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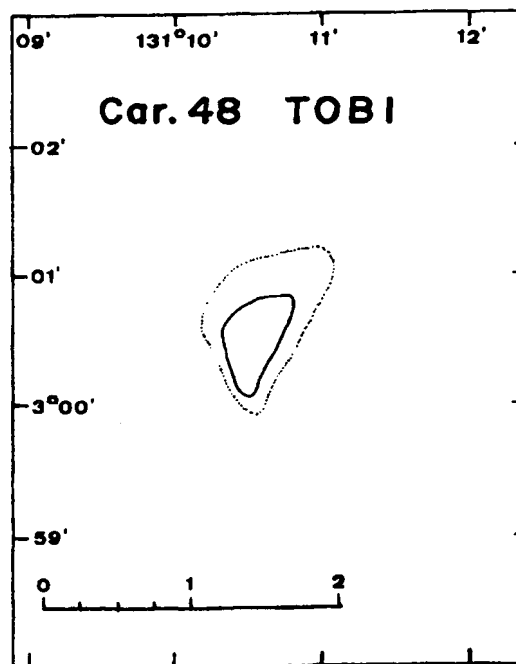
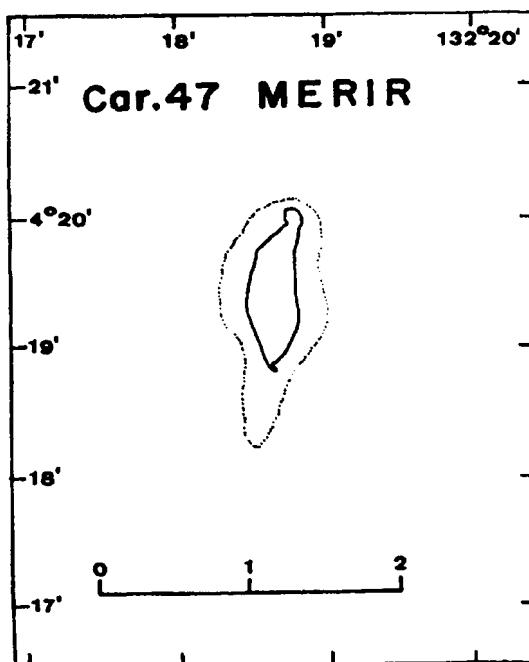
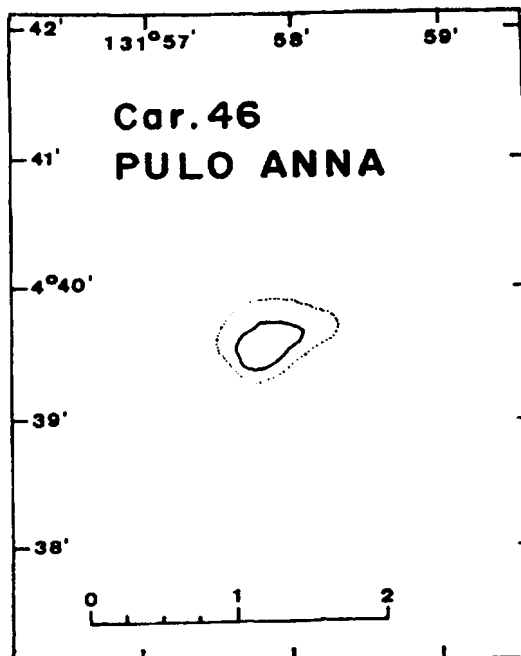
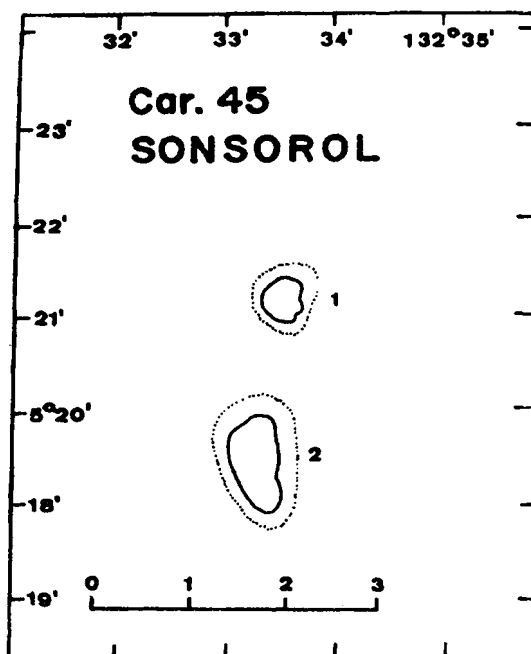
Espinosa's voyage—Secondary account by António Galvão pointing at the discovery of the Sonsorol Islands

*Source: António Galvão's **Tratado dos descobrimentos**, 4th edition, 1987 (pp. 124-5, 245-6). This edition reproduces two versions: the edition "princeps" of 1563 and the "updated" 1944 third edition annotated by the Viscount of Lagoa. The original text (reproduced below) has been followed. Note that a primitive English translation of the first edition of this book has also been published by Richard Hakluyt in 1601.*

...

