

The First Voyage around the World (1519–1522)

[1] Antonio Pigafetta, patrician of Vicenza and Knight of Rhodes, to the most illustrious and excellent Lord, Philipe Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, renowned Grand Master of Rhodes, his most honoured lord¹ [1].

[2] Inasmuch as, most illustrious and excellent Lord, there are many curious persons who not only take pleasure in knowing and hearing the great and wonderful things that God has permitted me to see and suffer during my long and dangerous voyage, herein described, but who also wish to know the means and manners and paths that I have taken in making that voyage; and who do not lend full credence to the end unless they have a perfect assurance of the beginning: therefore, your most illustrious Lordship must know that, finding myself, in the year of the nativity of Our Saviour 1519 in Spain, in the court of the most serene King of the Romans,² with the reverend Monsignor, Francesco Chiericati,³ then apostolic protonotary and ambassador of Pope Leo X of holy memory (and who has since ascended to the bishopric of Aprutino and the lordship of Teramo),⁴ and having obtained much information from many books that I had read, as well as from various persons, who discussed the great and marvellous things of the Ocean Sea with his Lordship, I determined, with the good grace of His Caesarean Majesty, and of his Lordship abovesaid, to experience myself and to see those things that might satisfy me somewhat, and that might grant me some renown with posterity [2].

[3] Having heard that a fleet of five vessels had been fitted out in the city of Seville for the purpose of going to discover the spicery in the islands of Molucca,⁵ under command of Captain-General Ferdinand

Magellan, a Portuguese gentleman, *comendador* of the Order of Santiago de la Spada,⁶ [who] had many times travelled the Ocean Sea in various capacities, acquiring great praise, I set out from the city of Barcelona, where His Majesty was then residing, bearing many letters of recommendation, and by ship I went as far as Malaga, and from there, travelling by land, I reached Seville,⁷ and having been there about three full months, waiting for the said fleet to be set in order for the departure, finally, as your most excellent Lordship will learn below, we commenced our voyage under most happy auspices [3].

[4] And inasmuch as when I was in Italy and going to see His Holiness Pope Clement,⁸ you by your grace showed yourself very kind and good to me at Monterosi,⁹ and told me that you would be pleased if I would copy down for you all those things that I had seen and suffered during the voyage; and although I have had little opportunity, yet I have tried to satisfy your desire according to my poor ability [4]. Therefore, I offer you, in this little book of mine, all my vigils, hardships, and wanderings, begging you, when you will take some rest from your continual Rhodian cares, to deign to skim them, by which I shall receive no slight recompense from your most illustrious Lordship, to whose good grace I consign and commend myself [5].

[5] The captain-general having resolved to make so long a voyage through the Ocean Sea, where furious winds and great storms are always reigning, but not desiring to make known to any of his men the voyage that he was about to make, fearing they might be cast down at the thought of doing so great and extraordinary a deed, as he did accomplish with the aid of God (the captains who accompanied him, hated him exceedingly, I know not why, unless because he was a Portuguese, and they Spaniards) [6].¹⁰ Desiring therefore to accomplish that which he promised under oath to the emperor, Don Carlo, king of Spain, and so that the ships might not become separated from one another during the storms and night, he prescribed the following orders and gave them to all the pilots and masters of his ships:¹¹ these were [to the effect] that he should always precede the other ships at night and they were to follow his ship which would have a large torch of wood, which they call *farol*,¹² which he always carried hanging from the poop of his ship [7]. This was a signal that

they should continue to follow him [8]. If he showed another light with a lantern or by means of a piece of rush wicking called *strengue*,¹³ made of esparto that is well beaten in the water and then dried in the sun or in the smoke (a most excellent material for such use), they were to answer him so that he might know by that signal whether all of the ships were coming together [9]. If he showed two lights without the farol, they were to veer or take another tack [10]. When the wind was not favourable or suitable for us to continue on our course, or when he wished to sail slowly, he showed three lights, so that they were to take away the *bonneta* (bonnet sail), which is a part of the sail that is fastened below the mainsail; when the weather is good, in order to make better time, it is taken away so that it may be easier to furl the mainsail when it is struck hastily during a sudden squall [11]. If he showed four lights, they were to strike all the sails, after which he showed a signal by one light [12]. When he was standing still, if he showed many lights, or fired a mortar, it was a signal of land or of shoals [13]. Then he showed four lights when he wished to have the sails set full, so that they might always sail in his wake by the torch on the poop [14]. When he desired to set the bonnet sail, he showed three lights [15]. When he desired to alter his course, he showed two [16]. Then if he wished to ascertain whether all the ships were following and whether they were coming together, he showed one light, so that each one of the ships might do the same and reply to him [17].

[6] Three watches were set nightly: the first at the beginning of the night, the second (which they call *modora*)¹⁴ in the middle, and the third at the end [of the night] [18]. All of the men in the ships were divided into three *colonelli*:¹⁵ the first was that of the captain or boatswain, those two alternating nightly; the second, of either the pilot or boatswain's mate; and the third, of the master [19]. Thus did the captain-general order that all the ships observe the above signals and watches, so that their voyage might be more secure [20].¹⁶

[7] On Monday morning, 10 August, St Lawrence's day, in the abovesaid year, the fleet, having been supplied with all the things necessary for the sea and with men of every sort¹⁷ (our number was 237),¹⁸ the five ships made ready in the morning to leave the Mole of Seville,¹⁹ and discharging many pieces of artillery, the ships set their

foresails to the wind, and descended the river Betis, at present called Guadalquivir,²⁰ passing by a village called San Juan de Aznalfarache, once a large Moorish settlement, in the midst of which was once a bridge that crossed the said river, and led to Seville, where two columns of that bridge have remained even to this day at the bottom of the water; and when ships sail by there, they need men who know well the location of the columns, so as to avoid them [21]. And it is necessary to pass them when the river is at high tide, as with many other places along the river that have insufficient depth for ships that are laden and too large to pass [22]. Then the ships reached another village called Coria,²¹ and passed by many other villages along the river, until they came to a castle of the duke of Medina-Sidonia, called Sanlúcar, which is a port by which to enter the Ocean Sea, in an east and west direction with the Cape of San Vicente, which lies in thirty-seven degrees of latitude, and ten leagues from the said port [23].²² From Seville to this point [Sanlúcar], it is seventeen or twenty leagues by river [24].

