
Document 1575

Cartography of the Pacific—Part 3

Juan López de Velasco's maps

Sources: The maps included here are from the 14 maps found with many of the copies of the López de Velasco manuscript entitled: "Demarcación y división de las Indias". There exist 4-5 copies of this manuscript, e.g. in BN Madrid (Códice J.15); in AGI; in the Provincial Library in Toledo; one in private hands in Spain in 1894; another in the John Carter Brown Library in Providence, Rhode Island. First published without the maps in Col. de Indias, vol. 15 (Madrid, 1871), pp. 409-572.

Note: This manuscript was used by Herrera in his "Historia general" of 1601 (and in the Latin and French editions, Amsterdam, 1622), but the material and the maps date from ca. 1575.

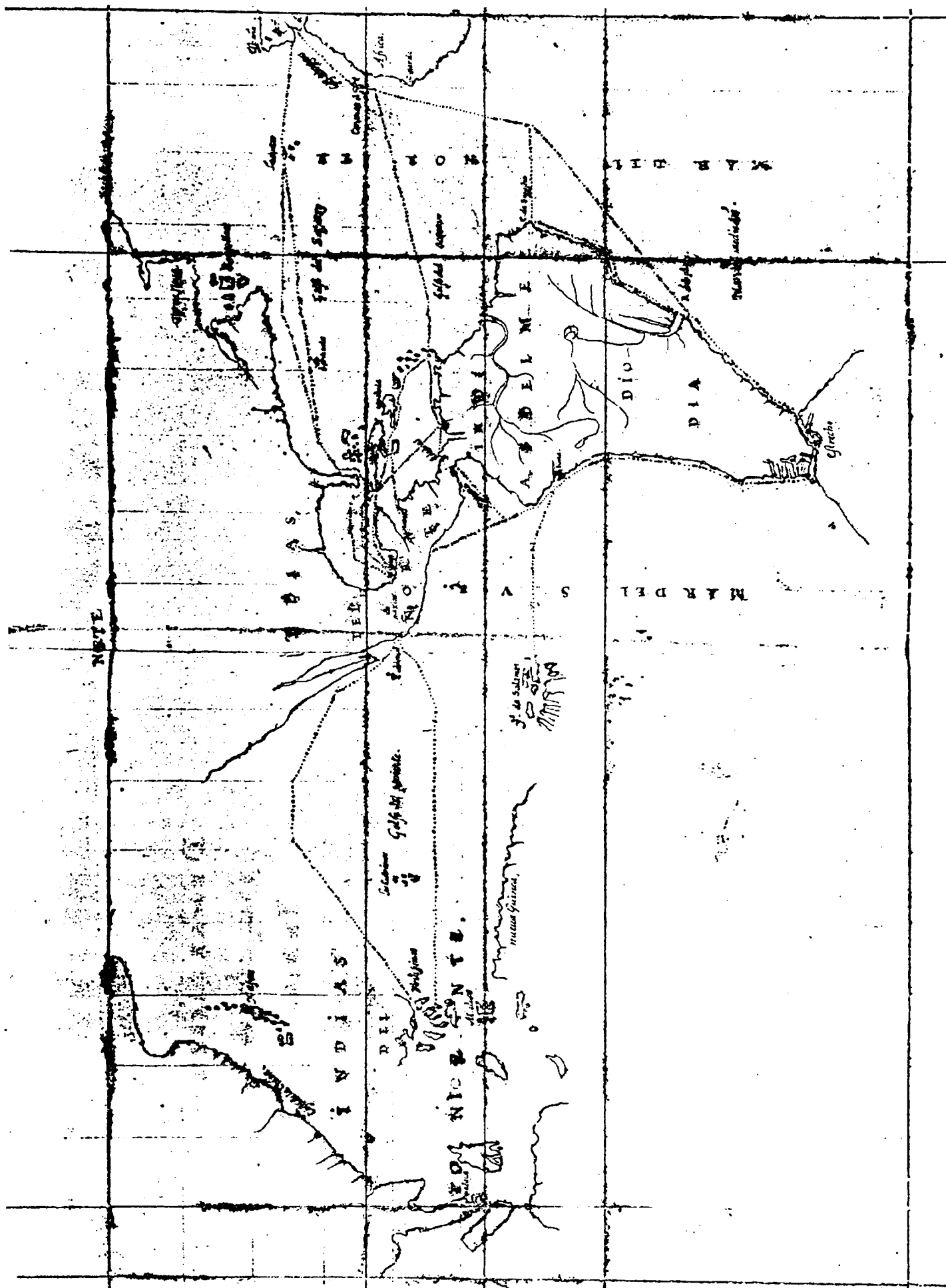
Demarcation and division of the Indies.