In this same year of 1522, and in the month of April, the other nao of [the] Magellan [Expedition] left the island of Tidore, with Gonçalo Gomez de Espinosa as her captain. On the way to New Spain, because the winds were scarce, they steered to the northeast. In 36 [sic] degrees on the north side, [they saw] **two islands**¹

¹ Ed. note: The latitude given by Galvão must be wrong, as 36° N is in Japan. The Viscount of Lagoa says (and I agree with him) that "there must be a typographical error or an error made in the transcription of Galvão's manuscript". However, this is the evidence for Espinosa having discovered a group of two islets (insignificant enough to have been forgotten by him by the time he wrote his 1525 letter to the King), somewhere between the Morotai Strait north of Gilolo (Halmahera) and his landfall in the Northern Marianas (Asunción). The islands or island groups lying in his path were: a) Tobi, b) one of these: Merir, Pulo Ana, or Sonsorol; c) Palau; d) one of these: Yap, Ngulu, Ulithi, or Fais, and e) Guam and Rota. Guam and Rota, whose position he knew, would have been recognized by him immediately. The most likely islands are the two islets of **Sonsorol**, located just below 6° N. The error made in transcribing 6° into 36° was an easy one to make. Tobi, Merir, Pulo Ana and Fais are all single separate islands. Palau, even Angaur and Peleliu, if sighted, would have resulted in the very significant discovery of the Palau Group. Yap is also significant in size. The atolls of Ngulu and Ulithi are not so easily excluded, but their nature as atolls would have been a novelty (Ulithi also covers such a large area), unless the ship passed far off to the east of them, with two of their easternmost islets seen from the masthead. However, this latter possibility would seem too far-fetched to merit serious consideration.



The Sonsorol Islands were first discovered in 1522. They were named the St. John Islands by their first European discoverer, Captain Espinosa. They were to be re-baptized the St. Andrew Islands in 1710. As can be seen above, the other small islands in the vicinity are single islets and could not have been the ones sighted by the ship Trinidad. (From E. H. Bryan, Jr.'s book: "Guide to Place Names", 1971)

to which they gave the name of **San Juan**.¹

Following the same course they went on to touch at another in 20 degrees, which is called **A Grega**.² Its people, innocent as they were, wished to come aboard the nao, and they seized a few of them to show them off in New Spain.³ They went on for four months along that course, until they reached 42 degrees, where they saw seals and dolphins.⁴ The climate was so cold and stormy that they could not feed themselves there; rather they turned back [in distress] toward the Moluccas. Consequently, they were the first Spanish to place themselves on that side in such a great latitude. When they returned to the Moluccas, António de Brito was already building a fort.

