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## Documents 1574

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# 1573-1574 annual report by Governor Lavezaris to the King, dated Manila July 1574

*Sources: For A1 and A2, AGI Fil 1-1-2/24; translated in B&R 3:272-285. For A3, AGI Islas del Poniente 1570-1588, copied by Navarrete and published in Col. de Navarrete, Vol. 18, folios 37 et seq.*

*Note: There are 3 versions, one sent in each of the 2 ships despatched in 1574, and one made into a relation in Spain.*

### A1. First version sent via the San Juan, dated 17 July 1574

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty:

In the past year of 1573, I sent to your Majesty, by two ships despatched to the kingdoms of New Spain, a written account.<sup>1</sup> A few days after the departure of these two ships, I despatched another one, which had taken more time in its preparations. The last-named vessel followed a different course from the others<sup>2</sup> but put into a harbor again, after having sailed all around this island of Luçon on account of the bad weather which it met.

The ship has been detained until now in order to repair it, and to make all the necessary preparations. We are waiting every day for the arrival of the ships<sup>3</sup> from New Spain, for it is already time that they should arrive; but, in order that the *vendavals* may not prevent the navigation of this ship, we shall not detain it here until the others arrive—although it would have been much better for the service of your Majesty to receive an explanation of matters regarding which an answer was expected.

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1 Ed. note: See Document 1573A.

2 Ed. note: This was the first attempt to try a return route by going north after leaving Manila Bay and passing by the Bashi Strait north of Luzon.

3 Ed. note: This letter may have been signed on 17 July, but it was started before the arrival of the Espiritu Santo on 5 July (See below).

...  
 In July of the past year, 1573 [error for 1572], a ship despatched by the Viceroy Don Martín Enriquez arrived at these islands from New Spain. It brought us news which caused great joy and satisfaction in this camp of your Majesty. We learned that God had granted the Queen, our Lady, the delivery of a prince<sup>1</sup>, so much desired by all, and that her Majesty is enjoying the good health so needful.

...  
 I am also sending to New Spain cinnamon plants, and pepper plants of the round and large variety; also roots taken from Chinese stock, so that they may be raised here for your Majesty. I am sending a bundle of cinnamon branches with leaves, and three flasks of cinnamon water, for her Majesty the Queen, our Lady.

Last year, I sent to your Majesty in this ship a cup and 14 gold earrings. Now I do the same, and add four daggers of the kind used by the natives. For his Highness the prince, our lord, I am sending a crown, two gold chains, and two daggers.

...  
 While this ship was on the point of departure, one of two ships which your Viceroy Don Martín Enriquez despatched from New Spain arrived here on the 5th of the present month. Through these ships he sends me 150 soldiers, some married men, and three Augustinian religious.<sup>2</sup> The other ship [i.e. the Santiago] has not yet arrived. This camp of your Majesty was much pleased at the news of the birth of the new *infante*.<sup>3</sup> May he rejoice your Majesty for many years.

...  
 May our Lord preserve the sacred Catholic royal person of your Majesty, and add greater realms and dominions, as we your Majesty's faithful subjects desire.

Manila, 17 July 1574.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty,

Your loyal subject who kisses the royal feet and hands of your Majesty,

Guido de Lavezaris.

[Endorsed: "Philippines, 1574. To His Majesty. From Guido de Lavezaris, 17 July 1574."]

— "Let it be made into a relation."

— "Received, 7 March 1575."

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1 Ed. note: The prince, whose name was Fernando, did not survive beyond his childhood.

2 Ed. note: This brought to 13 the number of Augustinians then in the Philippines.

3 Ed. note: He was mistaken earlier when he said that the news of the birth of the prince had reached him by the Espiritu Santo on its previous voyage; the birth occurred in 1572 and could not have reached Manila until the present year of 1574, as no galleon came in 1573.

## A2. Second version via the *Espiritu Santo*, dated 30 July 1574

...  
26. Up to this point, this letter is a copy of the letter which I wrote to your Majesty by the ship **San Juan**. What afterward occurred is, that the said ship left this port on the 19th of the present month. May God grant the propitious voyage for which we hope.

