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St. Francis Xavier's Letters From China (1552)

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A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francisco". The signature is flanked by decorative, scribbled lines on both sides.

The final maritime voyage of Francis Xavier from the Straits of Singapore to the small Chinese island of Sanchoão¹ was described in his memoirs as a sacred time in which several “prodigies” occurred. These important discourses were a religious response to the disappointments and opposition that Xavier had experienced in Malacca,² as well as an open gate for his posthumous canonisation.

Leaving Singapore, the vessel was becalmed for two weeks. The supply of fresh water began to dwindle, and all five hundred passengers were frightened and experienced pain and suffering. Several small boats were sent out in search of some water, but all returned unsuccessful. The captain and the crew, including several servants of Dom Álvaro de Ataíde da Gama, were hostile to Francis and claimed ironically that they had the “Holy Father” on board whose miracles were famous throughout all of the Portuguese colonial enclaves in Asia. They besought Xavier to help them find a safe way to their destination. Immediately, the Jesuit placed a crucifix before the gathered crowd and suggested that they should faithfully kneel and sing the saint’s litanies. Francis had a boat lowered and entered it with a child, who was invited to drink some water from the sea. It was salty, but Francis bade him to try again: now the water was completely sweet. Then, Xavier ordered the crew to fill all the ship’s barrels with sea water, but when they tasted it, it was still salty. The Jesuit blessed the water with the sign of the holy cross, and the sea water became sweeter and fresher than the water of Bangan, a famous spring in Goa, the capital of the Portuguese *Estado da Índia*.³ This miracle is precisely one of those selected from St. Francis’ canonisation process by the Roman Rota auditors as

being beyond all doubt. Several historical testimonies certified this miracle, such as that of João Botelho, aged eighty-five when he was examined for the canonisation process, since he had been one of those who drew the water from the sea and tasted it after Francis’ blessing, finding it the sweetest water that he had ever drunk.⁴

Pursuing the voyage to Sanchoão, another astonishing prodigy happened. A five-year-old Muslim child fell overboard. The ship was sailing so fast with the wind behind it that it was impossible to stop the vessel and rescue the child. In deep despair for three days, the grieving father found Xavier on the deck, unaware of the fatal incident. The Jesuit asked the Muslim whether he would believe in the faith of Jesus Christ if his child could be found. The man swore that he would, and after a few hours he met his child again, alive and well.⁵ The Muslim, the child and all his family were baptized. The men received the new name of Francisco, and the mother and a female slave were both renamed Francisca. After this prodigious miracle, the Jesuit was able to convert sixty other Muslims and to find a safe and fast maritime route to Sanchoão.⁶

The small island of Sanchoão is usually described by Portuguese 16th century chronicles and sources as almost wild, covered with brush, haunted by tigers, and “desert”.⁷ As the Portuguese merchant vessels were not allowed into Canton, the little island was a meeting point for the Portuguese and the junks of Chinese traders. The Portuguese were not authorized to settle on the island, thus remaining only a few months to purchase luxurious Chinese goods. The Portuguese chronicles describe life on the island not only as jovial,

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but even licentious, with money abounding, profits plentiful, daily gaming⁸ and drinking, while religion was almost forgotten. The merchants received Francis with prudence and built for him a provisional chapel with a hut attached to it. Here he began celebrating mass daily and administered the sacraments, spending the rest of his time setting frequent quarrels between the Portuguese traders and sailors.

Xavier arrived at Sanchoão in the last days of August 1552. After a few short weeks, the Jesuit fell ill from a fever for a fortnight. He recovered. Between October 21 and November 13 the Jesuit dictated in Portuguese his last eight letters which can be consulted in original or copied documents still preserved. Then, Francis was struck again by a dangerous fever on Sunday, November 20, after celebrating mass. The Chinese merchant who had promised to take the Jesuit with him to Canton did not appear. Francis was weak, confused, and uncertain of his next step. Xavier's last letters stress his solitude and the difficulties of entering the impenetrable Chinese mainland: should he wait for the following year's trading season or go immediately to Siam, where he had heard that the local king was preparing an embassy to China? One week after his illness had begun, Xavier became delirious, wondering about his final goal of visiting China to convert that great empire to Christianity. At last, on Friday, December 2, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, according to the testimony of his servant António in several hagiographic chronicles, Xavier fixed his gaze upon his crucifix and in tears repeated the Latin words: "*In te Domine speravi, non confundar in aeternum*".⁹ The Jesuit was accompanied only by his Chinese servant António and his *Canarin* companion Cristóvão. The corpse remained unburied until the Sunday after his death. The Portuguese traders in Sanchoão didn't show any particular concern at the death of Xavier, and he was buried almost alone. No one accompanied the Jesuit to the graveyard except António, the pilot Francisco de Aguiar and two mulattos who carried the coffin.

The final eight letters of Francis Xavier published here are a central testimony to this sad and almost forgotten end.¹⁰ In these Jesuit letters there is no trace of the "prodigies" wrought by the powerful performer of miracles and that would be used as the justification for the religious rights of Portuguese Patronage in the

East. Instead, we find a contradictory writing dealing with the problems of the small Jesuit community in the Portuguese colonial enclaves in Asia, namely in Malacca and Cochin, and the difficult religious mission of entering China clandestinely. At the same time, these letters are also full of recriminations against the powerful sea captain of Malacca, Álvaro de Ataíde da Gama, with whom Xavier had one of his most important political confrontations. In these final letters, Xavier demands of the Jesuits, of the bishop and the vicar in Goa, a strong mobilisation of the Church against the captain, urging his social isolation and religious excommunication. His last letters are largely concerned with this controversial dispute, normally presented as an ethical and courageous denouncement of the Portuguese greed and corruption that was dominant in those Far Eastern colonial enclaves. Much more than an exemplary moral battle between the religious projects of Xavier and the evil Portuguese commander of Malacca, this confrontation of perspectives of power helps us understand that the Portuguese empire in Asia was a complex collection of several enclaves and private trade enterprises that tended not to be built on the dominant orthodox Catholic ideas and programmes, unlike the exceptional case of Goa. Xavier's religious project to convert China was a huge embarrassment for the laborious ties negotiated between Portuguese traders and South Chinese merchants. The inflexible moral preaching of the Jesuit along with his idea of clandestine entry into Canton were at this time a real threat to these successful commercial relations, and even Xavier in his last months of life at the frenetic Portuguese-Chinese Sanchoão fair, had a clear understanding of the disruptive nature of his presence. In one of his last letters, sent to his friend and protector Diogo Pereira, the Jesuit clearly acknowledges the extensive social diversity and cultural autonomy of the commerce that dominated Portuguese and Chinese relations in the 16th century, and which Xavier was unable to comprehend and to which he was unable to adapt his religious and moral preaching: "You will receive information from those who are able to give it of the state and conditions of trade, and of the actual and future results that commerce may offer. I, who am unlearned in these matters, deem it more prudent to say nothing."

