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## Document 1590D

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# The Boxer Codex and the 1590 galleons

*Sources: A 307-page late 16th-century manuscript, called the Dasmariñas Codex in the Philippines, formerly in the possession of Lord Ilchester in England, and owned since 1947 by Professor C. R. Boxer, formerly with the University of London. Microfilm copies exist, notably as Ayer ms. 1409a in the Newberry Library in Chicago.*

1) Described by C. R. Boxer in an article entitled: "A Late Sixteenth Century Manila MS." in the *Royal Asiatic Society Journal* (April 1950, pp. 37-49).

2) Carlos Quirino and Mauro Garcia in an article entitled: "The Manners, Customs, and Beliefs of the Philippine Inhabitants of Long Ago; Being Chapters of "A Late 16th Century Manuscript"... " in the *Philippine Journal of Science* 87:4 (Dec 1958) pp. 325-451; reprinted in 1961 by the Bureau of Printing, Manila; also summarized by Carlos Quirino in Vol. 4 of the book: *Filipino Heritage; the Making of a Nation* (Manila, Lahing Filipino Pub., 1977).

### Background information on the Boxer Codex.

This codex is mostly about the Far East, but the beginning of the document deals with the visit of galleons to Guam. Professor Boxer himself has described how he acquired this document<sup>1</sup> in the following terms:

*Hodgson's Sale Catalogue for the 10th July, 1947, of books from Lord Ilchester's Library at Holland House, contained a curious manuscript which was listed as follows under item N° 60: "Oriental MS.—75 Coloured Drawings of Native Races in the Far East, including the **Ladrones**, Moluccas, Philippines, Java, Siam, China, and elsewhere, those of China depicting Royalty, Warriors, Mandarins, etc., in gorgeous Robes, richly heightened with gold, also 88 smaller Coloured Drawings of Birds and fantastic animals (4 on a page), all within decorative borders, and a double folding Drawing of a Ship, and Natives in small craft, with about 270 pages of MS. text, sm. 4to, calf, lettered, Isla de **Ladrones** (eighteenth century)."*

*Intrigued by this somewhat cryptic description, I acquired this codex, and found that the text was written throughout in Spanish, in a late sixteenth century hand, of a type familiar to anyone who has studied the documents in the Archivo de Indias in Seville... The latest date mentioned in the text, whether directly or by inference, is 1590.*

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1 Ed. note: He paid £70 for it in 1947, as he told my friend Carlos Quirino in the 1950s.



**Portrait of Governor Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas [1590-1593].** *A native of Galicia, and knight of the Order of Santiago. He was corregidor of Murcia and Cartagena when Philip II selected him to become Governor of the Philippines in 1589. He arrived at Manila on 1 June 1590 aboard the flagship Santiago, with his son Luís. He quarrelled with the friars and conquered the negritos of Zambales. He was on his way to the Moluccas in 1593 when his Chinese crewmen assassinated him on 25 October 1593. (From *El Oriente*, vol. 1, n° 7, p. 1. Courtesy of the Lopez Museum, Manila)*

*The codex begins with two preliminary blank leaves, neatly ruled on the bottom margin and each side in blue, as are the rest of the pages throughout. It seems likely that there was originally a title-page which has been removed. The third leaf is an oblong folding one, measuring 24 inches by 8 inches, depicting the Manila Galleon off one of the **Ladrones** (Marianas since 1668) islands, surrounded by native craft, in the course of her voyage from Mexico to the Philippines in 1590, as reference to the text on leaves 3-4 discloses. In point of fact, two ships left Acapulco for Manila on 1st March, 1590,*

with the new Governor, Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas, and his son, Don Luis. Only the flagship, or capitana<sup>1</sup>, reached Manila in safety on the 31st May, the almiranta<sup>2</sup> being wrecked off the island of Marinduque. It is therefore, in all probability, the flagship which is the vessel depicted here.<sup>3</sup> The exact location is not given, but the Manila-bound galleons usually aimed to reach the Ladrones between Guam and Sarpana [i.e. Rota] (not to be confused with the more northerly and nowadays better-known island of Saipan) after a seventy-day voyage from Acapulco.

The folding plate is followed by a double-page painting of natives of the Ladrones, whilst the next two leaves [i.e. 4 pages] contain an account of the inhabitants of this island group, entitled “*Relación de las yslas de los Ladrones*.” It is from this opening chapter heading that the binder has taken the lettering on the spine of the calf binding. The account is unsigned and undated, but it is written (or dictated) in the first person by somebody who was on board one of the two ships which passed through these islands in May, 1590. He comments on the herculean proportions of the naked islanders, describes the speed attained by their outrigger canoes, and explains how they bartered fish, fruit, and water, for bits of iron from the sailors of the passing Spanish ship. He adds that so keenly did the islanders value metal, that when he held out his sword as if to barter it, the occupants of all the canoes left off chaffering with the other passengers and crew, and paddled their craft towards him, offering everything which they had in exchange. This anecdote indicates that the writer was a layman, and for reasons which will be adduced at the end of this paper it is possible that he was either Governor Dasmariñas or his son...

The text seems to be written by a Spanish, or possibly a Filipino clerk; but the illustrations in all probability are the work of a Chinese artist. At any rate, the features of the persons portrayed are mostly of a Mongolian cast, the painter seems to be more at home with his Chinese than with his other subjects, whilst the ideographs are too well written to be the work of one of the very few friars or Jesuits who were capable of wielding a Chinese brush in 1590. The use of Chinese paper, ink, and paints, also suggests a Chinese artist; although this is not conclusive, as European materials were so expensive at Manila that Chinese supplies were often used instead... It seems most likely that the artist of this codex was a “Sangley”<sup>4</sup> working under European supervision.

...  
As to who was the original owner, editor, or compiler of this MS., that is a more difficult question. One thing is certain. He must have been a rich or influential man, as

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1 Ed. note: Named the Santiago, a 600-ton galleon.

