
Documents 1565V

Legazpi—First batch of letters sent from Cebu, in 1565

V1. Letter from Legazpi to King Philip II of Spain, dated Cebu 27 May 1565.

Sources: AGI 1-1-1/23 (2 copies) with another copy in Navy HQ; transcribed by Muñoz on 10 April 1794; Col. de Navarrete, t. 17, doc. 14; Col. Ultramar, ii, doc. 30, pp. 357-359; has been translated in B&R 2:174-176, 332, and reproduced in FBG 8:76-77. My own translation follows.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty:

From the Port of Navidad, which is in New Spain, I gave an account to Y.M. of my departure with your Royal fleet for the discovery of the Islands of the West. Continuing my voyage until the 13th of February of this present year, I arrived at one of the Philippine Islands. Afterward, I cruised among other islands of this archipelago until I reached this island of Zubu, whence I despatched a galleon to New Spain to discover the return route and to give an account to Y.M. of the incidents of the voyage up to the departure of this galleon, the narrative of which is annexed to this letter¹, as well as certain other information regarding: the change of mood among the natives respecting the friendship and goodwill that they used to have toward the vassals of Y.M. and the cause thereof; the possessions that have been taken in the name of Y.M.; and the logbooks of the pilots of this fleet.

I beg Y.M. to have these examined and provide what is best for the service. I myself remain at the settlement made in this island of Zubu, until I see what Y.M. will send me as orders on what to do, albeit with few people. That is why I have requested assistance with more people and ammunition from the Royal Audiencia in order to be able to sustain myself until such time as Y.M. sees the reports and the testimony regarding the things that the officials of your Royal Treasury residing here have requested and the general and individual accounts of those who remain here, and until Y.M. has ordered what is most suitable for his royal service. Since this enterprise is so great and of

¹ Ed. note: See next chapter, Doc. 1565W.

such great importance in things spiritual and temporal, and has been carried out so well and in such a timely manner, I humbly beg Y.M. to order that it be especially taken into account by ordering that succor and the requested supplies be sent, that it be placed in charge of someone who will take every care and diligence in putting it into effect, for I trust in God, our Lord, that, from such a great beginning, many good things will occur in the service of God, our Lord, and that of Y.M., with an increase in the Royal income and the universal good of his kingdoms and dominions. I beg Y.M. that, yielding to the usual greatness with which he always uses toward his servants involved in businesses of great importance, will be pleased to order that the official letters that accompany this one be perused and that you will grant me the favor that seems most suitable to Y.M., whose Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty may our Lord save with an increase in his kingdoms and dominions for many more happy years.

From Zubu, 27 May 1565.

From Y.S.R.M.'s faithful servant, who kisses the royal feet of Y.M.,
Miguel López de Legazpi.

V2. Letter from Legazpi to the Duke of Alba, dated Cebu 27 May 1565.

Source: B&R 53:243; Archivo de la Casa de Alba. Begins: "Escellmo. S.: Por mandado de Su Magestad..." and ends with "esperamos recibir toda merced" with closing, date, and signature. Published in "Documentos escogidos del Archivo de la casa de Alba" (Madrid, 1891), pp. 75-77.

Robertson says that it contains a slight description of the newly-discovered islands and their inhabitants, and the settlement on Cebu.

V3. Letter from the Royal officials to the King, dated Cebu 29 May 1565.

Sources: Col. de Indias 13:527-528; B&R 2:176-178, 333 & FBG 8:78-79.

Sacred Catholic Majesty:

Because General Miguel López de Legazpi is giving Y.M. a full account of events throughout these districts, therefore we shall say only that we remain in the royal service of Y.M. in these Philippines—in that part where the men of Magellan were killed, called the island of Çubu—under the protection of God, our Lord, and awaiting that of Y.M.; and we remain here with very great necessity.

We beg Y.M. to provide us aid with the despatch and diligence fitting, in order that Y.M.'s purpose to introduce the Christian religion into these districts, and to reduce these people, neglected for so many years, and who are in dire need of receiving the fruits of our holy Catholic faith, may be attained. We are of stout heart because of the many favors that our Lord has been pleased to bestow upon us so far; and for the future we trust that he will keep us in his holy service, and protect us in that of Y.M.

