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DANIELA DYCK

Experiencing Transit

On British Emigrant Ships to Australia in the 19th Century

Experiencing Transit:
Long-Distance Ship Passages on British Emigrant Ships to Australia in the 19th Century

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Daniela Dyck

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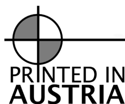

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Ich liebe Euch.

Ich war und bin reich beschenkt mit
liebevollen Ermutigerinnen und Ermutigern,
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weisen Ratgeberinnen und Ratgebern,
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IHM gehört meine Biografie, mein Leben, meine Geschichte.

List of Abbreviations

ANMM	Australian National Maritime Museum
AJCP	Australian Joint Copying Project
BLFES	British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society
CLEC	Colonial Land and Emigration Commission
CO	Colonial Office
LSE	London School of Economics
NLA	National Library of Australia
NSW	The Australian State of New South Wales
PROV	Public Record Office of Victoria
Qld	The Australian State of Queensland
SA	The Australian State of South Australia
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales
SLQ	State Library of Queensland
SLV	State Library of Victoria
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
UK	United Kingdom
VIC	The Australian State of Victoria

Introducing Transit:

1 An Encounter in the Library

During my first archival research trip, I found myself sitting in Sydney's Mitchell Library in the State Library of New South Wales next to the Botanical Gardens. It was summer outside, but the air conditioning allowed everyone to forget the blazing heat outside the historic walls of Australia's oldest library. I was not sure I knew where to look for what I was looking for. To be honest, maybe I did not even know exactly what I was looking for. I had ordered a few boxes, started filling out the form declaring the pictures I was going to take were for my own research purposes only, and then I noticed the signature of the box I had just received: MLK 2335. This was one of the boxes I had been really excited about because of the rather mysterious content description in the OPAC:

> Include subject files, lists and indexes on various research interests, including convict and emigrant ships, Australian maritime history, Australian Encyclopaedia, and World War II and the Pacific; correspondence relating to his books, including Australian Shipwrecks, Chartmaker, Convict Ships, Early Sailor, Early Soldier, First into Italy, Gold Commission, Gold Fleet to California, and Spitfires over Malta; scrapbooks, newscuttings, printed and pictorial material, and maps.[1]

Everything and nothing could be in here. However, the special glamour of this collection was that it had belonged to Charles Bateson (1903–1974). Ranked among the greatest historians on Australian settlement history, he was the author of a ground-breaking study on convict ships.[2]

1 State Library of New South Wales, "Charles Bateson Papers, ca. 1916–1974: Textual Records – 125 Boxes (MLK 2328-MLK 2452. 5) Outsize Items Held Onsite (KV 11970–KV 11974), updated 2021/08/10 <collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/YEGmdyKn>, accessed 2021/08/27.
2 Fletcher, Brian H., "Art.: 'Bateson, Charles Henry (1903–1974)'", updated 1993 <adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bateson-charles-henry-9452/text16621>, accessed 2023/06/08. Bateson's most famous book is Bateson, Charles, *The Convict Ships: 1787–1868*. Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1959.

The box standing in front of me now offered insight into his last years of active research. Bateson never really retired, continuing to collect various sources until his sudden death in 1974. The Mitchell Library holds the remains of this devoted historian's work, who died as he was gathering source material and drafting fragments for future chapters. In the end, this box was not of utmost importance for the research question I am primarily seeking to answer in this present book, but it was invaluable in enabling me to look over an experienced historian's shoulder, learning from his to-do-lists, address notes, book summaries, pieces of remark, oblique copies, letter beginnings. I started reading and realized: Before his death, Bateson had been working on a publication on emigrant ships – something I was now about to dive into! He had started collecting information on the first vessels, scandals, and problems; he attempted to understand the legal situation in Australia in the 1840/50s; and he issued public requests asking for emigrant diaries from private family archives. The following excerpt from the introduction is analytically remarkable: although drafted in the 1970s, it is much in line with today's prevalent microhistorical approaches:

> Whatever the aspect or problem of ~~emigration or~~ immigration under scrutiny it must never be forgotten that stripped of its bare essentials it concerns human beings. Any history of ~~emigration or~~ immigration is the history of a segment of the lives of thousands upon thousands of men, women and children — of human beings diverse in race, religion, character, mental capacity and physical ability, each with their own hopes, fears and anxieties, *their own strengths and weaknesses*. While ~~the emigrants and~~ immigrants are the central figures, there are also the departmental and civic officials, merchants, shipowners, officers and seamen, medical practitioners, clergymen and other people, official or ~~non-~~unofficial, who in one way or another, and in lesser or greater degree, help to formulate and carry into practical effect ~~emigration or~~ immigration policies. All are liable to human passions, *human prejudices* and human errors. Even the people at large in the respective countries, although not directly involved in the machinery of ~~emigration or~~ immigration, exert through their social customs, prejudices and idiosyncrasies a profound influence on ~~those who emigrate or immigrate~~ the attitudes of immigrants.

> These human factors, which are so often overlooked, have a direct bearing upon the success or failure of official policies, especially in the field of assimilation, and explain much that is irrational in our immigration history. They account for one group of immigrants being warmly welcomed and quickly assimilated and another almost identical group being coolly received and finding themselves misfits in their new environment. They explain why one person suddenly tears up all his roots and carves for himself a new and better life in a distant country, while another fails in a similar attempt and quickly returns home, disgruntled and disillusioned. Human elements also have been responsible for suffering and brutality, for death and disease in immigrant ships, for callous treatment *of immigrants* on leaving their homeland or on arrival at their destination, and for the creation in the receiving country of minority settlements of particular nationalities *or groups*, whose assimilation is long delayed or never attained.[3]

I felt like a dwarf standing on the shoulders of giants when reading through Bateson's introductory passages, arguing for migration history to focus on the human beings. This focus is one of anthropological history, looking at past individuals defending values, embodying mentalities, nourishing hopes, carrying out political decisions, supervising rules, fighting anxiety.[4]

I will use Bateson's thoughts as food for my own research when developing a conceptual approach concerned with human beings' experiences of one exemplary long-distance migration process. This in-between state of <u>transit</u> is historicized and taken to be both

(1) a temporal period with social, cultural, and political ramifications, and
(2) an abstract, conceptual framework for special experiences as human beings.

3 Bateson, Charles, Collection of Textual Records (State Library of New South Wales) MLK 2331+MLK 2335: MLK 2335, 7–9.
4 See Müller, Philipp, "Historische Anthropologie: Fragen und Konzepte zur Einführung," *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 69, 5/6 (2018): 334–345.

A quick overview of Australian migration and the historiographic tradition will now help to contextualize my approach.

1.1 Migration to Australia

Long-distance migration crucially shaped the increasingly mobile world in the 19th century, with three major systems across the globe: (1) Transatlantic, (2) Southeast Asia-Indian Ocean, and (3) Northern Asia.[5] This study focusses on the second system, with its attention on a selection of the roughly 1.6 million assisted and free migrants from the United Kingdom to Australia who built the core of the white Australian society today. The assisted and free migrants far outnumbered the previously transported 160,000–165,000 convicts. From these non-convict settlers, about 50% received governmental support.[6]

The Australasian route was the geographically longest one-way passage in 19th century migration to British colonies, covering 12,000–14,000 miles. In 1862, the annual *Colonization Circular* magazine, which from the 1850s until the 1870s offered information about possible settler destinations, noted that "the usual length of the voyage to the Australian Colonies [was] about 3 1/2 months, and to New Zealand a little longer"[7]. With the opening of the Suez Canal and the advance of the steamship, this period was reduced to 90 days by sail and 65 days by steam in the 1870s. Sailing vessels tended to go non-stop via the "Great Circle Route" across the Atlantic Ocean and around the Cape of Good Hope before heading towards the Australian continent. The range of climate zones, temperatures and winds was immense. Difficulties often came with

5 McKeown, Adam, "Global Migration, 1846–1940," *Journal of World History* 15, no. 2 (2004): 155–189: 156–160.

6 Maxwell-Stewart, Hamish, and Rebecca Kippen, "Sickness and Death on Convict Voyages to Australia," in *Lives in Transition: Longitudinal Analysis from Historical Sources*, ed. Peter A. Baskerville and Kris E. Inwood. Carleton Library 232. Montreal, et al.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015: 43–70 and Richards, Eric, *Britannia's Children: Emigration from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland since 1600*. London, New York: Hambledon and London, 2004: 126.

7 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, Colonization Circular (No. 21. Issued by her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners), London 1862 (Cambridge University Library) OP.3100.0.038 (22): 11.

the “doldrums” – the often-windless belt around the equator (latitude: N 5°–S 5°) – or the fierce headwinds of the “Roaring Forties” (latitudes: S 40°–50°) when approaching Cape Horn.[8] The illustration below shows one example of an emigrant ship route taken from a passage in 1875.[9]

Figure 1: The “Great Circle Route” (1875)

Steamships went through the Mediterranean Sea and the Suez Canal before crossing the Indian Ocean – a journey including stopovers in port cities and islands for coal-loading and touristic purposes. One argument for taking this migration system to study ‘transit’[10] is the quantitative advantage of the Australian passage over contemporary one-way-journeys in terms of miles and duration, but another argument is the prevalence of the Atlantic passage in other research projects.

8 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “What are the Doldrums?,” updated 2021/02/26 <oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/doldrums.html>, accessed 2021/09/24.
9 Zouche, Isaiah de, Surgeon’s Diary on Board the ‘Star Queen’ (Original and Transcript with Further Sources (Letters, Examination Protocols, Newspaper Extracts, Notes, etc.)), 1875/04/19–1875/10/30 (State Library of Queensland) OM 67–8; Box 8630: [65 in transcript].
10 A quick note on formatting: Throughout the book, I will use single quotation marks when referring to the abstract/conceptual meaning of a word, such as ‘transit’, ‘mediator’, ‘fear’, etc.

This book can therefore be read as a contribution to related studies on the "inner life of empires".[11]

In order to reduce the number of voyages being studied, my work focuses on the Eastern Australian colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland, where similar schemes and structures of assisted and unassisted migration were offered to intending emigrants from the United Kingdom. The chosen time span for the study covers a period of about 50 years: it begins with the 1850s after convict transportation had come to a stop in the aforementioned colonies and ends in the 1890s, shortly before the New Australian Federation Act in 1901. For statistics and numbers, I can build on Australian migration research from the 1990s onwards.[12]

Broadly speaking, whereas Australian historians look at these events from an "identity" approach, British historians generally deal with this "Down Under" territory as if it was one settler colony among others in the later Commonwealth community.[13] My study is situated between the different approaches and extends the settler studies to the pre-colonist period: the period when the future Australian citizen was still a passenger – still "in-between".[14]

11 See Rothschild, Emma. *The Inner Life of Empires: An Eighteenth-Century History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013; Fischer-Tiné, Harald, and Christine Whyte, "Introduction. Empires and Emotions," in *Anxieties, Fear and Panic in Colonial Settings: Empires on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, ed. Harald Fischer-Tiné. Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies. Houndmills, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016: 1–23:3.

12 Starting with a workshop in 1989, the series "Visible Immigrants" collected migration research previously unknown: Richards, Eric, David Fitzpatrick, and Richard Reid, eds., *Visible Immigrants: Neglected Sources for the History of Australian Immigration,* 5 vols., Visible Immigrants 1. Canberra: Department of History and Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, 1989, etc.

13 See e.g. Reid, Richard E., *Farewell My Children: Irish Assisted Emigration to Australia 1848–1870*. Sydney: Anchor Books Australia, 2011: 9.

14 This formative period during the journey has gained attention in convict studies as well: Foxhall, Katherine, "From Convicts to Colonists: The Health of Prisoners and the Voyage to Australia, 1823–53," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39, no. 1 (2011): 1–19.

1.2 The ship as laboratory

Paying attention to the ships sailing or steaming across the "British Sea" expands a merely land-based narrative[15] centred around Britishness and the related struggles of national narratives and identity.[16] The sea proved to be and was perceived as something forever foreign and unreliable. In spite of impressive advances in natural and technical sciences, attempts to tame and govern the waves often remained unsuccessful, although innovative technology and improvements in navigation, safety and provision made it possible for 19th century emigrant guides to sell the journey as a safe trip around the world, neatly situated in the realm of the familiar empire.[17]

While the historiographic beginnings of maritime research were primarily concerned with naval warfare, technical inventions and economic affairs[18], the field recently began to include fresh aspects such as agency. This actor-based approach, focussing "not only on leaders but also on common and anonymous agents" brings with it more abstract and more anthropological topics such as emotions, values and motives.[19]

15 Pietsch, Tamson, "A British Sea: Making Sense of Global Space in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Global History* 5, no. 3 (2010): 423–446. doi:10.1017/S1740022810000215. Pietsch's more abstract concept of the "British Sea" can be read against a recent volume on "empires of the sea", in which the British Empire is not numbered among the "maritime empires" as it is declared to be "very much land-based": Strootman, Rolf, "Introduction: Maritime Empires in World History," in *Empires of the Sea: Maritime Power Networks in World History*, ed. Rolf Strootman, Floris van den Eijnde and Roy van Wijk. Cultural Interactions in the Mediterranean 4. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020: 1–35.
16 "[…] a maritime perspective […] is a salutary way of de-parochializing the history of the British empire" (Cannadine, David, "Introduction," in *Empire, the Sea and Global History: Britain's Maritime World, c. 1760–c. 1840*, ed. David Cannadine. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007: 1–5:2.)
17 Pitt & Scott, *The Emigrants' Guide for 1883*. London: Pitt & Scott, 1883: esp.: 73.
18 Hattendorf, John B., "Ubi Sumus? Twenty Five Years Later," *Northern Mariner* 27, no. 1 (2017): 1–14 referring to Hattendorf, John B., ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History: Online Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007; Rodger, Nicholas A., and Christian Buchet, eds., *The Sea in History: The Modern World,* 4 vols., The Sea in History. La Mer dans L'Histoire 4. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017.
19 "More recently, maritime historians have also drawn on the histories of technology and science, as well as the history of the 'immaterial' (i.e., the fears, expectations and codes of inclusion and exclusion of maritime communities and groups). [...] Issues related to social, religious and cultural studies have emerged recently as important topics in maritime history. Their inclusion reveals an understanding of the centrality of human agents to

Hence, the new maritime history, with its attention on social and cultural questions, serves as a perfect bridge to the perspective advocated by global history.[20] In that sense, my work can be placed within this field as it concentrates on complex connections and long-distance movements across continents. Globalization is seen not simply as a straightforward movement of universalization, but, especially in migratory situations, as a process involving the juggling of constant and seemingly contradictory tensions of access and control, rights and duties, inclusion and exclusion.[21]

As will be shown throughout the book, these complexities are concentrated on the ship. Until well into the 19th century, the sailing vessel was the carrier of money, fame, people, and goods of the seaborne empire – and it was the temporary home to millions of immigrants to Australia as well. The advent of the steamship in the second half of the 19th century symbolized progress, power and prestige, and allowed both aspects (carriage and temporary home) to be improved and to profit from each other's experience.[22] Beyond these representative potential and technological efforts, it is the analytical value of the (emigrant) ship which is high for the historian. Known as the "wooden world" since the 18th century and rendered as "heterotopia par excellence" in the 20th century,[23] it can be taken as a stage for human transitory interaction in a globalized and globalizing world.

maritime dynamics."(Polónia, Amélia, "Maritime History: A Gateway to Global History," in *Maritime History as Global History*, ed. Maria Fusaro and Amélia Polónia. Research in Maritime History 43. St. John's: International Maritime Economic History Association; Liverpool University Press, 2010: 1–20:2.)

20 Cusack, Tricia, ed., *Framing the Ocean, 1700 to the Present: Envisaging the Sea as Social Space*. Farnhan Surrey, Burlington: Ashgate, 2014 and Fusaro, Maria, "Maritime History as Global History? The Methodological Challenges and a Future Research Agenda," in *Maritime History as Global History*, ed. Maria Fusaro and Amélia Polónia. Research in Maritime History 43. St. John's: International Maritime Economic History Association; Liverpool University Press, 2010: 267–282.

21 McKeown, "Global Migration, 1846–1940": 3–6.

22 Mendonça, Sandro, "The 'Sailing Ship Effect': Reassessing History as a Source of Insight on Technical Change," *Research Policy* 42, no. 10 (2013): 1724–1738. doi:10.1016/j.respol.2012.12.009.

23 Ward, Edward, *The Wooden World Dissected: In the Character of a Ship of War: As also the Characters of all the Officers, from the Captain to the Common Sailor. A New Edition*. London, 1795 and Foucault, Michel, and Jay Miskowiec, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 22–27. doi:10.2307/464648: 27.

Therefore, the ship becomes both an object of study ("mobilities of ships") and a carrier of mobilities ("shipped mobilities").[24] It becomes clear that this mobility only coexists with immobility and moorings, which makes its fluidity, contradictions and politics worth investigating.[25] Any such vehicle carrying migrants to Australia therefore by its very nature automatically restricted mobility and enforced spatial confinement on everyone, independent from their social or personal background. Within these already given boundaries of the ship itself, a "laboratory" situation was established.[26]

Right from the start, this laboratory was marked by separation into classes, gender, marital status, nationality, age, etc. As the journey proceeded through the Atlantic Ocean and beyond, the ship became the sole point of reference for the people on board. Time zones, geographical orientation and weather conditions were all confused and in terms of social encounters or activities, the opportunities were narrowed down. At sea, other authorities were in control, maritime hierarchies defined every day, and seaborne laws and traditions replaced the familiar system of rules. The voyages may have had many differences in their technical specifications, routes, number of passengers and environmental conditions, but certain vessel-related features united all the voyages. An enclosed setting like this is therefore exceedingly valuable for observing the actors and their agency.[27] The emigrant ship thus became

24 Anim-Addo, Anyaa, William Hasty, and Kimberley Peters, "The Mobilities of Ships and Shipped Mobilities," *Mobilities* 9, no. 3 (2014): 337–349. doi:10.1080/17450101.2014.946773.
25 See Adey, Peter, "If Mobility is Everything Then it is Nothing: Towards a Relational Politics of (Im)mobilities," *Mobilities* 1, no. 1 (2006): 75–94. doi:10.1080/17450100500489080: 85–87.
26 See Dusinberre, Martin, and Roland Wenzlhuemer, "Editorial – Being in Transit: Ships and Global Incompatibilities," *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 2 (2016): 155–162. doi:10.1017/S1740022816000036: 157–
27 Beamish, Johanna, *Im Transit auf dem Ozean: Schiffszeitungen als Dokumente globaler Verbindungen im 19. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus, 2018 and Connor, Claire, "Passengers, Emigrants and Modern Men: A Social History of the 1852 Voyage of S.S. 'Great Britain' from Liverpool to Melbourne," (Doctoral Thesis), University of Bristol, 2015 <ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.687273>, accessed 2019/03/28.

more than a mere site of interaction and individual re-fashioning, representing a peculiar cross section of British society.[28]

1.3 Advocating the individual's perspective

One voyage on the very same emigrant ship resulted in entirely different "lived experience[s] of mobility and identification [such as] foreignness, displacement and unbelonging" for each passenger.[29] This becomes especially clear when comparing accounts of one passage. Unfortunately this proves impossible for most long-distance passages, as often only one emigrant diary survived, while the other twenty, fifty, hundred, or two hundred travellers and sailors only occur as characters or names described, mentioned and listed, or remain entirely anonymous and forgotten. The confinement of space in one ship might conceal the fact that the boundaries and thoughts, impressions and rules imposed or invented differ significantly from one mess and berth to another.

The single man George Annison and married woman Emma White both travelled as unassisted passengers on board the 'Emigrant' in 1853, sharing the same age range (early twenties), nationality (English), and class background. Hence, they might have seen each other while attending the traditional Crossing the Line ceremony when the ship crossed the equator. In Emma White's primarily pessimistic letter back home to her family, this extraordinary maritime event stands out as somehow positively associated with "a bit of fun". This stands in contrast to George Annison's memories of the same day: his diary account is marked by annoyance as he writes about the drunken sailors' singing afterwards, leading to noisy quarrels that stole his sleep and continued as ongoing conflicts throughout the following days. Emma White nei-

28 "A migrant ship was like a social map of nineteenth-century Britain, dividing space according to class, marital status and gender. One large horizontal boundary separated the classes [...] It was a kind of maritime Upstairs, Downstairs, although the class on a ship was defined by money rather than social status." (Hastings, David, *Over the Mountains of the Sea: Life on the Migrant Ships, 1870–1885*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2006: 29–32.)
29 Ghobrial, Jean-Paul A., "Moving Stories and What They Tell Us: Early Modern Mobility between Microhistory and Global History," *Past and Present* 242, Supplement 14 (2019): 243–280: 249.

ther heard the yelling nor did she feel the tension in the single men's compartment.[30]

The same event on the same ship, but different stories and transit-experiences: Juxtaposing two accounts of one journey here shall serve to justify a special focus on one character's impressions, expectations, relationships, values, and feelings. In this manner, actors become the "loci" of connections and disconnections in space, "the fulcrums on which constellations of global connections turn […] and the multiplicity of existing connections intersect."[31]

Therefore, the trajectory of this book may take the approaches of new maritime history, but it also harks back to Bateson's appeal from the beginning, namely, to pay attention to the human being under examination. Here, both global and microhistorical perspectives are essential, with a concept of 'global history' as

> a perspective for considering all kinds of cross-border mobilities and their consequences, especially within vast and multicultural spaces; it focuses on connections and connectivity (or connectedness), with special attention to empirical connections that are uneven and have a transformative impact on the interconnected social and cultural units.[32]

This global perspective does not aim at large-scale investigations over an extended period spanning time and space, since those investigations tend to overlook the impact and the agency of the marginalized and quieter ones. Instead, this perspective works as an advisor, enriching

30 Annison, George, Diary on Board the 'Emigrant' and in Australia, 1853/01/22–1853/11/08 (National Library of Australia) MS 3878: 1853/02/24 [8] and White, Emma, Letter about Voyage on Board the 'Emigrant' and Impressions of Australia, 1853/05/08 (National Library of Australia) MS 3878:2.

31 Wenzlhuemer, Roland, *Doing Global History: An Introduction in Six Concepts*. London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020: 92–93, building on Latour, Bruno, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory,* Clarendon Lectures in Management Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005: 237.

32 Osterhammel, Jürgen, and Pierre-Yves Saunier, "Global History: With Comment and Response," in *Debating New Approaches to History*, ed. Marek Tamm and Peter Burke. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019: 21–47: 28.

the ongoing conceptual debates by "discover[ing] hidden or unexpected connections that present familiar phenomena in a new light".[33]

This "new light" excavates details such as the fact that the date of marriage between Emma White and her husband Charley was only one month before they set sail for New South Wales. At the same time, it considers the bigger framework surrounding the person, family, or ship under investigation, including, for example, the ideals of 19th century husband-wife-dynamics essential for further critical interpretation. Hence, global and microhistorical modes of enquiry are fruitful when applied together within the seemingly rigid structures of politics, society and community. "It requires the historian to imagine the world as seen by her subjects, to examine and re-examine the terrain on which they worked, travelled, fought, sued, and rebelled."[34] Based on the global microhistorical credo,[35] both the general and the particular carve out relations and offer explanations important to serve the purpose of this book: approaching 'transit' as a concept which characterizes in-between periods.

The adaptability of global microhistory studies to other realms of social sciences has led to another intersection: that with the field of the history of emotions.[36] Here there are basically three main models, which lack a commonly accepted conceptual approach. I am going to refer to all of them in my study on emotional communities within transit and the role of feelings, expectations, and other subliminal aspects

33 Osterhammel and Saunier: 29.

34 Stanley, Amy, "Maidservants' Tales: Narrating Domestic and Global History in Eurasia, 1600–1900," *The American Historical Review* 121, no. 2 (2016): 437–460. doi:10.1093/ahr/121.2.437: 438.

35 Epple, Angelika, "Globale Mikrogeschichte," in *Im Kleinen das Grosse suchen: Mikrogeschichte in Theorie und Praxis. Hanns Haas zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Ewald Hiebl and Ernst Langthaler. Jahrbuch für Geschichte des ländlichen Raumes 9. Innsbruck, et al.: Studienverlag, 2012: 37–47: 43–45. Bertrand, Romain, and Guillaume Calafat, "La Microhistoire Globale: Affaire(s) à Suivre," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 73, no. 1 (2018): 3–18 and Levi, Giovanni, "Microhistoria e Historia Global," *Historia Crítica*, no. 69 (2018): 21–35. doi:10.7440/histcrit69.2018.02.

36 See Nagy, Piroska, and Ute Frevert, "History of Emotions: With Comment and Response," in *Debating New Approaches to History*, ed. Marek Tamm and Peter Burke. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019: 189–216; Boddice, Rob, *The History of Emotions*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018 and Plamper, Jan, *Geschichte und Gefühl: Grundlagen der Emotionsgeschichte*. München: Siedler, 2012 (also available in English).

of migrating in the 19th century.[37] What unites them is the notion that emotions, just like cultures, values, and beliefs, are relative and contextually defined. They change over time and are interpreted and used differently in different settings. It is this assumption that emotions are as crucial as cognitive reasoning when it comes to the shaping and influencing of human decisions and historical developments that makes them so interesting for transitory situations.[38]

Rob Boddice, Angela McCarthy and Tamson Pietsch have conducted research on shipboard communities that comes the closest to the present book. Their work also takes into account gender issues and contemporary models of health and sanity. Their primary sources include various shipboard diaries and serve as a pool for topics such as dealing with time and space, acts of controlling and scheduling life on board, attempts to keep a certain standard of hygiene and separation, triggers of depression and fear, and means of punishment and discipline.[39]

Under extreme pressure, the ability to endure and oppose formerly unknown stressors demanded resilience and strength – both physical and psychological. Passengers and crew alike had to face a hostile

37 Starting with Reddy and his concept of 'emotional regime' and 'emotional refuge' (Reddy, William M., *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), continuing with Rosenwein and her 'emotional communities' (Rosenwein, Barbara H., *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), leading to Scheer's idea of emotions as 'practice' (Scheer, Monique, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and Is that What Makes them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion," *History and Theory* 51, no. 2 (2012): 193–220), the debate has not come to an end yet. Ongoing research in Germany is conducted by the research centre "History of Emotions" at the Max-Planck-Institute Research Center "History of Emotions" in Berlin.
38 Frevert, Ute, "Defining Emotions: Concepts and Debates over Three Centuries," in *Emotional Lexicons: Continuity and Change in the Vocabulary of Feeling 1700–2000*, ed. Ute Frevert et al. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014: 2–31 and Frevert, Ute, "Was haben Gefühle in der Geschichte zu suchen?," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 35, no. 2 (2009): 183–208: 197–199.
39 Boddice, Rob, "Hysteria or Tetanus? Ambivalent Embodiments and the Authenticity of Pain," in *Emotional Bodies: The Historical Performativity of Emotions*, ed. Dolores Martín-Moruno and Beatriz Pichel. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2019: 19–35; McCarthy, Angela, "Migration and Madness at Sea: The Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Voyage to New Zealand," *Social History of Medicine* 28, no. 4 (2015): 706–724; Pietsch, Tamson, "Bodies at Sea: Travelling to Australia in the Age of Sail," *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 2 (2016): 209–228. doi:10.1017/S1740022816000061.

environment and threats from without and within, such as gales, waves, intrigues, cold, heat, hunger, monotony, fear, and mental breakdowns.

At sea, formerly fixed and stable components such as time and space became less self-evident as time zones shifted and monotony overwhelmingly overcame everyone on board. Though I would not go so far to call the ship a "total institution" [40], the limited space available to the traveller in a phase of transit called for a modified perspective on perception and needed the application of tactics to fight boredom, worries and despair. Here we encounter the keyword again, which now requires contextualization and a first definition.

2 'Transit' through the Following Chapters

To grasp this strange and crucial space of the in-between, I argue for a multi-perspective, multi-layered analytical conceptual approach.[41] In line with Roland Wenzhluemer, Johanna Beamish, Jakob Vogel and Wendy A. Vogt, I want to understand 'transit' as the spatial entity between departures and arrivals with flexible extensions on either sides.[42]

40 As provocatively called so e.g. in the 1970s by Coy, Peter, *The Migrant Passenger Ship as a Total Institution,* La Trobe Sociology Papers 18. Bundoora: Dept. of Sociology, School of Social Sciences, La Trobe University, 1976 and Lisch, Ralf, *Totale Institution Schiff,* Soziologische Schriften 20. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1976.

41 From an earlier historical perspective: Gabaccia, Donna R., and Dirk Hoerder, eds., *Connecting Seas and Connected Ocean Rims: Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans and China Seas Migrations from the 1830s to the 1930s*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011. From a more literary point of view: Wilhelmer, Lars, *Transit-Orte in der Literatur: Eisenbahn-Hotel-Hafen-Flughafen*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2015; Boyden, Michael, Hans Krabbendam, and Liselotte Vandenbussche, eds., *Tales of Transit: Narrative Migrant Spaces in Atlantic Perspective, 1850–1950,* American Studies. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013, and Gilbert, Helen, and Anna Johnston, eds., *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire,* Travel Writing Across the Disciplines 4. New York et al.: Peter Lang, 2002. A starting point for the discourse on 'transit' in global history was the 2016-special issue of the Journal for Global History edited by Martin Dusinberre and Roland Wenzlhuemer and subsequent work.

42 Vogel, Jakob, "Die Passage: Annäherung eines Historikers an ein analytisches Konzept," in *Passagen des Exils: Passages of Exile*, ed. Burcu Dogramaci and Elizabeth Otto. Exilforschung. Ein internationales Jahrbuch 35. München: et+k, 2017: 24–38; Wenzlhuemer, Roland, *Globalgeschichte schreiben: Eine Einführung in 6 Episoden,* UTB 4765. Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2017: 221–256; Beamish, *Im Transit auf dem Ozean*: 14–21; Vogt, Wendy A., *Lives in Transit: Violence and Intimacy on the Migrant Journey,* California Series in Public Anthropology 42. Oakland: University of California Press, 2018: esp. 6–7.

It is not only a temporally fixed period that has to be passed through before reaching the destination, but everything that can be located somewhere within the span defined between "not anymore" and "not yet".[43] 'Transit' itself never is the intended or aspired final goal of an act, process, or journey. Movement therefore always influences 'transit' – either because of its absence ('waiting room' concept) or because of its main purpose ('railway' concept). The value of 'transit' lies in its neglect and even disregard as something annoying and tiresome, which people would prefer to do without. However, it is the unavoidable interlude people have to cope with and to make sense of.[44] 'Transit' often escapes simple schemes of control as its very nature calls for flexibility and modification so that the 'before' and the 'after' become important factors and markers of success, failure, power and dependency. Hence, the tools and aspects outlined here are not only limited to maritime movements but can and should be applied to other historical settings, enriching studies on human beings passing through. As an amplifier of subtle, undergoing mechanisms, the idea of 'transit' will prove fruitful elsewhere, too.

In the following chapters, I want to investigate the diverse aspects of transit shaping the heterogeneous experiences of individuals, and thus complete and extend the idea itself. Henceforth, whenever the noun transit is used with a single quotation mark (i.e., 'transit'), I am referring to 'transit' as a concept with an abstract meaning. When used without any quotation marks (i.e., transit), I am talking about the noun in its concrete meaning as defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "The action or fact of passing across or through a place; a passage or journey from one place or point to another."[45]

This study is based on a range of primary sources from both the emigrants' side and the official one.[46] The quickest access to 'transit' lies

43 Wilhelmer, *Transit-Orte in der Literatur*: 38.

44 Based on this, already before the mass migration programme to Australia started, convict sailing vessels were gradually equipped with literature, teaching material and religious education. (See Foxhall, "From Convicts to Colonists".)

45 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "transit, n.", updated 2021/09 <oed.com/view/Entry/204809>, accessed 2021/09/10.

46 Hastings, *Over the Mountains of the Sea* presents a profound study of over 250 migrant voyages to New Zealand from 1870 to 1885. In terms of genre and number, his corpus is similar to mine, but Hastings takes a national perspective, as he is tracing back the origins of

in the large number of documents written by migrants.[47] According to scholarly estimates, there are about 800–850 surviving shipboard diaries (albeit with a bias towards middle-class, male writers).[48] I will focus on more than 100 selected, mostly unpublished diaries across gender, age, social status and position, mainly taken from voyages to the Eastern Australian colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland.[49] In addition, journals by authorities on board ship, such as the ship surgeon, the matron, or the reverend, gain importance because they grant access to the experiences of illiterate people or those otherwise unheard due to being poor, young, or sick.[50] Furthermore, public and private material can reveal new perspectives on 'transit': political documents (including official and personal correspondence from the Colonial Office in both Australia and the United Kingdom), newspaper articles, emigrant guides, and emigrant societies' material. Additionally, the "Votes and Proceedings" of Australian parliaments offer insight into them and their approaches to immigration.

Working in this way – mainly with ego-documents – provides great opportunities to understand the notion of 'transit'. Unlike other sources, these self-narratives – whether produced for personal use like prayer books, family letters, or memoirs, or for public attention like utterances in court trials, letters to the editor, or parliamentary debates – offer ways to gain an apparently intimate insight into past events and thought processes. Keeping the restrictions and limits inherent to that genre in mind, a careful selection of critically examined self-narratives

today's society trying to figure out the "cultural baggage" the migrants brought with them and their impact on contemporary New Zealand.

47 Unfortunately, the proportional distribution is not representative: From the1.3 million free immigrants, only about 300 diaries survived that were written by steerage passengers. (Hassam, Andrew: No Privacy for Writing Shipboard Diaries, 1852–1879, Melbourne 1995: xvii.)

48 See Hassam, Andrew: Sailing to Australia. Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants, Manchester/New York 1994: 11–13.

49 See "Appendix" for a table of the diaries analysed throughout this book.

50 Unfortunately, there is only a very small number of surviving matrons' or ship surgeons' logs for the Australian colonies on the East Coast. My own research in the archives and my contact with experts in situ and via email confirms this unfavourable lacuna. (Haines, Robin, Judith S. Jeffery, and Greg Slattery, *Bound for South Australia: Births and Deaths on Government-Assisted Immigrant Ships, 1848–1885*. Modbury: Gould Genealogy, 2004: 13–17.)

therefore levels the path for bigger questions. Contradictions, inconsistencies and disguise serve the dynamics of historical research. The making and creating of identity visible in the writings reflects political, social, and moral topics current at that time, so that a corpus consisting of both ego-documents and other sources put together and against each other will blend into a multi-layered and multidimensional picture of personal transits in the 19th century.

In the following, I am approaching 'transit' in six chapters and three categories: The first part focuses on "the deciders" on either side of the globe, as they try to negotiate and control permissions, regularities, conditions and qualities of transit and those directly affected by it. Agreement and disagreement become the main components of negotiating transit (Chapter 1) and form the bottom line of the analysis as they introduce the historical background with the politics, procedures, personal preferences, and protagonists of the study. Next come the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion to show the impact and failures of controlling transit (Chapter 2) according to formerly fixed rules of migration. The example of immigrants arriving with mental difficulties will serve to understand the apparent ignorance in the 19th century of the impact of transit on the travellers, and it explores the notion of "suitable" immigrants. The primary sources featured here are political debates, official colonial correspondence, asylum reports and newspaper articles.

In the second part of the study, "the individual" on the move will be at the core of the study, proposing another layer of 'transit'. Preparation and expectation as motivators and basis for personal agency crucially shaped the experience of the in-between period and called for (re-) actions to resist and endure the realities of shipboard life. The individual imagining transit (Chapter 3) and coming to terms with the impressions on board will raise topics such as literacy, knowledge, survival techniques and resilience. Building on this, the emotional panorama of 'transit' centred around joy and grief will be analysed in more depth, as people are confronted with sensing and feeling transit (Chapter 4). For this, the primary sources examined are emigrant guides, emigration societies' publications, shipboard diaries and private letters.

This narrowed-down analysis examining singular actors then serves as a bridge to the third and longest section, looking at "the community". Separation according to classes, marital status, gender, age, nationality and religion happened either because it was enforced by authorities or because it evolved from among the passengers, thus turning 'transit' into a tension between unity and borders. Crossing transit (Chapter 5) and interacting despite segregation characterized the encounters on board with a high potential for both mutual understanding and conflict. Challenging and catastrophic transits often fail to balance between responsibility and rebellion. The sixth chapter therefore deals with an active engagement in managing transit (Chapter 6) as performed by certain persons acting as mediators within the community. Some of the steerage, intermediate, cabin, or saloon passengers started to take over responsibility, prove their organizational skills, or make use of their spiritual strength. Others breached or failed in the duties they had due to their official appointment as ship doctor, matron, reverend, schoolteacher or captain. 'Transit' put skills and competencies as well as values and character traits to the test, affecting the body, mind and soul of the individual and the shipboard community. This last section draws from various shipboard diaries, especially those written by surgeons superintendents, matrons, or reverends, as well as documents from colonial offices, court investigations and various newspaper articles as primary sources.

The book will end with a final case study, combining all the different aspects of the 'transit' concept developed throughout. It will call for a holistic approach to the 'in-between' – past and present. After all, reflecting transit and thus facing the complexities of life from a stance oriented towards the human being will result in some answers and some questions, embedded in stories of connections, gaps and mysteries.

[Chapter 1] Negotiating Transit – Agreement and Disagreement

1 Devoted to Settling the Land

An obituary for Henry Jordan, an influential actor for the first government-assisted emigrant ships, will serve as a starting point to unravel the peculiar nature of 'transit'[1] in a season of settler state-concern for the British Empire. One article emphasized his crucial part in the history of migration by claiming that "no one was better qualified to represent Queensland to the toiling masses of the mother country."[2] The trained dentist from Lincolnshire, who was still an "elected senior member for South Brisbane" at the ripe age of over 70, had dedicated his career to his chosen place and had even helped form the newly founded state of Queensland as a member of its first Parliament in 1859/60.[3] Among the many political offices he held during his life, the one he was remembered for in an article on "Queensland Pioneers" in 1938 (fifty years after his death) was "Agent-General for Immigration".[4] This important position as a passionate ambassador of Queensland indicates how "to settle people on the lands" became "the beacon of his life", and this metaphor, used in an idealistically composed announcement, suggests that an immigration agent is a guiding light on the stormy seas. When the hagiographic elements are removed from the articles on this man, what remains is a person whose life narrative is deeply interwoven with the storyline of migration, seafaring, settlement – and transit. Jordan knew the journey well. Due to his calling, he sailed repeatedly back and forth between the

1 As outlined in the introductory chapter already: Whenever the noun transit is used with a single quotation mark (i.e., 'transit'), I am referring to 'transit' as a concept (abstract meaning). When used without any quotation marks (i.e., transit), the noun transit is used plainly (concrete meaning).

2 N. N., "Henry Jordan, the Friend of the People," *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs General Advertiser*, 1890/07/05: 3

3 N. N., "The Late Mr. Henry Jordan," *The Brisbane Courier*, 1890/07/01: 5–6.

4 Bennett, John E., "Queensland Pioneers: Henry Jordan," *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 1938/04/12: 9. This short article was reprinted in other Queensland newspapers, such as the *Northern Miner*, *Morning Bulletin* and the *Central Queensland Herald*.

United Kingdom and Australia. He also knew Australia from various angles: an early attempt at Methodist missionary work among indigenous people, from practising as a dentist in Sydney, and from marrying a British woman raised in Australia. Furthermore, he was a dreamer with high hopes for the colony, so high that even among his colleagues in the assembly "it was customary sometimes to ridicule him for the faith he had in the future of the colony, but he always held to it".[5]

The metaphor also captures the inseparable relationship between land and sea: there was no settlement on Australian land without crossing the sea. The figurative use of "beacon" evokes the plain meaning of a bright, shining tower on rocky coastlines, "a lighthouse or other conspicuous object placed upon the coast or at sea, to warn vessels of danger or direct their course."[6] This maritime imagery matches with the experience uniting every single person arriving on Australia's shores in the 19th century: weeks and months of riding the waves and looking for orientation.

Henry Jordan invested in bringing people to Queensland and is remembered for being very successful in doing so. If we now read the whole paragraph in the overtly positive article cited above, this job as immigration agent sounded very easy and smooth:

> When it was resolved by the Government and the Legislature to inaugurate a large emigration scheme in order to settle an agricultural population upon our waste lands, Mr Jordan was, by general consent, pointed to as the man pre-eminently fitted to be sent to Great Britain to carry out the details of the emigration scheme. An able and accomplished speaker, with intimate knowledge of the colony and its resources – no one was better qualified to represent Queensland to the toiling masses of the mother country. How well he succeeded is now a matter of history; he sent to Queensland 100,000 emigrants, and most of them to-day are happy and prosperous Queenslanders. […] To settle people on the lands was the beacon of his life.[7]

5 This description is taken from a eulogy by Sir S. W. Griffith upon announcing the death of Henry Jordan in the Legislative Assembly. (N. N., "The Late Mr. Henry Jordan and Mr. Justice Mein," *Gympie Times and Mary River Mining Gazette*, 1890/07/05: 3.)
6 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "beacon, n.", updated 2021/03 <oed.com/view/Entry/16455>, accessed 2021/05/15.
7 N. N., "Henry Jordan, the Friend of the People".

The narrative of "happy and prosperous Queenslanders" as the telling proof of an effective one-man-show raises justified questions, some of which will be investigated in the following paragraphs.

Thirty years before the above-quoted article was published in the *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs General Advertiser*, nobody involved in the immigration field would have foretold the outcome. At that time, the complicated migration process, the tedious journey, and some peculiar political power preferences occupied the political talk of the day. In 1863, Henry Jordan, whose funeral would be attended by numerous dignitaries,[8] faced a big conflict in his career.

What is missing in the obituaries is the lengthy prelude to enabling migration altogether. Jordan indeed wanted to populate the – in contemporary terms – seemingly "empty"[9] lands according to the Empire's principles, but this was impossible without agreement on who was allowed to come and how to organize their journey there. Negotiating and controlling this period of transit was the challenge. So even before the individual emigrant him- or herself embarked an emigrant ship, the framework of 'transit' had already been the subject of extensive discussion.

Metaphorically speaking, 'transit' presented the crucial entrance for much needed settler colonists – both before the departure of an emigrant ship and after arrival. The influential men on either side of the 'transit'-spectrum could only exercise their power indirectly – by passing laws, defining rules, and signing contracts. Nonetheless, what they agreed in the political chambers and shipping societies' offices immediately shaped the experience of the men and women whose deaths later would not appear on the pages of the *Brisbane Courier*.
Therefore, it is essential to understand the surrounding mechanisms, people and contexts before the experience aboard itself can be analysed. Who wanted who in transit? The deciders both on the Australian and British side belong to a concept of 'transit' that does not only focus on the few months of interstice for the historical "transitors": it also con-

8 N. N., "Funeral of the Late Henry Jordan," *The Brisbane Courier*, 1890/07/02: 6.
9 On the concept of "emptiness": McGregor, Russell, *Environment, Race, and Nationhood in Australia: Revisiting the Empty North*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

siders the influential elements and people of the before and the after, without which the actual experience would not be possible.

This first chapter takes the before (pre-transit) into account. As an exemplary focus of study, it describes the development of migration schemes from both the side of the Australian colonies and from the British side. Henry Jordan, Queensland's official immigration agent, will be one key figure. Assigned to a position of officially negotiating contradicting opinions and aims, his extended network will lead us to various parties involved in the making of 'transit': individual parliamentarians, emigration societies, groups of common people, and commercial companies.

2 Queensland and Migration in the 1860s

Queensland is the second largest state of Australia, covering an area of 1,727,000 square kilometres. It was still young in 1863, having just separated from New South Wales to become an independent state in 1859, and one of its biggest challenges was the question of how to attract new settlers – a challenge approached by drawing from previous experiences and reports. So far, the newly arriving Australian colonists consisted of two almost equally large groups of immigrants: unassisted and assisted. The first group of unassisted migrants often evades historical research due the increased difficulty in accessing statistical resources: they did not have to provide the medical certificates or recommendations which the assisted group had to. Based on the money available to them, they chose the class they would travel in, paid for their bunk on board, had relatives and friends to supply them with money and information, and hence sometimes escaped from the observant eyes of the assisted migration officials.[10]

However, the fare to Australia was significantly more expensive than the fare to competing migration destinations in North America, so

10 See e.g. McLennan, Nicole, "Glimpses of Unassisted English Women Arriving in Victoria, 1860–1900," in *Visible Women: Female Immigrants in Colonial Australia*, ed. Eric Richards. 5 vols. Visible Immigrants 4. Canberra: Division of Historical Studies and Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, 1995: 59–84: 59–61.

from 1831 onwards, one Australian colonial state government after the other introduced financial support to help people afford the costs of emigrating as steerage passengers to the Southern hemisphere. Almost half of all the 1.4 million immigrants in the 19th century came under one of the various governmentally assisted schemes.[11]

One powerful player in the field was the *Colonial Land and Emigration Commission* (CLEC), a separate authority in the imperial apparatus in which the regulation and supervision of assisted migration was centralised in 1840. Replacing the former bounty system, the CLEC (simply *Emigration Commission* after 1855) organized, recruited and coordinated British and Irish migrants until 1872/73.[12] Its duties included categorising the passengers into various classes of free and assisted migrants and determining the amount of support they were allowed to receive from the government.[13] The CLEC followed Edward G. Wakefield's political agenda of "systematic colonisation" by selling

11 For statistics, numbers, and tables see Haines, Robin, *Nineteenth Century Government Assisted Immigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia: Schemes, Regulations and Arrivals, 1831–1900 and Some Vital Statistics 1834–1860,* Occasional Papers in Economic History 3. Adelaide, 1995. Her subsequent publications focus on poverty and politics, e.g. Haines, Robin, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor: Australian Recruitment in Britain and Ireland, 1831–60*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997 and for South Australia Haines, Robin, Judith S. Jeffery, and Greg Slattery, *Bound for South Australia: Births and Deaths on Government-Assisted Immigrant Ships, 1848–1885*. Modbury: Gould Genealogy, 2004. A detailed analysis of the relationship between contract prices and the Australasian trade in the 19th century can be found in McDonald, John, and Ralph Shlomowitz, "Passenger Fares on Sailing Vessels to Australia in the Nineteenth Century," *Explorations in Economic History* 28, no. 2 (1991): 192–208.

12 Foxhall, Katherine, *Health, Medicine, and the Sea: Australian Voyages, c.1815–1860*. Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press; Palgrave Macmillan, 2012: 27+33 and Richards, Eric, *Britannia's Children: Emigration from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland since 1600*. London, New York: Hambledon and London, 2004: 126+137.

13 "From 1849, 'free' and 'assisted' regulations were combined, forming a complex scaled rating system whereby the former 'free' category (covering agricultural labourers and other rural workers) was replaced by 'Class I' of a possible four classes. Scaled deposit fees for all classes included the regulation 'bed money' to cover bedding and utensils. A regulation outfit was also required. In the secondary literature the term 'assisted emigrants' usually refers to emigrants who were officially assisted by colonial funding in part, or in full, from 1831." (Haines, *Nineteenth Century Government Assisted Immigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia*: 10) For a good overview on various schemes and migration systems, see Haines, Robin, "Indigent Misfits or Shrewd Operators? Government-Assisted Emigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia, 1831–1860," *Population Studies* 48, no. 2 (1994): 223–247. doi: 10.1080/0032472031000147776, here: 225–229.

colonial land and using this money to provide an all-inclusive travel package. Sold land had to be purchased by the newly arrived settlers in the following years. It proved to be an extremely effective programme.[14]

To teach prospective emigrants about the various options, chances and requirements, the *Colonization Circular* was published annually from 1843 onwards, consisting of up to 150 thin pages of condensed emigration information, covering the whole range of the British Empire colonies with lists, names, numbers, wages, prices, climate tables and special hints.[15] This publication was regularly referred to as the main reliable governmental source for preparing the voyage or organizing the departure.[16]

The commissioners were in charge of the funds and the supervision of the emigrant vessels, thus holding migration matters primarily in their hands. From the British side, this procedure proved successful with large numbers of applicants from the working class until the mid-1850s, especially during the gold rush in Victoria and the famine in Ireland.[17] But circumstances changed and became more complex, resulting in rising resistance against this centralisation from the increasingly more independent colonies. How to attract new settlers became a topic frequently discussed in public. The Melbourne newspaper *Age* proposed installing a system of decentralised, colonially managed, chain migration that would encourage existing settlers to

14 Harling, Philip, "Assisted Emigration and the Moral Dilemmas of the Mid-Victorian Imperial State: The Dilemmas of Assisted Emigration," *The Historical Journal* 59, no. 4 (2016): 1027–1049. doi:10.1017/S0018246X15000473.

15 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, *Colonization Circular: Annual Journals. Issued by her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners*. Edited by Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 32 vols. London: Charles Knight and Co; W. Clowes and Sons, 1843–1873. After 1873, the *CLEC* had given up most of its former responsibilities and only controlled Indian indentured labour until 1878. (See National Archives, "Discovery: Catalogue Description: Colonial Office. Land and Emigration Commission, etc.: Administrative/Biographical Background" <discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C4577>, accessed 2021/08/24.)

