J. Sollewijn Gelpke

The report of Miguel Roxo de Brito of his voyage in 1581-1582 to the Raja Ampat, the MacCluer Gulf and Seram

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Introduction

For nearly four centuries, scholars of north-western New Guinea have been intrigued by a cryptic abstract of the *Relación que Migel Rojo de Brito da de la Nueva Guinea*, written shortly before 1600 by Hernando de los Rios (Zaragoza 1876-1880, I:187, II:294-6). The full Spanish text of Brito's *Relación* was eventually discovered on folios 139-149 of a Sino-Spanish codex of 1590 or shortly afterwards (Boxer 1950), and was published in 1979 (Boxer and Manguin 1979).

In the Netherlands and in West Irian itself, several students of the area where Brito travelled expressed regret at the inaccessibility of the Spanish text. They intimated they would welcome a translation.

Between 1945 and 1960, I had occasion to visit all the places and islands in West Irian where Brito went, and to gain some knowledge of the people and languages of the Raja Ampat Islands. Armed with this knowledge, I have attempted to edit and translate Brito's report.

Before going into this further, however, I wish to express my thanks to Professor C.R. Boxer for his kind permission to use his Manila Manuscript, and to Dr. P.-Y. Manguin for providing me with a photocopy of it. Thanks are also due to Dr. B.N. Teensma of Leiden University for his advice and help in the translation of several (to me) obscure passages.

Brito's activities before this voyage are unknown. He may have grown up on Terciera Island in the Azores. This assumption is based upon his statement that the conical shape of Tobalai Island reminded him of the 'Ilhas Devaras'. To fit this name and description, I have found no other candidate

J.H.F. SOLLEWIJN GELPKE is a retired civil servant who graduated from the University of Leiden. Specialized in the history of New Guinea and the Moluccas before AD 1700, he has previously published 'The Majapahit Dependency Udama Katraya', *BKI* 148-II, 1992, and 'On the Origin of the Name Papua', *BKI* 149-II, 1993. The author may be reached at La Bastide du Bois Biak, 83460 Taradeau, France.

The itinerary of Miguel Roxo de Brito in 1581-1582.

than the 1103m-high Pico da Vara (37°33'N 25°13'W) and a few lower peaks in São Miguel rising above the horizon. Possibly, the choice of Saint Michael as his patron saint points in the same direction.

Brito spent from May 1581 to about November 1582 in the Raja Ampat Islands, the MacCluer Gulf and North Seram. Because King Philip II of Spain had inherited the Portuguese Crown in 1580, Brito was sailing under the Spanish flag, though it is not clear whether he was doing so under official orders or on his own account. Several times he compares the features and customs of the Papuans to those of the inhabitants of Guinea in West Africa. Moreover, he uses a few words that seem to originate from the Cebu area in the Philippines. For details about his life after this journey, the reader is referred to the introduction to the Spanish text by Boxer and Manguin. Further research on this was beyond the scope of this article.

As Boxer and Manguin already noted, 'Presumably the original account was written in Portuguese, but one can not be sure of this. In any event, this Spanish version made at Manila c. 1590 is clearly the work of a rather careless, or perhaps a rather tired copyist.' This is borne out by the many variant spellings of some place-names (for instance, Seram as Seyron or Siron; Waigéo as Baygeo, Bayceo, Bayseo and Baygelo; Misoöl as Mesol, Maçol and Moçol; Gebe as Gele, Geve, Jeve), as well as a number of errors (*dos* for *doce*, Asanbujá and Açanbuxa for Azambuja, the name of the Captain Major at Ternate).

Almost all the toponyms follow the Portuguese orthography wherever this is different from the Spanish one, for instance Obe, One, Bale and Tanbuco for Obi, Oni(n), Bali and Tobungku (in older sources Tombuku) respectively, as well as Quilmontere for Kachili Menterí. The very frequent place-name Sardenha or Serdanha occurs only once in the Spanish spelling Cerdeña. It seems likely, therefore, that Brito wrote his journal in Portuguese, during his voyage, and that the extant MS is a sloppy copy of the translation prepared for King Philip II in 1582-3.

Brito's style is a convoluted one. He repeatedly digresses from his main story to follow trains of thought that carry him to other places and times. Sometimes the reader finds himself wondering whether the author is still freely associating or whether he is describing some secondary round trip he has gone on in reality. Since it does not seem possible for Brito to have made three trips from Misoöl to Waigéo in the given span of time, I have taken his descriptions of Misoöl and Serdanha to be 'monographs' that were written and interpolated in this report retrospectively. The resultant itinerary thus is considerably shorter than that proposed by Boxer and Manguin (henceforth abbreviated as B&M), who took the text as a continuous report.

At the beginning of his story, a confident Brito calls the Raja of Bacan a 'Reysuelo' (Kinglet). However, when a year later he has to be rescued from

North Seram by a vessel of that same Raja, he refers to him as 'Rey'. Apparently he did not systematically edit his text afterwards. Brito distinguishes between *yndios* and *negros*. With the former he seems to be referring to straight-haired people, with the latter to the frizzy-haired Papuans. For authenticity's sake, I have translated *natural* with 'native' and *negros* with 'blacks' in my English rendering, while I have left *yndios* unchanged. I have cut some of Brito's longwinded sentences into shorter ones by introducing additional punctuation. Words between square brackets are my additions. A critical reader should of course keep the Spanish text at hand when reading the translation.

Brito leaves no doubt about the fact that his prime interest is gold. He may in effect have been trying to discover the source of the fine-quality gold which, according to Andrés de Urdaneta, was traded from New Guinea to Bacan in small quantities.¹ Although he failed in his quest for gold, ironically his narrative now is a true gold-mine for historians.

The implications of this report for the historiography of north-western New Guinea are too many and too far-reaching for me to explain in but a few remarks and notes. They warrant a detailed analysis in further specialized studies. There are, however, two place-names which need to be commented on in the present context, namely Noton and Serdanha.

Notan

Noton was first mentioned as one of four Papuan kingdoms in the second half of the sixteenth century (Jacobs 1974:130, note 12). As a toponym, the word may derive from the name of a tree, *Kleinhovia hospita* (De Clercq 1889:1342).

Noton or Notan was supposed to be a region somewhere in the Raja Ampat or the Bird's Head Peninsula, but has never been unequivocally identified. Apparently, the name Notan was used in Ceram and Onin a century ago to denote both Misoöl and the Raja Ampat in general (De Clercq 1891:124).

