

Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions

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Emotion, Ritual and Power in Europe, 1200–1920

Family, State and Church

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ISBN 978-3-319-44184-9 ISBN 978-3-319-44185-6 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-44185-6

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016956409

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Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

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Shipwrecks, Sorrow, Shame and the Great Southland: The Use of Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Dutch East India Company Communicative Ritual

Susan Broomhall

This chapter explores the use of emotions within Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or VOC) documentation, from instructions and ship's logs, to letters and petitions, daily registers and summative reports among personnel in VOC outposts, as well as to the central board of directors in Amsterdam, as a ritual practice that functioned to reinforce power dynamics, resolve conflict and suggest inclusion and integration. It analyses this practice in relation to documentation

Research for this chapter was funded by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, 1100–1800 (project number CE110001011). I am grateful to Jacqueline Van Gent, Lesley Silvester, the editors and anonymous reviewers for their comments on earlier versions of this work.

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regarding interactions with the largely unknown lands south of the VOC's Batavia settlement (modern-day Jakarta), primarily produced in its first 50 years of operation.

At least two VOC ships are known to have been wrecked on the treacherous western coast of Australia during the seventeenth century, in addition to several documented near-misses: the *Batavia* struck Morning Reef near Beacon Island in 1629 and the *Vergulde Draeck* was wrecked about 100 km to the north of present-day Perth in 1656. In the following century, such disasters continued, with the *Zuytdorp* destroyed on the remote coast between Kalbarri and Shark Bay in 1712, and the *Zeewijk* wrecked upon Half Moon Reef in the Houtman Abrolhos islands in 1727. Here I explore the uses of particular affective language and descriptions of emotional states as they were employed by varied VOC officials in situations of distressing challenge. How did the VOC's communicative rituals operate in these contexts of unexpected crises?

The VOC began in 1602 and grew quickly into a powerful entity.¹ Its archive is extensive and includes all manner of documentation. These communicative forms had many purposes, not least the passing of Company information back and forth between the Dutch Republic and the VOC's global outposts. As such, the remaining records have primarily been studied for what they suggest of VOC actions, an approach that has foregrounded economic and political activities. However, they are now increasingly being examined for what they embedded and conveyed socially and culturally.² As Eric Ketelaar has argued, the:

VOC is a perfect example of what [Bruno] Latour has described as 'centres of calculation'. Such a centre conditions and controls events, places and people from a distance ... This is done by what Latour reverentially calls *gratte papiers* (paper shufflers), who create and manage records in a way that allows mobility, stability and versatility of events, places and people, linking various centres of calculation.³

Moreover, as this chapter demonstrates, VOC texts often expressed emotions, presented varied moods and tone, and acted holistically as an affective object. As such, I argue that VOC documentation served practical goals, communicating news and information across its global network, but also provided an outlet for articulating Company ideals, hierarchies and experiences through a communicative ritual that utilised emotional expression to create cohesion, reinforce hierarchies, control the unfamiliar and manage challenges.

THE USE OF EMOTIONS IN THE VOC'S TEXTUAL PRACTICE

The VOC performed rituals that worked to project a sense of inclusion and provided a framework for appropriate interpersonal behaviours in a wide range of situations. At least some of the VOC's rituals of integration occurred through its ritualised textual practice. These were communicative rituals that connoted hierarchy and power, and functioned to orient its men towards positive achievement for the Company. This chapter focuses on documentation that was designed for internal consumption rather than the VOC's external stakeholders, although the latter readership could not be ignored in fashioning the narrative of the Company in its written records at all levels. The VOC textual practice reflects the conventional criteria for rituals in that it contained elements of repetition in the documentation's form, content and performance; it was not spontaneous, but rather an expected duty; it was a communicative act conducted by members of the Company in specific positions of the hierarchy; it was highly organised and performed even in situations of stress and disruption; it was aimed at collective consumption by those in the Company; and finally—the matter that is the focus of this chapter— it employed an 'evocative presentation to draw and hold attention', in this case a particular form of affective rhetoric.⁴

I argue that this communicative ritual within VOC documentation used emotions as a key tool (see also Chap. 4). While recent studies such as that of Axel Michaels and Christoph Wulf provide important new attention to the power of ritual *as* emotional experiences, here my focus is on affective expression as a tool of a particular communicative ritual.⁵ At one level, the use of emotional language was a staged performance, creating the sense of a human touch and bond between its men, which functioned as part of a ritual of inclusion by reaffirming corporate principles. It combined a rite of renewal in which 'symbolic actions ... are periodically staged to reassert the dominance of certain organizational values' with a rite of integration that 'works to establish an emotional unity or community bond'.⁶ As Islam and Zyphur have suggested in relation to modern organisational culture, public 'ceremonial displays of shared affects, values, or attitudes will reinforce and increase the strength of these affects, values, or attitudes and will also increase the collective perception that these attributes are shared'.⁷ In VOC documentation, emotional expression presented the Company's commercial, religious and cultural ideologies, and framed appropriate and expected behaviours of its members. Its authors were generally

European men, distributed globally on VOC business, linked via its administration and participating in an emotional community that was reflected and practised through their particular regimes of affective expression.⁸

These expressive techniques linked a diverse cohort of individuals to a set of shared goals from which they could all benefit (namely, to achieve profit and to advance the Dutch nation and Protestant Christianity). The communicative rituals involved everyone from the Directors in Amsterdam, regional Governors-General and their Councils to ship captains. The VOC was comprised of many individuals, German, French and English as well as Dutch, who were mainly but not always united by their Protestant confession. Other members were those born in VOC settlements.⁹ The creolisation of VOC men, in sexual and marital practices as well as their personal affiliations and mentalities through their interactions with local communities, was a constant threat to the focus on Company objectives, one that documentation as well as practices such as postings between VOC settlements may have helped to limit.¹⁰ The VOC's communicative ritual therefore operated to unify a disparate group of men and provide organisational stability across a wide geographical sphere of operation.