2 Ed. note: Named the San Pedro, a 400-ton galleon. Both ships had begun service only two years earlier. The date given was accordingly to the Masico calendar.

3 Ed. note: Both ships had similar lines and we cannot tell from their relative size which one is depicted. I rather think that the figure represents the San Pedro, as seen from the flagship Santiago by the Dasmariñas.

4 Ed. note: This word, derived from the Fukienese dialect and meaning travelling salesman or trader, was used by the Spanish to denote all Chinamen in the Philippines.



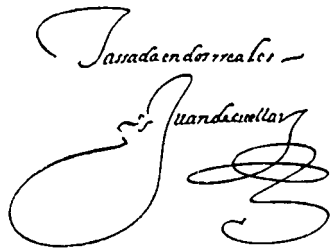
**Portrait of interim Gov. Luís Pérez Dasmariñas [1593-1595].** *(Photo of a painting exhibited at St. Louis in 1904. B&R 30:227)*

*nobody else could have afforded to pay the high prices involved by such a lavish use of gold leaf in the illustrations and chapter headings... When we recall that this MS begins with things seen from a Manila-bound galleon off the Ladrones in 1590, and that Governor Dasmariñas came out with his son that year, it is surely not too far-fetched to suggest that perhaps one of these two individuals was the original owner.*

...  
*A final word as to its provenance and condition. I have no idea when it came to England, but the transference presents no insuperable difficulties. It might have been picked up during the sack of Manila by Draper's expeditionary force in 1762.<sup>1</sup>*

Quirino and Garcia also think that the document belonged to Governor Dasmariñas and, upon his death in 1593, passed on to his son, the interim Governor, who continued to compose it until his own death in 1603, as least insofar as the pages on the Ladrones, the Philippines and perhaps Cambodia are concerned. They go on to prove their point. There is a slight possibility that the original owner may also have been Antonio de Padua, alias Antonio de la Llave, a soldier of fortune who was aboard the galleon **Santiago** in 1590 and could have befriended the young Dasmariñas. This man soon became a friar, taking the habit on 17 March 1591. He is known to have written many works which were unfortunately never published. If not the original owner, he could have done some of the work for the Dasmariñas. Certainly, he could have been the man who waved his sword at the Chamorros of Guam...

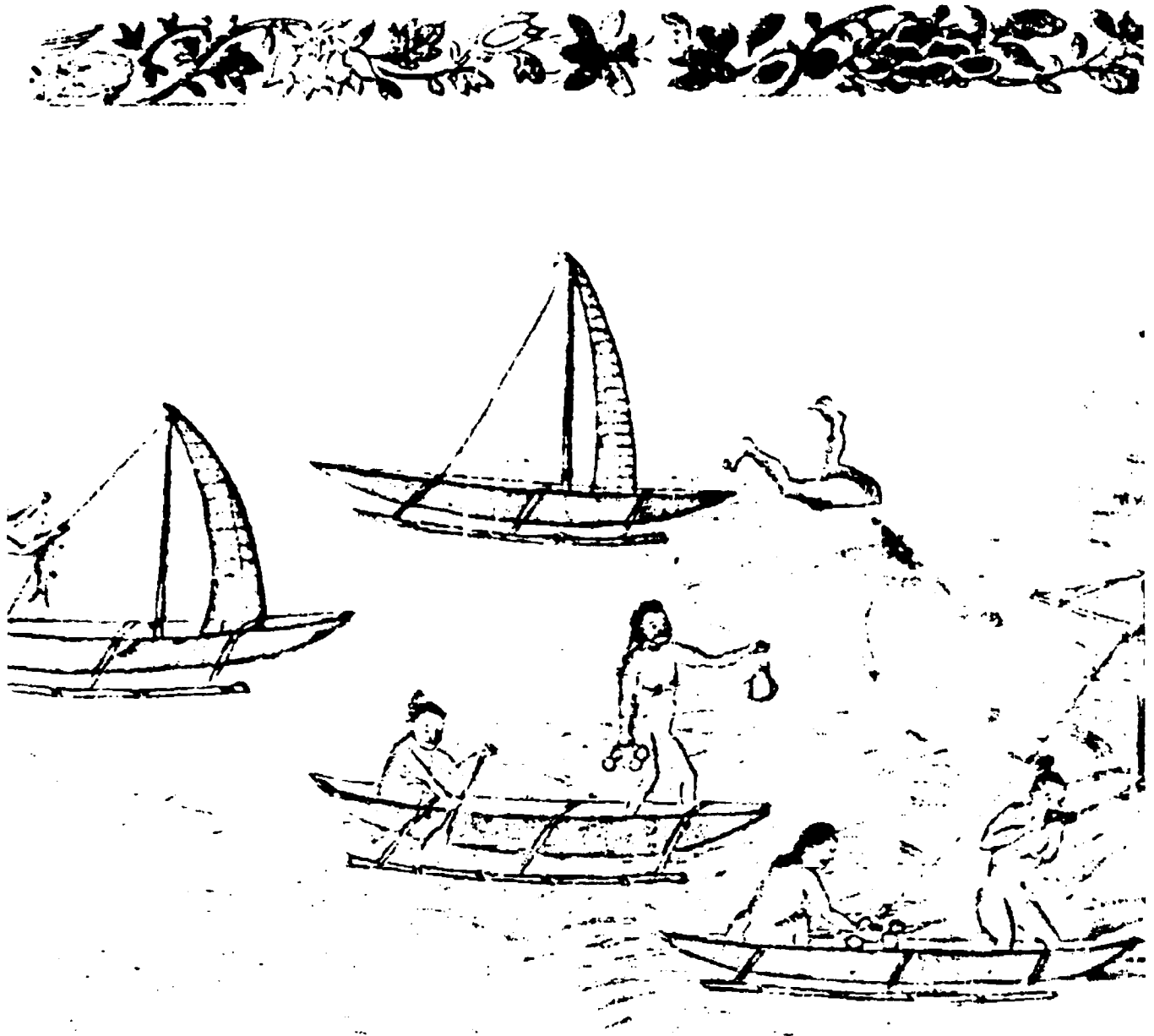
Another possible owner is mentioned by Quirino and Garcia. It is Juan de Cuellar, the Governor's secretary, who was also aboard the **Santiago** in 1590. Like Padua, he formed part of the contingent of soldiers who arrived with the new Governor to seek their fortune in the colony. While Padua became a priest, Cuellar became a close confidant and secretary of the Governor. In the course of his work, Cuellar has written narratives of expeditions in and out of the Philippines and could have written some, if not all, of the Boxer Codex. They claim that he was the copyist of this, the final draft, and that the calligraphy of the codex "closely resembles that of Cuellar appearing in the two Doctrinas sent by Dasmariñas to Philip II in 1593, the only samples of his handwriting available to us for comparison."