The similarity between Notan and Botan has led several writers to erroneously suppose these names to be interchangeable (Wichmann 1909:34; Jacobs 1974:130, note 12). In the languages of the Raja Ampat, the word *bat* denotes the (native) ground under one's feet, while *batan* designates any island larger than a *yef*, which (like *mios* in Biak) refers to an islet that does not fill the horizon even when one is looking at it from nearby.

Brito's narrative is the first and only source to locate Notan. He describes it as a fairly prosperous place that was subject to the Raja of Waigéo, which

¹ Urdaneta arrived in the Moluccas in 1527, but never visited New Guinea or the Raja Ampat Islands.

rules out Misoöl. Going by Brito's itinerary, it must have been somewhere on the west coast of Salawati, probably Sailolof.

Serdanha

Brito states Serdanha (also spelled Sardenha, Serdenha, Cerdenha and Cerdeña in the MS) to lie at a distance of 30 *leguas*, or about 165 kilometres, south of Misoöl, close to Seram, while it has an islet Çitan (Kidang, see note 43) lying nearby. Beyond any doubt he was referring to modern Seram Laut, near the eastern extremity of Seram. When in 1632-3 Artus Gysels, the then Dutch Governor of Banda, was planning to conquer Seram Laut, he heard that eight of the islanders' ships had set out for the Onin Peninsula to buy slaves and *massoya* bark. He discovered the walls of the forts there to be ten feet high and thick. The inhabitants preferred to buy Gysels off for 50 *tapil* (about three kilograms) of gold and 200 slaves, however, which Gysels wisely accepted. Brito's description of the Serdanhos' *massoya* bark trade to Bali and Java is exactly the same as Rumphius' of a century later.

The only uncertainty we have concerns the name Serdanha itself, which has a not very convincing assonance with Seram, or rather the endonym Seran. Brito had not previously heard of this island, so Serdanha or Sardenha must be his phonetic rendering of the name as he heard it in Misoöl. The Biak/Numforese and the Moy tribe of the Sele Straits used the name Raïn or Lain for Ceram (Kamma 1947-49:367, note 2; Kamma and Kooijman 1973:21, 34). It is likely, therefore, though not attested, that this name was also current in Misoöl. To the Biak and Raja Ampat people, the word Seran sounds like Sau-Raïn, Sel-Raïn or Ser-Laïn (bay or harbour of Raïn/Laïn). It remains uncertain, however, whether this is just a folk-etymology of Sera(ï)n, or whether the island was indeed called Laïn or Raïn before the Malay name (or corruption) Seran Laut came into use.

In his 'monograph' on Serdanha, Brito uses almost exclusively the rendering Serdanha, which seems to confirm my personal opinion that he heard Ser-Laïn (Sand Harbour) in Misoöl. In the English translation of his report, only the spelling 'Serdanha' has been used, except once, where the manuscript has the Spanish spelling Cerdeña.

Miguel Roxo de Brito's Report on New Guinea

[Journal]

I left Bacan on May 17th, 1581, with two *kora-kora*² [hired] at my own

² A *kora-kora* was a large type of double outrigger canoe. The largest models, with up to twelve booms, were developed in the Andaman Islands and (presumably independently) in Halmahera and nearby New Guinea. These vessels could carry as many as two hundred rowers and passengers, but were unsafe in choppy

expense from subjects of the Kinglet of Bacan, who is a friend of ours.³ These vessels were manned by 140 natives from the island of Obi⁴, which lies about twelve *leguas*⁵ to the south of Bacan, and from Tapa near [Obi]⁶; these people were placed at my disposal by the aforesaid Kinglet to serve and accompany me in every respect.

I set a course due south with them and arrived at that island of Obi, where I acquired provisions and better men, leaving the boys behind and taking on strong men for the voyage. Here we steered a SSE course to an island called Tape, and on this same course we soon arrived at Tapaeba⁷; both are small, uninhabited islets with plenty of fish and excellent land crabs.⁸

I continued eastward to the island of Tamlonga⁹, which has a volcano¹⁰; from afar it looks exactly like the [Pico] da Vara islands.¹¹ The population of this island consists of about a hundred *yndios*, who paid homage; I told them to man a *kora-kora*, and they accompanied me for as long as I was travelling in that region.

From Tamlonga I travelled eastward [now] with three *kora-kora*, and arrived at the Boö Islands, which are numerous and uninhabited. There are all sorts of fish and wild boar [there].¹²

seas. Brito travelled on medium-sized models with a crew of about seventy.

³ It is not clear whether Brito is talking of 'us Portuguese' or 'us Spaniards' here; Bacan repeatedly changed its preference for Spain and Portugal.

⁴ The MS has the Portuguese spelling *Obe*.

⁵ The MS has *dos leguas*, which must be a copyist's error for *doce leguas*, which is indeed the minimum distance between Bacan and Obi. A Spanish *legua* (of $17\frac{1}{2}$ *leguas* to a longitudinal degree) came to approx. 5,550 metres at the time.

⁶ There are several islands called Tapa(t) and Tawa in the Bacan-Obi area. The Tapat lying to the north-west of Obi (B&M) seems to be the most likely one here. According to Stormer (1889:623), *tapat* was a Bacanese word meaning 'straight ahead'; this word became the name for this island because it is just visible from Bacan and serves as a seamount for the crossing to Obi. See note 7.

⁷ These two islands were probably Tapa Besar and Tapa Kecil, two islets on the north coast of Obi, near the village of Tapa, also spelled Tawa(h). In 1922 the former population of Obi had already died out (Coolhaas 1926:476).

⁸ The delicious, tree-climbing coconut or robber crabs (*Birgus latro*).

⁹ This Tamlonga is never mentioned again. In sound, the word resembles Tmlonga, which is the name of a cape and an islet in north-east Bacan; a nearby river is called Tim(i)longa (*Aardrijkskundig Woordenboek* III:963). Tamlonga may therefore have been the name of an Old Bacanese village, as Old Bacanese and Old Obinese presumably were related languages (Stormer 1889:623; Coolhaas 1926:476).

¹⁰ Since there are no volcanoes in the area, Brito was presumably describing Tobalai here, which has a 240m-high peak and is the only island between Obi and the Boö group large enough to support a population of a hundred *yndios*. Here Brito hired the interpreter who is mentioned later on.

¹¹ *Yslas debaras* (*debasas* ?) in the MS. See the Introduction above.

¹² *Bojo* in the MS. The indigenous name is Yef Boö (rhymes with 'bow'), meaning Pig Island.

