

# **Sea of Print**

**Printed administrative paperwork in maritime commerce of the  
seventeenth-century Dutch Republic**

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# Abstract

This thesis examines the role of administrative printed documents – such as forms, receipts, lists and instructions – in the administration and regulation of maritime commerce in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. It explores the use of this type of print in three contexts: in Dutch Republic itself, on board of Dutch East India Company (VOC) ships, and in international maritime encounters throughout Europe. This study demonstrates that, alongside an expansion of the scale and complexity of maritime bureaucracy throughout the seventeenth century, there was an increase in the use of administrative print. Such print served as a key instrument in the state’s efforts to regulate and standardise increasingly complex administrative and operational procedures. This thesis argues that, firstly, administrative print functioned as instruments of governance and authority within the everyday lives of individuals active within the maritime sector. Secondly, it facilitated and aided record-keeping and the proper functioning of administrative systems of the state. Thirdly, it facilitated and mediated international interactions. Furthermore, basing itself on a unique collection of rare items of print – primarily from the ‘Prize Papers’ archive – this study adds to our understanding of the role and use of ephemeral print within the printing sector of the Dutch Republic, and its importance within the everyday lives of its citizens. This study contributes to historiographies on information-management, state communication, book history, and maritime history.

# Acknowledgements

This project started on an evening in October 2024, behind my desk overlooking the vast North Sea. 350 years earlier, the VOC ship *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* had sailed past – right there in the distance – and now I was looking at the papers it had on board. These documents marked the beginning of an exciting journey (that, unlike the ship's, luckily did not end prematurely by getting caught in a storm and stranded on an island). I have thoroughly enjoyed every part of this research, and am grateful to everyone who helped make it possible. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Richard Calis, for all his support, guidance and advice, which have been of incredible value to me and this project. I would also like to extend a great thanks to Arthur der Weduwen at the University of St Andrews for his encouragement, advice, and useful comments on earlier versions of the first two chapters. I am grateful to him, to Andrew Pettegree, and everyone else associated with the Universal Short Title Catalogue project for giving me the opportunity to return to St Andrews and work with the sources that have become the centre of this thesis. I have truly had the most enjoyable and enriching time these past months. A final thank you goes out to my family and friends in St Andrews, The Netherlands, and beyond, for all those times they patiently listened to me go on about some ships again, and for always pretending to be interested when I was once again trying to explain why, of all things, I am studying a bunch of old receipts and forms. I hope I can convince you with this thesis.

St Andrews, June 2025

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# Introduction

Skipper Lucas Pruijs was an avid record-keeper. In his personal administration on board of his ship, the *Santa Maria van Conceptie*, he carefully kept paperwork from his various voyages. Between 1661 and 1664, he had sailed between his hometown of Amsterdam to Cádiz, Genoa, Livorno and Venice. These various journeys were made possible by the use of printed paperwork, which he collected both within the Republic and beyond. Inspection reports confirmed that his ship was correctly loaded; bills of lading formalised the transactions of the goods being shipped; a sea letter in multiple languages served as an international passport for the ship that proved its identity abroad; and numerous toll and customs receipts proved that Pruijs had paid the necessary local fees. In short: Pruijs's personal archive was filled with printed documents that regulated and shaped his journeys.

A decade after Pruijs's final voyage, another ship departed the Dutch Republic. On board of Dutch East India Company (VOC) ship *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*, bound for Batavia with a crew of 300 men, was likewise a plethora of printed paperwork. Various instruction booklets, and posters affixed around the ship, outlined in detail the rules and regulations on board. Bookkeeping manuals prescribed the manner in which the books were required to be kept, and pre-printed inventory lists aided onboard administration. By the mid-seventeenth century, printed paperwork had evidently become indispensable to the operation and administration of Dutch merchant journeys.

The *Santa Maria* and *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* represent but two of the approximately 2000 merchant vessels that had the Dutch Republic as their home around 1660. This was twice as much as the Republic's nearest rival, the British.<sup>1</sup> To this must be added the countless foreign ships that docked at Dutch ports on a daily basis. During the latter half of the sixteenth century and first of the seventeenth, commercial activity of the Dutch Republic and beyond rapidly expanded, with an expansion of trade routes into the Baltics and the Mediterranean, and further afield to the newly established colonies in the East and West Indies. By the mid-seventeenth century, the Republic had become Europe's centre of trade, a position it would occupy until the end of the century.<sup>2</sup>

This expansion of maritime commerce required careful administration. Administrative, communicative, and instructional documents were used to ensure the smooth sailing of the Dutch merchant fleet and visiting international ships. Increasingly during this century, such documents were printed. Most of this 'ephemeral print' – instructions, receipts, bills, reports, and other forms – lived a short life, often discarded immediately after fulfilling their initial purpose. Yet, this does not imply that

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<sup>1</sup> Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 490; Joost Jonker and Keetie Sluyterman, *At Home on the World Markets: Dutch International Trading Companies from the 16th Century until the Present* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 73.

<sup>2</sup> See: Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740* (Oxford University Press, 1989); Jonker and Sluyterman, *At Home on the World Markets*.

they were insignificant. On the contrary: it is their fleeting character that makes these types of print stand in close connection to practices of everyday life. These materials were essential in the daily administration and regulation of ships entering and departing the Dutch Republic.

This thesis explores the sea of ephemeral print that kept the Dutch merchant fleet afloat. It asks how print was used in the administration and regulation of maritime commerce in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century, and what insights this provides into the use of ephemeral print within Dutch state administration during this period. It approaches this question through examining a wide and unique collection of administrative printed materials that were used in maritime administrative processes, situating them within their social, material, and spatial contexts on shore, on board, and in international encounters throughout Europe. What forms did ephemeral administrative print take? How did they structure and regulate maritime state administration both within the Dutch Republic and beyond, and what does this indicate about the rise of early modern bureaucracy? In what ways was this type of print present in everyday life, and what does this reveal about the presence of state governance in everyday life? Who produced administrative print, and what can it tell us about its role within the printing industry in the Dutch Republic?

By exploring previously unknown printed documents in an understudied archive – the ‘Prize Papers’ – I argue that ephemeral administrative print was fundamental to the functioning of maritime commerce of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, serving as a key instrument in the state’s efforts to regulate and standardise increasingly complex administrative and operational procedures. The development of maritime bureaucracy and the use of administrative print were mutually dependent and reinforced one another. With an increase in the scale and complexity of maritime administration, came an increase in print to regulate it. Simultaneously, a growth in the use of print resulted in more paperwork requiring administration. Thus, the development of print and maritime bureaucracy went hand in hand. As opposed to their handwritten counterparts, printed documents were more uniform, structured, clearer, standardised, and in some cases, authoritative. They could also be produced quicker and in much larger quantities – qualities that made print particularly suited to the evolving needs of maritime bureaucracy during this period. The increasing use of administrative print within seventeenth-century maritime commerce, I argue, had impact at three levels: at personal level, state-level, and international level.

First of all, ephemeral administrative print were tangible pieces of governance that reached ordinary people in their everyday practices regarding maritime activities, making the state present in everyday routine procedures. Contrary to administration conducted in offices by government clerks, and recorded in stationary books and ledgers, these ephemeral documents were highly mobile. They travelled from place to place, and were handled by a wide range of actors from often modest backgrounds, who with every interaction encountered state authority in the shape of printed paper.

Secondly, over the course of the seventeenth century, the Dutch state came to rely on ephemeral administrative print for the effective functioning of its maritime administrative systems. The operation

of these systems was dependent on printed receipts, forms, lists, and the accompanying printed announcements, rules and instructions, that were all intended to regulate and standardise the administrative procedures in ports, on ships, and even in encounters on open water. Thirdly, ephemeral administrative print operated within a shared international maritime administrative system that was characterised by international cooperation. Documents that were internationally recognised and accepted, held a legal mandate that held the power to regulate international interactions.

Finally, I demonstrate the importance of ephemeral administrative print for the Dutch printing sector in this period. Administrative print was produced by officially appointed printers who supplied the state and state institutions with a wide variety of forms, receipts, instructional documents, and more. ‘Ordinary’ printers and sellers were, too, actively involved in producing and selling of administrative print in a competitive commercial market. Thus, with maritime administrative print increasingly during the seventeenth century being produced, used, and discarded on a large scale and on a daily basis, their importance for Dutch maritime administration and printing business cannot be ignored.

## Historiography

In shedding light on the role of administrative printed documents within the Dutch maritime world, this thesis contributes to various fields of research and debates in the history of information management, book history, state communication, as well as maritime history.

The increasing use of paperwork in the maritime world must be situated against the background of a wider change in the role of paper and information management in early modern Europe. From the late Middle Ages onwards, the growing availability of cheaper paper, increasing state centralisation, rising literacy rates, and expanding urbanisation, led to an excess of information and paperwork to permeate all facets of society. In the last two decades, this transformation has received considerable scholarly attention, largely prompted by Ann Blair’s influential study on how early modern scholars coped with an excess of information.<sup>3</sup> Randolph Head has for instance discussed how early modern states created and maintained archives as a tool of everyday governance in the context of expanding bureaucracy.<sup>4</sup> More recently, Paul Dover has emphasised the centrality of paperwork, and the printing press, in the development of an ‘information revolution’.<sup>5</sup> These and other studies have shown that an increase in paperwork and the rise of bureaucracy and administration went hand in hand.

However, these studies largely focus on how elite actors – learned people, officials, or professional administrators – dealt with information, often operating from within their offices or archives, and often in notebooks, ledgers, and other types of books. This perspective, while important,

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<sup>3</sup> Ann Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age*, (Yale University Press, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Randolph C. Head, *Making archives in early modern Europe: proof, information and political record-keeping, 1400-1700* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).

<sup>5</sup> Paul M. Dover, *The Information Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

represents only one part of early modern administration and information management. I aim to demonstrate that administration and information management reached beyond the confines of offices out onto the streets, ports, ships and seas, and involved the active participation of ordinary citizens who interacted with small pieces of paper. For a full picture of how paper and print played a role in the context of increasing bureaucracy in this period, it is necessary to examine how administrative practices of the state reached and permeated the lives of their citizens in routine interactions with forms, receipts and other ephemeral print.

The administration and information-gathering of maritime institutions are not entirely unstudied. Miles Ogborn has examined the writing practises of the English East India Company, offering valuable insights in how the company employed written and printed documents in its trade operation, economic policies, and imperialistic ventures.<sup>6</sup> However, Ogborn's focus remains largely on shore-based administrative practices, not highlighting recordkeeping on ships themselves, and paying limited attention to the roles of ordinary seamen. Onboard administrative practices have received attention in recent work on the VOC.<sup>7</sup> Djoeke van Netten has discussed information-gathering and the regulation of procedures on early voyages of the VOC and its predecessors, a period in which the Company did not use print in its administration.<sup>8</sup> Margaret Schotte demonstrated that by the 1690s the VOC did use printed forms as an onboard data collection tool and to track the performance of a newly invented distillation machine.<sup>9</sup> Together, these studies show a shift from handwritten administration and instructions to the Company adopting print.<sup>10</sup>

Yet, much remains unclear about the VOC's adoption of print during this century, and how it influenced onboard administration and procedures. This is particularly unfortunate, as a focus on the maritime world can not only reveal how administrative print operated in practice, but also in interactions involving ordinary citizens, which, in turn, provides further insight into their role and experience within administrative practices of the state. Moreover, the exact types of ship's documents that were printed during this century are largely unknown, in part due to their low rates of survival. Through an

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<sup>6</sup> Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (University of Chicago Press, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> Record-keeping on board of Admiralty ships has likewise been the topic of research: Marc van Alphen, *Het oorlogsschip als varend bedrijf. Schrijvers, administratie, en logistiek aan boord van Nederlandse marineschepen in de 17<sup>e</sup> en 18<sup>e</sup> eeuw* (Van Wijnen, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Djoeke van Netten, "Instructing Trade and War. Regulating Knowledge and People on Faraway Dutch Voyages, ca. 1600," in *Regulating Knowledge in an Entangled World*, ed. Fokko Jan Dijksterhuis (Routledge, 2022); Djoeke van Netten, "Sailing and Secrecy: Information Control and Power in Dutch Overseas Companies in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries." In *Information and Power in History*, eds. Ida Nijenhuis, Marijke van Faassen et al. London: Routledge, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Schotte, "Distilling Water, Distilling Data: Questionnaires in Dutch East India Company Record-Keeping," *Intellectual History Review* 32, no. 3 (2022): 531–51.

<sup>10</sup> This is a development that has also been noted by Guido van Meersbergen and Frank Birkenholz, who remark that the Company's data management was facilitated by the use of the printing press, which helped to standardise procedures and administration. See: Guido van Meersbergen and Frank Birkenholz, "Writing That Travels," in *Trading Companies and Travel Knowledge in the Early Modern World*, eds. Aske Laursen Brock, Guido van Meersbergen, and Edmond Smith (Routledge, 2021).

examination of a rare and near-complete set of printed ship's documents from a 1674 voyage of a VOC ship, I seek to address this gap, and shed more light on how the Company incorporated print in their onboard administration. Besides VOC-documents, my examination of various other state-issued forms and receipts will highlight the importance of this type of print within systems of maritime state administration, thus contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of early modern information management.

Furthermore, this thesis will add valuable new perspectives to the field of book history. Ephemeral print such as that central to this study has only in recent decades begun to gain attention from scholars within this field. Traditionally, book historians have focused their research on the book as their primary object of study. While collectors have long expressed interest in ephemeral pieces of print, it was only until the last decades of the previous century that it gained scholarly attention, with book historians increasingly emphasising how studying ephemera can provide a better understanding of the role print in everyday life, as well their important for printing businesses.<sup>11</sup>

As opposed to books, ephemeral print was much more integrated in daily life for a larger amount of people, and had the ability to connect people and build communities.<sup>12</sup> This is, for instance, demonstrated by Rosa Salzburg in her seminal study of ephemeral print in Venice. Others have analysed many other types of ephemeral print and their integration in daily lives include almanacs, newspapers, pious print, ballads, trade cards and celebratory print – each emphasising the significance of ephemeral print in the daily lives of early modern Europeans.<sup>13</sup> Administrative print such as forms and receipts was likewise ubiquitously present in the lives of many individuals. Yet, its exact role within administrative systems and daily lives, of those active within maritime commerce or beyond, has not yet received much attention. A closer study of these items can therefore shed further light on the role of ephemeral print in the everyday experiences of early modern individuals.

This relative lack of scholarly attention to administrative print likely has to do with their survival and locations where they are stored. In their survey of what was produced in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen note that the production of

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<sup>11</sup> Influential was especially the work of Maurice Rickards. See for instance: Maurice Rickards, *Encyclopedia of Ephemera A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator and Historian*, ed. Michael Twyman (Routledge, 2000). Martin Andrews, "The Importance of Ephemera," in *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds. Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose (Wiley-Blackwell, 2007); Michael Harris, "Printed Ephemera," in *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, eds. Michael Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Pettegree, "Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing in the First Age of Print. Typology and Typography," in *Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing in the First Age of Print*, ed. Andrew Pettegree (Brill, 2017), 31-32.

<sup>13</sup> See for instance: Tessa Watt, *Cheap print and popular piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); Jeroen Salman, *Populair drukwerk in de Gouden Eeuw: de almanak als lectuur en handelswaar* (Walburg Pers, 2011); Tim Somers, *Ephemeral print culture in early modern England: Sociability, politics and collecting* (Boydell & Brewer, 2021); Callan Davies, Hannah Lilley. and Catherine Richardson eds., *Practices of Ephemera in Early Modern England* (Taylor & Francis, 2023); Chloe Akers-Brewer, "Academic Circles: The Celebratory Typography of Graduation Pamphlets in Finland, 1700–1760," *Quaerendo* 55 (2025): 1-23.

ephemera, including forms and receipts, must have been extensive.<sup>14</sup> They, along with earlier scholars, point out that the printing of such ephemera, or so-called ‘jobbing printing’, represented a large and significant part of the business of an early modern printing house.<sup>15</sup> As documents that were always in demand and relatively inexpensive and quick to produce, they provided the printer with a reliable and steady source of income. Despite their importance for the Dutch printing sector, however, much remains unknown about the true breadth and variety of ephemeral print. Unlike books, ephemera are typically not included in bibliographical catalogues such as the Short Title Catalogue Netherlands (STCN), and are often not part of library collections. Typically discarded after use, surviving examples are scarce and often remain hidden away and uncatalogued in archives. This thesis, through its examination of a previously unexamined, uniquely large collection of printed administrative documents – on which more later – therefore aims to significantly contribute to our understanding of what was printed in the Dutch Republic during this period. Moreover, my cataloguing of this material – provided in an appendix to this thesis, as well as added to the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) – will enable future scholars to easier access and identify this material.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, this thesis contributes to growing debates on state print and communication. The past decade has seen increased interest in the role of ephemeral print within state communication. For the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, this has been studied by Arthur der Weduwen, with related studies undertaken for other European countries and regions.<sup>17</sup> However, such studies almost exclusively focus on publications such as placards and ordinances. While these are significant, state communication and means of governance reached far beyond that, with state institutions actively employing forms, receipts, and instructions to inform and govern over their citizens – a topic this thesis aims to shed more light on.

Moreover, studies into the printing side of state communication in Europe tend to solely focus on official printers to the government – in case of the Dutch Republic, the printers to the States General, the provincial States, and individual cities. These were, however, not the only branches of the state that appointed official printers. In the Dutch Republic, the East and West India Companies, as well as the various Admiralties, similarly did so, as was the case with the French admiralty. While scholars do

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<sup>14</sup> Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, “Forms, Handbills and Affixed Posters: Surveying the Ephemeral Print Production of the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic,” *Quaerendo*, 50 (2020): 15-40. See also Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, *The Bookshop of the World: Making and Trading Books in the Dutch Golden Age* (Yale University Press, 2019).

<sup>15</sup> See for instance: James Raven, “Jobbing Printing in Late Early Modern London: Questions of Variety, Stability, and Regularity,” in *Forms, Formats and the Circulation of Knowledge. British Printscapes; Innovations, 1688–1832*, eds. Louisiane Ferlier and Benedicte Miyamoto (Brill, 2020); Peter Stallybrass, ““Little Jobs”: Broad-sides and the Printing Revolution,” in *Agent of Change. Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, eds. S.A. Baron et al., (Amherst: 2007).

<sup>16</sup> Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC), <https://www.ustc.ac.uk/>.

<sup>17</sup> Arthur der Weduwen, *State Communication and Public Politics in the Dutch Golden Age* (Oxford University Press, 2023). See also: Nina Lamal, Jamie Cumby and Helmer J. Helmers, eds., *Print and Power in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Brill, 2021); Saskia Limbach, *Government Use of Print, Official Publications in the Holy Roman Empire, 1500-1600* (Klostermann, 2021); and the Communicating the Law in Europe (COMLAWEU) project hosted at the University of St Andrews between 2024 and 2028.

acknowledge their existence, no thorough studies into the identities and roles of these official printers to government institutions have yet been conducted.<sup>18</sup> Yet, like the other state printers, they performed a crucial role in facilitating the communication of laws and regulations. This thesis offers an initial contribution to addressing this gap, by providing an overview of official state institutional printers I have identified for the Dutch Republic thus far (appendix 1), and by discussing the various types of printed materials they produced.

Finally, an analysis of the use of ephemeral print in Dutch maritime commerce adds to our understanding of maritime history. Dutch maritime history is a widely explored field, with studies into topics such as economics, social aspects, maritime law, navigation, colonialism, and ships and shipbuilding.<sup>19</sup> While some of these studies mention the use of printed receipts and forms, the full extent to which they were a part of maritime administration and the everyday lives and work of sailors and port workers – regarding for instance the collection of the important import and export taxes *convoyen* and *licenten* – remains unclear.<sup>20</sup> An investigation into their use therefore has the potential to enrich our understanding of Dutch maritime history by emphasising how integrated printed paperwork was in its everyday operational procedures.

On the whole, then, this study integrates multiple historiographies by bringing to the surface the largely overlooked use of ephemeral print within the maritime world of the Dutch Republic. Its focus on the Dutch Republic is not coincidental. Repeatedly termed ‘the bookshop of the world’, the Dutch Republic was Europe’s leading centre of print production. Combined with its important role as international hub for maritime trade, this meant that printed documents naturally played an increasingly important role in this country’s extensive maritime administration. Yet through comparisons with other countries, I also show that many types of administrative print used in the Republic, can also be recognised in other European countries, which suggests that the use of this material was an international phenomenon in seventeenth-century administrative practice. Focusing on the Dutch Republic thus affords insight into one of early modern Europe’s most developed printing cultures, while also shedding light on the international context.

While direct parallels are difficult to draw, similarities can be noted between the period discussed and our present time. The seventeenth century can be seen as a transition period from an

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<sup>18</sup> VOC printers are for instance mentioned in John Landwehr, *VOC. A bibliography of publications relating to the Dutch East India Company 1602-1800*, (Utrecht, 1991). Admiralty printers are discussed by Marc van Alphen: Van Alphen, *Het oorlogsschip als varend bedrijf*.

<sup>19</sup> See: G. Asaert, Ph.M. Bosscher, J.R. Bruijn, W.J. van Hoboken, eds, *Maritieme Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 4 volumes (De Boer Maritiem, 1976-1978), and a new version which is currently in development and released online: Henk den Heijer, Christiaan van Bochove, Els M. Jacobs et al. eds., *Nieuwe Maritieme Geschiedenis van Nederland*, 4 volumes. <https://beta.nmgm.huygens.knaw.nl/>.

<sup>20</sup> For instance, Victor Enthoven et al. discuss the levying of *convoyen* and *licenten* at tax offices. They do however not mention the role of printed receipts herein. Victor Enthoven, Marc van Alphen and Remmelt Daalder, “Een veelkoppig monster: De Nederlandse zeemacht, 1568-1780,” in *Nieuwe Maritieme Geschiedenis van Nederland*, volume 2, eds. Els M. Jacobs et al. <https://beta.nmgm.huygens.knaw.nl/nederlandse-zeemacht-1568-1780.html>.

administrative culture characterised and dependent on orality and the handwritten, to a culture that increasingly welcomed the printing press in its operations, with printed items permeating every inch of everyday life. A similar transition in media use can be observed today, as bureaucracies transition from being paper-based to digital-based, and the digital increasingly occupies and shapes our lives. A closer study of this transition in the early modern period, therefore, holds the potential to contextualise and inform our views of the significant transition that characterises our current time.

## Sources

This research is primarily based on printed documents found in the Dutch Prize Papers collection. The High Court of Admiralty ‘Prize Papers’ archive, kept at the British National Archives in London, consists of documents from approximately 35.000 ships captured by the British in naval conflicts between 1652 and 1815.<sup>21</sup> During periods of war, privateers were legally authorised to seize enemy ships – an act that weakened the enemy, but was most of all a lucrative source of revenue, as the selling of vessels and their goods could provide a useful income for states during wartime. The captures were carried out by privateers or warship crews, who would board enemy ships and inspect its onboard papers to evaluate their status. If the ship was deemed or suspected to be an enemy vessel, it was taken and brought to English shores.<sup>22</sup> The ships’ papers were kept in the Admiralty’s storage, to serve as potential evidence of ownership in cases presented before the High Court of Admiralty.<sup>23</sup>

In 1856, the captured papers were transferred to the Public Record Office, the current National Archives, where they remain to this day.<sup>24</sup> The archive, however, is highly disorganised, with papers from specific ships scattered among multiple boxes. Between 2015 and 2017, the Dutch Huygens Institute, in collaboration with Metamorfoze, undertook the sorting and digitalisation of 130 boxes of papers that were selected for an even spread throughout the period, and mostly concerned Dutch ships.<sup>25</sup> The sorted and digitalised boxes are now accessible via the website of the Dutch National Archives.<sup>26</sup> The majority of seventeenth-century items come from Dutch ships, captured in the second

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<sup>21</sup> The National Archives, London (TNA), HCA - Records of the High Court of Admiralty and colonial Vice-Admiralty courts, HCA 30 Admiralty Miscellanea, and HCA 32 Prize Court Prize Papers.

<sup>22</sup> Dagmar Freist, “The Prize Papers: Uncurated Histories of Global Scope,” in *Das Meer. Maritime Welten in der Frühen Neuzeit*, eds. Peter Burschel and Sünne Juterczenka (Böhlau, 2021), 269.

<sup>23</sup> Freist, “The Prize Papers,” 269-270.

<sup>24</sup> Amanda Bevan and Randolph Cock, “High Court of Admiralty Prize Papers, 1652-1815: Challenges in Improving Access to Older Records,” *Archives: The Journal of the British Records Association* 53, no. 137 (2018): 45.

<sup>25</sup> Previously, a small selection of seven boxes was digitised for the ‘Sailing Letters’ project, run by the Dutch National Library in collaboration with the British National Archives between 2004 and 2011. See: Gekaapte brieven, accessed 27 December 2024, [http://www.gekaaptebrieven.nl/tekst/over\\_de\\_brieven](http://www.gekaaptebrieven.nl/tekst/over_de_brieven).

<sup>26</sup> Nationaal Archief, Den Haag (NL-HaNA), 2.22.24 Inventaris van het archief van de High Court of Admiralty: Prize Papers (Sailing Letters), ca. 1564-1830 (Digitaal duplicaat), <https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.22.24>.

Notably, since 2018, a project led by the University of Oldenburg in collaboration with the British National Archives has been undertaking the digitisation and sorting of all prize papers. This project is to be completed in 2037. Prize Papers Project, accessed 27 December 2024, <https://www.prizepapers.de/>,

and third Anglo-Dutch wars (1665-1667 and 1672-1674), though the collection also contains papers from ships of other nationalities.

The Prize Papers collection is a unique collection of papers – and occasionally items – which offer a rare, largely unmediated insight into the lives of early modern individuals, both those working in the maritime sector and beyond. They consist of many documents that belonged to ordinary people, that would typically have been discarded and never have entered institutional archives. A large part of the documents in the collection are personal letters which were in transit. Interesting for this study, however, is the presence of a substantial number of printed documents: ships' papers, but also print sent in mail and personal printed items carried by sailors, the scale, nature, and variety of which is unlikely to be found in any other collection.

Although various studies have been conducted with the Dutch Prize Papers collection, a book-historical approach has yet to be taken. Existing research has largely focused on the letters, which have been used in studies into linguistics, gender, and colonialism, among other topics.<sup>27</sup> The printed items have too been objects of studies.<sup>28</sup> They have, however, not been comprehensively examined from a book-historical point of view yet.<sup>29</sup> The documents remain uncatalogued and absent from bibliographical databases, and their exact amount and nature is still unknown. Given the uniqueness of the material, a book-historical examination of this archive holds the potential to provide a wealth of new insight into ephemeral print used within the maritime sector of the seventeenth-century Republic and beyond.

Since the documents in the Prize Papers were not systematically collected, they cannot offer a comprehensive overview of print items used in maritime commerce. Indeed, given the ephemeral nature of such print, their survival itself is already highly unusual. This means we cannot simply assume these documents were representative. Hence, I supplement the printed documents available in the Dutch Prize Papers by similar pieces of administrative print found in the archives of the Dutch East India Company, the admiralties, and other state institutions involved in naval affairs. Furthermore, I draw on a range of other primary sources, including *plakkaatboeken*, resolutions of the VOC's *Heeren XVII*, Pieter van

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<sup>27</sup> See for instance: Gijsbert Rutten and Marijke J. Van der Wal, *Letters as Loot: A sociolinguistic approach to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch* (John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014); Erik van der Doe, Perry Moree and Dirk Tang, eds., *Buitgemaakt en teruggevonden. Nederlandse brieven en scheepspapieren in een Engels archief* (Walburg Pers, 2013); Judith Brouwer, *Levenstekens: Gekaapte brieven uit het Rampjaar 1672* (Verloren, 2014).

<sup>28</sup> For instance, researchers at the Huygens Institute are creating a database of information registered on printed bills of lading to gain insight into trade networks. Marijke Schillings, "Blog: Duiken in de Dutch Prize Papers," Maritiem Portal, 13 August 2024, <https://maritiemportal.nl/blog-duiken-in-dutch-prize-papers/>.

<sup>29</sup> Jan Bos has provided a brief descriptive overview of some of the printed items to be found in the Dutch Prize Papers, and Liesbeth van der Geest has given a description of two printed broadsheet advertisements for quacks. Jan Bos, "Sailing books: Over unieke liedbladen, vakliteratuur, almanakken en gelegenheidsdrukwerk," in *Buitgemaakt en teruggevonden. Nederlandse brieven en scheepspapieren in een Engels archief*, eds. Erik van der Doe, Perry Moree and Dirk Tang (Walburg Pers, 2013), 47-55; Liesbeth van der Geest, "'Spanjaerts plaster, groene meyzalf en kostelijke balsem' Zeventiende-eeuws reclamedrukwerk voor geneesmiddelen," in *Buitgemaakt en teruggevonden. Nederlandse brieven en scheepspapieren in een Engels archief*, eds. Erik van der Doe, Perry Moree and Dirk Tang (Walburg Pers, 2013), 82-94.

Dam's description of the Dutch East India Company, the digitised Amsterdam notary archive, and the digitised resolutions of the States General, to offer further contextualisation.<sup>30</sup> The latter two archives are particularly valuable for shedding light on how ephemeral print was embedded in daily life. The Amsterdam notary archive, containing many records of disputes between residents of the city, offers vivid glimpses into situations in which the printed documents played a role for ordinary people.<sup>31</sup> The States General resolutions, furthermore, offer insight into decision-making regarding the production and use of the documents. Collectively, then, the sources used in this thesis evidence for a broader culture of ephemeral print use in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.

## Theory: sociality, spatiality, and materiality

The analysis of the sources is carried out through the lens of a three-piece model. A frequently used approach within the study of book history is Robert Darnton's model of the communication circuit.<sup>32</sup> Developed in 1982, this model comprises of three categories in the life stage of a book: production, circulation, and consumption. This model has received criticism for being overly linear, static, and for its emphasis on books and neglect of other types of print.<sup>33</sup> In 2017, Daniel Bellingradt and Jeroen Salman proposed a more dynamic improvement to Darnton's model.<sup>34</sup> This approach, comprising of the categories of sociality, spatiality, and materiality, is better suitable for a study into the ephemeral administrative print central to this current research. The production, circulation, and consumption of ephemeral administrative print constantly intermingle. They are highly mobile documents and are interacted with by multiple individuals on multiple locations, who by adding signatures and texts reshape and reproduce the document with every interaction. Their portable and transformative character means that a dynamic model for their analysis is preferred.

The first dimension of the model, sociality, refers to the actions and motives of the individuals and groups involved in interactions with print.<sup>35</sup> For the administrative print discussed here, this for instance includes printers, port administrators, ship crews, merchants, and more. This dimension considers the identity of the people involved, interactions between them, and the meanings the pieces of print held for them and within their social contexts. Examining the dimension of sociality will

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<sup>30</sup> Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus, <https://amsterdam-city-archives.transkribus.eu/>; Goetgevonden. The Resolutions of the Dutch States General, <https://goetgevonden.nl/>.

<sup>31</sup> The richness of this archive for insight into daily lives has recently been demonstrated by Bob Pierik: Bob Pierik, 'Urban life on the move: Gender and mobility in early modern Amsterdam,' PhD dissertation, University of Amsterdam (2022).

<sup>32</sup> Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" *Daedalus* 111 no. 3 (1982): 65-83.

