Geelvink Bay

Carl Wilhelm Ottow and Johann Gottlob Geissler

“Een kort overzigt van het land en volk op de Noord-Oost-kust van Nieuw-Guinea” (Mansinam, den 29 Januarij 1857)
Copy UA: handwritten manuscript, 77 pp. [p.77 missing]
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Introduced and Translated by Jan A. Godschalk

A Brief Survey of the Land and People on the Northeast Coast of New Guinea (Mansinam, 29 January 1857)

Translator’s Introduction

Carl Wilhelm Ottow was born on 24 January 1827 in Luckenwalde, south of Berlin, Germany. His father (who died in 1830) worked in the cloth-making trade, and Carl was apprenticed in it by repairing uniforms. His mother (she was married again before too long to her late husband’s brother), a devout but domineering woman of strict Pietist and Lutheran convictions, had a great influence on him, and Carl developed early in life a strong zeal to evangelize. Through the impact of the preaching of the Revd Johannes Gossner in Berlin he became convinced of his call to mission work abroad. In 1852 he was commissioned as a missionary workman in Gossner’s Bethlehem church. Soon after Ottow left for the Netherlands to take a brief training session with the

Revd Ottho Heldring in Zetten (Hemmen). There he also met his future co-worker Johann Gottlob Geissler. Geissler was born on 18 February 1830 in Langen-Reichenbach, near Torgau (in Saxony, Germany). His father was a tailor and an active Lutheran. Geissler became an apprentice cabinetmaker, and he too trained with Gossner and was sent out by him.[1]

Gossner and Heldring (the latter called the "godfather" of the New Guinea mission) had agreed to send Ottow and Geissler to Dutch New Guinea with financial assistance of Dutch Christians, *inter alia* to cover their travel, outfit and housing expenses, but on the understanding that otherwise they had to support themselves as much as possible through a trade. Together with other mission candidates they left the Netherlands in June 1852 and arrived in Batavia (today Jakarta) in October. They went to work on a nearby mission estate, Kampong Makassar, continued learning Dutch and took up the study of Malay while awaiting government permission to travel to the outlying areas. This came through early in 1854 and in May they left for Ternate, where they stayed with the Revd J.E. Höveker. There they also met with traders plying the coasts of New Guinea. One of them, Captain G.J. Fabritius, had lived with his family and thirteen sailors without any problems on Roon (Rohn, Run, Rhun) Island in the Geelvink Bay for fifteen months[2] in the early 1850s, and he provided them with

[1] For most of the above, see J.C.G. and H. Ottow, *Im Namen Gottes betreten wir dieses Land: Die ersten Missionare Carl Wilhelm Ottow und seine Frau Auguste unter den Kannibalen auf Neu Guinea (1855-1862)*, Münster, 2004, chs. [2-3], and for Geissler, p. 134.

[2] So Fabritius to Goudswaard; cf. A. Goudswaard, *De Papoewa's van de Geelvinksbaai: Hoofdzakelijk naar mondelinge mededeelingen van ooggetuigen*, Schiedam, 1863, p. 5. Other time frames mentioned in the literature are: a year and a half (J. Pijnappel in "Eenige bijzonderheden betreffende de Papoea's van de Geelvinksbaai van Nieuw-Guinea," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 2 (1854): 371; Ottow and Geissler in a letter to E.W. King, 1 Sept. 1854, referred to in a letter by King, 6 Nov. 1854, *De Vereeniging: Christelijke Stemmen* 9 (1855): 583, similarly A. Wichmann in *Entdeckungsgeschichte von Neu-Guinea (1828-1885), Nova Guinea*, Leiden, 1910, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 83); and three years (J.E. Höveker in a letter to King, 4 Dec. 1854, *De Vereeniging: Christelijke Stemmen* 9 (1855): 718; F.C. Kamma in *"Dit Wonderlijke Werk." Het probleem van de communicatie tussen oost en west gebaseerd op de ervaringen in het zendingswerk op Nieuw-Guinea (Irian Jaya) 1855-1972: Een socio-missiologische benadering*, Oegstgeest, 1977, vol. 1, p. 49; J. and H. Ottow in op. cit., p. 43, referring to the letter from Höveker).

a basic wordlist.

After both the Dutch Indies government and the Sultan of Tidore had given permission, Ottow and Geissler left Ternate on the schooner *Ternate* (the owner, D.M. van Renesse van Duivenbode, had offered them free passage) in January 1855. It arrived in the Dore(h) Bay on Friday, 2 February, but could not enter the shallow strait. Both men then joined the navigating officer in a sloop and went to the island of Manaswari (originally Manansawari), near the village of Mansinam, where they had a look at an old shed built by a Captain Deighton and where they reportedly fell on their knees to pray and called out: "Im Namen Gottes betreten wir dieses Land" ("In God's name do we set foot on this land"); after that they went across to the mainland to look at another site, then returned to the ship. Early in the morning of Monday, 5 February, the *Ternate* anchored off Manaswari to drop them off with their belongings.[3] To this day that date is celebrated as marking the beginning of the Protestant mission in (formerly) Dutch New Guinea.

The supplies consisted of foodstuffs to last for a year, seeds and seedlings, cattle, chickens, ducks and geese, trade goods, and even prefabricated materials for a house. Ottow and Geissler used the shed as their temporary shelter. They decided to set up house on the mainland near Kwawi village, and began clearing a patch of land by themselves.[4] When in need of a canoe, they cut down a tree

[3] So Geissler in a detailed account to a friend (D. Brouwer?) in Surabaya, June 1855, in *De Vereeniging: Christelijke Stemmen* 10 (1855): 261-65. See further K. Roeber introducing J. and H. Ottow, op. cit., p. [vii]. Most of the material here on Ottow and Geissler's careers is covered in the Ottows' book. Cf. also F.J.F. van Hasselt, "Geschiedenis van het zendingsonderwijs op Noord Nieuw-Guinea," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsch Zendelingsgenootschap* [later *Tijdschrift voor Zendings-wetenschappen*] 66 (1922): 43-57; A.J. de Neef, *Papoealand: Het arbeidsveld van de Utrechtse Zendingsvereniging* [hereafter UZV] (Onze Zendingsvelden [Ser.]), Oegstgeest: Zendingsbureau, 1937, chs. 1-2.

[4] Kwawi is the name of a hill, the location where Ottow built his house and where his gravesite is, together with those of several others. This place (as well as Mansinam) has great historical (almost sacred) significance for the Papuans as it symbolizes the arrival of the Gospel of Jesus Christ who had not forgotten them. Kwawi later became a centre for both the mission and the church. It still exists, and is now part of the town of Manokwari. Approximately 50 m down the hill, along the shores of the Doreh Bay, were a number of houses built on stilts over the water. This little village, Kwawi, was inhabited mostly by

without asking for help to make one, but their attempts failed. Finally the people let them 'find' one, which they purchased. Soon Ottow got quite sick with malaria. Geissler also got malaria and developed a tropical ulcer as well; on the advice of the medical officer of one the visiting ships he returned to Ternate as early as April 1855.

But Ottow was not left idle. Although construction of the house was put on hold, partly because of intertribal fighting on the mainland, he was able to concentrate instead on learning the local language (compiling wordlists etc.). He proved to be a good observer. In September 1855 he was permitted to attend one of the stages of a mortuary ceremony, namely the preparation for making a *korwar* (described in the survey below), however not the most important part in which the soul of the dead person was believed to enter the *korwar*. It seemed to be still too risky to have an outsider present. Ottow tried to start teaching, but effective communication through a common language was not yet possible.

When Geissler returned in February 1856, he brought five carpenters with him. By July one house, on the island (Manaswari), was completed. Both missionaries, though still often stricken with illnesses, started informal worship services at their home in the Malay language, initially together with the (Muslim) carpenters. They traded with the local population, representing the interests of Van Duivenbode; this was necessary in order to earn an income, however meagre. They also decided to "buy up" neglected slave children,

members of the Rumfabe clan, owners of the land on the hillside, who made some of it available to the church. As for its name, Doreh (Dore, Dorei; the word means 'bay' in the Numfor language), a kind of umbrella term, relates only to the coastal people ("seafaring Papuans" in the Ms) who originally came from Numfor and/or Biak. They are an aggregate called Doreh people or Dorehnese. They settled along the shores of Doreh Bay and on its islands; Doreri means "Doreh bay (area)" in the Numfor language. As well, their villages, including Kwawi, have been collectively referred to as Doreh (see also A. Haga, *Nederlandsch Nieuw Guinea en de Papoesche eilanden. Historische Bijdrage, ± 1500-1883*, Batavia, 1884, vol. 2, p. 294). It should be born in mind, however, that the generic name "Doreh" is mentioned regularly in the (mission) reports, where strictly speaking it would have been more accurate to use the actual name of the village in question. For sources, see F.J.F. van Hasselt, *In het land van de Papoea's*, Utrecht, 1926, p. 67; F.C. Kamma, op. cit., vol. 1, e.g., pp. 60, 77, 200, etc., along with pers. comm. by Dr Daniel C. Ajamiseba and Dr Jelle Miedema.

raising and educating them in their home. This group eventually formed the nucleus of the "house church" community. The missionaries continued with their studies of language and culture, penning their results in a brief survey early in 1857, in my ken the first tentative ethnographic account of a New Guinea society from the mainland (while acknowledging Fabritius's observations on Roon Island nearby).[5]

According to Freerk Kamma,[6] the survey is fairly complete and the information appears to be reliable despite the fact that the authors had not yet begun conversing in the vernacular. The only major aspect of culture that they overlooked, or did not include, was the social organization. There are two sections in the survey that are worth noting. The first deals with the reckoning of time, especially of the year. This is based on the position of the stars and divided into twelve periods. The seasons are governed in particular by the constellations of Orion and Scorpio. The second concerns the narration of the myth of Manarmakeri, who is here referred to as the Old Man. Before his "baptism of fire," he is referred to by that name (or as the Old Man), but never as Manseren Manggundi (or as a young culture hero). It is for the first time that this story was published. Following one of the Numfor versions (from an island to the east of where they worked), Ottow and Geissler in fact use it in the context of explaining the origin of the Numfor groups. They do not mention the expected return of the hero Manseren Manggundi, but that integral aspect of the myth had already been reported a few years earlier by J. Pijnappel,[7] based on information received from Fabritius, and Mrs. Auguste Ottow would allude to it in a letter several years later.[8]

One cringes sometimes at the tone of the report. An ethnocentric tendency often creeps in, as when it is said that the forests need to be thinned out to improve health conditions. Descriptions are flavoured with moralistic,

[5] See J. Pijnappel, using data from Fabritius, "Bijzonderheden," loc. cit.: 371-83. [Eds.]
[6] Kamma, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 100-01.
[7] Pijnappel, loc. cit.: 383, cf. 377-9; cf., on the belief that Manggundi's son Konori was expected to return one day, A. Goudswaard, op. cit., pp. 84-8.
[8] In Kamma, *Koreri: Messianic Movements in the Biak-Numfor Culture Area* (transl. by M.J. van de Vathorst-Smit and ed. by W.E. Haver Droeze-Hulswit) (Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Translation Series 15), The Hague, 1972, p. 39.

sometimes sarcastic, comments; medicine men are “professors,” nakedness and uncleanness are vices to be eradicated within the framework of civilizing the people. Religious expressions and beliefs are dismissed as idolatry, the belief in immortality being the loftiest idea, but that is it. Suffice it to say that the authors brought with them not only a firm faith set within the Pietist tradition, but also the cultural and ethical presuppositions of German Europeans from the mid-nineteenth century. They were children of their time.

As alluded to on the final page of the report (third version, copy one, as discussed below), Geissler did go out to sea and rescued a small number of surviving castaways early in 1857. The Dutch Indies government reimbursed the missionaries for their expenses (mostly the cost of trade goods), and gave them a financial reward of 250 guilders each in appreciation for their work, as well as an annual allowance of 600 guilders each.[9] This improved their financial security, and eventually the concept of the “missionary workman” was abandoned by the sending agencies as impractical in Dutch New Guinea.

Both Ottow and Geissler spent considerable time away from the island, going to Ternate or sometimes Java, mostly to recuperate from their frequent bouts of illnesses. They also got married in Ternate. In late 1857 Ottow wedded a woman who had come from his hometown, and the two moved to the Doreh mainland in February 1861. Geissler married early in 1862, and stayed with his wife in Mansinam. Auguste Ottow *née* Letz proved to be a gifted language learner.

In 1858 a Netherlands Indies Commission led by Hugo D.A. van der Goes, Resident of Banda, visited several regions in Dutch New Guinea to conduct a scientific and expert investigation regarding potential locations for the establishment of a permanent government post. The so-called Etna-Expedition also visited Doreh Bay, from 3 May to 17 June and again for a few days in July on the return voyage. Van der Goes wrote up ethnographic notes on the areas visited by the expedition, including Doreh Bay. He had been given a copy of the *Overzigt* “by a friendly hand” in Amboina and in his final report he expressly

[9] The third “Gossner man,” J. Gottlieb W. Jaesrich, also benefited from this arrangement. However, the missionaries sent out by the UZV never wanted to receive financial assistance from the government for their missionary work as such; at the most they accepted subsidies for the schools they eventually established.

recognizes the work already done by Ottow and Geissler and does not duplicate it. But on one specific item he complements their findings, namely in the description of the "Roemsram" [*rumsram*, community house], and the supporting carved posts in particular, most effigies of which he was able to identify and name. The report also includes a pen sketch by Hermann von Rosenberg of the *rumsram* in Dore (the one in Mansinam had collapsed the previous year) and one of its effigies. Ottow gave permission to the Commission to make a copy of the Malay-Numfor wordlist compiled by him over the previous years. Dr. Johan Croockewit translated the Malay section into Dutch and re-alphabetized the wordlist; it is incorporated in the final report (Appendix KK).[10] In the same year the now famous Alfred Wallace[11] conducted fieldwork in the area and visited the missionaries, who in turn provided him with wordlists.[12]

After a brief illness, Ottow died suddenly and unexpectedly on 9 November 1862. He was buried the next day near his home in Kwawi. His gravesite, as with those of a few others subsequently interred next to him, has been turned into a kind of shrine.[13] Not yet 36 years old he had been physically completely exhausted. The people may well have looked at his death from another perspective. A year and a half earlier Ottow had let it be known publicly that two men who had come forward on Numfor Island claiming to be *konoor*s (heralds of Manggundi) should come to Mansinam and take him with them the next time they were going to the Papuan heaven; moreover, these impostors, as

[10] J.H. Croockewit, "Woordenlijst der te Doreh en omstreken gesproken wordende Myfoorsche taal, vervaardigd door den zendeling Ottow, in het Hollandsch overgebragt en gerangschikt door Dr. J.H. Croockewit Hzn." In H.D.A. van der Goes et al., *Nieuw-Guinea, ethnographisch en natuurkundig onderzocht en beschreven in 1858 door een Nederlandsch Indische Commissie* (Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië 9), Amsterdam, 1862, pp. 201-33.

