

Appendix C Social situation and history of the Raja Ampat archipelago

C.1. The social situation of the Raja Ampat archipelago

C.1.1. Introduction – land- and sea-oriented groups

The population density of the Raja Ampat archipelago is very low, at 35,338 people (Sorong in Numbers 1998).⁶⁶ On each of the three major islands (Waigeo, Salawati and Misool), there are up to twenty small villages, spread out over the coastline. The size of the population of each village ranges between 100 to 850 people. Nowadays, the interiors of the islands are mostly uninhabited, although some groups regularly go inland for various days to harvest sago, the staple carbohydrate for the whole RA population, or for hunting.

In an ethnographic study on the RA islands based on first-hand data, de Clercq (1893) draws a clear distinction between a sea-oriented population and a number of groups living in the interior of the islands. Among the groups living in the interior, but not for the coastal population, de Clercq distinguishes different tribes, namely the Ambel of east Waigeo and the “mountain-dwellers (my translation)” of Salawati and Misool (de Clercq 1893).

Nowadays all groups that used to live in the interior have moved to the coast. The distinction between land- and sea-oriented groups, however, is still most useful, because it allows us to distinguish and explain the primary socio-cultural division within the original population of the RA archipelago. Table C.1 illustrates how the sea- and land-oriented groups show a markedly different pattern in function of some important sociological factors.

⁶⁶ By *kecamatan* (= district): North Waigeo: 5,590; South Waigeo: 7,922; Samate (northern Salawati and Batanta): 7,154; Seget (South Salawati and a coastal section of the New Guinea mainland across from Salawati): 6,212; Misool: 8,460 (Sorong in Numbers 1998).

Table C.1: Overview of sea- and land-oriented groups of the Raja Ampat archipelago in function of a number of socio-cultural factors.

Factor	Sea-oriented (Ma'ya)	Land-oriented (various groups)
Religion	Muslim	Christian since mid 20 th century
Village location	Have lived on the coast since mythical times	Lived in interior until mid 20 th century
Main economic activity	Fishing	Produce sago, also for sea-oriented people
Contacts outside RA	Trade with Moluccas; vassals of Tidore sultanate	Hardly any, until move to coast
Physical appearance	Mixed Austronesian-Papuan type. Considerable within-group variation	Papuan type (dark skin, frizzy hair, big nose)
Language	Ma'ya	Various RA languages
Mythology	Myth of Waigeo origin	Local origin myths

The sea- and land-oriented populations themselves are consciously aware of the difference between them. For example, the Matbat, a land-oriented group of Misool, contrast *mat low* 'people of the sea', a label from the Ma'ya, with *mat ley* 'landward people', a label they use for themselves.

C.1.2. The Ma'ya

The sea-oriented population of Waigeo, Salawati and Misool are known in the literature as the Ma'ya (Polansky 1957, Smits & Voorhoeve 1992, van der Leeden 1993). While this label is known in some Ma'ya villages, it is not in others, where the Ma'ya refer to themselves in Malay as *orang Raja Ampat* 'Raja Ampat people'.⁶⁷ But although members of the sea-oriented group do not consistently refer to themselves as a group, they share a number of features among themselves, and these features set them apart from the various interior-oriented groups.

Generally accepted in the Raja Ampat archipelago is a migration myth, which says that the Ma'ya of Waigeo, Salawati and Misool have a common origin in west Waigeo, on the north shore of Kabui Bay. The following account summarizes the myth as it was presented by a Ma'ya from Samate to van der Leeden (1989). The

⁶⁷ LEMAKAF, the society of original Raja Ampat islanders (see § C.2.3.3), uses the word Ma'ya to refer to the original Raja Ampat population as a whole, that is, both the sea-oriented and the land-oriented groups, but excluding migrants from outside, such as the Beser people from Biak, the Butonese, etc.

myth tells the story of a woman who finds 7 eggs. She takes them home, where, after a while, the eggs hatch: out of them come the ancestors of the four *raja* dynasties of the *Raja Ampat* ‘four *raja*’ archipelago: the *rajas* of Waigeo, Salawati, east Misool and west Misool / Kilimuri.⁶⁸ Out of the three other eggs come a ghost, a woman, and a stone, the latter being the youngest of the seven siblings from the eggs. After an argument, the four brothers decide to move away from one another, each going with their followers to the area where they and their offspring would become the rulers. The stone decided to stay in Waigeo, to mark the location of their origin. This stone is housed now in a small shrine, and it is venerated by the Ma'ya, both from Waigeo and from the other islands. Nobody knows where the ghost went, according to the myth. The woman, Pintake, had moved from Waigeo before the brothers left, expelled because she was pregnant. She moved to Biak, and her son was the mythical hero Gurabesi, who fought for the sultan of Tidore and married his daughter as a reward. A number of versions exist of this myth, and the differences between variants have to do with the relative importance of the participants.⁶⁹

The myth of the Waigeo origin of the Ma'ya probably reflects historic truth, because the Ma'ya villages on Waigeo, Salawati and Misool speak the same language (see § II.3.1). In Indonesian, the people of the RA area refer to the Ma'ya language as *bahasa Raja Ampat* ‘the language of the Raja Ampat archipelago’. Strictly speaking, this label is incorrect, as there are other original RA languages. It is correct, on the other hand, in the sense that this language is the native language of Ma'ya villages all over the RA archipelago. Also, in communication with the interior-oriented groups, it is the latter who switch to Ma'ya, so that the language functions as a lingua franca. Nowadays, with the substantial influx of migrants from outside in the RA area, Malay is taking over this function from Ma'ya.

The main economic activity in the Ma'ya villages is fishing, for their own consumption, and sometimes also for selling in Sorong, the regional capital on the New Guinea mainland. The main carbohydrate is sago, produced from the interior of the sago tree. On Salawati and Misool, the Ma'ya hardly produce sago themselves, but buy it from neighboring interior-oriented villages. The reason for this situation will be discussed below.

Traditionally, all original Raja Ampat groups built their houses on poles. When the villages were constructed on the coast or near a river, they were built on the water; otherwise they were built on poles above the ground. This is clearly

⁶⁸ According to the versions of the myth in van der Leeden (1989) and in Kamma (1948), the fourth brother became *raja* of Kilimuri on the south coast of Seram. The *raja* of west Misool, residing in Waigama was appointed later by the sultan of Tidore.

⁶⁹ For example, among the Ma'ya of the west coast of Waigeo, the Kawe, I collected a variant which relates the four kings to the Kawe area. In what is probably a Biak version of this myth (Kamma 1948), the sequence of events is the reverse, and now it is Gurabesi – with an unambiguous Biak identity – and his Tidore princess who find the eggs out of which the *rajas* are born. This version implies that the RA *rajas* have a forefather from Biak. The version in de Clercq (1893) has Gurabesi as the biological father of the four *rajas*.

illustrated on a detailed map of Salawati in Polansky (1957). Nowadays, at least one Ma'ya village, Fafanlap, is still on poles above the water, and Sailolof may be as well.