From these Boö Islands, still on the same easterly course, I arrived at an island named Labey¹³, [which was] inhabited by a Kinglet and about two thousand men, who also received me with respect, and who was amazed at the sight of white people, because he had only heard of us but never seen us. These islands [Boö and Kofiau-Torobi] are about one day's travel apart.¹⁴

From here they took me to an island named Mesol¹⁵, where reigns a King with an entourage of four to five thousand men; he received me as something strange and never [before] seen. He kept me in a village there for about a month and treated me generously. He gave me valuable [presents] of gold in recognition of [the] friendship [between us], and when I asked him if there were any more islands and people in that area, he set me on an ENE course¹⁶ to some islands called Waigéo.

These islands [of Waigéo] are inhabited and there is a King, who, in the same way as the one before, gave me a princely reception and suspended a gold chain that must have weighed 90 ducats from the prow of the *kora-kora* I had come in.

[Some information on Misoöl]

The island called Misoöl is large and is mountainous in many parts; its circumference must be 40 *leguas*¹⁷, and the village is located near the north-eastern extremity, on a salt-water lagoon with an entrance that is a stone's throw wide; and after one passes through this, the inside is wide, and more than half a *legua* across. They have built their houses in the lagoon, on poles planted in the water.¹⁸ In this village there are about four thousand people living under a King whom they have elected. They call him Fun

¹³ Labey is similar in sound to modern Lawin. However, this island lies to the west of Boö, contrary to what Brito's otherwise accurate account says. B&M suggest it may refer to modern Kofiau, which name is used by the Biak immigrants here (Biak *kafiar*, pronounced *kafiáu* in the Raja Ampat, means 'whirlpool'). Labey may, in fact, be Brito's rendering of Torobi or Tolobi, which on old maps is the name of the second-largest island of the Poppa(ng) group, modern Kofiau. The other islands are too small to have a population of two thousand.

¹⁴ Until the eighteenth century, a day's travel was used as a unit of distance comprising eight *leguas* or miles; the miles varied in length from 15 to 25 to a longitudinal degree. The distance between Boö and Kofiau is indeed about eight Spanish *leguas*.

¹⁵ The indigenous name for Misoöl is Batan Mè, Mè Land, while Mè-soöl means Mè Harbour.

¹⁶ This course coincides with the shortest distance from north-east Misoöl to Salawati Island, the first leg on the voyage to Waigéo.

¹⁷ This figure is correct for Misoöl but not for Waigéo. This is confirmation that the information which follows refers to Misoöl, and not to Waigéo, where B&M supposed Brito to have made a trip.

¹⁸ This description fits the ancient seat of the Kings of Misoöl on Tomulol Bay, on the eastern coast of the island. This seat was transferred to Lilintá on the south coast in probably about 1750.

Moi.¹⁹ He has many *yndios* in the interior²⁰, where they cultivate vegetables and *landan*²¹ gardens for them; [*landan*] is a [kind of] bread they eat, similar to biscuits and very nutritious.

Here I was offered much worked and unworked gold for sale. When I asked the King where this gold came from, he replied [that]:

Each year he sent all of his people together to [raid] an island they call Cerdeña, which lies close to Ceram and where there are five thousand men living who are all very wealthy merchants. Those taken prisoner were released by my vassals in exchange for gold and gongs and cloth of all sorts.

These gongs they also offer for sale in exchange for gold in New Guinea, which they call 'Botan', meaning 'mainland', in a kingdom which is called Onin²², lying in the extremity of the mainland.

And so [the inhabitants of Misoöl] possess much [gold], as I said, for I did not see a single person among all of them, unless it was a slave, who was not wearing gold ear-pieces, which might weigh more than an *onza*²³ each; and this lust for gold much impels those of Misoöl to plunder.

For this purpose they build some very fast ships, which travel over twelve *leguas* per day, and which carry four rows of oars[men], one row inboard and three on the outside; when I travelled in these, I was in no way able to remain erect, because they are very fast and cause one to lose one's balance at each stroke.

Those of Misoöl raid no place other than the island of Serdanha, which, as I have said, lies about thirty *leguas* to the south of Misoöl; and they do this by going there with a fleet of thirty to forty warships, none of which comes back without booty.

[The fleet] first takes hostages, [then] releases them for a ransom, [and] returns to its base [in Misoöl]. And they catch 70 to 80 inhabitants of Serdanha in any one year, and these have to purchase their freedom as often

¹⁹ B&M have read this as Suncien in the Ms. *Fun* ('father, lord, prince') is the indigenous title by which the Four Kings are addressed, while Moi or (less likely) Tièn would be his name.

²⁰ The villages in the interior of Misoöl are inhabited by Papuan-type people. If Brito purposely used the word *yndio*, it may have referred to slaves and hostages from Seram.

²¹ *Landan* probably is the Cebuano-Visayan word *landang*, 'a dish made from powdered *buri* palm starch' (Wolff 1972). Brito is undoubtedly talking of (baked) sago here, which is called *sago lémpéng* in many Indonesian languages, denoting the sago bread that keeps almost indefinitely. At the time it was an important export product.

²² The MS has the Portuguese spelling One for this. Brito confirms that the name Onin (variants: Oni, Woni, Wonim) originally referred only to the north-western tip of the modern Onin Peninsula.

²³ This word denotes either an ounce or a coin.

as they are caught, for the same ransom they once paid to redeem themselves, without any discount. And if they do not have enough to purchase their freedom, they are killed. Since this trickery makes it impossible for them to get out of this predicament alive if they cannot redeem themselves, they beg other wealthy Serdanhos to buy them, and so they remain slaves. The Serdanhos themselves told me [so].

[*Journal – continued*]

The King [of Misoöl], accompanied by thirty *kora-kora*, went to make peace with [the Serdanhos] on the condition that they remain his subjects. I had counselled him to [make this proposition], but when I tried to make them accept this agreement, they replied that [‘]there was no Serdanho who had not been caught five times, and we don’t want to be vassals as long as we possess sails [with which] to earn our living by trade, because we can buy our liberty with our merchandise[’]. [With respect] to this the Papuan King retorted that, as long as [his people could] handle oars and *calauale*²⁴, which are the weapons they use, neither he nor his men would ever be short of gold or cloth.

And so we left Serdanha and reached an island at a place called Daro²⁵, which lies on the mainland of Ceram. Here I obliged the King to keep the peace, as the *yndios* brought me news of the Portuguese at the island of Banda. And this Papuan King promised that he would keep [the peace] as long as he lived, and would give orders from here that all the captives they had taken at Serdanha should be redeemed, as that is the way he makes his greatest profit.

[*Some information on Serdanha*]

Now, the island of Serdanha measures eight *leguas* around. On the southern side lies the village, along the beach, and on a hill they have built a stone enclosure, which they use as a fort and where they have a few towers with many small guns.²⁶

²⁴ A corruption or a local variant of the Moluccan word *kalawai*, denoting a barbed spear or javelin.