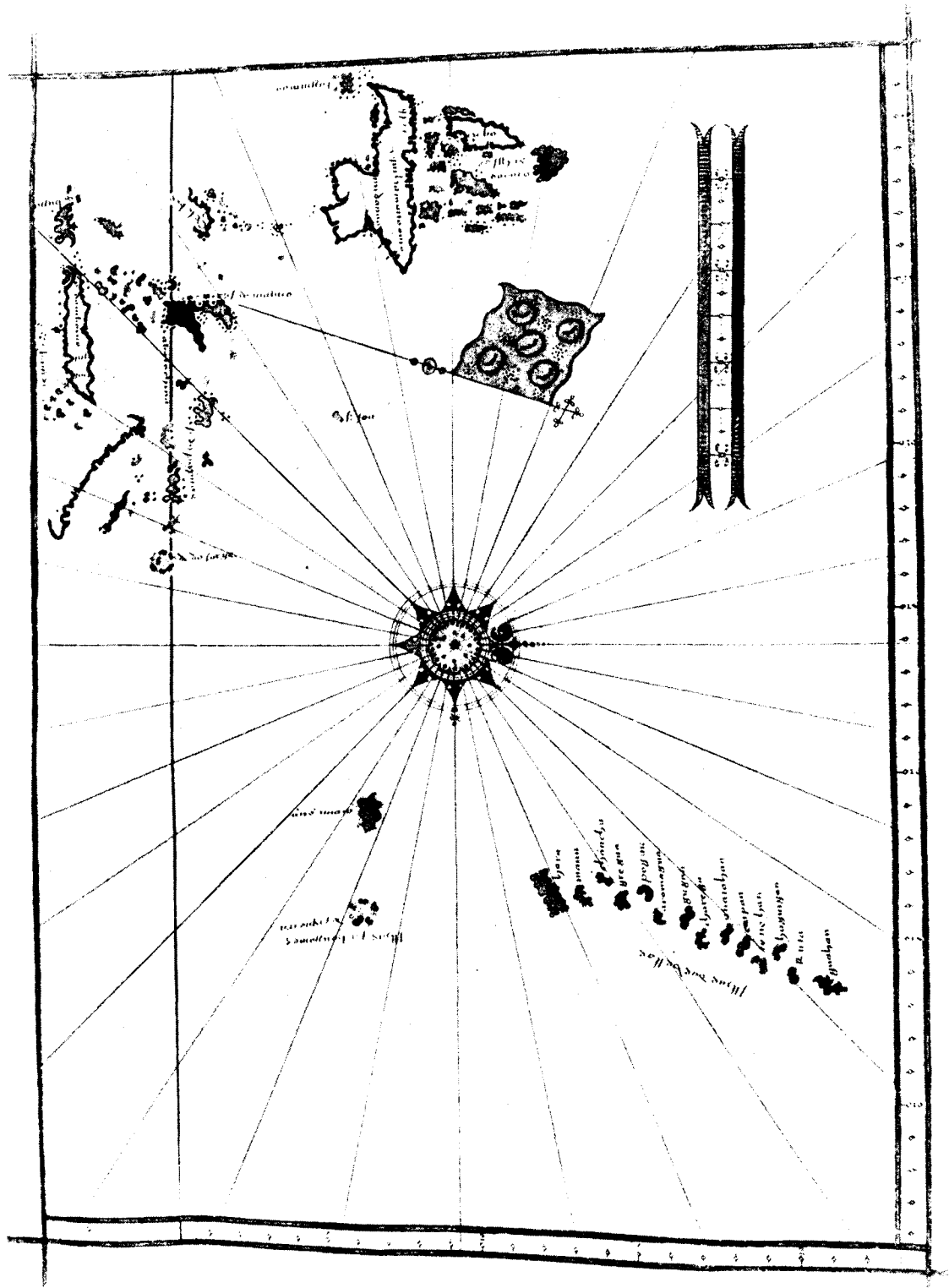
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- 1 Ed. note: There exists a more solid proof for this discovery of Sonsorol by Espinosa in 1522. It appears on a Portuguese map of the area, based on Spanish and Portuguese explorations up to the 1540s, which shows Sonsorol as "S. João" at about 6° N (See map below). By the way, the Viscount of Lagoa opted for the identification of Warwick and Warren Hastings Islands, i.e. the two separate islets of Merir and Pulo Ana, instead of Sonsorol. His evidence comes from tertiary (and therefore less reliable) sources, e.g. Herrera, Barros, and Castanheda, and it is to the effect that, on May 3rd [rather than May 6th], they discovered two islands which they called San Antonio. However, as pointed out by Sharp (p. 11), May 6th is the feast day dedicated to St. John, not just St. John the Apostle, but also St. John the Damascene. Finally, one may ask: Why did it take one month to reach Sonsorol after leaving Tidore? There is evidence (See the previous account by the Genoese pilot) pointing out that they first stopped on the eastern side of Halmahera to pick up supplies, then they tried to make an eastward passage by a southern route toward the Strait of Magellan but that they were becalmed; we are told that the winds failed them.
 - 2 Ed. note: We can easily recognize **Agrigan** Island in the Northern Marianas, in about 19° N. The island name might even have been written **Agregã** in the manuscript, a common feature for words ending with the letter "n". However, it was the intended stopover point on the way **back** to the Moluccas, **Asunción having been visited first on 11 June**.
 - 3 Ed. note: Only one Chamorro was taken according to primary sources.
 - 4 Ed. note: The word "toninhas" means dolphins or porpoises, although it can perhaps be misunderstood to mean whales; it cannot, however, refer to tunnies (tuna fish), as Hakluyt thought.