[11] Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago, the Land of the Orang-utan and the Bird of Paradise: A Narrative of Travel, with Studies of Man and Nature*, London, 1872 edn., ch. 34. On Wallace being co-founder of the modern theory of evolution by natural selection, see I. MacCalman, *Darwin's Armada: How Four Voyagers to Australasia won the Battle for Evolution and Changed the World*, Melbourne, 2009. [Eds.]

[12] On the wordlists, see above n. 10; and for background, Pijnappel, loc. cit.: 374-7.

[13] See above n. 4 and for pictures, J. and H. Ottow, op. cit., pp. 121-2.

he called them, should cause him to die if they really had the power to do so. Now he was dead… As Kamma comments, "it stands to reason that his death was associated with the challenge he had so publicly expressed, and that it served to strengthen the belief in the power of Manggundi."[14]

Mrs. Ottow left New Guinea in April 1863. A Dutch mission society (the *Utrechtse Zendingsvereniging*) had now taken over the responsibilities and new missionaries were coming in. Yet even in 1865 Geissler and J.L. van Hasselt were still the only missionaries around. At the same time the question of leaving New Guinea altogether was seriously discussed in the Netherlands and Germany. Geissler did not agree with this proposal at all, and Mrs. Ottow (now living on Java) weighed in very heavily against the idea; according to her, her husband would never have thought of quitting.[15] So the mission continued, the missionaries stayed put and more arrived, expanding the outreach. Geissler and his family eventually left in August 1869 for a two-year furlough in Europe paid for by the government. They arrived in the Netherlands only in May 1870. On 11 June Geissler died in Siegen, Germany, where his brother lived, one day's travel from his hometown; he was just 40 years old.

The overview was originally written in 'High German' (*Hochdeutsch*) by Ottow - the main author - and Geissler.[16] This original document (or copies of it), if it is still extant, has not been located thus far. However, at least three different versions exist in the Dutch language.

The first version appeared in print late in 1857 and early in 1858 in the *Bijblad* [17] edited by Heldring, who had received a copy of the 'Overview'; it is

[14] Kamma, *Koreri*, op. cit., p. 108.

[15] J.J. Mulder-van Hasselt, "Het begin." In Kamma (ed.), *Kruis en korwar: Een honderdjarig waagstuk op Nieuw Guinea*, The Hague, 1953, pp. 43-4.

[16] See Geissler's 1863 comment on his deferences towards dealing with the late Ottow's greater initiative; thus Kamma, *"Dit Wonderlijke Werk,"* op. cit., vol. 1, p. 216. On the language question note that 'High German' is *Hochsprache* or language free from dialectic peculiarities.

[17] Ottow and Geissler, "Kort overzigt van het land en de bewoners der kust van Noord-Oostelijk Nieuw Guinea. [Mansinam, 2 Maart 1857]," *Bijblad bij de Christelijke Stemmen* 6 (1857-58): 113-68. [Not 1868, as sometimes rendered, e.g., Trompf (and Tomasetti) (eds.), *Religions of Melanesia: A Bibliographic Survey* (Greenwood Bibliographies and Indexes in

not known who had translated it. It is dated 2 March 1857 and on the final page signed off with the names Ottow and Geissler.

The second version is a handwritten manuscript (H 87) held in the Archives of the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology [KITLV] in Leiden. It is not dated and is signed off with the name C.W. Ottow only. This signature proves to be his and he is, therefore, considered the translator of this version. The text resembles that of the printed version mentioned above.

Of the third version, two copies, the texts of which are virtually identical, have been located in Dutch archives. The first copy, the basis of the English translation below, is a handwritten manuscript, dated 29 January 1857. It counts 76 pages, but is incomplete as the final page (77) is missing. For that reason the names of the authors (and the translator) do not appear in the surviving document. It is held in the Archives of the Mission Council of the Netherlands Reformed Church [NHK], now part of the Utrecht Archives.[18] A note on page 1 indicates that it was meant for the Netherlands Missionary Society [NZG] in Rotterdam. It is written in a uniform, cursive longhand script. There are also several additional notes in the margin (as well as corrections in the text itself) written by a *Vertaler* or *V*(*ert*). [translator], in a handwriting different from that of the main document.

The second copy is a handwritten manuscript, with the same date, place and title, held in the National Archives in The Hague. It counts 189 pages and is complete. On the final page the names are given of not only the authors, Ottow and Geissler, but also the translator, Bernhard Roskott, who had been specifically asked by the Governor of the Moluccan Islands, C.F. Goldman, to translate this overview from German into Dutch, apparently without delay.[19]

Religious Studies 57), Westport, CN, 2006, p. 161. Eds.]

[18] Formerly housed at the Dutch Reformed Missiological Library at Oegstgeest, near Leiden.

[19] Roskott (1811-1873) was born in the county of Bentheim, Germany, near the Netherlands. A teacher by training, he was accepted by the Netherlands Missionary Society [NZG] in 1834 to assist in the training of teachers overseas; he was not an ordained missionary. In March 1835 he arrived on Ambon, where he soon established a teacher training institute and also began writing or translating teaching materials for school and catechism classes. Later he was appointed Inspector of Education of the schools run by the government in the Residence of Ambon. Upon arrival on Ambon, Roskott almost immediately married into a rich and renowned Indo-European family, the Twijsels, and over time he became a well known, if not

Both copies give the same date on page 1, 29 January 1857. This is probably the date on which Ottow (and Geissler) began, rather than completed, the writing of the *Overzigt*. For on the final page(s) they allude to the foundering of the schooner *Posa* off the Ayau Islands, north of Waigeo, and the sufferings of the surviving castaways, about which they had heard for the first time early in March 1857. Geissler then left at once for the Windessi area and returned in early May, after finding and rescuing three men. Word was sent to Ternate and the *Etna* arrived on 12 June to investigate. Ten days later it returned to Ternate (and continued on to Ambon) with the survivors. Ottow also was on board; he was to meet – and marry – his fiancée, Auguste Letz, in Ternate.

On 22 July 1857, Governor Goldman forwarded a handwritten copy of the translation of the *Overzigt* to the Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies in Batavia, Charles F. Pahud de Montagnes, who in turn had duplicates prepared, and in March 1858 submitted a copy to the Minister of Colonial Affairs in The Hague. The Governor-General also instructed that a copy be sent to the leader of the Etna Expedition, Hugo van der Goes, but by that time he had already left for the coast of New Guinea, with a copy of Ottow's report in his possession.

Roskott's translation differs considerably in 'tone' from the other two versions, in particular the one translated by Ottow himself. Thus a caveat is in order, that the text on which this English translation is based, reflects not only the observations and views of Ottow and Geissler but also bears an imprint of its translator, Roskott.[20]

somewhat controversial, personality in the Ambon society. A widower since 1856, he was summarily dismissed by the NZG in 1864 for having "an illicit relationship with a woman," out of which a son had been born. He continued working for the colonial government until his death in 1873. For Roskott's life, work and influence on Ambon, see Chris G.F. de Jong, 'Leven en werk van Bernhard Nikolas Johann Roskott (1811-1873) on Ambon (1835-1864),' 2011, unpubl. Ms, 30 pp., accessed on www.cgfdejong.nl. Cf. also De Jong's *De Protestantse Kerk in de Midden-Molukken 1803-1900*, Leiden, 2006, 2 vols.

[20] Roskott translated the original Report into Dutch. He is identified as such in the NA copy of this (third) version. The text or written wording of the NA and UA copies is virtually identical; most of the - minor - differences can be attributed to different clerks (four different handwritings). Hence the UA copy must also have been based on this version. Another line of approach would be to compare the handwritings in both copies, in particular the notes, corrections etc. by the *Vertaler*. For Ottow's own translation (H 87), see above, and the

The report contains a fair amount of words and phrases from the local languages. Since I am completely unfamiliar with them, I appreciate very much that [Drs] Lukas Noriwari, who taught at a theological seminary in the 1980s and who is a native speaker of the Biak language hailing from North Biak, was so kind as to check them. Words that have been changed at his suggestion have been marked [LN], but only at their first occurrence in the text. Furthermore, the spellings of these and Malay words, which were based on the Dutch spelling rules of the day, have been adjusted to reflect the spelling presently used in the Indonesian language. Thus *oe* has been changed to *u*, *dj* to *j*, *tj* to *c*, etc.

Now which particular language was spoken by the people interacting with Ottow and Geissler in the Doreh Bay area? They called it Mefoor (or Mafoor, Myfoor), which I have rendered Numforese, because they deduced that the people they talked with originally came from the island of Numfor. But according to Bert Voorhoeve,[21] anthropologist Gerrit Held noticed in the late 1930s that the language learned by Ottow, Geissler and their successors, and described by the Van Hasselts, was not the Biak language as spoken on Biak and Numfor, but a Numforese of a simplified type with a strong Biak flavour.[22] It was a kind of contact language or *lingua franca* already used widely among different groups before the arrival of Europeans, and comparable to Hiri Motu at the other end of the island of New Guinea. Although Ottow was facile with languages (mastering first Dutch, then Malay, then Numforese), his conversational Numforese was apparently not that fluent.[23] Moreover, the early missionaries lived in the Doreh Bay area and never worked on Numfor or Biak (see map).

Finally, although strictly speaking outside the scope of this contribution, we offer a brief note about the initial response of the people in the bay area after the arrival of Ottow and Geissler. We find next to nothing on this in the survey

foreshadowing of a later publication.

[21] "Een moeilijk begin. Zending, missie en taalwetenschap in Nieuw-Guinea." In W. van der Molen and B. Arps (eds.), *Woord en Schrift in de Oost* (Semaian 19), Leiden, 2000, pp. 185-9.

[22] Cf. the two Van Hasselts' *Noemfoorsch Woordenboek*, Amsterdam, 1947.

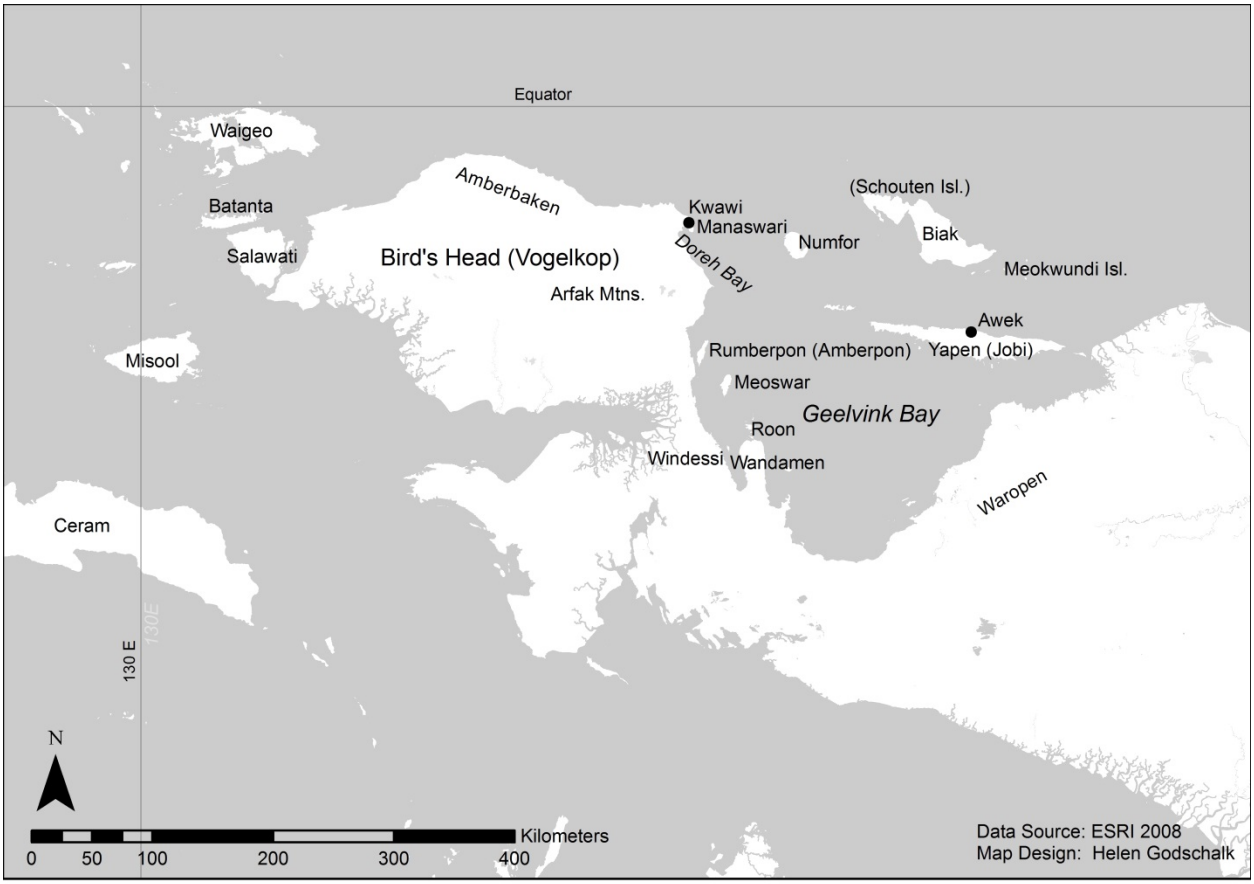
[23] Kamma, *"Dit Wonderlijke Werk,"* vol. 1, p. 129.

report. Frans van Hasselt at some point inquired about this issue after he returned to New Guinea in 1894; and then in the 1930s Kamma[24] found out more from the descendants about what went on in the minds of those who first heard the message over 80 years earlier. In essence, they were very afraid. They believed the missionaries to be people raised from death to life; for like their departed ancestors they were white-skinned, they came from the west, the abode of the dead, and they brought with them an incredible amount of wealth. Moreover, they came to stay, alone and without their families; so the question arose as to whether they had been banished. And the work they carried out, by themselves, was considered to be the work of slaves. The people watched intently, but did not help; it was too risky.

Thus, long before Ottow and Geissler began to preach they had already conveyed another message. And what the missionaries said was not always what the listeners heard. “But do we ask if they [Ottow and Geissler] have been able to so preach the Gospel since ten years ago that it could be understood? No, this was not possible there.”[25]

[24] Ibid., pp. 73-84; also F.J.F. van Hasselt, “De Protestantsche zending op Nieuw Guinea 75 jaar,” *De Opwekker* (Jan. 1930): 7-8.

[25] Quoted from a letter by Mrs Ottow, in *Berigten van de Utrechtsche Zendingsvereeniging* 6 (1865): 137 [transl. by JAG]; Kamma, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 173, 175, quotes from both Mrs Ottow and Geissler, who essentially makes the same argument.