Scholars of the period have tended to argue that Calvinists were generally reserved in their expression of sentiment.¹¹ What has been observed in the VOC archive is the strong sense of 'Dutch righteousness' about the Company's trade endeavours and sense of mission, particularly as reformed doctrine informed the governance of settlements that the Company established.¹² Ships' logs regularly commenced with 'Praise God' or 'In the name of God'. In addition, quasi-familial expressions of health and prosperity for more senior figures in the VOC were common. These articulations of aspiration and concern were important to the Company's identity and culture. Jan Carstenzoon, who had navigated the region on the northern Australian coast in 1623 in the *Pera*, concluded his journal to be presented to his superiors thus:

... hereby bringing the voyage to a safe conclusion (by the mercy and safe-keeping of the Lord) may He vouchsafe to grant prosperity and success in all their good undertakings to the High Mightinesses the States-General, to his Excellency the Prince of Orange etc., to the Lords Managers of the United East India Company and to the Worshipful Lord General and his Governors.¹³

These globally circulating documents aimed to establish and reinforce individuals' affective connection to *patria* (the word used by the Company

to refer to the Dutch ‘fatherland’) and the VOC. Documentation was frequently framed by salutations and valedictions containing both religious and familial statements, reiterating Company ideals in each missive. When, in 1636, Governor-General Antonie van Diemen and Councillors Philip Lucasz, Artus Gysels and Jan van der Burch issued instructions from Batavia for Commander Gerrit Thomasz Pool and the skippers of the yachts *Cleen Amsterdam* and *Wesel* who were to undertake further discovery of the South Lands, their instructions ended with an expression of paternal care as well as a reinforcement of the Company’s commercial, patriotic and religious interests:

In conclusion, we wish you all the blessing of the Lord, a prosperous voyage and safe return, hoping at the same time that this voyage may redound to the advantage of the Company, to the glory of our country, and to your especial honour. Amen.¹⁴

These communicative rituals, employing quasi-domestic affective rhetoric, offered a sense of a shared almost-familial culture for this mercantile network.¹⁵

In addition, and importantly, the employment of affective rhetoric in particular ways within the VOC’s communicative ritual managed conflicts and tensions inside the Company. It provided an outlet for alternative views to be voiced and unexpected or difficult experiences to be narrated, without generally destabilising the VOC’s corporate culture. Indeed, it was not only what emotions were expressed but also who articulated them that reinforced the Company’s mode of operation. The VOC had a distinct internal structure, which reflected the distribution of power within it. This flowed from the oversight of the Prince of Orange and the States General, to the practical powerbase of the Directors, through the regionally-based Governors-General and their Councillors to individual vessels’ captains and crew. These positions were marked not only by clear demarcations of activities and authority but also by distinctions in emotional expression and affective labour for the Company.

Individuals could adopt multiple roles in this communicative ritual. While Governors-General and Councillors, for example, might adopt the paternal affective language in their instructions to skippers, it was with the respectful rhetoric of the inferior that they justified local decision-making to the Directors in Amsterdam. In January 1649, for example, Governor-General Cornelis van der Lijn and the Councillors of the Indies François

Caron, Carel Reniers, Jochum van Dutecum and Gerard Demmer, wrote to the Directors to announce that their 1648 resolution to send the yacht *den Leeuwerik* to attempt to navigate the Sunda Strait had been successful and would be of great advantage to the Company. In the polite but nevertheless positioning conventions of the respectful inferior, ‘Your Worships’ faithful servants’ encouraged the Directors to see the merits of the endeavour by sending on the skipper’s records of discovery and evidence of praiseworthy accomplishment: ‘How this voyage was undertaken and successfully accomplished as far as Banda in the space of two months and 20 days, your Worships may be pleased to gather from the annexed daily journal and chart of Skipper Jan Jansz Zeeuw’.¹⁶ These might have seemed formulaic statements, but their expected inclusion evoked commitment to each other as a group with a shared purpose, and their absence would have been highly disrespectful and shocking to recipients. Moreover, this example highlights the wide potential circulation of textual content as it was reproduced in the annual reports of Governors-General or simply included for perusal by others in the Company, including the Directors in Amsterdam. VOC documents were carefully composed as they could have unanticipated readers and could even be used in unexpected ways by Company officials to achieve emotional effect, as will be explored below.

