

The concealment of violence?

A closer look at information flows within the VOC



Drawing depicting the Batavian Massacre of 1740.
(Unknown author)

Name: Jeroen Hoogendoorn

MA Thesis Colonial and Global History

Supervisor: Lennart Bes

Date: 19-12-2020

Table of contents

Introduction.....	2
Chapter 1: The information network of the VOC.....	8
1.1 Connecting Europe and Asia.....	8
1.2 Context of the different documents within the archive	10
Chapter 2: The Batavian massacre of October 1740.....	14
2.1 Context of the event.....	14
2.2 A closer look at the sources of the VOC	15
2.2.1. Factorij and kantoor level: The Batavian journals.....	16
2.2.2. Batavia Level: Resolutions of the High Government.....	18
2.2.3. Batavia level: The general missive of 31 October 1740.	19
2.2.4 Patria level: Reception of the event in the Dutch Republic.	21
2.3 Preliminary conclusion	23
Chapter 3: The uprising on Ceylon	25
3.1 Context of the event.....	25
3.2 A closer look at the sources of the VOC	27
3.2.1. Factorij level: letters from Galle and Matara	27
3.2.2. Kantoor level: Reactions from Colombo	29
3.2.3. Batavia level: The general missives of 1761.....	31
3.2.4. Patria level: Reception of the event in the Dutch Republic	32
3.3 Preliminary conclusion	34
Conclusion	36
Bibliography.....	39
Appendix I: Structure of the VOC	42
Appendix II: Overall information flow from Asia to the Dutch Republic.....	43
Appendix III: Shipping routes of the VOC.....	44
Appendix IV: Map of Ceylon	45
Appendix V: Map of South-Ceylon	46

Introduction

As historians we are trained to write a narrative according to the sources we find about a specific event. We try to engage with these sources by asking critical questions about them and comparing them to other perspectives on the event. However, due to the vast number of sources historians use for their research projects, articles or books, the source criticism sometimes remains superficial or limited to some generic comments in the introduction. Therefore, important questions about the sources are not asked and their contents are presumed to be true. Of course, the sources are being compared to other sources from different perspectives, but it is important not to focus solely on what is written in the sources. More attention should be paid to what is missing from them. Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill supposedly once said that 'History is written by the victors', although it was never documented that Churchill actually said these words, he does get the credits for it.¹ Whoever first said the phrase is point of discussion, however the lesson we as historians can learn from it is quite important. As the quote says, quite often the side which won in military campaigns or political intrigues had the power to shape the sources, archives and therefore the narrative of what went down in history. It is therefore quite difficult to retrieve the voices and the perspectives of those who were on the losing side, as these were often suppressed or destroyed by the conquerors. Hence, why we need to look very critical at how we interpretate the sources of the victors.

Especially events in which a lot of violence was used are most often very controversial. The reason why wars or conflicts emerged is disputed, or the course of these events is chaotic or badly documented. During these conflicts there are two or more sides which have their own reasons to use violence against each other. To be able to discuss the description of violence within the VOC archives, the definition of violence needs to be established first. According to the Indian Historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam, the reason for the violent character of the VOC was that they defined themselves as a quasi-state, which was able to make treaties and start wars.² Although they were a trading company, the VOC had extensive rights and perks, which they got from the Dutch Republic to protect their trading activities from the Portuguese and other European competitors. In practice, however, the power, which the VOC had gotten from the Dutch Republic, was used more to violently suppress the indigenous population of Asia, rather than to defend themselves against European opposition. The use of violence, or even the potential of using it, as means of suppressing indigenous people was

¹ <https://slate.com/culture/2019/11/history-is-written-by-the-victors-quote-origin.html> visited on 7-10-2020.

² Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the doors of heathendom; ethnography, violence and the Dutch East India Company* (Amsterdam 2002) 5.

part of a commercial strategy and is classified by some scholars as 'rational violence'.³ The system of modern capitalism demanded a stable trading environment with subjects that could be controlled in order for the VOC to get the most profit. As there was no stable environment in Asia, the VOC decided to create it by suppressing the indigenous people.⁴ However, Subrahmanyam argues that even this low-level violence left deep scars in the Indian and Asian society. Not to mention the acts of excessive violence. For instance, the ethnic cleansing on the Banda Isles under the reign of Jan Pieterszoon Coen.

According to Subrahmanyam, the VOC used a lot of epistemic violence by distinguishing themselves on an ethnographic level from the indigenous society to justify their actual use of violence. The VOC took themselves as the absolute standard, rejecting anything which deviated from their own views and principles.⁵ The indigenous Asian and Indian society was deemed inferior to the Dutch and, for that matter, the European standards. To adjust them to the standards the VOC needed for a favourable trading environment rational violence was used. In books and prints from the seventeenth and eighteenth century the general point of view was that the VOC and other European trading companies brought civilisation and progress to Asia. However, they did not notice or discuss how this 'progress' effected the indigenous cultures. This did not only happen in published chronicles and prints from publishers, but also within sources of the VOC themselves. Do the letters and reports which can be found in the VOC archives really depict what happened? Or is it a document in which the violence is justified or played down by whoever wrote it? Therefore, is part of the story missing from these sources and is rational and excessive violence for instance concealed by means of epistemic violence?

To explore this issue and make it more concrete this paper will take a closer look at the archival practices of the Dutch East India Trading Company, the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC). As one of the most prominent trading companies during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the VOC had a lot of influence in South East Asia. However, in their pursuit for monopolies, territory and influence they sometimes got into conflicts with the indigenous people. During these conflicts, violence was used by both parties to either make sure the indigenous people would cooperate, or, on the contrary, to scare off or remove the VOC from the territory of the indigenous people. To analyse how the VOC wrote about violence and archived these events, this paper will look at two conflicts by means of a case study.

³ Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the doors of heathendom* 5-6.

⁴ Jur van Goor, 'De Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie in de historiografie; imperialist en multinational' in: Gerrit Knaap en Ger Teitler, *De Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie; Tussen oorlog en diplomatie* (Leiden 2002) 9-35, there 17.

⁵ Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the doors of heathendom* 14.

The first conflict will consist of an uprising in Batavia by the Chinese in 1740. The Chinese were being suppressed by the VOC and were given less and less influence. As a result, the Chinese resisted against the influence of the VOC and organised a rebellion. The VOC met this revolt with deadly force which resulted in the death of thousands of Chinese by the hand of the VOC and other European settlers in Batavia. The second conflict will consist of an uprising in 1760 on the island of Ceylon by the Singhalese, who were aided by warriors from the kingdom of Kandy. Most importantly around the trading posts of Galle and Matara the administrators of the VOC faced rebellions by the Singhalese and Kandyans who resisted the influence of the VOC and tried to remove them from the island. At first, the Singhalese and Kandyans succeeded as they removed the VOC from Matara in 1761. However, by 1765 the VOC regained its influence on Ceylon during a violent campaign and forced the Kandyans to sign a treaty which made them surrender all the coastal territories to the Dutch. In both cases the VOC blamed the indigenous people for defying their leadership and starting the violence, without critically looking at why they rebelled in the first place. In Batavia as well as on Ceylon the rebellions resulted in a lot of deaths among the indigenous people. As the VOC was able to eventually crush the rebellion in both cases, they were able to shape the narrative from their side. Therefore, both cases provide a very similar situation, which makes them a good fit for this research.

However, there are two important differences between the two conflicts which must be mentioned. The first difference is that the uprising in Ceylon succeeded at first, whereas the uprising in Batavia had failed. The Kandyans and Singhalese were able to drive the VOC out of Matara and regained influence in the Southern parts of Ceylon, which will be the focus of the case study. The VOC in this instance was on the losing side of the event, which makes it interesting to compare and analyse the differences in the description of both events. The second difference has to do with the place where it happened. The uprising in Batavia happened at the centre of power of the VOC in Asia, which means that the information was sent from Batavia directly to the Dutch Republic. The information about the uprising in Ceylon was sent to both Batavia and the Dutch Republic, as there was also a direct route for VOC ships between Ceylon and the Dutch Republic. Therefore, an interesting comparison can be made between the two information flows, but also between the two uprisings, something which has not been done before. Also, a lot of these kind of events are being revisited nowadays to get a better understanding of what actually happened. For instance, some people think that the VOC used excessive violence to combat the uprising in Batavia, although this was not necessary according to some.⁶ By looking at both these conflicts, the depiction of these

⁶ Ewald Vanvugt, *Roofstaat: wat iedere Nederlander moet weten* (Amsterdam 2016) 314-322.

events by the VOC and the information flows within the VOC archives this paper aims to answer the following research question:

How was the information about the uprisings in Batavia (1740) and Matara (1761) spread through the networks of the VOC and to what extent did the VOC play down or justify their role and the use of violence in these uprisings?

As mentioned, this research question will be answered through two different case studies, which will be discussed in two separate chapters. This will go alongside an introductory chapter which will explain how the information flows within the VOC functioned and what kind of documents and sources there are within the VOC archives. The case studies will follow the information from the events through the different layers of the administrative apparatus of the VOC, which means a lot of sources from the VOC archives will be used. The primary sources for both cases will thus consist of reports, letters, resolutions and other documents which can be found within the VOC archives. These will be accompanied, when possible, by sources from the Chinese and the Kandyans to get another perspective and a better picture of what happened during the events. However, this paper is not supposed to examine every little detail what differed between the perspective of the VOC and those of the local sources. It is supposed to analyse if and how the information of the VOC was changed when it was passed on through the different levels, or if the information even changed between certain types of documents. This paper applies an extreme form of source criticism and follows a concrete information flow which has barely been done before. It is interesting to see whether historians can get a different or even better view by looking more substantively at strings of information from a single archive or source, rather than to just compare their sources to sources from other perspectives with just some marginal source criticism.

Although a lot has been written about archival practices, the idea that there are differences between types of documents, or archival genres, within archives is quite new. When looking specifically at archival sources, and not the archives as a whole, some distinctions can be made according to Miles Ogborne. In his book *Indian Ink*, which was published in 2007, he argues that there are different genres to be found within archival sources.⁷ He wants to make historians aware that archives are not one genre of sources, but that there are multiple genres which can be found within. These all depend on the writer, recipient, intention, time, tone and style of the document. Because there are many differences between archival sources, it is essential to recognise the type of

⁷ Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (London 2007).

genre and its purpose. To analyse an event, it is important to view it from different perspectives, but also through different genres, to compose an accurate overview of what actually happened.

In 2012, in a special edition of the journal of archival science, the idea of genre within archives was more broadly introduced and discussed by numerous scholars of archival practice, history and genre studies.⁸ Charles Bazerman, who wrote the opening paper of the issue, argues that we 'need to understand provenance, genre, activity context, and social and institutional structures from which the information arises and in which it is intended to be used.'⁹ When these aspects are understood there will be a better understanding of the source itself. Historians also used the concept of archival genres to get a better understanding of their sources and identify differences between certain documents and information flows. For example, in her book *Staging Asia: The Dutch East India Company and the Amsterdam Theatre, c. 1650 to 1780* Manjusha Kuruppath used the information flow from the VOC to track down how events that happened in Asia got to be portrayed by the Amsterdam Theatre.¹⁰ During her research she also differentiates between documents and their genres. This paper will follow a similar framework that Kuruppath used, although some more emphasis on the concept of violence and its legitimation will be made.

Another debate which is becoming more prominent in the field of archival studies is the debate about archival management and its relation to colonial power. Maria Pia Donato argues in an article that the archives are to be seen as an instrument of power of the Western colonizers. It was used to impose state control at home as well as colonial domination abroad.¹¹ Hence, why scholars are concerned about the recovering of the indigenous voices from the archives. As discussed, the narrative of the (European) victor is most often the most dominant one. However, the European narrative is sometimes filled with epistemic violence against the indigenous people. Therefore, we must not forget the narrative from the natives which is often suppressed or lost. On the other side governments nowadays are making the archives more accessible, thus making the function of archives shift from state apparatus to institutions of social memory and cultural heritage. With more and more archives opening, historians have more opportunities to research or even revisit certain historic events. However, this is most often the case for western archives, which means that the history of Asian events is still dominantly seen from a Western point of view.

⁸ Gillian Oliver and Wendy M. Duff, 'Genre studies and archives: introduction to the special issue', *Archival Science* 12:4 (2012).

⁹ Charles Bazerman, 'The orders of documents, the orders of activity, and the orders of information', *Archival Science* 12:4 (2012) 377–388, 378.

¹⁰ Manjusha Kuruppath, *Staging Asia: The Dutch East India Company and the Amsterdam Theatre, c. 1650 to 1780* (Leiden 2016).

¹¹ Maria Pia Donato, 'Introduction: Archives, Record Keeping and Imperial Governance, 1500-1800', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 22:5 (2018), pp. 311-326.

The paper *Can the Subaltern speak?* by the Indian academic and philosopher Gayatri Spivak also debates how these indigenous voices, or subaltern voices, have (not) been portrayed and represented by Western academics and historians in their academic work. The term 'subaltern', which was used first by the Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci, is referring to the indigenous population of a colony who are socially, politically, and geographically outside the institutions and hierarchy of power of a colony and are therefore denied participation in the making of local history.¹² It is important to realise that these voices are missing from the VOC archives. The VOC often tried to blame the indigenous population or make them a scapegoat for their own problems. This was easy to do, as the indigenous population were not able to defend themselves against the claims, due to their inferior position compared to the colonial ruler. Their voices, at the time, were not loud enough to be heard in the historiography of colonial events. Therefore, these voices need to be represented today by scholars who research these events.

