

## South Sulawesi in 1544: a Portuguese letter

Brett Baker

The letter, of which an English translation is offered below, was written by António de Paiva, a Portuguese merchant who had extensive experience living and trading in South Sulawesi in the 1540s. With its references to matters such as political alliances, funerary practices, and practitioners of traditional religions, it offers an intriguing glimpse into the political and social world that existed in South Sulawesi in the middle of the sixteenth century — before the widespread penetration of Islam and the political domination of Goa and Tallo’.

The Portuguese text of the letter was edited and published for the first time by Father Hubert Jacobs S.J. in 1966 with a full account of the circumstances of its composition and later references to the events described.<sup>1</sup> Though historians of the region have made frequent mention of the letter since then, it has been difficult to make full use of the valuable ethnographic information without a translation of the author’s archaic and somewhat obscure Portuguese. The translation also allows easier access to the context of Christian conversion which is the ostensible purpose of the letter and which has considerable interest in its own right.

The translation follows the text published by Father Jacobs and my notes draw heavily on his, with their superb scholarship. The numbering of the sections follows that added by Jacobs for ease of reference and does not occur in the original. I am also indebted to Campbell Macknight for some suggestions based on personal experience in South Sulawesi.

António de Paiva to João de Albuquerque OFM, Bishop of Goa.

Goa, [November 1545]<sup>2</sup>

Lord

1. Since Your Lordship commands that I give you an account in writing of how and in what manner the kings of Macassar<sup>3</sup> received the holy baptism and became of our holy faith, the following may be the least [I can offer], for I believe that the words which were spoken to them by me in the newness of this holy work were sent from above, and therefore I do not know if I will have the recall, as I speak, to be able to tell most of them.

2. In the year 1544, in February of the same year, I was dispatched<sup>4</sup> to the island of Macassar<sup>5</sup> to look for sandalwood by Ruy Vaz Pereira (may God receive him), who was captain in Malacca.<sup>6</sup> This same island is 46 leagues<sup>7</sup> west of Maluku, a little more or less. The coast from northeast to southwest runs nearly 200 leagues.<sup>8</sup> They say the tip of the north is at one degree latitude and that of the south is at six degrees, which I could not know specifically, not having brought an astrolabe.<sup>9</sup> But the first year<sup>10</sup> that a married<sup>11</sup> man from Malacca and I were there, we put in along the coast of Siang<sup>12</sup> for three months, namely April, May, and June, until arriving at Durate, the land of sandalwood.<sup>13</sup> And as an estimate of the leagues which we travelled and that which the navigators tell of it, it might be 160.<sup>14</sup> And it took us ninety days because of the winds which were blowing from the northwest most of the time.

3. I arrived at the port of the King of Suppa,<sup>15</sup> one of the principal kings of Macassar and one of the most warlike and who is much feared there, because, having come across news that the land of sandalwood was in rebellion, I resolved, along with the twelve Portuguese men whom Ruy Vaz Pereira had given me, to turn back from there to another cape because I was carrying his property which I could not risk. The land at that time was lacking in foodstuffs because the drought was common both there and all along the coast of Java so that the grass protruded from below the ground like blood.<sup>16</sup>

4. The island is rich in all kinds of foodstuffs, of rice and meats. The value of two-and-a-half candils<sup>17</sup> of rice is half a cruzado<sup>18</sup> used in Malacca, which is two-and-a-half tangas. As for the meats: one buffalo for two cruzados, a pig for a tanga and a half, sixty chickens for a cruzado, and a goat for a tanga — all this in abundance. There are great quantities of fish, especially sardines, three thousand for half a cruzado. And the whole island is situated with vast mountain ranges in the interior and exceedingly extensive fields along the sea, divided by many good rivers of fresh water which descend from these same mountains.

5. In this island and in the other little islands close to it are the following: sandalwood, gold, ivory, seed pearls, iron, and white cloth; and there is more slave labour for rowers than anywhere else in the world and very cheap. They are sturdy men and strong-limbed, bred for the oar from birth until death. They are worth four and five cloths, which can cost three-and-a-half pardaus,<sup>19</sup> although slaves. They are very great archers, using poisonous blow darts.

6. As soon as the king was aware that I was truly in his port, he came in person to see me, bringing with him a son of 15 years, and there came with him close to thirty women, all of them young, in golden bracelets. He is probably 70 years old. For some time on this same visit he tested me on the merit of our holy faith, asking me the reason why we have more wars with the Moors than with any other race.<sup>20</sup> And I told him that we thought these to be the least truthful race and the greatest tyrants which there were in the entire world. And this because they have no law except for a certain kind ordained by a man named Mohammed who, in order to acquire lands and estates, pretended to believe himself a prophet, giving him very great lavishness in life, which thing is very harmful to it.<sup>21</sup> But seeing that the bad is more accepted than the good, this kind of Muslim, which Your Highness sees and has heard of, has multiplied in number because it is conceded to them that they might have four wives or more, leaving them and taking them again each when it is their will (while to us [is conceded] the satisfying of the union only through marriage until death without having any other), and thus many other things has this aforementioned Mohammed commanded them, which they keep all

according to their pleasure, for in this act the father sins with the son, and the daughter with the brother, and the brother with the mother. Thus for the true Christians, which are these Portuguese whom Your Highness sees, to see such profligate acts and the offering of such dirty hearts and their acts filled with such evil, the King our lord and many other Christian princes confront them and pursue them with great destruction because of their abominable customs, which we do not do to any heathen race<sup>22</sup> such as Your Highness is, where the teaching of the divine grace has been weak. And since Your Highness is so happy to hear the word of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the World, may it please Him by His mercy that He will save you.

