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## Documents 1584B

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# Francisco Gali's voyage of 1584 and Pedro de Unamuno's voyage of 1587, in search of islands of gold and silver

*Sources: Wagner's Spanish Voyages to the Northwest, Chapter VII, has given a full bibliographical note; Gali's diary of the 1584 voyage is not to be found in the archives of Spain, probably because it was a Mexican project of Archbishop Moya, the future Viceroy; it is no longer extant. It is presumed that when Gali died at Manila in 1585, Unamuno brought this diary to Macao, where it somehow got into the hands of some Dutchman and was conveyed to Linschoten who was then living in Goa. Linschoten translated Gali's diary into Dutch, in his Reysgheschrift (Amsterdam, 1595) which was translated into English in J. Huighen Van Linschoten's Discourse of Voyages to the East and West Indies (London, J. Wolfe, 1598), Book 3, chap. 54, as quoted by Captain Burney in his Vol. 1, chap. 3; this was re-published by Hakluyt under Foreign Voyages, in 1600, as part of his Principal Voyages and Navigations. Other pertinent sources quoted below.*

## Gali apparently went to Manila aboard the San Martin in 1582

*Source: Richard Hakluyt's The Foreign Voyages, pp. 290- 291.<sup>1</sup>*

The true and perfect description of a voyage performed and done by Francisco de Gualle [sic] a Spanish Captaine and Pilot, for the Vice-roy of New Spaine, to the Islands of the Luçones or Philippinas, unto the Haven of Manilla, & from thence to the Haven of Macao in China, and from Macao backe againe to Acapulco, accomplished in the yeere of our Lord, 1584.

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<sup>1</sup> Ed. note: As for Captain Burney, he summarizes this story thus: "Francisco Gali sailed from Acapulco on March the 10th, 1582, and steered WSW to the latitude of 16°N., and afterwards West and W by S, till they made the southernmost of the Ladrone Islands, from whence he proceeded to the Philippines, and afterwards to Macao. He sailed from Macao, on his return to New Spain, July the 24th, 1584.

## Chap. I.

The tenth of March in the yeere of our Lorde 1582 wee set sayle out of the haven of Acapulco, lying in the countrey of New Spaine, directing our course towards the Islands of Luçones, or Philippinas West Southwest, running in that maner for the space of twentie five leagues, till wee came under sixteene degrees, that so wee might shunne the calmes by sayling close by the shoare. From thence forward we held our course West for the space of 30 leagues, & being there, we ran West, and West & by South, for the space of 1800 leagues, to the land called Isla de Enganno [i.e. Guam], which is the furthest Iland lying in the South parts of ye Ilands called **De los Ladrones**, that is, The Ilands of rovers, or Islas de las Velas, under 13. degrees and 1/2. in latitude Septentrionall, and 164. degrees in longitude Orientall, upon the fixed Meridionall line, which lyeth right with the Iland of Terçera [in the Azores]. From thence we helde our course Westward for the space of 280. leagues, till we came to the point called El capo de Espirito Santo, that is, The point of the holy Ghost, lying in the Iland Tandaya, the first Iland of those that are called Philippinas, Luçones, or Manillas, which is a countrey with fewe hilles, with some mines of brimstone in the middle thereof...

## Gali's voyage of discovery in the northern Pacific in 1584

*Sources: Portuguese translation of Gali's diary in the Portuguese archives in Lisbon; translated into English by E. W. Dahlgren, in his Discovery of the Hawaiian Islands, Stockholm, 1916; copied by Wagner, op. cit., pp. 134-135.*

[Gali left Macao in July aboard the San Juan Bautista, with Alonso Gomez as pilot, three Portuguese, a Chinese Christian, and goods from Macao. He went by Formosa, through the Okinawa chain, parallel to Japan sailing E by N and eventually reaching the coast of California in 37-1/2°. No new discovery was made. With regards to the possible existence of the Strait of Anian, all he said was that "I also saw a great number of whales, tunny, mackerel, and bonitos, fishes which usually haunt straits and currents, where they spawn; from which I concluded that it was a strait."]

