

Crossings: A Screenplay for the Eerste River

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Abstract

This paper presents *Crossings*, a multilingual screenplay that interrogates the relationship between archives, memory, and the environment around South Africa's Eerste River. *Crossings* forms part of *Kammakamma*, a video project by artist Abri de Swardt exploring narratives entangled with the mouth of the Eerste River. The paper's introduction provides further context for the creative work, including reflections on the research process and discussion of the major environmental shifts interwoven into the storylines within the screenplay. At its core, *Crossings* is an example of how the historian can experiment with new genres, archival fragments, and fabulation to arrive at alternative narratives of place.

Keywords

Eerste River; history and memory; screenplay; Kammakamma; Makassar; fabulation.

In late 2022, South African visual artist Abri de Swardt presented three collaborators with an intriguing prompt: *if the river's mouth could speak, what would it say?* This question underpinned De Swardt's latest project, *Kammakamma*, an exploration of narratives entangled with the mouth of South Africa's Eerste River. The project's name draws on the Khoekhoe language term for river, //gamma, and the Afrikaans term *kamma*, which has come to mean 'make believe'. The term *Kammakamma*, in turn, signifies 'the river of rivers, the river of fabulation, and the river under erasure', where rivers are 'sources of shifting stories, and ... living entities shaped by climate catastrophe'.¹ *Kammakamma* follows De Swardt's earlier artistic interrogation of the Eerste River, *Ridder Thirst* (2015-2018), a video project about queer agency and the Fallist movement, which questioned the river's connection to Stellenbosch as a settler-colonial site.²

Within the framework of *Kammakamma*, each collaborator was asked to explore stories embedded in specific points along the Eerste River and to produce a screen play that would result in a multi-part, wide-format video produced by de Swardt.³ Among the chosen collaborators, I was invited to reflect on the river's relationship with the neighbourhood of Macassar. This opportunity to investigate the archival possibilities of the river and its surrounds, and the potential of existing sources to give voice to the environment, resulted in *Crossings*, the screenplay presented here.

Setting

The Eerste River flows through approximately 40 kilometres of the Western Cape, beginning in the Jonkershoek nature reserve to the east of Cape Town and meeting the Atlantic Ocean at False Bay. It is a relatively short river, but one that traverses diverse socio-economic environments, from the Cape Winelands Biosphere Reserve and the industrial district of Stellenbosch to the marginalised, former 'coloured' townships of Eersterivier and Macassar, on the edge of the Cape Flats. It was named the First (Eerste) river in 1655 by Willem Muller, a Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*; VOC) official, since it was the 'first river of any significance' he encountered on an expedition into the territory east of the Cape Peninsula.⁴ The Eerste River and its tributaries became the main water source for the colonial outpost of Stellenbosch, supporting the area's agricultural activities that, in turn, supplied fresh produce for the growing settlement. Along the lines of Matt Edgeworth's archaeological approach to the study of rivers, the Eerste River is a 'cultural artefact' shaped by the communities that used it.⁵ This shaping is manifested in the canals

1 Personal correspondence with Abri De Swardt, 27 September 2022.

2 On *Ridder Thirst*, see: Megan McNamara 'Abri de Swardt: Ridder Thirst at Pool', *Art Throb*, 17 May 2018, Online: <https://artthrob.co.za/2018/05/07/abri-de-swardt-ridder-thirst-at-pool/> (accessed 22 November, 2024). For more on De Swardt's practice, see: www.abrideswardt.com.

3 Rupert Museum 'Social Impact Prize '22. Abri De Swart: KammaKamma', <https://socialimpactartsprize.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Project-7-%E2%80%93-Kammakamma-2.pdf> (Accessed 17 July 2024).

4 Cate Brown and Rembu Magoba (eds), *Rivers and Wetlands of Cape Town: Caring for our Rich Aquatic Heritage* (Cape Town: Water Commission Research, 2008), 270.