7. Because it was past afternoon, the king retired very content in himself and sent us much refreshment, returning to the junk the next day. The first thing to do was to rehearse the words of our holy faith, not forgetting the recollection of it, in which I came to say to him that Our Lord sent so many of his disciples to the world to preach the holy gospel, and then, discoursing on them, I came to name the blessed apostle Saint James. And because at times the Moors had said to him that the Christians would call upon and name Saint James in battles, this same king asked me who he was or how we would call on him. And I answered him that he was an apostle and knight of Jesus Christ Our Lord, to whom was granted the succour of the oppressed who call on him, who visibly see him come to their protection and aid, dressed in full armour and on a horse that appears to advance covered in fire, and that of this the Moors themselves were witnesses, seeing him in their destructions; and that he thus would help His Highness, if he were to call upon him with a clean heart and true faith in Christ; that if His Highness desired to see his figure, that I would show it to him, which the king asked of me with great pleading. And I had him take a closed altarpiece which contained the form and countenance of the blessed Saint James, all stitched in gold, his military vestment serrated and his cape of purple and gold, lined with blue and as nicely finished as is possible, with his green staff, and on his head a hat with scallop shells as used by pilgrims. This being opened, the king raised his hands in the manner of worshipping it, and I said to him, 'Lord, that praise is owed to all-mighty God. This was one of his envoys, as

I already said. In case Your Highness becomes a Christian, you will take him as a patron, asking that you might obtain through him that which you request in your petition. And this believe without any doubt that you will achieve and obtain it.' He supplicated me right away then that, upon his becoming Christian, I would leave it with him, and I promised him I would.

8. Because the time was short and I had been informed how the land of sandalwood was in revolt, and also because these words of the aforementioned king were only words, without my being able to perceive the part which divine providence had taken on his heart, I decided to sail for the port of Siang, whose king would probably be 45 years old, a large man, well proportioned in stature, and whose eyes are large and black. And as soon as I arrived in the port, which would be 50 leagues<sup>23</sup> from where I departed, the king came to the sea in person to see me, toiling a league beyond the bar, because he knew me from when the married man from Malacca, with whom I had outfitted, departed with the junks and left me in that land to die, this king having given me shelter in his house.<sup>24</sup> Giving me a grand welcome in front of all the Portuguese, he told me that he was so happy with my visit, that it could not be but that some great good must come to him from it; and because the true God had inspired one who was covered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the words came full of his fruit, for he begged me to disembark the following day as he would like to speak with me. And after asking about the captain<sup>25</sup> and also news of my trip, he departed.

9. As soon as it dawned, I had a prau<sup>26</sup> draped with banners bearing the cross of Christ, and with some Portuguese I set out for the city of Siang,<sup>27</sup> where the king was already waiting for me and, with great hospitality, said to me: 'Antonio de Paiva, since the time when you were here sick, when you shared with me in conversation this account of the most holy faith which your people hold, never, from then until today, has my desire to be baptised waned, and neither has my affection for that true God whom your people believe in and worship. And only because I fear my people will rebel and disobey me am I pondering what I will do. I beg of you, friend that you are, that, in front of these nobles of my house, you tell me something about

your Christian worship and what it does and what it ought to do for a true Christian.'

10. As soon as I, Lord, such a sinner and errant, dry-fleshed and without any fruit, saw the petition, very great and of such important substance and matter, with which the king solicited me, or the Lord God wanted, with eyes lowered and humble, full of all fear, I answered him: 'Lord, it does not behove me in such an important thing to express thoughts, let alone words, but, because I see Your Highness with such pure intent and desire, so enthusiastic in the grace from on high, that which, as defenceless and simple [as I am], I was able to understand from our superiors as the doctrine which I gained from them, I will tell to Your Highness the best I can because, in the few fundamentals which now I offer to you, you will see the crown of the work which, through it, performing the holy doctrines, is obtained at death, and which we Christians call the commandments of God.'

11. I continued with the king the declaration of these commandments from the first until the tenth, neither more nor less than as the Holy Mother Church teaches, which I presented to him in his language,<sup>28</sup> telling how these ten were encompassed in two.<sup>29</sup> The king replied that what I was telling him, as it seemed to him, might thus be his person and soul, and being satisfied with what I presented, he dismissed me, telling me that the next day he would like to come and rest on the junk.

12. When the following day, which was a Sunday, dawned, the king with many of his people came to the junk where I was, not having forgotten the words of the previous day. And repeating them again in front of all the Portuguese, he said to me that his intention was to become Christian, as he had already told me; however, he asked me to wait until he held a council, the cause being that such suddenness in abandoning that manner of living which his ancestors had had since the creation of the world and which he now had would give his people occasion to take him for a crazy man and be suspicious of me; and in this manner he would receive the holy baptism. And again recalling the commandments, which all seemed good to him, I then said to him: 'Lord, for the true Christian to be saved it is necessary that he have and do holy and good works, for salvation is very doubtful without these,

and for Your Highness to see its path, hear part of those which the true Christian employs, and you will know if, working in conformity to what they teach and are, you can be saved or lost.’

13. I then made him an argument for the fourteen Works of Mercy<sup>30</sup> based on the way they depend on the commandments, from the first to the fourteenth, with the most words necessary to that enterprise which I was in, which I omit to write only so Your Lordship does not deem it superfluous text. But it is to be believed that, since such an affair was conducted by the divine providence, it would be reasonable to trust that I would not change the words for good or ill, for it is clear God inspires those similar to him, as is read in the work of the holy baptism which was done, and therefore it may be allowed that the mighty God inspires the party which he sees disposed to follow him.