<sup>33</sup> Joad Raymond, "Matter, Sociability and Space: Some Ways of Looking at the History of Books," in *Books in Motion in Early Modern Europe: Beyond Production, Circulation and Consumption*, eds. Daniel Bellingradt, Paul Nelles, and Jeroen Salman (New York: Springer, 2017), 289.

<sup>34</sup> Daniel Bellingradt and Jeroen Salman, "Books and Book History in Motion: Materiality, Sociality and Spatiality," in *Books in Motion in Early Modern Europe: Beyond Production, Circulation and Consumption*, eds. Daniel Bellingradt, Paul Nelles, and Jeroen Salman, 1-11 (Springer, 2017).

<sup>35</sup> Bellingradt and Salman, 'Book History in Motion,' 2.

illuminate the social practises connected to these ephemeral types of print, shedding light on how they were embedded in the everyday social life of sailors, merchants, officials, and port personnel.

The second dimension, spatiality, refers to the spaces in which interaction with print occurred. This includes settings such as ships, ports, administrative offices, or even open sea. It also considers how print travelled between these spaces. As documents that were highly mobile – arguably more so than any other printed documents – the use of administrative print was often connected to the places they were utilised, their purpose changing depending on each new location it was used. The spatial dimension can provide a better understanding of how print was circulated and used in different spaces, and how it connected these spaces.

The third dimension, materiality, pertains to “the physical characteristics of printed matter and the infrastructure of the print industry.”<sup>36</sup> The material aspects of a piece of print are closely tied to its function and can reveal how it was perceived and used. Printers have for instance made choices with regards to the most fitting format, and layout to align with the intended purpose of the piece of print. The wide variety of people that interacted with them have also left material traces: they filled them in, signed them, and sealed them, thereby reshaping the documents with every interaction. The dimension of materiality therefore provides valuable insights into the function, perception and use of print materials.

The model of sociality, spatiality, and materiality acknowledges the highly mobile nature of ephemeral administrative print, as well as the wide variety of individuals who interacted with them, and the importance of their material features – making this a particularly valuable framework for understanding the role of this type of print within seventeenth-century Dutch maritime society.<sup>37</sup>

## Method

In order to gain insight into the use of ephemeral print within the Dutch maritime sector of the seventeenth century, the sources are approached in a specific manner. First, all seventeenth-century print items found in the Dutch Prize Papers collection are bibliographically catalogued in a systematic way, noting several bibliographical details: issuing authority, title or first few lines, imprint, location, year of publication, printer, seller, format, pagination, STCN-fingerprint, document type, archival location, ship’s name, number of copies, URL to the digital copy, and a reference to existing entries in the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC), where applicable.<sup>38</sup> In the case of two identical pieces of print, these are combined into the same entry, thus ensuring that every entry represents a unique printed edition. This cataloguing results in a comprehensive bibliographical overview of all printed items in the

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<sup>36</sup> Bellingradt and Salman, ‘Book History in Motion,’ 2.

<sup>37</sup> Although this theoretical framework underpins the analysis of the sources and is therefore key to this thesis, I do not refer to it explicitly in the following chapters to avoid the text becoming overly formulaic.

<sup>38</sup> The types of documents that I distinguish are: bills of lading, receipts, sea letters, attestation forms, inspection reports, letters of marque, funeral tickets, newspapers, pamphlets, health bills, inventory lists, equipment lists, instructions, passports, and a category for other and unidentifiable items.

collection, which is added as an appendix to this thesis.<sup>39</sup> As bibliographical descriptions disregard handwritten additions and other evidence of use, such evidence is noted separately, where relevant.

After cataloguing, I divide the various types of printed documents along the three broad spheres in which they were used: within the borders of the Dutch Republic, on board of East India Company ships, and within international maritime encounters in Europe. Items that do not pertain maritime commerce, such as newspapers, are excluded from further analysis, but retain their place in the bibliography. The divided documents are then studied from the aforementioned dimensions of sociality, spatiality, and materiality. In order to do so, I study the documents themselves, and consult a previously mentioned array of other source materials, in which information is gathered regarding for instance places where documents were utilised, the way they were required to be used, the identities of individuals involved, and aspects of their production.

Part of the sources consulted for this part of the research, include sources made searchable through text recognition technologies. As part of what has been termed the ‘digitised turn’, the past decade has seen many projects enabling the full-text search of sources that are otherwise difficultly searchable.<sup>40</sup> The Amsterdam notary archive and Goetgevonden are made accessible through handwritten text recognition (HTR).<sup>41</sup> Published sources such as Pieter van Dam’s description of the VOC, *Plakkaatboeken*, ordinances, and other state print have been made searchable using optical character recognition (OCR).<sup>42</sup> These archives and publications are searched for key words pertaining the names of documents to uncover the contexts in which these documents were used.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> The gathered data will eventually be added to the USTC, enriching this database with a wide array of new unique entries of rare, printed materials. My thanks go out to Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, directors of the USTC, for allowing me to carry out this cataloguing in the shape of a research internship between January and June of 2025.

<sup>40</sup> Hielke Huistra and Bram Mellink, “Phrasing history: Selecting sources in digital repositories,” *Historical Methods* 49, no. 4 (2016): 220-229.

<sup>41</sup> Part of the Dutch Prize Papers collection has likewise been made accessible using HTR. I have, however, not consulted this for the present research. Huygens Institute, “Dutch Prize Papers,” <https://prizepapers.huygens.knaw.nl/prizepapersorb>.

<sup>42</sup> It is important to remain critical while using OCR and HTR, and not treat digital outputs of search results the same as their original counterparts. Historians such as Ryan Cordell have critically discussed the use of OCR for historical research and the discipline of book history more generally. Cordell argues that OCR-generated texts must be seen as new editions of the text, remediated through digital technologies, and scholars should treat them accordingly, paying for instance attention to their metadata, and the processes and individuals behind their digitalisation. Ryan Cordell, ““Q i-jtb the Raven”: Taking Dirty OCR Seriously,” *Book History* 20, no. 1 (2017): 188-225.

<sup>43</sup> Including for instance ‘cognoissement’ (bill of lading), ‘paspoort’ (passport), ‘artikelbrief’ (article letter) and ‘lyste der convooien ende licenten’ (list of convoyen and licenten). One of the pitfalls of using full-text search sources, is an insufficient awareness of the choice and use of search terms. As character recognition is not always entirely accurate, spelling was not standardised, and synonyms could be used, the use of literal search terms will not yield a comprehensive set of results. To counter this as best as possible, I make use of several so-called ‘wildcards’ to include more entries in my search beyond the literal search terms. For a discussion of the use of search terms in full-text search sources, as well as further benefits and pitfalls of this methodology, see Huistra and Mellink, “Phrasing history.”

Furthermore, besides an analysis of the documents, I provide an overview of all printers I encounter: official printers to the Admiralties, to the East and West India Companies, and printers and sellers of commercially sold administrative print. They are listed in appendix 1.

## Structure

In order to answer the question how print was used in the administration and regulation of maritime commerce in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century, I discuss three spheres in which print functioned: within the borders of the Dutch Republic, on board VOC ships, and in international contexts.

The first chapter follows Lucas Pruijs as he prepares the *Santa Maria* for departure. I show that in every stage of their preparation for departure – during inspections, registrations, and at checkpoints – merchant skippers encountered pieces of print such as receipts, lists, forms and announcements. They served as a form of state governance operating in everyday maritime procedures, but were also key components in the functioning of the state's administrative system regarding maritime activities, standardising and regulating it, but also establishing a link between information registered in stationary settings, and their use in practical context.

In the second chapter I step aboard of *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*.<sup>44</sup> I examine the wide array of printed papers that were used on board, to show that the Dutch state used print to govern everyday procedures even beyond the Republic's borders. During the seventeenth century, the VOC increasingly began to use printed instructional and administrative documents to control, organise, and standardise the administration and procedures on board of their ships. Print established hierarchy, enforced discipline, and ensured accountability, which was vital in the context of the VOC's expanding operations and administration.

Chapter three returns to the *Santa Maria*, now on its journey through the Mediterranean. It explores the wide variety of printed documents that sailors used and received in international encounters with other seamen, port personnel, officials, merchants, and even privateers. Print held an important role within a shared international administrative system characterised by international cooperation. Holding universally accepted legal authority, it enabled the transaction of goods, facilitating mobility, and prevented or decided the outcomes of conflicts.

Each chapter approaches the print sources from the dimensions of sociability, materiality, and spatiality. Attention is given to the people through whose hands these papers passed, the physical spaces through which they travelled, and what material characteristics can reveal about their use and function within maritime administration and procedures. Taken together, the three chapters offer an in-depth overview of the various ways in which ephemeral administrative print shaped seventeenth-century

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<sup>44</sup> This chapter builds on previous research conducted for a term paper submitted for the MLitt course 'The Book in Early Modern Europe' at the University of St Andrews in December 2024.

Dutch maritime culture and commerce – from the moment a ship prepared to set sail, to its actual departure and journey, and on both a personal, state, and international level. Centred around a wealth of previously overlooked printed material, this study aims to contribute to discussions on early modern information-management, book history, state communication, and the history of maritime commerce – emphasising the important role of printed administrative documents in keeping the early modern maritime world afloat.

### **Note on terminology**

In the following text, I use the word ‘skipper’ as a translation of the Dutch word ‘*schipper*’, to refer to the person commanding a merchant ship. It should be noted that the English term commonly used to refer to such a person in this period is ‘master’. Yet, as this thesis focuses on Dutch merchant ships, I have chosen to remain close to the original Dutch term. The word ‘captain’, translated from the Dutch ‘*kapitein*’, is reserved for those commanding navy ships, including commanders of merchant convoys.

# 1. Print in the ports: Regulating and administering merchant ships within the Dutch Republic

From the opening of the city gates in the early morning, until their closing at night, the ports, canals, and quays of mid-seventeenth century Amsterdam were buzzing with activity. From dawn till dusk, ships arrived, departed, were loaded and unloaded in this centre of world trade. As he walked through the familiar streets of this bustling environment in August 1663, Lucas Pruijs must have felt more than comfortable. At forty years old, he was well acquainted with the shipping industry. Previously, he had been the skipper of a barge, like his father-in law. But for the past few years he had been in command of the *Santa Maria van Conceptie*, while he was away leaving the barging business in charge of his father-and-law and Lijsbet, his wife of sixteen years. On the *Santa Maria*, a medium-sized sea ship, he transported merchant goods from his hometown of Amsterdam to various places along the Mediterranean Sea. Business appeared to be going well. Earlier that year, after he had just come back from a journey to Cadiz and Genoa, he had bought a house with a courtyard on the Elandsstraat, in one of the city's new neighbourhoods, where he lived with his wife and their son Lourens. And now, during that summer of 1663, he was preparing for another voyage.<sup>45</sup>

Preparing a ship for departure was an intricate operation in which merchants, port personnel, ships' crews, and local officials all played an important role. So did paper. Often merely the size of a hand, various types of printed documents were vital for preparing a ship for departure. A merchant skipper like Pruijs could not simply load his goods and sail away – before he could leave the Dutch Republic, he and his crew members were engulfed by an administrative system made up of various people in different places, all of which involved print work. Personnel stationed in offices, on the quays, at the gates, and even on boats in open water, meticulously registered and inspected incoming and outgoing ships and goods. Printed receipts and forms passed from hand to hand: issued and filled in by one hand, signed by another, placed in a pocket by yet another, and checked by a few more. His possession of them determined whether a skipper could load his goods, pass the checkpoints, and sail away.

Following Lucas Pruijs as he prepared his ship in the summer of 1663, this chapter demonstrates that print was essential within the maritime bureaucracy of the state and state institutions, such as the Admiralties, to administrate and regulate outgoing merchant ships in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. The expansion of bureaucracy and print use throughout this century, co-evolved with the state's increasing desire and ability to control the many facets of the maritime industry on a growing scale. Ubiquitously present, printed receipts, forms, lists, instructions, ordinances and other announcements were a form of everyday governance, making the state and its regulations present in

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<sup>45</sup> Facts about Pruijs's personal life are all based on what I was able to find in Amsterdam's notary archives, and letters from his wife preserved in the *Santa Maria*'s Prize Papers.

sailors' and port workers' daily routines. Furthermore, through its mobility, print enabled a connection between stationary record-keeping and on-the-ground practices, serving a vital function in facilitating the practical operations of the maritime sector. I first discuss the system of receipts that was used to collect various taxes in the ports, and introduce the role of admiralty printers. I will then follow Pruijs out of Amsterdam to the island of Texel, where his ship was inspected, before stopping for one last official check of his goods just before he left the Republic, leaving behind a long trail of printed forms and receipts.

## From the *comptoire* to the *boom*: Collecting export taxes

Before Pruijs could even begin loading his ship, he was required to register his goods at the local tax office. Since the early days of the Republic, the States General had delegated most tasks regarding the administration of ships and collection of taxes to the Admiralties. Because of rivalries among provinces and cities, the Dutch Admiralty was split up into five separate institutions in 1597: The Admiralty of Amsterdam, of the Maze in Rotterdam, of the Noorderkwartier in Hoorn and Enkhuizen, of Zeeland in Middelburg, and of Friesland in Dokkum and Harlingen.<sup>46</sup> The receipts and forms we will encounter regarding tax collection were likely all printed by the official printers to the Admiralties. They were appointed by the individual Admiralties, and were conveniently based in the city where the directors held office, and were sometimes located very close by indeed: Abraham van Waesberge, official printer to the Admiralty in Rotterdam, operated his business right opposite the Admiralty building.<sup>47</sup>

The Admiralty printers played an important role in facilitating the smooth functioning of the Admiralty's administrative and communicative operations. Rotterdam's Admiralty printers, presumably as well as printers to the other Admiralties, were specifically assigned the responsibility of producing all there was to print: announcements such as placards, as well as administrative forms and receipts, including passports. Additionally, they supplied the Admiralty with paper, pens, and other necessary items required for the administration at the various offices.<sup>48</sup> It is evident that these printers were more than just another supplier – they were important actors in facilitating Admiralty administration. Hence, it was imperative that a trustworthy figure was appointed. In the seventeenth century, Rotterdam's Admiralty appointed two concurrent Admiralty printers, the majority of whom were members of the Van Waesberge family, a renowned printing dynasty in the city.<sup>49</sup> The printers in this family also functioned as official printer to the city, indicating that the Admiralty likely preferred to assign this important position to known and trustworthy individuals.

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<sup>46</sup> Jaap R Bruijn, *The Dutch Navy of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 5.

<sup>47</sup> J.A. Gruys and Jan Bos, eds., *Adresboek Nederlandse Printers en boekdrukkers tot 1700* (Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 1999).

<sup>48</sup> This becomes apparent from a resolution of the Admiralty op de Maze, 11 December 1659, quoted in: A. M. Ledeboer, *Het geslacht Van Waesberghe: Eene bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der boekdrukkunst en van den boekhandel in Nederland* (Martinus Nijhoff, 1869), 272.

<sup>49</sup> See: Ledeboer, *Het geslacht Van Waesberghe*.

To serve as an official printer to the Admiralty was regarded as a great honour. As with other official state printer appointments, such an appointment was seen as a status symbol; something that elevated them beyond other printers.<sup>50</sup> Hence, Admiralty printers liked to emphasise their distinct position on placards – something that printers to the various States, cities, and as we will see in chapter two, also the VOC, were likewise more than keen to point out. On administrative print, however, they do not mention their position, or even their name at all. For simple forms and receipts commissioned by state institutions, printers did not think it necessary to advertise their services. As I will further discuss in chapter three, only on administrative print sold to private individuals was an imprint often included, as a means to compete with other sellers in the market.

One of the Admiralties' tasks – and for which much administrative print work was produced – was the collection of a type of import and export taxes, the so-called *convoyen en licenten*, which were levied from 1582.<sup>51</sup> Described by a contemporary as the 'veins of the maritime state', the revenue of these taxes went straight to the admiralties to finance their operations.<sup>52</sup> The admiralties each collected the taxes in their own territories. Before a skipper like Pruijs was allowed to load any goods into his ship, he was required to register his ship and goods at a local admiralty tax office, or *comptoire*, of which there were approximately ninety in the Republic.<sup>53</sup> As skippers, particularly those of larger vessels, undoubtedly had a lot on their hands in preparing their ships for departure, it was not uncommon for them to make use of the services of *convoylopers* ('convoy walkers'), whose sole job it was to register goods at tax offices. The skipper would hand the *convoyloper* notes detailing what was to be loaded onto the ship, after which the latter went to the office to register the goods.<sup>54</sup> The offices were manned by a *convoymeester*, assisted by a *controlleur*, and a clerk, who were appointed by the local admiralty commission overseeing the collecting of these taxes.

At the tax office, the skipper or *convoyloper* encountered several printed documents that were fundamental to the functioning of the system of tax collection, an important example being a list of the current import and export duties (*Lijste der convoyen ende licenten*). These lists were regularly printed, at least from 1582 onwards, by the printer of the States General, who held a privilege granting them the sole right to print the document. In around 57 pages of tables, this quarto booklet alphabetically listed foods and goods, and their respective duties per area, with distinctions made between specific areas, and enemy and neutral countries.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Der Weduwen, *State Communication*, 188-192.

<sup>51</sup> De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 98.

<sup>52</sup> "Aderen der zeestand", in: Johan Tjassens, *Zee-politie der Vereenigde Nederlanden*, second edition (The Hague: Johan Veely, Johannes Tongerloo, Jasper Doll, 1670), 42; Bruijn *The Dutch Navy*, 7.

<sup>53</sup> Van Alphen, *Het oorlogsschip*, 134.

<sup>54</sup> The various instructions regarding *convoyen* and *licenten* do not mention *convoylopers*, but their existence becomes apparent from notary deeds pertaining to conflicts regarding the registration of goods.

<sup>55</sup> States General, *Lyste der convoyen ende licenten, ghemaect by mijne heeren de Generale Staten van alle inkomende goederen* (The Hague: Widow and Heirs of Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw, 1634), USTC 1012453.

For the determination of the content of the list of *convoyen* and *licenten*, the various involved state institutions appear to have used special, printed draft versions of the document. While the list was officially issued by the States General, the contents were agreed upon after hearing input from all provinces, who often disagreed among each other. Individual admiralties could too remark on its contents, and regularly sent the States General a copy of the list with their annotations and corrections.<sup>56</sup> The VOC likewise occasionally commented on the list. In an array of lengthy letters sent to the States General and Admiralties in 1683, filled with a plethora of arguments, they for instance defended that spices should stay exempt from duties, emphasising that fees could cause the complete ruination of the Company, which would, they claimed, drastically impact the entire Republic.<sup>57</sup> For these discussions on the contents of the list, a special draft version of the document appears to have been used. Printed in folio instead of quarto format, this larger edition featured an increased amount of blank space between every listing, which must have been particularly convenient for taking notes and making additions.<sup>58</sup> For the discussion of the contents of other documents pertaining *convoyen* and *licenten*, draft versions too appear to have been used and sent to other levels of state for deliberation. The burgomasters of Amsterdam, for instance, kept such versions of several of these documents, which they redacted and annotated in the spaciouly wide margins.<sup>59</sup> As a document that would never be used in public but solely be referenced by the various government institutions, the draft version of the list of *convoyen* and *licenten* indicates that the state not only employed ephemeral print for their communication towards their citizens, but also specially formatted versions for their internal communication.

As well as internal communication, the printed list likewise played a significant role within internal state administration, for instance within that of the burgomasters of Amsterdam. For their administration of levied taxes, they kept copies of the printed lists which they annotated richly (figure 1). In order to facilitate these annotations, the burgomasters had customised editions of the list bound, featuring blank pages after each printed page. On these blank pages, they inserted handwritten notes to keep track of the quantities of goods over which *convoyen* and *licenten* were collected in Amsterdam during a certain period.<sup>60</sup> This example further supports the observation that these lists were not solely used for external communication, and illustrates how through for instance the addition of blank pages, printed documents were modified to suit particular administrative needs of state institutions.

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<sup>56</sup> As becomes apparent from resolutions of the States General. See for instance: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 3184, scan number 0264, ordinariis resolutie Saturday 28 June, 1625. Via Goetgevonden.

<sup>57</sup> “Redenen en motiven, [...] diendende tot een klaere en evidente aanwysinge, dat de nagelen, noten, foulje en caneel van d’extraordinaris belastinge ter zee, [...] mede in alle manieren moeten sijn en blyven vry van exempt” Quoted in: Pieter van Dam, *Pieter van Dam’s Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, part 1, ed. F.W. Stapel (The Hague, 1927), 431.

<sup>58</sup> States General, *Concepte lyste van de Convoyen ende Licenten* (s.l.: s.n., [1681?]), USTC 1821355.

<sup>59</sup> Stadsarchief Amsterdam (SAA), 5030, Archief van de Burgemeesters: stukken betreffende lands- en gewestelijk bestuur, 405, Lijsten van convooien en licenten en concept-plakkaten.

<sup>60</sup> SAA, 5030, 405, Lijsten van convooien en licenten en concept-plakkaten.

Besides employed in internal communication and administration, the printed list of *convoyen* and *licenten* was well-known and widely consulted by individuals within the entire tax collection system. As becomes apparent from notary deeds, officials across the entire system regularly referred to “the list” if they for instance suspected goods to be incorrectly registered. In October 1680, for example, the 24-year-old barge skipper Daniel Danielsz was transporting a shipment of fish and what he claimed was old silver. When he intended to leave Amsterdam, however, the tax official (*chercher*) stationed at the gate prohibited him, claiming that the silver on his barge looked not like old but modified silver. And modified silver, the official pointed out, was on “the list”, whereas old silver was not, and thus was exempt from taxation.<sup>61</sup> Based on such examples, one could deduct that this printed list was not just available at the tax offices where skippers registered their goods. Instead, it must have been widely available across the city, in places frequented by merchants, skippers, port and tax personnel alike, and it is not unlikely that some individuals even possessed their own copy.

All goods that were loaded onto departing ships were required to be correctly registered at the tax offices, in accordance with the list of *convoyen* and *licenten*. The tax personnel registered this information in a ledger, specifying for every ship the names of the responsible skipper or merchant, and the weight of transported goods. If this information was erroneously recorded, this could result in the over or underpayment of fees, which could be interpreted as fraud – as evidenced by the case of barge skipper Danielsz and his dubious silver. In this case, it was likely Danielsz’ himself who had attempted to mislead the officials. Occasionally, however, errors were made on the side of the tax officials, as becomes apparent from complaining merchants appearing before the notary. In 1689, for instance, a group of three linen merchants attested that they had not paid attention to the way their shipment of linen had been classified at the tax office, and how the categories were specified on “the list”. So it happened that the tax officials had incorrectly registered their shipment as expensive Osnabruck cloth, meaning that they had paid more than they should have. Consequently, the merchants now demanded a rectification.<sup>62</sup> It was therefore imperative for both state and merchants that “the list” was followed at all times, and administration was pristinely kept. As a ubiquitous document used both in internal state administration as well as external communication directed towards sailors and merchants, it becomes evident that this printed list of import and export taxes was crucial to the smooth functioning of the system of tax collection.

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<sup>61</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, 95 Adriaen Lock, 2232, scan 363, 14 October 1680, via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

<sup>62</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, 174 Dirk van der Groe, 4139, scan 377, 14 June 1689, via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

	Inkomende.	Vyrgaende.	Inkomende vā Oosten door d'Oriontotte Bcht.	Vyrgaende na Oosten door Oosten door d'Oriontotte Bcht.
Ammeleachs van ses / se- ben en acht bierebelen breet / lanch ontrent vijftich ellen / mit gaders Slegher van gelijcke bzeete / vijftigh ellen vooz' t' satek	j gul.	—	xij st.	j guld. - j st. — rij st.
Ampon / oft d'ijffel / de hon- derd ponden	—	x st.	—	xv st. — rij st.
Andrioes / het toncken	—	v st.	—	v st. - v st. vij p. — v st. vij p.
Andriofte / Indigo / de hondert ponden	v gul.	—	ij gul.	—
Andis de hondert ponden	—	rij st.	—	x st. — xv st. vij p.
Appelen ende Peeren / de Conne	—	ij st.	—	ij st. vij p. — ij st. vij p.
Altehande ander Frups / van de weerde van ses gulden	—	iiij st.	—	iiij st. vij p. — iiij st. vij p.
Arange Appelen / t' d'uyfent	—	x st.	—	xv st. vij p. — xv st. vij p.
Aschen / Dor-afsche / de hon- derd ponden	—	vij st.	—	x st. — vij st. — xj st.
Asche / weder-afsche / t' last tot t'baef tonnen	j gul.	—	x st.	ij gul. — xv st. — ij gul. vij st.
Asyn / Franche Wijn-azyn / d'Alme Oerlands	j gul.	—	v st.	j gul. - v st. — vij st. — j gul. vij st.
Asyn / Franche ende Spaen- sche Wijn-azyn / Derjups / Cpter / Appelozaanch / ende Asyn van Appelozaanch / t' Orhoof	—	xv st.	—	xv st. vij p. — x st. 4 st. 8 p.
Asyn / Wier-azyn / de Gzobe Conne	—	vij st.	—	xv st. — xv st. vij p. — xv st. vij p.
Amunitie van Ooslochen- de allerhande Scheps-be hoesten / niet apt te voercu als met consent.	—	—	—	—
Salpeter / de hondert pondē	Incom. vij p.	j guld. - x st.	—	ij st. — j gul. - ij st.

Inkomende	uitgaende
Niet	25 1/2 (Amsterdam suldes)
1600 ponden	273171 ponden
378 tonnen	1252 Commisies
36438 ponden	120291 ponden
362980 ponden	245115 ponden
15 tonnen	12 Commisies
Niet	Niet
1402300 (Sickel)	202475 (Sickel)
3627800 ponden	1433445 ponden
2235 1/4 lasten	375 lasten
Niet	Niet
3237 1/2 ophoffen	419 ophoffen
Niet	Niet
59160 ponden	916480 ponden

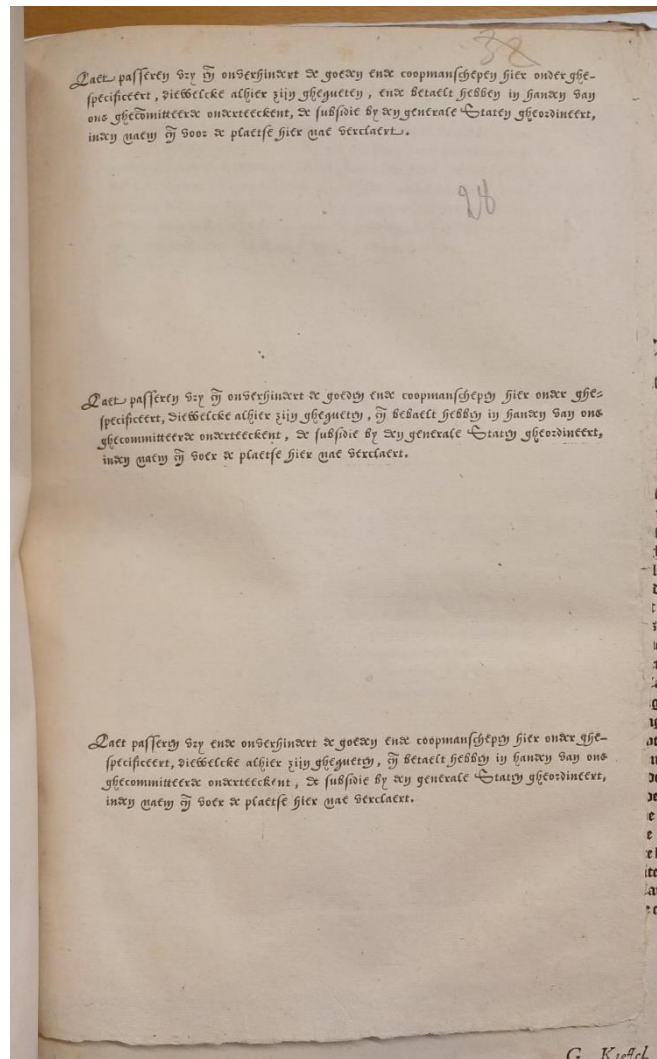
1 - Page from one of the Amsterdam burgomasters' copies of the list of *convoyen* and *licenten*, with added blank pages to keep notes (Amsterdam City Archives).

Besides the ubiquitous list of *convoyen* and *licenten*, two further types of administrative printed documents that skippers or *convoylopers* encountered at Admiralty tax offices were goods passports and load and unload receipts. After recording the registered goods in his ledger, the tax office clerk proceeded to write a so-called ‘passport’ – a document specifying the transported goods. This document was given an official seal, and was signed by the *convoymeester* or *controlleur*, and by the clerk himself. One copy of the passport was retained in the office, while another was given to the skipper. Besides passports, the tax office staff handed out load and unload receipts (*los- ende la cedulles*), which served to combat smuggling and tax avoidance, which seemingly occurred regularly.<sup>63</sup> Only when in the possession of such receipts, which served as proof of the payment of import or export taxes, was the skipper permitted to load or unload goods; further underscoring the significance of these ephemeral pieces of print within the Republic’s tax collection system.

During this period, various types of documents were referred to as ‘passports’. In addition to goods passports, personal passports and passports for ships (commonly termed ‘sea letters’) were in circulation, as I will further discuss in chapter three. The States General had both personal and goods passports ordered to be printed since the early days of the Republic, when they still resided in Brabant.

<sup>63</sup> States General, *Placaet ende Ordonnantie van de Hooghe ende Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, op 't stuck vande binnenlandtsche passepoorten, ende het suyveren van die selve*, 6 May 1623 (The Hague: Widow and Heirs of Hillebrandt Jacobsz van Wouw, 1623), USTC 1017145.

In 1577, they had commissioned the Antwerp printer Christophe Plantin to print 800 personal passports, with a ‘blank line’ to fill in names.<sup>64</sup> Plantin, and he alone, was also tasked with printing goods passports (figure 2), as becomes apparent from a 1580 set of instructions for tax collections, stating that “the passports will be printed by Plantin and no one else, with several special letters, so that they cannot be reprinted” – the latter comment showing that States General placed specific emphasis on ensuring the passports could not be copied, which was essential in the smooth functioning of the system.<sup>65</sup>



2 - Goods passports, printed by Plantin for the States General, ca. 1580 (Museum Plantin-Moretus).

<sup>64</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 3097, scan number 0219, resolution 25 August 1577. Via Goetgevonden.

<sup>65</sup> States General, *Instructie van tgene dat die particuliere collecteurs ende contrerolleurs vanden ontfanck vande generaale middelen op d'incomende ende uuytvarende coopmanschappen oft convoyen sullen moeten onderhouden*, 30 July 1580 (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1580), USTC 414275. A copy of such a passport survives in the Plantin-Moretus archives: “Laet passeren vry ende onverhindert de goeden ende coopmanschepen hier onder ghespecificieert,” (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, c. 1580), Museum Plantin-Moretus, A 1844:28, USTC 416063.

After the States General's move from Brabant to Holland, other official States General printers took over from Plantin in printing these goods passports, whereas later – possibly after the establishment of the five individual Admiralties – the responsibility for printing goods passports was assigned to the admiralty printers. Each Admiralty used their own passport; those of Amsterdam and that of the Noorderkwartier had a woodcut of their weapon placed on theirs, whereas Friesland's remained unadorned. Amsterdam's passport also had the place of signing already filled in; as this Admiralty was solely responsible for Amsterdam, the place of signing remained consistent. The text on the passports remained roughly the same across the Admiralties, starting with "Let pass by authority of the High and Mighty Gentlemen of the States General of the United Dutch Provinces", after which space was left open to fill in the skipper's name. Therefore, while there was variety in the design of these documents, the core text remained the same, making these documents easily recognisable throughout the country – which, as we see shall later, was vital given the skipper's requirement to show the passport at various stages of his journey.