**Specimen handwriting of Juan de Cuellar, the secretary of Governor Dasmariñas. I do not personally think that the calligraphy is the same as in the Boxer Codex, at least the first part about the Ladrones (see below).**

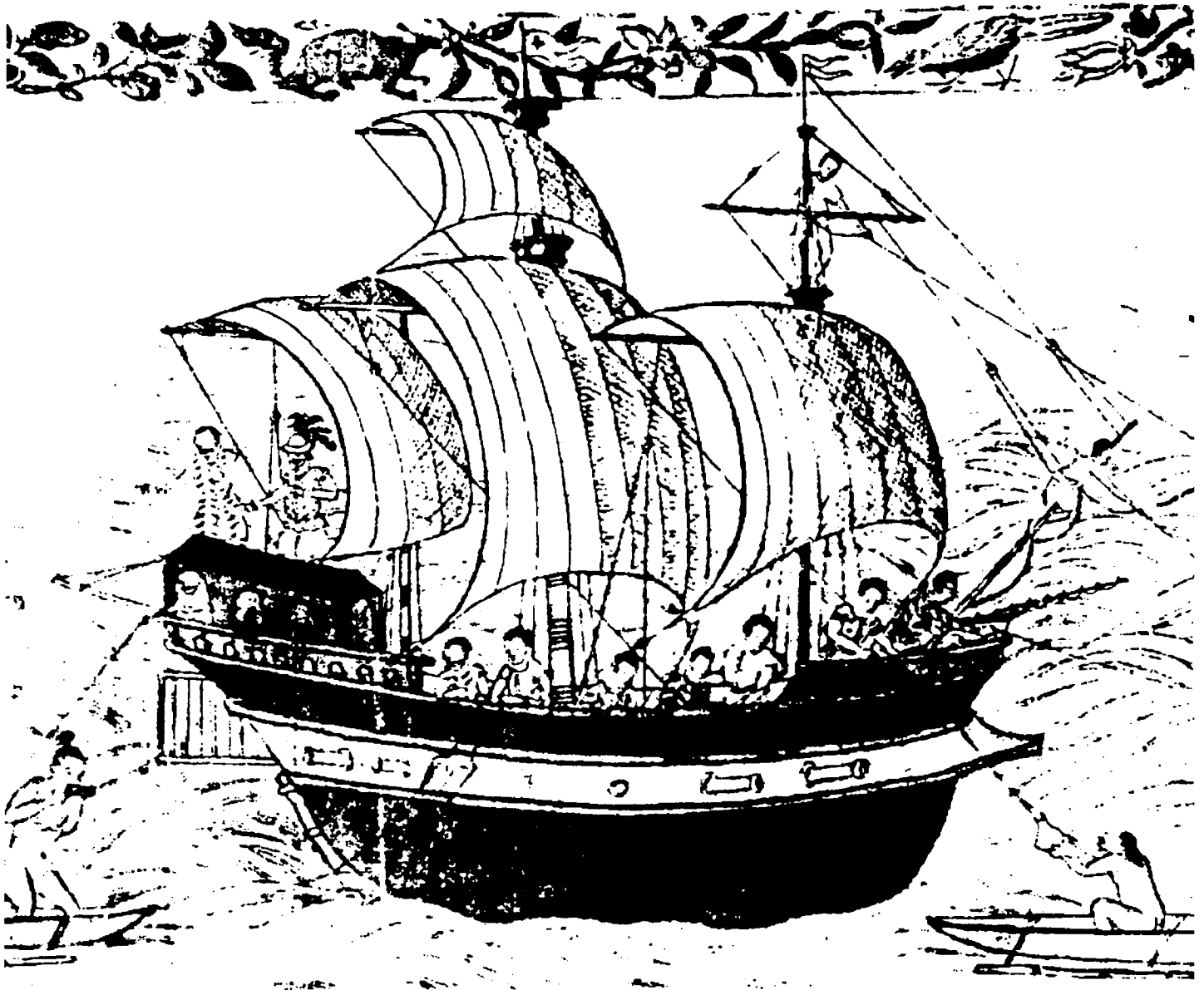
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<sup>1</sup> Ed. note: The English officers allowed their men to loot the whole city of Manila. All maps, charts, manuscripts, and non religious books were transported by Royal Navy ships back to England, where they were scattered. Many ended up in the possession of Alexander Dalrymple. However, I do not think that the codex was part of the loot (See next page).

