

---

## Document 1565Y

---

# Legazpi—First printed account of the Legazpi expedition, Barcelona 1566

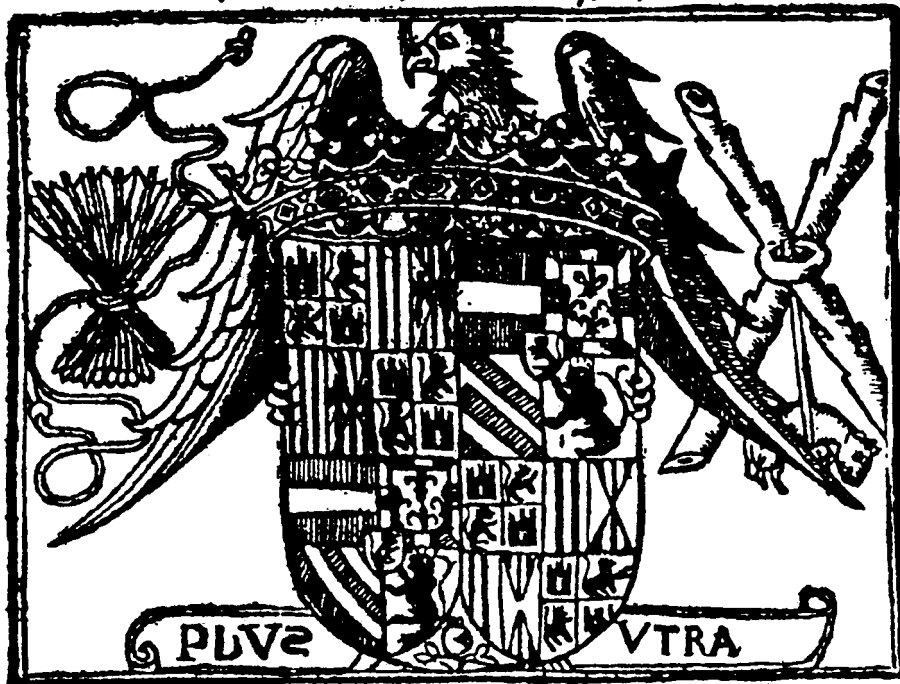
*Sources: Pamphlet published at Barcelona in 1566, by Pau Cortey [Catalan for Paul Cortés] and entitled: "Copia de una carta venida de Sevilla a Miguel Salvador de Valencia...". The one copy extant in the 19th century was the property of W. E. Retana, who sold it to the Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas, in Barcelona; a transcript in Spanish and its translation by Alfonso de Salvio was published in B&R 2:220-231. In 1905, a limited edition of 15 facsimile copies was produced in Madrid by Victoria-no Suárez. One of these was used as a master copy by Carlos Sanz in 1958.*

## Copy of a letter mailed from Seville to Miguel Salvador in Valencia, by an anonymous author<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Ed. note: This letter, says Robertson, was probably written by someone belonging to Arellano's patache San Lucas, or who obtained his information from that Captain's followers. I would think otherwise, on account of the learned comments made by the author, who had seen the correspondence sent by Legazpi. Hence, he may have been a member of the Audiencia writing from Mexico at the end of 1565, whose letter was aboard the first fleet that left Veracruz and arrived at Seville in May or June 1566.

**Copia de vna carta venida de Sevilla a Miguel Saluador de Valencia.** La qual narra el venturoso descubrimiento que los Mexicanos han hecho, navegando con la armada que su Magestad mando hazer en Mexico. Con otras cosas marauillosas, y de gran prouecho para toda la Christiandad: son dignas de ser vistas y leydas  
¶ En Barcelona, Per Pau Corney, 1566.



**D**Esto de la China ay dos relaciones, y es, que a los dezisiete de Nouiembre del año de mil y quinientos y sessenta y quatro, por mandado de su Magestad, se hizo vna armada en el puerto de la Natiuidad de la mar del Sur, cient leguas de Mexico, de dos naues, y dos patayfos, para descubrir las yslas de la espeeieria, que las llaman Philippinas, por nuestro Rey, costaron mas de seyscientos mil pesos de Atipusque hechas a la vela.

¶ Partieron el dicho dia del puerto, y nauegaron seys dias juntas: y a los siete les dio vna barrusca, que se aparto dellas el Patay, que era de cincuenta toneladas, y lleuaua ventye

## Copy of a letter sent from Se-

ville to Miguel Salvador of Valencia, which narrates the fortunate discovery made by the Mexicans who sailed in the fleet which His Majesty ordered to be built in Mexico. With other wonderful things of great advantage for all Christendom: worthy of being seen and heard.

Printed in Barcelona, by Pau Cortey, 1566.