Affective expression reflected and reinforced the hierarchy, signalled power, attempted to control disruptive behaviours and reorient these protagonists towards Company goals. My focus here is not upon instances of disruptive or subversive emotions bursting through the conventions to unsettle, achieve power or change hierarchy (for an example, see Chap. 4). This was rather emotional language used as part of the convention and tool of this textual practice, as demonstrated through a case study of a period in which the VOC was challenged by its experiences in the South Lands and employed communicative rituals to manage distressing incidents of shipwreck upon the Australian coast.

BATAVIA: EXPLAINING THE UNEXPECTED

When the *Batavia* struck Morning Reef near Beacon Island in June 1629, some 40 aboard drowned. Commander François Pelsaert, in his ‘Sad daily notes on the loss of our ship’ composed with an eye to the justification of his actions to the Governor-General and Councillors at Batavia, recorded the immediate evacuation of the vessel to the land amid ‘great wailing that there was from the ship, by women, children, sick and anxious people’.¹⁷

Pelsaert drew his readers into what he claimed to be a shared affective experience, as he realised the complete destruction of the ship was inevitable: 'How great a grief it was to me all reasonable people can imagine'.¹⁸ In his own dramatic turn of phrase, he demonstrated his deep unwillingness to leave more than 200 survivors of the vessel upon the islands off the inhospitable west coast, for 'to leave such a large group of fine people and the goods of the Company, I would be responsible before God and my High Authorities at Batavia'.¹⁹ Yet, although he felt 'it was better and more honest to die with them than to stay alive with deep grief of heart if we did not find [water]',²⁰ on 5 June, it was determined that a small party, including Pelsaert, should search out the nearby islands or mainland for fresh water and, if none were found, they should sail on to Batavia to announce 'our sad unheard of, disastrous happening'.²¹

Pelsaert, ever mindful of how this decision would be interpreted by his superiors, had a resolution drawn up noting the group's determination; indeed, he insisted that he was only 'resolved after long debating'.²² This was then read to the survivors, copied and signed into his journal 'as appears out of the resolution'.²³ The resolution itself was no less emotionally charged: explaining once again the desperate need that forced the small group to proceed to Batavia to announce their 'sad disaster' and 'do our very best and our duty to help our poor fellow brothers in their most urgent need'.²⁴ The document added that 'if we did otherwise we could not answer before God and our high authorities'.²⁵ When he located Dutch ships as they neared the VOC settlement in Batavia, Pelsaert made straight for Crijn van Raemborch, Councillor of the Indies, 'where I had to tell his Hon. with heart's grief of our sad disaster. He showed me much friendship'.²⁶ Pelsaert's history was filled with explicit affective language, of his sorrow and grief, at events that he implied were unexpected and harrowing for him. He also importantly signalled to his prospective reading audience the sympathetic reception he had received from his superior Raemborch and that he also hoped to receive from them.

Pelsaert's finessing of events was no doubt in anticipation of a frosty reception at Batavia. Emotions ran high at the news of the loss. Governor-General Jan Pieterszoon Coen's shock and anger at Pelsaert's abandonment of his crew was palpably expressed in the orders he delivered: Pelsaert was ordered to proceed 'most hastily to the place where you lost the ship and left the people'.²⁷ Pelsaert was sent back immediately in the *Sardam* to recover the '250 souls, men, women, and children, on islands or cliffs located about 8 to 10 leagues from the mainland, left in

utmost misery to perish of thirst and hunger'.²⁸ He was not to stop looking until he had exhausted all possibilities:

in case you do not discover any of our people near the wrecked ship or on the little islands nearby, which we hope will not be so, you should find out whether some have gone to the mainland and try to discover the place, searching for the people as much as possible and as you are able.²⁹

Pelsaert had dishonoured the reputation of the VOC by his actions, with Senior Councillor Antonie van Diemen describing the ship and its people as 'shamefully left' by Pelsaert in his regional report to the Directors in 1631.³⁰

The *Batavia* incident exposed divergent emotional expressions within the correspondence of the VOC regional hierarchy. Pelsaert expressed his sorrow, grief and sense of loss, and his sense of powerlessness amid the hostile environment he encountered off the coast. Leaving the stranded survivors was an action he had been persuaded to take only with extreme reluctance, he argued, and with the apparent support of his crew. However, senior officials at Batavia openly articulated to Pelsaert a sense of disbelief, and perhaps anger, at his actions. They made plain to him the horrifying prospects to which he had left the survivors who remained ashore (an imagined fate, however, that was exceeded by the grim reality of widespread rape and massacre that left at least 110 survivors dead, which Pelsaert was to discover and document in the continuation of his journal as he investigated and punished the ringleaders of the violence). Meanwhile, to their own superiors, the same men emphasised the shame that Pelsaert had brought on the Company. Not only did these rituals of voicing distinct emotional expression reflect these men's positions in the VOC hierarchy, but unexpected actions could be explained through them as well. These journals, letters and orders between the men sought to manage this surprising abandonment of a ship by its captain and the subsequent criminal violence that ensued, applying communicative rituals in which unexpected actions that were inconsistent with the practice of a good captain could be articulated through particular emotional language. The rituals of the production of Company paperwork functioned to signal disapproval of disruptive and unbecoming behaviour and to assert the power of superior officials over an underperforming inferior, but also to re-establish Company order by providing a means to control, both emotionally and practically, the unexpected events that had arisen (see also the discussion in Chap. 6).