THE SPIRITUAL CONQUEST OF THE FAR EAST. FROM XAVIER TO VALIGNANO

1. LETTER TO FRANCISCO PÉREZ, MALACCA¹¹

21 October 1552 – Sanchoão

Jesus.

Francisco Pérez:¹²

I command you in virtue of holy obedience, as soon as you have read this letter, to leave Malacca and get ready as soon as possible to embark for India in one of the vessels that will sail by the next monsoon. If this letter reaches you after the ships to India have left, go by the vessel that sails by Coromandel to Cochin with João Bravo¹³ and Rodrigues,¹⁴ where you must remain, employing yourself in preaching, confessing, and teaching the catechism, as you did at Malacca, observing the order and method that I recommended and put down on paper when I left Malacca for Japan. If the difference of place demands a change, follow the rule that I gave in writing to António Herédia,¹⁵ whom you are to succeed in the care and government of the college at Cochin. At the same time I order Herédia himself, or any other father who since my departure may for any cause have been placed at the head of the house at Cochin, to go to Goa as soon as he has seen this letter, which you will show him, and there hold himself in readiness until he be sent to Japan. The day you enter the college of Cochin, the Superior will give up his authority, and you must take his place, governing the house with the powers of rector, depending, however, to the degree I have prescribed on the rector of the College of St. Paul at Goa. At Cochin, in accordance with the institute of the Society, and with the talents that have been given you, you will employ your whole strength in procuring the glory of our Lord God, and in helping both our brothers and externs to advance in the ways of salvation and perfection. And although I am convinced that you will perform these things or any others greater and more in number without hesitation and at the mere sign of my will, still in order to add to your merits, I make use of the authority with which I am invested and command you and Herédia also, or whoever may be rector of the house at Cochin, in the name of obedience to do all that I have said in this letter. The rector will immediately resign the government of the house and proceed to Goa by the first opportunity, and you will take his place. You will have under your authority not only all our brothers, both priests and laymen who are now at Cochin, but those also who may come there at any

time, whatever may be their rank and station and dignity, with the exception of any one whom the rector of Goa from certain causes may perhaps desire to be exempt from your authority. And let all know that I command this in virtue of obedience. Do not you then fail to leave Malacca at once and to go and take the government of the college at Cochin, both of which things I order you to do.

Written in China, port of Sanchoão, 21 October 1552.

Francis

2. LETTER TO FRANCISCO PÉREZ, MALACCA¹⁶

22 October 1552 – Sanchoão

May the grace and love of Jesus Christ our Lord always help and favour us! Amen.

By the mercy and piety of God we have reached the port of Sanchoão, thirty leagues from Canton.¹⁷ On disembarking I had a hut made, in which I offered the holy sacrifice every day until I fell ill. I suffered all together for a fortnight from the fever, and now by God's goodness I am restored to health. I do not want for holy occupations. I hear confessions, appease quarrels, and do other things of that sort. A great number of Chinese merchants from Canton come to this island for the sake of commerce, and the Portuguese have often dealt with them diligently to procure my passage to Canton, but they have all flatly refused, declaring that it would be at great risk to their lives and property if the governor of that town should hear of it, and it was impossible to persuade them to receive us on board their junks.

However, doubtless by God's arrangement, we have met with an honest Canton merchant who has come to an agreement with me for 200 gold pieces. He promises to take us in a little vessel that is to carry no one else but his own sons and a few faithful slaves, so that if the governor of the town ever gets to hear of the affair, he will not be able to find out from the crew who it was that took us to Canton. He has also promised that we shall be in his house for three or four days with our books and baggage, and then very early one morning he is to take us to the gate of the town and put us on the road leading to the government house. I shall go straight to the governor, telling him that I am come to announce the divine and heavenly law to the emperor of China, and then I shall produce the letters of the bishop of Goa

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addressed to that monarch. All the Chinese merchants are always glad to see us and say they will be very glad if the matter is accomplished.

I am aware, as all tell me, of the twofold danger of this enterprise. It is possible that the Chinese merchant, after receiving the gold, may leave us in a desert island or throw us into the sea to conceal his crime; and again, if we reach Canton, the governor may put us to all kinds of unheard-of tortures, or make slaves of us for life. It is a capital crime for a foreigner to enter any part of China without a passport, but there are other dangers besides, greater and more unknown, all of which I cannot enumerate to you, but I will mention a few of them.

The first, then, is mistrust of God's goodness and providence, especially when I have only come to this country in obedience to God and from pure love of him to declare to the Chinese nation the most holy law of God, and to preach to them his only son Jesus Christ, the author of our salvation. Since he in his mercy has given us this mind, to doubt of his help and protection in the midst of the dangers that are before us would be a greater and more real danger than any that could be brought upon us by his enemies. For neither the devils nor their satellites and servants can hurt us without the permission of almighty God. If God is our defender, how easily will he dispel all perils! And besides, we shall follow the precept of the Lord Jesus "The man who loves his life shall lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life,"¹⁸ words that are in accordance with those other words of Jesus Christ, "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."¹⁹ As, then, we see that these spiritual dangers are more serious and more certain than any perils of the body, we prefer to face those of this life rather than incur everlasting death. In truth we have resolved and are positively determined to enter China. May God only prosper our footsteps for the spreading of his faith, and then let the devils and their army do their worst! I care not for them. "If God is for us, who can be against us?"²⁰

I hope the ships that are sailing soon for India will bring you letters from me, announcing my entry into the city of Canton. My companions Álvaro Ferreira²¹ and António China²² are perpetually sick. António, who I brought here to act as my interpreter, has, I find, forgotten his native tongue; but I have found

another, Pedro Lopes, who was a captive of António Lopes Bobadilha,²³ dead in the Malacca siege, well acquainted not only with Portuguese but also with the Chinese language, who has offered of his own accord to accompany me in my voyage. May God reward him for it in this life and after death! I beg you to pray that God will keep him firm in his intention and purpose.