Until the Dutch colonial government became more actively involved in New Guinea in the course of the 20th century, the Raja Ampat islands were dominated for at least 400 years by the North-Moluccan sultanate of Tidore. The leading clans in the Ma'ya villages were his vassals: there were the 4 *rajas*, of Waigeo, Salawati (residing in Samate), west Misool (residing in Waigama) and east Misool (residing in Lilinta), and also dignitaries distinguished with the slightly lesser title of *kapitan laut* – lit. ‘fleet commander’ – in the villages Sailolof and Fafanlap, on Salawati and Misool, respectively. Each of these paid a yearly tribute to the sultan, and contributed vessels and men to the *honggi*, the fleet that raided western New Guinea for tribute and slaves (Miedema 1984, Huizinga 1998). Apart from Tidore, the Ma'ya villages were connected in a network of trading and raiding with much of the Moluccas, and with the Bird's Head area of western New Guinea (Huizinga 1998, Goodman 1998).

An important consequence of the Moluccan contacts of the Ma'ya was the introduction of islam: in the RA archipelago, only the Ma'ya villages are muslim. There does not appear to be a single source from where islam was brought in. According to sources in the village Fafanlap, islam reached Misool from the Banda islands in the Central-Moluccas. In the Ma'ya village of Lupintol in Waigeo, people mention Tidore as the source from where they received islam. It is well known that muslim traders have played an important role in the spread of islam in the eastern part of the Malay archipelago (Hanna and Alwi 1990, Kamma 1977:684-685).⁷⁰ In addition, the political link with Tidore may have constituted an important incentive. In any case, the Raja Ampat archipelago is as far east as islam ever reached, in the sense that whole autochthonous villages adopted it.

Nowadays the Ma'ya number between 4,000 and 5,000 people. About half of these live on Misool. Apart from Waigama on the north coast, all Ma'ya villages on Misool are located in the southeast, which is adjacent to rich fishing grounds. On this southeastern side there are the big villages Lilinta and Fafanlap, each with approximately 750 inhabitants. Gamta, on the banks of the Gam River, is somewhat smaller. Recently, people from Fafanlap founded settlements off the coast, the biggest of which are Yellu and Harapan Baru. These villages, however, are shared with migrants from outside the RA archipelago, and the Ma'ya socio-cultural identity is less strong here, and the language is declining. On Salawati there are the Ma'ya villages Samate (northeast coast) and Sailolof (southwest coast).

The situation of the Ma'ya on Waigeo is more complex. Among the Ma'ya of Waigeo, there are three different groups: the Laganyan, the Wauyai, and the Kawe. Laganyan is the name of the population of the villages Lupintol and Arway, both located on the western shore of Mayalibit Bay – this group agrees with the Misool and Salawati Ma'ya in function of all the sociocultural factors in Table C.1. The

⁷⁰ Interestingly, there is at least one clan in Fafanlap that has an Arabic family name (Alhamid).

Kawe and the Wauyai, on the other hand, did not adopt islam, one of the sociocultural features which distinguish the Ma'ya from the interior-oriented groups. Unlike the Ma'ya of the Laganyan, Salawati and Misool groups, they adhered to their own belief system until they adopted christianity around the middle of the 20th century. This implies that these groups have not been in contact with the Moluccas to the extent the other Ma'ya villages have. In line with this, de Clercq (1893), who gives a detailed account of all villages in the Raja Ampat archipelago at the end of the 19th century, makes clear that the both the Wauyai and the Kawe did not live in villages along the coast.

While the Wauyai are not muslims, they very much share in the Ma'ya cultural identity, as their village (Wauyai in Kabui Bay) is located near the sanctuary of the ancestor stone. The clan Gaman, one of the clans that lives in Wauyai, is the guardian of the stone, and the village as a whole is reminded of the myth by visitors to the sanctuary from other Ma'ya villages. The Kawe lack such a link with the other Ma'ya villages. Also, the remote location of their villages (Selpale and Salyo) in Aljui Bay in western Waigeo isolates them somewhat from the other Ma'ya villages. When they adopted christianity, they turned away from their own belief system, and, doing so, from their link with the other Ma'ya villages.⁷¹ Still, they recognize the Ma'ya migration myth, although their version is somewhat different from the one accepted among the other Ma'ya villages.

Evidently, the land- vs. sea-oriented distinction, crystal clear on Salawati and Misool, is less obvious when we consider the Ma'ya of Waigeo. While the Laganyan pattern with the Ma'ya of Misool and Salawati, the Kawe and the Wauyai do so to a lesser extent. On the one hand, both their language and their mythology suggest a close connection with the other Ma'ya groups. But the fact that they did not adopt islam, and the fact that they were not living in villages on the coast by the end of the 19th century (de Clercq 1893) indicate that they were interior-oriented.

This crucially confirms that the myth of the Waigeo origin of the Ma'ya represents historical fact. Migrating from Waigeo, the Ma'ya became outsiders on Salawati and Misool, confined to the coastal areas, with no rights on the land, and therefore dependent on fishing and trading, having to acquire sago through exchange with the original population of those islands. This seaward-orientation brought them in contact with the Moluccas, from where they derived power and islam. On Waigeo, on the other hand, there never was a dichotomy between the original inhabitants and the Ma'ya, as the Ma'ya were autochthonous themselves. They were therefore less outward-oriented, had access to sago themselves, and did not develop contacts with the Moluccas the way the Ma'ya who had migrated did.

⁷¹ Kamma (1949:542) writes that the Kawe used to have a face-shaped stone, called "child of the stone (my translation)". This stone commemorated their link with the original ancestor stone near Wauyai. When they adopted christianity, the Kawe gave this "child of the stone" with Dr. Kamma, who brought it to the Ethnology Museum in Leiden (the Netherlands). It is currently on display there.

C.1.3. Land-oriented groups of Misool, Salawati and Waigeo

The land-oriented populations of Misool, Salawati and Waigeo stand out jointly as compared to the Ma'ya, but do not constitute a single ethnic group. Each of them has their own language, and each considers itself as the original inhabitants of its island or area: the Matbat of Misool, the Ambel of East Waigeo, and the people of the interior of Salawati, for which no general name exists. Both the Matbat and the people of the interior of Salawati look distinctly Papuan, with a dark skin, frizzy hair, and a relatively big nose as compared to the Austronesian physical type.

When de Clercq visited the RA islands in 1887-1888, all land-oriented groups still lived predominantly in the interior. By the 1980's, all groups had moved to the coast. The causal factors of this development are pressure from Dutch and Indonesian authorities (van der Leeden 1980:206), and possibly the influence of christian missionaries.

Christianity was introduced soon after the move to the coast, probably not before 1925. On Salawati, for example, evangelization was in full progress in 1957 (Polansky 1957). By then most but not all villages had an evangelizer, but in many villages a substantial part of the population still adhered to their original belief system. The only report on the belief system of the interior-oriented groups of the RA islands is Polansky (1957), who discusses the shamanistic *mon* religion of the people of the interior of Salawati. In this religion, individuals were trained in contacting spirits through a trance. Such trance-sessions (*main mon* in Malay) were repeated twice per month. They were also organized to persuade disease-causing spirits to leave the bodies of sick people.

