

THE SUMA ORIENTAL
OF TOMÉ PIRES
VOLUME I

Armando Cortesão



THE HAKLUYT SOCIETY

ASHGATE EBOOK

The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires

An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan,
written in Malacca and India in 1512–1515, and
The Book of Francisco Rodrigues, Rutter of a Voyage
in the Red Sea, Nautical Rules, Almanack and Maps,
Written and Drawn in the East before 1515 .

Volume I

Edited by
ARMANDO CORTESÃO

ASHGATE

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THE SUMA ORIENTAL OF TOMÉ PIRES

AND

THE BOOK OF FRANCISCO RODRIGUES

SECOND SERIES

No. LXXXIX

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PLATE I

7
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No may v'f'ho cargo de v'os' p'ona de v'os' e
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 q' on'ce' q' v'os' que' v'os' p' d'oda' d'portugall'
 p'arty' ate' m'p'fa' r'eg'onda' ap'urtugall' q' p' d'p'r'
 d'ad'ep' na' India' d' q' f'ud' a'cu' p'u' m' d'u' t'm' f'o'
 m'e' d'u' d'p'r' que' d' p'urtugall' t'oupe' d' q' m' d'el'
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First page of Tomé Pires' original letter from Malacca, to Afonso de Albuquerque, 10th Jan., 1513

THE SUMA ORIENTAL OF TOMÉ PIRES

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EAST, FROM THE RED SEA
TO JAPAN, WRITTEN IN MALACCA AND INDIA IN
1512-1515

AND

THE BOOK OF FRANCISCO RODRIGUES

RUTTER OF A VOYAGE IN THE RED SEA, NAUTICAL RULES,
ALMANACK AND MAPS, WRITTEN AND DRAWN IN THE
EAST BEFORE 1515

*Translated from the Portuguese MS in the Bibliothèque
de la Chambre des Députés, Paris, and edited by*

ARMANDO CORTESÃO

VOLUME I

LONDON

PRINTED FOR THE HAKLUYT SOCIETY

1944

TO
CHARLES RALPH BOXER

A true friend, to whom the
history of the Portuguese in
the East owes so much

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FOREWORD

WHEN I returned from Paris in 1937 and told Dr. Edward Lynam, Hon. Secretary of the Hakluyt Society, that I had just discovered the long-sought codex containing the *Suma Oriental* of Tomé Pires and the *Book* of Francisco Rodrigues, he immediately suggested that I should edit the manuscript for his Society. I gladly accepted, as no other learned Society could so appropriately publish this almost completely unknown work. Moreover the English, being the principal heirs of the great Portuguese Eastern Empire, are as much interested as the Portuguese in a document of such importance for the history of the first regular contacts between West and East.

The present study allows new light to be thrown on the first official European Embassy to China and its leader, Tomé Pires, the extraordinary man who, after being apothecary to the unfortunate Prince Afonso, son of King John II, went to India in 1511 as 'factor of the drugs', lived for two and a half years in newly-conquered Malacca, where he wrote most of the *Suma Oriental*, and then was sent as ambassador to China, where he died after some twenty years of varied and painful experiences. Till now, little was known about Pires and his Embassy, and the scanty information and scattered documents referring to both had never been brought together.

War broke out when I had nearly finished the lengthy task of typing and translating the whole manuscript. Not until 1942 could I continue my work. This is why I could not finish it as early as promised to the Hakluyt Society and to the International Congress of Geography of Amsterdam, in 1938, where I presented a brief tentative report on the codex, and announced my intention of editing it. The impossibility of working in Portuguese Archives or in Paris to clear up doubtful points, and the removal from the British Museum of much early material, caused me considerable difficulties. Furthermore, when the whole typescript was ready, war-time printing conditions forced

me to reduce my editorial work by about two-fifths. All this accounts for some of the deficiencies in the present edition.

From MM. les Questeurs de la Chambre des Députés I obtained authorisation, dated 5th March 1938, for the publication of the codex; this I here acknowledge with thanks. Without the aid of many friends and correspondents I could hardly have solved several of my problems. I wish to express my gratitude to all who have assisted me. Besides Dr. Lynam, I am specially grateful to Miss P. J. Radford for her varied assistance throughout this work; to Miss M. Withers for her help in the translation up to fol. 172; to Dr. H. Thomas, Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum, for much valuable advice, for help in the translation from fol. 173 onwards, and for reading the Introduction and Notes; to Major C. R. Boxer, now a prisoner in Japanese hands, for assistance and encouragement; to my learned friend the Viscount de Lagôa for information supplied from Lisbon; to Prof. E. Prestage for reading that part of the translation not seen by Dr. Thomas, and for valuable advice; to Prof. C. A. Moule for guidance in all matters relating to China; to Mr. G. R. Crone, Librarian of the Royal Geographical Society, for much help; to Commandant D. Gernez, of the French Navy, for help over Rodrigues' *Book*; to Dr. J. Ramsbottom, Keeper of Botany, Natural History Museum, for advice on all botanical matters; to M. C. de la Roncière, of the Bibliothèque National de Paris, Prof. W. Simon of the School of Oriental Studies, Dr. L. Giles, Mr. R. Pocock, F.R.S., Mr. J. E. Dandy of the Natural History Museum, Sir Richard Burn, Mr. C. D. Ley, J. Frazão de Vasconcelos, L. Reis Santos, Ad. Lopes Vieira, and my son Eduardo Luís, for assistance in various ways; to the Staff of the British Museum, especially Mr. J. A. Petherbridge, and of the Royal Geographical Society's Library and Map Room, especially Mr. G. Mackay, who has drawn all the illustrative maps. Last but not least, I wish to acknowledge the support received from the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, without which it might have been impossible for me to carry on with this work.

LONDON, *August* 1944.

A. Z. CORTESÃO.

INTRODUCTION

THE PARIS CODEX

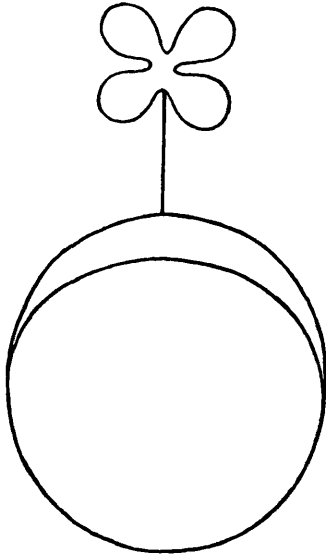
IT is surprising that such an important document for the history of geography as Tomé Pires' *Suma Oriental*—surely the most important and complete account of the East produced in the first half of the sixteenth century, though it was written in 1512–15—has lain forgotten and practically unnoticed until now; the more so as incorporated with it in the same codex is the contemporary *Book* of Francisco Rodrigues with its precious maps which became world-famous in the middle of the last century.

