A historical map of Murderers' Bay, showing a bay with mountains in the background and several sailing ships and canoes in the water. The map is overlaid with text and labels. The text is in a mix of English and German. The English text reads: "Investigation of 'A View of Murderers' Bay' Part One Solving the Mysteries – Detective Work". The German text includes: "an dem jenseits des Meeres", "sich befinden", "Küsten", "is nicht", "D. is die", "E. sind", "F. is". There are also labels "B" and "D" on the map. The map is a detailed drawing of a bay with mountains in the background and several sailing ships and canoes in the water. The text is overlaid on the map.

**Investigation of
'A View of Murderers' Bay'**
Part One
Solving the Mysteries – Detective Work

Robert Jenkin
24.11.2017.
Takaka Library

Solving The Mysteries of Murderers' Bay



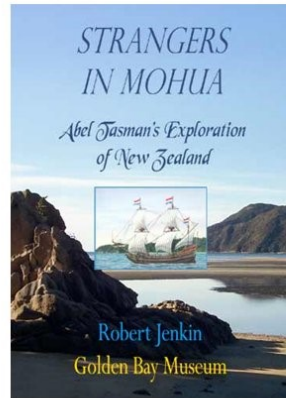
This picture of the ships Zeehaen and Heemskerck, at anchor off Wainui Bay on the morning of December 19th 1642, is very often reproduced. It also shows the Maori waka that surrounded and attacked Zeehaen's small boat and below this another fleet that then pursued the Dutch ships as they sailed off again. It's often claimed to be the work of Isaac Gilsemans, but there are good reasons for doubting that. In fact we really don't know much about this picture's provenance.

Detective Work:

eyewitnesses and
second-hand accounts



A primary source
for Tasman's voyage:
The Blok Fragment,
circa 1642



A secondary source
for Tasman's voyage:
Strangers in Mohua
2000

Historians are like detectives. We try to locate and evaluate all the best evidence in order to determine what has taken place. We class such evidence as either primary or secondary, and primary evidence is what we really like to get our teeth into.

Primary sources are *first-hand* accounts or illustrations of events, while secondary sources are just second hand. Published research, newspaper articles and history books are typically secondary. Primary sources aren't always fully self explanatory and can be hard to understand, especially if we don't know much about their provenance.

So, that word 'provenance'; what does it mean? One definition is "the beginning of something; its origin".

Secondary sources tend to have been mass produced and often they themselves explain their provenance. A printed work like Golden Bay Museum's *Strangers in Mohua* tells us its printer's name, it's authors' name or names, and generally has a publication date. However, the Blok fragment has no date or signature, and we are left to guess when it was made, where it was made, and who its maker was. This is, I think, one of the most exciting parts of history – detective work!



Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie 1642

The first known European expeditions to New Zealand were those of Tasman in 1642 and Cook in 1769. Primary sources that relate to Cook are very numerous, while those for Tasman are, comparatively, scarce.

This is because the further we go back in time the fewer primary sources tend to have survived. Also, the voyage that took place in 1642 was secretive, an expedition wholly financed by the VOC, the Dutch East India Company. At that time mercantilism led to many missions of discovery. Mercantilists tended to see distant lands as places ripe for exploitation by themselves. The VOC, a joint-stock, profit-making company, a sort of early multinational, with a large private army and navy, earned huge returns for its investors by its militarily enforced monopoly of what had previously been an open market trade in East Indies spices. European square rigged ships and their on-board artillery meant they could dominate the oceans and mass troops wherever they saw fit. Non-Christian, and especially Muslim spice-growers, were often seen by Dutch as devil-worshippers to be exterminated or enslaved at the discretion of the VOC.

What they learned from their own explorers they at first kept to themselves. This meant that men like Tasman didn't get much public recognition until later centuries. We have few actual portraits of them, few contemporary biographies. As far as I know there are none of Tasman or of any of his officers. I know, I know, you've all seen Tasman's portrait. So it may come as a surprise to hear that none of them are really known to be of him. Such primary evidence as we do have comes mostly from Birth, Marriage and Death certificates along with other legal documents, from the extensive records kept by VOC, and from a handful of surviving texts that were for centuries in private ownership. Both versions of 'A View of Murderers' Bay' are such surviving texts .



English Navy and Royal Society 1769

Endeavour's voyage was planned and funded publicly. In fact the English Navy and the English Royal Society both had a hand in it. By this time mercantilism was on the wane and an 'enlightened science' was the coming thing. Explorers now served great contending European empires, and the 'enlightenment' saw distant lands as places to be studied, for the betterment of science and 'humanity'. Empires still saw them though as places to be ruled, and they competed with each other just as fiercely as the mercantilists of the previous century – it must be more than a coincidence that French explorer De Surville just happened to arrive here in the same year as James Cook!

Cook and his officers, and scientists like Joseph Banks who sailed with him, were famous in their own time and have been so ever since. We have a wealth of pictures of them, hundreds of contemporary articles and documents, in short a plethora of primary evidence, most of it with known provenance, since it's been held in archives from soon after it was made.

As I have said, for Tasman and his officers that's not the case.

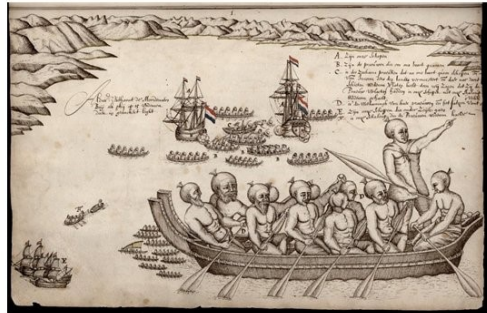


Blok Fragment



number 21 on Blok

State Archives Copy
of the Tasman Journal



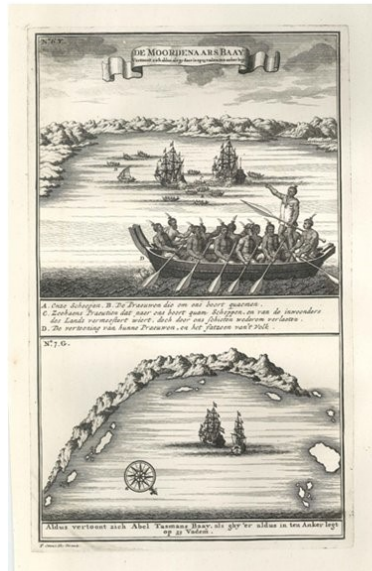
Let's look more carefully at these two images. We really don't know much about their provenance till they went into archives in the last years of the 19th century.

The Blok fragment is a single leaf of paper slightly less than A3 in size with ink and wash drawings on both sides. These closely correspond to pictures on the 64th and 65th pages of the State Archives Copy of what some see as 'the Tasman Journal', the copy that from here on I'll call SAC. There are no numbers on the pages of the SAC. The Blok appears to be a remnant of some kind, since it is just one leaf, yet has the number 21 – what it's a remnant of is something of a mystery. Blok's drawings have the same labels as their SAC equivalents: the first is 'Thus appear the sand dunes...' and the second 'Thus appears The Murderer's Bay...'. These labels have been written in a different hand to those of SAC but in the same hand as the body of the *text* in SAC; see what I mean about the primary sources and detective work? And anyone with internet can do this nowadays, online. Now, since we think one person helped make both these things, it's likely that their origins were closely bound. And it seems evident that either one was copied from the other or both were copies of another closely corresponding source.