All land-oriented groups cultivate sago, and trade it with the Ma'ya villages on the coast (de Clercq 1893, van der Leeden 1993).⁷² This age-old trade pattern, whereby the Ma'ya buy their sago from the interior-oriented groups, is still prevalent, and it constitutes at least part of the explanation why various interior-oriented groups chose to settle in the vicinity of Ma'ya villages.

The Matbat are the people of the interior of Misool. Their name means 'people of the land'. In the report of the biologist-explorer Wallace, the wordlist I argued to be of the Matbat language is introduced as the language of the interior (Wallace 1869:474). Two coastal Matbat villages, Atkiri and Lenmalas, are represented on Dutch maps based on data collected in 1944 (Nederlands Nieuw Guinea 1:100,000). In the case of Mage, a Matbat village in southeast Misool, the move to the coast must have taken place considerably later, as many of the villagers report that they were born and spent part of their youth in previous settlements of the village in the interior. As was mentioned above, some Matbat villages settled close a Ma'ya villages when they moved to the coast: Matbat Salafen is adjacent to Ma'ya Waigama, and Matbat Mage to Ma'ya Gamta (see Figure II.4). At least in the case of

⁷² On his trip to Mayalibit Bay, de Clercq met Ma'ya from the south coast of Waigeo who had traveled there to buy sago from the Ambel (de Clercq 1893:151). Van der Leeden (1980) notes that in northern Salawati, the interior-oriented villages Mocu and Fiawat trade sago with neighboring villages, as they have extensive sago-gardens near the Waijan River.

Mage, education was an important reason to move to the coast. By moving to the vicinity of Gamta, the people of Mage gained access to primary-school education for their children.

There is no general name for the different groups of interior-oriented people of Salawati. While the interior-oriented groups of southern Salawati are called Kawit, a number of names have been reported for the land-oriented people of northern Salawati: Butleh, Banlol, Tipin, and Metli, which means 'land-oriented people' (see § II.3.5). Some groups moved from the interior to locations adjacent to Ma'ya villages: thus land-oriented Fiawat and Mocu are immediately adjacent to Samate, and Kawit people from southern Salawati have moved to the Ma'ya village Sailolof. The language situation of the land-oriented people of Salawati is unclear.

The traditional area of occupation of the Ambel is the interior of east Waigeo, but already by the end of the 19th century, their settlements were located on the northeast coast and around Mayalibit Bay (de Clercq 1893:174). Evidence from clan names suggests that the Ambel have been intermarrying with the Ma'ya (Wauyai and Laganyan groups), before this was barred by a religious divide when the Ambel adopted christianity between 1920 and 1960.⁷³ Interestingly, the Ambel / Ma'ya (Laganyan) members of a clan are distinguished in terms of the sea vs. land-oriented distinction. For example, Ambel people refer to Kasyan clan members in Lupintol (a Ma'ya village) as *Asyan lul* 'sea Asyan', to distinguish them from the *Asyan lil* 'land Asyan' in Warsamdin (an Ambel village). The intermarrying between Ma'ya and Ambel, is also evident from the skin color of Ambel people, which can be lighter than that of the Matbat or the interior-oriented people of Salawati.

In general, it is the Ma'ya who enjoy the higher status, which is reflected by the fact that the people of the interior switch to Ma'ya in between-group communication. During the era of Tidore domination, interior-oriented groups were subordinate to a Ma'ya *raja* (de Clercq 1893, van der Leeden 1993).

C.1.4. Biga and the symbiosis of land- and sea-oriented groups

One village constitutes a notable exception to the division between land- and sea-oriented groups. This is Biga, in southeastern Misool, with about 350 people.⁷⁴ Biga

⁷³ For example, the clan name Gaman occurs in Wayfoy, and Lamlam (Ambel), Wauyai (Ma'ya – now christian), Lupintol and Arway (Ma'ya – muslim). Other clan names linking Ma'ya and Ambel are Kasyan (also Asyan or Syam) and Dayolon (also Dailom).

⁷⁴ In 1887-1888, the village consisted of four big houses on poles, each of which was occupied by approximately 50 people (De Clercq 1893:187,197). According to de Clercq, these houses were the best he saw in the whole RA archipelago. Today, the number of houses has greatly increased, and each houses a single family. However, the whole village is still on poles on the water. A bridge, more than 100 meters long, runs from the shore to the sea, and all houses are built on opposite sides of this bridge. When the poles supporting a house decay, its occupants build a new house on poles behind it, and connect it to the main bridge via a connecting passage, also on poles. In Fafanlap the main connecting road is on the shore, and half of the houses are built on poles. The same is the case in Wauyai, but here a number of houses

– the name means ‘sago place’ – plays an important role in the local economy, as it provides sago for both Lilinta and Fafanlap, the two big Ma'ya villages in the area. Various local sources said that Biga was the first village on Misool to take the christian faith. Physically, the Biga have a dark brown skin, and their head hair is frizzy. In summary, in function of religion, economic activity, and physical appearance, Biga patterns with the interior-oriented groups.

Like the sea-oriented Ma'ya, on the other hand, the Biga people claim a Waigeo origin. According to themselves, altogether 12 clans would have moved from Waigeo to Biga. De Clercq reports that the Biga people told him they hail from the Kawe region. In any case, the Biga language is different from both of the original RA languages used on Misool, Matbat and Ma'ya, although it is similar to the latter, a fact already noted by de Clercq (1893:187). Interestingly, Biga shares a number of words with Ambel and the language of the village Fiawat on Salawati (see Chapter II), both languages of interior-oriented groups. So on the whole, the linguistic evidence suggests that the Biga migrated to Misool from Waigeo or Salawati, and that they were an interior-oriented group there.

The linguistic data do not allow us to be more specific as to the area of origin from where the Biga migrated. An important complicating factor is that the ratio of original RA population over the number of languages is such that a group of families may have migrated without leaving much of a linguistic trace in terms of people who stayed behind speaking the same dialect or languages.

In the Misool context, Biga functions as an interior-oriented village, since it provides sago for Ma'ya villages in the area, in particular for Lilinta. Exactly the same relation is found between Gamta and Mage, Waigama and Salafen, and finally Samate and Fiawat and Mocu. In each case, the Ma'ya and interior-oriented villages are adjacent, and as a result each group can specialize in some activity. The interior-oriented village specializes in sago production, the Ma'ya village in fishing and maybe some trade. The villages do not merge, however, divided as they are by differences in physical appearance, culture, language, and religion. The same relation appears to have existed between Ma'ya and Ambel in Waigeo (see footnote 73).