Map: Northwest New Guinea (West Papua), 1857

A Brief Survey of the Land and People on the Northeast Coast of New Guinea (Mansinam, 29 January 1857)

Translation

The Land

The features along this coast which first strike the eye and draw the attention are the mountains. It is true, the northwestern part, near the island of Slawabi [Salawati], is flat country to some extent, but not far to the east from there the mountain range already begins, rising up gradually in an easterly direction, so that we have estimated the altitude to be 10,000 feet or higher near Amberbaken, situated at the 150th to 151st degree eastern longitude.[26] It is true that from there on the altitude decreases to the east, but it still continues to be considerable. Near Arfak, located at the 152nd [134th] degree eastern longitude, one may estimate it, by eyesight, at 8,000 feet. We have not yet had the opportunity to see the countryside itself, which runs from there in a southeasterly direction; but according to information received [**2**] the mountain range continues without interruption to the Great Bay[27] and even beyond it. Since the mountain range of such considerable height already rises up close to the coast, and one sees the same feature everywhere, the interior of the country remains entirely hidden from the searching eye and therefore unknown to the stranger and traveller. Even the people living along the coast are not much more fortunate about this, as overland trips are considered fraught with dangers, yea until now even entirely impossible, wherefore almost nothing is known about the state of the interior.

[26] That is, according to Ferro's meridian, or equal to about 132-33 Greenwich meridian. Greenwich was not formally adopted as the prime meridian for most European countries until 1884. [The Greenwich meridian, however, was used in the Proclamation of 1828 by which the Dutch took possession of New Guinea west of 141 E.L. (reprod. in S. Müller, *Reizen en onderzoekingen in den Indischen Archipel, etc.*, Amsterdam, 1857, vol. 1, p. 109) and in 1854 by Pijnappel (loc. cit.: 373). Eds.]

[27] For an account of how the Great (or Geelvink) Bay was named, see Tomasetti in the General Introduction to this volume. [Eds.]

The only exception to what is said above lies in the predatory raids which, however, are confined entirely to the neighbourhood alone, so that there is probably no one found among those living along the seashore who has dared to cross the mountain range.

It is true that trade, or rather the exchange of goods, extends from the west coast to the northeast coast, but only in such a way that the goods are taken from one village or hamlet to another. Through this exchange some information from the interior has reached the shores, but on the whole it amounts to little and it is also obscure and muddled. For example, it is told that there exists a mountain range on the peninsula near the Great Bay that is inhabited on both sides, at the foot as well as on the ridge. Further to the northwest the countryside is more open and it is also inhabited; its population brings a variety of objects from the west coast to elsewhere. But the features of the land, or rather the state of **[3**] the interior, have all in all not yet been discovered, and the questions which naturally force themselves on us, whether large rivers, lakes, plains or other mountains are found there which are not visible to the eye from the coast, remain unanswered, although one may assume that this is indeed the case. For the land is subject to earthquakes, wherefore one may suppose that volcanoes are to be found there, although no one knows with certainty that they are indeed there, with the exception, however, of a single one which is said to be located far to the southeast of the Great Bay and has been seen by the crew of a boat from Makassar that had drifted off by wind and current.

The presence of large rivers, streams and lakes may be assumed, because the mountain range makes the drainage of water from the interior down to the northeast coast impossible, hence of necessity there must be outlets in a westerly direction, or the water must be collected in lakes. However, although all of this is not yet known with any certainty, every reader will easily understand that one knows even less whether, for example, coal, iron, silver, gold or other ores or precious stones are to be found there. For all this a careful investigation is necessary, for which we have neither the ability nor much interest.

The Inhabitants

They are dark brown and of medium height. Their physical features differ [**4**]

from those of the Javanese and Malays, especially because they have fine black curly hair that they let grow long and that stands upright and as such is considered a fine decoration by them. Nevertheless, their hair has to be shaved off on several occasions, which will be discussed below in more detail. They go almost entirely naked; only the private parts are covered to some extent. However, in recent times this has improved, especially among the women of the Mefor [Numfor] tribe, and therefore – in this being followed by those of Salawati[28] – they gradually discard the old custom which half a century ago would be completely unheard of. The increasing trade has contributed much to this. However, clothing is still limited to the lower body and only consists of a piece of black, blue or printed cotton, in the form of a bottomless bag three to seven *el*[29] wide, and is no different from the generally known dress of the warm countries, namely what is known in the archipelago of the Indies as a *sarong*, which here bears the name *sru* [*srei*, LN]. However, many a woman is not wealthy enough to acquire such finery.

The men with few exceptions still keep to their ancestral clothing, and if they occasionally depart from this, it happens only on festive occasions; their usual clothing consists of a piece of prepared tree bark, five to seven feet long and one and a half feet wide. This [**5**] clothing of theirs is called *maar* and it is fastened by means of a piece of string or a belt tied over the hips around the body. In order to attach the *maar* to this string, the widest end is pulled through under it and partly hangs over it by way of an apron; the other part is pulled between the legs and wound around the body from the back, while the far end,[30] like a tail, hangs freely. This is the way clothing is generally used in the northeastern archipelago, which elsewhere is known by the name of *tjidako*. The

[28] The translator Roskott erred here; it is the other way around, cf. the text in H 87 and the *Bijblad*, p. 115.

[29] Other Mss read "three to four *el(len),*" which is more likely. The Dutch *el*, an old unit of length, measures a little less than 70 cm; it marks the distance between the tip of the middle finger and the elbow.

[30] Here *terwijl* (while) is ambiguous: to make sense of the description, is it probably better to follow the *Bijblad* and read: "so that…" Moreover, the use of *andere* (other) for the second time makes for difficult reading: it is meant that the furthest end or "the other" piece/end of the cloth hangs loose.

slaves, both male and female, have no clothing other than this.

The farther south, the cruder clothing becomes. The men from down there do not even take pains to prepare a *maar* from tree bark, and they simply make do with the bark of a banana tree which only reaches from the front to the back and can hardly be tied up. The majority of the inhabitants of south New Guinea still walk around completely naked; only those who live near the peninsula of the Great Bay are the exception.

Food and Houses of the Papuans

The main food of the Papuans is sago and fish. The first is usually prepared as a kind of porridge and consumed in that way. Twice a day the Papuans eat their fill of this fare. [**6**] However, sometimes other food is also eaten, like e.g., beans called *abroe* [*abrui*, LN], and a kind of millet called *pakem*, also a larger kind which much resembles hempseed and is called *vasboe* [*fasbu*, LN], as well as rice (*vaas*), maize (Dutch: *turksch koorn*) (*tastela* [*katera*, LN]), furthermore tubers grown in warmer regions such as *varkia* [*farkia*/*farkyai*, LN], *ufen* [*ifen*, LN], *kakijer* and *awir*. Fruits, or what may be considered as such, are gourds which are called *babi* or *ariain*; and besides that banana (*beef* [*imbief*/*imbyef*, LN]), pawpaw (*assawa* [*asawai*, LN]), breadfruit (*uur*), lansa[31] (*saindeboffor*), sugar cane (*kop* [*aman*, LN]), and other types. Except for bananas all the other fruits are available only in small quantities and they cannot therefore be counted as major foodstuffs.

Although sago does not grow everywhere, it occurs in many[32] areas in abundance and can therefore be acquired cheaply. Either it is picked up by those who need it or it is taken to places where needed and offered for sale. Sago among the Papuans is called *bariam* [or *baryam*, LN].

The houses of the Papuans all stand on poles. Those of the seafaring Papuans stand on poles in the sea not far from the shore; but always so far into the sea that even at low tide some water stands under the houses, and moreover so high that the highest tide does not reach the houses, although the difference here, south of the equator, between low and high tide is five to six feet.

[31] I.e., *Lansium domesticum*, a fruit-bearing tree belonging to the Meliaceae family. [Eds.]
[32] So the *Bijblad*; UA has *andere* (‘other’).

The houses of the cultivators, however, are [**7**] even higher, for two reasons. First, to be safer from enemies and to be able to defend oneself better during sudden attacks, and to have cleaner air, furthermore, because so many impurities fall from the houses, for one does not think of cleaning up. These are probably also the reasons why the houses of the seafarers are built into the sea.

The fitting up of the houses, both of the cultivators and the seafarers, is the same, and can very well be compared with a beehive, for the entire [extended, JAG] family lives together in one and the same house. Every house has a common meeting place which one, however, could also look at as a general passageway from which each family has a small entrance to their own quarters. However, one does not yet enter the living quarters directly, but first another room, at one end of which usually the kitchen or rather a kind of cooking area is located and where also the slaves usually live. From this room a small entrance leads to a room which for that matter also offers fairly limited space, but on the other hand is not obstructed by furniture either. The more well-to-do people sometimes have two rooms, one for themselves, the other for their slaves; nevertheless everything among them is in a deplorable state as well.

Cruelty and Thirst for Revenge

The Papuans show much attachment to those with whom they live in the same village. [**8**] As soon as a person from the same place has been offended, injured or killed by someone from another place, they are all immediately ready to take revenge. If they feel they are too weak for that, then the inhabitants of other villages in the neighbourhood are called upon to assist. Much time is lost with enterprises of such a nature, for fighting the enemy in an open battle is out of the question; the Papuan is not courageous enough to do that, but the band of heroes goes (the seafarers in vessels) and conceals itself near the houses of the enemy, and from their ambush they lie in wait for any enemy. Now when some persons from the enemy village appear, either to go on a trip or to do some other work, their way back is cut off and the fight begins, in which case the victory more often than not is on the side of the attackers, because they usually are superior in numbers, up to ten or twenty times. On such occasions the Papuan is cruel to the highest degree: they know no mercy, and only children are spared by the seafarers, because they are used or sold as slaves. The heads of those

captured are carried home as the highest prize with wild shouts of joy.

Such an undertaking, however, does not always succeed because the offenders are also on their guard, for as soon as the offence has been committed they already fear the revenge of those offended which, as they know very well, never fails to come – and if the enemy is [**9**] discovered near their village, everyone stays within the confines of their house so that the enemy has to return home empty-handed to make another attempt later in order to satisfy their thirst for revenge.

What has just been said about thirst for revenge also happens not rarely between one village and another without any reason or trace of giving offence, wherefore also travelling on the seas with a small crew or making an overland trip is very dangerous. For as soon as a party is encountered by others superior in numbers who are certain of their victory, immediately they yield to their lust to kill and a bloodbath is the result. For this reason all movement here is hindered by a thousand obstacles and remains within narrow bounds.

Childbirth among the Papuan Women

At the birth of a child nothing is known here of capable midwives (or their male counterparts) as among other peoples, nothing of this at all. The woman who is in such circumstances gets attended on by other women a few days before her delivery, women who themselves already know childbirth from experience, and therefore they are looked upon as great doctors. Because of lack of sensible assistance many times mother and child are lost, while even [**10**] this imperfect help is often lacking.

We were told of a woman who had delivered without any help, but who succumbed after giving birth to a blind child. The father who considered this poor child just a burden buried it alive together with the dead mother. We feel we are not mistaken when we state that such incidents frequently take place, for one does not meet people here who are blind or crippled from birth on, and hardly ever those who became such later on. Why not?

Name-Giving

This is always accompanied by festivities that primarily consist of a communal meal and of singing for several nights. It is less important with regard to small

children, for no old name is yet to be exchanged for a new one as often happens among Papuans. Thus children do not very early get their first name that later is to be exchanged for another one. Women may keep their first name until the time they have ceased to be virgins in one way or another. Should this be the case, however, then a feast must be given to sing the old name 'to the grave.' After the singing has been going on for some nights and the old name [**11**] has been killed, the person in question has the right to take another name. Often, it is true, one does not wait until the required age is reached, and if one wants to change the name earlier, then this often occurs when the children start wearing some covering, while this is also accompanied by feasts and one thus obtains a name more easily.

Moreover, it should be stated that the person who has changed his name may not be addressed by his old name any more, as this is considered an insult. There does not exist any law or custom how often a name may be changed; anyone does it as often as he chooses and it certainly would occur more often if it were not accompanied by expenses. We should further mention that the Papuans also give names to each domestic animal and are surprised that we do not do this.

Illnesses and Medicines

In general the condition of the land seems to be very propitious for one's health, and it would be even more so if the primary forests (*Urwälder*) were thinned out and the land cultivated. These forests make the air less healthy with their strong vapours because they cannot be dispersed by either sun or winds and therefore make the favourable condition [**12**] of the land in relation to health less apparent. Thus New Guinea is peculiar in that foreigners as a rule have to pull through an illness, although this is less the case among sailors. Foreigners most of all suffer from fevers and swelling of the feet, which we have experienced ourselves. However, once this latter disease has healed it is said that one does not suffer from it any more, which we can affirm from our experience so far. We found in respect to this disease that *opoldeldok*[33] with spirits had a positive

[33] Or rather *opodeldok;* German neologism [comprising *Opo(panax)* = Mediterranean resin for medical purposes; *(B)del(lium)* = palm resin also medicinally useful; *Dok(tor)* = medical practitioner], following *DUDEN Fremdwörterbuch* (ed. P. Grebe), Mannheim, 1960, p. 448.

effect when the swollen limbs are rubbed with it. Fevers though are more persistent, which is the case in other places of the warmer regions just as well. This sickness is also one of the most serious ones among the natives and is treated in various ways. The medicines against it are usually administered in the form of a brew, prepared from leaves, tree bark, roots and herbs. Also the general rule is that a place above the fire is prepared for the patient who is shivering from fever, or otherwise he is exposed to the heat of the sun. Furthermore, there is the practice that a cold shower is applied when one is hot with fever so that one may always say about this mode of treatment: the one or the other.

If the patient does not recover in this way and the end appears to be coming for such a sick person (for that matter not only with this but with every other dangerous disease), [**13**] a final attempt is made when no medicines help any more. At that time the professors of the Papuan art of healing are called upon to come and see the patient in order to discover the cause of sickness and also to prophesy the outcome, namely whether it will be death or recovery.

It is true that this seems to be an important feat, but it looks only like that, for usually the cause of sickness is attributed to evil spirits. For, as the belief in evil spirits already exists among them, they are only strengthened by the healers in their belief. But it is more difficult to predict the outcome of the illness, although often it can be seen and thus also be said when death already touches the lips what the outcome of the sickness will be. And if that is not the case, something has, in the case of recovery, turned for the better in the sickness. Or if the professor has predicted recovery for the sick person and he succumbs nonetheless, it will not be difficult at all with such superstition to come up with acceptable reasons in order to save one’s honour.

We cannot say whether what we said above is common. We have learned of it only from two examples. One example concerned ourselves; without being called on such gentlemen came to us to offer us their good services, which to their chagrin we did not accept. Another example became known to us on the occasion when we visited a sick person and were told that every hope [**14**] for recovery had already been given up for him by such fellows, which we could

[Eds.]

see at a glance just as well. Through this we discovered this secret, which otherwise is not generally known. We assume that it is commonly applicable but cannot say this for sure.