So, when considering the violent conflicts between the VOC and indigenous parties, did the VOC also try to blame the indigenous people for this? And did the VOC try to justify their use of violence in their reports? These will be the central questions within this paper. By answering these questions, this paper hopes to provide a better understanding on how archives are to be used and how their sources can be analysed more critically and extensively, for instance by considering the different genres that exist within the archival sources. Additionally, it hopes to inform scholars under which circumstances violent conflicts are described and how these circumstances could influence the accuracy of the description and therefore the narrative about the event. This paper hopes to challenge scholars and other historians to engage with their sources more critically, so they can get a better understanding of the narrative they are trying to describe, without losing touch with the silenced voices of history.

¹² Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' In: Rosalind C. Morris, *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010) 21–78.

Chapter 1: The information network of the VOC

1.1 Connecting Europe and Asia

During its existence, between 1602 and 1800, the VOC made a lot of profit on its trading activities in South-East Asia. This was mostly due to its extensive intra-Asian trading, which relied on profound information networks. The company had established numerous trading posts over the years which stretched from the Indonesian Archipelagos, to settlements around the Indian Ocean and from there to China and Japan. With these activities a lot of administration came into play, like ship logs, inventory lists and profit calculations, which were all recorded meticulously at the trading posts and the ships of the VOC. These trading posts came in two forms: *factorijen* (factories) and *kantoren* (regional offices). The *factorijen* consisted of local settlements where the VOC had established itself to trade with the local population or to let them produce trading goods on their behalf. These *factorijen* had to report to the *kantoor*, which was the regional establishments of the VOC.¹³ By obtaining control and information on both local and regional level the tradesmen of the VOC obtained detailed knowledge about the Asian markets and could maximise its profits from trading goods within Asia, as the VOC also facilitated trade between these territories.¹⁴

As the company grew further and further, they also acquired territorial control of the areas in which they traded. This was necessary to keep other competitors, like the English and the Portuguese away and to make it easier to acquire the spices and other products they wanted to trade. To accomplish this, forts were built which needed to protect the trading posts and other nearby interests of the VOC from European competitors and at the same time control the local population, which according to Subrahmanyam went hand in hand with the use of rational violence.¹⁵ ¹⁶ The indigenous population would not always comply with the VOC at first, upon which the VOC used violent punishments to keep them in check. The forts were built at strategical places near regional hubs and were important in protecting the *kantoren*, although they could also function as *kantoor* themselves. Therefore, these forts were not only used to ensure the safety of the VOC, but also held quite an important role in the administrative apparatus of the VOC. It needs to be noted, however, that the forts were not a separate layer within the administration. Since, more administration came along with the territorial control, the forts housed dozens of administrative clerks, as it was most

¹³ Femme Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen 2003) 70-71.

¹⁴ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 114.

¹⁵ Kees Ampt and Ad Littel, *Verre forten, Vreemde kusten: Nederlandse verdedigingswerken overzee* (Leiden 2017) 17-18.

¹⁶ Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the doors of heathendom*, 5.

often the VOC's central hub of a region.¹⁷ Some clerks also settled near the harbours of the trading posts or at markets to gather and write down the information they got from sailors and locals.

The information that was gathered by the local VOC officials went through four different administrative layers, which have been visualised in two schematics as can be seen in appendix I and II. VOC officials at the local factorij level would gather information about what was going on politically, socially and economically in their area and send reports and letters describing these developments to the regional kantoor level. For example, at Ceylon the factorijen of Jaffna and Galle gathered information about how much cotton or cinnamon there had been produced in a certain month, or they would report on, for example, civilian unrest near their factorijen. The factorijen then reported to the Council of Ceylon which was situated at the kantoor in Colombo.¹⁸ At Colombo the information would be summarized in reports and send to Batavia, where the Asian Headquarters of the VOC was situated, alongside with a copy of the financial accounting, administration and lists of passing ships and personnel from the factorijen and the kantoor. The kantoor was therefore responsible for all the administration of the territory in which they presided. Particularly for Ceylon, all the information would also be sent directly to the Dutch Republic, as returning ships were not obligated to pass by Batavia first. This was because Batavia was not on the shipping route from Ceylon to the Dutch Republic and a direct line was more efficient.¹⁹ Kantoren which were situated more to the east, like those in China, Japan and the Indian Archipelagos did send their reports and information to Batavia, which would summarize and forward this information to the Dutch Republic. These shipping lanes have been visualised in Appendix III.

Batavia was the headquarters of the VOC in Asia and was the place where the High Government and Governor-General of the company resided. The High Government operated quite autonomously from the Gentlemen XVII in Asia. This was due to the geographical distance between Asia and the Dutch Republic. The Gentlemen XVII, the board of the VOC who resided in the Dutch Republic, did send orders on what to buy for the European markets, but it would take nine months on average for ships to bring this information from the Dutch Republic to Batavia.²⁰ Although the High Government operated mostly on their own insight, they had to report everything they did to the Gentlemen XVII. For that reason, there were 7000 VOC officials who lived and worked in Batavia. These officials ranged from port workers, warehouse employees, soldiers, but most importantly

¹⁷ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 66.

¹⁸ Lodewijk Wagenaar, *Galle, VOC-vestiging in Ceylon. Beschrijving van een koloniale samenleving aan de vooravond van de Singalese opstand tegen het Nederlandse gezag, 1760* (Amsterdam 1994) 16.

¹⁹ Wagenaar, *Galle, VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 115.

²⁰ Piet Emmer and Jos Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld; de geschiedenis van Nederland overzee 1600-1800* (Amsterdam 2016) 51.

administrative clerks. These clerks received all the administration and reports from the kantoren and went on to check and summarize the information. The summary of all the kantoren combined would be send to the Dutch Republic in a large document called the general missive.²¹ The High Government and the Governor-General could and did already act on the information, which was written in the general missive, as it would take 15 months or longer for the information to be processed in the Dutch Republic and send back to Batavia. When kantoren needed more supplies or soldiers the High Government could already provide them, while waiting on the official confirmation from the Gentlemen XVII to do so. The High Government could also limit or upgrade production on specific products when the markets in Asia shifted. However, the Gentlemen XVII did not always appreciate this as the High Government would not always take the European market into account.²²

As discussed, a summary of the developments in Asia and the actions of the High Government associated to these developments was send each time the fleet would return from Batavia to the Dutch Republic in the form of the general missive to the Dutch Republic. When the general missive arrived in the Dutch Republic it was first send to another administrative body called the *Haags Besogne*. The *Haags Besogne* consisted of ten members of the chambers of the VOC, which would be supervised by an advocate, who would also be present at the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII.²³ The body would evaluate the general missive and note down the most important points for the Gentlemen XVII to act on. The body therefore had a lot of influence in the action points, which were put up for discussion during the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII. During the meeting, the Gentlemen XVII would make decisions on how to act on the different cases. The outcome of these meetings and the decisions which were made would be written down in resolutions. These resolutions in turn would be send to the High Government in Batavia, which would forward the decisions and orders to the regional kantoren. For this whole process to come full circle, however, it would take between eighteen and twenty-four months.²⁴

1.2 Context of the different documents within the archive

Throughout this paper a lot of different documents from the VOC archives will be used. Before we can discuss the contents of these sources in the next chapters, it is important to give some background information about which documents there are. For the factorij level, the sources mostly consist of missive or letters written by the chief administrator of the factorij. In these letters the chief informs the kantoor about the ongoing production, the relation with the local population who work

²¹ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 50.

²² Emmer and Gommans, *rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 51.

²³ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 151.

²⁴ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 154-55.

for the VOC and of possible shortages. Both the factorij and the kantoor kept *Dagregisters*, which are journals in which the everyday affairs were written down by administrative clerks. They contained detailed descriptions of events, with in the margins a summary of the text in just one sentence, the *Marginalia*. The journals often pose as the sources closest to the events for two reasons. First, because it was the closest in time, as the journals were kept daily, the event was described in real time. Second, because it contained the most details about the event compared to other sources, as it was the purpose of the journal to create a full and faithful account of what happened in the area. The journals informed the kantoor what was going on in the area, upon which the governor could write a missive containing a summarized account of what had happened to the High Government in Batavia. The missive therefore contained the same kind of information as the journals, only summarized. Additionally, at the kantoor level there were also accounts of court journeys to the indigenous kingdoms and other correspondence with courts. Maintaining a good relationship with the indigenous courts was very important for maintaining political and social control over an area.

At the Batavia level of the administration documents were written, which covered and discussed all the activities from the VOC in Asia. The general missive is a key example of this, as it was a periodical summary of everything that was going on in Asia. The document, which could stretch for several hundreds of pages, was written by the Governor-General and the High Government in Batavia. The document had to inform the Gentlemen XVII of everything that was going on in Asia, but could also be used by the Governor-General to justify the decisions and actions he and the High Government had taken in absence of a decision from the Gentlemen XVII. Problems, failures and mistakes were also written down, but were most often blamed on someone else other than the Governor-General or the High Government. The general missive provided the Gentlemen XVII with a version of reality according to the Governor-General and the High Government, which could well be a distorted image of the actual reality. For the Gentlemen XVII to check the information, appendices with financial reports, inventory lists and personnel records would be sent as well.

Another source which is very common in the VOC archives are the resolutions and the minutes of the meetings from the councils at the kantoor level, the Batavia level and the Patria level. The minutes contain a transcription of what was discussed and said during the meetings and therefore contain valuable information on how decisions were made. These decisions were written down as resolutions which were often signed by the governor, or in case of Patria by the Gentlemen XVII. The resolutions differed a lot from level to level. The councils at the kantoor level primarily decided on matters that happened around them, for instance on the production capacity or promotion of personnel. The resolutions from the High Government in Batavia could affect every VOC territory in Asia. The High Government could redistribute resources within Asia ranging from

ships and soldiers, to food and ammo. They also decided about alliances they wanted to make with Asian kingdoms and how they should maintain them. In Patria the Gentlemen XVII decided primarily on the allocation of funds and resources to Asia. When the VOC needed more ships, they could buy and order more from the wharfs in the Dutch Republic. The Gentlemen XVII could also decide about which governors or even Governor-General they would appoint or fire. The resolutions were often bundled together in a book with the resolutions for a certain year. For each meeting a couple of pages would be used to write down what has been decided on that day. Also, for the resolutions marginalia would be used to give a short overview of the discussed topic or the decision itself. This was often done so the administrators could quickly find and refer to a certain decision if it came up for debate. Both documents can provide an interesting perspective on how the different councils made decisions during certain events.

Finally, the last source which will be discussed within this paper is the *Haags Verbaal*, which was made by the Haags Besogne. The Haags Verbaal was an annual report which provided a summary of everything that happened in the East. The verbaal was divided in different sections, each covering one kantoor, which, for convenience, would be written down in the top left of the page. The descriptions of what had happened during the year would also be accompanied by marginalia, which made the document easily searchable. This was necessary because the verbaal stretched for over a thousand pages and would often be used for references during the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII. Although the Haags Besogne processed all the paperwork they received from the east, they mostly relied on the missive from the kantoren and the general missive from Batavia to make up the annual report. This was information which was often already summarized and therefore it could be that the information was inaccurate or important details were missing. This makes it important for researchers to also study sources from the lower levels, as they would contain a more detailed and accurate description of events.

With the extensive information gathering process described above, a lot of data and information was made available for the Gentlemen XVII. However, the information was far too substantial for the Gentlemen XVII to act on all of it. Therefore, the information was summarized three times between the different levels before it ended up in the meeting of the Gentlemen XVII. The original information would come from the factorijen and would be summarized for the first time at the kantoor. Here a report would be made which was send to Batavia. The second summary would be made at Batavia, where the reports from all the kantoren would be combined and summarized in the general missive. When the general missive arrived in the Dutch Republic the document would be summarized once more by the Haags Besogne before it ended up at the meeting of the Gentlemen XVII.

This means, however, that between the levels a lot of information would be left out, because it was not deemed important enough. In addition to this, facts could also be changed, or context could be left out, when the information was transferred from the original document to the summarized document. As summaries would be made three times during the process, it is important to look closely at the transfer of information between the different levels. By doing this, discrepancies between the documents can be noticed, which could change the way historians look at certain events. Furthermore, the different characteristics which define the different archival genres need to be kept in mind. It is important to realise how the purpose, time, tone, writer and length of the document influenced the contents and information within the document. This paper will analyse the documents from the different layers to show how these characteristics effected the contents of different archival sources and therefore show the importance of archival genres. It will also show how information changed as it was passed on to different levels.

To explore, two case studies will be conducted in the next two chapters to see if the narrative about certain events changed as the sources went through the different administrative levels of the VOC. Were there facts left out or changed? Or was context about events left out to justify certain actions of the VOC administrators in Asia? Apart from looking at information in general it is also important to look at the way in which violence was portrayed in different VOC sources. VOC officials high in the chain of command had the power to write their own narrative of what happened, as they had to inform the Gentlemen XVII of the affairs within their area. These narratives were rarely disputed, so they became truth to the Gentlemen XVII. However, were they 'the' truth? These are questions which can only be answered by looking very closely at the transfer of information.

