

Ngā Kōrero: 1808 and 1814 Māori-Russian Encounters in Aotearoa New Zealand's Historical Tapestry

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Abstract

This article delves into the underexplored realm of early 19th-century interactions between Māori and Russians. It focuses on Captain Vasily Golovnin's encounter with Te Pahi's son Matara (Ngāpuhi) in 1808 at the Cape of Good Hope and the meeting between "Suvorov" officers and Māori chiefs Korokoro, Ruatara, Hongi Hika and other Māori in Parramatta in 1814. By analysing Russian sailors' logs and memoirs, the article explores the Russians' perception of Māori, their communication strategies and Te Reo Māori. Importantly, it offers English translations of Russian primary accounts that have never been translated in full before, providing significant contributions to heritage preservation for hapū and iwi.

Keywords

Māori, Russia, indigenous diplomacy, early encounters

Introduction

While existing research on Māori-European communications often focuses on Dutch, British, French and Spanish encounters, this study brings attention to the often-overlooked aspect of early interactions with Russia. It focuses on early pre-colonial Māori-Russian encounters predating the 1820 Bellingshausen-Lazarev expedition to Queen Charlotte Sound in New Zealand's South Island, known for its Antarctic discovery and collection of Māori taonga now housed in Russian museums (Suvorova, 2020; Barratt, 1979). Specifically, it examines the 1808 meeting between Captain Vasily Golovnin and Te Pahi's son Matara at the Cape of Good Hope and the 1814 meeting between "Suvorov" officers Semyon Unkovsky, Pavel Povalo-Shveykovsky and Māori chiefs Korokoro, Ruatara, Hongi Hika and other Māori in Parramatta, New Holland (now Australia).

Despite challenges in historical, political, geographical, linguistic, cultural, professional and funding aspects, previous attempts have explored this less-documented ethnographic

area. However, existing literature is primarily limited to brief mentions in secondary sources.

This study relies on key primary sources to examine the 1808 meeting between Golovnin and Matara, drawing from Golovnin's first published notes in both journal and book formats (lifetime editions), namely his article "Cargo of an English transport vessel (from the notes of V.M. Golovnin)" published in the "Syn Otechestva" [Son of Fatherland] journal in 1816 (Golovnin, 1816), and his book "Voyage of the Russian Imperial sloop Diana from Kronstadt to Kamchatka, led by the fleet lieutenant (now Captain 1st rank) Golovnin in 1807, 1808, and 1809", published in 1819 (Golovnin, 1819). Golovnin's book underwent multiple editions. A comparison between the 1819 and 1864 editions revealed no discernible differences. However, a close examination of Golovnin's 1816 article and corresponding material in his 1819 book revealed minor discrepancies and additions. These variations may be attributed to the censorship imposed by the journal editors and the publishing house, respectively.

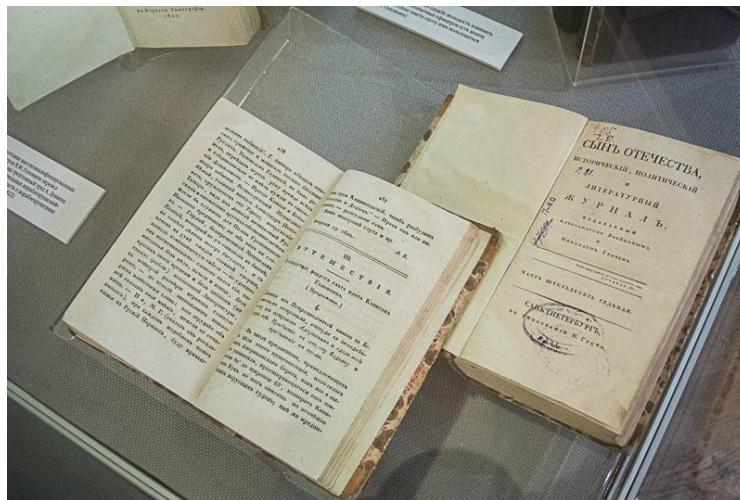


Fig. 1. Golovnin's first publication in "Syn Otechestva" [Son of Fatherland] journal in 1816. Exhibition in Ryazan in 2016. Source: <https://mediaryazan.ru/articles/detail/343130.html>

To explore the encounter of Māori and Russians in 1814, the author consulted Semyon Unkovsky's book "Notes of a Sailor, 1803-1819" published in 2004, which is the first full publication of Unkovsky's notes (Unkovsky, 2004).

1812 № 13
1212

K: Удвоенъ
Гранди

Въ Государственный Адмирал-тейный Коллежъ

Питергофа.

Однъ экземпляръ
Удвоенъ -
Удвоенъ
11 ОЧЕ
1807 года
№ 30

Исчислюю готовность Государственной
Адмиралтейской шлюпки, зано-
шенной имя Удвоенъ Гранди ввѣрен-
ной къ отбытію въ Сиднейскую
судовую роту изъ порта Св. Петра
въ гавани сего года и готовности
Гансмановскихъ подводныхъ и остро-
говъ отъ куда погребенъ.

Александръ Шалларъ

Копія доставлена командиромъ
Удвоенъ Гранди на судно
Адмиралтейской Роты Покровъ ввѣ-
ренъ 13 числа 1807 года.
Масштабъ въ развѣдъ 10 вѣстовъ
реперовъ установленъ на мѣсто
отъ гавани 15 вѣстовъ 1807 года.

Копія 15 числа 1807

Fig. 2. Report of Lieutenant Golovnin dated 11 July 1807 on the readiness of the sloop "Diana" for departure.
Source: The Russian Central State Archive of the Navy (TSGAVMF).

While Golovnin's manuscripts are housed in the Saint Petersburg Russian State Archive of the Navy (Fund 7, Inventory 1/Family documents: for 1615-1738, documents collected by V.M. Golovnin for 1642-1831), unfortunately, Unkovsky's manuscripts were lost in 1934. This loss occurred during the publishing house's efforts to prepare them for their initial publication, a task that was abruptly abandoned due to the sudden closure of the publishing house by the censors under Stalin's regime (Unkovsky, 2004).

Finding the manuscripts of other key meeting participants, particularly those of Golovnin's deputy Pyotr Rikord and Unkovsky's fellow explorer Pavel Povalov-Shveykovsky, would be immensely valuable. Unfortunately, their loss can be attributed to the challenges imposed by Russian history over the past two centuries.

The primary sources, in early 19th-century Russian with a distinct alphabet and archaic language, detail interactions with the Māori. The author, proficient in linguistics and

translation, has provided the first-ever complete English translations for these sections (See Appendix).

For secondary sources, this paper draws on the author's previous work on Māori taonga in Russian museums (Suvorova, 2020), historical perspectives of Te Reo Māori by Russians (Suvorova, 2021), and insights from scholars such as Robert McNab, Glynn Barratt, Ta Tipene O'Regan, D. R. Simmons, Gerard Hindmarsh, Moana Maniapoto, Hilary and John Mitchell, Elena Govor, Alexander Massov, Elena Rudnikova, Sofia Pale, Dmitrii Kochetkov and others.

Notably, Canadian historian Glynn Barratt's attention to the encounters stands out. In his 1979 article, "Russia and New Zealand: The Beginnings" he introduces English-speaking readers to the 1808 and 1814 meetings (Barratt, 1979). Barratt suggests ethnologists, not slavists, should make ethnographic use of this material. His 1988 book "Russia and the South Pacific, 1696-1840" builds on the same sources as the article (Barratt, 1988). However, Barratt's selective translation of Russian explorers' notes relied on censored Soviet editions, leading to incomplete translations and discrepancies in analysis.¹ Despite discrepancies, Barratt's work significantly contributes to highlighting early Māori-Russian contacts.

The Russian expeditions of "Diana" under Captain Golovnin and "Suvorov" under Captain Lazarev receive scant attention in New Zealand sources. Occasional mentions of Golovnin's captivity in Japan and Lazarev's discovery and naming of atolls in the Cook Islands exist, but these texts often contain factual inaccuracies and omit meetings with the Māori. Contemporary New Zealand historians specialising in early European contacts with the Māori typically do not focus on these encounters. *Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand* includes only British and French contacts with the Māori in its chapter on "First Māori-European encounters".

This article aims to address the lacunae in prior scholarship and delineate potential avenues for future research on the subject.

Golovnin Meeting Matara (Cape of Good Hope, 1808)

In the late 17th century, Russians obtained accurate information about New Zealand and the Māori from Dutch sources, making it the first Polynesian region for which they had authoritative data. In the later 18th century, primary accounts of Captain James Cook's visits supplemented this knowledge (Barratt, 1979).

