

## THE MANILA GALLEON – THE SPANISH TRADE ROUTE THAT LINKED THREE CONTINENTS

(From September 15<sup>th</sup> 2016 to February 12<sup>th</sup> 2017)

The Naval Museum presents this new exhibition on the origins, development and demise of the 250-year old trade route that linked three continents (1565 – 1815). Thanks to **Augmented Reality (AR)** devices, visitors will come into contact with the two main routes that Spanish ships used to link Asia, America and Europe: the West Indies Fleet and the Manila Galleon.

The origins of this trade route can be traced back to the discovery of America by Cristopher Columbus in 1492 when the Spanish Crown was searching for a sea passage to China and India. In 1513 an expedition commanded by Núñez de Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama and discovered the Pacific Ocean.

King Charles I (Emperor Charles V), dispatched the Portuguese sailor Ferdinand Magellan to search for a westward route to the Spice Islands. The purpose of the mission was to reach Asia avoiding the East Route, then under Ottoman rule.

The expedition left Seville in August 1519 and sailing southwards, Magellan reached a passage connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through a Strait subsequently named after him. In his voyage westwards he discovered the Philippines but was killed in a skirmish with local natives. The Spanish sailor Juan Sebastián de Elcano (*Primus Circumdedisti Me*) took command and led the remaining ships back home. Only 18 men out of the original 265 men arrived at Sanlúcar de Barrameda in September 1522.

This expedition were followed by other voyages in search of return routes, among them the ones led by García Jofre de Loaysa in 1525, Álvaro de Saavedra in 1542 and Miguel López de Legazpi with the pilot and cosmographer Andrés de Urdaneta in 1564. The latter discovered and plotted a path across the Pacific Ocean known as Urdaneta's Route.

Following orders from King Phillip II, Legazpi and Urdaneta sailed from the west coast of New Spain (Mexico) in November 1564 and arrived at the Philippines in February 1565. Four months later, the galleon San Pedro, with Urdaneta at the helm, set sail and found the Kuroshio Current obtaining favourable winds which led the ship towards the Californian coast first, and then to the port of Acapulco in Mexico, where they finally arrived on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

In Manila the ships loaded local products like spices from Ceylon, Moluccas and Java, silk, ivory, chinaware, lacquer, mother of pearl from Xiamen and Japan, carpets, tapestries and cotton garments from India.

Once the ships arrived at the west coast of New Spain, the goods were unloaded and transported overland to the port of Veracruz in the east coast where they were once again loaded onto the vessels headed towards Seville and Cadiz.

In Acapulco, the galleons transported officers, soldiers, missionaries and also silver, animals (cows and horses) and plants (corn, cocoa, tobacco, sugarcane, tomatoes, pumpkins, peppers, etc.).

Thus, in 1565 the so-called route of the Manila Galleon (also known as the China Ship) was officially established until 1815 linking Asia, America and Europe through Manila (the Philippines) and Acapulco (Mexico).

The arrival of the Manila Galleon was in those years a major commercial and social event and the different products were exhibited and sold in fairs and markets in Parian (Manila) and Mexico City resulting in a significant economic growth of both regions.

But the Manila Galleon not only contributed to the exchange of valuable and exotic goods; it also had a great spiritual, social, economic and cultural impact, with a clear influence on wide-ranging aspects like architecture, art, religion, traditions and gastronomy.

### **Augmented Reality (AR)**

The **Naval Museum** introduces an AR app for our temporary exhibition: '*The Manila Galleon – the Spanish Trade Route That Linked Three Continents*'.

Thanks to **Arte y Más**, the Naval Museum offers an interactive and educational experience on the voyages of the explorers and discoverers serving the Spanish Crown.

### **Facilities**

Visitors will be granted all possible facilities to download free of charge the App '**Ruta del Galeón**' in his/her smartphone or tablet from **Apple Store** and **Google Play**. Augmented Reality: *Rutas y Descubrimientos de la Corona Española en el Museo Naval de Madrid* (Routes and Discoveries of the Spanish Crown in the Madrid Naval Museum).

Free Wi-Fi: **RealidadAumentada\_app**. The Museum will make available to the public a limited number of tablets with the app already downloaded and installed.

Once downloaded in the smartphone or tablet, the user must focus the device towards the AR table with a Mercator World Map (160 x 60 cms.) where the Spanish and Portuguese areas of influence are shown. You can then start the voyage.

Shrouded in a maritime atmosphere you will hear the sounds of the waves, storms, birds and you will also see in 3D galleons, vessels, clouds and seagulls while following the trade routes of Magellan, Elcano, García Jofre de Loaysa, Legazpi and Urdaneta. In each one of them you will find ample interactive information on the milestones and important events of those years.

With this Augmented Reality project, the **Madrid Naval Museum** intends to engage the whole family in a pioneer experience within the European Culture. To this end, the Museum has benefited from the professionalism of the Spanish firm **Arte y Más**.