²⁵ B&M suggest that this is a copyist’s error for Baro, probably Waru. The reading Daro could represent a voluntary ‘correction’ by someone who knew Daru (Aru islands) from Portuguese maps, but not Waru in Ceram. A century later, Valentyn described the north coast of Ceram east of Hoti as being inhabited by Papuans from Misoöl.

²⁶ Tomé Pires (Cortêsão 1944:211) was the first to mention such a fort on Banda. Artus Gysels, Dutch Governor of Ambon from 1631-1634, described the walls of the fort on Ceram Laut as being 10 feet high and 10 feet thick (Valentijn 1862, II:476-9). He made sketches of six others in southern Ceram (Collectie Artus Gysels, Kaarten en Tekeningen van de VOC, Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague). Similar forts have been found in the Raja Ampat islands and the MacCluer Gulf, in particular in the area visited by Brito (cf. Galis 1964:272-4).

The village is divided among eight heads, who each have a number of men they command, and so the head of one quarter cannot be a judge in another. Each year two of the heads go off in their ships with [some] of their people to trade, while the rest stay behind to guard and defend the country. On the return of those who have gone off, others immediately set out; and so they govern themselves without anyone having a different status from another.

In Serdanha there are four ['treasurers'], with whom they deposit in full trust and withdraw gold and cash which they amass there for the needs and common well-being of the entire village; and every time the ships return from abroad, they give a contribution to the fund. When there is some particular need or a war with other regions, like the one they had with the Banda Islands, they pay a certain reward to people on the north-western coast of Ceram²⁷, with whom they make up a fleet to defend themselves, and sometimes to attack.

And this fund is also used when those of Misoöl take hostage a respected citizen of Serdanha, who is unable to redeem himself; they then draw on the fund to redeem him, lest that inhabitant go lost to the village; and he in no way loses respect for all that.

Those from the island of Serdanha have told me that they were amazed that their island, with its wealth, was not known [abroad].²⁸ They have many small guns, totalling about 600, complete with powder chambers; they keep them for prestige reasons, without knowing how to use them. The Serdanhos make very good ships, like Javanese junks, in which they sail to all the islands of the Timor [archipelago]²⁹, [both] the string of islands on the near side³⁰, and those where the fragrant sandalwood is collected. [They also go] to the kingdom of Bali, where they acquire much gold and cloth, and to the kingdom of Bima, where much gold, amber and wax is found, and to most of Java. And they trade with the islands of Marcho³¹ and Butung³², where they buy quantities of gold and textiles and cotton yarn. They also trade with Tambuco³³, where they purchase much iron[ware], which they sell

²⁷ The MS has Siron.

²⁸ More likely, the Serdanhos were amazed at Brito's ignorance.

²⁹ This seems to be what Brito understood. As the Malay word *timur* means 'east', his informants may actually have been talking of the trade route along the Aru and Kay Islands.

³⁰ The islands on the Java route, namely Wetar, Alor, Solor, and Flores.

³¹ Probably a corruption of Macasar, the town by this name being located on the route from Java to Butung. The south-western peninsula of Sulawesi until late in the sixteenth century was believed to be a separate island.

³² Identified as such by B&M from Botan in the MS.

³³ Tobungku or Tombuku, in the Tolo Bay in East Sulawesi, which for many centuries produced *parang*, the all-purpose Indonesian machetes, referred to as

in New Guinea, in a kingdom called Magusia³⁴, where they exchange it for [a variety of] wood that is called *massoya*, which they then sell to the Javanese, who value it as a medicine. The latter grind it and rub their bodies with it, as an ointment, even when in good health; and they spend a lot of money on it each year.

[Journal – continued]

From here [i.e., Waru] I returned to the island of Misoöl, and from there I went to the islands of the King of Waigéo, which are numerous and are inhabited. The island where he resides is called Batan, and measures about fifteen *leguas* in circumference. There is an abundance of sago, fowl, and black pigs³⁵; and in that place live about a thousand men, who come under the authority of that King.³⁶

He gave me a very kind and warm reception and told me many times that he wanted me to stay in his country to give instruction in the customs of our Holy Catholic Faith; [and] that he was a heathen and lived like a dumb creature, and his pagan faith forbade him to eat pork; and [that], as we live by the cross, so he wanted me to erect one in his village to be worshipped in the way we do so. And I had a large, beautiful one made by two craftsmen, which was planted in his village, on the beach; and the guns and arquebuses that I had with me were fired, which gave the King great satisfaction and joy; [and] his wife and children wept for pleasure. I also gave him a flag with the cross of Christ on it that I had with me, to be planted near his residence in the event of a skirmish between the inhabitants of this island and people from New Guinea, so that Our Lord might come to his aid and bring him victory, with which he remained very pleased.

And he forthwith brought his fleet in readiness, and set out due south-east with me; and we reached an island called Garau³⁷, which we found to be

'Tombuxe zwaarden' by the VOC.

³⁴ Identified by B&M with Manggusa on the southern shore of the MacCluer Gulf. The name may mean 'nine mango trees'; cf. Manggowitu ('seven mango trees'), a village on Pulau Adi, south-west of Kaimana.

³⁵ Brito several times mentions *puercos de monte*, referring to the common New Guinea pig, which, wild or tame, looks like the European wild boar. Where domesticated pigs are meant, 'black pigs' seems to be the best English equivalent.

³⁶ The fact that it is fifteen *leguas* in circumference excludes both Waigéo Island (B&M) and Batantá, while Batan Palé is too small. Only Gaman, which is separated from Waigéo by a narrow straits, fits this size; it was of old a port of call on the trade route from Geelvink Bay to the Moluccas. Moreover, a population of a thousand would fit Gaman rather than Waigéo.

³⁷ The direction indicated suggests that they took the shortest and safest route through the Sélé Straits between Salawati Island and the mainland. Garau could be the village of Arar, pronounced Araw in the Waigéo dialect of the Biak language; on the other hand, the name Garau may reflect the word *kala* or *kara* ('water,

deserted, because a snake at large had devoured most of the villagers.³⁸ We beached the fleet, consisting of thirteen *kora-kora*, on this island and spent some time accommodating and provisioning the crew: [with] sago and fish, which are abundant here.

When this was finished, we hauled the fleet out to sea and headed south-east, until we arrived at a small island called Onelor³⁹, where there lived about two hundred people, who paid us homage and gave us a few presents as a token of submission; and the King told them to give these to me, saying that I was the commander of that fleet and its crew.