Skin diseases are more common and apparently are usually caused by uncleanness and because they do not wear clothing, which otherwise would protect them against many a small cut, benefit cleanliness and in this way aid recovery. Medicines against this are unfortunately unknown, just as with internal sicknesses. Frequently, chewed tobacco is applied or the wound is covered up with other leaves. Whether these possess healing powers, or such a covering only promotes the healing process in that the wound is kept clean and insects are kept away and therefore the natural healing power removes all obstacles, is the question. However, one is often too slow to apply such protective measures for such wounds, so that they are exposed to all kinds of dirt and vermin and sometimes are disgusting to look at. Until now we have not witnessed anything of commonly prevailing fatal diseases, although ships which return from here to the archipelago not seldom take quite a load of such news with them.

Death and Burial

As soon as the sick person has died the [**15**] relatives begin to weep or rather to scream and cry. From that moment on all communal feasts and festivities in the *minna* (village) [*mnu*/*menu*, LN] cease for a while, and above all no joyous music may be heard. Even the seafarers lower the sails of their canoes when approaching such a village, until the time of mourning has passed. As long as the corpse is in the house it is guarded by the relatives.

The funeral ceremonies are organized in proportion to the greater or lesser esteem of the dead and thus, of course, also the accompanying expenses. Their most expensive things are given along with the dead, such as armbands, earrings, etc. Furthermore, the corpse is wound in white cotton (when available) and finally wrapped in mats. The head of important people rests on a plate, and in that way the body is carried to the grave. The same ceremony takes place with slaves who have served long and faithfully, although with a little less ceremony. After the body has been buried, however, it is felt that one still has to take care of it, and for that reason foodstuffs and fire are placed on the graves;

this occurs most of all in the case of children, and even a little jar with mother's milk is placed in the grave when they have not yet been weaned at the time of death.

For newly bought slaves such ceremonies are not performed; a rope is simply put around the neck of such people, sometimes even when they are not yet dead, and they are thrown out of the house, where [**16**] they drop into the sea, after which a man steps into his canoe, ties the rope to it and rows with the corpse to the burial place. If he still wants to show it some kindness, he digs a grave to bury it; oftentimes, however, such corpses are simply pulled ashore and left there unburied, where they fall prey to insects, worms and crocodiles, or sometimes poison the air for a long time still.

Nothing is done with those who have been murdered; they are left on the spot where they were slain. One greatly fears the spirits of such people. When the sun sets all the inhabitants of the village gather where the victim had his home and begin to scream with all their strength, in order to chase away their spirits lest they return to their homes; this screaming is repeated many times.

As has already been said above, the committal is not at all over with the burial. For a long time afterwards the relatives resume their expressions of mourning, often at certain times of the day. The shorter or longer duration depends, however, on the greater or lesser love and respect the person enjoyed in his life. Several months after the time of mourning, or after several years have gone by, or even also immediately after the mourning period, when one has the means to defray the cost, a *korrowar* [*korwar*, LN], that is a wooden doll, is made for the dead person. On special occasions or undertakings [**17**] presents are given to it by way of an offering; such a present often consists of a beautiful piece of linen[34] or tobacco, on the occasion of which the dead person is addressed or his help is invoked. One believes that one will then be able to remain assured of the help of the *korwar* or rather of the spirit of the dead person who then is supposed to live in the *korwar*.

The making of the *korwar* is, again, accompanied by a feast; for many nights before the work is begun the gathered crowd is singing while the musical

[34] This refers to one of a number of Indonesian linens traded into the region; cf. C.B.H. von Rosenberg, *Der malayische Archipel: Land und Leute,* Leipzig, 1878, pp. 445, 454, and esp. 461 for clues. [Eds.]

instruments are also used heavily. During one night, often in the first part of it, this singing even takes place in the open air. The next day, which is set apart especially for this, some men leave in a canoe while singing to fell a tree in order to take from it the necessary timber which then is changed by their sculptors into a human figure. Now, when one has succeeded in finding wood, a shot is fired and after that the wood, with much ado and singing, is taken home, where tobacco, *pinang* [areca nut], lime and betel, placed on brass[35] dishes are already ready for those who have assisted with this work. Together with the piece of wood, all these things are taken and placed under a shady tree, where soon a large crowd of men gathers together. One man then begins to work, while the others sing and in the meantime help themselves to the tobacco, etc. The height of this doll measures approximately one to one and a half feet, but [**18**] its preparation does not take place all at once, as usually first only the head is fashioned, and even when on that day a little more is done the place for the eyes is always left open; these consist of blue beads[36] and are put in later during great festivities. On that occasion the image is also addressed, questioned and shaken, probably on the assumption that then the spirit of the dead which has fled away is called back, so that from now on it can dwell properly in the *korwar*.

But not only is such a doll prepared for the dead person, for however much it features prominently and plays the main role in the whole affair, yet on top of that a feast is prepared by the more well-to-do, on the occasion of which yet more blocks of wood are prepared for the dead person, in the form of a [small] house (such as those with which the children in Europe play), with the difference that these are one foot long. Such little houses for the dead now are placed in trees here or there in the forest, probably to provide a home for the wandering spirit. This writer [Carl Wilhelm Ottow] has attended such a feast and found it as follows: –

At two or three o'clock in the afternoon he already found a large crowd

[35] UA and NA have *geel koper* ("yellow copper"), H 87 has *koperne* or *geel koper*, the *Bijblad* has *geel koper*, but in this place omits the reference to dishes altogether.

[36] *Koralen* (here and in the other relevant cases, glass beads, a popular trading good in this region; see, Rosenberg, op. cit., pp. 446 (*Glasperlen*), 460 (*Glaskoralen*); J. and H. Ottow, op. cit., p. 4 (*Glasperlen*). [Eds.]

singing in a new house[37] that had been built expressly for this purpose. The assembly sang in unison; the village chieftain led the singing. The guests were seated along the walls of the house, except for some persons [**19**] who were sitting within the inner circle and busying themselves with preparing a meal. Coconuts were grated, others sifted sago, yet others were cooking beans; later everything was mixed and kneaded and then baked into a kind of cake, for which one used tree leaves (on the fire).

Two men occupied themselves with preparing the houses or pieces of wood mentioned above, which after being cut were also brightly painted. When this was finished the chieftain stood up, gave a speech to the gathered crowd in which he among other things asked them to maintain calm and peaceful as a Dutch *pandita* (missionary) was present; if perhaps there was someone in the meeting who wore white feathers on his head, but did not have the right to wear them, they should however not argue and fight over this; more about this later.

After this the celebrants stood up and brought their finery in order, which consisted of beads (*ira*), yellow leaves (*undam nanyaer*) and white feathers (*mambar* [*manbur*, LN]); these are not feathers of birds-of-paradise (*manbevoor*). Then they grabbed bow and arrow, spear and sword, and arranged themselves for performing a dance [outside the house], that is, two by two, with the one hand holding each other by the waist and in the other holding the weapons. In that way the procession began, [**20**] going around in a circle singing, jumping up from time to time and kicking the feet up and out. They call this dancing *kommas* [*komas*/*kofyer*, LN]. About 4-500 men participated in it. Some women also joined in the circle; they carried something with them wrapped in linen, probably the houses mentioned above and the *korwar* prepared earlier. In the meantime each dancer was given a sago cake and a piece of smoked pork, distributed in the following way. A man stood in the centre with pork and gave two pieces to each dancer on the inside; another stood on the outside who likewise gave each dancer on that side two sago cakes; this was shared among each pair. After this was over

[37] Not to be confused with the *rumsram* (referred to below, under Various Festivities), which already existed.

some of the onlookers who had been in the new house took uncooked sago and made balls from it in the form of snowballs, in order to throw them at the first pair of dancers who had opened the dance just when they were about to lead the procession into the new house, which they by throwing the balls wanted to prevent or at least make difficult. These dancers, however, tried to evade the balls by jumping aside, because otherwise they would be laughed at. In spite of all this opposition, they managed to get into the house, after which the play came to an end. The remainder of the procession followed without problem, and now the dance resumed and continued for at least another fifteen [**21**] minutes.

After a pause the food, which consisted of sago porridge, smoked fish and pork, was readied. All the guests sat down at the table or rather on the floor as the former was not yet part of the furniture of the Papuans; they ate to their heart's content and the present writer was a guest. In the meantime it was getting dark, and the reporter therefore had to withdraw himself after the meal because he still had to return to Mansinam which is a distance of at least three quarters of an hour from Dore. He therefore could not wait for the end of the feast which, as he was told, would not be before the next morning. During the entire night they would still be dancing and singing, and also would have another meal, which they had already been preparing.

Note. The use of white feathers of the *katalla* [*katera*, LN], mentioned above, is of great significance among them, of which the description now follows: –

Not everyone has the right to use these feathers, and the person who belongs to those who are entitled to wear them, however, may not wear as many as he chooses at all, for these feathers are signs and numbers of heroic deeds and only honoured and respected persons are allowed to decorate themselves with them. Clothing, beads and armbands are for everyone, but the man who adorns himself only with those is equal in esteem to women and children. But the feather of [**22**] the *katera* is the adornment of heroes, that is of those who have already killed or kidnapped people: for each heroic deed or rather criminal act only one feather, absolutely not more. Such a hero (truly a criminal) may join in discussions; his opinion and judgment are certainly taken into account, he is a man for whom one has respect.

At the time this secret was discovered the reporter was indeed dismayed and he did not know what to think when suddenly he saw so many murderers and kidnappers before him.

This scene appeared to him even more gruesome when he noticed the great number of feathers that some wore; there were several men who had from ten to twelve on their head, others fewer, but they were there in all grades from ten to one, and they showed these off in the most ostentatious way. One of them who wore no feathers said to the reporter that he had murdered thirteen people, but that he did not have enough hair on his head to stick the feathers into it... Terrible! Horrible!

On such festive occasions, therefore, often serious quarrels arise, for as soon as someone wears more feathers than to which he is entitled, he is asked how he got all those feathers and then he has to count up his murders (*moorden*). This questioning, however, is always considered an intentional insult and thus one or the other must be wrong. But [**23**] the inquiry is not finished that easily, for if the one or the other has been convinced of his wrong, the insulted party will not cease getting even with the one who offended him; sometimes the quarrel stops with scoffing and abusing or a fight, but not seldom the matter ends with a slaying (*moord en doodslag*),[38] in which case immediately another feather has been gained. This is what the chieftain had in mind when he asked for peace and unity.

Another usage at such feasts concerns the yellow leaves. These, too, mean something extraordinary and refer to those who are familiar with the secret of procreation. In respect to young men wearing such a leaf indicates as much as that they have already violated a virgin, which for that matter is the order of the day, and furthermore these are the signs for all married persons, and to make it short it will be enough to know that yellow leaves are a sign that the man who adorns himself with these has intimate contact with the other sex. All of this is certainly not covered up and not considered disgraceful among the Papuans, but they rather boast in this, so that it is also true here what the apostle Paul already

[38] An idiom for being ‘at each other’s throat.’ [Note that there is no clarity here over whether feather acquisition is more likely to come from killing outsiders than in this case from slaying someone in one’s own group, a normally horrific thing to do for the whole security circle. Eds.]

said of the heathen of his day: “They seek their honour in disgrace” [Phil. 3:19].

Abducting young girls is very common; the man takes the girl to the forest where they spend several days together. Upon their return, fighting and quarrels start between the relatives of both parties, whereby often arrows are whizzing about their ears, until finally an agreement [**24**] is reached, on the occasion of which either the marriage is concluded as yet, or a fine is imposed on the man, which usually consists of a slave or equals the value of a slave. The man, however, keeps the honour that he is a hero, ... a hero of prostitutes.[39]

Finery or Adornment among the Papuans

The Papuan is very keen on adorning himself or also on carrying on his body the necessary prophylactics against illnesses and evil spirits. One may consider as adornment tattooing, through which one covers his body with many indelible figures. This is done with the thorn of wild lemons with which such figures are pricked into the skin. Tattooing is called by them *kopakoe* [*kopaku*/*kopai*, LN], literally: ‘we nail ourselves.’

Next follows the use of beads, which are mostly worn around the neck. Such a necklace is called *esroen* [*esron*, LN]. In addition, a kind of ribbon called *sarek* is made from beads and worn around the neck like a bandoleer, and other ribbons are worn like small aprons (*kapape*s). Likewise, *sarek*s made from tree bark or leaves are common as well as armbands worn around the elbow or the hand. Other kinds of armbands are made from seashells, or also from brass, silver or tin which also is considered silver by them. [**25**] One often sees a string tied around the foot, on which small shells are strung. All of this serves exclusively as adornment.

Means to protect against illnesses and evil spirits (*manoeën* [*manwen*, LN]) are as follows. At the top of the list is the talisman or magic wand (here called *aibeman*). This wand hangs on the back of the neck and is tied around the neck with a string. According to them, it protects against death, but it is not always worn. Only when an undertaking of importance is coming up is it worn; because according to them they would otherwise very certainly lose their lives. Now if a

[39] Thus, creating an apparent ambiguity, both the UA and NA copies of this version: “*een held ... een hoerenheld*.” This may well be an ‘interpretative’ translation by Roskott. Cf. the *Bijblad* “*een held*” (“a hero”) and Ottow himself in H 87 “*een man*” (“a man”).

raid or a long-distant trip is to be undertaken, the wand is first rededicated in a proper way; this consists in putting a charm on it and coating it with chewed *pinang*, betel and lime. The person himself also is to undergo this same dedication, and above all the forehead and arms are smeared with these items. One believes oneself, then, to be invulnerable, all the more because previously the oracle had already been consulted, which predicted to them nothing but success for their venture. But if in spite of all this the person concerned is still injured, a little is scraped off the wand, which the injured person is to use so that he recovers. They say that when an injured person eats from this he will not die. Another string is set with small pieces of wood and tied around the knee; it also serves to maintain health.

Moreover, braided rings of rattan and beads worn in the hair are signs of mourning. A rattan ring around the neck means that one's father or [**26**] mother has died. Likewise a ring around the arm above the elbow is a sign that one is mourning a sister, brother or child. These rings are worn for such a long time that they fall off on their own. Shaving off the hair is also common as a sign of mourning; but the person who wants to wear beads in his hair cuts only a little away or at any rate leaves a tuft of hair to be able to tie the beads to it. They are usually worn around the forehead and pulled through behind the ear, but are in general less common.

Finally, when marriage has been dissolved by the death of the husband, the widow is not allowed to cover the knees, for as soon as she starts doing that she is considered bent on marrying again, because she has removed the signs of mourning. It is common that such a widow marries one of the brothers of the deceased husband.

