
Document 1537B

Castilla, ex-Grijalva—Narrative of Miguel Noble as recorded by Galvão

Source: Galvão's Tratado of 1563.

Galvão's original version

*Neste anno de .534. ou na entrada de quinhentos & trinta & cinco chegou dom Antonio de mendoça à cidade de Mexico, por Visorey da noua Espanha & era ja partido Fernã cortez catar gente pera continuar seu descobrimento, & mandou logo a elle contra occidente dous nauios que achou acabados, & capitães delles Fernam de **grijalvarez** [sic], & Diogo bezerra de mendoça, & pilotos hum Portugues que se dizia da costa, & do outro Furtum Ximenez Biscainho, dadas a vellas foram descobrindo os secretos daquellas ribeiras, & apartados hum do outro, Furtum ximenez matou o capitam Bezerra & feriram os de sua valia, & deitados em terra tomou agoa & lenha na Baya de Sancta Cruz, onde os Indios ho mataram com vinte & tantos companheyros: & dous marinheyros foram no batel a Xalisco, & dixeram a Nuno de guzman: como acharam mostras de perloas, meteose no nauio, foy buscalas: descobrio por esta costa mays de cento & cincoenta legoas, Fernam de **grijaluerez** [sic] diz que andou trezentas sem ver terra, se nam huma ylha a que pos nome de sam Thomas, pella descobrir em tal dia, & que estaua em dezanoue graos daltura.*

No anno de 535. fundou Francisco piçarro aa cidade dos Reys, na ribeira de Lima, passou a ella os vezinhos de Xauxa...

...

Dizem que no ano de 536 estando Fernã Cortez em Tagantepee, soube como a sua nao era por Nuno de Guzmão tomada, despachou tres nauios que acabados tinha pera Chimalão a onde Guzmão estaua, & foy se por terra bem acompanhado, & achou a sua nao roubada, & a traues deitada. Chegados os tres nauios que mandara, embarcou se nelles com a mais gente & caualllos que pode, deixando por capitão dos que sobejara Andres de Tapia. Dada a vela foy tomar huma ponta ho primeiro dia de Mayo, & por isso lhe pos nome Felipe, & huma ylhetta que ahi está perto Santiago. Dahi a tres dias entrou na baya, em que mataram o piloto Furtum ximenes, & chamou Sancta Cruz,

sahio em terra mandou ali vir Andres de Tapia por ser bõ porto, & descobrir a terra dentro. Cortez embarcado deu lhe hum tempo, foy ter a dous Rios que se agora chamã sam Pedro & sam Paulo, carregou tanto vento, que se apartaram huns nauios dos outros, & foy hum ter à baya de Sãta Cruz & outro a Gayal, outro encalhou junto de Xalisco, os delle se tornarã por terra a Mexico.

*Fernam Cortez esperou pellos nauios, & vendo que nam pareciam, mandou dar à vella & entrou o estreyto que se agora chama de Cortez, & mar vermelho, cinquenta legoas por elle dentro ate o Tropico de Cancro, vio huma nao surta, arribou a ella, foy dar em seco, esteue quase perdido, & fora de todo se lhe a Nao nam socorrera, & pos a sua em terra, & corregela. Ambos se tornaram a comprar em sam Miguel mâtimento, & dahi ao porto de sancta Cruz, onde deixara a gente, a que lhe disseram como dom Antonio de mendoça era chegado a Mexico, o governador da noua España, deixou aque por capitã da gente Francisco dilhoa, foyse a Tagante pa de là lhe mandar nauios em que fosse descobrir a costa. Chegado a Capuleo, lhe veo mesageiro do viso rey dõ Antonio, em que lhe daua cõta de como era naquella terra: & tãbem lhe derã hum trelado duma carta que Francisco piçarro dezia como selhe leuantara Mãgro ingoa, & viera sobre a cidade de Cusco cõ cem mil homens de peleja, & lhe matara seu irmã Ioã piçarro, & mais de 400 soldados & o tinha en grãde aperto, pelo que pedia a todos socorro. Vendo Cortez isto, & a chegada de dõ Antonio de mendoça, por lhe nã furtar a bençam determinou primeiro mãdar a Maluco descobrir aquele caminho ao lõgo da linha, por estarem as ylhas do crauo naquele paralelo, & pa iso mãdou aparelhar dous nauios de mâtimentos, armas, gentes, & todo necessario, deu a capitania duma nao a Fernã de **grijalvarez**, & a outra a hum Aluarado homem fidalgo. Forã dereitos a S. Miguel de Tangaraga pera fauorecerem Frãcisco piçarro, & da hi a Maluco ao lõgo da linha como lhe era mandado, & deziã que andariã mais de mil legoas sem verem terra dhuma parte & outra da linha & en dous graos do norte, decobrirã huma ylha que chama o **Acea**, por estar das ilhas do crauo quinhentas legoas pouco mais ou menos a loeste¹: pera onde hiã ouuerã vista doutra que poserã nome **dos pescadores**. Indo assi nesta derrota virã huma ylha que se chama **Haime**, da parte do sul, outra que se diz **Apia**, vay logo ser **Seri**: tornados ao norte em hum grao, sugirã em outra que se chama **Coroa**. Daqui forã ter a outra debaxo da linha que se diz **Meõsum**, & day a de **Bufu** no mesmo paralelo.*