## Fr. Aguirre gives some substance to the mythical islands of Rica de Oro and Rica de Plata by linking them with the Armenian Islands east of Japan

*Sources: Letter from Fr. Andrés de Aguirre, O.S.A., to Archbishop and Viceroy Moya, undated but written late 1584 or early 1585, in AGI 58-3-16; published in Francisco Carrasco y Suisasola in his Documentos referentes al reconocimiento de las costas de las Californias desde el Cabo de San Lucas al de Mendocino (Madrid, 1882); translated by George Butler Griffin in the Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California (Los Angeles, 1891, Part I, Vol. II); reproduced in Wagner, op. cit. pp. 136-137.*

Illustrious Sir:

May the Holy Spirit ever dwell in the soul of your illustrious Lordship. The discovery that your Lordship orders to be made in order to understand the disposition of the coast, ports, and the qualities of the land and its people, that up to this time have been seen to the west of New Spain in the South Sea, as well as to continue the exploration of that coast and land from 41° forward, is very important and necessary for the return of the ships from the Philippine Islands and all parts of the west, and to find out and know the disposition and quality of the land and its people and of the islands near that coast which are understood to be of great importance. Although the ships which come from the west each year to Acapulco sight that coast and travel more than 500 leagues in sight of it, it is not known up to this time what ports or places of shelter it has. It is very essential to know this so that the ships which come in need of a place to repair, after having sailed 2,000 leagues without stopping in any port, can stop for repair and the provision of their necessities. It is of no lesser importance to pursue the exploration of that coast beyond 41° in order to find out its secrets, because it is considered certain that it is continental with the coast of China, unless a narrow strait they call Anian divides them, which according to the notices, is in lat. 52°, the farthest discovery of the coast of China.<sup>1</sup>

In that region and in that which lies between the islands of Japan and the farthest discovery on our coast there are very rich islands, thickly populated with a civilized people, according to Father Fray Urdaneta who had a report from a Portuguese captain.<sup>2</sup> I saw and read this report while he and I were going to Spain to give an account to His Majesty of the success of the first journey that we made by his order, in which the Philippine Islands were discovered and settled [in 1565], and the navigation to them and the return from them to New Spain was revealed. The Father gave this story to His Majesty and I took a copy of it and kept it until leaving Spain in this [1584 Atlantic] fleet [when] the ship in which I came was lost and in it was lost the report and all it carried, and what His Majesty had granted and given me. That which the notice contained, in brief, is the following:

A Portuguese ship sailed from Malacca bound for the Japan Islands and loaded in Canton Chinese merchandise. Arriving in sight of Japan a west storm arose, so strong that the ship could not make those islands. She ran eight days before it cleared up and they caught sight of two large islands. They anchored in a good port at one of these, in which there was a large city enclosed by a strong wall. There were many large and medium-size ships in the port. Soon after they arrived in port many well-dressed and well-mannered people went to the ship, displaying much friendliness to those on board. Learning that they were merchants, the lord of that island and city sent word to the captain that he and those of his people whom he wished might land without any

1 Ed. note: Wagner notes, with reason, that Fr. Aguirre did not realize that the maps of the area, at that time, were purely imaginary.

2 Ed. note: Dahlgren thought it was a report by the Portuguese Captain Diogo da Freitas of the European discovery of Japan (Discovery of the Hawaiian Islands, Uppsala edition of 1917, p. 67).

misgiving that he might affront them; he even offered a good reception and told him he might bring a list of the goods he had in his ship as they would barter and trade to his satisfaction. The captain communicated this to his people and determined to send the clerk of the ship to the city with the list of the goods, and two traders, one a Portuguese and the other an Armenian who lived in Malacca.

The lord of the land received them in his home, which was large and well built, and treated them with much liberality. Understanding by signs that the land was abundant and rich in silver and other things such as silk and cloth, the clerk and the Portuguese trader returned to the ship in order to bring the goods to a house they give him for that purpose. The Armenian remained with the lord of the island, being treated with much hospitality, until the goods having been landed, and a great number of people coming with a great quantity of silver to barter, in a little more than 30 days they sold all their goods, making a great and rich profit, so that they all became very rich and loaded their ship with silver.