[8] Some days after, the captain-general, with his other captains, descended the river in the small boats belonging to their ship, and we remained there for a considerable number of days in order to finish [providing] the fleet with some things that it needed [25]. Every day we went ashore to hear mass in a village called Our Lady of Barrameda, near Sanlúcar [26]. Before the departure, the captain-general wished all the men to go to confession, and he would not allow any woman to sail in the fleet for the sake of better order [27].

[9] We left that village called Sanlúcar on Tuesday, 20 September, of the same year, and took a southwest course, and on the twenty-sixth of the same month we reached an island of the Grand Canary islands,²³ called Tenerife, which lies in a latitude of twenty-eight degrees, [landing there] in order to get meat, water, and wood [28]. We stayed there for three and one-half days in order to furnish the fleet with those supplies, and then we went to a port of the same island called Monte Rosso²⁴ to get pitch, staying [there] two days [29].

[10] Your most illustrious Lordship must know that among these Grand Canary islands, there is one where not a single drop of fresh water is to be found; but that at midday a cloud descends from the sky and encircles a large tree which grows in that island, the leaves and branches

of which distil a great quantity of water; and at the foot of the tree runs a trench that resembles a fountain, where all the water falls, and from which the people living there, and the animals, both domestic and wild, amply satisfy themselves every day with this water and no other [30].²⁵

[11] At midnight on Monday, 3 October, the sails were trimmed toward the south, and we took to the open Ocean Sea, passing between Cape Verde and its islands in fourteen and one-half degrees [31]. Thus for many days did we sail along the coast of Ghinea, or Ethiopia; here there is a mountain called Sierra Leone, which lies in eight degrees of latitude, with contrary winds, calms, and rains without wind, until we reached the equinoctial line, where we had sixty days of continual rain, contrary to the opinion of the ancients [32].²⁶ Before we reached the line, at fourteen degrees, many furious squalls of wind and currents of water struck us head on [33]. Since we were unable to advance, and so as to avoid being wrecked, all the sails were struck; and in this manner did we wander here and there on the sea, waiting for the squall to cease, for it was very violent [34]. When it rained there was no wind; when the sun shone, it was calm [35].²⁷

[12] Some large fish with fearsome teeth called *tiburoni*²⁸ came to the side of the ships, and whenever they find men in the sea they devour them [36]. We caught many of them with iron hooks, although they are not good to eat unless they are small, and even then they are not very good [37].

[13] During those storms the Holy Body, that is to say St Elmo,²⁹ appeared to us many times in the form of light [38]. Once he appeared during an exceedingly dark night, with the brightness of a blazing torch, on the maintop, where he stayed for about two hours or more, to our consolation, for we were weeping [39]. When that blessed light was about to leave us, so dazzling was the brightness that it cast into our eyes, that we all remained for more than an eighth of an hour blinded and calling for mercy, for truly we thought that we were dead men [40]. The sea suddenly grew calm [41].³⁰

[14] I saw many kinds of birds, among them one that had no anus [42]. Another, [which] when the female wishes to lay its eggs, it does so on the back of the male and there they are hatched; the latter bird has no feet, and always lives in the sea;³¹ also, [there is] another kind

that lives on the ordure of the other birds, and in no other manner; for I often saw this bird, which is called *cagassela*, fly behind the other birds, until they are constrained to drop their ordure [43]. Immediately, the *cagassela* seizes it and lets the bird go [44].³² I also saw many flying fish, and many others collected together, so that they resembled an island [45].³³

[15] After we had passed the equinoctial line going south, we lost the North Star, and hence we sailed south-south-west until [we reached] a land called 'the land of Verzin,'³⁴ which lies in twenty-three and one-half degrees of the Antarctic Pole [south latitude],³⁵ and it is the land extending from the Cape of Santo Agostinho, which lies in eight degrees of the same pole,³⁶ where we got a plentiful refreshment of fowls, potatoes, many sweet pine cones (in truth the most delicious fruit that can be found),³⁷ the flesh of the *anta*,³⁸ which resembles beef, sugar cane, and innumerable other things, which I shall not mention in order not to be prolix [46].³⁹ For one fish hook or one knife, those people gave five or six chickens; for one comb, a pair of geese; for one mirror or one pair of scissors, as many fish as would be sufficient for ten men; for a bell or a lace, one basketful of potatoes (these potatoes resemble chestnuts in taste, and are as long as turnips); for a king of diamonds, which is a playing card,⁴⁰ they gave me six fowls and thought that they had even cheated me [47].⁴¹ We entered that port on St Lucy's day,⁴² and on that day had the sun on the zenith and we were subjected to greater heat on that day and on the other days when we had the sun on the zenith than when we were beneath the equator [48].

[16] That land of Verzin is very bounteous and is larger than Spain, France, and Italy put together [49].⁴³ It belongs to the king of Portugal [50].⁴⁴ The people of that land are not Christians, and do not worship anything; they live according to the dictates of nature, and reach an age of 125 and 140 years [51].⁴⁵ Both the men and the women go naked [52]. They live in certain long houses which they call *boii*,⁴⁶ and sleep in cotton hammocks called *amache*,⁴⁷ which are fastened in those houses by each end to large beams; a fire is built on the ground between the beams [53]. In each one of those boii, there are one hundred men with their wives and children, and they make a

great racket [54]. They have boats called *canoe*⁴⁸ made of a single but flattened⁴⁹ tree, hollowed out by the use of stone⁵⁰ (those people employ stones as we do iron, as they have no iron); thirty or forty men occupy one of those boats [55]. They paddle with blades like a baker's peel,⁵¹ and thus, black, naked, and shaven, they resemble, when paddling, the inhabitants of the Stygian marsh [56].⁵²

[17] The men and women are proportioned like us [57]. They eat the human flesh of their enemies, not because it is good, but because it is a certain established custom [58]. That custom, which is mutual, was begun by an old woman, who had but one son who was killed by his enemies [59]. In return some days later, that old woman's friends captured one of the company who had killed her son, and brought him to the place of her abode [60]. When she saw him, remembering her son, she ran upon him like an infuriated bitch, and bit him on the shoulder [61]. Shortly afterward he escaped to his own people, whom he told that they had tried to eat him, showing them [in proof] the marks on his shoulder [62]. Whomever the latter captured afterward at any time from the former they ate, and the former did the same to the latter, so that such a custom has sprung up in this way [63].⁵³ They do not eat the bodies all at once, but everyone cuts off a piece, and carries it to his house, where he smokes it [64]. Then every eight days, he cuts off a small bit, which he eats thus smoked with his other food to remind him of his enemies [65].⁵⁴ The above was told me by the pilot, João Carvalho, who came with us, and who had lived in that land for four years [66].⁵⁵