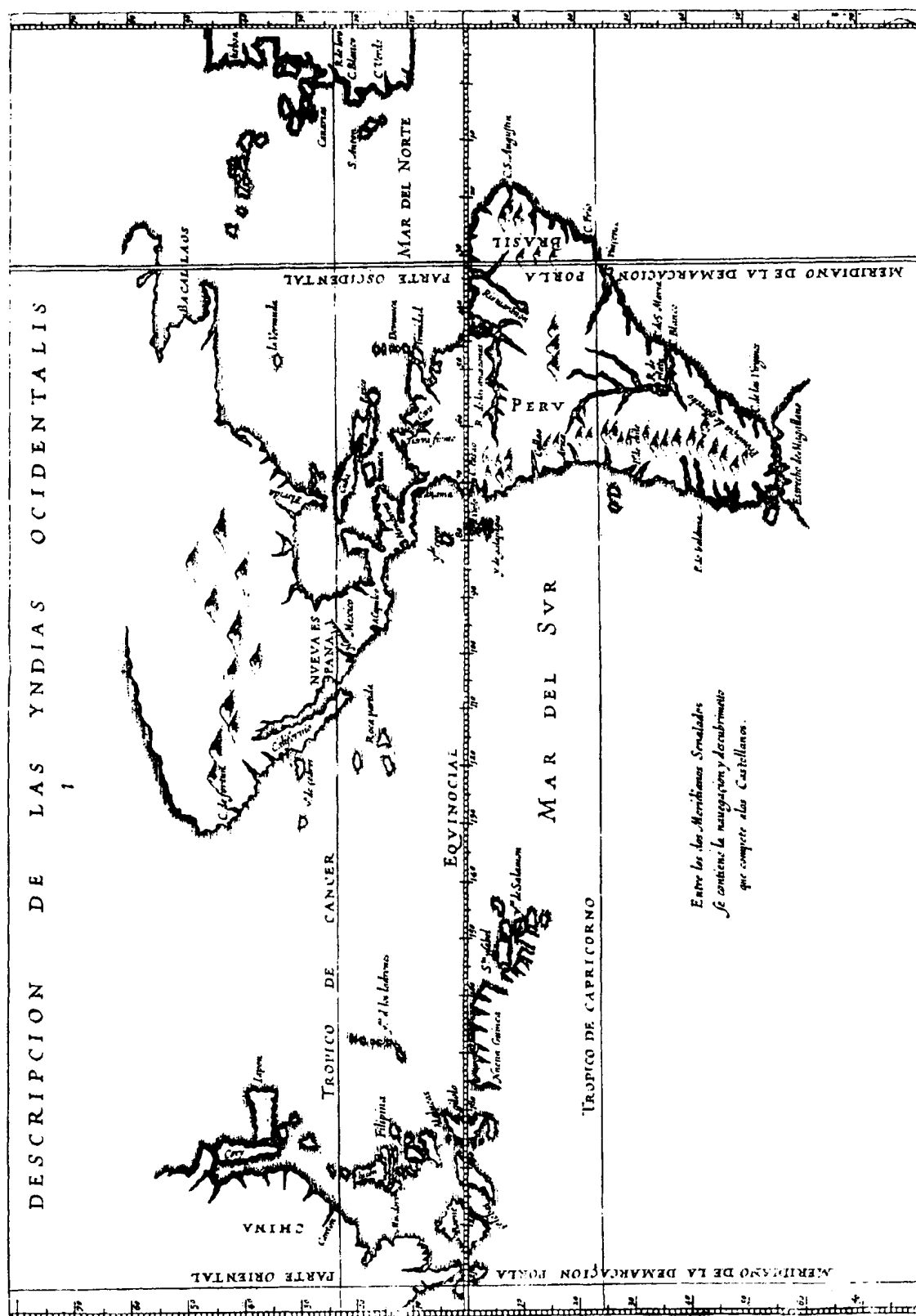
The Indies, islands and the mainland of the ocean sea, which are commonly referred to as the New World, are the lands and seas included within the demarcation of the Kings of Castile, which is one hemisphere, or half of the world, and begins to the westward of a meridian which passes 39 or 40 degrees of longitude west of the meridian of Toledo...