The ship acting as flagship on the voyage over from New Spain is about to return to discover the return route to Y.M.'s kingdoms. The Venerable Father Andrés de

Urdaneta is aboard. To him we refer in everything that has happened here, and we charge him with the responsibility of reporting on the events in these districts, as one who has so well understood everything that has happened hereabout. Father Fray Diego de Herrera, Fray Martín de Herrada [i.e. Rada] and Fray Pedro de Gamboa, religious from whom we receive every good instruction and advice, remain here.

We beg Y.M., with all humility, to exercise the accustomed favor to Y.M.'s faithful servants and vassals, in consideration of the faithfulness, fidelity, and alacrity with which we have ever served Y.M. What is offered for your consideration by us and by this entire camp, as your servants, we make known to Y.M., which things Y.M. will be pleased to provide.

On behalf of Y.M., we have had and still have, as protector and head of government, Miguel López de Legazpi, one for whom we give thanks to our Lord, who has been pleased to provide us such a major protector, and one who with such a great desire watches over the service of Y.M.—whose Sacred Catholic Royal person may our Lord keep, with an increase in great kingdoms and dominions; such is the wish of the servants of Y.M.

From the island of Çubu, 29 May 1565.

[To] Y.S.C.M.

From the faithful servants of Y.S.C.M. who kiss the royal feet of Y.M. with all humility,

(Signed)¹

Mateo del Saz, Fray Diego de Herrera, Fray Martín de Rada, Fray Pedro de Gamboa,

Martín de Goiti,

Guido de Lavezaris, Andrés Cauchela, Andrés de Mirandaola,

Andrés de Ibarra,

Juan Maldonado de Berrocal², Luis de la Haya,

Juan de la Isla,

Gabriel de Ribera.

V4. Second letter from the Royal officials to the King, dated Cebu 1 June 1565.

Sources: AGI Patronato 1-1-1/23 & 1/24 and also Doc. esc., 1-Nº 61; Col. Indias 13:529-531; B&R 2:178-182, 333 & FBG 8:80-81.

Sacred Catholic Majesty:

By the previous letter we signify and tell Y.M., with all humility, that we will always feel the need for receiving succor which Y.M. will be pleased to send soon, given that

¹ Ed. note: See facsimile of their signatures reproduced herein.

² Ed. note: Not listed anywhere previously. He was an artillery captain.

[illegible]

Original of the letter of recommendation of Fr. Urdaneta. Continued on next page. (From AGI, Seville: Doc. esc, 1-Nº 61)

y Para todo lo dho y con fado y Angas dho. En dho conde y en lo mismo.
 De V. Mag. se saca y dho. como Alotales fides. viados y bas-
 llas. Acordando. V. Mag. guarde dho. la. S. C. Real pexonade V. Mag.
 y Acordando en grandes Reynos y senorios como por nos fides viados y bas-
 llas. De V. Mag. sacado. de la ysla de Cuba. primero de Junio M. D. LXXV Años.

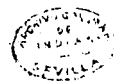
S . C . M.

De . V . S . C . M.

fides viados. y Basallas. y los Reales pexos de V. Mag.

contosia. humillidad Beson

Elaborado. 1755



M. D. LXXV
 de la ysla de Cuba

we are in such a need of it in order to proceed. We wish it to be so for the service of God, our Lord, and that of Y.M.

The great service which the Venerable Father Fray Andrés de **Urdaneta** has rendered to God, our Lord, and to Y.M. is worthy of great merit and increased favor, for having enlightened us in all things, spiritual as well as temporal, during this voyage, and no-one else was available aboard the fleet to give us advice except him.

For this reason, with all humility, we, the faithful servants of Y.M., as ministers at this camp, and generally all the other vassals of Y.M., beg and ask Y.M., given his great service and merit that, as soon as he will have given Y.M. an account of all the events that occurred up to now in these regions, he be ordered and compelled to return to proceed with this business which is so important for the service of God, our Lord, and that of Y.M.¹, inasmuch as it would be proper in the future to have someone like him who is so well versed in everything that is going on in these regions, and so that he may do the desired good for Y.M. in everything. This we hope to achieve with all confidence and alacrity, through divine favor and the protection of Y.M. so that we beg Y.M. to grant and assist us with his person, as he is very necessary to us and he would do much good in things spiritual and temporal.

For all the reasons given above and for our consolation and support, we remain convinced that Y.M. will be pleased to favor us as he is accustomed to do with his faithful servants and vassals. May our Lord save the S. C. Royal person of Y.M. with an increase in great kingdoms and dominions, as we wish.