27. One of the two ships [i.e. the *Santiago*] despatched from New Spain has not yet arrived, nor do we know anything about it. I have sent men to look for it in two different directions, with the oared boats of these natives. It is thought that the vessels is detained on account of stormy weather, and that with the help of God it will soon be here.

...  
29. Accompanying this letter, I send a map of the island of Luçon and of the coast of the mainland of China, from which it appears that, from the coast and great river of Cagayan at the northern extremity of this island to the nearest point of China, it is but a short distance by sea, a matter of 40 leagues or thereabout. By next year when we shall have seen and explored more of this land, I shall send your Majesty a fuller description of it than now.

30. I am also sending your Majesty another paper which I received from the Chinese, upon which is **printed a map of the whole land of China**, with an explanation which I had some Chinese interpreters make, through the aid of an Augustinian religious who is acquainted with the elements of the Chinese language. They have promised me to bring next year other maps drawn in more detail and with more precision; and, God willing, I shall send them to your Majesty.

31. By the ship **Espiritu Santo**, now about to sail, I am sending to your Majesty's officials in Mexico 80 quintals of cinnamon and 46 quintals of wax. For lack of room we have a quantity of cinnamon left over.

May our Lord preserve the sacred Catholic royal person of your Majesty with an increase of greater kingdoms and dominions, according to the desire of your Majesty's faithful subjects.

Manila, 30 July 1574.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty.

Your loyal subject and faithful servant who kisses the royal feet and hands of your Majesty,

Guido de Lavezaris.

[Endorsed: "...Received 15 August 1575..."]

### A3. The relation made of the 1573-74 events

#### Year of 1574: Relation of what happened in the Philippine Islands from 1 July 1573, when the two ships named *Santiago* and *Espiritu Santo* left the port of Manila, until 16 July 1574.

...  
 On 5 July of this year of 1574, the [flag-]ship **Espiritu Santo** entered this bay. General Alonso Velazquez was aboard. As for the *almiranta* [**Santiago**], aboard which is Lieutenant Sancho Ortiz de Agurto, it disappeared one night before these islands were sighted, eight leagues from them. Some have been sent to look for it. This camp rejoiced at his coming.<sup>1</sup>

...  
 The ship **Espiritu Santo** which has just entered this bay will be despatched with all haste, because it can make the crossing this year. The *almiranta* will not be able to be made ready until next year.<sup>2</sup>

For the greater convenience of the service of his Majesty and good of this country, it is necessary that two fleets be operated, so that when one gets to that New Spain, in September or October of each year, [folio 40] the other should be ready to leave for these islands. In this manner, it would be detained only enough time to allow the despatches to be seen, and the same procedure would be followed at these islands. In this manner, the navigation would be made safer with less risk because they would enjoy good weather in either direction.

Aboard this ship a bundle of cinnamon branches with leaves is being sent, and two phials of cinnamon water for her Majesty the Queen, our Lady; in addition, two barrels of china-ware<sup>3</sup> and two leather trunks full of rich things for your Majesty, and one cup, 14 gold earrings and four daggers with gold handles.

For H.M. the Prince Don Fernando, our Lord, a crown, and two daggers with gold handles, such as used by the natives.

This is what [happened] until 16 July 1574; what might happen until the departure of the ship **Espiritu Santo**, I will send an advice with it and whenever an opportunity will present itself I will send a report of the events of this camp.

Made at the city of Manila which is in the Island of Luzon on 16 July 1574.

[Unsigned]<sup>4</sup>

1 Ed. note: Actually, Velasquez was an Army captain and Ortiz was his company sergeant (See B&R 4:32). While at sea, however, they had held the senior rank aboard their respective ship.

2 Ed. note: It took two years to overhaul the *Santiago*, because its next voyage was in 1576.

3 Ed. note: The register listed 22,300 pieces of fine gilt china, and other porcelain ware. How many pieces each barrel contained can only be guessed. If 2 barrels contained the King's "fifth", then each barrel held 2,230 pieces!! This is unlikely; so, there may have been as many as 20 barrels reserved for the King.

4 Ed. note: There is another report by the royal officials Cauchela and Aldave in B&R 34:295-303, but it adds nothing new.