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(Next two pages) **The López de Velasco general map of the Indies, ca. 1575.** *The Spanish galleon routes in the Atlantic and Pacific are shown. Note that the Atlantic was then called the North Sea, as opposed to the Pacific, then called the South Sea; this was with reference to the Isthmus of Panama. North America was called the North Indies, South America the South Indies, and strangest of all were the West Indies, which corresponded to our modern East Indies or Southeast Asia. (From Figure 110 of Skelton's Explorers' Maps and Plate XII of Wroth's Early Cartography).*

The Velasco general map as published by Herrera in 1622. *It is nearly the same as the manuscript map, without the galleon routes and the Indies terminology. The demarcation lines are, however, emphasized, to show the Spanish claim to most of Southeast Asia. (From Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas' Description des Indes Occidentales, Amsterdam, 1622)*





Islands of the Ladrones.

468. The islands of the Ladrones, a range of 15 or 16 islets together that run North-South, at the average meridian of [New] Guinea, from 11 or 12 degrees to 17 of latitude north, or more, not far from the Philippines, and east of them. All of the land is sterile and miserable, without any cattle or metal, [with] few supplies, inhabited by poor people, well-built, naked and very much inclined to stealing, even going so far as removing the nails from the ships that arrive there, for which reason Magellan named them Ladrones [i.e. Thieves' Islands] when he discovered them when he was bound for the Spice Islands.

Their names¹ are: the Inglesa², Camas³, Septentrional⁴, and behind this one Otra or Ora mas⁵, Chemechoa or Chenchia⁶, Gregua [=Agrigan], Agan or Pagan, Oramagan [=Alamagan], Guguan, Cheruguan [=Sarigan], Natan [=Anatahan], Saepan [=Saipan], Botavolid [i.e. Rota and/or Guam].⁷

Between these islands and the Philippines, there are 18 or 20 more islands which they call Los Reyes [=Ulithi] and the Coral Archipelago or Islands and the Jardines⁸. There is another group of islets, Samsilan.⁹ There is another islet near the Jardines, and that of Matalotes [=Fais], plus that of San Juan or [rather and] Palmas, near those of the Moluccas.¹⁰

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- 1 Ed. note: The names are given from north to south, and are much garbled. Only 11 names are given on the accompanying map. They are to be compared to the names recorded by Cabot in 1544 and the earlier, and more accurate, Portuguese map of 1522 in 1:439 of this series.
 - 2 Ed. note: Which means the English One and is probably one of the three Maug Islands.
 - 3 Ed. note: This name Comoa on the Portuguese map. It must correspond to Maug Island proper. Note that the Maug Islands are shown as Mahao on the accompanying map.
 - 4 Ed. note: Which means the Northern One and corresponds to one of the Maug Is.
 - 5 Ed. note: Misprints for Hora or Uracas, which the copyist mistook for the Spanish words which mean "another".
 - 6 Ed. note: These words are corrupted versions of Sonson, the original name of Asunción.
 - 7 Ed. note: Tinian and Aguijan are not mentioned.
 - 8 Ed. note: Both groups belong to the Marshalls.
 - 9 Ed. note: Written Sanvilan, or something like it, on the manuscript map, and Pulo Vilan, i.e. Vilan Island, in Herrera and elsewhere. It has no correspondence to any real island.
 - 10 Ed. note: San Juan corresponds to Siargao Island, NE of Mindanao. On the map, it is listed as n° 10 of the Philippine Islands. Palmas Island is E of Sarangani and is the same as Meangi or Miangas Island; it was a Portuguese discovery (See 1:634-5). Also, although the maps show Arrecifes and Saavedra as island groups, the text does not mention them.