While they were in the islands they learned that the lord of the island was lord of the other one which was in sight 4 leagues away, and of others near them, all rich in silver and thickly populated. The people were white, well built, well mannered, and well dressed in silk and fine cotton clothes, and were affectionate and affable. The language is different from that of the Chinese and Japanese and easy to learn because in less than the 40 days that the Portuguese were on that island they understood the natives. These islands abound in good food, rice which is the bread they use, fowls like ours in great plenty, tame ducks and many pigs, goats, buffaloes, deer and wild boars, various kinds of birds and fowls, various kinds of fish, and a great abundance of fruit of different kinds. The climate of the island is very good and healthful. These islands are in 35° to 40°. The longitude from Japan to them could not be learned because of their having run before the storm and on account of the weather being dark, but they sailed from Japan to the east.

Having finished their barter they returned to Malacca, giving them the name "Islas del Armenio" on account of the Armenian trader who was very highly regarded among the people of the ship.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Ed. note: In the light of our modern knowledge of the North Pacific, there is no reason not to believe that the Portuguese ship had simply reached one of the Lequios, i.e. the Riu-kiu or Okinawa Islands.

## The voyage of Pedro de Unamuno in 1587

*Sources: AGI 1-1-3/25; published in facsimile in Wagner, op. cit., pp. 481 et seq., and translated by him in pp. 141 et seq. The translation of the excerpt below is mine.*

### Preliminary note.

The Viceroy accepted Gali's proposal, and Fr. Aguirre's endorsement, for a second voyage of discovery to the east of Japan. He gave Gali 10,000 pesos for a refit of the ship **San Juan Bautista** in the Philippines. This ship, in company with the **San Martin**, departed from Acapulco on 25 March 1585 and arrived at Manila in June. Gali soon died after this and Governor Vera appointed Unamuno to pursue the commission and ordered a ship to be built to replace the **San Juan Bautista** which needed some heavy overhauling. It was not until the second half of 1586 that Unamuno left Manila with a ship and a frigate, bound for Macao. His vessels were seized by the Portuguese but he was able to buy another frigate, named the **Nuestra Señora de Buena Esperanza** [Our Lady of Good Hope] for this voyage eastward to Acapulco. He was accompanied by the same Alonso Gomez as pilot, a few soldiers and Filipino sailors but his most important passenger was the same Father Martin Ignacio de Loyola who had returned to the Far East in 1586 but had been prevented from becoming a missionary to China by rival Portuguese religious, even those of his own order.

### Narrative of the voyage and navigation that Captain Pedro de Unamuno made from the island of Macarena which is one league south of the city of Macarena<sup>1</sup> in the frigate named **Nuestra Señora de Buena Esperanza** and the major events of the voyage are as follows.

Firstly, I left the said island of Macarena on Sunday 12 July at about noon and I headed ESE for 12 leagues and at about 11 at night found myself just beyond Leme Island, which is off the islands of Macao in 22-1/2°.

From this Leme Island a course was taken for the Babuyanes, steering E by S and, after having covered 96 leagues along the said heading, on Thursday 16th of the month of July, at about noon, those Babuyanes Islands were sighted. The sun was taken in just under 20-1/2°. <sup>2</sup> These islands were sighted while we were running on this heading because the compass had an easterly variation of nearly one point; so, we applied the required correction.

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1 Ed. note: On the China coast near Macao.

2 Ed. note: At this latitude, the islands in question are the northern Babuyanes, since called the Batanes.



### [Discovery of the Northern Daito Islands]

From these Babuyanes Islands we took a course for an island which on some sea charts is labelled **Rica de Oro** [= Rich in Gold] at some 450 leagues from these Babuyanes, heading ENE—WSW, as it is in a latitude of 29° up to over 31°. Running with variable winds toward the said island, I sailed for 12 days on various headings and, on the 28th of the said month of July, we sighted **two small islands**. Each had about three leagues in circumference and were separated by about one league and a half. They are situated N—S 1/4 NE—SW<sup>1</sup> in a latitude of 25-1/2° at which the sun was taken that day. We sailed around them and looked at them but did not find any port in them, nor any trees or signs of having any water. Rather, it was understood by the visual inspection that was made of them that they are of no use for anything, so that they were given the name of [Islas] **Sin Provecho** [= Useless Islands].<sup>2</sup>

From these islands that same evening the course was taken for the Island of **Rica de Oro** which in the previous chapter has been said to be 330 leagues E—W 1/4 NE—SW [i.e. E by N] from these islands and whose southern point is in latitude of 29° and its northern point almost 31-1/2°, according to its position on some charts.

