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## Document 1521I

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# The story of Enrique, Magellan's slave

*Sources: (1) Martín Fernández de Navarrete's Colección de los viages..., tome iv, p. lxxxv, translated by R. Lévesque.; (2) Sylvia L. Mayuga, "The Mysterious Enrique", in Bulletin Today, Manila, April 24, 1982; and (3) R. Lévesque's riposte in the same newspaper, April 26, 1982.*

### Elements in the controversy about who was the first man around the world: Magellan, Enrique, or Elcano?

#### 1. About Magellan's Slave, by M. F. de Navarrete.

When Magellan was in India in the service of the king of Portugal, he bought a slave in Malaca, who was a native of the Moluccas according to some writers, and of Sumatra according to others<sup>1</sup>; he gave him the name of Enrique, and in Spain taught him the Spanish language, which he learned to speak with much perfection and *hablaba muy ladino*<sup>2</sup>. He served his master and the Spanish as an interpreter at the islands of India, given that from Malaca to the Philippines the Malay language was spoken or was understood; but not in the others, as it happened at the Ladrões Islands, today the Marianas, where our navigators would perhaps have been received better if, by understanding the local language or through a skilful interpreter, they could have made the natives know of their peaceful intentions or of the harm they could do to them.

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- 1 Author's note: Gomara (chap. 91) says that he got the slave in Malaca, and on account of his being from the islands in question he was called "Enrique de Malaco" [sic]. Pigafetta and his translator assure us that he was a native of the islands of Maluco [sic], and similarly Maximilian of Transylvania (para. 13), adding that he bought him Calicut way, at the city of Malaca.
  - 2 Author's note: As Max. Transyl. says, in his paragraph 13. Editor's comment: That is, he spoke Spanish very smartly, like a poliglot.

Gomara supposes that Magellan had, in addition to the [male] slave, "a female slave from Sumatra who understood the language of many islands, whom he bought in Malaca", and that at the Ladrones, where they stole things like gypsies, they were saying that the natives came from Egypt, "according to what Magellan's female slave who understood them was saying".<sup>1</sup> No other contemporary writer talks about this female slave, and it appears that, since the use of the Malay language was not in use beyond the Philippine Archipelago<sup>2</sup>, the female slave would have been hard pressed to understand that of the inhabitants of the Marianas, being from Malaca, while on the other hand, they understood Enrique the slave in the islands of the San Lazaro Archipelago.<sup>3</sup>

It is also very worthwhile to note the contradiction existing among some classical writers regarding the perfidious advice that, on account of personal resentments, Magellan's slave gave to the king of Cebu about the intentions and project of the Spanish against his person and state, in order to incite him to take revenge and finish with them, as he did achieve in part treacherously and inhumanly.<sup>4</sup> Pigafetta and Gomara, Maximilian Transylvanus and Oviedo, who usually follow him, all say it that way; however, Barros attributes exclusively this event to the fact "that the enemy kings had convened to make peace among themselves as long as the king of Cebu would kill all the Christians"; and Herrera says only that the banquet affair was "at the instance of the other four kings who had threatened him (the king of Cebu) that if he did not kill the Spaniards and take their ships, they would destroy his land and kill him."<sup>6</sup> Father San Roman does not mention the [involvement of] the slave either; rather, that the kings in the vicinity plotted with the king of Cebu, making peace [with him] on the condition that he would then get rid of the Spaniards as best he could, and the barbarian agreed. This author adds that he saw a logbook and narrative in the hands of a pilot who was in Magellan's fleet, and referred to these events as an eyewitness; the said document was owned by the licentiate Céspedes, cosmographer of H.M.<sup>7</sup> Behind the above judi-

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1 Author's note: Gomara, chap. 91, p. 82; and 93, p. 86.

2 Author's note: Pigafetta, p. 72 & p. 236.

3 Author's note: Pigafetta, book 2, p. 72. Editor's comment: Gomara is an unreliable source of information compared to Pigafetta. I think that Navarrete makes too much of this. Interesting though it would be to learn that Magellan kept a female slave aboard his ship, the simple truth may be that Gomara's printer made two small typographical errors, when he transformed "esclavo" [male slave] to "esclava" [female slave]; Gomara may have been speaking about Enrique all along.