[18] Those people paint the whole body and the face in a wonderful manner with fire in various fashions, as do the women also; the men are smooth shaven and have no beard, for they pull it out; they clothe themselves in a dress made of parrot feathers, with large round arrangements at their buttocks made from the largest feathers, and it is a ridiculous sight [67]. Almost all the men, except the women and children, have three holes pierced in the lower lip, where they carry round stones, one finger or thereabouts in length and hanging down outside [68]. Those people are not entirely black, but olive skinned; they keep the privies uncovered, and the body is without hair, while both men and women always go naked [69]. Their king is called *cacich*

[70].⁵⁶ They have an infinite number of parrots, and gave us eight or ten for one mirror; and little monkeys⁵⁷ that look like lions, only [they are] yellow, and very beautiful [71]. They make round white bread from the marrowy substance of trees, which is not very good, and is found between the wood and the bark and resembles ricotta [72].⁵⁸ They have swine that have their navels on their backs,⁵⁹ and large birds with beaks like spoons and no tongues [73].⁶⁰

[19] For one hatchet or a large knife, they gave us one or two of their young daughters as slaves, but they would not give us their wives in exchange for anything at all [74].⁶¹ The women will not shame their husbands under any considerations whatever, according to what was told to us [75]. They refuse to consent to their husbands by day, but only by night [76]. The women cultivate the fields, and carry all their food from the mountains in panniers or baskets on the head or fastened to the head, but they are always accompanied by their husbands, who are armed only with a bow of Brazil wood or of black palm wood, and a bundle of cane arrows, doing this because they are jealous [of their wives] [77].⁶² The women carry their children hanging [in] a cotton net from their necks [78].

[20] I omit other particulars, in order not to go on too long [79]. Mass was said twice on shore, during which those people remained on their knees with so great contrition and with clasped hands raised aloft, that it was an exceeding great pleasure to behold them [80].⁶³ They built us a house as they thought that we were going to stay with them for some time, and at our departure they cut a great quantity of Brazil wood to give us [81]. It had been about two months since it had rained in that land, and when we reached that port, it happened to rain, whereupon they said that we came from the sky and that we had brought the rain with us [82]. Those people could be converted easily to the faith of Jesus Christ [83].⁶⁴

[21] At first those people thought that the small boats were the children of the ships, and that the latter gave birth to them when they were lowered into the sea from the ships, and when they were lying so alongside the ships (as is the custom), they believed that the ships were nursing them [84].⁶⁵ One day a beautiful young woman came to the flagship, where I was, for no other purpose than to find some

action [85].⁶⁶ While waiting there, she cast her eyes upon the master's room, and saw a nail longer than one's finger, and picking it up very delightedly and neatly, she trust it through the lips of her vagina, and bending down low immediately departed, as the captain-general and I witnessed [86].⁶⁷

[22] Some words of those people of Verzin [87]:⁶⁸

- 1] For millet *maiz*
- 2] For flour *hui*
- 3] For fishhook *pinda*
- 4] For knife *tasce*
- 5] For comb *chigap*
- 6] For scissors *pirame*
- 7] For bell *itanmaraca*
- 8] For good, better *tum maragathum*

[23] We remained in that land for thirteen days [88].⁶⁹ Then proceeding on our way, we went as far as thirty-four and one-third degrees toward the Antarctic Pole, where we found people at a fresh-water river,⁷⁰ called Cannibals, who eat human flesh [89].⁷¹ One of them, almost a giant in stature, came to the flagship in order to assure [the safety of] his companions [90]. He had a voice like a bull [92]. While he was on board the ship, the others carried away their possessions from the place where they were living into the interior, for fear of us. Seeing that, we landed one hundred men in order to find an interpreter and converse with them, or to capture one of them by force [93]. They fled, and in fleeing they took such long strides that we, although running, could not catch up with them [94]. There are seven islands in that river, in the largest of which precious gems are found [95]. That place is called Cape Santa Maria; it was formerly thought that one passed from there to the sea of Sur, that is to say the South Sea,⁷² but it was never further explored [96]. Now the name is not [given to] a cape, but [to] a river, with a mouth seventeen leagues in width [97].⁷³ A Spanish captain called Juan de Solis was eaten by these Cannibals for trusting them too far, together with sixty men who were going to discover lands like us [98].⁷⁴

[24] Then proceeding on the same course toward the Antarctic Pole, coasting along the land, we encountered two islands full of geese and seawolves [99].⁷⁵ Truly, the great number of those geese cannot be told; in one hour we loaded the five ships [with them] [100]. Those geese are black and have all their feathers alike both on body and wings, and they do not fly and live on fish [101]. They were so fat that it was necessary to skin them rather than to pluck them [102]. Their beak is like that of a crow [103]. The seawolves are of various colours, and as large as a calf, with a head like that of a calf, ears small and round, and large teeth; they have no legs but only feet with small nails attached to the body, which resemble our hands, and between their fingers the same kind of skin as the geese [104]. They would be very fierce if they could run; they swim, and live on fish [105]. The ships suffered there a very great storm, during which the three holy bodies appeared to us many times, that is to say, St Elmo, St Nicholas, and St Clare; whereupon the storm immediately ceased [106].⁷⁶

[25] Leaving there, we finally reached forty-nine and one-half degrees toward the Antarctic Pole [107].⁷⁷ Since it was winter, the ships entered a safe port to winter [108].⁷⁸ We passed two months there without seeing any people [109]. One day we suddenly saw a naked man of giant stature on the shore of the port, dancing, singing, and throwing dust on his head [110]. The captain-general sent one of our men to the giant so that he might perform the same actions as a sign of peace, and having done that, the man led the giant to a small island where the captain-general was waiting [111]. When the giant was in the captain-general's and our presence he marvelled greatly, and made signs with one finger pointed upward, indicating that he believed that we had come from the sky [112]. He was so tall that we reached only to his waist, and he was well proportioned;⁷⁹ his face was large and painted red all over, while about his eyes he was painted yellow; and he had two hearts painted on the middle of his cheeks; his scanty hair was painted white; he was dressed in the skins of animals skilfully sewn together, and that animal has a head and ears as large as those of a mule, a neck and body like those of a camel, the legs of a deer, and the tail of a horse, like which it neighs [113]. That land has very many of those animals

[114].⁸⁰ His feet were shod with the same kind of skins and covered his feet in the manner of shoes, and in his hand he carried a short, heavy bow, with a cord somewhat thicker than those of the lute, and made from the intestines of the same animal, and a bundle of rather short cane arrows feathered like ours, and with points of white and black flint stones in the manner of Turkish arrows, instead of iron, fashioned by means of another stone [115].

