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An Emotional Company: Mobility, Community, and Control in the Records of the English East-India Company

On 23 December 1674, Major William Puckle – an agent of the English East India Company – was issued a commission and extensive instructions from Company House in London for travel aboard the ship *Bombay Merchant* heading to Fort St George in the Bay of Bengal. Upon arrival and consultation with the Company’s agents there, Puckle was to immediately travel down the coast to the Company’s fort at Machilipatnam on the Coromandel coast. There, the instructions noted, Puckle was to be received as the third in the governing council at the fort and given absolute and free access to ‘all our bookes, consultations, & other papers, or any persons’ for the expressed purpose of discovering ‘abuses and miscarriages, [so] that those that have dealt unjustly may be discovered, & such that have dealt faithfully may be approved ...’. In particular, the London council wished to know ‘whether our orders for religious duties are followed’; to know of ‘refractory persons ... that are idle, and debauched’; those trading privately without the Company’s consent; those who had ‘entred into ye Moors service’; those whom they should see ‘discountenanced ... & sen[t] for England’; and all those English ‘not in our service’ along with their purpose in India. To these ends, Puckle was instructed to keep a ‘a full narrative of [his] whole proceedings’ in the form of a diary, which was to be given to the council on his return to inform subsequent reforms.¹

The completed diary, which spans January 1674/5 to January 1676, represents more than a simple audit of the Company’s material and financial affairs in India: it is also an inquisition into the moral state of the Company’s presence in South Asia. I do not employ the term ‘inquisition’ here lightly: as I will show, the diary fits many of the normal tropes of the inquisitorial process familiar to historians of the church.² The diary attests to the diverse range of people with whom Puckle consulted and the evidence he gathered in producing a broader narrative, incorporating depositions taken from Company agents at the fort, accounts of sermons given, conversations undertaken, crimes enacted, and transcriptions of correspondence with those within and beyond the factory’s walls. As his written commission

¹ British Library India Office Records [hereafter IOR], E/3/88 Letter Book 5, 1672-78, 79r-80v, ‘‘Commission & Instructions to Mr Wm Puckle, 23 December 1674’.

² On inquisition, see Christine Caldwell Ames, ‘Does Inquisition Belong to Religious History?’, *The American Historical Review*, 110, No. 1 (February 2005): 11-37.

suggests, Puckle's task was, in essence, to root out a sort of corporate heresy in terms grounded in the lexicon of Company prosperity: not only in religious misconduct, but also financial mismanagement, personal misbehaviour, and the unpermitted crossing of cultural boundaries (which, as I will show, were often understood within these wider matrices of Company profit). While lacking the formal legal apparatus which has shaped much of the academic discourse around inquisitorial records (especially questions of narrative and subjectivity around depositional material), the diary nevertheless reveals an intense concern for recording and reflecting the 'heresies' within the Company's remit.³ Such 'finding out' of 'abuses and miscarriages' relied heavily upon the assessment, substantiation, and confirmation of information – the 'truth of all such informacions', as Puckle's instructions had termed it – acquired by (or extracted from) those associated with the Company across Machilipatnam's social strata. The text which Puckle subsequently produced is, like other inquisitorial material, one which speaks at multiple registers: it incorporates the narrative imposed by its creator, the experiences of the factory and those surrounding it, and the priorities of the East India Company itself as distilled through Puckle's assessments. The diary, and the broader discourses surrounding it, are therefore shaped by many of the same questions of subjectivity and multivocality highlighted by John Arnold and Lyndal Roper – 'veils' created by the institutional gaze and populated by the disembodied voices within.⁴ The East India Company, as I will show, was no less concerned with the creation of an institutional line of enquiry, employing specific 'language and process' to both comprehend and report on its global activities.⁵ Engaging with sources like Puckle's diary therefore demands focusing not only on the embedded narrative which Puckle has created, but also seeking out the 'voices' which might be gleaned from the wider emotional discourses surrounding Mechilipatnam and the East India Company's gaze more broadly.

A close analysis of Puckle's diary within these wider discourses surrounding East India Company legitimacy and authority necessarily demands reading the document as an emotionally-laden text with specific emotive purposes. The act of observing and subsequently documenting life in Machilipatnam and the practices of Company servants within the fort there

³ Most recently Chris Sparks, *Heresy, Inquisition, and Life Cycle in Medieval Languedoc* (York: York Medieval Press, 2014); John Arnold, *Inquisition and Power: Catharism and the Confessing Subject in Medieval Languedoc* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2001).

⁴ John Arnold, 'The Historian as Inquisitor: The Ethics of Interrogating Subaltern Voices', *Rethinking History*, 2 no. 3 (1998): 379-86; Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1994): 2-3.

⁵ Arnold, 'Historian as Inquisitor': 381.

was an emotional balancing-act in the production of this text. As I will show, Puckle's descriptions required projecting a sense of remove from what was seen and done there while also deploying emotive language to register disapproval and prompt action from those superiors to whom he ultimately answered. Affective language here takes on a distinctly transnational gloss: Puckle's diary is at once a highly-localised representation of the emotional rhythms of the factory and its surrounds on a quotidian level, but also a document created in order to first travel and then project and solicit particular responses in readers as far away as Fort St George and London. The remit of Puckle's task required that the diary also project, where necessary, a sense of anxiety capable of spurring action while also befitting the balanced assessment of a Company servant able to read the situation 'on the ground'.⁶ As I will show, this was fundamentally shaped not only by the Company's own affairs, but interactions beyond the factory walls. Relationships with local merchants, neighbouring towns, and the dominant empires of the region are incorporated into the diary and narrated for the prospective readership as part of the wider, anxious project. In this sense, Puckle's diary can be seen to embody Barbara Rosenwein's 'emotional community' in its most geographically expansive form. The description of a location remote from the prospective readership demanded a common lexicon of value, harm, threat, and approval in assessing Mechilipatnam within the Company's global concerns, variously articulating causes of anxiety while also attempting to ease anxieties in its prospective reader.⁸ It represents an early example of what Ann Laura Stoler has described as the 'epistemic anxieties' which 'stir[red] affective tremors' in the later colonial endeavour, embodied in the 'pulse of the archive and the forms of governance that it belies'. Such documents are perhaps formulaic, but for a reason: they document, as Stoler argues, 'what could, should, and need not be done or said' within these 'never-stable' enterprises.¹⁰ Through this, we are afforded a window into a community – both the Company and those framing it – struggling to respond to the implications of its own global enterprise, seeing – and feeling – what concerned it and building an affective language capable of spanning its expansive geography to the end of shaping and controlling its engagement with the world.

⁶ On anxiety, see William J. Bouwsma, *A Useable Past: Essays in European Cultural History* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), Ch. 6; Laurence Johnson, "'Nobler in the Mind": The Emergence of Early Modern Anxiety', *Aumla* (December 2009): 141-56; Joanna Bourke, 'Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History', *History Workshop Journal*, 55 (Spring 2003): 111-33.

⁸ Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions," *Passions in Context: Journal of the History and Philosophy of the Emotions*, 1.1 (2010): 2-32. [https://www.passionsincontext.de/uploads/media/01_Rosenwein.pdf; last accessed 26/4/2019]; Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

¹⁰ Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 19-20.