Blok seems to be the last survivor of a set of illustrated pages which at first belonged to VOC and then passed into private ownership. It was presented to the Netherlands State Archives by D. Blok at an uncertain date between the early 1870s and 1882.



technical note by Valentijn
for 1720s copyist



The corresponding
half-leaf plate from
Old and New East-India

A cryptic note at bottom left of Blok appears to have a rather startling later origin. It translates into English as ‘N° 6F, together with 7G to form a half-leaf’. This is, according to ‘detective Heeres’, the handwriting of François Valentijn, whose 1726 book ‘*Old and New East-India*’ includes an illustration evidently based on the Blok ‘Murderers’ Bay’: some of its details, like Maori head-feathers, are shown in Blok but don’t appear in SAC. Probably then, side two of Blok was copied to create N° 6F in ‘*Old and New East-India*’, and illustration N° 7g, which appears on the same half-leaf, below, and corresponds to ‘... Abel Tasman’s Bay ...’ in SAC, was copied not from SAC, but from a matching illustration that once went with Blok, and on *that* Valentijn most likely scrawled ‘N° 7G’. Well, we no longer have it, so can’t say for sure, but it seems very probable.

It also seems to me a cavalier way to treat a precious primary source. Why not a separate note attached by paper clip, but, I suppose they’d yet to be invented then. Anyway this note is very useful for detective work. From Wikipedia we learn that Valentijn “probably had access to the V.O.C.’s archive of maps and geographic trade secrets, which they had always guarded jealously”. So, Blok appears to be the last survivor of a set of illustrated pages which had belonged to VOC and in the early 18th century were made available to Valentijn, and then passed into private ownership. Blok was presented to the Netherlands State Archives by D. Blok at an uncertain date between the early 1870s and 1882.



First page of
Huijdecoper
Journal

“Murderers’ Bay” in SAC

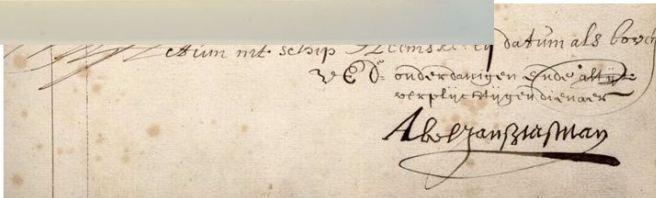
Batavia in 1656

The State Archives Copy of the so-called ‘Tasman Journal’ is hand written and hand drawn. Copying errors in it show it’s an imperfect copy of another text. It has 53 illustrated and 140 unillustrated pages, and these amount to 97 leaves. It was presented to the Netherlands State Archives by J. Gleichman in 1867.

There’s reason to believe it dates from 1643, since on December 22nd of that year VOC’s Council of The Indies signed a report which went back to the Netherlands from their base, Fort Batavia in Indonesia. That report said that with it there went “daily registers kept by the aforesaid Tasman and the Pilot-major ... Visscher, the said registers pertinently showing the winds and the courses held, and faithfully delineating the aspect and trend of the coasts, and the outward figure of the natives, etc.”

New Zealand academic Andrew Sharp, ‘Detective Sharp’, suggests the SAC is such a ‘daily register’, apparently the only one to have survived. We have one other Tasman daily register that’s seen as primary. Known as the ‘Huijdecoper Copy’, it’s now in the Mitchell Library of New South Wales. But it has fewer charts and illustrations, only four in fact, and while three of those do have counterparts in SAC, they actually contradict those counterparts, so it seems safe to say the Huijdecoper copy wasn’t sent back to the Netherlands with SAC in 1644. ‘Detective Roest’, who translated Huijdecoper into English in 1927, considered it a better textual copy than the SAC, of the same earlier text.

It’s been suggested (by ‘Detective Wallace’) that six ‘daily registers’ like SAC were made, one for each province that supported VOC. However many went, we have to marvel at the patient and exacting toil that went into any one of them, in equatorial heat, in Fort Batavia. Warfare and tropical diseases meant the Dutch in Indonesia often didn’t live for very long. Their lives perhaps seemed cheap, which may have influenced their treatment of the locals they saw as inferiors.



the SAC, ending with Tasman's Signature

We might suppose the SAC to be the work of Tasman, since he signed it, and it starts like this: "August 1642 - Journal or Description drawn up by me, Abel Jansz Tasman, of a voyage made from the town of Batavia etc. etc."

But Tasman's signature might be the only part of it he actually wrote; Sharp saw it just as an endorsement, not a proof of authorship. Sharp *doubted* SAC had been "composed exclusively or usually by Tasman himself", and ventured to suggest another author for it: "the under-merchant and secretary of the Council, Abraham Coomans."

Tasman had risen through the ranks from lowly origins and therefore may not, as a young man, have been very literate. We have his signature on several documents but don't have any documents he wrote himself. 'Detective Slot' described him this way at the age of 28, just before he enlisted with the VOC: "a humble seaman without any other qualifications, who lived at a very modest address". However Slot went on to say: "he never could have held the positions he did without a thorough grounding in the *navigational* techniques of the day." So Tasman probably improved his education while with VOC, but maybe focussed more on navigation than on writing up reports.



Blok



SAC



Huijdecoper



Sailor's Journal



North and East Tartary?

The New and Unknown World

These are the primary texts that deal directly with events in ‘Murderers’ Bay’ - just five or maybe six of them: first Blok; then SAC and Huijdecoper, which are both imperfect copies of a text that’s generally known as ‘Tasman’s Journal’. But since like Sharp I doubt he wrote it by himself, I’ll call it ‘The Officers’ Journal’.

The ‘Sailors Journal’ is an independent daily register made, Sharp informs us, by an “unknown person on the Heemskerck who was not a ranking officer”. And this is not the actual register that unknown person wrote, it’s yet another copy, which in 1898 ‘Detective Heeres’ suggested had in Tasman’s time belonged to Salomon Sweers who was then a VOC Councillor of the Indies. The Huijdecoper too had once belonged to Sweers, and both, Heeres tells us, were passed down, with other documents to a descendent called Cornelis Sweers, who put them into bundles marked with his initials, C. S. . In which case Salomon must either have had the Sailors Journal copied or obtained this copy some time afterwards. He obviously thought it was worth keeping; we do too. It has a lot of supplementary data to compare with the official day register, and sometimes tells us interesting things the officers left out, like the three names of sailors killed in Golden Bay.

Another eyewitness account is that of Henrik Haelbos, a surgeon-barber on the Heemskerck. We have this in a 1671 Dutch book, *The New and Unknown World*. This book was put together for a general audience, and Haelbos’s part of it, although much shorter than our other texts, is interesting, circumstantial and entirely believable in its account of what took place in Murderers’ Bay.

There’s one more source that may or may not offer new eye-witness evidence, it’s Nicolaes Witsen’s 1705 book *North and east Tartary*. East Tartary apparently stretched all the way into the South Pacific then.

Jan Heeres

ABEL JANSZOOM TASMAN'S JOURNAL, 1898

Andrew Sharp

THE VOYAGES OF ABEL JANSZOOM TASMAN, 1968

Anne Salmond

TWO WORLDS, FIRST MEETINGS ... , 1991

Roger Collins

ABEL TASMAN IN NZ WATERS, THE PICTORIAL RECORD, 1991

B.J. Slot

TASMAN AND THE DISCOVERY OF NZ 1992

Ab Hoving & Cor Emke

THE SHIPS OF ABEL TASMAN, 2000

Grahame Anderson

THE MERCHANT OF THE ZEEHAEN, 2001

Patricia Wallace

TRADITIONAL MAORI DRESS ... A 17TH CENTURY STYLE ..., 2006



Here are some secondary sources, ‘history detectives’ who have left their mark on me.