By the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Russian Empire had the world's third-largest fleet after Great Britain and France. Russian circumnavigations, supported by Alexander I, resulted in significant South Pacific activity (Wortman, 2014). Russian explorers conducted thorough surveys, astronomical observations, and collected

¹ Barratt incorrectly identified Matara's arrival vessel as the "Porpoise" instead of the "Speke". Furthermore, Barratt's assumption that Unkovsky met only two Māori chiefs was inaccurate, as the Soviet edition omitted the primary source text, which mentioned two Māori kings and twelve others.

extensive ethnographic specimens, providing unique insights into Māori culture, language and region (Suvorova, 2020).

Following the successful return of the sloops “Nadezhda” and “Neva” from the inaugural Russian round-the-world expedition in 1806, the government decided to deploy the 300-tonne sloop “Diana” under Commander Lieutenant Vasily Golovnin (1776-1831), an experienced navigator. After graduating from the Saint Petersburg Naval Cadet Corps in 1802, Golovnin, part of a group of twelve young Russian officers, honed his skills in naval practice with the British fleet from 1802 to 1805, experiencing combat under Admiral Nelson (Golovnin, 2015).

Departing from Kronstadt on 25 July 1807, the expedition aimed to explore the north-western coast of America, the Russian Pacific coast and East Asia, while delivering supplies to Okhotsk. Golovnin was tasked with creating comprehensive descriptions of unmapped lands, determining their coordinates, measuring depths, gathering information on seas and winds, and observing local populations for potential economic ties and trade.

At the onset of its global journey, the “Diana” stopped at the English port of Portsmouth. To navigate potential complications with the British Empire, Golovnin secured passports for free navigation. The Tilsit Peace Treaty of 1807 between Alexander I and Napoleon strained relations between Russia and England, nearly forcing an early end to the expedition.

In mid-April 1808, the “Diana” rounded the Cape of Good Hope for the first time in Russian fleet history, stopping at Simonstown in the British Cape Colony (now South Africa) for provisions. The British detained the vessel, leading to Russian sailors being held captive for a year until their escape in May 1809 during adverse weather and twilight (Erickson, 2009).

During “Diana” detention in Cape Town, the first documented meeting between Russians and Māori occurred as Captain Golovnin encountered Matara, the eighteen-year-old son of Māori chief Te Pahi.



Fig. 3. Vasily Golovnin; portrait by Orest Kiprensky (c.1816), Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg. Source: Wikipedia, Public Domain.

By the early 1800s, Te Pahi, a prominent chief in the north-western Bay of Islands, held a significant position among senior chiefs (Connell, 2021). As the son of Wharerau, descended from both Ngāti Awa and Ngāpuhi, Te Pahi had considerable mana over the land. Advocating for peaceful coexistence with Europeans, he established relations with the British. Te Pahi became the first influential Māori leader to visit New South Wales in 1805 with his four sons on British ships, engaging in discussions about religion with Samuel Marsden. He planned the establishment of a Church Missionary Society mission at Te Puna. In 1806, Te Pahi returned to New Zealand and sent his eighteen-year-old son Matara to Great Britain (Ballara, 1990).

Matara journeyed to England on the “Buffalo” with Governor King in 1807. During his visit, he had an audience with King George III. Returning to Sydney on the “Speke” in 1808, he then sailed back to New Zealand in 1809.

The “Speke”, originally the “Warren Hastings”, built in Calcutta in 1789, joined the British registry in 1796 after being sold. Renamed in 1805, it initially transported convicts from Britain to New South Wales and later engaged in whaling (Hackman, 2001).

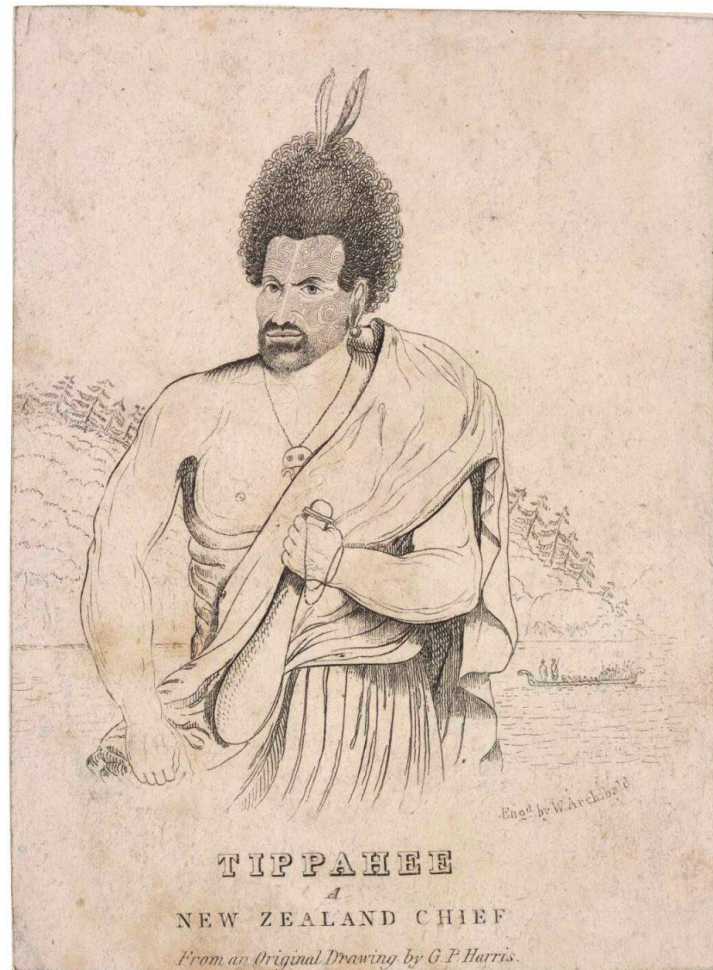


Fig. 4. Tippahee a New Zealand chief/ eng[rave]d by W Archibald from an original drawing by G P Harris. [London, 1827] in Alexander Turnbull Library. Source: Wikipedia, Public Domain.

Golovnin documented the visit of the “Speke” to Cape Town in August 1808, highlighting its role in transporting “female felons to New Holland”. He learnt about the conditions of human rights for female convicts during transportation. Additionally, he discovered that “the son of one of the New Zealand sovereigns” was on board, returning from England to his homeland:

On that same vessel the “Spik”, the son of one of the New Zealand sovereigns was travelling back from England to his homeland. This sovereign is a King of the Northern part of New Zealand. His Kingdom is called Puna by its inhabitants, and the Bay of Islands by the English. His name is Topagi [Translator’s note: Te Pahi]. He is very kind and benevolent towards Europeans, and for this reason, the English are trying to do all sorts of good things for him: they have taught him various crafts, provided him with instruments, have built him a house and have made various gifts. His son, of whom we speak here, by name Metarai [Translator’s note: Matara], had lived by his father’s wish for some time for learning among the English in New Holland, from where they had brought him to England on a whaling vessel, and he had spent 12 months in London, and was now returning home.

Golovnin invited Matara and the British surgeon John Macmillan to accompany him on board the “Diana”:

We wished to make the acquaintance of His Zealand Highness, and to this end we invited him to dine with us, together with a doctor, who was a passenger on this same transport.

Communication between Golovnin and Matara primarily relied on Dr Macmillan, who had acquired some proficiency in the language of the young Māori. Dr Macmillan served as a surgeon on two convict ship voyages to Australia: the “Speke” in 1808 and the “Lord Melville” in 1818. Naval surgeons on convict ships not only applied medical expertise but also served as advocates for their patients (Foxhall, 2011). In Matara’s case, Dr Macmillan played a central role in facilitating communication as an interpreter and translator.

Furthermore, Matara, after a year in England, could also speak some English:

...he is lively and cheerful; he understands almost everything in English ordinary conversation; but he speaks very incorrectly and his pronunciation is even worse... At table he chatted a lot with us; replying to our questions.

Golovnin’s observations offer valuable insights into the perception of Māori culture and language - Te Reo Māori:²

The language of the Homeland of this Prince is abrupt and is composed of short words which are pronounced quickly, but not unpleasant to the ear, and some words are even pleasantly pronounced: for example - tego - badly, unlike, unjustly; eti-eti - this way that way, little by little; vai - water; puta - a hole of any sort...

