

A Vocabulary of Philippine Food and Well-being

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Abstract

A preliminary study of culinary words during the Spanish colonial era reveals multiple dimensions to feeding. Entries in dictionaries of Philippine languages compiled from 1613 to 1895 reveal *kalusugan* as food for the body, *kaginhawaan* as sustenance for the soul, and *nayánayá* as nutriment for the social self. The tripartite diet was a recipe for happiness and contentment. It is a legacy to review when designing contemporary strategies for national well-being.

Keywords: *Filipino, food, vocabulary, well-being, happiness*

Concepts of well-being have been shifting over time. With happiness a recognized component of individual growth and societal development, studies of what a particular culture values as happiness and the means used to achieve it

become increasingly significant. So, too, do its issues of unhappiness and how to avoid them.

In Philippine life, food nourishes the happiness fundamental to contentment. Physical, metaphysical, and social well-being are components of happiness influenced by the role of food as it transitions. The Spanish colonial era from 1565 to 1899 found different ethno-linguistic groups peopling the Philippine archipelago. Culinary flora and fauna associated with Hispanic identity and necessary for galleon voyages were introduced to them side by side with Christianity.

Clues to acculturation are found in dictionaries of Philippine languages compiled by Spanish missionaries. Dictionaries, vocabularies, and lexicons from the Spanish colonial era are rich sources when seeking to reconstruct how Filipinos may have lived, felt, and thought then. Words, some of which have changed meaning or fallen out of use over centuries, reveal food's societal functions. They hint at valuations, sometimes subtle, establishing that feeding both one's self and others is a path to happiness and well-being.

Kalusugan: Feeding the Body

Timeless wisdom is revealed by a proverb from Pangasinan, a province on the northwestern Philippine seaboard: *Say toon, narasan, Andi denglen ton katunongan*. A

hungry man is unreasonable.¹ Indeed history has proven it correct. Food scarcity has been a constant cause for socio-political instability.

Spanish documents from the start of settlement in 1565 record pained accounts of hunger and starvation for both the colonizers and the colonized. Francisco Gainza, a Dominican and twenty-fifth bishop of Nueva Caceres Diocese, compiled Bicolano words in use from 1754 to 1865. Poverty of food was *dodyoc*.² One could die from *bongtas*, physical hunger;³ *gotom*, hunger;⁴ or *halop*, extreme hunger.⁵ *Nagogotom* meant an entire town suffering hunger.⁶ One could undergo *lagoc*, weakness from a want or lack of food.⁷

A dictionary of central Philippine languages spoken in Bohol, Cebu, Negros, and Mindanao compiled by Juan Felix Encarnacion was published in 1851 and republished in 1885 with 3,000 additional entries from Jose Sanchez. It reinforced a similar unhappy reality. *Golotman* meant a town or place enduring food shortage and hunger.⁸ In Bicol, *gotom* signified

¹ Damiana L. Eugenio, comp., *Philippine Folk Literature: The Proverbs* (Quezon City: The U.P. Folklorists, Inc., 1992), 250.

² Francisco Gainza, comp., *Diccionario ó Vocabulario de La Lengua Bicol*. (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico del Colegio de Santo Tomás, 1865), 424.

³ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 240.

⁸ Juan Felix Encarnacion, comp., *Diccionario Bisaya-Español* (Manila: Tipografía de Amigos del País, 1885), 119.

hunger as well as a person starving.⁹ In the Visayas, a person in need, one poor and miserable was deemed *hangol*.¹⁰ Absence or shortage of rice usually caused it. Rice was so significant that *hangop* meant to conjecture, to think up, and to understand, as well as rice that had been cooked pleasingly.¹¹

The quest for sustenance, whether hunted, gathered, or cultivated, was clearly dependent on many factors beyond human control. Droughts, floods, typhoons, plagues of locusts, attacks by giant worms, wild fires, labor shortages, unjust taxes collected in the form of rice and other edibles, foreign invasions, and domestic wars threatened food security. Pagan pantheons antedating Islam and Christianity placed islanders into a cosmic system that, if sustained harmoniously through prayer and food offering, seemed likely to increase the chances for being well fed. Malyari was the primary god of Zambales people. He was responsible for their good health and harvests. A quartet of divine brothers assisted: Dumagan, god of bountiful harvest; Kalasakas who made rice stalks ripen early; Kalasokus responsible for turning grains golden; and Damulag who secured rice flowers against strong winds.¹²

⁹ Gainza, *Lengua Bicol*, 149.