5 Matt Edgeworth, *Fluid Pasts: Archaeology of Flow* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2011), 14. Edgeworth's work is among a host of humanities-informed approaches to water that informed the broader Kammakamma project, alongside creative non-fiction works, media theory and science fiction.

created to redirect the flow of water, and bridges built to cross its breadth. While it is best known for its connection to the pristine Winelands, for centuries the river has served as the setting for violent displacement, segregation, and environmental disaster. It is these histories, in part, that *Kammakamma* seeks to address.

In the context of the river, Macassar (pronounced məkæsə) refers to several entities: a township, a beach, and a nature reserve comprising a series of fynbos-covered dunes. Macassar *is*, or at least it encompasses, the river's mouth. The river snakes around the Macassar Dunes – the tallest and most extensive dune system in Cape Town – before it meets its end at Macassar Beach. The area also hosts the Eerste River Estuary, once famed for its trout fishing. However, this practice went into decline following two major pollution incidents in the 1950s, which led to the destruction of much of the biota in that section of the river.⁶

This part of the Eerste river served as one of the earliest points of displacement in modern South African history and its name recalls that past. In 1694, VOC authorities banished renowned political exile and Sufi scholar, Shaykh Yusuf of Makassar, along with a retinue of 49 followers, to the farm Zandvliet, on the banks of the river. The river and its neighbouring dunes served as the final destination in the Shaykh's nine-year long journey of exile in the Indian Ocean.⁷ The area soon came to be known as Macassar, referencing both the original community that settled there and Shaykh Yusuf's place of origin in Eastern Indonesia. When Shaykh Yusuf died, his remains were buried on a hill overlooking the river. Today a green-domed, whitewashed tomb (*kramat*) marking this burial place draws Muslim pilgrims and tourists from around the world, who seek saintly blessings and connection with that portion of South African history.

Crossings centres on particular narratives of the Eerste River and Macassar: stories of transoceanic exile and the *kramat*'s function as a 'threshold ... in and out of time', where a revered saint was buried and is rumoured to still roam.⁸ It also foregrounds the perspective of the communities who have frequented that site as pilgrims, caretakers, and leisure seekers. Its title refers to two phenomena relevant to the social use and meaning of the river: the act of traversing the body of water in order to move from one bank to another, and the reality of the river as a kind of crossroads where diverse communities, desires, and histories intersect. The text draws on my own earlier research about the afterlives of exile and the case of Shaykh Yusuf of Makassar, which analysed the development of sacred sites and narrative traditions about the shaykh in Indonesia and South Africa.⁹ *KammaKamma* provided the opportunity to revisit my historical sources, in order to locate and amplify the place of the river and its environs in the written histories and memories connected to those spaces.

6 See: Brown and Magoba, *Rivers and Wetlands of Cape Town*, 278 and 282.

7 On Shaykh Yusuf's biography, including exile, see Abu Hamid, *Syekh Yusuf: Seorang Ulama, Sufi dan Pejuang*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2005, 2nd ed.); Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulama' in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004).

8 Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), 197.

9 S. Jappie "Between Makassars: Site, Story, and the Transoceanic Afterlives of Shaykh Yusuf of Makassar" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Princeton University, 2018).

At the core of *KammaKamma* is fabulation – determining what the river *would* say, if it could speak. In order to craft *Crossings*, I reread archival sources, interview transcripts and my fieldwork notes to see what, if any, traces of the environment emerged. Through this process, I found hints and fragments: a small comment about the banks of the river, a mention of the dunes as an unsavoury place, and so on. These asides were not central to my original research question and so they did not make it into the output that resulted from it. Furthermore, as fragments with jagged edges, they did not fit together easily, or at least substantively, in a traditional, linear historical text.