Chapter 2: The Batavian massacre of October 1740

2.1 Context of the event

Before analysing the different sources and reports about the uprising in Batavia and the massacre that followed on 9 October 1740, it is important to give some context to the situation first. The merchants of the VOC were not the first traders on the Indonesian peninsula. There had been Chinese traders in the area for centuries before the VOC decided to establish their headquarters in Batavia. Together the Chinese and the Dutch colonized Java which made them in the eyes of some historians co-colonizers.²⁵ As business and trade grew in the area, so did the amount of Chinese middle-class immigrants that came to Batavia. For example, craftsmen, shopkeepers and business agents were drawn to the favourable conditions of Batavia for their businesses. The Chinese also settled in the 'Ommelanden', the Javanese countryside, where they established sugar mills, using Chinese coolies as labourers. In 1710 there were 84 sugar mills in the Ommelanden of which 79 were in Chinese hands.²⁶ Within the city of Batavia the Chinese also formed their own institutions, like hospitals, mercantile groups and social insurance agents. The Chinese within the city had also earned civil rights and were represented by the Board of Chinese, thereby becoming a well-established middle-class on Java.²⁷ The VOC and other European settlers grew wary of the increasing number of Chinese, which constituted of 4.200 inside the city and thousands more beyond the city walls.²⁸

From the 1730's onwards there was a growing unrest, in both VOC and Chinese circles, because of the declining sugar prices. Batavia wanted to maintain the high prices and severely restricted the planting and selling of sugar by Chinese mills. As a result, many coolies that worked on the plantations became unemployed causing them to move to Batavia, whilst plundering the villages in the Ommelanden and fighting the Dutch soldiers and Chinese sugar mill owners who had suppressed them.²⁹ Meanwhile, the administrators in Batavia were working on a solution for the unemployed Chinese. On 25 July 1740 Adriaan Valckenier, who was Governor-General of the VOC between 1737 and 1741, issued a resolution in which they ordered the arrest of all the unemployed and illegal Chinese in Batavia, after which they would be sent to Ceylon to help build and expand the colonial presence of the VOC over there. This plan suggests that the High Government of the VOC was aware that the Chinese could still contribute to the colonial society.³⁰ There were, however,

²⁵ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 314-15.

²⁶ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 316.

²⁷ Leonard Blussé, *Strange company Chinese settlers, mestizo women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht 1986) 79-81.

²⁸ Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge 2008) 100.

²⁹ Ward, *Networks of Empire*, 97-100.

³⁰ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 318.

rumours among the Chinese that the people who were banished were thrown overboard on the open sea. When the coolies and the Chinese in the outer district got word of the upcoming resolution, they caused a riot at the outskirts of Batavia, out of fear for their lives if they had to go to Ceylon. They attacked Dutch administrators as well as Chinese community leaders for complying with the Dutch authorities and burned down sugar mills. Because the Chinese from middle- and upper-class distanced themselves from the conflict, the rioters could be put down by the VOC troops.³¹

On 9 October 1740, in response to the riots and the attack of the Chinese on Batavia, the VOC attacked numerous Chinese shops and houses, killing every person of Chinese descent in their sight. Although the Chinese middle- and upper-class citizens withheld themselves from the riots, they were assaulted as well. There has been some discussion on whether the High Government of Batavia in fact ordered the pogrom. Some historians believe that only after the killings begun, the High Government issued an order for the killing of the Chinese.³² Others think that there was no such order, but nor were there any attempts to stop the violence.³³ In order to get a clear answer to this, it is crucial to look at the sources within the VOC archives. How did they report about the situation? And what was the role of the VOC in the violent massacre in Batavia that resulted in up to 10.000 dead Chinese inhabitants?

2.2 A closer look at the sources of the VOC

The main aim of this paper is to look at how information transfers between the different levels of the VOC administration. However, for this particular case study the levels are a bit blurred, while Batavia functioned as both a kantoor for the VOC as well as its Asian headquarters. Therefore, it is important to look at what kind of documents there are available which describe the event, but more importantly who wrote the documents. As discussed in chapter 1.2, there are different documents which could be assigned to different layers within the administration. The *dagregisters*, or daily journals of Batavia, are the sources closest to the event and will be analysed first, as they are representative for the factorij and kantoor levels of the organisation. After that the general missive and resolutions from the High Government will be discussed, which will represent the Batavia level of the VOC organisation. To conclude the case study, the sources from Patria, namely the Haags Verbaal and the resolutions from the Gentlemen XVII will be analysed.

³¹ Ward, *Networks of Empire*, 100.

³² John Crawfurd, *History of the Indian Archipelago: Containing an Account of the Manners, Art, Languages, Religions, Institutions, and Commerce of its Inhabitants* (Cambridge 2013) 429-430.

³³ Ward, *Networks of Empire*, 99.

2.2.1. Factorij and kantoor level: The Batavian journals

The *Dagregisters van Batavia*, or the Batavian journals, are a daily record which were created at the general secretariat at the Batavia Castle. They were created by order of the Gentlemen XVII with the purpose of having a full and faithful account of everything that happened in the East. Within the journals all sorts of information was written down, such as ships arrivals and departures, local and regional events, and trade deals.³⁴ The most dominant event that was being reported between the 7th and 11th of October 1740 were the disturbances and riots caused by the Chinese and the subsequent reaction of the VOC. Due to the poor quality of the actual journals, this paper will mostly rely on the marginalia of these journals. These marginalia, which the summarized sidenotes of the journal, also give a detailed description of the disturbances leading up to the massacre, as well as the massacre itself. Whenever possible passages of the journals will be used and quoted.

The journal describes that on 7 October, Tay Wansoey, the leader of the Chinese insurgents, handed over a letter to Gustaaf Willem van Imhoff, commissioner of the VOC, addressed to the captain of the Chinese in Batavia, who was Lien Hoekong at the time.^{35 36} In this letter the Chinese insurgents, which had gathered with some hundred men at a sugar mill in Tanabang, replied to a call from Lien Hoekong to lay down their arms. Lien Hoekong, as leader of the board of Chinese, functioned as mouthpiece of the VOC and tried to calm down the situation by means of the letter and negotiate peace with the Chinese insurgents. However, the Chinese insurgents had no intention to lay down their arms. They stated in the letter that they could no longer endure the injustice and suppression they were experiencing and declared war against the Dutch and the VOC in name of the Nation of China.³⁷ When Van Imhoff returned to Batavia with the message of Tay Wansoey, the High Government ordered the following day that he would return to Tanabang with reinforcements to wipe out the Chinese, in which he succeeded as can be made up from the following text.

*'Commissaris Van Imhoff van Tanabang gekomen berigt dat de Chineesen geattacqueert en op de vlugt gejaagt zijn, mitsgaders een goed gedeelte van dat geboefte ter neder gesabelt.'*³⁸ In translation it says that Van Imhoff reported upon return that the Chinese were attacked after which they ran, however not before a great share of the 'thugs' was struck down with the blade. Within this passage some epistemic violence is used by the VOC by depicting the Chinese as thugs, thereby placing the

³⁴ https://sejarah-nusantara.anri.go.id/daily_journals/ visited on 7-11-2020.

³⁵ W.R. van Hoëvell, *Batavia in 1740; episode uit de geschiedenis van Neêrland's Indie* (Batavia 1840) 15.

³⁶ Daily Journals of Batavia, 7 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 733.

³⁷ Translation of a letter from Tay Wansoey to Lien Hoekong, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 2480, page 438-39.

³⁸ Daily Journals of Batavia, 8 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 734 and 736.

VOC on a moral high ground. The Chinese on the other hand did something similar by calling Van Imhoff the evil king of Batavia.³⁹

Not only in Tanabang, but also in other places in the Ommelanden the Chinese were gathering to prepare themselves to overthrow the Dutch. Therefore, the High Government ordered to close the gates of Batavia and not to let any Chinese in or out of the city. Any Chinese who still were in the city had to be indoors by half past six until the dawn of the next day. The High Government also ordered the burgers to arm themselves and reinforce the guards and to prepare themselves on what was coming. To prevent a two-front fight, the VOC would search the Chinese houses to confiscate weapons and to imprison or scatter groups of conspirators.⁴⁰

What follows in the Batavian journals are different accounts of skirmishes and arsons that happened during the riots, as well as a description of the massacre that happened on the 9th and 10th of October. According to the journal the massacre commenced when Chinese started to shoot from their houses on people who passed by.⁴¹ This was possibly a reaction on the arson and search of multiple Chinese houses, as Chinese wanted to protect their properties.⁴² Although there was an order not to kill any innocent Chinese, this was ignored by the soldiers in and around the city as can be read in the journal. *'en ontaarde in een generaal massacre onder de Chineesen begonnen aan te richten, waartegen de order van de Gouverneur-Generaal was gegeven om onschuldigen niet te doode zonder effect is geweest.'*⁴³ During the massacre the Dutch and European soldiers did not make any distinction between armed Chinese rebels or innocent women and children. As the VOC combatants lit multiple homes on fire, they started a big arson in which many Chinese were killed by the flames. Those who ran from the fires were shot and killed by the combatants, while other Chinese decided to take their own lives.⁴⁴ Most of the killings ended on 11 October and as a result most VOC combatants were ordered to stand down.⁴⁵

The Batavian journals give a very detailed account of what happened before, during and after the massacre, as they were supposed to do. The purpose of the document was to provide a full and faithful account of everything that happened in Batavia. The tone of the document is pragmatic as they were most of all short descriptive messages. Also, the journal described events that happened to both the Dutch as well as the Chinese, which prevented the information from becoming one-sided.

³⁹ Leonard Blussé & Nie Dening, *The Chinese annals of Batavia, the Kai Ba Lidai Shiji and other stories (1610-1795)* (Leiden 2018), 127.

⁴⁰ Daily Journals of Batavia, 8 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 736-38.

⁴¹ Daily Journals of Batavia, 9 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 744.

⁴² Daily Journals of Batavia, 9 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 744.

⁴³ Daily Journals of Batavia, 9 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 745.

⁴⁴ Daily Journals of Batavia, 9 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 747.

⁴⁵ Daily Journals of Batavia, 11 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 2571, folio 752.

As the journals were created right when the event was happening the outcome of the event was yet unsure. Therefore, there are not a lot of opinions or analysis within the documents on how and why the VOC acted in a certain way. However, there was some bias and epistemic violence in the descriptions, as the Chinese were depicted as ‘thugs’ or ‘brutes’. The VOC combatants were depicted as heroes who defended the city in first instance, although this changed whenever the actual massacre started, which was disapproved of within the journal. The journals are probably one of the most authentic sources within the VOC archive, as they should give baseline information to the High Government and the Governor-General. The information would be discussed during their meetings, upon which they would decide their course of action. The resolutions of these meetings will be discussed next, to see how the information was interpreted and used by the High Government.

2.2.2. Batavia Level: Resolutions of the High Government

The resolutions made upon the meeting of the High Government give an interesting insight in how they interpreted the rebellion of the Chinese and decided to act. On 9 October, the High Government was informed that numerous groups of Chinese had gathered near the gates of the city, awaiting to storm them. As could be read in the journals as well, the High Government decided to install a curfew to prevent a two-front battle. However, this would not be enough to fully remove the danger inside the city. As to how to act in order to completely remove the danger, the High Government and Governor-General Valckenier were in dispute. Valckenier wanted to take drastic measures, as the Chinese had ‘boldly shown themselves armed at the gates and attacked them’. Valckenier wanted to consider the Chinese nation as ‘public enemy’ and clear them from the city, thereby preventing the two-front battle.⁴⁶ The fact that Valckenier considered the Chinese inside the city as enemies, even though they had not actively participated in the riots, is interesting. It shows that Valckenier was anxious and scared of the threat the Chinese posed, something which needs to be considered when analysing the other decisions he made. Opposed to the proposition of Valckenier there was a suggestion from Van Imhoff, which was a bit less radical. Van Imhoff suggested that the Chinese houses would be searched as well, but rather than to evict them from their homes a clear the city of Chinese influence, Van Imhoff wanted to confiscate any weapons and imprison any Chinese who posed as conspirators against the VOC.⁴⁷ The innocent Chinese would be spared of any punishment, as they could not be blamed for the acts of those violent Chinese outside the city according to Van Imhoff. The two propositions went to a vote, which was won by Van Imhoff.⁴⁸ Only

⁴⁶ Resolution of the High Government of Batavia, 9 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 990, scan 70.

⁴⁷ Resolution of the High Government of Batavia, 9 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 990, scan 71.

⁴⁸ Van Hoëvell, *Batavia in 1740*, 39-40.

Valckenier voted against the proposal of Van Imhoff, suggesting that the city should be cleansed from the inside, before focussing on the Chinese outside the city.

