
Document 1526C

Salazar, ex-Loaysa—First eyewitness account by Urdaneta

Sources: Original in AGI 1-2-1/4, R.36. Navarrete's "Colección de los viages" (Madrid, 1837), vol. V, doc. 26, pp. 401-439; Pacheco et al. "Colección ... de Indias", 1ª serie (Madrid, 1866), vol. V, pp. 5-67; also in the Rivadeneira Collection entitled "Biblioteca de autores españoles", in which Vol. 77 is an edition of Navarrete's vol. V, pp. 226-250. Andrés de Urdaneta¹ wrote this report while he was at Valladolid on 26 February 1537; it is the most comprehensive report for the period 1525-1535. Most, if not all, the documents relating to Loaysa's voyage are still kept at AGI Seville, Legajo 1º, Papeles del Maluco desde 1519 a 1547. The original of this report is in Patronato 1-2-1/4, r 36-1-2-3/6, nº 1, rº 6. However, even Navarrete used the transcript that Muñoz made of them in the 1780s. The present account is taken from Tome 36 of the Muñoz Collection in RAH Madrid.

Extracts from the original report

Relaciones del viage hecho á las islas Malucas ó de la especiería por la armada las órdenes del Comendador García Jofre de Loaysa, hecha por el Capitan Andrés de Urdaneta

"S. C. C. M.

La relación que Andrés de Urdaneta hace á V.S.M., de la armada que V.M. mandó para la Especiería con el comendador Loaysa, el año de 525, es lo siguiente:

Partimos de la Coruña con siete navíos, viéspera del bienaventurado señor Santiago, é fuimos en busca de las Canarias...

¹ Ed. note: Robertson (B&R II, p. 33) says that Urdaneta was born in 1498, at Villafranca, in Guipúzcoa. If so, he was not just 18 years old (as some historians have said) when he visited Guam for the first time, but 28 years old. He had already had a short military career and fought with the Spanish army in Germany and Italy, reaching the rank of captain. After returning to Spain, he studied mathematics, astronomy and navigation before joining the Loaysa expedition. He remained in the Moluccas from 1526 until 1535, when he went back to Spain. He moved to Mexico in 1539, passing by Santo Domingo where he was interviewed by Oviedo. He refused the command of an expedition to the Moluccas, which was eventually commanded by Villalobos (1542). Rather, his goal was to become an Augustinian friar; he was received into that order in 1552. We will see later how the King was able to convince him to join the Legazpi expedition that left the port of Navidad for the Philippines in November 1564.

...
Desembocamos el estrecho, por el mes de Mayo de 526, la nao capitana, é las dos carabelas, y el pataxe; é dende a pocos días hubimos muy gran tormenta, con la cual nos desderrotamos los unos de los otros, que nunca más nos vimos, e con las grandes mares que había, abrióse la nao por muchas partes como estaba muy atormentada, que nos hacía mucho agua en gran manera que con dos bombas á malas penas nos podíamos valer, é cada día nos pensábamos de anegar, é por otra parte acertaron el mantenimiento, por causa de muchos hombres de la nao que se perdió haber entrado en ella: é asi por una parte trabajar mucho, é por otra comer mal, pasábamos mucha miseria y algunos perescian; entre los cuales murieron el contador Texeda é Rodrigo Vermejo, piloto de la dicha nao.

A 30 dias del mes de Julio, murió el Capitan general, Frey García de Loaysa, é vista una provision secreta de S.M., fue jurado por Capitan general Juan Sebastian del Cano, el cual proveyó a un sobrino del dicho Loaysa por contador general, por cuanto estaba vaco, é á Martin Perez del Cano por piloto, é á Hernando de Bustamante, de contador de la nao, que tambien estaba vaco por la muerte de Iñigo Cortés de Perea.