The way the passports and receipts were handled by tax personnel was likewise consistent across the country, as these procedures were meticulously described in universal sets of instructions, issued by the States General, from which the States' desire for oversight over administration and procedures becomes evident. The States General had compiled sets of instructions for the various types of personnel working in the tax collection system and beyond. A general set of instructions described the diverse tasks and responsibilities of the Admiralties altogether, and was described by a contemporary as "the eye in the body, and the sun in the sky", emphasising the importance of these instructions for the functioning of the maritime sector as a whole.<sup>66</sup> With regards to the collection of *convoyen* and *licenten*, the States General had compiled further sets of instructions: general instructions regarding their collection, instructions for the commission generals in charge of their collection, for the staff manning the tax office, and for the *cherchers*, officials stationed at city gates, whom we will meet later in this chapter.<sup>67</sup> Since the early days of the Republic, the States General had these various sets of instructions printed in quarto booklets, which they then sent to the admiralties.<sup>68</sup>

The instructions were a means by which the state could maintain tight oversight and control of the administration regarding tax collection and the issuing of passports. They laid out detailed rules and descriptions regarding the tasks to be performed, such as procedures for processing passports and receipts, regulations for the keeping of the administration, and on the frequency of the *convoymeester's* reports to his supervisors. Furthermore, the instructions described the reprimands that would follow if

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<sup>66</sup> Tjassens, *Zee-politie*, 13.

<sup>67</sup> For instance: States General, *Instructie voor den ontfanger generael van de convoyen en licenten, ende andere middelen van de respectieve collegien van de Admiraliteyten* (s.l.: s.n. [1636]), USTC 1009944; States General, *Instructie, voor de generale commisen van de convoyen ende licenten* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1666), USTC 1802831.

<sup>68</sup> In 1581, they for instance already ordered the printing of instructions for tax officials collecting *convoyen* and *licenten*. See the resolution of 1 August 1581. NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 3106, scan number 0115, resolution 1 August 1581. Via Goetgevonden.

the instructions were not adhered to. All newly appointed personnel received a copy of the instructions, which they were required to study thoroughly. Additionally, the new recruits had to swear an oath, promising always to abide by the instructions, and for instance in case of the commission generals of the *convoyen* and *licenten*, swear to always “be loyal to the States General, and obey their orders in everything.”<sup>69</sup> The instructions and accompanied oath, were therefore measures by the state to tightly regulate administration and ensure compliance.

This regulation and compliance was further exercised through systems of oversight, intended to ensure that tax office personnel fulfilled their duties correctly and that any potential fraud could be detected. As delineated in the instructions, the *convoymeester* was obligated to keep a ‘perfect and pertinent register’ of every passport he issued.<sup>70</sup> Every month, the collectors and inspectors were required to compile a financial report based on this register, and forward it to the Admiralty commission responsible for overseeing the tax collection within ten days after the end of the month (weather permitting, however: “without it being prevented by weather or wind”). The commission checked the documents, and forwarded copies to the Admiralty directors and the States General.<sup>71</sup> In the event that the commission generals suspected fraud, they were to make up a report and submit it to the fiscal prosecutor (*advocaat-fiscaal*) of the responsible Admiralty. For any other problems that could arise, they were also required to alert the States General as well as the Admiralty.<sup>72</sup> Formal complaints could for instance be issued against individual staff members if they were considered not to carry out their duties correctly. This is what occurred with Amsterdam tax office worker Pieter Martensz Hoefijzer, who according to a colleague had committed grave abuses in his administration, to the severe detriment of the States’ finances.<sup>73</sup> The matter was discussed by the States General, who ordered it to be further investigated.<sup>74</sup> Eventually, a court case was opened against Hoefijzer, showing that administrative misconducts could be taken seriously indeed. The extensive paperwork and arrangements surrounding the issuing of passports was therefore strictly regulated, intended to minimise errors and fraud that could occur in the handling of these important documents. This underscores the tight oversight the States General sought to exercise over the administration within the tax offices, emphasising the important role these instructional documents played in it.

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<sup>69</sup> States General, “Instructie, voor de generale commisen van de convoyen ende licenten,” 11 July 1597, *Recueil van alle de placaten, ordonnantien, resolutien, instructien, lysten en waerschouwingen, betreffende de admiraliteyten, convoyen, licenten ende verdere zee-saecken* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1689), USTC 1820140.

<sup>70</sup> States General, *Stuck van de binnenlandsche paspoorten*.

<sup>71</sup> For the information that the States General received from the Admiralties, see: NL-HaNA 1.01.02 Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 5715-5718 Staten van inkomende convooien en icenten [sic] ingeleverd door de Admiraliteit, 1621-1671.

<sup>72</sup> States General, “Instructie, voor de generale commisen van de convoyen ende licenten,” 11 July 1597.

<sup>73</sup> SAA, 367.B Archief van het Burgerweeshuis: oud archief (appendix), 542 Aanklacht tegen Pieter Martens Hoefijzer betreffende de fouten die hij maakt in zijn administratie als ontvanger van de convooien en licenten.

<sup>74</sup> See the resolutions of 9 November, 30 November and 1 December 1620. NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 3179, scan number 0379, resolution Saturday 9 November, 1620. Via Goetgevonden.

After Pruijs or his *convoyloper* had received their documents at the tax office, they were permitted to load the ship and depart. This does not mean, however, that they were free from interactions with tax personnel and ephemeral print just yet. On land, Amsterdam was encircled by a defensive wall, and accessible through several gates. Amsterdam's waterways, however, were also fortified. The primary waterway through which the city could be accessed was on the IJ river, located on the side of the Zuiderzee. Here, the city was protected by a double row of poles, with several openings inbetween through which ships could pass. These water gates, known as *bomen*, remained open during the day, but were closed by floating wooden beams at night. Similar water gates were situated on the rivers and canals at the other city borders. At each of these water gates was a guard post, a small hut, which was manned by soldiers day and night.<sup>75</sup> During the day, this was also the place where another type of tax official, a so called *chercher*, were stationed.<sup>76</sup>

In skippers' encounters with *cherchers*, the previously received passports and receipts again played an important role. Skippers like Pruijs were expected to approach the water gate, let the ship be brought to a halt, and hand the *chercher* the previously received passports and receipts. The latter then proceeded to inspect the goods, and examine whether they corresponded with the information written on the documents. In case of a large sea ship such as the *Santa Maria*, the official came on board to conduct his inspections, while for smaller ships a good look from his jetty sufficed. If he considered all goods to be legally loaded, the *chercher* signed the reverse of the passport with the date, place and his signature, to ensure that the passport could not be used a second time.<sup>77</sup> It was important for skippers to keep a good hold of this signed passport, as it served as proof of the *chercher's* visitation. Skippers were asked to present it on multiple occasions while sailing through the Republic: ships leaving the country were required to show it again at another checkpoint, while for shipments within the Republic, the *chercher* stationed at the place of destination again requested to see it, after which he again inspected the goods signed the back of the document.<sup>78</sup> Contrary to the passports – the load receipts, after being inspected and validated by *cherchers*, were “scratched through with ink or red earth” and put on a paper skewer, to prevent them from being used a second time.<sup>79</sup> Hence, these load and unload receipts do not survive in the Prize Papers collection. We can assume, however, that like the passports, they were

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<sup>75</sup> Caspar Commelin, *Beschrijvinge van Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: For Wolfgang Waasberge, Boom, Van Someren, and Goethals, 1693), USTC 1841412, Boek 3, 235.

<sup>76</sup> States General, “Particuliere instructie voor de commissen ter recherche, resorterende onder 't collegie ter Admiraliteyt, residerende tot Amsterdam,” 15 February 1652, *Recueil van alle de placaten, ordonnantien, resolutien, instructien, lysten en waerschouwingen, betreffende de admiraliteyten, convoyen, licenten ende verdere zee-saecken* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1689), USTC 1820140, 91.

<sup>77</sup> States General, “Instructie dienende voor Cherchers ofte Toesieners, op 't recht van de Convoyen ende Licenten,” 11 July 1597, *Recueil van alle de placaten, ordonnantien, resolutien, instructien, lysten en waerschouwingen, betreffende de admiraliteyten, convoyen, licenten ende verdere zee-saecken* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1689), USTC 1820140.

<sup>78</sup> States General, *Placaet op 't stuck vande binnenlandsche passepoorten*, 6 May 1623.

<sup>79</sup> States General, “Particuliere instructie voor de commissen ter recherche,” 15 February 1652.

printed. The Prize Papers contain a printed receipt from the Spanish Netherlands, containing a mere two words printed: “let unload”, suggesting that this is an unload receipt.<sup>80</sup>

West and East India Company ships had their own documents to present the *cherchers* at the water gates. Contrary to ordinary merchant ships, West and East India Company ships were not required to register their goods at Admiralty tax offices, as all registration was done by the companies themselves. They therefore did not receive an Admiralty goods passport. Instead, the Company ships were given a printed form issued by the Companies, provided with a seal to prove its validity. The ships could show the *cherchers* at the gates this document, which asked the latter to “please let pass without disruption the ship [ ] with thereupon skipper [ ] destined to go to [ ] with commission of the privileged West-India Company”.<sup>81</sup> The companies used their own load receipts as well, stating “The Directors of the Privileged West-India Company let be shipped and loaded onto the ship named [ ]”. Like the regular passports, these special WIC passports were also signed by a *chercher* on the reverse, after he had inspected the goods. Despite being issued by the Companies themselves, these documents appear to have had the same purpose as their counterparts issued by the Admiralties.

Whether they were for VOC or WIC ships, or for ordinary merchant ships – the passports and load and unload receipts were crucial documents in facilitating access, for if skippers were not in the possession of them, they were unable to begin or continue their journey. This becomes evident from various cases that were presented at Amsterdam notaries. In 1652, for instance, the crew of a small ship, loaded with whale meat, appeared before the notary.<sup>82</sup> They recounted how, around four o’ clock in the afternoon, they wished to leave the city, but were stopped by the *cherchers* at the water gate, on the grounds that they could not show them the appropriate receipts. Likely suspecting a smuggling attempt, the *cherchers*, with the help of soldiers stationed at the gate, came on board and took the ship. In an attempt to prove the crew’s innocence, the *convoyloper* attested that he had already obtained the receipt at the office, yet no one had come to collect it from him. But this testimony was to no avail, as the rules were clear: without a passport and loading receipt to present, the *cherchers* did not let anyone through.

Even after a ship had passed the *cherchers*, having printed documentation continued to be of great importance for the success of a journey. When a ship had in one way or another succeeded in bypassing the *cherchers* in the port of departure without the necessary documents, it risked the chance of being impeded at another port. In 1639, skipper Jan Schuijt was transporting French salt from Amsterdam to Zierikzee.<sup>83</sup> In Gouda, however, he was halted by the tax officials, as he did not have

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<sup>80</sup> Bibliography no. 349. The latter word is crossed out and replaced by the word “pass”. This could be evidence of an unloading receipt, being used as a passport. Perhaps the tax officials had run out of the appropriate receipts, and used another instead. This example comes from the southern Netherlands, but it is not unlikely that similar documents were used in the Republic.

<sup>81</sup> Bibliography no 280. I have not encountered a similar document for East India Company ships, however, but it is likely that they were used.

<sup>82</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, 54 Hendrik Schaef, 30 May 1659, via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

<sup>83</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, 54 Hendrik Schaef, 1373, scan 206, 13 September 1652, via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

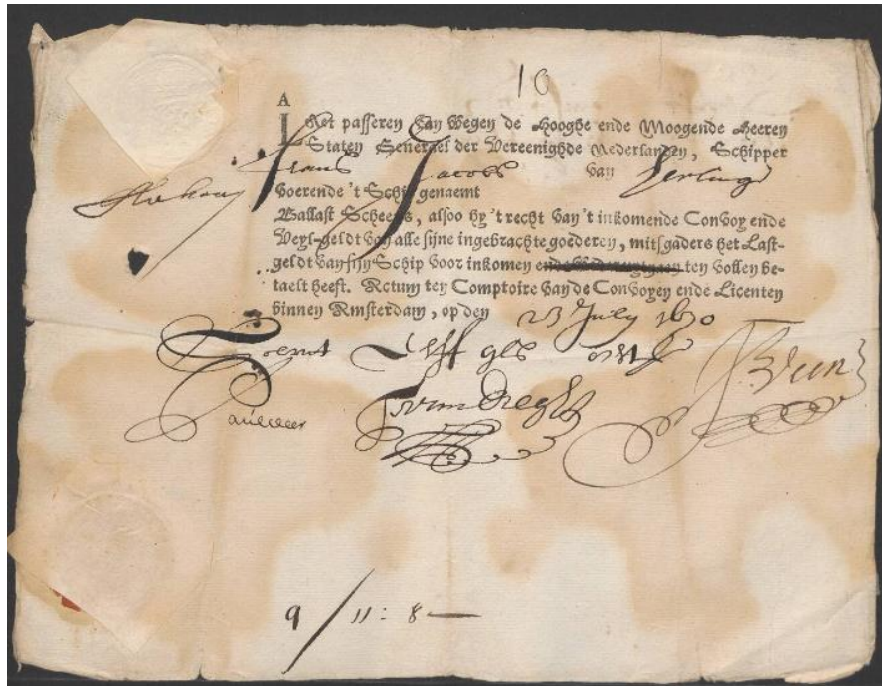
the appropriate receipt from the Amsterdam tax offices. Until he had obtained the required documents, Schuijt was not allowed to continue his journey, meaning that he had to leave his ship behind in Gouda and return to Amsterdam, to his great discontent about the revenue he was missing during the period he could not work. This shows that, even when one had bypassed the *cherchers* in Amsterdam, the reach and thoroughness of Republic's extensive tax collection system meant that without the appropriate documents, one could not travel.

Misconduct, however, not only occurred on the side of the sailors. Despite having received strict rules and regulations, tax personnel did not always abide by them, with personal whims and feuds sometimes gaining the upper hand. On a Saturday afternoon in December of 1652, skipper Hendrik van Olen sailed his ship to a water gate, where he handed over his passport to the *chercher*, a man named Schroock. When he requested the document back, however, Schroock refused and called him a drunkard, which prompted the two men into a fight. Van Olen fell into the water, and Schroock gave him a large blow on the head with a mop stick he had fetched from a nearby boat, all because – or so Van Olen claims – he had merely asked the *chercher* for his passport back. Evidently, Van Olen knew that without it, he could not continue.<sup>84</sup> Misconducts of staff officials regarding the handling of passports and receipts could disrupt journeys, and therefore it was essential that they adhered to their received instructions.

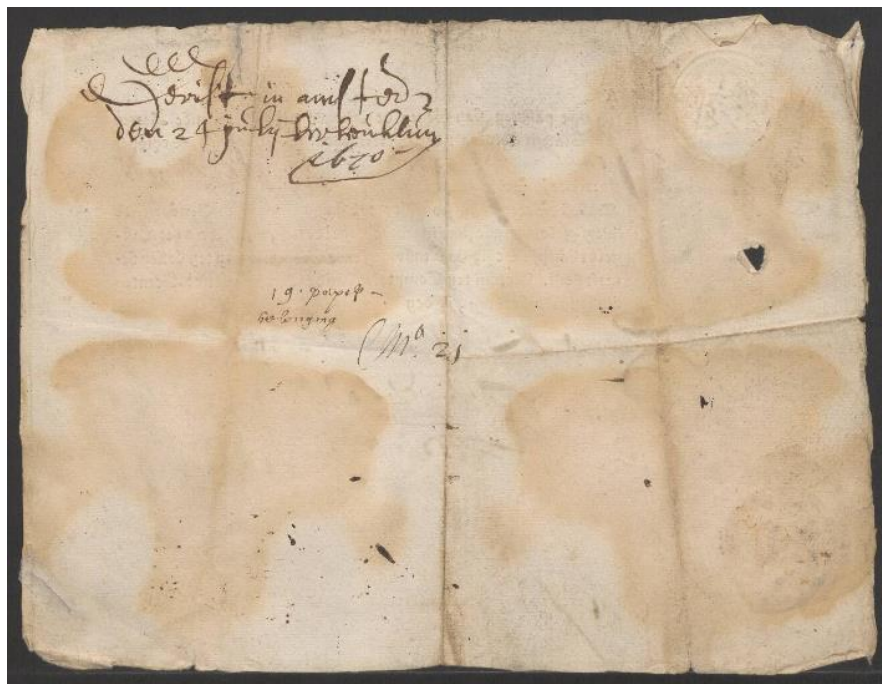
Taken together, these various vignettes tell an important story about the role of ephemeral print in the system of tax collection, and early modern commerce at large. In the first place, this administrative system of tax collecting – from the tax *comptoire* to the *boom* – very much relied on ephemeral print. The ubiquitous list of taxes, the passports, and the receipts that were signed and checked in various places by various people; they were all vital for this system to function, informing tax personnel and sailors, serving as proof of compliance, and providing access. These printed documents were, too, a form of control. Issued and regulated by the States General in close collaboration with the Admiralties, this type of administrative print was in many ways a form of governance that made the state and its interest in control tangible in the daily lives of sailors and port personnel alike. The various sets of instructions meticulously regulated administration and the correct handling of passports and receipts, whereas these documents themselves determined where and when persons and ships could move, and what goods could be loaded on board.

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<sup>84</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, 84 David Doornick, 1948, scan 209, 6 December 1652, via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.



3 - Front of a goods passport, issued by the local Admiralty commission of 'Convoyen en Licenten', and filled in and signed by the staff at the tax office. This passport is signed in Amsterdam on 23 July 1670. (Bibliography no. 345).



4 - The back of the same goods passport. The text is written by the *chercher* who inspected the ship on 24 July 1670.

### Piloting out of the port

*Convoyen* and *licenten* were, however, by no means the only fees skippers were required to pay on their outbound journeys, and for these various payments, printed receipts again played a central role. One

such fee was the piloting fee. After its encounter with the *cherchers*, as the *Santa Maria* was sailing through Amsterdam's water gate on its way to the Zuiderzee, it was not Pruijs or his helmsmen who stood behind the rudder. Large sea ships were not allowed to navigate their ships out of the port of Amsterdam by themselves, but were required to be piloted by authorised pilots (*lootsmannen*). Skippers of these ships were required to come to the pilots' office the day before departure to notify one of the five available pilots that their service was required. The pilots of Amsterdam had their office in the Haringpakkerstoren, a medieval tower conveniently located next to the port, in which the herring packers also held office.<sup>85</sup> Authorised pilots were men between twenty-five and sixty years old, who had sailed in their responsible territories for at least four consecutive years and thus knew it well. Special pilot marks (*lootsmans-teyckens*) they wore on their clothing, made them easily recognisable as legitimate pilots.<sup>86</sup>

In the regulation of piloting practices, printed instructions issued by the state were once again imperative. The provincial States had compiled piloting instructions for specific regions, which they had printed in quarto or octavo booklets.<sup>87</sup> Pilots for areas such as the Maas river, Texel, and Terschelling each received their own set of instructions upon their appointment. Like the tax personnel, newly recruited pilots were required to swear an oath upon receiving the instructions, and were tasked with studying them as best they could – making these instructions again not merely a set of information, but a tool of governance.

The piloting service was not free, and in the payment of the fees, printed receipts again played an important role, which were likewise regulated by the state. After the pilot had come on board, the skipper was required to tell him the depth of their ship, whereupon the pilot determined the amount of the piloting fee, based on a list prescribed by the State, as set out in the pilot's instruction booklet. These fees constituted the pilot's wages, which were higher in winter than in summer. After payment, the pilot handed the skipper a receipt, mentioning the ship's size, the amount paid, and the pilot's name and signature. Without this receipt, the skipper would be unable to receive reimbursement from the merchants.<sup>88</sup> The text on these receipts were likewise prescribed by the States in the same piloting instructions.<sup>89</sup> The receipts utilised in Rotterdam in the 1660s were printed, as evidenced by an extant item kept in the Rotterdam city archive (figure 5).<sup>90</sup> It is not unreasonable to assume that receipts used in at least some other places and decades were likewise printed. These piloting fee receipts solely held use and value for skippers and merchants among themselves. In contrast to for instance the payment of

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<sup>85</sup> Commelin, *Beschrijvinge van Amsterdam*, Boek 4, 703. Skippers could then choose between five pilots.

<sup>86</sup> States of Holland, "Placaten vande Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt, raekende het stuck vande pilotagie, ende aankleven van dien," Cornelis Cau, *Groot Placaet-Boeck* (The Hague: Widow and Heirs of Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw, 1658), 1032. See also: J.P. Sigmond, "Havens," in *Maritime Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, volume 2, ed. L.M. Akveld, S. Hart and W.J. van Hoboken (De Boer Maritiem, 1977), 78.

<sup>87</sup> Quarto versions: USTC 1012330; 1812142. Octavo versions: USTC 1843336, 1805231, 1830959.

<sup>88</sup> States of Holland, "Stuck vande pilotagie."

<sup>89</sup> States of Holland, "Stuck vande pilotagie."

<sup>90</sup> Stadsarchief Rotterdam (SAR), 1-01 Oud Archief van de Stad Rotterdam, 496 band 2 (USTC 1566896).

the *convoyen* and *licenten*, the state did not keep administration of received piloting fees. Yet, despite them playing no role in state administration, it becomes evident that the state still regulated the use of these receipts by prescribing its exact text, and through formulating stringent regulations surrounding piloting practices. Their insistence to even regulate un-administered processes, indicate the state's involvement in procedures of all aspects of Dutch maritime commerce.

Piloting fees are only one example of the plethora of fees that ships were obliged to pay for received services and the use of facilities, and it is not unlikely that for the payment of these fees, printed receipts were commonly used. A set of instructions for pilots from 1698, specify that they were only allowed to pilot an outgoing ship if the skipper of that ship could present them the receipt he received for the payment of '*vuur- en paalgeld*'.<sup>91</sup> These fees were used for the maintenance of the fire signals along the coastlines, as well as the maintenance of the port gates and defences. Furthermore, a fee was levied by port staff who transported goods to and from the ship and carried them on and from board.<sup>92</sup> There were also city port fees (*stadshavengeld*) to pay, as well as *leggeld* for each day a skipper had his ship in the port. Foreign ships could in some cases expect additional expenses: in Rotterdam, the Admiralty levied *vatgeld* over incoming French ships. It is well imaginable that upon the payment of least some of these fees, skippers received printed receipts: the Prize Papers contain such documents for the payment of port fees of Middelburg (figure 6), and *vatgeld* in Rotterdam.<sup>93</sup>

Likewise, the use of printed instructions and rules to regulate maritime procedures, appears to have been widespread beyond the tax collection system and piloting practices. In 1629, helmsmen of fishing vessels were required to have on board in print or manuscript, a set of rules forbidding him and his men to destroy or tamper with the equipment of others. Another ordinance, pertaining procedures surrounding herring fishery and issued in 1656, similarly states that this document needed to be brought on board at all times. The fact that the former explicitly differentiates between print and manuscript, whereas the latter does not address the form of the document at all, could indicate that by 1656, printed versions had become the standard, suggesting an increasing use of print throughout the century.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, together with the instructions for tax officials and pilots, it illustrates the widespread use of state-issued printed instructions within the maritime sector, used to regulate and control many facets of maritime administration and procedures.

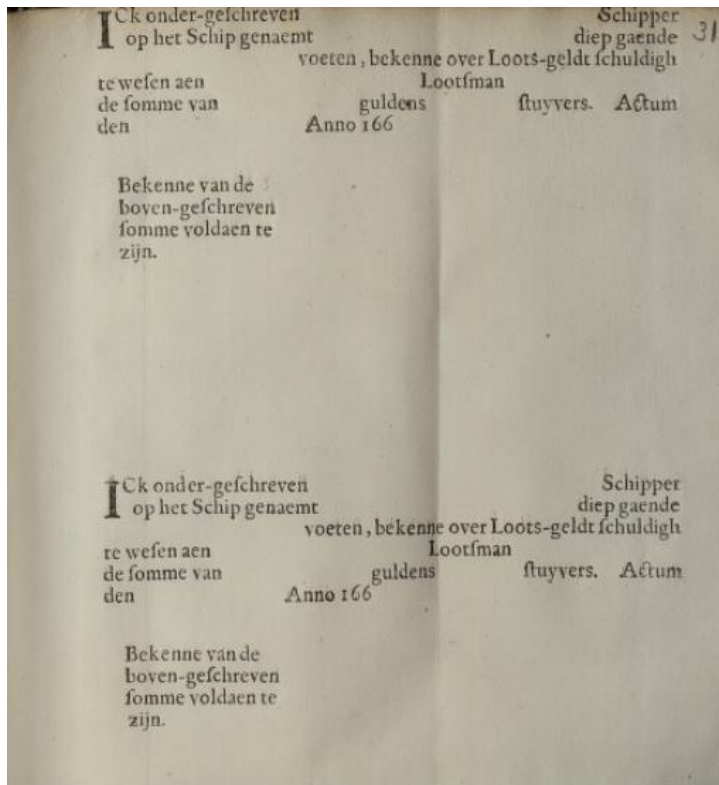
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<sup>91</sup> See also: States of Holland, *Ordonnantie, noopende het vuyren*, 19 December 1668 (The Hague: s.n. 1668), USTC 1567461.

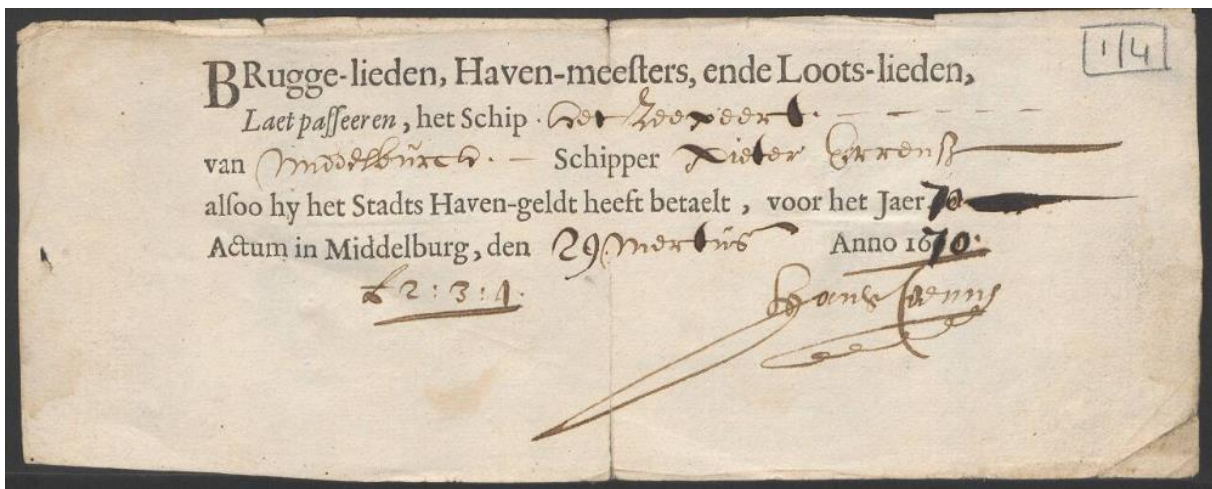
<sup>92</sup> Sigmond, "Havens," 105.

<sup>93</sup> Bibliography no. 540.

<sup>94</sup> States of Holland, *Placcaet ende ordonnantie, beroerende de groote visscherye ende haring-vaert deser landen*, 22 May 1629 (Delft: Adriaan Beman, 1698), USTC 1831142; States of Holland, *Placcaet ende ordonnantie, beroerende het vangen, souten ende leggen van den haring*, 30 May 1656 (Delft: Adriaan Beman, 1698), USTC 1831141. I would like to thank Arthur der Weduwen for generously sharing these findings with me.



5 - Receipts for the payment of piloting fees, used in Rotterdam (Rotterdam city archive).



6 - Receipt for the payment of Middelburg port fees (bibliography no. 39).

## Arming against pirates

After the *Santa Maria* was successfully piloted out of the port of Amsterdam onto the Zuiderzee, it made its way to its last port of call within the Republic: the island of Texel. Here at the roadstead (*reedde*), sea ships typically anchored to load provisions, let additional crew members on board, and wait for favourable winds to set sail. Texel was also where the *Santa Maria* and other ships were subjected to yet another type of inspection, accompanied by yet more printed paperwork.

In June 1625, a group of thirty-eight Amsterdam merchants sent a request to the burgomasters of the city. The group, including the notable businessmen Elias Trip and Jan Bicker, was fed up with the ‘daily increasing’ number of pirate robberies of their ships trading with the Levant, negatively impacting their trading activities. They proposed to have a few among them officially appointed to oversee and regulate the proper equipment of the ships. The burgomasters agreed, and so the Chamber of the Directors of the Levantine Trade and Navigation in the Mediterranean Sea was born.<sup>95</sup> Initially only located in Amsterdam, chambers were later also established in Hoorn, Rotterdam and Middelburg.<sup>96</sup>

That the Mediterranean Sea was dangerous to traverse was commonly known. A few years before his current journey, Pruijs’s wife Lijsbet had already urged him to please not set sail on his own, but to join a convoy.<sup>97</sup> Ever since the early days of the Republic, it was common for merchant ships to be protected against pirates and privateers. This was usually done through convoying: armed Admiralty ships would accompany fleets of merchant ships for their protection. But because of the rapidly expanding fleet of merchant ships, and the continuing threat of piracy, the Admiralties often struggled to keep up.<sup>98</sup> This led to groups of merchants founding their own initiatives to protect the interests of their own trade area, such as the Directors of the Levantine Trade, and the similar Directors of the Eastern Trade for trade with the Baltic Sea region. These collectives worked closely together with the Admiralties in the protection of convoys, who would provide men-of-war ships to assist the departing ships.<sup>99</sup> Lijsbet must have been pleased to hear that, while preparing for departure at Texel, the *Santa Maria* also joined a convoy, that under the command of captain Pieter van Braeckel.

In the processes surrounding the operations of the Levantine Directors, printed documents were once again significant, a first example being a payment receipt. The services of the Directors of the Levantine Trade were funded through *lastgeld*, a type of tax ships were required to pay based on its

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<sup>95</sup> NL-HaNA 1.03.01 Inventaris van het archief van de Directie van de Levantse Handel en de Navigatie in de Middellandse Zee, 87 Plakkaten, Nr 1, Institutie van de Kamer der Directeuren van de Levantse Handel ende Navigatie in de Middellandse Zee, tot Amsterdam

<sup>96</sup> A.H.H. van der Burgh, “Beschrijving van het archief van de Directie van de Levantse Handel en de Navigatie in de Middellandse Zee,” Nationaal Archief, The Hague, last updated 10 April 2025.  
<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.03.01>.

<sup>97</sup> NL-HaNA, 2.22.24 Prize Papers, HCA30-1051 Santa Maria van Conceptie, letter from Lijsbet Philippsse to Lucas Pruijs, 13 January 1661, scan no. 465.

<sup>98</sup> Bruijn, *Dutch Navy*, 24.