Golovnin recorded several Māori words and the British perspective on Te Reo, relayed by Dr Macmillan:

According to Mr Makmelin their language is extremely limited, and many things are expressed with just one word: this is a common deficiency of all languages of savage peoples. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the only four-legged animal they knew was a dog, which in their language is called karatagi, and so now all animals of this genus brought by Europeans to them are called by the one name, with differentiations as follows: a dog with horns - a bull or a cow; a dog with four ears - a ram or a ewe; a stinking dog - billy goat or nanny goat.

Matara and Golovnin’s encounter occurred at a time when Te Reo Māori lacked a standardised written form. Subsequently, during British colonisation, the written Māori language was developed using the English language alphabet.³ Golovnin, who recorded Māori words in Cyrillic using the Russian alphabet (Galaktionov, 2022; Ivanov, 2022), was

² Golovnin transcribed Māori words into Cyrillic script in his notes, following the Russian alphabet. This article presents all Māori words in transliterated form using the Latin script for the convenience of English-speaking readers.

³ Similarly, during colonisation, the Tlingit language of Alaska’s indigenous people was originally written in Cyrillic using Russian letters. However, it transitioned to English after Alaska was sold to the United States in the 1860s.

one of the first Russians to do so. The use of Cook's list of Māori words by Golovnin during his meeting with Matara is unclear. However, it is documented that the list was utilised by another Russian expedition led by Bellingshausen and Lazarev during their visit to Queen Charlotte Sound in 1820. Further research is needed to delve into Golovnin's vocabulary lists of Māori words, and it is recommended to scrutinise the original manuscripts for additional comments, Māori words, and phrases that might have been omitted from Golovnin's notes when initially published in 1816.

Matara's observation about the use of Te Reo may indicate the collective decision-making approach within Māori society:

The Doctor knows a little of the language of their people, and for this reason, the Prince always began to speak with him in his own language. The Doctor told him that none of us understood him, and that he ought to speak in English; but because of all our officers only Mr Rikord and I knew English, the Prince answered the Doctor in his own language: "what is the use of this when those sitting at the table don't know how to speak Europa?" By this name, he was meaning the English language, which they call the European language.

Matara's use of the term "Europa" to refer to the English language holds significance in deciphering Māori words in haka recorded by midshipman Novosilskii during the 1820 Russian expedition of Bellingshausen-Lazarev to Queen Charlotte Sound.⁴ It could suggest the Māori might have mistakenly identified the Russian expedition as British, potentially influencing their subsequent behaviour and interactions with the British positively.⁵

Diana carried New Zealand maps and books. One volume, possibly a Cook "Voyage" book with illustrations by Hodges or Parkinson, depicted a Māori man and woman:

We also showed him full-length depictions of the men of New Zealand. He said that they were not like that, speaking in his own language: tego-tego. He was right about this because these portraits were drawn from inhabitants of another region of this land whom his countrymen never come across.

Most likely, Golovnin misinterpreted Matara's words. "Tego-tego" (pronounced in Russian as "teva-teva"; Māori spelling "tewha-tewha") is a Māori weapon, which is a club with a long handle and a heavy axe that looks like a blade at one end. Mātauranga Māori Thesaurus created by Te Papa gives the following description of a tewha-tewha:

Double-handed weapon. The shaft closes down to a mata or point at one end. The striking end consists of a broad, quarter-round head, called the rapa. The

⁴ "Gina reko, Gina reko! Tovi gide N ey ropo!" (Novosilskii's account). See Suvorova, O. (2020). "Forgotten Taonga Māori in Russia: The 1820 Visit of the Bellingshausen-Lazarev Expedition to Queen Charlotte Sound" *Te Kaharoa*, 13(1).

⁵ Historical records depict similar incidents, such as James Cook's 1778 expedition to Chukotka, where he showed kindness to the Chukchi. Mistaken identity led the Chukchi to associate the English with Russians, potentially expediting the establishment of peaceful relations between Russians and Chukchi during internal wars in the late 18th century. See the report by T.I. Shmalev, the commander of the Tengin fortress in Kamchatka, and Cook's journals for further details.

lower part of the rapa often had a hole to suspend bunches of slit hawk or kereru feathers, called puhipuhi or paupuhi. Usually made from hardwood.

The club was used to parry and strike, and after the opponent fell, the tip was used like an axe to finish off the enemy. Today the tewha-tewha is only used for formal ceremonies. Matara commented on the depicted Māori man's weapon, but Golovnin incorrectly interpreted the term as "unlike" or "wrong".

Golovnin was impressed by Matara's exceptional skill in reading maps and understanding navigation, highlighting the significance of this ability for Māori during that period:

I showed him a sea chart on which were marked the Cape of Good Hope, New Holland and New Zealand. He immediately traced the route which they should take, pointing to Port Jackson and to Norfolk Island, to which it would be necessary to go beforehand, and on to the Bay of Islands; and when I pointed out to him our route to Kamchatka he observed that Russia (doubtless taking Kamchatka for the whole of Russia), is further from England than New Zealand; but having heard from us that from England to Russia it is possible to travel by ship in a week, he asked me: "why are you not travelling there via England? It would be nearer".

Moreover, Golovnin observed Matara's remarkable understanding of woodwork and shipbuilding, noting Matara's keen interest in the exceptional quality of the Russian ship. Matara expressed astonishment at the precise joining of planks.



Fig. 5. Parkinson, Sydney, 1745-1771: A New Zealand warrior in his proper dress and completely armed according to their manner. Parkinson del. T. Chambers sc. [London, 1784]. Source: Public Domain

Golovnin's notes offer insights into Matara's impressions of his visit to England, detailing his reception by the King and his family, participation in cultural activities such as theatres and Vauxhall Pleasure Garden, as well as the gifts and awards he received:

The English King conferred on this Prince an order of Chivalry established or better to say, invented, especially for savage sovereigns, and called the Order of Friendship. Its insignia comprise a blue sash and a silver star on which are depicted two golden hands clasping each other. To his father are being sent from the King a rich cap and a cape in the place of a crown and robe. In addition, many various useful gifts are being sent, comprising workshop tools, clothing etc. They are all packed into chests on which is written: to King Topaga from King George. His son was also given very generous gifts in England.

The relationship between Matara and Golovnin's associate Pyotr (Peter) Rikord, as detailed in Golovnin's notes, illuminates complex cultural exchanges during early European explorations of the Pacific. Golovnin's recorded stories from Rikord shed light on Matara's observations, offering insights into Māori conceptions and tikanga. For instance, Matara's remarks on property and ownership are among the revelations:

As he [Matara] was strolling on the shore with Mr Rikord he found a copper crest from a soldier's pouch. The glitter of the object had caught his attention. Having picked it up he said to Mr Rikord: "It is unlikely that the same person who lost this thing would find it; as a consequence, it will not be considered theft if I take it". Having made this observation, he put the crest in his pocket".

Rikord's possession of Māori taonga aboard the "Diana" before meeting Matara suggests prior interactions with Māori culture, possibly through collectors or explorers, highlighting the interconnectedness of different cultures at the time:

Mr Rikord had a flute and a (conch) trumpet of his people, and as soon as they were placed on the table, he eagerly grabbed the former and began to play.

Captain Golovnin's colleague, Pyotr Rikord, served as a senior officer on the ship (Sokolov, 1913) and subsequently played a pivotal role in rescuing Golovnin and his crew from two years of Japanese captivity following their escape from British captivity (the "Golovnin Incident").⁶ In gratitude, Golovnin gifted Rikord's wife, Lyudmila, a piano shipped from Saint Petersburg, indicating a connection to music (Roberts, 2020). It is plausible that the Māori musical instruments mentioned were also collected for her. Exploring Rikord's role in communicating with indigenous peoples holds potential value for future research.

In a significant footnote in Golovnin's notes on Matara, he alludes to the infamous "Boyd massacre" of December 1809. The tragedy unfolded when Māori attacked the sailing ship "Boyd" in Whangaroa Harbour as retaliation for the mistreatment of local chief Te Ara, who had sailed from Sydney on the Boyd. This act of vengeance resulted in the loss of

⁶ Rikord led three expeditions to secure the release of captured sailors, demonstrating remarkable diplomatic skills. He successfully convinced Japanese merchant Takadai Kahei to travel to Saint Petersburg for official papers, later earning the Russian sovereign's appointment as the chief of Kamchatka.

most crew and passengers. Golovnin's notes on the Boyd incident offer additional context:

Some while later, on my arrival in Kamchatka, I learnt from American merchants there that Metarai had badly repaid the English for their hospitality. He had lured to the shore of his kingdom two English whaling vessels, had captured them and executed all their crew and had taken into captivity the women on board. After some while a third English vessel arrived at the shore. Two of the women captured by Metarae (whom he was taking away, expecting the Europeans, into the hinterland of the island) succeeded in escaping captivity, jumped into the sea, swam to the vessel and informed those on it of the fate of their countrymen and about the ruination awaiting them ashore.