When the Viscount de Santarém reproduced in his last *Atlas*, dated 1849, a series of twenty-six maps under the general title *Portulan dressé entre les années 1524–1530 par Francisco Rodrigues, pilote portugais, qui a fait le voyage aux Moluques*, he did not state where the maps were to be found. The Viscount de Santarém died in 1856, but many of the notes he left on cosmography and cartography, gathered in an almost life-long research among European archives, mainly in Portugal and France, were not published till 1919¹. In these notes, under the heading 'Portulano de Francisco Rodrigues', we find an extensive description of Rodrigues' *Book* which ends with a very brief reference to Pires' *Suma Oriental*. The description is not altogether correct. It gives, however, a most important clue in a footnote, which says that the codex belonged at the time the description was written (1850) to the 'Library of the National Assembly', Paris. In 1933 I wrote to Paris about this codex and was told that it could not be found anywhere, though it might be in the Bibliothèque Nationale, perhaps catalogued under some unrecognizable title². However, when I visited Paris later, I could not find it in the Bibliothèque Nationale, nor in any of the other public libraries where I searched. No one could trace it, and it

¹ Visconde de Santarém, *Estudos de Cartografia Antiga*, 1, 148–56.

² This vague information misled me into asserting in my *Cartografia e Cartógrafos Portugueses dos Séculos XV e XVI* (11, 124), published in 1935, that the codex was in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

was considered lost; but I did not give up, and when in September 1937 I returned to Paris, I was glad to find in the volume *Paris, Chambre des Députés* of the *Catalogue général des Manuscrits des Bibliothèques Publiques de France*, p. 471, the following entry: '1248 (ED, 19). Journal de Francisco Rois, pilote de la flotte portugaise, qui découvrit les Molluques. Ouvrage divisé en deux parties, la première remplie par des cartes, la deuxième contenant le texte proprement dit. Sur le plat intérieur est collé un ex-libris du chevalier de Fleurieu. XVIe siècle. Papier. 178 feuillets et 124 pages. 380 sur 265 millim. Rel. veau marbré, portant au dos le soleil de Fleurieu'. Rois is the old or abbreviated spelling of Rodrigues. The description is not very correct, as will be seen later, but it led me to the place where the precious and long-sought codex lay in oblivion.



Watermark in the paper of
the whole Paris Codex.
(Size of original)

The volume is bound in gilt calf, and on the back is impressed the sun of the Fleurieu family; inside the cover is the ex-libris of 'Mr. le Ch^{er}. de Fleurieu', the famous French hydrographer, Comte de Fleurieu (1738-1810), a former owner of the codex. It is obvious that it was bound while in Fleurieu's possession, and unfortunately it was badly cropped in binding, part of the words in some marginal notes or additions, or in maps, and most of the original numeration of the sheets, having been cut away. The volume contains, besides 4 fly-leaves, 178 folios of thick white paper measuring 263 by 377 mm. Rodrigues' *Book*, with the drawings and maps all on the same

paper, occupies the first 116 folios; Pires' *Suma* fills the other 62. The paper of the 178 folios is all the same and bears the same watermark.

On fol. 5r. is written the word *Osorio* in a later hand, probably the signature of the famous Bishop D. Jerónimo Osório, a sixteenth-century historian and book-collector, apparently an early owner of the codex¹. Each MS has its original folio numeration, almost completely cut away when the volume was bound; but traces of it can still be seen. Another numeration was supplied, later, in Pires' *Suma*, and a completely new one, from 1 to 178, was added in a modern hand to the whole codex.

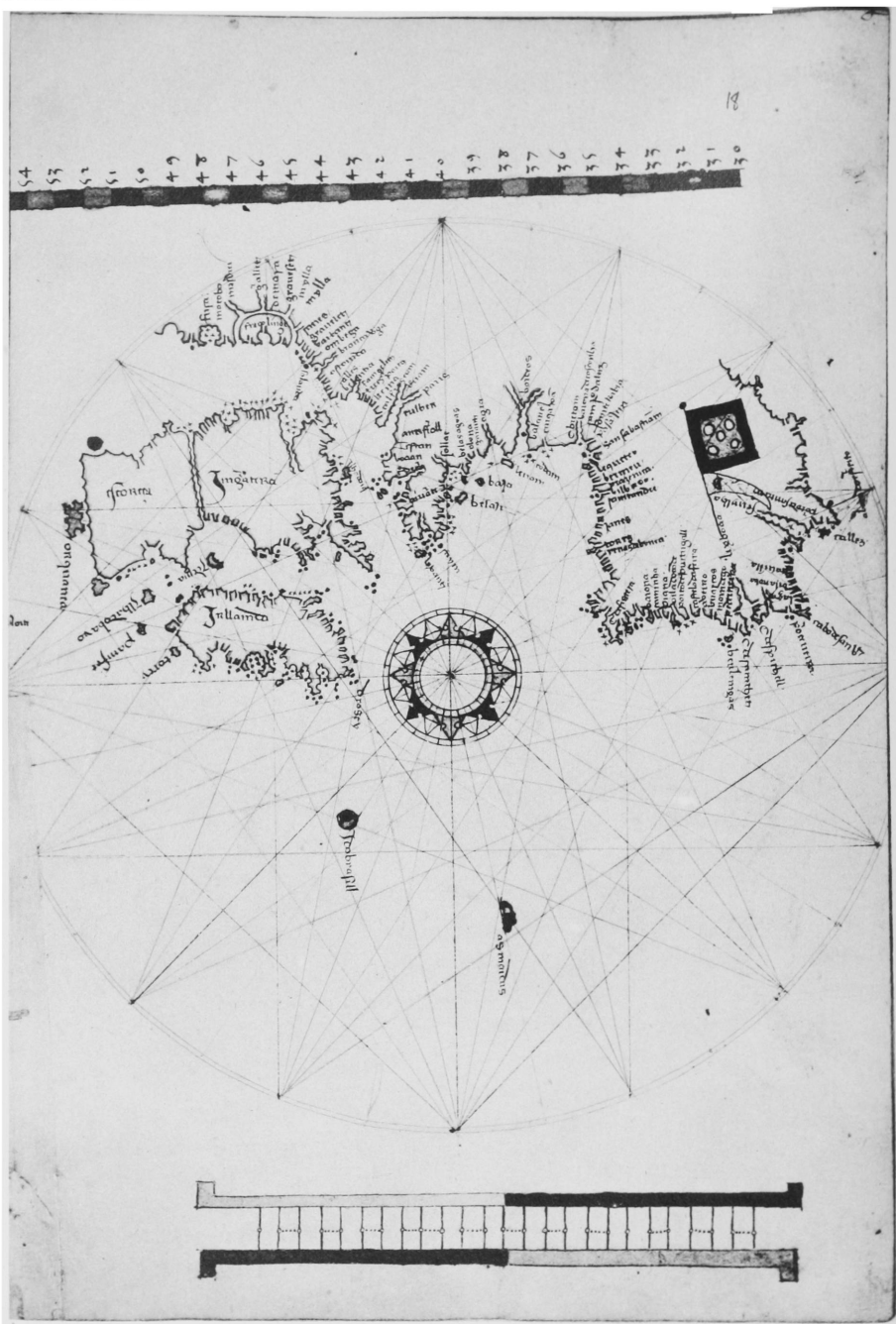
Santarém's above-mentioned footnote says also: 'It seems that this precious MS belonged to the famous Bishop Osório, a great many of whose MSS were found by the English on board a Portuguese ship, which they captured off the Azores and took to England. Later it was acquired by M. de Fleurieu'. He adds that this information was given to him by 'M. Biller, librarian of the National Assembly'. I was unable to trace the origin of this curious information.