16 E.g. Druitt, Robert, and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Medical Hints for Emigrants (Emigrant Tracts 9), London 1850 (Cambridge University Library) SPCK.1.1850.7.

17 On the gold rush: Goodman, David, "The Gold Rushes of the 1850s," in *The Cambridge History of Australia: Vol. 1: Indigenous and Colonial Australia*, ed. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013: 170–188. On the Irish famine migration: Gray, Peter, "'Shovelling Out Your Paupers': The British State and Irish Famine Migration 1846–50," *Patterns of Prejudice* 33, no. 4 (1999): 47–65. doi:10.1080/003132299128810696.

bring their relatives and friends to the colony – as "unpaid emigration agent[s]". It was not only Victoria that wanted to escape from the external rule of imperial selection and governance. Independently organized relational schemes and spontaneous migration with the help of relatives and family increased and circumvented (or reduced to a minimum) the all-too-annoying, complicated, and costly CLEC bureaucracy. This increasingly strong colonial self-consciousness then left the government in London responsible only for the ships, hygiene, provision, and comfort of the actual passage.[18]

Information that appeared in the *Colonization Circular* was provided by the agents for immigration of the colonies respectively. However, as soon as assisted migration was put into colonial hands, competition among the colonies became more prevalent.[19] Comparisons were drawn, strategies analysed, connections initiated. Multiplication was the key word and with every new immigrant hopes for a subsequently following number of motivated family members arrived as well. Therefore, each colony was trying to invest in a reliable group of people willing to settle permanently in their own geographical area.

From this point of view, access to the country should only be granted to those who could fulfil the requirements and expectations. With the cry for more control, a professionalization of the assisted emigration scheme became inevitable, and the colonies increased their involvement in the selection process.

With the separation of Queensland from New South Wales and an increased awareness of self-governance and the necessity of developing migration schemes, the colony's politics changed in the 1860s and 1870s. In those days, Queensland had its own governor and a self-governing political system, which was unique in having two different chambers: an Upper House called the Legislative Council with nominated mem-

18 See the following article in Melbourne's newspaper: N. N., "Practical Points in Emigration: (From the Australian Gazette)," *Age*, 1855/11/29: 7.

19 "We shall watch with great interest the course of the emigration question in Victoria, convinced – however humbling the idea may seem to some of our bouncing legislators – that the policy of that colony must to a great extent dictate the policy of this." (N. N., "Anglo-Australian Questions: Emigration to the Colonies," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1857/04/09: 5.)

bers, and an elected Lower House, the Legislative Assembly. The other colonies worked as unicameral legislatures until 1901.

Three main schemes of governmentally supported emigration until 1914 accounted for almost all assisted migrants.[20] The nomination scheme, which built on personal relationships or agents in Britain, was one way to emigrate and receive financial aid from official funds. It was particularly popular in Victoria, Tasmania, and New South Wales in the second half of the 19th century. Under this scheme, friends or relatives who already owned land in the colony (land warrant system) or deposited money there (remittance system) nominated persons for assisted passages and thus guaranteed the applicant's eligibility. The largest number of assisted migrants came through an occupation-based selection scheme that carefully chose men and women according to their profession, skills, and physical ability, thus securing the desired immigrants for the colonies. The process of selection was highly complex and demanding for many of the applicants: they had to present a variety of information about themselves and their health, and they also had to provide evidence for their technical skills, their personal reliability, and their moral conduct by submitting references and testimonies.[21] A smaller number of people came under the land order scheme.[22] This system promised land worth £18 to every adult person who paid for a passage (be it the immigrant himself or a friend paying for him). Measured against average yearly earnings of around £42 in England[23] and bearing in mind the context of industrialization, this was an attractive

20 Harper, Marjory, and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire,* Oxford History of the British Empire. Companion Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010: 53.

21 Haines, *Nineteenth Century Government Assisted Immigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia*: 2–4+11.

22 Especially Queensland and Western Australia profited from this land order system. This law was passed in Queensland in 1860 (Queensland Parliament, Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly, 1860/08/30 (Record of Proceedings) https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/1860/1860_08_30_A.pdf.)

23 This number is taken from Clark, Gregory, "What Were the British Earnings and Prices Then? (New Series)", updated 2011/10/30 <measuringworth.com/ukearncpi/>, accessed 2023/06/08. In Australia, the average weekly earnings were about £1in the 1860s. (Hutchinson, Diane, and Florian Ploeckl, "What Was the Australian GDP or CPI Then?", updated 2016/06 <www.measuringworth.com/australiadata/>, accessed 2023/06/08.)

offer. After two years of residency in the colony, everyone could also expect a further land order for twelve acres.[24]

However, Queensland chose another path to increase the immigration flow.[25] It stepped back from simply copying other colonies' strategies or taking part in the officially supervised CLEC monopoly, which meant personal efforts gained more attention and had more impact. The 1860s were a time of constant legal change in migration policy. Most developments were driven and shaped by some key figures that re-occur throughout the decades. A look into the annual reports of the Queensland Parliament makes it evident that the section on "immigration" unsurprisingly occupied much of the political debate and correspondence in the period immediately after separation from New South Wales: specific cases are dealt with alongside general problems and legal issues in the colony's first parliament. At the time there were 26 members of the Legislative Assembly and 11 nominees to the Legislative Council.[26] The first challenge was to convince immigrants to stay in Queensland and not to use Brisbane as a stepping-stone to more lucrative destinations such as Victoria or New South Wales.[27] Therefore, in 1860, a

24 See Foote, Warwick, "Queensland Immigration and the Black Ball Line: Read at a Meeting of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland on 23 February 1978," *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 10, no. 3 (1978): 21–49.

25 Queensland was finally to attract about a third of all emigrants to Australia in contrast to the other colonies between 1861–1900. (McCalman, Janet, and Rebecca Kippen, "Population and Health," in *The Cambridge History of Australia: Vol. 1: Indigenous and Colonial Australia*, ed. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013: 294–314, here: 299–300.)

26 This number was extended to 31 elected members for the Legislative Assembly in 1864 with the Additional Members Act, and it grew steadily. See the history section on the Queensland Parliament website: Queensland Parliament, "Queensland Electoral and Parliamentary History: Key Dates and Events", updated 2018 <www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Visit-and-learn/History/Key-Dates-and-Events>, accessed 2023/05/24.

27 "The Colonial Treasurer moved […] For some years past large sums had been expended in bringing out immigrants, a very small proportion of whom had remained in the colony, owing to the superior attractions offered elsewhere. To obviate this inferiority of Queensland in point of attraction, it was most desirable that this question of immigration should be taken up and satisfactorily settled. It was worthy of note that the legislatures of New South Wales and Victoria, misled by a temporary want of employment for their immigrants, which was due in a great measure to the perverse spirit of centralisation which prevailed there, had shown themselves somewhat inclined to check, rather than encourage, an influx of immigration. He [i.e. the Colonial Treasurer] trusted that the Parliament of Queensland would not adopt any such policy as this, for he felt assured that their fair country would

special "Immigration Committee" was set up, with six members, to develop a plan for promoting Queensland for as many people as possible without establishing a centralising political force.[28] The recruitment of immigrants was then put under the control of appointed "Agents Generals", the abovementioned immigration/emigration agents[29], who were sent to London in order to coordinate the selection and advertisement campaigns of their respective colonies.[30] Henry Jordan, the dentist from Sydney, was the first one for Queensland. Arriving in London in 1861, he spent about five years in this position and became one of the exemplary designers and deciders for 'transit' – something he would be remembered for even after his death.[31]

This job did not pass without tension and conflict – especially when Jordan's superior and leader of the Queensland government, the Colonial Secretary[32] Sir Robert G. W. Herbert, came to London to check on him in 1862–63. Looking into the Parliamentary Papers[33], when the

amply accommodate 30,000, 300,000 or 3,000,000 immigrants if they came." (Queensland Parliament, Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly, 1860/05/30 (Record of Proceedings) https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/1860/1860_05_30_A.pdf: 7.) Sir Robert R. Mackenzie was the Colonial Treasurer from 1859 until 1862. (Queensland Parliament, "Mackenzie, Robert Ramsay (Former Member Details)", updated 2017/08/22 <www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Members/Former-Members/Former-Members-Register/Former-Member-Details?id=1982652583>, accessed 2023/05/24.)

28 Stammers, Michael K., *Emigrant Clippers to Australia: The Black Ball Line, its Operation, People and Ships, 1852–1871*. Barnoldswick: Milepost Research, 2013: 64–65. The main schemes in the early 1860s were the (1) guarantee system, the (2) land-order system, and the (3) remittance system. The latter was re-introduced in 1861 after a few months of cessation.

29 Depending on the perspective, the agents were either called "immigration" or "emigration" agents. Since in this chapter, an Australian viewpoint dominates the narrative, "immigration agent" will be used most frequently.

30 Haines, *Nineteenth Century Government Assisted Immigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia*: 1–2.

31 Queensland Parliament, "Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly," 1860/08/30.

32 "Colonial Secretary" was the terminus technicus for the leader of the Queensland government until the 1880s. (Nagel, Delphine, "Johann Christian Heussler: A Father of Queensland," in *New Beginnings: Germans in New South Wales and Queensland. A Commemorative Volume*, ed. Johannes H. Voigt. Materialien zum internationalen Kulturaustausch/Studies in International Cultural Relations 20. Stuttgart: Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, 1983: 122–129: 128, FN 15.)

33 Prior to 1902, Queensland compiled its parliamentary papers into two separate publications: the "Votes and Proceedings" of the Legislative Assembly and the "Journals" of the Legislative Council. Additionally, the "Records of Proceedings (Hansard)" are the official

situation heated up, three non-political actors or groups of actors can be identified as contributors to the processes of transit negotiation: (1) private individuals, (2) private groups of common people, and (3) private commercial companies with their respective networks. The three cases also help to analyse particular aspects of agreement and disagreement on a closer level, such as nationality and religious denomination; money and convenience.

3 Source Material and Case Study

In 1863, the Legislative Assembly in Queensland faced a number of immigration-related requests and saw the need to reflect on and reform the current legal situation. The land order system, a great but not unquestioned success,[34] had been the subject of some critical remarks as well as some abuse through transfers and resales. In the mother country, where immigration agent Jordan was placed, things were developing fast. Jordan was very active in shaping what would later become the "beacon of his life": the settlement of people in the "Australian Sunshine State". Making the most of his position and freedom in dealing with the people in charge on the other side of the globe, Jordan felt the pressure of sending as many "suitable"[35] future settlers across as possible. Convinced of his good work, he was also anticipating being granted a higher salary soon.[36]

report of debates in the Legislative Assembly. (University of Queensland Library, "Guides. Parliamentary and Government Information: Parliamentary Papers", updated 2021/02/11 <guides.library.uq.edu.au/how-to-find/parliament-government-information/parliamentary-papers>, accessed 2021/08/24.)

34 "[…] he was given to understand that the land order system of Queensland was one of the best systems of immigration brought before the country […] It was therefore proposed to retain the land order system, but substituting for it in a considerable degree another system of assisted passages." (Queensland Parliament, Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly, 1863/09/15 (Record of Proceedings) https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/1863/1863_09_15_A.pdf: 6.)

35 So-called "suitable emigrants" (e.g. used in N. N., "Practical Points in Emigration") were the men and women who the imperial government aimed to have as citizens of the colonies.

36 On Jordan's salary: Queensland Parliament, "Legislative Assembly. Tuesday, September 1," *The Brisbane Courier*, 1863/09/02: 3: 8–9.

Meanwhile, the parliament back in Australia was overwhelmed with the increases in arrivals, people and the organizational effort involved therein – or at least, it was not up-to-date with the recent immigration regulations as amended and changed by Jordan. The early 1860s also witnessed an importation of Pacific Islanders, often in semi-slavery conditions, which – though not discussed explicitly in the settler migration debate – would change Australia's colonial society and culture. Besides, several petitions on immigration issues had arrived at parliament that could not be discussed at length during the regular sessions. In short: "Some modifications" were needed.[37] Therefore, both in the first session of 1863 and in the second session of the same year, an expert group was called for: a "Select Committee […] to inquire into and report on the operation and working of the lmmigration Laws, and the legality and effect of the Regulations affecting same, which have from time to time been issued by the Government".[38] The first committee started working in May and consisted of seven men, chosen by the mover George Raff[39]; while the second committee was appointed by ballot in July with six men.[40] Members of the committees had to evaluate the situation and had the right to decide upon further steps.[41] After a thorough cross-examination of six witnesses, more than ten meetings and a huge pile of appendices, the report was presented in September.

37 Queensland Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings (2nd Session 1863: Report from the Select Committee on the Working of the Immigration Regulations Together with the Proceedings of the Committee and Minutes of Evidence), 1863/09/11 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) FRY PER J 916.K3: 407. The longer account of the debate, the comments of the assembly members, and personal rivalries can be read in Queensland Parliament, Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly, 1863/07/28 (Record of Proceedings) https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/1863/1863_07_28_A.pdf.
38 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11. Context in short is also provided by Woolcock, *Rights of Passage*: 12–13.
39 Hall, Noeline V., "Art.: 'Raff, George (1815–1889)'", updated 1976 <adb.anu.edu.au/biography/raff-george-4444/text7227>, accessed 2023/08/06.
40 The second committee, which also came up with the official report, consisted of the mover, George Raff, the Colonial Secretary and Premier, Sir Robert G. W. Herbert, the pastoral settler ("squatter") John D. McLean, Dr Henry Challinor, naturalist Charles Coxen, and the judge Charles W. Blakeney. These men and their professions are a good portrait of the male, white, British politicians in the early Queensland parliament. For more biographical information see Australian Dictionary of Biography, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/>.
41 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 406.

Immigration was not dropped entirely as a topic of debate during this period until publication of the report, but whenever a proposal connected to that topic was made, reference would generally be made to the select committee and its upcoming report. Legal decisions had to wait until the group presented their results, but the anonymous interjections such as "hear, hear" during the meetings show that tensions, supportive voices and conflicting opinions on the matter were already present in the parliament.[42] There should be no doubt the committee members were all aware that their opinions were required as soon and as stringently as possible.[43] Time was running short with only a couple of assemblies left for the year 1863, as the governor was to announce an adjournment of parliament until mid-January the following year.[44]

The overall aim that the members of the Select Committee were striving for was a reduction in complexity by limiting the number of ways to board an emigrant ship. The options should be so lucid and clear-cut that even from miles away the colony could rely on the assurance that desired immigrants would arrive safely while undesirable ones would be denied access beforehand. Hence, the responsibility for opening and closing the avenues to transit – for refusing and granting mobility – was formally given over to the people in immediate contact with the prospective settlers. This handover was nonetheless based on a framework that Queensland politicians had designed, giving them the feeling and confirmation of authoritative superiority.

42 Ten days before the Select Committee presented their report, an increase of salary for Jordan, the Queensland Emigration Agent, was announced in the Legislative Assembly with reasons explaining the need for financial expenditures yet to be given by the committee members later. Judging from the audience's interjections, not everyone seemed to share the Colonial Secretary's and Mr. Pugh's positive recognition of Jordan's efforts. (Queensland Parliament, "Legislative Assembly. Tuesday, September 1").

43 "Your Committee entered upon the inquiry […] with the knowledge that the session would be a short one, and that there was an urgent necessity for bringing up their Report as speedily as possible." (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 406.)

44 It does not become entirely clear, though, if the parliament members knew about the governor's plans of "proroguing parliament until January 12th, 1864". (Queensland Parliament, Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly, 1863/09/22 (Record of Proceedings) https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/1863/1863_09_22_A.pdf).

Although the final report appears to be a joint project, the following analysis reveals how this project of designing transit needed cooperation, compromises and collaboration, and was by no means free of inconsistencies and obstacles. These become tangible and even literally visible when leafing through the pages of the report: There are "omissions in ~~Erased Types~~ and insertions in Black Letter".[45] The first committee's meetings ended after four assemblies in May and were prorogued to August, thus handing the task over to the Legislative Assembly's second session of 1863 and its second Select Committee.

The whole file consists of over 100 pages of detailed interviews, minutes, questionnaires, statistics and witness examinations, while the final report itself is made up of 22 condensed points. Signed by George Raff as the committee's chairman, it was ordered to be printed by the Legislative Assembly Chamber on September 11th, 1863.[46] The report was then introduced to the House on Tuesday, September 15th, causing a lengthy debate on the genesis and suitability of the decisions suggested. To sum it up, this ended in a quota system for immigrants from Great Britain, in which cabin and intermediate passengers could receive thirty-acre land grants. The order for steerage passengers was not transferable anymore, and all steerage passengers had to undergo a selection process, no matter if they paid for their own passage or were subsidized.[47]

Assuring itself of its relevance and – in an attitude of justification – pointing to the extreme time pressure in this matter, the report goes on to reveal its most important source of information. Before altering any existing immigration law, the abovementioned Colonial Secretary Sir Robert George Wyndham Herbert[48] had travelled to London

45 Queensland Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings (2nd Census), 1863/11/26–1864/05/20 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) FRY PER J 916.K3: 415–416.

46 Queensland Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings (2nd Census), 1863/11/26–1864/05/20: 401.

47 Woolcock, *Rights of Passage*: 12–13.

48 Sir Robert George Wyndham Herbert (1831–1905), arrived in Australia as Queensland's first governor Sir George Bowen's private secretary and became the first colonial secretary at the young age of 28, holding the office of premier until 1866. In July 1862, he visited England for almost ten months. His absence was not met with praise and approval by all the members of parliament after his arrival in April 1863. Against this background of tension, criticism, and instability, the extensive and detailed examination of Herbert through the select committee on the immigration laws must be read with caution and an awareness of messages

to personally assess the situation and meet the Emigration Commissioners, including, of course, Henry Jordan. Herbert's evaluations were included as decisive pieces of evidence and formed the basis of all further discussion.

Examining and questioning Herbert occupied most of the meetings and more than 30 pages of the "Minutes of Evidence Taken before the Select Committee". His extensive research in England lay the ground for the Queensland politicians to draft "Immigration Regulations" the way they considered them to work best. It is worth noting that no official from London was personally invited to speak or to introduce the Australians to the situation in the United Kingdom. Instead, the committee completely relied on the perspective of Herbert, who strove for male, white, educated, Queensland interests. Due to his intense contact with the immigration agent Jordan in particular, the economical and administrative details overseas and the atmosphere and circumstances onsite absorbed most of Herbert's working time in England. Managing and advertising a call for the "best class of immigrants" were aspects of increasing importance, because, as Herbert reported, with the United States losing its attraction for British migrants, more and more working people were thinking about settling in Australia instead. The global migration situation had changed.[49]

Henry Jordan, whose activities were critically examined in the course of the meetings, was not present himself. The justification and reasoning behind his partly independent initiatives as a lone fighter in London were presented and advocated by Herbert. This, however, required mutual trust – and Jordan was not entirely sure of Herbert's loyalty. Personal preferences and relationships cannot be subtracted from negotiating transit.

hidden between the lines. (Knox, Bruce A., "Art.: 'Herbert, Sir Robert George Wyndham (1831–1905)'", updated 1972 <adb.anu.edu.au/biography/herbert-sir-robert-george-wyndham-3757/text5921>, accessed 2021/04/16.)

49 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/11/26–1864/05/20: 420.

4 Negotiating Transit between Contrasting Poles

Indeed, designing the concept of 'transit' from afar was not a straightforward task, but a job heavily loaded with sympathies, interests and animosities. In these very early stages of self-governance, the franchise system in use only gave voting rights to men over 21 with strictly defined property qualifications. The parliament was therefore no Australian society in miniature, but a selection of male owners of goods.

The committee was divided into at least two distinct groupings with Challinor and Herbert on the one side and Raff on the other side. The mover George Raff did not agree with the Colonial Secretary on some major issues. He also bluntly criticized that "the departure of the Honorable the Colonial Secretary for a period of eight months, from the Colony, without the sanction of the Parliament, was contrary to the spirit and practice of responsible Governments".[50]

Not having a party system with a clearly defined opposition, people were standing as independents, presenting opinions primarily as individuals – with supporters and opponents. Their preferences were therefore not hidden or secret, but publicly available knowledge, which also put more emphasis on the individuals' performances and made them more vulnerable to personal attacks. So designing the Queensland version of immigration policy needs to be seen as a project that reflected various components of negotiations between individuals, revealing the ambiguous and critical aspects of transit from the perspective of powerful men on land.

Any utterances in the official house sittings could also cause additional tension in society, since the debates were printed verbatim in Brisbane's official newspapers the next day. *The Courier*, Brisbane's most influential and critical paper,[51] always recorded the proceedings of the

50 Queensland Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings (1st Session 1863, No. 7), 1863/04–1863/05 (National Archives) CO 236/9: 38.

51 Founded even before Queensland became independent, this morning newspaper belonged to the crucial journalistic papers of the time. It changed its editors and name several times: *Moreton Bay Courier* (1846–1859), *The Courier* (1861–1864), *Brisbane Courier* (1864–1933), *Courier-Mail* (since 1933). From early on, the paper took a clear stand against transportation

Legislative Assembly in full length and published them on the first pages.[52] For this reason, the performative aspect of shaping public impressions also needs to be kept in mind.

4.1 Individuals' private societies: The case of the *Queensland Immigration Society*

In addition to the individual performances of certain politicians, there were other players actively participating in immigration matters right from the start. Immigration agent Henry Jordan soon felt the effects of this when confronted with private societies such as the so-called *Queensland Immigration Society* (*QIS*). Here, dynamics of nationality and religious denomination became a decisive feature in negotiating the transit settings. This self-declared philanthropic society had been founded by the Catholic Bishop James Quinn in Brisbane only a short time before, in 1861/62,[53] yet it had already caused great debate both in Ireland and in Australia. Firstly, there was some doubt about its independent and unsupervised use of governmental funds, which understandably led to an investigation by the "Select Committee on the Working of the Immigration Regulations" for the Queensland assembly. In the end, they concluded that there was no substantial reason for accusing the *QIS* of illegalities.

However, the state of affairs appeared to be highly complicated. Describing this as simply as possible: Under the Alienation of Crown

and for separation. In the early 1860s it had become a daily paper under politically active editor Theophilus P. Pugh. On the history of this paper see the emphatic article by John J. Knight (Knight, John J., "The History of the 'Courier,'" *The Queenslander*, 1896/06/27: 1222–1223+1226) or the barely less emphatic article written in the "Jubilee Year of Federation" 1951: Lack, Clem L., "A Century of Brisbane Journalism," *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 4, no. 4 (1951): 471–493.

52 N. N., "Legislative Assembly: The Immigration Committee," *The Courier*, 1863/09/16: 2–3 and N. N., "Legislative Assembly. The Immigration Committee". Because of journalistic reasons and because the discussion was so vivid, the report was divided into two subsequent issues.

53 On the *Queensland Immigration Society* as Catholic initiative, see Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 70–71. On bishop James Quinn, who later called himself "O'Quinn", see Gibbney, Herbert J., "Art.: 'Quinn, James (1819–1881)'", updated 1974 <adb.anu.edu.au/biography/quinn-james-4425/text7229>, accessed 2023/06/08.

Lands Act of 1860, Bishop Quinn was eager to introduce as many people as possible to Queensland so, focusing on his global church family, he mainly addressed people suffering from eviction and hunger in Ireland, encouraging them to apply for a passage to Australia. For some, his efforts must have seemed quite exaggerated: the *Queensland Guardian* jokingly spoke of "Quinnsland" as a proposed name change that could be to the liking of Bishop Quinn.[54]

Immigration agent Jordan in London was right in the middle of this, faced with a difficult balancing act. His own achievements in recruiting as many motivated emigrants as possible were more a sluggish stream than an energetic flood. His lack of co-workers and the fact the new colony was still relatively unknown made ships and shipping companies hard to find. Jordan therefore had enough on his hands with the English migrants and was not very interested in addressing the Irish population. Bishop Quinn wanted to bring his countrymen through the same transit entrance, but facing Jordan's neglect of Ireland, he saw no opportunity to use official governmental schemes.

As a proud representative of the Roman Catholic Church in Australia, born and raised in Ireland, and with an obvious interest in establishing and securing his power, Quinn then took matters into his own hands and those of his brother Rev. Dr Matthew Quinn, who was a bishop in Dublin and formed the home base of the *Queensland Immigration Society*. This was a perfect example of a transoceanic family network, working together to accompany people on their move – in this case, from Ireland to Brisbane.[55]

It was not until later when Jordan heard about an exchange of letters between his superior, Colonial Secretary Herbert, and Bishop Quinn, in which he offered to take care of the willing Irish emigrants himself.[56] Herbert had not foreseen this type of move by a private person and only partly agreed to the idea: he avoided promising access to govern-

54 Harrison, Jennifer, "From King's County to 'Quinnsland', updated 2013/01/26 <archive.is/WesvT>, accessed 2023/06/08.

55 Gibbney, "Art.: 'Quinn, James (1819–1881)'"; Boland, Thomas P., "'The Queensland Immigration Society': A Notable Experiment in Irish Settlement," *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 7, no. 2 (1964): 307–321.

56 Boland, "'The Queensland Immigration Society'": 311–312.

ment-chartered ships, but without stopping the vision pursued by the brothers Quinn. The first ship sent out by the QIS therefore had Colonial Secretary Herbert's general approval.

All this was taking place without Jordan being asked directly. Whether or not to cooperate with private individuals or their societies was never an easy decision: there was always the question of whether this would mean handing over the control of transit to someone the government was slightly suspicious of. An Irish bishop and his society ticked all the stereotype boxes. The mainly Anglican citizens of the British Empire and the United Kingdom generally felt considerable competition and rivalry towards the Catholics, repeatedly leading to people from Ireland feeling neglected and discriminated against.[57]

By the time the Select Committee gathered in 1863, the QIS had sent out about 3,900 immigrants on privately chartered ships, some of which became famous for exhausting journeys and high mortality rates. Besides, to confirm the stereotypes, prospective colonists from Ireland were often viewed as "inferior to those obtained by Jordan".[58]

From Colonial Secretary Herbert's critical point of view, the Queensland bishop's brother Matthew Quinn in Dublin, who he also communicated with during his stay in Europe, was primarily a strategically well-placed Irish ambassador, messenger, and representative of his older brother James in Brisbane. The frequently raised criticism was that the QIS's offer had been conducted precisely to carry Catholic immigrants to Australia, but often without proper facilities and health care or any other form of insurance. Several letters of complaint had reached the Immigration Department in Queensland.[59] Besides, the bishop profited from the programme he invented not only in terms of manpower but

57 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 70–71.
58 Coghlan, *Labour and Industry in Australia*: 933.
59 One telling example by an immigrant through the 'Chatsworth', the second ship chartered by the QIS, was published in the Irish newspaper *Cork Daily Reporter* in early 1863. Exactly this well-written warning in the name of "William O'Carrol, An Irish Roman Catholic Immigrant" is also cited by Colonial Secretary Herbert during his examination: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 430–431. Doubts on the accuracy of this account, of course, did come up as well afterwards. In his examination interview, Quinn himself spoke against the accusations and the naïve reception of alleged eye-witness accounts.

also in financial terms – a critique brought forward in different forms several times throughout the debate. It was claimed that Quinn gained a lot of money from chartering ships, filling them with immigrants, and selling land orders.[60]

In contrast, Quinn's argument was that despite hardships and famine, the Irish applicants were rejected in favour of English or Scottish migrants. By invoking the equal right to emigrate for all men and women, independently of their nationalities, he vehemently protested against such treatment.

In the official report from the Select Committee 1863, the entire correspondence between Bishop Quinn and the Colonial Secretary's Office from February until August 1862 is attached to Herbert's statement.[61] This exchange of letters was no secret, nor was the proposal to establish the QIS to fight discrimination and counter the sole focus on England and Scotland in campaigning and advertising emigration to Australia. It had created a visible discourse in the Queensland newspaper *The Courier* in late 1862, with Quinn himself defending his position by writing a letter to the editor and putting the externally approved propaganda leaflet 'Prospectus' into the newspaper.[62] The same 'Prospectus' of about two pages, containing a special "appeal to the Catholics of Australia" to send for their relatives in the United Kingdom, was used and distributed as a means of advertisement in Ireland.[63]

Almost a year before the Select Committee passed its report in September 1863, *The Courier* had already published the first instances of communication between Quinn and Herbert in their issue of October

60 This is what Colonial Secretary Herbert claimed in the Legislative Assembly again. In parliament, the Irish Charles W. Blakeney and the Roman Catholic William F. Kennedy clearly sided with the opposition and openly defended the QIS and Bishop Quinn's honesty: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11.
61 The entire correspondence on Irish immigration with letters from and two both Quinns and other statements and pieces of evidence occupies the first examinations of Colonial Secretary Herbert (422–435), while the interview with James Quinn and a large appendix can be found at the end of the report (471–484). (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11).
62 Quinn, James, "Letters to the Editor. 'The Queensland Emigration Society' and 'Prospectus of the Queensland Immigration Society'," *The Courier*, 1862/10/08: 3
63 With some critical remarks commented upon in Boland, "'The Queensland Immigration Society'": 312.

1862. Introduced by an apology for the fact that the newspaper had not been allowed to provide this information to the public earlier, the emotionally written and personal letters appear under the heading "The Queensland Emigration Society"[64] on the first pages. The article contains the exact wording and phrases of the original publication, which was also printed in the official report of the Legislative Assembly.[65]

So the situation had already escalated at that time, a year earlier, with supporters and opponents standing up for or against the private society. In the middle of the investigations, Quinn vehemently recalled Christian duty, pity and mercy by invoking stereotypical narratives and images of starving Irish people to strengthen the resolve of his fellow workers and supporters:

> He had lately come from Ireland where he had the unhappiness of witnessing great distress and misery and in many instances deaths from starvation. Was it not humane and charitable to rescue a people from famine, and bring them to a land more bountiful than any he had ever seen before in his life – a land which yielded almost all the luxuries which man could desire? He was sure they would agree with him in saying that the object was a laudable one, and worthy the support of every Christian, no matter of what denomination.[66]

Research has shown, however, that those hearing this message and applying did not primarily come from the very poor areas. Instead,

64 The society was established as *Queensland Immigration Society* with headquarters in Brisbane but known as *Queensland Emigration Society* in Ireland. To avoid confusion, the perspective of the speaker must be taken into account. (Harrison, Jennifer. Interview by Kate Evans, "Out of the Port. Irish in Queensland," State Library of Queensland, Brisbane, March 14, 2012; Transcript <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/211828/OutOfThePort_Irish_Transcript.pdf>, accessed 2018/12/05.) A completely wrong name (*Queensland Colonization Society*) is used by Coghlan, although the order of events is nicely summed up here: Coghlan, *Labour and Industry in Australia*: 932–933.

65 N. N., "The Queensland Immigration Society: Correspondence between Bishop Quinn and the Colonial Secretary," *The Courier*, 1862/10/10: 2–3.

66 This is taken from his speech in mid-October during the time of the big public debate and accusation against the *Queensland Immigration Society.* Among his fellow supporters and friends, the phrases and expressions he used were still very emotional. (N. N., "Queensland Immigration Society," *The Courier*, 1862/10/18: 5.)

they generally consisted of passengers with some capital that were able to pay their fares.[67] Nonetheless, pity and misery were the techniques preferred by Quinn to back up his arguments.

It is interesting to note that this correspondence published a year prior then re-appeared in a political debate when the focus was on balancing out, understanding, and deciding upon the problems of nationality and class. Bishop James Quinn was called to the witness stand again, where he cited examples of Irish discrimination, questioned the immigration agent Jordan's focus on only England and Scotland, and critiqued the lack of emigration advertisement campaigns which reached many places that could and ought to offer perfect "emigrants [...] of the class the Regulations require".[68] His intention was to confirm and justify the privileges and governmental support already received by his society, which was to "act as supplementary to the Government Immigration" by focusing on geographical areas apparently overlooked by the current programmes – places like Ireland, Southern Germany and the Continent in general. He denied promoting an inherently "Irish-only" programme and emphasized the access of everyone to the support, as communicated in the QIS prospectus and in the newspapers as well.[69]

In the meantime, Henry Jordan had found out for himself that Ireland was a profitable place to lecture about Queensland, "the future cotton-field of England", and he was encouraged by the Queensland Colonial Secretary's Office to draw together all resources available. In reaction to this and to some allegations on wasted money, the Queensland government had also legally prohibited the QIS from conducting further immigration operations, which apparently caught Bishop James Quinn unaware.[70] Such was the situation shortly before the Select Committee presented their report on the working of the immigration law.

67 Harrison, "From King's County to 'Quinnsland'".
68 N. N., "The Queensland Immigration Society".
69 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 472.
70 His account of hearing about this sudden change of affairs in the legal settings concerning his *Queensland Immigration Society* proves his lack of understanding, as he had been in the middle of investing into proper immigration conditions when he received the news. (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 474.)

When being questioned by the Select Committee in 1863, Quinn was clearly prepared to respond to reproaches like this, as he had to repel similar charges before. The reason for stressing tolerance and openness was partly due to an irritation caused by an emotional letter written and circulated in Ireland by one of his most prominent co-workers, Father Patrick Dunne. Dunne was a Catholic priest and had spent some years in Melbourne engaging in education and social work before becoming embroiled in a financial dispute with the authorities. This resulted in him returning to Ireland and, in the end, losing his permission to ever go back to Australia. Dunne's circular letter precisely confirmed the concerns Quinn had to defend himself against repetitively: that he believed Queensland's migration policy to be denominationally exclusive, nationalistic, and economically and politically unwise.[71] The letter reinforced the suspicion that the QIS was secretly working to attract Catholics from Ireland to add to the numbers of its church members in the colony with as little effort as possible – promoting fears of the "vested interests of clergy" that the mainly Anglican Parliament wanted to prevent under all circumstances.[72] The notion of an Irish providential mission to establish a "spiritual empire" by means of circumstantially enforced emigration was actually not an unusual idea: it was cherished by some Catholic Irish and a cause of worry for some Protestants.[73]

71 The upstir Dunne had caused is stressed by the fact that this very paper was one of the top topics in Quinn's examination before the Select Committee. Quinn's reaction was unambiguous: "Immediately on seeing it, I condemned its contents, so far as they referred to our Society." (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 471–472.) Frances William Kennedy, who was mentioned by Quinn, and who, as a member of parliament himself and a supporter of the *Queensland Immigration Society*. also went back to this inconvenient publication in the name of the QIS when commenting on the final report in the Legislative Assembly Queensland Parliament, "Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly," 1863/09/15: 20.) On Patrick Dunne: Linane, Thomas J., "Art.: 'Dunne, Patrick (1818–1900)'", updated 1972 <adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dunne-patrick-3455/text5277>, accessed 2021/06/10.

72 See correspondence between Quinn and Herbert on exactly this charge from 1860/1861, which was ordered to be printed in April 1862: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/04–1863/05: 521–523.

73 See Roddy, Sarah, "Spiritual Imperialism and the Mission of the Irish Race: The Catholic Church and Emigration from Nineteenth-Century Ireland," *Irish Historical Studies* 38, no. 152 (2013): 600–619. doi:10.1017/S0021121400001851.

Quinn thus had to explain Dunne's per se "laudable project", while also rejecting the negative press and impressions that resulted therefrom.[74]

Paying closer attention to the making of the report in this regard, it becomes more and more obvious that Herbert had a personal interest in pushing his agenda and enforcing his principle of the government controlling the whole immigration business without private rivals or competitors. Knowing that his influence had to be maintained, and benefitting from his position as Colonial Secretary, he cleverly directed the order of events in the work of the Select Committee. Because the government then relied on his experiences and evidence alone, he could spend a considerable amount of time elaborating on the *QIS*, making it his personal "specialty" when presenting the case as difficult, urgent and complicated. Since he was the first speaker, the listeners were less suspicious. By complementing his insights and statements with external sources and appendices, he increased the appearance of expertise, made the topic unattractive and abhorrent to the other politicians, and put himself in an untouchable position.[75] In line with London-based immigration agent Jordan's aversion to independent private societies interfering with the official business, Herbert was thus able to claim and insist on his authority in a strategic way.[76]

The report was decided upon even before the members had the chance to read and discuss the evidence brought forward by Bishop Quinn himself. This is why the mover of the committee and official chair George Raff criticized the outcome and the process of finishing the report. However, he was already defending himself against criticism when he came to the front to speak. Raff did not appear self-convinced or self-assured and, unlike Herbert, his first words all contained excuses and apologies for the delay, the lack of transparency, and

74 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 472.
75 Somehow triumphantly, Herbert announced his explanations to the committee's decision on the *QIS*: "He had cheerfully taken on himself the odium attached to this question [of the *Queensland Immigration Society*]. He knew there were many persons in the colony who would shrink from touching it. It had been his duty to enquire into it and to recommend to the government that the operations of the society should be brought to a close." (Queensland Parliament, "Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly," 1863/09/15: 10.)
76 See Boland, "'The Queensland Immigration Society'": 319.

the "unfavourable circumstances". A clear sense of guilt and shortcoming could be detected. Nonetheless, on some topics Raff's opinion was not debatable. In particular, he did not want to give his full support for clause 21 dealing with the *QIS* without having been properly and thoroughly informed about "the Roman Catholic Bishop of Brisbane['s] […] very long evidence". Hence, "the committee had not, and he had not, made up his mind as to what opinion they could give on that evidence. Without taking further evidence and going into further enquiry, it was impossible for the committee to give any opinion on that part." Discrepancies and tensions were undeniable. Raff undoubtedly washed his hands of responsibility by repeating at least twice that he could not express his opinion, that he only approved of general things, and that he was not sure whether the way they chose to deal with the society and prohibiting it had been appropriate. Rather than making specific comments on the content of the report, he pointed out that the attitude and treatment of the bishop and the initiative had been less polite and respectful than suitable. Interestingly, he stated that from his point of view, Quinn "had not spoken so much as a bishop or a member of the society as a colonist".[77]

This confirms the suspicion that personal likings, aversions and preferences prevailed throughout the whole examination, dominating the discourse sometimes more, sometimes less openly. In passing, Raff mentioned the previously unsaid. While Herbert and the others were at pains to emphasize their desire to guarantee for a functioning, well-cared, properly equipped colony of Queensland, Raff confronted them with the biased proceedings. The "hear, hear" and "oh" from the ranks and the Treasury Banks testified how tense the atmosphere was.

Another interesting point is that the whole discourse frequently included the questions of stereotypes, nationality and prejudice. Designing and deciding upon 'transit' for migrants could not be dealt with from a neutral perspective. Repeatedly, the bishop was associated with his denomination, his Irishness, his upbringing. He tried to

77 Raff commenting on the *QIS*: Queensland Parliament, "Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly," 1863/09/15: 14–15.

distance himself from those ascriptions, while imputing partiality and biased motives to Herbert:

> I make this statement without meaning in the slightest degree to imply more than that Mr Herbert is, in my mind, influenced in an undue degree by religious, or national, or some other motives.[78]

This becomes especially clear when analysing the arguments brought for and against the QIS. It is not by chance that the QIS-supporters in the Legislative Assembly were either Catholic, Irish, or both: Charles Blakeney[79] came from Ireland, Kennedy was Catholic. Blakeney, additionally, was one of the "friends and supporters" of the QIS, who would have shown up for meetings and gatherings before.[80] He generally voted against any amendments in the last sessions. Since the former versions of the clauses are still partly readable, it is obvious that most changes only aimed at shortening and clarifying the message. They no longer significantly affected the content, so his disagreement was aimed at the proceedings in general.[81]

But is this really what happened? Does this nationalist argument explain the outcome? Are group pressure and a sense of community the driving forces behind votes for "yes" and "no"? At least in this case,

78 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 474.

79 Charles William Blakeney, barrister from Ireland and later judge dealing with difficult, contested cases, seemed to have entered a general disagreement with the leading members of the committee. For more information on his biography, see Bell, Jacqueline, "Art.: 'Blakeney, Charles William (1802–1876)'", updated 1969 <adb.anu.edu.au/biography/blakeney-charles-william-3012/text4409>, accessed 2023/06/08.

80 About almost a year ago, when *The Courier* reported about a meeting of the "friends and supporters of the Queensland Immigration Society" and its 120 participants, the newspaper named "C.W. Blakeney, Esq., M.L.A." as one of the most famous people present on that occasion. He openly sided with the society (N. N., "Queensland Immigration Society"). Blakeney is also referred to by Bishop Quinn himself when speaking about a meeting he initiated after the Dunne-affair. (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 472.)

81 In the parliament, Blakeney stressed that "under the circumstances of the opposition being deprived of two votes by the decision of the committee that night, and viewing the array on the opposite side, he despaired of condemning the action of the government in the matter." (N. N., "Legislative Assembly. The Immigration Committee," *The Courier*, 1863/09/17: 2–3.)

it became clear that due to the order of events and witness accounts, time pressure, and existing stereotypes, Quinn's confident analysis of Jordan and Herbert's discrimination against Irish and Catholic applicants remained unheeded in the political discourse. A witness account and letter to the *North Australian* editor intended to reveal Jordan's biased position was placed somewhere in the extended appendix to Bishop Quinn's examination. It got lost in the hundreds of paper sheets and was not taken into further account.[82] The dominant argument was that the QIS, along with its contribution to Australian society, was rendered redundant now with the extended introduction of governmental "assisted immigration schemes".

Quinn fought back with the bitter remark that it was his invention after all[83] – and that his initiative had paid off with lower costs and better success.[84] However, the Queensland parliament did not take those counterarguments into further consideration, after having listened to Sir Herbert first. The voices of its supporters could not help to "save" the QIS. In the second-to-last paragraph of the Select Committee's final report, the initiatives of the QIS are condemned as being "incompatible with that direct supervision and control of the Immigration Commissioner of this Colony". George Herbert and Henry Jordan had been successful in their campaign for transparency according to their understanding: as Colonial Secretary, Herbert became the established expert and source of information. Against all odds and doubts, he had managed to close a private side entrance to Australia.[85]

Thereafter, the *private persons* and their private societies did not officially send out any immigrants themselves anymore: instead, they could only help those who had already been promised a land order by

82 On October 15th, 1862, a certain Joseph Stringfellow wrote a letter to the editor of the *North Australian* about his interview experience with Henry Jordan, who had openly expressed his dislike of Catholics and Irish colonists for Queensland. As an English Catholic, he "felt hurt at the prejudice expressed against my co-religionists", so he decided "that the public should hear the truth; and therefore request that you will give publicity to this statement." (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 484.)
83 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 475.
84 Appendix D claims that this is why the QIS was not liked by Jordan or the *Black Ball Line*. (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 482.)
85 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 410.

putting them on officially chartered government ships. No other active involvement, hiring or selling was permitted to them anymore. The Quinn brothers returned to their spiritual duties, and the interlude with a Catholic bishop who acted on his own initiative to publish advertisements for Queensland and charter ships for poor Irish people became a part of migration history. In their 18 months of active involvement as *Queensland Immigration Society*, their operations had resulted in shaping the transit experience of 3,000–4,000 migrants. One could say that for otherwise underprivileged Irish immigrants, two brothers on both sides of the 'transit' line were the gate-openers navigating through the jungle of laws and authorities, of agreements and disagreements, so that for a short period in history another window was available through which transiting to the desired destination became possible.

4.2 Group actors: The case of the Germans

If the Irish who wanted to emigrate to Australia had a difficult position, how much more difficult it was for the Germans, who did not even belong to the realm of the British Empire. Their way into transit was similarly marked out and prepared by protagonists – official and unofficial private actors. For the immigration agent Henry Jordan and his "beacon" "to settle people on the lands", the Germans were no irrelevant minority. During his first two years as agent in London – the two years before the Select Committee gathered in Brisbane – he could reach out to a colleague across the channel who shared the same vision: the successful merchant Johann C. Heussler was working as an emigration agent in his home country Germany with apparently equal zeal. Soon after having immigrated to Australia during the 1850s, Heussler had become an agent for the German shipowners from Bremen (*H. Bischoff & Co*) and Hamburg (*Johann Cesar Godeffroy & Sohn*) in Brisbane, so he was the perfect match for organizing emigration from the continent. He returned to Europe to do this job in 1861, the same year that Jordan started in London.[86] Heussler soon also published a

86 Nagel, "Johann Christian Heussler" and Beuke, Arnold, *Werbung und Warnung: Australien als Ziel deutscher Auswanderer im 19. Jahrhundert*. Bern: Peter Lang, 1999: 158–162.

leaflet comparable to Jordan's "Future Cotton-Field of England" called "Kurze Beschreibung der neuen Colonie Queensland in Australien und ihrer Vortheile für Ansiedler und Einwanderer" ("Short description of the new colony Queensland in Australia and its advantages for settlers and immigrants") in 1862.[87]

As the shortage of British agricultural labourers called for new measures and demanded – in line with John Locke's ideal – "industrious"[88] workers with knowledge about farming, the Germans were chosen to be fitting as "useful colonists"[89], but it was clear that the closer location of the United States would continue to make it the more attractive option for most German migrants.[90] It is therefore no wonder that "German immigration" regularly appeared as an extra topic in immigration discussions in the legislative assemblies in Brisbane.

The story of German immigration to Australia had its up and down phases, but it resulted in at least 54,000[91] German-speaking new colonists for Australia between 1815 and 1914.[92] At the turn of the century,

87 Heussler, Johann C., Kurze Beschreibung der neuen Colonie Queensland in Australien, 1862 (British Library) 1049.1.aa.15.

88 On the concept of "industriousness", deriving ultimately from Locke, and the surrounding discourse, see e.g. Litvine, Alexis D., "The Industrious Revolution, the Industriousness Discourse, and the Development of Modern Economies," *The Historical Journal* 57, no. 2 (2014): 531–570

89 On the appointment of Johann C. Heussler as immigration agent to Germany, the *Moreton Bay Courier* explained why Germans should be encouraged to come: N. N., "German Immigration," *Moreton Bay Courier*, 1861/04/16: 5. See also: Yarwood, Alexander T., "The German Community in the Logan Region," in *The German Presence in Queensland over the last 150 Years: Proceedings of an International Symposium, August 24, 25, and 26, 1987, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia*, ed. Manfred Jurgensen and Alan Corkhill. St Lucia, 1988: 125–146: 128.

90 See Harmstorf, Ian, and Michael J. Cigler, *Deutsche Siedler in Australien: Von den Anfängen bis in die heutige Zeit*. Berlin: Weidler, 1988: 14–16+33.

91 Reynolds, Katherine M., "Land Ownership, Indenture and a 'Migration-Prone' Personality: Aspects of the Emigration from the Duchy of Nassau to Australia in the 19th Century," in *Migration and Cultural Contact: Germany and Australia*, ed. Andrea Bandhauer and Maria Veber. Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2009: 187–202: 192.

92 German research on Australia as a destination for German migrants in the 19th and 20th century has never occupied a major field of interest in German historiography, but there are some publications worth mentioning, such as the early study on advertisement and propaganda (Beuke, *Werbung und Warnung*) and the exhibition conducted by the "Deutsches Auswandererhaus Bremen": Blaschka-Eick, Simone, and Christoph Bongert, *Deutsche in Australien, 1788 – heute: Band zur Sonderausstellung*. Bremerhaven: Edition DAH, 2013. See also the following overview study and its harsh critique: Tampke, Jürgen, *The Germans in*

the fourth largest group of European Australians could trace their origin back to a German-speaking country.[93] In the first half of the 19th century, primarily Lutheran German-speaking families would have gone to South Australia and settled there, following the gold rush to Victoria, or they would have been recruited by immigration agent Wilhelm Kirchner before Queensland became an independent colony from New South Wales.[94] However, in 1863, the year under investigation here, the third period of German emigration had made Queensland the preferred Australian emigration destination – shown by an increase of self-paying passengers waiting for the land order promised by the Queensland government.[95] In this way, steady numbers of Germans came to Australia until the 1870s and were encouraged to do so by a range of different advertisement initiatives, emigrant guides, posters and advocates – this special treatment was only directed at the Ger-

Australia. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006 and Fischer, Gerhard, "Debating the 'German Presence' in Australia: Notes on Research and Research Desiderata," in *Migration and Cultural Contact: Germany and Australia*, ed. Andrea Bandhauer and Maria Veber. Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2009: 131–151. On German missionaries in particular, Regina Ganter' work is profound with the latest being Ganter, Regina, *The Contest for Aboriginal Souls: European Missionary Agendas in Australia*. Acton ACT: ANU Press, 2018. On Queensland in particular: Bonnell, Andrew G., and Rebecca Vonhoff, eds., *Germans in Queensland: 150 Years,* Germanica Pacifica 11. Frankfurt am Main et al.: Peter Lang, 2012. For assisted migration from Germany post-World War II see Biedermann, Bettina, *Eine bezahlte Passage: Die Auswanderung von Deutschen nach Australien in den 1950er Jahren*. Marburg: Metropolis-Verlag, 2006. For a critical, postcolonial perspective on the "German contribution" to Australian culture and society see Fischer, "Debating the 'German Presence' in Australia" as well as Issue 1 on German-Australian colonial relations in 'Postcolonial Studies': Barrett, Lindsay, Lars Eckstein, and Andrew W. Hurley et al., "Remembering German-Australian Colonial Entanglement: An Introduction," *Postcolonial Studies* 21, no. 1 (2018): 1–5. doi:10.1080/13688790.2018.1443671.

