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Pacific Islands in the Voyage of Magellan and Elcano

Introduction

The purpose and goal of this paper is to try to offer a new vision of the Pacific Islands in Modern History, shifting the center of historical cultural attention from the land to the oceans, reflecting the specific aspect of insularity and its significance for the race of globalization started by Spain and Portugal in the 16th century.

Island studies require the comparative method. Scholars must carry out a comparative history among island frameworks, interconnected during the Modern Age. Therefore, the research process must be subject to the comparative perspective, utilizing categories such as insularity, connectivity, universality, extroversion, which can traverse these territories, enabling the establishment of parallels and, above all, in their critical sense, conducting the corresponding comparisons and drawing the respective conclusions.

Fernando Magellan's expedition, continued by Sebastián Elcano, did not make landfall on continental mainland after they crossed the Strait of Magellan on November 28, 1520, only stopping in island territories during the journey across the Pacific Ocean until returning to their original port of departure in September 1522.

The publications of explorers, missionaries, and traders during the Early Modern Age held great fascination for the Western European psyche and were also present in novels from the 18th century onwards (Cohen, 1984, 14). One such example is *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World in Four Parts. By Lemuel Gulliver, First a Surgeon and then a Captain of Several Ships*, known in Spanish as *Los viajes de Gulliver* by Jonathan Swift, written in 1726 and modified in 1735. All four parts of the novel are set on islands: Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa, Balnibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbdubdrib, Japan, and the land of the Houyhnhnms.

Island framework

The island condition is often associated with isolation, solitude, remoteness, and separation, which are negative characteristics that can lead to self-enclosure. However, the historical data analyzed does not confirm these preconceptions.



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Due to this framework, it is necessary to conduct comparative and interdisciplinary studies on the history of islands, revealing their common characteristics. Distance from centers of political and economic decision-making was a feature these archipelagos shared, and it influenced their history once colonized. However, in the Pacific, they functioned autonomously for centuries (Santana, 2022).

These islands played a significant role in the formation of the modern global economic system from the late 15th century onwards.

They held a privileged position during the rise of trade at the onset of the first wave of globalization, serving as grounds for legal and illegal exchanges. They became fully integrated into the process of shaping the global system. They served as support for commercial traffic, acted as stopovers, and offered protection to traders and merchant ships. Some of these islands, such as Guam or Amsterdam Island, owed their development solely to their central location on extensive voyages (Martínez Shaw, 2011, 831). That's why they played a prominent role in the early stages of global history, a concept we cannot discuss until 1522. This marked the beginning of the first wave of globalization, with the establishment of a system of exchange between different continents, leading to the integration into a global economic system that gave rise to a single world and, for the first time, the possibility of conceiving a universal history (Martínez Shaw, 2019, 6).

The topic of the island has become an academic priority in recent decades. After centuries of silence or omission, we have begun to realize that these territories of great importance had not been taken into account.

An island is a physical reality, but like almost all concepts, it refers to an attempt to objectify a phenomenon that is historically constructed; because the concept of an island is constructed, not all territories surrounded by water on all sides have always been considered islands.

A new branch of knowledge has even been proposed – nissology, a science of islands¹ that encompasses everything related to islands from any perspective: myth, history, literature, art, music, philosophy, geography, psychology, and so on. However, Godfrey Baldacchino warns us that the emerging consensus is that island studies should not necessarily be viewed as a discipline, and perhaps not even as a discipline in waiting. It doesn't require a distinct methodology either. It is a primary, inter-, or even transdisciplinary approach to critical research and scholarship. The adoption of island studies as a focal point of research extends beyond conventional fields and can be a powerful force toward a better understanding of the world and the advancement of knowledge. Island studies should not only focus on the islands themselves but also on

1 Grant McCall was one of the first to clarify this concept in "Nissology: The Study of Islands" (1994). Two years later, he made further remarks in "Clearing Confusion in a Disembedded World: The Case for Nissology" (1996).

the relationships between islands and the mainland (Baldacchino, 2016, 9–10). They are not passive peripheral elements but an active part of a larger whole.

We must emphasize the island perspective of the world and avoid continental biases. A global history is necessary to focus on and lift island communities out of the marginalization of so-called general histories. Islands are distinct from continental territories, and they have historically had distinct characteristics due to their insularity.

