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978-1-108-01143-3 - The First Voyage Round the World by Magellan

Antonio Pigafetta

Excerpt

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NAVIGATION AND VOYAGE WHICH FERNANDO
DE MAGALHÃES MADE FROM SEVILLE TO
MALUCO IN THE YEAR 1519.

(BY A GENOESE PILOT.)

HE sailed from Seville on the 10th day of August of the said year, and remained at the bar until the 21st day of September, and as soon as he got outside, he steered to the south-west to make the island of Tenerife, and they reached the said island on the day of St. Michael, which was the 29th of September.¹ Thence he made his course to fetch the Cape Verde islands, and they passed between the islands and the Cape without sighting either the one or the other. Having got as far as this neighbourhood, he shaped his course so as to make for Brazil, and as soon as they sighted the other coast of Brazil, he steered to the south-east² along the coast as far as Cabo-frio, which is in twenty-three degrees south latitude; and from this cape he steered to the west, a matter of thirty leagues, to make the Rio de Janeiro, which is in the same latitude as Cabo-frio, and they entered the said Rio on the day of St. Lucy, which was the 13th December, in which place they took in wood, and they remained there until the first octave of Christmas, which was the 26th of December of the same year.

¹ Pigafetta says the fleet went out of Seville on the 10th of August, 1519; that it sailed from S. Lucar on the 20th of September, and reached Tenerife on the 26th, and continued its voyage thence on the 3rd of October, navigating to the South. *Lisbon Academy note.*

² The Paris MS. has "south-west." This must be the true reading *Lisbon Ac. note.* The Madrid MS. also has south-west.

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They sailed from this Rio de Janeiro on the 26th December, and navigated along the coast to make the Cape of St. Mary, which is in thirty-four degrees and two-thirds; as soon as they sighted it, they made their course west-north-west, thinking they would find a passage for their voyage, and they found that they had got into a great river of fresh water, to which they gave the name of river of St. Christopher, and it is in thirty-four degrees, and they remained in it till the 2nd of February, 1520.¹

He sailed from this river of St. Christopher on the 2nd of the said month of February; they navigated along the said coast, and further on to the south they discovered a point which is in the same river more to the south, to which they gave the name of Point St. Antony; it is in thirty-six degrees, hence they ran to the south-west, a matter of twenty-five leagues, and made another cape which they named Cape St. Apelonia, which is in thirty-six degrees; thence they navigated to the west-south-west to some shoals,² which they named Shoals of the Currents, which are in thirty-nine degrees; and thence they navigated out to sea, and lost sight of land for a matter of two or three days, when they again made for the land, and they came to a bay, which they entered, and ran within it the whole day, thinking that there was an outlet for Maluco, and when night came they found that it was quite closed up, and in the same night they again stood out by the way which they had come in. This bay is in thirty-four degrees;³ they name it the island⁴ of St. Matthew. They navigated from this island of St.

¹ Pigafetta mentions this river, which is the Plata, in 34 deg. 20 min. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

² Paris MS. "And they found themselves amongst some shoals." *Lisbon Ac. note.* The Madrid MS. is the same.

³ Paris MS. "is in 24 degrees," which seems clearly an error of the copyists. *Lisbon Ac. note.* The Madrid MS. is in this case similar to the Paris MS.

⁴ Paris MS. "the bay." *Lisbon Ac. note.* Madrid MS. "the bay."

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Matthew along the coast until they reached another bay, where they caught many sea-wolves and birds; to this they gave the name of "Bay of Labours;"¹ it is in thirty-seven degrees; here they were near losing the flag-ship in a storm. Thence they navigated along the said coast, and arrived on the last day of March of the year 1520 at the Port of St. Julian, which is in forty-nine and one-third degrees,² and here they wintered, and found the day a little more or less than seven hours.³

In this port three of the ships rose up against the Captain-major, their captains saying that they intended to take him to Castile in arrest, as he was taking them all to destruction. Here, through the exertions of the said Captain-major, and the assistance and favour of the foreigners whom he carried with him, the Captain-major went to the said three ships which were already mentioned, and there the captain of one of them was killed, who was treasurer of the whole fleet, and named Luis de Mendoca; he was killed in his own ship⁴ by stabs with a dagger by the chief constable of the fleet, who was sent to do this by Fernando de Magalhães in a boat with certain men. The said three ships having thus been recovered, five days later Fernando de Magalhães ordered Gaspar de Queixada to be decapitated and quartered; he was captain of one of the ships,⁵ and was one of those who had mutinied.