A 4 dias de Agosto del dicho año de 26, murieron el capitan Juan Sebastian del Cano y el sobrino del comendador Loaysa, que era contador general. Hicimos capitan por votos á Toribio Alonso de Salazar, el cual proveyó por contador general á Martin Iñiguez de Carquisano, y en su lugar proveyó por alguacil mayor á Gonzalo de Campo. Así mismo murió el thesorero de la nao, y proveyeron en su lugar á Gutierre de Tuñon.

En este tiempo andábamos muy trabajados é fatigados, catorce ó quince grados de la banda del Norte, en busca de Cipango; é como la gente andaba muy fatigada, así del mucho trabajar de la bomba como de la mar, é del poco comer é beber é muy ruin, muríanse cada día; é por este respecto acordamos de arribar á nuestro camino para Maluco.

*Yendo así nuestra derrota, descubrimos una isla en 14 grados por la parte del Norte; pusímosle por nombre **San Bartholomé**, la cual dicha isla parecia grande, y no le pudimos tomar, é anduvimos nuestra derrota para Maluco.*

*Y despues que partimos desta isla, en obra de doce dias, hubimos vista de las islas de los **Ladrones**, en 12 grados de la parte del Norte, donde surgimos con la nao. Aqui hallamos un gallego, que se llama Gonzalo de Vigo, que quedó en estas islas con otros dos compañeros de la nao de Espinosa; é [mataron] los otros dos, quedó él vivo, el cual vino luego á la nao é nos aprovechó mucho, porque sabia la lengua de las islas.*

Estas islas son trece, por dicho de este Gonzalo de Vigo, y están dende 12 grados hasta 19, é córrense Norte-sur. En estas islas no hay ganado ninguno, ni gallinas, ni otras animales ni bastimentos, escepto arroz, que hay en gran cantidad, y pescado y cocos y aceite de cocos y sal. Los indios destas islas andan desnudos, que no traen ninguna cosa sobre sí; son hombres bien dispuestos, y traen los cabellos largos, é la barba complida; no tienen ninguna [her]ramienta de hierro; labran con pedernal; no tienen otras armas, sino [h]ondas y unos palos tostados, con unos hierros de canillas de hombres muertos y de huesos de pescados.

En estas islas tomamos once indios para dar á la bomba, porque habia en la nao muchos hombres dolientes; y en acabando de tomar nuestra aguada, luego partimos para Maluco, y el gallego vino con nosotros por su propia voluntad.

A cabo de once ó doce dias, que estuvimos en estas islas, partimos de ellas, y antes de los ocho dias se nos murió el capitan Salazar, y hecimos capitan á Martin Iñiguez de Carquisano, que era contador general al presente; y así mismo murió Juan de Huelva, maestre de la dicha nao, é proveyeron en su lugar á Iñigo de Lorriaga, por maestre.

Obra de quinze dias despues que partimos de las islas de los Ladrones, hubimos vista de una isla grande, que se llama Bendanao; é fuimos á surgir en un puerto que se llama Bizaya; é luego fuimos con el batel en tierra y tomamos plática con la gente de la tierra, porque el gallego sabia hablar un poco lengua malaya, y se entendia con ellos; é luego nos trujieron un puerco é gallinas, como que querian vender, mas no los quisieron vender. Esta gente desta tierra es ataviada; andan vestidos con paños de algodón y seda, y tambien traian vestidos de raso de la China, y andaban todos armados, sus azagayas en las manos é sus alfanjes é sus guirris, que son á manera de puñales, y sus paveses. Es gente muy atraicionada é belicosa...

Aqui tomamos un indio, que llevamos á Maluco...

Translation of Urdaneta's account

Narratives of the voyage made to the Moluccas or Spice Islands by the fleet under the command of Commander¹ García Jofre de Loaysa, made by Captain Andrés de Urdaneta.

Sacred Cesarian Catholic Majesty,

The narrative that Andrés de Urdaneta makes to Your Sacred Majesty, about the fleet that Y.M. sent to the Spice Islands with Commander Loaysa, in the year of 1525, is as follows:

He left the city of La Coruña with seven ships, on the eve of the blessed St. James, and we went in search of the Canary Islands...

...