¹⁰ Encarnacion, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 133.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² F. Landa Jocano, *Outline of Philippine Mythology* (Manila: Centro Escolar University Research and Development Center, 1969), 13–15.

Tagalogs who lived south of Zambales, in an area that includes today's Metro Manila, worshiped Bathala the Creator of All, nourisher of humankind, and the highest ranked deity. Residing in his etheric environ were Dumangan, god of good harvest; his wife Idianale, goddess of labor and good deeds; son Dumakulem, guardian of mountains; and daughter Anitun Tabo, fickle-minded goddess of wind and rain. Ikapati was goddess of cultivated land who gifted people with agriculture. She provided fields, animals, and aliment. Her husband was Mapulon, god of seasons.¹³

Myths linked mortals to *anitos*, the spirits of their ancestors. In the famed Cordillera Rice Terraces region, Bontoc speakers say, *No en-iatang ka, Et tutuk-kongan da sik-a*. (If you offer to the spirits of your ancestors, they will always watch over you.)¹⁴ Gainza wrote that in his area, *atang* was to give anitos repast. *Gamit* was a banquet specifically to prevent them from taking a child.¹⁵ Encarnacion recorded *bibio* as the act of women idol worshipers inviting their gods and priests to feast.¹⁶ An entire community's happiness depended on well-fed spirits.

Food beckoned beyond its being a life-support. It enticed with its tastes. Ifugao were to provide anitos and Bagol the Downstream God what they fancied: delectable food,

¹³ Jocano, *Outline of Philippine Mythology*, pp. 8–10.

¹⁴ Eugenio, *Philippine Folk Literature*, 352.

¹⁵ Gainza, *Lengua Bicol*, 136.

¹⁶ Encarnacion, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 43.

plentiful betel-chew, and nice rice wine. In return for gifts, the spirits would provide a generous harvest, guard granaries, and defend an entire village. As godly reactions exemplified, food gave pleasure. The knowledgeable assured that if satisfied, Bagol laughed happily if he truly liked the wine.¹⁷ Andres Carro's vocabulary of Ilokano terms published in 1849 included *deggues* and *dumgues*, meaning to gain enjoyment when eating.¹⁸

The Augustinian Diego Bergaño compiled a Pampangan vocabulary that was released in 1732 and 1860. *Lasa* was taste in general.¹⁹ *Yaman* signified deliciousness specifically. When used as an adjective, *maniaman* means delicious flavor, the combination of taste and texture, that which gladdens the senses of taste and touch.²⁰ What excited the appetite and awakened taste buds was christened also as *irug*. *Manirug* denoted the thoughtful act of offering a patient a favorite food that could revive the desire to eat.²¹ The process of becoming pleasantly palatable was *ligatgat*.²² *Milinammam*

¹⁷ Francis Lambrecht, "Ifugao Tales," *Journal of Northern Luzon* 11, no. 1–2 (July 1980–January 1981).

¹⁸ Andres Carro, coord., *Vocabulario de la Lengua Ilocano* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico del Colegio de Santo Tomás, 1849), 104.

¹⁹ Diego Bergaño, *Vocabulario de la Lengua Pampanga en Romance* (Manila: Ramirez y Giraudier, 1860), 134.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 120.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 119.

²² Venancio Q. Samson, trans., *The English Translation of the Kapampangan-Spanish Dictionary written by Fray Diego Bergaño*. (Pampanga: Juan D. Nepomuceno Center for Kapampangan Studies and National Commission for Culture and Arts, 2007), 214.

conveyed savor's intensity, while *malinamnam* implied becoming agreeably tasting. Both terms encompassed the sensuality of food.²³ Bergaño also listed *sarap*, the flavor or relish of food, and *masarap*, to become or make something delicious.²⁴

Food fascinated. It could be *maliliag*, desired due to its associations with great endearment and tenderness.²⁵ It could turn someone *mavili*, attracted to it such as green grass to a flock, money bags to the greedy, fineries to a woman, and bread to a child.²⁶ Eating was one of life's beguilements.