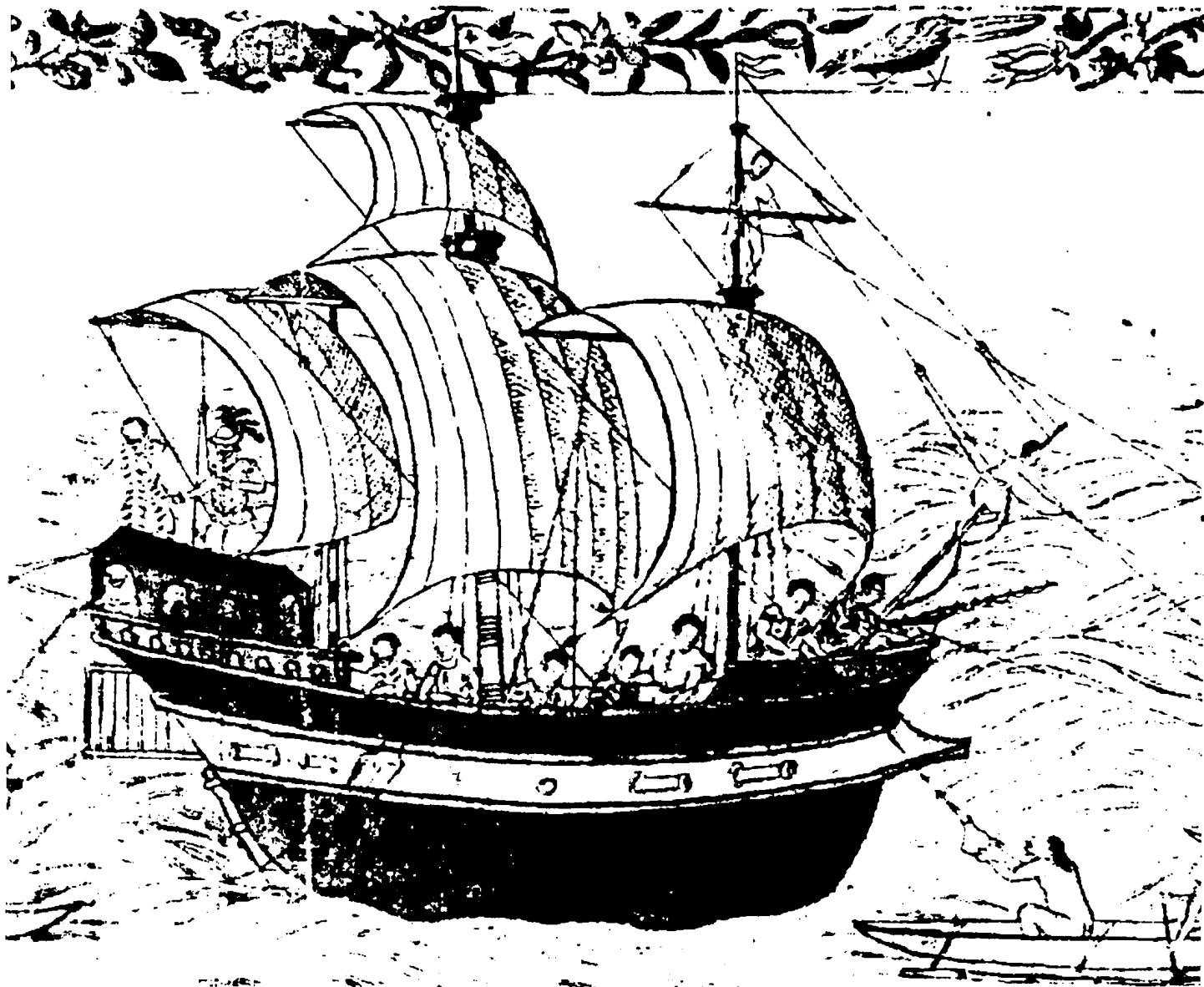


**Final word as to provenance of the manuscript.**

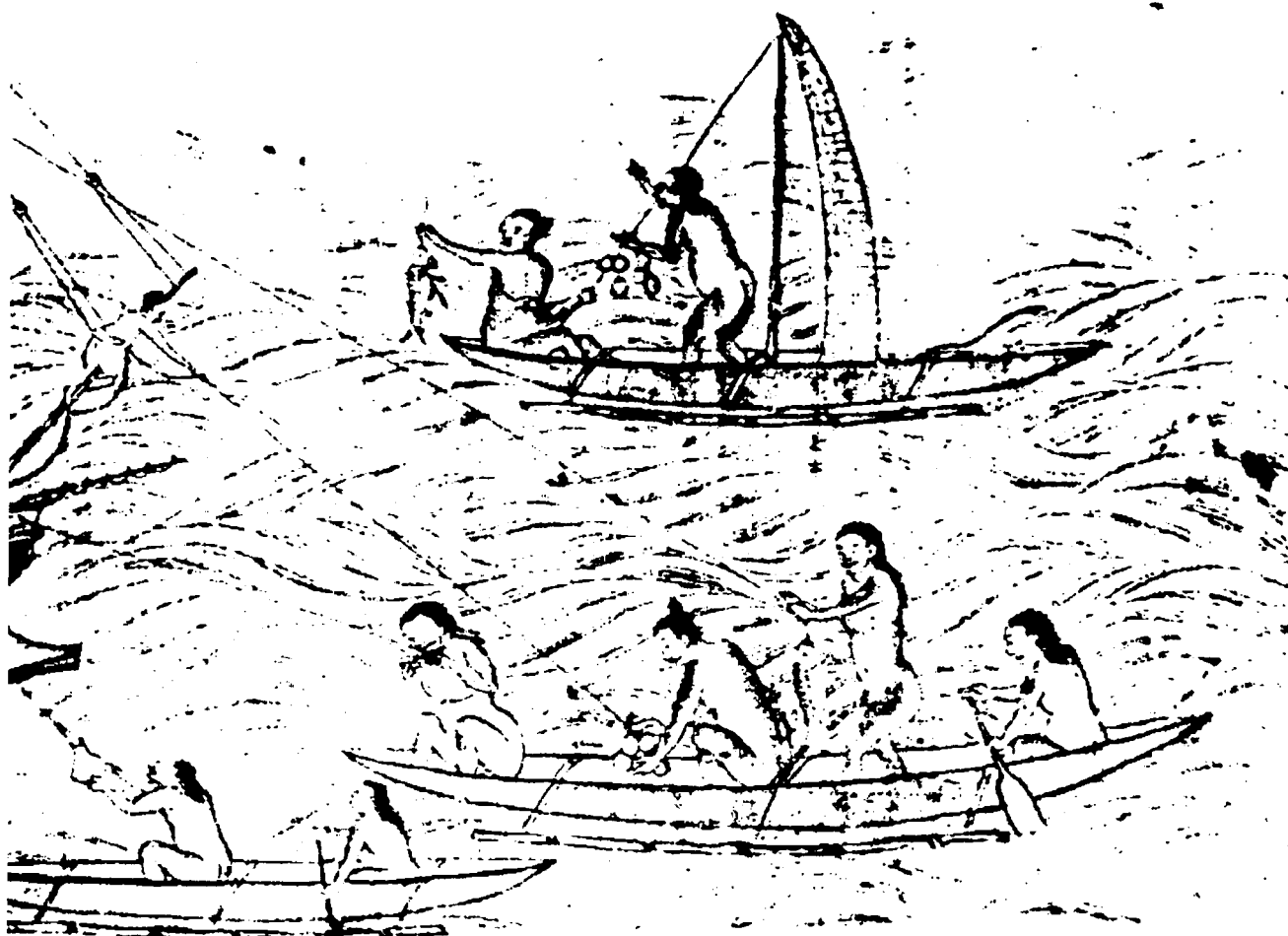
The English invaded and sacked Manila in 1762. It seemed to me unlikely that a document on such fragile paper would have been so well preserved in a tropical climate since 1590, or that it would have survived the many fires that periodically hit Manila. However, the final proof that the English did not steal it from Manila is that the manuscript was in Spain a few years before that. It was cited as an anonymous manuscript by Gonzalez Barcía in his *Epitome* (Madrid, 1737, 1738), ii, col. 638. I have found this reference in B&R 53:272, where the first line of the codex confirms that it is the same document: "*Relacion de las Islas de los Ladrones. Este genero de gentes, que llaman los Ladrones...*"