Once I selected the fragments – a quote from a court case about the *kramat*, reflections from the tomb's current caretaker and various visitors, among others – I was able to begin the process of imagining. How could these shards of information fit together? What kinds of conversations might emerge from placing them side-by-side? And what sorts of narratives about the environment are revealed through these processes? Then came the challenge, and opportunity, of writing in an unfamiliar genre, for a text that would eventually be translated onto the screen.

As seen below, *Crossings* unfolds as a series of conversations. Each consists of direct quotes from the sources, alongside imagined speech. A narrator appears, though not consistently, and weaves together the piece's three sections. The first is about Cape Muslims camping by the banks of the Eerste River around Easter, a tradition that began in the 19th century and continues today.¹⁰ The second section, told from the perspective of the *kramat*'s caretaker, speaks about the tomb and the river as supernatural spaces. The final part links the Eerste River to the other Makassar, in present-day Indonesia. The text is intentionally multivocal and multilingual, mixing Afrikaans, Dutch, English, Indonesian, and Makassarese. After all, given its complex and long history, the river is a polyglot entity. *Crossings* shares the perspectives of individuals and communities connected with Macassar and they, in turn, provide glimpses of how the environment has changed over time. Two distinct aspects of environmental shifts emerge: the disappearing sand dunes and the inconsistencies of the river.

The Macassar Dunes form an official conservation area, managed by the City of Cape Town since 2001. The mobile dune system sits at the edge of the Cape Flats, alongside informal and low socio-economic residential areas, and has served as one of very few natural habitats accessible to these communities.¹¹ The area measures 4.8 km² and consists of two sets of hairpin parabolic dunes, which measure up to 3 km long, 0.6 km wide and 35 m high. The dunes are home to at least 179 indigenous plant

¹⁰ See: Jappie, 'Between Makassars'.

¹¹ The area has also been one of high risk for these communities. See: Marnie Graham, 'Everyday Human (In)securities in Protected Urban Nature – Collaborative Conservation at Macassar/Wolfgat Dunes Nature Reserves, Cape Town, South Africa', *Geoforum* 64, 2015, 25–36.

species of the Cape's unique strandveld vegetation, alongside alien species.¹² The sediment itself is of windblown origin and samples suggest 'a concentration of shell fragments on the eastern beaches of False Bay prior to its deflation northwestward across the Cape Flats.'¹³ The commuted shell fragments found at Macassar appear at a higher level than that of other dunes in the area.¹⁴ Archaeological studies have revealed the dunes' long history of human interaction, with the discovery of San burial sites and other artefacts suggesting that the dunes were the location of at least one pre-colonial hunter-gatherer settlement.¹⁵

In section one of *Crossings*, a character mentions that the dunes behind Shaykh Yusuf's tomb 'were like huge white mountains' when she was younger, implying that now they are much smaller. The Macassar Dunes have in fact shifted and decreased in size over time due to extraction by sandmining companies, alongside more natural processes typical of a mobile dune system. Sandmining for construction purposes began in the 1970s as part of Apartheid planning and large-scale urban development. These processes resulted in both a large demand for building sand and the loss of natural habitats in the Cape Flats region, where many low-income residential areas were built. Macassar proved to be an important source of sand for the city, with its sediment being used predominantly for mortar, as well as for concrete, plaster and fill. In 2001, researchers estimated that 4.7 metric tons of sand had been exploited by mining companies operating in the area, with 40 metric tons remaining.¹⁶ Sandmining continues in the area today, with transporting trucks and other large equipment still visible on the landscape. Mining has proved to be a contested issue for several reasons, including suspected illegal sand mining in the area, the lack of benefit the industry brings to local communities, and the detrimental impact it has on the natural beauty of the dunes.¹⁷ Additional threats to the dunes include recreational activities like four-wheel driving and trail biking, which destroy vegetation and expose sand, making the dunes vulnerable to wind erosion.¹⁸

Strong and persistent South Easterlies have caused the consistent shifting of sand in this mobile dune system.¹⁹ One visible effect of the dunes-on-the-move is the smothering of coastal infrastructure, for instance in the case of the infamous Macassar Beach Pavilion, a once popular waterpark that opened on Macassar Beach in 1991. The structure was doomed from the beginning: its location within the dune system made it a prime target for windblown sand. Maintenance of the site proved

12 Stephen Davey, 'Environmental Governance of Sand Mining in an Urban Setting: Macassar Dunes, Cape Town, South Africa' (Masters Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2001), 6.