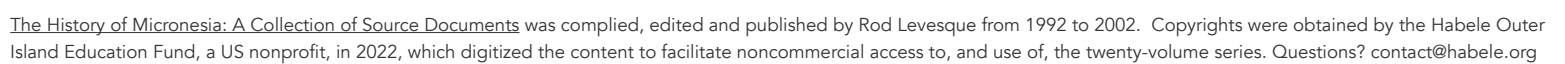
On the northern side of the Ladrones, there are 5 or 6 islets together, called the Volcano Islands, where there is much cochineal.¹ And then there is Malpelo², another islet where there are fine *cinaloës*.³

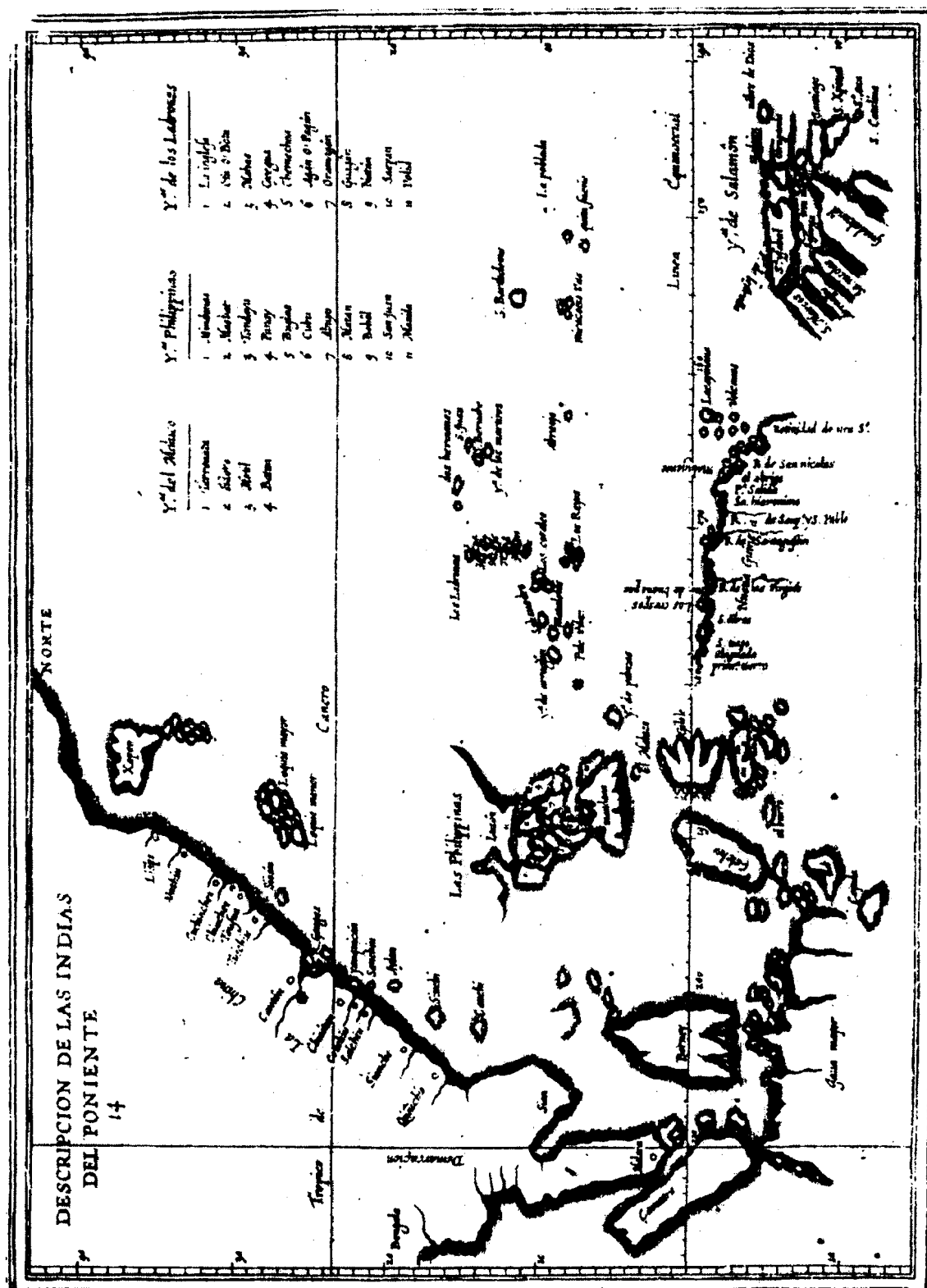
On the eastern side of the Ladrones, there are two islets they call Dos Hermanas [i.e. Two Sisters] in 24 or 25 degrees. Another one is San Bernabe, another Los Martires⁴ and Abreojo, a shoal in 10°, over 200 leagues before the Ladrones; also San Bartolomé [=Taongi] in 14°; and further toward New Spain, the shoals Mira como vas [=Minto Reef], Quita Sueño or Cata no Duermas [i.e. Takes away sleep or Careful you don't sleep]; and near them the island of Martin⁵, and San Pedro y San Pablo [=Ailuk], another islet with shoals; and La Poblada [the Inhabited One, i.e. Mejit], the easternmost one toward New Spain.

