give birth to two or more children. When the time came, she brought forth a well-formed girl, and she was born with all the circumstances of similar births.

However, the mother felt that something else had remained in the womb, and hoping that it would be a second child, with the help of a midwife, she bore not a boy or a girl, but a little cayman which was more than a *palmo* and a half in length, with tail and all. It was like those of this variety that has been out of the shell for five or six months.

All were stunned upon seeing the monster and they conferred among themselves what they should do with the little cayman. Some said that they should kill it because it was a *pangasa* (this meant among them an extraordinary and portentous thing) which they feared greatly. But the father of the girl said no, that it should live and they should find out what would finally happen.

He himself carried it down to the river and, in order to recognize it, he cut off a piece of its tail and threw the cayman into the water. Then the little cayman swam away and hid himself. The man went back to his house, which was very near the bank of the river, and attend to the convalescence of the woman until in a short time she was well. She suffered no ill effects, such as usually happen in similar situations and recur oftentimes.

Creció la niña, y el caimancillo también, y con tanto cariño que casi todas las noches se venía debajo de la casa de su[s] padre[s] (llamémoslo así; que la causa natural y efectiva en el vientre de la madre solo Dios la sabe cuál fué) y daba unos como ahullidos, pero pequeños; que estos animales no forman voz ni ladridos, o silvos, quizás por la falta de la lengua.

Habría dos meses, poco más o menos, que ésto había sucedido, cuando llegué al pueblo, y me lo contaron luego, y, para más seguridad, aunque fueron muchos los contestes, se lo pregunté al padre y a la madre y a la que sirvió de partera (y aún quise ver a la niña). Y de ellos supe lo referido, cómo iba creciendo el caimán más a prisa que la niña. Iba y venía éste a su casa, de modo que la madre tuvo miedo, y determinaron mudarse a otro pueblo que está dos leguas de allí, o tres, cuando mucho.

Cuando pensaban estar lejos del caimán, lo vieron, cuando menos se cataron, dentro de pocos días, que se fué al mismo río donde ellos se habían mudado. Estaba yo entonces en aquel pueblo, y aunque les dije que me mostrasen el caimancillo, y de hecho fui a ver si le podía ver, nunca le vi. Y de esta manera les dejé yo que¹³ tenían ya dos años, o algo más el caimán y la niña, y me fui a otro pueblo muy lejos, y no supe más de ellos en más de veinte años.

Volví, pasados estos, aunque no a los mismos pueblos, a otros de la misma residencia, y, preguntado por el dicho indio y por el caimán, me dijeron que, huyendo del caimán, que ya era muy grande, se habían ido a vivir a otro pueblo, ocho leguas más allá del segundo donde se habían ido primero, llamado Borongan, y que era gobernador del dicho pueblo el padre de la niña, entonces ya mujer grande, casada y con hijos, y que el caimán se había ido tras ellos, y acudía a otro río que estaba cerca de su casa; y me añadieron que estaba tan manso el caimán que bajaba a bañarse su hermana de vientre y otros muchachos o gente grande y su madre al río, y que entre ellos iba y venía el caimán sin hacer mal a nadie; antes se dejaba tocar, subir encima y casi jugaba con la gente. Y fuera de esto, dijeron que era proficuo a su padre, y que era rara la mañana que amanecía, cuando bajando su padre a la orilla del río de Borongan (que es otro del que corre en donde está el pueblo) no hallase o el puerco montés o el venado o la tortuga del mar a otros pescados grandes, que el dicho caimán traía para su sustento y de su madre y hermana.

The little girl grew and so did the little cayman; all with such filial affection that almost every night it came below the house of its parents (let us call them such. The natural and effective cause of what happened in the womb of the mother, only God knows). It gave out something like little howls, but very weak. These animals do not utter cries or howls or whistles, possibly because they lack a tongue.