93 The other groups being English, Irish, Scottish settlers so that the Germans were the largest non-English speaking Australian immigrants. (Buchanan, Stefanie E., "'I expected something else': Germans in Melbourne," *Space and Culture* 10, no. 3 (2007): 331–348. doi:10.1177/1206331207304354: 333 and Tampke, *The Germans in Australia*:3.)

94 Beuke, *Werbung und Warnung*: 96+127–128 and Reynolds, Katherine M., *The Frauenstein Letters: Aspects of Nineteenth Century Emigration from the Duchy of Nassau to Australia*. Bern et al.: Peter Lang, 2009: 27–28.

95 Erdmann, Claudia, "Rural Settlements Founded by German Immigrants in South Australia and Queensland During the 19th Century," in *The German Presence in Queensland over the last 150 Years: Proceedings of an International Symposium, August 24, 25, and 26, 1987, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia*, ed. Manfred Jurgensen and Alan Corkhill. St Lucia: Department of German, University of Queensland, 1988: 113–124: 117–121.

mans and no other continental group of possible immigrants. With Heussler having returned from Germany after two years of winning a substantial number of settlers for Queensland, the Select Committee questioned him on the matters of promoting the colony, selecting emigrants, and organizing networks.[96] The Parliament now stood at a crucial crossroads in terms of whether to continue or restrict this influx and whether to appoint another official agent or leave matters in German hands. Jordan's range of control and sphere of influence was limited, but the lawmakers did not want to let chance decide who to have in 'transit' and who not. However, the thought that

> German immigration, as well as that from any other part of Europe, will now have to be under the superintendence of the Emigration Agent in London, or some body authorised either by him or the Government here

was immediately negated as "impossible for the Emigration Agent in London to act, but it will be for Parliament to consider whether it will be worth while to have an agent in Germany."[97]

Even without the threats of upcoming warfare (German Danish War from 1863–1864) and Prussia's military preparations, the Southern German expertise in farming, shepherding, and vine dressing would already have been sufficient reasons for reaching out to skilled labourers. But what does this debate reveal about 'transit' and how it is treated and designed within tensions of agreement and disagreement? There is the component of 'race', but another factor that came into play powerfully is that of 'imperialism' in the language and ideology of the British

96 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 459–462. Heussler did not relent in his duties, but travelled through the country, set up licensed local agents, and attempted to paint a very attractive picture of Queensland in his publications in emigration newspapers, pamphlets, newspapers, etc. His own emigrant guide addressed every "father struggling in vain to nurture and educate his numerous family", all adventurous and progressive people and "überhaupt solche die es mit den Worten unseres unsterblichen Göthe in die Ferne drängt […] ("all those who are – as our immortal Goethe put it – helplessly driven by wanderlust") and pointed them to Queensland, where "kein schöneres und vortheilhafteres Feld dargeboten werden [kann]" (there is no place more beautiful and more advantageous"). (Heussler, "Kurze Beschreibung Der Neuen Colonie Queensland in Australien," 1862: 36.)

97 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 453.

Empire. According to Australian public speech and in line with imperial thought, the Germans counted as relatives, brothers, cousins:

> Sprung from the same parent race, plodding and industrious, frugal and virtuous; and accustomed, even more than Britons, to the pursuits best suited to this climate and a young country, there are a thousand inducements to prefer German immigration to any other save British.[98]

Those flowery announcements were recounted as having been partly fulfilled in the two years of Heussler's activity as emigration agent, but "now that [in early 1860] a large number of good immigrants are offering from the United Kingdom, it is less desirable, and less necessary to assist emigration from Germany."[99] Instead of appointing a new German agent, the Queensland parliament considered working with the local agents set up by Heussler and with the Hamburg shipping company *J.C. Godeffroy & Sohn* he had signed a contract with.[100] The final decision of the committee then stated that prospective European immigrants were to be financially supported as well, and it approved friends and family of Germans already living in the colony.[101]

This surprisingly open agreement resulted from the initiative of another actor in the negotiation of transit. This actor is neither a powerful man like Bishop Quinn nor a privately founded emigration society offering an extra entrance to transit: it is a group of common people

98 N. N., "German Immigration to Queensland: Taken from the Queensland Courier," *Geelong Advertiser*, 1861/09/28: 3.
99 As put forward by George Herbert. (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 459.)
100 Queensland Legislative Assembly: 461. On the *Godeffroy Company* :Poniewierski, Barbara, "J.C. Godeffroy and German Migration to Queensland," in *Germans in Queensland: 150 Years*, ed. Andrew G. Bonnell and Rebecca Vonhoff. Germanica Pacifica 11. Frankfurt am Main, et al.: Peter Lang, 2012: 9–23.
101 The regulation is stated in clause 12 of the final report: "Emigration from the Continent of Europe should, in the meantime, and so long as applicants from any portion of the United Kingdom are unable to obtain passages, be restricted to the relations or friends of those Germans now in the Colony, who may provide for their passage, and to any smaller number, not exceeding one-fourth of the whole, that may be necessary with these to fill a ship or ships." (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 408 and Queensland Parliament, "Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly," 1863/09/15: 14.)

which some individuals actively engaged in to justify their being granted access to the Australia-bound ships and land orders. In reply to a complaint on unequal treatment between British and German settlers wishing to bring out their families,[102] "certain Germans at Toowoomba"[103] had raised their voices and got in touch with the politicians. Having undergone the migratory process themselves, these anonymous settlers in the German community were now powerful and confident enough to make use of their knowledge and influence the political proceedings that would shape the transit and immigration experience for those to follow.

It is interesting to note that during all the negotiations in 1863 and in their petition, the actual shipboard passage was only mentioned in passing: what counted was the legal structure, the financial setting, the land orders, the shipping firms and the numbers. But this did not mean that the voyage was of minor importance. On the contrary: The gap might have been partly because in the most recent history the conditions on board German immigrant vessels had been an intensely debated topic, and there remained generally unsolved difficulties in how to impose rules agreed upon in British law on German-run ships. Migration agent Henry Jordan, in his efforts to acquire future Queenslanders, had to keep this in mind when it came to signing contracts with ship owners and allowing Germans to book passages on British ships.

In order to understand the mechanisms and influence(r)s of transit negotiations, it is therefore justified to go five years back in history and quickly glance at another Select Committee from the New South Wales Legislative Council in 1858, one year before the colony of Queensland gained its independence.[104] The devastating conditions on German

102 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 461.
103 Poniewierski, "J.C. Godeffroy and German Migration to Queensland" and in original: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 406.
104 Legislative Council of New South Wales, Report from the Select Committee of the Legislative Council Appointed […] to Inquire into the Present System of German Immigration into this Colony, 1858/08/11 (State Library of New South Wales) T/RAV/FM4/4. Beuke, *Werbung und Warnung*: 151–157 is using this example in his short chapter on diplomatic differences between Germany and Australia. He quotes the original source from quite a biased, early Bremen study: Tessmer, Fritz H., *Bremische Handelsbeziehungen mit Australien: Von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn des 1. Weltkrieges,* Veröffentlichungen aus dem Übersee-Museum

emigrant vessels from Hamburg and Bremen had then led to an urgent petition to apply a valid British law to German vessels: the British Passengers Act, which placed requirements on hired emigrant ships.[105] The petitioners, who had primarily arrived on the 'Wilhelm Kirchner' – a ship named after the celebrated emigration agent of this time – had complained about moral, hygienic, physical and organizational grievances, and underlined their request by comparing the situation to the better conditions on Australian ships. The increasing network of migrants, the exchange of information, and growing self-confidence to stand up for one's rights in front of strangers, prove that in New South Wales the idea of an interconnected world already existed in the minds of the settlers. The actors did not simply cry for help and protection from cruel Hamburg shipping companies but came up with concrete suggestions as to how improvements could be implemented. Somehow, it was taken for granted that no matter the circumstances, the political setting made room for open debates. Arrangements with direct impact on future travellers were not out of reach for German inhabitants. Their own experience did not remain a matter talked about merely within the German community, but suddenly became a public issue, even reaching back to cases from seven years before.[106] Behind this main concern and the quite explicit appeals concerning care and treatment, the isolation and dependency of immigrants with language barriers and insecure political status came into play and explained the delayed accusations and requests. When questioned, the then NSW immigration agent Hutchinson H. Browne laid out before the committee a summary of German concerns and illustrated his own helplessness in such matters. He identified the reason for digging out years-old cases in the extended time it took German immigrants to study and acquire the English lan-

Bremen Reihe C: Deutsche Geographische Blätter 2. Bremen: Übersee-Museum, 1979. Likewise, Poniewierski, "J.C. Godeffroy and German Migration to Queensland": 13–17 also spends time to look at the Hamburg side of the 1858 case when researching the *Godeffroy* shipping line.

105 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, "New Passengers Act," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1855/12/12: 5 and Legislative Council of New South Wales, "Report from the Select Committee of the Legislative Council Appointed […] To Inquire into the Present System of German Immigration into This Colony," 1858/08/11: 27.

106 Legislative Council of New South Wales: 15–16.

guage properly enough to dare talking to an official. Muted and disconnected, the Germans had to learn how to speak first to overcome an invisible communicative barrier. Browne explicitly referred to the voyage on badly equipped ships as shaping their future development, as many Germans had experienced hardship by being kept "almost as prisoners until they are drafted away to different parts of the Colony". Given the lack of a "Government interpreter, who would be bound to interpret faithfully" they were then, however, left without a chance of making themselves heard immediately after their arrival.[107]

Keeping that in mind, the necessity of imposing a general act on all foreign ships carrying immigrants to Australia became more prevalent. It was not only German ships which were infamous for their terrible conditions; American vessels likewise had the reputation of being dirty and careless. And worst of all in Australian opinion: morality was at stake.[108] Proper conduct, reliability, as well as protection of sexual purity were highly esteemed. No wonder the very first allegation of the Sydney German residents' petition read: "The absence of any proper separation of the sexes on board of German Emigrant ships". This was immediately followed by a complaint about very insufficient provision in medicine, nutrition and work force.[109] The Australian government was quick at demanding immediate action from the German shipping companies, but this was where negotiations came to a comparatively abrupt end. Despite public initiatives on both Australian and German ground, Bremen and Hamburg alike were not willing to give in easily to all the measures requested by Sydney to improve migratory conditions on board. This put a first stop to the transport via German ports, and with a decreasing interest in Australia as a destination in general, Germans would continue to primarily choose the United States, and they would often travel to board vessels departing elsewhere, e.g., in Le Havre, Liverpool or London.[110]

107 Legislative Council of New South Wales: 28.
108 For more on that topic, see Chapter 5 "Crossing Transit".
109 Legislative Council of New South Wales:3.
110 Beuke, *Werbung und Warnung*: 155–157; Poniewierski, "J.C. Godeffroy and German Migration to Queensland": 17.

What can be concluded from this case study? The conditions on board German vessels were not the main point of discussion for the Queensland Select Committee in 1863, but by then the German immigrant community was not a group to be underestimated anymore. Mentioned in an extra clause (no. 12) that enabled German settlers to send for their friends, the report paid tribute to that special treatment.[111] With the 1858 inquiry in New South Wales and the petition put forward in Sydney before Queensland became independent, a self-conscious minority's influence and agency had already been demonstrated. They can be seen as a representative group of post-transit people developing a group dynamic, interested in making themselves heard by pointing to witnessed irregularities. In the end, initiatives of group actor*s* in an imperial setting, as fervently promoted as one can imagine, can only slowly transform and change structurally implemented settings of an Empire – if they show measurable effects at all. Nevertheless, in the balancing out of group dynamics against the background concept of imperialism, a framework emerged that – in its first seemingly unshakeable form – remained a contested and contestable entity. This instability was not necessarily obvious to the ones directly confronted with laws, regulations and requirements, so that at first glance 'transit'-designing seemed to be exclusively the job of privileged, white, British men.

The case of the Germans showed the framework was nonetheless open to suggestions and amendments. Some of the recently immigrated Germans had grown confident in speaking (literally and in the figurative sense). They had grasped the opportunities given in 1858 and thus established themselves as serious and respectable partners in negotiation processes in 1863.

Building on the issues already discussed, debated and denounced in 1858, five years later, the Queensland Select Committee knew which main transit elements were causing uproar and resistance amongst the immigrants. This proves the process of negotiations and renegotiations to be essential to forming a transit experience now and then.

111 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 408.

4.3 Private business companies: The case of the *Black Ball Line*

In addition to religion, nationality and language, the topics of money and convenience played a big role. The government could not agree on whether to continue supporting passengers in wealthier cabins and intermediate passengers. This apparent logistic and economic question points to a deeper conflict linked to the definition of a perfect immigrant as a migrant with a certain amount of capital already.[112] But money was not what most candidate emigrants had to offer. When applying for a land order, passengers were usually poorer and travelled in steerage. Although steerage did not offer high standard of travelling, carrying many human beings across the oceans required ships with due facilities and equipment to conduct such a long journey. Not all shipping companies were willing to invest in a regular passenger trade to Brisbane. One of the homegrown Liverpool companies, the *Black Ball Line*, did significantly participate in both the practical and theoretical proceedings of Queensland immigration. So after (1) private individuals and (2) private groups of common people, the *Black Ball Line* represents the third group of actors involved in negotiating transit: private commercial companies.

James Baines and Thomas Mackay both earned their money as shipbrokers and ship repairers from Liverpool before joining forces in a sailing packet service and founding the *Black Ball Line*. Because the *Black Ball Line* had access to and authority over some capable long-distance ships, which were the only possible carriers of emigrants, the shipping company could put a lot of pressure on the political actors. Undoubtedly this was only possible in the specific historical context of the so-called Golden Age of the sailing ship, and because the so-called "Yankee clippers" were still the preferred means of emigrant transportation. Used by the *Black Ball Line* and the *White Star Line*, the other famous Liverpool company, these American-built ships were the biggest and fastest sail-

112 This is what Herbert presented as the governmental agenda. His idea was to direct land according to the costs of the passage so that wealthier future colonists would be encouraged to come in particular. This finally found entrance into the final report in clause 9. (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 408+422.)

ing vessels of their time. Thanks to their active engagement in the Victorian gold rush of the 1850s, they enjoyed an unquestioned primacy – and they were looking for new ports of destination after the run on Melbourne had ceased.[113]

What about steam? The new technology with steam engines had started to be used for ships before the 1860s (including for mail service in the Pacific Ocean), but in terms of long-distance migration and travel, the beginning was sluggish and the grand success of the steamship had to wait until the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and new inventions as well as improvements in ports, engine rooms, facilities, etc. Travelling under sail continued to be both much cheaper and more common until the 1880s, and usually the combination of steamship with sails ("auxiliary steamships") turned out to be the most popular vehicle. Then the steamship suddenly became unbeatable and took over completely: in the 1880s, 75% of the arrivals in port were by steam, in the 1890s it was almost 99%. Taken together, Queensland saw an overall percentage of 68.3% of arrivals coming under sail between 1860 and 1900.[114]

For the *Black Ball Line*, it therefore was a time-and-space-limited hegemony, but one that seemed worthwhile investing in. In 1863, they could not yet foresee that agreeing to run a monthly shipping service for Queensland emigrants from London might mean too great a commitment and required a much larger fleet in general. This regular shipping service can be interpreted as the beginning of the end of the *Black Ball Line*. When in the 1866 financial crisis their bank *Barned's Banking Company Limited* crashed, the owners Baines and Mackay ran up huge debts to sustain the service to Australia. The final demise caused by financial difficulties then came about in 1871.[115] Eight years before that, though, the *Black Ball Line* was still a self-assured partner in negotiations of 'transit' frameworks – and one that could not be avoided.

113 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 12–13+31 and Neale, Ralph P., *Racers of the Deep: The Yankee Clippers and Bluenose Clippers on the Australian Run, 1852–1869*. Melbourne: Australian Scholarly, 2007: 1–26+257–261. For a spar and sail plan of a full-rigged clipper ship see pp. 24–25.

114 Woolcock, *Rights of Passage*: 50–51.

115 Neale, *Racers of the Deep*: 319–326.

This becomes clear when looking back at the *Queensland Immigration Society*, as the Liverpool shipping enterprise is interwoven into their history as well. With the unlucky 'Erin-go-Bragh', the first ship sent out by the QIS in 1862,[116] Bishop James Quinn had succeeded in activating an already existing contract with the owners of the *Black Ball Line*.[117] Immigration agent Henry Jordan had also tried to find a partner to install a regular service to Brisbane and ended up, unsurprisingly, cooperating with the *Black Ball Line*, which already had Australia experience. His previous arrangements with them had gone sluggishly at first, but then the company became heavily engaged in centralising all assisted migration in the hands of the official governmental commissioners and in defending their unique right against all competing alternative companies in the Queensland emigrant transport. Because of this, *Mackay, Baines and Co.* supported the move to abandon the QIS as implemented by the Colonial Secretary George Herbert and Henry Jordan in London.[118] The fact that the *Black Ball Line* held a monopoly in the Queensland shipping business at the time of the discussion in the Brisbane parliamentary assembly obviously raised suspicion in 1863. It was assumed that the privileged position of one singular enterprise would prevent negative outcomes in the fields of health and morality:

> Now that this firm (the Black Ball Line) has a monopoly, they have a strong interest in doing the business well: they know that it would be taken away from them in the event of their misconducting it, and that the land orders will be refused, on the arrival of a ship of a serious complaint.[119]

However, Jordan's autonomous arrangement with that major shipping line was not approved of by all members of the committee. Despite the advantages brought forward, the Select Committee remarked that this

116 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 70. To read Bishop Quinn's version of the story see Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 475.
117 Neale, *Racers of the Deep*: 10–11.
118 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 482 and Coghlan, *Labour and Industry in Australia*: 928–929.
119 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 455.

was not fair towards other shipping companies and along with this commitment, the utter dependency on this company for regularly arriving immigrant ships was a matter of real concern. While Colonial Secretary Herbert acted as a promoter of Jordan's sole contract with the fast-sailing clippers from Liverpool,[120] the committee's chairman Raff wondered whether free competition might result in general improvements. After all, he himself was director of a steamship company involved in the wool trade, so his vote for opening the market was made as an experienced businessman.[121] In the end, the conclusion in clause 13 of the Select Committee's report read as follows:

> Your Committee, whilst satisfied with the reasons given by the Honorable Colonial Secretary on the arrangements entered into with the owners of the Black Ball line of ships for the conduct of their assisted emigration, recommend that immigration to this Colony should not be exclusively confined to one line of ships, if the conveyance of emigrants could be as satisfactorily secured by the employment of the ships of other firms.[122]

The *Black Ball Line* had to give up its special hold and authority on the entire Queensland emigration business to make room for other companies to join the market. But for many, this cautious step away from a position of complete monopoly was not made with sufficient rigour. When commenting on the different clauses of the report, the opposing politicians did not conceal their aversion to Jordan's close connection with the *Black Ball Line*.

Experienced politician John Douglas[123] counted the costs and concluded resolutely that "either Mr. Jordan was a bad agent or was not an able one", while Charles Blakeney identified the emigration commissioner's sub-agents as "in fact, nothing else than agents of the Black

120 Queensland Parliament, "Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly," 1863/09/15: 8.
121 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 456 and Hall, "Art.: 'Raff, George (1815–1889)'".
122 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/09/11: 408.
123 See Joyce, Roger B., "Art.: 'Douglas, John (1828–1904)'", updated 1972 <adb.anu.edu.au/biography/douglas-john-3430/text5221>, accessed 2021/08/16.

Ball line", who were willing to support Jordan's anti-Irish sentiments. Frances W. Kennedy spoke of an economic "folly" and pointed out "that other firms than that of Mackay, Baines, and Co. were ready and willing to bring immigrants in a much better and more comfortable manner for a lesser sum" so that the necessity of keeping a sacred treaty was made superfluous.[124]

Not present in Brisbane at the time of this political decision, Jordan eagerly waited for news in London and increasingly felt neglected as the weeks passed by without receiving any information, although the decisions would directly affect his work. In late November 1863, he even had to send a letter to remind the Queensland government to forward the "Report on the Working of the Immigration Laws" to him – and this despite his prominent position as emigration agent in London. With a sense of indignation, he wrote:

> I have regretted not receiving published Evidence and Report of the Select Committee on Emigration. May I ask that a copy of this may be sent to me, as well as copies of the volume of Votes and Proceedings, and a copy of the Acts passed in each Session. For want of such documents I am sometimes much inconvenienced.[125]

When Jordan finally received the news with the Select Committee's report after such severe delay, he reacted emotionally and was personally hurt, especially by the decision made concerning the shipping company. His efforts and initiatives to secure safety and comfort, he claimed, were neither honoured nor taken seriously, and now the new regulation would threaten to make void all his engagement and the improvements put in place to turn the clipper ships into proper emigrant ships for Queensland. Financial aspects cannot be underestimated when analysing historical developments, but in this particular case, despair and pressure counted as well. When Jordan had arrived in London as Queensland emigration commissioner in 1861, he only had

124 Queensland Parliament, "Record of the Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. Legislative Assembly," 1863/09/15: 16–20.
125 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/11/26–1864/05/20: 920.

the economically unattractive, Queensland-specific land order system to offer to all shipping companies. Only the *Black Ball Line* had been willing to take the risk, and so there was literally no alternative to them shortly after gaining independence from New South Wales. Against this background, existing arrangements were difficult to loosen, and it was much more convenient to negotiate with familiar(ized) partners.[126] This enforced opening to the free market put Jordan's business relationship with Baines and Mackay at risk. Tension between the state and the powerful private company as a player in the immigration game contributed to an extreme step: Jordan, the man later praised for his personal investment in the migration flow to Australia, felt he was being treated as a superfluous fifth wheel in his very own area of responsibility. When he was confronted with a critique of his achievements and rigid instructions to reduce the direct cooperation with the *Black Ball Line*, Jordan found himself at a very low point in his migration agent career, leading him to resign unexpectedly in Spring 1864 – a clever (and temporary) move designed to insist on the necessity of keeping the connection to the *Black Ball Line*. By suddenly withdrawing, Jordan stressed his apparent irreplaceability and enhanced the impression of his own importance.[127]

He handed over all his tasks and scheduled emigrant ship departures, boarded an Australia-bound ship, and set off to have the conversation face-to-face. Colonial Secretary Herbert's reaction to this announcement was a somewhat helpless reply:

> The circumstances of your return to this Colony will be fully considered by the Government; but in the meantime, and until possessed of further information, I must delay to recommend the acceptance of your resignation, for which the Government has been wholly unprepared.[128]

126 Neale, *Racers of the Deep*: 259–261.
127 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/11/26–1864/05/20: 929–934. Research literature: Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 73–75 and Foote, "Queensland Immigration and the Black Ball Line": 34–36.
128 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/11/26–1864/05/20: 971.

Henry Jordan did not build on philanthropic arguments when it came to defending his previous gatekeeper position in transit. When being questioned in May 1864 by a Queensland Select Committee on the "Resignation and Return of the Emigration Commissioner", he successfully spoke out against the reproach of selfish gain. He told a heart-breaking story of how his attempts to find a shipping company to partner with failed until one *Black Ball Line* agent agreed to cooperate with him.[129] Supported by Mr. Taylor of the *Mackay, Baines and Co.* company, Jordan navigated the immigration laws and strategically brought into play his first-hand experience in England. In the end, he was praised for his "sincere desire to serve the interest of the Colony", "completely exonerated from the charges […] brought against him", asked to "as speedily as may be, return to England, armed with full powers to carry out the Land Order System of Immigration".[130]

He had reclaimed his key position in negotiating transit for many future immigrants and served in this office for another two years in London. In the following months, the *Black Ball Line* remained the main partner for the regular fast emigrant clippers despite the breaking of the hegemonial status. Though their engagement with the Queensland government was not destined to last forever and this might have contributed to the company's failure later, the partnership succeeded for a while because of two main aspects shaping the design of 'transit': money and convenience. From the government commissioner's point of view, building on existing treaties prevented additional costly negotiations and allowed for an easier control of steerage passengers. Likewise, from the company's point of view keeping their monopoly demanded a more flexible cooperation adapted to the colony's rules on separation of the sexes, medical care, land order prices, fares and political profits.

The transit-experiencers, i.e., the thousands of men, women, children, fathers, mothers, girls and boys eagerly waiting for a letter of acceptance to tell them the name of the *Black Ball Line* ship that would

129 Foote, "Queensland Immigration and the Black Ball Line": 23 quoting from Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/11/26–1864/05/20: 988.
130 Report from the Select Committee of the Resignation and Return of Mr. Jordan, Emigration Commissioner in England, in: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1863/11/26–1864/05/20: 977–978.

take them to their new home in Australia, were nothing but perhaps a side note referred to in the debates about benefits and economic fairness.

5 Success and History

Henry Jordan was one of those well-educated white men who constantly dealt with immigrants but did not really interact with them: he stood in-between. 'Transit' as an abstract concept put him there, and 'transit' was what Jordan used to craft his career and pursue his ideals. Following this immigration agent's personal network leads us to other powerful players who cannot be ignored if we want to understand the nature and the impact of 'transit' on individuals' lives: Colonial Secretary George Herbert, Bishop James Quinn, Liverpool shipping company owner James Baines, and his business partner Thomas Mackay. In addition to these big names, there was also the less famous Catholic member of parliament, who felt discriminated against, or the group of unnamed German immigrants petitioning for improved travel conditions.

The previous passages allow us to see that 'transit' has several beginnings and several endings simultaneously. Bishop Quinn's private immigration society created opportunities for Irish Catholics to leave the UK and start their transit experience. The bishop himself, despite having settled in Brisbane before the Queensland land order system had even been invented, discovered new versions of 'transit' with each emigrant ship he organized. Some Queenslanders from Germany had already completed an experience of transit but picked it up again after years of acquiring sufficient English language skills when they started to raise their voices for better travel conditions on the ships.

For all the processes, debates, intermingling, human preferences, grievances and political schemes, it is intriguing to note they were all coming from pre- or post-transit places. 'Transit', the focus of this book, was shaped by negotiations on land – not at sea.

Take Henry Jordan with his "beacon to settle people on the lands": he helped pass and implement transit regulations that he did not have to observe himself. His privileges were clearly displayed in the course of his conflict with the parliament and his resignation: before embarking on a ship to Queensland, he did not need to apply for a ticket nor show

documents proving his suitability. Nor did the results of discussions on the amount of space for each steerage passenger affect him personally. For the Queensland Members of Parliament, the immigration laws were one important topic of many discussed in 1863. It was a topic that collected and subsumed aspects of their shared experience of immigrating years ago, but the laws and treaties they agreed upon no longer affected them directly. So there was automatically a clash between the theorized idea and the actual experience. Nevertheless, by zooming in on the process of creating the framework, we can find the actual transit experience within it.

The 'transit' framework, which was valid for a certain period of time, was the result of an encounter between contrasting poles and actors emphasizing aspects such as nationality and religious denomination, money and convenience. Against the background of power games and the show of strength, of imperial and national agendas, of long-distance (mis)communication and disconnections, with a more appropriate awareness of the negotiations behind an abstract entity like 'transit', re-reading Jordan's obituary quoted above might now have lost some of its glamour:

When it was resolved by the Government and the Legislature to inaugurate a large emigration scheme in order to settle an agricultural population upon our waste lands, Mr Jordan was, by general consent, pointed to as the man pre-eminently fitted to be sent to Great Britain to carry out the details of the emigration scheme. An able and accomplished speaker, with intimate knowledge of the colony and its resources – no one was better qualified to represent Queensland to the toiling masses of the mother country. How well he succeeded is now a matter of history; he sent to Queensland 100,000 emigrants, and most of them to-day are happy and prosperous Queenslanders. […] To settle people on the lands was the beacon of his life.[131]

131 N. N., "Henry Jordan, the Friend of the People".

[Chapter 2] Controlling Transit – Inclusion and Exclusion

1 Unwanted and Burdensome?

When A.W. Pollen, sub-agent of the Queensland Emigration Office based in Dublin, checked the assisted emigrant applications and browsed through the references and qualifications a certain Maria Johnston[1] had handed in, the file looked more than satisfactory. She had been recommended by Hamilton Leslie, a well-known and trustworthy agent with a special focus on selecting single women for Australia. There was a medical certificate and a reference signed by two householders, as well as a positive moral report sent by Reverend White. So there was no reason at all to become suspicious.[2]

Johnston had presented everything required from the official side before applying for an assisted passage as a single woman: one medical expert, two employers, and one clergyman or magistrate all had to sign and confirm her health and suitability for the colony.[3] As one of 100 single women, she therefore boarded the *Black Ball Line* clipper ship 'Elizabeth Ann Bright' in Liverpool on 12th September 1864.[4] Initially

1 Throughout the whole correspondence, three spellings are used for her last name (Johnston, Johnson, Johnstone), which makes it difficult to trace her further. I am going to stick with the way Agent General Henry Jordan spelled it. (Jordan, Henry, Copy of Letter to A.W. Pollen, Sub-Agent in Dublin (Case of Maria Johnston on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'), 1865/03/24 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 846804; DUP COL/12.) Gothard mentions the same case in passing as well without, however, going into further detail on the background or context of Maria Johnston. (Gothard, Jan, *Blue China: Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia*. Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001: 40.)

2 Pollen, A.W., Copy of Letter to Henry Jordan (Response to Case of Maria Johnston on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'), 1865/03/25 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 846804; DUP COL/12.

3 This is what Emigration Agent Jordan also emphasized when reporting the case to the Colonial Secretary: "This person could not have been accepted by Mr Pollen [i.e., Sub-Agent in Dublin] until he had received a Certificate of her fitness from a Medical Man, another from two respectable householders, and another from a Clergyman or Magistrate." (Jordan, Henry, Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report, 1865/03/25 (Queensland State Archives) QSA 219; DUP COL/12: Point 6.)

4 N.N., "English Shipping," *The Brisbane Courier*, 1864/12/19: 2 with the number of passengers despatched.

everything seemed fine, if the summary of a fellow male steerage passenger is to be relied upon: Though "[…] rather tedious, our passage has been pleasant and fortunate. No hurricane, no storm, nothing to alarm anyone, and no serious sickness […]".[5] Nothing to alarm anyone? Evidently, Maria Johnston would not have subscribed to this statement, since something appeared to happen to her during the 116 days at sea: among other diseases such as measles, fever and diarrhoea, the Health Officer's Report on the arrival of the emigrant ship had to note down one case of "mania"[6] – affecting Maria Johnston. Unexpectedly, she "had proved to be of unsound mind" and she also turned out to have been a former patient at an Irish asylum as a teenage girl.[7]

Given the state of confusion she found herself in, there was no chance of her finding a job as domestic servant in Queensland. So 20-year-old Johnston was sent to the recently opened Wolston Park Hospital[8] immediately after disembarking the 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'. In fact, she was among the very first patients treated there. Her diagnosis upon admission was "Mania (Hysteria)" due to "amenorrhea" (i.e., absence of female menstruation); the treatment consisted of "purgations with shower baths". Probably, the purgatives given were of herbal nature, traditionally used for treating melancholia since the 17th century.[9] Four months passed by before Johnston could be released and, hopefully, start a new life in a new country.[10]

5 N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger," *The Brisbane Courier (Supplement to the Brisbane Courier)*, 1865/01/09: 1.

6 Health Office Moreton Bay, Health Officer's Report 'Elizabeth Ann Bright', 1865/01/05 (Queensland State Archives) 1865/41.

7 Jordan, "Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report," 1865/03/25: Point 5.

8 Founded in 1865, this asylum separated the jail from the already existing lunatic asylum at Brisbane and developed into one of the biggest institutions in this area. (Mynott, Vicki, *Wacol, Wolston and Woogaroo (1823–2014). Vol. 1,* 2 vols. Inala Heights: Richlands, Inala and Suburbs History Group, 2014: 35–45.)

9 Jackson, Stanley W., "A History of Melancholia and Depression," in *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology*, ed. Edwin R. Wallace and John Gach. Boston: Springer US, 2008: 443–460: 453–455.

10 Wolston Park Hospital, Case Book (Male and Female Admissions), 1860–1916 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 292592: Folio 71. I was not able to trace her any further but suspect that she found employment soon after. Whether she again underwent an attack of mental illness remains unclear.

This part of her life story can only be told because of the colonial government's desire to control transit. It also can only be told because of her status as an assisted migrant with governmental funding and responsibility.[11] Had she belonged to the other major group of immigrants, the unassisted travellers, she would have simply circumvented all legally demanded proofs and certificates by paying for a cabin or intermediate place on board by herself.[12] But Johnston could not afford the price of approximately £14 for a one-way passage to the other side of the globe, and so she had applied for an assisted passage as so many others did. She thus profited from the Empire's growing concern of losing white supremacy in the settler colonies and related fears about miscegenation in the colonies. Given the disbalance between the sexes in the colonies, and the need for household help in the cities and farms, Queensland, like other colonies, supported single women intending to emigrate with special programmes and offers.[13]

Considering the complicated process of negotiating immigration laws in Queensland as outlined in Chapter 1, one important regulation was the obligatory selection process for every steerage passenger,

11 Gothard, *Blue China*: 38–40.
12 As explained in Chapter 1 "Negotiating Transit", poorer emigrants usually could not afford the price for an unassisted steerage passage to Australia. About half of all Australian immigrants arrived self-paid, while the other 50% took advantage of assisted migration schemes and other funding (Haines, Robin, "'The Idle and the Drunken Won't Do There': Poverty, the New Poor Law and Nineteenth-Century Government-Assisted Emigration to Australia from the United Kingdom," *Australian Historical Studies* 27, no. 108 (1997): 1–21. doi:10.1080/10314619708596025).
13 On female migration to Australia and single women in particular: Chilton, Lisa, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860–1930,* Studies in Gender and History. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007; Swain, Shurlee, "Maids and Mothers: Domestic Servants and Illegitimacy in 19th-Century Australia," *The History of the Family* 10, no. 4 (2005): 461–471. doi:10.1016/j.hisfam.2005.09.007; Chilton, Lisa, "A New Class of Women for the Colonies: The Imperial Colonist and the Construction of Empire," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 31, no. 2 (2003): 36–56; Gothard, Jan, "Wives or Workers? Single British Female Migration to Colonial Australia," in *Women, Gender and Labour Migration: Historical and Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Pamela Sharpe. Routledge Research in Gender and History 5. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002: 145–161; Hamilton, Paula, "The 'Servant Class': Poor Female Migration to Australia in the Nineteenth Century," in *Poor Australian Immigrants in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Eric Richards. 5 vols. Visible Immigrants 2. Canberra: Division of Historical Studies and Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, 1991: 117–131.

whether full-paying or subsidized. In theory, the full-paying steerage passengers to Queensland also had to undergo a health check before departure, but as unassisted passengers, they were more easily forgotten or overseen.[14] Some emigration officers therefore complained about the "problem" of nominated and self-paying immigrants who simply came through below the critical officer's radar.[15] The pressure was high to "prevent the introduction of persons of unsound mind, or otherwise unfitted for usefulness in the Colony"[16] and as guardians of transit, the emigration agents, ship owners, and medical officers were expected to diligently separate the goats from the sheep before departure. They were expected to see through the tricks being employed by people wittingly trying to circumvent restrictions. So, whenever someone unwanted had been able to come through nevertheless, they were quick to blame others, whether these passengers were assisted or unassisted.

The financial aspect of this business cannot be underestimated. With the acceptance of an applicant for an assisted passage – especially single women – the colonial government was expected to care for the immigrants in cases of unemployment or destitution. They were therefore eager to keep the power within their hands to minimize all additional expenditures and make the most of every hard-working colonist introduced to the colony. From the official point of view, transit was a precious and costly period that should only be opened to so-called "deserving ones" – neatly described by the immigration regulations which were frequently discussed and reviewed.[17]

Another woman's biography can be read as a telling example of what contemporaries would call "burdens upon the country".[18] In January 1883, a 16-year-old English servant girl called Elizabeth Bland

14 Woolcock, Helen R., *Rights of Passage: Emigration to Australia in the 19th Century*. London: Tavistock, 1986: 292.
15 Daintree, Richard, Agent General: Letter to Colonial Secretary, Charing Cross 1875/04/22, in: Queensland Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings (2nd Session 1875. Vol. 2), 1875/06/08–1875/09/08 (National Archives) CO 236/49: No. 2: 574.
16 Jordan, "Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report," 1865/03/25: Point 6.
17 Gothard, *Blue China*: 38–39. See also Chapter 1 "Negotiating Transit".
18 For actual use of this contemptuous expression see the following accounts referring to an immigrant with heart disease and one with epilepsy: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1871/04/12–1871/06/07: 906.

had joined a group of 63 assisted single women on their way to Sydney aboard the 'Roslin Castle'.[19] Together with 365 other emigrants,[20] she and her slightly older sister Sarah were hoping for a better life far away in New South Wales. However, similarly to Maria Johnston, Bland soon drew the surgeon's special attention when she became "somehow excited & strange in her manner, though always more or less eccentric [she] fancies her head is a telegraph office, & herself a clerk". Starting with these hallucinations and imaginations, her condition deteriorated further with failed suicide attempts over the course of the voyage.[21]

What happened afterwards? Australian scholar Jan Gothard also cites Bland's case, but in contrast to her claim that "we know nothing of her later fate and whether her symptoms, which today might be ascribed to a schizophrenic condition, re-emerged in the colonies"[22], I was able to trace her a little further. She was put into the Reception House for the Insane[23] and then to Gladesville Hospital, where she was treated for over a year before being released and finding a job, probably as domestic servant somewhere.[24]

A medical case book[25] with another admission file[26] to the Hospital for Insane at Callan Park reveals that she again became an inmate

19 New South Wales Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings. Session of 1883. Vol. 2 (Immigration. Reports from Immigration Agent and Others – Ship 'Roslin Castle'), 1883/03/21 (State Library of New South Wales) MAV/FM4/10865: 1065–1068.
20 With an average number of 344 statute adults per voyage in 1883, the 'Roslin Castle' had a slightly larger group of emigrants aboard, though more than 300 passengers were very common these days. (McDonald, John, and Ralph Shlomowitz, "Passenger Fares on Sailing Vessels to Australia in the Nineteenth Century," *Explorations in Economic History* 28, no. 2 (1991): 192–208: 199.)
21 Eadson, George S., Medical Journal on Board the 'Roslin Castle', 1882/12/01–1883/03/02 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) R2852 (4/4698.A): 20.
22 Gothard, *Blue China*: 127–128.
23 Reception House for the Insane, Register of Admissions and Discharges under Section 1, Lunacy Amendment Act, 1881 (Entry on 'Elizabeth A. Bland', Date of Admission: March 3rd 1883), 1883/02/22–1883/03/13 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 5/6.
24 Gladesville Hospital, Medical Case Book. Entry 'Elizabeth Bland', 1883/04/02–1885/06 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 4/8172.
25 Hospital for Insane at Callan Park, Medical Case Book. File 'Elizabeth Bland', 1885/05/28–1893/11/28 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 3/4657.
26 Hospital for Insane at Callan Park, Admission File 'Elizabeth Bland', May 1885 (Order for Conveyance to an Hospital or Licensed House of an Insane Person; Statement of Housekeeper; Two Medical Certificates; Report on the Condition; Statement for Information), 1885/05/26–1885/05/28 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 3/3319, No. 629.

at an asylum two years later in May 1885. Evidently, at the age of 19, she was diagnosed "mad" due to an "attack of insanity" that had troubled her for almost three weeks. Her fellow workers confirmed that she had acted strangely, slept badly, and sometimes even fell into physically threatening them, while simultaneously talking of suicide. A harried countenance with a frequently paranoid look marked her pale, melancholic face. and justified her referral and reception into the house. These vivid descriptions taken from her admission file and medical case book are the last available. Elizabeth Bland in fact never again left the asylum. Finally declared to be a victim of "Folie circulaire" (which today would probably be called "bipolar disorder") with manic periods and more melancholic depressive phases, she died in Callan Park ten years after her feet first touched Australian ground. Of her ten years in New South Wales, she had spent more than eight years in public care, paid for by the government.[27] From the point of view of the immigration and emigration agents – the makers and designers of 'transit' with their pragmatic and utilitarian principles – assisting Bland's migration was a costly mistake and should have been prevented by previously rejecting her when applying for a passage.[28]

In spite of stricter migration laws, the shiploads of passengers arriving in Australian ports did not always meet the ideals of the government and prospective employers. Just like Maria Johnston, not all fit into a homogenous, perfectly healthy group of future colonists. For this reason, the Australian side set up an almost equally crucial and obligatory check regarding health and morality to take place on board every arriving ship: this prolonged the actual ending of the transit period for the travellers. Health officers then decided about the state of the vessel, the

27 Hospital for Insane at Callan Park, "Medical Case Book. File 'Elizabeth Bland,'" 1885/05/28–1893/11/28.

28 Immigration Office Sydney, Report to the Principal Under Secretary reporting the Arrival of the Ship 'Roslin Castle' and the Disposal of the Immigrants by that Vessel (Reports by Immigration Agent on Condition of Immigrants and Ships on their Arrival), 1883/03/16 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) R2853: Point 6.

crew and the passengers: this included deciding whether or not quarantine was necessary to prevent contagion and infection.[29]

Every official report about the situation on board an arriving emigrant ship consisted of two pages with a table formed of 17 short questions, which was sent to the Colonial Secretary's Office in the state's capital and stored there. Besides statistical information, this document kept a record of the number and kind of sicknesses prevailing among the passengers throughout the voyage and at the point of arrival. It also counted the dead and born.[30] With the advance of medical research and hygiene standards, the number of disastrous voyages and epidemics on ships diminished, but the visits of a health officer remained part of every arrival ritual.[31] Paying special attention to unusual occurrences or suspicious diagnoses among the passengers, the Colonial Secretary often then initiated further inquiries – firstly about the severity of the disease and secondly, to detect the ones responsible for allowing "ineligible persons"[32] on board.

This writing-and-asking-procedure started immediately to locate where someone had wrongly accepted an applicant or dishonestly signed a certificate. It affected many departments and individuals and was typical of the exercise of control in the public service during this time. The colonial correspondence of 19th-century Australia holds several letters demanding an explanation for certain sick or handicapped people who had landed in Australia obviously ailing, although they had shown a signed reference confirming their health and moral character before departure. Usually, the Colonial Emigration Office in London received an "official despatch" letter from the colonial government, which earnestly called them to account for what sort of immigrants they

29 On quarantine, see the works of Alison Bashford and Peter Hobbins, e.g. Bashford, Alison, ed., *Quarantine: Local and Global Histories*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016 and Bashford, Alison, and Peter Hobbins, "Rewriting Quarantine: Pacific History at Australia's Edge," *Australian Historical Studies* 46, no. 3 (2015): 392–409. doi:10.1080/1031461X.2015.1071860.
30 Health Office Moreton Bay, "Health Officer's Report 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'," 1865/01/05.
31 Woolcock, *Rights of Passage*: 291–292 offers a statistical analysis of reports and statements for Queensland emigrant ships between 1860 and 1890, and shows that the decline in death rates is reflected in the overall generally positive accounts of most voyages.
32 Jordan, "Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report," 1865/03/25: Point 6.

had passed.[33] In consequence, the agents in situ forwarded the request to the doctors, employers, or reverends who had backed a person's application. Mostly this was done with little success because everyone defended himself by emphasizing that the patient had been perfectly healthy and sane when examined before emigration and that there had been no reason to assume a malady or misbehaviour on board. So the correspondence usually ended with two opposing statements, while Down Under the sick ones themselves were rarely asked anything during the period of letters being sent across the oceans.[34]

This way of dealing with individuals who did not match an idealized immigrant template markedly reveals an arrogant and somewhat paternalistic attitude towards every immigrant – and it also emphasizes the notion of controlling power, even after the voyage. One could have assumed that after being granted access to an emigrant ship and setting off to the country of destination, anchoring on the Australian shore might be a merely symbolic final gateway to walk through. Clearly, however, this was neither a guarantee of a successfully finished transit for the travellers, nor was it a guarantee of desirable immigrants for the officials. The last investigation post-voyage was another crucial part of transit. Although not as profoundly researched as in Ellis Island,[35] an externally enforced return was not ruled out entirely, even

33 Emigration Agent Jordan forwarded the information about the insane Maria Johnston to Sub-Agent Pollen with the heavy words: "You will see, however, that the case is a very serious one, and that it will be necessary for you to do anything you can do to clear yourself from the imputation of negligence, with which the Queensland Government considers you chargeable." (Jordan, "Copy of Letter to A.W. Pollen, Sub-Agent in Dublin," 1865/03/24).
34 A number of exemplary letters on immigrants landing with organic diseases and phthisis can be found in Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1875/06/08–1875/09/08: No. 75–78: 638–642.
35 For an overview on the history of the famous American immigration station Ellis Island see Szejnert, Małgorzata, *Ellis Island: A People's History*. London, Minneapolis: Scribe US, 2020 or Bayor, Ronald H., *Encountering Ellis Island: How European Immigrants Entered America,* How Things Worked. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2014. For similar approaches to studying immigration, which are focused on American history and/or the 20th century: Ward, Zachary, "Birds of Passage: Return Migration, Self-Selection and Immigration Quotas," *Explorations in Economic History* 64 (2017): 37–52. doi:10.1016/j.eeh.2016.09.002 and Lüthi, Barbara, *Invading Bodies: Medizin und Immigration in den USA, 1880–1920,* Studien zur historischen Sozialwissenschaft 33. Frankfurt am Main et al.: Campus, 2009.

after having survived the long voyage. Throughout the century, repatriation remained a threatening verdict passed on people suffering from chronic or infectious diseases, such as pulmonary tuberculosis (in the sources, often referred to as "phthisis"), heart defects, or blindness. In the early 1890s, the rigorous radicality of exclusion could end in tragic stories such as the one grieved about in the Salvation Army's journal *The Darkest England Gazette*, quoting an English clergyman's farewell letter before committing suicide. After turning blind, he knew that he was ineligible for emigration or would be sent back as a "burden to you [i.e. his mother] and family".[36]

Indeed, if the chance of recovery was not given or was very low, and an option for family members or agents paying for the return passage existed, then sending people back to Great Britain was an option given very serious consideration. This even happened "at the expense of the Government" sometimes, so a passenger's ticket to Australia could not automatically be treated as a one-way ticket.[37]

The investigation process was the same for all different sorts of epidemic sicknesses: the aim was to discover and shut any hidden doors into 'transit' that even strict immigration laws and medical officers in England had not been able to close properly. It is a telling illustration of controlling transit in hindsight – a question of responsibility and duty rather than care and help. Hence, the language used when speaking about immigrants is impersonal and without empathy.

"Insanity" belonged to the "very serious"[38] criteria of exclusion. Therefore, mental health[39] cases serve as good examples to understand

36 N. N., "Horrors and Sorrows," *The Darkest England Gazette* 9 (1893/08/26): 12.

37 Gothard, *Blue China*: 38–40. Gothard lists several women who had to go back to the United Kingdom due to physical and mental difficulties. To add a male example to this list: Sampson Matthews, a 21-year-old assisted passenger, who arrived on the 'Royal Dane' in November 1869, was diagnosed as suffering from heart disease shortly after his first weeks in Queensland. He was sent "back to his friends in England, at the expense of the Government" in early 1870. (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1871/04/12–1871/06/07: 906–909.)

38 See Jordan, "Copy of Letter to A.W. Pollen, Sub-Agent in Dublin," 1865/03/24.

39 I am using the term "mental health" and "mental illness" in a broad sense when talking about everything that would be labelled as "mental health" issues today. Hereby, I am fully aware of the discourse on psychiatric disorders and the surrounding terminology as most recently presented by Lucy Foulkes: Foulkes, Lucy, *Losing Our Minds: What Mental*

how contested 'transit' was and how fragile the structure of power and hierarchy appeared when confronted with an utter lack of control in situations of seemingly illogical and unreasonable character.

It has already been shown that for the decision-making emigration agents and officials, the pressure was high. The agenda was to allow into the colonies only those who "would prove a blessing to themselves and the country of their adoption".[40] It has also been shown that in times of failing to do so, the colonial immigration department could get quite urgent, insisting on an explanation from a scapegoat abroad. With immigrants suffering from any sort of psychological or psychiatric issues, the charges became even more severe: although the experienced migration agent Henry Jordan in London (a man well-known from the first chapter of this book) considered it quite an extreme and exaggerated disciplinary step, the Queensland Government threatened to dismiss sub-agent Pollen in Dublin, blaming him "culpably negligent" in granting the aforementioned Maria Johnston an assisted passage to Australia.[41] Uttering his astonishment, Jordan wrote in his March Report:

> I cannot suppose the Government will really require me to discharge the Agent Mr Pollen, who is a gentleman of good standing in Dublin, and I believe of high character, without, at least, making diligent enquiry to see if he is to blame in this matter.[42]

Illness Really Is and What It Isn't. London: The Bodley Head, 2021. In this book, I refer to the definitions as outlined by Eghigian, Greg, ed., *The Routledge History of Madness and Mental Health,* Routledge Histories. Basingstoke: Taylor & Francis Group, 2017. I also define the term "disease" to refer to a merely biological understanding of sickness (Littlewood, Roland, "From Disease to Illness and Back Again," *The Lancet* 337, no. 8748 (1991): 1013–1016. doi:10.1016/0140–6736(91)92668-R.)