From the island of Çubu, 1st of June 1565.

S.C.M.

From the faithful servants and vassals of your S.C.M. who kiss the royal feet of Y.M., with all humility,

Miguel López de Legazpi,

Mateo del Saz, Martín de Goiti, etc.

V5. Letter from Andrés de Mirandaola to the King, dated Cebu 28 May 1565.

Sources: AGI 67-6-34 (& maybe also in 67-6-29); Col. de Navarrete, t. 17, doc. 15; Col. Ultramar, ii, doc. 32, pp. 365- 372; summarized in B&R 2:123-124; translated in B&R 34:200-206 and in FBG 8:85-89.

Sacred Catholic Majesty:

... Don Luis de Velasco, Viceroy of New Spain—may he rest in peace—appointed me to the post of factor and inspector of your Royal Treasury, on behalf of Y.M., in consideration of the perpetual obligation that I have of serving Y.M. whose Sacred Catholic Royal person I beg our Lord to favor with an increase in kingdoms and dominions.

1 Ed. note: Luckily for his advanced age, Urdaneta was not ordered back to the Philippines.

This fleet arrived at these Philippine islands on 13 February 1565. I will relate what has been seen in them so far, with the fidelity, faithfulness, and willingness which is always to be found in me, with all possible diligence.¹

... Inasmuch as the ship which is being despatched for the discovery of the return route is ready to sail, I cannot inform Y.M. of the conditions that are being resolved upon, for conclusions have not yet been reached. Fray Andrés de Urdaneta, my uncle, is going back, and he is to serve Y.M. in this discovery; he is accompanied by Fr. Andrés de Aguirre. Felipe de Salcedo is in command, and Juan de Aguirre—persons who we believe will serve Y.M. with complete loyalty, fidelity and happiness.

I beg Y.M. to have us provided with the religious and secular priests that are needed for the preaching of the holy Gospel to these natives, in consideration of its great service to God, our Lord, and to Y.M. ... I beg Y.M. with all humility to please confirm the appointment that was given me on behalf of Y.M. by Don Luis de Velasco, Viceroy and Governor of New Spain—may he rest in peace—and to let me have it. Y.M. would do a great service to God, our Lord, and a blessing and a just favor to me by ordering that my salary be increased to 3,000 ducats in good money², given that the local cost of living is high with regard to everything that is needed for sustenance.

God, our Lord, save the S.C.R. person of Y.M. with an increase in great kingdoms and dominions, as I, the faithful servant of Y.M. so wish.

From the island of Zubu, [28 May] 1565.

From the faithful servant of your S.C.M. who kisses the Royal feet of Y.M. with all humility,

Andrés de Mirandaola.

V6. Letter from Guido de Lavezaris to the King, dated Cebu 30 May 1565.

Sources: AGI 67-6-34 (Simancas, Secular, Audiencia de Filipinas; cartas y expedientes vistos en el Consejo, años de 1565 a 1594); translated in B&R 34: 195-199 & FBG 8:82-84.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty:

Inasmuch as when Don Antonio de Mendoza, your Viceroy of New Spain, went to Peru, he ordered me to go to these kingdoms of Spain, in order to inform Y.M. about the affairs touching this western region, I being one who understood them and had had experience in them, and had come to these districts as your accountant in the fleet under command of Ruy López de Villalobos, I went to those kingdoms in order to kiss the feet of Y.M., and gave the most detailed account and information possible concerning the islands and provinces of these districts, the character and number of the people, their trade, means of gain, and mode [of living]. Your Majesty ordered that the fleet for

1 Ed. note: He goes on to repeat what has been reported by the others about the events in the Philippines. He adds nothing new to our knowledge of the Pacific crossing.

2 Ed. note: Meaning in ducats worth 375 Maravedis each.

the expedition be equipped immediately; that ships be built and the necessary things prepared for it in the sea west of New Spain. I busied myself in that work and despatch from the time of my return; also as soon as I returned to New Spain, I went, by order of your Viceroy of that country, Don Luis de Velasco, to explore the coast and ports of Florida where I had to go afterward when the fleet sailed of which Don Tristan de Arellano was commander. After my return from that expedition, I continued in the despatch and equipment of this fleet, in which I occupied myself most steadily. When it was quite ready for the sea, I embarked in it as your treasurer.