Heeres did his comprehensive work over a hundred years ago and few have ever challenged most of it, or not till fairly recently. He called the SAC ‘our copy’ and saw Blok’ as later than its SAC equivalents. Collins did challenge that idea, as long ago as 1991. Heeres also argued Gilsemans had illustrated SAC, though this is not confirmed in any primary source. His ideas aren’t fixed in stone. The sea of history is warming and the mighty ice shelf of the ‘Heeres’ Report’ may be beginning to break up. But we are all indebted to him for his work, and for *the Heeres Collection*, his appendices, a set of very useful supplementary documents he put together and translated, many from the VOC. All these are primary but none are so directly relevant to ‘Murderer’s Bay’ as my top five.

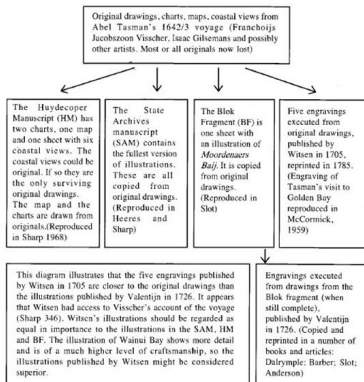
New Zealand’s Andrew Sharp is next in order of importance, although he does lean heavily on Heeres, and his translations aren’t always accurate. He translates praeutien as ‘cockboat’, and where all primary sources generally say that it was paddled Sharp always says rowed. However his is the most comprehensive English work of the last century that bears on ‘Murderers’ Bay’.

Ab Hoving’s practical research led to the first sound reconstructions of the ships Heemskerck and Zeehaen. Like Sharp he didn’t get the praeutien right, but his research and Cor Emke’s art are an important new resource.

Anne Salmond’s illustrated and appropriately bicultural book is excellent which comes as no surprise. And Grahame Anderson shines further light on the accomplishments of Tasman’s officers, especially Gilsemans.

Patricia Wallace frames ‘A View of Murderers’ Bay’ as documentary art, and shows it is a taonga for Maori and for Pakeha.

is Witsen's *North and east Tartary* a primary source?



A minute detail from top right of witsen's engraved waka

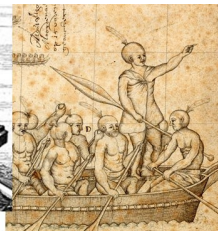
Mack's flowchart of the primary sources

Detectives sometimes disagree. In 2004 'Detective Mack' reported Witsen's 1705 *North and East Tartary* contained new information from another primary source. He said the Witsen version of the Maori waka in the Blok and SAC was not copied from one of those but from an even earlier source. He focused on the Witsen illustration's tiny details and what he saw as accurate depictions of the hills around Wainui Bay. He thought that Witsen's Oriental looking vessels must be Dutch and that the round hummock shown here enlarged was Abel Tasman Point. From this he went on to suggest the Dutch small boats had landed there on the 18th, and maybe even fought with Maori there. Such ideas bluntly contradict our two main primary written texts, those of the sailor and the officers: both speak of being horrified by the attack on the 19th. Till then they'd all thought Maori wanted to be friends, which makes no sense if fighting started on the day before. And Oriental looking boats agree with Witsen's text, since Mack himself confirms that Witsen argues Southlanders were Southeast Asians who'd migrated here. 'Detective Anderson' denounced the Mack report. Mack answered back, in 2006, claiming that Witsen's waka image came from a 'Visscher Journal' which has since been lost. Visscher and Gilsemans commanded the small boats on the 18th. A Visscher journal could have held draft illustrations made that day on which the later drawings of the BLOK and SAC were based. In this case an engraving, made in 1705 could *evidentially* predate the drawings made in 1642 or 43. To me the coastal details and distant native craft are fanciful embellishments and I see Witsen's waka as derived through SAC from Blok.

But Mack has also found some interesting tidbits in the Witsen *text: North and east Tartary* confirms the Sailor's statements that three Dutch were killed rather than four. Also, while SAC and Huydecoper only tell us that eleven waka, 'swarming with people' put out to intercept the Dutch, Witsen says each waka held 30 men; that's 330 in just half the observed fleet, rather a lot. It's possible that Witsen really had another journal to supply these tempting details, but I am not convinced. The Huydecoper Journal was believed by some to be a 'Visscher Journal' until fairly recently. It still contains two charts widely attributed to him. And were there really different copies of such registers by different officers?



Valentijn's engraved waka and its likely source, the Blok



Witsen's engraved waka and its likely source, the SAC



I think it makes more sense for all seven top officers to have agreed on one. The SAC and Huijdercooper are both copies of what I see as "The Officers' Day-register" The Council of the Indies spoke in 1643 of: "daily registers kept by the aforesaid Tasman and the Pilot-major ... Visscher". I don't interpret this as meaning separate registers. Sharp argues Tasman's signature on SAC was an endorsement only, and I think it's likely anything he so endorsed would be supported by all his Ships' Councillors: its clear from various entries that he went out of his way to get their full support.

Witsen had access to an illustrated 'journal' such as SAC. Perhaps he borrowed that for his engraver but possessed another version of his own. That could have been a less embellished copy, one like Huijdecooper, and it could have once belonged to Visscher and contained additional material from him. But Mack and Wildeman both seem to indicate the bulk of Witsen's text as it relates to 'Murderers' Bay' reflects the information we already have. There seems to be no English version yet of *North and east Tartary* and till I read one for myself I won't try to decide if minor variations to the text we have already really indicate it's partly based on something further that is primary.

Our primary sources are the words and pictures of explorers who were here in 1642. We can compare them with objective seeming things like photos, since the shapes of hills don't change much over centuries. Mack and I both do this, though photos may be less objective than we like to think.

Sometimes additional secondary evidence helps clarify what is and isn't primary. The waka of the Blok and SAC 'Murderers' Bay' views both have one standing man. In Blok he stands above and on the top-strakes, where a leader or kai arahi might stand. In SAC he's been moved down, making his feet invisible. Perhaps this was to make room for the relocated captions, which in SAC appear above his head. The Valentijn engraving, clearly based on Blok, has Maori wearing head-feathers, a standing man above the topstrakes and five pairs of kaihoe facing the same way. I will return to all of these particulars, as I believe they bear on which is closest to the documentary sketch. Witsen's engraving follows SAC in all of them., which I think doesn't help Mack's argument that Witsen's waka isn't based on SAC. If it is not, why do they share all of these incongruities?

Conflicting Evidence



Misunderstandings seem to have begun when waka first approached the ships soon after sunset on the night of the 18th. Trumpets were blown by Maori and by Pakeha. This went on for some time. As for what happened next, the primary evidence is contradictory, and we detectives must decide who to believe. The Haelbos version differs in some ways from that of the top officers. They say that cannon weren't fired until *after* Maori paddled back to shore, in darkness, on the night of the 18th. Haelbos insists the Dutch fired off a cannon *first* and after *that* "the South-landers began to rave terribly: blew on a horn: and [only then] returned to land." To me the latter sounds the more convincing, with its circumstantial detail: 'terrible raving' could have been a haka, I believe, and I think Maori would have launched straight into one when first confronted with a cannon blast.