40 White, Rev. H., Copy of Letter to Hamilton Leslie, Emigration Agent in Dublin (Response to Case of Maria Johnston on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'), 1865/03/25 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 846804; DUP COL/12.

41 Jordan, "Copy of Letter to A.W. Pollen, Sub-Agent in Dublin," 1865/03/24 and Gothard, *Blue China*: 40.

42 Jordan, "Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report," 1865/03/25: Point 7. As *The Press*, a New Zealand newspaper for Christchurch and the region of Canterbury, suggested, a certain A.W. Pollen [or "Pullen"] seemed to have visited Wellington in 1889, travelling via steamship a saloon passenger, probably with two daughters. It is unclear whether this article note refers to the same man acting as migration agent in Dublin in the 1860s. if it

Obviously, Queensland politicians did not regard it necessary to invest in further investigation to find out who was ultimately "to blame in this matter" but were satisfied with identifying Pollen as one Irish sub-agent whose name appeared on the crucial forms that enabled Johnston to embark the emigrant ship. This turned out to be a short-sighted assumption: many more were involved in this transit network of control, selection, exclusion, and approval. Jordan, Pollen, Leslie, White – those were only a few of the men who seemed to be partly responsible for turning the young Irish woman into an assisted migrant. Of course, Pollen did everything he could to negate his supposed guilt, pleading ignorance due to his reliance on other sources and authorities. The real difficulty, however, remained overseen, i.e., the general difficulty of assessing somebody's past and an individual's mental health in particular. The severe consequences looming over all those men involved in accepting a former inmate of an asylum reveal the special attitude towards mental illness in the Victorian age, when the theories, treatments, and views underwent a transformative period.[43]

Once, as a young teenage girl,[44] Maria Johnston had been an inmate of an Irish asylum – an episode the 20-year-old domestic servant had kept to herself when she applied for a new life in Australia. In Ireland, Agent Hamilton Leslie was the hired expert "in the selection of Female Emigrants for the Government Commission",[45] and he readily appointed Johnston when going through her CV, which showed several years of job experience with two "respectable householders'" certificates, and a positive record given by Reverend White, a spiritual authority "of

was, then he underwent the journey himself years later, making his own transit experience, but there is probably no comparison to the sailing vessel experience Maria Johnston went through in 1865. (N. N., "Shipping: Passengers per R.M.S. Kaikoura," *The Press*, 1889/05/29: 4.)

43 Immigrants diagnosed with "disturbed mental state or deficient intellect" regularly arrived and demanded extensive care at governmental costs in consequence. As asylums were still in the making in colonial Australia in the 1860s, the exclusion of mentally unstable immigrants was a politically driven agenda. (See Woolcock, *Rights of Passage*: 292)

44 She probably was under 16 during her stay in an asylum. This can be deducted from Rev. White's answer when challenged to explain his signing her emigration certificate. He emphasized that he had known her for more than four years. (White, "Copy of Letter to Hamilton Leslie, Emigration Agent in Dublin," 1865/03/25.)

45 Pollen, "Copy of Letter to Henry Jordan," 1865/03/25.

the highest honor [sic] and probity".[46] Nobody knew about this troublesome asylum episode in her biography; none of her references mentioned mental health problems at all. The clergyman emphasized his complete astonishment at the development:

> I am very much shocked at the account you give of poor "Maria Johnstone" [sic]. I knew her for more than four years and never had the least idea that she had been at any period of her life in a Lunatic Asylum.[47]

If we are to believe White, what is striking is that Johnston had been able to keep secret something as delicate as a previous stay in a mental health care institution. This is perhaps more surprising than today, where data protection is treated rather differently.

2 Mental Health Care in the Victorian Age

In 19th-century Ireland, people would be admitted to an asylum during a (semi-)public courtroom negotiation, so ending up in an asylum was usually not the result of a private, medical referral to a psychological expert. Overall, medicine and research followed a different track. With a generally growing awareness of caring for the mentally suffering, a number of district asylums spread across the country. Local and central government responsibilities often clashed, however, so the early system of asylums in rural areas often consisted of badly equipped housing and poor facilities.[48] Nevertheless, the fact that ordinary people like Maria Johnston could receive treatment in an official institution in the 1850s reveals crucial changes in the whole system that deserve a closer look in order to understand the historiographical and historical context within which the protagonist in Ireland, the imperial authorities, and the Australian medical situation must all be situated.

46 Jordan, "Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report," 1865/03/25: Point 6.
47 White, "Copy of Letter to Hamilton Leslie, Emigration Agent in Dublin," 1865/03/25.
48 Cox, Catherine, *Negotiating Insanity in the Southeast of Ireland, 1820–1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012: 73–77.

In an interconnected, imperial world, some cultural and medical tensions significantly shaped the British history of "mental health".[49] Then as now, it can pose a challenge to established beliefs and knowledge when we try to define mental health and draw boundaries between 'normal' and 'abnormal' so the sensitive nature of the topic makes it essential to adhere to the constructiveness of every category that claims to distinguish the sane from the insane.[50] Michel Foucault's work undoubtedly stands out: it is a milestone of profound research dealing with the marginalized and inconvenient maniac. Though certainly not undisputed and blisteringly criticized by scholars such as Andrew Scull, Foucault's ground-breaking analysis of the asylum, the prison, and power relations are also key contributions to 'history from below'.[51] Within this tradition, the "lives of the neglected dead" feature prominently in my analysis, too, albeit without apparently "resurrectionist ambitions".[52]

Broader oeuvres on the medical history of mental illnesses can be found in the 1990s, such as the seminal overview provided by German Berrios.[53] He also contributed to the 19th-century section on psychiatry in the large book project "History of Psychiatry and Medical Psy-

49 As mentioned before and based on Eghigian, *The Routledge History of Madness and Mental Health* and Littlewood, "From Disease to Illness and Back Again", I try not to use the biologically connoted term "mental disease" unreflectively. I am no self-declared post hoc doctor attempting to diagnose the historical actors on their psychological constitution. Besides, I am taking the language of the original source seriously and make it clear when talking about "madness", "mania", et al. as used in the 19th century.

50 "What has often been understood as the discovery of a new disease was on closer inspection more of a re-framing of older knowledge under new and unique conditions." (Aronowitz, Robert, "Framing Disease: An Underappreciated Mechanism for the Social Patterning of Health," *Social Science & Medicine* 67, no. 1 (2008): 1–9: 8.) For the current state of affairs and to clarify today's language and (mis)understandings in dealing with mental health: Foulkes, *Losing Our Minds*. See also Tighe, Janet A., "The Legal Art of Psychiatric Diagnosis: Searching for Reliability," in *Framing Disease: Studies in Cultural History*, ed. Charles E. Rosenberg. Health and Medicine in American Society. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992: 206–226.

51 Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1965 and Scull, Andrew, "Michel Foucault's History of Madness," *History of the Human Sciences* 3, no. 1 (1990): 57–67. doi:10.1177/095269519000300109.

52 Gamsa, Mark, "Biography and (Global) Microhistory," *New Global Studies* 11, no. 3 (2017): 231–241. doi:10.1515/ngs-2017-0024: 234.

53 Berrios, German E., *The History of Mental Symptoms: Descriptive Psychopathology since the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

chology", edited by Edwin Wallace and John Gach.[54] Last but not least, attention should be paid to the "Routledge History of Madness and Mental Health"[55].

Like most historiographies, they roughly distinguish between two movements characterizing the treatment and understanding of mental illness in the late 18th and 19th century: the moral and the medical.[56] One of the major changes in mental health politics significantly affected Western society in general: an innovative agenda of individually designed and adapted "moral treatment"[57] replaced older forms of hiding away patients suffering from psychopathological diseases. In historiography, the impact and intention of this reformed way of confinement has been both praised as liberating and condemned as oppressive.[58]

What lay behind "moral treatment"? In the tradition of the Enlightenment and profiting from French physician Philippe Pinel's approaches to insanity, a new definition of madness entered the medical discourse.[59] This humanitarian approach, closely connected with

54 Wallace, Edwin R., and John Gach, eds., *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology*. Boston: Springer US, 2008.

55 Eghigian, *The Routledge History of Madness and Mental Health*.

56 Shepherd, Anna, *Institutionalizing the Insane in Nineteenth-Century England,* Studies for the Society for the Social History of Medicine 20. London, New York: Routledge, 2014; Wise, Sarah, *Inconvenient People: Lunacy, Liberty and the Mad-Doctors in Victorian England*. Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2013; Melling, Joseph, and Bill Forsythe, *The Politics of Madness: The State, Insanity and Society in England, 1845–1914,* Routledge Studies in the Social History of Medicine 20. London, New York: Routledge, 2006.

57 Even though the terminology "moral treatment", "moral management", or "moral therapy" might not be absolutely accurately translated and has been criticized before (e.g. by Weiner, Dora B., "The Madman in the Light of Reason: Enlightenment Psychiatry. Part I and Part II," in *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology*, ed. Edwin R. Wallace and John Gach. Boston: Springer US, 2008: 255–303), I want to stick to this commonly accepted term here.

58 See Knowles, Thomas, and Serena Trowbridge, "Introduction," in *Insanity and the Lunatic Asylum in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Thomas Knowles and Serena Trowbridge. Perspectives in Economic and Social History 36. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2015: 1–10.

59 For a short evaluation of Philippe Pinel's contribution to the treatment of asylum inmates: Scull, Andrew, *Madness in Civilization: A Cultural History of Insanity from the Bible to Freud, from the Madhouse to Modern Medicine*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015: 202–209 and Pressman, Jack D., "Concepts of Mental Illness in the West," in *The Cambridge World History of Human Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995: 59–85,here: 62–63. The sharpest critique of how historiography long glorified Pinel came from Foucault (Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*). Keeping his re-analysis

William and Samuel Tuke's reformed York Retreat in the United Kingdom,[60] insisted on the personal rights of human beings and the curability of patients, thus leading to an institutionalization of the mentally ill without physical restraint. Madness was seen as induced by circumstances such that a successful dislocation from harmful settings and transfer to a new place became essential. The modern belief held that recovery was possible through an utter change of environment and externally stressful and devastating factors – and many asylums subscribed to this approach in the 19th century.[61]

With an increasing centralization of public institutions replacing or taking over small private asylums, the medical lobby made an urgent call for professionalization and scientific know-how. Arguing against lay specialists conducting a purely social and psychological therapy, this development fostered the large increase of experts in the growing field of medical, biological, and philanthropic research and initiatives. "Psychiatry" as a medical discipline of its own evolved, explaining insanity by "brain pathology", as did investigations into family structures and hereditary causes of mental derangement. Finally, both approaches, the moral and medical treatment resulted in a modified dominance of the medical perspective and therefore medically trained personnel. With gradually installed medical superintendents in asylums and retreats, the development from "madness to mental illness" shaped the Western mid-19th century significantly. Asylums became the accepted and powerful places to house and treat people legally declared insane, and Vic-

and the subsequent modifications in mind, Pinel's impact remains crucial nevertheless, see Sémelaigne, René, *Philippe Pinel et Son Oeuvre: Au Point de Vue de la Santé Mentale*. Paris: Harmattan, 2001.

60 William Tuke, a Quaker merchant, founded the York Retreat in 1792 as a counterpart to existing lunatic institutions. Its proclamation of "moral management" without chains and straightjackets became the model for reformed approaches to the treatment and perspective on the insane. His grandson Samuel Tuke continued in publishing their findings successfully. Later, the York Retreat also played a decisive role in pushing the medical professionalization of the superintendents and doctors working in the institutions. (Scull, "Madness in Civilisation": 202–212.)

61 See Sedlmayr, Gerold, *The Discourse of Madness in Britain, 1790–1815: Medicine, Politics, Literature,* Studien zur englischen Romantik 10. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2011: 17–86.

torian society started to pay taxes for local authorities to build and run them efficiently.[62]

For one special group of mentally ill people, namely the criminally insane, Victorian society had passed a separate law in 1838 that required a medical examination before deciding whether to send a person off to prison or to an asylum. Medical judgments therefore found their way into the legislative and jurisdictive realm of the Empire. "Dangerous lunatic" became the common and official term for erratic people posing a potential threat to society.[63] When asylums became the alternative to gaols, inmates often counted as criminals and patients simultaneously: distinguishing between the two was not always crystal clear. Of course, this notion of danger and violence did not refer to everyone in the asylum, but it certainly shaped the widespread perception of asylums being associated with prisons rather than with hospitals.[64]

The equation of jails and asylums within one single prison building was kept alive in the colonies and in Ireland much longer than in England itself, where the Poor Law took over, which turned the asylums more into workhouses. Against this background, young Maria Johnston's stay in an Irish asylum in the 1850s most likely did not count as one of her most pleasant experiences. A Poor Law as it was introduced in Great Britain never found its way into the Australian colonies. Until the 1860s, the few colonial asylums were an essential part of the Australian welfare system[65] but did not live up to the standards of "modern establishments" and received negative press reviews with complaints

62 Scull, "Madness in Civilisation": 208–223; Knowles and Trowbridge, "Introduction"; Shepherd, *Institutionalizing the Insane in Nineteenth-Century England*: 115–117 and Weiner, "The Madman in the Light of Reason".

63 Scull, *Madness in Civilization*: 190–199; Shepherd, *Institutionalizing the Insane in Nineteenth-Century England*: 115–117; Finnane, Mark, "From Dangerous Lunatic to Human Rights? The Law and Mental Illness in Australian History," in *Madness in Australia: Histories, Heritage and the Asylum*, ed. Catharine Coleborne and Dolly MacKinnon. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2003: 23–36.

64 Prior, Pauline, "Prisoner or Patient? The Official Debate on the Criminal Lunatic in Nineteenth-Century Ireland," *History of Psychiatry* 15, no. 58 (2004): 177–192. doi:10.1177/0957154X04039349 and Finnane, "From Dangerous Lunatic to Human Rights?": 24–26.

65 Malcolm, Elizabeth, "Irish Immigrants in a Colonial Asylum during Australian Gold Rushes, 1848–1869," in *Asylums, Mental Health Care and the Irish: Historical Studies, 1800–2010*, ed. Pauline M. Prior. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2012: 119–148: 125–126; Coleborne, Catharine, "Passage to the Asylum: The Role of the Police in Committals of the Insane in

about the overcrowded, dirty and chaotic institutions in many "British colonial towns".[66] In the colonies, where immigrants were expected to be exposed to severe challenges of possibly lonely and straining lives, the generally observed rise of lunatics in the Empire soon called for proper housing. This resulted in erecting new asylums in Australian colonies like Victoria and Queensland from the late 1860s/1870s onwards.[67]

Maria Johnston ended up in one of these asylums, one that had only recently opened its gates while separating the "Lunatic Asylum" and the "Gaol at Brisbane": Wolston Park Hospital for the Insane (later known as Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum or Goodna Mental Hospital).[68] The patient files are still available and show that Johnston was not the only asylum inmate from Ireland. In fact, the Irish formed a significant group of immigrants in the Australian eastern colonies and further investigation has shown that the Irish were more likely to be admitted to a British or American asylum than the English or Scottish. For Australia, the focus on Irish patients is still new, but fits well into the discourse about mental health among the Irish-born. Considering this, historians have started to address questions of ethnic and religious groups, gender and mental health more directly, leading to interesting findings on the connections and stereotypes adhered to the so-called Irish diaspora – a diaspora that Maria Johnston belonged to as well.[69]

Victoria, Australia, 1848–1900," in *The Confinement of the Insane: International Perspectives, 1800–1965*, ed. David Wright and Roy Porter. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003: 129–148: 129–130 and Finnane, "From Dangerous Lunatic to Human Rights?".

66 Lindsay, William L., "Insanity in British Emigrants of the Middle and Upper Ranks," *Edinburgh Medical Journal* 15, no. 3 (1869): 214–228: 228.

67 MacKinnon, Dolly, "Bodies of Evidence: Dissecting Madness in Colonial Victoria (Australia)," in *The Body Divided: Human Beings and Human 'Materials' in Modern Medical History*, ed. Sarah Ferber and Sally Wilde. Burlington: Ashgate, 2011: 75–108: 81–82.

68 Throughout its multi-faceted history from the 19th to the 21st century, this institution often changed its name. "Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum", "Hospital for the Insane Goodna", "Goodna Mental Hospital", "Brisbane Mental Hospital", "Brisbane Special Hospital", "Wolston Park Hospital" and the "Park Centre for Mental Health Treatment, Research and Education" are all the same location. (Mynott, *Wacol, Wolston and Woogaroo (1823–2014). Vol. 1*: 35.)

69 Coleborne, Catharine, *Insanity, Identity and Empire: Immigrants and Institutional Confinement in Australia and New Zealand, 1873–1910*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015; McCarthy, Angela, and Catharine Coleborne, eds., *Migration, Ethnicity, and Mental Health: International Perspectives, 1840–2010*. New York: Routledge, 2012; and Coleborne and MacKinnon, *Madness in Australia*. On the Irish: Malcolm, Elizabeth, "Mental Health and Migration: The Case of the Irish, 1850s–1990s," in *Migration, Ethnicity, and Mental*

2.1 Migration history and mental health

In addition to cultural and national attributes, the perceived link between travelling, settling elsewhere, being uprooted and feeling lonely or depressed has been studied in various publications, which try to figure out the correlation and nexus of "madness and migration".[70] The ground-breaking study by Littlewood and Lipsedge on Black immigrants in Great Britain and the mental health of ethnic minorities is still relevant today.[71] The spotlight of those studies is clearly on the immigrant's performance in the new country, less on the journey and preparation, but:

> […] to gain an understanding the impact of the migration experience, factors such as the differing cultural understandings of mental illness/health; pre-migration, migration, and post-migration experience (especially in relation to adverse events and trauma); culture 'shock' and its stages need to be taken into account. Such factors, include, amongst a number of others, the rural/urban background of country of origin; individual factors, including role performance and resilience; the socio-economic-political factors of the new country, including immigrants' perceptions of acceptance; and individual/group aspirations.[72]

Health: International Perspectives, 1840–2010, ed. Angela McCarthy and Catharine Coleborne. New York: Routledge, 2012: 15–38 and Malcolm, "Irish Immigrants in a Colonial Asylum during Australian Gold Rushes, 1848–1869": 118–122.

70 One of the earlier historical migration studies on poverty and mental health in 19th century England is presented by Adair, Richard, Joseph Melling, and Bill Forsythe, "Migration, Family Structure and Pauper Lunacy in Victorian England: Admissions to the Devon County Pauper Lunatic Asylum, 1845–1900," *Continuity and Change* 12, no. 3 (1997): 373–401. Of particular interest for migration schemes and travelling is Blok, Gemma, "'Insane Emigrants' in Transit: Psychiatric Patients' Files as a Source for the History of Return Migration, c. 1910," *Social History of Medicine* 28, no. 4 (2015): 889–901. doi:10.1093/shm/hkv023. Contemporary studies in the „International Journal of Mental Health" offer a range of contemporary medical articles on migration and mental health, such as Gupta, Susham, and Dinesh Bhugra, "Globalization, Economic Factors and Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders," *International Journal of Mental Health* 38, no. 3 (2009): 53–65.

71 Littlewood, Roland, and Maurice Lipsedge, *Aliens and Alienists: Ethnic Minorities and Psychiatry*, 2nd ed. London: Unwin Hyman, 1989.

72 Briggs, Lynne, Christopher Talbot, and Katie Melvin, "Demoralisation and Migration Experience," *International Review of Modern Sociology* 33, no. 2 (2007): 193–209.

With a special focus on Antipodean history (primarily New Zealand), Angela McCarthy and Catherine Coleborne pursued the question of how post-migration, nationality, identity and asylums interplay.[73]

Another aspect that often comes into play when looking at migration and mental health is the field of "maritime history". The concept of the sea as a menacing space and the ship as a floating "heterotopia"[74] makes this association even more likely. Considering the hostile environment and the utter dependency on a man-made vessel far away from safe shores, it is understandable that the associated imagery features hallucinations, unreachability, and isolation and it was not only in contemporary German studies[75] where the connection between working at sea and mental illness resulted in the stereotypical "crazy seaman", as exemplified by Herman Melville's fictional "Captain Ahab" and related figures.[76] From a non-literary perspective, the crew on board ship with sailors, mates, pursers and captains, still offers a research field that needs to be analysed in more detail in order to comprehend how mental illness, recovery, and diagnoses influenced the careers of individuals, the Royal Navy's asylum system, or medical history in general.[77]

73 E.g. McCarthy, Angela, *Migration, Ethnicity, and Madness: New Zealand, 1860–1910*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2015 and McCarthy, Angela, "Expelling and Repatriating the Colonial Insane: New Zealand before the First World War," in *Subverting Empire: Deviance and Disorder in the British Colonial World*, ed. Will Jackson and Emily J. Manktelow. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015: 145–166 and McCarthy and Coleborne, *Migration, Ethnicity, and Mental Health*

74 Foucault, Michel, and Jay Miskowiec, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 22–27. doi:10.2307/464648: 27.

75 See the early 20th century statistical analysis investigating the higher frequency of mental diseases in the German navy compared to the army: Podestà, Hans, "Häufigkeit und Ursachen seelischer Erkrankungen in der deutschen Marine unter Vergleich mit der Statistik der Armee," *Archiv für Psychiatrie* 40, no. 3 (1905): 651–703.

76 It is no coincidence that in the middle of the 19th century, author Herman Melville released his famous novel about a mad captain's quest for the huge white whale. (Melville, Herman, *Moby-Dick*. London: Penguin, 1851 [2015].)

77 On the British Royal Navy and mental health: Reger, Karl-Heinz, *'Dann sprang er über Bord': Alltagspsychologie und psychische Erkrankung an Bord britischer Schiffe im 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014 and Pietsch, Roland, "Hearts of Oak and Jolly Tars? Heroism and Insanity in the Georgian Navy," *Journal for Maritime Research* 15, no. 1 (2013): 69–82. doi:10.1080/21533369.2013.783169. With a special focus on the First World War: Jones, Edgar, and Neil Greenberg, "Royal Navy Psychiatry: Organization, Methods and Outcomes, 1900–1945," *Mariner's Mirror* 92, no. 2 (2006): 190–203. For research on the

That dynamics on board can imprint themselves on individual lives is excellently shown by Angela McCarthy offering an intriguing study about madness among ship passengers. By drawing on medical files as well as personal records, she reveals the struggle to avoid a lapse of control on board in the face of "madness". Highlighting the importance of the act of migration itself as one probable source of mental stress, McCarthy's work thus feeds nicely into the argument that a transit-experience often does not disappear without a trace but can leave a memory of psychological challenges.[78]

2.2 Definitions, reactions, society

> Madness indeed has its meanings, elusive and evanescent as our attempts to capture them have been. It remains a fundamental puzzle, a reproach to reason, inescapably part and parcel of civilisation itself.[79]

Maria Johnston was declared "maniacal" by the ship surgeon Dr Henry J. Hinxman while on board.[80] But what did he mean by that, and why was it treated as a criterion for excluding someone from immigration? Not unlike today, defining and identifying the "lunatic, mad, insane, unsound, maniac" posed a challenge: as outlined before, a range of options and ideas coexisted. Looking at contemporary definitions helps to understand better which ideas and treatment solutions were prevalent. Broad publications by intellectuals occurred side by side with singular studies on melancholia, hysteria, nervous disorder and other mental diseases.[81]

merchant ships: Kain, Jennifer S., "Undesirable Merchant Seamen in Transit: Harold Shaw, the Antarctic and the Asylum," *International Journal of Maritime History* 30, no. 3 (2018): 442–457. doi:10.1177/0843871418781399.

78 McCarthy, Angela, "Migration and Madness at Sea: The Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Voyage to New Zealand," *Social History of Medicine* 28, no. 4 (2015): 706–724.

79 Scull, Andrew, "Madness in Civilisation," *Lancet* 385, no. 9973 (2015): 1066–1067. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(15)60591-8: 1067.

80 Hinxman, Henry J., Surgeon's Report on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright', 1865/12/31 (Queensland State Archives) 1865/3499.

81 The vast literature of this time can be divided into more practical and somatically oriented books on the treatment of various symptoms, often written by experts based on their personal experience, such as (ordered from newest to oldest): Hirt, Ludwig, *The Diseases*

With only limited options of generally accepted medical vocabulary available for doctors, diagnoses often sounded similar, although the patients displayed different symptoms. The most common illnesses in the asylums were "dementia", "mania" and "melancholia". Based on the patient's mental condition, gender and social background, the symptoms assigned to each diagnosis looked different. Specialists held fast to their own definition of the terms they used, which made communication and research more difficult.[82]

The two main approaches to viewing mental disturbances professionally were, first, primarily pathological and, second, functional. These two did not automatically contradict each other, but could work together, although the emphasis of treatment and the patient's experiences differed in each. The first sought answers to aberrant human reactions in neurobiological dysfunctions. The second became more popular after the mid-1800s and paid more attention to the behaviour than to the brain. Both views existed side by side in Great Britain in the 1850s and 1860s.[83] The first can be seen as a perspective resulting from a rationalized mindset. In the early 19th century, the French psychiatrist Jean-Etienne Esquirol had already defined mania as "une affection cérébrale, chronique, ordinairement sans fièvre, caractérisée par la perturbalion et l'exaltation de la sensibilité de l'intelligence el de la volonté. [...]".[84]

of the Nervous System: A Text-Book for Physicians and Students. London: Medical Heritage Library, 1899; Macpherson, John, *Mental Affections: An Introduction to the Study of Insanity*. London: Macmillan, 1899; Charcot, Jean M., *Lectures on the Diseases of the Nervous System*. London: New Sydenham Society, 1881; Laycock, Thomas, ed., *The Principles and Methods of Medical Observation and Research: For the Use of Advanced Students and Junior Practitioners*, 2nd ed. Edinburgh, London: Maclachlan & Stewart; Simpkin, Marshall, and Co, 1864. Some were translated from French, e.g. Esquirol, Jean-Étienne D., and Ebenezer K. Hunt, *Mental Maladies. A Treatise on Insanity: Translated from the French with Additions by Ebenezer K. Hunt*. Philadelphia, 1845.

82 See Shepherd, *Institutionalizing the Insane in Nineteenth-Century England*: 118–125.

83 This "shift to functional concepts and environmentalism" is well described in Gach, John, "Biological Psychiatry in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology*, ed. Edwin R. Wallace and John Gach. Boston: Springer US, 2008: 381–418, esp. 385–390.

84 Esquirol, Jean-Étienne D., "De la Manie (1818)," in *Des Maladies Mentales Considérées sous les Rapports Médical, Hygiénique et Médico-Légal: Vol. 2*, ed. Jean-Étienne D. Esquirol. 2 vols. Paris, London: J.B. Baillière, 1838: 131–218: 132–134.

In like manner, the British neurologists and institutional psychiatrists John C. Bucknell and Daniel H. Tuke presented "insanity" as a dysfunction of the brain in their highly influential "Manual of Psychological Medicine":

> Whatever definition of insanity is adopted by the student, it is all-important that he should regard disease as an essential condition; in other words, that insanity is a condition in which the intellectual faculties, or the moral sentiments, or the animal propensities – any one, or all of them – have their free action destroyed by disease, whether congenital or acquired. He will not go far wrong if he regard [sic] insanity as a disease of the brain, affecting one or more of the mental faculties – intellectual or emotional.[85]

A definition such as this built on logically traceable reasons for otherwise incomprehensible human acts. As a result, the observing authorities involved in the 'Elizabeth Ann Bright' case quickly had an explanation at hand: Maria Johnston had been mentally instable before, as proved by a former stay in an asylum, and therefore, allowing her in as an assisted and paid-for female migrant was inacceptable. The Colonial Agent, the Immigration Office, and the General Secretary assumed that every lunatic had been a lunatic before emigration, and hence, every person of "unsound mind" could have been excluded pre-transit. Consequently, some sort of misinformation, lie, or deceit must have allowed them to sneak in.

Both emigration agent Jordan and sub-agent Pollen thought along the same lines. Fearing for his job, Pollen finally uttered doubts concerning the girl's identity ("As Rev. Mr. White states that he knew Maria Johnston to be of sound mind for more than four years it has occurred to me that this might possibly have been another Maria Johnston on

85 Bucknill, John C., Daniel H. Tuke, London. University College et al., "A Manual of Psychological Medicine: Insanity" <archive.org/details/b21270843>: 88. Also cited in Gach, "Biological Psychiatry in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries": 386.

board the 'E.A. Bright'").[86] Similarly, Jordan defended himself and his partners with the following words: "at the same time every precaution on my part, and on the part of the Agent acting under me, may be insufficient in some cases to prevent ineligible persons from creeping through." Thus, a deliberate withholding of facts by the patient herself finally became the narrative linking the bits and pieces of Maria Johnston's transit together. In the end, it was Johnston herself who was the easiest target for the blame being sought in the nervous exchange of official letters.

> She was, in all probability, what appeared to be in perfect health at the time [of embarking the emigrant vessel], and her having been at a former period in an asylum was probably not within the knowledge of anyone, saving herself, who was concerned in her Emigration.[87]

This whole correspondence reveals a lot about the practical consequences contemporary concepts of mental health had on migrants and their minimal chances of being included in society; something even more difficult in a narrowed-down and strictly controlled colonial society. If healing and improvement were rather unlikely, then of course the immigrants had to be carefully selected and double checks on certificates were recommended. Indeed, in several cases, the practice of tracing back the signatures made it possible for the government to find a "scapegoat", who then had to pay for the repatriation of the insane. Suspicions about any claimed ignorance of the mental struggles of a person known well to the referee did not come completely out of the blue: from time to time, families and friends deliberately sent off their troublesome, addiction-prone, or mentally unstable relatives, hoping to thus maintain the family's reputation or escape the burden of taking care of them:

86 Pollen, A.W., Copy of Letter to Henry Jordan (Further Response to Case of Maria Johnston on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'), 1865/04/05 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 846804; DUP COL/12.
87 Jordan, "Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report," 1865/03/25: Point 6.

> The theory on which those persons apparently act, who send imbeciles of the classes just mentioned, to our colonies, is somewhat as follows: – If the *patient* (I must call him so, regarding him, as I do, as the proper object of *medical* care and advice), having arrived at proper years, and possessed of suitable habit of body, shows no aptitude for, or indifference to, business, it is supposed that colonial life will benefit him by throwing him, as it is called, "on his own resources," and developing, by the stern necessity for living, that energy which is simply dormant amidst the luxuries and affections of home. If, on the other hand, his habits are vicious, the object is rather simply extrusion from the respectable society, on which such habits bring disgrace no less on the individual than on the so-called "respectable" families to which he is related. Family credit is concerned: the patient's fortune is not too curiously discussed; and there is a present feeling of relief at getting out of sight, and if possible out of ken, the "black sheep" who has been so long and so much a "skeleton in the cupboard" – a source of grief and expense to those to whom he is nearest, if not also now dearest.[88]

Hugh McCabe, aged 23, arriving in Maryborough in January 1875, was one of those suspected of having been sent off by his friends. As a "dangerous lunatic", his aggressive and irascible behaviour made him a difficult passenger during the voyage and brought him into an Australian asylum afterwards.[89] The Police Magistrate and Assistant Immigration Agent at Maryborough, George Faircloth, diagnosed him as "suffering from imbecility" of a murderous kind and suggested "that his friends at home got rid of him in consequence".[90] However, in contrast to Maria Johnston, whose employers' and physician's certificates could not be found anymore,[91] the detective work on McCabe's case was not without

88 Lindsay, "Insanity in British Emigrants of the Middle and Upper Ranks": 217.
89 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1875/06/08–1875/09/08: No. 4: 575–577 and No. 87: 646 contain all the letters on Hugh McCabe, coming as free passenger on the 'Gauntlet' in 1874.
90 Faircloth, George, Police Magistrate and Assistant Immigration Agent Maryborough: Letter to Immigration Depot Brisbane 1875/02/04, in: Queensland Legislative Assembly: No. 87: 646.
91 Pollen, "Copy of Letter to Henry Jordan," 1865/04/05.

success. The persistent Agent General Richard Daintree identified his parents, who agreed to take care of him, and sent him back home again.[92]

In those and similar cases, where mentally disturbed passengers frightened others (in one case, a mentally disturbed steerage passenger "took" an emigrating family's daughter and had to be "brought down and confind with tow keepers")[93], it is noteworthy that the patient him-/herself remained completely silent. There was no chance of giving a short statement or a personal report. The patient's voice, opinion or story was not asked for. Johnston remained merely an analysed object, subject to external powers, who tried to make sense of her change from a reliable worker to a "perpetual author of mischief" in an Australian asylum. The medical solution that suited the male doctors best was another key word, representative of the 19th century ideas of gender and sex. On board the general label "mania" had been applied to Johnston, and then at Wolston Park Hospital she received another, more specific diagnosis: "hysteria" was added in brackets.[94]

2.3 Hysteria, gender and the male gaze

Until now, controlling transit has been analysed as something based on the conviction that certain difficulties needing ongoing financial and administrative care could be avoided by separating the goats from the sheep. The line of argumentation was that, especially with mental illnesses, a tendency or disposition within the intending immigrant should be detectable by monitoring forces trained to check the "suitability" of migrants. If a person of "unsound mind" still arrived at the Immigration Depot, the fault was sought in negligence or deliberate deceit in relation to the supposedly healthy references in the North-

92 "As both correspondents say that McCabe's parents would take care of him if sent home, I have written to them to confirm this; and if they do so, perhaps the better course would be to send him home again." (Daintree, Richard, Agent-General: Letter to Colonial Secretary, Charing Cross 1875/05/12, in: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1875/06/08–1875/09/08: No. 4: 575.)

93 Goddard, Eliza, and Alan F. Taylor, Diary of Steerage Passenger on Board the 'General Hewett' (Information on Ship and Passengers with Transcript of Diary. Edited by Alan F. Taylor), 1852/08/14–1852/11/30 [2008] (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 9205: 22.

94 Wolston Park Hospital, "Case Book (Male and Female Admissions)," 1860–1916: 71.

ern hemisphere. The same happened with 16-year-old Jemima White, whose arrival in Bowen, Queensland, like Maria Johnston's ten years before, led to a governmental letter exchange after an alarmed telegram announcing an "idiot girl" with nonetheless perfect certificates. She came as a free passenger to find employment as a kitchen or children's maid but turned out to have received treatment for "an [sic] hysterical attack, brought on by some excitement on the subject of religion" as a teenage girl in one of Dublin's hospitals.[95]

The medical category of 'hysteria' was part of a discourse frequently used to explain the unexplainable. Across the Australian emigrant voyages, there are numerous examples of hysterical panic among the single girls[96] or women "lying in historicks [sic]"[97]. For centuries, hysteria had been an almost entirely feminized disease said to be caused by a wandering womb or other "uterine affections" occurring primarily in unmarried girls.[98] In the 19th century, 'hysteria' was often denounced as somehow pretentious with a touch of exaggerated mimicry; the fits,

95 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1875/06/08–1875/09/08: No. 50: 626–627.

96 E.g. ordered chronologically from oldest to newest: Slade, John, Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes', 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895] (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 5101:25. Armstrong (Holley), Mary, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Severn' (1863), Diary on Board the 'Alfred' back to England (1864), and Matron's Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1873–1874) (Transcribed by Barry Harris), 1863/07/14–1874/02/01 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS SEV: 10; Yaun, David/Spence, Daphne I./Yaun, Jenny: David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864. His Account, in Diary Form, of his Family's Voyage from England to Australia aboard the 'General Caulfield', Frenchs Forest 1991: 18–19; Pender, Thomas, Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw', 1883/01/12–1883/05/17 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15344; Box 4723/1: 1883/04/04 [127–128]; Care, Charles, Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient', 1888/03/03–1888/04/12 (Museum Victoria) HT 30972: 27–29.

97 On a steamship journey to Sydney in 1887, the engineer's wife upon watching her husband getting involved in a severe row with the ship steward broke down with fits on the floor. (Main, George, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Selembria', 1887/11/07–1888/02/26 (National Library of Australia) MS 8749:4.)

98 See Philp, Robert K., *The Dictionary of Medical and Surgical Knowledge and Complete Practical Guide in Health and Disease for Families, Emigrants, and Colonists*. London: Houlston and Wright, 1864: 369–370 or Laycock, Thomas, *A Treatise on the Nervous Diseases of Women: Comprising an Inquiry into the Nature, Causes, and Treatment of Spinal and Hysterical Disorders*. London, 1840 as exemplary of early/mid-19th century medical standard. Historiographical overviews following the development of 'hysteria' across the ages are provided by: Scull, Andrew, *Hysteria: The Biography,* Biographies of Disease). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 and earlier Micale, Mark S., *Approaching Hysteria: Disease and its Interpretation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

crying and fainting were often dismissed as overtly emotional weakness not to be taken too seriously. Walter Johnson from Guy's Hospital in London started his "Essay on the Diseases of Young Women"[99] with the vivid characteristics of 'hysteria', underlined by a paternalistic tone.[100] According to the enlightened school of moral treatment, the male physician becomes the "benevolent mentor" leading the confused female patient on a path to "re-educate the ill-educated mind". Then, so the story goes, the hysterical woman will graciously turn to rationality again.[101] For help with this process of calming down, the writer even suggests travelling by ship in order to be healed from the hysterical weakness ("a month or two at sea […] will occasionally effect a complete revolution in the physical frame"). Here, the ship becomes a site of rest, strengthening the ailing.[102]

Rob Boddice presents a contrary interpretation of travelling at sea as actually enabling and permitting hysteria. He traces back an emigrant ship's voyage, the 'Earl Dalhousie' sailing to Adelaide in 1874/75, that became famous for an outbreak of "hysterical epilepsy and tetanus" among several women on board. His careful analysis of the gender discourse concerning the expression of emotion and pain shows that the "cultural script of hysteria" made room for women to succumb to their feelings according to the generally accepted norms and emotional practices. His main thesis is that through the special travelling setting an emotional refuge[103] emerged that the women could use for the duration of the voyage, stopping with their hysterical "performances" afterwards –

99 Johnson, Walter, *An Essay on the Diseases of Young Women*. London, 1849. The same text appears a year later under the more exciting title "The Morbid Emotions of Women" (Johnson, Walter, *The Morbid Emotions of Women: Their Origin, Tendencies, and Treatment*. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co, 1850).

100 Johnson, *An Essay on the Diseases of Young Women*: 4–5.

101 Johnson: 253–256.

102 Johnson: 246–247.

103 "Emotional refuge. A relationship, ritual, or organization (whether informal or formal) that provides safe release from prevailing emotional norms and allows relaxation of emotional effort, with or without an ideological justification, which may shore up or threaten the existing emotional regime." (Reddy, William M., *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001: 129.) More on the concept of emotional communities and emotional regimes can be found in the following two chapters on "Imagining Transit" and "Feeling Transit".

probably subconsciously assuming that "what happened aboard ship stayed aboard ship".[104]

These two ways of looking at the sea voyage and relating it to mental health are quite different. On the one hand, there is the 19th century argument that a sea voyage could support recovering from hysteria, thus working against mental disturbances; on the other hand, the 21st century argument that a sea voyage triggered or supported an outbreak of hysteria, thus allowing for mental disturbances.

However, neither of these fit well with the case studies looked at so far: neither Maria Johnston nor Jemima White were mysteriously healed from their suffering through the months at sea (as suggested by Johnson's treatise). Nor did this problem stay aboard (as interpreted by Boddice and his analysis of surgeon John Hudson's account[105]) but remained with them after leaving the ship until being admitted to an asylum.

What then is another reading of the proceedings? When in transit, in an enclosed setting, a gated community with no separate rooms to flee the medical gaze, the gender-disbalance becomes even more striking. From the perspective of men in control, hysteria escaped the given medical categories even more than general mania or lunacy does. From a feminist and gender theory approach looking at the underlying connotation within the whole discourse of medical experts in Europe, the ship surgeons on board, colonial agents in Great Britain, and reverends in Ireland reduced many women's bodies to entities craving for procreation and being unable to master their emotions. Confronted with a seemingly irrational behaviour of the opposite sex, the men then demonstrated their power by assigning negative and ambiguous attributes to the patients.[106]

How does this relate to questions of controlling transit, though? First, the diagnosis in itself is an expression of insecurity. In the immi-

104 Boddice, Rob, "Hysteria or Tetanus? Ambivalent Embodiments and the Authenticity of Pain," in *Emotional Bodies: The Historical Performativity of Emotions*, ed. Dolores Martín-Moruno and Beatriz Pichel. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2019: 19–35.
105 Hudson, John, "Epidemic of Hysterical Epilepsy and Tetanus," *The Lancet* 106, no. 2719 (1875): 525–526. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(02)30611-1.
106 For a summary of feminist and gender-theory writings on 'hysteria', see Gherovici, Patricia, *Please Select Your Gender: From the Invention of Hysteria to the Democratizing of Transgenderism*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011: Chapter 3.

gration laws, "hysteria" was not listed among the criteria of exclusion. However, for the gendered gaze of a ship surgeon or immigration officer, emotions, single women, weakness, and madness were close neighbours; it was regarded as a suspicious indicator of trouble in the colonies. Secondly, the cases show the peculiar silencing of the "mad" – and in those cases in particular – the *female* "mad" by an externally controlling network of authorities. Thirdly, another way of looking at the connection and interrelation of 'transit' and mental health should be considered: 'transit' in itself as the contemporarily neglected cause of lasting mental stress, slipping away from official control.

3 Another Perspective on the Impact of Transit

For the officials in the Australian migration business, any mental or psychological irregularity detected in governmentally funded and selected immigrants must have sprung from a previous disease or a deliberate deceit by the migrant's referees. The hasty attempts to identify the careless person in the United Kingdom that did not reject the imbecile or unhealthy applicant are signs of a contemporary approach that more or less neglected the months between departure and arrival as a possible negative impact on the mental health of the passengers. In a medical publication such as Johnson's treatise on hysteria and "The Morbid Emotions of Women" (1850), travelling at sea for an extended period of time was pictured as a possible means to find relief from overly excited nerves. It needs to be remembered that he was addressing an audience who would read such an essay and could afford a voyage in a private cabin on board a modern sailing vessel.

From today's perspective, stress and panic are inevitable responses to merely imagining sailing more than 100 days in a crowded, noisy, smelly and rolling emigrant vessel, sharing air, water, a few water closets and limited food rations with a number of strangers. The fact that some young immigrants were overwhelmed by the situation of uncertainty after a few weeks at sea is not astonishing – in fact it might seem surprising there are not more accounts of sudden mental breakdowns. In the colonial correspondence of those days, however, the voyage appears

to be of minor importance in the overall depiction of a "mad" person. The blind spot within all those writings and thoughts is the less luxurious steerage experience, i.e., the average conditions on an emigrant ship and the circumstances most men and women had to deal with when migrating to Australia. So in what way could transit as experienced by Maria Johnston, Jemima White, Hugh McCabe and other "lunatics" have played a role in their outcome?

In the 1870s, Queensland was facing an immigration crisis: the numbers of assisted and full-paying passengers had sunk dramatically, while competing migration destinations seemed to flourish. At the same time as the authorities were trying to figure out how to promote the colony better and to attract fit and healthy people, the Legislative Assembly's "Votes and Proceedings" actually record an unusually high proportion of imbecile, sick, or otherwise "ineligible" immigrants. It seems as if the government had lost control over the incoming people.[107]

Some of the cases are already familiar: Jemima White and Hugh McCabe, both free passengers from Ireland with good job references and recommendations by former employers, who nevertheless both ended up in an Australian asylum. Another "dangerous lunatic" received at the Brisbane Immigration Depot in 1874 was William Duke. Two months after arriving in Brisbane, the 21-year-old free passenger from England had still not really been outside a medical institution, so the Under Colonial Secretary decided to follow up on his past and initiated the familiar procedure of searching for possible explanations for his mental disturbance. At first sight, this correspondence did not go beyond the common excuses. However, it is worth analysing one comment by Dr William Hoblyn, in his day a surgeon based in Aylesbury, in reply to Richard Daintree: "Sir, In answer to yours of the 11th instant, I beg to state that I have refused and passed many emigrants; all were sound when passed by me. I am not responsible for any men-

107 Woolcock, *Rights of Passage* : 295. Besides, original letters that speak of that crisis are e.g. Macalister, Arthur, Colonial Secretary: Letter to Richard Daintree, Brisbane 1874/06/27 and Daintree, Richard, Agent-General: Letter to Colonial Secretary, Charing Cross 1874/09/04, in: Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Votes and Proceedings," 1875/06/08–1875/09/08: No. 51+52: 627–628.

tal or physical changes that occur afterwards."[108] His defence rests upon denying responsibility for the things that happened after the last medical examination. The officials might have dismissed this phrasing as a cheap excuse, but we need to consider whether transit effects are really more dominant than was expected? Is the reason for a failure of control maybe founded in the slipperiness of transit itself?

In 1869, William Lindsay, Physician to the Murray Royal Institution for the Insane, in the previously quoted essay on "Insanity in British Emigrants of the Middle and Upper Ranks" reflected on the different reasons contributing to madness among male emigrants in the colonies. He distinguished between those already "imbecile or morally insane […] in the home country" and those in whom "the seeds only of insanity existed". In the following paragraph, he then paid remarkable attention to the voyage and continued:

> In the latter class of cases, where a tendency only to mental disturbance exists at the time of emigration, insanity is occasionally developed on shipboard, e.g. in crowded emigrant vessels, where its proper treatment is impossible.[109]

Both these extracts, taken from two different genres, refer to the migratory circumstances as influencing mental health by both leading to mental problems and exacerbating mental problems by blocking "proper treatment" – a perspective mostly unmentioned at the time in the official documents dealing with insane immigrants. This justifies a closer look at a slightly different, complementary approach to madness from the 19th century. As outlined above, one popular scientific position saw mania as the result of primarily neurobiological problems, while the other, hitherto neglected view stood for a modified model of insanity not only resulting from bodily givens, but from a functional defect, influenced by circumstances and personal experience. What,

108 Hoblyn, William: Letter to Richard Daintree, Aylesbury 1875/02/15, in: Queensland Legislative Assembly: No. 80: 642.
109 Lindsay, "Insanity in British Emigrants of the Middle and Upper Ranks": 222.

then, was the ordinary man and woman's idea of madness in the mid-19th century?

Taking a hands-on approach available to most of the emigrants leads us to another source of common knowledge besides the specialized medical treatises of physicians or psychologists: a dictionary offering practical advice and easy explanations "to teach how, in difficult situations, and thrown on his own resources, a person may cure diseases and save life without laying any claim to Professional knowledge".[110] The advantage of picking a work such as this one is that far from medical ivory tower debates in expert journals, literate lay society was more used to this type of public description when it came to classifying mental struggles. The common understanding can therefore be grasped much better this way than by citing pages from complicated medical accounts. The definitions in these works are specifically intended as first-aid advice to help those who may be far away from any medical support elsewhere in the colonies.

Robert K. Philp's popular "Dictionary of Medical and Surgical Knowledge and Complete Practical Guide in Health and Disease for Families, Emigrants, and Colonists" from the 1860s listed medical topics in alphabetical order, explained the symptoms and suggested a way of reliable treatment. It was a huge publication of several hundred pages, issued in monthly sections, which granted access to and subsumed the generally accepted knowledge of this time.[111]

Under the combined heading "madness, mania, insanity, lunacy", mental health problems are addressed and put into context. In contrast to other entries in the book, however, a recommended treatment is missing here completely. Instead, the lengthy article turns into a generalized description of two main categories of "insanity": 'mania' as the raging, vital, i.e. sthenic form; and 'melancholia' as the lethargic, debilitated, i.e. asthenic form.

110 Philp, *The Dictionary of Medical and Surgical Knowledge and Complete Practical Guide in Health and Disease for Families, Emigrants, and Colonists*:1.
111 Fell-Smith, Charlotte, and Stephen Roberts, "Art.: 'Philp, Robert Kemp (1819–1882)'", updated 2014/01/09 <doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22181>, accessed 2023/06/08.