Despite the best intentions of Van Imhoff, the panic in Batavia among the Chinese rose to a high. They were scared and agitated about their treatment by the VOC, which led to fights and ultimately the massacre. According to the Chinese annals, there was no search at all, but only the removal of Chinese from their homes upon which they were killed. *'He [Van Imhoff] ordered the Dutch officers to lead their soldiers within the walls to open the doors of the houses one by one and seize the Chinese inside. No matter whether they were men or women, old or young, they were pulled outside and killed.'*⁴⁹ This statement contradicts the resolution from the VOC and the order given by Van Imhoff. Presumably, the officers were sent out with secret orders from Valckenier to kill the Chinese anyway, although his proposal was voted off.⁵⁰ Interestingly enough, there is no further mention of the actual pogrom on the 9th of October in the resolutions. The next resolution is written on 10 October and orders to throw all the powder kegs in the water at the powder mill, before they would fall in Chinese hands.⁵¹ This resolution still suggests that the VOC was afraid of the Chinese rebels, although almost all the Chinese in Batavia were murdered in the pogrom. The resolutions, however, do not contain an extended description of events, as this was not the purpose of the document. The resolutions state the decisions which have been made by the High Government. The most interesting thing to point out is the discussion between Valckenier and Van Imhoff about which action to take. The consequences of the action have not been mentioned in the resolutions.

2.2.3. Batavia level: The general missive of 31 October 1740.⁵²

In the general missive the Governor-General and the High Government gave a summarized report of everything that happened to the VOC. The general missive which covered the uprising of the Chinese and the subsequent massacre was written by Governor-General Adriaan Valckenier and the members of the High Government on 31 October 1740. As it was written some weeks after the actual event the tone and style of the document was very different than that of the Batavian journals. The missive describes the event as *'een ongehoorde rebellie en stoutmoedige onderneming der Chineesen jegens de compagnie, in zoverre dat zij daar gewapent hebben durven vertonen en openbaar geweld uitvoeren in t gesigt en onder het bereik van het canon'*.⁵³ In this passage, which is at the beginning

⁴⁹ Leonard Blussé & Nie Dening, *The Chinese annals of Batavia*, 128.

⁵⁰ Van Hoëvell, *Batavia in 1740*, 40.

⁵¹ Resolution of the High Government of Batavia, 10 October 1740, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Nr. 767, scan 74.

⁵² This particular missive from 31 October 1740 has been published in its entirety in J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java : verzameling van onuitgegeven stukken uit het Oud-koloniaal archief. 6e deel* (s Gravenhage 1877) 295-312. The original text can be found in Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 2479, page 13-57. For the purpose of convenience the digitized text from J.K.J. De Jonge will be used.

⁵³ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 295.

of the missive, the Chinese are already being blamed of a bold and audacious rebellion in which they had armed themselves against the VOC. By depicting the Chinese as the instigators of the violence, it was easier for the High Government to justify their own use of violence. This was in fact partly true according to the Batavian Journal, as the Chinese had spoken out their intention to attack the VOC and the city of Batavia through the letter of Tay Wansoey, which is also mentioned in the missive.⁵⁴ The VOC had to defend Batavia from the Chinese attackers, as the loss of the city would have been detrimental to their trading activities in Asia. In response to the letter of Wansoey, the High Government ordered the reinforcement of the guards as well as a curfew for the Chinese who were inside the city, as they wanted to avoid a battle both within and outside the city.⁵⁵ Although, this does not give the combatants of the VOC the right to participate in a pogrom inside the city, something which can never be justified. However, that is just what the Valckenier and the High Government tried to do within the general missive.

Valckenier and the High Government believed that the massacre, which lasted for 24 hours, cleansed the city of the Chinese thugs, who in response started a fire at the west side Batavia, as can be read in the following passage; *'De massacre hoe langer hoe heviger zag worden, in diervoegen dat de stad van dat gespuys binnen 24 uren is gezuverd geworden en de westzijde derzelve door den gestichten brand der Chinezen als in lichten vlam gezet'*.⁵⁶ From this can be concluded that Valckenier and the High Government did not condemn the massacre, as they might have realized this was a necessary evil to get rid of the surplus of Chinese on Java. Before the riots or massacre had begun, they were already looking for a solution for the Chinese problem. What is interesting to notice is that in the general missive there is no mention of the killing of Chinese women or children, just 'Chinese'. In the Batavian journal it is clearly stated that the VOC combatants also killed these innocent groups of Chinese. However, this detail might have been conveniently left out of the missive as it would hurt the reputation of Valckenier, the High Government and of the VOC in general. Another detail which is mentioned multiple times in the general missive is that the Chinese presumably set fire to their own homes.⁵⁷ This contradicts with a statement in the Batavian Journals in which the VOC combatants and Europeans were held responsible for starting the fires. Once again, the description of what happened changed in the general missive compared to the Batavian journals.

Within the general missive a lot of emphasis is being put on the fact the VOC and the Europeans saved Batavia from further disaster. They saved multiple homes from being destroyed in the fires by successfully extinguishing them or preventing them from carrying over to different parts

⁵⁴ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 300.

⁵⁵ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 302.

⁵⁶ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 305.

⁵⁷ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 305.

of the city. Yet there were by counts of the VOC six- or seven hundred homes destroyed in the fires.⁵⁸ The High Government also prevented the plunder of Chinese as well as European property from the destroyed homes, as can be concluded from the following passage. *'en geen derzelve in te laten in de afgebrande huizen mitsgaders de zoldaten, ambachtsgezellen en zeevarenden, dewelke op eene zeer enorme wyze de verdistrueerde huizen quamen te plunderen en alles weg te sleepen'*.⁵⁹ However, when the Chinese had fled the city they started rioting and plundering, as well as setting fires to multiple barns and mills in the Ommelanden.⁶⁰ By stating the differences between the VOC and the Chinese so explicitly in the general missive, the High Government sought to put the VOC in an exalted position. They wanted to show that the VOC was civilised and that the Chinese were not, thereby once again justifying the massacre.

The importance of distinguishing different genres within archival documents becomes apparent here. Because the Batavian journals and the general missive are different genres, they give a very different perception about the event. Characteristics such as the tone and purpose of the documents as well as some of the details in the information of the event change significantly between the two genres. But most importantly the violent actions of the VOC were being justified by Valckenier and the High Government, whilst also downplaying some details of the violence by not mentioning the killing of innocent Chinese.

2.2.4 Patria level: Reception of the event in the Dutch Republic.

As the information about the massacre had to be delivered by ship to the Dutch Republic, it took quite a while before it arrived in the Dutch Republic. According to the newspapers, who most often had a reporter in the harbours covering stories about the VOC, the captain of the *Rijnhuizen*, Hendrik van Raa, was the first to report what was called 'a rebellion by the Chinese in Batavia'.⁶¹ According to the ship logs the *Rijnhuizen* left Batavia on 3 November 1740 and entered the harbour at Texel on 10 July 1741.⁶² What is interesting to point out is that the Haags Besogne does not make any notice about the event in their verbaal when they discussed the affairs of Batavia on 26 July.⁶³ The news had arrived and spread through the Dutch Republic, but it could have been that the general missive had arrived later. This meant however, that the massacre would only be handled a whole year later, on 27 October 1742, as it was custom for the Besogne to only make one Haags verbaal a year for the different kantoren.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 305.

⁵⁹ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 307.

⁶⁰ J.K.J. De Jonge, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java*, 307.

⁶¹ Article by the Haerlemsche Courant on 15-07-1741, found in Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011228854>

⁶² Ship logs of the *Rijnhuizen*, found at <https://www.vocsite.nl/schepen/detail.html?id=10881>, visited on 13-11-2020.

⁶³ Haags Verbaal from 26 July 1741 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 572-584.

⁶⁴ Haags Verbaal from 27 October 1742 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 824-864.

In the meantime, the massacre or rebellion was discussed at the meeting of the Gentlemen XVII on 19 September 1741. Although, there was not much of a discussion about the event going on during the meeting, since it was more of an acknowledgement of what happened. According to the resolutions of the meeting, the Haags Besogne informed the Gentlemen XVII that they had read several reports from captains of ships that had just returned from Batavia. In these reports the captains spoke about a rebellion which had been committed by the Chinese against the VOC. However, no further action was taken from these reports as the fighting had stopped according to the following passage; *'Dat niet nodig was omme die luiden daar over nader te horen immers voorals nog is opgehouden te disponeeren'*.⁶⁵ In addition the Besogne had also read and presented the general missive from Adriaan Valckenier and the High Government which served as justification of the event; *'Gelezen zijnde zeker schriftuur kort vertoog dienende tot justificatie tegens het geposeerde bij een zeker schriftuur van den heer Gouverneur Generaal Adriaan Valckenier...'*.⁶⁶ Once again, no further action was taken by the Gentlemen XVII as the rebellion had been dealt with accordingly. Interesting to point out however, is that when the information had reached the Dutch Republic more focus was being put on the 'rebellion' of the Chinese and not the subsequent massacre by the VOC combatants. Whenever the actions of the VOC were mentioned they were justified by both the Haags Besogne as well as the Gentlemen XVII, as the VOC combatants had dealt with the situation accordingly. However, would they also have justified the actions of Adriaan Valckenier and the High Government if they knew the correct details, like the killing of innocent women and children and the arson of multiple homes by the VOC?

As mentioned, the Haags Besogne handled the Chinese rebellion on 27 October 1742, two years after the rebellion had taken place. As the violence had stopped for a while the Besogne was more focussed on the implications of the rebellion to the trading activities of the VOC in their verbaal, which was the summary they made for the Gentlemen XVII. The Besogne, therefore, refers to the general missive of 31 October and 1 December 1740 for more context on the event.⁶⁷ What was mentioned in the verbaal was a batch containing 401 boxes of opium that was sold to some Chinese traders, however they never collected the opium after the massacre. Therefore, it was decided by the High Government that the batch could be sold again for the same price as the Chinese originally bought it.⁶⁸ Some implications of the massacre which were not directly bound to trade. Farmers who rented land or shopkeepers who rented buildings from the VOC did not have to pay for

⁶⁵ Resolution from the meeting of the Gentlemen XVII on 19 September 1741, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 47, page 246.

⁶⁶ Resolution from the meeting of the Gentlemen XVII on 19 September 1741, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 47, page 247.

⁶⁷ Haags Besogne from 27 October 1742 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 826.

⁶⁸ Haags Besogne from 27 October 1742 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 840-41.

rent for the course of two months, as their farms or buildings were damaged by the Chinese.⁶⁹ Within the verbaal the condition of the VOC garrison in Batavia is also mentioned. In December 1740 there were 1663 soldiers, of which 131 were in the hospital due to injuries.⁷⁰ For their vigilant and heroic services soldiers were paid a bonus of six ducats, while officers even got 12 ducats.⁷¹ To conclude, there were also implications for the Chinese described in the verbaal. Some Chinese were imprisoned after the massacre for unauthorized possession of firearms; *'De Chineezen die met de wapenen waren opgevat buiten de ordinaire weg van justitie het plan regt te doen en deselve met de dood te straffen'*. The High Government sought to do justice and ordered these Chinese to be sentenced to death, others would stay imprisoned.⁷²

From these documents it can be concluded that both the Haags Besogne as well as the Gentlemen XVII had little interest in what actually happened to the Chinese in Batavia. They were more concerned with their trading activities, rather than the humanitarian impact of the situation. Therefore, but the Haags Verbaal and the resolutions of the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII are pragmatic. They just state what they had received about the massacre, or rebellion how they liked to call it, and how this implicated the trade for the VOC and the governing of Batavia. However, because the massacre happened nine months earlier, there was not much that the Gentlemen XVII could do aside from acknowledging it and maybe condemning the approach of Adriaan Valckenier and the High Government had taken during the massacre.

2.3 Preliminary conclusion

There are two things that can be concluded from this case study. First, the portrayal of violence by the different layers of the VOC. For the Batavian massacre it can be concluded that the Batavian journals, so the documentation at the lowest layer, is the most faithful. Within the journals the most details are being discussed about the event, from both the VOC as well as the Chinese side, who also held their own accounts of the event. Some details like the arsons by the VOC and the killing of innocent Chinese women and children, were left out or changed in the general missive, the next layer within the VOC administration. Within the missive, Valckenier and the High Government tried to justify their actions and decisions which were taken during the massacre. Therefore, a lot of the blame was shifted towards the Chinese, who were depicted as thugs and instigators of all the violence. Their version of what happened was send to the Dutch Republic to the Haags Besogne and the Gentlemen XVII. Without another perspective on the situation, the version of Valckenier and the

⁶⁹ Haags Besogne from 27 October 1742 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 848.

⁷⁰ Haags Besogne from 27 October 1742 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 847.

⁷¹ Haags Besogne from 27 October 1742 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 853.

⁷² Haags Besogne from 27 October 1742 covering Batavia, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4472, page 848-49.

High Government became the truth. Therefore, the Haags Besogne and the Gentlemen XVII could only conclude that Valckenier and the High Government had dealt with the situation accordingly. Since the massacre happened nine months before the information arrived in the Dutch Republic, there was not much that the Gentlemen XVII could apart from looking at how the massacre influenced their trading activities in Asia.