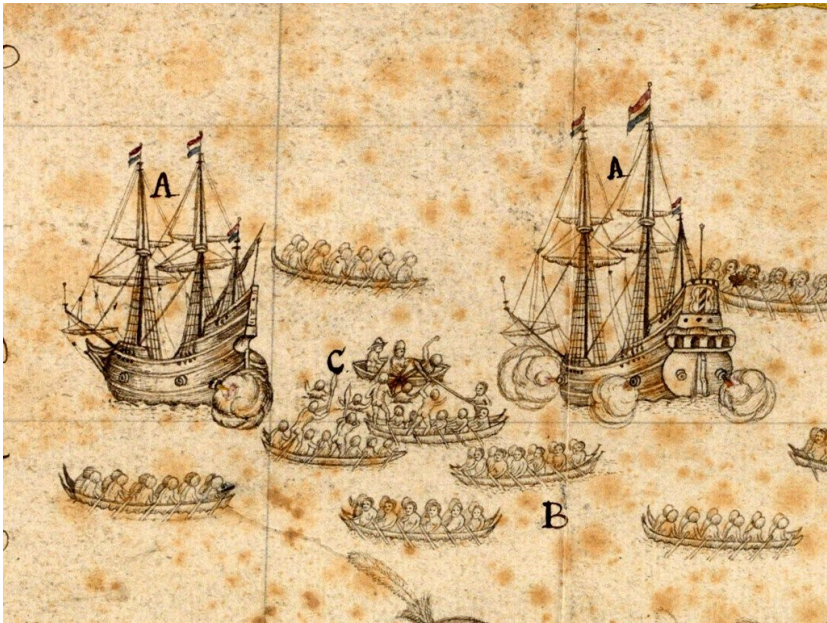
Haelbos had no reason to withhold or change the truth, since thirty years on he would not be held responsible. But the top officers expected to be judged by what went into their report. Why fire off a cannon close to Maori anyway, if your instructions were to treat them kindly and make friends with them?

I see the situation after dark on the 19th as very dangerous for both the ships. They didn't know how many waka were surrounding them. Next day they counted 22, one with a crew of 17. Just four such waka's men would have heavily outnumbered those on either Heemskerck or Zeehaen, whose crews were 60 and 50. And Heemskerck's cannons couldn't target what they couldn't see. Maybe a cannon was 'fired off', as Haelbos says, not at the visitors but maybe over them, and perhaps hoping it would frighten them. Cook later found that Maori weren't always overawed when first exposed to firearms. But Maori seem to have been quite surprised, and after what sounds like a haka followed by another trumpet blast, they did head home. Tasman's career shows that he had remarkable survival skills.

The stolen man

But next day everything went pear shaped for the praeutien, Zeehaen's small boat. While heading to the Heemskerck to pick up her officers it was suddenly targeted. Haelbos: *"Half-way between the two ships the boat was attacked from all sides by the Southlanders, who, approaching, made a fearful noise, and treated the seven sailors in such a way that they beat four to death with long staffs."* The Officers': *"Three of the Zeehaen's people were killed, and the fourth through the heavy blows was mortally injured. The quartermaster and two more sailors swam towards our ship and we sent our chaloup for them, into which they got alive, ... the murderers let the small boat drift, have pulled one of the dead into their canoe, and drowned another.* [Sharp tells us 'drowning' here meant letting one man sink] *We and those of the Zeehaen, seeing this, shot hard with muskets and cannon, but although we did not indeed hit them, they nevertheless hastened back, and paddled for land out of shooting range. We fired many shots with our forward upper and bow guns by and about their vessels, but struck none."*

The words *"have pulled one of the dead into their canoe"* suggest to me that Maori took an unresisting Dutchman back to shore. I don't see how the officers could know for certain such a man was dead, since Hoving says that, anchored at that depth, the two ships had to be at least 200m apart. Since the attack took place half way between, it was at least 100m from each one, and at such a distance how could they be sure a stunned or unresisting man was dead. Or did they hear this from the dying man left in the boat, or those who had to swim away to save their lives?



None of those four would be ideal witnesses. Perhaps the captured man *was* really dead, but saying so was also quite convenient for the top officers, since VOC might not have wanted them to leave behind a living prisoner in the hands of 'Southlanders'.

Maori had four to choose from; so would they have preferred a living prisoner, or a corpse?

Off what we call Cape Kidnappers, in 1769, Maori snatched a Tahitian youth out of Endeavour into their canoe. Perhaps they hoped to find things out from him, since like his master, Tupaia, he spoke a language they could understand. However, he broke free and managed to re-join his ship.

'Detective Belich' guesses that the man taken ashore in Golden Bay was eaten, and he makes a rather tasteless joke of it: "New Zealand's first import from Europe may have been a dead Dutchman". Belich is not the only one to make this guess, but I dispute that Maori usually saw any captive, live or dead, as their next meal.

A close examination of this man might have showed he was human with some interesting gear. If still alive, he would have been a most unusual slave or mokai, might in fact have been a prodigy and source of mana for whoever took control of him. So I think he was just as likely to have been adopted as consumed. If he went on to father children here, perhaps his signature lives on genetically in some descendant and will one day show itself. But otherwise, his fate may always be a mystery.

Lost in translation:

Zeehaen's Praeutien

This year I and some Mohua home-schooling families have built a working reconstruction of Zeehaen's small boat. Both Blok and SAC call this her 'praeutien' which Diederick Wildeman, a Netherlands authority, translates as 'little proa'; a proa is a canoe. Here's how he translates the first captions for the illustration 'Thus appears The Murderer's Bay ...':

"A. Are our ships; B. Are the proas which came round our ships; C. Is the little proa of the Zeehaen that came paddling towards us and was overpowered"

Where Sharp's translation of the SAC has: "their small boat, in it 6 rowers" Wildeman says the words in the original are 'praeutien' and 'scheppers', so it should read: 'their little canoe, in it six paddlers'.

Sharp obviously didn't think that Dutch would ever paddle a canoe, but this was rather blinkered of him, since the expedition's written orders, which he reproduced, do mention *tingangs* being taken on the expedition, where they might be "of great use, especially in the discovery and exploration of bays, shoals, harbours, rivers, etc." And in a footnote, Sharp explains a *tingang* is a 'small East Indies craft', which often would mean some kind of canoe.



Also the *illustrations* of the Blok and SAC actually show a double ended craft steered with a steering paddle, a craft quite unlike the Heemskerck's chaloup, which *was* a rowing boat and had a tiller in the stern. So it appears the VOC were not averse to trying out a native craft. Cost might have been a factor; I suspect a tingang was much *cheaper* than a Dutch chaloup. Much faster too; here's a contemporary Dutch quote: *"the Javanese have many tingangs, paddled proas and 'flyers' of all kinds ... most of them are pointed fore and aft and tapered, the bottom very smooth; they are very agile, easy and fast [paddled or sailed]. Tingangs of the fishers are usually called 'flyers' by us because they truly seem to fly"*. A picture of a fishing tingang in Batavia served as a model for this reconstruction.

Even before what happened here the praeutien had proved less stable and less practical than the chaloup. And here it may have been selected for attack *because* it was a craft that Maori felt they understood. There is no mention of it ever being used again.