4 Editor's note: When some two dozen Europeans were massacred during a feast given in their honor.

5 Author's note: *Década III*, book 5, chap. 10.

6 Author's note: *Década III*, book 1, chap. 9, p. 14.

7 Author's note: [San Roman, "Hist. gen. de la India oriental"] book 2, chap. 25, p. 345.

cious and worthy historians comes Faria in his *Asia portuguesa*<sup>1</sup>, Lafitau in his *Historia de los descubrimientos y conquistas de los portugueses*<sup>2</sup>, and Robertson who also did not admit this [version of the] incident.<sup>3</sup>

It is true that Juan Sebastian de Elcano, in answer to the questions that the mayor [of Seville] Leguizano put to him as well as to Francisco Alvo and to Fernando de Bustamante when they returned to Seville in the nao *Victoria* about various events of the expedition, he said that “after the death of Magellan they fled from this island (of Cebu) because they killed 27 of their men with 3 captains on account of a treason perpetrated by a slave of Fernando de Magalhães, and they went off to other islands... and that the reason for the treason by Magellan’s slave was because Duarte Barbosa [Magellan’s brother-in-law] called him a dog”.<sup>4</sup> The other witnesses say nothing about this, and they talk about Magellan with more moderation than Elcano, who incriminates him in everything, with a certain obvious prejudice, and this is not surprising when, in the inquiry ordered by Magellan at the port of San Julian [in Patagonia] into the assault committed by Gaspar de Quesada, the result was, according to various declarations from witnesses, that the same Elcano was one of the actors in the uprising fomented by the captains of some ships against their general. This weakens considerably his impartiality in this occasion; and more so when, among the persons sacrificed by the king of Cebu at the fatal banquet of 1 May 1521, is included the same slave Enrique de Malaca.<sup>5</sup> It is normal to expect that the petty king would have saved him from this fiasco, and reserved him a better fate, had he been his confidant and the perpetrator of such a horrendous fate for the Spaniards.

Furthermore, based on documents, we have the notice that Magellan brought, in addition to Enrique the slave, another named Jorge; well, the heirs of that famous discoverer, when they claimed in 1540 the back wages which had not been paid, and those of other relatives who had gone with the fleet, asked also for “*those of Enrique and Jorge, slaves whom Magellan took along as interpreters*”, according to what is found in AGI Seville and was communicated to us by Mr. Cean in 1805.<sup>6</sup>

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1 Author’s note: Tome I, part 3, chap. 5, para 10, p. 209.

2 Author’s note: Tome II, book 8, p. 37. Ed. comment: Father Joseph Lafitau, S.J., “Histoire des découvertes et conquestes des Portugais”, 2 vols., Paris, 1733.

3 Author’s note: [William] Robertson, “Histoire de l’Amérique”, book 5.

4 Author’s note: See p. 288 [of his Col. de viages].

5 Author’s note: See p. 66 [of his Col. de viages], where the list of those who died at the banquet is inserted, copied from the one quoted on p. 65, and existing in AGI Seville when it was copied and checked [by Muñoz] on 20 November 1793.

6 Ed. note: As this Jorge is not mentioned in connection with the Ladrones nor the Philippines, we can suspect that he had died before reaching them.

## 2. The Mysterious Enrique, by Sylvia L. Mayuga.

For those with a moment to spare for intriguing historical questions, April of 1982—461 years since Ferdinand Magellan came to grief on our [Philippine] islands—seems like a good time to give space to one history lover's thesis. Was the first man to circumnavigate the globe neither Portuguese nor Spanish but a native of these islands?

Here is our friend's imaginative leap:<sup>1</sup>

*"In the annals of Antonio Pigafetta, Magellan's official chronicler, mention is made of a certain 'Enrique de Malacca', recorded as a man-servant of Magellan during his military service in Malacca under the Portuguese flag."*

*"You will remember that in the 1450s to 1460s, the race between Portugal and Spain laid emphasis on profitable spices from the Indies. By 1511, however, Cortés had sacked Mexico for gold. The commercial fashion of the time was slowly turning from spices to gold."*

*"Now historians record that Magellan had brought with him to Spain from Asia this Enrique whom he eventually introduced to King Charles I of Spain. Could the lowly indio have merited a royal audience because he possessed some special knowledge of a gold route?"*