To the romanticized allure of sensual delight was added the need to consume chemically nutritious food. In 1904 domestic science, also called home economics, was introduced into Philippine public education during the American colonial period. Coupled with public health strategies, domestic science increased what to evaluate when deciding on diet. Pura Villanueva Kalaw began her cookbook of 1918, *Condimentos Indígenas*, with a Culinary Decalogue: Love the kitchen above all rooms, because it is the foundation of a family's good health and many prudent frugalities; Sanctify ingredients like heavenly manna; Honor national cooking above others because its simplicity is most suited to our tropical climate and its components are products of our

²³ Samson, *The English Translation*, 218.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, and Bergaño, *Lengua Pampanga*, 142.

²⁵ Bergaño, *Lengua Pampanga*, 136.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 270.

verdant land and healthy ingredients. Kalaw ventured that attending to her kitchen was a woman's most notable work.²⁷ Food was to be “*saludable y rica*,” healthy and delicious.²⁸

The modern-era's reasoning for sustenance selection was summarized by the titles of three pamphlets for adult education promoted by the Philippine Commonwealth starting in 1937: *Kumain nang Wasto Upang Lumawig ang Buhay* (*Eat Right and Live Long* for the English version); *Mga Pagkain sa Ikalulusog ng Katawan* (*Foods for Health*); *Ang Kalusugan ay Kayamanan* (*Health Is Wealth*).

The campaign to use nutritious food for good physical health continues side by side with efforts for zero hunger. Nutritional psychiatry and behavioral psychology advance the effects of food on mood, as well as the possible social conditions that could arise from diets unhealthy for the brain and the emotions. Other issues of safe and ethical food have been added to considerations. What to place on the table is a contemporary personal choice.

Kaginhawaan: Feeding the Soul

Spanish missionaries were concerned with the happiness of a well-fed soul, not just physicality. They found parallelisms between Roman Catholic and pagan food customs, often syncretizing the latter. Both considered food

²⁷ Pura Villanueva de Kalaw, *Condimentos Indígenas* (Manila, 1918), 5–7.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

sacred, applied it in rituals, and gave it religious symbolism. Both believed food was powerful, whether as medicine or mystical element.

Pivotal to mass at church is a sacred meal during which wine from grapes and host made of wheat are consumed. They are the epitome of liturgical status foods. New converts were primed to desire sanctified host. Wont to find a native term for it, missionaries selected *tinapai*, a word from those collected during the first circumnavigation by its official chronicler, Antonio Pigafetta. There was no description of *tinapai* from 1521, other than it being “a certain kind of rice cake.”²⁹ In the mid-1800s, Encarnacion wrote:

Tinapay is a kind of crust-less, flat cake made of rice flour by the natives. They knead it very thin and shape it to the size of a small plate like that used for a *jicara*. They put two small pieces of *calamay* or sugar between the top and the bottom before pressing it into a flat figure of a half globe. The word is also used by Visayans as a synonym for bread made with wheat flour and for host.³⁰

²⁹ *Tinapai* is defined as “*acerte fogacie de rizo.*” Antonio Pigafetta, “*Primo Viaggio Intorno al Mondo, 1525,*” in *The Philippine Islands: 1493–1898, vol. 33*, eds. Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (Mandaluyong: Cacho Hermanos, Inc., 1973), 197.

³⁰ Encarnacion, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 406.

Tinapay became synonymous with Holy Host archipelago-wide. It was also used for wheat bread when recounting the miracle of Jesus Christ feeding the multitude with only five fish and two loaves, and when referring to Christ as the Bread of Life.³¹ In due time, *hostia* replaced *tinapay* for host. *Tinapay* lost its link to rice cake and acquired a new meaning, “*pan*,” Spanish for bread in general.

When Juan de Oliver preached about the Ten Commandments between 1583 and 1591, he used “*nagsusuman cayo cun magbubuquir*” for “offering when you work in the fields.”³² *Suman* has been consistently described as rice, usually glutinous, cooked into cylinders while wrapped in leaves. He may have observed its use as a farm offertory. In Easter sermons, Oliver explained the mystery of transubstantiation: that Christ, born of God the Divine Father and Mary the Mortal Virgin, was the “true food of our soul” (*caning totoo nang ating caloloua*) and that Christ’s body was “in the hosts” (*caniyang cataoan doon sa Hostias*).³³ Christ’s fate was an agonizing crucifixion. At the last supper before his death, Christ had asked his disciples to eat bread in remembrance of his body, and to drink wine in recollection

³¹ Francisco Blancas de San Jose, OP, *Sermones*, ed. Jose Mario C. Francisco, SJ (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1994), 178–179, 268.