And from this island we went one day's travel eastward and arrived in the kingdom of Oni, which lies on the mainland of New Guinea, on the southern shore [of the MacCluer Gulf⁴⁰], about half a degree south.⁴¹ Here we were shown homage by some villages, which had poor defences, as they lie in the water off the beach; but others, which are difficult of access, held us off, and in the face of strong resistance we forced one [of them] to submit, although a few of our men were killed by arrows. This is the weapon they use with skill, and there are no weapons in all that region other than arrows and spears, though never poisoned [ones].

The people of this region are all black, like those of Guinea, and they are all traders; they [go to] trade in a kingdom on the equator, called Sekar⁴², where there is a village with an important market where black slaves are traded; here the people of Onin buy [slaves], which they sell in Serdanh. The Serdanhos, since they are very wealthy, buy them and take them to the island of Kidang⁴³ as labour for their gardens.⁴⁴ It is [a] certain [fact] that

river') in the Moy language, which is spoken on both sides of the Sélé Straits.

³⁸ Tall stories about giant snakes were, and still are, popular in New Guinea and the Moluccas. However, Brito here probably misinterpreted the information that the inhabitants had gone to their gardens in the interior, because the constellation of Scorpius (together with the Corona Austrina in its tail called the Snake of Heaven) was touching the horizon (July-August). For the Biak tribes, this still marks the beginning of the planting season today.

³⁹ This must be Sabuda, the largest of the Pisang islands, one day's travel to the west of Onin. Onelor may stand for Oni-luar ('Onin outside'); *lor* ('north') does not seem to make sense in the context.

⁴⁰ Although the location of Onin '*en la tierra firme de la Nueva Guinea de la banda del sur*' would suggest that Brito visited the southern shore of the (modern) Onin peninsula, it is clear from subsequent passages that he is talking of the southern shore of the MacCluer Gulf here.

⁴¹ As the real latitude is 3°S, the discrepancy may be an indication that Brito took the sun's altitude in December or January 1581/82. Indeed, the fleet would have made the crossing in the westerly monsoon.

⁴² Segat in the MS.

⁴³ Çitan in the MS, which should be read as Qitan. Modern Kidang is one of a dozen islets on a large reef east of Ceram Laut. Rumphius called it Kitan, Valentyn Kidan.

⁴⁴ *Puetas* in the MS, which I have translated as a corruption of *huertas*.

there are Serdanha *yndios* who own a thousand black slaves, who produce much sago bread, which they accumulate in order to sell to the Javanese; and [these] trade it for nutmeg and mace in Banda, because [the Bandanese] lack a staple food.

The people of Onin also have much worked gold, which they wear in their ears and around their necks. When I enquired where this gold comes from, they replied that further down this southern shore there is a kingdom called Offin⁴⁵, on which border in the east two powerful kingdoms in a region they call Ugar⁴⁶, where there is much fine gold. And when I told the King of Waigéo that we should go and visit these people, those from Onin said that we would be running a great risk, because they had many fast ships, but that we might take the village, although it was very large, if we had forty or fifty [arquebuses], because they would surely flee upon hearing the arquebuses. [They also said] that at Ugar people go in search of this gold in the interior [of the mainland], while they also find much gold in the rivers; that beyond this region there are others where there is also gold, although they do not know whether this is purchased in Ugar or found locally; [in a word,] that the entire kingdom of Ugar is reputed to possess much gold.

And the King of Waigéo himself, who had heard people say about Ugar all that time that it had much gold, spent some time in another area, called Offin⁴⁷, which lies between Ugar and Onin, and where live over forty thousand people; they all look like the blacks of Guinea. Here those of Serdanha come to buy the wood [of the variety] called *massoya*, which is valuable in Java, and they barter it for iron and swords, called *talisas*⁴⁸, which [the Offinese] in turn sell to other regions; and so most of the inhabitants of the southern shore are merchants. Those of Offin have much gold; they wear it in their ears and around their necks, as I said before.

In this and other regions the staple food is roasted sago, which they prepare very well; it could pass for bread, and is as hard as biscuits and very filling. They have many chickens and black pigs, and there are many varieties of excellent fish; and they keep a few goats and untamed buffaloes; and there are many fresh-water streams.

All along the southern shore [of the MacCluer Gulf] runs a string of small islands, all inhabited by a population which is partly black and partly of mixed blood; and it is said that on some islands there are white people

⁴⁵ Ufia in the MS; the village of Offin lies between Onin and Ugar.

⁴⁶ Still today the name of an island and of the village on it, to the north of modern Kokas.

⁴⁷ Sufia in the Ms. See note 45.

⁴⁸ B&M suggest that this is a misspelling for *calisas*, the Indonesian *keris*. *Talistas* may well have been the local pronunciation.

with red hair and freckles, meaning that they have brown and reddish spots on their faces.⁴⁹ These [small islands], too, have gold and sandalwood; here I found the [variety of] shell in which seem to grow great quantities of pearls; and there would be no end of them if only they knew how to dive. Here the *yndios* and blacks went into the jungle and brought back pieces of honeycomb; and they came [back looking] like beasts, with bee stings [all over], from which it is evident that there is wax here.

From here, I and the King of Waigéo sailed eastward along the coast, and passed through the region of Sekar, where we were ambushed by more than three thousand men in a bay that is the harbour of that village; they stood up to their waist in the water, all painted red, and with a lot of chicken feathers on their heads, like the people in Guinea. In this ambush, the blacks shot many arrows and threw spears, but at the first shot fired from our vessels all made for the jungle, as if they had seen the devil. And about half an hour later they came to look from afar at what we were doing; nevertheless, we went to fetch the one we had wounded in the leg with the bullet from the arquebus; we took him to my ship, and the blacks at once came to the beach with many bamboo cylinders of *tura*⁵⁰ and chicken to ask [us] for the wounded man; they wanted our friendship, and the King of Waigéo talked to them and made them bring a gong of four spans⁵¹ in width, which they held in high esteem; and they gave it in recognition of our friendship.

From there we continued [our journey], following the same coast northward; and, because the oarsmen were exhausted after such a long journey, we beached at a cape and sent the men ashore to catch us some fish. And on the far side of this cape the rowers of a hundred and sixty ships had gone ashore to eat and rest, as we learned later. Apparently they saw the smoke of the fire our men had made, and immediately all went back to sea and rounded the cape.

As soon as they sighted our ships, they stopped as if to decide [what to do], and soon came towards us in a crescent formation, with thirty-five ships on each flank, and the remainder drawn up, not in the way of barbarians but like intelligent and rational people. What amazed and frightened me was the sight of so many [ships] as to cover the sea; but the King of Waigéo told

⁴⁹ There are indeed so many albinos in the MacCluer Gulf area that the Japanese in 1942 initially arrested them, suspecting they were Europeans trying to escape internment.