14. And because Your Lordship, having some notice of the time of my imprudence, sat moved in your magnificent person, amazed at this holy Christianisation accomplished by me, as I saw when I gave you news of it, saying that you deemed it as significant, although it may be deficient in what Solomon superabounded in,<sup>31</sup> or lacking complete virtue. What is the difference to someone between having a clear mirror and another which has been fogged over by breathing on it? Your Lordship will say that it is much. Do you contest therefore [that] this same difference will exist between a clean heart and another which may be covered in sins? But nevertheless, as a mirror does not cease to be a mirror, so too a heart does not to cease to be [a heart]. It is true that, as in that clear brightness the breath begins to diminish, its clarity casting it [the breath] from itself, so that it again abides in the perfection in which it was at first. Now therefore, Lord, if Your Lordship so easily has obtained both, and the mighty God inspires it, so that we others are well governed and the King our lord better served, what argument will there be, if Almighty God was the master who made and perfected equally all these mirrors, if mine for instance was fogged over with the power of sin, and the sin began to diminish in itself because it will not tolerate the virtue and the majesty of this pure work, the power diminishing and casting away the stigmas of sin from itself until returning to its original state? Great difference, Lord,

between the masters, great that between the mirrors, great that between the brightness of each, much more that between their virtues. God, powerful master; man, weak worker; the mirror composed of steel and copper; the heart, of pure wisdom; the mirror of imperfect brightness; the heart of the brightness of the works of glory; the mirror a figure of good and bad; the heart itself of the virtues, fruit of the hand of God. May Your Lordship reconsider your intention, and you will find that, as Master Diogo<sup>32</sup> said in his public words: God is served by the good and the bad, and therefore, although it may have been established in the land by me, the act, I hope in God, is his and to his service.

15. As the point was to do business, I quit the pursuit of this incident, but, since these kings already bore hearts pure and clear from the fog of sin, the very next day a message from the king came to me, commanding me to go to him, which I did, finding him in Siang. And going in suspense and rapt in heavy thought, I remembered a very serious thing. And although the words are neither suitable nor acceptable to your magnificent ears, allow with patience the report of them, for it is fruit of the Holy Spirit. Your Lordship will know that the priests of these kings are generally called *bissus*.<sup>33</sup> They grow no hair in their beards, dress in a womanly fashion, and grow their hair long and braided; they imitate [women's] speech because they adopt all of the female gestures and inclinations. They marry and are received, according to the custom of the land, with other common men, and they live indoors, uniting carnally in their secret places with the men whom they have for husbands. This is public [knowledge], and not just around here, but on account of the same mouths which Our Lord has given to proclaim his praise. These priests, if they touch a woman in thought or deed, are boiled in tar because they hold that all their religion would be lost if they did it; and they have their teeth covered in gold. And as I say to Your Lordship, I went with this very sober thought, amazed [that] Our Lord would destroy those three cities of Sodom for the same sin and considering how a destruction had not come over such a wanton people as these in such a long time and what there was there to do, for the whole land was encircled by evil.

16. Having arrived at the residences of the king without



remembering or paying attention to the path which I had travelled because of being thus rapt, I petitioned Our Lord for the courage, although there was in me much wickedness and sin, that I might succour those who were blind. And having ascended to where the king was and being welcomed by him, I was directed by the king to sit not far from him, and in his own language, which I understood well, I again spoke, by his order, with him and with all his people who were present. He asked me if I would tell him if we had any information about the creation of the world, and I told him that we had all this written by saints and prophets. He asked me what a saint was. Because the word 'saint' could not be expressed in his language, I told him that all those who do the works and commandments about which I had already spoken to him were saints, a corps without blot from sins; and those who had written the Holy Scriptures by which we were governed were men in whom there was no lie. He asked me to tell him what a lie was. And I responded that, if His Highness would pardon me, I would answer him, and that, nevertheless, if it was so harsh, that he would allow the Portuguese to leave with their junks and that in me only would he exercise the justice which he had for good. And he, with affectionate words, instructed me to say all that I wished. Then I said to him: 'Lord, Your Highness asks me what a lie is, and I do not find anything to which I can liken its definition, for it is this life of yours, because, whereas there is no recollection, acquaintance, nor knowledge in you or in your people of Jesus Christ incarnate, Son of the living God, to serve Him, to worship Him, to believe, hence, as you are lacking such a great thing, you and your people, this itself is a lie, namely, the great errors which you commit; and we alone have the truth because we employ the works which depend on it.'

17. The king took his eyes off of me and, looking at his people, said: 'I have just begun to believe that the seed of these Moors is bad.' Then he turned to me and said: 'Antonio de Paiva, the Moors say that they have the truth, and you others, the lie.' And I said to him: 'The Lord God has ordained for you enough of the very great virtue, for without teaching and without your having the declaration of our holy faith in which the truth is contained, Your Highness can judge it well.' He asked me in what manner. I told him that only in the works of each

one could His Highness see right, and in the ones who followed the footsteps of those about whom I had already spoken to him, in these only was the truth. Then he asked me to tell him what we considered to be truth. I responded to him that God Almighty, without beginning and without end, was truth itself and that, since he was the pure truth, and in the works its opposite is dealt with, then everything else was a lie. Thus that the holy God Himself was the very truth, and to believe it not — [that] He was sent to the world, put on flesh in the womb of Our Lady the Virgin for the salvation of the human race,<sup>34</sup> suffering and rising from the dead — that everything else was a lie. And that since in him was contained this very holy word of truth, that all those who were opposed to it would perish forever because the works of truth were the staircase to endless glory, and these lies which were deceits of Satan were a perpetual fall into hell-fire.

18. I being thus discoursing with the king, the weather began to grow cloudy — it being a very great drought as I already said — in such a way that it appeared to be the Judgment, with dreadful thunderclaps and gusts of wind and rain such that we could not hear, by which the roof of the king's house overhead was totally bent back, rain falling on top of the king himself; he was covered by large umbrellas, and he had these removed and undressed himself, remaining covered, and, while he washed his body in the water, I said to him: 'Lord, these are the works of the true God,' and then immediately upon [the mention of] this name he lifted his hands to his head previous to being a Christian. When the rain stopped, I returned to my junk, hoping that the king might finish his councils.