*Todas estas ylhas sam de gentes pretas, cabelo reuolto, a que os de Maluco chamã Papuas, os mais comem carne humana, grãdes feiticeiros, tã dados aos diabos que andã antrelles como cõpanheiros, se achã hum sô matãno as pancadas, ou o afogam, por onde nã sam ousados de andarõ senão dous ou tres juntos. Ha aqui huma aue do tamanho dhum grou, nã voa nem tem penas pa isso, corre a pé como hum veado, das penas delles fazem cabellos pa seus ydolos, & assi ha huma erua que lavando cõ agoa quente qualquer membro do corpo, em pãdoa encima lãbendo cõ alingoa, tirarã o sangue todo duma pessoa, & cõ ella se sangrã. Destas yslas foram a outras que se chama **os Gueles**, estã em hum grao da parte norte leste oeste cõ a ylha de Ternate em que*

1 Ed. note: The 4th edition has corrected this to "leste".

esta a fortaleza. Estes homens sam bassos de cabelo corredio como os Maluqueses, estas estas ilhetas 124 ou 125 legoas da ylha de Moro, & esta de Ternate 40 ate 50. donde foram ter ao Moro & ylhas do Crauo, & andaram humas & outras, sem os da terra lhe deixarem tomar porto, dizendo que se fossem aa fortaleza que achariam o capitã Antonio galvão que o receberia com boa vontade, que eles o nam fariam sem sua licença, per ser pay da patria, que assi lhe chamauã: cousa digna de notar, porque os daquela terra sam afeiçoados a castelhanos que põe por elles vidas, molheres, filhos, & fazendas.

Translation of Galvão's text above

In this year of 1534 or at the beginning of 1535, Don Antonio de Mendoza arrived at the city of Mexico to become Viceroy of New Spain.¹ Hernán Cortés had already gone to gather people with whom to continue his exploration. He later sent him along the west coast two ships that he found completed², commanded by Hernando de **Grijalva** and Diego Becerra de Mendoza³, and whose pilots were a Portuguese who was called [Martin] da Costa and Fortún Jimenez, from Vizcaya, respectively.

They made sail⁴ and went to discover the secrets of those shores. They became separated one from the other [that same night]. Fortún Jimenez killed Captain Becerra and wounded those of his party and, while putting them ashore took on water and wood in the Bay of Santa Cruz⁵ where the Indians killed them, over 20 in all. Two seamen went to Jalisco in the boat and told Nuño de Guzman. As they had found signs of pearls, he boarded a ship and went to look for them. He explored along that coast for more than 150 leagues. As for Hernando de **Grijalva**, they say that he sailed for 300 leagues without seeing land, except an island which he named St. Thomas, because they discovered it on that day⁶; it was in 19° of latitude.

In the year of 1535, Francisco Pizarro founded the City of the Kings on the shore of the Lima [River]⁷ and he transferred its inhabitants to Jauja...