[26] The captain-general had the giant given something to eat and drink, and among other things that were shown to him was a large steel mirror [116]. When he saw his reflection, he was greatly terrified and jumped back, throwing three or four of our men to the ground [117]. After that the captain-general gave him some bells, a mirror, a comb, and some beads and sent him ashore with four armed men [118]. When one of his companions, who would never come to the ships, saw him coming with our men, he ran to the place where the others were [119]. They came one after the other, completely naked [120]. When our men reached them, they began to dance and to sing, lifting one finger to the sky, and showing our men some white powder made from the roots of an herb, which they kept in earthen pots, and which they offered our men to eat because they had nothing else [121].⁸¹ Our men made signs inviting them to the ships, and suggesting that they would help them carry their possessions; thereupon, those men quickly took only their bows, while their women laden like asses carried everything [122].

[27] The latter are not so tall as the men but are very much fatter [123]. When we saw them we were greatly surprised: their breasts are one-half cubit long,⁸² and they are painted and clothed like their husbands, except that in front of their private parts they have a small skin that covers them [124]. They led four of those young animals [the guanaco], fastened with thongs like a halter [125]. When those people wish to take some of those animals, they tie one of these young ones to a thornbush; thereupon, the large ones come to play with the little ones, and those people kill them with their arrows from their place of hiding [126]. Our men led eighteen of those people, both men and women, to the ships, and they were returned to both sides of the port so that they might catch some of those animals [127].

[28] Six days later, a giant painted and clothed in the same manner was sighted by some [of our men] who were cutting wood [128]. He had in his hand a bow and arrow; when he approached our men, he first touched his head, face, and body, and then did the same to our men, afterward lifting his hands toward the sky [129]. When the captain-general was informed of it, he ordered him to be taken in the small boat, and brought to that island in the port where our men had built a house for the smiths and for the storage of some things from the ships [130]. That man was even taller and better built than the others and as tractable and amiable [131]. Jumping up and down, he danced, and when he danced, at every leap, his feet sank a palm's depth into the earth [132]. He remained with us for many days, so long that we baptized him, calling him John [133]. He pronounced the name Jesus, the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and his own name as distinctly as we, but with an exceedingly loud voice [134]. Then the captain-general gave him a shirt, a woollen jerkin, cloth breeches, a cap, a mirror, a comb, bells, and other things, and sent him away to his companions; he left us very joyous and happy [135]. The following day he brought one of those large animals to the captain-general, in return for which many things were given to him, so that he might bring some more to us; but we did not see him again [136]. We thought that his companions had killed him because he had conversed with us [137].

[29] After fifteen days we saw four of those giants without their weapons for they had hidden them in certain bushes as the two whom we captured showed us [138]. Each one was painted differently [139]. The captain-general detained two of them, the youngest and best proportioned, by means of a very cunning trick, in order to take them to Spain; had he used any other means [than those he employed], they could easily have killed some of us [140]. The trick that he employed to capture them was as follows: he gave them many knives, scissors, mirrors, bells, and glass beads [141]. And those two having their hands filled with those things, the captain-general had two pairs of iron manacles brought, such as are fastened on the feet, and made motions as if to make a gift of them, whereat they were very pleased, since those manacles were of iron, but they did not

know how to carry them, and they were grieved at leaving them behind [142]. They had no place to put those gifts; for they had to hold the skin wrapped about them with their hands [143]. The other two giants wished to help them, but the captain refused [144]. Seeing that they were loath to leave those manacles behind, the captain made them a sign that he would put them on their feet, and that they could carry them away [145]. They nodded assent with the head [146]. Immediately, the captain had the manacles put on both of them at the same time, and when our men were driving home the cross bolt, the giants began to suspect something, but since the captain reassured them, they nevertheless remained still [147]. When they then saw that they were deceived, they raged like bulls, calling loudly for Setebos⁸³ to aid them [148]. As soon as we were able to bind the hands of the other two, we sent them ashore with nine of our men, in order that the giants might guide them to the place where the wife of one of the two whom we had captured was; for the latter expressed his great grief at leaving her by signs so that we understood [that he meant] her [149]. While they were on their way, one of the giants freed his hands, and took to his heels with such swiftness that our men lost sight of him [150]. He went to the place where his associates were, but he did not find [there] one of his companions who had remained behind with the women, for he had gone hunting [151]. He immediately went in search of the latter, and told him all that had happened. The other giant endeavoured so hard to free himself from his bonds, that our men struck him, wounding him slightly on the head, whereat he, raging, led them to where the women were [153]. João Carvalho, the pilot and commander of those men, refused to bring back the woman that night, but determined to sleep there, for night was approaching [154]. The other two giants came, and seeing their companion wounded, hesitated, but said nothing then, but with the dawn, they spoke to the women; [where-upon] they immediately ran away (and the smaller ones ran faster than the larger), leaving all their possessions behind them [155]. Two of them turned aside to shoot their arrows at our men; the other was leading away those small animals of theirs they use to hunt, and thus fighting, one of them pierced the thigh of one of our men with an

arrow, and he died immediately [156].⁸⁴ When the giants saw that, they ran away quickly [157]. Our men had muskets and crossbows, but they could never wound any of the giants [158]. When the latter fought, they never stood still, but leaped here and there [159]. Our men buried their dead companion, and burned all the possessions left behind by the giants [160]. Truly, those giants run faster than horses and are exceedingly possessive of their wives [161].⁸⁵

[30] When those people feel sick to their stomachs, instead of purging themselves, they thrust an arrow down their throat for two span or more and vomit [a substance of a] green colour mixed with blood, for they eat a certain kind of thistle [162].⁸⁶ When they have a headache, they cut themselves across the forehead; and they do the same on the arms or on the legs and in any part of the body, letting much blood [163]. One of those whom we had captured, and whom we kept in our ship, said that the blood refused to remain there [in the place of the pain], and consequently causes them suffering [164]. They wear their hair cut with the tonsure, like friars, but longer; and they have a cotton cord wrapped about the head, in which they stick their arrows when they go hunting [165]. They bind their privies close to their bodies because of the very great cold [166]. When one of those people die, ten or twelve demons all painted appear and dance very joyfully about the corpse [167]. One of those demons is seen to be much taller than the others, and he cries out and rejoices more [168]. They paint themselves in the same manner as the demon appears painted to them [169]. They call the larger demon Setebos and the others Cheleulle [170]. That giant also told us by signs that he had seen the demons with two horns on their heads and long hair hanging down to the feet belching forth fire from mouth and buttocks [171]. The captain-general named those people Patagoni [172].⁸⁷ They all clothe themselves in the skins of that animal mentioned earlier; and they have no houses except those made from the skin of the same animal, and they wander here and there with those houses just as the gypsies do; they live on raw flesh and on a sweet root that they call chapae [173]. Each of the two whom we captured ate a basketful of biscuit, and drank half a pail of water at a gulp [174]. They also ate rats without skinning them [175].