**The galleon San Pedro as seen from the flagship Santiago at Guam in May 1590.** Around the ship are the canoes of the natives of the Ladrões bartering fish, coconuts and other fruits for iron, which they praised above all else. They did so in 1590 while the ships were under sail as they did not stop because they did not need water. (From C.R. Boxer's "The Manila Galleon: 1565-1815" in *History Today*, vol. 8, n° 8 (1958), pp.544-545. By permission of Professor Boxer. Courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago)









**Naked islander of the Ladrone Islands in 1590. Neither men nor women of the islands wore any clothes. Spears were their most common weapons. (From the Boxer Codex. By permission of Professor Boxer)**



**Naked warrior of the Ladrone.** *Wearing a fictitious fig leaf, this warrior carries a bow and arrows, a weapon seldom described. The more usual weapon of the Chamorros was the sling. (From the Boxer Codex. By permission of Prof. Boxer)*

**R**elacion de las Islas de la Mar del Sur.  
 En el presente año de mill e quinientos e sesenta e tres años.  
 Vnas y las que ay quando entra la gente en el legar  
 al caudo de pueru santo y son las pueru que es el lien  
 Los nauios que son en esta pueru que es el lien  
 pinas. suen en la pueru. En algunos pueru de las  
 que ay muncos y buenos y quando nose haze como en  
 el Neuafe que se haze en el ano de 90. Por no auer fal  
 tado agua. que es la pueru de la se sue tomar pueru to  
 ellos sa en dosne leguas a la mar en unos naui  
 e sue los e hios y tane steechos. que no tienen en cancho  
 de dos pueru y medio a la mar. Son de la forma que  
 ay ban pintados a los lados tienen un conape sso  
 de cañas. runque estansiguos. de sosos la que os sa q  
 a ellos se le da bien poco. por que son como peces en el  
 agua y saca so se yne de agua. Un dicio se auer en  
 ella y la saca con medio co. Es siue de e saud. Ma  
 y si no con una pueru. con que bogan estos naui e h  
 e los naen de la latitud de petate. que es de sosos palma  
 y se siue muncos de ellos en estas partes. y hazen los  
 Los mores con muncos de los e labores grauosas  
 que parecen muy bien pueru pa e mente Los mores  
 Curneys y terrenates. son estos nauios tan ligeros.  
 Salendos Otres leguas. de pueru y en un momento  
 En tan con el naui. a bordo a unque bay a la uela  
 y tienen. onapateu la uela. En una uela que  
 no tienen en muncos de la. bien como de el  
 Toruere. se aso qual fue que en se maie an  
 La e la ad suere que bando quier en y e de man  
 que no parecen. sinocuallos. muy domesticos y  
 a pueru. pueru de estos nauios. salen tan  
 en buendonauio de a lo boido que no paie se si no que

## Transcript of the codex

[Leaf 3 recto]

***Relacion de las yslas de los Ladrones***

*Este genero de gente [que] llaman los Ladrones abitan en =  
unas yslas que ay quatrocientos leguas antes de llegar  
al cavo de spiritu santo, y son las primeras que descubren  
los navios que bienen de acapulco a estas yslas phili-  
pinas. suelen hazer aguada en algun puerto dellas  
que ay munchos y buenos y quando no se haze como en  
este viaje que se hizo el ano de 90, por no aver fal-  
ta de agua que solo por ella se suele tomar puerto =  
ellos salen dos [o] tres leguas a la mar en unos navi-  
chuelos chicos, y tan estrechos que no tienen de ancho  
de dos palmos y medio arriba donde la forma que  
ay ban pintados[.] a los lados tienen un contrapeso =  
de cañas[.] aunque estan seguros de sosobrar cossa que  
a ellos se les da bien poco, porque son como peces en el  
agua y si acaso se ynche de agua, el yndio se arroja en  
ella y la saca con medio coco que les sirve de escudilla  
y sino con una paleta con que bogan[.] estos navichu-  
chuelos traen bela latina de petate que es echa de palma  
y se sirve mucho dellos en estas partes, y hazenlos =  
los moros con munchas colores y labores graciosas  
que parecen muy bien[.] principalmente los moros  
burneys y terrenates. son estos navios tan ligeros  
que salen dos o tres leguas del puerto y en un momento  
estan con el navio abordo aunque baya a la vela  
y tienen otra particularidad en su navegacion que  
no tienen menester para ella biento mas de el  
que corriesef[,] sease qual fuere[,] que con ese marean  
la bela de suerte que bando quieren y es de manera  
que no parecen sino cavallos muy domesticos y dis-  
ciplinados. pues de estos navios salen tantos que des-  
cubriendo navio de alto bordo que no parese sino que*