¹ This supposition, though very likely, is merely conjectural, because—strange though it may appear—no document bearing the signature of Bishop Osório has, so far, been found in Portuguese archives or anywhere else. D. Jerónimo Osório was born in Lisbon in 1506 and died at Tavira in 1580. He studied at the Universities of Salamanca, Paris and Bologna; in Paris he was a companion of St. Ignatius of Loyola. In 1564 he was appointed Bishop of Silves, after having been a Professor in the University of Coimbra. He was a famous and learned writer and left numerous works, mainly in Latin; one of the better known is *De rebus Emmanuelis Regis Lusitaniae invictissimi virtute et auspicio gestis libri duodecim*, Olysiptone 1571. There was another Jerónimo Osório (1545–1611), nephew of the former, who was a canon of the see of Evora and also a book-collector. It has been said that when in 1596 the Earl of Essex sacked Faro he took with him Bishop Osório's books, which he later presented to the Bodleian Library. However, the bishop of Faro was then D. Fernando Martins Mascarenhas. Essex "quartered himself on the bushopes howse", and two days later set fire to the town and sailed for home; but he saved the Bishop's library, and in 1600 made a gift of some 200 volumes to the Bodleian'. See the interesting article by Miss K. M. P[ogson], *A Grand Inquisitor, and his Library*, published together with 'A list of books presented by the Earl of Essex in 1600, still in the Bodleian', in *The Bodleian Quarterly Record*, III, 239–44. Oxford 1922. J. B. Silva Lopes says that 'among the spoil that the English took with them, was the precious library of the Bishop (Mascarenhas), composed of many books, a good part of which they say was taken to the Library of Oxford, and among them there were many of the learned D. Jerónimo Osório'. *Memorias para a Historia Ecclesiastica do Bispado do Algarve*, p. 369. Lisboa 1848. Among all the books presented by Essex there is only one in manuscript; none of them seems to bear the signature of Bishop Osório. See plate II.

When referring to Tomé Pires, Barbosa Machado says in his *Bibliotheca Lusitana* that he wrote '*Summa Oriental começando do estreito do mar roxo até a China, Dedicado a D. João III.* fol. M.S.' This was perhaps an earlier copy than the Paris MS, as will be seen later, in spite of the supposed dedication to King John III, whose reign began in 1521. Actually Pires dedicated the *Suma* to John III's father, King Manuel I. There is no doubt, however, that it was a different copy. Rodrigues' *Book* was written by himself, and Pires' *Suma* is a contemporary copy, which is evident not only from the early sixteenth-century handwriting, but also from the fact of the paper being exactly the same in both MSS. Besides, the word *Osorio* on fol. 5r. of Rodrigues' *Book* is apparently in the same hand as the notes, referring to the order of the folios, written on fols. 118v., 124v., etc., of Pires' *Suma*. It is probable that the two MSS were assembled in the same codex by Rodrigues himself, or at least in his time; they certainly were together when in Osorio's possession, before 1580. So the copy referred to by Barbosa Machado could not have been the same, otherwise he would not fail to mention Rodrigues and his *Book*, which he does not.

THE PRESENT EDITION—Though the two works are very distinct in character—one a rutter, a nautical manual and an atlas, the other a geographical, economical and historical account—they are both very valuable, were written much about the same time, have been together from an early date, and to some extent complete each other. I am glad that the Council of the Hakluyt Society agreed to publish them both together and to print the original of the very difficult and etymologically very interesting Portuguese text verbatim after the English version, which undoubtedly enhances the value of the present edition.

The present copy of Pires' *Suma* is not the original he himself wrote, and the copyist has left only too many instances of his own carelessness. Pires' style is far from clear, and this, added to the transcriber's mistakes and the most anarchic punctuation, or absolute lack of it, makes the interpretation of the text often extremely difficult; sometimes the translation has to be very free, perhaps even more of a guess than anything else. I have endeavoured, however, always to catch the real meaning of what



Rodrigues' map (fol. 18) of the West Coast of Europe and the British Isles (p. 519)

Pires originally wrote, not only collating the Paris MS with another copy and with Ramusio's version of part of the *Suma*, but also studying the context and other sources when available. In all the most difficult cases I sought the help and advice of such learned experts and scholars as Dr. Henry Thomas and Prof. Edgar Prestage. Even so, I am not sure that it has always been possible to reach the right interpretation; but the reader, when in doubt, has the faithfully reproduced Portuguese text for reference; from it he may attempt a better version. He will find much matter for study and discussion. Here my limited responsibility ends.

The greater importance and length of Pires' work made it advisable to print the English version before that of Rodrigues' *Book*, reversing the order in which they occur in the codex. When the two MSS were assembled together at an early date, some folios of the *Suma Oriental* were misplaced, or for some reason or other the text does not follow the order originally intended by Tomé Pires. All this has been adjusted in the English version; but in the case of the Portuguese text, its actual order and disposition in the Paris codex are faithfully kept. Both in the English version and in the Portuguese text the numeration of the folios is given as it appears in the Paris codex; this will help the reader to find without difficulty the corresponding portions in the English and the Portuguese. In annotating the text I have tried not only to elucidate every obscure point, when possible, but also to explain or emphasize the importance of certain passages for the history of geography; this will account for the length of some of the notes.

Names of Eastern persons and places, the identification of which is not always possible, are often given with such different spellings in the Portuguese text that their rendering into English becomes a complex problem. I decided, as a general rule, to print Eastern names of persons, and their official posts, as they occur in the Portuguese text, and to give explanations, and the corresponding English forms, whenever possible, in footnotes. As regards place-names, they are always given in the English form in the translation, when they can be identified and there is a corresponding English name; but the first time the name

appears, and when it is repeated in a different form or much later in the text, the original Portuguese spelling follows in brackets.