When I was in Spain, Y.M. assigned me four hundred *pesos de minas* payable in acquittances in New Spain. But they have been poorly collected, and there are none from which I can be paid. I humbly beseech Y.M. to have me paid from the royal treasury for the support of my wife and family whom I left in Mexico. Besides this, as is well known to Y.M., when I left India, I brought pepper and carried away ginger from India at a very great risk, because of the ordinances and penalties passed and imposed by the most serene King of Portugal, which are executed without remission upon transgressors. The pepper was lost, but there is a great quantity of the ginger in your New Spain today, all of which has come from the roots which I took there with the purpose and design that your kingdoms might enjoy so many profits and a common usufruct. I communicated in regard to it with Don Francisco de Mendoza, asking him to treat with Y.M., so that some favor might be shown me from the profits that would result from the ginger. Don Francisco negotiated it for himself and not for me as he had agreed. Consequently, he obtained the reward for my services without having performed any work or labor on his own part, while order was given to give me three hundred pesos de minas of acquittances with the injunction that they be conferred. I wrote Y.M. in regard to the matter, and although I intended to go to ask for justice from Y.M., as from a most just prince, after the despatch of the fleet, in whose preparation I had been occupied, I did not go, because I thought that if I failed to sail in the fleet, I would not be performing my duty to your royal service; and that since I was one who knew the land and the season in which to return for the discovery of the return passage, and that success might be had now in that in which so many fleets have not been able to succeed, it was important for me to come. Therefore, on account of coming (as I did), I did not go to Spain, being confident in the liberality and grandeur of Y.M., and that if I petitioned you from here, you would show me justice and thorough favor. Also [I did this] because it is well for me to end my life in the service of Y.M., since most of my life has been spent in serving you. With that motive, I embarked, and we set sail from the port of Navidad.

After a 64-day voyage we made the Philippines. While some masts were being prepared in the island of Bohol for the fleet, your General sent me to the province behind the island [i.e. Mindanao] to attend to other things. There I traded for the samples of gold, wax, and cinnamon which are being sent to Y.M. with the greatest care possible. I returned to Bohol, where the fleet was stationed, and where, at the last resolution taken, it was determined that the fleet should come to this island of Cebu, because of

the information that we heard of it, and for other reasons. We arrived here on the 27th of April of this year '64 [error for '65]. We are located in the best center of the country although there is no other advantage in this island than that it is well settled, and consequently we can maintain ourselves until Y.M. have us informed of what is best for your royal service and that we should support ourselves. We are stationed here at the gateway of great kingdoms and the Moluccas are very near, where our holy faith will be exalted and your royal patrimony increased, as it is naturally proper. I am busying myself and shall continue to busy myself in your royal service, and there will be no lack of service. Will Y.M. aid us with the wherewithal, so that trade may be maintained and introduced among many of these nations. It is a fact that entrance must be made in your royal name, and by force of arms. We are not well equipped, and consequently, it is necessary that the aid that we are now sending to ask from New Spain be sent with promptness.

In the matter of the ginger it is already clear to Y.M. that I brought it and that Don Francisco did not deal in my favor as he ought to have done, and that I was notably injured in this, and that the three hundred pesos de minas in acquittances have not been collected because of the difficulty in doing so. I beg Y.M. that I be given warrants on the treasury reserving the right of the rest that makes for my justice in this matter, until it is pleaded in my name and until amends may be made to me; since before nor since no one else has done such a service in which there is an annual sum of more than fifty thousand ducats involved (or rather more than one hundred and fifty thousand). In that I will receive grace and justice.

May our Lord happily favor Y.S.C.M. with the increase of life and greater kingdoms that is desired by your servants.

Cebu, 30 May 1565.

Your Royal Catholic Majesty's faithful servant, who humbly kisses your royal feet and hands.

Guido de Lavezaris.

V7. Letter from Mateo del Sanz to the King, dated Cebu 31 May 1565.

Source: AGI 67-1-34; see note B&R 53:246: Begins with "S.C.R.M.—Despues de averse concluido..." and ends with "a mi costa y estoy adeudado" with closing, etc.

The writer states his services in various parts of the Indies, east and west, and recounts briefly the founding of the new Spanish settlement at Cebu, the treachery of the Portuguese, the hostility of the natives, and the needs for reinforcements.