cubien Lamma y que lla los biota. Subemdale  
 nrescatal. Sieno por que elle es suropor. Loesti  
 manemmas. quien el y de este resuen. Entoda  
 sus Labiancas y Suas. tienen mune. Los solos yagua  
 fresca muy buena. Algunos pescados. queco. Jencori  
 ansuelo. yalganauo3. es so a sumodo. y en buelben  
 Lo. Vnas Olas. yauo. Janco al nauio por Sieno y tien  
 tan buena algunas frutas. como pñantos y otras.  
 que no las conociamos. en llegando como a tiro de pi e  
 dia. se le oian en pie y dandole voces. diciendo ane  
 peque ane peque. que dizen a algunos. que quie de  
 ziramigos samijos. otros quit a alla. el aca buz sea  
 Louno. O lo. o lo. ellos gritan y dizen ane peque ha en  
 Llamano Vnaca. a bara grande e agria. Vno co3.  
 o pescador. L fincada uno. y tienen mune. a que lo  
 que tiene. pñineio que se case iquen dan mune. So  
 bores. con el han a presteza. y be la oia y en buendo.  
 Sieno se acercan y rescatan por el. L tido Lo que ha en  
 a mairando se para melle. rescatan. de vna alode L  
 na biopel. a po pa. y de calli y de todo. L nauio. Lo saw Jan  
 a Candancia de Lauos. Vie los yanos pñados de pipas  
 y de otros muy de bei por que ena. Liendo a sog a  
 donde ba atado. L Sieno L auitancan. Los dñentes como  
 si fue se vna bane. y a na a ella. Los solos v lo que  
 se pñen por señas. tienen naves a la na. para seitan  
 codiciclos de Sieno que no dan mas por bugianpedaco  
 que por lñpe que no y estose pñouo alli. ten ellos y si es  
 co han lñpe daco a L amar. son tan grandes. bucos y  
 n adadores. que canten que se le guen muy a lo. //  
 Lo colen y se bueluen a unauio. y asi. o si. 3o a. //  
 Vno. que es de Sando se lo a mayno. a be la y. a ce do. //  
 al.

[Leaf 3 verso]

*cubren la mar o que ella los brota[.] Suben a el [?]  
a rrescatar hierro porque este es su oro porque lo esti-  
man en mas que no el y de este se sirven en todas =  
su labranças y (h)eras. traen muchos cocos y agua  
fresca muy buena, algunos pescados que cojen con  
ansuelo y algun arroz[.]cebo a su modo[.] y enbuelben-  
los [en] unas ojas y arrojanlo al navio por hierro y traen  
tambien algunas frutas, como plantanos y otras =  
que no las conociamos[.] en llegando como a tiro de pie-  
dra, se leban en pie y dan grandes boces diziendo arre-  
peque arrepeque que dizen algunos que quiere de-  
zir amigos amigos, otros quita alla el arcabuz[.] sea  
lo uno o lo otro, ellos gritan y dizen arrepeque[.] traen  
en la mano una calabaza grande de agua y cocos =  
o pescado[.] al fin cada uno trae muestra aquello =  
que tiene. primero que se aserquen dan muchos  
bordes con estrana presteza y belocidad y en biendo =  
hierro se acercan y rrescatan por el hierro lo que traen  
amarrandose para mejor rrescatar de un cabo del  
navio por la popa y de alli y de todo el navio les arojan  
abundancia de clavos biejos y aros partidos de pipas  
y todo esto es muy de ber porque en assiando la sog  
donde ba atado el hierro la cortan con los dientes como  
si fuese un rrabano y atan a ella los cocos y lo que  
les piden por señas[.] tienen una cosa estrana para ser tan  
codiciosos de hierro que no dan mas por un gran pedaço  
que por un pequeño y esto se provo alli con ellos y si les  
echan un pedaço a la mar[.] son tan grandes buços y  
nadadores que antes que lleguen muy abajo =  
lo cojen y se buelven a su navio[.] y asi lo hizo alli  
uno que echandose lo amayno la bela y la echo +*





[Leaf 4 recto]

*al agua y luego el se arrojó tras ella y cojo su hierro =  
y entro en el navio y sacando la vela mojada del agua  
y era grande y al parecer tuvieron que sacar 3 o 4  
hombres y el solo la saco con mucha facilidad y la  
also y sin rrescatar mas hierro se bolvió[.] allí deseaba-  
mos saber si tenían algun conocimiento de las armas que  
usamos y para esto tome una espada desnuda y hize  
que se la quería arrojar, y al punto que la bieron dieron  
un alarito alçando grandes boces y era que todos querian  
que la arrojase pero cada uno la quería particularmente  
y para esto ofrecieron con señas toda el agua y fru-  
tas, pescado y mas. uno que penso llevarsela con =  
aquello saco de debajo muchos petates y algunas  
arquillas curiosas y todo lo ofrecia. al fin se fueron  
sin ella y despues bolvieron otras dos vezes con el  
mismo deseo y ofreciendo lo que tenían[.] todas estas  
muestras dieron de desear mucho la espada y tan =  
bien un cuchillo biejo que uno rrescato lo aparto ap.se [por sí?]  
y sobre el ubieron derre[stimiento?] entre ellos. al fin se quedo  
con el el que lo tomo que al parecer devia de ser mas  
principal y baliente y aun de mejor entendimiento porque lo  
que quería rrescatar baylaba con ello y hazia muchos  
meneos al parecer por aficionar a que se lo comprasen  
y dando a entender que estimavan ellos aquello y que  
era bueno. ella es gente muy corpulenta y de grandes  
y fornidos miembros bastante yndicio y argumento  
de su mucha fuerça y el tenalla es cierto por lo que les an  
visto hazer españoles que estuvieron surtos seis me-  
ses en una de estas yslas a los quales ellos acometieron  
algunas vezes pero sin daño nuestro y con alguno suyo por  
la vestialidad que tenían en meterse por las bocas de  
los arcabuzes hasta tanto que cayeron algunos lo que  
puso poco mas freno y conocimiento de lo que hera*