[31] We remained in that port, which we called 'Port St Julian,' about five months where many things happened [176].⁸⁸ In order that your most illustrious Lordship⁸⁹ may know some of them, it happened that as soon as we had entered the port, the captains of the other four ships plotted treason in order that they might kill the captain-general; and these men were the overseer of the fleet, one Juan de Cartagena, the treasurer, Luis de Mendoza, the accountant, Antonio Coca, and Gaspar de Quesada; and when the treason was discovered, the overseer of the men was quartered, and the treasurer was killed by dagger blows [177]. Some days after that, Gaspar de Quesada was banished with a priest⁹⁰ in that land of Patagonia for planning another plot [178]. The captain-general did not wish to have him killed, because the emperor, Don Carlo, had appointed him captain [179].⁹¹

[32] A ship called *Santiago* was lost in an expedition made to explore the coast [180]. All the men were saved as by a miracle, not even getting wet [181]. Two of them barely made it to the ships and told us about it; consequently, the captain-general sent some men with bags full of biscuits [182]. It was necessary for us to bring them food for two months, while each day supplies from the ship [that was wrecked] were recovered [183]. The journey there was twenty-four leagues long (or one hundred miles), and the path was very rough and full of thorns. The men were four days on the road, sleeping at night in the bushes; they found no drinking water, but only ice, which caused them the greatest hardship [185].⁹² There were very many long shellfish that are called *missiglioni*⁹³ in that port (they had pearls in them), but they were too small to be eaten [186]. Incense, ostriches, foxes, sparrows, and rabbits much smaller than ours were also found [187]. We erected a cross on the top of the highest summit there, as a sign in that land that it belonged to the king of Spain; and we called that summit 'Monte de Cristo' [188].

[33] Departing from there, we found, in fifty-one degrees less one-third degree, toward the Antarctic Pole, a river of fresh water⁹⁴ in which the ships were almost lost because of the furious winds; but God and the holy bodies aided them [189]. We stayed about two months in that river⁹⁵ in order to supply the ships with water, wood, and fish, [the latter being] one cubit in length and more, and covered with

scales:⁹⁶ they were very good although there were too few of them [190]. Before leaving that river, the captain-general and all of us confessed and received communion as true Christians [191].

[34] Upon reaching fifty-two degrees toward the Antarctic Pole, we discovered most miraculously a strait on the day of the [Feast of the] Eleven Thousand Virgins, whose cape we named the Cape of the Eleven Thousand Virgins [192].⁹⁷ That strait is 110 leagues or 440 miles long, and it is one-half league broad, more or less, and it leads to another sea called the Pacific Sea, and is surrounded by very lofty mountains laden with snow [193]. There it was impossible to find bottom [for anchoring], and [it was necessary to fasten] the moorings⁹⁸ on land twenty-five or thirty fathoms away, and if it had not been for the captain-general, we would not have found that strait, for we all thought and said that it was closed on all sides [194].⁹⁹ But the captain-general, who knew that he had to make his journey by means of a well-hidden strait, which he had seen depicted on a map in the treasury of the king of Portugal, which was made by that excellent man, Martin of Bohemia,¹⁰⁰ sent two ships, the *San Antonio* and the *Concepción* (for thus they were called), to discover what was at the end of the bay [195].

[35] We with the other two ships, the flagship, called *Trinidad*, and the other the *Victoria*, stayed inside the bay to wait for them [196]. A great storm struck us that night, which lasted until the middle of the next day, and forced us to lift anchor and be driven here and there about the bay [197].¹⁰¹ The other two ships suffered a headwind and could not double a cape formed by the bay almost at its end, as they were trying to return to join us; so that they thought that they would have to run aground [198]. But on approaching the end of the bay, and thinking that they were lost, they saw a small opening that did not appear to be an opening, but a cove,¹⁰² and like desperate men they hauled into it, and thus they discovered the strait by chance, and seeing that it was not a cove, but a strait with land, they proceeded farther and found a bay [199].¹⁰³ And then farther on they found another strait and another bay larger than the first two [200].¹⁰⁴ Very joyful, they immediately turned back to report to the captain-general [201]. We thought that they had been wrecked, first, by reason of the violent storm, and second, because two days had passed and they had

not appeared, and also because of certain smoke signals made by two of their men who had been sent ashore to notify us [202]. And so, while in suspense, we saw the two ships, with sails full and banners flying to the wind, coming toward us [203]. Upon approaching us, they suddenly discharged a number of mortars [...] and cheers; then, all together, thanking God and the Virgin Mary, we went to explore farther on [204].

[36] After entering that strait, we found two openings, one to the southeast and the other to the southwest [205].¹⁰⁵ The captain-general sent the ship *San Antonio* together with the *Concepción* to ascertain whether that opening which was toward the southeast had an exit into the Pacific Sea [206]. The ship *San Antonio* would not wait for the *Concepción* because it intended to flee and return to Spain, which it did [207]. The pilot of that ship was one Estevão Gomez,¹⁰⁶ and he hated the captain-general exceedingly, because before that fleet was fitted out, he had gone to the emperor to request some caravels to go and explore, but His Majesty did not give them to him because of the coming of the captain-general [208]. On that account he conspired with certain Spaniards, and the next night they captured the captain of their ship, a cousin-german of the captain-general, one Alvaro de Mezquita, whom they wounded and put in irons, and in this condition took to Spain [209]. The other giant whom we had captured was in that ship, but he died when they came into the warmer climate [210]. The *Concepción*, as it was unable to keep up with that ship, waited for it, sailing about here and there [211]. The *San Antonio* turned back during the night and fled through the same strait [212].