The second conclusion that can be drawn from this case study is the importance of genre within archival documents. Every source has a different tone, style, intention, purpose and time in which they were written, and it is important to acknowledge these characteristics when using archival sources. The Batavian journals are the most faithful account of what happened because it was their purpose to do just that. As they were written right when the event happened, the outcome of the event was yet unsure. The intention and purpose of these journals, therefore, was not to justify the actions of the VOC, but to accurately describe what happened. Hence, why the style and tone differed between the journals and other documents from the VOC. In the journals there is less prejudice and bias than in the general missive, where it was way important the Chinese were being depicted as thugs and instigators of the violence to justify the actions of Valckenier and the High Government, the very men who wrote the missive. The Haags Verbaal and the resolutions of the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII on the other hand were more pragmatic and described only what was necessary. As they were satisfied with the outcome of the rebellion, their only concern were the implications to their financial situation. However, to see if there was a trend within the VOC archive of downplaying violent events and justifying violent actions, it is necessary to look at at least one more event.

Chapter 3: The uprising on Ceylon

For the second case study, this paper will analyse the reports and information flow covering the uprising of 1760-61 around Matara and its subsequent fall. Before discussing the sources, some context about the VOC presence on Ceylon and the event will be given to get a better understanding about the uprising.

3.1 Context of the event

Dutch traders have had a long relationship with Ceylon and the Kingdom of Kandy, which was situated on the island. Even before the VOC was officially established, Joris van Spilbergen, a trader from Zeeland, had made the first contacts with the King of Kandy in 1602. The king, Dharma Suriya I (1594-1604), gave Van Spilbergen a small amount of the locally produced cinnamon. Upon his return Van Spilbergen told the VOC about his travels to Ceylon, who in turn organised their own expeditions to the island.⁷³ The expedition of the VOC, which was led by Sebald de Weert, ended up in a disaster, as De Weert was deemed undiplomatic and disrespectful by the Kandyan King he was killed. After this the VOC would only sporadically visit Ceylon, which gave the Portuguese time to establish their colonial presence on the island.⁷⁴ After some decades of Portuguese rule, the Kandyans wanted to get rid of their colonial oppressor. To do so, Raja Sinha II, King of Kandy between 1635 and 1687, asked the VOC in 1637 for help to combat the Portuguese. As Portugal supported Spain in the war against the Dutch Republic, the VOC was keen to help the Kandyans hoping that it could take over the cinnamon trade from the Portuguese as well. After several battles, attacks and campaigns the VOC and the Kandyans were able to completely remove the Portuguese presence in 1658.⁷⁵

With the removal of the Portuguese the Kandyans thought they would regain the sovereignty over their island again, as they had negotiated this within a treaty they signed with the VOC in 1638. In the treaty it was decided that the Kandyans would gain the right to claim the Portuguese strongholds after the war. However, the VOC would not hand over the fortresses, because in their version of the treaty there was not made such an agreement and they saw the fortresses as part of their payment to participate in the war. To prevent further disputes, the treaty was adjusted in 1640 in which the VOC would give back the fortresses as the Kandyans had fully paid back their debt to the VOC, who could also keep one fortress of their liking.⁷⁶ In practice the VOC just replaced the Portuguese and installed their own colonial presence on Ceylon and started to trade in cinnamon

⁷³ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 13.

⁷⁴ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 320.

⁷⁵ Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780-1815: Expansion and Reform* (Leiden 2007) 21.

⁷⁶ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 320.

themselves.⁷⁷ The Kandyan had to supply the cinnamon as part of their payment for the expenses the VOC made during the war. The kings of Kandy, however, would never officially recognize the rule of the VOC over the cinnamon rich coast, as they claimed they were still the sovereign rulers over these areas.

Despite the protests, the VOC set up their administration with a regional kantoor in Colombo, where the Council of Ceylon would settle, and multiple factorijen in Galle, Jaffna and Matara, all of which can be found on the maps provided in appendix III. From these settlements the VOC operated with a mutual respect to the Kandyan kings, the VOC would respect the supreme rule of the Kandyan king, which he held in theory, and the Kandyans would respect the trading monopolies of the VOC on the cinnamon and elephants.⁷⁸ This harmonious partnership would last until the 1730's, due to agricultural problems. The VOC wanted to further exploit the production in cinnamon, which led to declining rice productions and food shortages. In the southwestern part of Ceylon, around Galle and Matara, this led to riots and a big uprising by the Singhalese, a population group in the south of Ceylon, against the VOC in 1734.⁷⁹ After the uprising reforms were issued to regulate the cinnamon production and increase the food supplies by importing rice from India. These reforms helped somewhat, and for a short while tranquillity returned. However, due to a long period of drought, there were food shortages again among the farmers, which consequently led to another uprising by the Singhalese in 1760. The Singhalese were not only angry about the food shortages, but also with the way the VOC exploited them. Even in times of food shortages, the Singhalese farmers still had to pay their taxes, which were paid in food and other natural products like coconuts. This time the Kingdom of Kandy supported the Singhalese, as they were also dissatisfied with the amount of influence the VOC had on Ceylon and the way they ruled. The Singhalese refused to work and together with the Kandyans they started to set fires to cinnamon fields and stocks.⁸⁰

In December 1760, the Singhalese and Kandyans gathered at the border between the VOC territory and the Kingdom of Kandy near the guarding post of Hanwella. Scouts from the VOC reported to the Council of Ceylon that thousands of warriors had gathered. The Council and its Governor Jan Schreuder (1757-1762) acted swiftly and on 31 December 1760 they decided that the encampment of the warriors should be attacked, which happened on 2 January 1761. This succeeded at first, but when the Singhalese and Kandyan warriors regrouped they were able to defeat the VOC soldiers near Hanwella.⁸¹ Also in other areas, like Tangalla and Matara, there were reports of battles

⁷⁷ Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka*, 21.

⁷⁸ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 322.

⁷⁹ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 323.

⁸⁰ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 177 and 181.

⁸¹ W.A. Nelson, *The Dutch Forts of Sri Lanka; The military monuments of Ceylon* (Edinburgh 1984), 14.

between VOC soldiers and warriors. The VOC could not withstand the uprisings and was forced to give up Matara on 24 March 1761 and retreat to Galle.⁸² It would take until 1763 for the VOC to take back these areas with reinforcements from India under the command of the new Governor Lubbert Jan Baron van Eck (1762-1765). To retaliate and to prevent new uprisings, the VOC also attacked the Kingdom of Kandy in 1764. After this attempt failed, a second campaign was launched in 1765 which resulted in the taking of the city of Kandy. The city was plundered and partially burned down, while the population was murdered or driven away.⁸³ To end the violence a new treaty was negotiated by Governor Falck (1765-1785) which put all the coastal areas under VOC rule.⁸⁴

3.2 A closer look at the sources of the VOC

As discussed in the introduction, the information flow from Ceylon to the Dutch Republic is also a bit peculiar. Not only did the administrators in Ceylon send their reports and information to Batavia, they would also send their documents directly to the Dutch Republic. Therefore, it is also interesting to look at the different routes the information took to get to the Dutch Republic and if that made a difference. To cover the factorij level, some letters from Matara and Galle will be analysed and discussed. Most of these letters were sent to Colombo, but there was one bundle of letters which was also sent directly to both Batavia and the Dutch Republic on board of the ship *Bosch en Hove*. The ship left Galle on 18 March 1761, shortly before the fall of Matara.⁸⁵ Therefore, to cover the fall of Matara, these sources will be accompanied with the resolutions from the Council of Ceylon at the kantoor of Colombo, which also covers the next layer in the administrative apparatus of the VOC. Next, the bundle of letters and reports will be tracked to Batavia and the Dutch Republic to discuss the reception of these documents. By maintaining this order, discrepancies in the documents can be noticed and discussed to see where these discrepancies came from.

3.2.1. Factorij level: letters from Galle and Matara

The first letter which will be discussed, was written by Abraham Samlant Commodore of Galle to Matara on 3 March 1761. The letter acknowledged some demands which had been made by Jan Diederik Fedder, captain of Matara. Fedder had asked for resupplies and rations as he feared that the rebels would soon surround Matara and cut off its supply lanes. Samlant met this demand and sent rations to feed 250 men for 10 months.⁸⁶ When in need of extra gunpowder, Fedder was authorized to get some from the ship the *Renswoude*, which laid in the bay of Matara to provide canon support.

⁸² Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 189.

⁸³ Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, 324.

⁸⁴ Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka*, 39.

⁸⁵ Voyages of the *Bosch en Hove*: <https://www.vocsite.nl/schepen/detail.html?id=10157>

⁸⁶ Letter from Galle to Matara on 3 March 1761, Sri Lanka National Archive, lot 1 Nr 5552, scan 130.

According to Samlant the gunpowder would be of better use at the fortress, as the canons of the *Renswoude* did not have enough range.⁸⁷ This piece of correspondence really describes that the VOC was not well organised in case of an attack by the locals. The supplies at Matara were insufficient, so Fedder had to scrape and beg for rations. Also, the VOC soldiers did not know how to properly combat the Singhalese and Kandyan rebels, since the canons from the *Renswoude* were pretty much ineffective. Perhaps the VOC was surprised by the strength and tactics of the rebels, although this is not stated directly in the letter.

The bundle of documents on board of the *Bosch en Hove* contained another letter from Galle, written on 16 March 1761 and send to Batavia, discussing the hostile situation around Galle and Matara. It stated that Matara was surrounded by rebels, who had made barricades and equipped them with canons, which fired multiple times on the fortress. The rebels were held up behind the barricades waiting for the moment to attack and seize the fort as can be concluded from the following passage of the letter. '*De rebellen, onaangezig het geduurig vuur uit hun canon richtte op tot onder de Matureese afranding waare gekomen ... daarvoor een batterij hadden opgeworpen, [waar wij] dagelijks bedugt zijnde voor de aanval*'. Therefore, there was a constant threat for Matara of being overrun, as they were completely surrounded by Singhalese and Kandyan rebels.⁸⁸ The VOC combatants in the fortress could not do much damage against the rebels, as the rebels were out of range from their rifles and the canons of the fortress were not well equipped or supplied.⁸⁹ Reinforcements or supplies could not be sent, as both the roads to Galle and Colombo were cut off. The letter stated that the rebels were also closing in on Galle and that they had cut the supply lanes to the city, leaving it very vulnerable.⁹⁰

Matara eventually fell to the rebels on 24 March, as the garrison which held the fortress evacuated and returned to Galle on the 27th.⁹¹ Abraham Samlant informed Colombo of the loss of Matara on the 28th by means of another letter. In this letter he described the return of the ship the *Renswoude*, which brought back the remainder of the Matara garrison. The *Renswoude* also carried the body of captain Fedder, who had given his life to defend the fortress and his men. Fedder was buried that same day in the church.⁹² The loss of Matara was further discussed in a letter from Galle to Colombo written on 2 April. The letter, once again written by Abraham Samlant, describes that the garrison at Matara felt that they could not hold the fortress against the growing rebel forces.⁹³

⁸⁷ Letter from Galle to Matara on 3 March 1761, Sri Lanka National Archive, lot 1 Nr 5552, scan 131.

⁸⁸ Letter from Galle to Batavia and Colombo on 16 March 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 11302, page 27.

⁸⁹ Letter from Galle to Batavia and Colombo on 16 March 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 11302, page 27.

⁹⁰ Letter from Galle to Batavia and Colombo on 16 March 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 11302, page 28.

⁹¹ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 189.

⁹² Letter from Galle to Colombo on 28 March 1761, Sri Lanka National Archive, lot 1 Nr 5386, scan 383.

⁹³ Letter from Galle to Colombo on 2 April 1761, Sri Lanka National Archive, lot 1 Nr 5386, scan 387.

Perhaps, the garrison feared their fate if they were overrun, as the Singhalese and Kandyan forces had already stated their intentions to the VOC and other Europeans in a letter written to Samlant. In the Dutch translation of the letter the Kandyans stated that they intended to kill everyone and free their land of the Europeans. *'En sonder iemand te laten gaan, als de vinken die in een net gevangen sijn, massecreeren, mitsgaders de aarde van de plaats waarop het fort Matara staat in zee te gooien.'*⁹⁴ The garrison at Matara did not want to suffer the same fate of the soldiers at Hanwella, which were all murdered when they were overrun.⁹⁵ In the letter from 2 April it can also be read that the garrison at Matara destroyed everything that could be useful to the rebels and took all the ammo, food and other supplies with them.⁹⁶

The letters from the VOC are not very descriptive of what happened on the battlefields around Matara. They are more pragmatic and state developments of troop movements, supply counts and ultimately the surrender of Matara and the destruction of everything useful over there. This could be because the writers did not have much time to fully describe a battlefield during the fights. The purpose of the letter would have been to inform their superiors of key developments of the battle, not to give an elaborate description. Therefore, the letters are quite short, compared to other sources. Also, maybe due to the length of the documents, there is not much epistemic violence in these letters. The Kandyans and Singhalese are called rebels, where they could also have been called thugs or barbarians. This shows there was a certain degree of respect for the opposing party. Perhaps, because the Singhalese and Kandyans represented a king and were not just a faction of their own. Interestingly, the Kandyans did use some epistemic violence when stating their intentions to massacre every European on their land. The threat of excessive violence and the approaching force of Kandyan troops was reason enough for the garrison of Matara to evacuate and destroy Matara.