It was two months after this occurred that I arrived in the village and they told me about it then. To be more certain, even though there were many with the same testimony, I interrogated the father and the mother and she who served as midwife (and I even wished to see the girl). From them I learned the above story. Since the cayman kept growing faster than the child, while it came and went to her house, the other became afraid and she decided to move to another village which was two leagues from there or at most three.

When they thought themselves far from the cayman, they saw it when they least expected it, within a few days. It was in the very river to which they had moved. I was there in that town and although I told them to show me the little cayman and in fact I went to see if it was possible to look at it, I never saw it. In this circumstance, I left them when the cayman and the girl were two years old, or a bit more and I went to another town very distant and I learned no more of them in over twenty years.

When these years had passed, I returned but not to the same town, but to another of the same Residence. I inquired about that native and the cayman. They told me that, trying to flee from the cayman which was now very large, they had gone to live in another town eight leagues farther away than the second where they have gone in the first instance. It was called *Borongan* and the father of the girl was the governor of the said town. She was now a grown woman, married and with children. The cayman had gone after them and had entered another river which was near their house. They told me that the cayman was so tame when his womb sister and other children and grownups and her mother went among them without harming anyone. On the contrary, he permitted them to touch and climb on top of him and he almost played with the people. Aside from this, they said, that he was useful to her father. It was a rare day that dawned when the father descending to the bank of the river of *Borongan* (this is another than that which runs where the town is located) did not find either a wild boar, deer or a sea turtle or other large fish which the cayman had brought for his sustenance and that of his mother and sister.

Estas son las últimas nuevas que tuve yo cuando escribo ésto; que ha treinta y un años que nació dicho caimán.

No sé que hayan muerto aún ni él, ni su padre, madre o hermana, antes dicen están vivos; y aunque pocos meses ha tuve yo deseo, y de hecho di orden para que viniese a verme dicho indio, no pudo venir por estar indispuerto, y así no pude saber de su boca lo último, como supe lo primero.

Discurran ahora los entendidos las causas de la formación de dicho animal en el ser tan conforme a los demás de esta especie y tan diferente en la mansedumbre, en el reconocimiento y en lo demás que consta de lo dicho; que en otros lugares pondremos otros animales que han nacido juntos con niños, de que yo soy testigo, como veremos abajo.

Fuera de los caimanes hay otras dos especie de lagartos menores; y, aun de¹⁴ la figura exterior parecen caimancillos (como luego diré), no son perjudiciales, antes son comestibles y de buena carne, que he comido yo más de una vez.

Lllaman a la una especie de estos lagartos menores *halo*¹⁵ estos naturales. Son de color negro y amarillo, el tamaño común cuatro palmos, a veces crecen más, aunque pocas veces llegarán a seis. Es esta especie muy tímida y cobarde; y así en su antigüedad al que era pintado (pues, como dijimos, se pintaban por valentía) le decían, si era cobarde y tímido, '*dao na lipang, nga halo*'; que se parecía a este lagarto, pues, siendo pintado, era cobarde como él.

Comen a este animal algunos de los indios, aunque pocos, porque tienen sus supersticiones con él, y en, viéndole debajo de sus casas (es amigo de acogerse a ellas) dicen que es *pangasa* y que se morirá alguno, o les sucederá algún infortunio o desgracia, y, si los matan, peor; aunque otros lo[s] suelen matar; pero, en matándolos, los amortajan y entierran, y aún lloran, o fingen que lloran, por que con esto dicen que aquel¹⁶ *halo* va en lugar del que había de morir de aquella casa, y con esto (grande majadería) creen que ya no se morirán, y por esta causa le entierran, o enterraban, como si fuera gente, con mortaja, etc.; y a este modo otros disparates.

Iguana llaman los españoles a otra especie de lagartos menores que el *halo*, traído el nombre de la Nueva España donde se llaman así.

These are the last news that I had, as I write this; it is now thirty years that the cayman was born.