13 D.I Cole and J.H.A Viljoen, 'Building Sand Potential of the Greater Cape Town Area', *Council for Geoscience South Africa Bulletin*, 129, 17.

14 Ibid.

15 Marnie Graham, 'Open Space or Natural Place? The Politics, Perceptions and Practices of Place-making in the Co-management of an Urban Nature Reserve, Macassar Dunes, Cape Town' (Masters Thesis, Stockholm University, 2010), 31.

16 Coen and Viljoen, 'Building Sand Potential', 17.

17 See for instance court case LCC37/03 in Land Claims Court, <https://www.justice.gov.za/lcc/jdgm/2003/37-03-sep22-macassar-mac.pdf> (Accessed 10 August 2024).

18 Davey, 'Environmental Governance of Sand Mining', 6.

19 City of Cape Town 'Maintenance Management Plan: Dunes and Beaches', 17 November 2017, https://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/City%20strategies%2C%20plans%20and%20frameworks/CCT_Dunes_and_beaches-MMP.pdf (Accessed 13 August 2024).

futile and eventually it closed, in part due to financial difficulties. The pavilion became abandoned and derelict, its roof caving in and walls covered with graffiti. The site took on new fame as a ‘fascinating’ abandoned space with ‘creepy remains’. Eerie images of sand-buried waterslides and kiosks almost completely filled with sediment still circulate in online forums.²⁰ Structurally unsound and economically obsolete, the buildings were eventually scheduled for demolition by the city of Cape Town in 2020.²¹ These structures were a kind of archive of environmental change – of shifting white mountains – slated for destruction.

Another aspect of the shifting environment that emerges in *Crossings* is the precariousness of the river’s water levels. Characters remark on moments when the river floods and times when it flows with ‘very little water’, hinting at how these dynamics impacted their work and experience at the *kramat* and its surrounds. For the *kramat*’s caretaker, who grew up by the river, the times of floods brought excitement and change to the environment, with rugby fields and cattle grazing areas suddenly overwhelmed by the river bursting its banks. For the architect involved in building the *kramat* in the 20th century, the water levels were a central concern in timing and execution of construction-related tasks. Irregular flows are a part of the Eerste River’s nature. Yet, this became a problem from the 17th century onwards, when human reliance on the river for agricultural purposes emerged. Farmers had to navigate the realities of too little water in summer and too much water in winter. The river also shifted course, damaging infrastructure and cultivated land.²² To mitigate these effects, construction of canals occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries at different points along the river. These measures managed to redirect waterflow to certain areas, but caused further degradation at others, for instance in parts of Stellenbosch. Meanwhile, changes in the river’s course by Macassar has been linked to the opening and closing of the mouth of the Eerste River Estuary. The closing of the estuary mouth has caused the river to back up past the *kramat*, while flooding in the area with the winter rains would result in the mouth opening artificially.²³

Interwoven into *Crossings*’ conversations is a consistent dialogue between environment, historical process, and archive, where the one provides fresh perspective on the other. The hillock next to the river, where Shaykh Yusuf was initially buried, draws attention to the mound of layered ritual cloths and the objects inserted between them – an overlooked archive of pilgrimage and prayer. The inevitable shifting of the sand dunes parallels the dissipation of middle-class tourists to the Macassar area, who have dispersed to more affluent spaces of leisure since the fall of Apartheid. And oral accounts of supernatural sightings place the river in a new light, as a site in and

20 See: Viktoria Makeenko, ‘The Fascinating Macassar Beach Pavilion’, *Abandoned Spaces*, July 1 2020, online: <https://www.abandonedspaces.com/pools/the-fascinating-macassar-beach-pavilion.html> (Accessed 09 August 2024); and Brooke Davies, ‘Inside the Abandoned Water Park Left to Rot after Being Buried in Sand’, *Metro*, March 1, 2024, online: <https://metro.co.uk/2024/03/01/inside-abandoned-water-park-left-rot-buried-sand-20380796/> (Accessed 09 August 2024).