Of this discovery, two relations have come from China<sup>1</sup>: namely, that on the 27th of November<sup>2</sup>, in the year 1564, a fleet was made ready by order of His Majesty in the Port of Natividad (which is situated on the South Sea, 100 leagues from Mexico), consisting of two ships and two pataches, in order to discover the spice islands, which are named Philippines, after our King. This fleet, when ready for sailing, cost more than 600,000 pesos of Atipusque.<sup>3</sup>

These vessels set sail from port on the above-mentioned day, voyaging in company for six days. On the seventh a squall struck them, separating from the others the patache, a vessel of 50-ton burthen, and carrying a crew of twenty

---

1 Ed. note: Meaning the Western Islands

2 The actual date of departure was the 21st.

3 Ed. note: The actual cost was over 380,000 pesos of common gold, plus over 27,000 pesos of mined gold (See Doc. 1565A). Atipusque was probably a Mexican mint, or a mine; if we knew which, we could determine the ratio between unrefined and refined gold in Mexico at the time.

hombres: el qual nauego cinquenta dias, y al fin dellos, vio tierra, que cran muchas islas entre las quales vio vna mas grande, y alli surgio. ¶ Acudieron ala costa gente dela isla la qual es mas blanca que los Indios nuestros: y las mugeres muy mas blancas que los hombres. Venian vestidos, assi los hombres, como las mugeres de cofas de palma texidas, y labradas encima con sedas de colores. Por gala, trahen los dientes colorados, y horadados, y en los agujeros vnos clauicos de oro. Y los hombres con calças de liço de algodõ con senogiles de seda, con muchas pieças de oro. ¶ Entre ellos vino vno q̃ parecia de mas calidad, vestido todo de seda, con vn alfange, la empuñadura, y guarniciones de oro, y piedras. ¶ Los nuestros les pidieron mantenimientos, y dierõ se los a trueque de bugerias: pero ellos pidierõ hierro y dio seles: y quando vieron los clauos, no querian otro sino clauos, y ellos pagauan con oro en polvo. Trayan algunos vnas dagas de azero muy galanas, y muestran ser gente polinica y de mucha razõ. Vían de peso y medida: dierõ a los nuestros gamos, puercos, gallinas, codornizes, arroz, mijo, y pan de palmas: de todo esto ay grande abudancia. Estuuõ alli el Parays casi treynta dias, esperando las otras naues, y como no vinieron, determino de boluer a Mexico: y al tiempo que salio dela isla, encontro vn junco, que es nauio de casi cient toneladas, en la qual venian sessenta Indios, y como vieron el Parays, todos se echaron a nado, y se fueron a la tierra, que estaua cerca. Entraron dentro algunos soldados, por mandado del capitan, y hallaron que yua cargado de porcellanas, y mantas, y lienços pintados, y otras cosas dela tierra, y algunos cañutillos de oro molido, delos quales no tomarõ mas que vno, y algunas porcellanas, y algunas mantas: y delo demas, de todo poco, para traher lo por muestra. Estuuõ este Patays en yr y en boluer, dozientos, y treynta dias. Haueron de menester subir mas de quarenta grados haz la el norte. Huuo desde el puerto do partieron, hasta esta isla, mil y setecientas leguas. ¶ Las otras tres naues dentro de cinquenta dias hallaron muchas islas, y a-

men. This vessel sailed for 50 days, at the end of which time land was sighted. This proved to be a number of islands, among which they saw one larger than the others [i.e. Mindanao], where they cast anchor.

On the shore of the island were gathered the natives, who are lighter complexioned than our [Mexican] Indians, the women being of even lighter hue than the men. Men and women were clad alike in garments woven from the palm, and worked along the edges with different colored silks. By way of adornment, they color their teeth, and bore them through from side to side, placing pegs of gold in the holes. The men wear drawers of cotton cloth, silken garters, and many pieces of gold.

Among them was one man who seemed of higher rank than the others, clad wholly in silk, and wearing a cutlass, of which the hilt and sword guard were gold and precious stones.

Our men asked them for food, giving them various trinkets in exchange. But they asked for iron, which was given to them; and when they caught sight of the nails, they desired nothing else, and paid for them with gold-dust. Some of them wear very neatly-made steel daggers and they appear to be a polite and intelligent people. They use weights and measures. They gave our men deer, swine, poultry, quail, rice, millet, and bread made of dates—all in great abundance. The patache remained here for about 30 days, waiting for the other ships; but, as these did not come, they determined to return to Mexico. As they left the island, they met a junk, which is a vessel of about 100-ton burthen, in which were 60 Indians. When these caught sight of the patache, all threw themselves into the water, and swam to the shore, which was not far away. Some soldiers, by command of the captain, boarded the junk, and found it laden with porcelain, cloths, figured linens, and other products of their country, together with some beads of hammered gold. Of these latter they took but one, with some of the porcelain and cloth—a little of each thing—to carry as specimens. In going and returning this patache consumed 230 days. They were compelled to run to the north, beyond the 40th degree. From the port of departure to that island, they sailed 1,700 leagues.