VERGULDE DRAECK: SPURRING TO ACTION

Further shipwreck incidents exacerbated the VOC's concerns about the inhospitality of the western Australian coast. When the *Vergulde Draeck* was likewise wrecked there in 1656, a group of its crew sailed north to Batavia in search of assistance for the 68 remaining survivors whom they had left behind ashore. As they explained to the Directors in Amsterdam, the Governor-General Joan Maetsuyker and Councillors Carel Hartzinck, Joan Cunaeus, Nicholaes Verburch, and Dirck Hansz Steur at Batavia met on 7 June 1656, just one day after the *schuyt* of the *Draeck* had arrived, bringing the news of the shipwreck 'to our great sorrow'.³¹ Over the next year, they sent three further ships, with a loss of further men, to seek out the 'poor affected people' who 'hopefully are alive and can sustain themselves for several more months yet'.³²

In their instructions to the searching crews, the Governor-General and Councillors at Batavia expressed dark fears 'that they have perished through hunger and misery or have been beaten to death by savage inhabitants and murdered'. They also emphasised their feelings of responsibility to send yet more searches 'so as not to fail in any duty that could be demanded of us in searching for these poor souls in case they should be alive, or some of them'.³³ At the same time, the Council wrote to the governor of the VOC colony at the Cape, Jan van Riebeeck, asking him to direct ships heading to Batavia to scan the coast for signs of the *Draeck*. The daily register there recorded their request that galiots and light ships be sent, in simple terms 'in order to see whether there are either people or Compagnie goods to be salvaged',³⁴ but van Riebeeck made note in his daily register of a letter from Batavia that articulated in far more emotive terms the Council's request that ships seek out the '79 surviving people left behind, desolate and in need of all comfort and help'.³⁵ As a result, the *Vincq*, for example, was ordered by van Riebeeck to look out for *Draeck* people 'still miserably left behind who have not been found'.³⁶ To the captain of the *Vincq*, van Riebeeck used a similar pathos to that which had infused the instructions to captains from the Council in Batavia: 'you will keep a watch for any signs of fires or such from those poor, miserable people ... in order to release them from their misery, and to bring them back to Batavia'.³⁷ Van Riebeeck's daily register recorded these same instructions to take the people and Company goods that they located to Batavia in far less emotional terms.³⁸ In looking across a range of records, it is possible to see how the VOC communicative rituals employed affective

language precisely in specific documentary forms for heightened effect in order to instil and incite positive behaviours for the Company.

Moreover, in case the skipper remained unmoved by his elaboration of the distressing situation, van Riebeeck included both the resolutions of the Governor-General and the Council in Batavia, showing their determination to save the survivors, and the letters written from the stranded survivors upon the coast that had been carried on by those who sailed for help back to Batavia, and then sent on to him from Batavia:

And so that you will realize the intentions and seriousness of the Honourable Gentleman, Governor-General and Councillors of the Indies in the search and release of these miserable people, we provide you with an extract from the missive they sent us with the copies of their resolution to this intent of June 7 last. Also, the letters sent by the lost people to the aforementioned Honourables with the little schuyt and forwarded to us with that missive (you can read that on your way to realize the better their Honourables' order and seriousness).³⁹

These letters from the stranded passengers of the *Vergulde Draeck* became powerful emotional objects, representing the very people whose lives hung in the balance on the ability of the *Vincq* to locate them. Van Riebeeck's inclusion of these letters was calculated for maximum affective impact.

The death of 11 crew from the *Goede Hoop*, which faced heavy winter storms as it sought evidence of survivors on the coast, was a further disaster. The Council justified why its vessels had 'returned empty-handed' to the Directors by sketching a picture of the 'violent storms', 'bad weather and hollow sea' that the rescuers had faced on the inhospitable coastline.⁴⁰ It submitted the journals made of these voyages as a measure of their due diligence (and which also included charts of the hitherto-uncharted coastline). The failure of the *Vincq* in 1657 also to locate survivors was similarly recorded by the Council at Batavia in its daily register as a result of treacherous weather that 'became so much worse and the breakers off the coast so violent that it was a fearful sight to behold'.⁴¹ Two further ships sent from Batavia in 1658—the *Emeloord* and the *Waekende Boei*—also returned 'without, however, discovering any Netherlanders or any traces of the wreck', except a number of planks and other artefacts.⁴² The *Waekende Boei* crew had located all manner of beams, buckets, boxes and flotsam from what they thought was likely the vessel, including—unusually—a series of planks placed upright

in a circle.⁴³ Neither ship, though, located survivors. On the *Emeloord's* return, the Governor-General and the Council made particular note to the Directors that the crew had indeed seen '5 black people of an unusually great stature', a more restrained hint of their suppositions about the fate of the *Draeck's* survivors.⁴⁴

While much of the terminology in the documentation for and about the recovery missions was similar throughout the VOC network, suggesting a common routine of transcription and modelling from texts received, there were however subtle differences in the affective rhetoric employed across the Company hierarchy. To the captains of the rerouted vessels, senior officials emphasised the helplessness of poor, stranded survivors, at risk from an unknown and fearful environment, and dependent on the Company's assistance. These emotive descriptions were designed to inspire careful searching by the crews that they sent to the area. To their superiors, the Directors in Amsterdam, these same men demonstrated their earnest attempts to locate the crew and goods of the *Draeck* and placed blame for repeated failures on the extreme and unusual weather conditions of the coast, making it an exceptional force to be reckoned with, described in awesome and fearful terms. It was a reality the Directors were in the end forced to accept, responding in August 1660: 'Now that all missions have been fruitless, we will have to give up, to our distress, the people of the *Draeck*, who had found refuge on the Southland.'⁴⁵ The Company ultimately resigned itself to God's will. The communicative rituals surrounding this event employed varied affective language both to emphasise and to inspire the expected duties and attendant actions of men in different positions in the Company hierarchy.