3.2.2. Kantoor level: Reactions from Colombo

In Colombo, the Council of Ceylon was quite burdened with the ongoing rebellions in the South. As the situation was deemed a matter of defence, the situation was not discussed in the ordinary resolutions of the Council. They were deemed classified and discussed in the *Secreete resoluties*, or secret resolutions. In a meeting on 30 March 1761, the Council was informed on the fall of Matara during an update on the situation on all the fortresses of the VOC. The date is interesting, because Samlant had only send a letter to Colombo reporting the fall of Matara on 2 April. Therefore, the

⁹⁴ Translated ola from the King of Kandy to Abraham Samlant, included in a letter from 11 March 1761 to the Colombo, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 11302, page 9.

⁹⁵ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 189.

⁹⁶ Letter from Galle to Colombo on 2 April 1761, Sri Lanka National Archive, lot 1 Nr 5386, scan 389.

Council got their information from elsewhere, but unfortunately the resolution does not mention where the information came from. However, in the resolution it was stated that both Hanwella and Matara had fallen and some other fortress had been surrounded by the enemy.⁹⁷ During the battles at Matara both sides had suffered losses in their ranks. According to the resolution the garrison at Matara had killed around 200 rebels. It was agreed upon that both sides would stop fighting in order to carry away their dead and wounded. On the side of the VOC, the brave captain Diederik Fedder was unfortunately among those who had been killed during the fight with the rebellious parties.⁹⁸

Apparently, the garrison saw the cease fire as an opportunity to organise their retreat from Matara, as they were not confident they were able to hold the fortress against the rebels. According to the resolution, the garrison escaped on board of the *Renswoude* and the *Jonge Jacob*, two ships which had been sent by Colombo and Galle to support the garrison against the rebels. While some soldiers held the line at the walls of the fortress, others brought themselves as well as the remaining provisions and munitions safely on board of the ships. Everything that could not be carried by the garrison had been dismantled or destroyed.⁹⁹ Therefore, the Kandyan and Singhalese rebels could not use the supplies of the fortress for themselves.

Interestingly, the resolution gives more details than the letters from Galle and Matara did. Perhaps, the Council could publish more details in their resolutions as they could have gotten their information from multiple sources, maybe even oral reports from VOC officials who had been close to the battlefield. However, just like the letters, the resolutions are also quite formal and respectful to the Kandyans and Singhalese parties. Once again, they were called rebels or insurgents, rather than terms like thugs or barbarians which could be used to depict their adversary in a bad manner by using epistemic violence. Maybe, because the VOC considered the Singhalese and Kandyans a considerable opponent, from which they were in fact losing, it was in their best interests to depict their adversary in a good manner. By showing that the Kandyans and Singhalese were in fact a worthy opponent, it would be more understandable for the High Government and the Gentlemen XVII why the Council of Ceylon was losing their grip on the situation.

⁹⁷ Secret resolution from the Council of Ceylon in Colombo on 30 March 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 3012, page 199.

⁹⁸ Secret resolution from the Council of Ceylon in Colombo on 30 March 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 3012, page 200.

⁹⁹ Secret resolution from the Council of Ceylon in Colombo on 30 March 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 3012, page 200.

3.2.3. Batavia level: The general missives of 1761¹⁰⁰

The first mention of the uprising in Ceylon was made in the general missive of 29 April 1761. In his missive Governor-General Jacob Mossel discusses two letters that were sent to Batavia on 29 January and 1 February of the same year. The letters pointed out that the Kingdom of Kandy supported and maybe even ignited the rebellion of the Singhalese. Due to the hostile attitude of the Kandyans, the communication and supply routes with the Northern factorijen of Jaffenapatam and Manuur were closed off. The situation in Galle and Matara was also alarming as both factorijen were being closed in by 'mijtelingen', or mutineers.¹⁰¹ Mossel writes that the Council of Ceylon was worried that the fort could not be held, as it was not well suited to withstand a large-scale attack. In addition, the morale of the garrison in Matara was low, as they also were not confident that they could hold the fort.¹⁰² In the missive Mossel apologizes that he is not able to send many reinforcements to Ceylon, as there is a severe shortage of European soldiers in the East, despite his earlier requests to the Gentlemen XVII to send more troops. He asks the Gentlemen XVII to reevaluate his request as the situation was very demanding.¹⁰³

In his missive, Mossel is not accusing or blaming the Council of Ceylon for the escalating situation. He is more accusive of the Gentlemen XVII who did not send him enough troops to combat this situation. Perhaps, this is the case because the information Mossel received was in a very early stage of the rebellion. But it could also be that Mossel is trying to cover himself of being accused of not being decisive and resolute to combat the situation. The missive is somewhat more vindictive of the Kandyans and Singhalese by calling them mutineers instead of rebels. By doing so, Mossel stops treating the Kandyans and Singhalese in a formal and respectful matter. This is maybe done to stress the fact that Ceylon was in urgent need of reinforcements. Apart from this the missive is rather pragmatic. As the missive only uses two pages to cover the situation on Ceylon it does not share many descriptive details from the violence and battles themselves. The general tone of the missive is very pressing on behalf of the Gentlemen XVII to send more soldiers to Asia.

The next general missive is written by Mossel's successor, Petrus Albertus van der Parra, on 17 October 1761. Van der Parra had taken over from Mossel, who had died from sickness. In the missive the Gentlemen XVII were informed of the developments on the shores of Ceylon. Matara had

¹⁰⁰ All general missiven have been digitalized and published by the Huygens Institute of Dutch History. <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/retroboeken/generalemissiven/>. The general missive of Jacob Mossel from 29 April 1761 can be found in part 13, 1756-1761, page 620-634. The general missive of Petrus Albertus van der Parra from 17 October 1761 can be found in part 14/1, 1761-1767, pages 1-32.

¹⁰¹ General missive of Jacob Mossel from 29 April 1761, page 623.

¹⁰² General missive of Jacob Mossel from 29 April 1761, page 623.

¹⁰³ General missive of Jacob Mossel from 29 April 1761, page 624.

fallen to the mutineers, who had also taken over the fortress at Hanwella, during which most of the occupants' throats were sliced. However, there was also some good news, as the blockade around Galle had been broken by two outbreaks from VOC combatants. The missive, furthermore, discussed the replacement of Jan Schreuder by Lubbert Jan Baron van Eck. According to the High Government, Jan Schreuder was not able to mend the relations with the Kandyans and Singhalese. The High Government believed that Van Eck was better suited for the situation, as he was thorough, gentle and selfless.¹⁰⁴ In addition, King Rajasinha of Kandy would be send a friendly letter and a gift worth 11.628 guilders, in order for the '*gestoorde vorst*', or crazy king, to reconsider his allegiance.¹⁰⁵ The High Government had good hope that Van Eck would succeed in his mission, which he eventually completed four years later in 1766 by closing a treaty with the Kandyan King. In the treaty the VOC regained possession of the coastal areas of Ceylon and could continue the cinnamon trade.¹⁰⁶

In his general missive Van der Parra is a bit blunter and more aggressive about the situation. Possibly, because in the months between his missive and the missive from Mossel, he had gotten more details about the conditions on Ceylon. By including the gruesome way Hanwella had fallen to the Kandyans, Van der Parra may have been justifying the actions had taken or were about to take to regain control of Ceylon and punish the mutineers. One of those actions was the appointment of Van Eck who was believed to be able to bring back the Kandyans and Singhalese under VOC control. Another interesting thing to point out is the fact that Van der Parra called the King Rajasinha crazy for defying the reign of the VOC. By calling the King crazy, Van der Parra stops being formal and respectful and places the VOC on a higher level than the Kandyan Kingdom. He begins to use epistemic violence against his adversary to show that the Kandyans should listen to the rule of the VOC and not that of their King. The tone of the missive, in comparison to the one written by Mossel, therefore, becomes more aggressive. However, the missive also remains pragmatic as the situation of Ceylon is only discussed in two pages.

3.2.4. Patria level: Reception of the event in the Dutch Republic

The news about the uprising on Ceylon reached the Dutch Republic with the ship the *Vredestein* on 17 October 1761, which brought the bundle of documents and letters from the *Bosch en Hove* to the Dutch Republic.¹⁰⁷ However, it would take the Haags Besogne until 9 August 1762 for them to mention the situation in Ceylon in their Haags Verbaal.¹⁰⁸ Interestingly, the situation was only mentioned in the last two pages of the verbaal on Ceylon. In these pages the Besogne acknowledged

¹⁰⁴ General missive of Petrus Albertus van der Parra from 17 October 1761, page 24.

¹⁰⁵ General missive of Petrus Albertus van der Parra from 17 October 1761, page 24.

¹⁰⁶ Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka*, 39.

¹⁰⁷ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 190.

¹⁰⁸ Haags Verbaal covering Ceylon written on 9 August 1762, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4480, scans 414-466.

that they had received a letter from 25 January 1761, in which the Council of Ceylon informed the Gentlemen XVII that there was an uprising in some of the Southern areas of Ceylon. Especially in the area around Matara, there was a lot of resistance against the VOC. In the letter the Council of Ceylon asked for reinforcements to deal with the situation accordingly.¹⁰⁹ It is quite remarkable that the Besogne only covered so little of the uprising, even though the information about the situation had circulated in the Dutch Republic for almost a whole year. This could be because the Besogne only wrote their verbaal at certain times in a year, but it is still surprising that they only acknowledged the uprising without describing the situation, even though they must have had the information.

The Haags Besogne would cover Ceylon again on 21 July 1763, but they would not go in great detail about how the rebellion had developed.¹¹⁰ How to mend the relation with the Kandyan court was the predominant question which was discussed in the verbaal. Just like the general missive mentioned, Jan van Eck was appointed the new Governor of Ceylon to repair the relationship with the Kandyans. Van Eck was deemed qualified for the job, because of his gentle approach with the indigenous people, which could lead to peace and tranquillity.¹¹¹ The verbaal shortly mentioned the developments from Matara, where the brave Captain Fedder had died during the failed defence of Matara.¹¹² However, not much else was described about the course of the fights or which other fortresses were surrounded or lost.

The letters from the *Vredestein* describing the situation in Ceylon were read and discussed in a meeting from the Gentlemen XVII on 26 October 1761.¹¹³ However, there are no resolutions or minutes from this meeting, as the resolutions of 1761 stopped on 5 October and continued on 8 March 1762.¹¹⁴ However, some weeks earlier the Gentlemen XVII had already received signs that the relation between the VOC and the Kingdom of Kandy was on edge. They concluded this from package of letters they received from Ceylon on 1 August 1761 from the ship *Leimuiden*. This package included a letter from the Council of Ceylon from 25 January 1761 discussing some incidents with the King Rajasinha and suspicious movements of Kandyan troops in the Southern regions of the island.¹¹⁵ Within the letter the Council asked the Gentlemen XVII to send reinforcements to use in times of despair.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ Haags Verbaal covering Ceylon written on 9 August 1762, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4480, scans 465-466.

¹¹⁰ Haags Verbaal covering Ceylon written on 21 July 1763, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4480, scans 1184-1242.

¹¹¹ Haags Verbaal covering Ceylon written on 21 July 1763, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4480, scan 1230.

¹¹² Haags Verbaal covering Ceylon written on 21 July 1763, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 4480, scan 1231.

¹¹³ Accompanying letter from the bundle of papers from Ceylon, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 11302, page 1.

¹¹⁴ Resolutions of the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII held between 30-3-1761 and 11-10-1762, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 57.

¹¹⁵ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 193.

¹¹⁶ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 193.

The Amsterdam Chamber from the VOC, the biggest of the six chambers, agreed that more troops were necessary to keep control of Ceylon. In a letter to the Zeeland Chamber, the second largest chamber, the heads of the Amsterdam Chamber urged them to side with them during the next meeting and to send reinforcements to Ceylon to keep this precious establishment of the VOC.¹¹⁷ The heads of the Amsterdam Chamber had even planned for two ships to be filled with soldiers to send to Ceylon. By doing this the Amsterdam Chamber hoped that the Gentlemen XVII would recognise the necessity and gravity of the situation and decide on the issue in their next meeting.¹¹⁸ Interestingly, the Amsterdam Chamber already wanted to send reinforcements to Ceylon before they even knew that the situation had escalated, as these messages would only arrive in the Dutch Republic on 17 October 1761. The Gentlemen XVII discussed the matter in their autumn meetings at the end of September, once again without the information of the further escalated situation on Ceylon. On 25 September it was decided by the Gentlemen XVII that reinforcements were indeed needed and approved the request of the Amsterdam Chamber and the Council of Ceylon.¹¹⁹ The request for soldiers can also be found in the yearly list of requirements for Ceylon. The Governor and Council of Ceylon asked for 600 soldiers and 150 sailors to use in their strife against the Kandyans and Singhalese.¹²⁰

The Haags Verbaal and the resolutions from the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII did not go in great detail when discussing the situation in Ceylon. However, as mentioned in chapter 1.2, they were not really meant to. Especially the resolutions, mostly contained decisions from the Gentlemen XVII while only describing a small part of their thought process behind it. The Haags Verbaal had a more descriptive character, but the purpose of the document was to provide a summary of the events in the East. The nature of both documents is very pragmatic, as they refer for details on certain situations or decisions to the original missive or letters that had been send from the East. The original documents therefore are more interesting as they contain a more detailed description of the event and will therefore pose a better source for research.

3.3 Preliminary conclusion

There are two main conclusions which can be drawn from this case study. First, it can be concluded that the VOC did not use much epistemic violence when they are on the losing side of a battle. The

¹¹⁷ Letter from the Chamber of Amsterdam to the Zeeland Chamber written on 4 September 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 11301, page 2.