The ‘abuses and miscarriages’ related by Puckle to the Company at large also help to bring to life an institution primarily spoken of as a precursor to empire, as a facilitator of material change in Europe, or an embodiment of early-modern statecraft.¹¹ Change both within and around the Company has been explained through its growing monopoly on violence, its shifting aggression in territorial terms, and its management of diplomacy. This seems, to me, to be a field which has in many ways anticipated and understood the importance of emotion within historical change, but largely as a lower-level concern: processes of change laden with affective resonances in the course of encounter and distance, but hidden beneath more dominant historiographical glosses.¹² Susan Broomhall’s recent work has been suggestive in this regard in discussing the missionary endeavours of the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), or (Dutch) United East India Company, emphasising the role of affective motifs in Company correspondence for driving ‘continued engagement and exploration’. Broomhall sees these motifs ‘articulated, rehearsed, and reproduced through [the Company’s] documentation’, compelling missionary activity through appeals to divine obligation and national pride.¹³ Attention paid to emotional response and documentation within the wider processes of encounter, engagement, and (later) conquest can help to make sense of decision-making processes and the cohesion (or otherwise) of these communities across vast distances and in light of near-constant movement not only among Company agents, but the material elements which connected it.¹⁴ While important work by Miles Ogborn, Adrien Delmas, and others has helped to shift scholarly focus towards understanding the daily practices of writing and knowledge-gathering/circulation within these trading companies, focusing on affective language and its application(s) helps to combine such considerations of the negotiation of space and time within the wider ‘globalising process’ with a more precise consideration of the bonds

¹¹ Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Also see: Maxine Berg, Felicia Gottman, Hanna Hodacs and Chris Nierstrasz (eds.), *Goods from the East, 1600-1800: Trading Eurasia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); K.N. Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint-Stock Company 1600-40* (London: Routledge, 1999); Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History* (London: Longman, 1993); David Veevers, ‘“The Company as their Lords and the Deputy as a Great Rajah”: Imperial Expansion and the English East India Company on the West Coast of Sumatra, 1685-1730’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 41.5 (2013), 687-709.

¹² More recent forays into subjectivity and emotion in early-modern travel writing look to offset this. For instance, Nandini Das, ‘Richard Hakluyt’s Two Indias: Textual *sparagmos* and Editorial Practice’ in Daniel Carey and Claire Jowitt (eds.), *Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 119-28; Eva Johanna Holmberg, ‘Writing the travelling self: travel and life-writing in Peter Mundy’s (1597–1667) *Itinerarium Mundii*’, *Renaissance Studies*, 31, No. 4 (2017): 608-625.

¹³ Broomhall, ‘“Quite indifferent to these things”: The Role of Emotions and Conversion in the Dutch East India Company’s Interactions with the South Lands’, *Journal of Religious History*, 39 no. 4 (2015): 20-1.

¹⁴ Broomhall, ‘Emotional Encounters: Indigenous Peoples in the Dutch East India Company’s Interactions with the South Lands’, *Australian Historical Studies*, 45 No. 3 (2014): 352-3.

and boundaries it created.¹⁵ Comprehending what Philip Stern has recently termed the ‘root spatial dilemma’ of authority within the East India Company’s structures, and understanding the ‘systems and strategies produced by the Company’s ever-present institutional anxieties’ therefore demands closer attention to these manipulations and expressions embedded in the texts such dilemmas produced.¹⁶ In short, we have to find a way to comprehend how the Company learned to feel.

In texts such as Puckle’s diary, we can see this sort of regulation in motion, both literally and figuratively. Looking at the affective discourses in this text as part of the vast, self-writing institutional records of the EIC connects these many different strands of historiographical interpretation while also complicating understandings of this crucial institution and the people who both created and challenged it.¹⁷ The essay will be divided into three parts. First, I will look at what Puckle ‘saw’ while recording the ‘abuses’ in Machilipatnam, focusing on the particular elements of daily life in the factory which were reported and the affective language with which Puckle describes them. This will draw attention to the particular ‘anxieties’ which shaped the diary and, by extension, Puckle’s inquisition as a Company representative. Here, I draw on Joanna Bourke’s understanding of ‘anxiety’ as a social state dependant on the gathering of information and the exercise of power over a perceived threat.¹⁸ In Puckle’s case, the naming and interrogation of the source(s) of these anxieties and the restitution of normal, hierarchical power over them is shown to be central to the Company priorities and the stabilization of its emotional rhythms. I will then consider the ‘silences’ in Puckle’s diary by examining the apparent commonplaces and rhythms of Company life in Machilipatnam which clearly inform the text but are not described in comparable affective language – Stoler’s ‘skittish’ imperial gaze.¹⁹ Finally, I will look at the subsequent reception of Puckle’s report within the wider structures of the East India Company. This will be accomplished in the first

¹⁵ Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Adrien Delmas, ‘From Travelling to History: An Outline of the VOC Writing System During the 17th Century’, in Adrien Delmas and Nigel Penn (eds.), *Written Culture in a Colonial Context: Africa and the Americas 1500-1900* (London: Brill, 2012), 97-126; Anna Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World* (Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan 2015).

¹⁶ Philip J. Stern, ‘Response: Seeing (and Not Seeing) like a Company-State: Hybridity, Heterotopia, Historiography’, *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 17 No. 3 (Summer 2017): 110.

¹⁷ The Dutch VOC has received significantly more attention in the study of its ‘self-archiving’ process and forms of documentation: see Adrien Delmas, *Les Voyages de l’écrit: Culture écrite et expansion européenne à l’époque moderne; essais sur la Compagnie Hollandaise des Indes Orientales* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2013); Remco Raben (ed.), *De archieven van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (1602-1795)* (Den Haag: SDU, 1992).

¹⁸ Bourke, ‘Fear and Anxiety’: 126-33.

¹⁹ Rosenwein, ‘Problems and Methods’: 17; Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*: 255.

instance by tracing the reading of the diary before the Council of Fort St George in February 1676 and the resolutions set forth in the process. A dissonant reading of Puckle's interpretation will also be provided through analysis of the responses given at the Council by Walter Clavell, who served as the representative of the Machilipatnam factory at the hearing. This will shed light not only on the ways in which the Company responded institutionally to the appeals made through such affective language, but also the ways in which it permitted or silenced alternate voices in the process in the process of acquiring, exerting, and questioning its own global power.

I

The emotional topography of Puckle's diary is remarkable from the outset, with the landscape of its entries elevated and flattened in accordance with its author's priorities. The voyage, and the experience of travel generally, appear unremarkable within Puckle's account, contributing little to the wider narrative of the diary. From his commission we are told that he travelled in relative comfort, having had the 'great cabben' of the *Bombay Merchant* set aside for him.²⁰ We learn from his own relation only that the *Bombay Merchant* departed the Downs on 20 January 1674/5 in the company of four other ships bound for the Coromandel Coast, arriving 'through good providence and the blessing of God' at Fort St George on 24 June.²¹ The days which followed at Fort St George are related with the appearance of ritual and duty rather than descriptions of the exotic or the new: on disembarking, Puckle delivered letters to the council and his commission was read; on 25 June, Puckle notes 'this day spent in reading letters' and that he had received the respects of the Company there, including a welcome through the firing of guns 'it being too late last night when I landed to do it'.²² Fusing the banal and the routine may remove any sense of drama in the voyage, but also suggest a calming passage for a prospective Company reader into the world Puckle was beginning to describe.