All the good Chinese who know us take pleasure in our company and earnestly desire that we may penetrate into China. They have already got an idea that the books which they see us carrying everywhere contain better doctrine than theirs, and though it is possible that it may only be from their love of novelty, they would like to see us enter their country. Notwithstanding, as I told you, these Chinese refuse altogether to take us there themselves. I am daily expecting the merchant with whom I made the agreement. God grant that he may not fail me! Should that misfortune happen, I know not what I should do, whether I shall return to India or go to Siam to join the embassy that the king of Siam is said to be shortly about to send to the emperor of China. I will let you know what we shall do by a ship that sails for Malacca after a few days. May Jesus Christ our Lord grant us his help and guidance that we may one day come to the possession of the glory of heaven.

The least of your brothers in Jesus Christ,
Island of Sanchoão, 22 October 1552.
Francis

3. LETTER TO DIOGO PEREIRA, MALACCA²⁴ 22 October 1552 – Sanchoão

God, in his most bountiful mercy, has brought us and your ship safely into this port of Sanchoão. You will receive information from those who are able to give it of the state and conditions of trade, and of the actual and future results that commerce may offer. I, who am unlearned in these matters, deem it more prudent to say nothing; I will only write to you concerning my own affairs. I am daily expecting a merchant who has undertaken to take me to Canton. I have agreed to give him as his price twenty *picos* of pepper.²⁵ May this affair succeed, as I hope it will, for the service and greater glory of our Lord God!

If there is one man in the whole of this undertaking who deserves reward from divine providence, it is undoubtedly you; and you will have

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the whole credit of it. With the utmost generosity, you have advanced the expenses for my journey and that of my companions as far as this island, as well as the price to be paid, as I said, for my conveyance to the Chinese continent and the province of Canton. Tomás Escander,²⁶ your agent, accomplishes faithfully your orders and gives me all I ask. May God reward him for his great charity and for the continual acts of kindness that he performs on all possible occasions!

The Chinese merchant whom I expect to conduct me to the territory of Canton is well known to Manuel de Chaves,²⁷ having kept him at his own house at Canton for several days when he escaped from prison. This makes me feel confident that he will not be unfaithful to his word; and I have, moreover, discovered, in my dealings with him in this port of Sanchoão, that he thinks a good deal of the 120 measures of pepper, as I said. I hope, through means of Manuel de Chaves (whom I expected to find at liberty in Canton and preparing to return to India), to write to you at length about the issue of the affair of our passage and the reception I meet with at Canton.

If (which God forbid!) this Chinese merchant were not to keep his word, and no means remained of going this year to the continent of China, I am undecided what to do. I am not certain whether I should go back to India or to the king of Siam, who, they tell me, is preparing a solemn embassy to the Chinese emperor, and possibly I might find some place or other in its train. If I return to India, I see no hope of success as long as Álvaro da Gama²⁸ rules at Malacca. We would obtain nothing just or favourable there, and nothing would go well with regard to the expedition to China unless God, who is all powerful, does, by his supreme might, something that we do not at all expect. I do not write my inmost thoughts on this subject; I only say one word: that I fear very much that God will punish Dom Álvaro more severely than he dreams of, if indeed his punishment has not already begun.

I wrote to you a long letter from the Straits of Singapore, and I feel confident that my letter has reached you safely, for I gave it into the hands of Manuel de Fonseca, a servant of António Pegado,²⁹ who is very trustworthy. I have nothing further, then, to say touching my affairs except that I have just recovered from an attack of fever that had lasted a fortnight. If the voyage to China comes about, you

will receive ample news by my letters, which I shall send from Canton by Manuel de Chaves with others full of particulars for the king. If circumstances were to hinder me from going on this voyage, Diego Vaz of Aragón³⁰ offers kindly to take me with him; he proposes going to Siam, and he has just bought a Chinese junk for the purpose. I am inclined to his plan because, by occasion of the Siamese embassy, I think I see that access to China and Canton is possible, and from thence I might write to you by Manuel de Chaves. This idea pleases me so much that I almost lean toward the voyage to Siam. I beg you, therefore, if you find a favourable opportunity for sending letters to Siam, to take the trouble to do so and let me know what you have resolved to do since I left, and in what state your affairs are—whether your embassy seems likely to come off at least next year, for then I would wait for you at Conai³¹ or in some other port belonging to Canton. May God deign to grant it! With what delight we should embrace at finding one another on the soil of China, the object of our most earnest desires! If God wills otherwise, and if we are not to meet again in this life, may he, the most loving Lord of us and of the whole world, deign in his infinite mercy to allow us to meet someday in the glory of his paradise, where we shall be forever happy together.

Written in Sanchoão, 22 October 1552.

Francisco de Villa³² renders you all possible service on board ship. I ought to testify to his deep gratitude toward you. He declares publicly that he owes his estate and fortune to you, and that he is indebted to you for the bread that he has to eat. He will return to you with Manuel de Chaves and will beg to be excused for having come hither without having had your leave. If there is a fault in the matter, it must be imputed to me. Once more, farewell.

Your true friend from his soul,
Francis

4. LETTER TO FATHER GASPAR BARZEO, GOA³³
25 October 1552 – Sanchoão

Jesus.

May the grace and love of Jesus Christ our Lord always help and favour us! Amen.

I do not know whether it was from Malacca or from the Straits of Singapore that I wrote to tell you

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what had happened to me. God has brought us safe and sound to Sanchoão, a Chinese island about 120 miles from Canton. Here I am in daily expectation of a Chinese merchant with whom (in consequence of severe edicts forbidding the entrance of a foreigner without a government passport) I have agreed for 200 *cruzados*³⁴ to be taken to Canton. May God permit this plan to come about! I have heard that the emperor of China has been sending persons into different countries to learn their manners, institutions and laws, so there is reason to hope (and this the Chinese themselves tell me) that the king will not despise the Christian religion or reject it at once. If God grants me life and deigns to make use of us for his work, I will let you know about it. For the present, I charge you to watch over your soul, for in truth if you do not, I can have no hope of you.

Remember to read again and again and observe very strictly the rules that I left with you, especially those as to self humiliation, in which I recommended you to exercise yourself every day. Fear above all things lest, in looking around on all that God is pleased to do by means of you and our brothers, you should learn to forget your own soul. My great love for you all makes me wish very much that you would consider very seriously within yourselves how many things, through your fault, God has not done. I would rather see you occupied with this thought than with that of the great works of which you are the instrument. The first thought would cause you to feel shame and humility by making you sensible of your imperfections and miseries; the latter might be the means of your running into the danger of pride and presumption, trusting in good deeds with which you have nothing to do, and in wonders of grace that are the work of God alone. Pray consider how many persons this pernicious error has led into danger, and how fatal it would be to the whole Society if such a contagion should ever spread in it.