WAEKENDE BOEI: REITERATING THE CORPORATE MISSION

As the *Waekende Boei* surveyed the coast off present-day Perth in early 1658, its skipper Samuel Volckertszoon sent ashore a crew of some 14 led by upper steersman Abraham Leeman to look more closely for survivors. When Volckertszoon left the crew in bad weather and did not return, Leeman was forced to sail the crew's small open boat to Batavia, a journey which saw the crew reduced to just four survivors. Within Leeman's account of his experiences unfolded a remarkable tale of survival against the odds, in which his religious beliefs became key to how he and his crew dealt with their fate.⁴⁶ It was moreover a deeply affective account, charting the highs and lows as they battled their emotions as much as the elements.

Leeman's account is particularly important here because of its explicit recognition of the importance of adopting specific emotional expression as the superior among the men ashore. Leeman's journal articulated his sense of responsibility to lead his crew and to show them, by his own careful control of the feelings that he displayed to them, how they should act as a group:

I was very sad, not knowing where to turn, for from the crew I could get neither action nor help, but they looked to me. If I told them anything, they were content with it; if I asked them anything they said they would do whatever I told them, so that the cares were all mine. I prayed to God in my heart for help and guidance.⁴⁷

Leeman's text provides us with an opportunity to see how one man's experience of sudden ascension to leadership brought with it difficult expectations to subordinate his personal feelings. Significantly, Leeman allowed himself to express these same emotions in the paperwork designed to be read by his superiors in Batavia. In practice, he attempted to hide the emotions that so permeated his journal, and his written record became an opportunity to position his behaviour and articulate feelings that he claimed he had worked so hard to repress in front of the men he led. By displaying his concerns, fears and heartache in his textual practice, Leeman performed as a subordinate who had not yet formally earned the status of a Company captain, making clear that he was not claiming authority to which he was not entitled. He thus allayed any potential concerns of his superiors about his potentially problematic, albeit short-lived, assumption of a superior role. Here, the emotions expressed via the rituals of VOC administration carefully articulated Leeman's subordinate status and power to more senior men in the Company.

Leeman's evidence revealed the use of prayer as a ritualised activity in times of stress. He recorded the deep sense of despair that pervaded the group, but also recognised the importance of divine assistance in bearing their trials. Significantly, the account he made for his superiors of his emotional state informed an understanding of his power within the Company. At times, he wrote, 'I was very downcast and tortured myself as if I were out of my senses, often wishing for death out of despair, but consoled ourselves sometimes ... and prayed to God for better sense, if He pleased, for this cannot be done without His will'.⁴⁸ Thus, he attributed his strength to lead his men as not from himself, but from his faith, one that was

ostensibly shared by all in the Company and regularly reiterated across its documentation:

I was very sad for I could not consult with anybody save God alone; I went up the mountain, fell on my knees and prayed to God for succour. Having come down again I made them pray together and admonished them to keep God before their eyes, for we were in great peril and God was the right helmsman who could lead us back, so that some were moved and wept.⁴⁹

Leeman legitimated his leadership under divine guidance by contrasting the succour he drew from God with the grief and weakness he felt personally in their situation.

Leeman subtly utilised the Company's practice of emotions in its texts to reassure his superiors of his acknowledged subordinated status, despite his unexpected exercise of authority in a moment of need. He employed the Company's communicative ritual to reflect cycles of despair, faith in the Lord and, ultimately, to demonstrate God's grace through his survival. This allowed for a traumatic event to be articulated, remembered and then reintegrated as a positive achievement for the VOC, and became an important reiteration—given repeated disastrous experiences off the Australian continental coast at that time—of the Company's belief in its God-given mission.

CONCLUSION

The VOC's experiences with the South Lands were communicated, understood and experienced through specific communicative rituals in its textual practice. A wide range of different types of documents were produced by men in different positions of authority. These textual forms had distinct purposes that were reflected in, and created through, their varied affective language. Emotions—anger, grief, fear, sorrow—were an important aspect of the performative practice of VOC communicative rituals. Their expression reflected and reinforced the Company's internal hierarchy of power, influencing who could feel what and when within its documentation. Officials at senior levels portrayed paternal emotions, reflecting their superior status, to show their care and concern, as well as anger and dismay, about those they supervised within the wider VOC community. These were affective positions adopted by the central Directors as well as Governors and Councillors in Batavia and the Cape settlements. Fear,

terror, sadness and grief were generally articulations of subordinate men in the hierarchy, usually expressed by skippers and their crews, although they might also be employed by senior officials as acceptance of God's will when no other option for action appeared possible. For all, these expressions were negotiated emotional states that were designed to make sense of actions and justify them to those above and below them.