In this port they refitted the ship. Here the captain-major made Alvaro de Mesquita, a Portuguese,⁶ captain of

¹ We have not found mention of this name of "Bahia dos trabalhos" in any other writer. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

² Pigafetta puts this port in 49 deg. 30 min. The Transylvan in 49 and $\frac{1}{3}$; Barros in 50 deg., and says they arrived there on the 2nd of April. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

³ Paris MS. "eight hours." *Lisbon Ac. note.* The Madrid MS. has "seven hours."

⁴ The ship *Victoria*.

⁵ The ship *Conception*.

⁶ Alvaro de Mesquita was a cousin of Magellan.

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one of the ships the captain of which had been killed. There sailed from this port on the 24th of August four ships, for the smallest of the ships had been already lost;¹ he had sent it to reconnoitre, and the weather had been heavy, and had cast it ashore, where all the crew had been recovered along with the merchandise, artillery and fittings of the ship. They remained in this port, in which they wintered, five months and twenty-four days,² and they were seventy degrees less ten minutes to the southward.³

They sailed on the 24th day of the month of August of the said year from this port of St. Julian and navigated a matter of twenty leagues along the coast, and so they entered a river which was called Santa Cruz, which is in fifty degrees,⁴ where they took in goods and as much as they could obtain: the crew of the lost ship were already distributed among the other ships, for they had returned by land to where Fernando de Magalhaes was, and they continued collecting the goods which had remained there during August and up to the 18th September, and there they took in water and much fish which they caught in this river; and in the other, where

The ship which was here lost was the *Santiago*, the captain of which was João Serrão. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

² There seems to be some mistake here or transcriber's error. It is seen by the narrative that the navigators, having arrived at Port St. Julian at the end of March, or beginning of April, and going out of it on the 24th of August, they wintered there for the space of four months and twenty-four days, and this is what Pigafetta says: "they passed there nearly five months." *Lisbon Ac. note.*

³ "E havia delles ao sull 73 gr. menos 10 minutos." It has been impossible for us to understand the calculations of the writer in this place. *Lisbon Ac. note.* A possible explanation of this passage may be found in a passage of Castanheda, lib. 6, cap. 13, which describes St. Julian as distant from Seville 71 deg from North to South, and this calculation would refer to the distance from Seville.

⁴ The anonymous Portuguese, the companion of Duarte Barbosa, says they gave it the name of "Santa Cruz," because they arrived there the 14th of September, the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

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they wintered, there were people like savages, and the men are from nine to ten spans in height, very well made; they have not got houses, they only go about from one place to another with their flocks, and eat meat nearly raw: they are all of them archers and kill many animals with arrows, and with the skins they make clothes, that is to say, they make the skins very supple, and fashion them after the shape of the body, as well as they can, then they cover themselves with them, and fasten them by a belt round the waist. When they do not wish to be clothed from the waist upwards, they let that half fall which is above the waist, and the garment remains hanging down from the belt which they have girt round them.¹ They wear shoes which cover them four inches above the ankle, full of straw inside to keep their feet warm. They do not possess any iron, nor any other ingenuity of weapons, only they make the points of their arrows with flints, and so also the knives with which they cut, and the adze and awls with which they cut and stitch their shoes and clothes. They are very agile people, and do no harm, and thus they follow their flocks: wherever night finds them there they sleep; they carry their wives along with them with all the chattels which they possess. The women are very small and carry heavy burdens on their backs; they wear shoes and clothes just like the men. Of these men they obtained three or four and brought them in the ships, and they all died except one, who went to Castile in a ship which went thither.²

They sailed from this river of Santa Cruz on the 18th of October:³ they continued navigating along the coast until

¹ In the *Illustrated News* of March 27th, 1869, there is a drawing of some Patagonians: these are represented almost exactly as they are described in the text, for some of them have their shoulders bare, and the skins let down below the waist as here described.

² Probably in the ship which fled away, as will be mentioned later. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

³ Amoretti, the editor of Pigafetta, observes, that whilst the fleet was in the river of Santa Cruz, between 50 deg. and 40 deg. South latitude,

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the 21st day of the same month, October, when they discovered a cape, to which they gave the name of Cape of the Virgins, because they sighted it on the day of the eleven thousand virgins; it is in fifty-two degrees, a little more or less, and from this cape a matter of two or three leagues distance, we found ourselves at the mouth of a strait.¹ We sailed along the said coast within that strait which they had reached the mouth of: they entered in it a little and anchored. Fernando de Magalhães sent to discover what there was further in, and they found three channels, that is to say, two more in a southerly direction, and one traversing the country in the direction of Maluco, but at that time

there was, on the 11th of October, an eclipse of the Sun, “*which (he says) the Portuguese and Spanish writers mention, and which is registered in the astronomical tables:*” and he judges it to be an error of Castanheda putting this phenomenon on the 17th of April, and his attributing to Magellan the calculation of longitude of which he speaks. Barros also mentions an eclipse of the sun in April. It is noteworthy that neither our pilot’s narrative nor Pigafetta mentions a phenomenon which still in those times did not happen without causing some impression on men’s minds, or at least without exciting public curiosity. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