Engagement, Marriage and Matters Relating to These

Engagements often occur without prior knowledge of the children, usually when they are still very young. The parents of the boy or lad look for a girl whom they wish their son to marry. When they think they have found one to their liking, a delegation is sent to inform the parents of the girl of their wishes. If the parents are pleased with the proposal, negotiations are [**27**] begun concerning the question of how much will be paid as a bride-price to the parents of the girl. This bride-price usually is made up of two to four or six slaves. The envoys

return with the stated conditions to discuss these with the persons concerned. If the terms are accepted the envoys go for the second time to the parents of the girl to conclude the agreement and receive the "yes" to the marriage proposal. Once this has been received a good but difficult custom is in vogue among the Papuans, that is, from that moment on the engaged couple as well as the parents-in-law and other relatives may not associate with each other and the couple is not allowed to even see each other, let alone talk with one another. When they meet by chance the woman usually runs away. And all of this is not just observed superficially but very much with all seriousness, so that it is even improper when the one mentions the name of the other. This continues until the marriage has been solemnized. However, if a totally unexpected meeting takes place and one can hardly avoid the other, at least the eyes are turned away or cast down.

When the engaged pair has grown up, so that the marriage can be solemnized, it is then carried into effect without further delay. The parents of the boy hand over the promised slaves in accordance with the agreement, of whom however a few have already been given immediately after the engagement as security of the indissolubility of the concluded [**28**] agreement, so that now only the remaining ones are given. It is true that on the part of the bride counter-gifts are also presented, but only as are necessary in the household, yet so many that when the marriage is solemnized the value of the reciprocal gifts is about equal. Once the preparations are made, the merry-making starts at once, too. Already for several days prior to the marriage, [kettle-]drums accompanied by singing are played busily in the houses of both parents, until finally the appointed hour or rather the appointed night has arrived, and the bridegroom is led into the house of the bride by the light of torches. A man who is of good repute among the Papuans solemnizes the marriage, puts the hand of the bride into the hand of the bridegroom, chews *guraka*[40] and blows the vapour through the hands held together, a gunshot is fired and there! marriage is concluded. Whether the gunshot really is part of the ceremony or whether its purpose is to enhance it, is not known to us; for a gunshot has also already been fired at the moment when

[40] It probably is a regional term meaning "ginger." *Air guraka*, hot water mixed with ginger and topped with moist canary seeds, is a popular drink in Ternate.

the bridegroom enters the home of the bride. However, the latter only takes place among the more well-to-do, the former among both poor and rich. After the marriage has been solemnized the young couple sits down beside one another on a mat and is guarded by a few persons chosen for that until dawn, after which the husband returns to his former home. At [**29**] nightfall he goes back to his wife, where the guardian again receives him and guards him until morning. This lasts from five to seven nights and only after that are they left to themselves.

In marriage the husband is the privileged one, the arbitrary master and lord.[41] Not infrequently he adds to his first wife a second one, which is allowed for the husband but not the wife. However, this second marriage usually is a great bone of contention within the family. Both women scold and rail at one another, pull each other's hair, yea, cut and stab each other with no end in sight, so that a fight between the two is almost inevitable. Domestic peace is then usually gone forever, until one of the wives sounds the retreat and leaves her husband. In such a case flight is considered divorce. However, if marriage has been violated by adultery on the part of the wife, the husband's jealousy quickly leads to murder. The least suspicion, the least appearance of it, is already sufficient to raise the mistrust of the husband. For example, no married woman may give tobacco, lime, *pinang* or *sirih* [betel] to an adult man, not even an indigenous cigar. Also she may not accept a bamboo comb from any man, or she will be immediately suspected of having a relationship or cohabiting with the person who gives or accepts such things. The jealous husband straightaway has his wife undergo an ordeal, which is accompanied by a solemn oath by Nanggi (the firmament). The woman then has to put her hand in a pot filled with boiling water to take out an object [**30**] thrown into it; if she burns her hand with this test, the woman is considered guilty. Another method to clear oneself of such suspicion is whereby molten lead or tin is poured into the hand, after the hand has first been covered with a linen cloth. If the molten metal penetrates through the cloth and thus the hand of the woman gets burned, she is considered a recognized adulterer and in all probability has to pay for this with her life.

[41] These intriguing missionary observations in defence of the rights of women are worth noting. [Eds.]

When marriage is dissolved through death, the parents or kinsfolk of the deceased husband or wife lay claim to one or more children from the marital union. If the surviving spouse does not want to give them up, then this may also lead to scenes of murder, for the children are valued not solely out of love but also because of lust for gain. On such occasions the female children, especially those who are good-looking, are valued most. One can count on a marriage, then, whenever a girl presents the expectation of a profit. For these reasons young slaves are often adopted as children, as later on a six-to-tenfold gain can be realized with them. That is the motive for love of children among the Papuans.

Various [Other] Festivities among the Papuans

One may also include among these this one: some time after the wedding ceremony the young [**31**] woman is taken to the home of her husband (for at first the young man lives with his parents-in-law), which also takes place with much ado again. On this occasion the young woman stands in a canoe which is accompanied by two other canoes. With these two other canoes, one rows around the other canoe singing, with the understanding that the canoe with the woman always is between the other canoes.[42] This takes place in the vicinity of the house and continues until one has finally reached the new home and the young woman is put ashore.

Furthermore, although this is not so common, the young woman is locked in a room after her first delivery, while outside there is singing without interruption until the time set for this is up. The person in whose honour this feast is prepared does not get to see daylight during this time and receives a new name, too. Also the first child has a special privilege in that one half of it is considered to belong to the father's brother or the mother's sister. If it is a son to the father's brother, if a girl to the mother's sister; they often undertake to

[42] Both the UA and NA Mss refer to three canoes, two of them apparently circling around each other and moving around the one in the centre in which the young woman stays. However, the translator may have erred here. The other two Mss refer to only two canoes: the *Bijblad* "another," H 87 "a second;" and while they both make circles, the one with the woman in it always stays in the inside. Either way, the canoes move in the direction of the woman's new home; see Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 455.

educate the child as well. However, if there are no such collateral links, then others may receive that honour. Relationships between kin are reckoned indefinitely among the Papuans, so that sometimes mere acquaintance or companionship is considered a close blood-relationship.

[**32**] The first haircut of children cannot take place without a celebration either. First there must be singing for a couple of nights, only then it is all right for one to cut off the forest of hair thick with lice.

Furthermore, no house is built without the necessary festivities, yea, this already takes place even with repairs of some importance. A meal is prepared for the workers, whereby there is so much abundance that a large portion is left over. Now these leftovers are brought into the house of the nearest neighbour and now they begin to throw these at each other, and if someone is hit with the sago porridge it leads to shouts of joy by the other party. This lasts until the sago porridge is finished and the play stops on its own. What has been reported here applies also to the construction of the community house, called Roemsram [*rum sram*, LN]. Each community or village of the seafaring Papuans has such a house; it stands in a row with the other houses and is distinguished from these in that it has no access from them and, furthermore, that wooden images (statues) of people or crocodiles are attached to its stilts or poles. This house is dedicated to their faith or rather their fear and strictly speaking may be entered by no one already familiar with the secret of procreation, and if so only by the male sex, i.e. boys or youngsters, who indeed make use of it as many of them sleep in it.[43] Constructing such a new community house or [**33**] repairing it is done together and it is always accompanied by feasts.

The community house here collapsed on 8 January 1857, causing great fear as it was thought that the *korwar*s were angry. There was singing for nights on end in order to still their anger, lest they would send the evil spirits (*manwen*) to them that are always blamed for any calamity.

Another feast, though not as large, takes place when the children are clothed for the first time and is celebrated with singing, as with all their feasts. It takes place when the children have already reached the age of eight years, but is

[43] An ambiguous statement in view of the comparative cultural context. In Melanesia, experienced adult males would supervise novices in such a situation, considering the house holds generatively explicit carvings. [Eds.]

sometimes postponed until they are eleven or twelve years old.

Now on the other hand, a successful raid leads to a much more exuberant celebration. This is the case to even a greater extent when the raid took place as the result of an insult or murder suffered. Then everything is pure joy and jubilation. The returning band of heroes heads straight for the house which had suffered the loss to present the heads of the victims to the mourning relatives, with whom they then sing and jump and dance and shout full of joy because now the blood of one of them has been avenged. Every canoe that has such spoils or also a living enemy on board carries a sign or standard made from tree branches. The [**34**] arrival of such victors can already be heard from a great distance. Blowing on large shells is the audible sign of the success of the undertaking. At the approach of the vessels one sees them all rowing stately side by side; the jubilation of those who remained behind increases the triumph.

Finally something is to be said about the return of the men who took the contribution or tribute to Tidore. Such people will never return directly to their homes, but conceal themselves in the vicinity of their village and there await the night. At midnight they silently arrive in their canoes in front of the houses; now a shot is fired from each canoe; hardly has this happened when hurrah! the canoes fly away again, to return once more with great pomp the next morning. The canoes then are decked out with all sorts of goods. In front of the town (*mnu*) they row in a circle up to ten times; after that they row to the house of the chieftain, who is welcomed there with honours and sits down on a seat decorated for him. Boys who completed the trip for the first time have to step on brass plates when going ashore. Old and young, men and women gather around the chieftain to hear from him the story of the trip. Meanwhile, the vessel (*tampaberi*) is left [**35**] anchored in front of the house for five to ten days, only then is the *korwar* taken ashore and brought back again to its place in the house with the necessary pomp. Then the masts are removed and the vessel that thus far lay with its bow pointed landward is turned around, so that it now has to lie with the bow pointed seaward for as many days, before it may be used again.

In the meantime those who stayed at home play a joke before the travellers return, but which relates to them and benefits them. For they look for a rattan

rope, 50-70 half-yards? (*ellen*) long, for each chieftain.[44] To fetch it in the forest some men leave singing and return home in the same way with what they have found. With the necessary formalities this rope is removed from the canoe and taken home after the lower end of the rattan rope has been decorated. The following afternoon the inhabitants of the village gather together; they split up in two parties, one at each end of the rattan rope and now they pull as hard as possible. At the lower end stand those who belong to the family of the chieftain. While pulling, the ends are wrapped around trees, which makes it more difficult for either party to gain the upper hand and causes the game to go on longer. Both sides exert all their strength to gain the victory. In the meantime several women dance around the others while they are pulling [**36**] – some one hundred people take part in this – until finally one party gains the victory, or else the game ends because the rope breaks. If the party at the bottom end wins, it means that the trip will have a happy ending; if, however, the party at the top end wins it means that the travellers are up against many difficulties.

The only trip to Tidore we witnessed here lasted no less than seven months, that is from 17 October 1855 to 17 May 1856.

Activities involving Superstition

One of the most important impediments among the Papuans by which all undertakings are hindered is the prevailing superstition. Any undertaking takes place only when the oracle (*kokkirsor* [*kakinsor*, LN]) allows it. This happens in

[44] Since chieftains are mentioned here, with regard to the position and role of the "leaders," there are two, partially overlapping, systems. First, in traditional society, a *mnu* community consists of patrilineal and patrilocal clans/lineages (called *keret* in Biak, *er* in Numfor), each of which is led by an elder (*eribo*); together they form a council of elders (*kankein karkara*). The second system came from outside. When tribute was delivered to Tidore, the Sultan of Tidore conferred certain titles to the leaders of the groups, such as *raja* (king, prince), *sengaji* (district head), *dimara* (village head), and *korano* (idem, a lower level). They functioned more like intermediaries rather than non-traditional leaders and their authority was not recognized far beyond a *mnu*. In H 87, Ottow refers to the "chieftain" in question as *korano*. In this case he would have been the leading elder of a clan/lineage, for each of these lineages had its own *tampaberi*, a large sea-worthy canoe, used among other things for the voyages to Tidore. Cf. Kamma, *Koreri*, op. cit., pp. 9-13; idem, "*Dit Wonderlijke Werk*," op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 56, 68, 71.

various ways, the most common is the one with lime, betel and *pinang*. All of this when mulched together in the mouth colours the saliva red. When the saliva has the desired red colour one of the hands is covered with lime, after which the fortune-teller mumbles something and then lets part of the saliva drip on the hand covered with lime. From the figures formed by the saliva it is thought [**37**] one is able to see whether an undertaking will succeed or not.

In another kind of method the fingertips are brought to the mouth so that one can blow on them; then the arms are stretched out again and the left arm is measured with the right hand. This measuring must be done with the span of the hand, which here, however, is only measured to the index finger. Then one measures as far as the right shoulder; the thumb stays there while the other fingers are brought to the mouth. Whereupon one mumbles a little and then measures back again; whereby the main point is that then the fingers of both hands touch each other exactly. All of this is funny to look at, for they make a face as if they wanted to but could not do it, in order that the matter carries some weight and to validate as oracle what they had already discussed before.

Anyone who is not yet lost in superstition will see that all of this is an insignificant play. We have already frequently been able to convince them of the contrary.

The more important the undertakings are thought to be the more often the oracle is consulted. The voyage to Tidore to deliver the tribute stands at the top. One begins by choosing the travellers, one by one, through divination; for whom it does not turn out well, he stays home. After that everything is made ready for the trip, so it is then said: “Tomorrow to sea!” The day before, all the men are resting, since [**38**] none of the travellers may sleep during the first part of the night. In the village it is by and large quiet and the mood is tense and watchful, for should a branch fall from a tree or someone sneeze or a certain white bird (*katera*) make a sound or should it start raining, then these are all signs that one, if not more, of the travellers will die during the trip. In such a case the voyage is to be postponed, for the men to whom the signs applied have to be pointed out by the oracle and they then stay home. After this has happened, another day is chosen, during which, in the same way, attention is paid to all of that and, therefore, probably the same inauspicious signs are observed. When finally everything goes well, the helm is taken but with that the

party of travellers has certainly not overcome all obstacles. If they encounter rain at a time when they are still closer to their own village than to the next one they return home quickly, for it is a sign of a general impending disaster. A dead fish found at the same distance as mentioned a moment ago means the death of one of the men. Then again there is nothing to do but to return and begin the whole story all over again.

If someone from a certain tribe or village has been murdered, then none of them wants to eat anything before enemy blood has been shed by their hands first. After that has happened, friendly relations are [**39**] re-established so that foodstuff can be obtained again from that area. Such a covenant is concluded through the following signs, namely by *pinang*, betel and lime which are passed on between each other and used together. If this has not yet happened, then even famine cannot make them cross the border, because superstition threatens them with death, or if not death then certainly dropsy or a large flabby belly.

One may assume that there are yet more of such superstitious practices but these are still unknown and not yet discovered by us, for they do not readily reveal their secrets.

Inventions by the Papuans

The Papuans are in this respect still very much behind; such insignificant things are brought to light by them, as we now will present.