19. The councils which the king held concerning this holy Christianity were three [in number] and lasted nine days: the first he held in Siang, the second in Borneo,<sup>35</sup> and the third in Matojeng,<sup>36</sup> which means in their language the place of truth. And it happened in the exact same way, and in all three of the councils it rained without having done so on other days nor after the entire seed-time, and in many parts of the land there was abundance. I was thus awaiting a reply from the king, which was already late one day beyond the nine which he took, and the reason was because of the tremendous debating over Christianity by this race<sup>37</sup> of abominable priests which I

already mentioned, because of whom it took the greatest possible labour, and all the delay was for the reconciliation he wanted to have with them.

20. On the morning of the following day there appeared at a point of land approximately twenty praus, very swift, which came under sail and well equipped with oars. Each of them carried 70 or 80 rowers; in the fleet came the old king of Suppa, to whom I had already communicated the things of our holy faith, and from whose port I had come. And he made the praus head for the junk; striking sail, they came by oar. And because I did not know what was happening, I commanded the junk's flags to be raised, the guns to be loaded, and the Portuguese to be armed secretly because, in a land accustomed only to our being merchants, I did not want to show that, being cautious, I would probably have 70 combatants awaiting order. And, advancing, one very swift prau came to ask if I was on the junk, and, it being said that I was, they said that the king of Suppa had come there to see me. When he arrived, because of my not being that convinced of the truth that he was on my side, I therefore ordered most of the Portuguese from the high part of the stern, since they intended to defend it with the guns, and commanded that they not descend until my order, and thus they protected it with the guns as soon as he ascended to the junk, which might have been the seventh hour of the day, a little more or less.

21. The first thing the king asked me was if the king of Siang had already been baptised, and I told him no, that he was in council with his people, which had already gone two days overtime. And he, taking great pleasure and satisfaction, said to me that, for such a holy thing as this was, so many councils were unnecessary, that they might immediately prepare to baptise him, which he desired. And with great brevity I erected an altar, the best possible in the time, with silk cloths and with an altarpiece having the image of Our Lady the Virgin Mary and another with the image of the blessed apostle Saint James which this king had requested of me; and with many burning candles and with the perfume of incense and others, and the junk adorned with boughs since the tree branches were almost to the shipside. I had one of my slaves come, the mother of my son, a revered woman of good

appearance, whom, in the presence of all, I declared to be emancipated and free as if she had been born of legitimate matrimony, and she was the sponsor and witness of this king's baptism. The king was baptised at my request by an honourable man,<sup>38</sup> old and totally grey-haired, who travelled in the junk with me [and was] almost of the same age [as the king]; he baptised him, he requesting the name of the Infante Dom Luis,<sup>39</sup> which therefore he was given, and he was baptised with the conventional words, water being sprinkled in a cross over him in the customary figure: in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Thus immediately many of his kin became Christian. From there his land would be about forty leagues away.<sup>40</sup> We had great feasts and merry-making, firing many shots from the junk's cannons after everyone had received the water of the holy baptism.

22. As soon as the king of Suppa had been baptised and because word from the king of Siang was late due to his having gone to one of his cities called Lontar, which is to say 'palm',<sup>41</sup> I sailed seven leagues<sup>42</sup> from there to be on the windward side of the shoals, and this king Dom Luis went in the junk, and the armada went in front of us as well. I arrived in the aforesaid port, a large city called Gowa,<sup>43</sup> which formerly had belonged to a vassal of the king of Siang but had been taken from him. And the third day after my arrival, ambassadors from the king of Siang came, his old and venerable governor who is now called Dom Afonso and another one, and they brought me a gold bracelet as a token of good faith that he had concluded with his people, namely with the chiefs and with part of his priests, to be Christians, and therefore immediately to be baptised.

23. Seeing for myself the message and seal of the king, I gave much praise and thanks to Our Lord, and without delay I returned to get the things necessary for that holy baptism, and I took six Portuguese with me, leaving the junk with the rest, and I set out for the king. It is true that none of the Portuguese could imagine or suppose that it could turn out in this way, some saying that the Moors and others would burn them if it were so. And I departing in the grace of the Holy Spirit, the king of Suppa told me to have the king of Siang swear by his Christianity that he might thus be his brother in arms after becoming Christian as he had been as a heathen, that he thus promised

to be such, and that, if the people of either of them were to rebel against that holy work, that one might have help from the other, which I then did, neither more nor less, as will be told.

24. I arrived in Siang at sunset. The king ordered [that we] be put up in the residences of this same governor and that the following day he be made a Christian. I had for opposition the Moors, enemies of this same work and faith, namely those from Ujung Tanah, Pahang, and Patani,<sup>44</sup> because they sought with the king that he might not accept this, concerning which the king asked me how it appeared to me, for it had been fifty years or more<sup>45</sup> that these Moorish kings had been deceiving this land of Macassar; and, because they saw that we were defeating them thereabouts, they put forth efforts to obstruct this holy work. But I, in the virtue of God, defeated them in the manner of Mohammed and succeeded with the king so that the Moors might not be listened to or esteemed, and in front of me he commanded their captain to immediately go from before him, which he did without any delay; he commanded them not to want clearance from him until he had been baptised, and that after he his baptism, then they might collect duties and carry on their trade, and as they had seen the king's intention to become a Christian, they did not dare contradict him further.

