

A Bull in the Archives

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Abstract: Another treasure has been brought to light from the Archives of the University of Tomas. It is a personal copy of the papal bull given to knights of the Order of Santiago, the foremost Spanish knightly order. It belonged to Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas, governor of the Philippines from 1589–1593. The Order spanned both religious and military life, and is an indication of the high respect in which Gómez Pérez was held in Spain. However, it stresses the Spanish hatred of the Muslims (or Moors) and thereby sheds light on the origins of the divisions between Muslims and Christians in the Philippines that have plagued the islands for more than five centuries.

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Recently the University Archivist, Regalado Trota Jose, has brought to light a personal copy of a printed papal bull, which he found among the many such bulls in the archives of the University of Santo Tomas.¹ This bull sheds light on the long and deep-seated mistrust, indeed hatred, between Catholics and Muslims, which has been an impediment in the reconciliation between Christians and Mohammedans in the Philippines for centuries. It is appropriate to discuss this bull at the present time when the Bangsamoro agreement has just been signed, since it shows how deep-seated and long entrenched has been the distrust between Christians and Muslims. Early Spanish settlers of the Philippines, from Miguel López de Legazpi (c. 1502-1572) on, brought this distrust from Europe. Indeed they brought with them a hatred for the Muslims, or Moors, as they were known in Spain, because for centuries they had overrun most of the country until the fall of Granada in 1492, the same year that Columbus arrived in the Americas. It should also be remembered that this victory took place less than a century before Spaniards started to settle the Philippines in 1565.

The bull in question is the *Bulla conservatoria* of the Spanish knightly Order of Santiago and is the personal copy given to Governor-General Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas (1539–1593) when he was admitted to the order in 1589. In this paper, I shall first explore the role of the Order of Santiago, consider its aims and how they affected the early Spanish approach to the East Indies, and then go on to discuss the admission of Gómez Pérez to the order and its timing. Finally, I shall make some suggestions as to why this copy of this bull might have come into the possession of the Archives of the University of Santo Tomas.

Santiago nowadays evokes the thought of the famous pilgrimage along *el Camino* to the town of Santiago de Compostela in the northwest of Spain, where it is reported that the remains of St James the Apostle were discovered around 835 CE, under the cathedral.² Today, the pilgrimage is an opportunity for making new friends and breaking down barriers. But in the north-west Spanish province of Galicia, and beyond, St James is remembered as the warrior who, in 844, appeared on his

¹ The Bull under discussion should not be confused with the most famous of the bulls in the UST Archives: that of Pope Gregory XIV (1535–1591 who was Pope only in 1590–1), *Cum secuti*, which is dated 18 April 1591, and is directly addressed to the Philippines and not the whole church. That bull concerns the treatment of the local people, then known as “Indios.” Archives of UST, Legajo 2, Cajón 8, Letra H, Num. 11.

² In 1589, the year Gómez Pérez was appointed and set out for the Philippines, the remains were moved to “safety” by the Archbishop of Compostela when Sir Francis Drake—in Spanish eyes, a pirate—attacked La Coruña. They were then lost for centuries. (See *Tourist Guide, SPAIN*, Michelin: Clermont-Ferrand, 1985, p. 154.)

white charger, bearing a white standard with a red cross,³ and came to the aid of Don Ramiro I (fl. 844) who was attacking a group of Moors. This was the first step in the long *Reconquista* of Spain from the Moors, who had overrun Spain beginning in 711. From that time on St James was known as Santiago Matamoros—Slayer of the Moors. He is also the patron saint of all Spain. A friend who completed the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in 2011 wrote:⁴

Santiago Matamoros was very much part of the Camino de Santiago—at least in centuries past. ... [T]he pilgrimage started in the late 800s/early 900s, when most of Spain was under Muslim rule. And the battle to regain Spain under Christian rule started from the north—Burgos, home of El Cid Campeador [1043—1099], is in the middle of the Camino Frances. Thus all through the pilgrimage route, one sees the two images Santiago El Peregrino (with hat with scallop shell, walking stick, water gourd) and Santiago Matamoros on his white horse.