I do not know whether either it or its father, mother or sister have since died. Rather they say, that they are alive. However, a few months ago, I wished and, in fact, gave the order that this native should come to see me. He could not come because he was in bad health, and so I was unable to learn from his mouth the last part of the story, as I had learned the first.

Let the learned philosophize now on the causes of the formation of this animal into a being so similar to the others of this species and yet so different in its gentleness, in its gratitude and the rest that are evident from what has been stated. In other places, we shall tell you about other animals which were born together with infants, of which I am a witness, as we shall see below.

Aside from the caymans, there are two varieties of small lizards. Although in outward appearance they resemble small caymans (as I shall say next) they are not dangerous. On the contrary, they are edible and are a very tasty meat. I have eaten it more than once.

The natives call these lizards *halo*; and they are black and yellow in color. The usual size is four *palmos*; at times they grow larger, yet seldom do they reach six. This species is very timid and cowardly. Thus, in former times to those who were tattooed (for as we said they were tattooed for valor), if the man was coward and timid they said "*Daw nalipong nga halo*," that he resembled this lizard, since being tattooed he was a coward like the animal.

Some of the natives eat this animal, but only a few, because they have their superstitions about it. When they see it beneath their houses (it is fond of taking refuge there) they say, *pangasa*, and that someone will die or some misfortune will befall them, and if they kill it, worse! Others, however, kill them; but in killing them they enshroud them and bury them and even weep or pretend to weep, because they say that as a result that this *halo* goes in a place of the one who would have died from that house; by this means they believe that now they will not die. What a great absurdity! For this reason they bury him or might inter him, as if he were a person, with a shroud, etc., and in the same vein they have other absurdities.

Another species of lizard, smaller than the *halo*, the Spaniards call *iguana*. The name was brought from Nueva España where they

Aquí los llaman *ibir*¹⁷ los naturales de estas Islas. Son menores que los que llamamos *halo*, el color pardo, la hechura de lagarto. Diferéncianse en que estos no tienen escamas, ni en el cerro las puntas que aquellos, aunque tienen algo más levantado el espinazo. Al macho llaman *layagan*¹⁸, que quiere decir “que tiene vela¹⁹,” porque tiene en la cola, a lo largo de ella, una como vela alta, tres veces o cuatro que la hembra, y en esto conocen y diferencian su sexo.

Son animales anfibios que viven en el agua y en la tierra. Suben y bajan a los árboles, ponen sus huevecillos en la arena, que son del tamaño de los huevos de paloma, algo más largos, pero la corteza no es sólida, sino como membrana correosa y más difícil de quebrar que las cáscaras de los huevos.

Cómense estos muy bien, y dichas iguanas son comida regalada, y más para los días de viernes o viglias, en que se comen. Hélas comido yo muchas veces asadas o guisadas, y, cuando están bien manidas, son como las gallinas de indios, o naturales de acá, que son más pequeñas y mucho menos sabrosas que las nuestras.

Cázanlas con lazos; y de los refranes, o paremias, que ellos tienen de estos animales, sabemos sus mañas, y así dicen de ella que, cuando cae en el lazo, hace muchas diligencias para librarse de él; pero, viendo que no tiene remedio, se cose con la tierra, y, aunque la pisen, no se menea; y así como aplican a sus saltos y repugnancias a los mal sufridos, así su paciencia, cuando ya no tienen otro remedio, a los que dan vado a las cosas y sufren los trabajos sin quejarse.

Dicen también de ellas que no hacen caso de los lazos, sino que se los están mirando, sin apartarse, hasta que se ven presas y sin remedio. Bueno para el pecador que conoce los lazos de Satanás y, con todo, no se aparta hasta que cayó en sus garras sin remedio. Y de esta manera tiene[n] otros refranes doctrinales que dejo por no alargar.