*"Enrique joined Magellan's fleet from Cadiz [sic] (where Pigafetta joined the party) to Patagonia, and from Patagonia to Guam. In Guam (Magellan labelled it "Los Ladrones", if you will recall), a native Guamanian, Omatuc of the Chamorro tribe, boarded Magellan's ship as a guide to local waters.<sup>2</sup> Magellan's first sighting of the Philippine archipelago was the southern tip of Samar and his first landing was in the Waray-speaking island of Homonhon. Here was the thoroughly stimulating first sight of gold-bedecked natives! Magellan's party met with the natives and both Enrique and Omatuc were asked to speak with them but neither could be fully understood. After a few days' rest in Homonhon, the party sailed southwesterly and landed on the island of Limasawa. It was here, in Cebuano-speaking Limasawa, for the first time, that Enrique successfully conversed with the natives!"*

*"Charles Parr, in his biography of Magellan, records this event as follows: "Enrique hailed them with an invitation to come aboard and to Magellan's immense delight, he*

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1 Ed. note: Her "friend" (and mine as well) was Antonio S. Araneta, Jr. whom I first met in the library of the Lopez Museum in Manila while he was researching this question and I was researching a sequel to my first book: "The Philippines—Pigafetta's Story of Their Discovery by Magellan" (1980).

2 Ed. note: Unfortunately, there is no evidence in the primary or secondary accounts to prove the existence of such a person.

*was answered in his (Enrique's) native tongue...a rapid exchange ensued with Enrique trying to persuade the natives to trust the bearded white men to come aboard."*<sup>1</sup>

*"The "balanghai" with a single square sail drew near. Under a roof of nipa thatch, a dignitary reclined on mats with a number of attendants about him. Enrique once more engaged in fluent conversation. Significantly, the Chamorro Omatuc could not be fully understood."*

*"Now we know from Tomé Pires in [his] **Suma Oriental** that there were Filipino colonies (at the time called "Luçones") in Malacca at the time of the Portuguese invasion. With Cebu and Jolo, Malacca was a trading center. Magellan was later to encounter a Moorish trader in Cebu. It is highly possible that Cebuanos were around Malacca at the time."*<sup>2</sup>

*"It could well be that Enrique, recruited by Magellan in Malacca, not understood by the Waray-speaking natives of Homonhon in spite of racial similarity but understood by the Cebuano-speaking people of Limasawa, was actually a native of Cebu!"*

*"After Magellan's death, Enrique is recorded as having organized the massacre of Duarte Barbosa and the 28 or so other Spanish officers on board. Enrique then stayed behind in Cebu while the rest of Magellan's fleet sailed back to Spain. Had Enrique come home?"*

*"And so, while the Spaniards glorify Sebastian de Elcano who headed the voyage back to Spain as the first man to circumnavigate the globe and the Portuguese claim the honor for Magellan, it could well be that it was Enrique—who waded ashore first with his Cebuano-speaking kin—was technically the first to circle the globe!"*

*"Here is one Stefan Zweig<sup>3</sup> writing of the subject in 1938: "Now came the wonder. The islanders surrounded Enrique chattering and shouting, and the Malay slave was dumbfounded, for he understood much of what they were saying. He understood their questions. It was a good many years since he had been snatched from home, a good many years since he had last heard a word of his native speech. What an amazing moment, one of the most remarkable in the history of mankind! For the first time since our planet had begun to spin upon its axis and to circle in its orbit, a living man, himself circling that planet, had got back to his homeland. No matter that he was an underling, a slave, for his significance lies in his fate and not in his personality."*

Thereby, ends our friend, the story of another typical Pinoy fate, making history not by intention but by sheer luck!

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1 Ed. note: Charles McKew Parr's "Ferdinand Magellan, Circumnavigator" (New York, T. Y. Crowell, 1964), pp. 343-4. Omatuc was invented by Parr for this, his historical novel about Magellan. He took his name from Umatac, the village in Guam where he supposedly was kidnapped from.

2 Ed. note: We know, from Brito and other Portuguese historians, that Moluccans were also there, with their spices, etc.

3 Ed. note: Stefan Zweig's "Conqueror of the Seas. The Story of Magellan" (New York, Viking, 1938), p. 234. Another historical novel...