I am indebted to the courtesy of the Astronomer Royal, Mr. G. B. Airy, for the following information, which confirms Castanheda and Barros: “1520, April 17. There was certainly (from our own calculations) a total solar eclipse about 1.20 P.M. Greenwich time. But in the *Art de verifier les dates*, in which the extreme Southern eclipses are not included, none is mentioned for April 17: consequently the eclipse was a Southern eclipse, crossing the South Atlantic.”

¹ This is the famous strait which till this day is named the Strait of Magellan, for the eternal and glorious memory of the famous Portuguese who discovered it. Castanheda says that Magellan, on account of arriving there on the 1st of November, gave it the name of All Saints’ bay, and in the answer which André de S. Martin gave to the inquiries made to him about that navigation, he also names the channel that of All Saints’ (Barros, Dec. 3, liv. 5, cap. 9). The anonymous Portuguese, the companion of Duarte Barbosa, whom we have quoted above, and who sailed in the “*Victoria*,” says that at first the navigators called it the Strait of the *Victoria*, because that ship was the first which sighted it. (Ramusio, 3rd edition, tom. i. page 370). *Lisbon Ac. note.*

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this was not yet known, only the three mouths were seen. The boats went thither, and brought back word, and they set sail and anchored at these mouths of the channels, and Fernando de Magalhães sent two ships to learn what there was within, and these ships went: one returned to the Captain-major, and the other, of which Alvaro de Mesquita was captain, entered into one of the bays which was to the south, and did not return any more. Fernan de Magalhães seeing that it did not come back, set sail,¹ and the next day he did not choose to make for the bays, and went to the south, and took another which runs north-west and south-east, and a quarter west and east. He left letters in the place from which he sailed, so that if the other ship returned, it might make the course which he left prescribed. After this they entered into the channel, which at some places has a width of three leagues, and two, and one, and in some places half a league, and he went through it as long as it was daylight, and anchored when it was night: and he sent the boats, and the ships went after the boats, and they brought news that there was an outlet, for they already saw the great sea on the other side; on which account Fernando

¹ Alvaro de Mesquita, a Portuguese, and cousin of Magellan, was captain of this ship which went to explore the passages of the Straits, and did not return, and its pilot was Estevan Gomes, also a Portuguese. This Estevan Gomes had been requesting the Emperor Charles V. to confide to him a few caravels to go and discover new lands; but as the proposal and enterprise of Mazellan then interposed itself, and was preferred and accepted, Estevan Gomes continued after that to be a great enemy of the illustrious captain, and now profited by the opportunity to revenge himself on him, and to give vent to his rabid envy. He conspired, therefore, with others against the captain of his ship, Alvaro de Mesquita; they put him in irons, and brought him thus to Spain with the ship, telling the Emperor *that Magellan was crazy, and had lied to His Majesty, because he did not know where Banda was, nor Maluco*. Besides this, they brought accusations against Mesquita of having counselled and persuaded Magellan to use the severity and cruelty with which he punished the first conspirators, etc. (V. the Letter of Transylvanus and Castanheda, liv. 6, cap. 8). *Lisbon Ac. note.*

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de Magalhães ordered much artillery to be fired for rejoicing;¹ and before they went forth from this strait they found two islands, the first one larger, and the other nearer towards the outlet is the smaller one: and they went out between these islands and the coast on the southern side, as it was deeper than on the other side. This strait is a hundred leagues in length to the outlet; that outlet and the entrance are in fifty-two degrees latitude.² They made a stay in this strait from the 21st October to the 26th of November,³

¹ The ships *S. Antonio* and *Conception* were sent on this exploration of the Straits; they were with difficulty able to double the Cape Possession, named thus in Bougainville's map, and in others. They at length entered a narrow opening, which in the maps is named the first gut, and they proceeded thence to another bay, which is named Boucant bay, or Boucam. At the end of this they entered into another strait, named the second gut, and having passed that, they came out into another bay larger than the former ones. Then, seeing that the strait was prolonged and offered an outlet to the ships, they returned with the good news to Magellan, who was waiting for them, and on seeing him, they fired off all their artillery and shouted for joy. The fleet then sailed together as far as the third bay, and as they found two channels, Magellan despatched the two vessels, *S. Antonio* and *Conception*, to examine whether the channel, which took the S.W. direction, would issue into the Pacific sea. Here it was that the ship *S. Antonio* deserted, going ahead of its companion for that purpose. The other two ships, *Victoria* and *Trinity*, meanwhile entered the third channel, where they waited four days for the explorers. During this interval, Magellan despatched a well equipped boat to discover the cape with which the strait ought to terminate: this having been sighted, and the boat returning with the news, all shed tears of consolation, and they gave to this cape the name of Cape Desire; it is that which is at the outlet of the strait on the South side. They then turned back to seek for the ships *Conception* and *S. Antonio*, and leaving marks by which this one might steer, in case of its having lost the way (for they were still ignorant of its desertion), they sailed forward until they came out into the Pacific Ocean. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