In the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, one has on the main altar a huge bust of Santiago (which pilgrims walk around and hug), above it is Santiago El Peregrino and way above is Santiago Matamoros.

Among the reasons for the popularity of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela is that Jerusalem was under Muslim rule. Also one passes through territories controlled in medieval times by the Knights Templars. There are also memories of the Knights of Santiago—they protected pilgrims from robbers, but also served to keep Northern Spain out of Muslim rule.⁵

Inspired by the first victory against the Moors, St James, or as he was known to the Spanish, San Tiago or Santiago, eventually gave his name to the senior order of knights, the Order of Santiago. Writ large in the Papal Bulls that confirm the Order is the obligation to fight against the “infidel Muslims.” Indeed the original name of the knightly order is the “Order of St James of the Sword.” The Muslims were hated, and feared, because they were the enemy of the Catholic religion. This was doubly felt since, for centuries, the distinction between the church and the state in Spain was remarkably unclear, so an enemy of the church was an enemy of the state and *vice versa*. The attitude the Muslims projected by the church was one of unbounded hostility and it featured large in the mentality of the Spanish colonizers.

³ Or: with a flaming sword.

⁴ Fr B. F. Nebres, SJ, personal email, 22 February 2012.

⁵ Fr B. F. Nebres, SJ, personal email 22 February 2012.

The Order of Santiago is one of three Spanish knightly orders founded in the twelfth century; the others are those of Alcántara and Calatrava.⁶ It began as a military confraternity, not a religious order at Cáceres in 1170.⁷ Later it became a partly religious order at the Augustinian monastery of Uclés. Pope Alexander II originally approved the Order of Santiago in the Bull *Benedictus Deus* of 3 July 1175.⁸ It was only in 1523 that a Papal Bull of Pope Adrian VI (1459–1523) confirmed the incorporation of these three orders into the Spanish crown.⁹ Philip II (1527–1598), who reigned from 1556–1598, put all of the three knightly orders under a single council in 1566.¹⁰

Basically the Order of Santiago followed the Augustinian monastic rule, including vows of poverty, chastity and obedience,¹¹ but it was instituted in order to fight the “infidel,” i.e. the Muslims. The histories of the Order that were written around the seventeenth century—there has been little published since—stress this aim in bloodthirsty terms. The emblem of the Order is a red cross shaped like a sword, which is worn round the neck. “Archbishop Don Rodrigo [1170-1247], Book VII, Chapter VII, speaks of the sword in these words. *Rubet ensis sanguine Arabum*. The sword is colored with the blood of the Moors.”¹² The archbishop then goes on to say that it is understood that in ancient times this Order was not given to a knight until the first time that his sword had been bloodied with the blood of Moors (*ibid.*).

Blood was very important to the Spanish at that time, in particular the notion of *limpieza*, or pure blood, was taken extremely seriously. To be of pure blood meant not only that the person was a Christian, but that neither the person nor his or her ancestry were contaminated with heretic religion or Moorish blood, Jews, or Blacks.¹³ The term was also used for the records that showed the purity of ancestry of

⁶ See L. P. Wright, “The Military Orders in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Spanish Society. The Institutional Embodiment of a Historical Tradition,” *Past & Present*, No. 43 (May, 1969), pp. 34–70, especially pp. 34–5.

⁷ Thanks to Sam Z. Conedera for elucidation on this point. (Private communication, 13 May 2014.)

⁸ See, e.g., Guy Stair Sainty, “The Military Order of Santiago,” at <http://www.twow.ru/forum/index.php?s=001baeffa5ac03835b684265e2ee2cdc&act=ST&f=6&t=540> accessed 5 February 2011.

⁹ See p. 193 of Andres Mendo, SJ, *De las Ordenes Militares ...*, Madrid: Iuan Garcia Insançon, 1681.