I also charge you to receive very few subjects into the Society. Choose those who are capable of devoting themselves to literary studies or of attending to the work of the house. I assure you it would be better to buy slaves-yes, slaves-for domestic employments than to admit into the Society persons unfit for it. If any of those whom I have sent away are at Goa, be sure not to receive them back on any pretence, for they are not suited to our institute. If any one of them should

completely reform his life and give sufficient proof of it by public penances, voluntarily accepted and long persevered in, so as to have made in your judgment full satisfaction, you may send him to Portugal to the Superior of the Society there, with a recommendation from you, for I am satisfied that none of these persons are fitted to India.

And should any member of the Society, priest or layman, be guilty of any serious fault that has given scandal to others, send him away instantly, and do not allow yourself to be persuaded by any one to receive him back unless, perchance, his sense of guilt, his repentance and voluntary penance have been such as to save him from this calamity. Otherwise, on no account receive him; not if the viceroy and the whole of India were to ask you to do so. I remind you also to send to the Moluccas and Japan none but well-tried brothers of great virtue and experience; these are the kind of workmen wanted in these countries.

Commend me very much to all the fathers and brothers of our Society and to all our friends. Greet the Dominican and Franciscan fathers from me, and beg them not to cease to intercede for me with God in their prayers and holy sacrifices.

May God direct us continually and call us some day to the enjoyment of his everlasting bliss in Heaven!

The least of your brothers in Jesus Christ,

From this port of Sanchoão in China, 25 October 1552.

Francis

5. LETTER TO FRANCISCO PÉREZ, MALACCA³⁵

12 November 1552 – Sanchoão

Francisco Pérez, father of the Society of Jesus:

I command you in virtue of holy obedience to leave for Cochin in the vessels of this year and to take with you João Bravo and Bernardo³⁶ if you agree. The day you enter the college at Cochin you must take the house. Remember to always do our spiritual exercises and to preach and practice the works of mercy as you did in Malacca following the written rules that I gave to António Herédia in Cochin. In virtue of the holy obedience with which I am invested, I command father António Herédia, or whoever may be rector of the house at Cochin, all and everyone reaching the college, to obey you. And that father António Herédia must go immediately to Goa, or any other in his position at

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the college, and there hold himself in readiness until he be sent to Japan or another place commanded by father Gaspar, rector of the college. Do not fail you, Francisco Pérez, to leave from Malacca to Cochin at once, and to take the government of the college; and you, António Herédia, or any other in the college, must not doubt of this order in virtue of obedience that I signed here.

Written in Sanchoão, 12 November 1552.

Francis

6. LETTER TO FRANCISCO PÉREZ, MALACCA³⁷
12 November 1552 – Sanchoão

May the grace and love of Jesus Christ our Lord always help and favour us! Amen.

As Gaspar Mendes³⁸ ship was weighing anchor, I gave Francisco Sanches,³⁹ one of the passengers, a letter for you, which I hope has reached you; and I beg you to take to heart the orders that it contains and which I here repeat, and to give all heed and attention to carry them out. I have been expecting for a week the merchant who is to take me secretly to the city of Canton. I have the fullest confidence in his return, unless some hindrance should occur beyond the power of man to overcome, and I rely on the great value of the reward that I have promised him, and which he highly appreciates himself; for the quantity of pepper that I have agreed to have delivered to him, if he conveys me safe and sound to Canton, will easily obtain for him a profit of more than 350 gold pieces of our money. I have to thank my very dear friend Diogo Pereira for the means of buying my passage to China at so high a price, and he has of his own accord and with great generosity placed at my disposal this large quantity of very valuable merchandise. May God reward him as I cannot for I shall owe him a debt I can never repay all my life! I beg you all to use your most zealous endeavours to render signal services to this excellent man in every part of India where it is possible to serve, support or assist him, whenever any of you may have the opportunity; to embrace eagerly every means of doing him kindness, without sparing your utmost pains. The most earnest efforts of our united body will never be enough to repay only this last sacrifice that he has made at so great a cost to himself, one so beneficial to the propagation of our holy faith, in order to

introduce us into the empire of China, hitherto impenetrably closed against the Gospel. By this means the Society of Jesus will obtain the object of all its constant prayers—the power of spreading the kingdom of Jesus Christ and bringing into the Church the many nations of that immense empire; and as results are rightly attributed to their origin, it will really owe all these blessings to the generosity of one single man, Diogo Pereira, who out of his own fortune has provided the funds so necessary for my voyage—that is to say, for the beginning of this great work.

Pray inquire of him whether he has hopes of surmounting the obstacles in the way of this embassy and if he is coming to Canton next year. I desire this as greatly as I expect it little. God grant that my small hopes may be contradicted by a more fortunate issue than I look for! God forgive the man who is the cause of so great a misfortune! I greatly fear that before long a terrible vengeance from the God he has offended will overtake him, and it may be that he is even now about to experience its first effects. I am writing to Pereira himself so that if he obtains a more favourable result than I dare hope for, he may be good enough, on sailing for China, to bring with him some of our Society whom Father Gaspar⁴⁰ will send to him from Goa if he has notice given him some time beforehand. I have told him this by letter. But if, as I think most likely, Pereira despairing of the success of his mission, should pass by Malacca and direct his course toward Sunda, then it will no longer be necessary for the priest who would have gone with him to China to sail from Goa to Malacca in May. You should give notice of this, as I have told you in good time, to Father Gaspar, the rector of the college at Goa; and I wish you to be clearly informed of Pereira's intentions before your departure to Malacca. I have dismissed Ferreira from the Society as he was not fitted for it. When, therefore, you arrive at Cochin and have taken the management of the college, I command you in virtue of obedience, not to receive him into the house. Do all you can to urge him to enter the Franciscan or Dominican Order, and if you succeed, ask those fathers to grant him admission. Write also to Father Gaspar Barzeo at Goa saying that by virtue of my authority I absolutely forbid his receiving Ferreira into the community or under the college roof; only let him do all he can to help him as to his admission into the Order of St. Francis or St. Dominic.

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St. Francis Xavier saved from impending shipwreck on his voyage to China. Oil on canvas by André Reinoso (17th century). Sacristy of the Church of São Roque, Holy House of Mercy in Lisbon. Photograph by Júlio Marques.