Meetings conducted with local merchants elicited slightly stronger responses. Conversations with wealthy entrepreneurs such as Kasi Viranna – at that point the Company's 'chief agent for purchasing goods in Southern India' and servant of the King of Golkonda – and his account of the 'true state' of trade there brought information but also pity for the 'pore

²⁰ IOR/E/3/88.

²¹ IOR/G/26/12 'Diary of William Puckle, while at Masulipatam and Fort St. George' [hereafter 'Diary'].

²² IOR/G/26/12 Diary, fo. 1.

workemen' under the 'dayly oppression of Governours who seize their goods'.²³ This latter observation regarding the 'tyrannical' governments of South Asia was a common trope among Europeans in the region, and would later become part of the intellectual and emotional framework for imperial rule.²⁴ The neighbouring city of St Thomas (or São Tomé), visited by Puckle at the suggestion of the Company agent at Fort St George, proved 'a curious delightful City' for its 'straight streets with houses well built according to ye Portugall manner without doors windows or inhabitants except vermin'. The climate of St Thomas was sufficiently 'fruitfull [and] healthfull' that Puckle's improving eye saw an opportunity, noting that it would be 'great Advantage' to the Company if 'either St Thomas were brought to Fort St George or that Fort St George were carried to St Thomas'.²⁵ The performance of order mingled with the prospect of further improvement here, ranging from the spaces the Company occupied (or might have) to the maintenance of Company bodies.²⁶

Puckle's departure for Machilipatnam on 10 July brings about a noticeable change in the tone of his diary and the affective language incorporated into the narrative. From the moment of his arrival in the harbour's road, Puckle describes a space which is not only less ordered, but pervaded by external influence: he makes note, for instance of the 'otherness' of the ships surrounding him, observing '11 sayle of shipp' within view. Three of these, Puckle records, belonged to the King of Golkonda (Abul Hasan Qutb Shah); two belonged to the King of Siam (Ramathibodi III); the rest, to Puckle's eyes, appeared to be 'Moorees and Portugalls and Danes'. Puckle's recording of this detail cannot have been an incidental curiosity: it may well have been intended to suggest the relative weakness of the Company's presence in the region, surveying a space which might have been dominated by their own traders but he found filled with foreign bodies. The ship which drew his greatest attention, however, belonged to another Englishman: Richard Mohun, then chief of the factory, whose 'great vessel ab[ou]t 300 tuns

²³ Stern, *Company-State*, p. 95; IOR/G/26/12, 29; 30 June 1675. For Viranna in wider context, see Radhika Seshan, 'Intersections: Peoples, ports and trade in seventeenth-century Surat and Madras', *International Journal of Maritime History* 29 No. 1(2017): 119-20.

²⁴ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Europe's India: Words, People, Empires, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

²⁵ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 3 July 1675.

²⁶ While often commented upon at the time, the climates around the Indian Ocean and the bodily experience of them have received little scholarly attention. See, for instance, Huntington Library MS83394 Sir James Houblon's Notebook, fos. 18v-20r. For 19th-century commentary, see George C.D. Adamson, "'The languor of the hot weather': everyday perspectives on weather and climate in colonial Bombay, 1819-1828", *Journal of Historical Geography*, 38 (2012): 143-54.

... lately from Persia' suggested a more direct corruption than the internationality of the harbour.²⁷

Mohun's ship, and its recent journey, immediately signified the excesses with which he had come to be associated within the East India Company, and the first of the 'heresies' investigated by Puckle on behalf of the Company: private trade. This, as Philip Stern has established, was a concern born of the Company's expanding interest in maintaining a corporate monopoly on all trade conducted by Crown subjects east of the Cape of Good Hope. The institutional insecurities which this subsequently engendered brought with it – at least at this stage - as much or more violence directed towards private traders as any others.²⁸ In the course of reforming and controlling Company activity across such vast spaces, private trade conducted by individual servants otherwise professedly loyal to the Company would eventually be relaxed, ensuring that some – for instance, Elihu Yale or Joseph Collett – could become immensely wealthy on a personal level while still applying themselves to Company profit.²⁹ At the time of Puckle's visitation, however, private trade occupied a liminal moral space in the Company's anxieties. What was termed 'private trade', at its most severe, could lead to the rise of 'interlopers': comparable to smugglers but, in their perceived capacity to sow dissent through their unmitigated pursuit of personal wealth and rejection of Company authority, presenting an immediate threat. Interlopers were, in themselves, held by Company officials to be operating on the margins of both social acceptability and emotional constancy, described as 'unstable minds [and] ungovernable persons'.³⁰

Puckle's characterisation of Mohun, and the affective language employed in the diary, are best understood against these wider anxieties and institutional discourses around private trade. At the time of Puckle's arrival, Mohun had been confined to his quarters on the Council's orders. Anticipating potential offence in his absence, Mohun evidently wrote to Puckle personally: meeting other members of the factory's Council aboard the *Unity*, Puckle had a letter 'put into my hands'. Puckle promptly copied the letter into his diary as part of the larger reconstruction of his arrival. Here, Mohun lamented his state and asked that Puckle 'take not

²⁷ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 10 July 1675.

²⁸ Stern, *Company State*, pp. 44-60; Miles Ogborn, 'Streyنشam Master's office: accounting for collectivity, order and authority in 17th-century India', *Cultural Geographies* 13 (2006): 127-55.

²⁹ Yale is thought to have amassed a fortune of £200,000 while in India; Collett, as governor of Madras from 1717, was rumoured to be making upwards of £10,000 per year. See Om Prakash, 'The English East India Company and India', in H.V. Bowen, Margaret Lincoln, Nigel Rigby (eds), *The World of the East India Company* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2002), 4; 'Introduction', in H.H. Dodwell (ed.), *The Private Letter Books of Joseph Collett* (London: Longman, Greens and Co., 1933), xix.

³⁰ Stern, *Company State*, 44.

unkindly [to his absence] since it springs neither from neglect or disrespect'.³¹ This set the wider tone for Mohun's defence of his actions as well as his submission to Company authority: apparently contrite but also insistent upon explaining the iniquities of his position. Upon meeting with Puckle shortly thereafter in his own quarters, Mohun 'discoursed of his unhappiness as to his present condition [and] how ill he had been treated' but assured Puckle that he would submit to the Company's authority.³² Both men apparently agreed that Puckle would treat the matter dispassionately. Puckle wrote that 'I proposed (to prevent passions) to give him his charge in writing & desired his answer in the same manner ... To wch he agreed & for examining witnesses I should to the best of my skill do impartially in taking & wording theire testimonies'.³³ The conscious exercise of restraint and the subsequent recording (or perhaps performance) of it in the diary were central to the prospect of resolution and the restoration of calm, profitable order.