[37] We had gone to explore the other opening toward the southwest, finding, however, that the same strait continued [213]. We came upon a river that we called the 'river of Sardines,' because there were many sardines near it,¹⁰⁷ and so we stayed there for four days in order to await the two ships [214]. During that period we sent a well-equipped boat to discover the cape of the other sea [215]. The men returned within three days, and reported that they had seen the cape and the open sea [216]. The captain-general wept for joy, and called that cape, 'Cape Deseado,' for we had desired it for a long time [217].¹⁰⁸ We turned back to look for the two ships, but we found only the *Concepción*, and upon asking them

where the other one was, João Serrão,¹⁰⁹ who was captain and pilot of the *Concepción* (and also of that ship that had been wrecked), replied that he did not know, and that he had never seen it after it had entered the opening [218]. We sought it in all parts of the strait, as far as that opening through which it had fled [219]. The captain-general sent the ship *Victoria* back to the entrance of the strait to ascertain whether the ship was there, and orders were given them, if they did not find it, to plant a banner on the summit of some small hill with a letter in an earthen pot buried in the earth near the banner, so that if the banner were seen the letter might be found, and the ship might learn the course that we were sailing, for this was the arrangement made between us in case we became separated [220]. Two banners were planted with their letters: one on a little eminence in the first bay, and the other in an islet in the third bay where there were many seawolves and large birds [221].¹¹⁰

The captain-general waited for the ship with his other ship near the river of Isleo,¹¹¹ and he had a cross set up in an islet near that river, which flowed between high mountains covered with snow and emptied into the sea near the river of Sardines [222]. Had we not discovered that strait, the captain-general had determined to go as far as seventy-five degrees toward the Antarctic Pole, where in that latitude, during the summer season, there is no night, or if there is any night it is but short, and so in the winter with the day [223].

[38] In order that your most illustrious Lordship may believe it,¹¹² when we were in that strait, the nights were only three hours long, and it was then the month of October [224]. The land on the left-hand side of that strait turned toward the southeast and it was low [225].¹¹³ We called that strait the 'strait of Patagonia,'¹¹⁴ where one finds the safest of ports every half league in it, excellent waters, the finest of wood (but not of cedar), fish, sardines, and *missiglioni*, while small-age,¹¹⁵ a sweet herb (although there is also some that is bitter), grows around the springs, of which we ate for many days as we had nothing else [226]. I believe that there is not a more beautiful or better strait in the world than that one [227]. In that Ocean Sea one sees a very amusing fish hunt: the fish [that hunt] are of three sorts, and are one cubit and more in length, and are called *dorado*, *albicore*, and *bonito*,¹¹⁶ which follow the flying fish called *colondrini*,¹¹⁷ which are one span and more in length and very good to eat [228]. When the above three kinds [of

fish] find any of those flying fish, the latter immediately leap from the water and fly, as long as their wings are wet, more than a crossbow's flight [229]. While they are flying, the others run along behind them under the water following the shadow of the flying fish; the latter have no sooner fallen into the water than the others immediately seize and eat them: it is a truly beautiful thing to see [230].¹¹⁸

[39] Words of the Patagonian giants:¹¹⁹

1] For head <i>her</i>	29] For communication with
2] For eye <i>other</i>	women <i>io hoi</i>
3] For nose <i>or</i>	30] For thighs <i>chiaue</i>
4] For eyebrows <i>occhechel</i>	31] For knee <i>tepin</i>
5] For eyelids <i>sechechiel</i>	32] For rump <i>schiaquen</i>
6] For nostrils <i>oresche</i> ¹²⁰	33] For buttocks <i>hoij</i>
7] For mouth <i>xiam</i>	34] For arm <i>mar</i>
8] For lips <i>schiahame</i>	35] For pulse <i>holion</i>
9] For teeth <i>phor</i>	36] For legs <i>coss</i>
10] For tongue <i>schial</i>	37] For foot <i>thee</i>
11] For chin <i>sechen</i>	38] For heel <i>tere</i>
12] For hair <i>archir</i>	39] For ankle <i>perchi</i>
13] For face <i>cogechel</i>	40] For sole of foot <i>caotscheni</i>
14] For throat <i>ohumez</i>	41] For fingernails <i>colim</i>
15] For occiput <i>schialeschin</i>	42] For heart <i>thol</i>
16] For shoulders <i>pelles</i>	43] For to scratch <i>gechare</i>
17] For elbow <i>cotel</i>	44] For cross-eyed man <i>calischen</i>
18] For hand <i>chene</i>	45] For young man <i>calemi</i>
19] For palm of hand <i>canneghin</i>	46] For water <i>holi</i>
20] For finger <i>cori</i>	47] For fire <i>ghialeme</i>
21] For ears <i>sane</i>	48] For smoke <i>giaiche</i>
22] For armpit <i>salischin</i>	49] For no <i>ehen</i>
23] For breasts <i>othen</i>	50] For yes <i>rey</i>
24] For chest <i>ochij</i>	51] For gold <i>pelpeli</i>
25] For body <i>gechel</i>	52] For lapis lazuli <i>secheg</i>
26] For penis <i>sachet</i>	53] For sun <i>calexchen</i>
27] For testicles <i>sacaneos</i>	54] For stars <i>settere</i>
28] For vagina <i>isse</i>	55] For sea <i>aro</i>