25. The afternoon of my arrival the king asked me: 'Antonio de Paiva, you told us that God had come to assume flesh in the womb of a virgin and had gone forth in the world: This is the strongest thing that serves in your favour. I beg you, if you know, to tell us in what manner.' And I answered him: 'If Your Highness were a person who in some instance might gainsay some part of what I will say to you in this matter, I would not do it for anything in the world, because I am no theologian nor have I the power to touch on the least matter of this holy mystery of the incarnation, for I am a simple man who for nineteen years has travelled in these parts as a soldier and in the service of the King our lord. But to give you some just reason to have faith to become a Christian, as a blind man who proceeds gropingly in order not to fall, I will tell you this. Your Highness will know that after the creation of the world Our Lord made man out of the earth in his image and likeness to possess the things in it, this man being called

Adam,. And only because the man could not enjoy the benefits of nature without a companion, without having anyone with whom to communicate and to impart the things which he had of himself to give, while the man was lying asleep the Lord God took from him by divine providence, from one of his two ribs, a woman, Eve by name, and she was perfect in the flesh in *mendoas*<sup>46</sup> as any other woman, and she was given to this man Adam as a companion, and Our Lord kept them in an earthly paradise, where they were free from sin.

26. ‘Through the intercession of Eve, Adam was tempted of the devil to eat of a fruit which had been forbidden by God, and, having forgotten the commandment of the Creator of the world because this woman and companion of his said that, by enjoying the fruit, he would perceive part of the secret of God and also evil and good, he partook of it. And eating of it, trespassing the aforementioned commandment, he heard a voice from above which said: ‘Adam, you have sinned!’ And because the tone of this word came full of terror, they, husband and woman, pierced through with dread, desired to hide themselves, and in fact they did this in the grove of trees; and the reason [was] because, before committing sin, they were pure, and the purity was holiness, but now that he had sinned, as I said, the devil exposed to him the shame of his sin. And because in the time of their good and virtuous life they had walked about naked, as soon as this same Adam sinned, upon hearing this voice they saw the shame of each other, and from the shame of the sin [they had] committed they hid themselves in a wood, covering their shame with its leaves. Consequently the Lord God, indignant for having been violated, sent and cast them both out of the paradise in which they had been and where they had been created. And both [of them] making lives of sterile penitence dressed in skins, for 150 years they did not approach one another. And because God commanded them to create seed and multiply, by uniting they had two sons, one called Abel and the other Cain, and afterward many others, 70 or so in number. The sacrifice Abel made to God was acceptable to him and rewarded while Cain’s was not because it was vain to him; it was lacking to him seeing that the brother had to do it, and, because of the envy which Cain had toward Abel, he killed [him]. Your Highness will know that from the seed of this Abel come the

Christians and the heathen race,<sup>47</sup> and from Cain comes this bad seed of Moors which you now see. And because you command that I decree the word in such an important thing, which the incarnation is, I say that what has been said was necessary for what I offer to you further.'

27. 'Your Highness will know that from that time forward that multiplication of the human race<sup>48</sup> thus coursed in such quantity that these people divided themselves in many parts of the world, races<sup>49</sup> exchanging with races, and they began to work such abominable actions and such frightful and enormous sins that, without any redemption, the human race<sup>50</sup> was lost and was going directly to hell, and they had been multiplying in these hellish acts since the creation of the world, for five thousand years, a little more or less. And the high and mighty God seeing that the work which he had done in creating man for his glory and heavenly happiness had come to nought, he determined to redeem those who were lost, which could not be without a great mystery. There was a reason that he did not do this forcefully: because he was the God of truth, and since, working by power and not by true justice, he might surpass this limit, showing himself not to be a God of truth, winning by force that which by this same justice already was not his but the devil's, whose souls these were because of their works. And also if he had wanted to excuse himself from the toil of his passion which he had to accept, and, with that might, divinity, and grandeur which were his, he had desired to come to earth to redeem these souls, it was not proper to do it for many reasons which I now cannot give to Your Highness nor know how to, but some I will offer to you for material appropriate to the stage where you are.'

28. 'Your Highness will know as I have already said that the whole world was full of sin, and in it there was no quiet place. And if God had thus wanted to come holy [and] in all his divinity to the world without its being through the ordained end of the incarnation, this could not be because God was immensely holy in all divinity, and he would have been impossible to comprehend by being seen or touched by sinful eyes if he had thus come. He ordained then this very great mystery, which was to come to the world as God and man [and] to

redeem it; he created a Virgin, who is the one we call Saint Mary, clean, pure, perfect, without taint of sin, in order to take it, through his high, very holy mystery, works, and position, namely, in her virginal womb by the grace of the Holy Spirit to come to take human flesh, as he did 1,544 years ago now. And his incarnation was announced by an angel of God with very great words according to this very holy work and mystery where he took human flesh, mixing and uniting his high and endlessly powerful divinity with the humanity of that flesh of that Virgin, without this same divinity and might lacking anything which had been, but in all being perfect and substantial. And it is thus fitting for the human race<sup>51</sup> to be more duty bound and indebted to him for the afflictions which in life and in death he had to receive for the salvation of all. It behoved him to suffer them as a man in the flesh and to endure them with extreme agonies and offences, for these were the price to free these souls who were lost, who could only obey and not refuse the devil. And thus begotten perfect and faultless, God is man, man is God. The Virgin bore him for the space of nine months like any other woman, without any pain, without any corruption; neither was her womb affected by pain or affliction, but through the divine mystery without occupation; then God and man exited from the virginal womb of this Virgin, who remained a Virgin as clean, as perfect, as pure and as faultless as at the time when, by a mystery, the Son of God was engendered in her.