Much of the remainder of Puckle's visit centred upon assembling a record of Mohun's conduct through both the testimony of his fellow agents and the material record of his activity. When Puckle confronted Mohun after being invited into the latter's private quarters, Mohun argued that he had been 'necessitated to keep up a grandeur both in Habit, Entertainment, and also in attendance' or he would 'gitt nothing by living in this Country'. Foreshadowing similar responses to charges of corruption against Warren Hastings more than a century later, Mohun put forward an argument for the incompatibility of a supposedly orthodox Company morality with the trading cultures and social habits of South Asia: for Mohun, it was a plea for sympathy grounded on the notion that his actions and affectations required new boundaries within these unfamiliar spaces.³⁴ Puckle, however, carried on with the assembling of evidence in the matter. Letters exchanged between agents within the fort from before Puckle's arrival were transcribed within the diary in order to establish the history of Mohun's abuses. Puckle documented conversations held with fellow agents who had observed Mohun's activities and confirmed suspicions that Mohun had personally profited from outgoing trade where his fellow agents and the Company had not. Visiting the factory sites for which Mohun had provided oversight, Puckle marvelled at the excesses, being told that Mohun must have been 'distracted' during their construction. While consulting inventories, Puckle found that Mohun had personally sent

³¹ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 10 July 1675.

³² IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 10 July 1675.

³³ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 12 July 1675.

³⁴ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 12 July 1675; For Hastings, see Andrew Rudd, 'Space, Sympathy, and Empire: Edmund Burke and the Trial of Warren Hastings' in Paul Stock (ed.), *The uses of space in early modern history* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 173-96.

Persian wine to the Mughal governor of the territory without licence from the Company and traded on his own terms in painted cloth and salampore (painted cloth) without permission.³⁵ When finally tried before the Council on 12 July 1675, however, Mohun was replaced and made to wait for the next ship back to England, for which he would have to wait until January the following year.³⁶

While Mohun was certainly the foremost individual concern of Puckle's larger inquisitorial visit, recording the wider rhythms of the factory also demanded a careful balancing of affective language. The state of the factory in devotional terms – observing 'whether our orders for religious duties are followed', as his instructions had required – was of immediate concern on Puckle's arrival.³⁷ Noting his attendance of church on the Sabbath, Puckle recorded having heard the 'padre' (as he termed him) Mr Thomas Whitehead preach on John 16 condemning 'Pride Drunkenness Swearing & Uncleanneſſ' among those in attendance, with Puckle adding that while in the afternoon 'he onely reads prayers'. Moving from the general to the particular, Whitehead told the congregation – and Puckle recorded – that 'though Mars had some years been in the field yet he feared that more have been slain in the Courts of Venus then [sic] in the Fielde of Mars'.³⁸ A clear warning against the consequences of promiscuity and sexual debauchery among the factors at Machilipatnam, this was an articulation of fear regarding the consequences of crossing the cultural and racial boundaries of the factory: the perceived and real threat of spreading sexual diseases and the mixing of allegiances in the process.³⁹ Whitehead subsequently took it upon himself to notify Puckle that the young men of the fort had neglected to come to prayers, naming those who had not been in attendance and working with Puckle to ensure their reprimand. On 7 October, for instance, Puckle received 'information ... that severall of the young men kept disorders in their chambers', drinking beyond 'the bounds of soberity'; pursuing this, Puckle noted they were 'convicted partly by prooffe & ply by confession' and admonished by 'the Padre', who subsequently preached on the subject on the Sabbath following.⁴⁰

Whitehead himself was not beyond the suspicion of Puckle or, by extension, the Company whom he was meant to embody. As Haig Smith has recently pointed out, Company chaplains

³⁵ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, *passim*, but esp. 31 July; 10 August; 22 September.

³⁶ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 16 January 1675/6.

³⁷ E/3/88 Letter Book 5, 1672-78, 79r-80v.

³⁸ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 11 July 1675.

³⁹ Requests for medicines in other factories suggest that sexually-transmitted diseases were not uncommon: see IOR/G/14/1 [Cuddalore and Porto Novo], Davis and Ord to Fort St George, 15 November 1683.

⁴⁰ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 7 October 1675; 23 October 1675.

were not only invested with significant moral duties in spaces where licentiousness was thought to be rife, but also frequently found themselves criticised for proving inadequate in the policing of cultural and religious boundaries.⁴¹ The supremacy of Whitehead as chaplain within the fort was initially reasserted through Puckle's intervention: on 23 July 1675, not long after Puckle's arrival, Whitehead is noted as having complained that he had not been given due status at the dinner table and in the rest of the fort, arguing that he should be treated as second in council after the chief. Whitehead's argument for this was one of education and pedigree, 'he being a Minister and Master of Art of the University of Oxford'.⁴² Puckle duly brought the issue before the council at the next meeting on 2 August, but not without recording his reservations about the potential imbalances this would create in the factory's humours: he noted with caution 'What this little sparke may kindle, especially should it break out in ye Pulpit I cannot foresee further then [sic] the inflaming of ye dyning Roome which sometimes is made almost intollerable [sic] hot ...'.⁴³ The language of disorder, and in particular the implicit reference to humoral imbalance, is notable in Puckle's choice of words on recording this entry: while the Company's dining halls were closely-moderated spaces intended to enforce hierarchy (for instance, through separating married and single men in order to control conversation), Puckle's anxieties over possible excess reinforce a wider narrative of imbalance.⁴⁴ Puckle's examination of Whitehead's influence and moral fortitude also extended to more material manifestations. On 6 October Puckle inspected Whitehead's library, producing in his diary 'a catalogue of the books belonging to the Honourable Company'. Divided into folio, quarto, and octavo formats, these included theological works by Henry Hammond, John Calvin, Peter Martyr, Thomas Aquinas, numerous bibles and a Book of Common Prayer.⁴⁵ While East India Company libraries leave little material trace, comparable lists suggest that the preponderance of Calvin's works, editions of bibles (in English, but also in Greek, Hebrew, and indigenous languages such as Malay), and works of Anglican divines in Whitehead's library were relatively orthodox.⁴⁶ The notable absence of interposition by Puckle in producing this list – without note

⁴¹ Haig Z. Smith, 'Risky Business: The Seventeenth Century English Company Chaplain, and Policing Interaction and Knowledge Exchange', *Journal of Church and State* 60, No. 2 (2017): 226-47.

⁴² IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 23 July 1675.

⁴³ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 23 July; 28 July. 2 August 1675.

⁴⁴ For dining practices see, for instance, IOR/G/14/1 [Cuddalore and Porto Novo] Thursday 1 November 1683.

⁴⁵ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 6 October 1675.

⁴⁶ For comparison see IOR/E/3/43 [Hugli] 'A List of the Hon:bl Compas: bookes packed up in ye Chest, wrote upon Library Bantam' [Dated February 1684 in catalogue with 'Success pacquet recd 16 Augst 1684', but most likely compiled after the loss of Bantam to the Dutch in 1682].

of remarkable inclusions, gaps, or anything that might have been thought anathema to Company aims – again reinforces this insofar as the diary itself can suggest.