Before describing the *Suma Oriental* in detail, I now give a biographical sketch of Tomé Pires; then I deal with Francisco Rodrigues and his *Book* in the same way.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON TOMÉ PIRES

Tomé Pires cuts a modest figure when compared with some of the men who shine in the history of the Portuguese in the East during the first half of the sixteenth century. Among those living there at the time, Albuquerque, the great captain and administrator, founder of an immense Empire, and Camoens, the Prince of Portuguese Poets, who sang the glory of his country and countrymen, are the greatest of all. Duarte Pacheco Pereira, D. João de Castro and António Galvão were famous as captains, administrators and navigators or writers, Garcia da Orta as a scientist, Gaspar Correia and Castanheda as chroniclers. Fernão Mendes Pinto, whose *Peregrinação* was published only thirty-one years after his death, with several alterations, was the greatest adventurer in Portuguese history, and has left us a wonderful account of his marvellous adventures. Many others won immortal fame as warriors, navigators or explorers. Even Duarte Barbosa became world-famous, but his *Book* was written just after Pires had finished the *Suma Oriental*, a much vaster work. Barbosa's *Book*, the original of which is lost, was soon translated into Spanish and Italian, and was first published by Ramusio in 1550, becoming widely known, while only a less important portion of Pires' *Suma* reached Ramusio, who published it without name of author, which he did not know.

Pires' great work was lost and has been buried in oblivion until now. The humble apothecary who arrived in India in 1511, and through his merits was chosen for the important post of first Portuguese Ambassador to China, where he died probably about 1540, has been practically forgotten, though his contribution to the early knowledge of the East is of the greatest historical importance. He is, however, a very interesting figure, and the *Suma Oriental*, besides being the earliest extensive account

of the East written by a Portuguese, is also the first European description of Malasia, the detail of which was not surpassed, in many respects, for more than a century or two. Tomé Pires was above all an eager observer, a keen and inquisitive student, and a faithful, accurate and indefatigable describer; though his literary style is poor, he cannot but occupy a remarkable place among the early European writers on the East.

SOURCES—Data about Tomé Pires' life, from shortly after his arrival in India till his death, are not scarce, though they are rather incomplete; but for his life in Portugal there are only a few vague references. All we know about him is contained in the following: the present *Suma Oriental*, four letters written by him, five other documents signed by him, one letter signed by him and others, eight letters and another document by contemporaries who refer to him, and references in the chroniclers and early writers. These are summarized below.

Pires' letters: from Malacca, 7 Nov. 1512, to his brother João Fernandes, published in *Cartas de Afonso de Albuquerque*, vol. VII, pp. 58–60; from Malacca, 10 Jan. 1513¹, to Afonso de Albuquerque, *Ibid.* 4–7; from Malacca, 10 Jan. 1513, to 'Whoever is in charge of appointing officials for Malacca', *Ibid.*, 66–7; from Cochin, 27 Jan. 1516, to the King of Portugal. This last was published for the first time in the *Jornal da Sociedade Pharmaceutica Lusitana*, tomo. II, no. 1, pp. 36 *seqq.* Lisbon, 1838; then in *Gazeta de Pharmacia*, Lisbon, 1866; and again in *Obras Completas do Cardial Saraiva*, vol. VI, pp. 419–28, Lisbon, 1875. A translation of this extremely interesting document is given at the end of vol. II, Appendix II, of the present work.

Other documents signed by Pires: document dated in Malacca, 12 Nov. 1513, in which he appears as executor of the will of his brother-in-law Diogo Lopes, *Cartas*, VII, 99; receipt in Malacca, 24 Dec. 1513, *Ibid.*, 107; receipt in Malacca, 12 Jan. 1514, *Ibid.*, 112–13; receipt in Malacca, 5 May 1514, *Ibid.*, 121–2;

¹ This letter was published with the date 10 Jan. 1512. It refers, however, to some events that happened months later, such as Pires' auditing of the accounts of João Freire, factor of Abreu's fleet to the Spice Islands, who returned to Malacca in December 1512, and also the intended attack of *Pate Unus* against Malacca, which took place at the beginning of January 1513 (see note pp. 151–2). See plate I.

letter 'To the King our Lord—from the officials of Malacca', 7 Jan. 1514, signed by 'the scribes Pero Salgado, Tomé Pires and Garcia Chaym, and the factor Pero Pessoa', *Ibid.*, III, 89-91.

Documents referring to Pires: an order of Rui de Brito, Captain of Malacca, 4 Nov. 1513, decreeing that Pires should receive what was left by his dead brother-in-law, *Ibid.*, VII, 97; letter from Afonso de Albuquerque to the King of Portugal, Cannanore, 30 Nov. 1513, *Ibid.*, I, 141-50; letter from Rui de Brito, Captain of Malacca, to the King of Portugal, Malacca, 6 Jan. 1514, *Ibid.*, III, 91-7 and in *Alguns Documentos da Torre do Tombo*, pp. 345-50; letter from Rui de Brito to Afonso de Albuquerque, Malacca, 6 Jan. 1514, *Cartas*, III, 216-31; letter from Jorge de Albuquerque, Captain of Malacca, to the King of Portugal, Malacca, 8 Jan. 1515, *Ibid.*, III, 133-9; letter from Jorge de Albuquerque, Captain of Malacca, to the King of Portugal, Malacca, 1 Jan. 1524, *Ibid.*, IV, 35-42; two letters from Cristóvão Vieira and Vasco Calvo, Canton, 1524, and 10 Nov. 1524¹. Later copies of these two letters, extant in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris (Fonds Portugais, no. 65)², were published—introduction, original text and translation—by Donald Ferguson in the *Indian Antiquary*, Bombay, 1901-2. In the Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, there are fragments (Fragmentos, Maço 24) of the original of the first of these two letters (in Chinese ink on Chinese paper), which were published by Dr. E. A. Voretzsch in *Boletim da Sociedade Luso-Japonesa*, no. 1, Tokyo, 1929.

References in chronicles and early books: Gaspar Correia, *Lendas da Índia*, vol. II, pp. 473, 528-9, 678, written in the middle of the sixteenth century; Fernão Lopes de Castanheda, *Historia do Descobrimento da Índia pelos Portugueses*, bk. IV, chaps. IV and XXXI, bk. V, chap. LXXX, 1st ed. 1554; João de Barros, *Asia*, Decada III, bk. II, chap. 8, bk. VI, chaps. I and 2,

¹ Although these two letters were published as dated 1534 and 1536, this was a mistake, as will be shown farther on.