³² Antonio Ma. Rosales, OFM, *A Study of a 16th Century Tagalog Manuscript on the Ten Commandments* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1984), 34.

³³ Juan de Oliver, OFM, *Declaracion de la Doctrina Christiana en Idioma Tagalog*, ed. Jose M. Cruz, SJ (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1995), 142.

of the blood he would give as sacrifice. Communion was symbolically eating godly life.

Antedating Christianity was the rice-soul. Bagobos believed each grain had a soul called *umayun*.³⁴ Jama Mapuns called it *semanget*. The underlying “magical logic” of the Jama Mapuns *gindawatan* ritual is that “rice plants are like spirits and must be treated with religious care and reverence,” according to the anthropologist Eric Casiño.³⁵ In a semblance of host, young rice symbolized everlasting life to those who ate it in the Manuvu epic, *Tumaang*.³⁶ The Tagalog vocabulary of 1613 by the Franciscan missionary Pedro San Buenaventura pioneered the publications of Philippine languages by Spanish religious. He identified *calolova* as the synonym for *alma*, the human soul.³⁷

But to eat of Christ, the soul’s ultimate nourishment, a communicant had to be worthy. Natives were to understand and practice self-discipline even in their diet. *Doctrina Cristiana* was a catechetical primer. It included the Lord’s Prayer. When translating into Tagalog its line, “Give us this day our daily bread,” Dominican missionaries in 1593 opted for

³⁴ *Bagani: Man of Destiny* (Metro Manila: The Presidential Commission for the Rehabilitation and Development of Southern Mindanao, 1980), 41.

³⁵ Eric Casiño, *The Jama Mapun* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1976), 111, 113.

³⁶ E. Arsenio Manuel, *Manuvu Social Organization* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1973), 363.

³⁷ Pedro San Buenaventura, *Vocabulario de Lengua Tagala* (Pila: Thomas Pinpin y Domingo Loag, 1613; Valencia: Librerias Paris-Valencia, 1994), 46. Citations refer to the *Librerias Paris-Valencia* facsimile edition.

“*Bigyan mo cami ngaion nang aming cacamin.*” *Cacamin* means “what can be eaten.”

The *Doctrina* introduced seven mortal sins, one of which was gluttony, introduced as “*Ang capalaloan.*”³⁸ In sermons, Oliver defined gluttony: “*Ang caiamoan sa pagcaen at sa paginom*” (over consumption of food and beverage).³⁹ *Kayamuan* (today’s spelling) is not included by San Buenaventura. Instead, *palacain*, *matacao*, and *katakawan* are.⁴⁰ Overeating occurred around the archipelago, even if Spanish settlers often commented that the colony was food poor and an uncultivated wilderness. Bergaño lists for Pampanga: *butagtac* (to eat too much; to bloat from overeating);⁴¹ *lubad* (belly fatness that a lean person does not have);⁴² *mangupatan* and *mengutatan* (the belly becoming like an overstuffed pillow case bursting at the seams);⁴³ *tacao* (extreme appetite).⁴⁴ Gainza noted that in Bicol, *namoyac* connoted so much eating “until one dropped.”⁴⁵ Self-moderation was essential.

Oliver warned against drunkenness.⁴⁶ Colonial-era vocabularies countrywide are rife with terms meaning a desire for wine and behavior when drunk. Hiligaynon and Haraya words are

³⁸ *Doctrina Christiana: The First Book Printed in the Philippines* (Manila: National Historical Commission, 1973), facsimile with no pagination.

³⁹ Oliver, *Doctrina Christiana*, 177.

⁴⁰ San Buenaventura, *Lengua Tagala*, 330.

⁴¹ Bergaño, *Lengua Pampanga*, 67.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 232.

⁴⁵ Gainza, *Lengua Bicol*, 246.

⁴⁶ Oliver, *Doctrina Christiana*, 177–180.

recorded in the work of Alonso Mentrída published in 1841. *Mangangbao* meant to expel wine's stink, or figuratively, anger.⁴⁷ *Umpao* was allowing alcohol to evaporate from a female drunk.⁴⁸ Stopping her binge was *puas*.⁴⁹ *Yaga* was said of a drunk who had no idea what he was saying.⁵⁰ The noise of voices, such as those who had imbibed too much wine, was *lingŕug*.