But we must be cautious not to fall into “ego-islandism” and think that the island is the center of the world and that analysis does not extend beyond what can be seen from the highest peak, in other words, the world beyond the seas.

Dominant discourses have focused on the inaccessibility of these territories, conveying the idea that island regions are inherently peripheral and isolated “by nature.” Statistically, islands are more prone to suffer climatic adversities. However, in recent years, under the influence of postcolonial studies, some authors have begun to question the truth of these “certainties” and even their usefulness when it comes to island regions.

The global history of interactions, connections, circulations, and conflicts must necessarily pass through maritime history and the islands within it. The ocean conditions island life; it is omnipresent, although some of its societies on the planet have turned away from the sea. Paradoxically, the ocean both isolates and integrates; it precludes contact by land but opens up a navigable path that connects islands with the outside world. In addition to territories, we must consider “maritories.” In the past, sailors had to understand and “read” the sea. Island histories are part of maritime history and global history, but they should not be treated as strange anecdotes amidst the oceans; they should be understood as anchors, as trading posts, analyzed as island economies and in terms of what these territories meant for maritime power and imperial power projected toward continents (Sicking, 2014, 490–492). While their insular character unites them with other islands on the planet, they are not all the same; they depend on various circumstances or at least on how they experience their insular character.

We must emphasize the island perspective of the world and avoid continental biases. A global history needs to focus on and lift island communities out of the marginalization of supposed general histories. Islands are distinct from continental territories, and they have historically had distinct characteristics due to their insularity. Therefore, they at times require different interpretations, both as subjects and objects of research within broader historical processes (Santana, 2021, 333–346).

During the Early Modern Period, the oceans were considered deserts that separated two shores. However, it has not been noted that islands were oases in those deserts. Unfortunately, most of historiography has undervalued their role in that context.

Braudel aptly pointed out that islands often bridged continental areas and were sometimes less isolated than certain continental regions situated in mountainous or hard-to-reach areas (Braudel, 1949).

Generally, the isolation was more sociocultural and psychological than geographical. **Most of the theories and studies about islands have been developed from the observer's perspective (the etic), often to engage in philosophical debates, such as to reflect on whether humanity is prepared for cooperative living (Cohen, 2017, 4).**

In this sense, islands were places whose inhabitants were in a state of nature, that is, in an Adamite state, a hypothetical invention used in the 17th and 18th centuries by thinkers like Locke or Rousseau to anchor their morals and political philosophy.

Magellan's expedition in the Pacific

When Magellan's ships ventured into the Pacific Ocean, it became necessary to head north to catch the southeast trade winds, which blew in the same manner as those in the equivalent latitudes in the South Atlantic. The course was set west-northwest, and they couldn't avoid sighting numerous islands (Henriques, 2009, 16).

Magellan's expedition touched upon a multitude of islands in the Pacific and sighted many others, although the exact number is uncertain. It is important to note that the Capitulations (the contract between two parties, in this case, the monarch and Magellan) stipulated that if they discovered more than six islands, Magellan had the right to claim two of them as his own, govern them, and enjoy their revenues. They specify the following:

Moreover, for your greater reward, we decree that of the islands you discover, if there are more than six, after choosing six for us, you may designate two of them, from which you shall have and receive the fifteenth part of all the profits and revenues that we shall obtain from them, deducting the costs that may be incurred (AGI, Contratación, 50, 90, L.4, fol. 5 r-v.).

Furthermore, many members of the expedition deserted their posts and chose to remain on some of these islands because they preferred these almost virgin islands to the harshness of the return navigation.

We know that the rest of the expedition members came into contact with the following Pacific islands while searching for the three major spices of the time, nutmeg, pepper and cloves, which were produced in the Moluccas, a genuine emporium of these highly valued spices.

They sailed along the northern edge of the Carolines islands, which are now part of Micronesia. In March 1521, they sighted the islands of San Pablo (Fakahina) and the Island of the Sharks (possibly Flint).

The Island of San Pablo, currently Fakahina or Fangahina, was the first island discovered. According to the historian Comellas, this was Puka-Puka, and according to

another author, Speke, it was Angatau. They are all located along the edge of the Tuamotu archipelago.