With these assessments and rectifications of the mercantile and devotional orthodoxies of the factory came a broader effort to rein in excesses through the assertion of order. This endeavour, as Puckle's diary relates it, saw the disentanglement of excess and emotional indiscipline from the reasoned governance of mercantile activity. For instance, when Thomas Whitehead alerted Puckle to the widespread drunkenness and gambling among the younger men of the fort after having attended the 'punch houses' outside of its walls, Puckle promptly recorded that he personally interviewed the (largely English) owners of these punch houses, issuing licences to some on condition of ensuring moderation, and sending others back to England. The case of Thomas Davis, for instance, is instructive here: on 20 October Thomas Whitehead informed Puckle that Davis – 'an Englishman' – kept a 'punch house' outside the factory, where he 'suffereth great disorders to be in his house not onely in ye weekedays' but also on the Sabbath. Mohun, too, confirmed these disruptions, telling Puckle that, he living nearby, was frequently 'disturbed in his devotions' by 'ye noyse of fidders cursing, swearing, whooping ...' in Davis's house.⁴⁷ Davis was promptly brought before Puckle and the Council 'upon ye 2d message', where he was 'examined confessed & subscribed his name to ye sd examination'. This examination established not only Davis's actions as an owner of the punch house in question, but also his history and wider place in the Company's control: Davis is noted as having lived around Machilipatnam 'ab[ou]t 12 years', having left England in 1661 aboard the *Royal Charles* as a cooper before taking up another position aboard the *Royal James* under one Morris Blackman. Davis, however, found himself stranded when the ship cast away from Balasore, giving him cause to revert to keeping 'an house of entertainment ... most of ye time he hath lived here'. Maintaining that he only permitted gambling as a *passo tempo* and 'never knew any of ye Company's servants drunk but sometimes they would be merry in drink' and had never 'lodg[ed] strangers' while running the house, Davis signed his testimonial.⁴⁸ Testimonials from others within the Company undermined Davis, however: the physician, Thomas Morris, maintained that Davis 'kept a very disorderly house', having nearly killed two of the Company's dyers through plying excess drink; Whitehead himself claimed that Davis had so insulted the chief of the neighbouring Dutch East India Company factory that 'he would have laid Davis in irons but that he is of another nation'.⁴⁹ The following day, Davis's

⁴⁷ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 20 October 1675.

⁴⁸ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 20 October 1675.

⁴⁹ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 20 October 1675.

immoderation was punished, but not without the prospect of reform: he was ‘secured in the factory’ until he could be shipped to Fort St George where, if he could prove against these ‘informations’ against him that he would maintain ‘good sober & peaceable behaviour’, he could have his liberty.⁵⁰

Others escaped with noticeably less severe punishment. When, for instance, two young men were found ‘wanting from ye Factory’ and discovered at the punch house of Andrew Gill, the latter was summoned before the Commissioners. Gill, confessing that, being an ‘old man’, he had no commission or licence to keep a drinking house, nevertheless appealed to the sympathies of his examiners. Gill petitioned the Commissioners for a licence against considerations that he ‘hath lived 15 years in this towne in good reputation’ and being ‘abt 70 years of age past labour unable to returne for England’ could not make a living otherwise. Producing attestations of being ‘of good life & conversation’ from Whitehead and others, Gill was given permission for one year to sell wine under an obligation of 1000 pagodas (a Southern Indian currency) on grounds that he keep to a strict moral code: no fighting or drinking to excess in his house; no drinking after 9 o’clock on any day, not for more than an hour, and not on the Sabbath; and no ‘singing whooping hallowing musicke’ was to arise to avoid ‘disquiet’ for ‘ye neighbourhood’.⁵¹ This suggests that mitigating factors such as age, incapacity, or attestations of good character could shift the normal mobilities through which punishment and order might have operated within the Company. In both instances, the regulation of not only homosocial space, but the activities of those individuals no longer under the direct control of the Company and operating beyond the bounds of the factory walls was paramount.⁵²

The potential consequences of not governing these activities properly were exposed in vivid detail in November 1675, when the social practice of drinking outside the factory’s walls produced an outbreak of violence between Company servants. On 16 November Puckle recorded the signed testimonies of three men – Henry Colborne (a steward), Timothy Harris, and Thomas Mayo (both writers for the Company) – in the wake of a late-night disturbance which had ended with Harris arriving in the factory at midnight crying ‘murder’.⁵³ Harris, according to the recorded examination, had been drinking with Colborne at Andrew Gill’s punch-house when they heard the curfew bell ring, calling for the shutting of the factory’s gates

⁵⁰ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 21 October 1675.

⁵¹ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 22 October 1675; 26 October 1675; Stern, *Company-State*, p. 286.

⁵² On intoxication practices in this period, see Phil Withington, ‘Intoxicants and Society in Early Modern England’ *The Historical Journal* 54, No. 3 (2011): 631-657.

⁵³ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 16 November 1675

‘from 9 till ½ an hour after’, removing themselves to the rooms of George Chamberlain (a member of the Council). There they found both Colborne and Mayo, the latter of whom told Harris that he knew ‘Mr Harry his Unkle, yt is a stage player’ back in London, but had ‘kept compa[ny] with better men’. Passions flared, with Harris admitting ‘he was merry in drink but not drunk’, and a fight ensued during which Mayo ‘thrust his thumb into one of Harris his eyes’. Fearing the loss of his eye, Harris stumbled out into the factory, and ‘should have dyed [sic] thereupon’ but ‘cryed out Murther’ and was heard by the wife of one Samuel White, an Englishman living near the factory. The chirurgeon, John Heathfield, confirmed the eye was bloodshot.⁵⁴ Mayo, in his own account of the event, recalled having been with Harris and Colborne at Gill’s punch-house until they collectively removed to Mr Chamberlain’s, where the insults were hurled. Mayo recalled vividly the names Harris levelled at him, including ‘shabby rogue, puppy, &c.’; the ensuing fight witnessed Harris ‘bit[e] a hole in Mayos leg’ (shown to the Commissioners) and Mayo accidentally ‘run[ning] his finger in Harris[’s] eye’ while attempting to seize his hair. To Mayo, however, Harris had appeared not only drunk, but had drawn his sword at Gill’s punch-house to taunt his company.⁵⁵ Colborne’s examination confirmed that the three had met at Gill’s ‘by accident’ before leaving at 9 o’clock and walking ‘round abt ye towne for ye walks sake’ before arriving at Chamberlain’s house, where Harris was ‘disgusted’ by Mayo’s knowing his uncle. Colborne claimed to have intervened to break up the fight but suffered a bloody nose for it before Harris departed and screamed murder.⁵⁶

All three accounts, as Puckle records them, bring common issues to light: the association between immoderate drinking and a rise in the passions of the three men; the straining of masculine bonds between these men as reputations were questioned and reasserted (in this case, spanning London and Machilipatnam in its geographical scope); and the consequences of Company servants moving across and outside proscribed spaces, beyond the accepted rhythms of Company life as Puckle would have it. By recording these alongside a larger narrative of emotional immoderation, indulgence, and the breakdown of discipline within the factory, Puckle was able to project for his prospective audiences a community blurred at the margins and collapsed at the centre, in desperate need of Company enforcement to restore a profitable balance.

⁵⁴ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 16 November 1675: Examination of Timothy Harris.

⁵⁵ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 16 November 1675: Examination of Thomas Mayo.

⁵⁶ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 16 November 1675: Examination of Henry Colborne.