There appears to have been a balanced and well-defined relationship between the Ma'ya and the various interior-oriented groups. While the contact between them was limited, each profited from the trading relationship they had. In the case of Biga, this symbiotic relationship may have been created intentionally, as it appears that in this case an interior-oriented group moved to a location between two big Ma'ya villages on Misool, in order to fulfill a demand it may well have already fulfilled in Waigeo.

were being rebuilt on the shore while I was in the village (March 2000). In Lupintol, almost all people had moved to the land, according to themselves under pressure of the local government.

C.1.5. Conclusion

Differences in religion, mythology and history, economic activity, language and physical appearance warrant the distinction between the sea-oriented Ma'ya and the land-oriented groups. On Salawati and Misool the Ma'ya have a higher status, but this does not cause friction. The groups of the interior, on the other hand, can profit from their specialization as sago producers. The harmonic relation between Ma'ya and the land-oriented groups is evident from the fact that various groups of the interior settled near a Ma'ya village as they moved to the coast. Presumably, they moved near the Ma'ya village they had been selling sago to before. Biga may be an interior-oriented village which migrated with the Ma'ya to Misool to continue fulfilling its sago-providing role.

In any case, combinations of adjacent Ma'ya and interior-oriented villages enjoy better public services than they would as single isolated villages, since the Indonesian government caters education and health care on the basis of the number of people living in a location. Individual villages often are very small, in the range of a few hundred inhabitants. By moving closer together, the villages may fulfill a census criterion that brings a primary school teacher or a health care worker.

On Waigeo, the sea-oriented group is less well defined by the sociological variables that distinguish it on Salawati and Misool. This was interpreted as evidence that (western) Waigeo is the region of origin of the Ma'ya. Variation is greater here, because the Ma'ya who left constituted a subset of a population with more within-group variation in its sociocultural features. The Ma'ya who migrated had their language and physical appearance in common with the Kawe Ma'ya and the Wauyai Ma'ya.

C.2. The history of the Raja Ampat archipelago

C.2.1. The era of Tidore

C.2.1.1. Tidore and New Guinea

When European trading companies arrived in the eastern part of the Malay archipelago in the early 16th century, they found the north Moluccan sultanates of Tidore and Ternate in control of the spice trade. The wealth which the North Moluccan sultanates derived from the spice trade translated into regional influence, as Ternate expanded to the west (Sula islands), and Tidore to the east (western New Guinea). Islam had reached the North Moluccan sultanates not long before the arrival of the Europeans, and was spreading further east from there (Hanna & Alwi 1990).

Most early records on the Raja Ampat archipelago come from Portuguese and later Dutch documents relating to the sultanate of Tidore. In 1667 the Dutch East Indian Company (V.O.C.) signed a contract with Tidore, granting Tidore a

monopoly of trade with the ‘Papuan islands’ (Dutch: *Papoesche eilanden*), by which the Raja Ampat islands were known at that time. It may well be that Tidore’s supremacy was not fully established by that time, and that this treaty actually supported Tidore in its endeavor to consolidate its influence in the Raja Ampat archipelago and further west on the New Guinea mainland. Until the end of the 19th century, the Dutch East Indies Company and later the Dutch colonial government overestimated the role of Tidore as overlord of RA area and elsewhere in west New Guinea (Kamma 1948:553; Huizinga 1998). Initially, the Dutch appear to have believed that Tidore’s claims on west New Guinea were genuine, and hoped that, by acknowledging them, they would acquire an ally who would support their monopoly over the spice trade and counter the activities of pirates. Later on, in the 19th century, as the colonial powers carved up New Guinea, the Dutch government knowingly overestimated Tidore’s influence in order to boost its own far-reaching claims on west New Guinea (Huizinga 1998:388). That is, by acknowledging a greater part of west New Guinea as dominated by Tidore, the Dutch indirectly extended their own sphere of influence, as they were the overlords of Tidore.

In reality, there is no evidence of involvement of Tidore beyond the Cendrawasih Bay area. Within this sphere of influence, this involvement comprised little more than the extraction of tribute in trade goods and slaves (Kamma 1948, Huizinga 1998). In each group where it levied such a tax, the Tidorese appointed a headman, who was responsible to collect the tax and bring it to Tidore. Because the involvement of Tidore was limited to extracting tribute, there was little incentive for people to provide it voluntarily. Villages sometimes failed to deliver the tribute to Tidore as they were supposed to, in particular those in the Cendrawasih Bay area, located far from Tidore. Here the tribute was only paid under the threat of the *hong*, the dreaded raiding fleet which terrorized and plundered villages that had failed to bring their tribute themselves.

C.2.1.2. The four *rajas* as vassals of Tidore

Like elsewhere, a number of headmen were appointed in the Raja Ampat archipelago. They were the *raja* of East Misool, West Misool, Salawati and Waigeo, after whom the Raja Ampat – *ampat* is ‘four’ in Malay – were named. All *rajas* – and the lower-status headmen who had the title of *kapitan laut* – resided in Ma’ya-speaking villages. The relation of Tidore with these *rajas*, though, was considerable stronger than with the headmen of Cendrawasih Bay. Rather than mere representatives for tax collection, they were – most often loyal – vassals of the Tidorese sultan.

Right from the start of recorded history, at the beginning of the 16th century, the North Moluccan sultanates were closely related to the Raja Ampat archipelago. In 1534 the *rajas* of Waigama and Waigeo are recorded to have taken part in a joint effort of the North Moluccan sultanates to get rid of the Portuguese colonizers (Kamma 1948).

Like other headmen, the RA *rajas* were obliged to deliver a yearly tribute in slaves and goods to Tidore. At least some of them, though, were additionally

responsible for the collection of this tribute in other areas. For example, Valentyn (1726 in Haenen 1991:9), for example, reports that the *raja* of Onin was subordinate to that of (presumably East-)Misool, who in his turn was subordinate to the Tidorese sultan. Also, documents from 1705 report that the sultan of Tidore collected a tax in slaves and goods from areas on the north coast of New Guinea up to Cendrawasih Bay, and that this tax was collected by the *raja* of Salawati (Leupe 1875 in Miedema 1984). In that year the *raja* of Salawati was reported in a village in the Bay of Doreh, near modern Manokwari (Leupe 1875 in Miedema 1984). On the basis of more detailed accounts of a later date, these records of tribute collection can only be interpreted as indicating that the *raja* of Salawati organized *hong*i fleets which when necessary collected tribute by force.

Of the four *rajas* of the Raja Ampat archipelago, the one of Salawati was the most powerful (Miedema 1984:8). At the end of the 19th century, the *raja* of Salawati controlled the Bird's Head coastline from the Kalabra River (on the southwest shore of the Bird's Head) up to Cape of Good Hope, the most northern tip on the north coast of the Bird's Head (de Clercq 1893, references in Huizinga 1998). De Clercq also reports that there is a settlement of Salawati people on the north coast of the Bird's Head (As or Asbaken).

All Ma'ya villages that were the seat of a *raja* or a *kapitan laut* are muslim. This is an important indication of the fact that the relation between Tidore and the headmen of the Raja Ampat archipelago was considerable strong. Kamma (1977) writes that the Papuans obstinately refused to adopt islam. The fact that the Ma'ya villages did become muslim indicates that they were connected with the Moluccas by strong political, sociocultural and commercial links.