In later editions of Golovnin's notes, likely influenced by censorship, details about the Boyd massacre in 1819 and 1864 omit the mention of American merchants at Kamchatka as Golovnin's source. The 1819 edition suggests the English Government dispatching an expedition to punish the alleged villain.

The violent clash between Māori and Europeans had profound consequences. Golovnin erroneously attributes a major role to Matara in the Boyd massacre, leading to a case of mistaken identity. This misattribution triggered Te Pahi's death in 1810, inciting civil war and the destruction of Te Pahi's pā, Te Puna, with significant Māori casualties. British missionary Samuel Marsden corroborated the mistaken identity, highlighting the tragic consequences of the Boyd incident.

The Māori-European clash, exemplified by the Boyd incident, solidified the Russian view of Māori as "noble savages" and reinforced the notion of New Zealand as an extremely dangerous place (Barratt, 1979).

In November 1808, the Speke transported Matara to Sydney (McNab, 1914). On January 26, 1809, Matara finally sailed to New Zealand on the City of Edinburgh, led by Captain Pattison, with Mr Berry as the supercargo who described Matara as "speaking English tolerably and dressed and behaved like a gentleman" (Sherrin & Wallace, 1890). According to Berry Matara initially lived in the cabin but spent most of his time with a fellow countryman employed as a sailor:

In a few days, however, he resumed his national costume, and with it his national habits, but having been accustomed to delicate treatment for a length of time, his constitution proved unequal to resist the mode of living in use amongst his countrymen. He became affected with a hoarseness which gradually settled on his lungs, and in a few months brought him to his grave.

It is believed that Matara died of tuberculosis soon after returning to New Zealand in 1809, contracted during his time in England. His death marked the earliest recorded case of pulmonary tuberculosis in New Zealand (Hanham, 2003).

After escaping British captivity in Cape Town, "Diana" sailed by Australia and Tasmania without anchorage, skilfully avoiding British ships. In July 1809 the "Diana" anchored at Resolution Harbour on Tanna Island in the New Hebrides (modern Republic of Vanuatu).

During their stay, the “Diana” crew established friendly relations with Tanna locals while replenishing supplies. Golovnin documented detailed descriptions of Tanna people and customs, engaging in trade for various crafts and weapons (Lindstrom, 2020).

His officers oversaw works, exchanged items for food, conducted astronomical observations, and collected words of the local Nafe language (Kwamera, or South Tanna). Golovnin appointed Mr Mur for the task of collecting words, the same officer later captive with Golovnin by the Japanese. He compiled an extensive Tanna language dictionary using pantomimes, lost during their captivity in Japan.⁷ Regrettably, potential notes and Māori word lists from other Russian “Diana” officers may have also been lost over time.

Nevertheless, Golovnin’s surviving word list, basic yet remarkably accurate even after two centuries, included terms from Futuna-Aniwa, the language of Tanna’s Polynesian-speaking neighbours.

After a two-year and two-month journey from Kronstadt, Saint Petersburg, the “Diana” reached Petropavlovsk, Kamchatka’s port, in September 1809. After voyaging to Russian America, Novoarkhangelsk (now Sitka on the Pacific coast of the USA), and returning to Kamchatka in 1810, Golovnin received orders in April 1811 to survey the Southern Kurile and Shantar Islands, and the coast of Tartary to Okhotsk between northern Japan and southern Kamchatka. While surveying the southern part in July 1811, Golovnin, not expecting hostility, went ashore on Kunashir Island and was captured by the Japanese (Rikord, 1815). Two other officers and four sailors were detained and later transported to Hokkaido, where they remained under arrest for almost two and a half years, until October 1813 (Maggs, 2010).

Golovnin, the first known foreigner liberated from Japanese captivity, published his book in 1816 titled “Notes of the Fleet of Captain Golovnin about his adventures in captivity with the Japanese in 1811, 1812, and 1813” (Golovnin, 1816). The book, translated into many European languages, recounted his experiences. Vasily Golovnin returned to Saint Petersburg in July 1814, precisely seven years after his departure.

Semyon Unkovsky and Pavel Povalo-Shveykovsky meeting Korokoro, Ruatara, Hongi Hika and others (Parramatta, 1814)

In 1813, Lieutenant Mikhail Lazarev initiated a successful circumnavigation aboard the “Suvorov”, a sloop sponsored by the Russian-American Company. Named after the renowned Russian military leader Alexander Suvorov,⁸ the expedition aimed to deliver goods to Russian settlements in America, encompassing modern-day Alaska, California,

⁷ In 2009, commemorating the bicentennial of Russia-Vanuatu interactions, a bronze bust of Vasily Golovnin was installed in a Port Vila park. His name, inscribed in stone, appears in four languages: Russian, Bislama, English, and French.

⁸ Suvorov is mentioned as “Suwarrow” in Lord Byron’s epic poem “Don Juan” and Alaric Alexander Watts’ alliterative poem “The Siege of Belgrade”.

and Hawaii. The Russian-American Company, a Russian state-sponsored chartered company established in 1799 by Tsar Paul I, held a trade monopoly in the North Pacific. Seeking to broaden its economic influence, the company explored the Southern Ocean during this venture.



*Fig. 6. Admiral M.P. Lazarev; portrait by R.G. Schwede (mid 1840s), Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg.
Source: Wikipedia, Public Domain.*

At just 25 years old, Lieutenant Mikhail Lazarev assumed command of the “Suvorov”. Despite his youth, Lazarev was an experienced sailor and leader, rising swiftly through the ranks of the Russian Navy (Lazarev, 2014). After joining at a young age, he underwent further education in the British Navy in 1804. Over the next five years, Lazarev engaged in continuous voyages in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, participating in battles against French “privateers” (pirates) aboard East India Company ships. His naval service included active involvement in the Russian-Swedish war of 1808-1809, and 1812, he served on the brig “Phoenix”, earning a silver medal for valour in the Russian Patriotic War against Napoleon.

Lazarev commenced the perilous expedition aboard the “Suvorov” on 9 October 1813, navigating through challenging conditions, with Napoleonic France still posing a threat.

After a brief stop in the Swedish port of Karlskrona, the “Suvorov” continued its journey alongside other commercial ships under the protection of warships. The ship arrived in Portsmouth on 27 November and stayed there for three months. Then the “Suvorov” sailed to the island of Porto Santo (near the island of Madeira) as a part of another trade caravan, arriving in Rio de Janeiro on 22 April 1814 with an English merchant convoy. On 25 May 1814 the “Suvorov” set sail again, rounding the Cape of Good Hope and the South Cape of Tasmania before arriving in Port Jackson, Sydney’s natural bay, on 13 August 1814. The Russians stayed in Australia for about three weeks.

The “Suvorov” circumnavigation was primarily commercial, and the visit to Port Jackson aimed to provide rest for the crew, replenish supplies, and perform necessary ship repairs. Despite its commercial nature, participants in the “Suvorov” voyage actively engaged in scientific research, conducting hydrographic and meteorological measurements.

The Russians received a warm welcome from officials in the distant colony. Governor Lachlan Macquarie of New South Wales, with fond memories of his 1807 visit to Russia, extended a particularly warm reception. The “Suvorov” was greeted enthusiastically, partly because it was the first ship to bring news of Napoleon’s defeat and the entry of Allied troops into Paris. Despite foreign ships not typically allowed in that part of Sydney Harbour, Captain Lazarev received an invitation from the Governor to position the Russian sloop directly in front of his residence. Sydney celebrated the victory over Napoleon with fireworks and festivities. The hospitable hosts allowed the sailors of the “Suvorov” to experience the life of the distant British colony intimately. The local “high” society organised balls, receptions, and excursions for Russian officers in the vicinity of Sydney (Govor & Massov, 1993).

Lazarev’s deputy, Semyon Unkovsky, and the second lieutenant, Pavel Povalo-Shveykovsky, were invited to visit the settlement of Parramatta by George Johnston, a British military officer renowned for arresting Governor William Bligh during the “Rum Rebellion” of 1808 in New South Wales. Unkovsky, like Lazarev, had served on British ships and was fluent in English.