### 3. Enrique was not a Cebuano, by Rodrigue Lévesque.

Mr. Ben F. Rodriguez  
Editor, Bulletin Today  
Recoletos St., Intramuros  
Metro Manila

Dear Sir:

Today, April 28 [1982], marks the 461st anniversary of the death of Magellan on Mactan Island near Cebu. On this occasion, I would like to answer Sylvia L. Mayuga's unnamed friend (BT April 24) who claims that Enrique, the slave bought by Magellan in a previous trip to Malacca could well be "a native of Cebu". It may be true that "in Cebuano-speaking Limasawa... Enrique successfully conversed with the natives" but if one refers to Pigafetta's account, it is said that he could make himself understood only by the king "because", as Pigafetta says, "in those countries the kings know more languages than the ordinary people" (See my translation of two original Pigafetta manuscripts in old French: **The Philippines: Pigafetta's Story of Their Discovery by Magellan**, Lévesque Publications, 1980).

I have made a study of the basic sources concerning the discovery of the Philippines and my book on the subject contains, among other things, a lexicographic study of the Cebuano language. Before interpreting the historical facts, I believe we should always go back to original sources as later historians tend to romanticize the events of long ago. Pigafetta wrote that Henry the interpreter was "born in Sumatra, otherwise known as Trapobana". The other eyewitness accounts of the first trip around the world do not contradict Pigafetta; I am referring to the logbook by Alvo, the account of a Genoese pilot and the report by the geographer San Martin [as interpreted by Barros].

Second-hand reports of the voyage contain full explanations but again the researcher must beware of the existence of inadequate English translations of the original documents. The first published work about Magellan (and Henry) was by a certain Maximilian of Transylvania. Maximilian lived at the Spanish court at Valladolid and is described by his contemporaries as a secretary to Charles V, head of the Holy Roman Empire. Max listened to Pigafetta's verbal report to the court, to that of Sebastian de Elcano and the other survivors who accompanied him (only 35 men survived from an original crew of 280 sailors and supernumeraries). Max, as the Filipino historian Carlos Quirino has written, was "the forerunner of our present-day reporter". He was able to interview the three survivors who came to the court and in October 1522 wrote up a long letter, in Latin, to the Cardinal of Salzburg (said to be his real father), and the latter had the letter printed in Cologne in January 1523. This book was reprinted and translated into many languages very soon after and that explains, in part, why Pigafetta's manuscripts were not published during his lifetime as Maximilian had jumped the

gun on him... The modern English versions of Maximilian's book, like that in Blair and Robertson (1903)<sup>1</sup>, generally say something like this about Henry: *"Magellan had been the owner of a slave, a native of the Moluccas, whom he had formerly bought in Malacca; and by means of this slave, who was able to speak Spanish fluently, and of an interpreter of Subuth, who could speak the Moluccan language, our men carried on their negotiations."*

So we learn that two interpreters were needed because **Enrique could not converse in Cebuano**. The original text by Maximilian is much more explicit on that score. A 16th-century Spanish translation was published in 1837 by the Spanish historian, Martin Fernández de Navarrete (*Colección de los viages y descubrimientos...*, Tome IV, page 271) and can be translated literally as follows:

*"It should be mentioned that Captain Magellan had a slave, who was born in the Molucca Islands, where spices grow and which were the final destination of his trip, and whom he had bought Calicut-way in the city of Malaca, when he was there in the service of the king of Portugal, and bringing him to Spain had shown him the Spanish language, which he learned very perfectly, and spoke very "ladino" (that is, fluently, like a native Spaniard). By means of this slave, Magellan could make himself understood by and converse with the king of Cebu, not because the slave knew or understood the language of that land, but there was there with the king of Cebu an "indio" of his who had been in the Moluccas, and knew the Moluccan language very well, and with him the slave of Magellan could make himself understood, so that by means of these two interpreters our people could make themselves understood by those of Cebu, Magellan speaking Spanish to his slave, and the slave to the "indio" of Cebu, and the "indio" to the king his lord".*