² The two letters of Vieira and Calvo are bound together with the MS of the *Chronica dos Reis de Bisnaga*, published by David Lopes, Lisboa, 1897. The compilation of this *Chronica* was ordered by Barros (cf. David Lopes' *Introduction*, p. lxi), and he utilized it as well as the two letters as a source of information in the writing of the *Third Decade* of his *Asia*.

and bk. VIII, chap. 5, 1st ed. 1563; António Galvão, *Tratado*, pp. 129–30, Hak. Soc. ed. (1st ed. 1563); Damião de Góis, *Chronica do Felicissimo Rei Dom Emanuel*, pt. IV, chaps. xxiii and xxv, 1st ed. 1567; Fernão Mendes Pinto, *Peregrinação*, chaps. lxx, xci and cxvi, 1st ed. 1614; Manuel de Faria e Sousa, *Asia Portuguesa*, tom. I, pt. III, chaps. 3 and 6, and Appen-dice, chap. 7, 1st ed. 1666; Diogo Barbosa Machado, *Bibliotheca Lusitana*, s.v. Thomé Pires, 1st ed. 1752.

BEFORE ARRIVAL IN INDIA—Very little positive is known of Tomé Pires' early life. Gaspar Correia informs us that Pires was a son of the apothecary of King John II (1455–95), and Castanheda says that he had been apothecary of Prince Afonso. This was probably the unfortunate son of John II, born 18 May 1475, died 13 July 1491. There was also a Prince Afonso, seventh son of King Manuel (1469–1521), born 23 April 1509¹, but he was not yet two years old when Pires went to India, and could hardly be the Prince referred to by Castanheda.

Pires may have been in his early forties when he embarked for India. In his letter of 10 Jan. 1513 to Afonso de Albuquerque, he complains that Pero Pessoa, the new factor of Malacca appointed after the death of Rui de Araújo, probably at the beginning of January 1512, just before Pires' arrival, was so young that at first he did not want to serve as scrivener under him. He says, in the same letter, that Malacca was so important that he would like to see there 'three or four men with white beards to take care of the King of Portugal's revenue'. This shows that he was then no longer a young man. Prince Afonso married in November 1490, when he was fifteen years old. Most likely it was then that young Pires, son of the King's apothecary, was appointed as apothecary to the Prince. He could scarcely be less than 22 or 23 when the Prince died in 1491. This is confirmed by Pires himself when, at the end of his description of the Islands of Bachian, he says: 'it must be quite twenty years that I have been using the said leaves in Portugal' (fol. 158v.). That being so, Pires was born *circa* 1468, was about 43 when he went to India, and about 70 when he died perhaps a little before 1540.

¹ This Prince Afonso, who died 21 April 1540, was made a cardinal when only eight years old.

In his letter of 7 Nov. 1512 to João Fernandes, his 'brother by blood'¹, he also mentions his sister Isabel Fernandes, one Maria Godinha, perhaps his brother's wife, and one Antónia, perhaps a niece, whom he distinguishes from his brother's 'wife and children'. He also refers to 'Diogo Lopes my brother-in-law, who eats, drinks and sleeps in my house, a very good knight and a very good man'. The way in which Pires refers to 'my brother-in-law' seems to indicate that Diogo Lopes was the brother of his wife, whom he does not mention in the letter. Perhaps Pires was a widower, and here we may possibly have the reason of his departure for the East.

The letter is addressed to 'Senhor João Fernandes, in front of the Porta da Madalena, my brother'. It is possible that Pires had lived there too. The Porta da Madalena² was not far from the north-east corner of the old Terreiro do Paço, corresponding more or less to the present Praça do Comércio, better known to the British as Black Horse Square, near the end of Rua Nova dos Mercadores, then the main commercial street of Lisbon, approximately the present Rua do Comércio. There were several apothecary's shops in this street³, and it is not impossible that one of them or some other near the place belonged to Pires or to his brother, or to both. Faria e Sousa says that Tomé Pires must have been born in the Portuguese town of Leiria, because his daughter, found by Fernão Mendes Pinto in China in 1543, had the name of that town as a surname. But this is mere conjecture⁴.

¹ There is nothing extraordinary in Pires' using a different surname from that used by his brother and sister. Instances of the kind are not unknown, though they are not usual.

² I was unable to find any other reference to the 'Porta da Madalena'. It must have corresponded to the old 'Porta do Ferro', also called 'Porta da Consolação', which was in the present Largo de Santo António da Sé, behind the former Church of Madalena. Castilho, *Lisboa Antiga*, I, ii, 178 *seqq.*, VI, 112 *seqq.*

³ João Brandão says in his *Tratado da majestade, grandeza e abastança da cidade da Lisboa*, p. 82, that in 1552 there were nine apothecary's shops in Rua dos Mercadores.

⁴ When Pires' letter of 27 Jan. 1516 was published, D. Francisco de São Luís (Cardeal Saraiva) asserted that he was 'a native of Leiria'. This has no more foundation than Faria e Sousa's conclusion, on which it is probably based.

In the same letter Pires refers twice to 'Senhor Jorge de Vasconcelos, to whom I owe as much, on account of the favours I have received from him, as I owe you for reasons of blood'. Jorge de Vasconcelos was the director or purveyor (*provedor*) of the *Casa da Mina e India*, an establishment in which was centred the administration of Portuguese affairs beyond the seas—a forerunner of today's Ministry for the Colonies. He also says that he was enclosing a letter to Dr. Diogo Lopes, perhaps the chief royal physician, with whom Pires might have been connected after his service as apothecary to Prince Afonso. It is only natural that Pires went to India under the protection of these two important persons. In his two letters of 10 Jan. 1513, addressed to Albuquerque and to 'Whoever is in charge of appointing officials for Malacca', Pires says that in Lisbon the King—who wrote a letter to Albuquerque recommending him for the first factorship available—had dispatched him as factor of the drugs (*feitor das drogarias*), with 30,000 *reais* and 20 quintals of drugs, at his choice, every year, counting from the day of his embarkation in Lisbon, and three men to serve him, whom he took with him to India. He was also in charge of a *botica* (supply of medicines), worth 4,000 or 5,000 *reais*, which was being sent to India.

IN INDIA BEFORE GOING TO MALACCA—The fleet of six ships under the command of D. Garcia de Noronha, a nephew of Afonso de Albuquerque, sailed from Lisbon in March and April 1511. The one before this was a fleet of three ships, commanded by João Serrão, which left Lisbon in August 1510; the next afterwards left Lisbon in March 1512. One of the ships of D. Garcia de Noronha's fleet, *Belém* ('which was one of the most beautiful ships the seas have seen', according to Barros), under the command of Cristóvão de Brito, sailed from Lisbon on 20 April and arrived at Cannanore on 8 Sept. 1511¹. D. Aires da Gama, brother of the Admiral D. Vasco da Gama, sailed at the same time on the ship *Piedade*, but later he separated from Cristóvão de Brito's ship, and after sighting Bhaktal on 7 Sept.

