
Document 1538

Galvão sent Captain Castro on a gospel mission to the Philippines

Note: Although the mission was aimed mostly at the Philippines, it was to have some influence in the western Carolines, as will be seen under Villalobos, 1542-43. Source: Galvão's Tratado (cont'd).

Galvão's text

No mesmo anno de 538 mandou Antonio galuam, que estaua por capitã em Maluco cõtra a norte hum nauio, & capitã dele Frãscisco de castro, cõ regimento que fizesse quantos christãos podesse, por ser dalguns daquelas partes requerido pa isso, & o mesmo Antonio galuão ter muitos feitos .s. dos celebres¹ Macasares, Amboynos, Moros Morotax, & outras diuersas partes. Chegado Francisco de castro à ylha de Mid-anao, & outras que descobrio acima dellas, tomarã seis Reys agoa de baptismo cõ molheres, filhos, vassalos, & o mais deles mandou Antonio galuã por nome Ioannes, em memoria do terceiro que em Portugal reynaua, tanto trazia na sua [memoria].

Os Portugueses & Castelhanos que por estas ylhas andaram, contaum que auia nellas porcos, que alem dos dentes que tinhã na boca, lhe sayã outros dous pelos focinhos, & outros tãtos por detras das orelhas, & tinhã de cõprido palmo & meo. E auia huma aruore que o meo dela que estaua cõtra o oriente, era muy medicinal, & cõtra toda peçonha, o outro meo da aruore que estaua cõtra o ponente he muy peçonhenta, & o fruto daquela bãda o qual he todo como tramosso, & se faz delle mais forte peçonha que ha na redõdeza, & assi se dizia que auia outra aruore que quem comia seu fruto estaua doze oras fora de si, & fazia cousas de homem sem siso, quando tornaua nam daua nenhum acordo disso, & auia huns cangrejos da terra que quem os comia, tambem estaua certas oras da mesma maneira. Assi deziã os da terra que auia ahi huma pedra que quem se assentaua nela criãua potra, os homens destas ylhas douram os dentes, & at-rauessam sua natura cõ huma barra douro ou prata, & nas pontas rebatem humas rosas, com que ensanguentam huma molher toda.

1 Ed. note: Typographical error for Celebes.

Translation of the above text

In the same year of 1538, António Galvão, who was captain of the Moluccas, ordered a ship, whose captain was Francisco de Castro, to go northward with instructions to make as many Christian [converts] as he could, because he had been requested to do so by many from those parts. As for António Galvão himself, he had done many [Christians] already, for instance, in the Celebes, Macassar, Amboyna, Moro or Morotai, and in other parts.

Francisco de Castro, having arrived at the island of Mindanao, and others that are [located] above it¹, six kings took the water of baptism with their wives, children, vassals; to most of them António Galvão had instructed they be named John, in honor of John III who was reigning in Portugal, and would be so remembered.

The Portuguese and Spanish who have visited these islands narrate that there are some [wild] pigs there that, in addition to the teeth they have inside the mouth, they have two other teeth coming out of the snout, and as many others at the back of the ears that measure one and a half palms in length.²

There was a tree whose half that was facing east was very medicinal [in quality] and [good] against all poisons; the other half of the tree that was facing west has very poisonous quality and the fruit on that side, which is much like wild peas³ is used to make the strongest poison in the world. They also reported another tree whose fruit is such that, if one should eat it, he would be twelve hours besides himself, and would do things like a madman; when he would return to himself, he was left without any memory of it all. There were also some land crabs with similar properties; whoever eats them are also left a few hours in a similar predicament.⁴ Also the people of that land said that there was a stone that, when someone sat on it, would give hernia. The men of those islands [i.e. the Filipinos] put gold on their teeth, and pierce their nature [i.e. penis] with a gold or silver rod, whose tips are like roses and with which they make a woman bleed a lot.