<sup>99</sup> S. van Brakel, “De directie van den Oosterschen handel en reederijen te Amsterdam,” *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde* 4, part 9 (1910); Bruijn, *Dutch Navy*, 24.

tonnage. It appears to have been collected together with the *convoyen* and *licenten*, and only after skippers had paid *lastgeld*, they were allowed to register their goods and receive goods passports.<sup>100</sup> Skippers were, of course, given a printed receipt for the payment of this *lastgeld* (figure 7), which they had to keep a hold of as proof of payment.<sup>101</sup>

Furthermore, printed notifications were used to notify, warn and inform skippers at Texel. Besides organising convoying, another task of the Directors of the Levantine Trade was to carry out inspections of all merchant ships sailing to the Mediterranean Sea and the Levantine countries. They were to ascertain whether vessels were adequately armed, as per regulations prescribed by the States General.<sup>102</sup> All skippers were required to be present for these visits, but apparently, misdemeanour was not uncommon. Throughout the century, the States General had issued several placards, urging skippers to please be present and comply to the prescribed rules regarding equipment, as their absence and misdemeanour could cause the “total decay and ruination” of the shipping industry.<sup>103</sup> The Directors of the Levantine Trade therefore tried their best to communicate when inspections would be carried out, so that skippers had no excuse to not be present. Visits were announced through small printed leaflets in which the directors “notify all skippers of the ships currently lying in Texel, ready to depart in the convoy of [ ] to Cadiz and the Strait, that the appointed commissioners will visit Texel on [ ], to conduct the proper inspection of the merchant ships there.”<sup>104</sup> It continued urging all skippers to be present, their incomppliance resulting in a fine. These printed announcements were presumably disseminated around the harbour of Texel, in an attempt to inform the skippers as best as possible.

For the inspections themselves, print was again utilised. On 30 September, inspectors J. van Dam and Dirck Claesz van Beeck came on board of the *Santa Maria* and inspected the ship. With them, they had a printed form which they filled in (figure 8), stating that they had noted the ship having on board thirty *gotelingen* (small cannons) and forty half barrels of gunpowder, which was deemed to be sufficient to protect itself.<sup>105</sup> Pruijs had to keep a good hold of this document, as the Dutch consul at his port of arrival could request to see it, as proof of the Levantine Trade’s visitation of the ship. This form, therefore, served as evidence of skippers’ compliance, and its issuing was an imperative measure by the

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<sup>100</sup> States General, “Naeder ordre, op de betalinge ende verhooginge der last-gelden,” 18 January 1633, in *Groot Placaet-Boeck*, ed. Cornelis Cau (The Hague: Widow and Heirs of Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw, 1658).

<sup>101</sup> See bibliography no. 203.

<sup>102</sup> States General, *Placaet, opte grootte, equipagie, monture, manninge ende admiraelschappen der schepen, varende door de Strate van Gibraltar naer de Middelandtsche Zee ende op Levanten*, 26 April 1652 (The Hague: Widow and Heirs of Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw, 1652). (Found in NL-HaNA 1.01.46, Archief van de Admiraliteitscolleges, 1 Plakkaten, ordonnantiën, instructiën.)

<sup>103</sup> States General, *Waeschouwinge* [betreffende de monture en manninge van schepen varende door het Nauw van Gibraltar in de Middelandtsche Zee en Levant], 16 August 1663 (The Hague: Hillebrand van Wouw, 1663). (Found in NL-HaNA 1.03.01 Levantse Handel, 87 Placcaatboeken)

<sup>104</sup> This printed leaflet is not dated. I assume it must have been printed in the second half of the seventeenth century, or in the early eighteenth century, as the other printed documents in this collection were also produced in this period. NL-HaNA 1.03.01 Levantse Handel, 88 Placcaatboeken, Nr 5.

<sup>105</sup> The ship also had on board fifty *eters*, but I have been unable to ascertain what kind of item this is.

Levantine Trade Directors in collaboration with the state, in ensuring ships were adequately protected, for their own, and the convoy's safety.

The Levantine Trade inspections were specifically carried out for merchant ships sailing to the Mediterranean, but ships with other destinations were similarly subjected to inspections, and with them, their own types of printed paperwork. One example are inspections for timber ships trading with Norway. In 1647, and altered in 1666, the States General and the King of Denmark and Norway formed a treaty regarding the height of tolls levied on timber traded between the countries. As this height depended on the size of the vessels, timber ships were required to be measured. Similar to the Levantine Trade inspections, Dutch skippers were informed through affixed posters when it was time for inspection and measuring. Of the subsequent measuring results, they received a document that they were to show upon arrival in Norway.<sup>106</sup> Dutch timber ships departing Norway were likewise measured and also received a printed document, of which one appears in the Prize Papers collection.<sup>107</sup> Thus, besides receipts and printed instructions, the use of printed inspection forms and announcements appears to have been common within the maritime sector of the Republic – exemplifying yet another way the state regulated and governed everyday maritime practices through ephemeral print.

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<sup>106</sup> States General, "Tractaet den elfden Februarij 1666 tusschen den Koningh van Denemarcken, Noorwegen, ter eenre, ende den Staet der Vereenighde Nederlanden ter andre zyde, gemaect ende geslooten, naer het welcke de thollen van hout-lasten in Noorwegen geheven sullen werden," in Groot Placaet-Boeck, ed. Cornelis Cau (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1683).

<sup>107</sup> Bibliography nr. 531.

9158

Schipper *Augustus Dasso*  
 van *Gemina* varende naer de Straet ofte Middellantische Zee,  
 heeft aan den Ontfanger van de Directeurs van den Levantischen Handel,  
 ende Navigatie in de Middellantische Zee, betaelt ende voldaan het Last-Gelt  
 van sijn Schip, ghenaeamt *Arcaant officium*  
 groot *Centen tussentig* Dallen by de Ho. M. Heeren Staten Ge-  
 nerael op de selve Schepen gheselt. Actum in Amsterdam, den *20. Junij* 1666

*De Wit* *van Guntige* *van der* *Wij*

7 - Receipt for the Levantine Trade *lastgelt* (bibliography no. 203).


45

A Claeervolgende de Placcaten, by haer Hoog: Mog: de Heeren  
 Staten Generael der Vereenigde Nederlanden gemaect en ge-  
 maect op de Grootte, Equipage, Mastinge, Monture en Ad-  
 minicelschap der Schepen, varende door de Straete van Gibraltar nae de  
 Middellantische Zee, ende op Levanten, in dato den 27 November 1657,  
 en den 8 Meert 1663. geresolveert en gecomplieert, hebben de Directeu-  
 ren over den Levantischen Handel en de Navigatie in de Middellantische  
 Zee voornemmt, tot de visite vande voorschreve Straetsche Schepen by  
 de Ed: Achtere Heeren Burgemeesters en de Seden specialijk gecom-  
 mitteert en geautoriseert, gesuizeert het Schip genaemt *Arcaant*  
 groot *Centen tussentig* Dallen, daer Schipper op is  
 willende naze *gemaect* *gemaect* *gemaect* *gemaect*  
 ende bevonden het selve gemaet en gemaect te zijn als volgs, te weten  
 met *Centen* *Centen* *Centen* *Centen*  
*Centen* *Centen* *Centen* *Centen*  
*Centen* *Centen* *Centen* *Centen*  
 eters, voorts haer en seliet-geweer, mitgadens  
 seliet en andere Amoisie van Oerlogh niet advenant; En ten eynde de-  
 se Acte of Billot van visite van waerde merge wesen, sijn den bovenstaenden  
 Schipper, in conformitie van het bovengeseyde laatste Haer Hoog: Mog:  
 Placcat, dat haer in desen waert ter handen geselt, en op de reyse niet  
 degegeven gehouden wesen, deseyte te ve *Centen* *Centen* *Centen* *Centen*  
 fuis, ter plaise of placten by sal komen te arriveren, en dat op de boete  
 lude in eengetoemde Placcaten te gegrepen.

de Director der Amsterdamse  
*van Schooten*

Overconde hebben wy ondergeschreven Secretaris en Viceinteur vande  
 gemelte Directeuren desen respectivelijck gecontrasignieert in *Centen*  
 den 20 *Centen* *Centen* *Centen* *Centen* Anno 1667

*van der*  
*Centen*



8 - Santa Maria's inspection report from the Directors of the Levantine Trade (bibliography no. 53).

## The final post

After the *Santa Maria*'s inspection at Texel, it was time to set sail. But Pruijs was not free from encounters with officials – and a final type of administrative print – just yet. Before leaving the Republic, all ships were required to be inspected once more by Admiralty tax officials, to ascertain that, since the previous inspection by *cherchers*, skippers had not covertly loaded goods that were not registered and paid for. This inspection occurred right before the ships left the Republic, at the so called 'final posts' (*uiterste wachten*). For many ships coming from a port bordering the Zuiderzee, this final post was located at the waters around the islands of Texel or Vlieland, where the *Santa Maria* made its way towards, two days after the Levantine Trade inspections.<sup>108</sup>

The manner in which the inspections at these final posts were required to be conducted, was once again delineated in state-issued printed publications. These detail that, when a ship wished to pass through, skippers had to first bring the ship to a halt, and use an oar or other sign to signal the inspectors, who were stationed on ships called *uitleggers*, a type of armed Admiralty ship tasked with guarding the outermost waterways.<sup>109</sup> A team of at least two *cherchers* would subsequently approach the ship in a small boat and come on board to inspect the goods. Skippers were required to hand them over the printed goods passports and a list of goods they were carrying on board. These handwritten lists were compiled by the skipper before departure, and were kept in the ship administration during the journey. However, these procedures did not always go civilly. The inspectors were often shouted at with "vile and defamatory words", and occasionally, sailors deliberately tried to prevent them from coming on board by for instance throwing them an old and rotten rope. In other instances, ships simply kept sailing on, leaving the approaching *cherchers* in severe danger of being sailed over – something that had apparently fatally occurred in 1619.<sup>110</sup>

The States General considered these practices a great contempt of the Republic's government, and therefore throughout the years, attempted to control the procedures through placards and the introduction of administrative paperwork. A placard issued in 1620 was intended to remind skippers of the rules and urge them to behave civilly towards the inspectors. So that "no one could pretend ignorance" of these regulations, the placard was specifically ordered to be affixed around Texel, Vlieland, and in places in Friesland and Overijssel with maritime activity.<sup>111</sup> However, this published

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<sup>108</sup> This could also have been a bit later. While the handwritten date on the form appears to be the second of October, the day is difficult to make out – perhaps it was difficult to write on a rocky ship's deck.

<sup>109</sup> For more on the Admiralty's protection of waterways, see: Van Alphen, *Het oorlogsschip*, chapter 5.

<sup>110</sup> States General, "Placcaet, tegens alle de gene die tegens die van de recherche op de Stroomen van 't Vlie ende Texel eenige moetwilligheyt gebruycken," 13 April 1620, *Nederlandsche Placcaet-Boeck* (Amsterdam: Johannes Janssonius, 1644), 403; States General, "Placcaet, Dat de schippers in Texel ende 't Vlie sullen wachten tot dat de cherchers aen boort gheweest zijn," 10 April 1630, *Nederlandsche Placcaet-Boeck* (Amsterdam: Johannes Janssonius, 1644); States General, "Placcaet, teghen de moetwilligheyt der schipperen (het Vlye ofte Tessel-stroom bevarende) nopende het aenleggen ende ontfanghen der commissen om gerechercheert te worden," 17 March 1635, *Nederlandsche Placcaet-Boeck* (Amsterdam: Johannes Janssonius, 1644).

<sup>111</sup> States General, "Placcaet tegens alle de gene die moetwilligheyt gebruycken," 13 April 1620.

warning was evidently not effective enough, as in 1630 the States General introduced a new procedure. From then on, the inspectors were to hand the skippers a document after having completed the inspections, which stated that the ship had been inspected. Skippers had to keep a good hold of this document during their journey, as they were required to present it at the tax office upon their return to the Republic. Only after doing so, they would be given an unload receipt (*los-cedulle*) and were allowed to unload their goods. In principle, this administrative system meant that ships could no longer bypass the inspections at the last posts.<sup>112</sup>

Nevertheless, issues with smuggling kept occurring. In 1653, therefore, the States General issued a placard expanding the rules regarding the collection of the *convoyen* and *licenten*, introducing the use of printed inspection forms.<sup>113</sup> Like previously, the skipper was required to hand over to the Admiralty personnel the passports and the list of all goods, which was used to inspect the ship. However, the document they received was now replaced by a formal attestation, done by the skipper and helmsman, stating that to the best of their knowledge, “there were loaded no other or further goods than specified in the passports.” The *cherchers* carried with them a supply of forms stating this attestation (figure 9), which the skipper and helmsman were required to sign. The *cherchers* likewise signed an attestation, printed on the same form, stating that they “visited and investigated the ship of [ ], and the goods loaded therein, and found that everything was well and truthfully registered at the Office of the Convoys, insofar as we were able to tell from the passports.” They then handed over this form to the skipper. As before, the skipper was obliged to show this form at the tax office upon his return, to demonstrate that “upon their departure they had been adequately inspected” by the *cherchers*. The States General had prescribed the precise text these forms should contain, and ordered the individual Admiralties to print them accordingly.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, they decided that the forms should contain an illustration of the Admiralty’s weapon, without any alterations to it. This was possibly intended as a type of verification and forgery prevention in the absence of a seal, as a woodcut was difficult to correctly replicate.

The form remained in use until at least the early eighteenth century, indicating that it was deemed sufficiently effective by the States General. This form was again a crucial document in the system of tax collection and the combating of smuggling, and indicates once again that these administrative ephemeral pieces of print played an important role in the lives of sailors. One piece of evidence even illustrates – in vivid detail – how such forms could be used. In times of epidemics, at least in the early eighteenth century, the States General specifically ordered this form to be submerged

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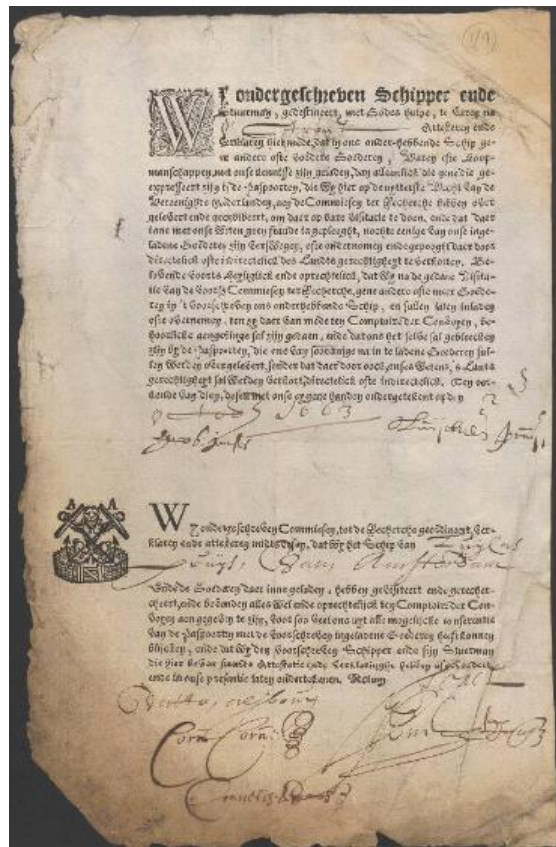
<sup>112</sup> States General, “Placcaet, teghen de moetwilligheydt der schipperen,” 17 March 1635.

<sup>113</sup> States General, *Ampliatie van voorgaende generale ende particuliere placaten op den opheeff vande convoyen ende licenten geemaneert*, 20 October 1653 (The Hague: Wed. and erfg. Hillebrandt Jacobsz. van Wouw, 1653), USTC 1808424. (Found in NL-HaNA 1.01.02, 8892).

<sup>114</sup> I was not able to find the resolution in which the States General dictated this specific text, but have found evidence of them dictating a variety on this form, specifically for ships sailing to the Sont. This form had virtually the same text as the form discussed here. See: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 3260, resolution 13 March 1654.

in vinegar before the skipper was allowed to hand it over to the tax officials upon his return to the Republic, showing how these travelling administrative documents were very much embedded in everyday realities.<sup>115</sup>

This example of the use of print for inspections at the final posts, illustrates how the States General attempted to regulate administrative practices through the use of print throughout the century. When regulation through the dissemination of placards proved not to be as effective as hoped, they introduced administrative paperwork to control inspection procedures. When that too did not remedy the problems, another type of document was introduced, remaining in use until at least the end of the century. It is evident that placards were not always the most effective form of governance when it came to regulating procedures, and the States General became aware of this in throughout the century. Administrative print provided a solution, permeating even further into the lives and daily procedures of sailors than placards, and serving as a form of state governance that could not be ignored.



9 – The *Santa Maria*'s attestation form, issued by the Admiralty of Amsterdam and signed on board of ship at the 'last posts' at Texel, right before it left the Republic. (Bibliography no. 77).

<sup>115</sup> States General, "Placaet tegens de besmettelijke sieckte," 12 November 1720, *Recueil, van alle de placaten, ordonnantien, resolutien, instructien, lysten en waarschouwingen, betreffende de admiraliteyten, convoyen, licenten, en verdere zeesaaken* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1721).

States of Holland, "Placaet, houdende precautien tot weeringe van de besmettelijke sieckte," 12 September 1721, *Groot Placaet-boeck, sesde deel* (The Hague: Isaac and Jacobus Scheltus, 1746).

## Conclusion

From the wide array of lists, passports, receipts, forms, instructions, ordinances and announcements that we have encountered while following the *Santa Maria*, it becomes evident that the whole system of maritime administration, from the ports to the final posts, heavily relied on ephemeral administrative print. Firstly, administrative print served as tangible manifestations of state governance, present in every aspect of the working lives of sailors, port workers, and state officials. Through printed receipts and forms, and the requirement to have them checked on several occasions, the state regulated and controlled everyday procedures within the maritime world. For instance, Admiralty goods passports – required to be presented at various checkpoints – held the power to decide whether, by government rules, ships would be granted access. Similarly, the list of *convoyen* and *licenten* held power as a decisive, legal set of information to which all had to abide, and around which all import and export was based. Ubiquitously present, known and consulted by port workers, merchants, and sailors alike, individuals active within the maritime world were confronted with this document's manifestation of state power on a daily basis.

Printed instructions, announcements, and placards served to support this governing administrative system. They were used by state institutions to regulate personnel and sailors: prescribing how administrative processes should transpire, telling inspectors what to do, informing skippers when inspections took place, and commanding sailors how to behave. However, as we have seen, administrative print could in some cases be more effective than public announcements in communicating and enforcing regulations. Whereas the content of placards could be easily ignored, holding open the possibility for fraud, the passports and forms used in administrative systems could not. Without being in their possession, skippers could not embark on or continue their journeys – illustrating the important governing power of these pieces of print.

Besides being a tangible piece of everyday governance, a second way in which print was vital in this administrative system was in their ability to establish a link between stationary record-keeping and the practical situations in which the recorded information was required. In order for registered information to have any use, it was required to possess the ability to move beyond the stationary locations where it was recorded, such as the tax office. This travelling information was key to the proper functioning of state administrative systems: without them, it could not be ascertained whether administrative actions – such as registering goods and paying export fees – had been successfully completed, which would undermine the practical operation of the administrative system.

Moreover, print enabled new ways of internal record-keeping and communication. The burgomasters of Amsterdam's use of the lists of *convoyen* and *licenten*, adapted to facilitate note-taking, is an example of this. Specially produced draft versions of the same list, used for internal state deliberation, likewise show how print was deployed in novel ways to accommodate communicative

needs, and indicates an integration and interaction between print and manuscript annotations within state bureaucracy.

Throughout this chapter, we have seen examples indicating that the expansion of bureaucracy and print use throughout this century, co-evolved with the state's increasing desire and ability to control the many facets of the maritime industry on a growing scale. The goods passports and lists of *convoyen* and *licenten* were printed as early as the 1580s – perhaps a testimony of their widespread use and perceived importance in that period – but over the following century many more documents began to be printed. Some, such as the regulations for fishing vessels, had previously existed in manuscript form, but other documents that played an important role within the regulation of the administrative system had not, including the attestation form used at the 'final posts'. This demonstrates a growing recognition of the benefits of the printing press for aiding the control and regulation of state administration and everyday procedures in the maritime world. However, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter, the state's use of administrative print was not limited to the shore. Instructions and forms circulated too on the open sea, within the confines of a VOC ship.

As the *chearchers* at the final post returned to their boat, we can imagine Lucas Pruijs going to his hut and storing the form and passport safely among his papers. These two documents he would not need anytime soon, but other papers were only now beginning to become relevant, now that the journey was finally starting. Experienced as he was, he knew it was important to keep his papers neatly organised, as during the journey he would amass many more. He returned to deck and let the anchor be raised, and – unbeknownst that this was his last ever sight of his homeland – slowly watched Texel disappear behind him, as the convoy of ships left the Dutch Republic.

## 2. Print on board: Regulating and administrating work and life on VOC ships

Ten years after Lucas Pruijs saw the island of Texel disappear behind him, another skipper, on deck of another – much bigger – ship was enjoying the same view. After weeks of preparation, on 16 December 1673, Jacob Martensen Cloet and his Dutch East India Company ship *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*, left the port of Texel. Together with another ship, the *Voorsichtigheijt*, it was embarking on what was intended to be a long voyage to Batavia in the Dutch East Indies, hoping to arrive there around eight months later with a cargo of supplies, and return to the Republic a year later with lucrative goods from the colony. At 160 feet long and 18.5 feet deep, *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* was one of the Company's largest ships, and with a crew of three hundred men, living and working together in an enclosed space for over half a year, it was important that life and work on board proceeded in an orderly manner and was properly administrated. Therefore, in order to ensure the smooth sailing of the ship, the Amsterdam chamber of the VOC had provided Cloet and his men with a substantial stack of papers, an important part of which was printed.

In this chapter, I examine the role of such print in the day-to-day administration on board a VOC ship.<sup>116</sup> Established in 1602, the VOC was the world's first public company and is often regarded as the largest and most financially successful enterprise of the seventeenth century. By the late seventeenth century, the VOC employed an estimated 30,000 people, with an average of 4,900 individuals departing annually for the Indies during the eighteenth century.<sup>117</sup> This scale of operation demanded an extensive administrative system. Although scholars have debated the effectiveness of the VOC's administration – pointing to financial mismanagement and corruption as factors in its eventual decline – it remains evident that the company's extensive bureaucracy was crucial to its operations.<sup>118</sup> Initially, the Company's paperwork was all handwritten. However, as I will discuss, over the course of the seventeenth century, the VOC increasingly adopted printed materials, reshaping their administrative practices.

I demonstrate that the medium of print enabled the VOC to standardise their administrative and operational procedures, to reinforce their authority, and enhance the efficiency of their overall administrative processes. *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*, as a typical example of a VOC 'return ship', will serve as a case study to gain a better understanding of the dynamics between handwritten and printed materials on board, as well as the broader role of print within the administration of the company as a

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<sup>116</sup> This chapter builds on previous research conducted for a term paper submitted for the MLitt course 'The Book in Early Modern Europe' at the University of St Andrews in December 2024.

<sup>117</sup> J.R. Bruijn, F.S. Gaastra and I. Schöffer, *Dutch-Asiatic Shipping in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, part 1 (Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), 144.

<sup>118</sup> Femme Gaastra, *De geschiedenis van de VOC* (Walburg Pers, 2009), chapter 5 "Het Compagniebewind in de Republiek."

whole. I first introduce the VOC's official printers, before discussing the printed instructional documents that were used to govern everyday procedures on board. This chapter continues with an examination of the ship's printed administrative manuals and lists, illustrating the VOC's use of print to standardise and organise administrative procedures in its increasingly complex administrative system.

## Printing for the VOC

VOC ships had a dedicated chest in the skipper's cabin where the ship's papers were kept, neatly ordered by number, and with an inventory list for quick reference. While the VOC had used the medium of print ever since the Company's establishment, for instance for the production of their now infamous 'shares', the ship's chests were initially filled with handwritten documents. By the mid seventeenth-century, however, printed materials increasingly started to fill up the chest. These documents were supplied to the Company by officially appointed printers.

The VOC appear to have assigned their initial printing commissions to Joan Blaeu, as evidenced by his printing of a bookkeeping manual in 1656, which I will discuss later in this chapter. Blaeu was not an illogical choice, as he and his father Willem Jansz. were also the VOC's mapmaker since 1633.<sup>119</sup> He, however, never appears to have been given the title of official VOC printer. Who did receive this title was Paulus Matthijsz, who in 1663 was appointed by the Amsterdam chamber as their official printer.<sup>120</sup> Matthijsz, operating from his print shop in the *Stoofsteeg*, 'in the music book', specialised in music-related books, but his business with the VOC was undoubtedly a lucrative additional source of income.<sup>121</sup> For the Company, he printed "bills and cargo lists, and everything else that was needed."<sup>122</sup> Besides administrative print, he provided the VOC with various other publications, such as psalm books for ships' crews, and Malay translations of Christian works for the colonial population.<sup>123</sup> After Matthijsz's death in 1684, his daughters Alida and Maria, who had been assisting their father for some years already because of his 'old age and weakness', took over the printing business, including the position as VOC printer.<sup>124</sup> Publishing as 'the heirs of Paulus Matthijsz', the two unmarried sisters would remain the official printers to the Company for nearly four decades, until closing down and selling their business after Alida's death in 1723.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 1, 403.

<sup>120</sup> Landwehr, *VOC. A bibliography*, XX.

<sup>121</sup> Rudi A Rasch, "Musica dis curae est: the life and work of the Amsterdam music printer Paulus Matthysz (1613/4-1684)," *Quaerendo* 4: 2 (1974): 86-99.

<sup>122</sup> Quoted in: Landwehr, *VOC. A bibliography*, XX.

<sup>123</sup> Rasch, "Paulus Matthysz," 89.

<sup>124</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 Inventaris van het archief van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), 242 Resoluties van de vergaderingen van de kamer Amsterdam, 14 December 1684, scan no. 189; Landwehr, XX.

<sup>125</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de Notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, 242 Pieter Carel, 6213B, 22 September 1722, Testament Alida en Maria Matthijsz.

It was not unusual for women to run printing businesses in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. After the passing of her husband Hillebrandt Jacobsz. van Wouw in 1622, Machteld van Leuninghen served as official printer to the States General for four decades, a position that provided her with considerable sums of money and quite some status.<sup>126</sup> The Matthijsz sisters, likewise serving four decades as printers to the largest and most influential VOC chamber, is further evidence of the significant role that women had within the Dutch printing sector of the seventeenth century. It shows that having women, widowed or even unmarried, at the head of printing businesses and in charge of producing important state print, was not something that was frowned upon.<sup>127</sup>

Like the five admiralties, the different VOC chambers each appointed their own printers. In the 1690s, the Zeeland chamber had commissioned print jobs to Pieter van Goetthem, who was also official printer to the city of Middelburg and would later become official printer to the WIC. From 1669 onwards, they appointed their own official printer, Theodorus de la Maere, He was succeeded by Johannes Meertens, and, upon his passing, his son Galenus.<sup>128</sup> The smaller chambers – Rotterdam, Delft, Enkhuizen and Hoorn – appear not to have appointed an official printer during this century. Due to their much smaller scale of administration, they possibly did not think it necessary to appoint an official printer. Instead, they appear to have commissioned a ‘regular’ printer whenever they required printed items. In 1665 and 1672, for instance, the Delft printer Arnold Bon printed a record-keeping manual, which I will discuss in more detail later.<sup>129</sup> Like with the admiralty printers, appointments as VOC printers were often combined with appointments by other government institutions. Van Goettem, Johannes and Galenus Meertens, and Bon all also served as official printers to their city or to their provincial states, indicating that state institutions preferred entrusting their printing commissions to trusted and respected printers with established reputations. Printing for the state was, after all, a serious task which required adequate skill and trustworthiness. The printed ship’s papers aboard *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* – at least fifteen distinct documents – were likely predominantly printed by Paulus Matthijsz.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Maarten Hell, “Leuninghen, Machteld Aelbrechtsdr. van (ca. 1580-1662),” *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland*, last edited 11-6-2015.

<sup>127</sup> For the role of women within family printing firms, see: Heleen Wyffels, *Women and Work in Early Modern Printing Houses: Family Firms in Antwerp, Douai, and Leuven (1500-1700)*, PhD dissertation, KU Leuven, 2021, and the WidowsPrint project hosted at the University of Göttingen, <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/691112.html>.

<sup>128</sup> Landwehr, XX; NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 4928 Instructies voor het houden van de verschillende scheepsboeken, instructies voor VOC-dienaren, artikelbrieven, zeilorders en scheepsgebeden.

<sup>129</sup> VOC, *Instructie ende ordre op 't houden van de scheeps-soldie en guarnisoen-boecken* (Delft: Arnold Bon, 1665). (National Maritime Museum, S.0187(0225)); VOC, *Instructie ende ordre op 't houden van de scheeps-soldie en guarnisoen-boecken* (Delft: Arnold Bon, 1672). (National Maritime Museum, S.0187(0226)).

<sup>130</sup> Not all documents that are listed on the ship’s inventory list have survived into the Prize Papers. Some of these can, however, be found in the VOC archives: NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 4928 Instructies voor het houden van de verschillende scheepsboeken, instructies voor VOC-dienaren, artikelbrieven, zeilorders en scheepsgebeden.

## Rules, regulations, power and penalties: the article letter

Once *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* had left the Dutch Republic behind, and sailed on open sea, the entire crew of about 300 men assembled on deck for an important mandatory meeting. During this gathering, everyone was obliged to listen attentively to Cloet, or the ship's highest ranked merchant, reading aloud a 48-pages-long printed document, termed the *artikelbrief* ('article letter'). If a ship can be likened to a microstate, the *artikelbrief* functioned as this state's constitution and civil code. In 118 separate articles, the document meticulously outlined the rules governing work and life on board. It established the chain of command, specified what behaviour was allowed and what prohibited, delineated the tasks and responsibilities for the crew members, and detailed the penalties for transgressions of the rules. It did so in considerable detail. If, for instance, a crew member of *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* was unfortunate enough to lose his right arm during his work, the article letter detailed that he would be compensated for this unlucky loss with eight hundred guilders upon his return to the Republic. The loss of one eye earned him four hundred, and of both eyes no fewer than twelve hundred. Should a crew member transgress the rules, they were interrogated by the provost, who repeatedly confronted them with whether he was adequately aware of the article letter's contents, asking for instance "whether he does not know, that the article letter forbids..."<sup>131</sup> The letter, therefore, was a way to keep crew members accountable, and served as the foundation of work and life on board. It ensured order and uniformity within onboard procedures and administration, and created a structured and disciplined environment that was essential to the ship's operations, and ultimately those of the VOC as a whole.

Crew members were bound to the article letter by an oath, which was included at the end of the document. Upon their registration as a ship's crew member, the article letter was read to the new recruit, after which they were required to pledge their allegiance to the States General, the Prince of Orange, the VOC directors, and their onboard superiors, promising that they "will obey the foregoing article letter, which was clearly read to us, and all other orders, instructions, signal and rationing letters, and other ordinances mentioned in the aforementioned article letter [...] and will obey and meet all points to the best of our ability."<sup>132</sup> They were required to swear this oath in the presence of town councillors (*schepenen*), 'or other state authorities', demonstrating this document's strong association with state government, and indicating its status as an almost legal text, akin to official state ordinances. The letter, thus, was read to the crew once again whilst at sea. After this collective reading, the ship's council, consisting of several high-ranking crew members, retreated to the skipper's cabin to swear and sign an additional oath, promising to always regulate according to the article letter.<sup>133</sup> In establishing a solemn bond between the employee, VOC officials, and the Dutch State in general, these oaths played a

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<sup>131</sup> *Instructie voor de provoosten* (bibliography no. 391).

<sup>132</sup> *Artyckel-brief*, p. 47 (bibliography no. 387).

<sup>133</sup> *Artyckel-brief*, p. 46 (bibliography no. 387).

significant role in holding VOC employees accountable, and ensuring that the contents of the article letter were obeyed and regulated at all times.