¹⁰ Wright, “Military Orders,” p. 35.

¹¹ The notions of chastity and poverty are relative, see below.

¹² See p. 86 of Diego de la Mota, *Principio de la orden de la cavalleria de Sant Tiago del Espada ...*, Valencia: Alvaro Franco, 1599. The original work of Rodrigo Jimenez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie, sive, Historia Gothica*, has been edited by Juan Fernández Valverde, Turnhout : Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1987, vol. 72 of Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis.

¹³ See e.g., Ophelia Marquez and Lillian Ramos Navarro Wold, compilers and editors,

a person applying for a position. Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas, governor of the Spanish Philippines from 1589 to 1593, went to great lengths in his will to stipulate that his heirs should not compromise the *limpieza* of his family.¹⁴ Needless to say, *limpieza* was a necessary condition for becoming a knight of the Order of Santiago, and conversely that membership demonstrated one's purity of blood.

Membership had other benefits, though pecuniary rewards were an indirect, rather than a direct, consequence of membership: membership put one into the list of desirable people for senior posts of government. A significant number of governors of the Philippines were knights of the Order of Santiago, for example, Santiago de Vera (?–?, gov. 1584–1590), Francisco de Tello de Guzmán (c. 1545–1603, gov. 1596–1602), Juan de Silva (?–1616, gov. 1609–1616), Fernando de Silva (?–1626, gov. 1625–26), Diego Fajardo (?–1653, gov. 1644–1653). In official communications virtually any letter to or from such a knight will indicate the knighthood in the salutation beginning the letter, which indicates the importance of membership. Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas became a knight of the Order only around the time of his nomination to the governorship of the Philippines.¹⁵

Being a knight of the Order of Santiago had its duties and obligations and these were set out at length. Since the Order was based on a religious order, the monastic rule was a guiding precept. As in all monastic orders this included vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but since many of the knights were seculars these vows were interpreted somewhat differently from usual. Poverty was construed as disclosing one's assets annually, giving to the poor—including feeding the poor three times a year—and not living ostentatiously. For those who were married, chastity was interpreted as marital chastity, that is to say, only having sexual relations with one's wife, but there were also extra restrictions. Sex was forbidden on certain feast days, and particularly during Advent; adultery, especially if evidenced by the birth of a child, was sacrilege and was punished with penance for a year, which included only having bread and water at times. Obedience was interpreted as obedience to

Compilation of colonial Spanish terms and document related phrases, second edition, 1998, Midway City, CA: SHHAR Press, (Society of Hispanic Historical and Ancestral Research).

¹⁴ The text of the will is available at <http://www.cronistadebetanzos.com/trabajos/gomezper.pdf>, accessed 18 November 2013. See also John N. Crossley, "The religiosity of Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas, Governor General of the Philippines, 1590–93," this journal, XLVIII, No. 144, 2013, pp. 241–252.

¹⁵ Gómez Pérez was confirmed as a knight of the Order of Santiago in May 1589 (see below). In that same month Fr. Alonso Sánchez, SJ, wrote to him from Rome giving him advice about how to act when he became governor. See vol. I, pp. 463–5 of Francisco Colín, SJ, 1900–04, *Labor evangelica de los Obreros de la Compañía de Jesús en las Islas Filipinas*, Nueva edición. Ilustrada con copia de notas y documentos para la crítica de la Historia general de la soberanía de España en Filipinas por el Padre Pablo Pastells, S. J., three vols, Barcelona: Henrich y Compañía.

the priests and the Master of the Order.¹⁶ Oddly, however, even bishops were not allowed to excommunicate knights of the Order, which also reflects the influence the King had on the Church.¹⁷

In addition to these requirements there were many pertaining to piety. The number of *Our Fathers* that had to be said each day was stipulated, attendance at Mass, and taking communion, were compulsory on Sundays without exception.¹⁸ Naturally, there were differences of level of observance.