Map 1: Magellan-Elcano's voyage in the Pacific. (Authors: J. M. Santana & C. Moreno)

Comellas asserts that it is still a question of debate today whether the Island of the Sharks is Flint, Caroline, or Vostok (Comellas, 2012, 115–116).

Next they encountered the Island of Thieves (Guam, in the Marianas, Guaján in Chamorro). The journal of the voyages has been lost, but we must bear in mind that Antonio de Pigafetta, from Vicenza, was on the expedition, and he was its self-appointed “great chronicler”, who embarked on the expedition in order to fulfill that task. He delivered his chronicle to Emperor Charles V:

The commander-in-chief wanted to stop at the largest one to get refreshments and provisions. However, this was not possible because the islanders came on board and stole one thing or another from us, and we were unable to prevent it. They tried to force us to lower the sails and go ashore, even having the audacity to take away the skiff that was tied to the stern. Therefore, the captain, angered, went ashore with 40 armed men, burned 40 or 50 houses and many of their boats, and killed 7 men. In this way, he recovered the skiff, but he did not consider it appropriate to stay on this island after all these hostile acts. At the time of going ashore to punish the islanders, our sick asked us to bring them the intestines of any inhabitants

who might be killed because they were convinced that by eating them, they would quickly recover (Pigafetta, 2019).

They also saw the Island of Rota in the Marianas. Suluan was sighted on March 16, although Pigafetta called it Zamal, mistakenly confusing it with Samar, an island located further north.

They were now in the Philippines, which they called the San Lazaro archipelago, in March–April 1521. The southern range of Suluan made this island quite visible.

Magellan arrived on Homonhon Island on March 17, 1521, after a long and difficult journey across the Pacific Ocean. The island was uninhabited, but the Spanish expedition was able to find fresh water, firewood and food. They also contacted the local people from the island of Suluan, who brought them fish, palm wine and various fruits, especially coconuts.

Magellan named the island the **Aguaca** of Good Signs or the Island of Good Omens because he believed that it was a sign that they were getting closer to their goal of finding a new route to the Spice Islands. The Spanish expedition stayed on Homonhon Island for **eight days**, and they used the time to rest and repair their ships (García, 2020, 15). They inquired about the routes **between the islands** they could see to the west, **likely** asking about the Moluccas, which was their objective (Semedo, 2020, 179).

From Homonhon they sailed to Leyte, a large island. Later, they sailed past Hibuson in the Surigao Strait and the island of Dinagat north of Mindanao. They rested in **Limasawa** or **Mazawa**, where they had their first deep cultural contact. They managed to communicate through Enrique, the slave Magellan had purchased ten years earlier in Malacca, and gathered valuable nautical information from the islanders. They anchored on March 28, 1521. They also passed by the shores of **Panao** to the southeast but did not stop there.

About Bohol, Pigafetta's chronicle mentions the dangers of coral reefs north of the island that separate the south of Leyte and Cebu. Some claimed they had passed through Butuan, which was invalidated by P. Schreurs.

They continued along the **southwest coast** of Leyte, passing by the small **Cuatro Islas** archipelago and the island of **Poro**, where the ships turned **south** toward Cebu (Blot, 2002, 256).

They arrived in Cebu, sighted the islet of **Canigao**, and reached it on April 7, 1521. It had an organized social structure, with **King Humabon** as the ruler. Magellan managed to have **Humabon**, the **rajah** of the island, sign an alliance pact with **Charles V**, making him a vassal. This was achieved thanks to the armor and firearms provided by Magellan. The **evangelization** of these islands began:

These people are savages, that is, pagans. They go naked, covering only their genital organs with a piece of tree bark, and some chiefs with a piece of cotton cloth, embroidered with silk at both ends. They have an olive-colored skin and are generally quite obese. They paint and oil their entire bodies with coconut and jengle oil to protect themselves, they say, from the sun and wind. They have black hair, which they wear so long that it falls to their waist. Their weapons include knives, shields, clubs, and spears adorned with gold. For fishing, they use darts, harpoons, and nets somewhat like ours. Their boats also resemble those we use. Before the Mass began, the commander sprinkled the two kings with musk-scented water. At the moment of prayer, they, like us, came to kiss the cross but did not make the offering. When it was time to elevate the Host, they adored the Eucharist with folded hands, always imitating what we did. At this moment, the ships, having seen the signal, fired a general salvo of artillery. After Mass, some of us received communion, and then the commander had a sword dance performed, which gave great pleasure to the sovereigns. After this, he had a large cross adorned with nails and a crown of thorns brought forward, before which we all prostrated ourselves. The islanders imitated us in this as well. Then, through the interpreter, the commander told the kings that this cross was the standard entrusted to him by the emperor to plant wherever he landed, and thus he wanted to raise it on this island. This sign would, moreover, be favorable to the island because all European ships that came to visit in the future, upon seeing it, would know that we had been received as friends and would not commit any violence against their persons or property. Even if one of them were to be captured, all he had to do was show the cross, and his freedom would be immediately restored. He added that it was advisable to place this cross on the highest peak in the vicinity so that everyone could see it, and that it should be worshipped every morning. He further explained that if they followed this advice, neither lightning nor storms would harm them in the future (Pigafetta, 2019).

The city of Cebu is located on the eastern part of the island and forms a channel with the neighboring island of Mactan. Later, Magellan considered making Humabon the ruler of all those islands and threatened death to those who would not accept. He wanted to set an example in Mactan with their leader, Cilapulapu. On April 27, 1521, he set sail with 60 men, but the boats could not reach the shore due to the coral reefs. They jumped into the water and advanced towards the beach where the armed natives were waiting for them.

They baptized more than 800 people in Cebu:

During this time, all the inhabitants of Zubu and the neighboring islands were baptized. However, there was a village on one of the islands whose inhabitants refused to obey the king and us: after burning it down, a cross was planted there because it was a population of idolaters, and if it had been of Moors, that is, Muslims, a stone column would have been erected to show the hardness of their hearts. (Pigafetta, 2019).

The landing at Mactan was on the northern side. There, their calculations failed, and just a few miles from glory, Magellan died on the Philippine Island of Mactan on April 27, 1521, alongside a group of men including his own illegitimate son, Cristóbal Ravelo. Antonio Pigafetta was wounded by an arrow.

They departed from Cebu on May 1, 1521, to continue their journey. However, 27 crew members were assassinated in an ambush by the King of Cebu, including Duarte Barbosa, who had been named the expedition's captain-general after Magellan's death. As there were no longer enough sailors, they burned the Concepción. This was a difficult decision, but it was ultimately the best option for the expedition. It allowed them to focus their resources on the two remaining ships and gave them a better chance of completing their journey.

The Concepción was never found, but its remains may still lie on the seabed off the coast of Bohol. In 1978, a team of underwater archaeologists led by Robert Marx discovered a shipwreck that they believe to be the Concepción. However, further investigation is needed to confirm this identification.

During their journey, they sighted the following islands: Yunagan; Panglao, near Bohol, the Philippines; Palawan, which they called Pulan, west of the Philippines, where they received friendly reception.

They anchored in Borneo, the third-largest island in the world with immense biodiversity, on August 7, 1521. They remarked on the palaces of Siripanda, the walls, and artillery. Three men deserted and chose to stay there. It is noted that the inhabitants of Borneo were civilized and ruled by King Siripanda. They entered the city of Brunei, where there were 25,000 houses, and the locals rode elephants. They knew how to write and appreciated paper and inkwells. However, the situation turned sour due to a misunderstanding: The natives creates confusion in the warrior and they shoot and flee.

Due to the delays and erratic behavior, such as keeping Borneo princesses as a harem and appropriating various items, Juan López Carvalho, who had been left in charge as the expedition's Captain-General, was deposed. They decided to change leadership, and Elcano took command of the Victoria, while Gómez de Espinosa continued to lead the Trinidad.

Elcano and his crew set sail for the Moluccas. The description of the Polynesians is striking:

These people knew no laws, following only their own will; there is no King or chief among them; they worship nothing; they go naked; some have long beards and black hair tied on their foreheads, reaching down to their waists. They also wear small palm leaf hats. They are tall and well-built; their complexion is olive-colored, and we were told they are born White, but their color changes with age. They have the art of painting their teeth red and black, which is considered a beauty among them. The women are beautiful, with good figures and fairer skin than the men; they have very black, straight hair that reaches the ground; they go naked like the men, except that they [cover their] genital parts with a narrow piece of cloth, or rather, a thin bark, as thin paper, made from palm fibers (Pigafetta, 2019).