¹ Barros, II, vi, 10. Castanheda (III, lxxi) says that Cristóvão de Brito sailed from Lisbon on 19 April 1511 and that he went first to Goa; Correia (II, 197) says that he arrived at Cannanore in August.

went to Cannanore¹. Pires went to India on one of these ships, which, according to Barros, were the only two of D. Garcia de Noronha's fleet to arrive in India that year of 1511. Pires' letters of 7 Nov. 1512 and 10 Jan. 1513 show that he had not been long in Cannanore when Albuquerque returned to Cochin at the beginning of February 1512, after the conquest of Malacca. In the letters to his brother and to Albuquerque, Pires says that the Governor-General had summoned him from Cannanore, where he was 'factor of the drugs', to Cochin. In his letter of 27 Jan. 1516 to the King, Pires says: 'The ships of Cristóvão de Brito and Dom Aires took to Portugal a quantity of wormwood which was bought by João Dávila when I was still in Portugal.' These ships loaded as soon as they arrived in India and were back in Portugal in August 1512. It is likely that the wormwood was not bought much before it was sent to Portugal, and if Pires was still there at that time, and by the end of 1511 was already in India, he could not have come on any other ships than those of Cristóvão de Brito and D. Aires da Gama. It can be safely concluded that Pires sailed from Lisbon on 20 April and arrived in India on 8 Sept. 1511, or a day or two later².

In his letter of 30 Nov. 1513 Albuquerque tells the King of disturbances and irregularities on the part of some of the men he had appointed as wardens of prizes of war (*quadrilheiros*) in Malacca. In view of this he decided, as soon as he knew of it, to send there 'Tomé Pires, apothecary of the Prince, because he seems to me a diligent man, so that he, with Rui de Araújo [whom Albuquerque had left as factor in Malacca] and the Captain should make an enquiry into all that matter'. Pires sailed from Cochin to Malacca on board the *Santo André*³, in company with the ship *Santo Cristo*, in April or May 1512, after eight or

¹ Castanheda, III, lxxi. Correia (II, 197) says that D. Aires da Gama arrived at Cannanore three days after Cristóvão de Brito.

² When Pires' letter of 27 Jan. 1516 was published, D. Francisco de São Luís said: 'I believe he (Pires) went to India between 1512 and 1515.' But this is a mere and groundless supposition.

³ A vessel of 70 tons built in Cochin by Gonçalo Eanes. *Cartas*, III, 128, 355; v, 492. This vessel formed part of the fleet that in 1513 went to Java with Pires as factor, and of the squadron that in 1516-17 took him to China. The *Santo André* was lost in October 1518 when returning to Malacca. Barros, III, ii, 8.

nine months in India. From his letter of 10 Jan. 1513 to Albuquerque it seems that the two vessels met with bad weather just off Cochin, and some cargo had to be thrown overboard, including more than 400 *cruzados* worth of goods belonging to Pires.

IN MALACCA. The *Santo Cristo* and the *Santo André* arrived in Malacca in June or July, soon after the death of the factor Rui de Araújo¹. The letter of 7 Nov. 1512 to his brother is the first document we have about Pires' stay in Malacca. In it he says: 'I am in Malacca as scrivener and accountant (*contador*) of the factory (*feitoria*) and controller (*veador*) of the drugs.' He was enjoying good health and he was already rich, 'more than you can imagine', in spite of having more than 400 *cruzados* worth of his goods thrown overboard on the *Santo André*, and the complaints he made later, in the letter to Afonso de Albuquerque, about his salary. He asked the latter for 50,000 *reais* more for his services as scrivener, besides the 30,000 *reais* he already received as factor or controller of the drugs. He complained also that he had been most of the time in bed with fevers. 'I have been very ill, two months in bed', he says, which shows that he had fallen ill just after he had written to his brother. His brother-in-law, Diogo Lopes, was living with him in November 1512, but on 4 Nov. 1513 he had already died and Pires was the executor of his will.

On 6 Jan. 1514 Rui de Brito, Captain of Malacca, wrote to King Manuel and to Afonso de Albuquerque telling them that in March 1513 he had sent to Java a fleet of four ships to fetch spices. The fleet was under the command of João Lopes de Alvim. Three of the vessels (*navios*) were the *São Cristóvão*, the *Santo André* and a caravel, commanded respectively by Francisco de Melo, Martim Guedes and João da Silveira. 'Tomé Pires, scrivener of this factory and its accountant, went as factor of the fleet and to superintend the cargo', adds Brito. It sailed from Malacca on 14 March and returned on 22 June 1513 with

¹ In a letter written from Malacca to Albuquerque on 22 Feb. 1513, F. P. Andrade says that the *Santo André* and *Santo Cristo* arrived during the course of events that happened between the day of St. John (24 June) and the day of St. James (26 July). *Cartas*, III, 54-5.

about 1,200 quintals of cloves¹. From his description of Java (fols. 148-55)—‘as well as I have been able to examine and investigate, verifying my facts with many people’—we see that Pires visited the north coast of the island, at least from Cherimon to Grisee. When referring to Baros, a port on the north-west coast of Sumatra, he says: ‘I went behind this island a matter of fifteen leagues.’ This was obviously a different voyage from that to Java, but we do not know when it took place. Perhaps Pires wrote or at least intended to write another book dealing with the ‘weights and measures in all the different places’ of the East, as he seems to state when referring to the ‘Coins and weights of Java’ (fol. 150v.); but if he did, the book is now lost.

Two documents of 12 Nov. and 24 Dec. 1513 and three others of 7 Jan., 12 Jan., and 5 May 1514, show that Pires was then in Malacca; on 27 Jan. 1515, the date of *Ninachatu*'s death, he was still there, as shown in the last page of the *Suma*². But he must have left for Cochin soon after that date. In his letter of 8 Jan. 1515 to King Manuel, Jorge de Albuquerque, the new Captain of Malacca, mentions China and Cochin China, and the kingdoms of Siam, Borneo, *Llucoes*, and *Tamjunpura*, where is the diamond-mine, ‘as Tomé Pires is bringing all these things duly explained.’ This refers of course to the *Suma Oriental*. It seems that Pires sailed from Malacca at the same time as this letter, immediately after the 27 Jan. 1515, in one of the two ships that arrived in Cochin at the end of February. We know of the arrival of these two ships through two documents dated 30 (*sic*) February and 3 March 1515, in which Pero de Mascarenhas, Captain of Cochin, orders some provisions to be supplied to a boat (*atalaia*) he was sending to Goa with the news from Malacca for Afonso de Albuquerque³.

¹ Castanheda (III, cxi) and Barros (III, v, 6) say that Alvim went to Japara to fetch some cloves salvaged from a junk shipwrecked there the year before, when returning from the first Portuguese expedition to the Spice Islands. See p. 521.