Unkovsky’s companion, Pavel Povalo-Shveykovsky, about whom little is known, sailed in the Adriatic Sea from 1805 to 1808, participating in various sea battles, including the capture of the Korčula fortress and engagements with the Turkish fleet at the Dardanelles and Mount Athos. Serving as a midshipman of the Russian fleet from 1808, he returned from the voyage on the “Suvorov” (1813-1816) and inherited his father’s estate, including Lobkovo village. Pavel Povalo-Shveykovsky retired from naval service in 1819 with the rank of lieutenant commander, relocating with his family to Lobkovo.

Many officers aboard the “Suvorov” maintained diaries, documenting their impressions during the voyage. Regrettably, not all of these records have survived to the present day. The author could not identify any records left by Povalo-Shveykovsky about his

participation in the round-the-world trip on the “Suvorov” in 1813–1816. However, it is highly probable that such records existed but were either unpublished or lost over time.

Additionally, the extended family of Povalo-Shveykovsky included a Decembrist Colonel, Ivan Povalo-Shveykovsky, who was sentenced to exile and perpetual hard labour in Siberia for his involvement in the Decembrist Revolt (1825). Such familial associations likely incurred the Russian Emperor’s disfavour, making the publication of any records by the Decembrists’ family members subject to scrutiny by state censors.

Semyon Unkovsky’s memoirs stand as a valuable source for cross-cultural and heritage researchers and historians, partly due to the scarcity of surviving records from the “Suvorov” officers.

Unkovsky, a contemporary of Mikhail Lazarev at the Saint Petersburg Naval Cadet Corps, shared an internship with Lazarev in the British Navy. His early naval career involved participation in several battles, capture by the French, and subsequent release following the Treaty of Tilsit. Recognised for his courage and experience, Unkovsky was appointed as Lazarev’s second-in-command on the “Suvorov” in 1813.

Unkovsky’s round-the-world journey on the “Suvorov” marked a significant chapter in his life, being both his inaugural and final circumnavigation. Post-voyage, a life-altering inheritance of a country estate from his aunt, Varvara Unkovskaya, a relative of renowned Russian writer Ivan Turgenev, led Unkovsky to early retirement, marriage, and the commencement of his memoirs.

Although it appears that Unkovsky did not complete his memoirs, three known parts provide valuable insights. The most extensive section recounts his involvement in Lazarev’s expedition on the “Suvorov”, featuring analyses of Russia’s trade policies and a “forecast of the historical development of the world economy”. Another part delves into Unkovsky’s service in the British Navy, while a third section sheds light on his family life and experiences in the countryside.

Unkovsky’s memoirs faced challenges in publication. Initially slated for release by the Sabashnikovs’ publishing house in 1934, the Soviet authorities shuttered the publishing house, preventing the book’s issuance. The prepared text is currently housed at the Russian State Library, while the whereabouts of Unkovsky’s original manuscript remain unknown. In 1944, excerpts from his memoirs, titled “True Memoirs of My Life”, featuring the circumnavigation of the “Suvorov” under Lieutenant Lazarev, were published in the Soviet “News of the All-Union Geographical Society”.

In 1952, a censored, abridged version of Unkovsky’s notes about the “Suvorov” voyage appeared in “M.P. Lazarev”, a collection of documents. A partial translation into English was done by Glynn Barratt in the 1970s. The full text of Unkovsky’s memoirs, published in 2004 by the Sabashnikovs’ publishing house, includes the section describing his visit to Parramatta and meeting with Marsden and the Māori, which has been translated into English for the first time by the author of this article.

Notably, Marsden's Christian mission in Parramatta during the Russians' visit in 1814 held significance for the expanding Russian Empire, particularly in Siberia and the Far East. Russian Orthodox missionaries were actively involved in assimilating indigenous peoples and territories into the Empire during this period (Sofronov, 2006).

By 1814, Marsden, a prominent figure in the Australian colony, led a Christian mission in Parramatta (Parsonson, 1990). His efforts included establishing the first Christian school to convert the local indigenous population through Christian teachings and European customs (Moon, 2012). Marsden also played a central role in improving living conditions for convicts by creating a farm in Parramatta, providing opportunities for work and skill acquisition. He advocated for fair treatment and humane punishment for those sentenced (Parsonson, 1990).

During their visit to Parramatta, Unkovsky and Povalov-Shveykovsky were hosted by Johnston and Marsden, who was in the midst of preparations for his inaugural trip to New Zealand. Unkovsky documented their experiences as follows:

Very soon a man arrived from Mr Marsden, the pastor of this small settlement and the senior chaplain of all the villages surrounding Port Jackson. We paid a visit to the reverend father. Mr Johnson is well known to him, he recommended us and we were received with particular courtesy. Mr Marsden, a gentleman of about 45 years, has a wife and eight daughters. He is the head of the Mission which was sent to the Society Islands to preach the Christian faith. He told us that on these islands many inhabitants have turned to Christianity and that services are conducted in the islanders' native language. He himself intends for this purpose to travel to New Zealand, for which reason have been invited two kings from New Zealand and 12 persons from the families of the kings. All these New Zealanders were in Mr Marsden's home and it was evident that they had great trust in this honourable gentleman.

Unkovsky likely referred to Ruatara and Korokoro, Ngāpuhi chiefs from the Bay of Islands in New Zealand, as "two kings". Hongi Hika, another Ngāpuhi chief living with Marsden, could have been grouped by the Russians in the "families" category. They all had arrived in Australia on Marsden's vessel "Active" on 22 August 1814, the same week as the "Suvorov" arrived. The list of passengers and crew from the "Active" that sailed in December 1814, three months after the Russian visit, from Sydney to the Bay of Plenty provides the names of ten Māori individuals that the Russians have encountered:⁹

Chiefs in the Bay of Islands: Duaterra (Ruatara), Shunghi (Hongi Hika), and Korra-korra (Korokoro);

Passengers, all New Zealanders: Tui (younger brother of Korokoro), Jacky Miti (Mutu, Jacky Maitai - sailor), Tommy (Māui - Tommy Drummond - Marsden's servant), Young Shunghi (Ripiro, eldest son of Hongi Hika), and Tenana (Te Nganaga, a relation of Hongi Hika);

⁹ https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Space:Active_%28Brig%2C_Nov/Dec_1814%29#Passenger_List

Crew, New Zealanders: War-ra-kee and Tommy.

There were also two other Polynesian crew members on board that the Russians might have mistaken for Māori - Dicka-hee (Otaheitan/Tahitian) and Punnee (Bolabolan/Bora Bora).

Unkovsky gives a detailed description of the appearance of the Māori the Russians met at Marsden's house in Parramatta:

All the New Zealanders whom we had the chance to see were of sturdy build, dark complexion, and some were quite black, the kings and all their family have various patterns or tattoos incised on their faces and part of their bodies. It is said that they are brave and that during battles they eat their foes. Many of them showed us their wounds received in battles and took a great deal of pride in this.

The Russians observed the haka performance with admiration, noting its pleasing auditory and visual elements:

Shortly after the New Zealand kings began to dance, demonstrating when they enter into a battle and how they celebrate after victory. In their dance we did not notice at all the grimacings and any other nasty body gestures as is generally the case with savages, but they only turned in a line to one or the other side, beating time with one foot and clapping their hands, while singing a dance song which had quite a pleasant sound.

Unkovsky mentions how they communicated with the Māori:

One of the kings spoke a little English and Mr Marsden, knowing their language in part, was able easily to express himself with these savages.

The English-speaking "king" was likely Ruatara (1787-1815), a 27-year-old chief from the Bay of Islands. Ruatara, among the first Ngāpuhi leaders closely associated with Europeans, had learned English during his time as a seaman on whalers (Connell, 2021). His visit to London in 1809 and subsequent mistreatment led Marsden to care for him, bringing Ruatara to Parramatta. Marsden's farm became a place for Ruatara to study European agricultural techniques. In 1814, Marsden sent gifts and aid, fostering Ruatara's agricultural efforts in the Bay of Islands. By the Russians' encounter, Ruatara had firmly established relationships with Marsden and other Europeans, showing support for the first Christian missionaries in 1814.

Ngāpuhi chief Hongi Hika (1772-1828) was accompanied by several members of his family at the time of the Russians' 1814 visit to Parramatta. Arriving on the "Active", Hongi Hika was instrumental in early European contact and settlement in New Zealand. Recognising the value of European muskets, he used them to conquer northern New Zealand during the Musket Wars. Beyond his military prowess, Hongi Hika promoted European settlement, fostered positive relations with early missionaries, introduced Western agriculture to Māori, and contributed to transcribing the Māori language (Connell, 2021). Notably, he assisted in creating the first Māori Grammar Dictionary

during a trip to Cambridge, England, in 1820. In 1820, Hongi Hika visited England, receiving recognition as a “Māori King” and gifts of armour from King George IV.