² The Paris Manuscript has "fully in 52 degrees." *Lisbon Ac. note.*

³ Pigafetta remarks: In the strait in which they were, in the month of October, the night was only of three hours; and Transylvan says that, in November the navigators found the night of little more than five hours; and that on one night they saw to the left hand many fires. It

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which makes thirty-six days of the said year of 1520, and as soon as they went out from the strait to sea, they made their course, for the most part, to west-north-west, when they found that their needles varied to the north-west almost two-fourths, and after they had navigated thus for many days, they found an island in a little more or less than eighteen degrees, or nineteen degrees, and also another, which was in from thirteen to fourteen degrees, and this in south latitude;¹ they are uninhabited. They ran on until they reached the line, when Fernan de Magalhães said that now they were in the neighbourhood of Maluco, as he had information that there were no provisions at Maluco, he said that he would go in a northerly direction as far as ten or twelve degrees, and they reached to as far as thirteen degrees north, and in this latitude they navigated to the west, and a quarter south-west, a matter of a hundred leagues, where on the 6th of March, 1521, they fetched two islands inhabited by many people, and they anchored at one of them, which is in twelve degrees north; and the inhabitants are people of little truth, and they did not take precautions against them until they saw that they were taking away the skiff of the flagship, and they cut the rope with which it was made fast, and took it ashore without their being able to prevent it. They gave this island the name of Thieves' Island (*dos ladrões*).²

is from this that that country came to be called *Terra do fogo*. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

¹ The Paris MS. has, and also others which were, &c. Pigafetta places these two islands in 15 deg. and 9 deg. South latitude. See Amoretti's note, p. 45, upon their situation, in which he supposes them to be in the archipelago of the Society Islands. In some maps they are designated by the name of *Infortunadas*. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

² Some writers remark that Magellan gave to these islands the name of *Ilhas das velas*, on account of the many vessels with sails which he observed in that neighbourhood. But they continued to be commonly called *Ladrones*; later they took the name of *Mariannas*, in honour of the Queen D. Marianna of Austria, widow of Philip IV, and Regent during the minority of D. Carlos II. of Castile. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

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Fernando de Magalhães seeing that the skiff was lost, set sail, as it was already night, tacking about until the next day; as soon as it was morning they anchored at the place where they had seen the skiff carried off to, and he ordered two boats to be got ready with a matter of fifty or sixty men, and he went ashore in person, and burned the whole village, and they killed seven or eight persons, between men and women, and recovered the skiff, and returned to the ships; and while they were there they saw forty or fifty *paros*¹ come, which came from the same land, and brought much refreshments.²

Fernan de Magalhães would not make any further stay, and at once set sail, and ordered the course to be steered west, and a quarter south-west; and so they made land, which is in barely eleven degrees. This land is an island, but he would not touch at this one, and they went to touch at another further on which appeared first.³ Fernando de Magalhães sent a boat ashore to observe the nature of the island; when the boat reached land, they saw from the ships two *paraós* come out from behind the point; then they called back their boat. The people of the *paraos* seeing that the boat was returning to the ships, turned back the *paraos*, and the boat reached the ships, which at once set sail for another island very near to this island, which is in ten degrees, and they gave it the name of the island of Good Signs, because they found some gold in it.⁴ Whilst

¹ *Parós*: so our manuscripts always write it. In the edition of Pigafetta it is constantly written *praós*. It is the same kind of vessel that our writers of the affairs of Asia name *paraó*, which is of various sizes, and is much used in the South Sea Islands. Pigafetta says it is a kind of fusta or galliot. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

² The Paris manuscript has "much refreshments of fruit." *Lisbon Ac. note.*

³ "A primeira;" the Paris manuscript has "da primeira;" this means, which was first sighted. See the *Relation of Pigafetta, Amoretti*, p. 54, March 16, 1521. *Lisbon Ac. note.*

⁴ Pigafetta says: "We named the watering place of *Good Signs*,