C.2.1.3. Raiding and trading

Until the beginning of the 20th century, the trade with west New Guinea was dominated by commercial centers in the Moluccas, most notably the North Moluccan sultanates and the principalities of insular East Seram (Goodman 1998). The former network is the better known, thanks to the interest of European traders and later on Dutch colonial officials in Ternate and Tidore. The second has received comparatively little attention because the East Seramese villages involved attracted little interest from European observers.

Traders from these centers sailed to New Guinea to buy, among others, massoy (aromatic tree bark), tripang (sea cucumber), damar (a tree resin), birds of paradise, pearls, gold, nutmeg, sago, and of course slaves (Kamma 1948:549, Goodman 1998). In exchange for these goods and slaves they brought metal products (axes, knives, swords), textiles, and trade goods such as glass beads, bracelets etc. (Goodman 1998).

Tidore acquired goods and slaves as part of its yearly taxation. For example, in 1871 the *raja* of Salawati owed the sultan of Tidore a tax of two slaves every three years. The East Seramese traders had *sosolot* monopolies, in which a group in New Guinea exchanged goods with a specific East Seramese village (Goodman 1998).

In the slave trade, the Ma'ya villagers were important suppliers. In 1706, Leupe reports that the people of Salawati support themselves predominantly through robbery (Miedema 1984). Referring to the *rajas* of Waigama, Waigeo and East-Misool, van der Dusen (1610) reports that “they rob incessantly on the shores of Seram, from where they get not little in loot of gold and slaves” (Haga 1884 in Kamma 1948, my translation). In 1653, a fleet of 15 vessels from Salawati and Waigeo threatened Hitu, on the north coast of Ambon (Haga 1884 in Kamma 1948).

Another important supplier in the slave trade was Onin, on the southwest coast of New Guinea, but here the principalities of East-Seram monopolized the trade via the *sosolot* trading networks (Kamma 1948:551, Goodman 1998). In general, the slaves were acquired both as part of regular trade and by means of raids to west New Guinea, but also to the Moluccas. Miedema (1984) discusses the profound effects of the continuous danger on communities on the north coast of New Guinea.

Also, it was not unusual for raiders to kidnap people if there was the possibility of extorting a ransom from their village. In one of the earliest documents dealing with the Raja Ampat archipelago, Roxo de Brito describes such practice by a raiding fleet from Misool, which kidnaps leaders of wealthy villages in East Seram in 1581 or 1582 (Sollewijn Gelpke 1994:130-131). In another reported case of kidnapping, this trick is played on the raiders from the Raja Ampat archipelago themselves. When in 1710 the *raja* of Salawati is in the Cendrawasih Bay area, Tidorese pirates kidnapped his wife and children and 150 of his people. He bought their freedom for 104 slaves (Miedema 1984).

The historical documents involved do not specify which Raja Ampat villages were active in raiding, piracy and slave hunting, but we can safely assumed that it is the sea-oriented Ma'ya villages. To this day the Ma'ya villages acquire their staple carbohydrate sago from other groups.

Pirates from the Raja Ampat archipelago and elsewhere sold the slaves on the markets in Tidore and east Seram, where the physically stronger Papuans commanded a higher price than Austronesian slaves did (Goodman 1998). Demand for slaves increased considerably after the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) monopolized the spice trade in the course of 17th century. Slaves were needed for the spice plantations on Banda and Ambon, and the VOC tried out a variety of ways to obtain them, from buying at the East Seram slave markets, obtaining them through exchange in Onin, and raiding (Kamma 1948). In fact, the monopoly system by the Dutch East Indies Company has been blamed as the highest-order cause of slavery in the Moluccas and New Guinea (Kniphorst in Kamma 1948). While it is unclear whether slavery existed in the Moluccas and west New Guinea before the arrival of the Europeans, it evidently flourished as a consequence of the monopoly on the spice trade by the VOC.

In the course of the first half of the 19th century, the Ma'ya of Salawati lost their dominant position in the slave trade on the north coast of the Bird's Head and Cendrawasih Bay to raiders from Gebe and Biak (Miedema 1984). Haga (1884 in Miedema 1984:7) suggests that the increased competition from Biak is a reaction to the raids which the Biak people had suffered themselves in the past.

C.2.1.4. Decline of the power of the Raja Ampat *rajas*

Various authors have noted that there is a marked difference between the reports preceding the end of the 18th century and those postdating approximately 1830. It was mentioned above that before the end of the 18th century, Salawati exercised authority in Tidore's territories on the north coast of western New Guinea, an area extending up to and including Cendrawasih Bay. In 19th century reports, however, the influence of Salawati is limited to Cape of Good Hope. Similarly, while the *raja* of (presumably East-)Misool is reported to control Onin for Tidore in the early 18th century, this influence no longer exists in the second half of the 19th century. De Clercq, who traveled to Onin in the company of the *raja* of East-Misool, states most clearly that the latter had no influence and was not paid any particular respect there (de Clercq 1893:160).

Kamma (1948:263) relates this decline to the period of chaos the sultanate of Tidore went through at the end of the 18th century. In 1780 the Dutch selected the next sultan, a privilege they had recently appropriated, and ignored two princes that were in line to become sultan (Hanna & Alwi 1990). One of them, prince Nuku, started a rebellion. After an initial defeat he moved his power base to the Raja Ampat islands, and finally conquered Tidore in 1795, with military support from the English who challenged the Dutch monopoly in the Moluccas. The unrest went on during the following decades, as Nuku went on to conquer Ternate. His contested successor, the *raja* of Jailolo, continued to use the Raja Ampat islands as his power base. According to van der Crab (in Kamma 1948), a large part of the male population of the RA islands followed Nuku on his campaigns, so that the area would have been depopulated by the time order was restored, around 1840. In any case, the power of the *raja* of Salawati had declined considerably. After the restoration of order in Tidore, it was Gebe that took over Salawati's role in the *hong*i fleets that intensively raided the north coast of the Bird's Head and Cendrawasih Bay for slaves between 1840 and 1850 (Huizinga 1998).

The perceived decline may also have to do with the fact that the sultanate of Tidore, and the Ternate sultanate likewise, never were organized states in the first place, and had been overestimated initially. When the Dutch finally collected first-hand information on the influence of Tidore in west New Guinea in the 19th century, they found it to fall short of earlier reports, both in terms of geographic scope and in quality.