¹¹⁸ Letter from the Chamber of Amsterdam to the Zeeland Chamber written on 4 September 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 11301, page 2.

¹¹⁹ Resolutions from the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII, 25 September 1761, Dutch National Archive, 1.04.02 Nr. 57, page 162.

¹²⁰ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 193.

Kandyans and Singhalese were most often described and discussed with respect and seen as a worthy opponent. In the documents the VOC made little use of distinctions on an ethnographic level. Perhaps, the fact that the Kandyans and Singhalese represented a king could also have influenced the level of respect that was given to them. Also, the Council of Ceylon could have depicted the Kandyans and Singhalese in a more formal manner to make it more understandable for the Gentlemen XVII as to why the situation on Ceylon had escalated in the way it had. Whenever the documents were written by a higher layer in the administrative apparatus of the VOC, epistemic violence became more apparent, but was in this case still limited. The High Government called the opposition mutineers instead of rebels, by which they perhaps hoped to stress the seriousness of the situation on Ceylon. This was maybe done to convince the Gentlemen XVII to send more troops to Asia. The only real epistemic outburst in this case study was written by Governor-General Van der Parra, who called the King Rajasinha crazy. However, this could have arisen from frustration about the situation.

The second conclusion which can be drawn is that in this case it did not really matter if information was sent directly from Ceylon to the Dutch Republic or via Batavia. The direct route from Ceylon to the Dutch Republic would save some time, but the information did not change much whether it came from Ceylon or Batavia. The information from Ceylon was more descriptive of the situation, but the core of the information that was sent from both places remained the same. The only thing the Governor-General in Batavia did was enforce the words and requests from the Council of Ceylon in order to convince the Gentlemen XVII to send the hard needed reinforcements. This was mainly done, because the Governor-General and the High Government had their hands tied, due to the shortage of troops in Asia. By urging the Gentlemen XVII to send reinforcements they also covered or justified their lack of action on the situation. However, the Governor-General did not change or add on the information he got from Ceylon. Therefore, there was not much difference between the two routes the information took to get to the Dutch Republic.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper several different themes and topics have been discussed, from which different conclusions can be drawn. Before discussing the overarching theme of the paper, which is the portrayal of violence within VOC sources, it is interesting to look at some other conclusions which can be drawn from this research.

First, an interesting conclusion can be drawn when comparing the two events with each other. In both cases the VOC did not anticipate an uprising or rebellion by the indigenous people. Either they were extremely naïve and did not understand how their policies and 'rational violence' effected the indigenous communities, something which can be paired with megalomania. Or they did not mention the underlying tensions in their sources, to be able to blame the indigenous people for defying their leadership. Both explanations resulted in epistemic violence within the VOC sources, as they either barely mentioned the problems of the indigenous people in their sources, therefore excluding them from historiography. Or they depicted the indigenous people as instigators of violence and malicious people who defied the noble reign of the VOC by using ethnographic distinctions. Although the indigenous people in both case studies had very grounded reasons to stand up against the VOC, the VOC neglected them and argued that they were attacked. The VOC reacted in a strong and violent way in both cases, which resulted in unnecessary violent conflicts.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference between the different routes the information took to get from the kantoren to the Dutch Republic. Whether the information went through Batavia first or was send directly to the Dutch Republic, the contents of the documents stayed mostly the same. The route the information took did not influence the Haags Verbaal that much either, as it was written only once a year for each kantoor. Therefore, information would pile up until it was time of the year to write the verbaal. The route the information took was only of importance whenever one part of the sources from an event arrived in time to be included in the verbaal and the other part arrived after the publishment of the verbaal. In this instance the sources and the narrative would be split, and the first verbaal could contain some inconsistencies compared to the one written a year later. Furthermore, the different routes would only influence the speed on which the Gentlemen XVII would reply. For instance, in the Ceylon case the Governor and council really needed the reinforcements from the Dutch Republic. Therefore, it was better to send the request directly to the Gentlemen XVII rather than to send it to Batavia first, as it would take some extra weeks or months.

Finally, to make some concluding remarks on the overarching theme, it is interesting that both case studies gave a different perspective on how the VOC portrayed violence in their sources.

This had a lot to do with whether the VOC had the upper hand in the conflict or not. Whenever the VOC was on the losing side of the conflict, a lot less epistemic violence was used in their sources against the other party. This was in order to give the idea that the VOC was losing against a considerable opponent. The sources discussed the adversary in a more formal and respectful way, which kept up the appearance that both parties were equal in strength, although this was most often not the case. In the case of Ceylon, the Kandyans and Singhalese were described as a worthy opponent, which they in fact were, to get more troops from the Gentlemen XVII. By addressing the Kandyans and Singhalese as a considerable opponent, it would also have been easier for the officials on Ceylon to explain to their superiors why they were losing their grip on the situation.

Whenever the VOC had the upper hand, like during the Batavian massacre, the VOC used a lot of epistemic violence in their sources, which they used to justify their actual violence. The VOC was able to blame the opposition in their sources of instigating the violence and argue that their use of force was an appropriate reaction for the situation. However, in agreement with the dissertation of Subrahmanyam, it could also be that the VOC explained their use of violence by emphasizing the ethnographic differences between the two parties in their sources. Whenever this was the case the VOC stressed the fact that they were the better, or more developed society compared to their adversary. For instance, in the Batavian case, the Chinese were called 'thugs' and 'brutes' to emphasize the ethnographic difference between the two parties. By doing this the VOC pointed out that they were the 'entitled' party and had to use violence to bring the Chinese to justice and bring back the peace in Batavia, despite it all turning out in a bloody pogrom. The VOC, however, also played down how much violence they used. By stating the innocent Chinese were spared, or that the Chinese set fires to their own homes. The VOC could only create this narrative, because they had better access to the making of historiography than the Chinese. As the VOC was the authority in the region, their version of the narrative was believed to be true. Therefore, archives can be seen as instruments of power which ensured colonial domination.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that archival genres do have an impact on how information is written down and the level of detail of the information. Sources from the lowest level, the factorij level, generally had the most details in their descriptions of the event. This is understandable, as the levels above had to summarize the information they received, so it was kept comprehensive. However, there are some other important characteristics which need to be considered when discussing sources from different layers. The purpose, time and writer of the source all have different effects on the information that is contained in the document. For instance, the general missive contained different information about an event compared to the daily journals. The journals had the purpose of providing a full and faithful account of everything that happened in a specific region,

while the general missives were intended to give the Gentlemen XVII a summary of everything that happened in the entire East. The general missive was based on the daily journal of Batavia and all the other correspondence from the kantoren, but due to its intention to summarize some important details could be left out, like the arson of multiple buildings by the VOC.

When further considering the time of writing the document it is important to realise that the general missive was written after the event, whereas the journals were written during the event. This changed the way information was written down in both sources. As the journals gathered and described the information during the event, without the need of justifying the actions of the VOC. The Governor-General, who wrote the general missive, did need to justify the actions of his soldiers and officers. In his summarized account he could choose to leave out important details, like the slaughter of innocent Chinese, in order to justify the actions of the VOC, although he knew these details were in fact part of the story. Within this example, the importance of the relationship between the writer and receiver of a document also becomes apparent. The Governor-General had to send his general missive to the Gentlemen XVII, who could either help or criticize a Governor-General. In case of the Batavian massacre, Governor-General Valckenier blamed the Chinese of what had happened and had adjusted or left out some important details to prevent critique on his actions. On the other side, both Governor-General Mossel and Van der Parra stayed mostly true to the messages they had received from Ceylon, but exaggerated the gravity of the situation slightly to get more troops. When considering these examples from the case studies, it can be concluded that different characteristics have a significant influence on sources within the VOC archives. Just like Ogborne suggested, there are indeed archival genres to be distinguished when considering the different characteristics of a source. Therefore, it is important to consider and question these characteristics and the genre of a source before using it.

The most important lesson that can be learned from this paper is that it is important to consider the characteristics of the archives and sources and the conditions in which they were written. Especially when researching violent conflicts and other events which tend to be controversial or cause a lot of discussion, it is essential to understand the characteristics of these sources and to consider how they influence the information and the perspective of the document. As shown in this paper, different documents shed a different light on a certain situation. Therefore, it is sometimes better to consult multiple documents from the same archival source, rather than to take one source from each of the different parties of the event. However, it is always better to use both methods and compare multiple documents from multiple sources, as doing so will give the best understanding of what actually happened during an event.

Bibliography

Archival sources

Sources from the Dutch East India trading company located in the National Archives of Indonesia as found on the website of sejarah nusantara; <https://sejarah-nusantara.anri.go.id/>

ANRI Nr. 990: General resolutions of Batavia Castle, 1740 September 26 - 1741 December 18.

ANRI Nr. 2571: Daily Journals of Batavia Castle, 1740 January 1 - 1740 December 31.

Sources from the Dutch East India trading company located in the National Archives of Sri Lanka

(SLNA lot 1):

Nr. 5552: Letters from Galle to Matara, August 1760 - December 1763.

Nr. 5386: Letter send from Galle to Colombo, September 1760 - December 1761.

Sources from the Dutch East India trading company located in the Dutch National Archives (NA 1.04.02):

Nr. 47: Resolutions from the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII, 27 February 1741 - 17 November 1742.

Nr. 57: Resolutions from the meetings of the Gentlemen XVII, 30 March 1761 - 11 November 1762

Nr. 2479: Received letters and papers from the Indies to the Gentlemen XVII and the chamber of Amsterdam, First book: Batavia, First part of 1741.

Nr. 2480: Received letters and papers from the Indies to the Gentlemen XVII and the chamber of Amsterdam, Second book: Batavia, Second part of 1741.

Nr. 3012: Received letters and papers from the Indies to the Gentlemen XVII and the chamber of Amsterdam, fifteenth book: Ceylon, Second part of 1762.

Nr. 4472: Verbalen from the Haags Besogne, 2 May 1740 - 28 October 1744.

Nr. 4480: Verbalen from the Haags Besogne, 17 May 1762 – 24 October 1763.

Nr. 11301: Missive from the Amsterdam Chamber to the Zeeland Chamber concerning the reinforcements to be send to Ceylon.

Nr. 11302: Sources concerning the rebellion of the Singhalese against the reign of the VOC, 1761.

Other primary sources

Jong, J.K.J. de, *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag over Java : verzameling van onuitgegeven stukken uit het Oud-koloniaal archief*. 6e deel (s Gravenhage 1877).

Sources from the Huygens Institute of Dutch History (<http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/>)

General missive from Governor-Generals and Councils to the Gentlemen XVII of the VOC

Part 13: General missive from 1756-1761.

Part 14/1: General missive from 1761-1767.

Sources from Delpher (Delpher.nl)

Haerlemsche Courant from 15 July 1741 <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011228854>

Secondary sources

- Ampt, Kees and Ad Littel, *Verre fortten, Vreemde kusten: Nederlandse verdedigingswerken overzee* (Leiden 2017).
- Bazerman, Charles, 'The orders of documents, the orders of activity, and the orders of information', *Archival Science* 12:4 (2012) 377–388.
- Blussé, Leonard, *Strange company Chinese settlers, mestizo women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht 1986).
- Idem and Nie Dening, *The Chinese annals of Batavia, the Kai Ba Lidai Shiji and other stories (1610-1795)* (Leiden 2018).
- Crawford, John *History of the Indian Archipelago: Containing an Account of the Manners, Art, Languages, Religions, Institutions, and Commerce of its Inhabitants* (Cambridge 2013).
- Donato, Maria Pia, 'Introduction: Archives, Record Keeping and Imperial Governance, 1500-1800', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 22:5 (2018), pp. 311-326.
- Emmer, Piet and Jos Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld; de geschiedenis van Nederland overzee 1600-1800* (Amsterdam 2016).
- Gaastra, Femme, *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen 2003).
- Goor, Jur van, 'De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie in de historiografie; imperialist en multinational' in: Gerrit Knaap en Ger Teitler, *De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie; Tussen oorlog en diplomatie* (Leiden 2002). 9-35.
- Hoëvell, W.R. van, *Batavia in 1740; episode uit de geschiedenis van Neêrland's Indie* (Batavia 1840).
- Kuruppath, Manjusha, *Staging Asia: The Dutch East India Company and the Amsterdam Theatre, c. 1650 to 1780* (Leiden 2016).
- Nelson, W.A., *The Dutch Forts of Sri Lanka; The military monuments of Ceylon* (Edinburgh 1984).
- Ogborn, Miles, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (London 2007).
- Oliver, Gillian and Wendy M. Duff, 'Genre studies and archives: introduction to the special issue', *Archival Science* 12:4 (2012).
- Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780-1815: Expansion and Reform* (Leiden 2007).
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' In: Rosalind C. Morris, *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010) 21–78.
- Subrahmanyam, Sanjay, *Forcing the doors of heathendom; ethnography, violence and the Dutch East India Company* (Amsterdam 2002).

Vanvugt, Ewald, *Roofstaat: wat iedere Nederlander moet weten* (Amsterdam 2016).