Missionaries taught that gluttony needed taming, so that the soul would live forever. *Tilo* expressed temperance in eating, Mentrída noted.⁵¹ *Hayat* was to curb the appetite or suffer hunger whether for virtue or necessity.⁵²

The Roman Catholic calendar commemorates events in the Bible and the church's history such as saintly martyrdoms. It remains anchored on the birth and the resurrection of Jesus Christ after death, Christmas and Easter respectively. Preparation for formal celebration of the many events included abstinence and fasting. Abstinence is refraining from eating certain foods; fasting regulates intake. In today's Philippine national language, abstinence is *abstensiyon*, from the Spanish *abstencia*, and *pangilin*; *mag-ayuno*, from the Spanish *ayuno*, means fasting. Penitential fasting was a way to

⁴⁷ Alonso Mentrída, *Diccionario Lengua Bisaya, Hiligüina y Haraya de la Isla de Panay* (Manila: *Imprenta de Manuel y Felis Dayot*, 1841), 144.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 452.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 448.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 196.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 395.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 172.

subjugate concupiscence, to overwhelm the body with the spirit's strength.

For Catholics until the mid-twentieth century, Friday was a day for abstaining from flesh meats, meat juices, and the products of warm-blooded animals. The latter included egg, milk, butter, and cheese unless one received dispensation such as when ill. During the Conquista, the Pope issued a bull allowing Spanish settlers in the Philippines eggs during Lent, because there was little to eat in what was classified as a hardship post. Over several centuries cookbooks for meatless meals were published in Spain. *Sopas de vigilia*, *escabeches*, and viands made of dried and salted cod or solely vegetables, were Filipinized as they grew popular. Faith found form in food.

Days of fasting were referred to popularly as "Fish Days." Church leaders and common priests sometimes elected to eat fish daily except on festivals. It was considered a show of moral virtue, of a physical simplicity inspired by a Christ-like life because Jesus was viewed as a poor fisherman. One wonders if islanders saw themselves doomed to poverty, because rice and fish made up their daily diet. Or did they consider their almost perpetual abstinence a sure road to heaven?

Because lack of rice beleaguered the colony, fasting became a frequent way of life whether for religion or survival. In Bergaño's vocabulary *patas*, when conjugated as *mamatas*, meant to fix by rule the amount of a food ration, like of

rice.⁵³ Similarly Gainza recorded *nadodyoc* for decreasing the ordinary ration of food.⁵⁴ He added that *dool* was abstinence from certain foods because one's relative had died.⁵⁵ Fasting and abstinence were necessary to appreciate their counterpoint, feasting.

Kataman is the Tagalog term for corpus. Among Tagalog terms of 1613, Pedro San Buenaventura identified *ginhaua* as good physical health. God could give it, he noted.⁵⁶ But *ginhaua* affected more than the corpus. Mentrída defined *ginhaua* as food in general and *guinhauaan* (today spelled *ginhawaan*) as the birth or the breath or the *espirtu vitalis* of a person.⁵⁷ Through *ginhaua*, missionaries could advocate feeding the body and its life force, as well as that on which the life force depended metaphysically: a well-nourished, contented soul.

In the 1890s *kaginhawaan* became a political objective. The *Kataastaasang Kagalang-galang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (Highest and Most Esteemed Assembly of the Children of the Country or KKK for short) sought independence from Spain. Its philosophy combined spiritual ideals with patriotic ardor: *Katwiran* (Straightness, Reason, Truth) would protect *Kalayaan* (Freedom) so all her people might enjoy *Buong*

⁵³ Samson, *Kapampangan-Spanish Dictionary*, 269, and Bergaño, *Lengua Pampanga*, 175.

⁵⁴ Gainza, *Lengua Bicol*, 124.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 127.

⁵⁶ San Buenaventura, *Lengua Tagala*, 545.

⁵⁷ Mentrída, *Diccionario*, 149.

Kaginhawaan (Full Contentment).⁵⁸ Well-being required moral rectitude.