Within 50 days, the other three vessels discovered many islands. They

portarō en algunas dellas, y passaron en cada vna dellas mu-  
 chas cosas, que es tan grande la relacion, que ocupa veynte  
 pliegos de papel. En un aportaron a vna isla grande que se  
 llama lubu, y alli hizieron amistad con el rey della, que le hi-  
 zo desta manera. Saco se el rey sangre del pecho, y el capi-  
 tan assi mesmo, y echada la sangre de entrabos en vna copa  
 de vino la partierō por medio, y el vno beuió la vna mitad, y  
 el otro la otra mitad: y aquello dizen q̄ haze la amistad mui  
 olable. Cō todo esto tuuierō ciertas paisiones, y robarō vn  
 lugarejo: y en vna casa pobre hallaron vn niño Iesus, deltos  
 que traen de Flandes, con su velo, y pomo en la mano, tan  
 fresco como si se acabara de hazer entonces. En aquella isla  
 quisieron poblar, porq̄ es muy abundante de todos los man-  
 tenimientos, y començaron a hazer vn fuerte, y hizierō fue-  
 ra del vna yglesia, do pusieron el niño Iesus, y la llamarō del  
 nombre de Iesus: y la isla la llaman Sant Miguel, porque se  
 entro en ella el dia de su Aparicion. Y de alli a los Malucas  
 dōde esta la especieria, ay cient y cinquēta leguas, y ala Chi-  
 na dozientas, y a Malach quinientas leguas. Y hallaron alli  
 canela finissima, que la hauian los dela isla trahydo de los  
 Malucas y gengibre, y cosas de seda galanas. Y de alli em-  
 biaron deias tres naues la capitana de Mexico, do llego des-  
 pues que hauia llegado el Parays, y estauan adereçando o-  
 tras dos naues para socorro. Hay muchas otras islas por alli  
 muy grandes, y son del mismo modo desta. Entre las otras  
 hay vna tierra tan rica de oro, que no lo estiman en nada: y  
 hay tanta cantidad de canela que la quemā en lugar de leña: es  
 de tan luzida gente, q̄ la ygualan con España. Hay alli vn rey  
 q̄ tiene ala continua mil hōbres de guarda: y estima se tanto  
 que ninguno de sus vassallos le vee la cara sino vna vez en el  
 año: y si le han de hablar para tratar con el algo, le hablā por  
 vna zebatana: y quādo de año a año se dexa ver, le dā muy  
 grandes riquezas. Son gente muy prima, hazen brocados,  
 y sedas texidas de muchas maneras. Tienen en tan poco el  
 oro, q̄ dio este rey por vn pretal de cascaveles, tres barchi-  
 llas de oro en poluo: porq̄ alli todo quanto oro ay es en pol

anchored at some of these, and in each one they suffered many hardships. So long is the relation of this, that it fills twenty sheets of paper.<sup>1</sup> Finally they landed at a large island named **Iubu**<sup>2</sup> where they made friendship with its king. This was done in the following manner. The king drew some blood from his breast, and the captain did the same. The blood of both was placed in one cup of wine, which was then divided into two equal parts, whereupon each one drank one half; and this, they assert, constituted inviolable friendship. Notwithstanding this, they had certain conflicts, and sacked a small place. In a poorly-built house was found an image of the child Jesus, such as comes from Flanders, with his veil and the globe in his hand, and in as good condition as if just made. They wished to settle in that island, because of the abundance of all kinds of food. They began the construction of a fort, outside of which they erected a church, wherein the child Jesus was placed, and they called the church *Nombre de Jesús* [Name of Jesus]. They named the island San Miguel, because of landing there on the day of his apparition. From here to the Moluccas, where the spices are found, there is a distance of 120 leagues; to China, 200; and to Malacca, 500. They found in this island the finest cinnamon, which its people acquire through trade with the Moluccas; besides ginger and articles of fine silk. Of the three vessels, the flagship was despatched from that island to Mexico, where it arrived later than the patache, and where two other vessels were being prepared as a relief. There are many other very large islands in that region, in appearance quite like the above-named island. Among others is a region so rich in gold, that the amount is beyond estimation. And there is so great abundance of cinnamon that it is burned instead of wood by those people, who are as luxurious as those of Spain. They have a king there who has a constant bodyguard of 1,000 men, and who is esteemed so highly that none of his subjects see his face oftener than once a year. If they find it necessary to converse with him on any matter, they speak to him through a long wooden tube.<sup>3</sup> And when he annually permits himself to be gazed upon, his subjects give him many valuable things. These people are quite advanced. They possess brocades and silken fabrics of many different kinds. They hold gold in so little estimation that this king gave three *barchillas*<sup>4</sup> of gold dust (for there all their gold is in the form of dust) for one string of jingle bells.