Another Ngāpuhi chief met by the Russians in 1814 in Parramatta was Korokoro (1760?-1823). He was also part of the group which travelled to New South Wales on the “Active” in 1814. It is considered that, unlike Hongi and Ruatara, who were avid traders and travellers, Korokoro’s passion was military activities (Nicholas, 1817):

He never recounted the battles he fought or the foes he had conquered, without being transported with a kind of furious exultation; and when desired to sing the war song and give a description of his mode of attack, his gestures and manner became outrageous to the very extreme of frenzy.

Korokoro, as highlighted in Russian accounts, demonstrated a keen interest in politics, international relations and indigenous diplomacy:

Mr Marsden explained to the King that we were Russians and that we were in a great alliance with England. He asked what Russia was rich in, and when we explained that we had much iron, he asked that it be brought to him and in return he would give pigs and timber. Later he said that he was particularly fond of the English King and the Russian Emperor above others and that King Korokora (as this King was called), Emperor Alexander and King George were better than all monarchs. He suggested that we went to New Zealand, and he would furnish us with everything we needed. We thanked His Highness and regretted that we were not able to visit his islands. In answer to our question as to whether he had eaten human beings he, not the least put out, replied that he had never eaten human flesh.

During his time with Marsden, Korokoro received various gifts, including a regimental uniform, from Governor Lachlan Macquarie. In December 1814, he accompanied Samuel Marsden and others back to the Bay of Islands to support the inaugural Church Missionary Society mission.

Interestingly, Korokoro (or “Korokora” in the Russian records) is the sole Māori name recalled by Unkovsky in his memoirs. The phonetic structure of this name is familiar and easy for the Russian ear to remember. Marsden’s pronunciation and recording of Māori names, as introduced to the Russian visitors, were not always accurate. Some Māori names, such as “Duaterra” for Ruatara and “Shunghee” for Hongi Hika, were misspelt or anglicised, differing from commonly recognised Māori spellings.

The encounter between the Russian officers and Māori in the settlement of Parramatta in 1814 during the “Suvorov” stopover in Australia occurred in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Both parties displayed curiosity about each other and discussed potential cooperation and interest in global affairs. Additionally, the historic meeting with missionary Marsden facilitated the communication between the two sides.

On 3 September 1814, Lazarev departed from Port Jackson for the Hawaiian Islands. Following bird clouds, he became the first European to discover and map five uninhabited coral islands in the northern Cook Islands. These were named “Suvorov Islands” in

honour of his ship, with one still known as “Suwarrow”, the anglicised version of “Suvorov”.

In late November 1814, the Russian sloop finally reached New Archangel (Novo-Arkhangelsk, now Sitka) in Russian America, Alaska. In August 1815, departing from New Archangel with a cargo of furs and goods for sale, the “Suvorov” sailed to the coast of Peru. Lazarev received a gift of Peruvian antiquities from local authorities for Emperor Alexander I of Russia. The journey continued to Cape Horn, Fernando de Noronha, the English port of Portsmouth, and the Danish Helsingor (Elsinore).

On 27 July 1816, the “Suvorov” returned to Saint Petersburg, completing its “round the world” voyage which took almost three years. This marked the first of Captain Mikhail Lazarev’s three Pacific voyages. In his subsequent journey, he would visit Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand, and engage with the Māori of the Tōtaranui region in May-June 1820.

Conclusion

This paper provides a unique perspective and detailed context of the early pre-colonial Māori interactions, shedding light on cross-cultural engagement, indigenous diplomacy, Māori self-determination and autonomy. Echoing a Māori proverb, “He aha te kai a te rangatira? He kōrero, he kōrero, he kōrero” (What is the food of the leader? It is communication, it is communication), this study enriches historical understanding by emphasising Māori participation in early global interactions. It explores early Māori exchanges with the Russians, often overlooked in existing research that predominantly focuses on Dutch, British, French and Spanish encounters.

Dialogues of Captain Vasily Golovnin with Te Pahi’s son Matara in Cape Town in 1808 and of the “Suvorov” officers with Māori chiefs in Parramatta in 1814 uncover a complex historical narrative enriched with linguistic and cultural insights.

Analysis of previously inaccessible primary accounts - Russian sailors’ records - translated into English by the author, contributes to shaping the broader narrative of Māori-European engagements in this era, and importantly, to heritage preservation for hapū and iwi.

Further research could incorporate indigenous voices for contemporary relevance in diplomacy, history and tikanga.

Disclosure

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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Acknowledgements

The author expresses gratitude to Alexander Schwab (Eichelmaendli Verlag) for valuable support and encouragement. Special thanks to Ambassador (retired) Stuart Prior for his thoughtful comments and enhancements to the original text and translations.

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Appendix 1A.

Extract from Golovnin, V.M. (1816). Cargo of an English transport vessel (from the notes of V.M. Golovnin). *Syn Otechestva [Son of Fatherland]*, 31(30). Saint Petersburg. 129-140. [Translated from Russian by Olga Suvorova and Stuart Prior]

During our time at the *Cape of Good Hope* at the port there was docked a transport vessel which was taking female felons to *New Holland*. It was also carrying passengers such as the English Sea Captain *Porteus* and two Officers who were assigned to a sloop-of-war there. I had the opportunity to meet them and the commander of that transport. In the course of our acquaintance, I learnt from them how the unfortunates sentenced to exile were being transported and kept. The humanitarian and compassionate beneficences of the English Government for easing the painful fate of felons who had brought upon themselves the anger of the law have obliged me to set out in my Journal a short observation on this subject.

They are being exiled to *Botany Bay* for the most part for theft and robbery and sometimes for other crimes as well. For transportation from *England* to *New Holland* a merchant transport vessel is almost always chartered, and several soldiers are put on board as a guard. The male felons and female felons are dispatched on different vessels; and they are never mixed together. The vessel about which I am talking here was named "*Spik*" ("*Speake*") [Translator's note: "*Speke*"] after the name of its owner; it was going for whaling to the shores of *New Zealand* and it had been chartered by the Administration to transport to *New Holland* en route a hundred female felons, and 24 soldiers for the garrison there with their wives, who had 29 children. For the transportation of them all the Administration is paying the owners 4000 pounds sterling, but the upkeep of these passengers is at the expense of the Treasury; however, the Captain of the vessel if at fault

has to pay the Treasury 1500 pounds sterling for each female felon who escapes. Notwithstanding this, they are kept very freely and are allowed to stroll on deck whenever they want; while alongside shore they are given victuals, per day a pound of fresh meat, a sufficiency of white bread, tea, sugar and once a week grape wine. In spite of their situation these unfortunates even in exile do not abandon their wicked crafts. *Mr Rikord*, with some others of our Officers, visited the above-mentioned transport; the oarsmen of our ship's boat out of curiosity went up on deck; the female convicts immediately surrounded them and obviously too closely. One of the Englishmen asked our Officers to order the oarsmen to be careful because of the known character of these ladies they have evil intent towards them and of course are wanting to steal something from their pockets whenever possible. Midshipman *R....* took it on himself to warn them of this danger but instead of ordering them loudly in pure *Russian* language to be more careful he whispered it in their ear as if these ladies understood *Russian*. He did it as the saying has it without reflection and the sailors having heard that their pockets were in danger also without reflection grabbed hold of them. – The tender sex having seen this movement and understanding completely the reason behind it immediately took severe offence at it: they all set about abusing *Mr R...v* – it fell to *Mr Rikord*, who was familiar with the *English* language, to calm them down. Going up to them courteously he mollified their indignation with words of endearment; they surrounded him, spoke in friendly fashion and completely forgot the chagrin they had felt from the unfounded suspicion levelled against them; but when he arrived in his cabin and felt for his kerchief, he could not find it in his pocket; they had been able to remove it. He laughed a lot at this happening and instead of being sorry about the kerchief he was on the contrary very pleased with such a lesson.

On that same vessel the "*Spik*", the son of one of the *New Zealand* sovereigns was travelling back from *England* to his homeland. This sovereign is a King of the Northern part of *New Zealand*. His Kingdom is called *Puna* by its inhabitants, and the Bay of Islands by the English. His name is *Topagi* [*Translator's note: Te Pahi*]. He is very kind and benevolent towards Europeans, and for this reason the English are trying to do all sorts of good things for him: they have taught him various crafts, provided him with instruments, have built him a house and have made various gifts. His son, of whom we speak here, by name *Metarai* [*Translator's note: Matarā*], had lived by his father's wish for some time for learning among *the English* in *New Holland*, from where they had brought him to *England* on a whaling vessel, and he had spent 12 months in *London*, and was now returning home.