In the first place, sea fish swimming near the shore are caught at very low tide and when the weather is calm, usually at the time of full moon. This takes place by means of a certain poison which for that matter does not make the fish inedible. A mixture of this poison, produced from the realm of plants, is prepared, put into small bags and thrown into the sea, as a result of which fish up to a certain distance die or are intoxicated. [**40**] But also in this case superstition rules supreme. For when the men who undertake this labour step into their canoes, all the others have to remain very quiet and may not talk with each other. They set themselves down along the shore and keep their eyes on those who are busy in their canoes. From this, however, all pregnant women are excluded; they have to go into hiding already before daybreak and above all may not see water as otherwise the fish do not die.

Those sitting along the beach are eagerly waiting for the sign to be given

by those sitting in the canoes as soon as they see that the fish begin to die or are already dead. Once this sign is given, everyone throws himself into the sea screaming in order to grab as many as possible. The multitude of fish caught in this way is sometimes very considerable indeed. One notices nothing of anger or jealousy on such an occasion.

Second, an inflammable substance is known among the Papuans which has the characteristic of the European tinder and also almost looks like it; they use it while travelling or otherwise, when no fire is available. This tinder is made from tree bark and mixed with the fluid from the trunk of the banana tree and can be used after it has been dried in the sun.

Finally, if one also wants to include their weapons among their own inventions, then we will now proceed [**41**] with saying a brief word about that.

The Use of Weapons among the Papuans

One may assume that the customary weapons here also are their own invention. With the exception of some rifles, they consist, however, only of bow and arrow and spear. The bow, when used, is also only drawn with the free hand; the use of the foot-bow is still unknown to them. The bow consists of a bamboo curved and cut aright, or of a kind of palm wood, at the ends of which rattan is tied by which it is pulled, although the curve does not reach half a circle. The length of the bow ranges from three to five feet and, like its tension, is shaped in accordance with the bodily power of the person who uses it. The bow is called *marria* among them. The arrows likewise are of different lengths. Those used most of the time have only one tip called *iko*; others, used to catch fish, with four or more tips, are called *pisan*. The spears or lances usually consist of pointed bamboo or wood. Iron spears are an exception and they have come into their possession through trade; but since some people from the Numfor [**42**] tribe recently have learned how to forge iron, lances are now also made by them.[45] These lances or spears bear the name of *meop* [*bome*, LN]. The poisoning of weapons is still unknown among the Papuans.

[45] For background, Kamma and S. Kooijman, *Romawa Forja: Child of the Fire: Iron Working and the Role of Iron in West New Guinea (West-Irian)* (Mededelingen van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde 18), Leiden, 1973. [Eds.]

Attentiveness to the Position of the Stars

The observation of the position of the stars as well as the east wind and west wind helps them to calculate the time of year. The sun is not considered in this, and in respect to the moon one only takes notice of the regular succession (phases) of full and new moon. Nonetheless, the months of the year have their own names and even have some stars that during those months are visible or at least more visible. Thus, for example, the constellation that has the form of a snake and is called *mongguanya* is divided by them into four sections. Corresponding to each section, in as far as it has its own position in the sky, four months of the year are called, as follows:

1. *Rowaamsi* or *Wowaamsi*, that is, the hand.
2. *Reworri* or *Rowamia*, that is, the head.
3. *Wepassi*, that is, the knee.
4. *Poerari* [*Purari*], that is, the tail.
5. Moreover, to this is added a fifth month, which is called after the rainy season, which is always accompanied by heavy winds and is [**43**] therefore called *wambarik* [*wambarek*, LN] by the Papuans, that is, west wind. Or also *yampassiwak beba*, that is, the time of high waves. Now this month is called *Maande*, which in the Numfor language means ‘to die’ or also ‘the birds have come.’ To clarify this we will quote here what the Papuans themselves say about it. For they say that in this month small birds come in great swarms. In our opinion these are not migratory birds, but still it is certain that not as many are seen and heard during the other seasons as at this time. In this (and the following months), however, they are very numerous, but that is also the time of sickness and death, more than ever, and therefore that month is called *Maandi*, that is, death month or month of dying, although the word ‘month’ actually has been omitted and it therefore only means ‘to die.’ *Yamandi* means ‘I die,’ although the word ‘death’ is expressed by *maar*.

Thus, according to what is said above, this month would have received its name from its characteristic feature or the influence this time has on people. However, if one parses the name *maandi*, one arrives as a matter of course at the existence of birds. *Maan* means ‘bird’ or ‘birds.’ However, if one wants to refer to a certain bird, then the *a* is pronounced like a short vowel, that is, *man*. Thus, for example, *manyouwer* (‘a small kind of cockatoo’), *mangera* (*katera*),

mannabeef (‘cockatoo’), etc. If one, however, only wants to refer to birds in general, then it [**44**] is pronounced with a long vowel, thus *maan*. This is also the case with the naming of the month. *Di* can mean so much as ‘is, are, they are there.’ For example, *si kain de rum*, ‘he/she (the third person) stays/is in the house,’ and thus *di*, ‘are, they are there;’ hence *maandi* also means ‘the birds are there.’ And since this month now is called thus, it is sufficiently certain that it derives its name from the presence of birds, all the more so because the Papuans themselves say so.

6. In addition, a month belonging to that half of the year is given the name of *Wambabis*, that is, month of fever.

But this is not common, for most people say that a ‘half-year’ has five months, which probably derives from the fact that during the calm season they do not watch everything as carefully, for this season consists of the months:

7. *Kemari* or *Roemari* [*Rumari*].
8. *Sarmari*, that is the name of the Pleiades.
9. *Kakkori*, that is, ‘counting star’ or the constellation of counting.
10. *Kawempi*.
11. *Jawi* [*Yawi*].
12. *Swabai*.

We have not been able to give the meaning of these other months, because they are not known to us;[46] we want to say only something about the name of the ninth month.

No one who has interacted with the Papuans to some extent will come upon the idea that they have borrowed the name of this constellation from a foreign [**45**] country. The name is too simple and also corresponds so completely to the method of counting among the Papuans that this claim must be considered entirely unacceptable. When a Papuan is shown some objects, he is not able to count them at a glance.

Some count to three at the most. For example, to be able to say ‘these are three ...,’ he begins to count from one, thus ‘one, two, three,’ etc. Most do not know that they have five fingers on each hand; if they want to indicate the

[46] The *Bijblad* and H 87 are clearer, reading “The meaning of the names of the months behind which nothing is noted is not yet known to us.”

number six, then they first count the fingers of one hand and add the remaining one from the other hand. But among them 'to count' means *kakkorie* or *kokkorie*, actually 'we count,' for *ko* or *ka* before verbs means the first person of the plural; and therefore 'to count,' *kori*. Because of the greater number of stars in the constellation referred to, they have for that reason given the name *kokkori* to this constellation. The reduplication of *k* cannot give a problem, because we spell it the way it is pronounced, which is always the case with combinations, because the *a* or *o* in conjunction with a verb is always heard as a short vowel, while on the other hand the consonant *k* is heard as a double one, thus *kokkori*, 'we count,' or in this case 'counting star.' The Papuan thus wants to say: 'there are too many,' 'we have to count,' 'these are stars which have to be counted.' It is true that the name 'counting star' actually should be expressed by *attarawakori*, but the reason why it was left at *kok[k]ori*[47] is explained by the other constellations. [**46**] Therefore, they do not say *attarawamangguanya* or *attarawasampari*, etc. Why not?

Other designations of stars or constellations are:

a) *Makbendi*, 'evening star.' This designation can be easily analyzed, whereby the Papuans help us on the way; it actually means 'pig star.' *Mak* means 'star' in the Rohn [Roon] language. And although this designation is derived from another language, it is as fully known and common among the Numfor people as *attarawa*, 'star' in their own language. *Been* or *beyin* means 'pig,' but when nouns are combined the vowels are pronounced as short vowels. The third syllable has already been explained above. For in the light of this star wild pigs are killed on Roon and elsewhere where sago grows; they feed on the sago trees during the night and ruin them, and these are therefore guarded; and since this star is helpful thereby, it will have taken its name from that.

b) *Sampari*, 'morning star.' This star does not take its name at all from the time of its appearance. 'Daybreak' or 'early morning' is *aro* or *arobepriem*. Now if one wants to take a designation from the local language, however, one could (although somewhat arbitrarily) analyze the name as follows. *Sampari* could be changed to *samfari*; *samfar* means 'a white armband made from

[47] The UA copy reads *kokori*, which is a clerical error. It should indeed read *kokkori*; so the NA copy and H 87.

shells,' which is highly valued among the Papuans. They thus imagine that, when they dance during the night, [**47**] these white armbands, like lights or stars, sparkle on the dark brown skin. In order to explain it in this way, however, one has to change the *p* to *f*, which indeed is done frequently; for example, *arfak*, which some pronounce *arpak*. *I* or *si*, especially after a noun, indicates the third person. In this way *sampari* or *samfari* could be divided into two parts: *samfar* 'white or glittering armband' [and *i* 'he'], thus the third person, the star: 'armband star.'

c) *Maksra*, 'coconut star.' This designation can be analyzed as follows. *Mak* has already been noted above under a), on the understanding, however, that the designation again is to be ascribed to the people of Roon, the only ones who have the word *mak* for 'star,' while other tribes and tongues use other words for it. *Sra* means 'coconut;' here neither the tree (*sraknam*) nor the fruit (*srabon*) nor the foliage (*sraraim*) are meant, but as the Papuans themselves say, this constellation has the form of a frond of the coconut tree, from which, therefore, this name has been derived.

In general, one easily sees that the matter concerns only such stars or constellations that directly strike the eye, and that one is thus free to believe that the Papuans themselves have observed and named these. If, however, someone wishes to prefer forced and arbitrary explanations and attribute these names to outside influences, let him go ahead. Many heads, many minds! Not all spectacles [**48**] are the same! Healthy eyes see well!

Regarding the moon, *paik*, it may be noted that it has more influence on their superstition, but it is not yet known to us wherein this actually consists. When some of the people had gone to Tidore to pay tribute, the new moon was always awaited with singing and the waving of cloths by those who stayed behind. They turned their faces towards that point in the sky where the new moon was expected to appear, and as soon as it was seen it was greeted with jubilation. This was repeated as often as the time of the new moon came around, until the travellers had returned. At our questions why they did this we received the answer: the one who is the first to see the new moon here, his/her relatives in the party are the first to see it over there, too. This, however, does not seem to be a satisfactory reason for so much trouble and expense, unless they want to draw the conclusion: our loved ones are still alive, are not yet dead, as they still

see the new moon.

The natural laws concerning the moon are still unknown to them, for we have already been asked whether each new moon is another one. Likewise with the sun, they cannot understand where the sun stays overnight and why it always appears again in the east on the following morning. They certainly would explain it as a great miracle if that did not happen each day again. This, however, is not surprising at all with respect to such people. [**49**] God and his works are still unknown to them, and although nature with its fixed laws could be examined also through mere reason, without divine revelation, they lack this ability altogether, however.

The sun is called *ori*, and not *yas* as some think. For *yas* means 'gliding,' for example *ayas*, 'a beam inside the house;' likewise *yas* is the extended beam of a canoe which hangs or glides above the water and protects the canoe from turning over. *Ori yas iba*, 'the sun stands high,' but it can also be translated 'the sun shines strong or hot.'

The Belief in Immortality

The Papuan has an obscure idea of the immortality of the spirit, for that the dead continue to exist after their death is what they believe with certainty. For they fear the anger of their relatives who have died, for which reason their idolatry is devoted just to them. From them they expect assistance, help and blessing. But they cannot form an idea of their condition; they imagine them living under the earth, where they exist in a state that corresponds much to the one before, during their life on earth. But when they sail the seas there they can only use short masts. It is thought that they sometimes have to cope with great difficulties, especially when they are forgotten up here [on earth], for which reason it [**50**] is also common to place fire and foodstuff on new graves.

To these ideas the wisdom of the Muslims from the archipelago has added something which is also partly accepted and believed, namely, that those who eat pig flesh are roasted on red-hot grills after their death, as a punishment for such a serious crime, whereas on the other hand all Muslims share in perfect salvation because they do not eat pork. Nevertheless, the fear of the glowing grill has not yet deterred them from roasted pork. In this respect they are more on our side when we declare to them the divine ordinances regarding our eternal

salvation or eternal doom. We say they agree with us, at least in this, that eating pig makes one neither happy nor subject to doom. But to do away with their sins – that is what they do not feel like doing, just as much as refraining from eating roasted pig meat. We were not allowed either, though, according to the Gospel, to conceal from them that all deeds which are the outcome of sin are just as much punished with fire.

What has been said about their belief in immortality is the loftiest belief among them, but that is also all. Their gods are nothing but their dead, and even if there is some idea among them of a Lord of Heaven, we still do not know for sure whether or not this [**51**] is one of their many dead. Heaven, according to them, is under the earth. They call the firmament Nanggi, without expecting from there anything else but lightning, thunder and rain. Of the first two they have great fear, and the more rudimentary their degree of civilization the greater this fear, as we have experienced during our two-month stay among the cultivators at Amberbaken.

Agriculture among the Papuans

Not much can be said about agriculture, for there is probably no nation in the world which has made less progress in cultivating the land than this one. In the first place, they lack suitable tools but even more so diligence. There is no question of them holding land in possession; what they cultivate one year remains fallow the next year, and then anyone is free to make use of it. When they want to make a garden, they begin by cutting down all the trees, only fruit trees remain standing as well as heavy trees which would cost too much of an effort to cut down. When it is dry everything is set on fire, and then they sow without the soil being plowed, in the following way. By means of a sharpened piece of wood, holes are drilled in the ground into which the seed is put without earth being scattered over it, so that it is [**52**] simply left to the rain to cover the seed. From this it can be easily concluded what can be expected; for as soon as the seed has come up, the young scrub has appeared as well. Also such a garden is only then fenced in when they see that it will give a yield. But by then it will be high time, lest the wild pigs that are here in great numbers destroy everything.

Harvesting the fruit, especially from trees, is accompanied with an awful

amount of superstition. Once we wanted to buy fresh beans, but although they did not want to hand these over to us we were told this secret, namely, that no beans were allowed to be taken outside the garden until the entire harvest could be taken home. Gathering beans occurs in the following way: all the beans that had already ripened earlier are kept in the garden. When finally the entire crop has ripened the gatherers go to the garden and do not return home from there until everything is finished and the beans, which have already been cleaned, can be taken home. Usually a hut, called *yabriya*, is made in the garden where the workers can spend the night. These workers pick the pods that are then spread out on mats and dried. None of the workers may wash themselves during this time. When everything has been picked and dried, the pods are crushed by one or more persons on mats called *yar*. Before [**53**] starting, however, the person, or persons, to whom this work is left to do, is to undergo a consecration which consists herein, that hands and feet are rubbed with red saliva and then held in the smoke above a fire. After this consecration has been performed, such a person may not speak a word until the work is finished. Now, after the beans, *abroe* [*abrui*, LN], have been finally removed from the pods, a potful is cooked, then put in wooden cups (*saijer* [*sayer*, LN]), one portion per person. These beans, however, are not eaten by the owner of the garden, or by those who assist in the harvest, but by the workers of nearby gardens, who are busy with the same work and therefore can give back a similar portion in their turn. In this way everyone eats the first fruits of his neighbour, and only when all of this is finished, does everyone put his load on his shoulders to take the new supply home, after which they may then clean up themselves.