As the example of early Australian experiences suggests, VOC textual practices also provided a space in which one could work through difficult experiences in rituals that foregrounded emotional expression as a tool for collective reflection of their purposes and reintegration of men after distressing events. These communicative performances attempted to promote a positive, inclusive and righteous Company identity with which members could associate. In doing so, the VOC archive created a shared language, expectations, interpretation and, ultimately, even a collective emotional engagement with the Company and the region itself.

NOTES

1. Femme S. Gaastra provides a comprehensive but accessible analysis in *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003).
2. On the foundations and structure of the VOC archives, see J.C.M. Pennings, 'Origin and Administration of the VOC Archives', http://www.gahetna.nl/sites/default/files/afbeeldingen/toegangen/NL-HaNA_1.04.02_introduction-VOC.pdf (accessed 13 October 2016). See also Adrien Delmas, 'The Role of Writing in the First Steps of the Colony: A Short Enquiry in the Journal of Jan van Riebeeck, 1652–1662', in *Contingent Lives: Social Identity and Material Culture in the VOC World*, ed. Nigel Worden (Cape Town: Royal Netherlands Embassy, 2007), 500–11; Eric Ketelaar, 'Archives as Spaces of Memory', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 29 (2008): 9–27; Eric Ketelaar, 'Exploration of the Archived World: From De Vlamingh's Plate to Digital Realities', *Archives and Manuscripts* 36(2) (2008): 13–33; Adrien Delmas, 'From Travelling to History: An Outline of the VOC Writing System during the 17th Century', trans. Christine Bull, in *Written Culture in a Colonial Context: Africa and the Americas 1500–1900*, ed. Delmas and Nigel Penn (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2011), 95–122; Siegfried Huigen, Jan L. De Jong and Elmer Kolfin (eds), *The Dutch Trading Companies as Knowledge Networks* (Leiden:

- Brill, 2010); Hedley Twidle, 'Writing the Company: From VOC Dagregister to Sleigh's Eilande', *South African Historical Journal* 65(1) (2013): 125–52. The approach of Ann Laura Stoler in examining colonial records principally of the nineteenth century provides a powerful example of the emotional interpretive possibilities of such official administrative documentation. See Ann L. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).
3. Ketelaar, 'Exploration of the Archived World', 23–4.
 4. Gazi Islam and Michael J. Zyphur, 'Rituals in Organizations: A Review and Expansion of Current Theory', *Group Organization Management* 34(1) (2009): 121, drawing particularly upon the taxonomy devised by Harrison M. Trice and Janice Beyer, *The Cultures of Work Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993).
 5. Axel Michaels and Christoph Wulf (eds), *Emotions in Rituals and Performances* (London: Routledge, 2012).
 6. Islam and Zyphur, 'Rituals in Organizations', 125 and 132.
 7. *Ibid.*, 132.
 8. On theories about styles of affective practices within particular group cohorts, see Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Benno Gammerl, 'Emotional Styles—Concepts and Challenges', *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 16(2) (2012): 161–75.
 9. On religious aspects of VOC identity and practices, see Gerrit J. Schutte (ed.), *Het Indisch Sion: De gereformeerde kerk onder de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002).
 10. Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983); Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500–1920*, trans. Wendie Shaffer (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008).
 11. Costas Gaganakis, 'Stairway to Heaven: Calvinist Grief and Redemption in the French Wars of Religion', *Historiein* 8 (2008): 102–7.
 12. Sinnappah Arasaratnam, 'The Use of Dutch Material for South-East Asian Historical Writing', *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 3(1) (1962): 103–4. See Gerrit J. Schutte, *Het Indisch Sion: de Gereformeerde kerk onder de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002)

13. ‘wesende daermode de vojiage (door de genadige bewaernisse Godts) volbrocht, Die de Ho. Mo. Heeren Staten Generael, Sijn Ext^{ie} Prince van Orange etc. ende de Heeren Generael ende Sijne Gouverneurs, in alle haer goet voornemen, geluck ende heijl believe te verleenen’, in *Het Aandeel der Nederlanders in de Ontdeeking van Australië, 1606–1765*, ed. Jan E. Heeres (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1899), 44. ‘Journael van Jan Carstensz. Op de ghedaene reyse van Nova Guinea’, in *Twee togten naar de Golf van Carpentaria*, ed. L.C.D. van Dijk (Amsterdam: J.H. Scheltema, 1859), 56. Translation by C. Stoffel in Jan E. Heeres (ed.), *The Part Borne by the Dutch in the Discovery of Australia 1606–1765* (London: Luzac, 1899), with additional translations by Elise Reynolds and Marianne Roobol online at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek website: http://www.kb.nl/bladerboek/barrenre-gions/carstens/browse/page_56.html (accessed 13 October 2016).
14. ‘Ende hiermede wenschen Ul. altsamen toe, den segen des Heeren ende een behouden reyse. Mitsgaders dat dese voyagie mach strecken tot dienst der Comp^{ie}, reputatie van ’t Vaderlandt ende Uwe besondere Eere, Amen’, in *Het Aandeel*, 67, trans. Stoffel, *The Part borne*, 67.
15. Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Gelina Harlaftis and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou (eds), *Diaspora Entrepreneurial Networks: Four Centuries of History* (New York: Berg, 2010) includes several essays focusing on early modern examples of trade diasporas.
16. ‘UEd. Trouweschuldige dienaren’, in *Het Aandeel*, 74. ‘Hoe die voyagie ondernomen, ende in 2 maanden en 20 dagen tot Banda geluckigh volbracht sij, gelieven U Ed. uyt het nevensgaende gehouden daghregister en de caerte van den schipper Jan Jansz. Zeeuw te beoogen’, 18 January 1649, in *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. 2, 1639–55, ed. Willem P. Coolhaas (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), 334.
17. ‘Droeviege daghaenteyckeningh’, ‘het groot jammergeschrij datter jnt schip was, door vrouwen, kinderen, ziecken, ende armhertige menschen’, in *Het Aandeel*, 55. Marit van Huystee (ed. and trans.), *The Batavia Journal of Francisco Pelsaert*. Algemeen Rijksarchief [ARA], The Hague, Netherlands: Document 1630: 1098 QQII, fols. 232–316. Western Australian Maritime Museum Report 136 (Fremantle, Western Australian Maritime Museum, 1988), 2. The