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If by God's grace I am able to reach Canton, I will do all in my power that you may hear of it from me next year by letters that I will send to you in India, which I will dispatch, if possible, so as to catch the vessel sailing to Coromandel. I shall use for this Pereira's ship on its return to Malacca; I only pray it may reach Malacca in time. If all this can be successfully arranged, you will be able to hear at Cochin during March of my arrival at Canton. With this view, it may be well, when you leave Malacca, to ask Vicente Viegas⁴¹ to be good enough, as soon as he hears that Pereira's vessel has returned from the Chinese coast, to ask for and take charge of any letters from me that it may bring, and to send them to Cochin by way of Coromandel, especially if, as I think will be the case, there is no immediate opportunity of sending them further by sea, you will do well to beg Diogo Pereira himself beforehand to send you my letters to Cochin, together with his own, so as to be forwarded, in case of necessity, overland from Coromandel.

With regard to your departure for Malacca, a day or so before you start I think you should ask Vicente Viegas to take charge of our house in the city and the little chapel in the suburb attached to it dedicated to Our Lady the Mother of God. Ask him, then, to allow you to commit these two houses of the Society to his care and custody. And lest, in the course of time, either himself, or any other in his name, should think of acquiring any right of property in these two places, you must put in his hand the copy of the deed of gift by which the bishop has made over these two buildings in regular legal form to the Society of Jesus in perpetuity; and at the same time you must get Vicente to give you an acknowledgment declaring that he takes these two houses under his charge and protection simply as a trust and for their preservation, and that he is ready to restore them to the Society when required to do so. You must take with you the original of the Lord Bishop's deed of gift and diploma that they may be sent in the safest way from Cochin to Goa to be kept in the latter town in the archives of St. Paul.

I most positively order you to adhere resolutely to your determination of leaving Malacca, and I expressly forbid you to let yourself be persuaded to remain there by any entreaties, no matter how pressing, or by deceitful promises from any one. You must not continue wasting your labours, which, as things are, may be far better employed elsewhere, on a town so ungrateful and unworthy of your help as has for some

time been the case. If you think well, you can leave with Vicente Viegas, the good priest I have mentioned to you—our Brother Bernard, who can occupy himself as he has hitherto done in teaching children the rudiments of grammar and the elementary prayers as well as the catechism. But in this matter I leave all to your discretion; you will settle as seems best to you either to take him or to leave him. I should not like Ferreira, who has been dismissed from the Society, to sail for India in the same ship with you; do your best that he may embark in another. If there is none to be found, or if he refuses to part from you and begs you earnestly to take him with you, you may consent to do so on the express condition that he must solemnly promise to enter some other religious order. After he has entered into his formal engagement, you can receive him and charitably do all you can to help to confirm him in his resolution.

The interpreter who consented, as I told you, to come with me to China has been frightened and given up the idea. He remains here, having abandoned me. We are determined to run all risks relying on God's help. There are three of us—António of the Holy Faith (a Chinese educated at our college), Cristóvão, and myself. Pray much to God for us for we are going to expose ourselves to the almost certain danger of the most dreadful slavery, but our consolation is in this thought, with which we are deeply penetrated: that it is infinitely preferable to be a captive in chains for the pure love of God than to purchase the most delightful liberty by basely and ungratefully deserting the sufferings and the cross of Jesus Christ. Should it happen that the Chinese merchant, on whom depend our hopes of going to Canton, should change his mind through fear or any other reason and break his word, I have resolved in this last case to sail for the kingdom of Siam, for which voyage I have a favourable opportunity. In fact, I have heard that a ship was being fitted out there for Canton, and if I can get on board by God's protection, I hope before the end of the year to land on the shore that is the object of so many prayers to me. Salute very heartily all our friends for me, and especially Vicente Viegas, and beg them to commend me to our Lord. May he remain with you and accompany me! May he bring us all to the glory of paradise.

Your brother in Jesus Christ,
Port of Sanchoão, 12 November 1552.
Francis.

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7. LETTER TO DIOGO PEREIRA, MALACCA⁴²

12 November 1552 – Sanchoão

I have nothing to write you at present except to repeat over and over again the assurance (which, no matter how often it were expressed, would always be inadequate to my obligation) of my gratitude for the daily and hourly kindness that your affection and charity are constantly lavishing on me without end or measure. You have, even in your absence, thought of means of exercising these virtues through your servants and representatives who assist and do me service in all ways and at all times. Among them is Tomás Escander, your agent, who supplies me so affectionately and generously with everything I ask for that it is easy to see that he knows and shares the extreme tenderness and goodness that you entertain for me, not only always ready but always eager and anxious to give me even more than I ask and more than I want. May our Lord God reward you, for he alone can! I am unable to pay my debt to you and must owe it for the rest of my life, but though I can never pay the principal, I will not fail, at any rate while I live, to pay you, as it were, a daily instalment and interest according to my ability by continually beseeching our Lord God to preserve you from all evil and never to suffer you in this life to be deprived of his grace but to keep you always flourishing both in body and mind through all accidents of health and unfavourable chances of fortune always constant in the faith, diligent in the duties of holy religion and divine worship, so that he may one day crown your merits and receive your soul to the glory of his paradise. And as in spite of my endeavours I can never satisfy myself as to this, I call on all my brothers, the fathers of the Society of Jesus who are serving the holy Church in different places in India, to be my helpers and assistants. Certainly all would have performed this duty of their own accord; nevertheless I have, so to speak, added spurs to their willingness by ordering them to show you all the offices of most friendly goodwill as an eminent patron of our Society and commend you to God in their daily prayers and sacrifices as a mainstay of the Christian religion in this country on whom rests the chief hope of seeing the holy law of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, preached in the empire of China and of spreading his glory to the ends of the earth. Indeed our Lord himself, who knows so well your ardent zeal for his service, who so

truly values your labours so profitable for the extension of his servants, to encircle you and your interests with his constant favour and protection and to further the accomplishment of your desires to this holy end of helping the preaching of the Gospel and calling wandering souls to the faith of Jesus Christ. If the affair of your embassy to the sovereign of China entrusted to you by the viceroy of India should be at length successfully arranged next year, I beg you to deal with Francisco Pérez (whom I have ordered to set sail for Goa) so that he may procure from Father Gaspar Barzeo, the rector of the college of Goa, a priest of our Society whom you may take with you when you embark for China. I should wish the valuable vestments that, as you know, we had prepared for that expedition to be given to him to bring them with him. When our project failed, I left them at Malacca in the care of Francisco Pérez; that father will deliver them to you on seeing this letter, which will sufficiently acquaint him with my intentions. I will send the chalice, a part of the same set that I brought with me, by Tomás Escander so that you may, if you think well, give them all to the father who is to accompany you on your embassy.

