

TRIO DE JANEIRO



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Woodwinds
Gitarre
Vibraphon, Marimbaphon

How could it happen that the Portuguese seafarer Gaspar da Lemos mistook the Guanabara Bay right after having discovered it on January 1st in 1505 for a river estuary? (How Rio (!) de Janeiro (!) got this name should be apparent by now). If he met resident people there is unknown. And finally, what remains of Lemos is solely the memory of an irrelevant momentous mistake. Therefore he also probably had nothing to do with the origin of the Aymara. The Aymara is but one of the three theories on the derivation of the indigenous people on

the national territory of Bolivia and it says that, back then, the conquerors created new communities, based on solidarity against the dominators, by the loathful means of resettlement. But then, firstly, the conquerors were basically Spaniards and Lemos evidently was Portuguese and secondly, the seafarer of whom we don't even have a reliable birth date, simply would not have been capable of doing this. How can a seaman mistake a bay for an estuary? Maybe it was all his wife Penelope's fault, who sat at home in Porto waiting for her husband to come home from his journey and who never believed he would be as popular as Colon and the others.

Lemos had discovered something once. Oddly enough it had been a bay, too, and he even recognised it as such. One year after the discovery, he returned to the place with Amerigo Vespucci who did not object to then being himself celebrated as the discoverer. After all, he was famous for claiming other people's success as his own. And thus Lemos was deceived - which infuriated Penelope. After all, she was pregnant with their child who, years later, sadly did not begin to write his father's live story, like Colon's boy did, for example, which is why all we know about Lemos is the story of the estuary.

Lemos' boy - let's also call him Gaspar for simplicity's sake - did not want to become a seafarer or an analyst during the years of his wild youth, but, somewhat deranged, committed himself to Anabaptism and went to Münster in 1533 the company of Jan van Leiden whom he had met by chance at a witch burning in Lisbon. He had fallen for the charismatic Dutchman. Thanks to the newly decreed polygamy in sieged paradise, he was married to two women: Gerlind, a 21 year old fundamentalist from Bielefeld, and Margarete, a 47 year old widow from Aachen. While Gaspar's death is closely connected to a hostile lansquenets' halberd, Gerlind died trying to usher away some birds from the cage in which Jan van Leiden found his end high up on top of the tower of a cathedral. Margarete's vernacular was so incomprehensible, Gaspar could hardly understand her at all. She is still AWOL.

The old Gaspar, the seafarer who still mixed up his basic maritime geography-terms, was old by that time. He liked to enjoy himself playing board games in the port, and spent his evenings in an illegal dive in the city catacombs where he lost the scarce savings from his explorations to dodgy racketeers. He would have loved to make more of his life, would have loved to not just sail to some random bays. Should have

thrown Vespuccio overboard decades ago, the Florentine ne'er-do-well who even stole Penelope from him shortly after his return.

Gaspar was rolling the dice when the young writer Francisco de Morais also known as King Johann III from Portugal's treasurer. To appease his parents he used to tell his dandy friends whose lackadaisical behaviour was to be turned into a style icon only centuries later. He told Gaspar about a literary genre he wanted to start. Knight-errants that everybody could understand was what he aimed at.

Gaspar liked the idea a lot, but shortly afterwards he almost died in the backyard of a quayside bar when he did not have any money on him which so infuriated a robber – in fact a harmless man – that he attempted to kill him with a stone which, oddly enough, Gaspar used to carry around. It was the stone with his name and the carved date 1501 which Vespucci had simply removed all those years ago hurling his own explorer's stone in the bay afterwards. He was like that, Vespucci.

Francisco de Morais by the way actually wrote some very famous romances years later when he worked as an ambassador in Paris. Even the Spaniard Miguel de Cervantes emphatically praised them, and Cervantes is considered the Master of knight-errants. Morais was murdered in Evora in 1572. At the time Gaspar de Lemos still lived. But this is probably of no interest whatsoever. But then again, the inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro might want to know. How can anyone be ignorant enough to mistake a bay for an estuary?