An event that undoubtedly played an important role in the decline of Tidore's influence in west New Guinea in the 19th century was the prohibition of the *hong*i raids, which constituted the only incentive to pay tribute to Tidore. By the middle of the 19th century, the Dutch colonial government became increasingly aware that Tidore's influence in west New Guinea amounted to little more than raiding and slavery. Dutch administrators started restricting the *hong*i raids, and tried to abolish slavery through a number of contracts with the North-Moluccan sultanates. Tidore's influence in western New Guinea ended simultaneously with the prohibition of the *hong*i raids in 1862 (de Clercq 1893:162). Slavery ended in Ternate and Tidore only in 1879, as the Dutch colonial government bought the freedom of 1371 slaves on

Ternate and 3078 on Tidore (Kamma 1948:268). In western New Guinea this abolition of slavery only took effect gradually. Villages in New Guinea had been raiding one another for slaves for a long time, and it took time before the absence of a market and pressure of the colonial government caused this practice to be discontinued. The clearest evidence of the continuation of this practice is that in 1918 the colonial local administration liberated 143 slaves in Samate and moved them to Sorong (Kamma 1948:268).

In summary, the decline of power of the *rajas* started with the chaotic state of the Tidore sultanate at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Later, in the second half of the 19th century, the prohibition of the *hong*i raids (1862) and the end of slavery (1879) reduced their position as vassals of the Tidore sultan to a symbolic one.

C.2.2. Dutch rule and the Indonesian present

C.2.2.1. Dutch colonization

Until 1898, the Dutch part of New Guinea was governed from Ternate, in the North-Moluccas. This government did not amount to much involvement, apart from the abolition of slavery in 1879, which did have a profound impact in west New Guinea. In 1898, a first government post was founded in Fakfak, on the southwest coast of New Guinea, and this was the first step in increasing involvement (Overweel 1998). At the end of the 19th century a number of expeditions had visited the north coast of New Guinea, mainly to determine the extent of Tidore's influence, in the context of the controversy on the division of New Guinea between colonial powers (Huizinga 1998). After the establishment of a permanent post on New Guinea, a beginning was made with the exploration of the interior. A policy was developed on how to colonize west New Guinea, and both private and military explorations crisscrossed the country before 1915 (Overweel 1998). Government officials were stationed at a number of key coastal locations, and their reports provided accurate information on the situation (Miedema & Stokhof 1992, 1993). They also introduced taxes, a judicial system, health care, regular maritime transport and postal service, etc. The hunt on exotic bird species such as the bird of paradise was regularized, and so was the exploitation of natural resources.

The advances made in the state of public services are evident from a report by Polansky (1957), at the end of his term as local administrator of Salawati. This report is probably representative of the situation in the Raja Ampat archipelago in general at that time. There were five state-subsidized schools, and most villages that did not have a school had an evangelist who also served as teacher. Health care was provided in Sorong and in Seget, and the personnel of an ambulant medical center visited most villages by boat, providing vaccination. Other services include jurisdiction by the colonial government administration and government-sponsored cooperatives that bought agricultural and other products from villagers and sold them in Sorong. In order to be able to control villages and to provide services, the

colonial government encouraged the formation of larger villages in accessible areas, that is, near the coast.

C.2.2.2. Traditional Raja Ampat leadership under the colonial regime

When possible, the colonial government made use of local power structures to exercise its authority. Traditional leaders received letters of recognition of their title from the Dutch authorities, and a wage, the size of which was dependent upon their usefulness to the colonial authorities. The amount of the wage was regularly evaluated, in order to ensure that it was in line with a leader's performance, and in case of bad performance, the local leader could lose his title. Also, neither the title nor the wage was automatically inherited, although the Dutch authorities tried to accommodate local traditions.

The report by the administrator Maurenbrechter (in Miedema & Stokhof 1993) makes clear that there are important differences between local RA leaders in the influence they have among the population. For the local leaders of the Biak settlements (the *senadjis* Omka, Beser, and Wardo, and the *gimelaha* Oesba), the monthly wage was only 15 guilders for each leader, and the report states that these leaders had very little influence in their communities. The report notes that vacant posts were left unfilled, and that there was no reason to fill them. Apparently, there was no strong tradition of leadership in the Biak communities. On the other hand, the traditional Ma'ya leaders, the *rajas* of Salawati, West-, and East-Misool, and the *kapitan lauts* of Salawati and Misool, receive a monthly wage of 100 (*rajas*) or 60 (*kapitan lauts*) guilders, respectively. The report notes that these leaders have considerable power in the villages in their sphere of influence, and finds their relatively high wage to be commensurate with their influence and performance.

However, Polansky (1957) notes that the influence of local leaders is shrinking, and that most of them only have influence among the members of their own village. Polansky distinguishes two causes for this decline.

One important factor in the decline of the power of the *rajas* is the advance of christianity in the Raja Ampat area. Except for the majority of the Ma'ya villages, which had received islam from traders or from the Tidore sultanate, most villages in the Raja Ampat area adhered to an animistic religion, such as the *mon* religion of Salawati. In 1855 the protestant missionaries Otto and Geiszler founded the first mission in Doreh Bay, near modern Manokwari (Kamma 1977). In the earliest reference to missionary activities in the Raja Ampat area, Kamma (1977) mentions the names of three teachers of the protestant mission, who in 1914 were active in Sorong, Saonek and Samate, respectively (see Figure II.4). By the middle of the 20th century, the majority of the interior-oriented villages of Salawati were being converted to christianity, and by 1957, over half the population of the administrative unit Salawati was christian (Polansky 1957).⁷⁵ As Polansky reports, this

⁷⁵ This administrative unit (Dutch 'district') consisted of Salawati, Batanta, and the coastal area of New Guinea adjacent to Salawati (Polansky 1957). Its population in 1957 was 4881 people: 2623 christian (53.7%), 1586 heathen (32.5%), and 671 muslim (13.7%).

development met with opposition from the Salawati *raja*, who feared that this expansion would result in the reduction of his influence in the evangelized villages. Indeed, the only villages that still obey the orders of the *raja* in 1957, Yefbo and Pakon, were villages adhering to the shamanistic *mon* religion.

A second important factor in the decline of local leadership was the presence of the Dutch colonial government. As the colonial authorities took active control of local government in the course of the 20th century, this reduced the relevance of the local leaders. The colonial authorities dealt with traditional leaders as they saw fit. In August 1957, for example, the *kapitan laut* of Sailolof, who had been considered a promising local leader in Maurenbrechter's report of 1953, was condemned to the loss of his rank and two months imprisonment on charges of fraud (Polansky 1957). This must have given a clear signal to the population that the power of traditional leaders was limited.

With the Indonesian takeover looming after 1950, the Dutch colonial government strived to emancipate the Papuans so as to make them ready for self-government. The involvement of the colonial authorities in local government increased considerably (Drooglever 1998:482), and in 1951 the authorities tried to lay the foundations for democratic decision-making in west New Guinea, so as to prepare the Papuans for self-rule (Maurenbrechter 1953 in Miedema & Stokhof 1993). In each of the four districts in which west New Guinea was divided, an advisory body was established. The members of these bodies were not elected, "because most of the population is not considered ready for this modern technique of representation" (Maurenbrechter 1953 in Miedema & Stokhof 1993:201). Instead, they were appointed by the administrator, who took care to represent all sections of society. In 1953 three members of this body hailed from the Raja Ampat archipelago: Abukasim Arfan, the *raja* of Salawati, his brother Abdullah Arfan, who had a job as an assistant administrator of Salawati, and A. Boegis, imam in Waigama (Misool). Abdullah Arfan's career as a representative of New Guinea later took him to the conference on the future of Dutch New Guinea in The Hague.