I would go to Malacca with your people if I could hope that you would start for China next year. Now I am following a more probable hope of going there this very year, which rests on a merchant of Canton, and if (which God forbid!) he should fail me, I have now made up my mind to accompany an Aragonese named Diego Vaz, who, as I told you, is going to the kingdom of Siam. From thence I rely on being able easily to reach Canton next year by a Chinese junk. Thus, should it happen that your embassy really starts next year, I hope that we shall meet again, God knows with what consolation, at Conai or at Canton. Pray write to me if you have an opportunity, to the kingdom of Siam, saying what you have decided, for under any circumstances I shall much like to know the state of your affairs from yourself. As to the particulars of my agreement with the Chinese merchant who is to take me into the city of Canton, I do not give them to you yet; it will be more convenient and satisfactory to do so when the matter is over. You may look for them in letters that I hope to send you by Manuel de Chaves. If our fathers at Malacca, Goa or elsewhere can render you any services toward the favourable conclusion of your

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embassy, do not fear using them. You will find Francisco Pérez, Gaspar Barzeo and all others, wherever they are, eager at the first expression of your wishes to serve you with all their power; they know perfectly how much I have this at heart. But—and this is the chief point in their eyes—they are firmly convinced that this matter concerns above all the glory of our Lord God and the release of a vast number of unfortunate Portuguese who are suffering a wretched captivity in the Chinese prisons. I have just learnt with excessive pain that my excellent friend Francisco Pereira de Miranda⁴³ has quite lately, through some melancholy chance, fallen into the same misery. I most gratefully and sorrowfully remember all my obligations to him for the good offices and kindness that he loaded me with so charitably when he was with us at Hirado in Japan with a numerous band of companions under his command sharing all his kindly feelings toward me.

I have by mistake taken with me the letters that the viceroy of India sent for you to deliver to the sovereign of China, and I now send them back to you with this. Once more I beg you not to fail to write to me to the kingdom of Siam, for, as I say, I am fully resolved, should the hopes fail that I have built on the Chinese merchant (which God forbid!) to go to the kingdom of Siam and endeavour to get into China by that way. Should our Lord God deign to favour at least this last enterprise, I shall go to wait for you at the court of the Chinese emperor unless I am thrown into prison at Canton. In short, then, in any case, if the divine favour opens to me the way into China, you will find me in one of two very different places, in one of two very dissimilar conditions—a captive in the prisons of Canton, or at Peking, which it appears is the residence of the sovereign of China.

I add no more except to say what is the exact truth, that I so ardently desire to know what you are doing, how your health is, the stage of your affairs and hopes, that if I were rich I would not think the news bought too dear with much gold and would give profusely any most precious gifts as its price, especially as my confidence as to the high favour in which our Lord Jesus Christ holds you makes me hopeful that if the news were true, it would be what I most eagerly desire. May our Lord God, if he sees it advisable for the interests of his holy service, grant us to see one another again in the empire of China! If he has ordered

otherwise, may he at least reunite us one day in the blissful abode of Paradise!

Your servant and entire friend from the bottom of my soul,

Sanchoão, 12 November 1552.

Francis

8. LETTER TO FATHER FRANCISCO PÉREZ, MALACCA, AND MASTER GASPAR BARZEO, GOA⁴⁴
13 November 1552 – Sanchoão

By this letter I expressly command and earnestly beg you, Father Francisco Pérez, who, according to my previous orders, are to sail from Malacca to India, to send this letter of mine to our brother Gaspar at Goa and to obtain as soon as possible from the Lord Bishop, through Father Gaspar or our other brothers at Goa, the canonical proclamation of the excommunication incurred by Dom Álvaro, the commandant of Malacca, by having prevented my going to China. I think the way to proceed with this is for our brothers to go to his lordship and his vicar and show them the bulls of the sovereign Pontiff concerning the institution, confirmation and privileges of the Society of Jesus, and separately show them the Pontifical brief written on parchment in which the sovereign Pontiff creates and appoints me by name his legate in these regions of India, for which purpose it must be taken from the secret archives of the College of St. Paul at Goa.

After showing them these documents, they should both be asked, seeing that, contrary to the manifest privileges of the Society of Jesus granted by the decrees of sovereign Pontiffs, and contrary to my own personal authority by right of the office of Apostolic Legate conferred upon me, Dom Álvaro de Ataíde, the commandant of the city of Malacca, has violently opposed the formal authorization of the viceroy of India that I presented to him and has made it useless by his rebellious obstinacy; seeing further that he has despised the order and authority of Dom Francisco Álvares, then in command of the royal citadel and fortress of Malacca and also receiver general and keeper of the royal treasury, when the latter guaranteed my rights and declared the formal will of his Highness, and audaciously persisted in his disobedience; and seeing that by these offences Dom Álvaro de Ataíde, besides the crime of rebellion against his Highness, has plainly incurred the ecclesiastical anathema set forth

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in the bulls of the sovereign Pontiff: we, therefore, pray that this same may be declared in the accustomed form, and that in the place where the crime was committed the author of it be pronounced to be publicly separated from Catholic communion and cut off from the body of the Church in punishment for his so hateful wickedness.

Let a prescript of his Lordship the Bishop, in which this is clearly drawn out, be sent to Malacca, together with letters from the same prelate to his vicar in that place, charging him to take good care that those letters of his be read from the pulpit according to custom on a Sunday to the people assembled in church. I have two reasons for which I wish you to make this demand that everything may be done as I say. The first is that, as far as is in me and out of my pity for him, I wish to consult the interests of the author of this bitter injustice for indeed he is still ignorant into what an abyss he has plunged himself, and it is most likely that the public proclamation of the terrible anathema that he has so rashly brought upon himself will fill him with terror at the thought of so great a calamity and inspire him with some sentiments of penitence that may be the beginning of his salvation and might excite in him a salutary desire of meriting by due satisfaction the lawful absolution of the Church at the hands of her competent ministers.