We came out of the Strait during the month of May 1526, with the flagship and the two caravels and the patache. Within a few days we were hit by a very big storm, as a result of which we were all separated from one another, and we never saw any of them again. With the great seas we had, the nao opened up in many places because she was under considerable stress. She was leaking so much that with two pumps going we could hardly stay afloat. Every day we thought we would founder. On the other hand, they

¹ Ed. note: Loaysa was a commander of the military Order of St. John of Jerusalem, formerly the Hospitalers, also known as the Knights of Rhodes, and soon to become re-named the Knights of Malta in 1530, when Charles V ceded that island to them.

shortened the rations, on account of the many men from the nao that was lost [i.e. the *Sancti Spiritus*] who came aboard. Thus, either because of too much work, or of the bad food, we had much misery and a few perished.¹ Among those who died were the accountant [Alonso de] Tejada and Rodrigo Bermejo, pilot of the said nao.

On the 30th day of July, the Captain General, Fray² García de Loaysa, died. Inasmuch as there was a secret order from Y.M. to that effect, Juan Sebastián del Cano was sworn in as Captain General. He in turn appointed a nephew of the said Loaysa as Accountant General, as the post was vacant, Martín Pérez del Cano as pilot, and Hernando de Bustamante as ship accountant, because that post was also vacant on account of the death of Iñigo Cortés de Perea.

On the 4th day of August of the said year of 1526, Captain Juan Sebastián del Cano and the nephew of Commander Loaysa who was Accountant General, both died. We elected Toribio Alonso de Salazar as captain. He in turn appointed Martín Iñiguez de Carquisano as Accountant General, and in his place he appointed Gonzalo de Campo as master-at-arms. The ship treasurer also died, and they appointed Gutierre de Tuñon in his place.

During that period we were sailing very weary and tired, in 14 or 15 degrees north of the equator, in search of Cipango [i.e. Japan]. However, because the people were very tired, as a result of the labor involved in working the pump, the [rolling] sea, as well as from the lack of food and drink, and their very bad condition, people were dying every day. For this reason, we agreed to change our course for the Moluccas.

While we were thus on our course, we discovered an island [Taongi] in 14° N. We named it **San Bartholome**. The said island seemed big, but we were unable to stop at it, and we continued our course for the Moluccas.

After we had left this island, something like 12 days later, we sighted the **Ladron Islands** in 12° N³ where we anchored with the nao. Here we found a Galician, whose name is Gonzalo de Vigo, who remained at these islands with two other companions from Espinosa's nao [Trinidad]. They [killed] the other two, but he was kept alive. He then came to the nao and was very useful to us because he knew the language of the islands.

[Description of the Ladrones]

These islands are 13 in all, according to this Gonzalo de Vigo, and they lie between 12 and 19 degrees, along a north-south line. In these islands, there is no livestock whatever, no chickens, nor any other animals nor food supplies, except rice, which they have in abundance, as well as fish, coconut, coconut oil, and salt. The Indians of these is-

1 Ed. note: Urdaneta says, at the end of his report, that a total of 40 men died between the Strait and the Moluccas.

2 Ed. note: The title of Fray, which comes from the Latin "Frater" for "Brother", did not mean that he was a religious friar. Members of military orders were sometimes called thus.

3 Ed. note: Uriarte says, more correctly, 13° N.

lands go around naked; they do not wear a single thing over themselves. They are well-built men. They wear their hair long and full beards. They do not own any tools made of iron. They work wood with flints.¹ They have no weapons other than slings and some fire-hardened sticks whose tips are made from the shin-bones of dead men and from fish bones.

At these islands we took 11 Indians to work the pump, because there were many sick men aboard. After we had finished taking on water, we left for the Moluccas. The Galician came with us on his own free will.

After we had spent 11 or 12 days in these islands², we took our departure from them, and before 8 days had elapsed our Captain Salazar died.³ We made Martín Iñiguez de Carquisano our captain, he who had just been Accountant General. Juan de Huelva, the ship master, also died and they appointed Iñigo de Lorriaga in his place, as master.