² Pires says: ‘And if by chance I should not come before the presence of the King our Lord, or of the Governor of the Indies’; ‘and that it is most important for the Governor of the Indies *to come* without delay to Malacca in force.’ This seems to imply that he was still writing in Malacca. See note p. 287.

³ *Cartas*, VI, 252-3.

RETURN TO INDIA AND EMBASSY TO CHINA. From the above quotation of Jorge de Albuquerque's letter we see that Pires left Malacca with the intention of returning to Portugal. But Pires' fate was written otherwise in the Book of Destiny. Albuquerque had sailed from Goa to Ormuz on 21 Feb. 1515 and only returned about ten months later, to die before Goa on 16 December. Meanwhile the new Governor-General of India, Lopo Soares de Albergaria, had left Lisbon with a fleet of thirteen (or fifteen) ships at the beginning of April, and arrived at Goa at the beginning of September 1515. Thence he proceeded to Cannanore and Cochin, where he arrived before the end of September. With the new Governor came Fernão Peres de Andrade, whom the King sent as Captain-Major of a fleet to go from India 'to discover China' and take a Portuguese ambassador there.

Castanheda informs us that 'the King of Portugal did not send any ambassador [from Portugal], because, thinking that the King of China was near, he ordered Fernão Peres to send there one of his captains, or whoever he might choose. And the Governor would not send anyone but this Tomé Pires, whom he sent on the advice of the noblemen and captains of India, because this Tomé Pires had been apothecary of the Prince Dom Afonso, and was discreet and eager to learn, and because he would know better than anyone else the drugs there were in China'. On the other hand Correia says that the Governor, who had gone again to Goa and returned to Cochin in February 1516, 'dispatched Fernão Peres de Andrade to China according to the orders he had brought; and he sent with him one Tomé Pires, son of the apothecary of King John, who was his great friend, and because he was very prudent, and very curious of knowing all things of India'¹. Thus it seems that the Governor was already an old friend of Pires, a fact that must have influenced him in his choice for such an important embassy, in spite of Pires being a man of the people, as the chroniclers do not forget to emphasize. He must have chosen Pires when he met him on his first arrival

¹ It is odd that Correia seems to have forgotten that Pires was already in the East when he adds: 'therefore he embarked and came with him (Andrade) on this voyage of China, because in Portugal they talked great things about China, which Tomé Pires was anxious to learn and see, in order to write about them, as indeed he did.' II, 473.

in Cochin at the end of September. By then Pires certainly was a very rich man, and he would have liked to return to Portugal after an absence of nearly five years. But the idea of going to see for himself that great and mysterious China, of which he had heard so much in Malacca, with new and exceptional possibilities of increasing his wealth, must have attracted him powerfully. Besides, he may have had a grievance against Albuquerque, who used his abilities, but never raised him above the modest post of scrivener, in spite of justified complaints and requests. Albergaria was an enemy of Albuquerque and, according to Correia, a friend of Pires, who perhaps had been strongly recommended to him in Lisbon. By that time Pires had finished or was finishing the *Suma Oriental*, which might have impressed not only the new Governor, but also many of the 'noblemen and captains of India' mentioned by Castanheda. It must also not be forgotten that Pires, as well as his father, though men of humble origin, had been intimately connected with the court, and certainly had more education than the great majority of the Portuguese noblemen then in India. In the letter to his brother, Pires refers to the 'pampering in which I was brought up and spoiled'. Barros says: 'the ambassador . . . was called Tomé Pires, whom Lopo Soares in India had chosen for that post. And although he was not a man of very much quality, being an apothecary, and serving in India to choose the drugs which should come to this Kingdom, he was the most skilled for that mission and the best fitted for it; for besides his distinction and natural inclination to letters, according to his ability, and his liberality and tact in negotiation, he was very curious in enquiring and knowing things, and he had a lively mind for everything.' Thus, the choice of the modest but clever, industrious, experienced and well-brought-up Pires for the important post of ambassador to unknown China seems less extraordinary than it perhaps appeared to some later chroniclers¹.

¹ Osório, *De rebus Emmanuelis*, lib. xi, and Couto, *Decada* xii, v, 4, refer to the embassy and the ambassador, but do not even mention his name. We do not know whether the codex containing the *Suma Oriental*, now in Paris, was in Bishop Osório's possession when he wrote his famous book; but it seems that it was not, otherwise he might have shown more consideration for Tomé Pires' name.

Though Pires had left Malacca by the end of January 1515 with the idea of returning to Portugal, his very interesting letter of 27 Jan. 1516 'about the drugs and where they grow' shows clearly that he no longer thought of going back so soon. From this we can gather that before the Governor came again to Cochin in February 1516, Pires already knew that he was going to China.

FROM COCHIN TO CANTON. As soon as Albergaria returned to Cochin in February 1516 he despatched Fernão Peres de Andrade to China with a fleet of four ships¹, in which went the ambassador Tomé Pires. The fleet called first at the port of Pase, in Sumatra, where it would be joined by the ship of the merchant Joannes Impole (Giovanni da Empoli), a Florentine in the Portuguese service, which was there loading with pepper to take to China. But Impole's ship had caught fire and the cargo was lost, so Andrade decided that, after calling at Malacca, he would go to Bengal before going to China. However, the Captain of Malacca, Jorge de Brito, insisted that Andrade should go to China with his fleet without delay, because he was worried about Rafael Perestrelo, who had gone there the year before in a junk with other Portuguese. Reluctantly, because the monsoon was too advanced, Andrade sailed to China on 12 Aug. 1516² on the ship *Santa Barbara*, with António Lobo Falcão in a caravel, Manuel Falcão in another ship, and Duarte Coelho in a junk. The fleet met adverse weather off the coast of Cochin China and

¹ Góis (iv, ii) tells us that Albergaria arrived in Cochin and at once despatched Andrade to China; Barros (III, i, 2) says that Albergaria left Cochin on 8 Feb. 1516 after despatching Andrade's fleet to China; Galvão (Hak. Soc. ed. p. 129) says that the fleet to China sailed from Cochin in April. In a very interesting and still unpublished letter written from Malacca, 10 Aug. 1518, to King Manuel, Simão de Andrade says that when he arrived in Goa, coming from the entrance of the Red Sea, on 20 Jan. 1516, he found Albergaria there. Torre do Tombo, Gaveta 15, Maço 17, no. 27. Nor are the chroniclers very clear about the fleet's composition. Barros (II, ii, 6) says that King Manuel had ordered that it should be of four sail equipped in India; Correia (II, 473) says that Andrade sailed from Cochin in company with Simão de Alcáçova, António Lobo Falcão and Jorge de Mascarenhas. However, Castanheda (iv, iii) and Góis (*ibid.*) mention Falcão alone, 'and the rest of the company he should gather in Malacca.'