---

1 Ed. note: A reference to the account by Legazpi, Doc. 1565W.

2 Ed. note: Misprint for Çubu.

3 Ed. note: This story is from Pigafetta and is about the customs of Borneo.

4 A measure for grain containing one-third of a fanega.

uo. Cargaron estas tres naues quando tornaron tanta cantidad de oro en aquella isla, que mōto el quinto q̄ dan al rey vn millon y dozientos mil ducados. ¶ Aadan por alla Moros contratando con naues, y trocādo cosas de su tierra por oro, y mantas, y especieria, y por clauos y otras cosas. Encontro la armada con vna naue dellos, y tomola, aunque se defendio de tal manera, q̄ mato vno dellos y hirieron mas de veynte. Y trahian muchas cosas de oro y mantas, y otras especierias que hauian rescatado. Hay tantas islas que dizē que son serēta cinco mil y ochocientas. En esta isla de lubu do hazen poblacion, es do mataron a Magallanes. Y dicen, que los Portugueses con ciertas Carauelas aportaron por alli, haura dos años, llamādose Españoles, y vassallos del rey de Castilla, y robaron muchas islas, y las saquearon, y lleuaron mucha gente captiua, porque como veyan q̄ nuestra armada se hazia en la nueva España, tomassen los nuestros cō los dela tierra mal credito: Y assi quando los nuestros llegaron, pensando que eran ellos, huyan a los mōtes con sus joyas, y haciendas. Y se ha visto el general en harto trabajo por apaziguarlos, y darles a entender que son ellos, y cierto deue ser hombre cuerdo, porque por la relaciō se vee ha uer tenido mucho sufrimiento, por no topa con ellos, y los ha lleuado con mucho amor, sin hazer agrauio a nadie. Ellos es cosa grāde, y de mucha importācia: y los de Mexico estā muy vfanos con su descubrimiento, q̄ tienen entēdido q̄ seran ellos el coraçon del mundo. Trahe en este nauio de auiso q̄ es venido agora aca, gēgibre, canela, oro en poluo, vna arrova de conchas riquissimas de oro, y blancas, joyas de oro, cera, y otras cosas para dar muestra de lo que en aquella tierra ay, y muchas bugerias, y otras cosas muy galanas. Y aunque no las traxeran, harto trahian en hauer descubierto y hallado la nauegacion por aquestas partes, que es cosa de mucha calidad. Con la flora sabremos mas, de lo que supiere auisare a. V. M. &c.



Those three vessels loaded so much gold in that island that the king's fifth amounted to one million two hundred thousand ducats.

Moros frequent that district in ships for purposes of trade, bartering the products of their country for gold, cloths, spices, cloves, and other articles. The fleet encountered one of their vessels and captured it, although its occupants defended themselves so valiantly that one of the Spaniards was killed, and more than twenty wounded. They had much gold, cloth, besides spices, which they had acquired in trade. So many are the islands that they are said to number 75,800.<sup>1</sup> That island of Iubu, where the colony was planted, is the place where Magellan was killed.<sup>2</sup> It is said that the Portuguese with some caravels landed there about two years ago, claiming to be Spaniards and subjects of the king of Castile, and plundered many islands, sacking them and seizing many of the natives. Consequently, when those people heard that our fleet had been made ready in New Spain, our men were held in bad repute among the natives of that region. Therefore, when our men arrived, the inhabitants, thinking them to be Portuguese, fled to the bush with their jewels and possessions. The General has experienced much trouble in appeasing them, and in making the natives understand who the Spaniards are. Surely he must be a discreet man, for the relation shows that he has exercised much forbearance in not coming to blows with them; and he has shown them much friendliness, without causing offense to anyone. This is a great and very important achievement; and the people of Mexico are very proud of their discovery, which they think will make them the center of the world. The vessel that has just come here with the news of this discovery has brought ginger, cinnamon, gold dust, an *arroba* of the richest gold *conchas* and *blancas*<sup>3</sup>, gold ornaments, wax, and other articles, in order to furnish proof of what this land contains, besides many trinkets and pretty articles. And even had they not brought these things, they bring enough in having discovered and found the [return] route for navigation to these districts, which is a most notable event. When the fleet comes, we shall know more—of which, when it is known, I shall advise your Grace, etc.

---

1 Ed. note: I think this is a transcription error of 7,580 which would be a good estimate of the number of the Philippine and neighboring islands.

2 Ed. note: A common error for Mactan.

3 The *concha* and *blanca* were ancient copper coins of the value of 1/2 and 3 Maravedis, respectively. The coins above-mentioned evidently resembled these in size.