After something like 15 days following our departure from the Ladrone Islands, we sighted a big island, whose name is **Bendanao** [Mindanao]. We sent to anchor in a bay called Bisaya⁴. Then we went ashore with the boat and spoke with the people ashore, because the Galician could speak the Malay language a little, and he could be understood by them. Later on, they brought us a pig and some chickens, as if to sell them, but they did not wish to sell them⁵. The people of this land are dressed up; they wear clothes made of cotton and silk, and they also brought satin clothing made in China. They all carried weapons, their spears in the hands and their cutlasses, their *kris* which are like daggers, and their tall shields. They are very treacherous and bellicose people...

Here we took one Indian whom we brought to the Moluccas...

[The end of the ship Parral]

In the year of 1528, when Saavedra came from New Spain, he found in the islands of the Celebes, some three Spaniards from our fleet, in an island called Sarangani; two of them were Galician and the other Portuguese, and they were from the caravel **Santa María del Parral**. The said Saavedra ransomed them, because the Indians sold them, as they kept them as slaves; he took them along to the Moluccas.

The said men told us that the first island at which they arrived with the caravel before coming to the Archipelago of the Celebes was in Bendanao [Mindanao] at the port of Visaya. When they sent the boat ashore to get food, the Indians ashore seized and killed all the men who were aboard. When those aboard the caravel saw this, they made sail to go to the Moluccas. While passing next to an island called Sarangani, they were hit by a crosswind and were lost.

1 Ed. note: The Spanish word “pedernal” could also be interpreted as meaning “stone tools”.

2 Ed. note: They spent 6 days there, from 4-10 September, according to the log.

3 Ed. note: This man, who had become captain at the eastern limits of Micronesia, died at its western limits, west of Palau.

4 Ed. note: This bay corresponds to Bislig Bay today.

5 Ed. note: Only on one occasion, when they were refused, probably because they were not Portuguese.

When the Indians ashore saw this, they attacked them, captured and killed all [sic] the Spaniards aboard the said caravel. As the Indians had them in their power, they sold them to the other islands. They said that there were 7 or 8 more men in the said islands of the Celebes.

As the said Hernando de la Torre learned that there were more Christians to be found in the said islands of the Celebes, he ordered to send 5 or 6 proas to ransom the said Christians who could be found in the said islands of the Celebes. When the said proas were about to leave, one of the [above] Galicians revealed himself to a Galician who had come aboard our nao, [saying] that the Indians at Visaya had taken the boat of the said caravel with all the people in it, and that afterwards there was a **mutiny** aboard the caravel, and that they had thrown Captain Jorge de Manrique overboard, as well as Don Diego, his brother, and a certain Benavides, alive, and in the water they had killed them with lances; these two Galicians had been involved in it and they wanted to pass to the Portuguese because they feared that the truth would come out.

The said proas departed for the said islands of the Celebes with the said two Galicians aboard, with the Portuguese man and other Spaniards, because they knew the language of those islands. Three or four days later, this other Galician in our company revealed what the other had revealed to him. Upon learning of it, the said Captain Hernando de la Torre sent a very light proa after them, with an order for them to be brought back to the Moluccas as prisoners under guard. So, the said proa left, overtook the others at the place in Zamafo and then one of the Galicians sensed something and fled from there into the bush; afterwards, he passed to the Portuguese. They captured the other two and brought them back to Tidore, although the Portuguese man was not guilty, because he had not been part of it.

They gave a few blows with a rope to the Galician, by which they made him confess what he had done; the captain ordered him to be dragged, and later quartered. This was done, and we never again sent for the other Christians to be ransomed; they still remain there.

I, and Macías del Poyo, the pilot, who had remained in my company, were in the Moluccas until February 1535.¹

...