21 Yaseen Gaffar, ‘Macassar Beach Resort Crumbling’, *Netwerk 24*, 24 June 2019, <https://www.netwerk24.com/netwerk24/macassar-beach-resort-crumbling-20190619-2> (Accessed 09 August 2024).

22 Brown and Magoba, *Rivers and Wetlands of Cape Town*, 273.

23 Ibid, 281-82.

out of time itself, with its physical properties manipulated by the miraculous. The archival possibilities of the river and its surrounds emerge most saliently in *Crossings*' final scene, where the river serves as an archive. It is bottled up and carried away, as a record of Shaykh Yusuf's final abode and as evidence of his spiritual power, manifested in the purported healing properties of the river he lived beside.

From Text to Screen

Crossings is currently being translated into a video work, a creative process entirely driven by De Swardt. The first installation of *KammaKamma*, based on De Swardt's own screenplay, debuted as a short film in the artist's solo exhibition that opened at POOL Space in Cape Town in February 2024.²⁴ This portion of the project centres on the figure of Hendrik Biebouw, a young free burgher alleged to be the first person to declare an 'Afrikaner' identity, in 1707. Along with three friends and in a drunken state, Biebouw attacked the VOC watermill on the Eerste River at Stellenbosch and was subsequently arrested. On being detained, he protested: 'I shall not leave, I am an Africaander.'²⁵ The film depicts Biebouw, portrayed by actor Ben Albertyn, submerged at various points in river. He delivers a multilingual monologue while he engages with the body of water: looking through a sieve, cutting through a sandbag and emptying it into the stream. The river made visible through film is as much a character in the story as is Biebouw: its sound dominates the audio and the flow of the water adds further dynamism to the scene.

How the river will appear in *Crossings* is yet to be seen. However, elements of Macassar have appeared in this first instalment of *KammaKamma*. The sand that filled the bag cut open by Biebouw originated from its dunes. Furthermore, the exhibition featured a sculpture that served as seating for the viewing of the film, made from dozens of sandbags containing, collectively, at least a ton of sediment from Macassar. The video for *Crossings*, along with that of the screenplay *Doppelganger*, by renowned Afrikaans poet Ronelda Kamfer, are scheduled for completion in 2025. The full screenplay for *Crossings* follows.

24 See: Georgia Munnik, 'Short Film Project Pushes Against the Current', *Mail and Guardian*, 26 February 2024, <https://mg.co.za/friday/2024-02-26-short-film-project-pushes-against-the-current/> (Accessed 24 April, 2024); and Madeleine Bazil, 'Tracing Flows: The Fluvial Landscape in Abri de Swardt's "Kammakamma"', *Art Throb*, 28 February 2024, <https://artthrob.co.za/2024/02/28/tracing-flows-the-fluvial-landscape-in-abri-de-swardts-kammakamma/> (Accessed 22 March 2024).

25 See Hermann Giliomee, *The Afrikaners* (Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers, 2003), 22.

Crossings

[Sung to the tune of Abdullah Ibrahim's 'Kramat'] *Hoe gaan die padjie na die Kramat toe? Na die Kramat toe?*²⁶

I. Sak ... En ... Pak²⁷

Narrator: It is heavily laden, with goods, hopes, regrets. From the first 50 banished there over 400 years ago, to the pilgrims and tourists of today, the road is *loaded*, especially once the autumn chill descends.