Otra especie es la que llaman *holabiran*²⁰, que es de la figura de estos que llaman *ibir*, aunque mucho menores. Son al modo de los lagartos de España, aunque no de su color.

*Tamumucao*²¹ es otra, aun menor que esta, y que es mayor que las lagartijas de España y se semejan en todo a aquellas, excepto en ser

are called thus. Here the natives of these islands call them, *ibid*. They are smaller than those which we call *halo*, a brown color and the shape of a lizard. They differ in that these last do not have scales or the points on the backbone like the former. However, they have their spine somewhat more protruding. They call the male *layagan*, which means he has a sail, because he has, down the length of the tail, a kind of little sail, three or four times than that of the female. By this means, the natives differentiate their sex.

They are amphibious animals and live in the water and on land. They climb up and down the trees, laying their little eggs in the sand. They are the size of the eggs of a dove, somewhat more elongated but the covering is not hard but a tough membrane and more difficult to break open than the shells of eggs.

They are good for eating and these *iguanas* themselves are a prized meal, especially on Fridays or vigils when they are eaten. I have eaten it many times roasted or fried and when they are well seasoned they are like the hens of the natives here or '*indios*', which are smaller and much less tasty than ours.

They hunt for them with a noose and from the sayings and proverbs they have concerning these animals we know about their cunning. In this regard they say of this animal, that when it falls into a noose it makes various efforts to free itself, but realizing that there is no recourse, it flattens itself on the ground and even though they step on it, it does not move. So they relate the leaps and resistance of these animals to those impatient with suffering; so too is their patience when finally they have no other recourse to those that let things pass and suffer travails without complaint.

Also, they say of the animals that they pay no attention to the snares, but continue to look at them without getting away until they find themselves caught and without recourse. This is good for the sinner who recognizes the snares of Satan, nevertheless does not desist until he falls into his clutches helplessly. In the same way, they have other wise sayings, which I omit in order not to prolong this.

Another species is one they call *hulabiran*, which is of the appearance of those they call *ibid*, although much smaller. They are very similar to the lizards of Spain, although not in color.

Tamumukaw is another kind, still smaller than this and which is larger than the newts of Spain. They are similar in every respect to

tres o cuatro veces mayores, aunque menores que los lagartos.

*Tabili*²² es otra menor. *Tagoto*²³ o *pinit*²⁴ otros, que son lagartillos pequeños, y suelen cantar o chillar, y creen en sus chillidos o cantos, volviéndose atrás si suben o bajan entonces de su casa o están cerca de ella, porque dicen les sucedará algun daño.

*Tiqui*²⁵ llaman también, o *tacu*²⁶, a los españoles “chacones,” que tienen la voz muy recia y sonora; lagartos que llegan al tamaño de un palmo. Háyllos negros, colorados o pintados, con pintas muy coloradas; blancos, y amarillos. Son enemigos de los ratones, que se los comen y los cazan mejor que los gatos. Tienen los piececillos con cinco dedos redondos, con un género de escamas que se apegan aún en un espejo y difícilmente se desasen.

Dicen que son ponzoñosos y que matan. Sácanles las ponzoñas metiéndoles en unos cañutos de las cañas de acá, u otra vasija. Tápanla de modo que no pueda salirse, y con una punta de caña, o hierro, le hieren, e instigan y hacen²⁷ encolerizar hasta que echa unas espumas blancas por la boca, como babas, que deja en la caña, o vaso, dejánlos allí morir, y dichas salivas son tósigo, según dicen, eficacísimo, y que mata sin remedio sino se le acude muy presto con eficaces contras.