[Leaf 4 verso]

*pero volviendo a lo de la fuerças es gente que toma uno un coco berde u seco cuvierto de una corteça de 4 dedos u poco menos de grueso y tan tejido que es menester si es seco partillo con = una acha y le dan tantos golpes antes que le desnudan de solo la corteça y ellos de una punada me afirman le parten todo y dan con el en la cavesa y hazen lo mismo[.] tambien dicen que un dia estando rrescatando en tierra con los españoles uno de estos yndios se aparto y adelanto de los demas y tres hombres se abraçaron con el para cojello y tenello para traello consigo y el se abraço con ellos y los llebaba arrastrando y el yva corriendo de manera que para que los soltase fue menester acudiesen otros con arcabuces y entonces los solto[.] esto es = lo que toca a las fuerças[.] su talle como digo es mucho mas grande que el nuestro[.] Son] hombres muy bien echos de todo el cuerpo y mejor de piernas que esto es gracia general en ellos los yndios de esta tierra[.] la cara ancha y chata aunque otros bien agestados pero todos muy morenos[.] la boca muy grande y los dientes los labran agusandolos como de perro y mas y los tinen con un barniz colorado que no se quita, que es para conservar la dentadura sin que jamas se cayga diente por biejo que sea. Otros los tinen de = negro que tiene la misma propiedad que el colorado y esto hazen tambien los moros desta tierra[.] el cavello tienen muy largo y = unos suelto. otros le dan una lasada detras. no visten asi hombres como mugeres genero de rropa ni otra cosa alguna ni cubren parte ninguna de su cuerpo sino como nacen andan[.] tien[en] pocas armas y son solo sus arcos con unas puntas y las flechas de gueso de pescado[.] unos dardillos arrojados y ponenle su punta quanto un gеме de gueso de pescado y muy fuerte y de palo tostado. usan honda y esta desembracan con gran pujança[.] traen servidas unas talegas con piedras al proposito. no se save que tengan otras armas salvo si an echo algunos cuchillo u otra cosa del hierro que rrescatan[.] dizese una cosa bien estrana de estas yslas, que no hay en ellas ningun genero de animal ora sea nocibo o provechoso ni tanpoco ave o pajaro alguno[.] esto no lo vimos porque no surjimos pero lo afirman los que alli estuvieron ser esto[.] asi esta la noticia que hasta agora se tiene de la gente de estas yslas que llaman de Ladrones.—*



Said to be natives of Guam, but probably Filipinos instead. *The Quirino Collection in the Ayala Museum in Manila identifies this plate as depicting natives of Guam. However, I think that they are natives of the Philippines. Their breech-cloths remind one of latter-day Yapese. (Boxer Codex. By permission)*

## Translation of the codex

[Leaf 3 recto]

### Account of the islands of the Ladrones

This type of people called the Ladrones live in some islands that are 400 leagues before arriving at the Cape of Espiritu Santo, and they are the first ones sighted by the ships coming from Acapulco to the Philippine islands. They usually do their watering at some port in the islands where there are many good ones, and when it is not done, as for this voyage which was done in the year of '90, [it is so] because water is not needed, as it is only for it that they do make port.

They come out to sea two or three leagues in some small canoes, so narrow that they would not be two and a half palms in width at the top and whose shape is as illustrated [see above]. On the sides they have a counterweight made of [bamboo] canes. Although they are sure of capsizing, it is something of little importance to them because they are like fishes in the water and if by chance it fills with water, the Indian jumps off and takes it out with half of a coconut [shell] which they use as a bowl [i.e. bailer], or else with the paddle they use for rowing.

These canoes come with a lateen sail of mats made with palm [leaves]. Many such sails are used in these parts. The Moros<sup>1</sup> make them with many colors and charming designs that look very good, specially the Moros of Borneo and of Ternate. These ships [sic] are so light that they come out two or three leagues from port and in one moment they are alongside the ship, although it is under sail. They have another characteristic in their navigation which is that they do not need for sailing any wind other than the one that currently blows, no matter its condition, and with it they work the sail to go in the direction they want, in such a way that they appear like very tame and trained horses.

Well then, so many of these ships come out at the appearance of a tall ship that it seems as if they [Leaf 3 verso] cover the sea or that they sprout from it. They come up to it to barter [for] iron because iron is their gold and they esteem it above anything else; they use it in all their farm plots and garden patches. They bring many coconuts, very good fresh water, some fishes which they catch with a hook and some rice—a type of bait they have—and they wrap them in some leaves and throw it at the ship for iron. They also bring some fruits, like bananas and others that we did not recognize.