1 Ed. note: Mendoza was appointed first viceroy of New Spain by royal decree on 17 April 1535, and he arrived at Mexico in October 1535. In effect, he replaced the conqueror of Mexico, Cortés, who had been acting with the title of Governor, and now became Number 2.

2 Ed. note: The initiative was in fact taken by Cortés himself, not by the Viceroy.

3 Ed. note: Grijalva then commanded the ship San Lázaro and Becerra the ship Concepción.

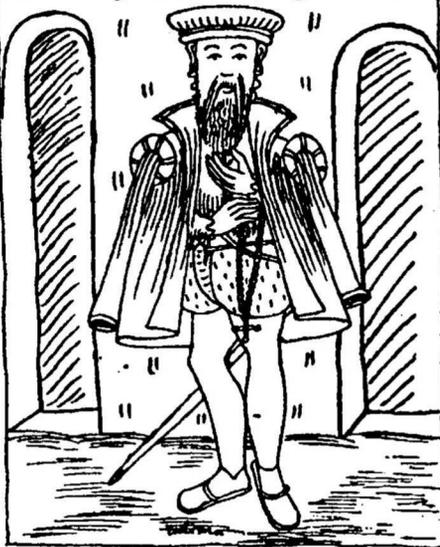
4 Ed. note: From a port of Colima, probably Manzanillo today, on 31 October 1535.

5 Ed. note: Now known as La Paz, Lower California.

6 Ed. note; That is, on 21 December 1535.

7 Ed. note: The name Lima stuck to the city but the river got back its native name, Rimac, later on.

EL PRIMER O V E G O B I E R N O V I S T I
 DON ANTONIO DE
 MENDOZA DE LA ENCOMIEN
da.
da del Sr. Santiago caballero de vna y el segundo del Reyno.



por el mes de mayo de 1532
 son por el mes de mayo de mill y quinientos y uno en pe
 ues nas el con de selanica don antonio de men doza goubr.
 tiempo del imperio de carlos

Don Antonio de Mendoza, Count of Niebla, first Viceroy of New Spain (1535-1550) and later second Viceroy of Peru.



Manco Inca, the rebel Inca who defied Pizarro. (Both illustrations are from the Graphic History of Peru by Felipe Guamán Poma)

...

They say that in the year of 1536 [rather 1535], when Hernán Cortés was in Tagantepee [Tehuantepec], he learned that his nao had been taken by Nuño de Guzman. He despatched three ships, which he had destined to Chimalao [Sinaloa] upon their completion, to where Guzman was, while he himself went there overland with a good company. He found that his nao had been stolen and driven aground. When the three ships he had sent arrived, he boarded them¹ with as many men and horses as he could², leaving Andrés de Tapia as captain of those he left behind. Having made sail, he went to touch at a point on the 1st of May; for this reason, he named it [San] Felipe, and gave the name of Santiago to an islet nearby.³ From there after three days he entered a bay where the pilot Fortún Jimenez had been killed, and he named it Santa Cruz. He stepped ashore and, it being a good port, he sent for Andrés de Tapia to come and to explore inland. Cortés himself embarked and was hit by bad weather; he headed for two rivers that are now called St. Peter and St. Paul. [However,] the wind became so violent that the ships were separated from one another. One ended up at the Bay of Santa Cruz, another at Gayal, and the other sank next to Jalisco and the people from it went overland to Mexico.

Hernán Cortés waited for the ships [to show up] but when they did not appear, he ordered to set sail and entered a strait that is now called Strait of Cortés and the Vermello [i.e. Red] Sea, went 50 leagues inside it as far as the Tropic of Cancer.⁴ He saw a ship that was anchored and went to it. He ran aground and was almost lost; he would have been if the nao had not helped him. He careened his ship and repaired it. Both ships returned to buy food at San Miguel [of Juliacan] and from there back to the port of Santa Cruz where he left the men. He heard that Don Antonio de Mendoza had arrived at Mexico as Governor of New Spain, [so he] left Francisco dilhoa [de Ulloa] as captain in charge of them and went to Tagante [Tehuantepec] in order to send him some ships from there for him to explore the coast.