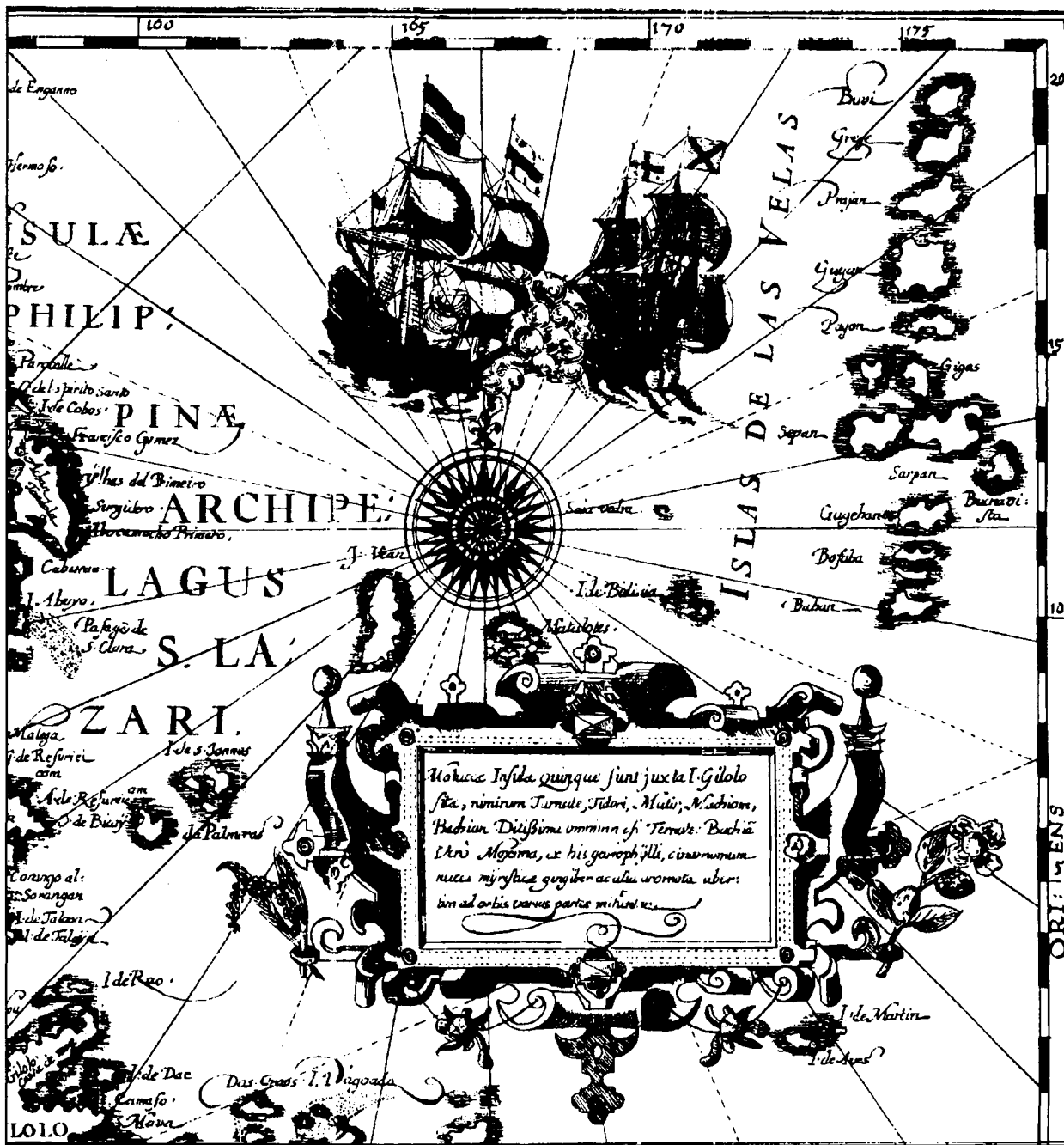
(Next two pages) **Velasco's manuscript map of the West [sic] Indies, ca. 1575.**
The map records the founding of Manila in 1571, in that the southern part of Luzon is charted for the first time. The discovery of the Solomon Islands by Mendaña in 1568 is also recorded in detail, no doubt from an original chart.