We wished to make the acquaintance of *His Zealand Highness*, and to this end we invited him to dine with us, together with a doctor, who was a passenger on this same transport. They spent time with us and we entertained them as best we could, only we did not fire a salute for the Prince. The doctor, *Mr Makmelin* [*Translator's note: Macmillan*], is a modest gentleman, courteous and intelligent, and, as it seems, versed in the sciences of his rank. The Prince is 18 years old, short, stately; shape of face European, colour dark lilac, without any face ornamentation according to the ritual of savage peoples; black hair, straight and rather short; holes in his ears, as our women have for earrings; he is lively and cheerful; he understands almost everything in *English* ordinary conversation; but he speaks very

incorrectly and his pronunciation is even worse; he bows and performs other civilities in the European fashion, similarly dressed; he knows how to drink wine in the English fashion and judging by the amount which he drank without any noticeable effect on him, it seems that he is not a novice in this type of European passing of time; he eats everything put before him, and a lot of it; and he particularly likes sweet things. At table he chatted a lot with us; replying to our questions; he told us that his father has 15 wives, many children, he does not know how many; and with him from the same mother there are 3 sons and 2 daughters. The Doctor recounted that his mother was herself of sovereign rank. *Topigi* had conquered her land and had married her, and *Metarai* himself already has two wives to whom he is very attached. His father, when he was setting off, gave him detailed instructions as to what to study among *Europeans*, and what to try to adopt from them. He demonstrated to us great natural talents; many of his observations did not demonstrate that he was a savage from New Zealand without any education. Here are some anecdotes about Prince *Metarae*.

As he was strolling on the shore with Mr *Rikord* he found a copper crest from a soldier's pouch. The glitter of the object had caught his attention. Having picked it up he said to Mr *Rikord*: "It is unlikely that the same person who lost this thing would find it; as a consequence, it will not be considered theft if I take it". Having made this observation, he put the crest in his pocket.

In *England* he was presented to the King and the Royal Family. He recounts that the King speaks very quickly and that he was not able to understand him; he also noted that among the Princesses, the daughters of the King, there was one who is cross-eyed. In *London* he was taken to theatres, to Vauxhall pleasure garden and so on; however, about all these entertaining places he recounted little to us and it seemed that they did not engage him much.

The Doctor knows a little of the language of their people, and for this reason, the Prince always began to speak with him in his own language. The Doctor told him that none of us understood him, and that he ought to speak in *English*; but because of all our officers only Mr *Rikord* and I knew *English*, the Prince answered the Doctor in his own language: "what is the use of this when those sitting at the table don't know how to speak *Europa*?" By this name, he was meaning the *English* language, which they call the European language.

In the cabin where we were dining under the deck there were panels made of joinery; the boards were so artfully glued that under the paint it seemed that each panel was fashioned from a single board. He quickly noted the unusual width of the boards and asked: where do such thick trees grow? And when we explained that the panels were made from many boards and not just one, then he was quite amazed and with evident distrust sought with his own eyes to convince himself of this.

I showed him a sea chart on which were marked the *Cape of Good Hope*, *New Holland* and *New Zealand*. He immediately traced the route which they should take, pointing to *Port Jackson* and to *Norfolk Island*, to which it would be necessary to go beforehand, and on to the *Bay of Islands*; and when I pointed out to him our route to *Kamchatka* he observed

that *Russia* (doubtless taking *Kamchatka* for the whole of *Russia*), is further from *England* than *New Zealand*; but having heard from us that from *England* to *Russia* it is possible to travel by ship in a week, he asked me: “why are you not travelling there via *England*? It would be nearer.”

We also showed him full-length depictions of the men of *New Zealand*. He said that they were not like that, speaking in his own language: *tego-tego* [*Translator’s note: Māori words transcribed by Golovnin are in Russian Cyrillic; the Translator has provided English transcriptions. Also, the Russian written ending “-go” is typically pronounced as “-vah”*]. He was right about this because these portraits were drawn from inhabitants of another region of this land whom his countrymen never come across; however, on seeing the depiction of the woman who was shown naked, he brought the picture with sudden haste to himself and stared at it fixedly for a long time. Mr Rikord had a flute and a (conch) trumpet of his people, and as soon as they were placed on the table, he eagerly grabbed the former and began to play.

The language of the Homeland of this Prince is abrupt and is composed of short words which are pronounced quickly, but not unpleasant to the ear, and some words are even pleasantly pronounced: for example - *tego* - badly, unlike, unjustly; *eti-eti* - this way that way, little by little; *vai* - water; *puta* - a hole of any sort... According to Mr Makmelin their language is extremely limited, and many things are expressed with just one word: this is a common deficiency of all languages of savage peoples. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the only four-legged animal they knew was a dog, which in their language is called *karatagi*, and so now all animals of this genus brought by Europeans to them are called by the one name, with differentiations as follows: a dog with horns - a bull or a cow; a dog with four ears - a ram or a ewe; a stinking dog - billy goat or nanny goat.

The *English King* conferred on this Prince an order of Chivalry established or better to say, invented, especially for savage sovereigns, and called the Order of Friendship. Its insignia comprise a blue sash and a silver star on which are depicted two golden hands clasping each other. To his father are being sent from the King a rich cap and a cape in the place of a crown and robe. In addition, many various useful gifts are being sent, comprising workshop tools, clothing etc. They are all packed into chests on which is written: *to King Topaga from King George*. His son was also given very generous gifts in *England*.

Some while later, on my arrival in *Kamchatka*, I learnt from American merchants there that *Metarai* had badly repaid the English for their hospitality. He had lured to the shore of his kingdom two English whaling vessels, had captured them and executed all their crew and had taken into captivity the women on board. After some while a third English vessel arrived at the shore. Two of the women captured by *Metarae* (whom he was taking away, expecting the Europeans, into the hinterland of the island) succeeded in escaping captivity, jumped into the sea, swam to the vessel and informed those on it of the fate of their countrymen and about the ruination awaiting them ashore).

Appendix 1B.

Extract from Golovnin, V.M. (1864). *Works and translations. Vol. 1. XXIV.* Saint Petersburg. Navy Ministry Publishing House. [Translated from Russian by Olga Suvorova and Stuart Prior]

During our time at the Cape of Good Hope at the port there was docked a transport vessel which was taking female felons to New Holland. On that same vessel the son of one of the New Zealand sovereigns was travelling back from England to his homeland. This sovereign is a king of the Northern part of New Zealand. His kingdom is called Puna by its inhabitants (on the map it appears to be Rososke), and the Bay of Islands by the English. His name is Topahi [*Translator's note: Te Pahī*]. He is very kind and benevolent towards Europeans, and for this reason the English are trying to do all sorts of good things for him: they have taught him various crafts, provided him with instruments, have built him a house and have made various gifts. His son, of whom we speak here, by name Metarai [*Translator's note: Matara*], had lived by his father's wish for some time for learning among the English in New Holland, from where they had brought him to England on a whaling vessel, and he had spent 12 months in London, and was now returning home.

We wished to make the acquaintance of his Zealand Highness, and to this end we invited him to dine with us, together with a doctor, who was a passenger on this same transport. They spent time with us and we entertained them as best we could, only we did not fire a salute for the prince. The doctor, Mr *Makmelin* [*Translator's note: Macmillan*], is a modest gentleman, courteous and intelligent. The prince is 18 years old, short, stately; shape of face European, colour dark lilac, without any face ornamentation according to the ritual of savage peoples; black hair, straight and rather short; holes in his ears, as our women have for earrings; he is lively and cheerful; he understands almost everything in English ordinary conversation; but he speaks very incorrectly and his pronunciation is even worse; he bows and performs other civilities in the European fashion, similarly dressed; he knows how to drink wine in the English fashion and judging by the amount which he drank without any noticeable effect on him, it seems that he is not a novice in this type of European passing of time; he eats everything put before him, and a lot of it; and he particularly likes sweet things. At table he chatted a lot with us; replying to our questions; he told us that his father has 15 wives, many children, he does not know how many; and with him from the same mother there are 3 sons and 2 daughters. The doctor recounted that his mother was herself of sovereign rank. Topahi had conquered her land and had married her, and Metarai himself already has two wives to whom he is very attached. His father, when he was setting off, gave him detailed instructions as to what to study among Europeans, and what to try to adopt from them. He demonstrated to us great natural talents; many of his observations did not demonstrate that he was a savage from New Zealand without any education. Here are some anecdotes about prince Metarae.