> MADNESS, MANIA, INSANITY, LUNACY: Names expressive of an unsound state of mind, or a disordered intellect. There are two conditions of madness, or stages in this mental disorder; one characterized by violent and unrestrained behaviour, and an irritability which drives the patient to commit the most wild and often grotesque and extravagant actions, and, when opposed in his headstrong fancies and impressions, causing him to perpetrate acts of the most violent and vindictive nature. It is to this condition of mental aberration that the term *mania* is properly applied, or the sthenic form of insanity. In the other form or stage, all the outward expressions are of a sad or desponding character, attended with a loathing or disgust of life, a weariness of all subjects, and a settled despair, with frequent attempts, either openly or covertly made, to shake off a life is regarded as an intolerable burden; in other words, to rid himself by his own hands of what he regards as a hateful existence. This condition is called *melancholia*, or the low asthenic form of insanity.
>
> Though there are many forms and varieties of brain affections, according to the locality and specialties of the attack, mental derangement is usually divided into the above two primary conditions of *mania* and *melancholia*, or raving and melancholy madness.
>
> It has generally been supposed that madness is a disease or perversion of the intellectual or reasoning faculties; this, however, has been proved to be a mistake, for cases frequently arise where the mental illness is confined to a diseased perversion of the moral affections exclusively, with little or no apparent injury of the intellectual faculties.
>
> Whether the disease assumes the form of mania or melancholia depends more on the constitutional characteristics of the patient than on the nature or severity of the immediately exciting cause. [...][112]

The broad distinction between two opposite forms of insanity, namely mania and melancholia, serves as a good starting point to categorize a person's behaviour from a lay perspective. In the tradition of humanism and the Enlightenment, Philp praised a "moral treatment" approach. With his clear statement against merely pathological and biological

112 Philp, *The Dictionary of Medical and Surgical Knowledge and Complete Practical Guide in Health and Disease for Families, Emigrants, and Colonists*: 429–430.

causes of insanity, he also took up his position against still-cherished beliefs in British psychiatry that would embrace a purely cerebral pathological approach to mental illnesses. Philp adhered to a shift towards a more functional concept of insanity that saw possible reasons for aberrant conduct in the behaviour, the circumstances, and the physiology. This reassured the common man and woman that trying circumstances need not automatically lead to a breakdown pre-determined by brain constitution. Instead, an individual's personality could direct and steer the reactions of body and mind.

What follows is an outspoken critique against a British society marked by stress and pressure, discontent and injustice, blaming it for an increase of mentally suffering people:

> In Great Britain, [...] there can be no question but that insanity, in one or other of its forms, is fearfully on the increase. We may blink the fact, and strive to suppress the truth so palpably apparent, but the evidence of the assertion will be heard, and leaves no loophole for incertitude or doubt.
>
> That the go-ahead and "fast" practices of the times – the emulous struggle to obtain position and fortune, and realize in a few years the independence which the former generation devoted a lifetime to acquire – is exercising a fearful influence on the health and stamina of the intellect of this country is a fact beyond all dispute. It is impossible that the brain and nervous system can be kept on the stretch for so many years with impunity, more particularly when it is remembered how artificially the man of business generally lives; – the breakfast hurried, the mid-day meal postponed for a fashionable repost at tea-time, to which, frequently without appetite or desire, the merchant or professional sits down, endeavouring to obtain from variety or wine the stamina which a substantial meal can alone impart.[113]

This entirely sceptical view fit well into a dictionary that pursued the purpose of encouraging intending colonists, of informing them about diseases while simultaneously relieving fear and anxiety based on

113 Philp, *The Dictionary of Medical and Surgical Knowledge and Complete Practical Guide in Health and Disease for Families, Emigrants, and Colonists*: 431.

rumour, false expectations or stereotypes. With mental disorders, the barrier was even higher than with "ordinary" diseases, so that the entry can be read as a re-assuring appeal against a regime that harmed the mental health of its people. Philp was not the only one to present life in the United Kingdom as crucially lacking rest and peace. Along with "modern civilized societies" came a growing awareness of the downsides of overexercised brains in intellectual or emotional matters.[114] Such a warning against a negative, unhealthy overemphasis on study and knowledge was not only a British trend, but also featured prominently in Australia until the 1880s. In a paper given in front of the Medical Section of the Royal Society of New South Wales, Frederick N. Manning lectured on the "Causation and Prevention of Insanity", criticizing the "high pressure, the fever and fret of professional and business life, the haste, competition, and all-pervading disquiet, which has had no parallel in other times" prevalent in British society. In contrast, he then praised the "tendency which happily exists in this Colony to indulge in out-door sports and amusements of every kind."[115]

If that picture still was promotable in the 1880s, emigration therefore could be seen as one solution to escape the "fearful influence on the health and stamina of the intellect".[116]

Let us return to the young emigrant Maria Johnston on board the 'Elizabeth Ann Bright', whose mental stability was at stake upon arrival in the Australian colony. Even if in 1864 the chances were low that a servant girl such as Johnston would have read these publications advertising a quieter and more relaxed world in the colonies, she would quite probably have felt the uncertainty and pressure of life in the Northern Hemisphere. Furthermore, 'health' was indeed one of the major factors backing up her decision to emigrate. Having suffered from a painful

114 Bucknill, John C., Daniel H. Tuke, London. University College et al., "A Manual of Psychological Medicine: Insanity" <archive.org/details/b21270843>: 45–63.
115 Manning, Frederick N., "The Causation and Prevention of Insanity: Paper read before the Medical Section of the Royal Society of New South Wales, Sept. 10th 1880," *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales* 14 (1880): 340–355: 353.
116 Philp, *The Dictionary of Medical and Surgical Knowledge and Complete Practical Guide in Health and Disease for Families, Emigrants, and Colonists*: 431.

soreness in her leg, her doctor advised her to be exposed to some fresh air out at sea and a warmer climate, which would help her leg recover:

> She was in Hospital with a sore leg and the Doctor then told her after she was discharged cured [sic] that a sea voyage and change of climate would be the best thing for her this was what first induced her to wish to go to Australia.[117]

One could ponder about the irony that the very journey that was supposed to help her regain full physical health resulted in her falling ill mentally.

Everyone assumed that Maria Johnston had suffered a relapse from an already existing sickness that she maliciously or cleverly withheld from her closest references. But if we assume that the certificates were filled out honestly in her case, then something must have happened between the healthy young woman's departure and her arrival with a mental disturbance – something that might be explained by the conditions affecting her mind and senses. This theory would be in line with Philp's suggestion to include the circumstances in a more functional, holistic idea of personhood.

Is there any reason to suggest that the events and experiences on board might have heavily influenced Maria Johnston's mental health, regardess of any past periods in an asylum? One can only speculate about the encounters and experiences Maria Johnston had on board the 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'. The journey was not marked by a harmonious atmosphere, although Captain John Starkey and other passengers remembered the journey favourably in general.[118] Surgeon Hinxman, who put her into the shipboard hospital (a separate space on every emigrant ship) and who treated her throughout the voyage, was not only concerned with taking care of the sick and ailing. In the 116 days of sailing, Hinxman entered into a heated conflict with the Head Constable and Schoolmaster William Smith and his wife, who acted as matron

117 White, "Copy of Letter to Hamilton Leslie, Emigration Agent in Dublin," 1865/03/25.
118 "The captain and officers under him were also very kind and very attentive, and the voyage being prosperous, though comparatively tedious, the time passed away very pleasantly." (N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger".)

for the married and single women. This conflict was carried out on the backs of the passengers: Dr Hinxman accused Mr. Smith of both mobilizing other passengers and of making an "aggravated assault" upon him in November 1864, about two months after departing from Great Britain. The tension must have grown, since Hinxman apparently started to fear for his life and in the end refused to sign a positive reference on the conduct and performance of the schoolmaster. He had also already dismissed Mrs. Smith as matron after "less [sic] than a month".[119]

No replacement or new appointment followed, so female passengers had to cope with the voyage all by themselves. Usually, the matron's job was to serve and supervise the women by taking care of the sick and looking after the children, as well as educating and training the single women[120] – duties Mrs. Smith apparently willing and able to perform. The women could not understand the matron's enforced leave: it was common to write and undersign a letter of gratitude to confirm the positive conduct of authorities on board, but in this case 37 young women added a uniquely critical comment to the otherwise standard letter. After expressing their "warmest esteem" towards Mrs. Smith, they complained and regretted they had "not received any satisfactory reason" for her "removal from office".[121] Although Maria Johnston did not sign this letter, two of her friends from Ireland did: Anna Murphy and Eliza Kavanagh. If they had not already met earlier, then on board the 'Elizabeth Ann Bright' they must have realized they were from the same part of Dublin, with the Irish accent and the common fate of emigrating as assisted single women surely facilitating their connection with each other. However, some evidence does suggest they did actually know

119 Hinxman, "Surgeon's Report on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'," 1865/12/31:2.
120 Matrons were either appointed and assigned by women's organizations such as the British Ladies' Female Emigration Society (BLFES) or by the surgeon-superintendent from among the emigrant women. (See Gothard, *Blue China*: 95–99; Chilton, *Agents of Empire*: 56–58; Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and K.E. Ferguson, Hints to Matrons of Emigrant Ships (Emigrant Tracts 3), London 1850 (National Library of Australia) NK2411) More on mediators such as matrons in Chapter 6 "Managing Transit".
121 Murphy, Anna et al.: Letter of Gratitude to Mrs. Smith, Ship 'E. A, Bright' 1865/01/03, in: Immigration Board, and Colonial Secretary's Office Queensland, Report, Letters, and Enclosures on Charge by Dr. Henry J. Hinxman, Surgeon on Ship 'Elizabeth Ann Bright', against William Smith, 1865/01 (Queensland State Archives) 1865/145; 1865/58; 1865/57.

each other: all three of them had asked Reverend White for a moral certificate; they had all received an assisted passage through the same agent Hamilton Leslie; and they probably also travelled from Dublin to the port of Liverpool together.[122] It is noteworthy that those two girls are among the comparatively small number of women signing the letter of gratitude (37 out of 100 single women and at least 50 married women).[123] With Anna Murphy being the first to sign, it seems she might even have been the initiator of this act of female agency. It is plausible that her observation of Maria Johnston becoming mad and being treated by Dr Hinxman in the hospital compelled her to raise her voice expressly, beyond the standard form of writing.

In the end, Hinxman did not receive the government's support he demanded by accusing Mr Smith of murderous insubordination. Instead, his dramatically written charge was weighed against evidence brought up against him by other passengers. Some men emphasized in a written note that Smith had acted dutifully, while the "conduct of the surgeon superintendent toward Mr S. has been anything but gentlemanly."[124] Besides, the detailed statement by Smith himself reveals more about the surgeon's careless behaviour towards sick children. Hinxman had ignored remarks about his duties without allowing anyone to criticize his authority.[125] He thus disqualified himself. The legal procedure he initiated by blaming William Smith backfired on him, unveiling his gross incompetence and intemperance. The final verdict was hard and

122 Reverend White had signed the moral certificate for all three young women, who then were passed by Sub-Agent Leslie in Dublin. This can be traced back in the correspondence on Maria Johnston's case: "From Mr. Leslie's long experience in the selection of Female Emigrants for the Government Commissioners, I felt perfectly satisfied as to the correctness of his Applications for three young women – Eliza Kavanagh, Maria Johnson [sic] and Ann Murphy as assisted passengers p [sic] 'Elizabeth Ann Bright' […]" Pollen, "Copy of Letter to Henry Jordan," 1865/03/25 and Leslie, Hamilton, Copy of Letter to Rev. White (Enquiry upon Case of Maria Johnston on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'), 1865/03/25 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 846804; DUP COL/12.

123 There were 427 passengers altogether with 168 "members of families" besides the 100 single women and 163 single men. (N. N., "Ship Launches," *Empire*, 1864/12/14: 4).

124 Lockhart, James et al.: Statement against Surgeon Dr. Hinxman Refusing to Sign the Certificate of Mr. W.A. Smith, Brisbane 1865/01/09, in: Immigration Board and Colonial Secretary's Office Queensland, "Report, Letters, and Enclosures on Charge by Dr. Henry J. Hinxman, Surgeon on Ship 'Elizabeth Ann Bright', Against William Smith," 1865/01.)

125 Smith, William A.: Complaint against Surgeon on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright', Brisbane 1865/01/10, in: Immigration Board and Colonial Secretary's Office Queensland.

clear: Hinxman had proved "unfitted for the position" with no chance for "future employment in a similar capacity" and was therefore "struck off the List of Medical Officers of the Queensland Ships".[126]

Against this background, and in line with Boddice, the following narrative is suggested. Disappointed by the tensions in her surroundings in Dublin, Maria Johnston had waved goodbye to her home country. Like "many of the stalwart sons and blooming daughters" she was "going to the other side of the globe to seek what [Ireland] cannot yield to their honest industry",[127] hoping to regain strength in her sore leg and find a good job as domestic servant Down Under. Alas, the reality of travelling was very different! The measurements and sizes for luggage boxes and berths in steerage did not fit with the ones announced by the shrewd emigration agent. Everything was lower between decks, so to store their boxes, people had to give up even more of their private sphere.[128] After almost four weeks in steerage, the matron and schoolmaster's wife, who herself had to fight debility and was anxious about severely sick children, dared to ask the surgeon for some more milk for the little ones she was responsible for. Hinxman exploded and fired her. Maria Johnston and her friends from Dublin, Anna Murphy and Eliza Kavanagh, then received the news that the institution of a matron, who was the single women's main reference point in the ship's hierarchy, no longer existed. Left without further explanation, the women had to handle conflicts and overcome insecurities alone, since Mrs Smith did not visit the single women's compartment anymore.

126 Jordan, "Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report," 1865/03/25: Point1. More on the character and duties of surgeons and matrons as 'transit-mediators' in Chapter 6 "Managing Transit".

127 One anonymous passenger describes his feelings of sadness on the inescapable force for emigration when passing Ireland on the 'Elizabeth Ann Bright': "Dear, dear old Ireland, how many of thy stalwart sons and blooming daughters are here around me, going to the opposite side of the globe to seek what you cannot yield to their honest industry! and this from no fault of your own, but from incidental circumstances. Your difficulty has been traced to various sources, and various remedies have been proposed to keep your superabundant population at home; but I have long been convinced that until manufactures be largely introduced, your simple remedy is increased emigration." (N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger".)

128 The anonymous male traveller describes the first futile attempts to put the boxes under the berths. He blames the agents for giving wrong measurements to prospective emigrants. (N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger".)

Routine and rituals were missing, too. For the primarily Catholic Irish emigrants such as Johnston, no mess service was offered. Instead, the Presbyterian minister Alexander Caldwell led the weekly devotions, modelled on those of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland and leaving no room for cherished Catholic hymns.[129] "When measles made its appearance, a great change occurred. Most of the children were attacked and the disease appeared to me unusually virulent."[130] This is how a fellow male steerage passenger remembered the spread of measles that added another layer of worry and uncertainty. Clearly, Johnston felt this as well.[131]

With every day amid more unfavourable winds, the tensions grew. At least, Johnston's pre-existing leaning towards what was called "hysteria" might have increased. Nervous as she was, her menstruation stopped. Diagnosed with amenorrhoea,[132] she succumbed to what the slightly paranoid, dominant, and self-indulgent medical authority then deemed "maniacal" behaviour. What might the 20-year-old have experienced with this kind of doctor when being in hospital for most of the voyage and being treated by him personally? Unfortunately, no medical attendant or permanent nurse was appointed on board.[133]

Lacking an assistant, the surgeon had to ask unqualified or unmotivated people to help, or the patients had to accept hours of complete exclusion from proper community. Johnston shared the hospital with three men; herself probably being placed in the female "ward", but due to want of space for proper treatment, this gender separation must have been more theoretical than real. One of the three male patients

129 Hinxman, "Surgeon's Report on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'," 1865/12/31: 2 and N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger".

130 N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger".

131 Surely, the voyage of the 'Elizabeth Ann Bright' in itself was not a sick one compared to other emigrant journeys (the six deaths on board were all children under six years of age). However, since the single women were next to the married couple's compartments, the fever, diarrhea, and measles spreading among the little ones were certainly recognized by the female emigrants. (Health Office Moreton Bay, "Health Officer's Report 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'," 1865/01/05 and N. N., "The Chronicle," *Maryborough Chronicle, Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser*, 1865/01/11: 2.)

132 Wolston Park Hospital, "Case Book (Male and Female Admissions)," 1860–1916: 71.

133 "My first complaint is the want of a medical attendant for the hospitals, both for males and females." (N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger".)

was a seaman who had been accidentally shot by a cabin passenger's revolver during the journey, yet miraculously survived the bullet passing through his lungs. The second had been knocked over by a box when down in the hold, crushing his chest, and the third fell down a hatchway and hurt his head, face and fingers. All three recovered at some point but must have suffered some extreme pain.[134]

Against this background, Johnston's excitement and confusion on arrival takes on another, more comprehensive shape. It is no longer merely the predictable result of a brain disease, whose outcome could have been prevented by exclusion or more careful selection. Instead it can be seen as a combination of various aspects and details that all correlate with the individual in transit – the period simply overlooked by most controlling forces.

Although, not by all of the controlling forces. One last story shows that some of those directly involved with emigration did indeed incorporate reflections on 'transit' into their observations on cases of mental illness among arriving immigrants.

4 Conditions Aboard and Mental Health

Ideally speaking, the immigrants to the Australian colonies should have been healthy, morally reliable, and industrious men and women. In theory, the surgeon-superintendent and the health officer at the port of departure had to finally check every passenger and – if necessary – express their doubts on the suitability of migrants. In reality, it has been shown that it was simply impossible to check all paperwork and every migrant thoroughly. Besides, duties and actual responsibilities were not always clear to everyone, and so it happened that a woman named Ann Connelly arrived in Geelong, Victoria, in 1852, who became the subject of prolonged investigation by the Immigration Board.

Ann Connelly had come to Plymouth to board the 'Louisa', which was to carry her to Victoria. However, due to some restructuring, she had to be transferred and ended up on board the 'Stebonheath', where surgeon-superintendent Dr Kilgour examined all intending emigrants

134 Hinxman, "Surgeon's Report on 'Elizabeth Ann Bright'," 1865/12/31: 1–2.

carefully.[135] Connelly was critically observed by the experienced physician, and "her appearance, strange conduct and extraordinary behaviour" gave him reason to worry. He could not let go of the suspicion that this 29-year-old woman was struggling with some sort of mental disturbance. When the final round of critical examination was almost over, Dr Kilgour decided to ask for a second opinion. He uttered his uncomfortable feeling, suggested a tendency towards "insanity", and convinced the emigration officers Timothy Carew and his colleague to talk to Connelly again.

According to Carew, this conversation went well. Connelly answered all the questions "in a rational and coherent manner", so that the officers did not see any reason to make her stay in Great Britain. Realizing, however, that Dr Kilgour was not entirely satisfied with that decision, they openly informed him about the legal framework. With a certificate signed by him as medical authority, it would be no problem to remove Connelly from the group of assisted single women.[136]

From his limited observation, "he did not feel justified in giving a Certificate stating that she was actually insane at that period; consequently she was allowed to proceed on the voyage." However: "[…] she rapidly became more violent and intractable, and within a few days the Surgeon's apprehensions appear to have been fulfilled."[137]

Connelly had to be separated from the other women and isolated in a single cabin. She was then placed under special care in the Immigration Depot in Australia, too. A classic example of maintaining and upholding control over transit then appeared to emerge, as the already familiar process of identifying the official scapegoat started. However, in this case, the correspondence unexpectedly shed another light on the story: transit, the circumstances, the environment and the migration

135 Foulds, William, Officer: Copy of Reply to Colonial Land and Emigration Office, Plymouth 1853/07/06, in: Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 'Stebonheath' 1851–1854. Case of Ann Tydd / Case of Ann Connelly (Public Record Office of Victoria) 1189_114_462E.
136 Carew, Timothy, Emigration Officer: Copy of Reply to Colonial Land and Emigration Office, Plymouth 1853/09/07, in: Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners.
137 Strutt, Charles Edward, Immigration Agent: Report on Ann Connelly, Immigrant by 'Stebonheath', Geelong 25/02/1853, in: Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners: Point2.

experience became important when – to the surprise of the observing men – Connelly, despite her intellectual limitations, recovered from the extreme outburst of "insanity" after she arrived in the Immigration Depot in Victoria. A closer look at the change confirms the thesis that transit cannot be controlled by merely paying attention to the ending and starting point, but that the complete picture needs to be considered to comprehend an individual's story:

> The want of space and impossibility of seclusion, as well as the absence of sufficient occupation on board Emigrant Vessels are serious obstacles to the recovery of persons afflicted in a similar manner as Ann Connelly. In the Depôt [sic], the change of scene, the comparative quietness resulting from nearly all the single women rapidly frowning situations, and especially the occupation which would be provided, and which she was fortunately both willing and anxious to perform, soon produced a formable change. Although evidently still of weak intellect, as evinced by the general demeanour and remarks, the former outbursts of passion have not recurred; nor has she required any medical treatment.[138]

The statement that the "suffering, excitement, and inconvenience inseparable from the commencement of a voyage in the between decks of an emigrant vessel proved highly detrimental to her" is a rare occasion of immigration officers pointedly evaluating the travelling conditions in their impact on the mental health of people. Here, the immigration agent Charles E. Strutt even added concrete political and practical suggestions for positive changes of external factors aboard emigrant vessels: atmosphere, surroundings, space, quietness, occupation etc. These were all aspects of post-Enlightenment mental health care, reminiscent of the principles subscribed to by promoters of 'moral treatment'.

But – and here, we have come full circle again: No serious steps were immediately taken to change the on-board framework, to improve the negatively criticized lack of private sphere or exposure to overstimulation. Instead, the measurements suggested are representative of the

138 Strutt, Report on Ann Connelly: Point 5.

19th century idea(l) of health, stability, and a mixture of pragmatically rationalized psychology:

> Having carefully considered the foregoing data, the Board is of opinion [...] (3) That Ann Connelly should decidedly not have been sent to this Colony; and that in future similar or doubtful cases should be rejected. This might be effected by a Certificate from the Surgeon Superintendent stating that the person is unfit to undertake the voyage, and mentioning the reasons of such unfitness.[139]

Again, the emphasis and responsibility were laid on the controlling forces that all immigrants had to pass. Again, transit was treated as something that could be kept clear if only the entrance gatekeepers were entrusted with enough rights, expertise, and knowledge to select and detect the "odd ones". In Connelly's case, the doctor's doubt of her mental stability raised before sailing from the United Kingdom underlined this political strategy.

Although theoretical considerations reflecting on the major influence of surroundings on psyche and body, moral treatment approaches, and several false health certificates existed, the possibly too short-sighted view continued to dominate the political discourse.

Maybe the evasiveness and complexity of 'transit' was too multi-layered; it was simply easier to adopt the straightforward approach of merely fine-tuning the beginning. This was to the disadvantage of people like Maria Johnston, Elizabeth Bland, Jemima White, Hugh McCabe, William Duke, Ann Connelly and so many others. The practical negligence of the in-between period meant the letter-writing, excuses and self-protection from the men discussing their fate might not have done justice to their experience.

139 Strutt: Point 7.

[Chapter 3] Imagining Transit – Preparation and Expectation

1 Becoming Emigrants

> Emigration, like every other great change, brings with it great spiritual risks, especially at its beginning. My experience and observation tell me that most men become better or worse, morally and religiously, when they become emigrants.[1]

What does it mean to emigrate? According to this anonymous advice from an 1873 handbook on emigration, the specific starting point of emigration might not be the core issue to worry about. Instead, a possible identity shift might occur for the emigrant, which entails the explosive potential of either turning a person into something "better or worse". No doubt, the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (*SPCK*)[2], which published this "Manual for Emigrants" besides several other emigrant tracts, worked hard to ensure it was a change for the better. Founded in 1698, the *SPCK* was one of the most influential Christian organizations and deeply involved with encouraging education, shaping church routine, ordering private religious life, and supporting missionary work. In the 1880s, with an increasing number of emigrants to the colonies, the society set up an Emigration Committee dedicated to inform intending emigrants, support local clergymen, and connect Christians abroad and in the home country. Some of the means they and other private, political, or religious organizations chose in the midst of the migration movement included addressing the intending emi-

1 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Manual for Emigrants, London 1873 (Cambridge University Library) 1873.4.24: 4–5. This saying is not innovative but seemed to be an accepted belief in 19th century Great Britain. See another, very popular emigrant guide: Chadfield, Philip B., *Out at Sea: Or, the Emigrant Afloat, Being a Hand Book of Practical Information for the Use of Passengers on a Long Sea Voyage*, 3rd ed. Derby: Chadfield and Son, 1862: 30–31.

2 Sewell, William H., The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (A Short Account of its Work and Organisation), London 1885 (Cambridge University Library) BSH.700.239.

grants directly, creating easily readable information sheets, and training competent staff to deal with questions and concerns.

The first two chapters of the present publication, with the deciders at its core, aimed at understanding the overarching structure and the global connections across the British Empire, in addition to identifying prominent and powerful negotiators and controllers of transit. In the following two chapters, the individual becomes the focus – the individual as caught up in expectation, imagination, and reality (Chapter 3) and emotions, pressure, and feelings (Chapter 4).[3]

'Transit' turns people into emigrants. They left their homes and boarded ships carrying not only material luggage, but also suitcases filled with expectations. Expectations that consisted of experience, hopes, and fears. Expectations that ex ante created an idea of crossing the seas in the imaginations of people. Expectations resulting in a curious blend of disappointments and resilience techniques used or invented on board, which can be seen in personal writings and official publications both openly and in a slightly hidden way.[4]

Often, expectations did not match with what the individual encountered on board ship – but this experience of dissonance served as a measuring scale that daily events, feelings and actions could be compared to and evaluated from. With that in mind, the pre-transit, pre-emigrant phase marks the subsequent unfolding und understanding of transit and the emigrant's personal story in a decisive way. In that sense, expectations undoubtedly influence 'transit' – as transit is perceived as well as it is memorized afterwards. For better or worse.[5]

3 See the introduction to this book. For an overview: Ghobrial, John-Paul A., "Introduction. Seeing the World like a Microhistorian," *Past and Present* 242, Supplement 14 (2019): 1–22. doi:10.1093/pastj/gtz046 and Epple, Angelika, "Globale Mikrogeschichte," in *Im Kleinen das Grosse suchen: Mikrogeschichte in Theorie und Praxis. Hanns Haas zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Ewald Hiebl and Ernst Langthaler. Jahrbuch für Geschichte des ländlichen Raumes 9. Innsbruck, et al.: Studienverlag, 2012: 37–47.

4 In Chapters 3 and 4 below, the individual emigrant will receive special attention before enlarging the focus to the shipboard community in Chapters 5 and 6.

5 See Coletto, Diego, and Giovanna Fullin, "Before Landing: How Do New European Emigrants Prepare Their Departure and Imagine Their Destinations?," *Social Inclusion* 7, no. 4 (2019): 320–329. doi:10.17645/si.v7i4.2381.

2 The Making of Expectation and New Experience

If expectations are a way of coping with the uncontrollable by directing and shaping human behaviour,[6] the question arises how they emerge and where they come from. Their impact on 'transit' notwithstanding, a closer look at the specific components of expectations reveals a lot about the way people started out and what they then went through. 'Experience' and 'expectation' are two metahistorically closely connected key concepts, which bring together past and future. Based on historian Reinhart Koselleck's conceptualisation,[7] the category (marked by single inverted commas) and the content of these concepts can be distinguished more clearly.

Table 1: Category and content of 'experience' and 'expectation'

CATEGORY 'experience' (noun, singular)	CATEGORY 'expectation' (noun, singular)
"The actual observation of facts or events, considered as a source of knowledge. […] What has been experienced; the events that have taken place within the knowledge of an individual, a community, mankind at large, either during a particular period or generally."[8]	"The action or fact of anticipating or foreseeing something; the belief that something will happen or be the case."[9]
Koselleck interpreted 'experience' as a backward-looking concept of "present past"; as an anthropological idea of the past that forms the "space of experience" ("Erfahrungsraum") where personal and alien events are reworked and remembered.	As "future present", Koselleck defines 'expectation' as something created by several elements that "direct itself to the not-yet, to the non-experienced, to that which is to be revealed." Thus, 'expectation' as an anthropological idea drafts a "horizon of expectation" ("Erwartungsshorizont").[10]

6 Hoorens, Vera, "Expectation," in *Encyclopedia of Human Behavior.* Vol. 2, ed. Vilayanur S. Ramachandran. 2nd ed. San Diego: Academic Press, 2012: 142–149.
7 "[…] experience and expectation are two categories appropriate for the treatment of historical time because of the way that they embody past and future." (Koselleck, Reinhart, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985: 270.)
8 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "experience, n.," updated 1989 <oed.com/view/Entry/66520>, accessed 2023/06/08.
9 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "expectation, n.," updated 2015/06 <oed.com/view/Entry/66455>, accessed 2021/08/11.
10 Koselleck, *Futures Past*: 272.

CONTENT	CONTENT
experiences + to experience "To have experience of; to meet with; to feel, suffer, undergo."[11] When used in plural or as a verb, the content and object of an individual's conscious 'experience' and its emotional affections is focused on.	Expectations "A preconceived idea or opinion based on what a person has hoped for or imagined regarding a future event, situation, or encounter. Chiefly in plural."[12] Special expectations refer to very specific aspects of the future, such as encounters, people's behaviour, or personal reactions. They can prove helpful or dangerous, and they affect human decisions.

Going beyond Koselleck, Schinkel later introduces 'imagination' as an "intermediary" third category mediating between those two interwoven ones and handling the "possibilities" available in a creative way.[13] Hence, for the case studies looked at in this chapter, "imagining transit" is the act of forming expectations and preparing for the yet unknown. 'Transit' thus becomes the product of an imagined encounter; or rather a space where experience and expectation meet.

'Experience' clearly serves as one of the chief sources of 'expectation' and is based on a peculiar mixture of personal, memorized, and unconsciously embedded ideas. Just as the above quote from the 1873 emigrant's manual suggests, the decision to share one's "experience and observation"[14] shows the passing on of advice and information as an anthropological mode of conduct.

In the case of 'transit', the creation of expectation(s) is – as in other "first time-settings" – more complex, as the factor of self-made experience is not the prime building block for the formation and stabilisation of expectations. Since nearly none of the would-be travellers had lived through the journey before, expectations of it had to be based purely on second-hand information. Of course, not every single experience

11 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "experience, v.," updated 1989 <oed.com/view/Entry/66521>, accessed 2023/06/08.
12 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "expectation, n.".
13 Schinkel, Anders, "Imagination as a Category of History: An Essay Concerning Koselleck's Concepts of Erfahrungsraum and Erwartungshorizont," *History and Theory* 44, no. 1 (2005): 42–54. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2303.2005.00307.x: 48–50.
14 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, "Manual for Emigrants," London 1873: 4–5.

has to be made in person, as "there is also an element of alien experience contained and preserved in experience conveyed by generations or institutions."[15] However, for most emigrants, this "alien experience" remained the only way to feed the decision-making process and prepare for the journey.

According to the history of knowledge, it is of analytical importance to distinguish between 'information' and 'knowledge'. 'Information' precedes actual, established knowledge; it denotes the still raw and unstructured bits and pieces of facts and statements. The making of accepted knowledge, then, is a process of combining, reconstituting, and assembling findings.[16] Because there is no clear-cut line between the two as they smoothly blend into each other during social interaction, the history of knowledge does not only refer to scholarly research or expert publications but broadens and extends it to global, social, and long-term approaches.[17]

The more the prospective emigrants collected pieces of 'information' (in the previously defined sense of trustworthy facts and statements), the more they crafted and created their very own box of knowledge about migration, the colony, and the transit. The less they did so, the more they were surprised by circumstances while relying on otherwise evolved pictures of migration, the colony, and the transit.

Obviously, the big decision of whether to emigrate or not rested upon information and knowledge, experience and expectation stemming from different origins: politically motivated initiatives, such as advertisement campaigns or lectures; privately published material by various emigration societies; semi-private documents, such as pub-

15 Koselleck, *Futures Past*: 272 and Koselleck, Reinhart, *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979: 354.
16 Mulsow, Martin, and Lorraine Daston, "History of Knowledge: With Comment and Response," in *Debating New Approaches to History*, ed. Marek Tamm and Peter Burke. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019: 159–187; Dupré, Sven, and Geert Somsen, "The History of Knowledge and the Future of Knowledge Societies," *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 42, 2+3 (2019): 186–199. doi:10.1002/bewi.201900006 and Burke, Peter, *What is the History of Knowledge?* Cambridge, Malden: Polity, 2015.
17 Mulsow and Daston, "History of Knowledge": 159–162+191–192. Enrichingly connected to aspects of knowing and learning, categories like 'ignorance' and 'failure' are not neglected or carefully avoided anymore, but feed into a complex system of knowledge that helps explain minor and major historical events, ideas, and reactions.

lished emigrant letters; and private communication, such as diaries and letters circulated among family and friends. Drawing from this range of "potential knowledge", the individual historical actor could then acquire his or her "actual knowledge", incorporating it into his or her own imagination of leaving Great Britain, transiting to Australia, and settling in the colonies.

3 Motives and Motivation to Depart

> While I was in bed I heard two of the passengers conversing about emmigration [sic]. One said "I should never have come here but once I had my fortune told and the woman said you will do nothing in England but in a foreign land you will get rich so that's why I am going, for it so prayed on my mind" "Well" said the other "As regards myself I am so fully sick of the ship that I'm determined directly I get there I shall manage to keep myself for two years and then work my passage back again for I am just sick of all this."[18]

A fortune teller's prophecy paving the way for this anonymous speaker's decision to say goodbye to England is not what classic migration studies usually start with when listing push- and pull-factors for emigration. Admittedly, this superstitious background certainly does not apply to the majority of migrants pondering a wide-reaching decision, but the often neglected and subtle reflections and motivations should not be forgotten when observing human beings in their handling of life issues. Therefore, recent historical research has begun to view migration as "a complex and dynamic process of mobility which starts with the initial aspirations and hopes of the migrant, and is never quite over even when the desired destination has been reached successfully."[19] In line with that thought, a crucial part of any analysis of migration movements is the decision-making process – including motives, expectations and information.

18 Skinner, Jane E., Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar', 1850/04/29–1850/08/20 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 59; TR 1789; Box 9593: 1850/04/26 [2].
19 Demireva, Neli, and Fabio Quassoli, "The Lived Experiences of Migration: An Introduction," *Social Inclusion* 7, no. 4 (2019): 282–287. doi:10.17645/si.v7i4.2568: 283.

"Incidental circumstances" drove young men – and women in particular – to this decision when they were trying to make a living yet failing to gain a standing despite "their honest industry".[20] Whenever the feeling of labouring in vain deprived unmarried women like Jane E. Skinner of further motivation to stay in England, the decision to join family members or friends abroad became a bit easier to make.[21] For a long time, the narrative was dominated by the assumption that the majority of the more than 1.5 million British, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish emigrants were travelling to escape from brutal poverty and fierce overpopulation. However, this darkened picture of merely destitute and starving paupers has received profound and source-based criticism, altering the long prevalent idea of a stereotypical immigrant to Australia. This is not to say that they all were wealthy, proficient readers with university degrees, but many were actually skilled workers, trained in craftmanship or business, and eager to labour for their income.

Although the unassisted passengers, who could pay their own fare entirely by themselves, only slightly outnumbered the ones receiving financial support, Australia's future settlers were generally marked by a solid social background; all the more so when it came to governmentally wanted passengers from the United Kingdom.[22] Most Australian settlers who were assisted migrants would have arrived via an occupation-based selection process, through nomination by a family member, or chosen by the land order system. Work, space, and property in the "land of perpetual summer"– this was what convinced most of them.[23] A well-known musical piece of the 1850s, "The Emigrants Progress or Life in the Far West", told the story of emigrants celebrating the prospect of great opportunities, joyfully calling "cheer, boys, cheer" upon facing a glorious future:

20 N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger," *The Brisbane Courier (Supplement to the Brisbane Courier)*, 1865/01/09: 1.
21 Skinner, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar'," 1850/04/29–1850/08/20: 1850/06/30 [19].
22 Connor, "Passengers, Emigrants and Modern Men": 18–22.
23 Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*: esp. Chapter 3 and Vitucci, Maria N., "Emigration and the British Left, 1850–1870," in *Class, Culture and Community: New Perspectives in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century British Labour History*, ed. Anne Baldwin et al. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Pub, 2012: 183–199.

Cheer, boys, cheer. No more of idle sorrow,
Courage true hearts, shall bear us on our way
Hope points before and shows the bright tomorrow,
Let us forget the darkness of today
So, farewell England! Much as we may love thee
We'll dry the tears that we have shed before
Why should we weep to sail in search of fortune?
Farewell England! Farewell for evermore.
Chorus: Cheer, boys, cheer! For England, Mother England
Cheer, boys, cheer! The willing strong right hand
Cheer, boys, cheer! There's wealth for honest labour
Cheer, boys, cheer! For the new and happy land.
Cheer, boys, cheer! The steady wind is blowing
To float as freely o'er the ocean's breast
The world shall follow in the track we're going
The star of Empire glitters in the West
Here we had toil and little to reward it
But there shall plenty smile upon our pain
And ours shall be the prairie and the forest
And boundless meadows ripe with golden grain.
Chorus: Cheer, boys, cheer! For England, Mother England
Cheer, boys, cheer! United heart and hand
Cheer, boys, cheer! There's wealth for honest labour
Cheer, boys, cheer! For the new and happy land.[24]

At the same time, many of the people to be found on Australia-bound passenger vessels went abroad intending to return after having gained wealth,[25] especially during the gold rushes, as a diary entry by James V. Mulligan in 1860 illustrates:

24 Russel, Henry, ed., *Musical Bouquet: 'The Emigrant's Progress or Life in the Far West': Quadrille*. London, 1855. That this song was famous before Russel's edition was published in 1855, and that it was sung indeed upon leaving the English shore is proved by McDonnel's diary from 1853: "On nearing our good ship (FALCON) many began to exercise their vocal abilities by singing that beautiful song 'Cheer Boys Cheer' and nearly all on board both the steam boat and the ship joined in the chorus." (McDonell, Andrew, Diary on Board the 'Falcon', 1853/05/22–1853/08/14 (State Library of Victoria) MS 12436: 1853/05/23 [2].)
25 Goodman, "The Gold Rushes of the 1850s". On return migration in the British context, see Connor, "Passengers, Emigrants and Modern Men": 314–362.

> We are gaining very little and are all day sailing along the south of Ireland and can see old Helernias fields and mountains, over more I take another long and lingering look at them as we pass along and do think of the many days of pleasure I had when I was them and now perhaps this may be the last sight I may ever have of my native land but who can tell! I do not intend to let it be the last if God spares me I will return & I hope victorious.[26]

Family and love were motives for heading south as well. Chain migration was very common, meaning that settlers in Australia sent for their relatives and thus had their brothers, sisters, cousins, and uncles come join them in their new country.[27] Women in particular followed their husbands, who would sometimes have travelled from Australia to the United Kingdom again to "seek a wife as [they] did not find one in the bush": this is what the Scotsman McNevin did after 11 years in South Australia.[28] Others emigrated right away with their partner or went by themselves to unite with their fiancés.[29] The less happy love stories gave reason to leave, too. Sometimes bigamy or extramarital affairs were the true motives.[30]

26 Mulligan, James V., Lynette F. McClenaghan, and Pat McClenaghan, *From County Down to Down Under: Diary of James Venture Mulligan 1860*. Armidale: Pat McClenaghan, 1991: 16.

27 There are numerous examples to be found in Australia's migration history. To give but one example: In his shipboard diary, William Sayer, when emigrating to New South Wales in 1876, introduces "about 20 men that have been to Australia before and have come back to fetch some of there freinds [sic] and they are now going back to settle down for life". (Sayer, William, Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (Access through personal contact with Dr. Peter Hobbins), 1876/05/29–1876/08/29 (Papers of Ann Pine): 1876/07/26.)

28 "[…] so Mr. & Mrs. McNevin & we are in one apartment […] they are scotch [sic] people from Inverness, Mr McNevin has been in Queensland before & S. Australia for 11 years […] has only been home to regain his health & seek a wife as he did not find one in the bush." (Ridley, Isabella, Diary on Board the 'Melmerby', 1865/05/11–1865/09/06 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) F849: 7.)

29 E.g. Ramsay-Laye, Elizabeth, *Social Life and Manners in Australia: Being the Notes of Eight Years Experience*. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861: 1–3 and Bayne, Clotilda, Diary of Fiancée Preparing for Emigration on Board the S.S. 'Orizaba' (1890/05/04–1890/06/03) and during First Time in South Australia as Wife to Charles L. Marson, 1890/01/01–1890/12/31 (National Library of Australia) MS 2733: 39+43–44.

30 Walcott, Stephen, "Letter to Colonial Secretary, Victoria. As to Frederick Fox Emigrating in the 'Persia' with a Woman Alleged to Be not His Wife," in *Entry Books of Correspondence: Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania*. London, 1854–1856 (National Archives) CO 386/128: 14–16

A more spiritual dimension to the motives is added when taking the aspect of mission and faith into account. As churches in Australia were running short of trained personnel and the growing number of new inhabitants needed spiritual guidance, many prayed for more reverends, vicars, pastors, and bishops to come to Australia. In the writings of those that followed the calling, their trust and dependency on God within their lives and thoughts stand out as a permanent and recurring theme explaining their decision. This can be observed among all denominations and confessions. For example, Baptist minister Benjamin Wilson read a call in a journal for a clergyman at the first Baptist Church to be established in Brisbane.[31] A plaque in the City Tabernacle Baptist Church commemorates him as the founder of this congregation, which remains impressive to the present day.[32] When Catholic teachers were lacking in the parish of St Mary's East St Kilda in Melbourne, Mother Mary Paul Mulquin waved goodbye to her "loved convent and sisters" in Limerick and set off with a heavy heart knowing that "only the thought of going for God's glory, would reconcile us to undergo the trial".[33]

Usually, however, it was a number of motives coming together that tipped the scales. After his conversion, Robert Beckett had started preaching at Methodist churches in Guildford and Greater London and was pursuing a more permanent way to serve the church as a pastor. The fact that the Methodist congregations in Melbourne had a vacancy in the 1850s sounded like an open door for him. Besides, his ailing health prevented him from accepting a perpetual position as Methodist preacher in England, so he applied for a free passage to settle in a supposedly healthier climate.[34]

31 Patterson, Henry Stuart, and Benjamin Gilmore Wilson. "Diary of a Medical Parson: Being Extracts from the Diaries and Letters of the Reverend B.G. Wilson (1823–1878)." *The Medical Journal of Australia* 2, no. 21 (1951): 697–701. See also the original document: Wilson, Benjamin Gilmore. Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Tornado'. John Oxley Library, Brisbane.
32 When attending a Sunday service at the City Tabernacle Baptist Church in February 2017, I was astonished to find his name and dates on a plaque on the left wall of the church's interior.
33 Mulquin, Mary P., Mother Mary's Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1873/10/22–1873/12/21 (Brunel Institute and Archive Bristol) Voyage Box 41, Item 2: 3.
34 Beckett, Robert, Extracts from Diary in London, on Board the 'Underley' and in Melbourne, with Letter Written during the Voyage, 1854/11/05–1889/12/31 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9576; Box 4293/3: 2.

Health was indeed another crucial factor. Travelling as wealthy "consumptive health-seekers"[35] or "one of the numerous tribe [sic] of invalids"[36] to recover from debilities or more serious diseases such as tuberculosis, many people hoped for lasting recuperation with unpolluted see air or the sunshine in Australia. Other rarer, but certainly more joyful motives for crossing the seas were touristic and educational purposes. Royals practicing for their future responsibilities travelled the world,[37] and wealthier parents in general tended to send their children off in the late 19th century "for seeing all they can, and to enlarge and improve their ideas."[38]

4 Getting Ready

As soon as the reasons for leaving home had led to the final decision to actually emigrate and an assisted passage had been approved or a passenger's ticket purchased through an agency, preparation started. This post-decision phase has received little attention in migration studies, but it deserves a closer look, given that during this specific phase, migrants started a process of putting into practise what beforehand had been mere deliberation. The individual travellers-to-be transformed general 'information' into personal 'knowledge'; they paid more attention to advisory and authoritative voices as travel items were bought, possessions sold, and relatives informed.

35 A Passenger, Narrative of a Voyage from England to Australia in the S.S. 'Somersetshire', 1879/12/13–1880/02/16 (National Library of Australia) PETHpam 2513: 21.

36 This arrogant comment about a traveller with lung problems came from the young, first class passenger Robert Tindall, who was travelling with the nuns around Mother Mary Paul Mulquin in 1873. (Tindall, Robert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain' and during First Weeks in Melbourne et al., 1873/10/24–1874/01 (Brunel Institute and Archive Bristol) Voyage Box 41, Item 1: 27.)

37 See the dissertation by my colleague: Weindl, Aglaja, *Ein Leben im Transit. Die Weltumsegelung von Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand von Österreich-Este (1892/93)*. Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus, 2024.

38 "I made the acquaintance of an American girl, Miss Mills of Montreal, Canada, who is travelling round the world with her brother for the sake of seeing all they can, and to enlarge and improve their ideas." (Care, Charles, Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient', 1888/03/03–1888/04/12 (Museum Victoria) HT 30972: 17.)

When considering emigrants to Australia, it needs to be borne in mind that the Australian passage was a very expensive one, as explained in the previous chapters. For impoverished families without access to contributions from nominators in the colony, landlord assistance, or other depositors, the pre-embarkation costs necessitated impossible payments. Assisted migration was not completely free: finding enough warm clothes, cooking and eating utensils, as well as some extra clothes to be more independent on board, were only some of the costly aspects of Australian emigration. So even poor steerage passengers needed some kind of capital or had to borrow money.[39]

Where did the future Australian citizens obtain the information they needed to get ready? After all, children were not taught substantial knowledge about Australian geography or culture at primary or secondary school.[40] With a growing number of British emigrants, the stock of reliable data increased and was distributed among adventurous men and women. Necessary purchases or detailed organizational requirements depended on the class, the arrangement, the conditions, and the destination. In analysing those texts, even just the identification of the topics that required further explanation and those which were self-evident already provides insights into the contemporary knowledge prevalent among the readers and recipients of those days – and reveals a lot about existing ideas about Australia. Besides travelling lecturers and public talks,[41] the published information available for intending emigrants can be organized into three major groups of mate-

39 Reid calculates the pre-embarkation costs, including clothing, equipment, travel fares to the port and to Australia, etc. for Irish government assisted emigrants to Sydney in the 1850s and 1860s in more detail and with concrete prices. He then comes to the conclusion that "these families, while not affluent, were also not destitute". (Reid, *Farewell My Children*: 32–38.)

40 The young Dane Thorvald Weitemeyer recalled his lack of information before boarding a ship to Australia: Weitemeyer, Thorvald P., *Missing Friends: Being the Adventures of a Danish Emigrant in Queensland (1871–1880)*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1892: 7–13.

41 Stammers, Michael K., *Emigrant Clippers to Australia: The Black Ball Line, its Operation, People and Ships, 1852–1871*. Barnoldswick: Milepost Research, 2013: 140–141. Often, there would be additional lectures on board to introduce the soon-to-be-colonists to their new home, see e.g.: Holmes, Charles, Diary on Board the 'Earl Granville' (Dec 1880–Apr 1881) and Letters to Parents (Apr 1881) (AJCP Microfilm), 1880/12/13–1881/04/14 (National Library of Australia) M 1860: 1881/03/22 [42].

rial: (1) colonial publications and advertisements, (2) private emigration societies' documents, and (3) private emigrant guides and biographies. Additionally, one of the characteristic genres in the field of migration studies probably offers the most influential source of information and knowledge for individuals within a certain network of societies: (4) emigrant diaries and letters.

Victorian culture in general, including that of the working class, had certain public spaces for reading and reading out loud. This could happen publicly, when magazines once bought were read aloud to others, or privately, when the family member with the highest degree of literacy would gather everyone and read letters, pamphlets and newspapers to the relatives.[42] If it is true that even in the remotest villages of 17th century England at least one literate person could be found, then the amount of people in 19th century Britain with "functional literacy" can be assumed to be even higher among the labouring classes.[43] Reading skills were taught widely at Sunday schools in the course of industrialization and globalization, so that the rise of printed material, books, tracts, magazines, etc. does not come as a surprise; it needs to be kept in mind that the greater majority of all government-assisted emigrants were at least able to read. There is a strong correlation between occupation and literacy, as well as with mobility – the better people could understand and receive information, the more mobile they were.[44]

The fact that the colonial and imperial governments had a great interest in attracting willing emigrants has already been pointed out several times. With the instalment of emigration and immigration hubs on either side, laws and regulations, financial investments and new paid positions, the machinery of posters, lectures, and information sheets

42 Sutherland, Gillian, "Education," in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750–1950: Vol. 3: Social Agencies and Institutions*, ed. Francis M.L. Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990: 119–170: 125–126.
43 Vincent, David, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750–1914,* Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989: Introduction, esp. 12+18.
44 Haines, Robin, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor: Australian Recruitment in Britain and Ireland, 1831–60*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997: 68–76.

commenced throughout Great Britain and Europe in the 1850s.[45] In general, lists of wages and tables showing the demand for labour in the colonies could also be found in Australian newspapers, encouraging the colonists already settled there to send for their family and friends in the old country.[46] But the more common source for hard facts and numbers were the official publications of the *Colonial Land and Emigration Commission* (CLEC) that had been established in 1840 to oversee and organize assisted migration in particular. From 1843 until 1875, the annually updated *Colonization Circular* was the go-to journal for statistics, addresses and lists about the settlement options offered in the British Empire. The CLEC was responsible for the data and with a growing number of colonies the journals became thicker, the table of content fuller, and the price as high as six pence (starting in 1859). In order to provide a full overview of emigration with lists of costs, official aids, necessary tools, prices, wages, laws and land disposals in the various destinations, this publication had to be the size of a book, eventually comprising over one hundred thin pages, with slightly changing formats and layouts. The Antipodes and Canada were the two largest destinations, demanding the most introductory remarks and details. In the 1870s, 600 copies were printed for public sale (with an estimated readership about twenty times higher than suggested merely by the number of copies sold).[47]

400 copies were assigned for the colonies and the Emigration Commissioners. Building on this information, travelling emigration advertisers and local agencies worked on behalf of the colonial government, and they were seen as the experts on transit and the far-away country.[48] Due

45 The government was well aware of the importance of advertising and attracting emigrants, see Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 140. They proved to be effective in several cases, as can be seen in exemplary biographies such as Weitemeyer, *Missing Friends*: 7 in Hamburg or Hunt, Agnes G., *Reminiscences*. Shrewsbury: Wilding & Son, 1935: 13–14 in Great Britain.