⁵⁰ *Tura* apparently is the local pronunciation of *sura* (cf. note 48), a Moluccan Malay word of Sanskrit origin for palm-wine, the fermented juice tapped from the spadices of certain palms (coconut, nipa, *arèn*, sago).

⁵¹ Equivalent to about 90 centimetres.

me that there was no danger [to be feared from them], because they were weak people, and so we approached them in the manner experience had taught us. When we launched an attack, firing two guns and two arquebuses that I had with me, they all jumped into the sea, and not a single one remained in his ship.

They had taken such a fright that the King of Waigéo at once went to them in a small canoe⁵² and made them climb back aboard, as he knew the language well, and he brought the King and commander of that fleet to me, with a few relatives and heads. They embraced my feet and the first thing they asked [me] was to turn away the guns that were aimed at them, as they were afraid that these would produce fire again. I put them at their ease and received them as well as I could; but they were so amazed to see our ways that they were speechless and did not utter a word for more than half an hour.

These people are primitive blacks, like those of Guinea, only darker, and live in an area at a latitude of about 1° north.⁵³ In this fleet there were about seven thousand men, who had come down here to celebrate and to end the [period of] mourning they had observed at the death of their queen, which appears to be their custom. The region [they inhabit] is called Apaa⁵⁴, and it is densely populated, by a people who go around naked, excepting a few chiefs, who wear some coloured and black cloth. I saw no gold or silver on them; nor do they value it, and so apparently they do not trade in it.

They are fond of iron; gongs constitute their wealth. They told me that they had gone to raid an island they call Gébé⁵⁵, and that they had received gongs in exchange for the captives they had made, and that the Gébénese wore much gold similar to the [kind] I had shown them when asking if they

⁵² The MS has *baroto*, the Philippine name of a type of boat (B&M).

⁵³ Brito must have calculated this latitude on the basis of a number of 'days' rowing' of eight *leguas* each. Using this unit, he calculated the correct circumference of Misoöl, Gaman and Serdanha. Assuming the same deviation of 2°30' as is indicated in note 41, this would point to the region between Wandamen and modern Manokwari.

⁵⁴ All the details given by Brito suggest a Biak-speaking people. The King of Waigéo would certainly have known their language, which was spoken by a great many of his subjects. Apaa probably is the village of Waba or Wabau on the western coast of the island of Amberpon (today incorrectly called Rumbé(r)pon) in Geelvink Bay. It was first noted in 1705 by Weyland, who remarked that Wabau was known in the area of the Mios Sú islands (Haga 1884:163-4 and 168-9; Wichmann 1909:146). It apparently no longer existed when the area was described by De Bruyn Kops in 1850 and De Clercq in 1889.

⁵⁵ Gele in the MS. Gébé is an island half-way between Waigéo and Halmahera. Linguistically, Gébé and the villages of Biancí and Umpain in West Waigéo belong to the South Halmahera area. The raid(s) on Gébé had probably taken place long before.

had any; but they did not want it [themselves], because iron was much better; for one thing it was stronger, and for another it could be used for many purposes, whereas they had no use for gold.

They have plenty of [coconut] palms, chickens and pigs in their country. They grow rice⁵⁶, [but] when they go on a trip they use sago bread for food.

The islands they call Gébé lie some seventy *leguas* to the north-east⁵⁷, judging from the number of days they [need to] travel [there] (and I have travelled with them), and they claim that beyond the Gébé islands there are many other villages.⁵⁸

The people of Apaa informed me that there were three white men staying on the mainland of New Guinea, but that many more had died, and that now there were only three left. When I asked what sort of clothes they wore, the King had a sleeveless tunic⁵⁹ and an old hat, which he had had a long time, fetched, and showed me that these were theirs, [adding] that all three were married. Then I gave orders to ask them if the [whites] had given this garment as a present. The King answered that he had captured two ships in a battle with a[nother] King, with whom he was at war, and had found these clothes therein, and that the people he had taken prisoner had told him that these three men were staying on the same coast, beyond their country.

As soon as I arrived in the Moluccas, I learned that these men were mutineers from the *San Gerónimo*, for those [prisoners] had also reported that the [white men] had settled on an island where the men wore full beards; therefore these are the bearded men [of the place] where the *San Gerónimo* called [to maroon the mutineers]. On the maps, this [island] is depicted quite far from the mainland of New Guinea; but since the blacks claim that some among them go there in their ships, it must be much nearer, and there cannot possibly be so much sea in between as is indicated on the maps.

From the reports the King of Waigéo heard from these blacks, as well as from others we met, he knew that on the northern shore [of the MacCluer Gulf], too, gold is used, though it seems to him that there is much more on the southern shore, as most of the people [there] usually wear it.

In that kingdom of Apaa there are trees whose bark the blacks peel off and dry in the sun; and they use it against many ailments, at least against

⁵⁶ The production of rice at a place called Isla del Oro in the Geelvink Bay area was also mentioned by Vicéncio de Nápoles in 1528.

⁵⁷ To the north-east of where Brito was in the MacCluer Gulf lies modern Manokwari, whence the distance westwards to Gébé is indeed about seventy *leguas*.

⁵⁸ Brito here wrote *poblaciones*, which I have translated as 'villages'. His informants may have used either the Biak word *mnu* ('village'), or *kèrèt* ('clan'); in either case, they probably explained that kinsmen of theirs had settled beyond Gébé, in East Halmahera, at Maba, Patani, Weda and other places, long ago.

⁵⁹ *Baqueruelo* in the MS, the diminutive form of *baquero*, from Arabic *baqir*.

pains in the abdomen. It did me quite well; it has a nice colour, like cinnamon, and [gives off] a peculiar warmth; when eaten, it sets the face afire, like a betel-nut.⁶⁰ It would be much appreciated in cold countries; and it could be mistaken for *dioja*⁶¹, for it is similar in colour and taste.

This country where I went is on the equator, or at most one degree off [it]⁶²; it has a temperate climate and wholesome air; the sun does not burn unless it is right overhead. So much dew falls each night that the sun cannot cause it to evaporate until nine in the morning; and so I always felt very vigorous and well.