1 Ed. note: Hernando de la Torre and some others had left earlier. Urdaneta and Poyo were given permission to go to Malacca aboard a trading junk owned by a Portuguese merchant named Lisuarte Cairo. They went by way of Banda, where they stopped until June 1535, then via Java (port of Parauca), they arrived at Malacca at the end of June. They left Malacca aboard a junk owned by a Portuguese on 15 November and went by way of Ceylon to Cochin, where they rejoined Captain de la Torre. However, the Spanish went to Portugal in two Portuguese ships, Urdaneta and Poyo being aboard the nao **San Roque**. De la Torre and four others boarded the nao **La Gallega**, but his report to the King was entrusted to Urdaneta for safe-keeping. The ships were part of a fleet of 5 ships that left Cochin on 12 January 1536 and, after a short stopover at St. Helena Island, the fast sailer San Roque which had left the other ships behind, arrived at Lisbon on 26 June 1536.

[Papers seized at Lisbon]

At the time we disembarked at the said city of Lisbon, the Major Guard¹ looked me over very well, first my person, then my box, where they found inside a letter pouch the report and the [covering] letter that Hernando de la Torre was sending to Y.M., which the said Major Guard of the naos that come from India took from me, although I made much fuss. In addition, they took from me the accounts book of the nao in which we went to the Moluccas, with another large [record] book of mine and certain letters from Spanish men from our company who stayed behind in Portuguese India. We were also bringing along sketches of the Molucca and Banda Islands and other islands drawn on white paper, which had been sealed with letters carrying [ordinary] messages in order to make them less obvious, but they took them also. Also, they took from the said box the logbook of the voyage [of the Victoria] we made from here to the Moluccas and consequently the log of the voyage made by the caravel [Florida] that went from New Spain to the Moluccas, with other records and notes. All of this was taken away by the Major Guard without any official receipt nor anything else, but by force.

When I saw that the said Major Guard had taken from me all the above said in such a discourteous manner, I decided to go and complain to the King of Portugal, at the city of Évora, where he presently was, and when I came there I went directly to the Ambassador [Luis] Sarmiento to whom I reported how I was coming from the Moluccas and when at the time of disembarking at Lisbon the Major Guard had taken all the said papers from me, and, because they did not wish to give them back to me, I had come to complain to the King. Y.M.'s ambassador told me not to give any thought about speaking or complaining to the King of Portugal for that, but rather to seek cover as fast as possible and then come to Y.M. to give a report of all that had passed, the better to serve Y.M.'s interests.

So, I hit the road to come to Y.M.² and give a complete report about this and all the rest, leaving behind in Lisbon a daughter I had brought from the Moluccas and other things.

While I had gone to Évora, as the King of Portugal learned that we had disembarked at Lisbon, he sent for us and, not finding me there, they took the said pilot to the city of Évora where the Court is residing. The said pilot, when he came to Évora, went directly to the hotel of Y.M.'s ambassador and told him who he was, and how he had come there upon orders from the King. When the ambassador saw this, he advised him to absent himself, and he gave him a horse to flee with; so, he came to this Court.

³
...

1 Ed. note: This was the equivalent of the Coast Guard, or military police from the Navy.

2 Ed. note: The Spanish Court was then residing at Valladolid.

3 Ed. note: There follow descriptions of the islands in and around the Moluccas which Urdaneta describes here from memory. Among them are the following noteworthy bits of information.

[News about islands in the western Carolines]

Northeast of the Moluccas there is an archipelago of islands that are close together, which were discovered by a Portuguese fusta [See Doc. 1525B], 200 leagues away, from 3 degrees as far as 9 degrees north.

North of the Moluccas is Talao [Talaud Is.] in 5 degrees north. We anchored at this island with the nao when on our way to the Moluccas, and the Indians of the said island told us that east of it there were two islands where there is much gold; they are named Gallilu and Lalibu.¹

...

Made at Valladolid on 26 February 1537.

Andrés de Urdaneta.

1 Ed. note: Here is a tantalizing idea: are the islands in question the first mention of Babelthuap and Peliliu? However, one of the Talaud Islands is called Salebabu on one map; the Indians perhaps referred to two of the other islands in their group, or even to some off the New Guinea coast.