When other crops are harvested such a fuss is hardly or not at all made.

Trade among the Papuans

Trade among each other and with outsiders consists only in exchanging goods. Money is entirely unknown and not in circulation, except for silver money which is refashioned by them to make armbands. But it is only a short while ago that [**54**] such money came into their hands, as for that matter their entire trade with the outside world is possibly not yet two centuries old and, even though in the past trade was already going on, it must have been very insignificant. For the present generation claims that 30 or 40 years ago ten times less was paid for

turtles than today, which makes one suppose that demand was lower.

The same still takes place today southeast of the Great Bay, because the inhabitants of that part of the land are not yet in contact at all with those who live to the northwest, so that the person who trades there now makes a tenfold profit, but the concomitant danger deters everyone; only ships can take advantage of this trade under such circumstances.

However, the fact that turtles were already being caught solely for their meat before the trading of *caret* [*karet*, literally 'rubber;' here: shell, JAG] developed, can be learned from their history.

From more recent time dates the catching of *tripang* [trepang, Indon. *teripang*, sea slugs], for people who are still living today tell that a captain from Ternate taught them this and bought it for a very low price. *Tripang* is called *pimam* by them.

We assume that slave trade has existed for a long time but we find no sufficient ground to determine with some certainty when it began. We feel, however, that it cannot have been longer ago than the time when the seafarers [**55**] began to cultivate the land, or vice versa, when the cultivators began to sail the seas, for one of these changes must have taken place prior to the trade, and that is because:

1) no slaves can be used except for working on the land or, if they remained near their own land, they would certainly have used the first opportunity available to escape. Only by being transported over water could this opportunity be taken away from them.

2) Without maritime traffic no slaves could be transported elsewhere.

3) Both these reasons mentioned gain a higher degree of probability, because the original inhabitants of the land, that is, the mountain people with few exceptions do not hold slaves at this moment. Also, these reasons are self-evident. For what are their slaves but kidnapped people? The cultivators, however, cannot kidnap anywhere but in the neighbourhood of their own village, but in that case they cannot expect anything else than that the people kidnapped and made slaves by them sooner or later make off, and thus their efforts would remain in vain and their thirst for revenge unsatisfied. Hence the fact that until now among most of the mountain people everyone from the enemy, whether young or old, man or woman, who falls into their hands during

their raids, is killed off. And even if there are some exceptions, then this is only the case among those who [**56**] have relations with the seafarers and can sell such slaves to them. But this is not at all done by everyone, for although the Arfak people have already often been told to at least spare the children from the enemy that fall into their hands, until now they have not been willing to consider it. The fear of people escaping falls away among the seafarers, because the sea cuts off the way for the slaves, with their birthplaces often far away. Furthermore, the slave trade offers advantages and, therefore, the lives of those taken, at least of the children or the younger people, are more often spared.

Papuans are exported as slaves to Ceram, Gebe, Gilolo, Tidore, Ternate, yes, even as far as Makassar; these slaves are called *women*.

The final major article of trade is *masooi* [massoi], here called *aikor*, which is the fragrant bark of a certain tree. It is, however, doubtful whether it has been exported, at least from the north coast, for longer than the last 60-80 years. In the first place it is not found north of the second degree southern latitude, while farther down the south coast the country is inhabited by very unfriendly savage Papuans who greatly thwart every approach towards them. Many a head has already been cut off by them, which in our opinion must have been even worse in earlier days.

History and Fables

The seafaring Papuans, from Dore to [**57**] the Great Bay, may be divided into two original tribes, namely the Numfor people and the Swandiwaer people.[48] The first tribe occupies two districts on the island of Jobi [Yapen], furthermore the entire island of Beak [Biak] (in the atlas referred to under the name Schouten [orig. text: Schoubon, a clerical error, JAG]), then the islands of

[48] Regarding the reference to the Swandiwaer people, this appellation is somewhat of a mystery. It is not used for any socio-linguistic group in the Geelvink Bay area today. According to Kamma (*Koreri*, op. cit, p. 94, cf. also p. 36; "*Dit Wonderlijke Werk*," op. cit, vol 1, p. 70 and map), the term *Swandirwu*, meaning "origin of the sea", refers to the southern end of the Geelvink Bay. The authors of the *Overview* apply the term to the Wandamen (southwest) and the Waropen (southeast) area of the Bay. Regarding the latter, however, see n. 50.

Numfor, Amberpon [Rumberpon] and Mansinam,[49] and finally two districts on the peninsula, or along the first bay, near Dore.

All the others, who live to the southeast, may be considered as belonging to one tribe, except for the Roon people. They all bear the name of Swandiwaer people, and one may assume with sufficient certainty that they originate from the mainland of the island of New Guinea and were cultivators before; that they lived there in the regions called Wandammen [Wandamen] and Waropia [Waropen],[50] whose inhabitants, on the mainland, nowadays are seafarers as well. The reason for our opinion we consider to be that on Yapen everyone, with the exception of the Numfor people, speaks the same language. For although there are differences, they can understand each other, which may let us assume that they are of the same origin.

However, it is not clear where the first tribe (the Numfor people) comes from. Everything leads us to assume that they do not originate from the mainland. Or if it happens to be the case, then it must be the area farthest to the northwest. Yet it is more probable that they [**58**] originate from the islands situated there, Salawati, Wagia [Waigeo], etc., because their (the Numfor) language, which generally speaking they have in common with those islands and which differs completely from all the other languages of New Guinea, points in that direction.

Although, when considered superficially, the Papuans have one and the same faith or rather superstition, on closer investigation this is no more the case than when yellow and red or green and blue could be called the same colour, however much less they differ from each other than black and white. And where something is found in which they correspond to each other, then one has to assume that they have borrowed this from one another through mutual contact.

[49] Strictly speaking this should be Manaswari; Mansinam is the name of a village on this island.

[50] According to G.J. Held, *The Papuas of Waropen* (Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Translation Series 2), The Hague, 1957, pp. 5, 16, the Waropen people consider a village at the far end of the Wandamen Bay, then (in 1940) called Ambumi, to be their village of origin. It used to be located further interior, along the banks of the Woisimi river. On older maps a village called Aropen (or an area called Waropen) is marked there. The name Aropen appears first in reports related to the voyage by Weyland in 1705.

We are not even against the idea that the inhabitants of those islands, before they converted to Islam, shared one and the same belief with the Numfor people. We are thus of the opinion that the same concepts and customs held among the Numfor and Swandiwaer people in respect to their idolatrous ceremonies, have been borrowed from one another from time to time, whereby however their customary songs on both sides have been modified so much as the nature of their language obviously entailed.

In respect to their idolatrous ceremonies, we will only refer to a single example to indicate the difference between them in this regard. For whereas, as we already mentioned above, a corpse of a Numfor person is interred with great ritual, [**59**] the corpse of a Waropen person,[51] on the contrary, is 'roasted' above a fire until it is completely dried out. The skin, which falls off through the heat of the fire, is carefully saved and finally, together with the desiccated corpse, wrapped in blue cotton and hung up in the house under the roof and kept there until in the end, through the dampness of the air, the remainder wastes away and the cotton has decayed. Only then is the corpse taken outside, but not buried. Somewhere in the forest a small hut is built, where the remainder of the corpse is taken with the necessary ritual, but to which later no attention is paid any more and in the long run it is forgotten.

In this case, as well as in the case of most ritual acts related to their superstition, its basic character is entirely different from that of the others [i.e., tribes, JAG]. It will be redundant, however, to adduce more examples as proof, and we limit ourselves therefore to this one because the main features of their superstition become apparent in their treatment of the dead. Moreover, we have not yet been able to gain sufficient knowledge in respect to the Swandiwaer people either. Whatever we reported above, however, we found out as accurately as possible from an eyewitness, he himself a Waropen man.

The origin of the first tribe mentioned is completely unknown. Their tradition or fable begins before some 2-300 years ago,[52] when the ancestors of the Numfor people in Awek settled on the island of Yapen. *Awek* in the Numfor

[51] The UA and NA copies read *Waripoanees*, which is a clerical error and should be written *Waropianees* as it is in the next paragraph. Both the *Bijblad* and H 87 use the word *Aropian* here.

[52] In H 87 Ottow dates the story to as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century.

language means ‘stairs’ or ‘ladder’ or something with which [**60**] to climb. It is possible that the place received its name from the arrival of the outsiders, when it was said: ‘We go ashore here,’ ‘we land here,’ ‘place where one goes ashore?!’ If this guess is correct, then one could conclude that here was the first settlement of this tribe. In what way their descendants spread over Yapen and to the nearby island of Biak [orig. text: Beäk] cannot be ascertained. *Beäk*, however, in their (the Numfor) language means ‘to hire,’ and one could therefore explain it thus: the people from Awek have hired themselves out there, the land has been taken in possession, has been used; all these meanings can be found in the word *beäk*.

The tradition, the legend, now begins as follows:

> A vessel (*tampaberi*) with emigrants departed from Awek for the island of Weokwoen [Meokwundi] where they settled and fared well. An old man kept himself busy with making palm wine which drips out of branches cut off from the palm tree and is caught in bamboo containers. But however much fluid oozed out of the tree of the old man, yet every morning his bamboo container was empty and the wine, therefore, stolen. For that reason he was forced to guard it during the night, and lo and behold! What does he discover!... At daybreak, the morning star (Sampari) came flying along to drink the palm wine. But the old man, guardian and also owner of the wine, grabs her and does not want to let her go unless [**61**] she first pays for the wine. All her pleadings and entreaties do not help her; even the assertion that she has nothing with which to pay cannot move the old man to let her go. Finally Sampari gave the adamant old man a miracle stick by way of compensation for the loss suffered by him. Sampari said that by means of this miracle stick he would obtain everything he could wish, for example food, clothing, houses, and vessels. When he got older he would only need to expose his body to fire made from ironwood and his old skin would fall off. He would be completely rejuvenated and become handsome. Even more, when he would merely throw the fruit of the ironwood tree at a woman, she would at once become pregnant. This then was considered sufficient to release Sampari.
>
> Now the body of the old man was so rough and wrinkled that he could not find anyone willing to marry him. One day he saw a beautiful virgin

working all by herself. Unseen by her, he crept closer and closer and threw such a fruit at the girl, touching just her breast. The young virgin, looking up and seeing nobody, thought that the fruit had fallen from a tree, but at once she felt a severe itch that penetrated her as far as her heart. She went bathing, but this did not ease matters either and already the same evening one could notice that she was pregnant, although neither she nor anyone else could say by whom. This was and remained a secret for everyone, until her child reached the age of four to eight years; for the young woman, called Ninggai, had given birth to a son and, [**62**] since no one claimed to be his father, the community agreed to prepare a feast and then the child would point out his father from among all the men assembled or adopt one as such. People were singing throughout the night, and the following afternoon, when the tide was very low, all the men gathered on the beach to pass by Ninggai and her child while dancing. They were placed there as well so that the child could point out his father from among all those men or else adopt one as such. But however much his mother exhorted the child, he did not want to have anything to do with any of them and resisted the attempts. Now they noticed that the old man mentioned above had stayed away, but he too was forced to join the procession. They began dancing again and look what happens! no sooner does the old ugly man approach than the boy jumps up to him, grabs his hand and calls out: “My father! My father!” The entire community was very much shocked by it; everyone threw off his finery, the musical instruments were dashed to pieces, and they sailed away from the island, leaving father, mother and child to their fate. The woman, who was not at all pleased with the ugly man and was now cut off from every form of companionship felt extremely unhappy. She said to her husband: “We will certainly die from hunger.” But only now does he show his miraculous power, which until then had remained hidden. Everything [**63**] she desires he supplies immediately by means of his miracle stick, and never does she have any reason for moaning and groaning. But look, the boy, who feels so totally alone and left all by himself, asks his father to look for another land where he can find playmates. The father is at once willing to do this; he goes to the beach, draws a vessel in the sand, puts his foot inside the outline drawn by him and in no time at all a real vessel is ready; it floats at once, and soon the

family leaves Meokwundi. But because of the gentle breeze the voyage does not proceed quickly; nowhere is land to be seen and already mother and child complain that they will now have to perish in the ocean. The father who cannot stand this complaining any more says: “[Let] there [be] land!” and at the same moment a large island rises up from the depth of the sea. This island is the present Numfor. They go ashore and at once again the old man provides everything that is needed through his miracle stick. But the ugly body of the man still bothers the woman and, therefore, he proceeded at long last to rectify this. All by himself he goes deep into the forest, collects wood and as soon as he has piled it up it ignites on its own. The old man jumps into the fire which indeed does not consume him. He jumps out again and after he has rubbed himself the old skin comes off, which, falling to the ground, at once turns into gold earrings, silver armbands, and [**64**] dishes and various other kinds of useful and valuable things. All at once he now has a smooth, fresh, soft skin and he is completely rejuvenated. Moreover, he has an abundance of all sorts of valuable ornaments, of which he right away avails himself, and then he returns home, an entirely different person. The woman, noticing but not recognizing him, quickly runs into the house, but the child calls out on and on: “Mother! Mother! It is Father!” Finally, after hesitating for a long time, the mother asks him to come closer, whereupon he shares the secret with her. He wants her now to follow him to the place where he scorched himself, on the spit of land called Narjorie [Naryori], to fetch the valuables still left there. She indeed follows him, finds many valuables and is very happy. But as it always goes, so the fable continues, there was no enduring and perfect joy on earth. The woman’s longing for companionship became stronger by the day and made her feel depressed and sad, so that the man once more had to resort to new miracles.

He thrusts sticks into the ground at four different places, and no sooner has the sun risen the following day than he calls out: “Arise all of you!” and at the same time four houses filled with people were seen. The names of these houses are: Amberpon [Rumberpon], Angradifu, Rumansra [orig. text: Rumanssa – a clerical error] and Amberpur [Rumberpur], from which later four settlements (*steden*) developed. [The] Amberpon [people], however, partly left the island later and went to live on an island which today still bears

> the name Amberpon. Also a section of the population of Amberpur later left the island; [**65**] the Dore and Mansinam people are the descendants of these emigrants.

Therefore the entire tribe bears the same name and speaks the same language: Numfor. But among themselves the four sections are distinguished according to their descent from the four settlements mentioned above, from which, however, the Biak people and the inhabitants of Yapen are excluded, although they have the name of Numfor people in common with all the others.