Since it was over two months that we had been roaming among these islands, and the men were tired, we headed due west-north-west, and came to an uninhabited island, where we caught quantities of fish and spiny lobsters, like the Spanish ones.⁶³

From here we travelled along a string of islands and arrived at Noton, which belongs to the King of Waigéo. Here we stayed for over a month, and had a good time with his subjects here, who supplied us with an abundance of fruit, chickens, goats and many varieties of fish; we decided to go to the King of Misoöl and undertake a journey in search of the three Spaniards whom I mentioned above.

[About the amazing carbuncles]

During the time we spent in the island of Notan, the King of Waigéo was very curious and asked many questions; but he also told me, on a lighter note, about a few things that he thought strange, and so he asked me whether there were among us [Europeans] people who had no knowledge of fire and ate raw fish. I answered him that there are none; and I asked him how they made light; and he replied that on an island not far from here, there were animals the size of large cats, which feed at night⁶⁴ and which have on their forehead a stone over which they wear a small hood, and when they come out in search of food at night, they take it off and search by the light [of the stone]; and when they hear a sound, they cover it with the hood and

⁶⁰ This must be either *massoya* or *lawang* bark, which are both used for extracting medicinal oil. Rumphius compared the scent of *massoya* to that of cloves, and of *lawang* to cinnamon (Rumphius 1741:64, 66).

⁶¹ Presumably a copyist's error for *droga* ('drug'), which in turn is an error for *drago*; *dragon*, *estragon* or tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculus* L.) is still generally used as a herb for seasoning food, and was formerly often employed as a medicinal herb against intestinal complaints.

⁶² See note 41.

⁶³ Brito here is probably referring to one of the small islands lying to the east of the southern entrance to the Sele Straits, including Yef Yus, Yef Yal, Yef Matél, and Yef Kabalím.

⁶⁴ This is the *kuskus*, a common marsupial.

remain in darkness. The inhabitants of those islands seek them out and kill them with bow and arrow and take out the stone to use as a light. I asked him if there were many such stones, and he said to me that there were at least seven or eight in every house, and that they used a length of rattan, split at the end, to hold the stone; and at night they took this cane to catch shellfish on the reef by the light of the stone. I asked him, 'Why don't you have any of these stones?' And he replied that his light was better, as he could light and extinguish it at will.

I asked him whether he himself or [any of] his subjects had [ever] been to that island, or had only heard about it. He told me that in his father's time they had once gone in search of a canoe, and had lit upon a small ship with five *indias*, who had told him this about that island, because they marvelled at our light. And they related that on that island there was a river flowing down from a volcano from which much fine gold was mined; and with a view to this his father had manned two ships and sent them off with two of those *yndias*, but up until now they had not returned, and it was suspected that the sea had swallowed them, because the vessels were small and vulnerable and were made for speed, and, since the currents are strong, it would seem that a whirlpool had caught and crushed them⁶⁵, and that they had perished in this way, as otherwise their fate would have been known.

I asked him, did he want us to go there and to launch strong ships in which we would be safe. And he replied that there was no pilot who knew the way there, since the four *yndias*⁶⁶ who had remained behind in his village had died because they had not been able to adapt themselves and had not even lived two years.

I asked him if it was far away, [and] he said no; and according to the information he gave me, this island is located to the north-east and must lie in the area of Gébé. My experience is that in everything he discussed with me, the King of Waigéo was always very truthful and had no stake in the matter.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ This is by no means an imaginary event off north-west Waigéo.

⁶⁶ The feminine form *indias* is used three times for these islanders.

⁶⁷ One wonders who was pulling whose leg here. In any case, the story is based upon highly embellished facts. Francisco Viera SJ wrote in a letter from Ternate to the Jesuits in Portugal, dated 9 March 1559, that eight men had come to Morotai in an outrigger proah. Only one had survived and learned to speak (presumably Malay), and had explained that in his native island stones were used as illumination, though he had not mentioned that they were of animal origin. The man had died in 1557 (Jacobs 1974:275). Nicolau Nunes SJ, who lived in the Moluccas from 1547 to 1573, in 1576 wrote a similar account about nine tattooed men, whom he had seen himself; of these, two had survived (Jacobs 1974:686). Brito's version, with the *kuskus*, is repeated by Eredia (1807:138). Valentyn (1862, I:172) writes a similar sort of story about an Oelar Komala (Carbuncle Snake) with a brightly shining, egg-sized carbuncle, living 'just one island further on' – according to the Talaud Islanders. In fact, these 'carbuncles'

[About the King of Waigéo and his people]

His Majesty [Philip II] ought to show the King of Waigéo mercy because of the great zeal with which he has served Him, submitting [to Him] without any reserve and, whenever the occasion arose, proclaiming the majesty of King Philip, Our Master, [saying] how large a part of the world He possessed, and how He was ruler of the best people in the world, that is, the Spanish nation, and how He had recently acceded to the throne of Portugal and thus added another New World to His royal crown.

He has stated to me how very fortunate he considered himself for [having] in his lifetime [had the opportunity of] subjecting himself to so powerful a monarch, and [how he hoped] that it might please God to grant him [a long enough] life to [be able to] give one of his sons in order to be taught how to serve such a people as we are, and how by our manners we clearly showed who our King was. This he confided to me through an interpreter⁶⁸ whom I had taken on at the island of Tamlonga, but in the course of time had stopped using, as I had learned the language [myself] and had a good grasp of it.

I discovered so much good sense in this good King that, if I had not thought of all I had to do in the service of God and His Majesty, I would have remained with him for a few days to explain all these things. The paganism of these people involves certain ceremonies that they might easily abolish. They regard their ancestors as gods and so preserve their bones. Whenever they go on a trip, they take these along in a box and, when they eat, present them with food and drink; and when they go into battle, they eat of a certain [kind of] wood, saying that its strength makes them invulnerable. They also wear on their person a [piece of] wood with which they ward off contrary winds.⁶⁹ And they have other pagan customs [besides].

This King has only one wife, and he has imposed this rule in his kingdom. They are a gentle people, and not greedy. They are always obliging, and keep a smiling face, in contrast with the people of Misoöl, who are very greedy and given to debauchery and theft; when I sailed from Misoöl for New Guinea with three vessels, they kept asking me to go on a raid to Serdanha.

As I was convinced that it would be serving God and His Majesty if they

may have been (fossil) *damar*, a resin that I have seen used, mounted on a piece of cane in the manner described by Brito, as a torch to fish by at night.

⁶⁸ The MS has Naguatato. A Naguatatlo is a Mexican Indian who speaks both Nahuatl and Spanish.