Article letters were not exclusively used by the VOC. They were equally essential to the operations of the West India Company (WIC), the admiralties, and the land army, for which the document was also regularly read aloud.<sup>134</sup> Similar to the VOC, soldiers were subjected to a reading of the article letter upon their enlistment, after which they likewise were required to swear an oath.<sup>135</sup> The document was also publicly read before a regiment's march, grandly announced by trumpets and drums, so that everyone knew they were expected to pay attention.<sup>136</sup> Ordinary merchant ships, like Lucas Pruijs's *Santa Maria*, used documents similar to article letters, such as a document, signed by all 34 crew members, titled "Terms, articles, and conditions, on which we, the undersigned officers and boatmen, hire ourselves out and bind ourselves to skipper Lucas Pruijs." Like the printed forms, this document too was standardised; it was pre-written, with spaces left open to fill in the names of the ship and its skipper. But whereas the VOC, WIC, the admiralties, and the land army all had their article letters printed by the mid-seventeenth century, the documents on ordinary merchant ships remained handwritten. The documents were, after all, required in much smaller quantities, and the expenses and efforts involved in printing them were undoubtedly considered to be excessive.

Having a document such as the article letter in print appeared to have been essential to proper state administration. The land army's article letter, or *Articule-briefff, ofte ordonnantie op de discipline militaire*, was provided in printed form as early as 1590.<sup>137</sup> The admiralties appear to have begun printing theirs around 1620.<sup>138</sup> For the VOC, it took somewhat longer to start providing ships with printed versions. Since the first Company voyages, the *artikelbrief* had been supplied in manuscript form, although eight pages long, quarto extracts of the document's most important articles appear to have been printed by the 1620s.<sup>139</sup> The full document, however, only began to be supplied to the ships in printed form in 1649, in a large folio edition.<sup>140</sup> This makes the *artikelbrief* one of the first ship's papers to be printed. The VOC's decision to prioritise this document for printing is understandable: a printed version minimised the potential for ambiguity, errors, or tampering, ensuring that every ship received the same authoritative text. Consistency was essential to maintaining uniformity and order across the ships.

Who printed the article letter mattered greatly, and was a prestigious appointment. The article letter on board of *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* was not printed by VOC printer Matthijsz, but by Jacobus

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<sup>134</sup> Van Alphen, *Het Oorlogsschip*, 47.

<sup>135</sup> Van Alphen, *Het Oorlogsschip*, 48.

<sup>136</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 3272, scan number 0929, via Goetgevonden.

<sup>137</sup> Van Alphen, *Het Oorlogsschip*, 48; States General, *Articule-briefff, ofte ordonnantie op de discipline militaire*, 13 August 1590 (Delft: Aelbrecht Hendricksz, [1590]). USTC 443913.

<sup>138</sup> Van Alphen, *Het Oorlogsschip*, 50.

<sup>139</sup> VOC, *Extract van eenige voornaemste artijckelen, uyt den artijckel brief*, (s.l., s.n., [1621]), USTC 1033478.

<sup>140</sup> Van Meersbergen and Birkenholz, 'Writing That Travels,' 48; NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 102, Resoluties van de Heren XVII, 6 September 1649, ff. 145.

Scheltus, official printer to the States General. Earlier VOC article letters, as well as those of the admiralties, army, and WIC, were likewise printed by the States General printers. This choice of printer arose from the document's unique status: although written by the directors of the VOC, the *Heeren XVII*, the document was officially validated by the States General and approved by stadtholder Willem III himself. An extant article letter from 1673, kept in the VOC archives, contains a letter signed by the stadtholder, stating that he had "seen and examined the following article letter" and that he "approbates and confirms" it.<sup>141</sup> This association with the Republic's central government enhanced the significance and authority of the *artikelbrief*, suggesting an alignment between the rules governing life aboard the ship and the broader laws of the Republic. Having it printed by official States General printer gave a further air of authority to the document. It reinforced its status as an official government document, comparable to other state-issued publications.

Article letters were regularly updated to suit the current political situation. During the 'stadtholderless period' between 1650 and 1672, VOC personnel only pledged their allegiance to the States General and their VOC superiors. When a stadtholder returned to power in June 1672, however, it was necessary to revise the letter's text and include Willem III's name and lengthy list of titles. The Amsterdam Admiralty attended the States General to this, whereupon the latter immediately ordered a new version of the Admiralties' article letter to be printed, with the stadtholder's name included in the title, oath and articles.<sup>142</sup> This change was likewise immediately imposed to the VOC's article letter, as this letter too was revised in September 1672, including the prince's name and titles where needed. For an important document like this, it was essential that the text was kept up to date at all times.

The *artikelbrief's* importance is further underscored by its ubiquity on board. The collective reading of the document, or at least part of it, was to be repeated every four to six weeks, to ensure that 'people keep it in mind' – a practice that was also done on Admiralty ships.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, the merchants and skippers were required to attach a printed extract of the document's key articles to the main mast and other 'appropriate places'.<sup>144</sup> The *artikelbrief* was not the only printed document that was affixed on board, although it is imaginable that it was certainly the most prominently present. Centrally located and regarded as the main gathering spot, the big mast was commonly used as a place where goods were sold, punishments were carried out, spoken announcements were made, and placards were put up.<sup>145</sup> Such placards, issued by the VOC themselves, attended the crew to rules such as the

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<sup>141</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 364 Artikelbrieven door de Staten-Generaal aan de VOC verleend, scan no. 65.

<sup>142</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 3286, scan number 0358, Friday 16 September 1672, via Goetgevonden.

<sup>143</sup> Tjassens, *Zee-politie*, 25.

<sup>144</sup> *Artyckel-brief* (bibliography no. 387).

<sup>145</sup> After a crew member's death, his possessions were sold at the mast to the highest bidder. For some violations of rules in the article letter, punishments were carried out at the mast. In the event of someone maliciously drawing a knife, for instance, the culprit was 'nailed to the mast with a knife through his hand, and stand there so long until he pulls the knife through.' *Instructie ende ordre, op 't houden van de scheeps-soldie en guarnisoen-boecken*, 7 (bibliography no. 392); *Artyckel-brief*, 27 (bibliography no. 387).

forbiddance of the theft of company goods, and the prohibition of taking private goods on board – much like official placards affixed throughout cities, used by authorities to govern their citizens.<sup>146</sup>

Multiple copies of the article letter must have been on board. The article letter extracts that were spread around the ship were likely to have been provided to the ships in large numbers, as they were to be replaced regularly with fresh copies, when wear and tear had worn them down. Moreover, it is probable that other crew members besides the skipper – or at least high-ranking ones – also possessed their own copy of the printed article letter. An estate inventory of a VOC helmsman, compiled by an Amsterdam notary after his death in 1680, mentions, for instance, that he had a printed article letter in his possession.<sup>147</sup> With the repeated recitals, broad distribution, and personal possession of the document on board, the crew truly had no excuse not to know this important document's content. Its ubiquity was undoubtedly aided by the printing press: providing this document in print allowed for the quick and relatively cheap creation of large stocks, ready to be distributed.



**10 - Article letter on board of *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* (Bibliography no. 387).**

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<sup>146</sup> Der Weduwen, *State Communication*, 146; Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, deel 3, 373. For the affixing of official print throughout cities in the Republic, see: Der Weduwen, *State Communication*, chapter 5 'Crying and Affixing the Law.'

<sup>147</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de Notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, Jacob de Winter, 2412B, 27 January 1682, scan no. 19, via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

## Endless instructions

As we have seen, the article letter was the central document on board. It was, however, accompanied by an array of other printed instructions. During the same 1649 meeting in which the *Heeren XVII* decided to print the *artikelbrief*, they also ordered the printing of another set of documents.<sup>148</sup> In four to eight folio pages, these documents, which previously had been used in manuscript form, provided further rules and instructions. They were tailored to specific crew members: the merchant, skipper, ship's council, fleet council, provost, and the preacher or 'sick comforter' (*sieckentrooster*). In later decades, this collection would be expanded to include printed instructions for various other personnel such as surgeons and carpenters.<sup>149</sup> As a more personalised addition to the article letter, these documents were used to further regulate work and procedures on board.

The personalised instructions described crew members' tasks in more detail than the article letter. For the provosts, for instance, it contained a list of questions they were required to ask interrogees after they had transgressed the article letter. The priests or sick comforters were instructed to see to it that prayers were said every morning and evening, and to ensure that there was no blasphemy on board. One of the skipper's versatile tasks was to, when the ship had reached the Spanish sea, 'assist in distributing the books that the Company has provided, to be used for their edification.'<sup>150</sup> Another set of documents provided useful information for navigating to the Indies. The 'signal letter' (*seinbrief*), outlined essential regulations regarding how to behave whilst sailing in convoy, such as how to manoeuvre, and to communicate and signal to each other using fires, flags, and cannon shots.<sup>151</sup> Furthermore, the 'instruction of the characteristics of the winds' contained information about winds and monsoons during the journey, instructions on compass reading, and detailed sailing instructions from the Republic to Java for different periods of the year. Moreover, the Zeeland chamber provided their ships with a further set of instructions, which gave detailed accounts written by previous sailors, detailing navigation situations at specific locations along the route.<sup>152</sup> Together with the article letter,

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<sup>148</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 102, Resoluties van de Heren XVII, 6 September 1649, ff. 145. Scan no. 294.

<sup>149</sup> For instance: VOC, *Ordre en instructie voor de chirurgyns* (Middelburg: J. Meertens, [1695]. USTC 1829765.

<sup>150</sup> *Het Wapen van Rotterdam's* inventory contains a list of these 'ships' books', containing 100 psalm books, and ten other books, which were – besides a work on the 'Spanish tyranny' – all religious in nature. In the beginning of the century, VOC ships were supplied with over 300 books (Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, 121), but in 1654, the *Heeren XVII* decided that this was too much. After consulting church commissioners on the essential works, they reduced the amount of books to 110. Ships' inventories from the Prize Papers, show that this revised list of ships' books remained largely the same for at least a century. H.C. Millies, "Aantekeningen betreffende Oost- en West- Indische Kerkzaken 1604-1652," *De Navorscher* 41 (1891); NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 103, Resoluties van de Heren XVII, 15 October 1654, p. 556.

<sup>151</sup> Printed signal letters were also used for admiralty fleets, see: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 4845, scan number 0321, Friday 25 November 1647. Via Goetgevonden. They were also used for fleets conveyed by Admiralty ships: Admiralty of Amsterdam, *Ordonnantie ende Seyn-brief, waer na hen alle de schippers sullen moeten reguleren by Admiraelschap, varende uyt het Vlie ofte Marsdiep nae de Sont* (s.l.: s.n., s.d.[not after 1689]) (bibliography no. 457).

<sup>152</sup> 1.04.02 VOC, 4928, *Aenwysinge om t'allen tijden des jaers, van Cabo de Bonne Esperance, de kusten van India Malabax, Cabo Comorijn, Madure, 't Eylandt Ceylon te beseylen* (Middelburg: Pieter van Goetthem, s.d.); VOC, *Naerdere en seekere Mercken, Genomen en ghestelt by den Commandeur Rijbeeck, en schipper Claes*

this wide variety of instructional documents for various staff and situations, formed the key documents on board, used by the VOC to regulate nearly all aspects of life and work on board.

As with the article letter, we can assume that there were multiple copies of these instructions on board. One copy was kept in the ship's designated paper chest in the skipper's cabin, and the personnel to whom the instructions were directed possessed at least one copy. The previously mentioned estate inventory of a VOC helmsman tells us that he was in possession of three copies of the printed 'ship's council instructions'.<sup>153</sup> Of 'Instruction of the characteristics of the wind' it is known that at least that four copies were present on board: one each for the first, second, and third mates, with a fourth presumably intended for the ship's paper chest.<sup>154</sup> It is not unlikely that the VOC provided the ships with a stack of spare documents, in case a document got lost or damaged. The documents were intended for single use only, and were replaced by new copies for every voyage. This becomes apparent from the last page of the documents, which contain blank spaces intended to fill in date, place, and signatures of the two Company directors who had officially approved every document during a directors' meeting, a few weeks before *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* departed.

The importance of these handwritten additions of approval is illustrated by the case of the preachers and *sieckentroosters*, who occupied a somewhat special position on board. As clergy affiliated with the Reformed Church but also employed by the VOC, they were subject to both Church and Company authority.<sup>155</sup> Likely as an attempt to prevent conflict with this other institution, the VOC only allowed the preachers and *sieckentroosters* to take instructions on board that had been officially approved by the *Heeren XVII* and signed by the directors.<sup>156</sup> This illustrates the role of signatures in the legitimising these instructional documents. Despite being printed by the official VOC printer and supplied to the ships by the Company, without an official written approval by Company directors, the instructions would lack the necessary validity and authority. In this manner, the signatures transformed these otherwise standardised printed documents into official mandates, supported by institutional authority.

The signed instructions were also a type of binding agreement. Before departure, the instructions were read aloud to the clergy, after which they were obliged to sign two copies of the booklet: one for the ship, and one to remain in Amsterdam.<sup>157</sup> This is comparable to the practice of requiring other high-ranking crew members to sign their oaths. By having them sign these printed

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*Franssen Bordingh* (s.l: s.n., 1669); *Extract uyt den brief geschreven aen de vergaderinge der Heeren Seventiene, door den Commandeur Cornelis van Qualbergen* (Middelburg: Pieter van Goetthem, s.d.)

<sup>153</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de Notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, Jacob de Winter, 2412B, 27 January 1682, scan no. 19, via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

<sup>154</sup> As becomes apparent from *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*'s inventory of ship's papers: 'Register vande instructien en de andere papieren leggende inde dose voort schip genaamt T' Wapen van Rotterdam' NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA30-1064, scan no. 2.

<sup>155</sup> 'L.J. Joosse, "De kerk onderweg: aan boord en in de verstrooiing," in *Het Indisch Sion: De Gereformeerde kerk onder de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, ed. G.J. Schutte (Verloren, 2002), 101-103

<sup>156</sup> Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 4, 13.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

documents, the VOC established accountability and reinforced the binding nature of its authority over its personnel on board. Not all instructions were signed, however. The ‘Instruction of the characteristics of the winds’ was intended not as a set of strict rules, but rather as guidance that skippers and helmsmen were asked ‘to observe carefully’.<sup>158</sup> The same applied to the various sailing instructions. Unlike the other sets of instructions, these documents therefore served as practical, educational resources that the crew was expected to consult, not as binding agreements.

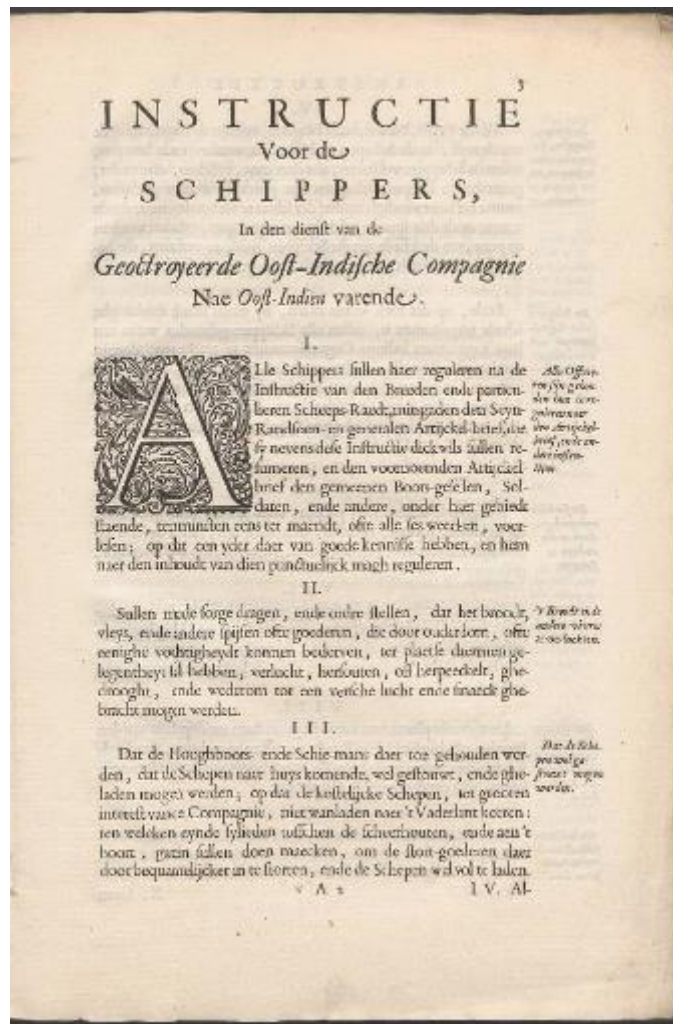
Not all instructions on board of *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* were printed. Instructions regarding matters such as who was permitted to dine in the skipper’s cabin (a group of the eight most high-ranking people on board and their spouses, if the latter had been permitted to come along) or how meat should be preserved (it required regular salting), were provided in manuscript.<sup>159</sup> Why they were written could have several reasons. They could, for instance, not have been standardised across multiple vessels, or could have been regarded as less important, the VOC not deeming the production of decisive versions essential.

The underlying intent and purpose of these documents is clear. These various printed booklets – most of them signed and read aloud to the applicable staff members – served as a means to clearly convey the rules and duties on board. They regulated authority, ensured accountability, and maintained order in the operations on board. To have these documents printed was both practical and efficient. Printing enabled standardisation, ensuring that all ships received identical texts, and eliminated the need for manual transcription for each departing ship. Moreover, it made it easier to provide the ships with multiple copies, facilitating easier dissemination of this important information on board. Nevertheless, the extent to which all these instructions and rules outlined in the *artikelbrief* and other instructional documents were actually followed by the ship’s crew is not easy to gauge. The preacher or *sieckentrooster* aboard *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*, for instance, did not sign their instructions. Similarly, other documents requiring crew signatures were also left unsigned. This could mean that, despite their efforts, the many rules and instructions the *Heeren XVII* had set up may not have always been rigorously followed in practice.

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<sup>158</sup> Instructie van de eygenschap der winden, in het vaerwater tusschen Nederlandt en Java, [1] (bibliography no. 393).

<sup>159</sup> NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA30-1064, Nr 21 ‘Ordre en regelement voor de opperhoofden op de uytgaande schepen vande Nederlantsche Oostindische Compagnie naer Oostindien, omme haar daar nae te reguleren’; ‘Ordre en regelement aangaande ’t verpeeckelen en versouten van ’t vleesch’.



11 - Page from the skipper's instructions (Bibliography no. 388).

## A perfect administration

The VOC's attempt at regulating onboard procedures through printed documents did not end with the article letter and other instructions. While these instructional documents were essential for maintaining order and accountability in the daily procedures on board, another category of documents focused on ensuring efficient bookkeeping. As the VOC's operations in the Indies expanded, so too did the complexity of managing its administration. By the 1640s, the *Heren XVII* had received repeated complaints. The onboard bookkeepers were making "major oversights, errors, and omissions" in their administration of the ship's finances, to the great frustration of the administrators in Batavia who were tasked with processing all this data.<sup>160</sup> In response, the *Heeren XVII* allowed the administrators in Batavia to compile a bookkeeping manual in 1646, which was from then on to be supplied to every ship.<sup>161</sup> All onboard bookkeepers were ordered to strictly adhere to the manual, with the added warning

<sup>160</sup> VOC, *Instructie ende ordre, op 't houden van de scheeps-soldie en guarnisoen-boecken* (Amsterdam: Joan Blaeu, 1656), 3 (bibliography no. 392).

<sup>161</sup> Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 1, 701.

that failure to comply would result in fines. The first edition of the manual was printed by Joan Blaeu in 1647, which was two years before the *artikelbrief* and other instructions. This makes the manual, to my knowledge, the first document supplied to the ships in printed form. Unlike the *artikelbrief* and the additional instructions, this manual had never existed in manuscript form, indicating the VOC's recognition of the potential of the printing press to aid their administration. Manually compiling this 33-pages long document for each ship would have been highly impractical, but print allowed for a much more efficient production. Moreover, print was neater in its text and structure – which was surely beneficial for a bookkeeping manual designed for the purpose of enforcing order and neatness in the administration.

The copy on *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* was printed in 1656, and there were at least two on board: one for the merchant, and one for his assistant. This indicates that – assuming that the manual was only used once, as with the other ship's documents – the print run was sufficiently large to supply the Amsterdam chamber's ships for at least fifteen years, amounting to at least more than circa 400 copies.<sup>162</sup> A handwritten note with updated instructions dating from 1666, and a further three pages of printed instructions were later added to the book, indicating that rather than reprinting the entire manual, the VOC chose to add to it; a cost-effective solution, particularly when there was still a stock of copies available.

The manual was intended to ensure order and neatness in the onboard administration, outlining strict rules to which the bookkeepers should adhere. It concerned the content of the books, as well as their form and writing style, emphasising that books should be written “neatly and without cluttering or mistakes.”<sup>163</sup> The bookkeepers were also urged to carefully structure their books and include an alphabetical index at the front, which, it is emphasised, should not be written on loose pieces of paper as those could get easily lost. “So that all this may be easier understood”, the instructions were followed by detailed examples of what a correct ‘journal’ and ‘groot-boeck’ should look like (figure 12). For *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*, the instructions appeared to have been effective. While the ship's journals have not been preserved, one of the two *groot-boecken* has. It is clearly written and neatly arranged, something that was further aided by the use of pre-lined paper with vertical red lines. The bookkeepers were obliged to keep the manual with them on board at all times, with a penalty of the loss of three months' wages if they were repeatedly caught without. The VOC, therefore, saw this manual as a key document in regulating onboard administration.

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<sup>162</sup> With 192 ships of the Amsterdam chamber departing between 1656 and 1673, the amount of copies must therefore have been more than 384. Huygens Instituut, “The Dutch East India Company's shipping between the Netherlands and Asia 1595-1795,” accessed on 29 April 2025. <https://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/das/voyages>.

<sup>163</sup> VOC, *Instructie op 't houden van de scheeps-soldie*, 4 (bibliography no. 392).

In 't Schip Hollandia, Anno 1641.			
		Abraham Jarmansz van Amsterdam, Oppet-Koopman, is schuldich	264 8 6
Adi 1	Januarij	Aerde E. Compagnie, over 2 maanden ge- geve 4 g. 70 per maent.	5 240 ---
25	Juli	Aerde E. Compagnie, over 6 maanden ge- geve 4 g. 70 per maent.	5 215 ---
		Somma	425 ---
Anno 1642.			
		Isaac Dircksz van Hoorn, Schipper, is schuldich	
Adi 1	Januarij	Aerde E. Compagnie, over 2 maanden ge- geve 4 g. 70 per maent.	5 240 ---
15	Juli	Aerde E. Compagnie, over 6 maanden ge- geve 4 g. 70 per maent.	5 215 ---
		Somma	455 ---
Anno 1643.			
		Joris Schilderhuyzen van Leyden, Fif- cael, is schuldich	
Adi 1	Januarij	Aerde E. Compagnie, over 2 maanden ge- geve 4 g. 70 per maent.	5 240 ---
15	Juli	Aerde E. Compagnie, over 6 maanden ge- geve 4 g. 70 per maent.	5 215 ---
		Somma	455 ---

In 't Schip Hollandia, Anno 1641.			
		Abraham Jarmansz van Amsterdam, Oppet-Koopman, moet hebben	264 8 6
Adi 15	Juli	Van de E. Compagnie, 2.475: 00 over 6 maenden gegeve, 4 g. 70 per maent, by hem verleent, teken prima Januarij pastado, dat mer dit Schip nye Toel sin geveyt, toe dies dater, want op Bataviae made (Gode heb lof) sin geveent, de Boec- ken geschreuen worden, ende contereent lijst.	1 255 ---
Anno 1642.			
		Isaac Dircksz van Hoorn, Schipper, moet hebben	
Adi 15	Juli	Van de E. Compagnie, 2.190: 00 over 6 maenden gegeve, 4 g. 70 per maent, by hem verleent, teken prima Januarij pastado, dat mer dit Schip nye Toel sin geveyt, toe dies dater, want op Bataviae made (Gode heb lof) sin geveent, de Boec- ken geschreuen worden, ende contereent lijst.	1 180 ---
Anno 1643.			
		Joris Schilderhuyzen van Leyden, Fif- cael, moet hebben	
Adi 4	Januarij	Van Jarmansz van Hoorn, over 2 maanden gegeve.	4 240 ---
15	Juli	Van de E. Compagnie, 2.234: 00 over 6 maenden gegeve, 4 g. 70 per maent, by hem verleent, teken prima Januarij pastado, dat mer dit Schip nye Toel sin geveyt, toe dies dater, want op Bataviae made (Gode heb lof) sin geveent, de Boec- ken geschreuen worden, ende alreux aan hand gien.	1 241 ---
		Somma	241 ---

12 – A page from the bookkeeping manual, exemplifying how a ‘groot-boeck’ needed to be kept. (Bibliography no. 392).

Having attempted to regulate the administration of onboard finances through the bookkeeping manual, in 1669 the VOC decided to also improve the maintenance and administration of the victuals and equipment on board. Concerning the provisioning, The *Heeren XVII* deemed regulative action was necessary, as they were dissatisfied with the lack of uniformity among the Chambers. While they had already compiled a universal list for the victuals in 1649, and the Amsterdam Chamber had been printing it since 1652, the other Chambers apparently did not sufficiently adhere to it, choosing independently what provisions to supply their ships.<sup>164</sup> Therefore, the *Heeren XVII* re-emphasised the need to adhere to the revised standardised list, and listed the specific foodstuffs required to be supplied to all ships and rules regarding their rationing.<sup>165</sup> To ensure the Chambers’ compliance, the *Heeren XVII* required each Chamber to submit annual reports detailing the provisions supplied, thus further strengthening their centralised administrative oversight.

<sup>164</sup> Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 1, 511-513; NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 234 Resoluties van de vergaderingen van de kamer Amsterdam, 7 November 1652, scan no. 280.

<sup>165</sup> Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 1, 511-513; NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 106, Resoluties van de Heren XVII, 14 August 1669. Scan no. 489.

Besides attempting to regulate the Chambers' power regarding the distribution of provisions, the *Heeren XVII* also wished to regulate the skipper's power. The directors had received multiple complaints about skippers taking too much authority upon themselves in the rationing, either withholding rations from the crew or distributing them too generously.<sup>166</sup> They therefore mandated adherence to the printed rationing rules, which were to be printed and distributed to all vessels. On West India Company ships, this list of rules appears to have been affixed around the ship, as becomes evident from an incident during a 1652 voyage of the ship *De Gewapende Ruijter* from Brazil to the Republic. The list of victuals and rationing rules, usually affixed at the helm, was suddenly "removed in all quietness and went missing." Simultaneously, the crew and passengers began to receive much fewer provisions, escalating to such an extent that before the end of the journey, little of it was left, and angry mobs stormed the skipper's hut. By removing the printed list from its publicly available place, the skipper appears to have attempted to conceal the fact that he had made errors in the rationing.<sup>167</sup> While this incident happened on a WIC ship, it is well imaginable that the list was likewise affixed on VOC ships, as a way to regulate rationing practices and hold skippers accountable.

In a further attempt to contain the skipper's power regarding provisioning, and prevent cases like the one that occurred on *De Gewapende Ruijter*, the *Heeren XVII* required skippers to begin keeping a 'consumption book'. Every week, he was to list in this book the types and quantities of food and beverages that were consumed that week. To ensure that this book was properly kept, the *Heeren XVII* ordered the printing of yet another manual in 1669.<sup>168</sup> Like the previous financial bookkeeping manual, this book laid out the rules regarding bookkeeping. It too provided examples of what an adequate consumption book should look like through pages of neatly organised tables, two of which were fold-out pages to make two particularly wide tables fit (figure 13). Upon arrival in the Indies, ships were required to hand over their completed consumption book within fourteen days, so that the administrators could verify and process them.<sup>169</sup> Failure to do so resulted in a reduction of wages. The consumption book and its accompanying manual were, therefore, yet another way the VOC attempted to regulate actions, procedures, and administration on board of their ships.

The two bookkeeping manuals are exemplary of the VOC's recognition of the potential of the medium of print. Unlike the far majority of the other printed ship's papers, both manuals had not previously existed in manuscript form. If they had to be handwritten for each ship, it is unlikely that they would ever have been produced at all, as their production would have required much time and

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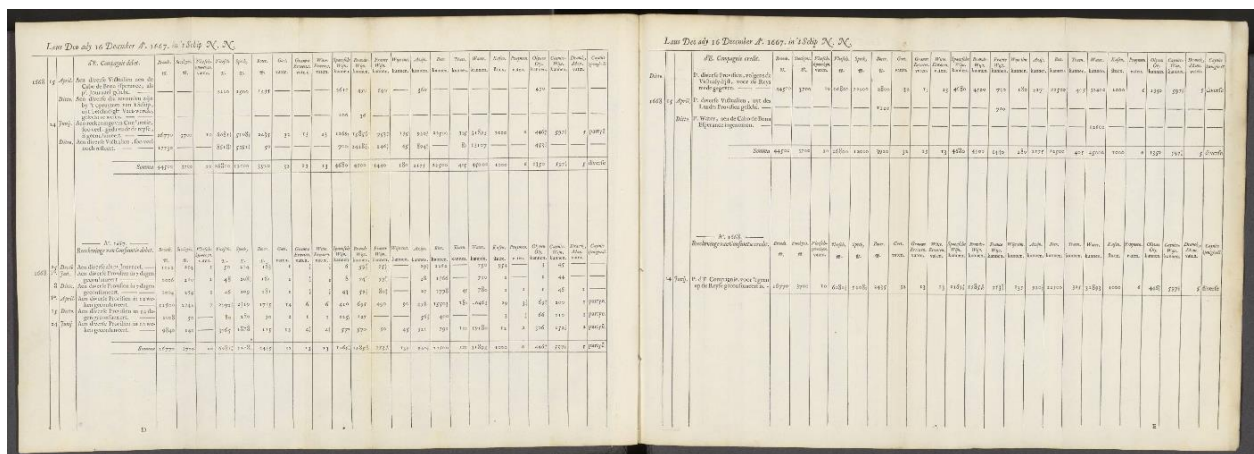
<sup>166</sup> VOC, *Lyste vande victualien, en ordre op de rantsoenen*, 4 (bibliography no. 396).

<sup>167</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de Notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, Henrik Schaef, 1301, 2 August 1652. Via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

<sup>168</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 106, Resoluties van de Heren XVII, 20 August 1669. Scan nr. 517; VOC, *Instructie en formulier waer na, op de Scheepen van de Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie deser Landen, varende na Oost-Indien, zal werden gehouden een consumtie-boeck* (Middelburg: Theodorus de la Maere, s.d.) (NL-HaNA, 1.04.02, 4928).

<sup>169</sup> VOC, *Instructie en formulier consumtie-boeck*, 2.

effort. As we can therefore see, for the VOC, the use of print played a crucial role in implementing standardised procedures and efficient administration among its fleet.