Voice of older man: In the old days, at Easter time the community would go to the kramat by Macassar. We used to gather at a meeting point. There would be organisers who arranged a lorry and a tent and we would pay them a fee, maybe two pounds or three pounds. They would go *sak en pak*.

Voice of older woman 1: We brought everything with, but if we wanted milk, we had walk to the farm far across that field to buy milk from the boer. Yes, the boer used to sell us milk.

Voice of older man: The whole of District Six would go. And if you didn't go and camp there you would certainly go and visit. Some people left on the Thursday. Or the young and more adventurous would go on a Saturday evening. The *kramat* was by the way, we went there to *jol*,²⁸ you know.

Hoe gaan die padjie na die Kramat toe?

Voice of older woman 2: No, no. We certainly didn't go there. My father wouldn't allow it: it was far too dangerous, it was for the lower classes. And nothing good ever happened there.

Voice of older man: The things weren't exactly primitive, but they were usable. People made do. There was running water in the little river – it flows through Faure – and people would do their washing there. It wasn't uncommon to see people washing themselves from pails of water.

Voice of caretaker: There was nothing there. It was just dark, people had to make fires. We used to take the reeds to sell it so that people can sleep on there. There was no *thikr*,²⁹ just singing and dancing. Now everything has changed.

²⁶ Afrikaans: How does the little road to the *kramat* go? To the *kramat*?

²⁷ Afrikaans: Full to the brim.

²⁸ Afrikaans: Party.

²⁹ Arabic: Ritual remembrance.

Voice of older woman 1: Back then, these sand hills were like huge white mountains. Not so small like now. They were bright white mountains.

Voice of older man: Oh yes, the dunes were a happy hunting spot for adventure seekers. People didn't encourage their children to go there: it was dangerous and there was no parental control.

NOW, the Sunday afternoon stroll along the *kali*,³⁰ THAT was like a fashion show, you know. Just everybody who was anybody was there on the Sunday afternoon by the *kali*.

Voice of caretaker: Now everything has changed, it's no more the same.

Voice of older man and his wife: We are the last of the Mohicans. Our areas are middle class – you won't get anyone here who goes to kramat. You know our children, they spend their time at the Lord Charles.

Voice of caretaker: No more the same.

Na die Kraaaa-maaaat tooooe?

II. The Big One

*It is extremely inaccessible. It is at the top of a little mound, I suppose a few ... miles short of Somerset West, leading across the Flats. In order to get to it from the road or the railway it is necessary to cross the Eerste River, and consequently in the summer there is no great difficulty in doing that. A contractor would have to cart a lot of heavy material and it is necessary for him to do the carting when there is very little water in the river. That explains why the question of the rains was raised.*³¹

Narrator: Heavy materials became a quietly imposing tomb, green-domed and white-washed, at once out of place and creating it.

Voice of older man But remember, for the jollers,³² it was by-the-way.

Narrator: Unlike the campers and the fortune-seekers, Auntie B has been a lifelong resident of *kramat*:

Voice of caretaker: When I was small there was no water, no electricity. It was just dark, dark, dark here. That time there was a little bridge and only one car could go

³⁰ Javanese and Cape Afrikaans: River.

³¹ Cape Archives CSC 2/1/1/1107 Ref: 83, from Testimony of F.K. Kendall, June 22 1927.

³² Afrikaans: Party people.

over. It was the most wonderful experience ever because we had nothing, but that hard life made us better people. We had a tough time I'm telling you, but it was lekker.

Narrator: Auntie B traverses the flatland below and makes her way up to the top of the little mound four or five times a day, around the time of each daily prayer. While the saint takes care of pilgrims, she takes care of his resting place: cleaning, touching up, observing the goings-on.

Voice of caretaker: I can see what the people are doing, with what they go in, how they come out.

Narrator: She has witnessed the visitors come and go, and lived through the heavy rains ... watching the *kali* burst its banks, in turn flooding the surrounding fields, bringing some excitement with it to the small community living at the bottom of the hill.