When they first come up, at about a stone's throw, they get up and start shouting loudly, saying "*arrepeque arrepeque*" which some say means "friends, friends" but

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1 Ed. note: The author refers to the Moslem natives of the Southern Philippines and their *vintas* or *vireys*, those of the Moluccas with their *coracoras*, etc.

others say "take away the arquebus". Whatever it may mean, they shout and say "*ar-repeque*".<sup>1</sup>

They carry in their hand a large gourd full of water, coconuts or fish, in short, every one shows a sample of whatever he has. At first, when they are coming up, they tack many times with a surprising skill and speed. When they see the iron they come near and barter what they bring for the iron, making fast to a cable at the poop of the ship in order to barter better from there. From all over the ship they throw out an abundance of old nails and bits of barrel hoops and all of this is something worth seeing because, upon taking hold of the rope to which the iron is fastened they cut it with their teeth as if it were a radish and they tie to it the coconuts and what is being asked of them by signs.

There is this strange thing about their greediness for iron; it is that they do not give more for a big piece than for a small one and this was proven with them at that time. If a piece is thrown into the sea at them, they are such great divers and swimmers that before they get very far down they grab it and return to their ship. One of them did so at that time and, as he threw himself in, his sail came down and he threw it into [Leaf 4 recto] the water. Then he threw himself after it and picked up his iron and went back into his ship and took out the wet sail from the water. That sail was big and apparently 3 or 4 men would have been required to take it out and he took it out by himself very easily, raised it and, without bartering anything more, went off.

At that time we wished to find out if they had any knowledge of the weapons we use and for this [purpose] I took out a naked sword and did as if I wanted to throw it. As soon as they saw it they raised an outcry, shouting loudly. As it were, everybody wanted it for himself and for this they offered me with signs all the water, fruits, fish and more. One who thought he could get it for himself took out from below many mats and some curious little chests<sup>2</sup> and he was offering it all. In short, they went away without it but later they returned a couple of times with the same desire, offering what they had. They gave all these indications of desiring the sword very much and also an old knife that one bartered for. He took it away for himself [?] but there was a collision among themselves about it. At the end, he who had taken it remained in possession of it; he seemed have been a leading man and a brave one, one with superior understanding even, because whatever he wanted to barter, he danced with it and he made many wriggling motions as if to endear himself and have it bought from him; such is the way they made us believe that they held that thing as valuable and that it was good.

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1 Ed. note: The meaning of "ari pek" is "don't shoot", literally "no gun". The word for friend was "chamor" (See Doc. 1565Q). The word "pek" was probably a new word for them, which they invented when they first heard the report made by an arquebus. The same thing happened exactly at Kosrae in 1824; the natives there invented the word "pak" after seeing and hearing their first shotgun fired by their first foreign visitors.

2 Ed. note: They were called "agu" in Chamorro (See Doc. 1565Q) and were probably made of tortoise shell.

They are a very corpulent people, with big and well-developped limbs, a sufficient indication and argument in favor of their great strength. That they have it is certain, from what they have been seen to do by the Spaniards who were anchored six months at one of these islands.<sup>1</sup> The Spaniards were attacked by them a few times, without any damage on our side but some on theirs on account of the stupidity with which they placed themselves in front of the muzzles of the arquebuses until so many fell down, something which put a brake on them somewhat and gave them a knowledge of what it was about.

[Leaf 4 verso] However, to go back to the matter of their strength, they are a people who can take a coconut, green or dry, covered with a husk about 4 fingers in thickness, more or less, and so interwoven that it is necessary, if dry, in order to cut it open with an axe, to give it so many blows just to remove its husk; as far as they are concerned, I am told that they only need one punch to split it, and they crack it open with their head to get the same result. They also narrate that, one day when they were bartering ashore with the Spaniards, one of these Indians stepped forward, ahead of the others. Three men grabbed hold of him with their arms in order to catch him and seize him to take him along with them. He in turn grabbed them and was dragging them off and running away [with them] so that in order to make him release them it became necessary for others to intervene with arquebuses and then he let them go. This is what pertains to their strength. As for their size, as I have said, it is much superior to ours; [they are] men very well developped all over their body, with very good legs which is a specially-good feature general among the Indians of this land. Their face is wide and flat although others are well formed but they are all very brown. The mouth is very big and the teeth are sharpened like those of a dog and more so, and they stain them with a red varnish that cannot be removed and which is to preserve their set of teeth; they never lose one tooth no matter how old they are. Others stain them black, which has the same property as the red [varnish]. This is something that the Moros of this land [i.e. Philippines] do as well.<sup>2</sup> They keep their hair very long; some wear it loose and others tie it with one loop at the back.

They do not wear any type of clothes whatever, either the men or the women, nor anything else, nor do they cover any part of their body; rather, the way they are born is the way they go about.

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1 Ed. note: A reference to the aftermath of the shipwreck of the San Pablo at Guam in 1568 (See Doc. 1568A).

2 Ed. note: The filing of teeth is still done in many parts of Indonesia.

They have few weapons other than their bows with some points and arrows whose tips are made of fish bone<sup>1</sup>, some small throwing darts which they cap with a point as much as one span in length made of fish bone<sup>2</sup>, very strong and with a fire-hardened shaft. They use the sling and they fling it with a great force. They take along some bags with stones for the purpose. It is not known if they have other weapons, unless they have made some knives or something else out of the iron that they barter for.

A very strange thing is said about these islands; it is that there is not any kind of animal, be they harmful or useful, nor any fowl or bird either; we did not see this because we did not anchor, but those who were here say that it is so.<sup>3</sup>

Such is the news that up to now is known about the people of these islands they call the Ladrões.

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- 1 Ed. note: One illustration above shows a bow and arrows, but such a weapon may be fanciful, as such a weapon has seldom, if ever, been described for the Ladrões. This may have been wishful thinking on the part of the author, more familiar with the Indians of America and of the Philippines, some of whom used bows and arrows.
  - 2 Ed. note: These were not darts but medium-sized spears whose tips were made of human bones.
  - 3 Ed. note: They had not seen either the local doves or the flightless rail peculiar to Guam. Shore birds, i.e. sea-birds, were, of course, always present. This is another example of a story that became exaggerated with the telling.