In the 1972 dictionary-thesaurus of Jose Villa Panganiban *ginhawa* and *kaginhawaan* were defined as ease of life, comfortable living, and freedom from want.⁵⁹ But within the historical concept of *kaginhawaan* is its dimension of the soul. Missionaries introduced food as influencing one's virtuousness and thus chances for afterlife. Christ-centered living, they assured, led to the ultimate happiness. It is a message still promoted today.

Nayánayá: Feeding the Social Self

Christian festivals characterized by communal celebration aided conversion. Words suggest that natives disliked eating alone. Feasts intensified social connectedness. In Samar and Leyte the desire to eat in the company of others was *bigara*,⁶⁰ whereas *sagang* was simply eating with others.⁶¹ On Panay, *salo*

⁵⁸ *Ang Dapat Mabatid ng mga Tagalog* identifies the goal of *kalayaan* (freedom) as *kaginhawaban ng baying tinubuan* (contentment of the nation of one's birth). *Kaginhawaban* is not simply prosperity, material wealth, or abundance as it is often translated. A review of Katipunan documents such as *Katungkulan Gagawin ng mga Z.L.L.B* by Andres Bonifacio and *Mga Aral ng Katipunan ng mga A.N.B.* by Emilio Jacinto, will evidence that the goal was *buong kaginhawaban*, full contentment in the material and spiritual realms, both possible only by commitment living according to moral guidelines. Felice Prudente Sta. Maria, *Visions of the Possible: Legacies of Philippines Freedom* (Manila: Studio 5, 1998), 34, 69–75.

⁵⁹ Jose Villa Panganiban, *Diksiyunaryo-Tesaurus Pilipino-Ingles* (Quezon City: Manlapaz Publishing Company, 1972), 442.

⁶⁰ Antonio Sanchez de la Rosa, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español ... par las provincias de Samar y Leyte* (Manila: Tipo-Litografía de Chofre y Compania, 1895), 85.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 203.

signified a company of comrades who ate as a group; it also meant placing food or cutting up a piece of food for each one of them.⁶² In Bohol, Cebu, Negros, and Mindanao *salo* was for two or more persons to eat using the same plate or at the same table.⁶³ Eating alone seems to have been the exception. Not caring if seen eating solo and separate from others was *halon*;⁶⁴ to eat food while hiding and without inviting others to share it was *hoco hoco*.⁶⁵ Preferred behavior would leave no one out of a meal. No one was to go hungry.

Eating aimed to be pleasurable. Fiesta food broke the monotony of a daily fish and rice diet. In 1613, San Buenaventura noted that Tagalog had absorbed the Spanish word *potajes*. While *potaje* means pottage or boiled food in Spanish, in Tagalog, it had come to mean food eaten at a fiesta. Serving numerous *potajes* (also called *polotan* in Tagalog) was associated with the fiesta.⁶⁶ *Guinhawa* returned in Hiligaynon's *nagaguinawa*, the pleasurable eating of a profusion of things such as at a fiesta;⁶⁷ *tamasa* was to eat many delicacies.⁶⁸ Desired was variety.

A community worked together and celebrated as one. The once pagan neighborhood feast had acquired a Roman

⁶² Mentrída, *Diccionario*, 321.

⁶³ Encarnación, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 326.

⁶⁴ Sánchez de la Rosa, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 95.

⁶⁵ Encarnación, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 153.

⁶⁶ San Buenaventura, *Lengua Tagala*, 493.

⁶⁷ Mentrída, *Diccionario*, 149.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 379.

Catholic flavor. Domesticated pig and wild boar had figured on precolonial menus from the time of Pigafetta, but pork-eating was encouraged by missionaries as proof of being neither Muslim nor Jew. Spit-roasted pork became iconic for the Christian feast. Prehispanic cooking partnered with new colonial cuisine on the fiesta table. Native celebratory rice yellowed with turmeric shared space with *arroz valenciana* colored by expensive, imported saffron or the cheaper locally grown *kasubha*. Wines made domestically from coconut, rice, or sugarcane as well as costly imported grape wines satisfied desires. Pastries of wheat or rice shaped like a bird in honor of the Holy Spirit, in the figure of Christ's mother, or stamped with a saint's image filled platters. Rice cakes of all kinds were likewise favorite fare, and expected to be present. Sweets were a tradition encouraged by missionaries. There was no limit to how much one ate at a fiesta. A fiesta—from Latin *festum* meaning “feast”—exemplified faith existing: *La fe es*.