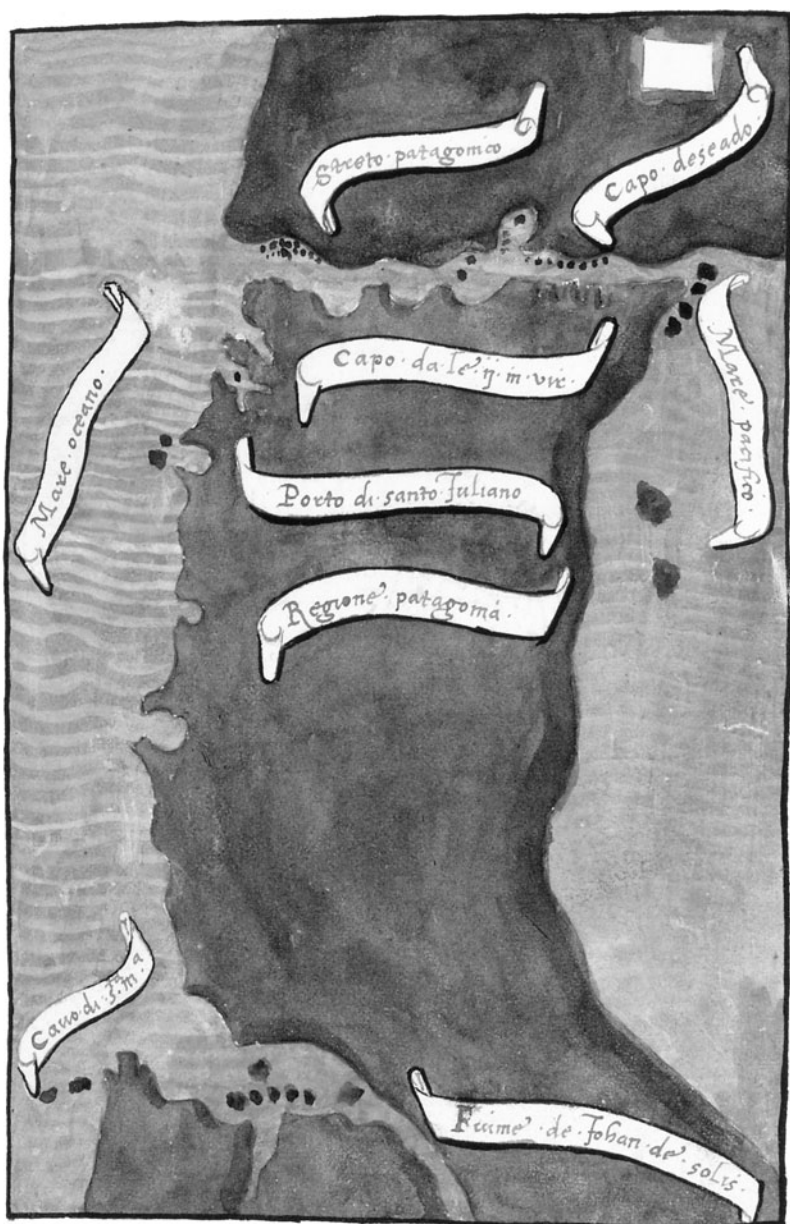
The First Voyage around the World

56] For wind <i>oni</i>	74] For ostrich, a bird <i>hoihoi</i>
57] For storm <i>ohone</i>	75] For its eggs <i>iam</i>
58] For fish <i>hoi</i>	76] For the powder of the herb they eat <i>chapae</i>
59] For to eat <i>mechiere</i>	77] For to smell <i>os</i>
60] For bowl <i>elo</i>	78] For parrot <i>cheche</i>
61] For pot <i>aschanie</i>	79] For birdcage <i>cleo</i>
62] For to ask <i>ghelhe</i>	80] For missiglioni <i>siameni</i>
63] For come here <i>hon si</i>	81] For red cloth <i>terechai</i>
64] For to look <i>choime</i>	82] For cap <i>aichel</i>
65] For to walk <i>rey</i>	83] For black <i>ainel</i>
66] For to fight <i>oamaghce</i>	84] For red <i>taiche</i>
67] For arrows <i>sethe</i>	85] For yellow <i>peperi</i>
68] For dog <i>holl</i>	86] For to cook <i>yrocoles</i>
69] For wolf <i>ani</i>	87] For belt <i>cathechin</i>
70] For to go a long distance <i>schien</i>	88] For goose <i>cache</i>
71] For guide <i>anti</i>	89] For their big devil <i>Setebos</i>
72] For snow <i>then</i>	90] For their small devils <i>Cheleule</i>
73] For to cover <i>hiam</i>	

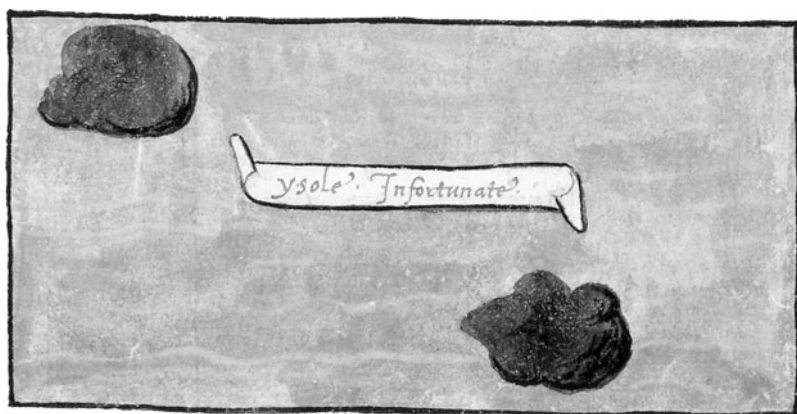
All the above words are pronounced in the throat, for such is their method of pronunciation [232].

[40] That giant whom we had in our ship told me those words; for when he, upon asking me for *capac*, that is to say, bread, as they call that root which they use as bread, and *oli*, that is to say, water, saw me write those words, and afterward when I, with pen in hand, asked him for other words, he understood me [233]. Once I made the sign of the cross, and, showing it to him, kissed it, he immediately cried out ‘Setebos’, and made me a sign that if I made the sign of the cross again, Setebos would enter into my body and cause me to die [234]. When that giant was sick, he asked for the cross, and embraced it and kissed it many times [235]. He decided to become a Christian before his death; we called him Paul [236]. When those people wish to make a fire, they rub a sharpened piece of wood against another piece until the fire catches in the pith of a certain tree, which is placed between those two sticks [237].

The First Voyage around the World



[Chart of the Patagonian Strait (I)]



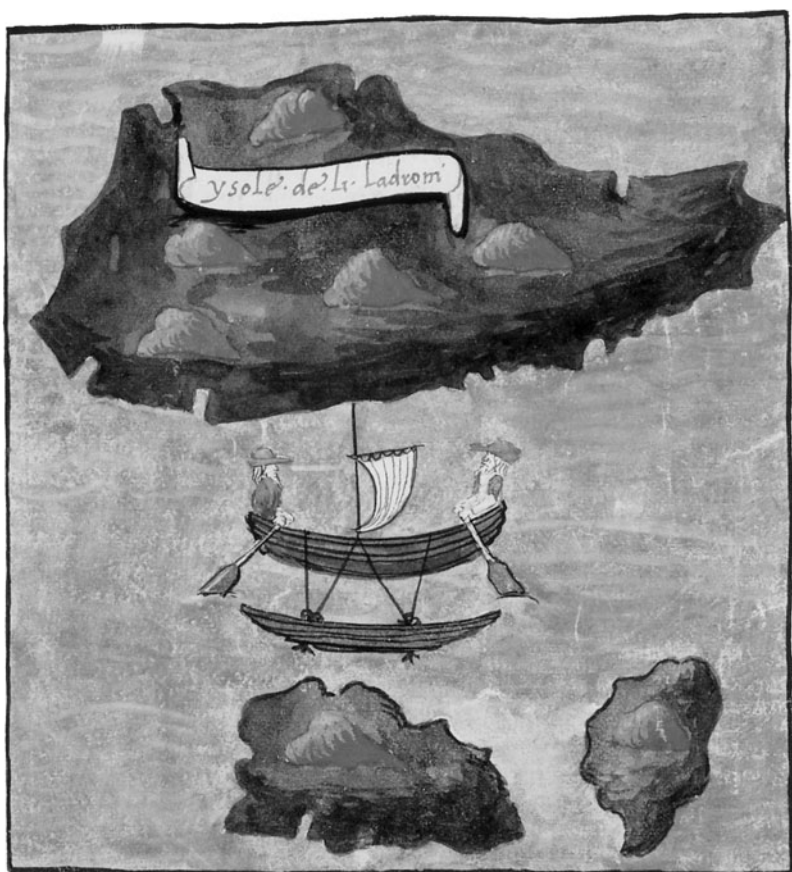
[Chart of the Unfortunate Islands (II)]¹²¹