- original text has not been entirely transcribed (apart from selections in *Het Aandeel*), but Pelsaert's published account *Ongeluckige Voyagie van 't Schip Batavia, nae Oost-Indien* (Amsterdam: Joost Hartgers, 1648) is a slightly altered, third-person account described as a 'Journael ende Historiche verhael'. On the published life of ship's journals, see Marijke Barend-van Haeften, 'Van scheepsjournaal tot reisverhaal: een kennismaking met zeventiende-eeuwse reisteksten', *Literatuur* 7 (1990): 222–8.
18. Van Huystee, *Batavia Journal*, 3.
 19. *Ibid.*, 4. The same statement appears in the published version: 'want men 't voor Godt de Bewinthebberen en de Overigheydt op Batavia niet souden konnen verantwoorden sa een schoon volck ende des Compagnies rijche middelen lichtvaerdelijk', *Ongeluckige Voyagie*, 4.
 20. Van Huystee, *Batavia Journal*, 4. A modified version of this is in the published text: 'met haer aldaer by des Compagnies Schip ende goederen/in er eeren te sterven', *Ongeluckige Voyagie*, 5.
 21. 'ons droevigh noijt gehoorde ongelickigh wedervaren', in *Het Aandeel*, 55. Van Huystee, *Batavia Journal*, 4.
 22. 'naar lange biddens dat sy mij beweechden', in *Het Aandeel*, 55. Van Huystee, *Batavia Journal*, 4. 'Soo heeft den Commandeur sijn byhebbent volch dese naervolgende te booren veraemde resolutie voorgelesen daer sy in alle geconsenteert ende die met eeden bevestigst hebben', *Ongeluckige Voyagie*, 6.
 23. 'als bij de resolutie blyckt', in *Het Aandeel*, 55. Van Huystee, *Batavia Journal*, 4.
 24. 'droevig ongeluck'; 'ons uysterste beste ende devoir te doen, om onse arme mede-broeders in haer hoog-dringende noot te helpen', *Ongeluckige Voyagie*, 6.
 25. 'dat wy het anders voor Godt, en onse Hooge Overheden niet souden konnen verantwoorden: des wy eendrachtigh goet gevonden ende geresolveert hebben', *Ongeluckige Voyagie*, 6.
 26. Van Huystee, *Batavia Journal*, 8. 'hem met droefheynt des herten haer droevigh ongeval verhaelde; die hem veel vriendschap bewees', *Ongeluckige Voyagie*, 10.
 27. 'spoedichste moocht arriveeren ter plaetse daer ghyliende 't schip ende 't volck verlaten hebt', 15 July 1629, in H.T. Colenbrander, *Jan Pieterszoon Coen: Bescheiden omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indie*, vol. 5 ('s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1933), 576.

28. 'omtrent de 250 sielen, soo mans, vrouwen als kinderen, op seker eylanden ofte klippen, omtrent 8 a 10 mylen van 't vaste lant gelegen, gelaten in d'uytterste miserie, omme van dorst ende hongersnoot te vergaen', *ibid.*, 576.
29. 'Byaldien geen van ons volck omtrent het verongeluckte schip off op de byleggende eylandekens verneempt, dat niet verhoopen, sult onderstaen oft sich oock ymandt na 't vaste lant begeven heeft, trachtende de plaetse daeromtrent soo na 't ontdekken ende 't volck op te soecken, als immer mogelijcke ende doenelijck sal sijn', *ibid.*
30. 'schip en volck zoo schandelijck heeft verlaten', in Willem Ph. Coolhas, 'Een Indisch Verslag uit 1631, van der hand van Antonio van Diemen', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht* lxx (1947): 202.
31. 'tot onze grote droefheijt', 4 December 1656, in *Het Aandeel*, 75.
32. 'na de geroerde arme menschen te soecken, met hoope, ingevalle alsnoch in't leven sijn, dat se haer voort noch wel ettelijcke maenden sullen sustenteren', 4 December 1656, in *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. 3: 1655–74, ed. Willem P. Coolhaas (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), 85.
33. Translated by Louis Zuiderbaan, in James A. Henderson, *Marooned: The Wreck of the Vergulde Draeck and the Abandonment and Escape from the Southland of Abraham Leeman in 1658* (Perth: St George Books, 1982), 62–3.
34. 'om te sien of er noch eenige menschen often Comp^e waeren sullen te salveren sijn', 28 November 1656, in *Dagh-register gehouden int Casteel Batavia, Anno 1656–1657*, ed. J. de Hullu (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1904), 19.
35. 'als oock noch 79 daer in gansch desolaten staet achtergelaten sijn, makende t'samen 197 sielen, welcke d' Almogende wil troosten, alsoo der, om van menschen geholpen te worden, reede veele moeyten gedaen ende derhalven weynich raedt meer toe wesen sal', 22 February 1657, in Jan van Riebeeck, *Daghregister*, vol. 2: 1656–8, ed. D.B. Bosman and H.B. Thom (Cape Town: A.A. Balkema, 1955), 104; see also 124–6, 333.
36. Jeremy Green, with contributions by Lous Zeiderbaan, Robert Stenuit, S.J. Wilson and Mike Owens, *The Loss of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie Jacht 'Vergulde Draeck', Western Australia*