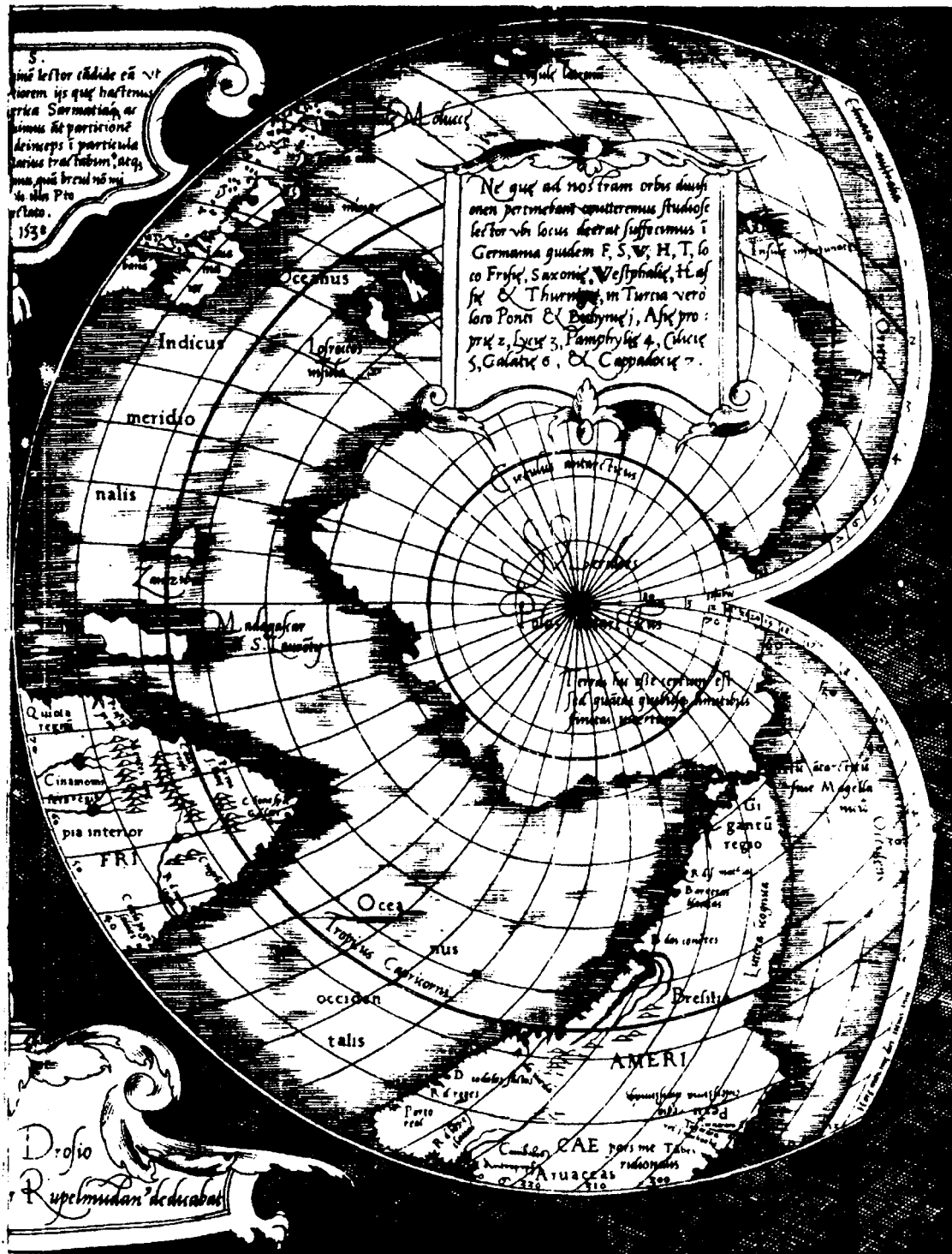
King John III of Portugal

1 Ed. note: It appears from this comment that Castro went to the Visayas as well.

2 Ed. note: In this case, one palm equals one span or about 8 inches, so that the length of the back tusks of those pigs was about 1 foot.

3 Ed. note: The word "tramosso" is a typographical error for "tremoço", nowadays "tremoço", Lat. *Jupinus*. I have checked the Handbook on Philippine Medicinal Plants, by Padua et al. and the closest plant I can find is the *Leucaena leucocephala*, called *loyloy* in the Visayas and *ipil-ipil* in Tagalog. A decoction of its bark and/or roots is said to induce menstruation, even abortion.

4 Ed. note: Santiesteban wrote in 1547 (See Doc. 1543C) that some who ate land crabs went mad for one day after partaking of them, specially if they had eaten the "vitals".



Mercator's map of 1538 (southern hemisphere). This was the first map of the world, available to the public, to show America and Magellan's discoveries in the Pacific. The Ladrones are at the top. (From Lloyd A. Brown's *Story of Maps*)



Emperor Charles V by Van Dyck, ca. 1540.