As he was strolling on the shore with Mr Rikord he found a copper crest from a soldier's pouch. The glitter of the object had caught his attention. Having picked it up he said to Mr Rikord: "It is unlikely that the same person who lost this thing would find it; as a

consequence, it will not be considered theft if I take it". Having made this observation, he put the crest in his pocket.

In England he was presented to the king and the royal family. He recounts that the king speaks very quickly and that he was not able to understand him; he also noted that among the princesses, the daughters of the king, there was one who is cross-eyed. In London he was taken to theatres, to Vauxhall pleasure garden and so on; however, about all these entertaining places he recounted little to us and it seemed that they did not engage him much.

The doctor knows a little of the language of their people, and for this reason, the prince always began to speak with him in his own language. Once the doctor told him that none of us understood him, and that he ought to speak in English; but because some of our officers did not speak English, the prince answered the doctor in his own language: what is the purpose of doing this when those sitting at the table don't know how to speak Europa. By this name, he was meaning the English language, which they call the European language.

In the mess-room where we were dining under the deck there were panels made of joinery; the boards were so artfully glued that under the paint it seemed that each panel was fashioned from a single board. He quickly noted the unusual width of the boards and asked: where do such thick trees grow? And when we explained that the panels were made from many boards and not just one, then he was quite amazed and with evident distrust sought with his own eyes to convince himself of this.

I showed him a sea chart on which were marked the Cape of Good Hope, New Holland and New Zealand. He immediately traced the route which they should take, pointing to Port Jackson and to Norfolk Island, to which it would be necessary to go beforehand, and on to the Bay of Islands; and when I pointed out to him our route to Kamchatka he observed that Russia (doubtless taking Kamchatka for the whole of Russia), is further from England than New Zealand; but having heard from us that from England to Russia it is possible to travel by ship in a week, he asked me: "why are you not travelling there via England? It would be nearer."

We also showed him full-length depictions of a man and a woman of New Zealand. He said that they were not like that, speaking in his own language: *tego-tego* [Translator's note: Māori words transcribed by Golovnin are in Russian Cyrillic; the Translator has provided English transcriptions. Also, the Russian written ending "-go" is typically pronounced as "-vah"]. He was right about this because these portraits were drawn from inhabitants of another region of this land whom his countrymen never come across; however, on seeing the depiction of the woman who was shown naked, he brought the picture with sudden haste to himself and staring at it fixedly for a long time, made several lascivious gestures. Mr Rikord had a flute and a (conch) trumpet of his people, and as soon as they were placed on the table, he eagerly grabbed the former and began to play.

The language of the homeland of this prince is quick, short and abrupt, but not unpleasant to the ear, and some words are even pleasantly pronounced: for example - *tega* - badly,

unlike, unjustly; *eti-eti* - this way that way, little by little; *vai* - water; *puta* - a hole of any sort... According to Mr Makmelin their language is extremely limited, and many things are expressed with just one word: this is a common deficiency of all languages of savage peoples. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the only four-legged animal they knew was a dog, which in their language is called *karatagi*, and so now all animals of this genus brought by Europeans to them are called by the one name, with differentiations as follows: a dog with horns - a bull or a cow; a dog with four ears - a ram or a ewe; a stinking dog - billy goat or nanny goat.

The English king conferred on this prince an order of Chivalry established or better to say, invented, especially for savage sovereigns, and called *the Order of Friendship*. Its insignia comprise a blue sash and a silver star on which are depicted two golden hands clasping each other. To his father are being sent from the king a rich cap and a cape in the place of a crown and robe. In addition, many various useful gifts are being sent, comprising workshop tools, clothing etc. They are all packed into chests on which is written: to king Topagha from king George. His son was also given very generous gifts in England (*).

(*) Not long ago I found out that this savage had assiduously repaid the friendship of the English government. He had by subterfuge taken over two whaling vessels owned by that nation and had killed all the Englishmen on them, leaving only two or three women alive who saved themselves by a daring flight by swimming across to an English vessel which sailed to this very place a little while later. A similar fate was being prepared for this vessel; but the women saved it. It is said that the English Government has dispatched an expedition to punish the treachery of this ungrateful villain.

Appendix 2.

Extract from Unkovsky, S. (2004). *Zapiski moryaka 1803–1819* [Notes of a Sailor, 1803-1819. Original manuscript of memoirs by naval officer Semyon Yakovlevich Unkovsky]. Moscow: The Sabashnikovs Publishing House. [Translated from Russian by Olga Suvorova and Stuart Prior]

1814. August.

18th. In the morning Mr Johnson courteously offered us horses to travel outside the town and promised to escort us himself. At 3 o'clock after lunch, the horses were ready. Mr Shveykovsky and I accompanied by Mr Johnson set off on horseback. We intended to spend some time in the small town of Parramatta which is 16 miles from the town of Sydney and that's why we took this road. Everywhere there were the prettiest cottages of the citizens of New Holland and everywhere hard-working country folk were working their fields and clearing forests for cultivating new ones, meadows filled with cattle of all sorts at pasture. The road to Parramatta is laid straight, without bends, well cleared, ten or 12 sazhen wide [*Translator's note: sazhen - old Russian unit of length equal to approx. 7 feet*], on both sides there is a well-grown but thin forest suitable for all types of

buildings. At 4.30 we arrived in Parramatta (which) for its attractive location can be called an earthly paradise. It stands on a river of the same name which runs into Sydney Harbour. The houses are mostly small but built to plan and with taste. Flat areas, everywhere showing green, surround this beautiful spot. Here there is a Mansion for the Governor, a house for bringing up orphans and a house of correction for women - a building particularly notable because of its size.

We stopped at an inn quite exhausted after our unaccustomed travel on horseback. Therefore, today we decided not to leave our peaceful quarters and decided, after a good supper, to set aside our curiosity until the (next) morning. But very soon a man arrived from Mr Marsden, the pastor of this small settlement and the senior chaplain of all the villages surrounding Port Jackson. We paid a visit to the reverend father. Mr Johnson is well known to him, he recommended us and we were received with particular courtesy. Mr Marsden, a gentleman of about 45 years, has a wife and eight daughters. He is the head of the Mission which was sent to the Society Islands to preach the Christian faith. He told us that on these islands many inhabitants have turned to Christianity and that services are conducted in the islanders' native language. He himself intends for this purpose to travel to New Zealand, for which reason have been invited two kings from New Zealand and 12 persons from the families of the kings. All these New Zealanders were in Mr Marsden's home and it was evident that they had great trust in this honourable gentleman.

One of the kings spoke a little English and Mr Marsden, knowing their language in part, was able easily to express himself with these savages. Shortly after the New Zealand kings began to dance, demonstrating when they enter into a battle and how they celebrate after victory. In their dance we did not notice at all the grimacings and any other nasty body gestures as is generally the case with savages, but they only turned in a line to one or the other side, beating time with one foot and clapping their hands, while singing a dance song which had quite a pleasant sound. All the New Zealanders whom we had the chance to see were of sturdy build, dark complexion, and some were quite black, the kings and all their family have various patterns or tattoos incised on their faces and part of their bodies. It is said that they are brave and that during battles they eat their foes. Many of them showed us their wounds received in battles and took a great deal of pride in this.

Mr Marsden explained to the King that we were Russians and that we were in a great alliance with England. He asked what Russia was rich in, and when we explained that we had much iron, he asked that it be brought to him and in return he would give pigs and timber. Later he said that he was particularly fond of the English King and the Russian Emperor above others and that King Korokora (as this King was called), Emperor Alexander and King George were better than all monarchs. He suggested that we went to New Zealand, and he would furnish us with everything we needed. We thanked His Highness and regretted that we were not able to visit his islands. In answer to our question as to whether he had eaten human beings he, not the least put out, replied that he had never eaten human flesh.

At midnight we said farewell to Mr Marsden, expressing our gratitude and returned to our inn where soft beds had been prepared and, having wished each other good night, went to sleep.

The following day in the morning we had a stroll around this beautiful place. Mr Marsden has been planning out a new village which is to be built on the other side of the river, for which he has given his instructions, and honoured us with his company on our stroll. At 2 o'clock we took our leave of this honoured pastor, had lunch at our inn and returned to Sydney, where we arrived not earlier than 6 o'clock, thanking our kind guide for taking us on such a pleasant outing and we returned to our vessel.

20th. On this day we were invited to dine with the Governor where we spent the evening quite cheerfully.