II

Nevertheless, to read Puckle's diary as a straightforward process of the 'uncovering' of abuses, their documentation, and subsequent remedy (to the best of Puckle and the Council's abilities) risks treating the anxieties of the 'inquisitor' as the dominant influence in shaping the Company's emotional record. Puckle's diary might be read, as above, as an effort in easing larger institutional anxieties through the hounding out of unregulated practices and reinforcement of spaces intended to be segregated.⁵⁷ Yet, there are already slippages evident in Puckle's record and silences which speak to larger tensions. As I have already established, Puckle was acutely aware on his arrival that Machilipatnam was a space not just permeated on all sides by other powers and cultures – the ships on the horizon – but also a heterogeneous cultural space only loosely obedient to Company strictures. Closer analysis of the ways in which Puckle's narrative of regulated emotion and the controlled rhythms of profit appears broken up or intruded upon by broader cultural exchange and interaction is instructive here. This will help in situating the diary within the Company's wider anxieties beyond the narrative permitted to us by its author.

In keeping with his instructions, Puckle made a point of acquiring information about Crown subjects living beyond the Company's administration; however, hearing of these Company 'heresies' relied heavily upon the rumour, hearsay, and reportage of those who, unlike Puckle, had moved freely throughout these regions and could speak to those outside the Company's normal gaze. For instance, in January 1676, one Mr Ives, identified as the 'Son of Mr Ives of Thames Street' in the diary, appeared at the fort apparently fleeing for his life from the army of the King of Golkonda. According to Puckle's account, Ives' arrival at the factory was in pursuit of refuge from 'his French comrades' in the Golkondan army.⁵⁸ Puckle immediately plied Ives for information about his comrades there, noting their reputed character since crossing these boundaries. For instance, Puckle took note of one Mr Hull, described as having 'married a Portugall woman yt proved unfaithfull to his bed', abandoning her at Madras when she sought divorce, 'not being able to bear ye reproach & affronts'; or 'one O'Brian an Irishman came forth a souldier to ye Fort' but fell out with a lieutenant and abandoned his post to join the Golkondan army; John Browse, who had apparently been in India 'abt 10 or 12 years travaling [sic] about ye Mogulls country & most parts of India', but now joined the Mughal armies; and one 'Joseph Taylor' who sailed out in the *Bombay* only to leave his ship and go to

⁵⁷ Stern, 'Response: Seeing (and Not Seeing) like a Company-State': 112-13.

⁵⁸ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 3 January 1675/6.

Golkonda, where he married.⁵⁹ Of Ives himself, Puckle noted that he had served out his time in the Company ‘(as he said) then hearing [Machilipatnam] was a better place to live in’, was persuaded by a friend to stay there, where he married the ‘natural’ daughter of that friend for an (as yet undelivered) ‘sum of Money’.⁶⁰ In another conversation with a Mr Mallet from Bombay, Puckle was notified of some twenty English soldiers in the service of the Golkondan King alongside ‘abt 60 French’, as the King ‘took great pleasure in his Europeans’. Puckle immediately recorded that he had been assured ‘none of them ... had turned M[o]jores’.⁶¹

The essential contradiction for Puckle in producing these sorts of accounts therefore became the need to acquire information regarding those thought to be beyond the Company’s authority (and approbation by extension) through the cooperation of those who did not themselves embody (or even acknowledge) it. This demanded, in effect, temporary e of the wider ‘emotional community’ which the diary circumscribed to achieve the larger inquisitorial end of the investigation, permitting otherwise suspicious testimony into the framing of what was seen and understood to give shape to the image provided.⁶² The prompts which shaped Company anxieties must also be considered as fundamentally hybrid: both drawing on and responding through the actions and language of those who crossed these boundaries.⁶³ In gaining intelligence about Spanish activities in the Philippines, for instance, Puckle was willing to consult an anonymous Englishman ‘yt had left the King of Bantam’s service after 14 or 15 years spent in ye South Seas & parts of India’. From this (curiously) anonymous individual, Puckle was able to gain information about the goods traded in Manila and the potential for spurring insurrection there against the ‘Spaniards Tirany’, building upon the informant’s sense that Spanish subjects there ‘refuse to till ye land because of oppression’. Nevertheless, these remained the insights of a man long since severed from the affairs of the Company and England at large.⁶⁴ Puckle’s investment of trust, and his willingness to incorporate it into the diary as a report on the present state of tensions in the Philippines, necessarily required a willingness to believe not only that the informant had reliably consulted with local sources in the Philippines (either in their own language or through intermediaries there) as to their feelings of oppression and willingness to resist Spanish rule, that he had left the King of Bantam’s service on honourable terms, and that he had arrived in Machilipatnam

⁵⁹ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 3 January 1675/6.

⁶⁰ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 3 January 1675/6.

⁶¹ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 7 December 1675.

⁶² Rosenwein, ‘Problems and Methods’, *passim*.

⁶³ Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge*, esp. ‘Introduction’.

⁶⁴ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, [1] September 1675.

in a spirit of camaraderie; in order to work, it also required that Puckle's superiors would be willing to suspend their distrust of such a 'cosmopolitan go-between' whose divided loyalties might normally have prompted suspicion.⁶⁵

As many of these examples have suggested, anxieties about the consequences of mobility and the spatial limits of Company control intersected with concurrent concerns about the gendered, racial, and hierarchical bounds of the factory. In the easing of many of the anxieties swirling around Machilipatnam and the Company itself, masculine emotion predominated, with the presence of women and non-European agents largely incorporated only as a source or salve for male emotional regulation. As in much of the Company's records, women tend to appear only as wives to Company servants (in India or as embodiments of luxury at home) or, more often, as sources of temptation across cultural boundaries.⁶⁶ The aforementioned wife of Samuel White, who was among the witnesses to the screams of the temporarily cyclopean Thomas Harris, but whose name is not given; Puckle does, however, later record that White, having arrived in India aboard the *Loyal Subject* escorting women to Fort St George, had courted the then Ms Povey when she was intended for a Mr Jersey (or Jearsy). When Povey rejected Jersey and 'return'd him his tokens', she and White were married by the 'French padre' in Madras when the minister at the fort refused to do so.⁶⁷ The example of Mr Hull above in marrying a Portuguese woman (again, unnamed) is in keeping with a broader tendency in the institutional record to reduce 'foreign' women to agents of male anxiety: as early as 1624, one Captain Greene was brought before the Company courts for keeping '2 Portugall women ... in his cabbin a yeare togeather', giving them 'costly apparell' and making them part of the 'ships companye'.⁶⁸ Such desires – emotional, sexual, physical – were, as Julia Schelck has pointed out, often noted as obstacles to the 'productive capacities' of Company servants.⁶⁹ Other women – clearly part of the fabric of everyday life, but at the periphery of Puckle's institutional gaze – are permitted only a glance in the record: one 'Mrs Mingham' is noted as among the English families in neighbouring towns, but only a widow whose husband was 'cannonier to ye King of Golkonda'; another woman, listed only as a 'peon', is noted as working to 'cleanse ye [Factory] house at ½ pago[da] a month'.⁷⁰ As Amrita Sen has noted, however, the presence

⁶⁵ Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge*, 215-16.

⁶⁶ Tillman W. Nechtman, 'Nabobinas: Luxury, Gender, and the Sexual Politics of British Imperialism in India in the Late Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Women's History* 18 No. 4 (Winter 2006): 9-10.

⁶⁷ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 3 January 1675/6.

⁶⁸ IOR/H/29/1r Extracts out of the East India Company Court Books concerning misdemeanours, Dec 17 [1624].

