
Document 1525B

Da Rocha's voyage—Secondary account by Galvão pointing at the discovery by the Portuguese of the Sequeira or Ulithi Islands in 1525

Source: Same as for Doc. 1522D (pages 134, 257-258).

Introductory Note

The only primary evidence we have of this voyage is the Portuguese map, published ca. 1545, reproduced previously as part of Doc. 1522D. The Sequeira Islands are shown correctly there as an island group or atoll labelled: “Ilhas q. achou gomez de sequeira”, which means “Islands found by Gomez de Sequeira”. Just to the west of the Sequeira Islands, there appears a large island labelled something like “momcgua” or “momegug”, which can be recognized as Mogmog, the name of what was politically the most important island of the Ulithi group for centuries. Hence, we can conclude that the Portuguese map-maker put down the Sequeira Islands at two places, i.e. at the same latitude but a different longitude.

As far as the latitude is concerned, the center of the above islands are shown at about 6° N on the map. However, let me hasten to add that they appear, more correctly, at about 10° N on another, anonymous, Portuguese map drawn ca. 1560 (See Doc. 1550.).

Galvão's original text

Neste anno de 525, estando dom Jorge de Meneses capitam de Maluco¹, elle [e] dom Garcia anriquez mandara[m] huma fusta descobrir contra ho norte, hy[v]ja por capi-

1 Note by Viscount de Lagoa, editor of the 3rd Portuguese edition of 1944: “There is an error here on the part of António Galvão, because the voyage of Gomes de Sequeira did take place in 1525 but Dom Jorge de Meneses only arrived at the Moluccas in the middle of 1527.” In fact, Meneses arrived at the Moluccas in May 1527, as is certified by an eyewitness, Father Urdaneta. It was Garcia Enriquez who had replaced António de Brito.

tam della Diogo da rocha, & [por] piloto Gomez de sequeira, que depois andou por piloto na carreira da India. Em nove ou dez graos daltura, acharam humas ilhas juntas, [e] andaram por antrellas: poseram lhe [o] nome [de] as Ylhas de Gomez de sequeira por ser o primeiro piloto que as descobrio, donde se tornaram aa fortaleza, por derredor da ilha da Batachina [e a] do moro.

Translation by Hakluyt

In this yeere 1525 Don George de Meneses, captaine of Maluco, and with him Don Garcia Henriquez, sent a foyst to discouer land towards the north, wherein went as captaine one Diego de Rocha, and Gomes de Sequeira for pilot who afterwards went as pilot on an Indian voyage.¹ In 9 or 10 degrees they found certaine islands standing close together, they passed among them, and they called them the Islands of Gomes de Sequeira, he being the first pilot that discovered them. And they came backe againe [to the fort] by² the Island of Batochina do moro.³

1 Ed. note: The original text says that Sequeira subsequently acted as a pilot on the regular run between Portugal and India.

2 Ed. note: The original text means “going around”.

3 Ed. note: The island of Gilolo or Halmahera, and that of Morotai. This translation is from Richard Hakluyt’s “The Discoveries of the World...by Antonio Galvano, Governor of Ternate...”, London, 1601.