Before one could become a full member of the Order, one had to undergo an apprenticeship. So it was usual for persons nominated to become knights to first serve a novitiate. This involved two matters in particular: one involved religious training and the other military experience. The new knight was to spend a period of time at the monastery of Uclés following the routine of the monks, and the other was to serve in the galleys of the Spanish king.

We have no evidence as to whether Gómez Pérez fulfilled either of these conditions. However, he had been an effective commander in the southeast of Spain, defending the land and people against the attacks of the Moors when he was governor of Cartagena and Murcia. Certainly, this part of the southern Spanish coast was often under attack from the Moors who had been in the kingdom of Granada but had now gone to Algiers in North Africa.¹⁹ It was there that Gómez Pérez directly confronted Muslims. De la Costa paraphrased Fr Sánchez (1547–1593) as saying, he had “three years as commander of the galley fleet on coast-guard duty against the [B]arbary pirates.”²⁰ Surely this would have shown that he needed no additional service in the galleys. Moreover, as regards his observance of religious rules, it is clear that Gómez Pérez was a deeply religious person and that he did indeed attend Mass every day.²¹

¹⁶ For all of these see Mota, *Principio*, pp. 178 ff.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹⁹ See vol. 2, pp. 365–6 of Jerónimo Castillo de Bobadilla, *Politica para corregidores, y señores de vasallos, en tiempo de paz, y de guerra. y para jueces eclesiasticos y seglares*, [Antwerp] en casa de Iuan Bautista Verdusseau, 1704, originally published in 1597.

²⁰ See the letter of Fr Sánchez at p. 170 of Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola, 2009, *Conquista de las Islas Malucas*, prólogo de Glòria Cano, Madrid: Miraguano S. A. Ediciones and Ediciones Polifemo previously published in 1609, and p. 99 of Horacio Villamayor de la Costa, SJ, 1961, *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581–1768*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press. He refers to Colín-Pastells, 1900–04, II, 174–5 (*re* his appointment) and Book I, chapter 27 of Pedro Chirino, SJ, 1969, *Relación de las islas filipinas*, reprinted, Manila: Historical Conservation Society. Tr. Ramon Echavarria. First edition, Rome, 1604.

²¹ See f. 250r of *De la Historia de las Philipinas ...*, Bloomington, IN, Lilly Library, Philippine Mss II. This manuscript is being edited and translated by Clive Griffin and the present author. For his general devotion, see Crossley, “Religiosity,” *passim*.

He had become a fully-fledged knight of the Order of Santiago in May 1589, since the copy of the bull is dated 21 May 1589.²² This was apparently about the same time as he learnt he was to become governor-general of the Philippines. He would have been given the certified copy of the *Bulla conservatoria* of the order at the time of his attaining full membership of the Order, and this is the document that has recently been brought to light in the University of Santo Tomas Archives. The Bull itself occupies 18 printed pages, but there is an additional sheet, which continues the notes written at the end of the printed text. The technical content of the bull concerns the Order of Santiago, commends the members of the order for their fight against the Muslims, and guarantees them privileges. Much of the text is full of warnings against those who might obstruct the knights, and it contains threats of excommunication against those who do so, while giving considerable concessions to the knights themselves. On its last printed page, it orders that each knight shall have a copy of the bull: “Mandamus, tamen copiam fieri de præmissis eam petentibus ...”²³

The hand-written notes at the very end of this copy of the bull comprise two parts. First, on two pages there are certifications by the notary Cosmas de Vega (fl. 1573–1589) that the bull is indeed a true copy. Secondly, there is similar notation that Gómez Pérez has received this bull. This is how we know it is his personal copy. There was a complication: de Vega died before the bull was handed over, so there is a second notary, Juan Gutierre [Gutiérrez] who certifies the copy previously approved by de Vega.