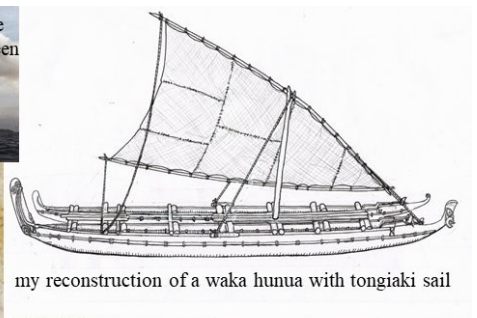
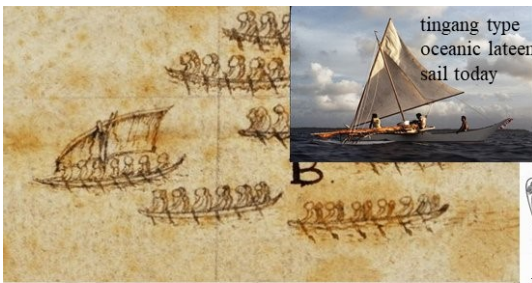
“a type of tingang sail”



One fascinating ‘clue’ in ‘View of Murderers Bay’ is that the leading waka in pursuit of the Dutch ships carries a mast and sail quite like one drawn a few weeks later in Tongatapu; both seem to be the ‘tongiaki type’, a stage in the development of an extremely fast Pacific rig that’s still in use, although no longer used by Maori here, the oceanic lateen.

Those *Tingangs of the fishers*, which the Dutch called “*flyers*” might well have used the oceanic lateen— it’s very fast and works well with an outrigger. A vessel using it needs to be double ended, like our praeutien. Such vessels need not turn in order to change tack, they simply drop the sail, turn that round, set it again and sail off the other way, which means the outrigger can always be to windward, balancing the wind. When Europeans saw this they were quite impressed – they’d never thought of it. The tongiaki is an early type and vessels using it weren’t always double ended, and could tack by turning like the Europeans. This didn’t matter much for craft with double hulls not outriggers.

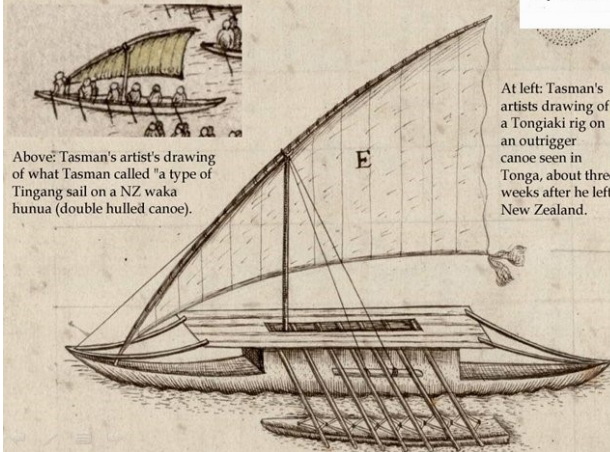
It’s now being suggested Maori settled here during the 1300s in a well planned and cooperative mass migration. Thereafter for a century or two, in what’s been called the ‘moa-hunting’ phase, which Belich calls ‘the protein boom’, it’s thought they lived together relatively peacefully, unlike descendants in more recent centuries.



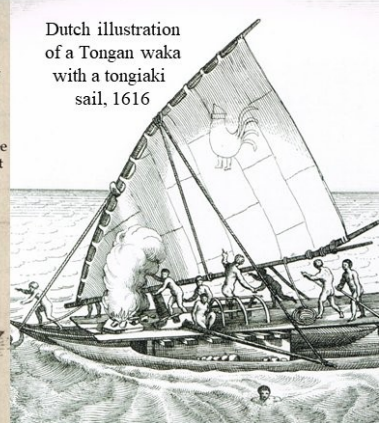
my reconstruction of a waka hunua with tongiaki sail



Above: Tasman's artist's drawing of what Tasman called "a type of Tingang sail on a NZ waka hunua (double hulled canoe).



At left: Tasman's artists drawing of a Tongiaki rig on an outrigger canoe seen in Tonga, about three weeks after he left New Zealand.



Dutch illustration of a Tongan waka with a tongiaki sail, 1616

Instead of fearsome mono-hulls as raiding craft, they still used giant voyaging canoes with double hulls called waka hourua. Our Anaweka waka fragment is a part of one of these. Such waka may have travelled to and from places as far away as Rarotonga and Tahiti, till as late as some time in the 15th century, when we believe the Anaweka Waka was last being used. Detective Salmond says Tupaia, and therefore presumably other Tahitians, knew the islands of New Zealand by their Maori names.

The tongiaki sail was the mainstay of the Tu'i Tonga Empire, which flourished between 1200 and 1500. So in those years, if Maori stopped off either at Samoa or the Cooks, they could have learned to use the tongiaki rig. 'Detective Best' in his colonial report *The Maori Canoe* cites one East Coast Maori informant who describes what seems to be this very rig.

In 1642 the Maori sail seen here by the officers was called by them 'a type of tingang sail'. As seamen from the Indies they would certainly have known the type, and it is even possible the praeutien had such a tingang sail of her own, with matching outrigger. Hoving has reconstructed Heemskerck's chaloup with her own sailing rig, so I suggest the praeutien, also a scouting boat, would need one too. We're keen to have a go at making one to sail our own 'replica'.

which ‘View of Murderer’s Bay came first?

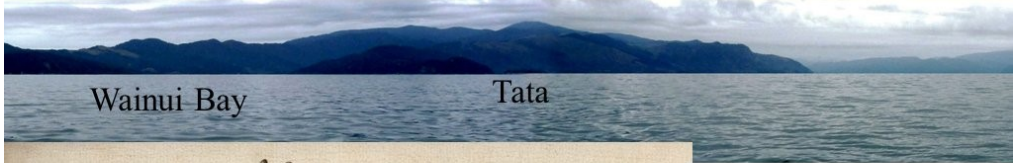
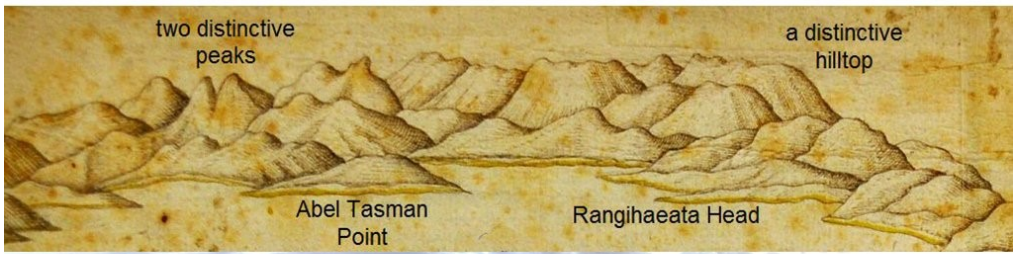


Which came first, Blok or SAC? ‘Detective Collins’ is an expert on old art. He looked at the originals and wrote in 1991 that SAC was based on Blok. The differences, in his view, were deliberate. He pointed out such things as larger flags, to stress “Dutch agency”, and saw the SAC as the more polished version and the Blok as its first draft. One isn’t necessarily ‘the best’, each has advantages. Wallace points out that maro war-belts, an authentic detail, appear in SAC and not in Blok. The artist, I suggest, may have remembered these and reinstated them, or been reminded of them by another sketch, when later, in Batavia, he modified the Blok to make the SAC. Though Collins thought two artists were involved I see these as successive illustrations by one man. Though there are many differences these don’t appear to me to be stylistic ones. One difference in particular convinces me that Blok came first. A kaihoe who in Blok is partly hidden by the standing man, is left out altogether in the SAC. I don’t think such a figure, half obscured, would have been added by a later copyist. Blok’s large waka seems closer to the truth in several ways. Presumably its model was a prior sketch, one of a real waka, seen close up. A real waka would have almost equal sets of kaihoe on each side. In Blok it does, five on each side; they sit in pairs, perhaps on “planks or other seating” laid across both hulls, as mentioned in the officers’ day register. In SAC, with one left out, that side has only four. So I see Blok as closer to the documentary sketch.