46 E.g. N. N., "Sydney Labour Market," *Empire*, 1857/05/23: 5.

47 "Readership of periodicals has been estimated at over twenty times their sales figures. Reading aloud in clubs, inns, and parlours was an important aspect of working class rural and urban culture." (Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor*: 303.)

48 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, *Colonization Circular: Annual Journals. Issued by her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners*. Edited by Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 32 vols. London: Charles Knight and Co; W. Clowes and Sons, 1843–1873.

to its reliability and conciseness, the magazine was recommended from the very beginning to everyone seriously contemplating emigration, even by other private organizations involved in the emigration business:

> I may suppose that before leaving England, you have provided yourself with the outfit of clothes, &c., recommended in the Colonization Circular issued by Her Royal Majesty's Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, which you can get at any bookseller's for 2d[49], and which you ought to read carefully.[50]

This quote is taken from one of the many tracts the aforementioned SPCK distributed among various groups of prospective emigrants. Together with the Anglican *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*, it represented one of the oldest and largest Christian organizations, closely cooperating with the *Church of England Emigrant Chaplaincy*.[51]

For numbers, dates, and statistics, Hitchins' book from the early 20th century is still the only one wholly dedicated to *CLEC*: Hitchins, Fred H., *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931: 99–104.

49 Starting at four pence for one magazine, then reducing the price to two pence for the following seven issues, the *CLEC* increased the price significantly from one year to another. From 1859 people had to pay six pence for one copy (which was still a modest price for such a paper). (Hitchins: 99–100). See: Issues 1–19: Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, "Colonization Circular. Annual Journals 1843–1859," updated 1999 <www.nla.gov.au/ferg/issn/14614278.html>, accessed 2021/08/12.

50 Druitt, Robert, and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Medical Hints for Emigrants (Emigrant Tracts 9), London 1850 (Cambridge University Library) SPCK.1.1850.7:1.

51 Carey, Hilary M., *God's Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c. 1801–1908*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011: 309. Unfortunately, there is not much in-depth historical research that has been conducted on the *SPCK* and related Christian societies yet. For the early years in Australia see e.g. Bollen, J.D., "English Christianity and the Australian Colonies, 1788–1860," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 28, no. 4 (1977): 361–385. doi:10.1017/S0022046900041658 and a self-publication from the 19th century: Sewell, "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," London 1885. Other denominations also had colonial missionary societies involved with imperial and colonial projects. An unusually loud voice belonged to the *Salvation Army*, which only in the emigration business in the 1890s. With a peculiar vision of an "Over-Sea Colony", the founder William Booth wrote a successful book presenting his solution to poverty and over-population: Booth, William, *In Darkest England and the Way out*. London: Punk & Wagnalls, 1890: 90–93. Their professional engagement, however, particularly took off in the 20th century. (Strong, Rowan, "Globalising British Christianity in the Nineteenth Century: The Imperial Anglican Emigrant Chaplaincy 1846–c. 1910," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 43, no. 1 (2015): 1–32: 15–16.)

Thus, the SPCK stands for several religious or philanthropic institutions offering privately researched and published hints and guidelines. The SPCK were experts even before the *Anglican Emigrant Chaplaincy Network* asked them for spiritual literature. Funded by public figure William Gladstone in 1836, they had worked on an emigrant library that the poorer classes could afford, and which covered devotions and prayer books as well as practical advice or moral readings.[52] Apart from financially supporting emigrant chaplains, this remained their main business throughout the 19th century. Soon, more secular and hands-on questions were addressed as well, although clearly embedded in a Christian (primarily, Anglican) worldview and the context of a gospel-driven mindset. The need was there. Impoverished, rural areas crucially lacked trustworthy information, let alone knowledge – so much so that even in 1888, John C. Ryle, the first Anglican bishop of Liverpool, sighed at the ignorance of certain people when he was writing for the SPCK:

> I believe a great deal more information needs spreading throughout the country. I could wish there was an office opened in every parish in England and Wales for the circulation of cheap emigration literature, and the provision of plain lectures for the benefit of those who cannot read.[53]

Indeed: The impact of religiously motivated initiatives in enabling movements and facilitating circumstances for people cannot be underestimated. Given that a long-term blind spot for religious aspects has characterized migration history until recently, the contribution of church-related agents and spiritual motives should not be forgotten in any analysis of imagining transit and a new life. Of course, it is hard to estimate how many people actually did consult those guides and manuals thoroughly. However, as there are clear references in the private

52 Strong, Rowan, *Victorian Christianity and Emigrant Voyages to British Colonies, c.1840–c.1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017: 38–71. A list of the 1859 books and tracts is given in Strong, "Globalising British Christianity in the Nineteenth Century": 25–26.
53 Ryle, John C., and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Emigration and Emigrants (Some Thoughts for Churchmen (Emigrant Tracts 2230)), London 1888 (Cambridge University Library) 1888.6.773: 11–12.

papers of emigrants and a measurable increase of published material, it is safe to assume that the texts were received with success.[54]

In the Christian tracts, the repeated call was to fight against poverty and improve one's character by practising endurance and patience despite harsh circumstances. Emigrating, therefore, was proclaimed as a special burden imposed on the faithful and courageous who were willing and able to leave in order to fulfil their duty as Christians in obedience to God. It was not a decision to be taken lightly and required diligent preparation of heart and soul. In particular, dramatic narratives of fictional emigrants' fates were often used to warn the working classes – deemed to have more need for teaching – not to be ignorant of the problems and difficulties that lay ahead.[55]

Following this attitude and concern, other private organizations focusing on a selected group of people also offered specifically designed material. Although the *SPCK* had at least one pamphlet for the female audience,[56] emigrating women were often supported by several decidedly middle-class societies. They were characterized by both strongly maternalistic and feminist tendencies. Due to the tough working conditions and shortage of jobs for domestic servants, governesses, etc., the emigration of single women was a matter of constant concern in certain circles of Victorian society.[57] Key figures in establishing wom-

54 Strong, "Globalising British Christianity in the Nineteenth Century": 3–5 and Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor*: 174.

55 Directly or indirectly through the touching story of "young emigrants" or "emigrating orphans", Christian societies challenged the readers on their true motives, as in tracts like: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, The Emigrant's Call (Emigrant Tracts 1633), London 1873 (Cambridge University Library) 1873.6.621 and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, The Young Emigrants. Or, a Voyage to Australia. Part I-III (Emigrant Tracts 5–7), London 1850 (Cambridge University Library) 1850.5.54.

56 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, A Few Words for Female Emigrants (Emigrant Tracts 1671), London 1873 (Cambridge University Library) 1873.6.651.

57 Cf. Hammerton, A. James, "Gender and Migration," in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: 156–180 and Myers, Janet C., "Performing the Voyage out: Victorian Female Emigration and the Class Dynamics of Displacement," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 29, no. 1 (2001): 129–146. In a manner typical of the new feminist rhetoric, Maria S. Rye, one of the founders of the *Female Middle Class Emigration Society*, started her paper in front of the Social Science Congress in Dublin in 1861 with the following melodramatic words: "[…] 'Are women to perish simply because they are women?' […] there were thrown upon their own resources hundreds of educated women – women of unblemished character, and, in many instances, women of capability and power –

en's emigration as a respectable and relevant social issue were Caroline Chisholm, Maria Rye and Jane Lewin.[58] To name but a few of the most popular associations founded by the latter two, the *Female Middle Class Emigration Society*, the *British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society* (BLFES), the *Girls' Friendly Society*, and the *British Women's Emigration Association* were all invested in guaranteeing a safe voyage for women. They acted as mediators and put the arriving women in contact with possible employers in the colonies or ran houses for the first safe accommodation in a new city, therefore not only offering help for organizing the voyage but also beyond. At least the ones mentioned here also worked together with the *SPCK*. The *BLFES*, for example, did not actually run emigration programmes for women themselves, but rather participated in the making and preparing of transit by training matrons for emigrant ships in the mid-19th century; something which was promoted and funded by the *SPCK* and related societies.[59] Given that most emigrant-related publications and guidebooks were aiming at a male audience, information specifically for women was limited. Hence, the emigration societies adapted the content to the female reader by selecting mainly positive letters of gratitude from former emigrants with fulfilling jobs, such as an educated gentlewoman hired as governess or a young middle-class girl hired as schoolteacher.[60] The female emigration societies thus filled a significant gap and were successful exactly

nine-tenths of whom could literally find no employment whatever – and this in London alone, the unanimous advice from all quarters, from papers of the most opposite political opinions, and from pens the most antagonistic on every other subject, was invariably 'Teach your *protégés* to emigrate; send them where the men want wives, the mothers want governesses, where the shopkeepers, the schools, and the sick will thoroughly appreciate your exertions, and heartily welcome your women.'" (Rye, Maria S., Emigration of Educated Women (A Paper Read at the Social Science Congress), 1861 (Women's Library London School of Economics) FME/3/1:3.)

58 Chilton, *Agents of Empire*: 21–23.

59 Haines and Gordon name the *BLFES* as working together with the *SPCK*; Strong refuses and identifies the *British Women's Emigration Association* as the cooperating association (Strong, "Globalising British Christianity in the Nineteenth Century": 13, Gordon, Peter, and David Doughan, *Dictionary of British Women's Organisations, 1825–1960,* Woburn Education Series). London, Portland: Woburn Press, 2001: 28–29, and Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor*: 193–194). On the role of matrons, see Chapter 6 "Managing Transit".

60 Clarke, Patricia, *The Governesses: Letters from the Colonies 1862–1882*. London et al.: Hutchinson, 1985.

because of occupying that niche. For the sake of this argument, the merely informative potential of their publications serves as a valuable source for shaping and determining historical expectations of migration for the female travellers.[61]

On a more anonymous level and similar to the CLEC-publications, independent emigrant guides existed as well. One of the very popular ones, which was published in several editions and regularly updated, was an emigrants' guide by Pitt & Scott for the various colonies in the British Empire.[62] In general, those emigrant guides represent a peculiar genre,[63] curiously overlooked by most migration historians.[64] Together with a growing number of counselling pamphlets and handbooks, the "how-to"-leaflets were a popular source for information about the requirements, the voyage, and the destination. Popular in the 1830s already, promotional literature flooded the libraries and booksellers' markets, with older guides seeing several re-prints and new editions in the 1850s as well as in the 1880s. Not every prominent author could claim to speak of personal Australian experience,[65] but many relied on

61 For a large overview, see: Gordon and Doughan, *Dictionary of British Women's Organisations, 1825–1960*. For historical research on female migration: Chilton, *Agents of Empire*; Gothard, Jan, *Blue China: Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia*. Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001.) The Women's Library based at the London School of Economics holds the archival leftovers of many of those societies; they mainly consist of scrap books and newspaper cuttings. The Annual Reports are often repetitive, while a number of letters by emigrants give insight into the first impressions and struggles the women were confronted with in the colonies.

62 Pitt & Scott, *The Emigrants' Guide for 1883*.

63 Like other manuals, "emigrant guides" cover instructional writings about a particular topic (in this case "migration"). They collect details about times, places, geographies, schedules, prices, etc., covering a range of formats from paper leaflets to handbooks; some of them were illustrated. They sometimes pick a specific audience to adapt their style of writing, providing specific data for women, working class people, governesses, schoolteachers, or other groups. (See Charlwood, Don, *The Long Farewell: Settlers under Sail*. Ringwood: Allen Lane, 1981: 70–81.)

64 A similar lacuna in historical and geographical research is observed by Pesek when analysing manuals for scientific travellers: Pesek, Michael, "Vom richtigen Reisen und Beobachten: Ratgeberliteratur für Forschungsreisende nach Übersee im 19. Jahrhundert," *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 40, no. 1 (2017): 17–38. doi:10.1002/bewi.201701808: 17–19.

65 One of the most prominent authors was the children's writer and editor, Sir William H.G. Kingston, who published emigrant guides in the 1850s, albeit never emigrating to the colonies himself. (Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor*: 180–186 and Hassam, Andrew, *Sailing to Australia: Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants*. Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press; St. Martin's Press, 1994: 36–37.)

biographically bound narratives and pursued the aim of offering emigrants a hand to help them avoid unnecessary discomfort or mischief at sea and in the colony. Concise, with an understandable style of writing and a clear structure with headlines and a table of content, the emigrant guides count as typical migration-related items.

Some individuals privately spoke of their own lives, printing emigrant guides without official help or funding from one of the bigger institutional bodies, such as the *SPCK* or the *British Women's Emigration Association*. For example, Anne Ramsay-Laye's mixture of autobiography and handbook "Social Life and Manners in Australia" addressed the wives, mothers and sisters with reflections on the challenges she faced emigrating during the Australian gold rush in the 1850s. Deprived of any knowledge about the new country she was following her husband to, she recalls her "dismay and apprehension" upon hearing about her husband's decision to leave England. She explains this first reaction with ignorance on her part, writing:

> just what I have seen and heard; for it would have been a consolation to me in my own perplexity, had I known the true state of things in that far distant land. […] for this reason, as I imagine, – having passed through the fiery ordeal of expatriation and suspense, with the discomforts always attendant on a new life, they are ready to compassionate and lend a helping hand to those who are entering upon the same trials.[66]

She was not alone in pressing her autobiographical know-how into the generalizing genre of a manual. Other women did likewise and helped produce literature for a low price, in the manner of mid-19th century manuals and dictionaries. The annoying boredom and disturbing insecurities that came with the voyage in a crowded, maritime, unfamiliar place also encouraged another woman, Anne James, to put together a companion volume. In general, advice given by people already in the colonies conveyed another level of trustworthiness and reliability, so that the first-person narrators of successful manuals were eager to

66 Ramsay-Laye, *Social Life and Manners in Australia*: 1+3.

virtually connect with the reader and befriend him/her. This captatio benevolentiae was a common stylistic device:

> The following pages are respectfully dedicated to those of the Working Classes about to Emigrate to Australia, by one who has resided in various parts of that delightful colony for some years; and who, in the course of her travels, has had abundant opportunity of learning the real state of affairs, with regard, especially, to its capabilities for bettering the condition of the working portion of the community, a consummation which she ardently desires to see accomplished.[67]

With a similar intention of sharing their experiences and insights with loved ones left behind, many diarists scribbled their comments into notebooks they had brought with them on board ship. "Nothing can be more interesting to your friends at home, than to receive from time to time extracts from that miniature record of human action", claims James' emigrant guide explicitly.[68] Shipboard diaries therefore also have an in-between function and stand in the middle of something unique, by trying to "give a readable form to the literally unsettling experience of emigration." The confrontation between 'expectation' and 'experience' often took place on the yellowed and sticky sheets of paper, which encouraged many to share what they had learned and grappled with. Unlike other diaries, they are not necessarily meant to be kept secret (though, of course, some certainly were). On the contrary, many were sent back to family and friends who had stayed in the United Kingdom. Unlike letters, however, they are not asking questions to be answered by the receiver. Often, they were only posted after copying them so that the writer him- or herself would still be in possession of this self-made souvenir of the voyage.[69]

67 James, Anne, "The Australian Emigrants' Companion: Containing Practical Advice to Intending Emigrants. Especially to Those of the Working Classes," 1852:2. Coming full circle, she also recommends the *SPCK* religious tracts for the voyage (p. 5).
68 James: 7.
69 Hassam, Andrew, *No Privacy for Writing Shipboard Diaries, 1852–1879*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1995: xv and Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*: 41–43.

Some even deliberately went on to edit their pencil writings afterwards to see them officially printed for an anonymous readership interested in understanding such an undertaking. In those cases, the informative intention is palpable.[70] But the presence of an imagined audience, "which assembles round the Mybster Inn fireside during the long and weary winter evenings"[71] holds true for the unpublished, hand-written, and somewhat undecipherable emigrant diaries as well. The imagined audience is why they often contained useful pieces of advice, practical lessons, dietary lists, or hints to facilitate the sea voyage, such as the advice that the best time to take the daily bath as a family travelling first class is at 7:30 a.m. to avoid the masses queuing in line.[72] Sometimes, they addressed a specific relative contemplating emigration or spoke against false beliefs or futile purchases. Donald G. Sutherland added an appendix entitled "Notice to intending emigrants" with information on clothes for the voyage and for Australia, strategies to pack luggage in two different boxes, behavioural appeals, tips for keeping steady during heavy seas, etc.[73] Sometimes, they had an even greater political agenda in mind,[74] but independent from that, they all fulfilled the purpose of containing knowledge, first-hand experience and ingredients to cope with an adventurous enterprise.[75] Today, social media offer similar ben-

70 Travelling on an American clipper from Liverpool to Melbourne in 1860, Mulligan talks about regular washing of clothes and bathing to fight against the plague of lice on board: "[…] The change of direction and climate causes this & it is thought no way strange to see them in pairs triping [sic] each other upon the passengers I would not mention this disagreeable subject only thinking perhaps some one may read who might some time be at sea and this might put them on their guard, so I drop it." (Mulligan, McClenaghan, and McClenaghan, *From County Down to Down Under*: 40.).

71 Sutherland, Donald G., Diary on Board the 'Northumberland' (Edited by Marina Eaton in 2013), 1876/09/21–1876/11/22 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15572; Box 4667/9:2.

72 Royle, Emily E., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Kent' and in Australia, 1880/11/17–1881/06/01 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 2613: 13.

73 Sutherland, "Diary on Board the 'Northumberland'," 1876/09/21–1876/11/22: 47.

74 Such as "calling attention to the importance of providing some more efficient moral and religious supervision than now exists on board" in the early 1850s. (Mereweather, John D., *Life on Board an Emigrant Ship: Being a Diary of a Voyage to Australia*. London, 1852: i–ii.)

75 Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*: 38–41 and Charlwood, *The Long Farewell*: 3–4.

efits: in the Victorian age it was provided by the circulation of generalized letters by more distant contacts.[76]

A critical look at all those genres shows that the purpose-driven writings heavily form and shape the language and imagery used. Common to all societies living off migrants are the brightly coloured descriptions in their advertisements, which sometimes come quite close to mere propaganda. A clear selection of primarily enthusiastic letters of thankfulness, stories of immediate success and quick achievements, as well as brilliant opportunities for everyone were meant to catch the attention of the unsatisfied and discontent, the weary and desperate. However, what becomes clear as well is that intending emigrants did not only have access to advertisements. Societies like the SPCK put a lot of effort into informing appropriately, including warnings and caveats against reckless decisions. Open and honest autobiographies spoke of debilitating obstacles, as a counterpoint to tales of sunny Australia's "land of promise". Private diaries and letters sometimes also transgress the boundaries of the genre, which often required a strong and conquering protagonist, and instead dared to utter severe criticism, to name anxieties and to express regrets about life decisions.

However, the availability of this whole range of information did not in itself mean that everyone had the time, resources, and skills to comprehensively gather and evaluate a variety of reports beforehand. Some did not have enough money to purchase guides or were cut off from private networks to settlers in the colony. So the first steps on leaving the country did often lead to a biased idea of transit, because more attention was paid to the future home, job and family life than to the first interlude of emigration, namely the ship journey.[77]

Because of the long-term prospect of permanent settlement, many of the genres and sources looked at were not the foremost contributors to the formation of an idea of transit. Noting that the poorer emigrants probably did not consult all the material sold and promoted in the cities:

76 See: Buchanan, Stefanie E., "'I expected something else': Germans in Melbourne," *Space and Culture* 10, no. 3 (2007): 331–348. doi:10.1177/1206331207304354 and Coletto and Fullin, "Before Landing": 323–324.

77 Piper, "Great Expectations".

> [the] information received with regard to maritime matters comes through the channel of the newspapers, which, as ships usually arrive safe at their destination, take very little notice of them till a fearful shipwreck or a mutiny occurs when the press teems the harrowing details. Another source from which information of ship life is derived is from novels – historical or romantic – in which fact is strangely interwoven with fiction in order to bring out the brave qualities of the hero in some naval engagement; or to show the convenience afforded on board for the courtship on which the whole interest of the book is concentrated, that they give very real instruction on the subject of the routine life on board.[78]

Taken from a book that was the product of an emigrant ship's newspaper produced by the passengers of the 'Winefred' in 1874–1875, this preface makes it clear that rumours, stories and fiction were all an essential part of the luggage passengers carried with them – perhaps even more so than carefully researched instruction sheets.

5 Expected to Be vs. Experienced as

Reflecting on the landscape of theoretically available written preparation material, the voyage reveals itself as playing a more important role than just being the insignificant and unavoidable path to the desired destination. The broad, general government publications did not primarily focus on the voyage but the long journey and prevailing narratives about the dangers and discomforts of travelling did number among the major objections to emigration. The people who filled this strange and unknown sphere with a curious amalgamate of hopes and sorrows were personally confronted with the discrepancy between the expected and the experienced. Both hopes and fears are projections of something likely onto a future yet to come – either something positive or something negative.

To address these concerns of hesitatant citizens in Great Britain, it was common to conduct indirect advertisement campaigns, such as the

78 Hetherington, Frederick W., ed., *Life on an Emigrant Ship: Being Twelve Numbers of a Ship's Newspaper Entitled 'The Winefred Marvel'*, 3rd ed. Uxbridge, 1895: Preface.

full-length publication of seemingly authentic notes by an anonymous passenger on board an emigrant ship:

> Like many others, I dreaded to undertake such a long sea voyage, but now that I know, by experience, what it is, I would not waste one single thought upon its difficulties or want of comfort. This may arise from learning, by experience, that these are much less than I had anticipated. I must say I never passed the same number of weeks more pleasantly. As your newspaper will be read by many in the British Isles who are anxious to come here, but deterred by fears of the difficulties and discomfort of a long sea voyage, I wish to say to them these difficulties are more imaginary than real.[79]

The keyword "experience" occurs twice and is set in opposition to "imaginary difficulties and discomfort" to encourage more people to dare setting off to Australia. However, this argument lacks substantial specificity, as it simply talks about the transit being "better", "much" or "less" than expected, with no baseline to anchor these comparisons. A personal level of imagination, which is not further elaborated upon, is used as the standard against which 'transit' is measured. Furthermore, although they are described as barely impedimental to the enjoyment of a "prosperous" voyage, the mentions of sickness and lack of space actually indicate they are issues which need to be addressed, hinting at tension and contradictions.

The value and credibility of deliberately motivational open letters to prospective travellers are to be doubted. The societies and associations introduced above offered more detailed, more objectively written publications on Australian migration, which specifically addressed the extended period of travel. The independent emigrant guides were

79 N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger". It should not be forgotten that this was the exact same voyage, during which Maria Johnston suffered from a prolonged maniacal attack and the surgeon ended up charging the schoolmaster after dismissing the schoolmaster's wife from her post as matron for the emigrating single women (see Chapter 2 "Controlling Transit"). On shipboard newspapers: Beamish, Johanna, *Im Transit auf dem Ozean: Schiffszeitungen als Dokumente globaler Verbindungen im 19. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus, 2018.

also aware of the watery border to be crossed. According to the popular emigrant guide by Pitt & Scott, Philip Chadfield's "Out at Sea"[80] counted as "the most useful little work for an intending passenger" as it "describes how to fit up the berths and contains many practical remarks about cooking, and life on board ship".[81] All those manuals set out to serve as instructive instruments, helping migrants to come to terms with two major fields concerning the voyage: (1) shipboard conditions, including accommodation, comfort, sanitary provisions, food; and (2) shipboard life, including family organization, passenger community, rituals, authorities.

Legally speaking, the first aspect was the authorities' job and gave ground for much discussion in the parliaments, leading to the Passengers Act in 1855. This law formed the basis for further passenger regulations, defining space allotments for one statute adult, victualling scales, safety commandments (lifeboats, etc.), and health requirements (medical officers for vessels with over thirty passengers). The act was an enormous step towards passengers' health care, and though far from being perfect, passing this law made British emigrant vessels safer and more reliable than any other ships. Until the 1870s, amendments and minor changes helped to establish the Passengers Act as the foundational law in the Empire's migration business.[82]

This advantage became well-known among passengers travelling on ships other than British ones, where the conditions were worse and less regulated. It explains why American, Scottish or German vessels, for example, frequently occurred as negative examples in both official investigations and private writings.[83]

80 Chadfield, *Out at Sea*.
81 Pitt & Scott, *The Emigrants' Guide for 1883*: 77.
82 For an analysis of the exemplary ups and downs of negotiating transit proceedings and migration regulations from the political side see Chapter 1 "Negotiating Transit".
83 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, "New Passengers Act," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1855/12/12: 5. For research literature see Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*:151–158. For historical examples how American, Scottish or German vessels received criticism and drew court investigations, see e.g. Johnston, W. Ross, ed., *A Documentary History of Queensland: From Reminiscences, Diaries, Parliamentary Papers, Newspapers, Letters and Photographs*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1988: 398–400; Murdoch, Thomas W., and Frederic Rogers, "Letter to Herman Merivale. Investigation into Salted Ships with Comparison between American and British Ships," in *Letters*

It is one thing to have a law imposing rules, but an entirely different thing to have people actually embark on a vessel and start the journey that involved practical, social and personal life conditions. In the long process of migration, it was the effects of bad preparation and ignorance which were felt first. Depending on how well or badly prepared the passengers set out, there are either more words of regret or expressions of relief in the diaries and letters. The well-meant recommendations of the tracts, journals, newspaper articles and autobiographies implicitly or explicitly influenced individual experiences. Sorted into the two categories of shipboard conditions and shipboard life, a selection of instances that enables conclusions to be made about the previously existing expectations and the actual experience will now show how the ideas of transit markedly shaped the onboard period with its motley facets. The concept of an imagined transit based on expectations also allows for understanding many of the diary remarks better as they speak in comparative language or switch to a defensive tone. After all, none of the passengers wrote into an empty space, but found themselves caught between prescriptive texts, descriptive reports, fictional pictures, intimate hopes and underlying fears.

5.1 Shipboard conditions

Measurements, weight and luggage regulations were strictly prescribed, and a list of required clothes and items was printed in each *Colonization Circular* copy to be found at emigration agencies and bookshops. Strict warnings about the hot and cold seasons to be endured when travelling to the other hemisphere made the emphasis clear:

> 1. Length of Voyage. – The usual length of the voyage to the Australian Colonies is about 3 1/2 months, and to New Zealand a little longer; and at whatever season of the year it may be made, passengers have to encounter very hot and very cold weather, they should be prepared for both.

to the Colonial Office: Australia. London, 1854–1871 (National Archives) CO 386/72: 2–9; Thompson, William, Diary on Board the 'Meteor', 1854/04/07–1854/05/28 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9085; Box 104/5: 29–30 or Weitemeyer, *Missing Friends*: 32.

> 2. Outfit. – The following is a list of the principal articles required; but it cannot be too strongly impressed, as a general rule, that the more abundant the stock of clothing each person can afford to take, the better for health and comfort during the passage.

The following list of clothes, divided into a man's and a woman's wardrobe, took the meteorological and geographical changes into account:[84]

Table 2: Outfits required for emigrating to Australia

Single Man's Outfit to Australia	s.	d.
1 beaverteen jacket (warm lined)	6	6
1 ditto waistcoat with sleeves	4	6
1 ditto trowsers (warm lined)	6	6
1 duck ditto	2	3
1 coloured drill jacket	2	9
1 ditto trousers	2	6
1 ditto ditto waistcoat	2	0
1 pilot over-coat or jacket	10 [?]	0
Or, 1 waterproof coat	7	6
2 blue serge shirts, or Jersey frocks	4	6
1 felt hat	2	0
1 tweed cap		
6 blue striped cotton shirts, each		
1 pair of boots		
1 pair of shoes		
4 handkerchiefs, each	0	6
4 pair worsted hose, each	1	0
2 pair cotton hose, each	0	9
1 pair braces or belt	0	8
4 towels, each	0	4
Razor, shaving-brush, and glass	1	6

84 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, Colonization Circular (No. 21. Issued by her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners), London 1862 (Cambridge University Library) OP.3100.0.038 (22): 11.

Single Woman's Outfit to Australia	**s.**	**d.**
1 warm cloak, with a cape	6	0
1 bonnet	5	0
1 sun hat	2	0
1 stuff dress	11	0
2 print ditto, each	6	0
6 shifts, each	1	3
2 flannel petticoats, each	2	6
1 stuff ditto	3	9
2 twill cotton ditto	2	0
1 pair of stays	2	6
4 pocket handkerchiefs, each	0	3
2 net do. for neck, each	5	5
3 caps, each	0	10
4 night caps ca.	0	7
4 sleeping jackets, each	1	4
2 black worsted hose, each	0	10
4 cotton do., each	0	8
1 pair of shoes	2	9
1 ditto boots	5	0
6 towels, each	0	4

The costs were not to be underestimated. Knowing about the monetary challenges, Chadfield's emigrant guide for sea voyages therefore deliberately lists fewer clothes as the absolute minimum and considers "begging old shirts, shifts, stockings, &c., from friends who have cast them aside" as one option to obtain linen clothes that could "be thrown overboard" if the occasion called for that. This could be very helpful advice but, if not applied wisely, it could also be useless. Emigrating as a girl in 1884, Agnes Hunt saw her mother collecting various random dresses, jackets and pants without caring about their size: she thus ended up not actually possessing much of use aboard. Obviously, not all preparation was good – of real value was firmly directed preparation based on solid research and conscious investment. Varying preferences and ideas of hygiene also manifested in the advice given. Mr. Howell told the recipients of his letter that he could not see the greater benefit of bringing as many clothes as possible, but reflecting on his male perspective, he then did admit:

> I find that it is not really necessary to be supplied for a voyage with such an extra number of shirts, towels and other odd bits of drapery as I am; because, I find, there are opportunities at sea for 'washing'! – but in the case of ladies in that matter there exists too much mystery for me to say anything positively, or give you information thereon, in which they only have an interest.

This might serve as a good summary of how recommendations could be given but were then shaped by any individual's real circumstances. To evaluate the true character of 'transit', an actual encounter with the sea was necessary.

The space allotted to each immigrant unfortunately often turned out to be of theoretical value only, with most people probably not even checking the official measurements. The lack of a private sphere, crowdedness, and immediate closeness could be hard to bear and often gave rise to rows and arguments. It is needless to say that sharing cramped berths with strangers, only separated from each other by curtains at the end of each bunk, was not the most pleasant setting a single or married person could find him- or herself in. Additionally, the ventilation and airing on ships were still in the process of being improved.

Accommodation and nutrition both belonged to the most fervently debated and criticized factors before, during and after the voyage. After all, the journey in itself was a unique period in the life of most emigrants, who without much further distraction might have felt the lack of comforts even more severely. Of course, it should not be underestimated how the promise of a daily allowance of food raised high expectations for some of the notoriously hungry. Chadfield gives an exemplary schedule of the meals, which started with breakfast at 8am. The main meal, dinner, was served in the middle of the day and had to be prepared by the passengers themselves. Then followed teatime at 5pm, which served as a reason to assemble for hot water. Supper then lay in the hands of each mess, consisting of about eight adults. If they had kept some leftovers from dinner, a third meal could be served. Especially on sailing vessels, it was the ship's cooks who prepared the basic meals (porridge, soups, salt meat joints) for the steerage, intermediate and second-class passengers; each mess then had to organize the rest

of the meal to be heated, baked or cooked. With the advance of steam over sail there was an end to the stressful practice of steerage passengers cooking for themselves in stoves lashed to the deck, so that by the 1880s steamship companies provided food for all classes, even for the Atlantic passage. Food at sea altogether was a precious and complicated matter, given that techniques to store and cool groceries were limited. Diaries mentioned good or bad diets, complained about the meat, the lack of fresh water, and praised competent cooks when reporting back to friends and family. Likewise, most of the petitions handed in to the Immigration Board afterwards called for an evaluation of the basic needs of the travelling immigrants.

The *CLEC* did not publish a dietary list of daily allowances in their magazine, so the details regarding what the emigrants could expect were not as easy to get as the list of what they had to bring with them. This might be the case because the dietary scale was prescribed by the Passengers Act and modified by the shipping lines' standards. Stemming from an officially superordinate department, the *CLEC*'s *Colonization Circulars* were more concerned about informing its willing citizens of their contribution. This included a bowl and a can for every individual, cutlery, one deep tin plate and one pint-sized tin drinking mug. Chadfield in contrast gives a comprehensive list of the weekly scale of dietary expectations in "respectable shipping houses" and also presents simple recipes "for tolerable dinners" with the ingredients available.

How did a careful preparation play out in the actual voyage? William Smith was relieved to have bought additional stores before departure that proved to be immensely valuable towards the end of the voyage when the ship ran short of provisions assigned to the passengers. Likewise, Joseph G. Stewart rejoiced at having thought of some soda for baking. In his diary, he boasted in the success of having "the best cakes in the ship" and observes: "There was no one [who] brought any I belive [sic] but myself." In fact, if he or any of the other passengers had read Chadfield's guide, they all purchased some soda before boarding the ship. In contrast, with a growling stomach, William Clarke envied those who had brought some "meal or flour, some tea and sugar, butter and jam" and dreamed of "a good thing" such as "some good salt herring and a box of biscuits." Although all these examples are taken from

different ships with different destinations, covering more than a decade, the differences are less remarkable than the similarities when reading about the food distributed and the shortages, problems and annoyances passengers used to face.

Leaving out the luxuries of the first-class saloon dinners, complaints about the insufficiency of the food belonged to the topoi found in many notebooks and reports of lengthy sea voyages. Since fresh water supplies could also quickly turn into a contested resource, further research on cheap and functioning distilling apparatuses was carried out and tested throughout the century and especially on steamships later. Despite government regulations dictating sufficient allowances for each adult and child to not starve, the reality looked somewhat different. However, false measurements or disregard for official rules would only be noticed in cases where emigrants had gone through the list and knew their rights, as well as how to defend and proclaim them. Otherwise, the suffering continued and put a heavy burden on the individuals who sometimes could not or did not know how to adequately raise their voices against sneaky stewards or fraudulent cooks. Although, the following case is one where the direct confrontation was not met with approval by the ship surgeon or other authorities, Alexander Blaikie and his fellow travellers did not argue for their due portions in vain. When they proved that they "had been cheated out of our […] part of flour and by the storekeeper giving wrong weight for the buckets", the doctor sided with the storekeeper and refused to do anything against him but he did not have the last word on this matter: upon arrival in October 1883, the "water police came along […] & took off [..] also the steward for stealing." Eventually, justice was restored.

Apart from clothes and food, the weather was one of the hardest aspects of shipboard circumstances. Warnings of extreme conditions were issued, but the temperature and the weather were topics to ponder and reflect on constantly. When it comes to the weather, the imagined transit can be observed vividly, with both calms and storms undoubtedly considered to be essentials of any sea voyage. Their presence, absence, strength, power, annoyance, etc. appeared in every letter, autobiography and emigrant diary.

> Last night was very rough and stormy, I could not sleep at all rocked in the cradle of the deep sounds very charming in a song, when we are safe on land, but I can assure anyone of an enquiring turn of minds, that it is not half so pleasant in reality as we are led by the song to suppose.

With a slightly ironic tone, the surgeon's wife Frances Thornton quoted a familiar hymn about a peaceful maritime atmosphere when resting in God's sovereign power: "Rocked in the cradle of the deep / I lay me down in peace to sleep; Secure I rest pon the wave, for Thou, O Lord! hast power to save." She referred to that first stanza and was quick to point out that there was indeed a huge difference between "safe on land" and "reality" on board. However, the difference that seems to be significant here is less the one between "land" and "sea" and more the difference between "expectation" and "experience". The hymn did not serve as a stable source of information, but it had nevertheless and most likely unconsciously become part of her personally owned 'knowledge', feeding into her imagining of transit. The implications of comfort, though, did not help Thornton in this case because she had never seen anything like that. In fact, in the middle of the storm:

> the waves are something fearful and you can form no idea what a storm on the rolling deep is like […] To those unaccustomed to a storm at sea I can only say that it is something to dread. For my part I did not mind a bit, as I knew before now what a stormy sea was like and anyone who visits Wick Bay on a stormy day in February can have a very good idea.

In like manner, the dreaded "tropical squalls" were not just familiarly heavy showers but exceeded the limits of a written description. Clearly struggling to verbalize this, the anonymous author of a "narrative of a voyage from England to Australia" wrote:

> These rain squalls come with a suddenness and violence which completely baffles my descriptive powers, and must really be both seen and felt before they can be understood. […] It will be long ere I forget the first of them.

It could also be the other way around, of course. Advertisement campaigns and published letters picked comments similar to the one cited above, such as "our voyage was throughout most happy and prosperous, we had no bad weather, and no illness on board; of course excepting seasickness, the passengers were all amiable […]".

Another common theme addressed in virtually all published and unpublished maritime sources is "seasickness". When the vessel "'pitches' & rolls' at the same time […] the 'combination' is decidedly awkward". Seasickness occupied either the epic starting point of the narrative, the wearisome middle part, or the triumphant final part. Nausea cast a shadow over all oceanic endeavours and hit the unsuspecting voyager, timid or brave, in a manner that could not be predicted. Already anticipating something disquieting and somehow queasy lurking beneath the watery surface, the emigrants were certainly waiting for this introduction to the sailor's life and were not expecting it to be a pleasant encounter. Nevertheless, this disease had a special status, which becomes visible in phrases like "of course excepting seasickness" above. It was not surprising to suffer from it as a landlubber. Sometimes, the impression was conveyed that it even seemed to be both desired and dreaded at the same time. The uniqueness of it, its intrinsic property of the seas can be read as an entrance ticket to a new, nautical world, in which the physical challenges were far more than what the ordinary body had ever encountered. Because of these characteristics, there was no opportunity to prepare for seasickness beforehand. Interestingly, Chadfield's prominent emigrant guide "Out at Sea" did not even find it necessary to mention seasickness at all. Others, taking the miserable effects of nausea more seriously, tried to assure the passengers that it stopped after a while, as if automatically ("this is a misery you must make up your mind to for there is no preventing it"). The line of argumentation was that "becoming used to the motion" was an unavoidable, long process that the whole body, including the stomach and equilibrioception, first had to adapt to. But when it did, it would earn the well-deserved sea-legs.

As a recurring theme, it was possible to adopt an attitude towards seasickness that could lean either way (not in determining the bodily reaction completely, of course, but in the reflective process of writing or talking about it). Some totally succumbed to the overbearing misery

and longed with fervent desires for an ending. Others, almost exclusively male, were more self-conscious or overconfident and came up with natural or technological explanations, finding justification for their indisposition that made them bedridden like most other passengers. Or they were quick to emphasize the speed with which they managed to recover: "the seasickness had me too, but only temporally, in the afternoon I was well and fit again. The whole journey through I noticed nothing anymore."

Some remained rather neutral, commenting that "sea sickness after all in my experience is nothing as bad as it is painted." Others, on the contrary, boasted in their resistance to nausea as if this was something they had achieved by their own resolve. Often they also used their experience to contradict common assumptions and provide a reassuring message for back home: "I felt queer but never ever gave in. So take heart those who may have to go to sea: I do not believe you are going to be ill until the misfortune actually overtakes you." In any case, this behaviour and self-fashioning in light of the physical confrontation confirms that the discrepancy between imagined and experienced transit calls for a deeper analysis.

5.2 Shipboard life

Here, expectations and imageries were probably more colourfully painted by what modernist writers, such as Herman Melville, Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo and Joseph Conrad, or the Romantic poets had projected onto the sea. For some authors with a naval background themselves, the depictions were shaped by what the Royal Navy represented and proclaimed. British Admiralty and its alluring glories or the merchant navy in the colonial age gave rise to sailors in novels, poems, and plays. However, the ordinary passenger, whose time on board was limited from the beginning, did not appear in maritime fiction very often. Advertisements and theatre plays, especially when it comes to later steamship voyages, might have also played into the imagining of transit, creating potential for frustration when the reality of tedious boredom hit the passengers hard.

Some of the rituals and mysterious traditions were quite well-known, at least among the better-educated travellers. These included the Crossing the Line ceremony with its initiatory implications to celebrate the first time someone crossed the equator with a so-called "baptism", accompanied by sometimes very rough jokes and shaving procedures. The main protagonists in this spectacle were the god Neptune and his folk appearing as judges and rulers of the new seashells. Disguise, alcohol, payments, and mock trials characterized this tradition. Depending on the individual's knowledge, expectations of the equator crossing were high or low, but it seemed to be an event clearly assigned to all long-distance passages and usually received at least a short note in the accounts. Some, like teenage girl Agnes Gardner in 1859, longed for a fun evening when the passengers could observe a supposedly archaic, nautical ritual displayed – and were disappointed at its cancellation without further explanation. Others had never heard of it before, and watched it like an exotic theatre play. Other ceremonies appeared to be similarly unexpected. Robert Bradley (1867) and Jack Eisdell (1882) gave very detailed and similar accounts of the generally popular Dead Horse ceremony: a specific celebration linked to the fact of paying the sailors' first wages a month before leaving shore, establishing a "dead horse" – a month without money. The passengers' reactions to those rituals were diverse. Basically, the very same occasion could be met with disappointment regarding the excessive consumption of alcohol or remembered as "a bit of fun" in the otherwise gloomy narration of a depressing journey. Sometimes, an ambiguously distant attitude and some sort of arrogant relief can be read between the lines of travellers paying off their debt to avoid being "baptized".

Similarly to the luggage checklists relating to shipboard conditions, when it came to shipboard life, well-meant advice on aspects such as hierarchical principles only helped insofar as they were read and applied – and even then, good preparation was no guarantee for a perfect voyage, as sometimes it appeared that "dirty at home is clean here – muddle at home is comfort here". What becomes clear, though, is that the clash between the expected and the experienced transit turned out to be less forceful the wider and the more colourful an individual's prior knowledge about 'transit' was. The ones having some sort of idea about

the circumstances awaiting them on board at least had a hint regarding what was about to happen and – subsequently, what to write and reflect about. By comparing the events to the imagination and labelling them as "better" or "worse", they made sense of the shipboard hopes and fears.

Back home in Scotland, Wales, Ireland or England, a ship voyage was associated with adventures. Embarking with enthusiasm, thrilled at the thought of exciting news to report to his parents, 19-year-old George White soon had to realize that monotony dominated the daily routine. The first letter from Australia that he sent his family starts with an excusing remark, trying to pre-emptively prepare the readers for an account that is hardly exhilarating:

> I see by way you are writing that you are expecting something great in what I have prepared on the voyage. I hope you will not be disappointed when you receive it. For what is there in a voyage and ours was one of the smoothest, except a few facts interesting only to those who have never seen them. It is a very dull affair, all sea and sky and sky and sea. I said to mother that when it would be blowing a Gale with you, I might be whistling for wind in a calm, and so it seems to have happened. I have put down on board ship everything that I thought could interest you in the least. I could easily have made grand exaggerations, but stuck to truth and so you will see I am hard up for a subject now and again.

This comment can well serve as a summary of the making of 'knowledge': Sources of 'information' (official, unofficial, written, spoken, etc.) are blended with personal ideas and hopes, painting shipboard life as some sort of distractingly sensational contrast. "Grand exaggerations" in other people's accounts contributed to the fact that the "dull affair" of a "smooth" sea voyage was almost completely lacking from an imagined transit narrative as it was pre-constructed in the minds of this young Scottish second-class traveller and his family. An <u>imagined</u> 'transit' emerged – sometimes vaguely drafted, sometimes clear-cut and determined. Once aboard, the unpredictability, severity, physicality, etc. of shipboard life led to a re-categorization of what had been projected onto the months at sea. The actual reality of the frustrating "monotonous sameness of every day's occurrence" could even

lead a self-conscious and literate man like Robert Smith to apologize for his "tedious and uninteresting" account with the conclusion that "really life at sea is so monotonous that it is scarce worthwhile keeping a journal." If then this new 'experience' was fed into an already existing network of relationships and circulation, available knowledge was enriched, changed, and modified. Hence, looking at 'transit' as a more or less strictly pre-defined and enclosed entity allows for a laboratory analysis of how expectation, imagination, and experience work together in the making of knowledge generally, and in the individual's perception, because "only the unexpected has the power to surprise, and this surprise involves a new experience. The penetration of the horizon of expectation, therefore, is creative of new experience."

6 Practicing Resilience

Disappointments waited for the passengers at every corner: the ship was not peaceful, but noisy; not ordered, but chaotic; not exciting, but monotonous. However, the reality check did not necessarily have to lead to general despair aboard. In the following, some strategies and tactics will be examined that incorporate aspects of shipboard conditions and shipboard life but zoom in on the personal arrangements and programmes that seemed helpful for defeating obstacles on an emigrant ship.

In this chapter so far, the make-up of certain expectations concerning the various aspects of transit has been looked at rather neutrally and with little room for a more empathetic approach to the state of the on-board psyche. But, as revealed in the previous chapter by investigating mental breakdowns in the light of shipboard travel, the act of emigrating itself must have been psychologically taxing in general. Regardless of education and connections, waving goodbye to dear friends and family was a highly emotional and severe step. The emigrant ship represented the finality of this decision, and although the sight of these ships was common in British port cities, it is hardly surprising that it could be difficult for the individual to come to terms with the journey. Most emigrants would arrive at the place of departure without ever having seen the ship before. Assisted migrants would neither have had much of a choice in terms of the liner or shipping company, let alone a chance

of comparing accommodation conditions, as they were bound to a government-chartered vessel. Pitying this group of people, an anonymous onlooker characterized the men, women, and children piling up in the port cities as "already almost overburdened and anxious emigrants", whose "spirit" would be easily "crushed" by the "amount of harassing inconvenience, discomfort, and uncertainty."

The panorama of discrepancies between what transit could be expected to be and what it was experienced as demands an answer for a looming question: How should and could emigrants cope with the unavoidable mélange of feelings, duties, challenges, dangers, etc.? Why did some individuals come out of the same maritime passage strengthened and affirmed, and others debilitated and demoralized? At the core of the answer lies 'resilience'. Although nowadays it is often a catchphrase for self-help manuals, resilience more literally denotes an elasticity in medical and mechanical contexts. Developed further into a more figurative sense it means "resuming an original shape after compression", further explained as "the quality or fact of being able to recover quickly or easily from, or resist being affected by, a misfortune, shock, illness, etc.; robustness; adaptability". The word first occurred in a history book of the mid-19th century and continued to be used for mental strength and endurance. Today, psychological and social economic studies use 'resilience' as a concept for social sciences and migration studies as well.

In historical research, the investigation of an individual's tactics and strategies that could account for a better or worse result within a certain historical context can be used as additional lenses through which to assess the scope of agency and the compulsory or liberating factors within the reach of an individual. Due to its constructivist nature, any concept needs contextualization to avoid the trap of projecting a normative idea of what counts as strong and durable today on a past context, thus conflating it with a set of contrasting priorities or values. So, what did 'resilience' mean for the Victorian mindset in general and for shipboard life in particular?

The first dimension of this question concerns the nature of the disruptive events that people had to be resilient toward. Defining 'transit' with its various difficulties and challenges as a disruption affecting the individuals on board a 19th century emigrant ship to Australia allows

for an analysis of resilience and vulnerability on the part of the migrants. Such a conception of transit is by no means an ex-post conclusion that merely projects current assumptions on contemporary discourse. The 1874 emigration manual by the *SPCK* warned future emigrants:

> My friends, you are emigrants: you are leaving your old home with all its sorrows, all its joys, all its plenty, and all its want, to find or make for yourselves a new and a happier home (as you trust and I trust) in a new land. But to get there you must cross the sea, put up with much inconvenience, and perhaps meet with terrible storms; so that unless you had courage and hope in your hearts, you could not dare to face the troubles known and unknown of the voyage over the deep.