The same Velasco map of the West Indies as published by Herrera in 1601.
It was re-published in a Latin and a French edition of the same work in Amsterdam in 1622.

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- 1 Ed. note: A type of insect, a wood-louse, whose crushed body was used to make a red dye. However, the word "cochinilla" could be a misprint for the archaic word "chinilla" which meant small pebbles. Either way, who could have landed on Iwo Jima before 1575 to ascertain this fact? It may have been Bernardo de la Torre in 1543.
 - 2 Ed. note: A possible corruption of Malabrigo.
 - 3 Ed. note: Perhaps aloes, unless they found a pebble beach there too.
 - 4 Ed. note: Originally this was the name given to Pulap by Arellano.
 - 5 Ed. note: Probably a duplicate of Martyr Island.

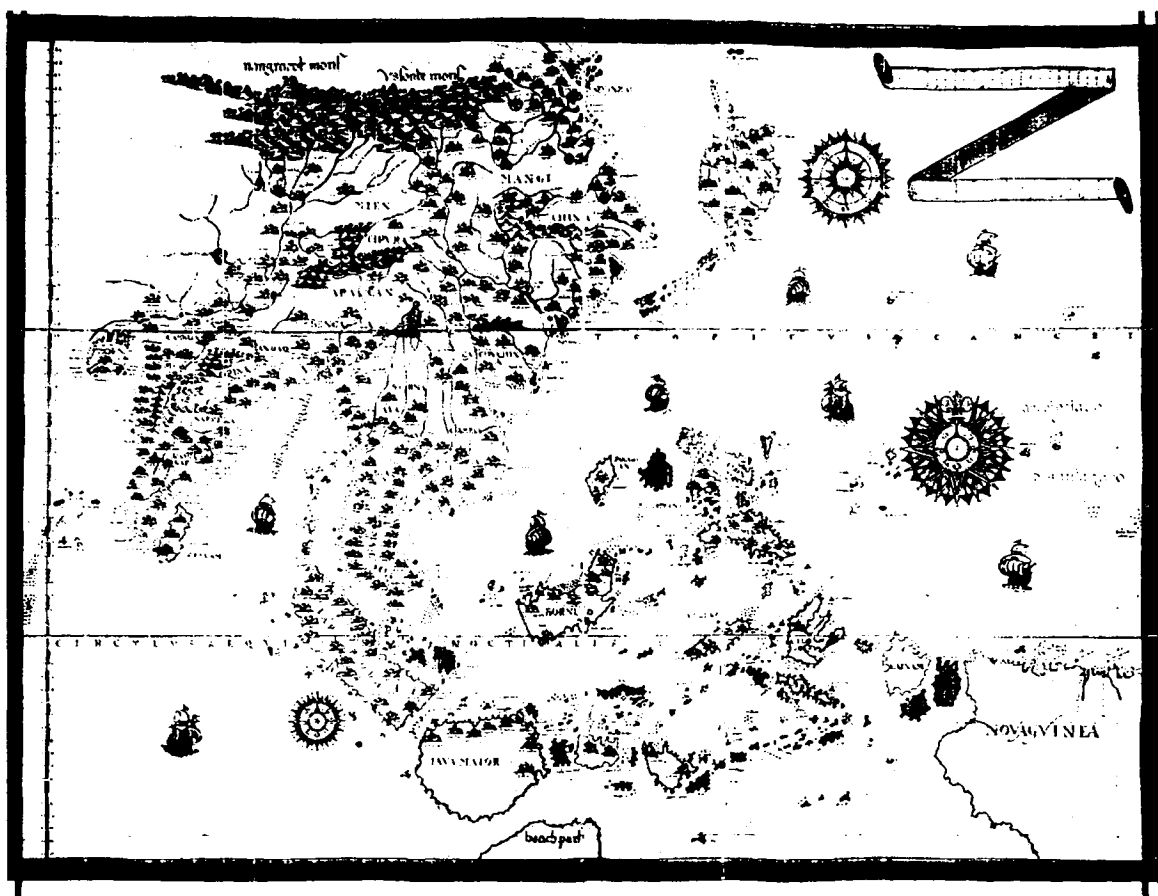






(Facing page) **Part of a map of the western Pacific showing the Islands of Sails or Ladrones, ca. 1580.** *The island names have become so confused that they are hardly recognizable. Gugeham, at 12° N, corresponds to Guam. The islands south of Guam never existed, although the names shown here may have come from the Cabot map of 1544. My theory is that the island names were often looked at upside down and some imagination was called upon when placing a name next to every reported island in the chain. Buvi, for the northernmost island, is a "new" name, probably derived from Hora, for Uracas. The islands facing the word Gigas correspond to Sarigan and Anatahan. Saipan is represented by Sepan, and by Sarpan as well, although the latter name is that assigned by the Spanish for a long time to Rota. An interesting name is that given to Tinian: "Buenavista"; this name must have come from a Spanish chart. We can therefore speculate that the charts stolen by Drake in 1579 have been used by the cartographer. Also, west of Guam are two "new" groups: Saia vedra, which must be a misprint for Saavedra, and I. de Bidivia, which probably comes from I. de Vilan or Pulo Vilan of earlier charts, and which does not exist either. Matalotes is Fais, and west of it we look for Ulithi under its various names of Arrecifes and Los Reyes, only to find a large island marked "I. Vean"; this is either Pulo Vilan transposed, or Reyes misprinted.*