Drawings and paintings based on life that try to be a faithful record are what we call documentary art. We have a problem: Blok and SAC both have one kaihoe facing the wrong way. He seems to me to be a steersman, and if so he seems misplaced. As I explain Blok's provenance, this waka and its crew were sketched from Heemskerck by her artist/tekenaar, when, on the morning of the 19th, a waka with an actual crew of 13 came to within a half-cast' of that ship . Presumably the waka in that documentary sketch faced to the right, as these ones seem to do. The artist then put this waka in Blok, as a main element. It almost seems to join the Maori fleet that in Blok's narrative pursues the ships as they depart. In Blok the two ships actually fire on these waka with their after guns.

Blok was intended as an illustration for the officers' day register, so had to match the words of that. Might this explain the steersman at 'the front'? The officers described one waka as: 'projecting in front, high and sharp'. Perhaps they saw the documentary waka sternposts as its prow, since this accorded best with their day register, and told the tekenaar to put the steersman at the other end, so making that the stern. Seen this way round the paddlers became rowers, though their arms and hands still show that they are not. Wallace does not see this waka as part of the pursuing fleet; she sees it properly, with sternposts at the stern. To her, my 'steersman' is another kaihoe, who has simply turned to face the standing man. Which puts two extra kaihoe on our side of it. Copying errors aren't always textual.



Blok Fragment's view of Wainui Bay and Tata shown above a modern photo and the same view in the SAC



Another way of checking the validity of documentary art is to compare things in it that should not have changed too much with modern photographs

Until I saw the Blok I couldn't get the hills of Golden Bay, as shown in SAC, to look like any modern photograph. But when I saw the Blok I realised that the feature between these apparent bays could be what we now know as Abel Tasman Point as seen from what we now think is the anchorage. The relevant Blok detail is shown here above the photograph and that of SAC is shown below. To me, again, the Blok looks closer to the documentary sketch.

To sum up, I believe a set of documentary sketches and draft illustrations which included Blok were drawn on Heemskerck by her artist/tekenaar. Sketches were made onboard and drafts for illustrations may have been. Back in Batavia this artist also drew the polished final illustrations of the SAC. Sketches and drafts including Blok were then archived by VOC and for a time stayed in Batavia. Then after about four decades they went back to the Netherlands where some were copied and engraved by Valentijn. They then passed into private ownership and by the time D. Blok donated them to the State Archive just one leaf was left.

Blok's views were drawn before those of the SAC so they are generally closest to the documentary sketches that have now been lost. However SAC's version of Murderers' Bay is the more finished work and it contains some supplementary details.



I mentioned earlier that Huijdecoper has only four illustrations whereas SAC has fifty-three. I also mentioned Huijdecoper versions contradict their counterparts in SAC. Above is part of the New Zealand chart from Huidecoper and below the same part of the corresponding chart in SAC.

Tasman has copped some flak from subsequent observers since he signed the bottom one and we now know there *is* a strait at roughly the point shown in what is thought to be the 'Visscher Chart' above, though no one really knows it to be his. Slot, in his *Abel Tasman and the discovery of New Zealand*, describes Tasman as "a fearful subaltern who falsified his findings to avoid problems with his superiors". Slot justifies this by comparing these two charts. He writes that if the opening had been shown on 'Tasman's' then the VOC "would have been justified in asking why this passage had not been surveyed." This 'Visscher' chart is also more informative than SAC's in other ways. Numbers on dotted lines showing the expeditions course appear in it and not in SAC. They are noon readings, so the number 18 shows us that at noon on the 18th both ships were just northeast of Farewell Spit.

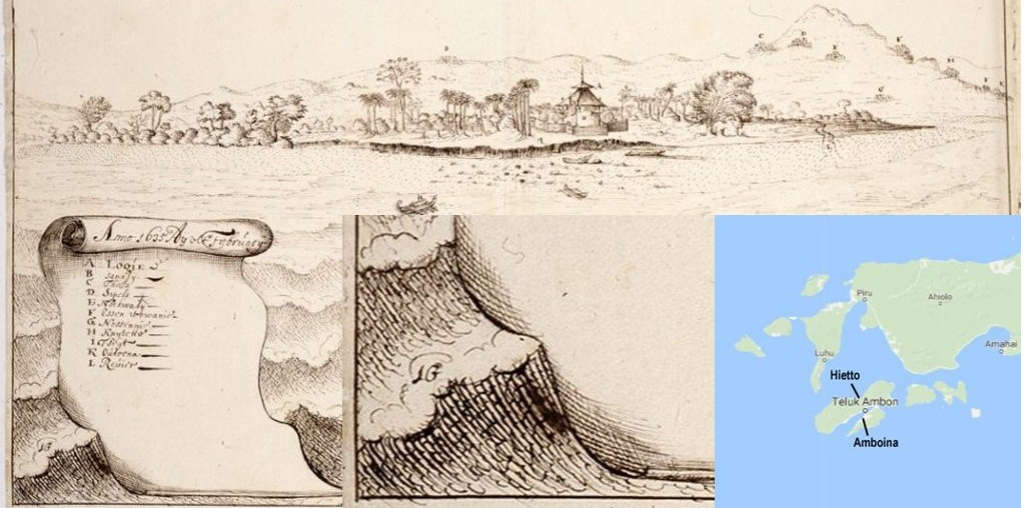
The second of the Huijdecoper' illustrations to have corresponding pages in the SAC is what may be another draft map such as 'Visscher's' one shown here of Tonga and Fiji. As with the two shown here, there are some differences.

Whodunnit?

are the illustrations
of the SAC by Gilsemans
or by the artist/tekenaar?

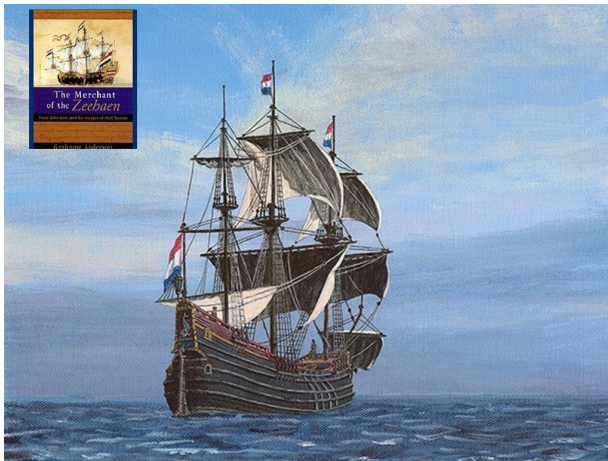


Comptoir Hietto.



In 2001 'Detective Anderson' found us a picture Gilsemans seems to have signed in 1635 (or maybe 1636), and here it is. The letters IG at the bottom left are quite discreet so I've enlarged them here and to the right of that I've put a map of Ambon and Seram showing the whereabouts of VOC's Hietto Fort, seen at mid-right, above. Anderson says the small initials and large label at the top are both the handwriting of Gilsemans, and in *The Merchant of the Zeehaen* reproduces five more works all similarly drawn and labelled in the same distinctive hand.

Apparently Gilsemans drew these pictures in his first two years with VOC, when he was about 29. Then he was just an Under-Merchant and apparently a scribe and illustrator in the service of an Upper-Merchant called Artus Gysels (or else Arnout Gijls). The titles Under-Merchant, Merchant and Upper-Merchant weren't job descriptions, they denoted a civilian rank in VOC.