² Almost all the chroniclers give this date, but Castanheda says that it was 15 August.

the ships were nearly lost. It was mid September and Andrade decided to return to Malacca. The junk went to Siam, where Duarte Coelho had been before; the other three vessels, after taking in fresh water on the coast, sailed south by way of Pulo Condore and Patani.

When Andrade arrived at Malacca he found Perestrelo back from China with great profit. He decided to postpone the expedition to Bengal, and in December went to Pase to load with pepper in order to proceed to China as soon as the monsoon permitted. In May he returned to Malacca where he found that, Jorge de Brito having died, there was a great dispute between Nuno Vaz Pereira, Brito's brother-in-law, and António Pacheco, Captain-Major of the Sea, as both wanted to succeed as captain of the fortress. After vain efforts to reconcile them, Andrade sailed from Malacca in June with a squadron of eight ships. Castanheda describes it as follows: Andrade 'commanded the *Espera*, a ship of about 200 tons, Simão de Alcáçova the *Santa Cruz*, Pero Soares the *Santo André*, Jorge de Mascarenhas the *Santiago*, Jorge Botelho a junk of a Malacca merchant called Curiaraja, Manuel de Araújo another junk of [the Malacca merchant] Pulata, and António Lobo Falcão a junk of his own; and it was a fleet of seven sail that left for China'. Barros, however, says that there was an eighth ship commanded by Martim Guedes¹.

The squadron arrived at *Tamão* or *Tumon* island², about the middle of the Canton River entrance, on 15 Aug. 1517, after meeting a Chinese fleet cruising off the island as a protection against the pirates. The Chinese shot at the Portuguese, without doing any harm, however, and Andrade did not return the fire, giving every demonstration of peace and friendliness. All the chroniclers describe, sometimes at great length and with much detail, what happened to Andrade and his squadron, from the arrival at *Tamão* till the ambassador Tomé Pires was landed at

¹ Correia also says seven ships, Galvão and Sousa say eight, and Góis and Osório say nine. Góis' mistake is that he says that Duarte Coelho went in a ship with Andrade; however, when Andrade arrived at *Tamão*, Coelho had been there a month, having sailed directly from Siam where he had gone the year before, when he parted from Andrade on the coast of Cochin China.

² Lin Tin Island. See note p. 121.

Canton¹. As soon as he cast anchor at *Tamão*, Andrade sent a message to the captain of 'the Chinese fleet which came barking behind him', in Barros' picturesque words, 'explaining who he was and that he was bringing an Embassy of King Manuel of Portugal his Lord to the King of China.' The Chinese captain welcomed Andrade and said that 'through the Chinese who went to Malacca he also had news of the good faith and chivalry of the Portuguese', advising him to address himself to the Pei-wo (*Pio*) of Nan-t'ou, 'a man with a post like that of Admiral among us, which was the name of the office and not of the person'². Andrade then sent a message to the Pei-wo—who at the same time had sent a messenger to enquire from Andrade who they were and what they wanted—to inform him 'that the principal reason of his coming was to bring an ambassador whom the King of Portugal, whose captain he was, was sending to the King of China with letters of peace and friendship, and he asked for pilots to take the fleet to the city of Canton'. The Pei-wo answered in very kind words, but stating that the permission would have to come from the officials in Canton. After many messages and delays, Andrade decided to wait no more and to go to Canton with some of his ships, using the Chinese pilots he had brought from Malacca. But as soon as the ships cleared the port they were suddenly struck by a storm, and only with great difficulty and much damage could they be saved. The Chinese ashore refused any assistance for repairing the Portuguese ships, but Andrade did as well as he could, and 'embarked on the ship of Martim Guedes, taking with him that of Jorge de Mascarenhas and the boats of the other ships, all very well prepared for peace as well as for war, and went to the port of Nan-t'ou, leaving Simão de Alcáçova as captain in charge of the other vessels. His

¹ Correia, II, 524 *seqq.*; Castanheda, IV, xxviii-xxx1; Barros, III, II, 8; Góis, VI, xxiii. The quotations that follow in the text are from Barros.

² 'The Pei-wo [an abbreviation of the title Pei-wo Tu-chih-hui, a military commander whose chief function was to guard the coast against the depredations of the Japanese pirates] at Nan-t'ou was empowered to examine all ships that came to Canton. . . *Pei-wo* is pronounced *pi-wo* in the dialect of the coastal district, and from *pi-wo* we have the form of *Pio* in Portuguese accounts and manuscripts.' T'ien-tsê Chang, *Sino Portuguese Trade from 1514 to 1644*, p. 41. On Nan-t'ou, called *Nantoo* by Pires and *Nantó* by the chroniclers, see note p. 121.

purpose was to send, from nearer the Pei-wo, his messages and requests to be allowed to proceed to Canton, and if the permission was not given, he himself would take it'. Once at Nan-t'ou he sent ashore Impole, with trumpeters and a bodyguard, pressing the Pei-wo to let him go to Canton with the ambassador. After new delays Andrade 'set sail, in view of which the Pei-wo sent him pilots, who took the Portuguese ships to the city of Canton, where they arrived near the end of September with all the pomp and festivity he could manage'. The journey up the river took three days, because Andrade did not want to travel at night.

ARRIVAL AT CANTON. About nineteen months had elapsed since Pires sailed from Cochin before he arrived in front of Canton—a voyage that, in favourable conditions, could be made in about four months. The chroniclers do not tell us of Pires' reactions to the delays, drawbacks and annoyances he suffered during all these months, but one can well imagine his desperation, impatience and anger. However, that was nothing compared with what awaited him in China, though the first contacts with the Chinese, through the Pei-wo of Nan-t'ou, must have given him a foretaste of what was in store. It may also be supposed that often Andrade sought Pires' advice, and that they acted in accord.

Displaying flags and firing a salute with all their artillery, the Portuguese ships cast anchor off the main quay, before the Huai-yüan post station¹. The Pu-chêng-shih or Provincial Treasurer, Wu T'ing-chü², the highest Chinese authority then in Canton, remonstrated against what he said were breaches of the custom of the land on the part of the Portuguese, who furthermore came without official consent. Andrade replied that the firing of the artillery and the displaying of flags was due to his ignorance, and intended as a mark of respect, and as for his

¹ This information is given by a contemporaneous Chinese account of Andrade's arrival at Canton in 1517. The account published under the Ming Dynasty in 1621 in a rather confused and so. . . inaccurate manner, was translated by W. F. Mayers, under the title *First arrival of the Portuguese in China*, in *Notes and Queries on China and Japan*, 1, 129-30. Hongkong 1868.

² Chang, *op. cit.*, p. 42. The Pu-chêng-shih is Barros' *Puchancij* and Castanheda's *Puchāci*.