**13 - Two folding-out pages from the consumption book manual, providing an example of how the book was supposed to be kept (Nationaal Archief, The Hague).**

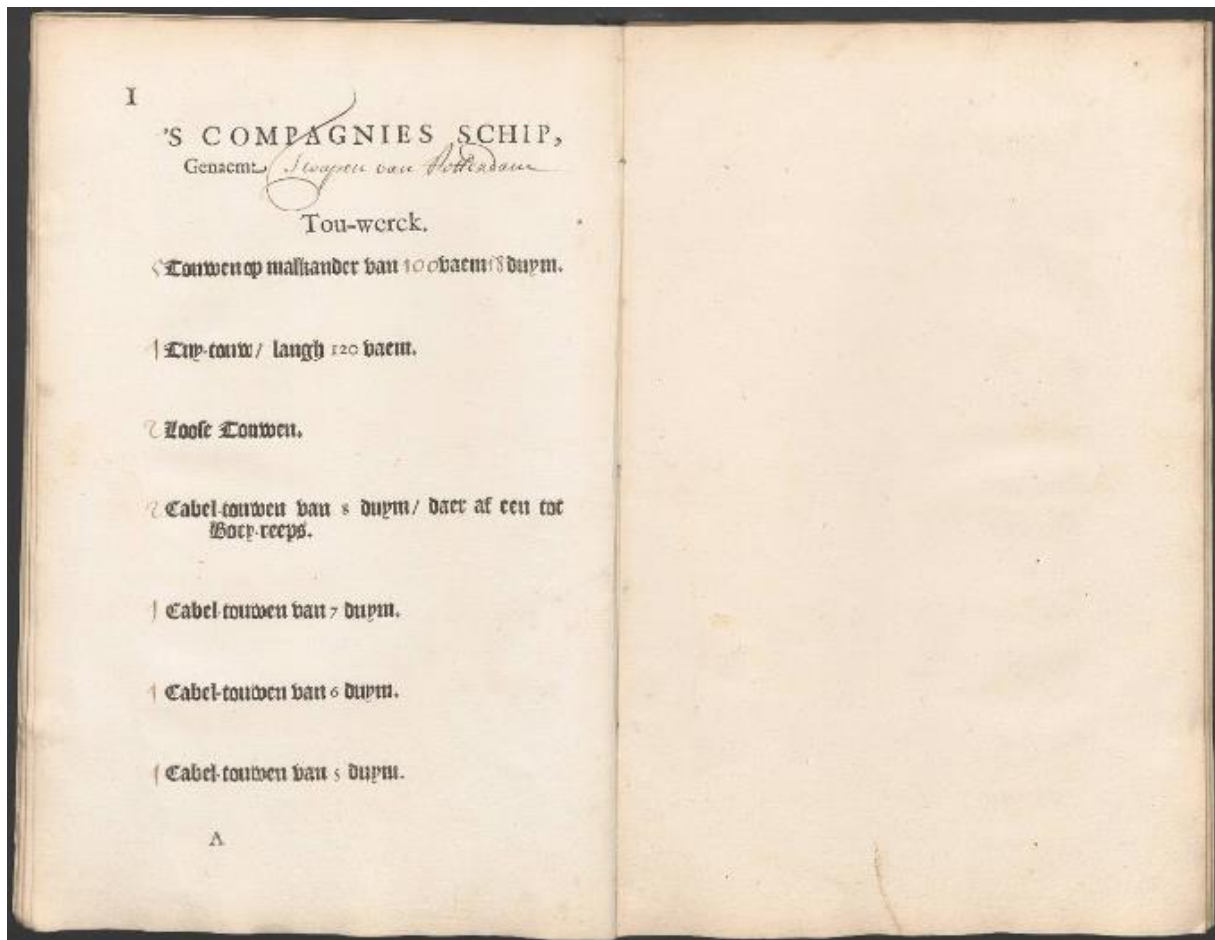
The VOC’s wish to implement standardised and efficient administration, is further evidenced by another administrative document, the ‘equipment book’. During the same meeting in August 1669 in which the *Heeren XVII* had streamlined the administration of consumption, they had likewise turned their attention to the regulation of the administration of equipment, deciding that new, additional instructions would be incorporated into the ‘equipment book’.<sup>170</sup> In this 158-page folio document, the skipper had to keep track of everything that was being “consumed, used, worn, or perished during the journey, or got lost due to one cause or another.” The new instructions, added to the instructional text at the beginning of the book, detail that the skipper was to note how, where, and when certain items were used. Failure to sufficiently do this, would obligate the skipper to compensate the Company for any missing items. A duplicate but ‘more compressed’ version of the printed list was kept at the Amsterdam office, allowing for cross-referencing if discrepancies arose.<sup>171</sup> The book contains 63 printed pages that list the items, with their quantities added by hand. Generous spacing was left between entries, and at least three blank pages were interspersed behind each printed page (figure 14). The book’s layout was, thus, intentionally designed to facilitate a particular style of bookkeeping, encouraging the bookkeeper to include extensive annotations and additional details. *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*’s skipper had probably not had the chance to do this, however. Apart from filling in the quantities of items, the ship’s equipment list had not been used much. Skipper Cloet probably had other things on his mind during the ship’s tumultuous voyage.

It is important to note that not all inventory lists were printed. Whether they were handwritten or printed appears to reflect the perceived importance of the items in question. The list of clothes, linens for the skipper’s cabin, and the books and writing utensils were for instance handwritten, while those

<sup>170</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 106, Resoluties van de Heren XVII, 23 August 1669. Scan nr. 539.

<sup>171</sup> Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 1, p. 646.

of the artillerist (*konstapel*), steward (*bottelier*), and locksmith were printed together in a 3-page booklet. The latter lists also required signatures from their responsible crew members, who had to confirm they had received the listed goods. As the supplies managed by the artillerist, steward, and locksmith were essential for the safety and smooth operation of the voyage, it is likely that the VOC believed these items required precise and standardised documentation. The requirement for these crew members to personally sign the printed inventories further underscores the significance of ensuring accuracy and accountability in managing these items. By contrast, less rigorous administration appears to have been considered sufficient for items like clothing, where accuracy in their documentation was less important. Thus, while handwritten administration continued to be used on board of VOC ships, many documents were provided in printed form, used by the VOC to standardise and control its onboard administration.



14 - Page from *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*'s 'equipment book', with blank pages intended for annotations (Bibliography no. 394).

## Conclusion

As I have discussed in this chapter, the introduction of printed instructions, lists, and manuals allowed the VOC to standardise procedures and rules across their ships, ensuring that the exact same rules, protocols, and administrative styles were used across all ships from all Chambers. This uniformity was supposed to reduce the potential for errors and ambiguities, enhancing the efficiency of the Company's administration. Furthermore, printed documents served to establish and reinforce the VOC's authority both on board and within its broader organisational framework. The ubiquitously present *artikelbrief*, validated by the States General and printed by their official printer, reinforced the VOC's legitimacy and authority, and, combined with other instruction booklets, served as everyday manifestations of governance in the lives of ships' crews. The strict rules on board also curbed the individual autonomy of crew members on board, ensuring their compliance with Company policies and reducing the potential for individual discretions. As such, examining the ubiquity of print on board of a VOC ship illustrates how this company, and by extent the Dutch state, attempted to implement its lofty ideals, and demonstrates the VOC's desire to for control and uniformity over its administration and the procedures on board.

Moreover, printing facilitated the easier dissemination of rules and instructions, enabling documents like the *artikelbrief* extracts to be reproduced in many copies to be circulated throughout the ship. It also enabled the VOC to create new kinds of documents, such as the bookkeeping manuals, which had not previously existed in manuscript form, indicating the Company's recognition of the potential of print within implementing standardised procedures and efficient administration among its fleet. However, it is important to note that while print became a vital medium for the Company's administration, handwritten documents continued to be used. They were used for shorter instructions and lists that could be quickly copied and did perhaps not necessitate a formal and standardised version, and for documents that may have applied only to the individual ship in question.

We have seen that print appears to have made its entry into the VOC's ship papers within a short period of time from the late 1640s onwards. The first printed item was the bookkeeping manual in 1647, reflecting the Company's recognition of print's potential to improve their procedures and administration. The manual was soon followed by the printing of the *artikelbrief* and crew instructions in 1649, and further sets of documents in 1652. By the 1660s, the use of print had clearly caught on, as evidenced by the appointment of Matthijsz as the Amsterdam chamber's official printer in 1663, followed by the appointment of Zeeland's printer in 1669. Furthermore, the creation of the consumption book manual in 1669 indicates the VOC's increasing use of printed material to streamline their administrative processes. By the time of *Het Wapen van Rotterdam*'s voyage in 1673, the Company supplied their ships with approximately twenty printed items. The use of print on board continued to expand into the eighteenth century. Printed instructions were created for various aspects of work on

board, from carpenters and water supply supervisors, to instructions to prevent leakages, and the use of printed lists too expanded, with for instance a ‘general list of the helmsman’s tools, maps, and books’.

This expansion of print within the VOC’s administration, coincided with the rapid growth of the Company. Between 1610 and 1670, the number of ships departing from the Republic, and the amount of people leaving, doubled. At the same time, the bureaucratic network in the Indies vastly expanded.<sup>172</sup> This growth undoubtedly necessitated efficient and effective systems of management and regulation, for which print was a vital medium. However, there were inconsistencies in the enforcement of the rules. Missing signatures and repeated complaints from the administrators show that the VOC’s bureaucratic ideals were not always realised in practice. This aligns with earlier observations by historians that the VOC’s administration was not without its flaws, and highlights the challenge of managing such a vast organisation.<sup>173</sup>

To end, it is important to note that while I have focused on instructional and administrative print documents in this chapter, these were not the only print items on board. The so called ‘sea letter’ and bills of lading were also printed. Their important role within the international maritime trade system will be discussed in the next chapter. Furthermore, the ship was provided with a booklet of ‘ship prayers’, as well as 110 mostly devotional books. The ship also transported a shipment of bibles in the Malay language as cargo, intended for the colony. Those bibles, however, never made it to the Indies.

As per their received instructions, *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* sailed north towards Scotland to avoid transversing the English Channel, which was unnavigable due to the ongoing Anglo-Dutch war. However, not far from the Shetland, the ship encountered severe weather, losing its rudder and snapping a mast. Unable to continue, they anchored at Ronas Voe, a bay in the northern Shetland Islands, to carry out emergency repairs. Nearly two months passed, until by 11 February, word of the ill-fated ship had reached London. A mere two days earlier, Charles II had signed the Treaty of Westminster, marking the end of the Anglo-Dutch war. However, the treaty was not yet in effect, and Charles seized this opportunity to act, ordering the ship to be swiftly taken. British forces quickly captured the helpless ship after a brief skirmish. *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* was taken as a prize, and all its contents were taken to London.<sup>174</sup> The crew was made prisoners – though some were swiftly released – and skipper Cloet returned home on a packet boat. Meanwhile, upon hearing their ship had been taken, the *Heeren XVII* immediately sent men to England try to buy the ship back, but without success.<sup>175</sup> The ship was unimaginatively renamed *The Arms of Rotterdam* and was taken into the royal navy, where it served until 1703. Its cargo was sold at auction, and – lucky for us – its papers were safely stored away.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Bruijn et. al., *Dutch-Asiatic shipping*, part 1, 144.

<sup>173</sup> Gaastra, *Geschiedenis van de VOC*.

<sup>174</sup> Frank L. Fox, “The Ronas Voe Incident, 1674,” *The Mariner’s Mirror* 10: 4 (2020): 408-421; *Oprechte Haerlemsche courant* 15, 10 April 1674 (Haarlem, Abraham Casteleyn), USTC N31-2438.

<sup>175</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.04.02 VOC, 107, Resoluties van de Heren XVII, 24 April 1646.

<sup>176</sup> Fox, “Ronas Voe Incident”; Interestingly, the printed auction catalogue has been preserved: s.n. *A sale of His Majesties prize goods by the Arms of Rotterdam* ([London]: s.n., [1674]), USTC 3090661.

### 3. Print at sea: Printed documents in international maritime encounters

Lucas Pruijs's cabin on the *Santa Maria* must have been simple yet comfortable. A big table with nine cushioned chairs stood in the middle. Whenever it was time to dine, it was set with tin tableware, several of the no fewer than forty-five napkins, and a copper candelabra. Three leather chairs provided the skipper with some necessary comfort, and a mirror adorned the wall.<sup>177</sup> Somewhere in this room, there must have also stood a large chest, filled with papers. It is probably here that Pruijs kept the letters his wife Lijsbet had sent him, her “best friend and dearly beloved husband,” over the years while he was away on his voyages. But Pruijs's personal archive of papers contained more than such letters of comfort. The good record-keeper as he was, he kept hold of various papers he had collected during his current as well as his previous journeys on the *Santa Maria* – journeys that took him to various ports across the Mediterranean. For it was not just in his preparing for departure in the Dutch Republic that he had obtained an abundance of documents. Across the various European ports and in diverse encounters with other seafarers, he, like most skippers of merchant ships, had received and used many more – of which, once again, a significant part was printed.

In this chapter, I discuss the role of printed documents that Dutch merchant ships like the *Santa Maria* could encounter during their voyages throughout Europe. In the first place, it demonstrates that in the second half of the seventeenth century, the Dutch Republic was not alone in its use of the printing press for various types of administration. Commissioned as well as produced and sold on their own initiatives, administrative print was a vital part of the business of Dutch and European printers and booksellers. Furthermore, this chapter demonstrates that administrative print operated within a shared international administrative system that was characterised by international cooperation, and intended to regulate European maritime commerce. Many documents were universally used throughout Europe, and held legal authority, holding the power to regulate international encounters between individuals in various maritime situations. In order for these documents to have any value, it was necessary for both foreign states and individual seamen to recognise, understand, and accept them – a necessity which can be seen reflected in their international standardisation.

I first focus on the variety of printed documents that Dutch ships could encounter in international ports, placing the use of receipts and forms in the Dutch Republic, discussed in chapter one, in an international context. This is followed by a discussion of the bill of lading as a ubiquitous and indispensable document in the international exchange of goods. I subsequently show how the sea letter and other types of passports and forms played an important role in managing the outcomes of international encounters in the context of wars. The wide-ranging selection of papers presented here,

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<sup>177</sup> NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA30-1051, *Santa Maria van Conceptie onder leiding van Lucas Pruijs*. “De goederen ghevonden in de cayuit, 30 November 1664.”

covering countries from Italy to Sweden to England, demonstrate that by the latter half of the seventeenth century, print had large and wide permeated the bureaucracy of the European maritime world, and the everyday lives of sailors.

## Print in European ports

From Texel, the *Santa Maria* sailed to Cadiz, Livorno, Genoa and Venice. In each of these ports, Lucas Pruijs and his men came across countless state-issued documents – handwritten and printed – which were essential in the administration and regulation of the numerous international merchant ships frequenting these ports. Examining the documents that the *Santa Maria* and other Dutch merchant ships encountered during their journeys through Europe, reveals that the Dutch Republic was certainly not alone in its use of administrative print.

A first aspect that was not unique to the Dutch Republic, was the use of printed receipts in administrative systems of tax levying. The French state too appears to have been a prolific user of administrative print, as a system involving inspections, forms and receipts, similar to that in the Dutch Republic, was likewise in place in this country. Loading receipts and goods passports were in circulation, specifying the goods carried on board and the confirming the payment of taxes.<sup>178</sup> One receipt used in Blaye, outside Bordeaux, for instance states that “the captain and guards of the naval ship at Blaye allow the passage of [ ], who has paid the duties for *convoy*, *comptabilie* and the new increase owed to the King, at the bureau of [ ] according to the receipts dated [ ] which remain in our possession.”<sup>179</sup> This form, seemingly filled in by the crew of a naval ship, indicates the presence of such ships (termed *pataches*) on the sea passages outside Bordeaux that inspected receipts of outgoing ships, similar to Dutch Admiralty inspections at the ‘final posts’. Furthermore, French cities utilised their own types of receipt for their local fees and taxes. The island of Re and the city of Brouage, both located near La Rochelle and known for their salt trade, had issued their own receipts for the export of salt.<sup>180</sup> Other countries beyond France likely also possessed a tax system in which printed receipts were used, as evidenced by a Swedish tax receipt from the 1690s, as well as an English receipt from the same decade.<sup>181</sup> By at least the end of the seventeenth century, print appears to have played a role in the maritime governance of multiple European states.

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<sup>178</sup> Bibliography no. 61 and 447.

<sup>179</sup> Bibliography no. 58. See also no. 469 for a more elaborate version of this document, issued at the end of the century.

<sup>180</sup> Bibliography no. 476 and 481. Duties like these were levied for both domestic and foreign ships. However, the French also levied special duties for foreign ships, for which they produced special receipts. See for instance bibliography no. 62.

<sup>181</sup> Bibliography no. 499 and 505. The English receipt mentions the existence of ‘searchers’, inspectors who appeared to have performed a similar role to the Dutch ‘cherchers’. For a discussion of this function and the wider British maritime customs system, see William J. Ashworth, *Customs and Excise: Trade, Production, and Consumption in England, 1640-1845* (Oxford University Press, 2003), especially chapter 8 ‘Life on the Waterfront’. While Ashworth occasionally discusses the use of documents in this system, he unfortunately does not specify whether they were handwritten or printed.

In addition to various import and export taxes, ships traversing Europe were required to pay fees for the use of local services, for which, again, printed receipts could be used – similar to, for instance, piloting fees in the Dutch Republic. An example of such fees are English lighthouse duties, for which the use of printed receipts had an additional purpose beyond its quicker production (figure 16). The collection of fees for lighthouses was an intricate task, for which the use of receipts provided a solution. Ships making use of a lighthouse's service could not simply be halted on open sea and requested to pay. Consequently, the payment was made at ports of arrival – which in some cases could be far removed from the lighthouse in question.<sup>182</sup> Stocks of receipts for the various lighthouses were therefore likely to have been available in various ports along the coast. Since at least five English lighthouses that utilised such receipts can be identified, the use of printed receipts for the collection of lighthouse dues in this country must have been widespread.<sup>183</sup> Each lighthouse, or set of lighthouses, employed its own receipt: a printed form specifying the lighthouse in question, on which information such as the date, ship name, and location could be filled in. Unusual for administrative receipts, lighthouse duty receipts featured woodcut illustrations, incorporating a unique woodcut for each lighthouse.<sup>184</sup> These were likely intended to enable sailors to recognise the lighthouses they passed and subsequently were obliged to pay dues for. While skippers may often not have known the specific names of lighthouses – potentially leading to disputes in the collection of the fees – they could have been more likely to recognise their visual features; demonstrating another way in which the printing press aided the collection of fees. Whereas on other receipts the inclusion of woodcuts was an unnecessary luxury, in the case of lighthouse due receipts, they served a specific, practical purpose that aided the system of the duties' collection. Lighthouse due receipts represent but one example of printed receipts that ships could encounter on their journeys. They were, for instance, also used for the collection of English and French 'duties of anchorage', and French beacon duties (*fanal*), suggesting a wider use of such documents throughout Europe.<sup>185</sup>

Printed documents were not just utilised out of convenience; they were also employed to demonstrate power and status to foreign visitors. One particularly revealing example comes from late seventeenth-century France, where foreign sailors, after registering their ship at Admiralty offices, were supplied with a document confirming the registration, which was lavishly adorned with an elaborate

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<sup>182</sup> Erik Lindberg, "From Private to Public Provision of Public Goods: English Lighthouses Between the Seventeenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of Policy History* 25, no. 4 (2013): 538-556.

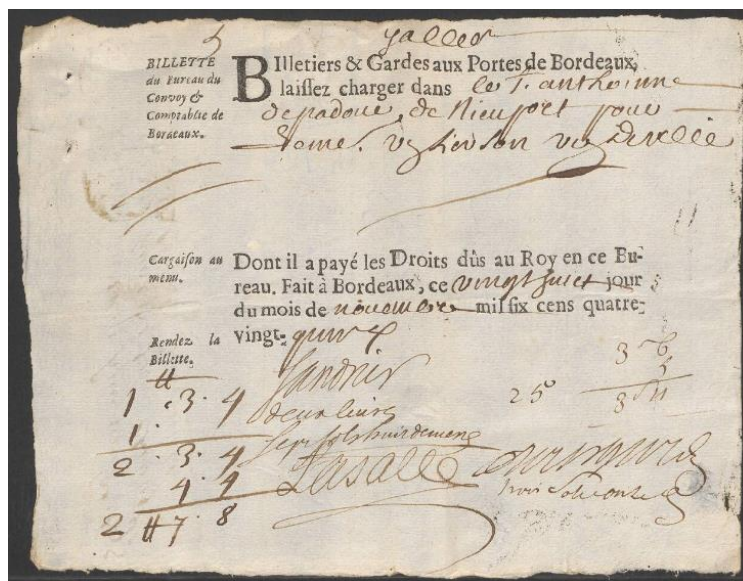
An extant receipt in the Prize Papers shows, for instance, that the duties for the three North and South Foreland lighthouses near Dover were collected in Weymouth (bibliography no. 283). In another instance, the dues for a lighthouse on the island of St Agnes, southwest of Cornwall, were paid in Gravesend (bibliography no. 507).

<sup>183</sup> I have identified three types of lighthouse receipts in the Dutch Prize Papers collection: for the three Foreland lighthouses, the St Agnes lighthouse, and the Dungeness lighthouse. Douglas B. Hague and Rosemary Christie, in their book on the history of lighthouses, have shown that the undigitized Prize Papers contain at least two more examples: Casquets, and, later in the eighteenth century, Mumbles. Douglas B. Hague and Rosemary Christie, *Lighthouses: their architecture, history and archaeology* (Gomer Press, 1975), 239-240.

<sup>184</sup> This is also suggested by Hague and Christie. Hague and Christie, *Lighthouses*, 239-240.

<sup>185</sup> Bibliography no. 281, 428, 541.

engraving (figure 17). Produced by the King’s official illustrator and engraver, and featuring a Poseidon-like figure and various royal insignia, this document was specifically produced for foreign sailors. It stands in stark contrast to all other administrative types of print discussed thus far, which often feature no ornamentation whatsoever, let alone engravings. Besides its practical function as confirmation of administrative registration, this document was with its embellishment likely intended to impress foreign sailors and convey the notion of French naval superiority and power towards other states – a strategy of adopting administrative print for political purposes. In addition to the lighthouse receipts’ woodcuts, this example suggests that towards the end of the seventeenth century, states began to recognise and adopt the unique qualities that print possessed over manuscript, employing it to aid fee collection, and propagate messages. While the full extent of their use across Europe remains to be thoroughly explored, it is evident that by the second half of the seventeenth century, multiple European countries beyond the Dutch Republic had embraced the convenience and qualities of the printing press within the administrative systems of their maritime sectors.



15 - Loading receipt, issued in Bordeaux and signed in 1695 (Bibliography no. 447).



## Sending and receiving goods: Bills of lading

As we have seen, printed receipts for customs and other fees appeared to have been in use in several countries around Europe. These documents solely served an administrative purpose within local contexts – a specific port or country – and were not necessary in facilitating an international system of trade. This stands in opposition to another set of papers, to which I turn in the remaining of this chapter, that served an important role within an international, shared administrative system. It was mandatory for all international sailors possess and use these papers, “to prevent and defend against all deceit” – thus serving as a collaborative, international attempt to regulate European maritime commerce.<sup>186</sup>

Bills of lading – the type of printed document that appears most frequently within Pruijs’s collection of ships’ papers – is a first example of such a document (figure 18).<sup>187</sup> Used within interactions among merchants, sailors, port workers and buyers, these documents were crucial components in facilitating the mobility, administration, and exchange of goods in international contexts, thus being an unmissable part of an international administrative system. The earliest printed bills of lading I have identified date from 1589, although the document was in use much earlier, likely originating in the late fifteenth century in southern Europe.<sup>188</sup> Prior to its introduction, a book of lading was used on merchant ships, in which all goods transported on the vessel were noted. However, this system was not watertight, as in the event of the loss of either goods or book, the shipper had no guarantee of being compensated for their damage. This resulted in the introduction of separate pieces of paper to record the details of shipments.<sup>189</sup> By the mid-sixteenth century, bills of lading were used in the Low Countries, as evidenced by their mention in a placard of 1563, and by the end of the century, they appear to have been widely used throughout the continent.<sup>190</sup> While they were initially handwritten, an extant bill kept at the Dutch Maritime Museum indicates that by 1589, printed bills of lading were in circulation.<sup>191</sup>

Given the high volume of bills of lading that were required to be produced, it is comprehensible that printed versions were adopted as early as 1589. Each individual shipment required at least three bills of lading to be written: one copy was meant for the merchant, another for the skipper to be sent along with the goods, whereas a third copy was usually forwarded to the recipient of the shipment, with

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<sup>186</sup> States General, *Placcaet, houdende scherp verboodt jegens de ingesetenen der selver landen; ende voorts raeckende de navigatie ende commercie van de neutralen op de havenen van Vankrijk ende Engelandt* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1673).

<sup>187</sup> In Dutch, this document is termed *cognossement*. French, Italian, Spanish and German use the same word, with local varieties in spelling.

<sup>188</sup> S.F. Du Toit, “The Evolution of the Bill of Lading,” *Fundamina* 11, no. 2 (2005): 15-16.

<sup>189</sup> Du Toit, “Evolution of the Bill of Lading,” 17.

<sup>190</sup> Abraham Polak, *Historisch-juridisch onderzoek naar den aard van het cognossement* (Amsterdam: Binger, 1865), 57-58.

<sup>191</sup> Dutch Maritime Museum, *Cognossement van het schip "Fortuna" van schipper Jan Claesz. uit Limmen, A.4433(01)*. For four further bills of lading from this period, see: USTC 427830, -31, -32 and -33.

optional further copies intended for anyone else who requested one.<sup>192</sup> With the rapid expansion of maritime trade, the amount of shipped goods – and thus the number of bills to be produced – only increased. Merchants were therefore required to fill in many bills of lading, a process which could become lengthy and laborious if the text was to be copied by hand each time. The printing press offered a practical solution to rapidly speed up the process of their production.

Dutch printers recognised the potential the printing press offered for merchants. During the seventeenth century, bills of lading were widely printed and sold throughout the Republic. The Dutch Prize Papers contain an estimated 3,000 of them, making this document by far the most prevalent type of administrative print in the collection.<sup>193</sup> Their widespread production also becomes apparent from imprints that were frequently included in the bills' left- or right-hand margins. Contrary to the other types of administrative print I have discussed thus far, printers and sellers of bills of lading were often eager to point out their identity. For instance, the Rotterdam printer Petrus Paludanus – and many with him – proudly mentioned that “these good and true bills of lading” were printed and sold by him, located on the Wijnstraat.<sup>194</sup> The imprints are in virtually all cases accompanied by a woodcut of the city's crest as indicator of location. Sellers and printers used these imprints as a means of advertising their work and competing with their fellow sellers. The fact that they felt the necessity to advertise, suggests a large competitive market, and indicates that, in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, these documents must have been widely produced and sold indeed.

Bills of lading appear to have been sold by all types of printers and sellers, despite their function or speciality. The previously discussed Paulus Matthijsz – who, besides his appointment as VOC printer, specialised in musical books – also printed bills of lading. In Vlissingen, the documents were produced and sold by Abraham van Laren. He served as official printer to the city, a function he also proudly mentioned in the bill's imprint, in undoubtedly an attempt to distinguish himself from his competitors. However, besides such familiar printers, we notice booksellers and printers that are relatively unknown to us today appear as producers or sellers of bills of lading. Of individuals like Daniel Charels and Cornelis Pick in Vlissingen, and Michiel Hartogh and the widow of Johannes Colom in Amsterdam, little to no records of printed or sold publications exist in bibliographical databases like the Short Title Catalogue Netherlands (STCN) and the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC). This demonstrates that the production and sale of bills of lading was likely carried out by a broad range of individuals, and shows that ephemeral print likely took up a significant and unmissable part of what was produced and sold in the Dutch Republic. A list of printers and sellers I have identified, can be found in appendix 1.

The significance of ephemeral print for the Dutch printing sector is further underscored by evidence that bills of lading were certainly not the only type of administrative print available for

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<sup>192</sup> It is likely that the bills were also sold on sheets of paper containing three bills: the *Santa Maria* had on board a sheet with three bills still uncut. See Bibliography no. 120.

<sup>193</sup> Schillings, “Duiken in de Dutch Prize Papers.”

<sup>194</sup> Bibliography no. 14.

purchase from these sellers. Other, similar types of documents used in the maritime sector, likewise appear to have been widely produced and sold throughout the Republic. So called ‘sea policies’ (*zeepolissen*) visually starkly resembled bills of lading (figure 19). Both included a woodcut of the city crest and an imprint in the margin, advertising where ‘these true policies’ could be obtained.<sup>195</sup> Intended for the insurance of a ship and goods, the fact that these maritime insurance policies also included imprints, implies that these forms, as with bills of lading, were widely sold within the Republic. The apparent proliferation of the sale of administrative forms like bills of lading and sea policies by all types of sellers, hints to the importance of printing this type of ephemera for printing businesses in the Dutch Republic and beyond. As documents that were always in demand and relatively quick and easy to produce, administrative print represented a reliable and stable form of income for many sellers and printers.

Printers could both print and sell the bills themselves, but it was also possible for sellers to purchase a stock of bills from the printer, and commission him or her to produce a customised bill. In the latter case, printers could produce a stack of anonymous bills without imprint, and another including an imprint of the seller’s name. This becomes evident from a set of bills printed around 1663 for the Middelburg bookseller Paulus Wante, which also offers an insight into their production process. Wante’s bills are entirely identical to another set of bills that do not mention any location or name. The sole difference between the two documents is the inclusion of Wante’s name in the margin, indicating that the printer, who remains unknown, added or removed this name halfway throughout the same the print run.<sup>196</sup> Since extra letters were required to be set, the incorporation of an imprint was an additional service which naturally came with additional costs, but some sellers evidently regarded the investment worthwhile, the advertisement benefitting their business in the highly competitive market.

In addition to booksellers, merchants could likewise commission personalised bills of lading. It is what the Amsterdam merchants Giovan Battista Benzi and Gió Gabriél Voet did in the 1660s.<sup>197</sup> Whereas these pieces of information typically had to be filled in by hand, Benzi and Voet’s bills of lading were pre-printed with Texel as the port of departure, Amsterdam as the place of signage, and their names as the senders.<sup>198</sup> Importantly, their customised bills were printed not in Dutch but in Italian, indicating that the two merchants frequently shipped goods from Amsterdam to Italy, or to Italian-speaking merchants – often enough, at least, for them to warrant commissioning their own bills of

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<sup>195</sup> See for instance: A sea policy printed and sold by Stoffel Jansz. Kortingh in Hoorn: Westfries Archief, 0348 Oud archief stad Hoorn, 2567 Handel en scheepvaart 1548-1807, scan no. 197; Sold by Pieter Tonneman in Amsterdam: SAA, 562 Archief van de assurantiebezorgers Wed. J. van Bosse en Zoon, 189 Zeepolis; printed by Marcus van Rossem and sold by Johannes de Vichter in Rotterdam: SAA, 562 Archief van de assurantiebezorgers Wed. J. van Bosse en Zoon, 190 Zeepolis.

<sup>196</sup> Compare bibliography no. 182 and 191.

<sup>197</sup> Amsterdam city archive’s index of individuals indicates that Johannes or Juan Batista Benzi and Jan Gabriel Voet were both residents of Amsterdam.

<sup>198</sup> Bibliography no. 217.

lading.<sup>199</sup> Partly filled-in bills were likely practical and timesaving. The captured ship *Offer van Abraham* carried nineteen of Benzi and Voet's personal bills. Given that at least three bills were written for each shipment, this meant that for this voyage alone, Benzi and Voet had written at least 57 – a process which was undoubtedly sped up by the use of their personalised bills. However, these personalised bills of lading should perhaps above all be regarded as a status symbol. They could have been a way for merchants to display that they possessed the financial capabilities to commission the printing of personalised documents, which would not have gone unnoticed by their fellow merchants and others in the maritime industry. This indicates that bills of lading were part of a shared international bureaucratic system in which merchants and sellers actively participated – the latter catering to the needs of merchants through producing customised bills of lading, even in foreign languages.