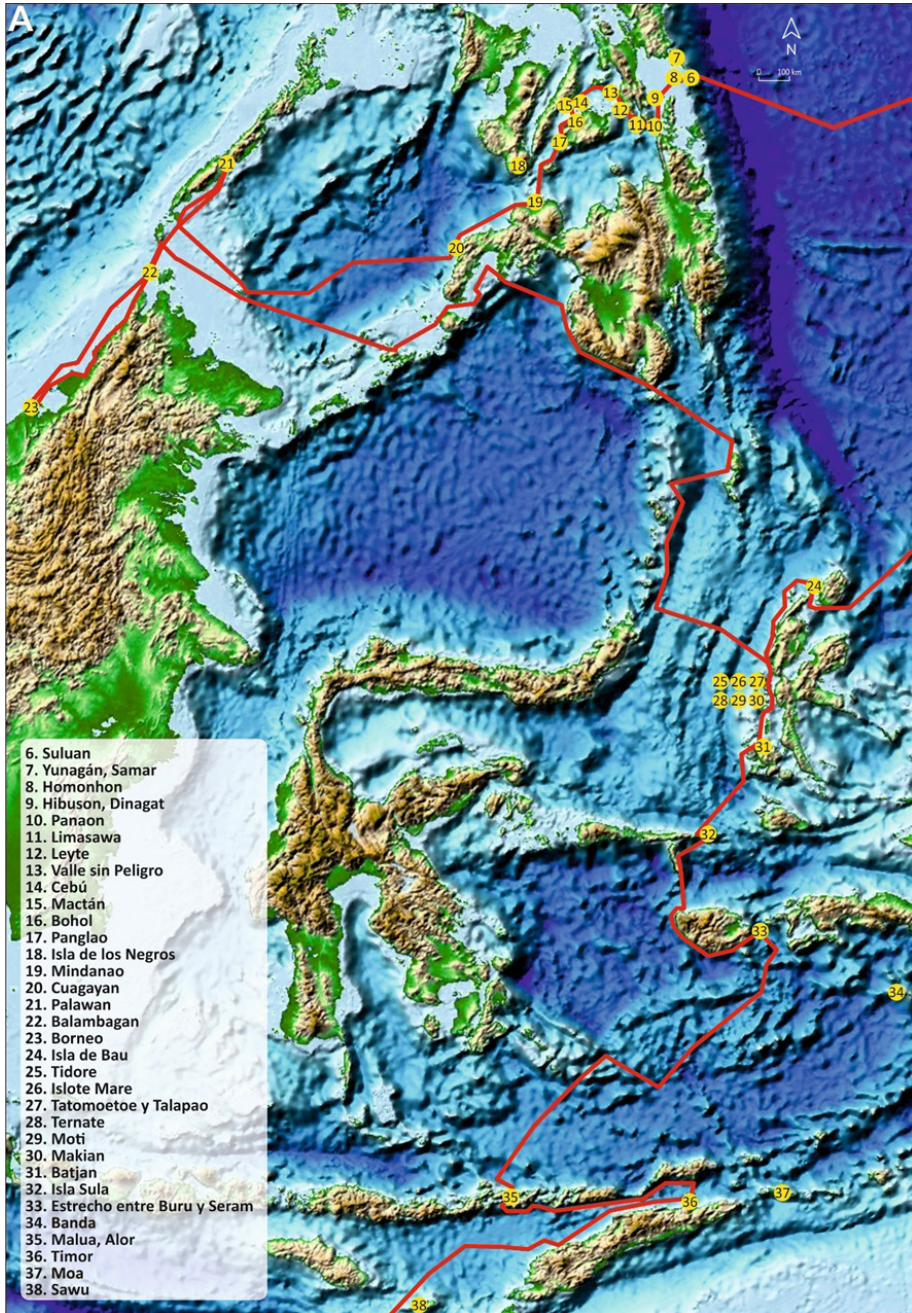
On November 4, 1521, south of Tidore, they reached the islet of Mare, where they cut wood to supply the ships. They also stopped at Tatomoetoe and Talapao on the eastern side of the island of Maluku Vitara. On the island of Solea, they encountered cannibals, and on Boho, they encountered strange savages. In his report to the Emperor, Elcano mentioned that they discovered more islands, such as Bandam and Zalba. They stocked up on provisions, including coconuts, rabbits, chickens and pigs.