When he arrived at Capuleo [Acapulco], he was met by a messenger from Don Antonio the Viceroy who gave him news about that land [i.e. Mexico]. He also was given a copy of a letter written by Francisco Pizarro who said how **Mangro Ingoa** [Manco Inca] had risen up, and he had been to the city of Cuzco with 100,000 fighting men, where they killed his brother Juan Pizarro and over 400 soldiers; he also considered it urgent for everyone to send him reinforcements. When Cortés saw this, in view of the arrival of Don Antonio de Mendoza, before the latter would be in a position to refuse

1 Ed. note: He departed from Chametla, in the Province of Sinaloa, on 13 April 1535 (not 1536 as Navarrete has said in Doc. 1537A) according to a letter written by Nuño de Guzman to the Council of the Indies, dated 7 June 1535.

2 Ed. note: He loaded a total of 113 foot soldiers and 40 horsemen onto these 3 ships.

3 Ed. note: Not Cardona, as Navarrete said in Doc. 1537A. The names given by Cortés did not stick, it seems, as the point in question is given as Cape Ventana on a modern map, and the island nearby is called Cerralvo.

4 Ed. note: Galvão's map was not accurate, as the Tropic in question is **south** of Santa Cruz or La Paz.

permission, he determined to be first to send to the Moluccas to discover a route south of the Line, as the Spice Islands lie on that parallel. For this purpose, he had two ships made ready with food, weapons, men, and all the necessities. He gave command of one of the naos to Hernando de **Grijalva** and the other to a certain Alvarado, a gentleman.

They went directly to San Miguel de Tangarara [Piura] to succor Francisco Pizarro, and from there to the Moluccas along the Line as he had been ordered to do. They said that they sailed over one thousand leagues without seeing land on either side of the Line. In 2 degrees north, they discovered an island that is called [the] **Acce**, which seems to be 500 leagues more or less, east of the Islands of Cloves. In the direction they were going, they sighted another island which they named **Pescadores**. Pursuing their route, they sighted an island which is called **Haimé**¹, on the south side, another called **Apia** [=Japen], then they went on to sight **Seri**. They turned back toward the north and in 1° anchored at another which is called **Coroa** [=Korido]. Afterward, they went to touch at another south of the Line which is called **Meonsum** [=Meosnum], and from there to that of **Bufu** [=Nufor] on the same parallel.²

The people of all these islands are black, with frizzled hair. The Moluccans call them Papuas. Most of them eat human flesh, are great fetishers, so much given to the devil that [they have to] go out together in company, because if one is found alone, they kill him with blows or drown him; that is why they do not dare to go out, except two or three together.

There exists there a bird of the size of a crane, which does not fly and does not have [wing] feathers for that purpose³; it runs on foot like a deer. From its feathers they make hair [pieces] for their idols. There is also a herb which is used to draw all the blood from a person when, after washing one limb with hot water, it has been placed upon it and licked with the tongue; with it they do bloodletting.

From these islands they went to others which are called [the] **Gueles**. They are located in 1° on the north side, along a line running E—W with the island of Ternate where the Portuguese fortress is located. These men are dark, with flowing hair like the Moluccans. These islets are 124 or 125 leagues from the island of Moro [Morotai], and this one is from 40 to 50 leagues from Ternate. From there they went on to Moro[tai] and the Islands of Cloves, going from one place to another⁴, because those ashore refused to let them take port, saying that they should go to the fortress where they would find Captain Antonio Galvão who would receive them willingly, that they would not let them [land] without his permission, because he was “the father of the country” as they called him. That is noteworthy, because those of that [is-]land are fond of Spaniards and they would give their lives, women, children, and their possessions for them.

1 Ed. note: Same as Paine, discovered earlier by Saavedra. According to Tiele, as reported by Wallis, this could also be an island in Geelvink Bay named Hamey.

2 Ed. note: Equivalences confirmed by W. T. Brigham's Index. The latter islands are all in Geelvink Bay. Miguel Noble was taken by natives to Biak Island and later to Halmahera Island.