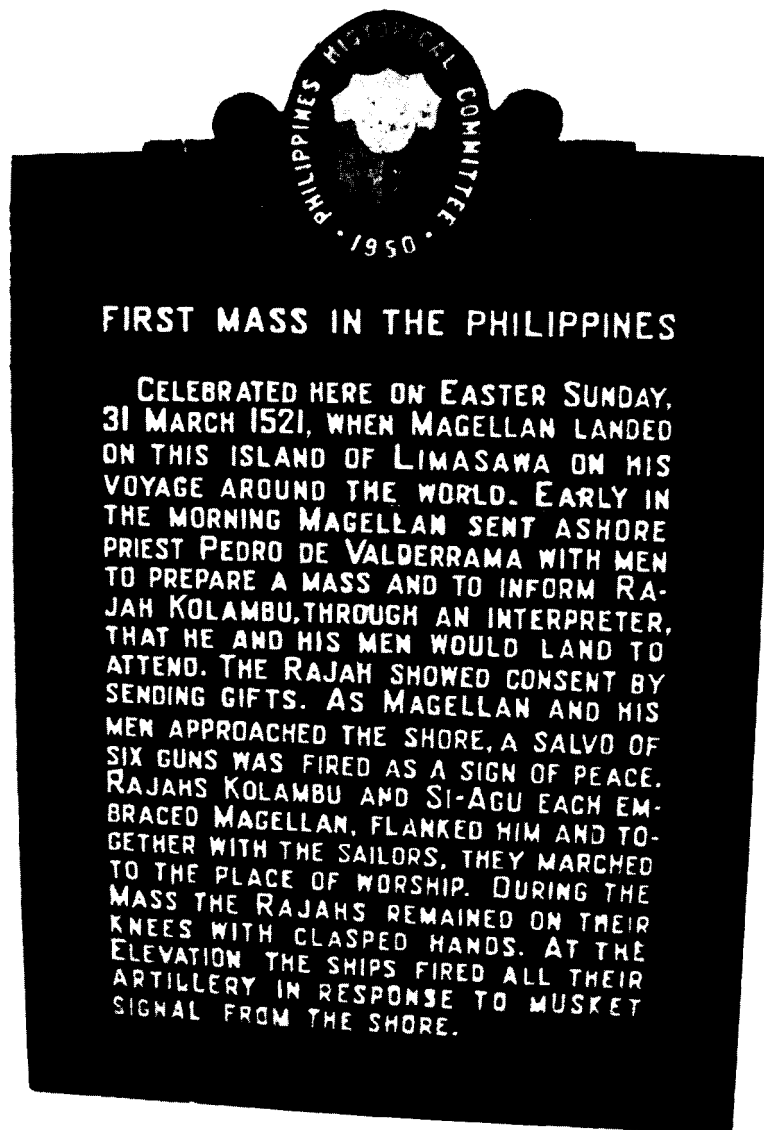
The above account by Maximilian of Transylvania is the main evidence pointing out that **Henry was either a Moluccan, or else an Indonesian (from Sumatra)**. Was Henry born in the Moluccas or in Sumatra? Navarrete (tome iv, page 57) warns us that early historians, like Herrera and Oviedo, often confused the two terms Malaca and Maluco (Molucca). My humble opinion is that Pigafetta, who has written the first vocabularies of both the Cebuano and Moluccan languages, and who had to act as interpreter after the desertion of Henry at the Great Massacre of Cebu, could not have been mistaken on that subject. We must give full credence to his long verbal explanations on how the Spanish could communicate with Cebuanos because his verbal account, as recorded by Maximilian, was corroborated by two other eyewitnesses. Whether or not Henry survived the massacre and eventually returned to his homeland in the Moluccas, it can be said that he was **the first man around the world** if only because he had crossed the meridian of the Moluccas by the time he reached Cebu.<sup>2</sup>

(Signed:) Rodrigue Lévesque

1 Emma Helen Blair & James Alexander Robertson (eds.). "The Philippine Islands 1493-1898" (Cleveland, Ohio, A. H. Clark, 1903-08), Vol. I, p. 306.

2 However, if he indeed had been born in Sumatra, it cannot be said that he circumnavigated the world.

P. S. Thank you for publishing a review of my latest publication about the Philippines in this morning's newspaper. I am referring, of course, to the book: **They Refused to Die** by Col. Ongpauco as reviewed by Gen. Carlos Quirino. I may add that a third book: **The Treasure of Limahong** is being printed now and will come out in 2-3 weeks... Thank you.



**This plaque marks the site of the first mass at Limasawa I. It was placed there by the Historical Committee in 1950. Father Pedro de Valderrama, N° 57 on my crew list, was the officiating priest. (Courtesy of the Ayala Museum-Library and Iconographic Archives, Manila)**