There remains the question remains as to how this document came into the Dominican Archives of the University of Santo Tomas. As I pointed out in my previous article in this journal, Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas left his belongings to his son, Luis Pérez (1568–1603), who succeeded him as interim governor of the Philippines.²⁴ We have no details, however, of what items Luis Pérez received from his father. Luis Pérez was also a knight, but of the order of Alcántara, to which he had been appointed in 1587.²⁵ It has often been said, since the time of Augustus de Morga (1559–1636), that Luis Pérez was under the influence of the Dominicans.²⁶ Certainly

²² See the handwritten note on the last printed page of the bull.

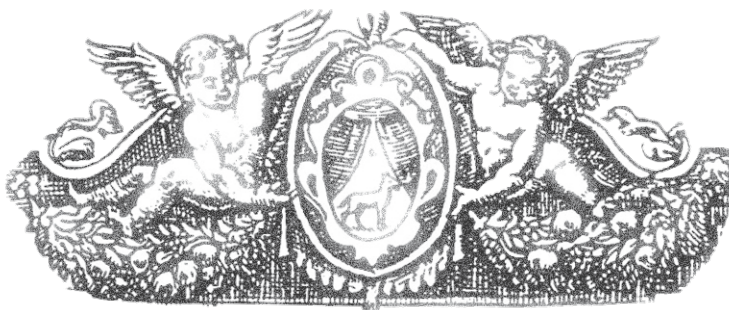
²³ “We [the pope] command that a copy be made for the supplicants put forward.”

²⁴ See Crossley, “Religiosity,” p. 248.

²⁵ See p. 409 of Juan Donapétory Iribarnégaray, 1953, *Historia de Vivero y su concejo*, Vivero: Artes Gráficas A. Santiago, and also p. 220, n. (1), of César Vaamonde Lores, 1917, *Gómez Pérez das Mariñas y sus descendientes: históricos y genealógicos*, La Coruña: Litografía e Imprenta Roel. Vaamonde also says he was “more affable and astute than his father.”

²⁶ Letter of de Morga to Philip II, 5 July 1596, see vol. IX, p. 269 of Emma Helen Blair, & James Alexander Robertson, 1903–1909, *The Philippine Islands 1493–1898*, Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co.

he had two Dominican confessors, Fr Juan Maldonado de San Pedro Martir (born ?), who died in Cambodia on 22 December 1598,²⁷ and then Fr Bernardo Navarra de Santa Catalina (?–1616).²⁸ The latter was superintendent commissary of the Inquisition from 1599 until his death,²⁹ and he was one of the executors of the will of Archbishop Miguel Benavides (1552–1605), founder of the University of Santo Tomas. It therefore seems quite plausible that the bull came from the father Gómez Pérez to the son, Luis Pérez, and then to the Dominicans. In any case the fact that the bull came into the custody of the Dominicans in Santo Tomas once again shows the closeness of church and state at that time. It is tempting to think that there may be yet more items from the estate of Governor Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas still hidden in the archives of the University of Santo Tomas.³⁰ ■



Tr. from the originals, edited and annotated. 55 vols, republished as 55 vols in 19, Mandaluyong, Rizal, Philippines: Cachos Hermanos, Inc., 1973. This work will be referred to as “BR.”

²⁷ Fr. Maldonado, OP, “a serious-minded and learned man, was a special friend of Don Luis Dasmariñas, to whom the Dominican order was pleased to send him now as company.” Augustus de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, Cambridge: Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, translated and edited by J.S. Cummins, p. 151. See also BR XIV, p. 185, n. 118 and p. 46 of Hilario Ocio, OP, and Eladio Neira, OP, *Misioneros Dominicanos en el Extremo Oriente 1587–1835*, 2000, Manila: Life Today Publications.

²⁸ See Colín-Pastells, *Labor Evangelica*, vol. II, 548.

²⁹ See vol. 1, p. 45, of Ocio Neira, *Misioneros Dominicanos*.

³⁰ I am very grateful to Regalado Trota Jose, Archivist of the University of Santo Tomas, who alerted me to the bull discussed here. Thanks also to Kevin Molloy, Hugh Hudson and Des Cowley of the State Library of Victoria, and, as always, to Clive Griffin of Trinity College, Oxford.