Interestingly, there are some names that come from early Spanish charts seized by the Portuguese, and early Portuguese charts centered on the Moluccas (See Part 2 in Vol. 1). North of New Guinea is I. Dagoada which means the Watering Place Island, Das Graos which means the Island at 2 Degrees. The right arm of Halmahera or Gilo-lo is Çamafo, of course. Mora is Morotai misplaced, as well as its neighboring islets of Dae [=Doi] and Rao. The first two names north of the Moluccas are part of the Talaud Group. Sarangani and its sister island, Candigar, are recognizable south of Mindanao. The region of Bisaya and the Bay of the Resurrection mentioned by Father Urdaneta appear on the east coast of Mindanao. East of Mindanao is Palmas I. [=Miangas] and the St. John Islands, originally recorded as the name of Sonsorol, but more and more confused with Siargao I. whose real location is at the NE corner of Mindanao. South of Abuyo or Leyte is the Passage of Santa Clara. Cabalien is recorded as Caburan (?). Similarly, Tandola is recognizable as Tandaya, i.e. Samar. Another misprint can be deciphered as "Abocamiento primero", the first mouth of the channel used by the first explorers to enter the St. Lazarus or Philippine Archipelago. Similarly, the place where Legazpi first anchored is recorded in a mixture of Spanish and Portuguese as "Ilhas del Primeiro Surgidero", the Islands of the First Anchorage. Legazpi's Island of Cobos is placed north of that. However, the name of Francisco Gomez appear in-between; this was the name of the soldier in Legazpi's company who was treacherously killed by a Filipino native while he was performing the blood ceremony (See Doc. 1565W). At the NE corner of Samar is Cape of Espiritu Santo.



Map of Juan Martinez, 1580. (Close-up on facing page).

1. "Las Dos Ermanas", meaning *Two Sisters*, are also from *De la Torre* and corresponded to *Agrigan* and *Asunción* in the Northern Marianas. They are misplaced on all the existing charts.

2 & 4. "Los Volcanos" are the *Volcano Islands*, *Kazan Retto*, i.e. *Iwo Jima* and sister islands. "La Farfana", whose probable origin was *La Huerfana* or *Orphan Island*, was originally one of the *Bonin Islands*.

3. "Malabrigo", meaning *Bad Shelter*, comes from the return voyage attempted by *Bernardo de la Torre* in 1543.

5. "Illa di boni segni": Italian for *Island of the Good Signs*, the *Homonhon I.* of *Magellan*.

6, 7 & 8. "Cenalo" one of the *Visayas*, misplaced too far east. Similarly, "Bibalion" and "Abarien": the *Cabalien* area of *Leyte*, misplaced too far east.

9. "Illa de Arrecifes": the *Reef Islands* or *Ulithi*.

10. "Illa de Matalotes": *Sailors Island* or *Fais*.

11. "La Mala", meaning the *Bad One*, lat. 14°N (perhaps *Rota I.*).

12. "Restinga de Ladrones" = *Thieves' Barrier Reef*, or the *Marianas*.

13 & 14. "Los Jardines" and "Ysoli di los Corales" are *Villalobos' Wotho* and *Likiep* respectively.