⁶⁹ These are black bangles made of a marine plant, in Malay called *akar bahar*, which are still widely used today, even in Europe, to ward off illness, in particular rheumatism.

knew us [Europeans] better, I informed them that there was a fortress of His Majesty's quite close to Serdanha, where they should go to surrender themselves; and that I could only repay them for the goodwill they had shown us with the favours and gratitude that would be shown them there. And [I] also [advised them] that they could observe the new power and its practices and customs, and they could see our artillery, which is what they admire most, as well as churches and the religious practices of our Faith, and that everything would greatly please them.

I, as one Portuguese, and the other I had with me, would both like them to do this. That, moreover, on their testimony I might receive a reward for the trifling service I have rendered His Majesty without demur or objection.

The King of Waigéo told me that, since it was far away, he was prepared to go with [only] two vessels, but that all the remainder of his people were to stay behind to guard and defend his islands, lest those of Apaa should attack them on account of the loss of face they had suffered in the brush they had had with us, when they had jumped into the sea; for the news that I had left those islands was sure to spread quickly.

[Journal – continued]

And so we set out [from Notan] with five ships for the island of Misoöl, where the King added two more, and we headed for Serdanha with seven vessels. We soon reached Seram, and sailed due north-west along the coast, and on this coast found many villages of five hundred and six hundred men each, until we arrived at the village of Atula⁷⁰, where I heard the news that Rubohongi⁷¹, the admiral of the King of Ternate, was at sea with a large fleet of *kora-kora*, and had gone to His Majesty's fortress in Amboina to lay an ambush, where he had killed a few Christian *yndios*. Therefore I henceforth travelled with a bodyguard, and when the sun rose at dawn near the village of Anaade⁷², we saw many ships in the direction of the village of

⁷⁰ The location of this village 'on the north coast of Seram (129°31' long.E.)', as proposed by B&M, is correct; but Atula probably is 'Hatoe Alau', modern Cape Pemali, at the eastern end of Seleman Bay. Around 1700 this coast was inhabited by many Papuans from Misoöl (Valentyn 1862, II:58-60).

⁷¹ Reboanje in the MS. Rubohongi (an old Ternate title meaning 'Smasher of Fleets') was instructed by the Sultan of Ternate in about 1570 to go and fight the Portuguese in the Amboina area. In 1581/82 he was still responsible for this; his base was on the Hoamoal peninsula in West Ceram. For details, see Jacobs 1971:114-5 and 339; Van Fraassen 1987, I:43.

⁷² Anaade must have been a village on Seleman Bay, to the east of Saway, where today the Sapulewa language is spoken; Anaade thus would represent *hena ata*, 'four hamlets'. In the 16th and 17th centuries, the word *henna* ('tribe, clan') formed part of many place-names in West Ceram.

Permata⁷³; I immediately sent my two fastest vessels, each with one or two bright *yndios*, to reconnoitre [and see] if these were civilian ships, and [instructions to] quickly turn back to their point of departure if it was a war fleet.

This way I would have time to get away; for the ships I had brought from the Moluccas were unwieldy after almost a year at sea, and their crew was tired and exhausted from the voyage. As the two vessels that were observing the war fleet turned back from the open sea, twenty-five Ternatese *kora-kora* started overtaking them, and when I saw this, I remained near the coast, so they would not catch sight of me.

I went ashore at a village called Saway, which is tributary to the King of Bacan, and there I met one of his nephews, by the name of Quilmontere⁷⁴, who received me very well. As the two ships I had sent beyond the cape [of Hatu Alau] to spy on the fleet had not come back, and joined me only two days later in this village, we stayed there for twelve days.

There I let the two Kings of Waigéo and Misoöl return to their countries, telling them that I wanted to go to the fortress in search of Portuguese, in order that the three of us might go to New Guinea once more, on account of what the people of Apaa had reported [about the three Europeans], so that they should keep ships in readiness for that journey. The King of Waigéo asked me how many moons he should wait for me, and I assured him [it would only be] three or four at the most. And so he took leave of me with tears in his eyes, and I gave him a scarlet cape; he was very pleased, but [also] very sad because I was leaving him.

The Captain of Amboina had been apprised of the news that I was staying on the other side of Seram, as he stated in a letter which I received; [on the other hand,] he had been informed by letters from the Moluccas that I had left Bacan with two *kora-kora* more than a year before, and that they believed I was dead because they had not heard from me since. He wrote this to Diogo de Azambuja, who upon receipt [of this letter] immediately gave the King of Bacan orders to send a *kora-kora* in search of me; this vessel came upon me in the village of Tolemata⁷⁵, not far from Saway, where [the King of Bacan] had a timber fortress. For Azambuja had heard that [Rubohongi]

⁷³ Beramita in the MS. This village changed its location over an area of about twenty kilometres to the east and west of modern Wahai several times. See note 75.

⁷⁴ This is Brito's rendering of the Ternatese title Kacili Menter, 'Prince Councillor', by which this functionary was addressed.

⁷⁵ Tolimanta in the MS.; according to Valentyn, this was the Amboinese name for (or probably pronunciation of) Permata. In about 1700 it had moved to a site ten kilometres east of Hatu Alau, near modern Wahai. At that time it had strong trade connections with the King of Misoöl, who used to sell slaves there.

was pursuing me to prevent the Portuguese occupying the [north] coast [of Ceram.] on the far side from Amboina.

And from here I got to Ternate, which I had left nineteen months before; here I met with Diogo de Azambuja, the Captain Major, who at that time was in Tidore. I presented him with a slave from New Guinea, worked and unworked gold, and *massoya* wood and that other [variety of] wood which is similar to cinnamon⁷⁶, and pearl-shell, which he much appreciated; and he told me that he would advise His Majesty accordingly.

It seemed more appropriate to me that I should do so myself (since I had seen that country with my own eyes and had set foot in it), however, in order that His Royal Majesty might make his arrangements as He sees fit, in accordance with what He deems most appropriate for His royal service. And towards this end I⁷⁷ gave him this truthful report, without adding anything or stating anything other than the truth.

The land of New Guinea, as far as the part in and the route along which I travelled is concerned, has many shoals and sandbanks and numerous reefs and currents between its multitudinous islands. There are also many whirlpools, which prevent high-sided ships from taking this route to New Guinea. On the southern shore [of MacCluer Gulf], the trade in the products which I have mentioned and in slaves, which are like those of Guinea, can be opened up with New Spain, and [communications] would be easy and quick. The prevailing winds there are west-south-westerly; they are useful for getting to the [appropriate] latitude for loading nutmeg and mace, the islands of Banda lying about sixty *leguas* south of New Guinea; and one can get there via a course that I shall outline.

Here I [shall] leave off.

⁷⁶ *Kayu lawang*; see note 60.

⁷⁷ The manuscript has *dio* ('he gave'), which does not make sense.

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