29. 'Whence the Son of the living God, Jesus Christ Our Saviour, for the space of 32 years, a little more or less, did very great miracles by means of his divinity, such as raising the dead, healing the sick, and curing lepers and cripples; and, as concerns being human, his members bore witness in the flesh with eating and drinking and speaking, and making of the substance of these things so many and so lofty things, which are needless for me to say; because these, and [it is] the least [part] that I have said, are sufficient for Your Highness to believe it. Consequently, as I said, he offered himself to suffer for our salvation, concerning which the Jews, who were the people of Jerusalem, the city in which God had to suffer, had so great a portion of those bad people who did not confess him to be God, but they said that he was a deceiver, a sorcerer, and a fraud. And in this deceitful way they took



him prisoner and whipped, slapped, and insulted this most holy intellect who was ordained for the salvation of the lost and for us as well, the same being crucified as in this figure you will see (which I showed to him with all of the afflictions represented in a book). And after his death he descended to hell, conquering it by his power, and took away the holy fathers who were there. And the third day after dying he rose again and exited the closed tomb without opening it, glorified in body and soul; and after testifying of his resurrection to many people who saw him and knew him for the space of forty-odd days, at the end of this time he climbed a mountain called Tabor, from which he publicly ascended, with body and soul thus powerful, infinite, and divine, in the sight of all; and he went to glory, where he remains and whence he will come at the end of the last day of judgment, in the same form in which he ascended with his most holy wounds, to judge the living and the dead, rewarding the good with their own place in glory and the bad with perpetual punishment forever in hell.<sup>7</sup>

30. The king was overawed hearing these things and said that they might prepare for him, that he wanted to be baptised with all his people. I baptised him at the seventh hour of the day in the hall of his palace, which was all draped with palm branches, and the altar was adorned as well as was possible there, and the chiefs of the kingdom were at hand when this king received baptism. All were on their knees with their hands raised because the king received it thus, he wearing Portuguese dress: silk shirt and drawers, white velvet jerkin, red cap, and velvet slippers; I baptised him myself with my own hands in the manner which the holy mother Church commands, sprinkling water over him in a cross, and, requesting the name of the king our lord,<sup>52</sup> he called himself João. I baptised him, beginning the first bar of the cross ‘name of the Father,’ completing ‘name of the Son,’ and the other bar beginning and ending ‘name of the Holy Spirit,’ constantly pouring water evenly on top of him. With his own mouth three times he swore loudly in the hearing of all that he swore to die and live in that holy faith, and that he renounced his first custom because he knew it to be bad, and he would have only this [faith] because he knew it to be holy and true. And then at that instant 25 or 30 of the most powerful in his kingdom became Christians as also other people,

nobles and those of his household; and it would have been four in the afternoon when the king sat down to dinner.

31. When he had finished his dinner, I presented to him the king of Suppa's message about his brotherhood, neither more nor less, on condition that he would not agree to be his brother in arms in the act of wanting him to do harm unjustly, and in all other things which may be judged as truth, he would; and in this they both agreed as was later confirmed by ambassadors from one to the other.

32. The custom of this people was that, when someone died, they kept [the body] in the house for three months put into a large chest of wood after the manner of an elaborate sawn coffin,<sup>53</sup> and there they put all kinds of rich silk cloths and patolas<sup>54</sup> and also fine white cloth and gold according to the status which each one had, and as the estate of each one allowed. Their houses are very high up on great wooden supports. And they raise up this body thus in this elaborate wooden coffin and keep it there for this time span I said. They took a bamboo so long that it could freely reach the ground, hollow in the centre, and they put one end of it into the coffin and the other below in the ground. May Your Lordship believe that the bodies spoken of give off from themselves no harmful smell of putrefaction, but rather the flesh of the body is siphoned off through the bamboo in such a way that only the bones and nothing else remain. The reason appears to be the work of the humidity from the soil, which enters it via that bamboo, the bamboo here being totally decayed, and it preserves it before its being decayed, that none of its smell gets out, as I say above.

33. At the end of this time they place three large supports like horizontal masts in such a way that the coffin can come down to the ground, where it is put on a large wagon in which it goes to the place where, together also with the wealth which it carries, they place it under the ground. And when they want to put [it] down by means of those masts underneath, they will cover it with a grand cow head, according to the grandeur of the coffin, with horns of gold, all carved, and they cover it in many silk cloths accompanied by very great drumming.<sup>55</sup> Great feasts and amusements are held at the burial without any mourning; they eat and drink at this burial in the manner of the holiday feasts of Portugal.

34. After the king was a Christian, I rebuked him for that kind of ceremony, telling him what Christians did and what their funerals were like, and thus how, after the body was shrouded, each one was taken to a grave, and how a Christian's riches and estate which remained were divided between God, for the poor and the orphans, and his children, wife, and kin, and not as they did; that the devil had given them the order and custom so that his people could benefit neither God, who had given it to them, nor their own nor their kin, for everything went scattered under the ground, dissolved in the dust along with the body itself, without anything of the one or of the other to remain intact to be able to be seen except by Satan; and that [concerning] what Christians do, one such deed was the candle of the flame of eternal life, which candles they would carry in front, these being testimonies of the works of glory. All of this seemed good to the king and those who were with him, and together they approved it as a holy and good way, and beyond these things I told him others which they attributed great importance to.

35. They had this among themselves that the king did not take [another's] property without first paying the owner. Every man who slept with a married woman died for it, but with unmarried women and virgins there came no dispute of any sort or kind according to their pleasure.

36. A thief in the first [instance] repaid eleven for each one [that he had taken], and in the second [instance] lost his property, and in the third instance [received] a natural death;<sup>56</sup> and, if he was a person who had no property and no one to pay for him, he died for it [in the first instance]. And concerning a war which they would make, before its commencement they had to make it known to the party, and they had to set a certain day, and if, after the war was prepared, they retired to reassemble and one of the kings went to rest with his wife or people somewhere, in the law of truth his enemy could not enter his lands, and, if one did so, all of the others would gather together against him and destroy his land and property and person, and in this manner were they governed and thus they lived. Now it will be whatever the King our lord and Your Lordship will declare for this island because they call it the estate of the King of Portugal our lord.