The other reason that moves me to take this step is my wish to hinder for the future any such audacious attempt of wicked persons that would be so hurtful to the preaching of the Gospel. For I see by experience that the apostolic labourers of our Society will often find opportunities of embarking at the different Indian ports for Japan, the Moluccas or other countries to preach the law of Jesus Christ, and that the officers invested in such places with the authority of royal governors may be tempted by avarice, jealousy or other bad passions to thwart and insult them by causing the failure of their plans, as has happened to myself. In order, therefore, that these officers may not imagine that such crimes will remain unpunished, this bad example must be made infamous by its terrible issue and must be branded with so much ignominy that those persons whom the fear of God does not influence may be made to shrink from its imitation by the disgrace before men, the dishonoured name, the mark of shame burnt in on his forehead, which will render this poor man so utterly infamous forever. I am

convinced that some of these persons let themselves go with more audacity to such wickedness partly from forgetting the severe punishments attached to this kind of crime, through the sordid cares in which their souls are plunged, and partly often through their disgraceful ignorance of the discipline of the Church, in which they are wonderfully uninstructed. It is necessary to put visibly and palpably before them an example of the Church's severity inflicted on a person of note that by this salutary warning they may be held back when instigated to perpetrate a deed so injurious to religion, and that perceiving the danger they incur in this way of sin, they may restrain their licentiousness by fear.

The letter of the bishop, or of his vicar general, declaring the commandant of Malacca separated from the sacraments of the Church and under anathema, should be taken to Malacca by Juan de Beira,⁴⁵ or by any other of our brothers who are going there to embark for Japan. At Malacca he must place it in the hands of the bishop's vicar. In order that this latter may not put off carrying his orders into effect, you must obtain the bishop's promise to write, or to order his vicar general to write in his name, a special letter to the bishop's vicar at Malacca charging him under pain of anathema not to delay publishing in the Church the excommunication incurred by Dom Álvaro. As for yourselves, beware in the name of God of neglecting this order of mine and thus of committing the great sin of violating obedience. Let me hear before the end of the year how diligent you have been in this and what has been the issue of this affair.

With regard to myself, I have written this letter in the midst of preparations and anxieties relating to my passage from this island to the Chinese continent. The voyage will be most painful under my present straitened circumstances; it is full of a thousand dangers, of very doubtful issue and full of terrors. How it will turn out I know not, but I have a firm confidence and a strong inward assurance that, no matter how things may go, the result will be good. If (which God forbid!) my hopes of the Canton merchant captain, whom I expect every moment, should fail, I am determined, as I told you, to go by sea to Siam, whence there is some expectation of being able to get to China. Should this hope too come to nothing, through some accident, then I shall return to India. But my mind presages that I shall not be driven to this last resolution, and I persist in believing that my first hopes will be

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fulfilled, and that I shall have what I pray for and place my foot at last on Chinese ground.

One truth has been proved to me by the clearest evidence, and I tell it to you confidently and wish you to be fully convinced of it. The devil has an unspeakable dread of the Society of Jesus entering China, and every effort in this direction seems to wound the very apple of his eye; it makes him rage with impotent fury, and lash himself up and boil over with passion. Take my most certain word for it. In this port of Sanchoão, where fresh obstacles to our passage to China are raised every hour, he keeps contriving them in swarms, one after another, as though he thought the first to be nothing and that new ones were always needed; and if I were to describe them by letter or by word of mouth, I should never end. I perceive most clearly that the war cry has sounded in the camp of hell, and the spirits of darkness, all in consternation, are arrayed against us as if to defend their last entrenchments. But let it be no less certain to you that I am confident, relying on the unfailing help and grace and favour of our Lord God, that Jesus Christ, our Saviour and redeemer, will expose to the scorn of the whole world the enemy of mankind, disappointing his wishes and making his vain hope void. And the glory of the divine majesty will shine all the more brightly because the instrument of these wonders will be one so mean; that by means of me, the least and the vilest of men, he will overthrow that insolent spirit, so bold in his pride, and expose him to the most shameful defeat and universal derision.

It is to you especially, Master Gaspar, that I now particularly address myself. I most earnestly beg of you not to fail to fulfil exactly and completely everything that I commanded you on my departure, whether by word of mouth or by writing, in the form of instructions. Be careful to forget nothing, or to neglect carrying it out at the proper time, as if supposing me perhaps dead, you might imagine yourself free and independent and no longer under obedience to me. I remember a case of this kind when certain persons fell into this error in consequence of my long absence. In truth I shall not die before the time appointed by God; long indeed it is that life has been a burden to me, and to die is my prayer, but it is idle for men to speculate curiously as to the hour of my decease, which is settled

beforehand in the eternal decrees, and which the foolish opinions of men cannot hasten or retard. This counsel is given to fortify you against the temptation of trusting too much to your own judgement as you may remember a time when you allowed yourself to follow your own opinion irrespective of my instructions. Whether you did the best thing in the world on that occasion, or whether you made a mistake, God knows, but I should not like by any chance on my return next year to find in India anything that I should have to punish.

And pray pay particular attention to what I am about to add. Be very severe, I would almost say be most fastidious, in choosing persons to be received into the Society. The few who have stood the sharp test, as I may say, of the first exam should then go through all the successive experiments of the novitiate at home. Indeed I have seen in certain persons who had passed through the first beginnings things that made me mistrust the judgment of those who could have admitted them. They were persons who, as experience shows, ought to be excluded from our Society from consideration of our own good character and tranquillity. It was impossible for me not to make an example of this sort in the person of Álvaro Ferreira, whom I have struck off the list of our brothers. Should he come to you, be sure not to receive him into your house, but you may give him the help of your advice and influence to enable him to enter another religious order. But you must absolutely refuse to receive him back into our Society no matter how pressingly he may entreat you, and you must understand that you are forbidden this by the obedience that you owe me; for after mature deliberation, and by my authority, I order you not to receive into our house Álvaro Ferreira, whom I know to be in no way suited to the ways of our Society.

Should it happen that when this letter reaches Goa another than Gaspar Barzeo is rector, let him, whoever he may be, understand that the directions I have given to Gaspar apply equally to him.

Port of Sanchoão, 13 November 1552.

Francis. **RC**

Organisation and translation by Ivo Carneiro de Sousa.