Also at a lower level, the colonial authorities tried to involve the population of New Guinea in government. Polansky (1957) discusses the possibility of a district council of Salawati. Noting the fragmented nature of the Salawati population, divided as it is by religion and ethnicity, Polansky indicates that such a council could only be arrived at in two phases. First councils would be chosen to represent villages from the same area, which share a social background. From these lower level council representatives could then be elected to the Salawati district council. Probably, this body has never been formed. If it has been formed, it did not last long, because 1962 saw the end of Dutch rule in West New Guinea.

C.2.2.3. Armies passing by: World War II and the Dutch-Indonesian conflict

The second world war caused considerable upheaval in the Raja Ampat archipelago. At the maximal expansion of the Japanese conquest, the Japanese army occupied the north coast of New Guinea, and the allied forces were on the south coast of the island. The Raja Ampat archipelago was on the frontline. This is reflected by the

large amount of military equipment – mostly planes – resting on the seafloor between the Raja Ampat islands. In many villages people have vivid memories of the war that passed by. Probably no village suffered more than Samate, the traditional seat of the *raja* of Salawati. The Japanese army found it to be the most comfortable village in the area, and chose it as its camp, close to the airstrip on Yefman. The village population was displaced, and they moved to the nearby island of Kasim. As the allied forces learned that the Japanese army was located at Samate, they bombed it, leading to the total destruction of what must have been the biggest village of the Raja Ampat archipelago. The population of Samate moved back to their village in the 1960's. Van der Leeden (1995) presents a Ma'ya account of the destruction of Samate.

After the rest of Indonesia gained independence between 1945 and 1950, West New Guinea remained Dutch territory until 1962. First the Dutch wanted to keep west New Guinea as a colony, with the objective of making the Papuans ready for self-government. As the pressure from Indonesia and the United States increased, the Dutch government offered to hand over west New Guinea to the United Nations.

In the two years immediately preceding the Indonesian takeover, the Indonesian armed forces repeatedly sent small units to infiltrate west New Guinea by air or by sea (van Horst Pellekaan, de Regt and Bastiaans 1990). These actions had no military value, but were meant to keep the diplomatic pressure on the Dutch government to concede (van Horst Pellekaan et al. 1990:132). Various such operations took place in the Raja Ampat archipelago in months immediately preceding the agreement between the Netherlands and Indonesia on August 15, 1962: at the village of Aduwey on Misool and in Aljui Bay on Waigeo. The people of the Raja Ampat archipelago appear to have sided with the Dutch, as is evident from the fact that in both cases local people informed the Dutch authorities about the infiltrations (van Horst Pellekaan et al. 1990). Only on Gag, whose population had migrated there from Gebe, did the population support the Indonesian troops who landed there.

C.2.2.4. The Raja Ampat archipelago in Indonesia

After the Indonesian takeover, West New Guinea was renamed Irian Jaya. Like the Dutch before them, the Indonesian authorities supplied a number of services, including health care, education, and public transportation over sea.

An important development under the Indonesian regime has been the migration of people from elsewhere in Indonesia to the Raja Ampat archipelago. This issue will be dealt with in § C.2.3.

The Indonesian authorities did not continue the Dutch policy of accrediting traditional leaders. Instead, members of the former ruling clans were dominant in key government jobs, like village head (*kepala desa*), health official (*mantri*), leader of the cooperations. The same was the case one level up the administrative hierarchy: the districts (*kecamatan*) Misool and Salawati were led by members of the Soltif and Arfan clans, respectively, in the course of last decades.

C.2.3. Outside influences and the reaction of the Raja Ampat people

The population of the Raja Ampat archipelago has grown considerably in recent decades, in particular through immigration. This is a sensitive issue, which has recently triggered the foundation of an organization to defend the rights of Raja Ampat people (LEMAKAF). This section looks at the outside influences that led to the foundation of LEMAKAF, and at the structure of this organization.

C.2.3.1. Migrants

Various groups have migrated to the RA archipelago at various points in history, and there are important differences between these groups.

Most integrated are clans whose ancestors came – as individuals or in small groups – to live in a Ma'ya village in the remote past. In this way, the clan names Soasiu and Alhamid indicate a Tidore and an Arabic ancestry, respectively. Other clans have a Seramese or other Moluccan ancestry. These clans speak Ma'ya and are totally integrated in Ma'ya society.

Second, there are people whose ancestors moved to coastal south and east Waigeo from the Cendrawasih Bay area. Their origin is well established (de Clercq 1893), and is evident from their languages, which constitute dialects of Biak (Hartzler 1978, Smits & Voorhoeve 1992). The original RA population refers to these people as Beser.⁷⁶ The settlements occupied by these groups were included in Tidore's age-old claim on New Guinea, as recorded by de Clercq in 1887-1888, which implies that their migration from Biak and Numfor to the RA area must date back to well before that time. The fact that the name of the Ambel appears to derive from the Biak word /amber/ 'stranger', is also indicative of their long presence in the area. De Clercq (1879) reports them to be subordinate to the *raja* of Waigeo. However, they have kept their own identity, and when the last *raja* of Waigeo died in the first part of the 20th century, their position in the Raja Ampat archipelago has become unclear. There are two instances of Beser people sharing a village with Ambel: Warsamdin and Kabare. Undoubtedly, these developments have been motivated by a desire to forge closer connections with the original population of Waigeo. The Beser outnumber the original Raja Ampat groups on Waigeo, and this has led to tension. Irrespective of the long history of residence of the Beser in the RA area, members of the Ma'ya and Ambel groups have claimed that the Beser have no rights to the land they occupy.

The case of the Gebe people on the island Gag, southwest off the coast from Waigeo, is similar. Gebe is a group of islands halfway between Waigeo and Halmahera. People from Gebe migrated from their islands of origin to Gag. This settlement dates back to well before 1878, because de Clercq (1893) mentions that Gag is occupied by people from Gebe.⁷⁷ In recent decades a foreign company started

⁷⁶ This use of the name Beser appears to be a parsprototo, since de Clercq (1893:16) mentions Beser as one of the nine villages of these migrants from Biak and Numfor.

⁷⁷ De Clercq's statement on the status of Gag is the following: "In *De Indische Gids* [= name of journal, BR], 1889, August edition, page 1301, I have given a short description of the island Gag, in the

to mine nickel on Gag, and the original RA islanders believe that they should receive compensation, rather than the Gebe people who live on Gag.