37. What I administered to these kings concerning their becoming Christian has already been said. Our Lord wanted in his infinite goodness and mercy to give them the way of truth. And if I, mediator of this holy work, in what I have done might be considered and judged to have erred in some substance of the important words, it is attributed only to ignorance, for I worked according to my desire in God, and this I am certain of, and therefore Your Lordship might think well of these and all other faults in excusing and forgiving me.

38. The king Dom João held a convocation and assembly of his leading men in a village of his father-in-law, which village is called Maguntor,<sup>57</sup> and this was to publicly obtain pardon from the lords who, because their lands were far away, had not been summoned, which the king commanded them to say to him in a loud voice, and that, notwithstanding this, everyone had much reason to thank him anew for the good path which everyone was taking in accepting Christianity, which he had already received. To this convocation came a noble, a tutor of the king's elder son, who was a tall man, not stout, and whose hair curled in the manner of waves, who had been lord of a city which they called Pacu,<sup>58</sup> which the king took by force, where this tutor of the king's aforementioned son remained in subjection with the loss of his wife and children and property, and he was recompensed in other goods by another marriage which he made, he being called *Sidomre*.<sup>59</sup> And because the man who was making a speech, who had taken the name of Simão Botelho,<sup>60</sup> exceeded propriety in speaking and said in front of the king: 'Lord, because you have added so many lands to those which you inherited from your father, and each day God gives you new things for the good of your people, will there be anyone who may not greatly surrender to Your Highness this mercy, it being so great for everyone?' And because in this he brought to mind the city which the king had destroyed, which had belonged to the aforementioned tutor of his son, this tutor without any respect grabbed a fan which this Christian had in his hand, with which he covered his mouth, and he snatched a golden keris from his sash, and he gave this fan two or three stabs, and immediately there was a crowd with him of around 100 people, his kin. But because this had been done to him [Simão Botelho] to one side of the king, I bowed myself

and touched the king on the leg, who looked at me with great meekness, and I in his language informed him what had happened. In the meantime, the tutor of his son had had time to disappear, but this availed him little because, without being moved, the king said the following words: 'Bring his head before me!' May Your Lordship believe that in that moment, without any delay, but in the time it might take to say two Creeds, the head came there completely whole; and he commanded that it be cast down in an open field with a proclamation that no one should dare to bury him; and the person who might mourn for him would die for this. And the man who gave the speech came to Malacca in 1544 and took Father Vicente Viegas,<sup>61</sup> who is there now.

39. The son of the king, as soon as he saw his dead tutor, waited for his father to turn his head in order to flee. And when the king again turned his glance to the place where they had been and asked for him, they told the king that he had gone. Then before long he ordered [him] as a penalty to be exiled to a place, which is like in Galicia and which is called Mandar.<sup>62</sup> And the son, having taken counsel, then came dressed in mourning and, casting himself at his feet, the king [no longer] wished it. The king ordered him to be confined in Borneo,<sup>63</sup> and, because of good apologies, he was released and pardoned from there after ten days.

*Brett Baker is completing a PhD in the Division of Pacific and Asian History, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University. His email address is: [brett.baker@anu.edu.au](mailto:brett.baker@anu.edu.au)*

## **Notes**

1. Jacobs 1966.
2. Jacobs (1966:256–7) argues for this as the date of composition.
3. Paiva is here referring to the whole area he visited, as the use of the term in the next paragraph shows. I have maintained the spelling Macassar [*Macasar* in the Portuguese] to distinguish this use from Makassar, for the modern city, and Makasar, for the cultural and linguistic group.

4. See note 16 below.
5. See note 3 above.
6. Ruy Vaz Pereira was captain of Malacca 1542–4. He died in May.
7. 255km.
8. 1110km.
9. Contemporary Portuguese maps make it clear that Paiva means 1 degree North to 6 degrees South latitude. See the two examples of such maps in Pelras 1977:opp. 243.
10. 1542, according to a version of the information in Italian. See Jacobs 1966:260–1, 283.
11. The word *casado* used here indicates a Portuguese man married to an indigenous woman.
12. *Sião* in the Portuguese. This is the small realm of Siang, around the modern town of Pangkajene on the west coast of Sulawesi. There has been considerable archaeological work in the area (Ali Fadillah and Irfan Mahmud 2000). Campbell Macknight notes that a former branch of the Pangkajene River once gave much easier access from the coast to the locality of Kampungsiang — as marked on modern maps — than is now the case.
13. Durate appears on early maps on the west coast of Sulawesi, just north of the equator. Its identification has been much discussed (Pelras 1977:237–8). Campbell Macknight suggests an identification of ‘the land of sandalwood’ with the small realm of Sendana, about 30km north of Majene. The regular Malay word for sandalwood is *cendana* (with corrupt forms in Makasar). The confusion — if it is a confusion — between Sendana and *cendana* could have been made by the Portuguese themselves, since they would have known the Malay word from experience in Malacca. This location fits this and later references to the ‘land of sandalwood’, but it does not explain the name Durate.
14. 888km.
15. This is the regular Indonesian form of the name. The Portuguese form is *Supa*. In Bugis, there is a final glottal stop, Suppa’. The name applies to a small realm to the north of Parepare Bay.
16. This comparison may suggest that Paiva had come from Malacca by the normal route along the east coast of Sumatra and the north coast of Java.
17. Approximately 160 litres or 227 kilograms.
18. A silver coin worth 5 or 6 tangas or 360 reis.
19. A Portuguese silver coin worth roughly the same as a cruzado.
20. The word used here, *geração*, derives from *gerar*, ‘to beget,’ and suggests shared genealogical descent.