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NOTES

- 1 Sanchoão is a Portuguese name adapted from the Chinese Shangchuan, an island 180 km distant from Canton and 12 km from the continental mainland.
- 2 The "Captain of the Sea" in Malacca, Álvaro de Ataíde da Gama, was largely against the Chinese mission of Francis Xavier, opposing also the embassy given by the viceroy to Diogo Pereira, a close friend of the Jesuit. After several confrontations clearly resulting from different political and social perspectives, the captain allowed Xavier to sail to Sanchoão without Pereira but in his ship, the *Santa Cruz*. The formal embassy to China was later dismissed, obliging the Jesuit to prepare a complex attempt to reach mainland China as a clandestine passenger aboard a negotiated Chinese trade junk (Cf. Georg Schurhammer, *Francisco Javier: su vida y su tiempo. IV. Japon-China (1549-1552)*, Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra-Compañía de Jesus-Arzobispado de Pamplona, 1992, pp. 751-782).
- 3 Schurhammer, *op. cit.*, pp. 793-794.
- 4 Manuel Barradas, *Relação de algumas coisas notáveis de N. Santo Padre Francisco Xavier*, GS III, pp. 138-140, 254-257.
- 5 *Monumenta Xaveriana*, Madrid: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1899-1912, II, p. 476.
- 6 Barradas, *op. cit.*, GS, IV, p. 445.
- 7 João de Lucena, *História da Vida do Padre Francisco Xavier*, (ed. Luís de Albuquerque & Maria da Graça Pericão), Lisboa: Ed. Alfa, 1989, pp. 188-189. Cf. Schurhammer, *op. cit.*, p. 797, n. 1.
- 8 The only documented reference to gaming is the chess played by Pedro Velho, a wealthy Portuguese merchant who had already met Xavier during his voyage to Japan (Lucena, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-191).
- 9 Schurhammer, *op. cit.*, p. 827, n. 103.
- 10 The translation and edition of the letters follows Henry James Coleridge, *The Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1997, pp. 545-570; San Francisco Javier, *Cartas y escritos*, Madrid: BAC, 1996, pp. 507-525; and Eduardo Javier Alonso Romo, *Los Escritos Portugueses de San Francisco Xavier*, Braga: Universidade do Minho, 2000, pp. 576-585.
- 11 Original letter dictated by Francis Xavier.
- 12 Francisco Pérez was one of the first Jesuits to reach India, arriving in Goa in 1546, working in Malacca and becoming rector of the Jesuit College at Cochín.
- 13 João Bravo was born in the northern Portuguese town of Braga. He travelled to India with Father Pérez in 1548 and was received into the Society of Jesus by Francis Xavier.
- 14 Bernardo Rodrigues was a Jesuit born in India from a Portuguese father and an indigenous woman.
- 15 António Herédia was born in Bragança in the north of Portugal and entered the Society of Jesus at Coimbra College in 1545.
- 16 Portuguese copy of 1746.
- 17 The Portuguese *légua* (league) at this time represented around 6 km.
- 18 In Latin: "*Qui amat animam suam in hoc mundo perdet eam, et qui odit animam suam in hoc mundo in vitam aeternam custodit eam*" (John XII, 25).
- 19 In Latin: "*Qui point manum suam ad aratrum et respicit retro, non est aptus regno Dei*" (Luke IX, 62).
- 20 In Latin: "*Si enim Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos?*" (Rom. VIII, 31).
- 21 Álvaro Ferreira joined the Society of Jesus in Goa, studying in the local College of St. Paul. He also studied Japanese and was appointed by Xavier to follow him in his attempt to reach China.
- 22 Discouraged by the difficulties in reaching China, Francis promptly dismissed him from the Jesuits.
- 23 António China or António de Santa Fé was of Chinese origin and studied while still young at the Jesuit College in Goa. He was the last companion of Xavier and we have from him the writings witnessing the death and the incorruptibility of Xavier's body, which António accompanied in 1553 to Malacca. In 1578 Alessandro Valignano met him in Macao as a "good and old Christian."
- 24 There are no known documents about Lopes, but he was probably Bobadilha the slave.
- 25 Portuguese copy of 1746. Diogo Pereira was a close friend and protector of Francis Xavier who lived for several years in Goa. He was a powerful and rich trader appointed in 1552 to lead a Portuguese embassy to China that was dismissed by the sea captain of Malacca, Dom Álvaro de Ataíde da Gama. From 1562 to 1570 Pereira is referred to as the sea captain of Macao.
- 26 The *pico* or *pikul* is an East and Southeast Asia measurement of weight equivalent to 60 kg.
- 27 Tomás Escander or Escandel was the factor of Diogo Pereira, probably a trader of Malabar or Armenian origin.
- 28 Manuel de Chaves was one of the Portuguese held captive in Canton in 1551, but was able to escape from the prison, becoming one of the most important sources of information for Xavier.
- 29 Álvaro de Ataíde da Gama.
- 30 We do not have documented information about Fonseca and Pegado, perhaps Portuguese private merchants.
- 31 Diego Vaz de Aragón was an active trader in Bungo between 1544 and 1551. He is also referred to in 1568 in Macao-Japan trade relations.
- 32 Small island opposite Xiamen.
- 33 Servant of Diogo Pereira.
- 34 Original letter dictated by Francis Xavier. Gaspar Barzäus (Barzeo) was born in 1515 in Zeeland and was professor of Humanities in Louvain before he became a soldier in the imperial army of Charles V in 1536. He joined the Society of Jesus in Coimbra in 1546, leaving for India two years later. In 1552 Xavier called him to work in Goa, where he was appointed vice-provincial of the Jesuit Company.
- 35 Portuguese gold coin.
- 36 Portuguese copy of 1746. This document gives instructions repeating the orientations of the first letter.
- 37 Bernardo Rodrigues.
- 38 Original letter dictated by Francis Xavier.
- 39 Gaspar Mendes had been a military officer in Malacca since 1539 and was present in the defence of the town in 1551 when it was attacked by Malay and Javanese armies.
- 40 Francisco Sanches was a Portuguese trader still living in Macao around 1576, married to Violante Spínola.
- 41 Gaspar Barzeo.
- 42 Vicente Viegas was a secular priest in Malacca who started the evangelisation of Macassar in 1545.
- 43 Portuguese copy of 1746.
- 44 Francisco Pereira de Miranda was a nobleman appointed Captain of Chaul in 1541. He received Xavier in 1550 at Hirado. Liberated from his Chinese captivity in December 1551, Miranda was appointed again captain of Chaul.
- 45 Portuguese copy of 1746.
- 46 Juan de Beira was born in Pontevedra, Galicia, joining the Society of Jesus in 1545. The next year Beira travelled to India and worked in the Moluccas. He died in Goa in 1564.