(Facing page) This Portuguese map, circa 1545, is the definite proof that the Spanish ship *Trinidad*, Captain Gomez de Espinosa, discovered Sonsorol and the Northern Marianas in 1522 and that an unidentified Portuguese ship, Captain da Rocha, along with Pilot Gomez de Sequeira, discovered Ulithi in 1525. Because the convention showing the direction North as being on top of a chart or map was not yet firmly adopted, the names of the Marianas (here called Islands of the [lateen] Sails) appear upside down. It appears that the draftsman, who wrote them upside down, made the wrong guess. However, the list is remarkably correct and the information had to have been seized by the Portuguese from Captain Espinosa after he turned back to the Moluccas. The information itself must have come from the Chamorro Indian whom Espinosa had taken from Asunción and returned to Maug. This information was to be corroborated 4 years later by the Galician deserter, Gonzalo de Vigo, and again this information was seized by the Portuguese in the Moluccas. The Spanish themselves lost track of the correct native names for the islands (as evidenced by this map) until they occupied them in 1668.

The "**Ilhas das velas**" = *Ilhas das Velas* or Islands of the [Lateen] Sails, another name for the *Ladrones* or Marianas:

1. **Guahan** = Guajan (for many centuries until the spelling was changed to Guam),
2. **Ruta** = Rota (but for a long time the Spanish thought its real name to have been Sarpana),
3. **Haguigan** = written Aguijan today,
4. **Tenchan** = Tenian or Tinian today,
5. **Caapan(?)** = Saipan today,
6. **Anatahan** = Anatahan today also,
7. **Charega** = Sarigan today [here we can see that the sound for "ch" and "s" could be confounded],
8. **Gugan** = Guguan,
9. **Aromagua** = Alamagan today,
10. **Pagan** = Pagan,
11. **Gregua** = Agrigan or Agrihan today,
12. **Chancha** (or Chanchã) = Original name of Asunción [Assumption in Spanish], then pronounced something like As Sonson, or Songsong for the name of its chief,
13. **Maua** = Maug today,
14. **Hora** = Urac or Uracas today.

Apart from the Molucca Is., highlighted with a flag symbol, the cartographer has shown the "I. de Papuas" or Papua I. and also those "de Don Jorge" [de Meneses] lying east of the Moluccas. On a 1544 map by Sebastian Cabot, such islands are labelled: "Archipelago de papus donde enverno don Jorge" [Archipelago of Papua where Don Jorge spent a winter]. Also of interest is the note written on top of Mindanao: "Aqui ha muito ouro" which means "Here there is much gold", as well as the Visayan Islands discovered up to that time (ca. 1545) labelled: "Ilhas de ouro", the "Islands of Gold".



Portuguese map, ca. 1545, recording many new discoveries. (Plate 52D of Vol. I of A. Cortesão & A. Teixeira da Mota's *"Portugaliae monumenta cartographica"*, Lisbon, 1960. See facing page for explanations)

TRATADO.
Que compôs o nobre & notaue
l capitão Antonio Galvão, dos
diuerfos & defuayrados caminhos,
por onde nos tempos passados a pi-
menta & especcaria veyo da India ás
nossas partes, & alside todosos des-
cobrimentos antigos & modernos,
que são feitos ate a era de mil & qui-
nhentos & cincoenta. Com os nomes
particulares das pessoas que os fi-
zaram : & em que tempos &
as suas alturas, obra cer
to muy notaue l &
copiosa.

Foy vista & examinada pela santa Inquisição.

Impressa em casa de Ioam da Barreira impres-
or del rey nosso seuhor, na Rua de sã Mamede

Title page of the first 1563 edition of Galvão's Treatise. The second edition of 1731 bore the full title: "*Tratado dos descobrimentos antigos, e modernos...*" [Treatise on ancient and modern discoveries].



Portrait of António Galvão, Governor of the Moluccas. *He was governor of the Portuguese Moluccas from 1536 to 1540. (Drawing from the second edition of his book, 1731)*

Galvão's original Portuguese text

*Neste mesmo ano de 522 & mes Dabril, partio a outra nao que com o Magalhães fora da ylha de Tidore, capitam della Gonçalo gomez despinosa[.] na volta da nova Espanha por escassear o vento, governaram ao Nordeste em trinta [sic] & seis graos da parte do norte, [e viram] duas ilhas a que poseram nome de **sam Joam**, & polo mesmo rumo foram ter a outra em vinte graos, que se chama a **Grega**, a gente della como innocente, se veyo meter na nao, & [dos quais] tomaram alguns pera levar da-mostra aa nova Espanha. Forão quatro meses nesta volta, ate se poerem em quaren-ta & dous graos, onde viram lobos marinhos, & toninhas, & era a Crima tam fria & destemperada, que se nam podia[m] sostentar nella, pello que tornaram arribar a Ma-luco, com tudo forã os primeiros Espanhoes que se poseram daquela banda em tam grande altura: & quando tornaram a Maluco, acharam ja neste anno Antonio de Brito fazendo fortaleza.*