Who drew the illustrations in the SAC? Instructions for Heemskerck and Zeehaen's expedition put at the disposal of its seven highest officers, including Gilsemans, an artist/tekenaar. The officers were told: "*have proper drawings made of [the new lands] ... for which purpose we have ordered a tekenaar to join your expedition*". Instructions didn't say "Have Upper Merchant Gilsemans make proper drawings", and in fact, as Upper Merchant, *and* the Zeehaen's second in command, Gilsemans would often have been otherwise engaged. No pictures by the tekenaar are signed. The captions for 'A View of Murderers' Bay' suggest the Heemskerck, not the Zeehaen, as his point of view. Here's one such caption: "C. Is the little proa of the Zeehaen that came paddling towards us and was overpowered ... it was brought back by our skipper with our chaloup". Of course the Heemskercks view was also Tasman's view, but still, would Gilsemans have written "our skipper with our chaloup"? Zeehaen had no chaloup, he was her second in command, and these captions, as written first in Blok, aren't even in his handwriting.

If Gilsemans did not draw any of the pictures in the SAC, why do so many authors and so many archives say he did? It starts with Heeres, who hazarded this guess, in 1898: "As 'supercargo' [Upper Merchant] in the Zeehaen we find Isaack Gilsemans. He was most probably the 'draughtsman' mentioned in Instructions, who had been directed to join the expedition". Heeres, in a footnote, gives two reasons for this attribution: first a resolution of the Council of the Indies at the expedition's planning stage, which noted Gilsemans had a "fair knowledge of seafaring and the *drawing* of lands"; second an Officers' Journal entry for September 25th reporting that while in Mauritius, Visscher and Gilsemans "*surveyed* the land". Hardly *conclusive* evidence, and yet Heeres' guess, through constant repetition, has put on a lot of *weight*. Now it is seldom even qualified: the words '*most probably*' seem to be understood now as '*most certainly*'.

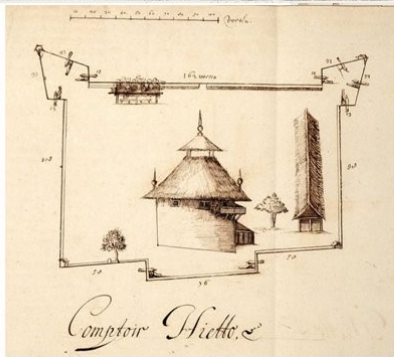
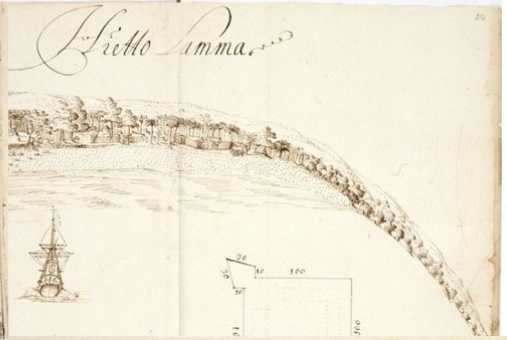
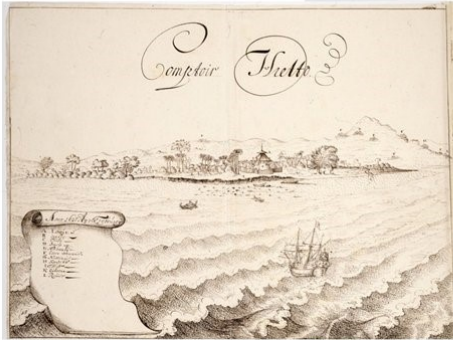


One reason for this, I think, is a lot of authors don't like anonymity. They feel an illustration *ought* to have a name beside it, so they prefer to overlook uncertainty of provenance while there is any name at all for them to use.

Gilsemans would no doubt have liked his work to have his name beside it too, but I'm not sure he would have liked his name beside the work of someone else. We now have a much better signature of his, one from a map Heeres never saw since it did not turn up till 1932. It is the large Map of Tasmania above and it was drawn and signed (in this case rather splendidly) by Isaac Gilsemans who as an Upper Merchant seems at last to have had the authority to sign his work as he saw fit. I've wondered if perhaps he got a telling off from his superiors for his impertinence in signing that 'Hietto Trading Station' view while still a junior, because no other 1630s illustrations of his I have seen have any signature.

On SAC's map shown at top-right, we can trace the expedition's course, north, then north-east, away from what the Dutch called 'The South Cape' first past Maria Island, then past Schouten's and so on to Vanderlin's Peninsula, which took two days. Hobart today lies not far to the west of where they anchored northeast of South Cape.

Detective work online



More than five drawings seem to have been done by Gilsemans in 1635 and 36; I've so far counted about forty that I think are his. They can be viewed online, at *Atlas of Mutual heritage*, a site which calls itself "a database with information, maps, drawings, prints and paintings of locations related to the Dutch East India Company". Unfortunately you won't find all of them by just using the search-word Gilsemans; only the one he signed with his initials will come up on that. I've shown it here again at the top left, and with it are three other drawings of Hietto that I think he also did.

Detective work like this would once have taken days or weeks of travel and then countless hours poring through old archives, which is probably the sort of work that Heeres once did. And we should thank him even if he made occasional mistakes. One reason secondary sources tend to have been used so much is that till now so few detectives have had access to the primary ones. Today the internet is changing that, and we can do historical research interrogating primary resources held in archives very easily from our own homes.



There is a proverb that a picture's worth a thousand words. I hoped at first that in this talk I would have time to cover *Gilsemans' earlier art and the projection of Dutch Power in the 17th Century*.

The pictures here seem to show villages of Muslim cloves growers on Seram that the VOC are razing to the ground, with all their cloves orchards. The bottom picture is today's Kaibobo while the names of those above are now not known. It was the policy at that time to eliminate the villages whose spice trading activities the VOC could not control. Reducing the supply of cloves would also help to keep the prices high, which worked for them. Mercantilists considered commerce to be a zero sum game: if any other party profited they wrongly thought it had to be at their expense. Applying these ideas across the spice growing Moluccas was a bloody business. From Amboina's Fort Victoria they sent out fleets of yachts like Heemskerck filled with soldiers under orders to destroy such villages, and Gilsemans, it seems, was told to draw them being burnt. Perhaps this was requested by Gysels, to show the Council of the Indies in Batavia that ships and men they had allotted him were doing a fine job.



When those same Councillors went on to state of Gilsemans some six years later that he had “a fair knowledge of seafaring and the drawing of lands”, it’s possible it was pictures like these they were remembering. He did show skill in drawing ships, buildings and lands but wasn’t quite so confident with faces and anatomy, unlike the Heemskerck’s Tekenaar, as will be shown in part two of this talk where that describes his earlier art.

The map above shows places on Seram and Ambon like Kaibobo and Hietto which Gilsemans depicted for the VOC. I can’t tell any more about them here but hope to do so in my presentation on the projection of Dutch Power in the 17th Century. Gilsemans’ art deserves another talk, one to describe the broader context of the Dutch arrival here in 1642.

For now I’ll sum up my assessment in this way: In 1642 our bay was given the bad name of ‘Murderers’ Bay’, but that discouraged further European visitors so may have been a good thing from a Maori point of view. Also it was undoubtedly ‘the pot calling the kettle black’. For Tasman and his officers, before and after coming here, murder by order of the VOC was day to day routine.