The conditional sentence with "unless" upholds the necessity of character ("courage") and determination ("hope in your hearts") required of any emigrant "fac[ing] the troubles known and unknown of the voyage over the deep". Obviously, personal struggles to come to terms with the stark realities of being entirely thrown back on oneself in absolutely unfamiliar surroundings contribute to the special taste of this educational and character-shaping interim period at sea. This was common sense. Many emigrant guides were devoted to the country, politics, work and settlement, with only a few emphasizing the journey: these usually ponder the question of how to enter into and survive transit best. Here again, the expectations projected onto the voyage became the catalysing force for pre-transit resolutions ("ex ante"), but the actual experience on board displayed the trustworthiness and reliability afterwards ("ex post"). For building 'resilience' this clearly included "planning, preventing, evading, mitigating, avoiding as well as coping with and reacting to challenging livelihood conditions".

In theory, the toolbox for transit suggested actions that would facilitate the voyage. Looking at the implementation can propose answers as to how success and endurance could be traced back to careful curation of knowledge or whether outcome and experience were the result of personality rather than preparation. The previous subchapter discussed the impact of expectation vs. experience, as well as the various factors responsible for the discrepancy between the two; including biased pub-

lications, lack of education, spontaneity, lack of personal contacts to Australia, distorted dreamy imagery based on poems and literature, and mere ignorance. In this next section, the responses to clashes between dream and reality will unveil the establishment of helpful techniques, evaluate their justification, and analyse the underlying message conveyed by the accounts given.

An actor-based framework for social resilience distinguishes between "reactive capacity" that "copes with and adjusts to adverse conditions" on the one hand and "proactive capacity" that "searches for and creates options" on the other hand. Coping techniques aboard follow this categorization: roughly speaking, there is advice regarding practical arrangements (proactive capacities) and recommendations geared toward attitude (reactive capacities). Depending on the context and the situation, both can be found in emigrant guides, but often one aspect stands out more than the other.

6.1 Proactive and reactive capacity

Focusing on the first category, the main piece of advice running through almost all handbooks is a call to occupy oneself at any cost. Indeed, keeping busy did not automatically happen. Of course, there was a basic structure given to the day by mealtimes and the fixed times of giving out stores for preparing warm dishes, but most hours still had to be filled somehow. The government, private societies, and shipping companies increasingly did their best to offer opportunities for learning (such as surgeon superintendents or schoolmasters teaching children and the illiterate) or provided material for knitting, sewing or crocheting (eager matrons asked the single girls to acquire or improve their skills). In 1852, a "committee of ladies" in Liverpool campaigned for sewing material on board every ship to fight laziness among the women. Instructions to the matrons, in particular, mentioned education, reading and sewing as activities to be pursued with the single girls. Along the same lines, engaged authors such as Anne James severely warned of alluring temptations, bad company, and seductive immorality, which were to be countered by keeping oneself busy. That was the agenda to follow, and it seemed well worth this emphatic appeal:

> Provide yourself then with the means of useful employment […] Young people cannot do better than to set before them some one object of study, and to supply themselves with the books and instrument (if required) for successfully pursuing it. […] Books of history, travels, biography, and general information and amusement, I need not repeat, will be found of great advantage to persons of all ages.

However, all the advice would not suffice to make a voyage bearable if there was no personal commitment or understanding for the necessity of it when in transit. People had to practice what was preached to be able to evaluate the effects and to come to terms with 'transit'. According to manuals, self-discipline and self-management would be the best way to adjust to the surroundings positively, but this might have been a difficult demand for people who had never before encountered "enforced leisure". Hence, knowing about (and fearing) the dangers of idleness, reading material ranked high on the most commonly recommended items to purchase. Since books were precious goods that not every migrant could simply afford, the distribution of (mostly Christian) tracts before departure was not only meant to instruct the passengers regarding the practicalities but also to keep them busy. Additionally, emigration societies, the government, and the shipping lines often installed a permanent library on the passenger vessels so that open access to schoolbooks, informative material, and spiritual essentials (Bibles, prayer books, sermons, etc.) was guaranteed. The 22-year-old gardener William J. Adams on board the 'Victory' refers to the *Emigrants' Library Association* when listing the "books and tracts for lending on board during the Voyage", including journals and biographies. As pointed out already, reading abilities were widespread, especially among the English migrants, both male and female. Comparing Adam's list with the poor spelling and grammar he displayed in his own diary is a case in point for the argument that steerage passengers like himself might have been able to read, but often were not very well trained in writing. To counteract any excuses for the "unwholesome and indolent habit of lying half the day in bed", James' manual motivated even the illiterate ones – and them in particular – "to avail themselves of the golden opportunity which so long a voyage offers for the acquirement

of those all but indispensable arts". She also suggested to approach the schoolmaster or to seek a competent person nearby that could teach them to write or read.

Turning the leisure time into an extra period for diving into classical and famous plays, essays, and novels, some of the better-educated second-class travellers like Robert S. Bradley in 1867 spent a lot of ink and paper to discuss style, characters and plot at length. Bradley used his diary as a sort of personal commentary to the texts he had finally managed to read. Apparently, he had brought some books with him, while others were shared on board. Borrowing books from others was also an unsuspecting way of connecting across gender and age – it is interesting to observe that 13-year-old Clara M. Eddis frequently talked about the literature she could enjoy thanks to 28-year-old Arthur Rourke's generosity in lending them to her. In like manner, when looking back to his journey as the privileged son of the ship captain, Havelock Ellis recalled his preparation for a journey to Australia in 1875 and remembered having packed Spenser, Rabelais, Faust, and a few scientific books for the transit. This also made it possible to arrive with new insights and to distinguish oneself from others – something a well-educated young man from London would never disdain.

What becomes visible through these endeavours to stay occupied is an explicit or implicit call for efficiency that created an idealized, morally superior, disciplined, and humble character. Making the most of the temporary absence from daily duties on a farm, school, or factory counted as the epitome of usefulness. The weeks of tedium and the lack of familiar routines created opportunities to flee the current state of affairs at least by way of imagination. Books offering glimpses into new worlds, thoughtful depths, and spiritual challenges could help to moderate the potential for moral decline and aggression among passengers.

Stuck in a narrow and confined place, growth was only possible through fantasy and mental exercise. Food for thought as well as food for the body structured daily life and ascribed additional meaning to the period spent on board. Whether reading emigrants were actually more resilient than the not-reading ones cannot be determined to a satisfying degree from the sources analysed so far. However, those diarists who were quoting from or talking about their reading did write longer

accounts with reflective reviews and comments that displayed a sense of humour. They also had something to discuss with their fellow travellers beyond the weather or other trivialities. Naturally, though, most intermediate and steerage passengers are not represented in this rough estimation, as their accounts dealt more with daily routine rather than Schiller or Darwin.

As all the primary sources referred to here are written ones, a reflection on writing will now follow the section on reading. Given that diaries and letters, the main source base revealing coping techniques, consist of sentences, paragraphs, and drawings, the practice of reading and writing is accessed indirectly. As it seems, taking notes throughout the voyage was part and parcel of a "proper" migration tour and something uniquely popular in the 19th century – perhaps comparable with today's vlogs or podcasts that high school graduates fill with mobile uploads while on a work-and-travel trip to Australia. Writing first-person accounts always fulfilled one crucial role of self-fashioning and identity construction, and this seems to be even more so in the case of the mobile individual.

On another level, the diary could even develop an identity of itself. For Harold Philips in 1885, it became the personified companion during the voyage. With a tongue-in-cheek narrative voice, he talked about his lack of a permanent friend to talk to, so that his "note book" became dear to him as "a splendid confidant – never tired of listening, never contradicts, never forgets, & is always ready to go straight home & give a collected straightforward & complete account of its author's doings."

This communication technique served a double role – as a conversation partner and as a reporter for his British audience. It certainly helped reflecting "some of the odds + ends that are going on in this one voyage across the Atlantic". By at least imagining a receiver and a listener, deeper meaning was attributed to what occurred on board – because someone fictional or real (such as family and friends at home) would read it someday. Here, resilience was built by its strength from a response and feedback by someone outside of the writing self, an audience to stabilize the author in the midst of the doldrums or the tremendous seas.

In addition to establishing a fictional conversation through the personification of the diary or by addressing a prospective reader, another literary technique also served the purpose of finding stability after something happened that was surprising or shocking (in either a negative or positive sense): shrugging off any responsibility and referring to someone hierarchically higher for the prerogative of interpretation. This is observable in the use of superlatives in accounts of challenging situations that received validation through the appearances of the captain or someone equally respectable. Interestingly, many diarists felt the need to point out the fact that the storm, the gale, the heat, the fortunate winds, etc. were absolutely exceptional and therefore uniquely noteworthy. This recurring theme can be explained by an unconscious desire to justify one's own reactions to the circumstances and to claim a special place in the seemingly endless masses of interchangeable emigrant accounts with almost the same topics.

Hiding this somewhat selfish desire, the diarists preferred to quote external authorities other than themselves when seeking to validate their conclusions and protect them from any accusation of being dishonest or exaggerating. This strategy indeed occurs regularly across the years. The emigrants were generally lacking a personal comparative baseline to follow or measure their experiences against, so they were lost in the attempt of making sense of what they had seen, felt and heard. All their familiar categories failed when winds and squalls made the whole ship tremble, howl and ache under the crushing waves. The dry pages of an adventure novel or the dried pages of an emigrated friend's letter also could not help with incorporating the experiences into their own, personal narrative of transit. Often the eye of a storm was the point where expectations and imaginations quite abruptly gained a new and deeper level of meaning and understanding.

6.2 Communication and resilience

For those seeking help and orientation, the captain's opinion was the favourite and apparently most trustworthy source for a defence of the emigrants' extreme experiences. Investing the time and extra effort to find out what was really going on by asking a veteran sailor, a so-called

"shellback", also served to prove to the individual passenger themselves and their future possible readers that they were not simply to be ridiculed as a cowardly landlubber. Of course, this self-fashioning also conveyed another message: it boasted of an enviable closeness, familiarity with, and access to the highest-ranking officer, the master of the wooden world, and, at the time of writing, the most powerful person with the greatest responsibility. So this move was generally only possible for first- or second-class passengers with personal connections to the upper crewmembers. Nonetheless, since this act of referring to someone older, wiser and more reliable comes so naturally, reports of the captain's evaluation also occur in steerage passenger accounts or printed shipboard newspapers. There can be no doubt, therefore, that second-class passenger Samuel Laver indeed felt the "roughest wind ever" in 1859, and assisted migrant Isabella Ridley survived a "never more terrific storm" in 1865.

This act of comparing one's observations with other people's memories was not only restricted to threatening situations with typhoons and gales, but it also applied to uncontrollable natural events with more favourable effects. On board the crowded 'Ernestina', John Wilson marvelled at a "never finer run out of the Channel" in 1864 and Nancy Armitage proudly quoted the captain claiming that he "never made such a good passage to the line and never had such a good weather" when she was heading to Melbourne as a cabin passenger in 1880. Likewise, 24-year-old William J. Mayes failed in a vain attempt to capture "the most beautiful sunset I ever saw". On his health-motivated trip on the clipper 'Alexander Duthie' in 1882, he struggled to find words to capture the blazing colours ("metallic red, sea green, deep blue, light grey, lovely red, light blue and coral"), sighing "that would only give one a faint idea".

It might be suspected that the superlatives and temporal adverbs (best, fastest, worst, never, ever, etc.) simply belonged to the seamen's repertoire for talking to frightened or naïve passengers and do not relate to actual and real estimations of size, severity or pace. But even if this way of speaking was the general register of calming down travellers and granting them and the voyage a certain uniqueness and distinctiveness, it seemed to have worked. People did listen with open ears to the voice of authoritative interpretation, and willingly accepted

the framing offered. When realizing that their imagination had misled them because the new experience failed to fit in familiar categories – whether enhanced with prior preparation or not due to the lack of it – the individual was confronted with something that might be seen as a failure or a surprise. Therefore, when trying to get a hold of one particular aspect of transit without acknowledging their shortcomings or admitting a lack of readiness, people emphasized the impossibility of any preparation – a convenient way to explain the experience to themselves and others. This is why the captain's, surgeon's or first mate's statement, or any other experienced sailor's appreciation of the perceived clash between expectation and experience, counted so much in the writing and narrating of transit.

Furthermore, upon closer examination of some common phrases and stylistic features in emigrant diaries, the factor of simply keeping busy becomes secondary. Even if many diaries were not sent away or maybe not even touched again after the voyage, they were not simply written in vain. As a resilience technique, all this communication points to the need for a listener to one's own monotonous, tiring or challenging experiences. The crux rather seems to stem from the thought processes in the mind of the emigrant. An inner disposition and willingness to adapt and yield, to endure and move on seemed to be key to remaining unshaken and preserving one's mental constitution across the seas. For those who could purchase a pamphlet with all this information, both a disillusionment and a re-construction process could take place. Warning against utopian ideas of a happy and peaceful shipboard fellowship of instant friends, the Christian tracts in particular did not try to mince matters. Outspokenly blunt, the realistic depiction of an exhausting, annoying, grouse, and stinky community aboard introduced the reader to the matter of facts:

> the voyage brings with it duties to your fellow passengers. You cannot help being thrown together with them; for weeks or months you and they will be brought into close and constant intercourse, whether you like it or not.

Acceptance and adaptation to the given circumstances could be based on a realistic, unpolished depiction of the "various annoyances and inconveniences unavoidable from so many human creatures being crowded within the narrow limits of even a commodious vessel".

In consequence, the faithful emigrant was advised to meditate on the aim that he or she was pursuing by heading to Australia. Constantly reminding oneself of the greater prospect and the greater aim would then shift priorities, alleviating the pressure caused by the exhausting and uncomfortable circumstances that were inevitably felt by a sensitive person. "Fear of the sea" could be overcome by steadily keeping firmly in mind the prospect of improvement in a "land of the brave". By stressing the positive, didactic aspects, 'transit' became a test of one's true Christianity, kindness, patience, and enduring faith.

Indeed: Resilience lives off an actor's access to both proactive and reactive capacities to create a positive outcome. For the individual, access to (in Bordieuan terms) external "capitals" was a necessity. Being exposed to a disruption, the historic agent had to use those capitals to build resilience, competently re-locating and externalizing the hazard or risk, which then deprived the threat of its extreme power to paralyze or frighten. Fostering such agency were not only "material resources", such as books or diaries, woollen clothing or fishing gear: the development of "non-material resources" lay at the core of every advice manual on attitude, manner and behaviour. What could the underlying principle have been? In the emigrant guides, the key motivator for being moral, friendly, dedicated, caring, etc. is grounded in the Christian faith – turning transit into a period to be lived in obedience to and trust in God. Since personal convictions have an enormous impact on a person's stability, and as prayer and reading belong to the essentials for a devoted Christian, the call to reflect, think through, and meditate sounds natural and familiar. Unfortunately, scholars rarely take this factor and motivation into account, although honest spirituality clearly completes a believing person's worldview, especially in "a period of massive religiosity, church extension, Christian mission (both domestic and foreign) and the involvement of Christianity and the churches in virtually every level and issue of Victorian society". Hence, one might argue that resilience resulting from religion is less surprising, as practised faith inher-

ently meant to permanently communicate with and reach out to an external source of power. Put into practice, the emigrant guides' preaching brings together both a reactive and a proactive capacity. "Nothing can teach more significantly man's dependence on God, than a voyage in a sailing vessel, and in no situation does it seem more difficult to submit to the Divine appointments and to say, 'Thy will be done'".

Struggling to draw meaning from the hardships, Reverend Frederick Miller, who at this point was suffering from severe health problems such as indigestion and breathing difficulties, thus concluded his short reflection on a prolonged, stormy and dangerous voyage from Plymouth to Melbourne in the early 1860s. Reactively, he decides to see the spiritually pedagogical benefit of such an uncontrollable setting, which then merges into a proactive surrendering to God, enabling Miller to continue with his religious duties of preparing and conducting several services throughout the week.

> Thursday evening June 26. Yesterday, the doctor examined my chest etc. again. […] I thought this morning I was somewhat relieved, but my breathing when I walked gently along the Poop, leaning on the Captain's arm became so distressing, that I am not much encouraged. I am again placed in the school of suffering to supply and enforce some needful lessons […] Tuesday July1. Last Sabbath I held service in the morning, but in the evening I simply read part of a chapter, offered a few remarks on it and closed with prayer. After the effort on each occasion [sic] I had distressing nausea and retching, without being actually sick. This is an additional trouble from which I suffered and evidently leads me to keep as quiet as possible. […] I have been much confined below, while all feel the depressing influence of our passage being thus protracted beyond the time anticipated. We find it difficult quietly [sic] to wait for the salvation of the Lord. How do our trials teach us our deficiencies.

For many who did not work for a church, frequent prayers amid homesickness, storms, tension, arguments or hunger were a constant of shipboard life as well. There are numerous examples of people calming down after prayers or gaining comfort through Bible reading, etc. One is the melancholic family father Robert Hepburn from Durham

who repeatedly sought peace about his decision to leave behind wife and children to travel to Victoria by focusing on God. Second-class passenger Isabella Ridley, when facing a typhoon for several days, also turned to prayer even more and recounted the events by always adding a spiritual context to it despite her fears and weaknesses.

Being equipped with a strong faith and conscious awareness of a higher calling can be interpreted as mental preparation. Thus grounded, an individual's expectations and imaginations were not the only driving force framing the experience of transit. People of faith were not alone while coping with the details of the actual experience, but ideally were more balanced and stable through their belief in an external authority's prerogative:

> First of all, and before all, begin, continue, and end your voyage in God. Pass through it in the fear of God, and in confidence in God […] Remember God is round about you at sea as much as on land. The sea and all that belongs to it is strange to you. […] But though strange to you, it is all known to God. […] Happen what may, all will be well.

7 No Experience without Experiencing

On a conceptual level, migration advice from emigrant manuals as well as first-person accounts reveals something crucial about the imagined 'transit' and the building of resilience. First, 'transit' becomes a protagonist in the narrative of emigration. Instead of viewing it as an enemy or a bore, active transformation and re-interpretation was encouraged. Since there was no way around it, stepping out of a victim mentality was empowering. Some people understood that principle long before boarding a vessel to Australia, others only relied on superficial knowledge; and others again were completely surprised by their ignorance or false expectations. But whenever the active voice started to dominate the language of manuals, advertisement pamphlets, letters, diaries, etc., the passive and faceless emigrant became an agent. He wrote, she prayed, he categorized, she compared, he studied, she sang, he reflected, she recommended – all with little measurable effects on the geograph-

ical course of the ship, but with actual outcomes on the course and meaning of an individual's personal experience and the enlargement of the information available. Emigrants could "own 'transit'", in an act of subtle resistance to what otherwise would continue to threaten and claim power even over the individual experience. Of course, the weather, messmates, physical weaknesses, temptations, facilities, etc. remained important as formative factors, but through expectation, imagination and preparation it was possible to shape transit into a valuable experience.

Against this background, a very optimistic and historically inaccurate statement like "I think our vessel must be an exception" can be understood as an act of practicing resilience. On the one hand, experiences of the kind Robert Saddington presented as astonishingly colourful for an early steamship voyage in 1853 were undoubtedly nothing special. He mentioned "ships, flying fish, birds, porpoises and, for the first time, grampuses". The description of marine animals was a trope repeatedly invoked in order to find something to write about at all. On the other hand, Saddington was right in what he said: referring to previous worries about the lack of events on board a steamship in comparison to a sailing vessel, he concluded that his voyage must be extraordinary.

In fact, it was. No journey, no historical event is the exact repetition of something that had occurred before. At the same time, it was not unique. Patterns, reactions, results, were redundant when looked at from a long-term perspective. Preparations and expectations of a voyage, "varied thoughts […] plans & longings fair", do not fully explain the outcome and nature of an individual's transit. Speaking with the words of Edward W. Eddis composing a narrative poem on board the 'Yorkshire' in 1873: "Experience must be bought!" Accordingly, the emotional implications and felt realities, the "hopes, energies & fears, perhaps […]" deserve a closer look in the following chapter.

> Rich treasures in the "Yorkshire" stored, old Europe's sons & daughters,
> Bringing their gifts to the distant lands over the mighty waters,
> Hopes, energies (& fears, perhaps, like clouds o'er the sun)
> In bright new homes unselfishly the race of life to run.

What varied thoughts were gathered there—what plans & longings fair-
What good resolves of manliness—what castles in the air!
Some seeking rest, some active sport, some earnest toil & task,
And many health & strength restored. God send them all they ask!
[...]
Oh! had we but a magic key to open every mind
To scrutinize the hidden springs, the deep desires to find,
The self-deceivings, the true aims, unlocking thought by thought,
But no! such key was never forged! Experience must be bought!

[Chapter 4] Feeling Transit – Joy and Grief

1 Approaching Emotions

In her doctoral thesis, Claire Connor chose one iconic swteamship passage of the famous S.S. 'Great Britain' in 1852 for which there is a luxuriously rich amount of source material and followed 300 of the 630 emigrants from Liverpool to Melbourne and beyond. Her dissertation is a good example of studying the plurality of perspectives bundled together in one vessel. Instances such as this voyage, offering more than one first-hand account of any particular journey, are rare and valuable: both the discrepancies and the similarities lay the foundations for arguing that generalizations of shipboard experiences do not work on a micro-level. Generalizations are helpful for identifying patterns and classifying reactions, but they are not sufficient to grasp all the transit-related feelings and individual stories.

For the 1873 passage of the same steamship S.S. 'Great Britain', there are three first-hand accounts to appose. One specific event serves as an example here: a major concert in the saloon. The well-educated first-class passenger Robert Tindall proudly spoke of it as the opportunity for his successful first public singing performance, while the nun Mary Mulquin, who sat in the audience, did not mention Tindall's song but remembered the event as an outstanding occasion when her Catholic uniform stood out among the finely dressed women. Steerage passenger Walter Edmonds, on the other hand, was not allowed to attend the event officially but still enjoyed the music with the thrill of a secret listener "behind the scenes". So a rather unspectacular concert on board can reveal how social parameters such as class, gender, religion and education all create different unique sets of personal impressions and feelings at one particular moment in time and space.

In this chapter, the focus therefore will be on the emotional side of transit. Following the actor-based approach, I want to sketch out a panorama of feelings that mark almost every 19th century emigrant voyage

to Australia: by extension these can also be assumed to work for a flexible model of any transit situation.

As seen above, emigrants developed various techniques to build up resilience when confronted with the transit setting. Writing, keeping busy, inner preparation, strong faith, and a re-shifting of pressure proved to be of help. In extreme situations, their suitability, depth and benefit would be tested. An emigrant ship undeniably provided almost laboratory-like conditions that unveil social cohesion and separation like a miniature model of British society. The vessel was not the big equaliser but brought the imminent and obvious borders closer to each other. For the individual, any bodily or mental reaction necessarily occurred in front of a comparatively larger, more diverse audience. Though spacious rooms for a private sphere would not have been part of most emigrants' daily experience in their British hometowns anyway, the naked immediacy of observers on board could still be disturbing.

From the researcher's perspective, however, proximity and closeness are of historical value. Given the similarity of the circumstances on board and the monotony of a voyage, even minor events stand out. With a tendency to exaggerate, invent or obsess over something trivial, human beings become the object of interest – as actors, whose feelings and perceptions both create history and are themselves created by history.

A short overview of the history of emotions will help to understand this approach. With the "affective (re-)turn" in historiography, new emphasis was placed on the impact of dynamics beyond rational decisions, logical ideologies and political structures. William Reddy introduced a linguistically influenced idea of 'emotives' and 'emotional regimes' when observing authoritative societies during the French Revolution. Arguing against a concept she considered too binary and one-sided, Barbara Rosenwein preferred to microhistorically concentrate on 'emotional communities' instead of 'emotional regimes'. They are understood as existing side by side, overlapping and flexibly interchanging, so that in a less centralized society every individual could be a member of various emotional communities with different systems of accepted and disdained emotions. A slightly different, Bordieuan understanding is promoted by Monique Scheer, who speaks about "emotions as a kind

of practice". In the tradition of ritual and performance theory, she calls for including the "bodily act of experience and expression".

Therefore, I am using the methods and tools suggested by historians of emotions to help complete a picture of 'transit' as it was felt and perceived. I will also combine it with the other way of studying the history of emotions by picking one sensory object of enquiry and casting a quick light on this one particular topic in its movement across the seas on board an emigrant vessel.

To balance between "overcognitivizing" and "over-naturalizing" emotions, it is key to return to the sources themselves, where the panorama of feelings is displayed in verbal and performative, written and physiological ways. Stepping back from an assumed stark contrast between authentic inner feelings and communicated outer feelings, the "emotion-generating structures and emotion-expressing texts and systems of non-verbal signs" are taken to be happening at the same time. The aim is not to identify the true emotions of a 19th-century person posthumously, but to take emotions seriously – as they are presented, talked about, and referred to. As social practices, emotions occur within a given historical setting that has norms for certain emotions, remains silent about some of them, and makes sense of feelings and interactions by using verbal and non-verbal expressions typical of its time.

Clearly, the Victorian emigrants' vocabulary, concepts and values differed, as did the ideas of body, hierarchy and gender that dominated the thinking and feeling of the colonists and travellers. With rising self-awareness, the qualities of rationality, control and reservation were viewed as more desirable for the modern self than quests for romantic love or fits of sentimental doubts.

This more culturally constructed and process-oriented view is in line with neuroscientist and psychologist Lisa Feldman Barrett's argumentation against the idea of universally anthropological "basic emotions". The details of that discourse are not of further importance here, but it needs to be emphasized that the main critical voices stem from sceptical reflections on the way these notions are often conceptualised in accordance with Western ideas and expressions of feelings. Conversely, though, by adding emotions to traditional imperial history, we can apparently de-centre the colonial setting and its rules, rather than automatically

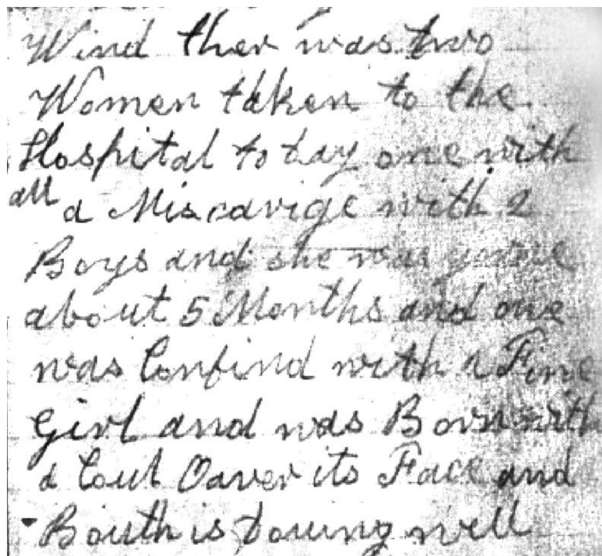
prescribing them. Emotions can offer a counter-narrative to that of brave discoverers and fearless colonists by paying attention to insecurities, panic, shame or even terror experienced by the actors as they go about their imperial endeavours. What is perceived or presented as emotionally relevant? What does this emotion do at the given time and situation? Which reactions are described? How does the community communicate the emotion? What is triggered by a certain event?

Caution in terminology is necessary because language undergoes significant changes and definitions vary. This holds true for emotions in general and remains important in transit. Words, expressions and topoi of the time and age under investigation need to be contextualized and read as such. Emotions were not automatically understood in the same sense as today. For source analysis, this implies keeping in mind the 'emotional communities' and their respective rules and principles within which certain interactions and reactions occur. Based on Joanna Bourke, the frameworks (1) language and grammar, (2) body and physiology, and (3) society, culture, and power are helpful in outlining a balanced analytical investigation of emotions of any kind. This is not concerned with "authentic feelings" but rather with understanding the overlap and flexibility of co-existing emotions as they are communicated individually and as a community.

2 Life and Death

Co-existing emotions and the immediacy of intimate events such as birth and death can hardly be any closer than in a setting as compact as a ship, where the socio-spatial dimension of emotions comes together physically and conceptually. This is true for seemingly minor events that the monotony of sailing turn into the talk of the day: in January 1862, the discovery of a new-born baby lamb led first to great excitement among the travellers and then, when the little sheep "departed this life" the next day, "to the great regret" of a "numerous circle of friends". Henry H. Ramsdale's account half-ironically uses the fairly strong verbs "lament" and "mourn" for an animal, but this exaggerated example illustrates the similar emotional rollercoaster also seen for larger events aboard.

Especially in this case it is not difficult to argue for a big-picture view on the subject of the narration here: the very same author might have used this side-event, which might appear superficial yet entailed the serious notions of birth, death, joy and grief, to take refuge from an extremely tense voyage with incidents of suicide, mental illness, alcoholism, etc. Against the background of Ramsdale's transit experience on board the 'Clifton' in the 1860s, the comments on the baby lamb appear in a different light, as they could be read as a means to relieve the emotions filling the room with tension. Therefore, that short account serves well as a bridge to more serious experiences of "both – and" that mark transit.



Wind ther was two
Women taken to the
Hospital to day one with
all a Miscarige with 2
Boys and she was gone
about 5 Months and one
was Confind with a Fine
Girl and was Born with
a Caul Oaver its Face and
Boath is doing well

Figure 2: Extract taken from Adam's diary on two women's fates

Another story will underline this point. Two pregnant women calling for the ship doctor the same day in March 1855 went through a totally different emotional process: the first suffered from a miscarriage of her twin boys, while the other one gave birth to a healthy girl and recovered quickly. What tragedy must have taken place in the tiny room declared to serve as the "hospital" on board the emigrant ship 'Victory' on her way to Sydney with blood, tears and slime. The 22-year-old gar-

dener John Adams, who travelled with his wife Mary, had no problem hearing all about it; when scribbling this down into his diary, in a few sentences marked by incorrect spelling, he did not shy away from any small details such as the months of pregnancy before the miscarriage or a description of the live baby girl's face. He mentioned the pieces of information contrasting both women's fates in an adversative mode ("one with a Miscarige [sic] with 2 Boys […] and one was Confind [sic] with a Fine Girl"):

Common in those days, his fact-based way of writing might sound incomprehensibly cold to 21st century ears. In fact, Adams placed this account along the same line as he described watching a shark pass by or a ship sighted from afar in the sentences before and after. One had become accustomed to cries of grief and cries of joy, and childbirth included both anyway.[1]

For others, though, the switch from tears of grief to tears of laughter was too sudden and not acceptable. The aforementioned nun Mary Mulquin and her sisters in faith refused to join the evening entertainment programme on board the S.S. 'Great Britain' one day in December 1874 after a young man had died of consumption and his body had been released to the seas the same afternoon. One tragic aspect was that this man had hoped to survive at least two more days to arrive in Melbourne and be buried on land, but the weakness overcame him faster. The well-attended Protestant funeral, however, did not prevent the saloon passengers from celebrating one of the last evenings on board with a long-planned "Grand Supper" afterwards – something the nuns could not support in the face of death. Despite some of their fellow passengers' repeated invitations, Mulquin insisted on being a good example and role model, and stayed behind.[2] This is a rare example of a behaviour viewed as somehow uncommon: the general perception in the 19th century would not deem it inappropriate to do both the same day. Death

1 Adams, "Diary on Board the 'Victory' and Scrapbook (1855–1860)," 1855/02/01–1855/05/24: 28. In a similar, seemingly unempathetic way, John D. Mereweather reported a few years earlier how "a giant baby" was born, while a stillborn baby was buried the day after: Mereweather, *Life on Board an Emigrant Ship*: 52.
2 Mulquin, "Mother Mary's Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain,'" 1873/10/22–1873/12/21: 25.

was not a taboo topic; it belonged to the human existence as did birth, sickness and pain.

The probability of loss hovering above tense emotional situations, therefore, is another case in point for the parallelism of highs and lows. In addition, expressions of fright, fear and anxiety look different in different stories and situations. Without a context, physical responses to emotions are ambiguous.[3] One telling example serves to illustrate this. With "tears spring[ing] to his eyes and […] seem[ing] almost overcome", at first reading the description of the body and face of this Irish father of three children could speak of deep grief. However, it is actually his uncontrollable reaction to a very "happy result": his wife had given birth to a baby girl after suffering for many weeks and surviving a spread of measles among the steerage passengers. Hence, his tears flood into several emotional categories, including relief, joy, gratitude and fear, making it impossible and unnecessary to pin it down after all.[4]

3 Joyful Laughter

Together with most critical anthropologists, historians of emotions include 'joy' and 'humour' as one of the sentiments characterizing human beings. However, they barely enter into an analysis of how the patterns and ideas have changed over the years. The insight gained from comparing cultures and mentalities over time is clearly that "nurture" and education, the values and models shown by a certain culture at a certain point in time, determine the direction of an individual's or a group's sense of joy and humour.[5] There is a case to be made for studying

3 "It means that on different occasions, in different contexts, in different studies, within the same individual and across different individuals, *the same emotion category involves different bodily responses*. Variation, not uniformity, is the norm." (Barrett, *How Emotions are Made*: 15.)

4 Soutter, Pattie, Diary on Board the 'Stracathro', 1882/05/22–1882/08/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1882–0; TR 1882–3; Box 9593: 14–15.

5 See Swart, Sandra, "'The Terrible Laughter of the Afrikaner' Towards a Social History of Humor," *Journal of Social History* 42, no. 4 (2009): 889–917: 890–892 and Nitschke, August, and Justin Stagl, "Lachen und Weinen als Zeugen für individuelle Unterschiede und für Ähnlichkeiten der Menschen, für Bindungen an die Sprachen und an die Zeit: Fragen an die Historische Anthropologie," in *Überraschendes Lachen, gefordertes Weinen: Gefühle und*

happiness and wellbeing from a historical viewpoint, which – among others – sharpens a broader understanding of societies past, especially in times of accelerated change such as during the Industrial Revolution when pre-modern structures ceased to exist.[6] Living conditions and working situations altered previous routines, opening up more opportunities in a different framework of human experience – opportunities for happiness, but also for complexities of inequality. A history of happiness is therefore simultaneously a history of deprivation and lack of joy. Being concerned about happiness, claiming a right to it, and being called to actively pursue it at all: this is a fairly recent message of modern times only.[7]

With that in mind, the quasi-absence of the adjective "happy" in most emigrant diaries or letters in the 19th century Australian context should not come as a surprise. What can be detected, though, are incidents described as "joyful", "pleasant", or "enjoyable", and where laughter, smiles[8] and fun are included. As mentioned before, I agree with Scheer's thesis that for historical research, emotions can be (and often need to be reduced to first-person expressions and (performative) acts displaying feelings that others can observe.

Until the early 1800s, laughter as a human reaction to something incongruous, ridiculous, or funny tended to be regarded as something negative and contemptuous, something ambiguously hierarchical. This

Prozesse; Kulturen und Epochen im Vergleich, ed. Dieter R. Bauer, August Nitschke and Justin Stagl. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Historische Anthropologie e.V. 11. Wien, et al.: Böhlau, 2009: 749–768.

6 For psychological, philosophical, and spiritual approaches to happiness: David, Susan A., Ilona Boniwell, and Amanda C. Ayers, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Happiness,* Oxford Library of Psychology. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Compilations on the mainly Western evolution of ideas of happiness are provided by Darrin McMahon or Nicholas White, yet they are also criticized for their (gender-) biased selection: McMahon, Darrin M., *The Pursuit of Happiness: A History from the Greeks to the Present*. London: Penguin Books, 2006 and White, Nicholas, *A Brief History of Happiness*. Malden et al.: Blackwell, 2007.

7 Stearns, Peter N., "A Happy History?," *The Historian* 81, no. 4 (2019): 613–626. doi:10.1111/hisn.13246 and McMahon, Darrin M., "The Pursuit of Happiness in History," in *The Oxford Handbook of Happiness*, ed. Susan A. David, Ilona Boniwell and Amanda C. Ayers. Oxford Library of Psychology. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013: 252–262.

8 Smiling is a result of 18th century developments, dental care, and self-consciousness. (Rosenwein and Cristiani, *What is the History of Emotions?*: 80–81.)

“superiority theory” was gradually questioned with the start of the Enlightenment, as the discourse entered into discussing social virtues such as sympathy, morality and benevolence. In 19th century literary circles, comic figures rose to prominence, also fostering the powerful force of benevolent humour and true sympathy. On a more general level, the discovery and appraisal of “modern happiness” as a virtue and an ideal began in and during the aftermath of the Enlightenment.[9] In Victorian society, ideas of happiness were a marked element of the Western mindset. If ‘transit’ conceptualizations are to be “emotionalized”, the historian needs to watch out for the giggles and grins, the loud outbursts and satisfied smiles in times long gone, always bearing in mind that behind a hearty laugh, deep sadness may occupy the heart.[10]

‘Humour’ is another tricky research object. Peculiarities might prevent the historian from “getting the joke” or making him/her feel uncomfortable when confronted with the sheer otherness, but it can serve as a good indicator of social change.[11] In Victorian England, the uses of laughter and the perception of humour were not straightforward, and differed greatly among the classes. There was humour aimed at making people feel uncomfortable about current misfits in society, institutions, or authorities and there was also nonsense humour that on the surface did not want to convey anything thoughtful at all. Furthermore, there was the “laughter of release” referring to actual events or people without completely ridiculing them, which allowed for harmless laughter by consciously laying aside a compelling force requiring activity in the full awareness of the hardships of the time.[12]

9 Zevnik, Luka, *Critical Perspectives in Happiness Research: The Birth of Modern Happiness*. Cham et al.: Springer International Publishing, 2014 and Prütting, Lenz, *Homo ridens: Eine phänomenologische Studie über Wesen, Formen und Funktionen des Lachens. Bd. 2,* Neue Phänomenologie 21, 3 vols. Freiburg, München: Karl Alber, 2016: 927–939.

10 “Even in laughter the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.” Proverbs 14:13 (The Bible. ESV). ‘Love’ and ‘sexuality’, as possible sources of pleasure and happiness, will be put aside for now, as they will become one focus in the next chapter when paying particular attention to interpersonal relationships and connections.

11 Swart, “‘The Terrible Laughter of the Afrikaner’ Towards a Social History of Humor”: 905–906.

12 Gray, Donald J., “The Uses of Victorian Laughter,” *Victorian Studies* 10, no. 2 (1966): 145–176: 152–154.

In this subchapter, therefore, I want to shed light on the different shades of joyful instances and good feelings, including relief, funny situations, pleasant distractions, deliberately comical incidents, celebrations, relaxation and anticipation.

3.1 Births

Change serves as a natural reason for new sentiments, and the successful arrival of a new world citizen gave reason to celebrate. Given that a substantial number of babies were born during the voyages to Australia, deliveries were basically part of every journey and each ship surgeon had to be prepared to put on display his midwifery skills. As a young, newly appointed surgeon-superintendent on the sailing vessel 'Ellora', Robert Scot Skirving proactively added "Playfair's Midwifery" to his "sufficient selection of practical pieces, that is, medical books and all my instruments" – which proved to be of essential value when an emergency involving a Caesarean section called for action. Luckily, the surgery went well despite stormy seas, and mother and daughter were safely brought to Sydney in 1883.[13]

Not all childbirths were equally harsh. Many deliveries seemed to be comparatively safe.[14] Theories assume that the apparent ease of maritime births can be traced back to the fact that women might have been more relaxed when knowing that there was free access to medical care and professional support.[15] Somehow, therefore, births became matters of secondary importance during the voyage, referred to alongside a new-born baby lamb (obviously more striking news than "another birth […] in the steerage"):

13 Skirving, Robert S., and Ann Macintosh, *Memoirs of Dr. Robert Scot Skirving, 1859–1956*. Darlinghurst: Foreland Press, 1988: 119–121.

14 The apparent ease of childbirth astonished Captain Hatfield: Hatfield, Samuel A., Captain Hatfield's Private Log on Board the 'Plantagenet'. Emigrants from Plymouth to Sydney 1856 (Edited by William E. Hatfield), 1856/10/12–1857/02/13 [2001] (Vaughan Evans Library) 910.45 HAT: 62.

15 Haines, Robin, and Ralph Shlomowitz, "Deaths of Babies Born on Government-Assisted Emigrant Voyages to South Australia in the Nineteenth Century," *Health and History* 6, no. 1 (2004): 113–124: 121–122.

> [1864/07/03] Another birth occurred last week in the steerage. These events have become so common that we scarcely take any notice of them, which will account for my not having mentioned it on the right day. A sheep also lambed last week.[16]

Without direct connection to the family, of course, the reasons to rejoice were not immediately relevant. However, the fact that births were recognized across the classes and compartments at all shows that there was a positive attitude towards children amongst men and women alike. William A. Smith, the author of the above cited entry, was a second-class passenger, a single man enthusiastic about launching a ship newspaper and engaged in supporting a good community among the passengers. With 286 emigrants on board the 'Young Australia', it could well have been that the news about another baby in the steerage down below would be missed, but that was not the case. Amidst all the separation policies, the daily annoyances, and the interpersonal struggles, Smith suddenly recalled the news and considered it worth mentioning. His adding a sort of apology or justification for not taking notice of it on the very day also allows for arguing that transit was indeed perceived as an exceptional situation. Otherwise, births were not "so common that we scarcely take any notice of them". In this particular setting, however, the emotional and social landscape was unique enough to "account for my not having mentioned it on the right day". It would have been culturally expected to count successful births as positively special. Indeed, there are examples that do exactly that: George Annison, who migrated to Victoria in 1853 and was a single man like Smith, referred to the first boy born on the 'Emigrant' as giving a valid opportunity to be glad and being the talk (and reason for "joking") of the day.[17]

Most babies were born among the lower classes, simply because most emigrants and married couples belonged to them. The closer one gets to the pregnant woman, though, the more details become clear about the two-sided nature of having infants at sea: when Jane Skin-

16 Smith, William A., Diary on Board the 'Young Australia', 1864/05/09–1864/08/13 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1815; Box 9593: 116.
17 Annison, "Diary on Board the 'Emigrant' and in Australia," 1853/01/22–1853/11/08: 1853/03/14 [16].

ner's sister Caroline was finally delivered of a little boy, the excitement was great and the congratulations many, but Skinner herself ironically mentioned "joy" and "pest" in one sentence as she talked about sleepless nights together in one tiny berth during a rough night, constantly afraid of rolling over onto "the little dear":

> 27 [June 1850] The day was fine so after I had got through my work for the good of my health I went up on the poop for an hour, and I soon got surrounded, wishing me joy with my new nephew. Joy is out of the question. On a ship a child is the greatest pest one can have.[18]

Here again, joy and exhaustion were close neighbours, and a healthy child undoubtedly required constant care. Against this background, 'gratitude' and 'relief' are probably concepts more fitting than 'deep joy' in intense events like this: 'gratitude' for the new life, and 'relief' that everything has gone well so far. Some parents expressed this mixture of intermingling feelings by naming their children after the ship, the captain, or the surgeon, who had played a major role in the little one's arrival on this planet. This gesture of embodiment of the transit experience signifies an attachment to this in-between period that lasted longer than the passage itself. On board the 'Clifton', which Captain D'Oyley was in charge of, the new-born babies Harry Clifton[19] and Martha D'Oyley[20] had the maritime moment of parental and physical relief irreversibly inscribed onto their identities.[21]

Motherhood, family management and approaching a new continent were challenging processes: one ego-document written by a pregnant

18 Skinner, Jane E., Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar', 1850/04/29–1850/08/20 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 59; TR 1789; Box 9593: 1850/06/27 [17–18].

19 Ramsdale, "Diary While with English Brigade, on Board the 'Clifton', and in Queensland," 1859/09/01–1862/08/28: 14.

20 Ramsdale: 36–37.

21 Hobbins, Peter, Anne Clarke, and Ursula K. Frederick, "Born on the Voyage: Inscribing Emigrant Communities in the Twilight of Sail," *International Journal of Maritime History* 31, no. 4 (2019): 787–813. doi:10.1177/0843871419874001: 802–805. There are other examples of giving maritime names, such as Slade, John, Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes', 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895] (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 5101: 15 and Wilson, John, Diary on Board the 'Ernestina', 1864/10/27–1865/02/18 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9134; Box 4475/13: 1864/12/26 [45].

woman on board gives insight into the ups and downs of preparing for birth in an environment as challenging as this without any private sphere. Elizabeth F. Allbon emigrated to Sydney with her husband Alfred, their toddler Edith, and ten-year-old Eliza (probably her niece) in 1879. Against the advice of their siblings, they set off on board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' and had to fight sickness and debility right from the start. Her letter-diary is a rare testimony that brings together several exceptional categories as a pregnant mother in her twenties travelling steerage in the late 1870s when the migration business had already become an established trade. Her passage is dominated by thoughts of regret, ill family members and worries: this is actually not dissimilar to much of her later life as a working-class settler, as recorded in the letters sent to her brother and sister back in England during the following years. Given this experience, the birth of her daughter Clara towards the official end of the oceanic voyage (before being put in quarantine for another 14 days), turned out to be one of the more positive memories: despite the hardships and an epidemic creeping in, the doctor was attentive and the nurses supportive. Even her husband Alfred ("Alf") spoke up on the day of birth, when his wife ("Lizzie") obviously was not able to write the good news herself:

> Monday June 2nd: Lizzie was confined this morning with a little daughter. Exactly like Edie [i.e. their two-year old daughter Edith]. At half past one in the morning. Had every attention from the Doctor, and had three nurses with her.

Later that day, then, the mother added herself: "I like this Doctor's treatments much better than I did the one I had before. Alf has his hands full now."[22]

Admittedly, this short note was neither brimming with enthusiasm nor overflowing with cheer, but what can be taken from those lines is the hope embodied by little Clara (named after the sister Elizabeth

22 Allbon, "Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1879/03/21–1879/06/13); Letters to England (1879–1888); Newspaper Reports (1890); Photographs," 1879–1890: 1879/06/02 [9].

Allbon missed so dearly).[23] Right before going into labour, the Allbons mourned with their friends from the bunk next to them, when a father of two suddenly died of some sort of heart attack in the arms of Alfred Allbon. Within the next five days, three babies passed away in a row, and a young mother of a six-month-old child breathed her last. Elizabeth observed those events eagerly, while trying to overcome her nervousness at night and while Alfred suffered another setback. Knowing that it was written in the middle of all that dark news, the short sentence "baby getting on nicely" now shines as a light of joy in an otherwise dim steerage compartment.[24]

In most cases, though, the mothers did not raise their voices explicitly. Instead, birth accounts are provided by co-travellers, doctors, relatives, etc. that allow for watching "emotions" being "enacted" as "practices of the body". Replacement surgeon Harry H. Ramsdale's comment about the beauty of the aforementioned baby boy Harry Clifton on the 'Clifton', or the (somewhat ironic) comment about sentimentally affected saloon passengers at the baptism of little Martha D'Oyley are examples of commonly shared moments of positively perceived events. In this case, it is not relevant to form a judgment about the authenticity of the feelings, but given that there was a visible impact, it is legitimate to speak about emotions expressed in a form acceptable to the historical context.[25]

However, manifestations and the appearance of <u>celebration</u>, <u>joy</u> and <u>relief</u> did not look completely similar on board a ship segregated into classes according to wealth and status. There was certainly a very obvious difference between the two children in this respect, and this difference showed itself in the way people reacted to the births. The boy born to anonymous parents in steerage did not receive a welcome as warm and official as that of the girl born to the Millers, who were saloon passengers. When little Harry was delivered, Dr Ramsdale only spoke about "another woman taken in labour" and recorded calling

23 In one of her letters sent back to England, Elizabeth Allbon asked her sister "Dear Clara, how do you like the baby's name? Mother did not say anything about it in her letter. She is such a little pet." (Allbon: 1879/12/03 [13–14].)

24 Allbon: 1879/06/09 [10].

25 Rosenwein and Cristiani, *What is the History of Emotions?*: 78–81.

the “fine” baby “Clifton”. In contrast, the baptism of Martha D’Oyley Miller filled the leading article of the shipboard newspaper *Morning Chronicle*, which listed all the prominent and important attendants by name and family relations.[26] The attention paid to some births and the lack thereof to others reveals a lot about the significance of interaction and emotional networking within enclosed communities. Any sort of public announcement or celebration of an infant on board can be read as a gesture of displayed gratitude, encouraging the shipboard community to join in the privileges of good mood and joyful atmosphere and inviting them in to form a fellowship based on the optimistic moments created in this manner.

Along the same lines, there is also other news that provides reasons for sharing a sense of relief, such as the news about the recovery of young O’Connor who had hurt his spine when the ship had rocked suddenly a few days before:

> There was one young man named O’Connor fell on his back and hurt his spine he had to go to hospital […] The young man that hurt his back came out of hospital today. There was a great cheer given for him. it [sic] is wonderfull [sic] how we get attached to one another in so short a time.[27]

Joseph G. Stewart talked about the bliss of friendship and a communal spirit uniting the single men in steerage, as exemplified by this interest in one another’s fate. Stewart himself was evidently of a more caring character, partaking in the health and suffering of others throughout his diary and letters on the ‘Northampton’ in 1879/80, but in general releases from the hospital were some of the few entirely positive events that could shape a transit experience. Relief set suppressed feelings free – resulting in a “great cheer” as in the case of O’Connor.