The fact that Benzi and Voet's bills were printed in Italian was not unusual, for bills of lading were available for purchase in a variety of languages – again indicating the international nature of these documents. Besides Dutch, merchants could buy English, French, and Italian bills, with a strong possibility of more languages being available. For instance, the Amsterdam printer Joseph Bruyning, who specialised in the production of English language works, sold English bills of lading.<sup>200</sup> In his and his wife Mercy's bookshop at the exchange, the English-speaking population of Amsterdam could purchase English Bibles or English works of famous thinkers, but, evidently, also English ephemera like forms and receipts.<sup>201</sup> In Rotterdam, the widow of Matthijs Wagens sold French bills besides the regular Dutch.<sup>202</sup> They appear on a captured French ship, on its way from Rotterdam to Rouen with various shipments of cheese. Merchant Paul Timmers, who sold the cheese, must have chosen to buy French bills to accommodate the French ship crew and recipients of the goods. Bruyning and Wagens's bills of lading are an exception, however. The plentiful bills of lading kept in the Dutch Prize Papers in other languages than Dutch, rarely feature an imprint, making it near impossible to determine where they were produced.<sup>203</sup> Yet, given the discussed examples, and given the Republic's highly international atmosphere, it can be assumed that the availability of bills of lading in other languages beyond Dutch was common.

This phenomenon was not unique to the Dutch Republic: bills in languages other than the local were printed or sold in other places in Europe, suggesting the existence of a shared, multi-lingual administrative system within European merchant communities. Imprints indicate that the printer Jacob

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<sup>199</sup> Benzi and Voet's bills are the only example of personalised bills from the Republic that I have encountered thus far, but the practice appears to have been more common among merchants in the Mediterranean region. See for instance bibliography no. 208.

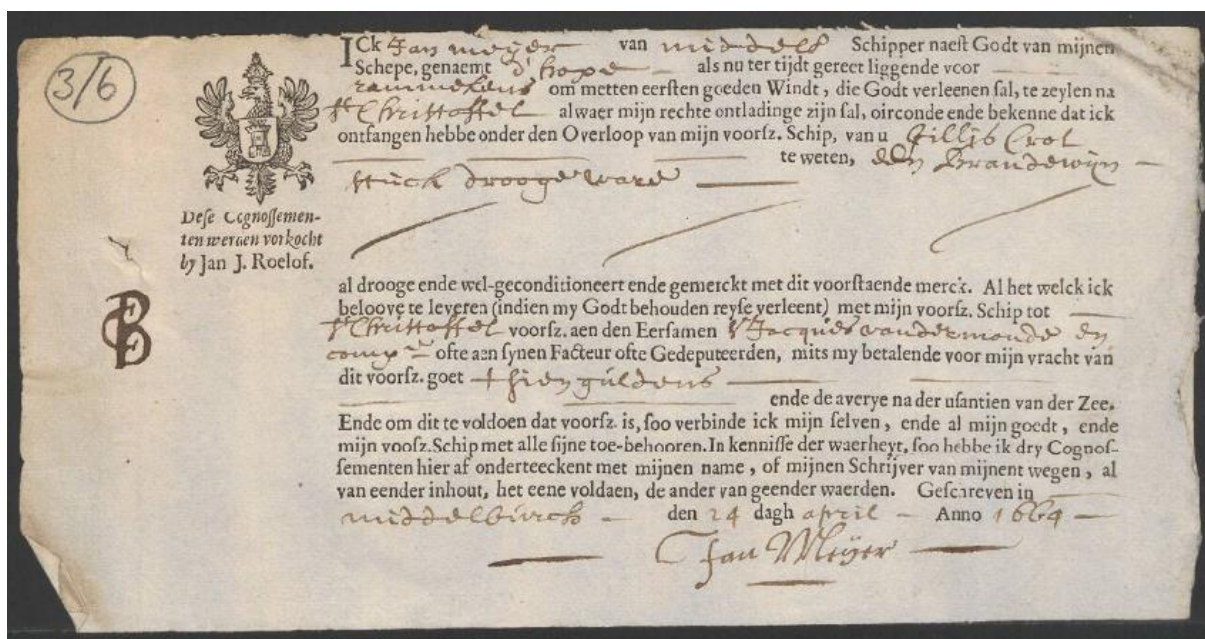
<sup>200</sup> Bibliography no. 137.

<sup>201</sup> P.G. Hoftijzer, *Engelse boekdrukkers bij de beurs: De geschiedenis van de Amsterdamse boekhandels Bruyning en Swart, 1637-1724* (APA Holland Universiteits Pers, 1987), 44-45.

<sup>202</sup> Bibliography no. 543.

<sup>203</sup> I have, in fact, only come across three examples of international bills featuring an imprint so far: a French and an English bill sold by Jacob Mancel in La Rochelle (bibliography no. 376 and 542), and an English bill sold by Robert Horns (bibliography no. 48).

Mancel, working in La Rochelle, sold English bills of lading besides French.<sup>204</sup> Other evidence is less definitive. The Prize Papers contain a Dutch and a German bill, both featuring Bordeaux printed as the port of departure and place of signing, making it likely that these bills were produced in this city.<sup>205</sup> Moreover, the collection contains two copies of an identical Dutch bill of lading, written by two different merchants, for two different ships, on two different dates, but which were both signed in Bordeaux. This could indicate that the bills were printed in the northern or southern Netherlands, and brought to Bordeaux to be used there, or – perhaps more plausibly – printed and sold in Bordeaux. It was certainly not uncommon for documents pertaining matters of maritime commerce to be printed in the Dutch language in places beyond the Republic. Dutch commodity price lists were, for instance, printed in cities such as Bordeaux, Livorno, and Hamburg and Danzig.<sup>206</sup> Furthermore, the use of bills of ladings in languages other than the one spoken in the vessel’s home port, appears to have been commonplace, with many ships’ papers, including the *Santa Maria*’s, containing bills in various tongues. The widespread production, sale, use and acceptance of bills of lading in various languages across Europe, indicates that bills of lading were part of a multilingual, international administrative system, that, besides merchants, involved the active participation of printers and sellers.

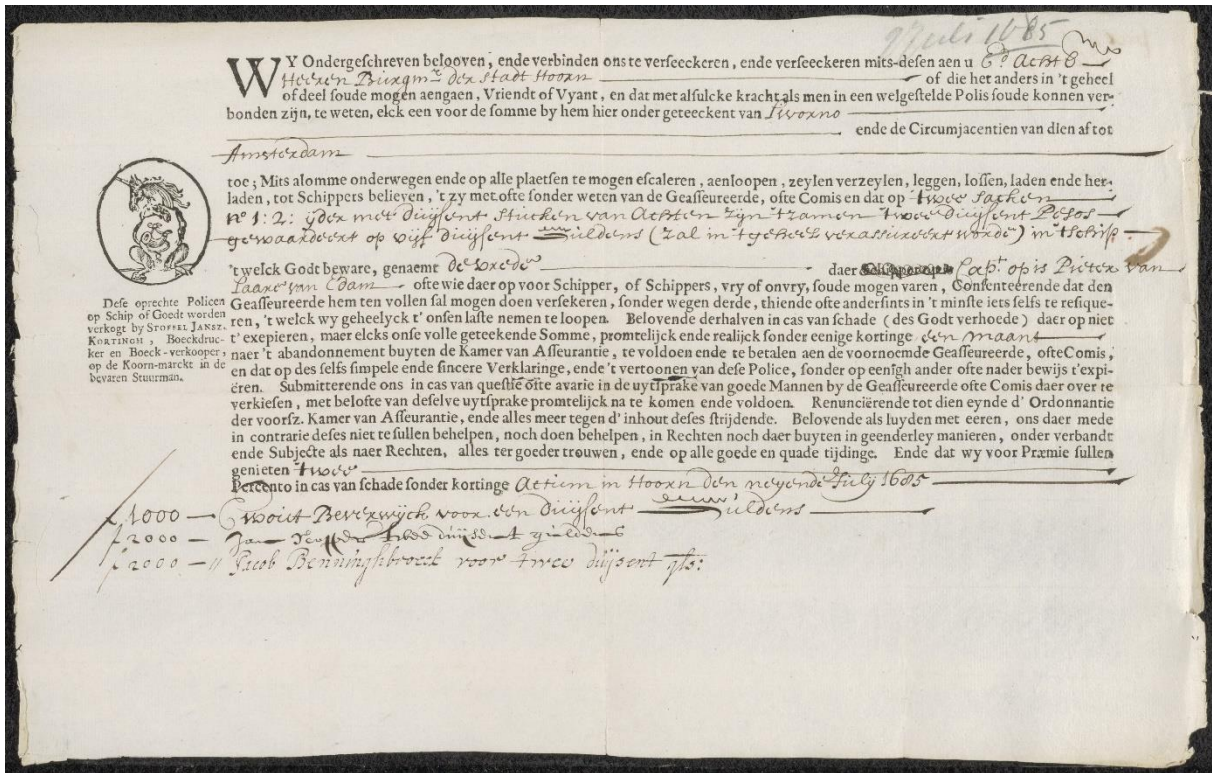


**38 - A Bill of lading, sold by Jan J. Roelof in Middelburg and signed in 1664 (Bibliography no. 161).**

<sup>204</sup> Bibliography no. 542.

<sup>205</sup> Bibliography no. 465 and 516.

<sup>206</sup> Arthur der Weduwen, “Exile, Expansion and Commerce: Dutch Printing outside the Low Countries in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.” in *The Book World of Early Modern Europe. Essays in Honour of Andrew Pettegree*, volume 2, ed. Arthur der Weduwen and Malcolm Walsby (Brill, 2022), 233.



19 - 'Sea policies' were visually very similar to bills of lading and likewise featured an imprint. This policy, signed in 1685, was sold by Stoffel Jansz. Kortinh, printer and seller in Hoorn (Westfries Archief, Hoorn).

As part of an international administrative system, bills of lading were widely recognised, understood, and accepted throughout Europe. In order to effectively and efficiently function within this system, elements of their content, structure, and use aided their international processing. The bills of lading was an essential and indispensable document in international maritime trade, as it served as crucial documentation for the exchange of goods. For every parcel of goods shipped, the merchant was obligated to provide at least three bills. Both handwritten and printed versions were accepted – as evidenced by a handwritten bill on the *Santa Maria* – although printed versions appear to have been more prolific.<sup>207</sup> Besides its faster production, it is conceivable that the printed version was favoured for its uniformity in structure and design, facilitating easier processing of these documents – and, by extension, the goods.

The bills and physical goods were matched through a system of handwritten marks, which facilitated easy processing of the goods, as well as their administration. All three filled-in versions of the bills were identical, mentioning information such as the merchant's and recipient's names, the type of goods, and – perhaps most importantly – a unique mark. This mark, which could be anything ranging

<sup>207</sup> NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA30-1051, Santa Maria van Conceptie onder leiding van Lucas Pruijs, scan nr. 277.

from initials to symbols, was drawn in the left margin of the bills. They corresponded with the same mark placed on the shipment's packaging. This facilitated easy matching between paper and goods, which aided the efficiency of the shipment's handling by the various individuals involved in this logistical process. The use of marks must have been an accessible and effective system, for they were likely to be universally understood by sailors and port workers across Europe, including the illiterate or those not proficient in the bill's language. Furthermore, the system aided the onboard administration of the goods. Skippers kept handwritten lists of the goods on board – often in a multi-page bound notebook – detailing its sender, a description of the goods, and the mark used.<sup>208</sup> Pruijs, for instance, had conveniently ordered the goods on these lists based on the locations where they needed to be disembarked, to ensure that his men could easily find and handle the appropriate goods. These marks were, therefore, essential elements in establishing a link between paper documentation and physical goods, which aided the efficient handling and administering of the numerous shipments that traversed European seas and ports on a daily basis.

For bills of lading to function within this system, it was imperative that they were recognised, accepted, and understood by all involved parties. One way in which this was achieved was through uniformity in text and design. An extant Dutch bill from 1589, indicates that by that time, a standardised design and text had already been established.<sup>209</sup> Rectangular-shaped and featuring two blocks of text, the text and design of bills of lading was not significantly altered until at least the end of the eighteenth century. The Dutch text is formulated as an attestation by the skipper, and customarily begins with, “I [ ] skipper by God of my ship called [ ] presently laying ready in [ ] to sail with the first good wind, that God will provide, to [ ]”.<sup>210</sup> Italian, German, and French bills bear similar texts. While the English text differs slightly, the core message remains consistent.<sup>211</sup> The international standardisation of text and design was likely beneficial for their interpretation and use in international contexts, ensuring that anyone who came into contact with the document could immediately recognise it as a bill of lading.

As a universally adopted document, bills of lading held considerable power in facilitating the transfer of goods. One of the three bills was commonly forwarded by mail to the intended recipient of the transported goods, to inform them of the shipment's details and help them obtain it. In 1677, the Amsterdam burgomaster and Admiralty and VOC director Joan Huydecoper had, for instance, explicitly

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<sup>208</sup> For examples of such notebooks, which were called ‘kargaboecken’, occasionally written as ‘kerch boecken’, see for instance: NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA30-1056, Hoop van Middelburg onder leiding van Jan de Meyer, scan no. 93; NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA30-1060, Witte Zeepaard van Vlissingen onder leiding van Pieter Jaspersen Heerensen, scan no. 119.

<sup>209</sup> Dutch Maritime Museum, Cognossement van het schip "Fortuna" van schipper Jan Claesz. uit Limmen, A.4433(01).

<sup>210</sup> “Ick [ ] schipper naest Godt van mijnen schepe ghenaeft [ ] gereet leggende voor [ ]”

<sup>211</sup> English bills customarily begin with “Shipped by the grace of God in good order and well conditioned by [ ] in and upon the good ship called the [ ]”. It was also common for English-language bills of lading to be more embellished than their mainland counterparts, with a richly ornated first letter. See bibliography no. 48. For a discussion on the ornamental English bills of lading in the eighteenth century, see also: Hannah Farber, “Sailing on Paper: The Embellished Bill of Lading in the Material Atlantic, 1720–1864,” *Early American Studies* 17 (2019): 37-83.

urged an acquaintance of his to forward him a bill of lading upon the latter's shipping of the goods. It appeared that Huydecoper had experienced great troubles in obtaining an earlier shipment of four Madagascar parakeets of which he did not have a bill of lading. He had to wait so long to obtain his birds, that by the time he finally received them, only two were still alive. With a bill of lading, Huydecoper wrote to his correspondent, he hoped he would be able to get his hands on his future purchases quicker, the next being four African Cape geese.<sup>212</sup> The power that bills of lading held in the transfer of goods also becomes apparent from another example. In 1641, the Amsterdam broker Samuel Hooftman de Jonge wished to pick up his shipment of three crates of sugar that had recently arrived from Brazil. He had previously visited the West India Company's warehouse bearing his three bills of lading, but at that time, the crates were still in transit from the ship to the warehouse. Upon his return a while later, his goods had still not arrived, and, moreover, he had lost his bills of lading – a cause of concern, as it meant that whoever had found the bills, could now get their hands on his salt. Fortunately, the warehouse workers still remembered De Jonge and his bills from his previous visit. They put up a piece of paper in their office with the goods' unique marks, so that they could be on the lookout for anyone coming to claim the shipment bearing the lost bills of lading.<sup>213</sup> These situations underscore how the bill of lading served as a material key to the ownership of the goods, highlighting the power of these printed pieces of paper in this administrative system of international commerce.

## Regulating international encounters

Beyond bills of lading, an array of other documents was widely used within an international shared administrative system. Issued by states, they held legal, governing power in international contexts, and were a way of regulating encounters of various natures: curbing the spread of diseases, proving identities, facilitating access, and legitimising actions.

A first example of such a document is the health pass (figure 20), which ships like the *Santa Maria* received in several ports around the Mediterranean and beyond. Intended to prevent the spread of contagious diseases, health passes were used in Italy as early as the late fifteenth century, with them appearing in print by the late sixteenth century.<sup>214</sup> During a time in which plagues could drastically impact populations and, subsequently, commerce, the use of health bills was a measure to prevent the spread of diseases. Issued after an outgoing merchant ship was inspected by the local health board, they were used by virtually all countries in Western Europe – often in printed form.<sup>215</sup> The passes were to be

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<sup>212</sup> Utrechts Archief, 67.58 Familie Huydecoper, Joan Huydecoper (1625-1704), Brieven, uitreksels, dagboekanteekeningen, jaaroverzichten, 1675-1678, p. 72. Via Transkribus.

<sup>213</sup> SAA, 5075 Archief van de Notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, Henrik Schaef, 1283, 2 March 1641, scan no. 42. Via Amsterdam City Archives, Transkribus.

<sup>214</sup> Alexandra Bamji, "Health Passes, Print and Public Health in Early Modern Europe," *Social History of Medicine* 32, no. 3 (2019): 442.

<sup>215</sup> Alexandra Bamji has surveyed 219 extant printed health passes from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. 169 of these are Italian and are issued in 68 different places. Other countries she has encountered include

shown at subsequent ports of call, where a local inspector signed the reverse of the pass. The functionality of this system, and therefore the successful containment of diseases, was reliant on the international acceptance and authentication of health bills. A woodcut of the cities' coat of arms, a stamp used in state offices, and signatures, served as the document's proof of validity, and minimised the possibility of the production of fraudulent versions, ensuring the reliability of the document.



## 20 - Health pass, issued in Venice (bibliography no. 76).

Arguably the most important document aboard any European ship traversing international waters, and therefore also the most important document within the international administrative system that kept the maritime world running, was the sea letter.<sup>216</sup> This document can be regarded as a ship's passport, serving as a proof of the ship's nationality. The sea letter was addressed to foreign rulers and officials, and "anyone else who sees or hears read this open letter." In the Dutch Republic, skippers could obtain sea letters from their local magistrates upon swearing an oath before them, affirming that "the ship named [ ], around [ ] large, belongs to these United Provinces." The skippers were obliged to keep hold of the letter, as they were required to present it whenever they were asked after their ship's nationality, for instance in the context of identifying enemy ships for privateering purposes, or for proving eligibility for toll exemptions. As with the other internationally used documents discussed thus far, it was imperative that sea letters were internationally accepted and understood for them to have any value and function. The Dutch, therefore, appear to have supplied their ships with both a Dutch and French version

France, Switzerland, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Dutch Republic. Extant bills in the Dutch Prize Papers allow us to add Spain and England to this list. Bamji, "Health Passes," 444.

<sup>216</sup> This document is in some instances referred to as 'seabrief', or simply 'pass'. In Dutch, it is similarly called 'zeebrief' or 'passport'.

of the sea letter. With French being more universally understood around Europe than Dutch, this additional version of the letter ensured comprehension in international encounters.

Officially issued as proof of nationality, this document served as a representation of the state in international encounters, which gave the Dutch sea letter a considerable degree of authority. A sea letter from this important maritime nation, after all implied that these skippers were supported by Dutch naval protection, could gain them toll exemptions, and could protect them during wars in which the Dutch Republic remained neutral. This made the document into a piece of paper that was sought after by foreigners as well, which could occasionally lead to fraudulent practices. The renowned Dutch Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, for instance, expressed his disapproval over a group of Hamburg skippers who he had encountered bearing Dutch sea letters. He recounts how he met skippers who knew how to “find people in Amsterdam who were willing, in exchange for money, to take the oath in their place before the burgomasters, and falsely swear that the ships belonged in Amsterdam.”<sup>217</sup> De Ruyter’s advocacy for caution in the issuing of letters is understandable, as the repeated illegitimate provision of letters to foreign sailors could discredit the value and acceptance of the Dutch sea letter – and, perhaps, the international reputation of the Dutch as a whole. The sea letter, therefore, contained significant power and authority.

The sea letter’s official and significant status is also reflected in its materiality. Although the text remained consistent, variations can be noted in the material appearance of the sea letters issued throughout the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. In Middelburg, for instance, handwritten sea letters appear to have been used by the middle of the century.<sup>218</sup> In contrast to the majority of other documents among ship’s papers, these were written on vellum, which was a more expensive and durable material than paper and traditionally reserved for official documents like charters. Together with the large lead seal attached to the document, this material attested to the importance and authoritative nature of the sea letter. During the same decade, the magistrates of Enkhuizen likewise issued their letters on vellum and with a lead seal. However, rather than being handwritten, they were printed.<sup>219</sup> The version of sea letters appearing most frequently in the Dutch Prize Papers is, however, a version printed on paper and featuring two paper seals. In addition to the standardised text, this version contains a note in the margin, stating that the letter is issued by order of the States General. It also features the signature of the States General clerk, indicating the States General’s direct involvement in the issuing of this document. This version appears to have been used in Amsterdam and Vlissingen. Though much remains unclear regarding sea letters due to a lack of evidence, differences in materiality across places may reflect the decentralised nature of the Republic’s political system. The apparent prevalence of the printed paper version in the second half of the century, however, might be indicative of a gradual shift towards using

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<sup>217</sup> Gerard Brandt, *Het leven en bedryf van den heere Michiel de Ruiter* (Amsterdam: For Wolfgang, Waasberge, Boom, Van Someren, and Goethals, 1687), 263.

<sup>218</sup> See for instance: See for instance: NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA30-1053, Hoop van Middelburg onder leiding van Jan de Meyer, scan no. 1.

<sup>219</sup> Bibliography no. 72.

standardised and uniform documents that were centrally issued by the States General, and printed on paper. Such a development towards standardisation could be particularly efficient in the context of an expanding bureaucracy during the century, with an ever-increasing number of ships requiring sea letters.

During encounters in foreign territories, sea letters served to prove a ship's nationality. One example of a situation in which ships were required to present their sea letter, comes from a toll office in Denmark. In 1651, the States General had formed an agreement with the Danish king that all Dutch ships would be exempt from paying tolls when passing through the Sound and the Belt, important waterways for shipping to and from the Baltic Sea region.<sup>220</sup> In order to proof their nationality, the ships were required to show their sea letters, with valid city seal and signatures, and issued within the year.<sup>221</sup> Skippers needed to present this letter to a certain Frederick de Vries, who the States General had sent, accompanied by two assistants, to Denmark to oversee the Dutch ships from a tax office in Helsingør.<sup>222</sup> The determination of a ship's identity, and therefore its eligibility for tax reductions, thus depended on a piece of paper – underscoring the sea letter's legal power within international contexts, and significance in an international administrative system.

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<sup>220</sup> Heights of tolls for various Scandinavian countries were printed in 'toll lists', which appear to have been widely available for purchase at bookstores in the Republic. See for instance: States General, *Lijste ofte tol-rolle, van de in ende uytvoerende goederen in Noorweghen* (Amsterdam: Gerrit van Goedesberg, 1648), USTC 1017699; States General, King of Sweden, *Tol-rolle, en verklaringh van't Elbingsche verbont, tusschen de kroon Sweeden, en de Vereenighde Nederlandtsche Provintien, aengaende den tol van alle waeren passerende de Oost-Zee* (The Hague: Jan van der Hulst, 1660), USTC 1846046.

<sup>221</sup> States General, *Placaet tot nae-richtinge voor de schippers der koopvaerdye schepen in 't passeren vanden Orisont ende Belt*, 1 April 1651, *Groot Placaet-Boeck*, ed. Cornelis Cau (The Hague: Widow and Heirs of Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw, 1658), 948.

<sup>222</sup> Besides the sea letter, Dutch skippers were requested to present them the goods passports signed by the Dutch tax officials, which I have discussed in chapter one. If fraud was suspected, one of De Vries's assistants, a *chercher*, came on board to inspect the lading. If he indeed discovered evidence of misdemeanour, this needed to be attested in writing, and was communicated to the responsible Admiralty in the Republic. This demonstrates that the Dutch system of tax collection reached beyond the borders of the Republic, even governing citizens abroad. NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 4809, scan number 0238, resolution 30 March 1651, Instructie voor Fredrick de Vries. Via Goetgevonden.



21 - Sea letter issued by the magistrates of Enkhuizen in 1662, printed on vellum (bibliography no. 72).

A shared system of paperwork within European maritime commerce, was perhaps especially significant during periods of war – of which there were many in the seventeenth century. In these contexts, various official documents held the important legal authority to regulate outcomes of encounters between international sailors, including those from enemy states. For such documents to hold any power, it was crucial that they were recognised and accepted by all parties involved. Their features and value were therefore discussed and decided upon through international agreements, and aspects of their content and materiality further accommodated universal recognition and comprehension.

A document that granted a ship the lawful power to capture another vessel, was the letter of marque. Capturing enemy ships was legal during early modern wars, but this right was exclusively reserved for ships carrying a specific, internationally used and accepted document: the letter of marque, or ‘commission letter’. While handwritten versions of this document were in use since at least the fifteenth century, the Prize Papers evidence that printed versions of Dutch and French commission letters were circulating during the wars in the latter half of the seventeenth century.<sup>223</sup> In the Dutch

<sup>223</sup> See bibliography no. 47 for a Dutch example issued during the Third Anglo-Dutch war, see bibliography no. 431 for a French letter used during the Nine Years’ War. In the Dutch Republic, standardised texts for letters of

Republic, these documents were handed out by the Admiralties, through their official issuing was done by the States General, or, after his restoration in 1672, the stadtholder.<sup>224</sup> These lengthy documents, completed by hand with the ship's and skipper's names, stated that the ship was permitted to capture enemy vessels, and their cargo. French and Dutch commission letters bear many similarities: both were printed on a large sheet of paper, prominently featuring the name of the issuer in the first sentence, and contain a block text of similar length and content. As with bills of lading, these similarities likely ensured that the letter was internationally recognised and therefore validated – which was essential for this internationally agreed upon system of privateering to function effectively.

The letter of marque formed the foundation for the legal capturing of enemy ships and, together with the sea letter, held considerable power in regulating international encounters between enemy vessels. Privateering ships were required to present their commission letter to the crew of the captured vessel to legalise their capturing attempt. In return, the other ship presented the privateers their sea letter, so that it could be ascertained whether the ship indeed belonged to an enemy state, and thus whether its seizure was legal. The outcome of a capturing attempt was therefore decided by these two documents. Sailors were well aware of this, and it was not uncommon for them to attempt to mislead their enemy captors by, illegally, carrying a second set of sea letters of another nationality. If a capturing attempt was then made, the crew could choose to hand over the papers they thought would offer them the best opportunity of escape, before quickly disposing of the others.<sup>225</sup> In some instances, sailors must have gotten away with this deceit, but if there was the slightest hint of doubt, a thorough investigation by the admiralty prize courts – including inspecting the other paperwork the ship carried on board, constituting the origin of the 'Prize Papers' collection – would often swiftly uncover the truth. Thus, despite the presence of an internationally agreed and accepted legal system that regulated privateering based on official paperwork, there were attempts to undermine this system for sailors' own interests. They knew all too well that the fate of their ship, cargo, and themselves, entirely depended on pieces of paper – underscoring the latter's indispensable role within the international regulation of the maritime world.

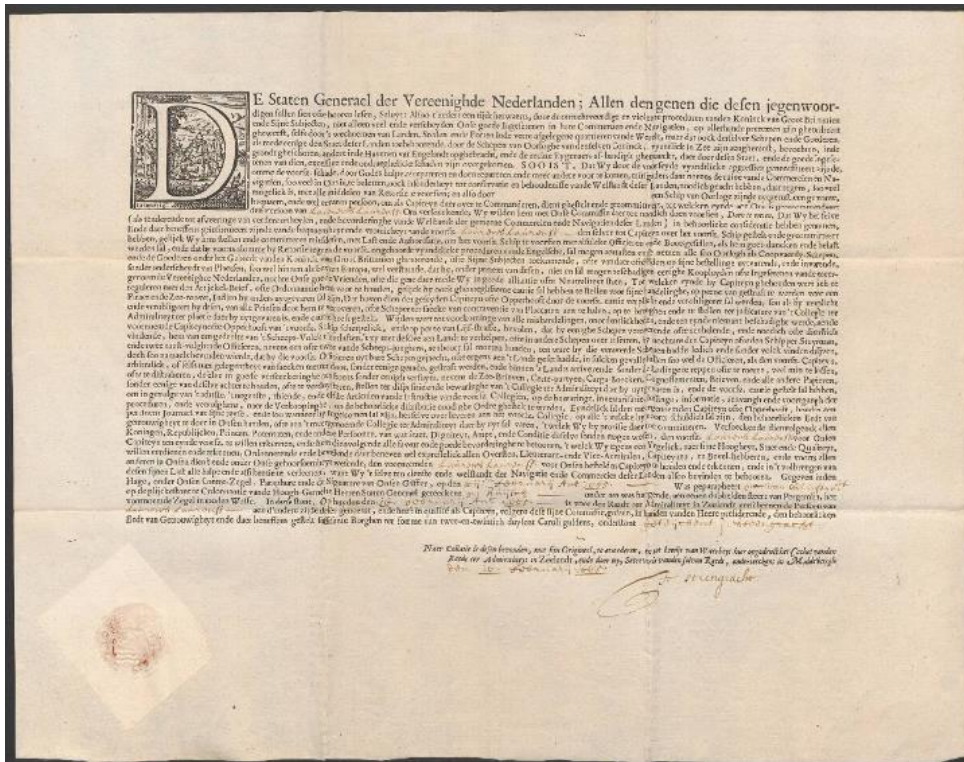
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marque were already used by 1625. It is unclear, however when commission letters were first provided in print. Joke Korteweg, *Kaperbloed en koopmansgeest: legale zeeroof door de eeuwen heen* (Balans, 2006), 68-70.

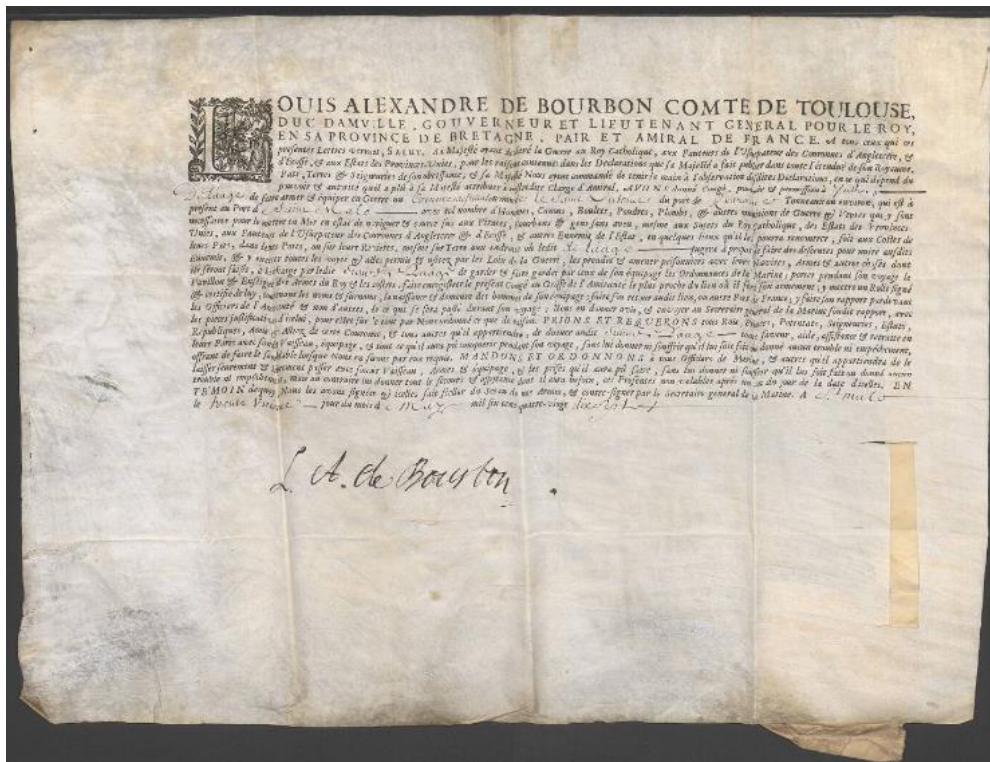
<sup>224</sup> Korteweg, *Legale zeeroof*, 128; Victor Enthoven, Marc van Alphen and Remmelt Daalder, "Een veelkoppig monster: De Nederlandse zeemacht, 1568-1780," in *Nieuwe Maritieme Geschiedenis van Nederland*, volume 2, ed. Els M. Jacobs, Christaan van Bochove, Henk Dessens et al. <https://beta.nmgn.huygens.knaw.nl/>.