Merriment, cheerfulness, gaiety—*kasayahán* in Tagalog and Filipino—characterized feasting. Much food to eat was cause for *kasayahán* especially when hunger stalked often and sometimes unexpectedly. On Panay Island, *maco* meant to eat with gratification. That the stomach hugged or embraced food was a common metaphor, according to Mentrída.⁶⁹ Encarnacion notes *macó macó* as knowing the food was good,

⁶⁹ Mentrída, *Diccionario*, 261.

that it agreed with the stomach.⁷⁰ Similarly, *ngalo ngalo*, he added, was a word for eating with desire, having a good appetite or stomach.⁷¹ *Manasao* meant to eat anything with yearning.⁷² In contrast was *ngotingoti*, eating with a bad appetite such as when there was no viand.⁷³

Food was cause for thankfulness and thanksgiving, virtues to practice. Fundamental to happiness, *ligaya* in the National Language, after all, is food security. *Nayánayá*, according to the vocabulary of Encarnacion, was polysemous. It meant to entertain, give food, and serve guests and friends. Its second definition was to be a happy person, one of good humor.⁷⁴ As an adjective it became *nayánayáon*, the description of a person who was happy, of good humor, who entertained and was affable, as well as benign or content.⁷⁵ One could conclude that by giving food to others, one became happy. Providing food and drink was acknowledged as a means toward nurturing a joyful spirit. *Nayánayá* is a central concept for strengthening Philippine hospitality, charity, food security, and benevolence.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Encarnacion, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 225.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 241.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 230.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 243.

⁷⁴ Encarnacion, *Diccionario Bisaya-Español*, 241.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ The etymology of *nayánayá* has not been researched. In Jainism, the Naya Philosophy defines *naya* as “teaching a method of investigation” by which one can drive away miseries, learn the truth, and thereby free the soul. See “The *Naya* Philosophy,” Jain World, accessed July 23, 2018, <http://www.jainworld.com/book/thesysofindianphil/ch7.asp>.

Community cooperation is fundamental to food sustainability. Similarly, today's research on life satisfaction expresses the need for social cohesion. Preventing and assuaging physical and metaphysical hungers were not only personal responsibilities, but one's duty to others of the community. The Tagalog expression, *nakakataba ng puso*, used when something or someone "fattens the heart," reveals how important joy and emotional ardor are in the Filipino context. Assured sustenance can bring societal joy; food in a social setting punctuates happiness.

Conclusion

Tagalog elders have suggested, "*Ang kaginhawa'y nasa kasiyaban at wala sa kasaganaan.*" One translation of the proverb is, "Well-being is in happiness, not prosperity."⁷⁷ Happiness (*kasiyaban*) ranges from sonorous elation to silent contentment. Panganiban defined *saya* as merriment, cheer, and gaiety.⁷⁸ Synonymous were *galak*, *ligaya*, *lugod*, *tuwa*, and *pagtatamasa*. He translated *ligaya* as happiness,⁷⁹ and *igaya* as delightfulness,⁸⁰ two terms in the San Lucar and Noceda work.⁸¹ Contentment spans an appreciation of both.

⁷⁷ Eugenio, *Philippine Folk Literature*, 223. English translation mine.

⁷⁸ Panganiban, *Diksyunaryo-Tesouro*, 891.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 635.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 539.

⁸¹ The San Lucar-Noceda entries are: *Ligaya*. Happiness or internal pleasure (p. 180); *Igaya*. Happiness, or desire with yearning (even greed), joy for something. *Caigayayang lingnan*, A thing desirable to see. (p. 154).

In the Ilocos region of northern Philippines, happiness and friendship were linked. Seeing a happy person made the viewer happy, elders said. Making friends was considered one of the best heavenly gifts, added others.⁸² That meals can bring people together and make them happy is timeless wisdom gained from immeasurable experience.

In meals simple and elaborate do Filipinos find a means to negotiate the complexities of reality. What is eaten, when, and how require considerations that impact not only on physical health, but on intrapersonal and interpersonal human bliss. Vocabularies reveal that food is important to the Filipino sense of doing good for others. In social good, in its social contract, beckons a path toward happiness and fullness of well-being. It is a legacy worth revisiting.

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⁸² Eugenio, *Philippine Folk Literature*, 223.

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