Acabemos este Capítulo con una lagartija que es del tamaño, poco más o menos de estos chacones, y de la figura de iguana, el cuello siempre erguido y levantado; la cabeza remeda a una cabecilla de caballo pequeña. Héla visto varias veces y es, al parecer, hermosa. Lo que tiene singular es que vuela como dragoncillo (si ya no especie de ellos, aunque no es ponzoñosa). No se echa de ver que tenga alas, sino cuando vuela, porque las tiene encogidas y rolladas²⁸ a lo largo de su cuerpo. La punta inferior acaba junto al pie, en las manos ensancha, y, al abrir los brazos, despliega las alas y con ellas vuela. *Taborlon*²⁹ le llaman los bisayas. Canta también como las otras, aunque no tan recio como el chacón, ni aun como la que llaman *tagoto*. Y con ésto, dejando otros animalejos como éstos, pasaremos a las culebras.

these except in being three or four times larger. However, they are smaller than the lizards.

Tabili is another small one; *taguto* or *pinit* are others which are very small; they can sing or shriek and the [natives] have trust in their shrieks or singing. They turn back if they are climbing to or descending from their homes at the moment or are near them, because they say that some misfortune will befall them.

They also call *tiki* or *taku*, those which the Spaniards call 'chacones' which have a very powerful resounding voice. They are lizards which get to about the size of a *palmo*. There are black ones, red or mottled with very red, white and yellow spots. They are the enemies of mice which they eat and catch better than cats. They have little feet with five rounded toes with a kind of scale which takes hold even on a mirror and are unloosed with difficulty.

They say that these are poisonous and kill. The poison is extracted by putting the animal into some sections of bamboo (growing here) or other vessels. They cover it so that the lizard cannot come out. With a sharpened bamboo or iron, they wound and irritate him and make him angry until some white froth is formed on the mouth and so some saliva then is left in the bamboo or vessel. They leave the lizards to die. That saliva is extremely poisonous, so they say; inevitably it is fatal unless one is quickly aided with an effective antidote.

Let us bring this chapter to a close with a little lizard which is the approximate size of these *chacones* and the appearance of the *iguana*. Its neck is always erect and the head raised, resembling the little head of a horse. I have seen it various times and it is pretty in appearance. It has a special quality in that it flies like a little dragon (if it is not indeed a variety of these, although it is not poisonous). A first glance does not reveal that it has wings except when it flies, because it has them hidden and folded along the length of its body. The lower tip ends next to the rear foot. It widens at the forefoot and on spreading the arms, it unfurls its wings and flies with them. The Bisayans call it *taborlon*. It also sings like the others, although not as loudly as the *chacon* or even that which they call *taguto*. And so with this, omitting the other little animals similar to these, we shall pass on to the snakes.

Chapter 8 - ANNOTATIONS

¹ *Barangitaw*. A species of caiman, but very small and dwells in fresh waters. Sánchez, *op. cit.* Bisayan Part, 37. Tramp gives his entry as a crocodile; large alligator. *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

² In the Muñoz text, 'de'.

³ In the Muñoz text, 'porque'.

⁴ In the Muñoz text, 'escapado'.

⁵ Better spelling than *baio*; Sánchez presents it thus and describes it as: a name of a caiman about which they chant in their poetical compositions. *Ibid.*

⁶ The Muñoz text reads *bacariun*, while the *Copia Naval* renders it as *bancariun* and correctly so. Sánchez describes it only as a large crocodile and with color. *Op. cit.*

⁷ *Batangan*. The meaning we find for this Samarnon-Bisayan word is 'girder; dormer', in Tramp, *op. cit.*, p. 43. Sánchez speaks in his *Diccionario* of a beam of a building, placed under the building and above the alcove; this beam crosses the width of the building. *Op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 42. Perhaps the similarity between a caiman, elongated, with a beam, gave motive for the name.

⁸ *Bina-tang*. It may be a derivative of *batang*: big, dead, fallen tree; driftwood; sunken wood or log on the beach or in the river blocking navigation. Or simply it means as Alcina has it — a wedge-like shape. *Ibid.* There is a clarification under the entry of Sánchez *layaglayag*: a small sail. It is also the backbone of the *ibid* or *iguana* because it is full of stubs like little fins. Also called *balidbalid sa ibid*. And under *balidbid*: the sharp points of the *iguana* and other fishes on the spine. *Op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 31; 42; 183.