Interestingly, the ship *Hoop*, which departed the Dutch Republic in 1665, had five identical printed letters on board, all completed with the same information. Perhaps these spares were a protection against loss, damage, or their requirement to be handed over and kept by others during the journey. (Bibliography no. 544)

<sup>225</sup> Korteweg, *Legale zeeroof*, 125.



22 - Dutch letter of marque, issued in 1665. This is one of five identical letters of marque this ship had on board. (bibliography no. 544).



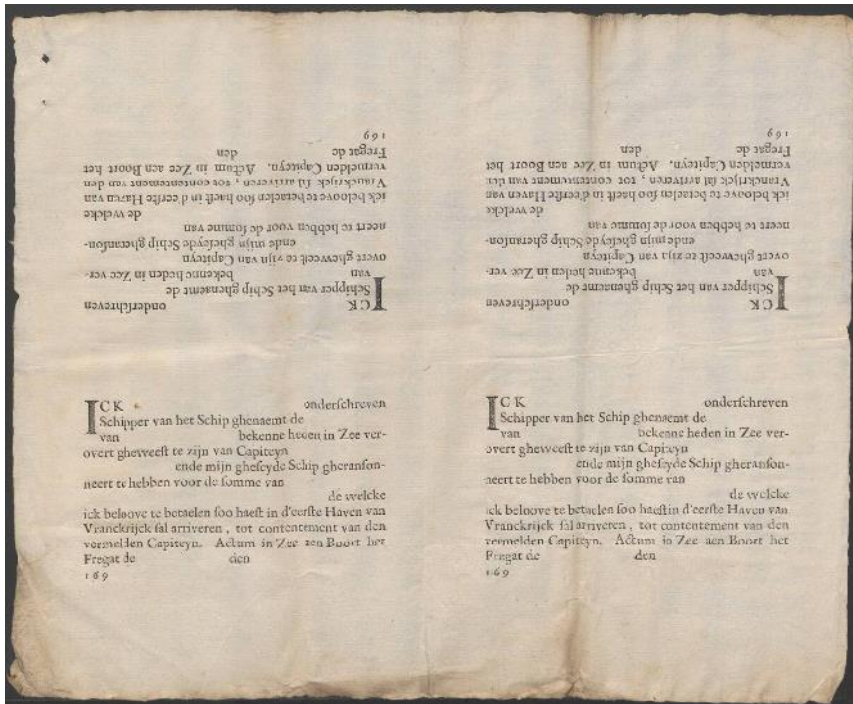
23 - French letter of marque, issued during the Nine Years' War (bibliography no. 432).

Privateering involved further paperwork beyond the commission letter and the sea letter. Printed forms, completed by captor and captee, similarly formally regulated privateering procedures, and their understanding and acceptance in international contexts was facilitated by the strategic use of languages. After conquering a ship, privateers could, instead of capturing it, opt to ransom it. When during the Nine Years' War, French privateers had decided to do so and came on board of a conquered Dutch ship, they provided its skipper with a printed form, of which they kept a stock on board (figure 24).<sup>226</sup> The document contained an attestation by the captured skipper, in which he declared "to have been captured today at sea by skipper [ ], and to have ransomed my aforementioned ship for the sum of [ ]", continuing that he promised to pay the said sum in the first French port he would set foot in. Convenient for the Dutch skipper, the document was written in his native language. As a formal agreement between captor and captee, it was imperative that the Dutch skipper could understand what he was consenting to, which was likely the reason why the French had provided the form in Dutch.

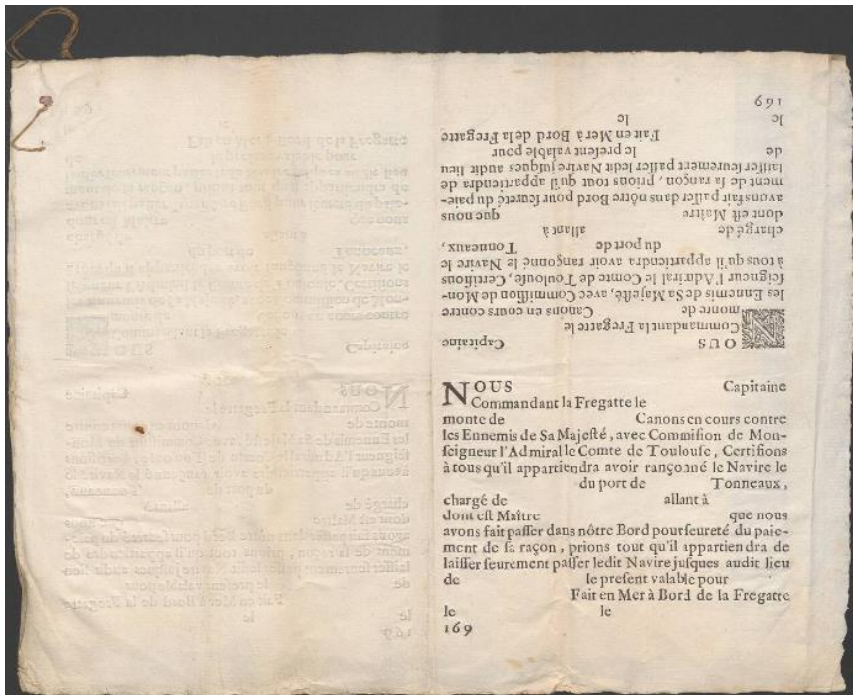
The form was accompanied by a similar-looking counterpart, to be signed by the skipper of the French privateering vessel (figure 25), that stated that he had taken the enemy skipper prisoner, to ensure the ransom was paid. The document also served as a pass, asking whoever read it to let the ship pass to the designated port. This document was written in French, to ensure comprehension by both the French skipper and other French-speaking individuals who encountered it. These multilingual ransoming forms illustrate that mutually accepted and understood communication was essential in international encounters between sailors. Whereas verbal communication between seamen may have been impeded by a language barrier, printed forms in other languages could provide a solution, ensuring that both parties understood and acknowledged what was agreed. With commission letters, letters of marque, and forms, even the practice of privateering, perhaps often imagined as roguish, was not exempt from the use of regulatory administrative paperwork, thus vividly illustrating how deeply engrained paper was within the international maritime world of the seventeenth century.

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<sup>226</sup> The Prize Papers contain an unused, uncut sheet of four printed forms. Bibliography no. 435.



24 – Dutch-language forms used by French privateering ships (bibliography no. 435).



25 - Forms used by French privateering ships, confirming the ransoming of an enemy ship during the Nine Years' War. The string was likely added by the English captors of this privateering ship. (bibliography no. 436).

Personal passports constitute another important category of printed administrative documents that were internationally used during maritime wars. As internationally accepted, material expressions of state authority, they held the power to grant safe access through enemy terrain. Such passports were used in multiple situations, with them for instance granted to sailors from captured vessels, to privateers after they had brought in a captured ship, or to maritime prisoners of war who were being exchanged between France and the Republic after an agreement between the two states<sup>227</sup> The recognisability and legal acceptance of these documents was again crucial for them to have any value. On the prisoner of war passport, for instance, a woodcut of the French royal coat of arms, the prominent featuring of the text “in the name of the king”, and an official seal, were therefore intended to demonstrate legitimacy to anyone who encountered it along the prisoner’s journey home.

The use of personal passports in the context of wartime diplomacy also becomes evident from peace negotiations. At the end of the third Anglo-Dutch war, for instance, the States General ordered the immediate printing of two thousand passports, in French with a Dutch translation underneath. They were to be sent to Breda, where the peace was being negotiated, to be exchanged against an equal number of printed passports issued by the English king.<sup>228</sup> The exchanged passports were likely intended to facilitate safe passage home for British nationals in Dutch territory, and vice versa, with the bilingual nature of the Dutch passports ensuring comprehension in international encounters.

These mutually recognised personal passports served as material expressions of state authority that held the legal power to grant unobstructed passage in international contexts. Their proliferation in the seventeenth-century maritime world must be seen against the background of expanding bureaucracy. The expansion of the latter coincided with an increase in a desire to control, including to identify and authenticate citizens.<sup>229</sup> The increasing use of the printing press reinforced this; offering the possibility to produce them rapidly and in large quantities. Their use in international contexts indicates that the Dutch Republic was not alone in its use of the printing press. Instead, these passports were part of a large, international system of administrative print that regulated a wide range of international maritime encounters.

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<sup>227</sup> For instance: Bibliography no. 366 and 268.

<sup>228</sup> NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, Archief van de Staten-Generaal, 4847, scan number 0155, resolution 29 August 1667. Via Goetgevonden.

<sup>229</sup> See also: Valentin Groebner "Describing the person, reading the signs in late medieval and renaissance Europe: Identity papers, vested figures, and the limits of identification, 1400-1600," *Documenting individual identity The development of state practices in the modern world*, ed. Jane Caplan and John Torpey (Princeton University Press, 2001),16.

P A S P O O R T.

DE Gecommitteerde Raeden ter Admiralteyt in  
DZĒELANDT, doen te weten, hoe dat  
*Klein jakoben*  
gedient hebbende in qualiteyt als *Strosmen*  
op een Frans Schip, genaemt  
door de Cap<sup>t</sup>.

met Commissie van desen Staat der Vereenigde Neder-  
landen uitgevaren; tot *in de 16* heeft opgebracht;

Derhalven wert een yder, die dese aengaen mach,  
versocht, en sal werden verzoont, de voorsz. Per-  
soonen te laten passeren, sonder eenige moeyenis  
of verhinderinge, gelijk 't behoort, 't welck wy  
ontrent een ygglijck oock wel willen verschuldigen.

*Gelien in 't Hof van Leiden, aldaar in Middellach, den 14 Junij 1691*

*J. M. Marrequant*  
*St. Jans port*  
*A. van der Grinte*

26 – Passport given to the helmsman of a privateering ship, after having brought in a captured enemy ship. Bibliography no. 366.

## Conclusion

Fully laden with goods and supplied with an extensive array of paperwork, in the autumn of 1664, the *Santa Maria* was on its way back to the Republic. Lucas Pruijs, however, never made it that far, and nor did his ship. He died in November 1664 of a cause unknown to me. He did not experience how, a mere weeks later, the *Santa Maria*'s convoy was attacked by British forces. Pruijs' replacement, Jacob Bau, let three cannonballs be shot, but then gave up, perhaps realising that defending his ship was a hopeless attempt. The *Santa Maria*, its crew, and its goods were captured by the British and taken to England, and Lucas Pruijs's personal archive of papers was stored in the Admiralty warehouses – eventually becoming part of the Prize Papers collection.<sup>230</sup>

This chapter has examined the wide array of printed documents that Pruijs and other merchant skippers could encounter in the seventeenth-century European maritime world. It has become evident that the Dutch Republic was by far not the only state employing print in its various administrative processes, with other countries similarly using printed receipts and forms in their collection of taxes and other fees. Many of these printed items were part of a shared, international administrative system that underpinned the world of maritime commerce. This system must be understood against the context of an expansion of bureaucracy throughout the seventeenth century, which co-evolved with an increasing use of paper and print, and a growing desire to exert control. Print had advantages for early modern states, as it had the capacity to demonstrate authority, to reduce the likelihood of forgery, to offer an easily comprehensible, uniform and neat design, and – perhaps most significantly – it could be produced much quicker and in higher quantities than handwritten documents, which were all essential qualities in the ever-growing and increasingly complex world of early modern shipping. This was recognised by states and individual printers alike, the latter actively beginning to sell administrative print in what quickly became a competitive market. In order for these documents to have the power to regulate interactions, they were required to be internationally recognised and accepted. Measures such as uniformity in design and text, and clarity in the language used, ensured that these documents were easily recognisable and understood by the involved sailors, merchants, and port personnel who interacted with them.

The use of such documents in a shared international administrative system was effective in several ways. In the first place, printed documents enabled standardisation of maritime operational procedures, thereby making these transpire more straightforwardly and efficiently. Bills of lading, for instance, uniformised the administration of the transport and exchange of goods through a uniform design and a universally used system of symbols. Personal passports could rapidly be printed in a uniform, mutually agreed-upon manner, ready to be used and facilitate safe passage for individuals. Secondly, such paperwork held a legal function. They could provide paper evidence in the case of

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<sup>230</sup> NL-HaNA, 2.22.24, Prize Papers, HCA32-1.1, *Santa Maria van Conceptie onder leiding van Jacob Jansen Bau* (interrogations).

disputes, or could prevent disputes through their legal authority in deciding the outcomes of international situations of, for instance, privateering. Lastly, these printed documents were a form of governance, enabling the state to exert further control over maritime commerce and individuals beyond their borders. Containing the state's authority and power to prove identities, permit actions, and facilitate access, these documents were authoritative representations of the state, and were a form of state governance that shaped the daily lives and work of ordinary seafaring people in an international setting. Thus, with receipts, forms, passports and more permeating every inch of a ship's international journey, it was printed paperwork that kept early modern international commerce afloat.

# Conclusion

The journeys of the *Santa Maria* and *Het Wapen van Rotterdam* both ended at the British Admiralty Prize Court. Their goods were sold, their crews returned home, and the vessels themselves changed flag and purpose. But their papers remained. They allow us, 350 years later, a unique glimpse into the maritime world of which they were a part – a world that was very much ruled by print and paper.

This thesis has examined the role of print within the administration and regulation of maritime commerce in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century, in order to understand the role of ephemeral print within state administration during this period. Throughout its three chapters, it has shown that ephemeral administrative print was fundamental to the functioning of maritime commerce of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, serving as a key instrument in the state's efforts to regulate and standardise increasingly complex administrative and operational procedures. An increasing complexity and growth of maritime commerce and bureaucracy in the seventeenth century, coincided with an increasing use of printed paperwork, and a growing desire to control – the latter executed through the standardisation of administration and procedures. In this regard, the medium of print offered advantages over manuscript: it was more uniform, structured, clearer, and, in certain cases, more authoritative. The possibility of print to be produced quicker and in larger quantities, enabled its large-scale use and implementation in many aspects of state administration.

Printed paperwork was influential on three levels: the personal, the state, and the international. Firstly, state-issued administrative print was a form of everyday state governance on a personal level, serving as tangible manifestations of the executive power of the state that permeated and shaped nearly every aspect of the working life of sailors, port workers, and merchants. In each interaction in which documents such as goods passports, inspection forms, or sea letters was used, individuals encountered executions of governance that influenced the outcome of the situation – both within and beyond the borders of the Republic. It thus becomes evident that early modern state laws, regulations, and other exercises of power were not solely disseminated through placards and pamphlets, as previously assumed. The communicative reach of seventeenth-century states extended beyond that; permeating further into the daily lives of individuals through numerous other types of ephemeral print: forms, receipts, lists and instructions. With an increasing use of this type of material over the course of the century, this governance through print only became more prevalent in individual experiences.

It should be noted, though, that while administrative print was a way of regulating procedures and governing individuals, this does not mean it depleted all personal agency. On the contrary, this thesis has shown several examples of individuals not following state-imposed laws and rules: refusing to hand over documents; obtaining them in fraudulent manners; or simply ignoring instructions. Despite the state's attempts to regulate behaviour in a top-down manner, individuals retained their power to refuse, resist or ignore, showing that the state was not all-powerful. Rather, power was negotiated and

shared between the state and its citizens, making the functioning of maritime administrative systems as much a bottom-up process as it was top-down.

A second main sphere in which print was influential is within maritime state administration, where it played a significant role in several ways. First, while scholars have discussed record-keeping practices by officials in stationary offices and ledgers, I have highlighted another, equally crucial side to administrative practices, characterised by the use of highly mobile documents. These mobile pieces of administrative print established a vital link between stationary administration done in offices on the one side, and everyday, on the ground operations in which this information was required on the other. Information recorded in ledgers had little practical value unless it could travel, making it available in locations beyond the office as evidence that an administrative task had been completed. In this way, mobile administrative print functioned as an essential part of the maritime sector's administrative system.

Furthermore, print helped to standardise and regulate record-keeping procedures, thus enhancing the efficiency of information management in the context of expanding bureaucracy. As opposed to a handwritten version, pre-printed documents allowed for more standardisation and larger-scale production, such as hundreds of the same tax receipts. Bookkeeping manuals and other instructions complemented these materials, further aiding the exercise of control over administration. Moreover, print enabled the development of new ways of record-keeping within state administration. As scholars have discussed before, an excess of information led to the creation of new information-management tools and techniques. I have illustrated this further, underscoring how printed documents – like the Amsterdam burgomasters' list of *convoyen* and *licenten* – through their structure and materiality, facilitated novel ways to record and process information.

Finally, the use of print aided fraud prevention within state administration. Compared to handwritten documents, print was difficult to replicate. Qualities unique to print – such as a uniform type and design, and the incorporation of woodcuts – offered an extra layer of authentication to protect against fraud. Moreover, manuals and instructions helped ensure that the correct information was recorded. This was essential in prevention of fraud and ensuring accountability – again evidence of the state's desire to impose control over its administrative procedures. Thus, the medium of print was in several manners significant in the shaping of maritime state administration. These developments in Dutch maritime administration reflect a broader increase in importance of print within early modern European bureaucracies. It sheds light on ways in which early modern states employed this new medium in the context of growing bureaucracy, and a desire to control processes of information management.

The third sphere in which administrative print was vital is the international context. Print functioned within a shared international maritime administrative system that was characterised by international cooperation. Countries across Europe used the same types of documents within their maritime operations, including bills of lading, sea letters, and letters of marque. The effective functioning of these documents in international encounters, was dependent on their mutual recognition

and acceptance; they only held power if their authority was recognised by all parties involved. That recognition was in part achieved through aspects of their content and materiality, ensuring that they could be quick and easily understood and accepted across Europe.

These mutually accepted printed documents played an important role in the management of interactions between citizens of different states, often holding legal authority. As expressions of state authority, these pieces of paper could manage and prevent disputes. The legality of the international privateering system, for instance, rested largely on paper. Thus, in the context of rapidly expanding maritime trade, by the second half of the seventeenth century print was actively used by European states and merchants in an international bureaucratic system, used to regulate and facilitate the smooth operation of international maritime commerce. In some ways, this may seem obvious; we know from other contexts that communication across borders – be they cultural, religious or political – was eased by written documentation. Yet, in emphasising the role of print in international commerce, this thesis highlights how this international communication, previously ruled by the handwritten, was in the early modern period actively and increasingly aided by the new medium of print. Employed to further standardise and ease communication and interactions, the increasing use of print represents a vital development in how early modern states communicated, collaborated and governed across borders, which was particularly important in the context of an increasingly interconnected world.

Printed paperwork was thus influential on three levels: the personal, the state, and the international. But this thesis has also offered further insight into the position of ephemeral print within the printing industry of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. By cataloguing and examining hitherto unexamined pieces of print, this thesis has revealed, in many cases for the first time, what specific types of administrative print were produced in this period. Moreover, I have also turned our attention to the ephemeral print produced by official printers to the Admiralties, the VOC, and the WIC, emphasising their previously overlooked role in producing state-issued print. In addition to official printers, administrative print was also widely produced and sold by ‘ordinary’ printers, who operated in a competitive market. Ephemeral administrative print, therefore, constituted a vital component of the Dutch printing industry, highlighting the need for book historians to devote greater attention to this material in order to better understand the broader role of print in the early modern period.

It is important to note that when I argue that ephemeral administrative print formed a part of the daily lives of seventeenth-century Europeans, I am not referring exclusively to men. The maritime sector may all too often be imagined as male-dominated, but women too played a significant role within it. Even though this thesis is not explicitly about gender and women, women did in fact populate my story. They could own ships or lighthouses, work in the ports, were passengers on board of ships, or in some cases even join ships’ crews disguised as men – all instances where they likely encountered

administrative paperwork.<sup>231</sup> Women also frequently shipped or received goods, thereby filling in or obtaining bills of lading. Similarly, as I have discussed, the production and sale of administrative print was not uncommonly in the hands of women, such as the unmarried sisters Alida and Maria Matthijs who occupied the prestigious position of official VOC printers for nearly forty years. Bills of lading, too, were regularly produced and sold by women. Recognising the role of women is therefore important for understanding the role of ephemeral administrative print in daily lives as well as the printing sector in this period – something that should be considered in further research on this topic.

It is equally important to acknowledge the continuing significance of the handwritten and the spoken within state administration. Though my research focused on the role of print culture, this does not mean handwritten paperwork became obsolete. Many administrative documents continued to be created only in manuscript form, as evidenced, for instance, in the onboard VOC administration. Handwritten bills of lading and sea letters also continued to be accepted, indicating that print not necessarily held more power or value compared to the handwritten, but was primarily used out of efficiency. Handwriting was in fact integral to printed paperwork: on forms and receipts, the key information such as names, amounts, and locations, were all written by hand. The addition of blank pages in the VOC's equipment list, indicate that the bookkeeper was required to add plenty of handwritten notations. Signatures, together with the seal, authenticated and authorised documents. Similarly, the increasing use of paperwork should not obscure the importance of orality. Indeed, there was often an interplay between the spoken and the printed, as can be gauged, for instance, from the repeated recital of the VOC's article letter on board, or the fact that sea letters were only issued to skippers after they had orally sworn an oath. We see, therefore, that despite an increasing implementation of the medium of print in the maritime sector, the handwritten and the spoken remained important in administrative and organisational practices. In that sense, this thesis highlights with further evidence, how orality, print, and handwritten cultures were no opposites, but instead belonged to one, shared culture of communication.

In analysing the role of ephemeral print in the Dutch Republic, I have predominantly dived into the Prize Papers, an archive that offers unique insights into lives of ordinary individuals because of the many ephemeral documents it contains. It is an archive that offers the possibility to approach the history of administration and information-gathering from a more bottom-up view that includes the perspectives of ordinary citizens, who, as this study has shown, played an important role in administrative systems. It is also an archive that underscores the need to shift our attentions away from libraries to archives, in order to gain more insight into ephemeral print in early modern Europe. Items such as receipts, lists and passports are rarely found in library collections, and are instead more likely to be encountered in archives. Actively finding and cataloguing these pieces of print is necessary to enrich our understanding

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<sup>231</sup> See: Suze Zijlstra, "Women in Early Modern Dutch Maritime and Colonial Worlds: Historiographical Currents and New Perspectives," *Early Modern Low Countries* 9, no. 1 (2025).

of what printed items were produced and consumed, and understand how the medium print influenced early modern lives.

In this research I have, limited by scope, investigated but a small section of a topic which holds large potential for further studies into the nature and use of print within state administration, and the role of ephemeral print in the early modern period more generally. Further research could expand beyond the maritime sector, to examine the role of printed materials within other areas of state administration. Its use in state administration of countries other than the Dutch Republic could likewise be of value. My preliminary findings of administrative print that Dutch merchants obtained in foreign countries, suggests that the use of print was common beyond the Dutch Republic. More research is, however, needed to explore the full extent to which these countries employed print.

One could also expand this research chronologically. Because of the nature of the source material consulted in this study, and a restriction of the researched period to the seventeenth century, the majority of printed papers discussed here come from the 1660s, 1670s, and 1690s. Tracing the use of administrative print back to earlier as well as later periods, could help to gain a better understanding of how its use in state administration developed over time. The Dutch Prize papers contain papers from ships captured in the eighteenth century, which have yet to be examined and catalogued, thus offering a valuable opportunity for further research.

This project has primarily focused on the Prize Papers as its main source, but my consultations of other archives, such as that of the East India Company, the Admiralties, or city magistrates, have shown that these archives too contain administrative print. Further explorations of these archives could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of print within state administration. While this thesis has primarily focused on printed items used in external administrative processes, between state and citizens, print was also used in internal administration – a topic which could be further explored through consulting these archives. Finally, this project has demonstrated the richness of the Prize Papers archive in uncovering rare pieces of ephemeral print. However, restricted by their current availability, the documents discussed here comprise only a small fraction of the entire collection, which is estimated to contain papers from approximately 35.000 ships. Once fully catalogued and digitised, this archive holds significant potential to offer us countless more fascinating and unique pieces of print that can significantly enhance into our understanding of commerce and print in the early modern period.

As Jacob Cloet returned home without his ship and possessions, and Lijsbet Pruijs waited for her husband who would never return, the busy world of maritime commerce carried on around them. Merchants bought bills of lading, skippers queued at the tax office to receive their passports, ships arrived and departed after stopping at the gates for inspection. On VOC ships, the crew listened to article letter being read again and again, and each week, the skipper diligently updated the consumption book. At sea, privateers and their enemies showed each other their sea letters and filled in forms. It was paperwork that kept maritime commerce afloat, then as much as now. Merchants, sailors, privateers and port personnel – all were immersed in a sea of print.

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SAA – Stadsarchief Amsterdam

SAR – Stadsarchief Rotterdam

SMA – Scheepvaartmuseum, Amsterdam (National Maritime Museum)

TNA – The National Archives, London.

UA – Utrechts Archief

WFA – Westfries Archief, Hoorn

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SAA, 5075 Archief van de Notarissen ter Standplaats Amsterdam, 242 Pieter Carel, 6213B, 22 September 1722, Testament Alida en Maria Matthijsz.

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TNA, HCA - Records of the High Court of Admiralty and colonial Vice-Admiralty courts, HCA 32 Prize Court Prize Papers.

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<sup>232</sup> This does not include the catalogued printed documents from the Prize Papers, which can instead be found in the appendix to this thesis.

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# Appendix 1 – Lists of printers

<b>Printers and sellers of bills of lading</b>			
<b>Amsterdam</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Approximate year of publication</b>
Gerrit van Goedesberg	Seller	Op 't Water by de Nieuwebrugh, in de Delfsche Bybel	1670
Abel Symonsz van de Storck	Seller	Op 't Water by de Nieuwebrugh, in de Delfsche Bybel	1670
Wed. Johannes Colom	Seller	Aan de Beurs	1663
Wed. Francoys Lieshoudt	Seller	Op den Dam in 't Groot-boeck	1662
Abraham van den Burg	Seller	Jan-Roonpoorts Toren, in de Gereformeerde Catechismus	1663
Marcus Willemsz Doornick	Seller	Nieuwe Gast-Huys Moolensteeg in 't Kantoor Inck-vat	1662
Isaac de la Tombe	Seller	Middel-Dam in de Franse Bybel	1664
Jaques Boursse	Seller	Lely-graft, inde beurs van Antwerpen	1664
Joseph Bruyningh	Printer	Corner of the exchange	1664
Abraham Wolfgang	Seller	Op de hoeck van de Beurs, onder de Toren / In het opgaen van de Beurs, by de Beurs Toren, in 't Geloof	1664
Pieter Arentz	Seller	In de Beursstraat, in de drie Rapen	1667
Michiel Hartogh	Seller	Op de hoeck van de Hoogh-straet	1667
Jacob Heerman	Seller	Op den Dam in 't Cruyt boeck	1667
Paulus Matthijsz	Printer	Stoofsteegh in 't Musyc-boek	1664
Wed. Theunis Jacobz.	Seller	Op 't Water in de Loots-man	1664
Pieter Rotterdam	Seller	Op de Vygendam, op de hoek van de Beurs-poort	1691
Aert Dircksz. Oossaen	Seller	Op den Dam, op de hoek van de Beurs-steegh	1691
Adriaen Venendael	Printer	In de Molsteegh	1689
<b>Middelburg</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year</b>
Gomaris de Clerck	Seller	Not mentioned	1670
Cornelis de Clerck	Seller	Op de Dam	1664
Wed. Cornelis de Clerck	Seller	Op de Dam	1664
Paulus Wante	Seller	Not mentioned	1663
Jaques Fierens	Seller	Not mentioned	1670
Francois Krook	Seller	Not mentioned	1670
Hendrick Smidt	Printer	Op de Wal	1670
Jan J. Roelof	Seller	Not mentioned	1664
<b>Rotterdam</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year</b>
Petrus Paludanus	Printer	Wijnstraet	1670
Hendrick de Bruyn	Printer	West-wage-straet, inde Koning David	1667
Wed. Matthijs Wagens	Printer	Vis-mart	1667
<b>Vlissingen</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year</b>
Jan de Paaynaar	Seller	Op de Beurs	1664
Jacob Lambrechtse	Seller	Not mentioned	1665
Abraham van Laren	Printer	Op de Beurs	1670
Geleyn Jansz	Seller	Not mentioned	1664
Andries vanden Eede	Seller	By den Accijs	1670
Johannes van den Eede	Seller	Not mentioned	1664
Jacob Pick	Printer	Not mentioned	1664
Cornelis Pick	Seller	Not mentioned	1664

Daniel Charels	Seller	Op de Bier-kaey	1664
<b>La Rochelle</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year</b>
Jacob Mancel	Seller	Not mentioned	1665
<b>Calais</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year</b>
Guillaume Desjardins	Seller	Not mentioned	1667
<b>London</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year</b>
Robert Horns	Seller	At the South Entrance of the Royall Exchange	1672

## VOC printers<sup>233</sup>

Name	Chamber	Period
Paulus Matthijsz	Amsterdam	1663-1684
Heirs of Paulus Matthijsz (Alida and Maria Matthijsz)	Amsterdam	1684-1723
Pieter van Goetthem (not officially appointed)	Zeeland	? - 1669
Theodorus de la Maere	Zeeland	1669- c. 1672
Johannes Meertens	Zeeland	c. 1672 – c. 1695
Galenus Meertens	Zeeland	c. 1695 - ?

## Admiralty printers

Name	Location	College	Period
Heirs of Michiel Colijn	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	1650s
Albert Magnus	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	1670s?
Widow of Aert Dircksz Oossaan	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	1690s
Egbert van den Hoof	Enkhuizen	Noorderkwartier	1660s
Cornelis Mul	Enkhuizen	Noorderkwartier	1690s
Jan van Waesberge	Rotterdam	Maze	1620s
Pieter van Waesberge	Rotterdam	Maze	? – c. 1657
Arnout Leers	Rotterdam	Maze	1658-1673
Widow and heirs of Arnout Leers	Rotterdam	Maze	1673 – at least 1684
Abraham van Waesberge	Rotterdam	Maze	1676 – at least 1685
Hero Galema	Harlingen	Friesland	1670s
Jan Hessels Schouwenburgh	Harlingen	Friesland	1660s
Johan Mission	Middelburg	Zeeland	1660s
Jacobus Noenaert	Middelburg	Zeeland	1670s

<sup>233</sup> I have based these lists of VOC and Admiralty printers on publications I have encountered during my research, and entries in *Adresboek Nederlandse Drukkers*. These lists are intended as an initial exploration, and are not exhaustive. J.A. Gruys and Jan Bos, eds. *Adresboek Nederlandse drukkers en boekverkopers tot 1700* (Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 1999).