- 1656, Part I, British Archaeological Reports Supplementary Series 36(i) (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1977), 51.
37. *Ibid.*, 52.
 38. ‘aff te sacken ende alsoo ’t opgemelte vrack ende volcq, mogelijk sijnde, op te soecken ende empassant weder mede op Batavia te brengen, neffens sooveel van de contanten ende andre coopmanschappen als met het minste pryckel mogelijk wesen sal uyt dito vracq noch te becomen’, 22 April 1657, in Riebeeck, *Daghregister*, 124–5.
 39. Green, *The Loss of the Verenigde Oostindische*, 52.
 40. ‘onverrichter sacken te retourneren’, ‘vehemente storm’, ‘onwder ende holle zee’, 4 December 1656, in *Het Aandeel*, 75.
 41. ‘maer ’tweeder begon so hart aen te halen ende de cust langs berendet soo geweldig, dat vervaerlijck om sien was’, 8 July 1657, in *Dagh-register gehouden int Casteel Batavia*, 206.
 42. ‘doch geen Nederlanders nocte oock het wrack van het schip vernomen, dan wel eenige planken, blocken, oock een joffer ende hackebert van een schip’, 14 December 1658, in *Generale Missiven*, 211.
 43. ‘een dicke dwarsbalck, stuck van de eecke huyl, stuck van de verdubbelingh, vaetie, putsen, doften van de boot, stucken van kisten, duygen en andere rommelingh, en notabels was, dat party stucken van plancken, die met de eyden omhoog en in ’t ronde opgeset waeren’, 26 February 1658, in Samuel Volckertszoon’s journal, ARAKA 1115, Overgekomen brieven en papieren 1659, fols. 222v–223, <http://museum.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/No-274-Volkersen-Wackende-Boey-Journal.pdf> (accessed 13 October 2016).
 44. ‘Die van Emeeloort hebben op seeker plaets oock 5 swarte menschen gesien van een ongemeene groote stature’, 14 December 1658, in *Generale Missiven*, 211.
 45. Green, *The Loss of the Verenigde Oostindische*, 60.
 46. KA1115, *Overgekomen brieven en papieren uit Indie gericht aan Heeren XVII en Kamer Amsterdam* 1659, fols. 229–52, <http://museum.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/No-273-Leemans-Journal.pdf> (accessed 13 October 2016). A transcription is available in Samuel Pierre LHonoré Naber (ed.), ‘In een open sloep van Australië naar Java’, *Marineblad* (1910–11): 18–36 and translated by C. de Heer, ‘My Shield and My Faith’, *Westerly* 1 (1963): 33–46.

47. 'Ick seer bedroeft sijnde niet wetende waar ick mij keeren oft wenden soude, want van 't volck geen raat off daet krijgen conde, sij sagen al op mij, seyde ick haer wat, sij waeren daar mede te vreedden, vraechde ick haer iets, seijden 't geen u goed dunckt, sullen wij doen, soo dat de sorgh alleen op mij aan quam. Ick badt Godt in mijn harte, om hulp en raat', 27 March 1658, in KA1115, fol. 236. De Heer, 40.
48. 'ick was somtyds soo bevreest ende quelde mij selven off ick halff sinneloos was, wenschten dikwijls om de doot, van mismoedicheyt, dan troosten ons somwijlen weder, ende baden Godt om beter sinnen, dewijle het hem soo belieffde want sonder sijn wille ins niet geschieden can', 1 May 1658, in KA1115, fols. 247v-248. De Heer, 44.
49. 'Ick was seer bedroeft want met niemant conde te raade gaan, dan met Godt alleen, gingh boven op den bergh, viel op mijn knien, en badt Godt om bijstant, om laegh gecomen zijnde, liet haar gesamentlijck 't gebet doen, ende vermaende haer, dat zij Godt voor oogen wilden houden, ende haer wachten van sonden, want wij in groote noot waeren, ende dat Godt den rechten stuurman was, die ons weder te recht con brengen, soo datter sommige beweeght wierden, tot schreijen', 24 March 1658, in KA1115, fol. 234v. De Heer, 39.