On November 8, 1521, they anchored on the island of Tidore, which they called “Tadore,” in the Moluccas. On November 25, they began loading the ships, while new quantities of spices continued to arrive at the warehouse. They loaded the holds with spices.

Juan Sebastián Elcano loaded as much cloves as he could to trade for the Moluccas, Timor, and other islands, in order to make the journey profitable (Marchena, 2020, 500). They arrived at Tidore, the world’s largest producer of cloves, after 2.5 years of navigation, eight months after Magellan’s death. Cloves were advantageous compared to other spices because, for the same weight, they occupied less space. They loaded both ships.

On December 8, with the *Victoria* and the *Trinidad* fully loaded, they set sail heading south because the wind was blowing from the north. The *Trinidad* hesitated and turned back. Elcano ordered them to return to port to find out what had happened and assist their companions. A leak had opened in the hull of the flagship. They had to completely unload the *Trinidad* and, taking advantage of the tide, beach it to repair it. Water was not entering through a hole but through the joints of the timbers. In reality, the ship had been overloaded, and due to wear and tear, it had become misaligned.

They sighted Ternate, which they called “Tarente,” in the Moluccas. Moti (Mutir), Makian (Machián) and Batjan (Bachián) are all in the Moluccas. Pulan (Palawan) received them amiably in the west of the Philippines, where they collected rice and livestock. They careened the ships in Balambagan, in the Balabac Strait, and stayed for 42 days. They passed through the strait between Buru and Seram. Malua (Alor) is north of Timor.



Map 2: Magellan-Elcano's voyage in the West Pacific. (Authors: J. M. Santana & C. Moreno)

Elcano set sail on December 21 heading south, first passing by the island of Bachian and then leaving Buru to starboard. It seems he reached the Cape of Flores, passing between that island and Adunara, being dragged eastward by the Solor Strait. They anchored in Malua, from where they departed on January 25 for Timor, through the port of Lifau, and from there to the southeast (Semedo, 2020, 186).

They remained on Timor while searching for supplies and favorable winds. Two men deserted there. On February 8, 1522, they set sail without knowing that they were about to embark on a five-month journey without any stops (Comellas, 2012, 158–159).

They spotted the island of Suluan in the Surigao Strait, between Surigao and Dinagat, but according to Salvador Bernabeu, this did not align with their course. He says it was an uninhabited island that Albo called “Gada”, while Pigafetta called it “Buenas Señales” and mentioned another uninhabited island called “Humunu.”

Between Dinagat and Mindanao, they passed many islands that they referred to as the “Valley Without Danger.” These included the Island of Negros, Mindanao, Cagayan, Isla de Soela, Isla de Zalba, Isla de Bandam, and Isla de Malua (Moa), which was difficult to navigate. They also passed by two islands that Albo mentioned but did not know the names of; these islands appear to be Savu and Toti. Albo referred to the Island of Panoan as Selani.

Before being captured in the Moluccas, the Trinidad visited the Island of Doi, the Island of Rau, and the Island of Moratai. The Victoria visited Sonsorol in the western Carolines, Palau, and probably other islands, including Ngulu, Ulithi, Fais, and Sorol. They sighted several of the Mariana Islands. They also spotted the island group of Sula and were able to land in the northern part of Mangoli. In Alor, Mahua, they took refuge from a storm from November 8, 1522, to January 25, 1523, repaired the ships, gathered fresh water and collected provisions. Two men deserted in Timor by leaping from the ship and swimming ashore.

They also sighted the uninhabited and treeless Amsterdam Island.

The route taken by Elcano to cross the Indian Ocean and reach the Atlantic was different from what the Portuguese knew. In *Magellan: The Man and His Deed*, Stefan Zweig stated: “No one had ever before attempted to cross the Indian Ocean from east to west. The Portuguese had always sailed from west to east, hugging the African coast” (Zweig, 1945).