[41] Wednesday, 28 November 1520,¹²² we debouched from that strait, engulfing ourselves in the Pacific Sea [238]. We were three months and twenty days without taking on any food or water [239]. We ate biscuit, which was no longer biscuit, but [had been reduced to] fistfuls of powder swarming with worms, for they had eaten the better part (it stank strongly of rat urine); and we drank yellow water that had been putrid for many days, and we also ate some ox hides that covered the top of the main yard to prevent the yard from chafing the shrouds, and which had become exceedingly hard because of the sun, rain, and wind [240]. We left them in the sea for four or five days, and then placed them for a few moments on top of the embers, and thus we ate them; and often we ate sawdust from boards [241]. Rats were sold for one-half ducat apiece, if only one could get them [242]. But worse than all the other misfortunes was the following: the gums of both the lower and upper teeth of some of our men swelled, so that they could not eat under any circumstances and therefore died [243]. Nineteen men died from that sickness, as well as the giant together with an Indian from the country of Verzin;¹²³ twenty-five or thirty men fell sick [during that time], in the arms, legs, or in some other place, so that only a few remained well [244]. By the grace of God, I suffered no infirmity [245].

[42] We sailed about four thousand leagues during those three months and twenty days through an open stretch in that Pacific Sea [246]. In truth it is very pacific, for during that time we did not suffer any storm, and we saw no land except two desert islets, where we found nothing but birds and trees [247]. We called them the Unfortunate Islands;¹²⁴ they are two hundred leagues apart [248]. We found no anchorage, [but] saw many sharks near them [249]. The first islet lies in fifteen degrees and the other in nine [250]. Daily we made runs of fifty, sixty, or seventy leagues with the wind at the windward side or at the stern,¹²⁵ and had not God and His blessed mother given us such good weather we would all have died of hunger in that exceedingly vast sea [251]. In truth I believe no such voyage will ever be repeated [252].¹²⁶

[43] When we left that strait, if we had sailed continuously westward we would have circumnavigated the world without finding other land than the Cape of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, which is a cape of that strait on the Ocean Sea, straight east-west from Cape Deseado on the Pacific Sea, and both of those capes lie in a latitude of exactly fifty-two degrees toward the Antarctic Pole [253].

[44] The Antarctic Pole is not so starry as the Arctic [254]. Many small stars clustered together are seen, which have the appearance of two clouds with little distance between them, and they are somewhat dim;¹²⁷ in the midst of them are two large and not very luminous stars, which move only slightly: those two stars are the Antarctic Pole [255]. Our loadstone, although it moved here and there, always pointed toward its own Arctic Pole, although it did not have so much strength as on its own side, and on that account when we were in that open expanse, the captain-general asked all the pilots: 'Are you still sailing forward in the course that we laid down on the maps [256]?' All replied: 'By your course exactly as laid down [257].' He answered them that they were pointing wrongly, which was a fact, and that it would be fitting to adjust the compass, for it was not receiving so much force from its side [258].¹²⁸ When we were in the midst of that open expanse, we saw a cross with five extremely bright stars straight toward the west, those stars being exactly placed in relation to one another [259].¹²⁹



[Chart of the three 'Islands of Thieves' (III)]¹³⁰

[45] During those days we sailed between west and north-west and north-west by west, and north-west, until we reached the equinoctial line at the distance of 122 degrees from the line of demarcation [260].¹³¹ The line of demarcation is thirty degrees from the meridian, and the meridian is three degrees eastward from Cape Verde [261]. We passed a short distance from two exceedingly rich islands while on that course, one in twenty degrees of the latitude of the Antarctic Pole, by name Cipangu, and the other in fifteen degrees, by name Sumbdit Pradit [262].¹³² After we had passed the equinoctial line we sailed west-north-west, and west by north, and then for two hundred

leagues toward the west, changing our course to west by south until we reached thirteen degrees toward the Arctic Pole in order that we might approach nearer to the land of Cape Catigara, and that cape (begging the pardon of cosmographers, for they have not seen it) is not found where they thought it to be, but to the north in twelve degrees or thereabouts [263].¹³³

[46] About seventy leagues on the above course, and lying in twelve degrees of latitude and 146 in longitude, we discovered on Wednesday, 6 March a small island to the northwest, and two others toward the southwest [264]. One of them was higher and larger than the other two [265].¹³⁴ The captain-general wished to stop at the large island and get some fresh food, but he was unable to do so because the inhabitants of that island entered the ships and stole whatever they could lay their hands on, in such a manner that we could not defend ourselves from them [266]. The men wanted to strike the sails so that we could go ashore [267]. The natives very deftly stole from us the small boat that was fastened to the poop of the flagship;¹³⁵ thereupon, the captain-general in wrath went ashore with forty armed men, and they burned some forty or fifty houses together with many boats, killed seven men, and recovered the small boat; we departed immediately pursuing the same course [268]. Before we landed, some of our sick men begged us if we should kill any man or woman to bring the entrails to them, since by eating them they would recover immediately [269].¹³⁶

[47] When we wounded any of those people with our crossbow shafts, which passed completely through their loins from one side to the other, they, looking at it, pulled on the shaft now on this and now on that side, and then drew it out, with great astonishment, and so died; others who were wounded in the breast did the same, which moved us to great compassion [270]. Those people seeing us departing followed us with more than one hundred boats for more than one league [271]. They approached the ships showing us fish, feigning that they would give them to us, but then threw stones at us and fled [272]. And although the ships were under full sail, they passed between them and the small boats [fastened astern] very adroitly in those small boats of theirs [273]. We saw some women in their boats who were crying out and tearing their hair, for love, I believe, of their dead [274].