It is claimed that, on the Naryori spit mentioned above, coals are still to be found, originating from the rejuvenation process of the old man. And of all the miraculous valuables there is still one dish found with a family in Mansinam, which to this day signals when someone from that family is going to die. The dish then gives a sound as if it were tapped on by someone.

Let us now move on to the history of the emigrants of Amberpur, which is more explicit and credible than what has already been dealt with.

Thus one section of the population of Amberpur left the island to look for another place to live and so came to Arfak, at the second bay, near Cape Dore. At that place they built houses; which could have happened approximately 120-150 years ago, for the present generation claims to be the fifth or sixth generation after those emigrants. However, the constant hostile attacks they had to endure from the original inhabitants (it is said that [**66**] at that time there were five different districts or tribes on the peninsula) and to which they responded with hostile actions, were the reason that some of these newcomers moved away again. They returned to Numfor but without staying there. Now they travelled to Biak, but, as they did not like it there either, they travelled on and on until they finally came to Roon. For a long time, however, they did not see any of the mountain [i.e., interior] people.[53] Then they took a dog, put a collar on it and let it go. Walking around the island, it finally came to the homes of the natives who at once understood that there must be outsiders on the island, which when they investigated soon appeared indeed to be the case. After the outsiders and the natives had concluded a pact of friendship, the latter were persuaded to come

[53] But the *Bijblad* and H 87 read only “did not see anybody.”

and live along the beach and to sail the seas, which until then had been completely unknown to them or rather had fallen into disuse over the course of time. For how else can it be explained that one finds islanders? Maybe it is possible that, after being shipwrecked, they were forced to stay on the island, of which there are innumerable examples, for how else is it to be explained that people have ended up in America and other countries?

But the Numfor-Amberpur emigrants again moved away from there as well, and [**67**] returned to Dore. Now, however, their homes were built in another part of the region, namely along the first bay where Dore is found today. But there too the hostilities with the natives resumed until finally after much bloodshed a longer lasting peace came about. Some of the mountain people joined the seafarers and learned from them how to use oars. It is related that only then did those people learn to help themselves to proper food, as prior to that they only nourished themselves with charcoal.[54] For a long time afterwards the descendants of the mountain people were acknowledged as the true owners of the peninsula of Dore and the island of Mansinam. Around this time Mansinam must have been settled, for the present generation is said to be the third or fourth since that time, which would be at the most a hundred years ago.

As can be assumed just as well the descendants of the people from the mainland have their own fable, and that will also be the case with all the other tribes. However, these are not yet known to us, except those from Roon, which we will pass over in silence, however, since Mr Fabricius has already reported them and enriched them with very interesting comments and explanations.[55]

The legend[56] of the original inhabitants of the mountains, from whom those who united with the Numfor people descended, is even [**68**] more obscure. We cannot say with certainty either whether it really has already existed from the earliest times, since it could also be that it has been made up by their fellow tribespeople who later joined the Numfor people. Thus we cannot vouch for it and render it as we heard it. It runs as follows: –

[54] I.e., they did not cook with pots, but threw edibles into the fire.
[55] See Introduction above, n. 5.
[56] This may be an ‘interpretative’ translation, too. For both the *Bijblad* and H 87 refer to the “[far distant] past” of the mountain people as being even more obscure.

A cassowary[57] laid two eggs; from one of these eggs appeared a young male cassowary, from the other a human female. Sister and brother were attached to each other through ties of tender love, although their appearances differed very much from each other. When the sister became marriageable, she married and soon her marriage was blessed with a child. In the meantime, the brother cassowary, called Kendekkamari, had to suffer and endure much while living among humans, especially at the hands of the bad boys from the village. One day it came to pass that these boys placed a *samfar* (armband) on the ground and threw spears at it from a distance, but they could not hit it. Kendekkamari who had watched this game for some time said that he would hit the band at the first throw in such a way that it would break to pieces. He was laughed at; but look, Kendekkamari grabbed a spear, made a throw and the band was smashed. Now everyone became angry and nobody wanted to pay attention to his defence and account; he was threatened that he would pay for the band with his blood. To save his life [**69**] there was nothing he could do but to flee away, ... and where could he go but to Arfu, the place from which he originally came. But his sister, loving him tenderly, could not part from him; leaving husband and child behind she hurried after her fleeing brother and she indeed caught up with him before nightfall. She managed to persuade him to return with her again, but fear of being scorned and also fear for his life made him waver again and again. Although it was hard for him to resist the love and persuasion of his sister, he made off once more during the night. The sister, who missed him again, hurried restlessly once more to look for him, and when she finally succeeded in this she managed to persuade him once again to return with her. Gradually they approached the old home. But yet again the brother was gripped by dread and fear of the bad boys. Having already come near their home he made use of the darkness of the night to take to flight once more. But this time, alas! he walked straight to his death, for after coming to the beach he was seen by some strangers looking out for turtles, who took Kendekkamari for an ordinary cassowary and killed him. His sister, searching for him with dread, finds him dead already. Sorrow and

[57] Orig. text: *struisvogel*, "ostrich," an identification the translator questioned in the margin.

grief overtake her, she does not want to leave that [**70**] place any more and soon follows her beloved brother into death.

The beginning and end, or cause and effect, of this fable seem to be missing. We could not obtain more of it. What became of the sister's child, no one could tell us; and this proves, therefore, that the entire story is an invention of gullible Papuans and thus a big lie. Similarly, this is the case with the many other fables of the Papuans and these, therefore, contradict the opinion that the idolatry and teaching of fables would have been brought there by other peoples. For that reason we are of the opinion that all these silly stories are little pieces of their own invention. The truth is from God alone and not from Man; truth must be communicated to Man, both to the learned and the most simple; he does not have it of his own accord, although this could partly be the case as is written in the letter of Paul to the Romans [1:19-21].

A Few Considerations

We do not yet consider ourselves competent enough to give an overview of the language. But some words that have already been recorded in another 'write up' we do not want to pass over altogether in silence.[58]

For example, the word given for 'crocodile' [**71**] is *wonggor*, while it is actually *antimbabo* in the Numfor language, although the first word is also used. *Wonggor* means 'something that is exalted, miraculous, extraordinary, pre-eminently large,' for which reason the word is also used as an exclamation of surprise, and the crocodile sometimes is referred to by that word as well. The crocodile is actually referred to by five different words or names, such as: *antimbabo*, *amberobi*, *andant*, *mambari*, and *wonggor*. The cassowary has, because of its size, a similar name, namely *wongge*.

As we have already mentioned, we do not know to which tribe we are to consider the Roon people to belong. Roon or, as the Papuans pronounce it, *Rohijen*, means 'objects' or 'things' in the Numfor language and is used for various objects; for example, 'take my things (package) along with you,' *wadun roijen ieda*. For similar objects *pappasya* is also used. Now from the first word,

[58] This may be an allusion to the word list, mentioned in the Introduction above.

because it is a Numfor one, we conclude that the Roon people are descendants of both tribes, as their language also corresponds to some extent to the Numfor language. However, they are not recognized as such and are referred to by the Numfor people with the name Swander people.[59]

Regarding the words *manbur*, 'feather,' *beak*, 'to take possession, to rent,' *manbevoor* = 'bird-of-paradise,' and *ori* = 'sun,' we have already mentioned something above, but the word *mefoor* we cannot quite yet explain, at least not so well that we may consider it plausible. [**72**] *Me* could be an abbreviation of *menu*/*mnu*, as this often occurs in the Papuan language; for example, in combination with other words only the second syllable -*ko* of *inko* 'we' is heard. *Foor* and *voor*: the first word is used of something that is not allowed or that is forbidden, for example, eating pig meat; *voor* means 'fire.' On the basis of this *mefoor* could mean 'forbidden-unnatural-mysterious' or 'miraculous town' (*stad*). *Foor* = 'not to be eaten,' presupposes a blind obedience, whereby one does not ask why. If, on the other hand, it is derived from *voor*, it could mean 'fire town,' where it is said the old man mentioned above scorched himself.

We will not deal with this any longer now; if there is someone who wishes to know more about it, he will find us always prepared to help in as far as we are capable of meeting every reasonable wish.

Our Opinion with Regard to the Establishment of a Permanent Post by the Government

Since we have been requested from so many sides to give some information about the Papuans, we also take the liberty to state our ideas about where in our judgment a government post could be established. Although we have not yet visited the so-called Papuans everywhere, yet we believe, in accordance with the information gathered so far, [**73**] that we have to point at Dore[60] as the most suitable place for this, for the following reasons.

1) As a matter of fact, the English had already chosen this place for it about 40-50 years ago and built houses; they lived here for a year, but on receipt of a letter from Tidore suddenly left the place.[61]

[59] *Swanderézen*; the *Bijblad Swandewoeër*, H 87 *Swandewoeer*; cf. above n. 48.

[60] For this and the subsequent reference to Dore as a place, see the Introduction above.

[61] For resource explorer Thomas Forrest and Cpt. John Hayes's presences there in 1775 and

2) The French visited the Papuan islands four or five years ago and also chose this place as the best one. The Papuans say that three warships anchored there for several months and at their departure the French had stated that they would return to build a city (*stad*) there.[62]

3) The inhabitants of these regions are probably still the best of all the Papuans.

4) No better harbour can be found.

5) One can establish contact with three tribes of cultivator Papuans, we believe with those of Arfak quite nearby, with those of Arfu a little farther away, and finally with those of Amberbaken. It is true that the last ones live some 15-18 miles west of Dore, but we believe that along the coast a fairly straight road can be built to that area. We are of the opinion that all these tribes will be quite willing to work for the government for little remuneration, if only they are protected. They are more industrious than the seafarers, but are in a pitiable state because they spend their lives in continual fear and dependency. They grow their own food and [**74**] what is left over they have to deliver to the people living along the seashore, at their mere command or for a ridiculously low price, so to keep them in total bondage. Now these people would quite certainly join the government post immediately and actually begin to recover under its influence, for now they are still given up to the insolence of the oppressors. If they are hurt and insulted they have to stay quiet; if some of them are beaten to death they are fooled, given some machetes or beads and with that the case is over and done with. How often are not some of these people caught by those living along the seashore and then have to be ransomed by their relatives or friends with the products of their land! This is especially the case with the Amberbaken people; those from Arfak on the other hand are more inclined to

1793 respectively, see Kamma, "*Dit Wonderlijke Werk,*" vol. 1, p. 70. Cf. also T. Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea and the Moluccas, from Balambangan ... during the Years 1774, 1775 and 1776*, London, 1779; I. Lee, *Commodore Sir John Hayes: his Voyage and Life (1767-1831), with some Account of Admiral D'Entrecasteau's Voyage of 1792-3*, London, 1912; D.K. Bassett, "Thomas Forrest: An Eighteenth Century Mariner," *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* 34, 2 (1961): 106-22.

[62] The authors are vague in suggesting they used local information. Cf. Kamma, op. cit., vol.1, p. 71 on the Cpt. J.L. Dumont d'Urville visits of 1824 and 1827.

defend their rights with the sword (*zwaard*) in their hands; however, even if they are not insulted, they are still better than the seafarers. If, on the other hand, one wants to establish a post among the seafarers and then count on their help, one could be certain to be deceived. We are convinced rather that if the government interacts with the cultivators, the seafarers automatically would be forced to set themselves to cultivation for the simple reason that otherwise they would lack the necessary food, and New Guinea would then be heading for a completely different future.

The place we [**75**] consider most suitable for a settlement is located at the second bay near Dore, and not at the first one where the village is located now. It is said that one can reach the sea from the place we have in mind in a few hours via the peninsula. There is certainly no less anchorage there than at the first bay; a hundred ships can easily anchor there. The anchorage consists only of sand and has a depth of 15-30 fathoms or a little more. The soil in the area, with the exception of the peninsula, is fertile and, with some tillage, promises a high yield. In our opinion, nutmeg and other spices would do well, for from the second degree southern latitude on they are already found in the wild and to be of excellent size, but they are completely neglected.

Furthermore, it is greatly preferred that the Papuans come under the government, for the atrocities that are committed here all remain unpunished and will therefore not become less until they come under strict discipline, which is not difficult to exercise. We are certainly not miscalculating very much when we state that one third of the population is murdered or taken as slaves. They oppose each other like cats and dogs, but despite the fact that they are so barbaric they are very cowardly, and ten armed soldiers would be enough to chase away an entire village without firing a shot. By this we absolutely do not want to say that we are of the opinion that the Papuans should be ruled harshly, but nevertheless it is our absolute [**76**] conviction that those who cannot be reformed by the Gospel will not give up their cruelty, until the time that a European power severely punishes these evildoers once or twice, as a warning to others; even one time very severely would be sufficient to rein in all the others. The Tidore people do not improve the situation at all in this respect; as long as they receive their benefits, they let Papuans be Papuans.

Lately we saw a very sad example of their injustice here. Two sloops with

castaways fell into their hands; no one knows anything about one sloop, the other was overpowered near Wandessi [Windessi]; of the ten persons who were in it two were killed at once, the others were apprehended as slaves. According to the information gathered by us these unlucky people had already drifted at sea for 148 days, enduring every imaginable misery, and when they finally thought they were saved this new disaster hits them. Just now we receive word that another three of them have been murdered and one has died. If this information is correct, then only four are still alive, while we initially heard of eight. We are considering measures to come to the rescue of these unlucky men, in which we will probably succeed, too. We have persuaded the chieftains of this village[63] [**NA 187**] to take us to a settlement of Papuans in the vicinity of Windessi, so that we can then call those from Windessi to come over, for we absolutely cannot get the people here to take us to Windessi itself. Neither could this be expected otherwise, lest we, too, would share the fate of those unlucky ones. Nonetheless, we will be pleased, if we can manage to ransom the unlucky ones, albeit at great [**188**] expense.

The Windessi people deserve a severe punishment. As long as we have been here, they have already raided and murdered around here five times. Once they beat three people from Arfak to death and captured one, later they murdered another two, the third time they took one man here away by force, the fourth time they murdered a man in Amberpon, and finally, the fifth time they fatally [seriously, JAG] wounded three Arfu people and took them away as slaves, and all of this in addition to what they have done to the south of here – they make their living almost exclusively from raids.

Should a post be established here, then [**189**] these atrocities would soon cease and New Guinea would really change for the better. Now this beautiful land is only covered with impenetrable forests and inhabited by savages and (brutes) [*sic*]. And desolate above all for this reason, that the cultivators cannot farm their land in peace, because they always face the danger of enemies lying in wait for them, which is why their fields are also always in the vicinity of their homes.

The undersigned are not able to present more at this time.

[63] From here on the translation is based on the NA Ms; see the Introduction.

(signed) C.W. Ottow
(") J.G. Geissler
For the translation from High German
(signed) Roskott