Wagenaar, Lodewijk, *Galle, VOC-vestiging in Ceylon. Beschrijving van een koloniale samenleving aan de vooravond van de Singalese opstand tegen het Nederlandse gezag, 1760* (Amsterdam 1994).

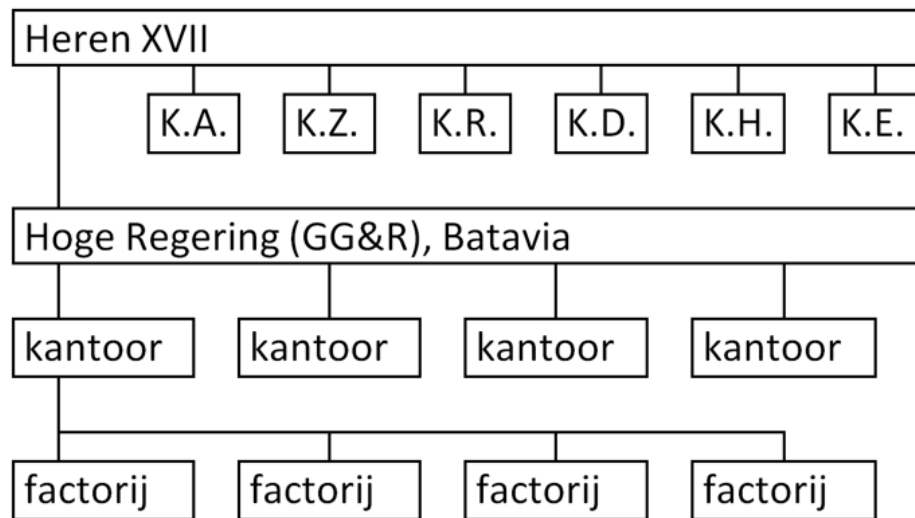
Ward, Kerry, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge 2008).

Websites

<https://slate.com/culture/2019/11/history-is-written-by-the-victors-quote-origin.html> visited on 7-10-2020.

<https://www.vocsite.nl/>

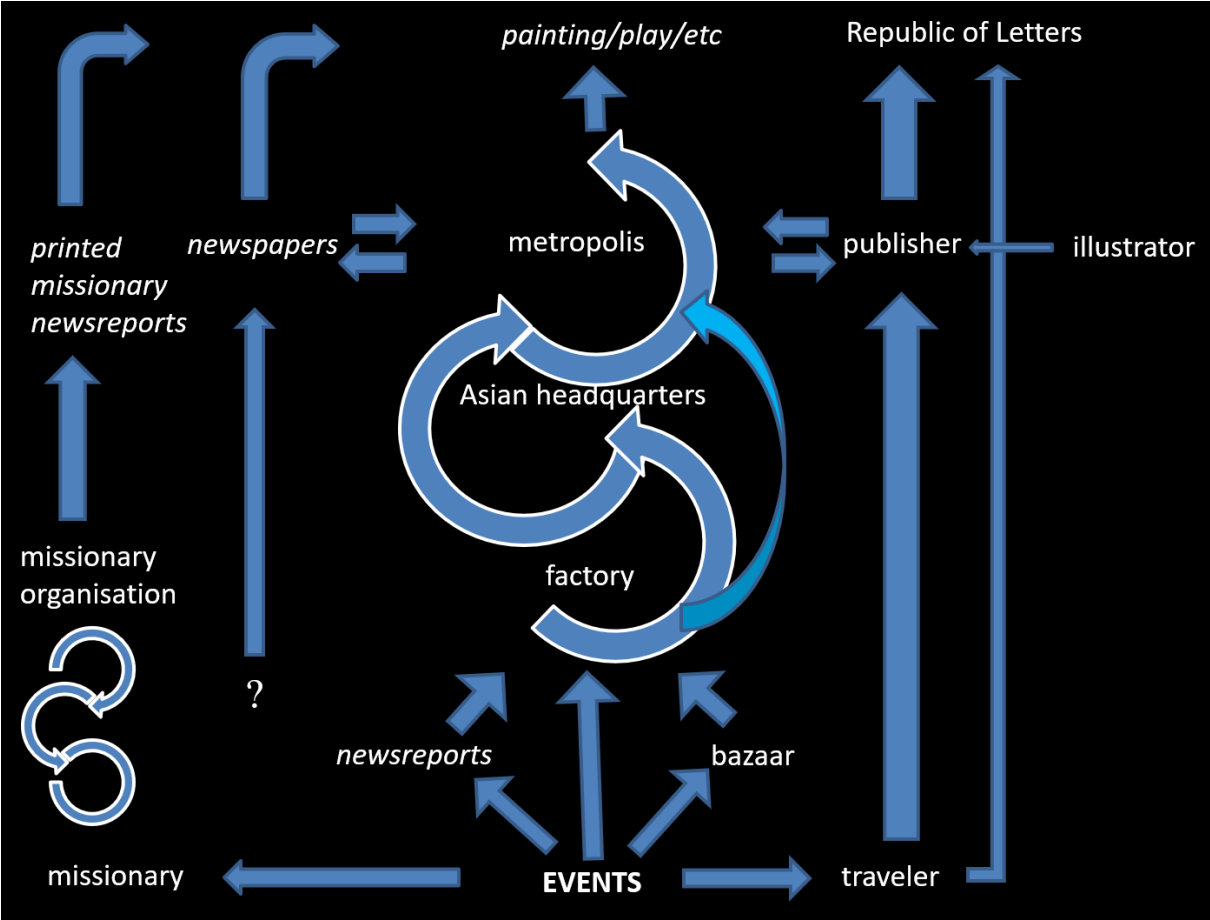
Appendix I: Structure of the VOC¹²¹



- * *Heren XVII* = Gentlemen XVII
- * *Kamers* = Chambers (Amsterdam, Zeeland, Rotterdam, Delft, Hoorn, Enkhuizen)
- * *Hoge Regering* = High Government
- * *Gouverneur-Generaal & Raden* = Governor-General & Councilors
- * *kantoor* = regional establishment
- * *factorij* = local settlement

¹²¹ This schematic made by Dr. Lennart Bes was shown in the research seminar Asian Events on 18-2-2020 which was instructed by Dr. Lennart Bes and Prof. Dr. Jos Gommans at the University of Leiden.

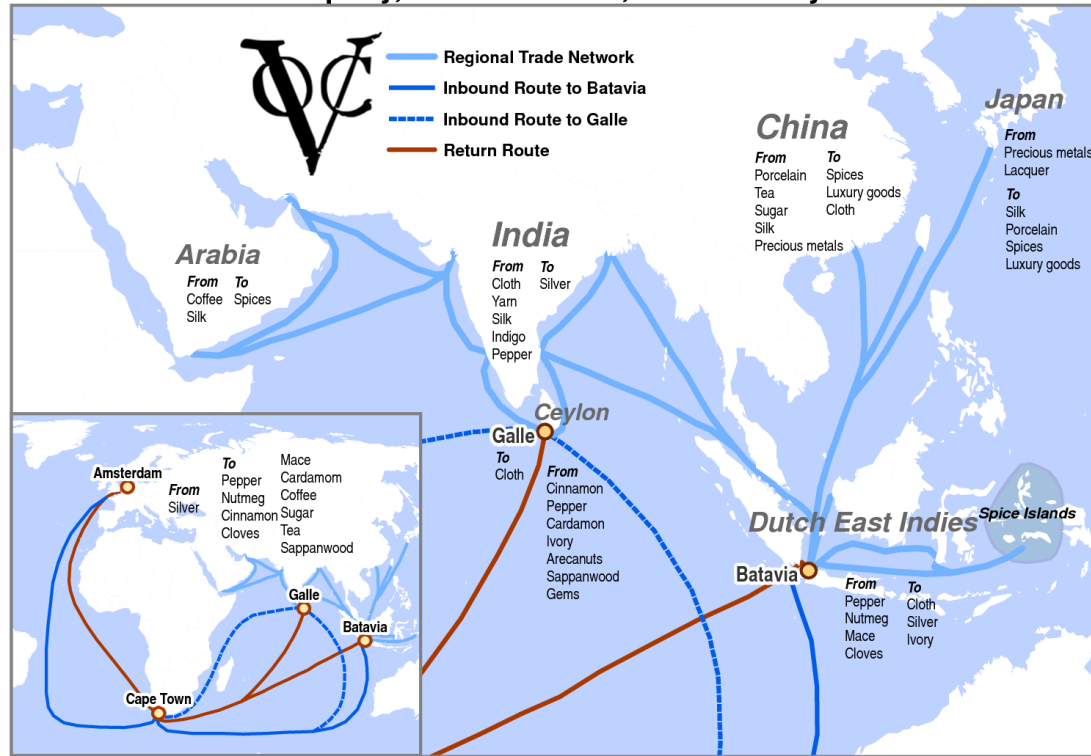
Appendix II: Overall information flow from Asia to the Dutch Republic¹²²



¹²² This schematic was made by Prof. Dr. Jos Gommans and shown in the research seminar Asian Events on 18-2-2020 which was instructed by Dr. Lennart Bes and Prof. Dr. Jos Gommans at the University of Leiden.

Appendix III: Shipping routes of the VOC¹²³

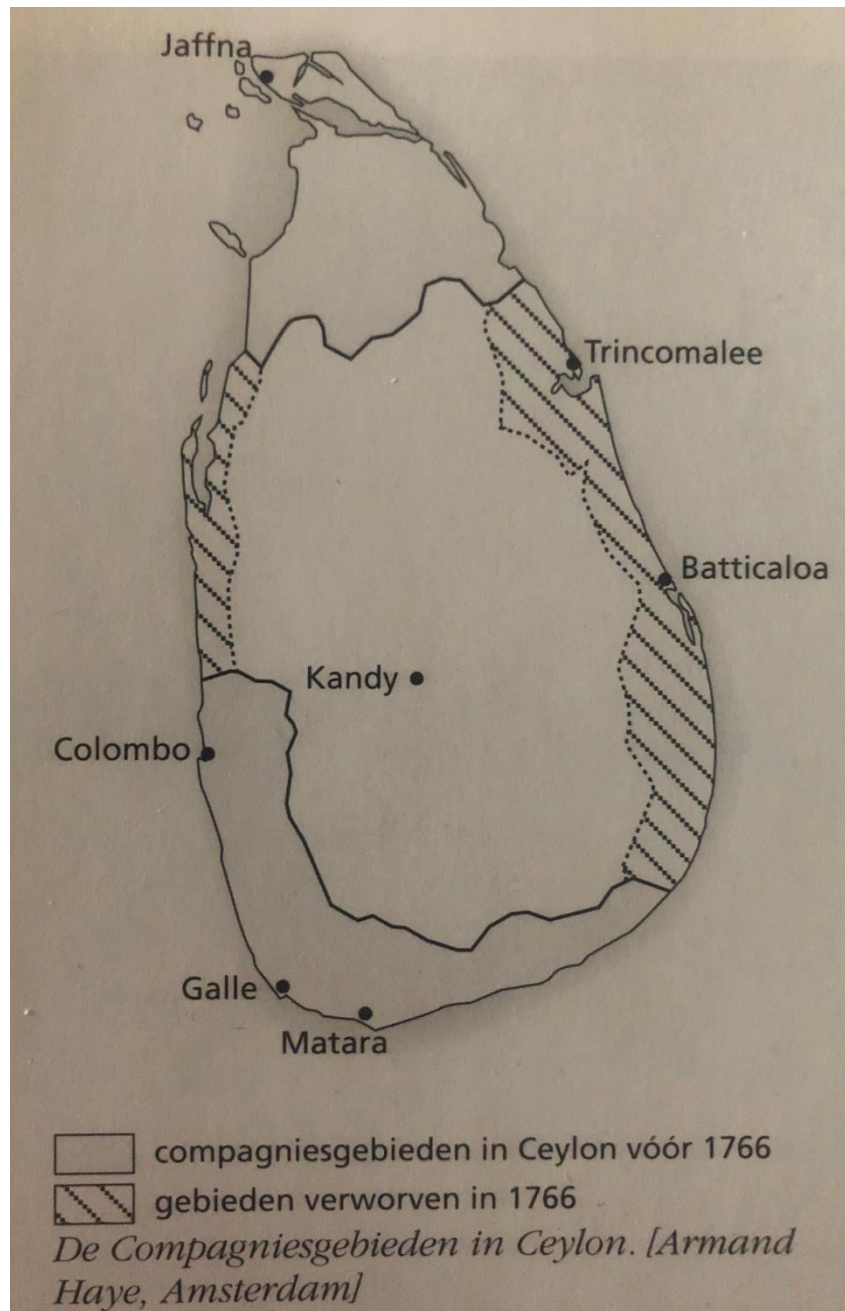
Dutch East India Company, Trade Network, 17th Century



Dr. Jean-Paul Rodrigue, Dept. of Global Studies & Geography, Hofstra University

¹²³ This schematic was shown in the research seminar Asian Events on 25-2-2020 which was instructed by Dr. Lennart Bes and Prof. Dr. Jos Gommans at the University of Leiden.

Appendix IV: Map of Ceylon¹²⁴



¹²⁴ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 15.

Appendix V: Map of South-Ceylon¹²⁵



¹²⁵ Wagenaar, *Galle: VOC-vestiging in Ceylon*, 182.