21. Despite the lack of quotation marks, Paiva here switches into direct speech for the rest of the paragraph.
22. *Geração*.
23. This has to be a mistake. The distance from Suppa to Siang is only 100km, not the 278km indicated here.
24. Two years earlier.
25. The captain of Malacca.
26. Paiva uses the Malay word in the form *paró*.
27. See note 12 above.
28. That is, in Makasar. Paiva was presumably acquainted with this from his previous visit. He also refers below in section 16 to his fluency in the language.
29. Cf. Matthew 22:35–40.
30. 1) feeding the hungry, 2) giving drink to the thirsty, 3) clothing the naked, 4) sheltering the homeless, 5) visiting the sick, 6) ransoming the captive, 7) burying the dead, 8) instructing the ignorant, 9) counselling the doubtful, 10) admonishing sinners, 11) bearing wrongs patiently, 12) forgiving offences willingly, 13) comforting the afflicted, and 14) praying for the living and the dead.
31. That is, wisdom.
32. Diogo de Borba, an orator in the Goa Cathedral.
33. This appears to be the earliest Western reference to the South Sulawesi bissu. There is now an extensive literature on them.
34. The word used here is *linbagem*, indicating lineage or race.
35. Pelras (1977:244) identifies this as the village of Bunnea, in Bungoro, just north of Siang.
36. Again Pelras (1977:244) notes the village of Matojeng, just east of Siang. The Portuguese original is *Matugym*, from which Jacobs deduces its approximate pronunciation and makes the link to the Makasar adjective *tojeng*, meaning true.
37. *Geração*.
38. This was Jorge de Alvarenga according to the version of the information in Italian. See Jacobs 1966:294, 304.
39. Fourth son of King Manuel I.
40. This distance is not only wrong but also disagrees with the incorrect distance of 50 leagues given above. The actual distance is about 100km or 18 leagues.
41. Pelras (1977:244) discusses possible identifications of this place name in the Siang area.
42. Approximately 40km.

43. Gowa is the name of what became the major Makasar state. [There is no link between the names of Gowa in Sulawesi and Goa in India.] The easiest interpretation of the passage is that Paiva anchored off the mouth of the Jeneberang River where the ruler of Gowa was establishing a trading base after capturing the settlement of 'Garassi'. It was probably 'Garassi' which 'formerly had belonged to a vassal of the king of Siang.' Subsequently the fortress of Somba Opu was developed at the mouth of the river and the ruler moved there from the older centre of Kale Gowa, up the river. The indigenous court chronicle of Gowa also records that during the reign of Tumapa'risi' Kallonna (c. 1511–46) the Portuguese arrived for the first time. Bulbeck (1992:123–5) discusses this passage and the use and misuse of it by various historians. Bulbeck translates the passage to imply that the port ['Garassi'] had been captured by the ruler of Siang.
44. Three Malay trading ports. Ujung Tanah was located at the tip of the Malay Peninsula whilst Pahang and Patani were on the peninsula's east coast.
45. This is an important reference to the presence of Malay Muslims in South Sulawesi prior to the Portuguese capture of Malacca in 1511.
46. A suitable translation for this word is unclear.
47. The word used here, *género*, is the same as the English word genus and can indicate species, race, or variety.
48. *Género*.
49. *Gerações*, the plural of *geração*.
50. *Linbagem*.
51. *Género*.
52. John III, king of Portugal, 1521–57.
53. The word used here is not 'coffin' but *moimento*, indicating a mausoleum or elaborate funerary monument. Its application in describing a wooden chest made to hold a corpse suggests an elaborate, richly ornamented coffin.
54. Brightly coloured silk cloths from India. The original Portuguese has the word *patolas*.
55. The word *tamgeres* used here suggests music produced by some form of percussion instruments, and in the Makasar cultural context, drumming seems the most likely.
56. A phrase which, at the time, could include execution.
57. Pelras (1977:244) identifies this as the outlying limestone hill known as Ma'duntu' or Ma'runtu', just north of Siang.
58. By reading this as *Paçu*, Pelras (1977:244) identifies the place as Pasuik, a village just to the northeast of Siang.



59. The meaning of this name is not clear. It is suspiciously similar to *Sedemre* or *Sedemra*, which is the Portuguese rendition of Sidenreng in Pinto's letter of 1548, but from the details of Sidenreng's importance given by Pinto it is hard to believe that the tutor was the ruler of Sidenreng. See Schurhammer 1980:628.
60. Presumably this was one of the court notables who had taken this name at his baptism as described in section 30 above. Simão Botelho was a leading figure in Malacca.
61. Vicente Viegas, a secular priest, spent three years (1545–8) in South Sulawesi. For more information, see [Pinto] 1887 and Wicki 1950:419–23.
62. A region on the west coast of Sulawesi, north from Parepare to about 3 degrees South of the equator. It is the area referred to in section 2 above as 'the land of sandalwood'.
- 63 See note 35.

## References

- Ali Fadillah and Irfan Mahmud 2000. *Kerajaan Siang Kuma: tutur, teks dan tapak arkeologi*. Balai Arkeologi, Makassar.
- Bulbeck, F.D. 1992. A tale of two kingdoms: the historical archaeology and Gowa and Tallok, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. PhD thesis, Australian National University, Canberra.
- Jacobs, H. 1966. The First Locally Demonstrable Christianity in Celebes, 1544: Unpublished Document, *Studia* 17 (April): 251–305.
- Pelras, C. 1977. Les premières données occidentales concernant Célèbes-Sud, *Bijdragen to de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 133: 227–60
- [Pinto, M.] 1887. 'Emmanuelis Pinto ad Episcopum Goanum.' *Selectae Indiarum Epistolae*. Typographia a Ss. Conceptione, Florence, 1887: 41-5.
- Schurhammer, G. 1980. *Francis Xavier: his life and times*. vol. 3. trans. M.J. Costelloe. Jesuit Historical Institute, Rome.
- Wicki, J. 1950. *Documenta Indica II (1550–1553)* [Monumenta Missionum Societatis Iesu vol. V, Missiones orientales], Monumenta Historica Soc. Iesu, Romae.