3 Ed. note: That is the emu (*casuarinus emeu*) or Australian ostrich.

4 Ed. note: Along the coast of Halmahera Island.

Reconstructions of Grijalva's route

An interesting reconstruction has been made by Harry E. Maude in 1959.¹ His theory is that Acea is Christmas Island in the Line Islands, and that Pescadores is Nonouti. The first identification is highly unlikely; Maude's only argument is that "Christmas is approximately 1,000 leagues from the American mainland". As I have said before in a footnote, Miguel Noble's estimates of distance could possibly shift Acea (remember that Ale is the main islet of Kapingamarangi) further east to the Gilberts, but no farther. However, Maude may be right in pointing at Nonouti as a possible discovery. The Santiago had to have crossed the Gilberts at or near the equator, but it must have been done at night, because Noble does not mention them. If he had seen something there, he had forgotten them by the time he reported to Galvão two years later, or he had no native name for it and Galvão did not record anything.

As for Andrew Sharp², basing himself on Galvão and recognizing Hakluyt's faulty translation, is non committal. Reasoning that they could not have passed the Gilberts without seeing them, he concludes: "*Can it therefore be concluded finally that 'o Acea' and Dos Pescadores were in fact Marakei and Abaiang? Perhaps the possibility that Dos pescadores was Kapingamarangi ... cannot be entirely ruled out...*" However, he also says that 'o Acea' could be another island in the Gilberts (Makin or Tarawa). For Pescadores [i.e. Fishermen] Island to coincide with Kapingamarangi, he finally says (on p. 209) that it is possible, but not probable; he gives no explanation for this judgment.

Riesenberg in 1974³ agreed with Maude that Kapingamarangi could possibly have been discovered by Grijalva's ship in 1537.

Helen Wallis, who made a study of the voyages from 1519 to 1644⁴, has relied too heavily on Diogo de Couto's *Da Asia* (1780). Such a tertiary source could not, as she claims, reveal the true origins of the expedition. However, she has made a useful contribution when she pointed out that most of the islands remembered by Noble are in fact located in Geelvink Bay (the "neck" of New Guinea). What Galvão reported as islands were in fact place names often located on the same island. It turns out that Noble spent over one year on Biak Island. I agree with her (and Wichmann whom she quotes) when she says the following: "*Individual islands mentioned in the survivors' report to Galvão have been identified from the sound of the names which the survivors, uneducated sailors, reproduced to Galvão as they heard them from the natives. The reconstruction thus established suggests that the Spaniards first sailed to **Japen** (called by*

1 Ed. note: "Spanish Discoveries in the Central Pacific", JPS 1959, pp. 294-297.

2 "The Discovery of the Pacific Islands", OUP, 1960, pp. 24-26, 209.

3 "Six Pacific Island Discoveries", American Neptune.

4 The title of her Ph.D. thesis was "The Exploration of the South Seas", Oxford, 1954.

*them Apia*¹ whose district of **Serui** on its south coast was spoken of as the 'island' of **Seri**. They sailed north to **Korido** in 1° N [rather S?] on the south coast of **Supiori**, naming this the 'island' of **Coroa**, then south to **Mios Num** (named **Meonsum**), and to **Nufor** (named **Bufu**).² Advancing north again, they reached the **Mapia** Islands (named **Guelles**) in 1°N."

Modern Spanish historians have done a poor job of identifying Pacific islands, mostly because of their over-reliance on defective maps. Therefore, there is no point in discussing the views of people such as Francisco Coello and others who produced quick studies during the 1885-86 Yap conflict with Germany, even late-comers such as Pastor y Santos (who tried to claim part of Micronesia for Spain in 1949) and Landín Carasco (1984) who relied on these earlier studies.

1 Ed. note: This is clearly indicated on a modern C.I.A. map of Indonesia as Pulau Japen, that is Japen Island in Bahasa Indonesia and should be pronounced the Dutch way, as Yapen. The frilly way that people had in Galvão's time to write capital letters probably caused a typographical error, transforming Iapen into Apia... An interesting conjecture!

2 Ed. note: Here we have another example in which a capital N was printed B.