We did reach that position on Wednesday 19 August, and being in the said latitude, the said island was sought east and west and along other headings as necessary and every effort was made but the said island could not be found, so that it is understood not to exist.<sup>3</sup>

(Facing page) **Half of a map of the New World published by Hakluyt in 1587. After Drake's visited northern California, which he called Nova Albion as recorded on this map, cartographers realized the immensity of the Pacific Ocean and the lack of connection between the Asian and American continents, although the mythical Strait of Anian was sought for some time thereafter. (From the 1587 Paris edition of Peter Martyr's *De orbe novo*)**

1 Ed. note: That is, the northern island is N by E of the southern one.

2 Ed. note: To the east of Okinawa, at some 200 leagues ENE of the Batanes, at a position of about 26°N and 131°E, are two islands lined up as described here. Now called the Kita-Daito group by their Japanese owners, they were formerly called the Oagari Islands, the northern one being called Kita-Oagari and the southern one Minami-Oagari.

3 Ed. note: There is nothing at that position 7° north of Marcus Island, anywhere near 30°N and 155°E.

From this latitude of 31°-32° the course was taken to the ENE in search of another island which is placed on some charts and is called **Rica de Plata** [= Rich in Silver] and from the one they call Rica de Oro and its latitude, 60 leagues, by steering ENE, it is located, according to the charts and its latitude on the charts is in 33° to 34° from its southern to its northern point. We reached this latitude<sup>1</sup> on Saturday 22 August and looked for it east and west and made all possible efforts but it could not be found, reason for which it must be non existent, although someone on hearsay insisted on having it placed on his chart.

On Sunday 23 August in the evening, we changed our course to go in search of the islands they call the **Armenian Islands** which, according to their placement on some charts, are 20 leagues from the above-said island of Rica de Plata, whose relative position is NE—SW in a latitude of 34° to 35-1/3°. We reached this latitude on Wednesday 26 August and it was carefully looked for but in spite of all the efforts made it could not be found; it is understood not to exist.

From the latitude of the Armenian Island, according to those who say it exists, that is, 35-1/3°, we took our course to E by N and ENE bound for the land of New Spain...  
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We did not visit the Lequios [Riu-kiu] Islands, Japan nor the Pescadores<sup>3</sup> as these countries had been explored; besides, the ship was small and carried no guns, the men aboard were few in number, and the people of Japan are numerous and warlike, possessing ships and artillery with which to attack and to defend themselves.

From the Babuyanes, in just under 20-1/2°, to the Port of San Lucas<sup>4</sup>, which has now been discovered in just over 35-1/2°, we sailed 1,890 leagues on various headings as the weather permitted, although on a straight course it would be about 1,550 leagues...

On 12 November, at the mouth of the Port of Valle de Banderas in latitude 21° plus, near Cabo de Corrientes, we met a launch out of the port, which by order of the Audiencia of Guadalajara, was patrolling the coast to warn the ships from China [i.e. from Manila] that the English corsair<sup>5</sup> was on the coast and to advise them of the damage he had done, and that he was then careening his ship in the port of Mazatlan.

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We entered the port of Acapulco on Sunday 22 November, whence we wrote Your Excellency and reported the details of the events and hardships of the voyage.

Pedro de Unamuno.

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1 Ed. note: There is nothing at the approximate position of 33-1/2°N and 159°E.

2 Ed. note: The ship reached the California coast on 17 October 1587 at a latitude of 35-1/2°N. Unamuno landed at a suitable place and his party got into trouble with the local Indians.

3 Ed. note: Islands off the coast of China.

4 Ed. note: Now known as Morro Bay, according to Wagner.

5 Ed. note: This was Cavendish who, two days later, was to capture the **Santa Ana**. The English date, old style, was 4 November.