⁹ *Tbotobo*. A herb or a plant. Goad that projects from the tail of the crocodile. Sánchez, *op.cit.*, Bisayan Part, 368.

¹⁰ In the Muñoz text, 'yo he visto'.

¹¹ *Tubig*. A town on the eastern coast of Samar situated near the great Tubig River, which had this name in ancient times and which was changed to Taft after the occupation by the United States. Today part of Eastern Samar.

¹² In the Muñoz text, 'quería'.

¹³ In the Muñoz text, 'cuando'.

¹⁴ In the Muñoz text, 'aunque'.

¹⁵ *Halo*. The first meaning of the word refers to a lizard which resembles a small caiman which has an ability to catch chickens, doves, eggs, etc. *Inobus san haloan acon camanucan*. The halo has finished with all my chicken. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 136. It resembles the *iguana*, but these are not found in the Philippines but the *Agamidae*, which closely resemble them. Tramp, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

¹⁶ In the Muñoz text, 'aquel'.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* Also, *ibir*: the so-called *iguana* or better *Agamidae*, according to Tramp, *ibid.*, p. 201. Sánchez refers to it as *iguana*, simply, and cites several examples about this *ibid*, which reflects its characteristics in the lives of people. *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 165.

¹⁸ *Layagan*. The word comes from *láyag*: a sail of a vessel. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 183.

¹⁹ In the Muñoz text, '*velita*'.

²⁰ Vide *Hulabiran*. A species of lizards. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 160.

²¹ Vide *Tumumukaw*. A small bird related to the owl; a small animal with bulging eyes; dragon or flying lizard of Palawan, *Draco volens*, according to Tramp, *op. cit.* p. 425.

²² *Tabili*. A lizard of iridescent colors; chameleon. *Ibid.* p. 413. A kind of small lizard and although a species it is a generic name. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 322.

²³ *Tagoto*. A house lizard or simply lizard. Tramp, *op. cit.*, p. 42. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 330.

²⁴ *Pinit*. Small lizard. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 247. This word in Samareño means: to clip; to curtail; to cut into pieces; to divide; v. stat. to break; n. bit; fraction; fragment, section, slice. Tramp, *op. cit.* p. 359; Sánchez, *Ibidem*. Perhaps, this name is given it because if it gets caught or if a tail or leg is broken or pulled-off, it grows a new one, as one of these editors has experienced in Samar. The idea here is that it breaks off, divides, etc.

²⁵ Vide *Tiki*. An eft (land stage of newt); lizard; brown giant lizard that lives in the hollows of trees or posts, or in the tops of roofs to hunt for centipedes. Tramp, *op. cit.*, p. 453. Cfr. Sánchez, *op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 359.

²⁶ *Taku*. Both Sánchez and Tramp have an entry which carries the meaning: to signal, to indicate; in Samar dialect: *takó*: to clutter; to mark out; to signalize, to stamp. *Ibid.*, p. 415. Sánchez, gives for *tácu*, as a primary meaning: *nagtacutacu*, grinding of teeth. Now, *tactac*, according to him is also a kind of small lizard, but primarily: What falls from above due to its own weight, like leaves, rice from the basket, money from the purse, etc. *Magcacatactac an mga bitoon*. The stars will fall. *Nagcacatactac an mga dahon*. The leaves fall. *Nagtactac an salad san acon alat*. What was in my basket has been spilled. *Natactac an acon salapi*. My money has fallen. *Op. cit.*, Bisayan Part, 325.

²⁷ In the Muñoz text, '*de hierro le hieren, le hostigan y le hacen encolerizar*'.

²⁸ In the Muñoz text, '*dobladas*'.

²⁹ *Taborlon*. The word is not found in Sánchez' *Diccionario*.

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