⁶⁹ Schelck, 'The Marital Problems of the East India Company', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 17, No. 3 (Summer 2017): 98.

⁷⁰ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 22 September 1675.

of such women in texts such as Puckle's diary is indicative of the ways in which women shaped, and often pushed at the confessional, cultural, and gendered boundaries of Company life even while those boundaries were in the process of being monitored and forced upon them.⁷¹

The capacity of not only subaltern groups such as the unnamed 'peons' who populate Puckle's diary but also the indigenous merchants and translators to shape the emotional rhythms of life in the factory can also be traced through closer attention to such small, often inadvertent acts of inclusion in the text. Reliance on 'peons' – that is, South Asian labourers, orderlies, and servants working under the Company's remit – for the enforcement of boundaries and provision of stability in the factory is evident throughout Puckle's diary.⁷² As Amrita Sen has recently argued, these incorporations of 'ordinary Indians' into Company routine were 'essential to its survival', facilitating cooperation across cultures and shaping much of the daily function of Company trade.⁷³ Puckle's diary confirms this dependence. For instance, on 4 September 1675, in a bout of 'd[e]lirium', Nathaniel Cholmley, an English diamond merchant living in Machilipatnam by the Company's permission, attempted suicide by 'leaning his breast on the point of a sword', producing '5 wounds'; while Cholmley was recovering, Matthew Mainwaring (a council member) 'put peons into the house that nothing might be removed or imbezeiled [sic]'.⁷⁴ Peons could be both witnesses to disorder and agents of it: when, on 6 January 1675, a 'great brick batt' was thrown at the house of Matthew Mainwaring, three peons affirmed it to have been thrown by Samuel Wales – described as 'one of ye young men' by Puckle – which they 'affirmed to his face' only to be dismissed by Wales on grounds that 'they were black men & their testimoneyes not to be taken'. Wales blasphemed 'with passion' before leaving 'in a huffing manner' once reproved.⁷⁵ When Company servants were retrieved from punch houses or made to observe curfew, peons tended to undertake the labour required which subsequently underpinned the projected calm of Puckle's diary.⁷⁶

Such marginalized individuals and groups could also be targets of suspicion when order broke down. Not only was violence against 'peons' commonplace – to the extent that Puckle

⁷¹ Sen, 'Traveling Companions: Women, Trade, and the Early East India Company', *Genre* 48, No. 2 (2015): 193-214.

⁷² For peon see definition in Henry Yule and A.C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: The Definitive Glossary of British India* (Oxford: Oxford's World Classics, 2013), 410-11.

⁷³ Sen, 'Searching for the Indian in the English East India Company Archives: The Case of Jadow the Broker and Early Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Mughal Trade', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 17.3 (Summer 2017): 38-40.

⁷⁴ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 4 September 1675; 3 January 1675/6.

⁷⁵ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 6 January 1675/6.

⁷⁶ For instance, IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 21 October 1675.

later advised that a penalty should be imposed against any found guilty of ‘drubbing’ them – but their ubiquity within factory life tended to leave them implicated in crimes as passive participants or manipulated accomplices.⁷⁷ Noted instances of trade, whether seemingly frictionless or recorded in a tone of frustration by Puckle, relied upon the translations and intermediation of those – including peons and brahmins – able to work between Company polarities of profit and violence.⁷⁸ Reminders of the Company’s (for now) position of weakness in South Asia were frequent enough: towards the end of December 1675, the factory was evacuated to facilitate its inspection by the King of Golkonda, sending ‘all ye English women to Madapollam’ and the men to a tent beyond the town, with doors left open in the factory ‘yt ye King may go into any house he shall please’.⁷⁹ The affective language embedded within Puckle’s descriptions of South Asian society may, therefore, not have always assigned significant agency to those with whom he interacted, but the gravity of their influence on the text itself is clearly evident. This, as Susan Broomhall has suggested in relation to the VOC, was a fundamental creative (and destructive) component of the wider Company psyche; for Puckle, it was an essential – if not always conscious – element of the story being told.⁸⁰

III

These interactions advanced in Puckle a desire to control how the Company and its agents located themselves along these mercantile and cultural boundaries. The diary concludes with a series of recommendations meant to respond to the problems of the fort. Many of these are unsurprising given the problems initially articulated by Puckle. For instance, Puckle argued for the reinforcement of strict hierarchy within the fort to ensure ‘settling differences amongst the commissioners’ and thereby avoiding conflict. This would help to counter the perceived ‘idleness’ of its young men. If they were not to be ‘conformed to the Rules of Government’, Puckle suggested the Company adopt the Dutch example of sending ‘all young men as will not be regulated to Batavia’ as soldiers.⁸¹ But Puckle was also careful to advocate a clearer, moderated engagement along the cultural boundaries of the factory. He lamented the linguistic inabilities of many within the fort – again, the young in particular – noting that only a few spoke Dutch or Portuguese and only one or two ‘ye Countrey languages’. To this end, Puckle advocated daily, one-hour lessons in Portuguese and ‘the Moores language’ (likely Persian)

⁷⁷ IOR/G/26/12 Diary [fo. 68], ‘Proposals’; 17 November 1675.

⁷⁸ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 24 July; 4 August; 27 August.

⁷⁹ IOR/G/26/12 Diary, 26 December; 28 December.

⁸⁰ Broomhall, ‘Emotional Encounters’: 351-3.

⁸¹ IOR/G/26/12 Diary [fo. 68], ‘Proposals’.

after dinner each day, with the caveat that non-attendance would come at a personal cost to help pay for the tutors.⁸² This would have helped to facilitate fluency in what were, by that time, the *lingua francas* of the South Asian seaboard as well as the main language of communication with the Mughal elite, likely with the aim of cutting out native intermediaries.⁸³ Nevertheless, such advocations on Puckle's part should not be read as a case for unadulterated cosmopolitan engagement with these same South Asian societies. The spatial terms in which these cultures were to be encountered was to be strictly controlled, especially where profit suffered. For instance, all travel of 'Moors, Gentues & Persians' on Company ships was to be prevented according to Puckle, on grounds that 'it doth give them such insight into trade as may in tyme spoile the English.'⁸⁴ This was a careful management of the space of the fort to not only rectify the 'abuses' Puckle witnessed there, but also to set the terms of cultural engagement in a way which would affect measured, controlled cosmopolitan trade.

Puckle's diary ostensibly worked as an affective device, prompting swift actions from the wider Company grounded on his authoritative account. The Council at Ft St George, with the approval of Company House in London, produced a four-page set of proposals with the aim of remedying the problems the diary had exposed in Machilipatnam.⁸⁵ In many of these, the connection between managing the emotional rhythms of the fort and its day-to-day operations are evident, bringing Puckle's recommendations into almost direct effect. For instance, Company agents were instructed to pass any complaints between agents and commissioners upwards rather than settle disputes locally, fearing that otherwise 'the parties will [never] become one piece againe' in either private terms or 'in the Honourable Company's service' if hierarchy remained unenforced and unobserved.⁸⁶ The 'tyrannical' practice of private trade – here clearly echoing Mohun's case – was condemned on grounds that such practices 'justified the Heathen whom in words they condemn'.⁸⁷ The young men whom Puckle so often criticised were to be subject to strict moral monitoring: fines were introduced for being found drunk, for cursing, or unlawful gaming; for being out of their chambers 'after 10 of the clock at night'; and for beating ('drubbing') Company servants or 'peons'.⁸⁸ Such strictures set into place a

⁸² IOR/G/26/12 Diary [fo. 68], 'Proposals'.