Migration to the RA archipelago accelerated considerably in the latter part of the 20th century. While population currently stands at 35,338 (Sorong Dalam Angka 1998) this is an enormous increase from 12,004 in 1953 (Miedema & Stokhof 1993:274) and 22,095 in 1973 (van der Leeden 1993:2). Next to improvements in health care, immigration is the most likely causes for this increase: since the end of Dutch rule, many people have migrated to the RA islands, particularly from western Indonesia. To some extent, this migration has been organized by the Indonesian government (the *transmigrasi* program). At Kalobo on Salawati for example, there is a transmigration village, and both Ma'ya and Butleh people have joined the settlement, presumably in order to enjoy better services. Others migrate individually, and they may join a village of original RA people. Among others, there are now significant numbers of Butonese and Buginese in the RA islands, in particular in areas featuring rich fishing grounds such as the southeast coast of Misool. A large proportion of the population of the villages Yellu and Harapan Baru, off the coast of southeast Misool, are migrants from outside the RA archipelago. But unlike the incidental individuals or clans that joined original RA villages in previous centuries, the new migrants do not need to learn the local languages in order to be able to communicate, because nowadays all the original RA people are fluent in Malay or Indonesian. As a consequence, these recent migrations constitute a serious threat to the survival of all local RA languages.

C.2.3.2. Companies

A final group of migrants are the employees of companies. These companies include an Indonesian fishing company operating in southeast Misool, pearling operations in Waigeo and southeast Misool, the nickel mine on Gag, and oil mining in eastern Salawati. Logging takes place at various locations. Some companies offer the RA islanders free transport to and from Sorong. In this way, Aljui Bay in west Waigeo and Yellu in southeast Misool, remotely located in the corners of the RA archipelago, are now connected with Sorong by regular boat services (at least twice per week). A number of companies also offer employment, in particular the Australian pearling operation in Aljui Bay and the Japanese one in southeast Misool.

The effect of these companies cannot be underestimated. The Australian pearling operation has two base camps in Aljui Bay. With a population of over 100 people (westerners and people from elsewhere in Indonesia), these camps are almost as large as the nearby village of Selpale. The traditional way of life is continuously challenged, as villagers working for the pearling operation adapt to a new lifestyle, and as goods and fuel are available at the company shop. The company tries its best to accommodate the village, but every step it takes inevitably breaks the mold of the old ways. By allowing people to buy goods and fuel at the company shop they ended

conviction that it belongs to Waigeo. Because I have been informed later that it is considered to be part of Gebe, I have not included this description here.” (de Clercq 1893:17 [my translation])

a lucrative business for the villager who used to sell those goods with substantial profit margins. When the company organized bread production in the village, with the generous arrangement that they would deliver the raw materials for free, and buy the bread later on, arguments broke out in the village when the women of a less prominent clan suddenly got a lot of money. Evidently, companies bring about a radical change in the lifestyle of several villages in the Raja Ampat archipelago.

C.2.3.3. The reaction of the original RA people

The original Raja Ampat population is now a minority in its own region. This situation has forced the RA islanders to consider their own sociocultural situation, and to organize themselves.

The result of this process has been the foundation of the 'organization of the people of the Raja Ampat archipelago on the basis of their own traditions' (*Lembaga Masyarakat Adat Kalanafat (Raja Ampat)* – LEMAKAF for short). This organization is to defend the rights of the original RA islanders in dealings with the government, companies, and migrants.

This organization was established solemnly on March 27, 2000, in the presence of the mayor of Sorong, and various government officials. One of the first activities of the people who took the initiative was to make a list of original RA clans. However, this list only includes clans whose ancestors are considered to hail from the RA. It excludes all of the groups of migrants mentioned in § C.2.3.1, including well-integrated clans such as the Alhamid or Soasiu from Fafanlap. While this attitude towards outsiders does not come as a surprise in the current climate of large-scale spontaneous and state sponsored migration to the RA archipelago, it actually appears to predate it. In 1953, when the RA islands and the rest of the Dutch part of New Guinea had hardly seen any migration at all, the Dutch regional administrator for the Raja Ampat and Bird's Head area makes the following statement:

On the whole, the population takes a quite narrow-minded perspective [on the right of migrants], summarized by the phrase *kita punya tanah air* [it is our land]. According to this point of view, foreigners cannot own land. [Maurenbrechter 1953 in Miedema & Stokhof 1993:197 (my translation)]

In the drive to unite themselves, the land- and sea-oriented groups ignore what distinguishes them from one another. Speakers of Ambel insist that their language is the same as that of the Laganyan, Wauyai and Kawe Ma'ya villages on Waigeo. Also noteworthy is how unimportant the religious divide proves to be: at the same time as inter-religious strife is raging in the neighboring Moluccas Province, muslim and christian RA islanders cooperated intensively in the setup of LEMAKAF.

The driving forces behind LEMAKAF are the powerful clans, and they have designed its structure as a variation of the original power structure of the RA islands. In this way, the local leaders of this organization are called *rajas*, but instead of following the original tradition in assigning them to Waigeo, Salawati, East Misool and West Misool, the 4 *rajas* are assigned North Waigeo, South Waigeo, Salawati, and Misool. This alternative structure follows the division of the local administrative

districts (*kecamatan*) of the Raja Ampat islands in the Indonesian state structure. Some positions of power have been assigned to members of clans who did not have these positions in the past. Also, the structure includes one *raja* at the top, above the four *rajas*. This position has been added to accommodate a place for a single leader of LEMAKAF, and is currently filled by Thahir Arfan, of the *raja* clan of Salawati. Importantly, the Beser, who used to be subordinate to the *raja* of Waigeo, are not represented in this institution, and that is an obvious weakness of LEMAKAF.

It may be surprising that the hierarchy of LEMAKAF mirrors the traditional power relations of the Raja Ampat archipelago. However, the powerful position of the ruling clans has never been contested, so there is no reason for it not to continue. Even now that the *rajas* and *kapitan laut* are not accredited by the state, the clans that used to have these titles are still in power. LEMAKAF makes explicit a system that has never ceased to function. Since LEMAKAF was set up only in March 2000, it is unclear where this new development will lead.

C.2.3.4. Summary

The discussion of the history of the RA islands from the 16th to 19th century shows that the sea-oriented Ma'ya villages had a strong connection with the North-Moluccan sultanate of Tidore. Both as vassals of the sultan of Tidore and on their own account, the Ma'ya villages were active players in the raiding and trading that went on between the Moluccas and western New Guinea. The historical sources indicate that the Ma'ya lived from raiding, and were dependent on others for their staple carbohydrate. At the end of the 19th century, the Ma'ya of Salawati were reported to buy rice from the people of Amberbaken (Miedema 1984:9), east of Cape of Good Hope. Nowadays, the Ma'ya still do not produce sago themselves, but instead they buy it from the interior-oriented villages.

The traditionally powerful clans maintained their position through the changes that have taken place in the last two centuries. From being the raiding vassals of Tidore they found new roles in the Dutch and Indonesian administrations. As the structure of LEMAKAF shows, this feudal clan system has survived until now.

While information on the history of the RA islands is scarce in general, there is hardly any mention of the interior-oriented groups in historical sources before de Clercq (1893). Anthropological research on these groups is very much worthwhile, as it would present data on cultures about which very little is known.