Voice of caretaker: It was always high, the water.

Narrator: In the holy months, the *kramat* overflows with devotees.

Voice of caretaker: But you also get the regulars that come every week – I know them by face.

Narrator: Seeking the intercession of this saintly threshold in and out of time, their mouths utter prayers destined to be heard – answered even – on the other side. Their supplications build up like strata of spiritual sediment, materialised as a new, colourful [in the voice of the architect] a *little mound* of ritual cloths piled high upon each other. An exercise in excavation reveals objects of desire – the buried offerings between the folds:

Letters

Teeth

Panties

Voice of caretaker: Every time it's the same... It's unbelievable the stuff you get in there.

Narrator: Why do they come here exactly?

Voice of caretaker: This is mos³³ the big one, Shaykh Yusuf.

³³ Afrikaans: after all.

Narrator: She re-lights the incense and then recalls that some people say they've seen 'him' in the area.

Voice of caretaker: He goes to the river to make his ablutions.

III. *In his footsteps*³⁴

Narrator: 'Him' ... The green-cloaked apparition that roamed the hills by False Bay. *De Moorse Paap*.³⁵ Grandson of Gallarang Moncongloe. The noble *perantau*³⁶ banished across the oceans. The bones whose exact location remains a mystery. *Tuanta Salamaka*.

Voice of caretaker: But you know, those visitors say the Tuang is that side, he's not buried here. Everyone comes here with a different story.

Makassarese noble: *Kamma anne caritangku nakke: Anrinniak ammenteng ri birinna binangaya nakukkutaknang ri batang kalengku 'Apa nakasiak anrinni'? Apa napare siagang bijanna anrinni, na bella kamma battu riassalakna? Apa memang Tuanta nia-ki anrinni? Tenamo na kuassengangi.*

[My story goes like this: I stood at the edge and I thought to myself: 'What did he see here? What did he and his family do here, so far away from home? Was he there?' I don't know.]

Riolo kabarakna sekreji karemeng nialle battu ri kuburukna anjo nampa pajjappanna aklimbang tamparang, anjo karemenga atimbo-timboi sanggenna akkalepui ammotere. Rupa tawwa angkana takkanna niaki anrinni, songkokna niaki ri Mangkasara, bilang-bilangna niaki ri Sri Lanka. Jari Tuanta Salamaka niaki kemae-kemae. Ri Mangkasara anjoeng, ri Mangkasara anrinni poeng.

[As the story goes, only his finger was taken from the grave and as the boat that carried it crossed the waters, it grew and grew until the whole body appeared once more. Others say his *tongkat* is here, his *peci* is in Makassar, the *tasbih* is in Sri Lanka. So, he is everywhere. In that Macassar, in our Makassar too.]

Siratangi punna tau Mangkasaraka eroki mae azziarah anrinni. Ingka, tena nakamma kabusuk taua sawe mae anrinni, anjappai tampa'tampa'na Tuanta. Kulangngerek angkana jekneka anrinni nibarakkaki, jari takkulleaki tangngalle sibotolo jekneka ri tenanapa nimmoterek battu ri se'rea kampung.

34 The Makassarese translations that appear in this section were provided by Marlina Mansyur, Muhammad Setiawan, and Muhammad Zuhairi Abdullah.

35 Dutch: Moorish Priest.

36 Indonesian: wanderer.

[It's only natural that we would want to see this place where Tuanta once was. But not all of us will ever be able to visit here. To follow in his footsteps. Someone told me the water was blessed, so I had to collect some of it. To carry it back from the *rantau*.³⁷]

*Bagaimana jalan ke makam keramat-nyaaaaa? Makam keraaaamaaaatnyaaaaaa.*³⁸

[End]

³⁷ Indonesian: Homeland.

³⁸ Indonesian: How does the road to the *kramat* go? The *kramat*.