Gilsemans' art from 1642

Huijdecoper

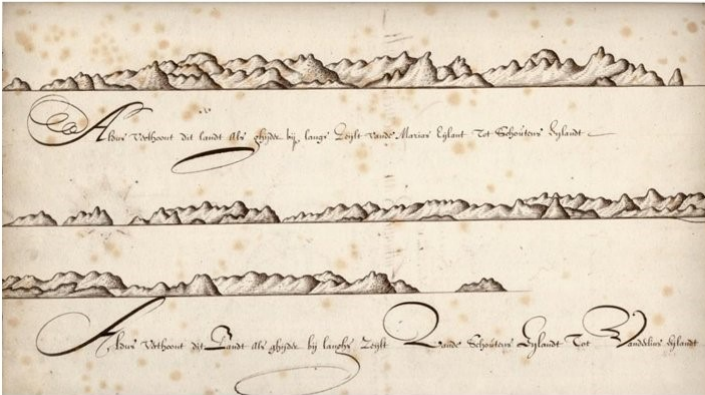
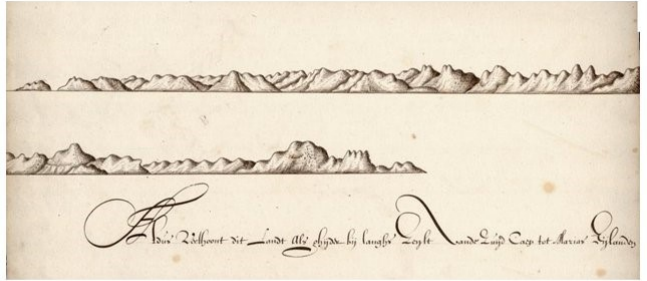


We come now to what I see as the most compelling evidence that Gilsemans was *not* the illustrator of the SAC: A page of coastal illustrations that appear to match the drawing and the labelling in the 1630s illustrations we have just been looking at. These are from 1642, when Gilsemans was about 36, had reached the rank of Upper Merchant, and was Zeehaen's second in command.

What we have here, from Huijdecoper, are three coastal elevations set out on six lines. The first takes up one line, the second three and the third two.

This page is pasted between pages of the Huijdecoper manuscript that tell what happened on December 4th and 5th. If Heeres was right and Sweers was one of Huijdecoper's earliest owners, Sweers may have got this page either directly or indirectly from Gilsemans himself, who died aged about 40, probably in 1646. As I have mentioned, Dutch in the East Indies tended not to live for very long.

Huidecoper coastal drawings - probably By Gilsemans



SAC drawings made of the same coast on the same days; these do not match the Huidecoper set in any way so can't be copies of the same originals

These large two pages are the coastal drawing counterparts from SAC, sketched on the same two days. Only their labelling resembles anything in the page done by Gilsemans. Anderson thinks that Gilsemans penned all the illustration labels for the SAC, including these, though not till work began on all illustrated copies of the Officers' Day Register back in Batavia. I'm not expert enough on handwriting to say if this is right or not.



Thus appears the Land on 4 xber 1642 in the Southern Latitude of 42 degrees 40 Minutes when the main



Land is 4 to 4 1/2 Miles and The Islands 2 1/2 to 3 Miles from you.



NW by N schoutens Island

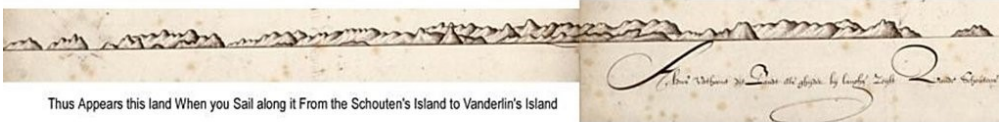


➡ Thus Appears this land When you Sail along it From the Maria's Island to Schouten's Island.

These coastal views are from the 4th, and with the help of Google Earth I think it's possible to see that Gilsemans' are closer to modern realities.



Appearance on 5th xber 1642 when it Is 8 Miles from you



Thus Appears this land When you Sail along it From the Schouten's Island to Vanderlin's Island

These ones are from the 5th. We can compare the three above with hilltops from the Gilsemans' signed view of the Hietto Fort, part of which I show here in black and white. The same coast as it's shown in SAC is at the bottom of this slide. To me the coastal view below is clearly not the work of Gilsemans

Why would one artist make two different sets of drawings anyway, of the same coast, on the same days? I find it rather strange that questions such as these seem not to have been asked till very recently. Both sets of drawings were available to Heeres; did he imagine the same man drew both? For Heeres, of course, the SAC was primary, so maybe he regarded Huijdecoper and its contents as not so important and less trustworthy. We have since learned it is, if anything, more textually accurate, and the NZ chart in it attributed to Visscher is a better source of information than the one in SAC. These pictures, which I also see as better and more accurate, seem to have been largely ignored. If these ones *are* by Gilsemans, then their equivelants in SAC, and by extention all the other illustrations in the SAC, seem not to be by Gilsemans.

Perhaps not all detectives think that pictures matter very much. Admittedly it wasn't easy to examine and compare them all until we had the Internet. Detective Jenkin rests his case, for this talk anyway; I don't see any illustrations in the SAC as matching those of Gilsemans.

Rounding off This investigation





Did Gilsemans create the first known European images of Golden Bay? No he did not. Were Dutch ships here in 1642 a peaceful trade mission? Was it just mutual misunderstanding that that led on to violence?

‘Detective Belich’ wrote: "the farthest outstretched finger of the grasping hand touched New Zealand in 1642, [it] was pricked and recoiled". I think in this case he sums up the situation well.

Tasman and his top officers were actually warned in their instructions to be careful with small boats, because: "*no barbarous people are to be trusted, ... they usually think that people who appear so exceedingly strange and unexpected, come only to take over their lands*".

And that, I think, is what Dutch would have done, if a) they had been able to, and b) they'd found that there was any profit to be made.

But Maori, here in Golden Bay, forestalled any such takeover. Was this a case of a misunderstanding? I think not. And is it something anybody needs to now regret? Of course it's not.



And I see these events of 1642 as an illuminating narrative. Remember Collins saying that the SAC version of 'Murderers' Bay' had bigger flags on ships, to emphasize 'Dutch Agency'?

We have been brought up to imagine Europeans as almost *always* having greater agency than others could. And Maori are *still* thought by some to have been 'barbarous', or primitive, bewildered or amazed by any European ship, as if such things were far too hard for them to understand.

We're talking here about the people who created waka hourua and staged a mass migration to this country in the 14th century from far-away Tahiti, or the Cooks.

There was a European 'fatal impact' theory that won popularity during the 19th century. It said wherever Europeans went, 'natives' would soon all die out. That didn't happen here, two centuries earlier. The fatal impacts in *this* story aren't *on* the Maori, they are impacts *of* the Maori on at least three of the praeutien's unlucky crew.



We're told one Maori 'fell down' later, after being hit with grape shot when he held up something white. It might have been a peace token or just as easily another cunning ploy, this time perhaps to seize the ships themselves. If I'd been in command of them I would have fired at that man myself – beware of Maori bearing peace-tokens.

We don't know whether falling down meant he was badly hurt or had just gone 'to ground'; what matters is, Dutch were already on the run when those pursuing waka hunua caught up with them. They never even landed in New Zealand, they were too demoralised, and subsequently Europeans left this place well alone for well over a century.

The Dutch were the best European fighting sailors of their day, but they were outperformed and outmanoeuvred on the water here. One of their crewmembers was even taken from them by the natives to the shore. And Zeehaen's praetien may well have been disabled, since we never hear of it again.

So who had agency, in our bay, back in 1642?

End of Part One

**This booklet and PDF was adapted from a Powerpoint presentation
created by Robert Jenkin to accompany his talk
'Investigation of 'A View of Murderers' Bay, Part One'
at Takaka Library on November 24th 2017**