⁸³ Samuli Kaislaniemi, 'The Linguistic World of the Early English East India Company: A Study of the English Factory in Japan, 1621-1623', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 17.3 (Summer 2017): 40.

⁸⁴ IOR/G/26/12 Diary [fo. 69], 'Proposals'.

⁸⁵ IOR/E/3/36, 'Replies ... to various proposals and questions by Major William Puckle', Fort St George the 16th Febr 1675/6.

⁸⁶ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 181v.

⁸⁷ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 182r.

⁸⁸ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 182r.

proposed system of moderation which would ensure calm, order, and of course stable conditions for trade. Puckle's language reforms were implemented for both Portuguese and Persian ('the Moors language') and to be woven into factory life. A tutor for each language was to be hired for six months, reading to the Company servants for an hour each day after dinner 'whilst they are together'. Non-attendance and incompetence in the languages was to be met with penalties: three further months could be provided at the end of six if they were not yet 'perfect', however speaking English during lessons would be met with forfeiture of money to help pay the tutor.⁸⁹ While linguistic ability was, as Samuli Kaislaniemi has pointed out, already entrenched in Company activity through a larger 'community of practice', such formalized lessons and the clear attempt to invest in full competence through a common lexicon must also be read as an enforcement of order and a response to the anxieties of cultural fluidity and co-dependence.⁹⁰ In extreme circumstances, those who refused to be 'conformed to Rules' were to be 'sent to the Fort [St George] and kept there', severing them from factory life entirely. That the Dutch 'send all such young men ... to Batavia, & make them serve for souldyers till their time expire' was cited as a justification for this approach, as Puckle had done in his own recommendations.⁹¹

Curiously, however, the same document through which the proposals were issued in Council also contain a dissenting voice: that of Richard Mohun's representative, Walter Clavell, who was invited to answer for Mohun and comment on the proposals at Fort St George. Clavell's responses, which are recorded in a second column next to the original proposals in a different hand, speak directly to the tensions between the regulating impulses of the Company authorities and the realities of life in the factory. While the format of the document leaves Clavell's direct penning of the responses uncertain, the preamble to the document notes that Clavell 'will Answer for himselfe', suggesting at the very least transcription by a clerk at hand.⁹² The responses given offer a notably dissenting voice from that of the proposals themselves. For instance, the mediation of the Company in divisions among agents is noted as having 'long been desyred', but never properly acted upon by the Company and so 'discountenancing the transgressor at home' had been the only remedy.⁹³ Stricter observance

⁸⁹ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 182r.

⁹⁰ Kaislaniemi, 'The early English East India Company as a community of practice: evidence of multilingualism', in Esther-Miriam Wagner, Bettina Beinhoff, and Ben Outhwaite (eds.), *Merchants of Innovation: The Languages of Traders* (De Gruyter Mouton, Berlin/New York), 132-57.

⁹¹ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 182v.

⁹² IOR/E/3/36, fo. 181r.

⁹³ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 181v.

of Company orders and hierarchy is responded to bitterly and with a clear tone of frustration, saying ‘this were better addressed to our employers’ whom Clavell noted had too easily found fault in their agents.⁹⁴ Puckle’s suggestion of sending young agents to the Company fort at Batavia to gain discipline as soldiers, while agreeable in principle, is given the warning that ‘a garrison is a sorry schoole of morality’, and thus unlikely to provide any longer-term issues with the character of the Company’s servants.⁹⁵ Lastly, Clavell replied to the charge that the carrying of ‘Moors and Gentues’ had ‘spoiled the English’ in those regions, noting that this passage was very often enforced by local governors, and therefore beyond the control of any but the highest ranking Companymen; moreover, Clavell noted, co-operation with these groups – whom he lists as ‘Armenians, Indostans, Bengallers, Viziapores, Moors, Gentues, Mallabars ... Javas, Chinese, Mallayes, Syamers ...’ – was made necessary by their ‘free & uncontrolled’ movement in those waters.⁹⁶ Trade made movement a reality; the Company could only restrict its own servants. To do so in the hope of spurring further reform, however, would be ‘to take the[ir] bread & give it unto strangers’, not only hindering trade but denying servants the capacity to survive in a cosmopolitan environment (as yet) beyond the Company’s fashioning.⁹⁷ Such recommendations lay at the core of Clavell’s responses to the Company’s attempts at regulation and control, connecting the local and the transnational alike but suggestive of the emotional fraying which could occur in the process of regulation. Clavell’s responses should, however, be read alongside a wider institutional endeavour to respond to the anxieties which Puckle’s report was designed to ‘expose’: while an attempt to invite a measured and informed local response to Puckle’s rendering of life in Machilipatnam, Clavell’s dissenting viewpoint, like the interjections of factory servants and ‘silent’ voices of the factory, remains veiled by the Company’s own anxious self-interest.⁹⁸

As Guido van Meersbergen has recently suggested, attention to the sort of anxieties evident in records such as these are instructive for their capacity to dissolve easy characterizations of the East India Company and the cultures with which it engaged.⁹⁹ Puckle’s diary must be located at the nexus of a multitude of anxieties: its author’s desire to both find and

⁹⁴ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 182r.

⁹⁵ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 182r.

⁹⁶ Reliance on the Armenian ‘trade diaspora’ would be partly formalized soon after these incidents in a 1688 treaty. See Sebouh Aslanian, ‘Trade Diaspora versus Colonial State: Armenian Merchants, the English East India Company, and the High Court of Admiralty in London, 1748-1752’, *Diaspora* 13 (2004): 46.

⁹⁷ IOR/E/3/36, fo. 181r.

⁹⁸ Arnold, ‘The Historian as Inquisitor’: 383-4.

⁹⁹ van Meersbergen, ‘Writing East India Company History after the Cultural Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century East India Company and Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie’, *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 17, No. 3 (Summer 2017): 18-19.

constructively respond to known disorders, uncontrolled exchanges, and interests divergent from those of the Company; the tensions between Puckle as both individual agent in his own narrative and as a performing Company servant being acted upon by that institution's influence; and finally, the intrusion – active or passive – of voices outside the Company into that narrative. Attention to affective language is not only central to understanding these constructions, it has also permitted insights into the ways in which East India Company servants strained to operate between the aspirations of the abstract entity for which they worked and the practicalities of putting them into practice across immense distances. Puckle's diary suggests overlapping and even disputed boundaries which could extend across time and space (through reports, instructions, and regulatory structures) while struggling to comprehend more localized geographies where ambition and practicality often diverged when confronted with temptation, fear, or questions of survival.¹⁰⁰ These were the tensions born out of the process of globalization which the East India Company has so often embodied in historical discussion: the simultaneous creation of vast distances between individuals and communities alongside a direct need to maintain essential emotional connections for the sake of function and a sense of common purpose. In trying to resolve these anxieties and exposing others, both Puckle and his diary reveal the crucial interplay and tension between the external and internal in the shaping of Company life and the wider world of which it was – wilfully or otherwise – increasingly a part.

¹⁰⁰ Similar questions have been raised recently in Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 68-71.