Elcano’s route was a major achievement, and it helped to open up new trade routes between Europe and Asia. In his itinerary, Francisco Albo tells us that on Sunday, May 15:

I took the Sun at 76° 15’, with a declination of 23° 31’, which resulted in an altitude of 9° 46’. I found myself with the shallows to the East-northeast – West-south-west. We sounded in the night and found 23 fathoms. We continued to anchor all night until the morning, and by morning, we were at sea from them (AGI, Patronato Real, 34, R.5 , fol. 21 v).

Conclusions

Island studies have made significant progress in recent decades, with specialized networks in this field worldwide. In Portugal, there has been a specialization in the archipelagos of Lusophone culture, and many Atlantic islands historians have updated their approaches to align with more advanced trends after Iberian dictatorships were overcome and/or decolonization processes began. There have been research efforts on islands from various perspectives in recent years, but many remain fragmented. What we need is a comprehensive island history that integrates the islands' past into broader historical narratives while highlighting their unique characteristics.

The lands where the Magellan-Elcano expedition made stops in the Pacific world were islands. They landed on dozens and sighted many more. The Pacific world was an island world, with individual islands serving as oases amidst the perils of the oceanic “desert”, providing essential resupply points. These islands became gates in the middle of the sea. The wealth of the Pacific islands was what motivated the first circumnavigation voyage. Without this goal, the first act of globalization would have been delayed.

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Keywords: circumnavigation, island studies, Pacific Ocean, maritime history, Ferdinand Magellan, history of geographical discoveries

Islands had an important role in the first circumnavigation expedition undertaken by Magellan and Elcano. A global history that focuses on islands is necessary, one that no longer places island communities into the marginalized position they are assigned in alleged general histories. Meanwhile, the issue of the island must be approached individually. Islands have historically had features marked by their insularity, which is why,

as subjects and objects of research within general historical processes, they sometimes require different interpretations.

The Magellan expedition landed on a multitude of islands and sighted many others – we do not know exactly how many. An important fact to keep in mind is that the Capitulations between Magellan and Charles I stipulated that if Magellan discovered more than six islands, he had the right to keep two, act as their governor and enjoy the income from them. In addition, there were many instances of desertion among the expedition members who preferred to stay on those islands.

Pacifiški otoki na potovanju Magellana in Elcana

Ključne besede: objadranje, otoške študije, Tihi ocean, pomorska zgodovina, Ferdinand Magellan, zgodovina geografskih odkritij

Otoki so imeli osrednjo vlogo pri Magellanovi in Elcanovi prvi plovbi okoli sveta. Tematika otokov zahteva individualno obravnavo; potrebna je globalna zgodovina, ki se osredotoča na otoške skupnosti in jih izvzame iz marginalizacije domnevno splošne zgodovine. Zgodovinsko gledano so imeli otoki značilnosti, ki jih je zaznamovala otoškost, zato občasno zahtevajo različne interpretacije kot subjekti in objekti raziskovanja v okviru splošnih zgodovinskih procesov.

Odkrili so številne otoke in jih še več videli, natančno število ni znano. Pomembno dejstvo, ki ga velja upoštevati, je, da je kapitulacija (prenos pravic) med Magellanom in Karlom V. določala, da ima Magellan, v primeru odkritja več kot šestih otokov, pravico obdržati dva ter na teh delovati kot guverner in iz tega naslova uživati prihodke. Poleg tega je bilo med člani odprave veliko dezerterjev, ki so raje ostali na teh otokih.

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○ avtorju

Juan Manuel Santana Pérez je redni profesor zgodovine na Inštitutu za besedilno analizo (Instituto de Análisis Textuales) na Univerzi Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Avtor je diplomiral iz geografije in zgodovine, 18. januarja 1989 je s posebno pohvalo doktoriral na področju zgodovine. Na Univerzi La Laguna je prejel nagrado za izjemno disertacijo. Poleg tega je na Univerzi La Laguna diplomiral iz filozofije, izobraževalnih znanosti, informacijskih ved in novinarstva ter na Univerzi Las Palmas de Gran Canaria iz angleške filologije. Njegove raziskave se osredotočajo na zgodnjo in moderno zgodovino ter 18. stoletje, s poudarkom na zgodovini otokov tega obdobja. Je avtor štirinajstih monografij in več kot sto štiridesetih znanstvenih člankov. Bil je mentor štirinajstim doktorandom in predstojnik Oddelka za zgodovino na Univerzi Las Palmas de Gran Canaria med letoma 1999 in 2004.

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