26 Ramsdale, “Diary While with English Brigade, on Board the ‘Clifton’, and in Queensland,” 1859/09/01–1862/08/28: 36–37.
27 Stewart, Joseph G., Diary and Letter on Board and about the ‘Northampton’, 1879/10/14–1880/03/10 (Caird Library and Archive) MSS 89/057: 1879/11/28 [31]+1879/12/03 [36].

3.2 Celebrations

A similarly harmless kind of joy could also arise during official celebrations or holidays. Besides lightening up the monotonous daily routine, they served as conceptual spaces of "emotional refuge". This term is taken from William Reddy and extended to cover abstract entities:

> A relationship, ritual, or organization (whether informal or formal) that provides safe release from prevailing emotional norms and allows relaxation of emotional effort, with or without an ideological justification, which may shore up or threaten the existing emotional regime.[28]

A day or an evening set apart and accepted as such had great potential to make room for a "laughter of release" that would add a special flavour to the transitory setting without inherently changing or modifying the surroundings as such. Instead, those externally fixed occasions of behaving differently helped individuals look forward to something more concrete, to prepare for something in the short run, and to try out something new. Many emigrant ships sailed over Christmas, and since most travellers were of Christian religion, this holiday automatically brought expectations and chances with it – a unifying event that would not leave out the lower-class compartments. Christmas, sometimes referred to as "the happiest [evening] I have spent on board"[29] is mentioned in both steerage and saloon accounts, covering joyful memories (the focus of this subchapter) as well as disappointing proceedings (the focus of the next subchapters). "'Christmas comes but once a year and when it comes it brings good cheer' appeared to hold good at seas as on land."[30] Hence, such overarching opportunities of commemoration could bring together different groups for a limited period of time, when "the day was spent as a holiday by all on board", symbolized and

28 Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*: 129.
29 Wilson, "Diary on Board the 'Ernestina'," 1864/10/27–1865/02/18: 1864/12/26 [45].
30 Mayes, William J., Diary on Board the 'Alexander Duthie', 1882/11/11–1883/02/05 (National Maritime Museum) REF MS ALE: 1882/12/23 [20].

visible as "every one [sic] dressed in their best or at least the best we had at hand".[31]

The teenage girl and saloon passenger Clara M. Eddis in 1873 and the married steerage passenger Charles Dean in 1884 may have experienced quite different Christmas celebrations on board, but they included them in their daily entries in similar ways: the special food, hot weather, decorations and gifts are all mentioned. While the richer passengers on the 'Yorkshire' had entertainment programmes with laughter and amusements,[32] the captain on Dean's ship 'Goalpara' forbade the mixing of single men and women completely but this did not seem to trouble Dean and his family too much, as he still remembered an exciting 25th December. It was particularly exciting for his children because they were allowed to "draw" for "over 1000 Beautiful Toys hanging from Cealings [sic] of all Sorts".[33]

Anticipation included, such rituals and celebrations thus helped to create identities and increase the sense of belonging to a certain group. Longed-for differences to the usual daily structure, food, clothes, etc. all underlined this exceptional character, so that surgeon John Maffey, for example, decided to keep the beautifully coloured Christmas menu as a cherished memory of delicious food alongside his personal diary and shipboard newspaper copies.[34]

Subject to a strict system of behaviour, lifestyle, nutrition and hygiene – or lack thereof – any official opportunity to escape this standardization was welcomed by everyone. It also needs to be kept in mind that the emigrant ship was a completely foreign stage for the great majority of passengers. The very nature of 'transit' as the unavoidable, temporary in-between affected the whole life of each migrant. For 24

31 Stewart, "Diary and Letter on Board and About the 'Northampton,'" 1879/10/14–1880/03/10: 1879/12/25 [50–51].

32 Eddis, Clara M., Teenager's Diary on Board the 'Yorkshire' (1873/12/04–1875/02/23) and during First Time in Melbourne, 1873/12/04–1874/10/16 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS YOR: 1873/12/25 [4–5].

33 Dean, Charles H., Diary on Board the 'Goalpara', 1883/11/07–1884/01/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 61; M 753; Box 9593: 11–12.

34 Maffey, John, Papers: (1) Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Parramatta' (1882/09/28–1883/01/09); (2) 'Petrel Papers' Ship Newspaper; (3) 'Parramatta Journal' for Children; (4) Menu Christmas Day, 1882–1883 (State Library of New South Wales) MLMSS 2716 / Items 1–4.

hours a day, seven days a week, they were now in a new world – externally controlled and imposed upon them. Pre-transit, the day theoretically belonged to the individual him-/herself and was given over to their own liking. Of course, most labourers, craftsmen and housewives were not fully free to do whatever they wished, but walking and cooking, cleaning and working were still in their own hands. This had changed entirely when they came on board. It usually took a while to get their sea legs and get used to the new commands, daily routine, people, accommodation, etc. It was an exhausting process. Common holidays therefore provided a safe space where the old and the new could meet. They had the same names, the same reasons and the same justifications at sea as on land. This was familiar territory and therefore a connection with the home left behind and to the home aimed for, while at the same time building a mental bridge from land to the sea. Passengers could feel more comfortable when knowing that the same Christmas songs were sung back in their hometown churches, the poop deck services on board, and in the yet-to-be-attended Australian churches. Within those spaces, harmless laughter and humour lodged naturally. Besides Christmas, calendar dates such as New Year's Eve or Easter were also regularly celebrated, as well as voyage-related events such as crossing the equator[35] and personally important days like birthdays.[36]

Nationally or patriotically shaped holidays then pursued yet another goal, besides offering a small opportunity to escape from constraining schemes: they supported one's belonging in the huddled mass of emigrants. As a common denominator for a selected group of people identified by something that was not related to the maritime world and which went beyond the categories of class and marital status, national holidays were special occasions worth communicating among the fellow travellers. Hugh Torridon was delighted to hear that Captain Frank Puttman supported the celebration of the "Glasgow Fair Saturday" with its

35 See Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit". To cite just one example from the sources, where the writer himself thoroughly enjoyed playing the role of Neptune's wife Amphitrite in a previously organized female dress: Kemp, Joseph, Diary on Board the 'Suffolk', 1868/08/21–1868/11/21 (State Library of Victoria) MS 12171; Box 2766/1: 12–14.

36 E.g. Loyd, I., Diary/Letter on Dutch Emigrant Ship to Australia, N.N. (Caird Library and Archive) MSS/71/061: 2–3.

uniquely Scottish sports games. His account of this particular day, the 18th of July 1885, then gives ample details about the physical exercises and competitions held and fought through by the small but significant number of native "Glaswegians". On that occasion, even some of the hitherto disconnected passengers and sailors met on common ground, rejoicing in a shared tradition which only insiders could fully relate to. This was an even more precious Saturday for the ones involved, as a tightly soil-bound national holiday was curiously transferred and translocated to a place decidedly supranational. By trying to localize and defend a sense of "belonging" elsewhere than in familiar surroundings, a microhistorical process occurred: formerly stable identities changed their meaning in motion and were negotiated anew. What John-Paul Ghobrial drafts for "moving stories" generally,[37] can be seen acted out with identity-related events like that. A paradoxical situation crystallized here in the oddities of the games carried out – activities generally unsuited to a rolling vessel or a slippery deck. The attempts to do the exact same things as on Glasgow terra firma were an example of human behaviour creating spaces for "laughter of release". This was not nonsense comedy, but an awareness of the incongruities of the situation and a hearty laugh about it when facing it fully consciously. That each copy would fail when performed at sea was expected and played out visibly.[38] For the others on board, it primarily remained a hugely entertaining show "causing shouts of laughter" at the "best event of the lot" so far. For the Scottish, though, it was both an intelligent laughter connecting them with their former home and a slightly painful laughter reminding them of the disconnectedness with that very same home.[39]

Although the aspect of being far away from beloved ones often cast a shadow on the cheerfulness and the "great mirth", alongside nostalgic expressions of longing to be home ("I should have enjoyed [New

37 Ghobrial, Jean-Paul A.: Moving Stories and What They Tell Us. Early Modern Mobility between Microhistory and Global History, in: Past and Present 242, Supplement 14 (2019): 243–280: 250.

38 Gray, "The Uses of Victorian Laughter": 154 and Ward, "Laughter, Ridicule, and Sympathetic Humor in the Early Nineteenth Century": 736–740 on "laughter out of incongruity".

39 Fleming, Hugh, Diary on Board the 'Loch Torridon', 1885/05/26–1885/08/23 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9149; Box 4476/14: 22–24.

Year's Day] in Edinburgh much better among old acquaintances"), most writers were still glad to have experienced something special.[40] Besides, passing through various time zones made keeping a record of dates more problematic, so holidays symbolized the desired stability and orientation.

Against the background of a steadily deteriorating food service, slaughtering a sheep to provide fresh meat for the second-class passengers became a great highlight when crossing the equator. Since live animals on board were usually only kept for saloon passengers, Samuel Laver considered it definitely worth recording that the captain himself paid for a sheep and champagne for the lower class. Gratitude towards the ship's master and a rejoicing about the mutual acknowledgment as equal human beings seemed to flow into this positive entry in August 1859.[41]

Understandably, therefore, cancelled concerts or drunk cooks[42] would annoy the whole company and make those days even worse. Hence, disappointment, the 'twin sister' of excitement, belongs to the companions of joy and laughter and cannot be excluded in our present analysis. Without the opposite experience to delight and ease, the significance of such an 'emotional refuge' would not be explainable.

Neither would it be without a rising awareness of another emotional state: boredom. As a fairly new 19th century development in the wake of self-reflection and an emphasis of happiness as a human right, the expression of boredom in sailors' accounts started to characterize long-distance sea travels. Of course, even before that, in the 17th and 18th century, travelling to India or other colonies would bring with it tediousness and monotony, but admissions of the lack of adventure, the

40 White, "Letters and Diary on Board the 'Sultana' and in Melbourne," 1858/11/21–1859/09/02: 1859/01/01 [6].

41 Laver, Samuel, Diary on Board the 'Mermaid', 1859/07/09–1859/09/30 (State Library of Victoria) MS 10961; Box 4448/13: 1859/08/14 [12].

42 "Friday Christmas morning December 25th 1885 (Day 43) […] I guess the day will be slightly different in England. We were expecting a grand dinner today, at least a great deal better than our ordinary run, but I doubt if we will get it as the cook is dead drunk. [...] The Captain is awfully vexed this morning, and good cause to, in fact he came and hauled the Cook out of his bunk this morning." (Foster, Roger N., and James O. Heymer, *Good Hope: A Journey from London, England to Sydney, New South Wales on Board the 'Windsor Castle'. The Diary of James Oliver Heymer, November 1885–February 1886*. Sandy: Authors OnLine, 2012: 140–143.)

unfulfilling duty or the ongoing ennui had generally been kept away from the public – who were longing for glorious tales of heroic achievement.[43] It should be no surprise that passengers on dull voyages initiated concerts, auctions, plays, etc. to stay busy and to enjoy an evening without worries. Numerous reports of this filled the pages of shipboard newspapers, private logs and homeward-bound letters, sometimes with detailed programmes and charts announcing the performers, followed by lengthy evaluations on the quality of a certain person's presentation.[44] Comparing a concert from the early 1850s on a large sailing vessel with one given in the late 1880s on a smaller steamship to Australia does not yield very many differences in terms of the musical instruments, the repertoire or the balance between comedic and sentimental pieces. Men and women were singing and playing piano or violin, often enriching the programme with short skits, little musical pieces, and theatre plays. Well-organized classical events needed longer preparation and particular backgrounds or education, so they might only have happened once per passage and constituted a class-segregated evening programme. But smaller singing performances, lectures or public gatherings for some happy reason also took place in steerage, intermediate or second-class, not only in the large saloon with speeches from the captain and the officials. The laughter surrounding those events was of a two-fold kind: first, the merriness of the participants, and second, the "laughter of superiority" (as Hobbes would call it)[45] by higher-class observers such as Reverend Richard Cole in 1854, smiling "at the maniacs let loose".[46]

Concerts and similar performances basically appear in all journals and serve another purpose than the unifying Christian or national holiday celebrations. The latter would be more of a cross-class-and-culture

43 With reference to Reddy, see Auerbach, Jeffrey A., *Imperial Boredom: Monotony and the British Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018: 24–27+42.

44 The frequent mentioning of such events is missing from Auerbach's collection of various quotes about the monotony of imperial and colonial voyages. (Auerbach: 12–43.)

45 On Hobbes and his model of humour and the contested thesis of a mere "laughter of superiority", see e.g Prütting, *Homo ridens*: 786–820.

46 Cole, Henry, Bruce Cole, and Christopher Whittle, *The Diary of the Rev. Henry Cole: An Account of the Voyage of the 'Albemarle', London to Adelaide in 1854*. Pearce: Whitham Press, 2005: 44.

character with set dates and reasons. The former used self-determined occasions and developed more into spaces for exclusive laughter. The example quoted right at the very beginning of this chapter beautifully illustrates this point: on board the S.S. 'Great Britain', the large dress concert in the saloon was made for and attended by first and second-class passengers only – a deliberate move underlining an already existing distance from the third class. Saloon passengers' reports about the successful concert are found in detail in Robert Tindall's and Mary Mulquin's journals, and both seemed to have enjoyed the evening generally (though for different reasons).[47] The only way for steerage passenger Walter Edmonds to get audible access, then, was to eavesdrop on the pianist. When then comparing the musical quality of this upper-class programme with another second-class and steerage-concert held about a month before, Edmonds drew the conclusion that the sophisticated "dress concert" was certainly better. However, there was no chance for people like him to participate in the joyful mood of this sort of entertainment.[48] Similarly, he and the other unassisted steerage migrants were also excluded from a grand supper in mid-December, shortly before arrival. While Tindall, the self-fashioned gentleman, recalled songs, food, and drinks, steerage passenger Edmonds was annoyed by "another sleepless night owing to noise caused by Saloon champaigne [sic] supper". Tindall talked about "prettily arranged" tables in the saloon, "regular toasts drunk" to different crew members, and good "impromptu speeches" – but all that Edmonds noticed about this was what he could perceive as undistinguishable noises with his ears. He could merely "hear" what was going on; and this did not give him a pleasant memory.[49] Obviously, one distinctive feature of these self-made spaces for joyful emotions is their exclusiveness, hiding the full sensory experience from certain individuals.

47 Tindall, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain' and during First Weeks in Melbourne et al.," 1873/10/24–1874/01: 19+22 and Mulquin, "Mother Mary's Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain,'" 1873/10/22–1873/12/21: 23.
48 Edmonds, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain,'" 1873/11/24–1873/12/20:2.
49 Tindall, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain' and during First Weeks in Melbourne et al.," 1873/10/24–1874/01: 36 and Edmonds, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain,'" 1873/11/24–1873/12/20:3.

3.3 Distractions

The same argument can be observed on steamship passages with touristic stops along the route, where wealthy cabin lodgers were invited to go "on shore" accompanied by the captain or other officials. While, for example, the S.S. 'Great Britain' was loading coal and water in 1854, respectable passengers were led to interesting sites, such as "the watering place" in Porto Grande, "to see the natives fill the casks and roll them into the water" or watch "native women washing". Women like Annie Henning could take part in "a nice walk all along the shore […] pick[ing] up shells" and then record this accordingly as "the pleasantest morning I have spent since we came on board".[50] A list of famous and favourite destinations emerged with the arrival of the steamship taking on most of the passenger trade in the 1870s/80s[51] and made exotic excursion goals out of South American port cities like Porto Grande as well as Naples, Malta, Port Said, St. Vincent and the Cape of Good Hope.[52] Given the omnipresence of boredom, exoticism in the form

50 Thomas, Joan, *The Sea Journals of Annie and Amy Henning*. Sydney: John Ferguson, 1984: 23.
51 Schreuder, Deryck M., "Empire: Australia and 'Greater Britain', 1788–1901," in *The Cambridge History of Australia: Vol. 1: Indigenous and Colonial Australia*, ed. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013: 511–534: 522; Mendonça, Sandro, "The 'Sailing Ship Effect': Reassessing History as a Source of Insight on Technical Change," *Research Policy* 42, no. 10 (2013): 1724–1738. doi:10.1016/j.respol.2012.12.009 and Steel, Frances, *Oceania under Steam: Sea Transport and the Cultures of Colonialism, c.1870–1914*. Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 2011.
52 On St Vincent: Royle, Emily E., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Kent' and in Australia, 1880/11/17–1881/06/01 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 2613: 7–9; on Malta: Anderson, William, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Cloncurry' (Written on a Voyage from Scotland to Queensland. Incomplete), 1886/06/17–1886/07/08 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS CLO: 5–6; on Naples: Bayne, Clotilda, Diary of Fiancée Preparing for Emigration on Board the S.S. 'Orizaba' (1890/05/04–1890/06/03) and during First Time in South Australia as Wife to Charles L. Marson, 1890/01/01–1890/12/31 (National Library of Australia) MS 2733: 56–60; on the Cape of Good Hope: Reynolds, Albert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'London', 1864/10/26–1864/12/14 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS LON: 37–39, et al.

of "Derwish ceremonies"[53] or "all blacks" on the Grenadines[54] would increase the excitement, with otherness, variety and diversion finally available. At least for the ones who – in a sense – could afford to buy a little bit of extra happiness.

The examples given so far all rely on the extraordinary to arouse positive feelings, but this was not the only way to make emigrants smile, as can be seen from their transit accounts. Owing to the predominance of monotony, even little distractions became important enough to brighten up a day. When the outlook and the surroundings were anything but encouraging, the sudden opening-up of any space with different rules or norms was an invitation to people to let go of their sorrow. Those refuges worked in the very moment, which makes them difficult to grasp from the account of them in a diary or letter written hours or days later. However, they still had the power to touch underrepresented emotions afterwards through the act of recalling and reminiscing.

This could happen deliberately, or without intention. An example of the latter is included in the diary of William Dutton, travelling lower class on the 'Sarah Dixon' to Melbourne. Having had a rough start with incompetent seamen and difficult company, he started his entry for Thursday, November 11th, 1858, with some more depressing news: "Some of the sailors are drunk again" and the captain did not seem to care at all or take over any responsibility for altering this situation. While still pondering about how to interpret such reckless behaviour, Dutton suddenly remembered something he had forgotten "to mention on Sunday", namely an encounter with the 'William Jackson', another British emigrant vessel from Bristol. Although it happened four days previously, the event popping up in his mind then made him narrate in detail the meeting on the ocean. So-called "speakings" like this between two ships served to convey information about their proceedings across the seas and helped follow a ship's journey. They were published in

53 Brummit, Robert, The Two Shipboard Diaries of Dr. Robert Brummit (England to Melbourne and Back in the Clipper 'True Briton', December 1874 to September 1875 & The Red Sea Cable Expedition in the Steamship, the 'Chiltern', November 1875 to March 1876), 1874/12/22–1876/03/16 (State Library of Victoria) MS 14927; Box 4641/5: 28–30.
54 Alexander, Thomas, Letter to Brother David Alexander of Larrycormick on Board an Emigrant Ship, 1879/01/25 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS ALE.

newspapers or shipping lists and relieved troubled hearts waiting for good news about safe arrivals. The flag hoisting to communicate each ship's name and port of origin to the other was fascinating enough for gold-rush attracted landlubbers like Dutton, but the carefree minutes really "commenced" when both ships started to pull towards each other and hoisted their sails for a fast race on the waves. "The passengers on both ships waved their hats and cheered each other as long as they could." Clearly, it was the mere memory of this which let Dutton conclude his entry with the complete opposite of the depressing mood it had started with: "it was the most pleasing little incident that has taken place since I have been on board."[55]

Other accounts also reveal how a meeting with another ship, preferably a homebound vessel that could convey letters back to England, belonged to the cherished highlights of sea life.[56] Whether true or exaggerated, communication outside of the wooden world provided novel sights and topics enough to talk through and extend the horizon in a positive way – be it a debate about the captain lying about the pace of his sailing ship or a reflection of some privileged emigrants about paying a passing vessel a visit.[57]

Reading, singing, speakings with other ships, watching sharks, learning new card games, catching albatrosses, changing clothes, and more: these minor activities could be perceived quite differently when travelling.[58] They often marked another step towards the prospective arrival. Although not all diarists were aware of the meaning of these tiny

55 Dutton, Walter, Diary and Letter on Board the 'Sarah Dixon', 1858/08/29–1858/12/26 (Museum Victoria) HT 23918: 1858/11/11 [8–9].

56 Charlwood, *The Long Farewell*: 207–209.

57 See Smith, "Diary on Board the 'Young Australia'," 1864/05/09–1864/08/13: 76–77, recording lies about five or even eight days less, or Thornton, Frances, Diary of Surgeon's Wife on Board the 'Selkirkshire', 1882/07/19–1882/09/14 (National Library of Australia) MS 1025: 1882/08/10 [21–24], who as the surgeon's wife was invited to visit the ship 'Glengarry', trading salt to Calcutta, whose British commander was friends with the 'Selkirkshire's' captain.

58 There are numerous examples for pleasant trifling distractions in diaries and letters. To name just two from the 1860s, from both male and female emigrants: Ridley, Isabella, Diary on Board the 'Melmerby', 1865/05/11–1865/09/06 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) F849: 2 and Yaun, David, Daphne I. Spence, and Jenny Yaun, *David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864: His Account, in Diary Form, of his Family's Voyage from England to Australia aboard the 'General Caulfield'*. Frenchs Forest: Jennifer Anne Lake and Geoffrey Norman Lake, 1991: 9.

things or reflected on it in an open manner, these incidents apparently rendered felicity. They were enjoyed by close companions on board and observing parties from other classes or families. Ship surgeon's wife Francis Thornton confirmed that "very trivial things please people at sea", as she wrote about "the people […] all greatly excited this morning getting their boxes up for their clean clothes, looking at their clothes in what the Captain calls sailors' pleasure [sic]. On Sunday afternoon when the sailors have no work to do they amuse themselves by turning over their things […]."[59]

The simplicity of happiness might therefore be seen as uniquely marking the emotional aspect of 'transit', where certain "very trivial things" became associated with, at first sight, apparently incongruous or exaggerated sentiments and passions. Put in context, though, highlights – be they trivial or not – were unconsciously sought after and urgently needed. In the end, it all came down to positioning oneself in the midst of trying and tiring circumstances. It may also be true in other situations in life, but for out-of-place spaces like 'transit' it is especially true that there is almost no genuine and ongoing source of pure happiness to draw from – neither for the wealthy saloon passengers nor for the impoverished steerage travellers. What made the voyage a positive or negative experience and shaped an emigrant's overall message is how that individual emotionally managed shipboard life with all its rolling and pitching. A keyword search for "laughter" in the transcribed diaries brings up a few holiday-related results (as analysed above), but also situational humour or simple jokes. This attitude already made a huge difference in narrating the vessel's shaky movements:

> Friday 26th Nov. Contrary winds and tremendous seas. The ship rolls so that her yard arms touch the water nearly every roll, rather nice to look upon by us Landsmen. Some rare scenes occur at the table, when sitting in fancied security a great roll would send a miscellaneous collection of articles into one's lap. Cups and spoons and hot coffee were the portion of one, another would have the sugar and butter to nurse, while every

59 Thornton, "Diary of Surgeon's Wife on Board the 'Selkirkshire,'" 1882/07/19–1882/09/14: 1882/07/31 [14].

> moveable goes cutting about making a confusing noise. It was scarcely possible to know whether to laugh or to be angry, but it always ended in the first.[60]

For many travellers, the pitching in stormy waves and the instability felt in their bodies and threatening their possessions were reasons to complain or worry. But whenever inwards-focused anger was overcome by outwards-directed laughter, the releasing effect of the emotions communicated in this way changed the atmosphere and made it easier to accept the differences inseparably connected with life at sea.[61]

Playing tricks or exchanging silly quips also became the flashes of colour in an all-grey painting. Those actions include the tomfoolery of single girls mocking single men like Mr. Tucker by hiding in the storeroom in the dark and jumping at him when he passed, so that "he first turned pale and then red." It is not surprising the girls "had such a laugh about it".[62] Despite the strict separation between single girls and men in steerage, cheeky tricks were often played on one gender by the other – in addition to tricks and pranks among the same gender.[63] The shipboard newspaper on board the 'Fusilier' records the surprising discovery of a young man "grinning from ear to ear" in the single women's compartment, benevolently and graciously forbearing this breach of segregation rules: the anonymous writer interpreted this "explosion of

60 White, "Letters and Diary on Board the 'Sultana' and in Melbourne," 1858/11/21–1859/09/02: 1858/11/26 [3].

61 E.g.: Skinner, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar'," 1850/04/29–1850/08/20: 1850/05/20 [10]; Saddington, Robert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1853/08/11–1853/10/29 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS GRE: 8+33 and all throughout this account Mulquin, "Mother Mary's Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain'," 1873/10/22–1873/12/21.

62 Skinner, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar'," 1850/04/29–1850/08/20: 1850/08/08 [28]. But not only steerage passengers like Jane E. Skinner liked to play tricks on men. On her steamship passage on the 'Calcutta' a few years later, saloon passenger Amy Henning similarly laughs about turning a man into a fool, as a harmless revenge for his poking fun at the gullibility of the girls before: Thomas, *The Sea Journals of Annie and Amy Henning*: 109–110.

63 Pranks occurred in the married people's compartment as well, as recorded by family father Lewis Pilcher: Pilcher, Lewis, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Nowshera', 1883/08–1883/09 (National Library of Australia) MS 9533: 1883/09/01 [5]..

mirth" met with mercy by the captain and the doctor as a sign of the "pretty mocking birds'" liveliness and humour.[64]

Towards the end of the voyage, people either became more irritable or edgy[65] – or more boisterous and light-hearted. If the second option won over and alcohol was given out more freely with the approaching coastline of terra firma, this merry spirit could even result in animal sounds followed by fits of laughter in the cabins at night, ranging from "crowing like a cock […] bleeting [sic] like a goat, [or] braying like an ass […]". For some this behaviour was evidently "very annoying", but even the otherwise serious and devoted young emigrant James V. Mulligan smiled at the amusing memory of this hearable "country farm yard" next door, which fit well with the way he started this entry with the scripture: "Rejoice in the Lord always. (Phil.4.4)".[66]

The call to "rejoice" was usually easier to follow when pushed by an increasing excitement affecting the whole ship shortly before arrival, as Smith metaphorically described the emotional turnaround on board:

> After the rough & unpleasant weather we had experienced for so many weeks, our first trial of the genial air of Australia made us almost feel that it was worth all we had undergone; the spirits of all on board seemed suddenly to have risen from below zero, to temperate or boiling point, according to the temperament of the individual, we once more occupied

64 N. N.: Letter to the Editor. A Scene in the Single Female Compartment (1864/08/06), in: N. N., How We Went to Queensland on Board the 'Fusilier', 1864 (A weekly journal (incomplete) written on board the ship Fusilier, from 14th May 1864 to 20th August 1864. The Captain of the Fusilier was C.D.B. Carvosso. Printed version), 1864/05/14–1864/08/20 (Fryer Library) F706: 830–831.

65 "On the look out for land. Everybody very lively and busily engaged 'packing their trunks [?]'. It's time we landed. We are all tired of one another. I like two or three of the passengers (Mackay, Mader, Bartholomew) very well – the others are only ordinary mortals – some not even that." (Bradley, Robert S., Diary on Board the 'Essex', 1867/04/22–1867/07/22 (National Library of Australia) MS 9010: 113.)

66 Mulligan, James V., Lynette F. McClenaghan, and Pat McClenaghan, *From County Down to Down Under: Diary of James Venture Mulligan 1860*. Armidale: Pat McClenaghan, 1991: 96.

> our long deserted seats in the rigging &c to enjoy the balmy air of an Australian winter […] – The spirits of many seemed to have become so buoyant, that they actually knew no bounds.[67]

To sum up what can be said about happiness and laughter during transit: a boost of lively energy pushed the emigrants after departure, when the practical starting point of the oceanic transit still contained the lure and attraction of the "new", but when relying on external factors for contentment and relief, the opportunities quickly slipped through the emigrants' fingers as monotony took over. Watching out for amusing children or silly characters and then choosing to look at the ridiculously harmless aspects of funny cooks or humorous first mates (who were better than naughty children, grumpy chefs, or violent sailors in the end) was a counter-strategy employed and enjoyed by some.[68] Adhering to this attitude would then be a good preparation for the point when "everybody is completely tired", since no matter how nice the surrounding people and how fast the ship is, "a three months journey at sea [is] no joke".[69]

After this fresh enthusiasm had ceased, the crucial factor making it easier to turn a voyage into a "pleasure trip"[70] was a passenger's attitude. Although paying attention to the tiny distractions and holding on to a self-determined optimistic perspective did not directly ease the hardships and monotony, an approach such as this found or created spaces of positively associated emotional refuge.

67 Smith, "Diary on Board the 'Young Australia'," 1864/05/09–1864/08/13: 175–176. A comparably boisterous mood on board the S.S. 'Nowshera' in 1883 was recorded in Pilcher, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Nowshera'," 1883/08–1883/09: 1883/09/01 [5].

68 An example of laughing at toddlers is e.g. Skinner, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar'," 1850/04/29–1850/08/20: 1850/04/28+05/02 [3+5]. The funny emigrant cook stars in Stewart, "Diary and Letter on Board and About the 'Northampton'," 1879/10/14–1880/03/10: 1879/10/26 [6] and the funny first officer is found in Brummit, "The Two Shipboard Diaries of Dr. Robert Brummit," 1874/12/22–1876/03/16: 11.

69 Smith, "Diary on Board the 'Young Australia'," 1864/05/09–1864/08/13: 173.

70 Described as such by privileged passengers, such as Stock, Walter, Letter on Board the 'Hereford', 1882/02/21 (Caird Library and Archive) AGC/S/18: 26–27 and Rogers, Emma P., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Warwick', 1884/01/19–1884/03/15 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 8106: 1884/03/12 [53–54].

4 Anxious Fear

Building on insights from various studies on fear and anxiety, the potential for panic, timidity, and trembling is higher in periods of instability, unpredictability and weakness.[71] As uncomfortable, tantalizing emotions, fear and anxiety belong to the "heart of human experience".[72] When viewing the objects and motives of dread as embedded in a discourse, one has to refrain from (1) solely relying on anthropologically determined displays of cultural rules or (2) merely psychoanalysing the observations. By putting too much emphasis on (1) culture and mentality, there is a risk of neglecting organic and physiological states. On the other hand, if too much emphasis is put on (2) the individual, the danger is a biased psychohistory that could oversee the mentality and culture of given emotional norms. A balanced approach would follow the tradition of 'emotionology' as outlined by the Stearns and consider that:

> […] *belief* – in the desirability of experiencing pain in dying, or in the evolutionary origins of children's fears, or in the role of the unconscious in producing nightmares – profoundly influences an individual's feelings about pain, the dark, or the interpretation of dreams.[73]

In her substantial work on 'fear', Joanna Bourke repeats three previously introduced frameworks – (1) linguistic, (2) physiological, and (3) sociocultural – to grasp both the making and displaying of emotions in a particular historical context. If asking for the acts and deeds of fear as a mediator between the individual and the social, the role and hierarchical structure become more accessible, while at the same time avoiding a categorization imposed on class or gender groups.[74]

71 See Pinto, "The History of Emotions in Australia": 106–108.
72 Weiss, Max, "Introduction. Fear and its Opposites in the History of Emotions," in *Facing Fear: The History of an Emotion in Global Perspective*, ed. Michael F. Laffan and Max Weiss. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017: 1–9.
73 Bourke, "Fear and Anxiety": 118–119.
74 Bourke calls this "aesthesiology" and appeals to her kin: "Historians always need to ask: what is fear *doing*?" (Bourke, "Fear and Anxiety": 113+123.)

In imperial history, researchers around Harald Fischer-Tiné have added a more subaltern view on structurally motivated fears.[75] For the case studies here, however, I am more interested in the individuals' experiences of mostly familiar feelings in unfamiliar settings. Following the notion that emotions are imprinted on human bodies and faces, we can remember that expressions of fright, fear or anxiety look different in different stories and situations.[76]

In historical research, 'anxiety' and 'fear' are semi-permeable categories and concepts taking two distinct perspectives on almost the same emotional reaction: 'anxiety' emphasizing the subjectively perceived inner disposition, and 'fear' having a direct object as a source triggering this emotion.[77] Based on the terminology suggested by sociologist James M. Jasper, who distinguishes between types of feeling by their duration and intensity,[78] 'fear' would therefore be called a classic 'reflex emotion', while 'anxiety' would be labelled a 'mood' as identifying persistent and longer lasting feelings not particularly bound to something, but denoting a disposition towards something.

What makes them so valuable in transit is the peculiar nature of both: fears (e.g. of weather changes, hunger, or violence) and anxious worries (e.g. about suffering relatives) were not unknown to the emigrants. In contrast – those feelings belonged to the ordinary toolbox of a Victorian person as they do to people in the 21st century. Although, having stated this, the following analysis will show that pre-transit categories of fear and anxiety will change when they are transferred to the physically "unpreparable" challenge of transit.

75 Fischer-Tiné, Harald, ed., *Anxieties, Fear and Panic in Colonial Settings: Empires on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown,* Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies. Houndmills, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

76 Barrett, *How Emotions are Made*: 10–12.

77 Bourke, Joanna, *Fear: A Cultural History*. Emeryville: Shoemaker Hoard, 2006: 189–192.

78 Jasper, James M., "Emotions and Social Movements: Twenty Years of Theory and Research," *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011): 285–303: 286–287.

4.1 Fright and panic

Fear of storms was well known for gardeners like William J. Adams, emigrating to Sydney in 1855, or farmers like Samuel Laver, emigrating to Auckland via Melbourne in 1859.[79] Winds, hail or heavy rain were never fun when the fields and houses on England's plains were hit by storms. However, it was different to face a storm on a creaking and crepitant wooden vessel, where suddenly nature had the power to enter and destroy not only the means of living, but also the very man-made construction essential to living in an otherwise lethal environment. The concept of 'fear' suddenly had a new dimension – both alluring and frightening.

Starting with a (1) linguistic approach, the descriptions in diaries present a verbal variety. For sure, Robert Bradley was not the only passenger who had "some ambition to behold a heavy sea" upon embarking. His wish was granted after almost two months at sea on board the 'Essex', and the diary entry he penned after "monstrous hungry-looking waves" stands out. Bradley concluded by praising the captain's courage and the 'Essex's "brave" behaviour in the middle of the storm, but was convinced that "after this, [I can] understand less even than I could before, how any body in their senses can 'like to go to sea'".[80]

Curiously, there was hardly any fear, screams or panic among the passengers – which was very uncommon indeed. Bradley tried to explain this interesting observation by the apparent belief in a very reliable vessel, so that ignorance would account for a rather naïve reaction to the crushing and cracking. Being jarred and slightly scared himself, though, he did not seem to understand this stoicism:

> There did not seem to be any feeling of fear excited amongst the passengers: mainly I believe because we saw [sic] nothing of the state of affairs, and also because there is a notion very prevalent that the vessel is unusually strong.[81]

79 Adams, "Diary on Board the 'Victory' and Scrapbook (1855–1860)," 1855/02/01–1855/05/24 and Laver, "Diary on Board the 'Mermaid,'" 1859/07/09–1859/09/30.
80 Bradley, "Diary on Board the 'Essex,'" 1867/04/22–1867/07/22: 85–91.
81 Bradley: 85–91.

Some might have boldly claimed that they were:

> not the least afraid though [they] knew the danger was great and the roars of the waves as they rolled over our ship was awful, the flapping too, of the sails was like thunder, though far more terrifying. The slapping of doors and the slapping of boxes as they rock against each other added to the creaking or scraping of the inside of the ship was terrible and terrified every one […][82]

Everyone, except James V. Mulligan, apparently. Despite the terrifying noise and movements, he first proudly remembered sleeping tightly in the middle of the storm. However, following his initial enthusiasm, it becomes clear that his young optimism had turned to actual realism a few hours later:

> Everyone speaks of the danger of the Channel and of the probability of us being washed against some shore, rock, ship or something like dangerous. The storm still continues boisterous [sic] my companion P. Thomson & I go to bed commiting [sic] ourselves to the ear of Him at whose command the waves and wind obey knowing that He only can "still the raging of the sea" and when in my hammock no doubt I was what I thought deplorably miserable the noise of the sea the creaks of the ships berths & the rocking of the berth doors still as the ship rolls from side to side – was most wonderful and – was frightful as well as dangerous sometimes.[83]

In fact: Fear was not necessarily a sign of cowardice. There was real danger around and even the sailors had to find means to cope with the danger and the lack of sleep. Alcohol sometimes served this purpose, as told by Samuel Marchant after a huge hurricane that almost drowned the 'Thirlmere': "I heard it said that they might have got drunk to drown fear; this is very likely, as you read of whole crews rushing to the spirit cupboard for the same purpose."[84] Sinking to the watery grave was the

82 Mulligan, McClenaghan, and McClenaghan, *From County Down to Down Under*: 12.
83 Mulligan, McClenaghan, and McClenaghan: 13.
84 Marchant, Samuel T., Diary on Board the 'Thirlmere', 1882/11/18–1882/12/30 (National Library of Australia) MS 801: 1882/12/12 [2].

ultimate fear, fed by smaller fears connected to that: of fire, of cracking masts, or of incoming water.[85] The quote about the seamen clinging to alcohol in a raging sea is taken from a stormy encounter with a wrecked Chinese trade barque, which saw the captain and seven seamen all tragically drowned. The surviving crew was then offered assistance by the 'Thirlmere'.[86]

In the end, heavy hurricanes, blowing winds, pitching waves, torn down sails, and broken masts were all serious matters and demanded the full investment of all crew members, including the first mate and the captain. Hence, an old rule-of-thumb, highlighted in one of the earlier emigrant guides "The Settler's New Home" from 1850, can be explained: "Never be alarmed until the captain is."[87] This explains why Emily E. Royle mentioned the captain's urgent behaviour in the middle of the thunderstorm to put her panic into the context of an intensity and a threat to all the people on board the steamship 'Kent' to Melbourne.[88] Of course, commanding oneself not to fear is easier said in the theory of an emigrant guide than done in practice. Emotions, after all, have bodily and physiological effects that are often beyond the control of the emigrant mind reading a guide back in England's rural areas.[89]

Nonetheless, it does need to be considered that the unfamiliarity of the circumstances made it difficult for most travellers to realistically

85 Austen, Susan, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames', 1856/12/23–1857/04/01 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 9/6212: 1856/12/24 [16–18 in original/2–3 in transcript].

86 In a series of articles from the 1930s, maritime expert J.G. Eastwood from Babinda recounted the speaking with the 'Thirlmere' after the storm and her report about the Chinese barque 'Undine' that they helped out with after her loss of the captain, the second mate and six other sailors (Eastwood, J.G., "To Australia in a Sailing Ship in the Eighties: Continued from Saturday, May 11," *Cairns Post*, 1935/05/17: 12–14: 14). In contrast to that narrative, Marchant, who sailed on board the 'Thirlmere', recorded that the 'Undine' declined the offer from the 'Thirlmere' to assist, as they had already replaced the missing captain with the first officer (Marchant, "Diary on Board the 'Thirlmere'," 1882/11/18–1882/12/30: 1882/12/12 [2]).

87 Smith, Sidney, *The Settler's New Home or Whether to Go, and Wither: Being a Guide to Emigrants in the Selection of a Settlement, and the Preliminary Details of the Voyage*. London: John Kendrick, 1850: 37.

88 Royle, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Kent' and in Australia," 1880/11/17–1881/06/01: 5–7.

89 The discrepancy between expectation and experience is also outlined in Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit".

estimate the level of danger. Exaggerations and justifications are stylistic devices not uncommon in logbooks of the day. From a quasi-neutral point of view, shipwrecks and collisions did not belong to the expected events in a passage. (Although the likelihood – as shown by the 'Thirlmere' case above – was certainly not zero and there were several shock moments due to narrow escapes from dangerous collisions with other ships, particularly in dark and stormy nights.)[90] They provided perfect material for nightmares, novels and short stories, in turn feeding into the beliefs unconsciously causing uneasiness and alarm.[91]

For this reason, even early editions of prominent emigrant guides were already reassuring prospective settlers by emphasizing safety and security: the "thickness of a ship's side", the "nonsense" of imminent mortal danger, and the low percentage of wrecked ships based on the financial statistics of insurance companies. All those facts should "relieve the passenger in many a moment of anxiety". A vivid description can also be found of what might seem intimidating in complete darkness, when cramped in steerage berths down below with several "timid people suffer[ing] a good deal of fear", and this description is very accurate in comparison to the diary entries from lower-class passengers. Here, the linguistic embeddedness and performative characteristics of fearful emotions in transit is more interesting than figuring out whether or not the single women really fell victim to a mass panic without an objective reason.[92]

24-year-old second-class passenger William J. Mayes, travelling to Sydney to recover from his tuberculosis, wrote in a typical way, but with an unusual density of adverbs and phrases. The 'Alexander Duthie' was a rigged barque, no huge emigrant ship, and the 25 saloon and six second-class passengers enjoyed a close relationship with the seamen, as could often be observed on board smaller clippers. When running into a gale in January 1883, Mayes' writing focused on his activities: after the fore

90 E.g. Beckett, Robert, Extracts from Diary in London, on Board the 'Underley' and in Melbourne, with Letter Written during the Voyage, 1854/11/05–1889/12/31 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9576; Box 4293/3: 1867/01/04 [4]; Kemp, "Diary on Board the 'Suffolk'," 1868/08/21–1868/11/21: 6 and Soutter, "Diary on Board the 'Stracathro'," 1882/05/22–1882/08/01: 18.

91 Bourke, "Fear and Anxiety": 118–119.

92 Smith, *The Settler's New Home or Whether to Go, and Wither*: 37.

topsail had gone and the mate informed the passengers that now the main topsail urgently needed to stay erected, Mayes could not find rest and stayed awake. Smoking his pipe, he "listened anxiously", analysed the sounds and motions of the ship as regards the level of danger, and refrained from waking up his companion. Furthermore, Mayes also introduced the natural forces: the "wind with the force of a hurricane" and with "increased violence", the "shocks of the sea", a "most terrific squall". Though not seeing anything from the inside of his little cabin, he eagerly tried to understand what the vessel was going through: when a "prolonged tremble" attacked the vessel, he concluded "we were now in a critical position". When "a tremendous sea" hit the ship suddenly, the water came as close as possible: the cabin port hole broke in with "a fearful crash" and cold salt water flooded the interior, ripped off one of the boats on board, and smashed it so that the skylight window of Mayes' cabin splintered all over. In hindsight, Mayes was sure that this "completed the most exciting and most fearful moments of my short life". His friend Langham, peacefully sleeping until then, got the shock of his life, too.[93]

As well as a list of adjectives, such as awful, tremendous, terrible, frightful, dreadful, terrifying, dire, etc., the (2) physiological aspects can also be taken from this passage. Sometimes, the emigrants would get more "tangible" in their writing, as when the aforementioned Elizabeth F. Allbon, being seven months pregnant, was rushed into her first "fearful hurricane of wind and rain" in April 1879. With the masts breaking and the crying passengers "tumbling downstairs" like fury, she "had a very bad fit of hysterics". In her condition, a combination of menacing emotions with physiological reactions had a broader effect, affecting the ones she felt responsible for, including her unborn baby, her little daughter and her husband. In the midst of this, her body told of hitherto hidden stress of the first two weeks at sea. This hit the otherwise very self-assured person out of the blue and left marks on the

93 Mayes, "Diary on Board the 'Alexander Duthie,'" 1882/11/11–1883/02/05: 1883/01/31 [33–34].

entire individual.[94] Indeed, we can assume most of the fearful aspects of 'transit' would do this, even when the first-hand accounts are rare.

In other accounts, the predominant way to talk about scary moments is not to focus on bodily changes. Hardly any diarist spent ink and paper elaborating on the pounding heart, the sweaty hands, goose bumps on the arms, or the shivers sent down the spine. Most conclusions about the physiology of fear are therefore only possible indirectly. The stereotypical Victorian author self-fashioned him-/herself by keeping a distance to his/her very own body; while sometimes projecting the feelings on surrounding persons, whose reactions were more vividly pictured. Screaming women, loud regrets and wishes to return home, or people vowing obedience to their god(s) in confusion are scenes often found in personal memories.[95] In quite a few Protestant sources, the often-disdained Catholics (mostly of Irish origin) then appeared as superstitious, foolish folks, praying to the saints and the Virgin Mary. This display of dread was often an act of drawing boundaries to the writer's behaviour in the midst of peril, and contrasting this with other forms of seeking help or coping with fear.[96] In Mayes' long entry from January 1883, his friend Langham's physical reactions were worth mentioning: "frightened almost to tears out of his sleep".[97] This is as close as one can get to the body in a fragile moment like this, but yet again

94 Allbon, "Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1879/03/21–1879/06/13); Letters to England (1879–1888); Newspaper Reports (1890); Photographs," 1879–1890: 1879/04/05 [3]. This example fits well into the findings of Chapter 2 "Controlling Transit", where hysteria and nervous breakdowns were analysed as possible effects of the transit experience.
95 E.g. Austen, "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames'," 1856/12/23–1857/04/01: 1856/12/24 [16–18 in original/2–3 in transcript]; Armstrong (Holley), Mary, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Severn' (1863), Diary on Board the 'Alfred' back to England (1864), and Matron's Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1873–1874) (Transcribed by Barry Harris), 1863/07/14–1874/02/01 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS SEV: 10 or Pender, Thomas, Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw', 1883/01/12–1883/05/17 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15344; Box 4723/1: 1883/04/04 [179].
96 E.g. Yaun, Spence, and Yaun, *David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864*:2. Here, the even more interesting aspect is that David Yaun apparently went to the single men's compartment to fetch his 12-year old son, who was "frightened by the behaviour of the Catholics". Neglecting the obviously cracking and tackling and flapping sails, jib boom, and decks, Yaun was eager to emphasize his lack of any fear that also characterized his brave teenage boy, who then decided to sleep at his parents' place the whole night to escape from horrifying Catholics praying on their knees. The irony does not have to be pointed out here.
97 Mayes, "Diary on Board the 'Alexander Duthie'," 1882/11/11–1883/02/05: 1883/01/31 [34].

it was not the first-person narrator, but another human being that was "almost" crying on the verge of breaking down emotionally. We read of scared people expressing their feelings through the description of external stimuli affecting basically all senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, touching), and the aforementioned negative adjectives re-occurring in the process of remembering the hours of blowing wind or hailstones. They talked about the darkness (sight), the yelling and trampling of the sailors (hearing), the second mate's frozen fingers (touch),[98] the lack of cleanliness (smell)[99] – terror and anxiety automatically resulting as a product of all this.

The third framework observes the notion of (3) "power and social structure". A ship was anything but a non-authoritarian space, but when it came to facing external danger, it suddenly became a profoundly unifying institution. Of course, the situation in a narrowly crowded steerage mess was completely different from a family cabin in first class. The chances for mass panic were much higher when, thanks to people crying loudly below, "fear begets fear", resulting in "great confusion without the least just cause for it".[100] The anxiety that Emily E. Royle was suffering when gathering her four children around her in the cabin during a thunderstorm was certainly not the same as it would have been in steerage, when "the single women […] became frantic".[101] And yet: "Fear is a most democratic emotion."[102] Natural forces did not care about riches or poverty, education or religion. The waves and the squalls attacked the ship altogether and threatened the well-being of both captain and stowaway, gentleman and housemaid's infant.

In this sense, 'transit' can turn fear into something going beyond the chill of reading novellas like Joseph Conrad's "Typhoon": "It was the Typhoon burst over us in all its fury all of us can read about them but never in

98 E.g. Laver, "Diary on Board the 'Mermaid'," 1859/07/09–1859/09/30: 1859/09/15–20 [20–22].

99 See Mulligan, James V., Lynette F. McClenaghan, and Pat McClenaghan, *From County Down to Down Under: Diary of James Venture Mulligan 1860*. Armidale: Pat McClenaghan, 1991: 12.

100 Smith, *The Settler's New Home or Whether to Go, and Wither*: 37

101 Royle, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Kent' and in Australia," 1880/11/17–1881/06/01: 6–7 and Pender, "Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw'," 1883/01/12–1883/05/17: 1883/04/04 [127–128].

102 Bourke, "Fear and Anxiety": 125.

the slightest degree can they be realized by those on land & they are to be felt & dreaded on the treacherous ocean." In this quote second-class passenger Isabella Ridley did not only point to the discrepancy between expected, imagined and experienced transit described in the previous chapter, but she also talked about her fears and (most likely subconsciously) suddenly identified herself with the ship by switching to first person plural and by personifying the storm as an enemy to the 'Melmerby': "Our poor ship struggled hard with its antagonist rushing on in a fearfully tremulous motion which tried her timbers sorely our sails were reefed hatchways fastened down it was as dark as the grave outside."[103]

Likewise did Robert Bradley, whose storm experiences introduced the topic of fear in this book. As Bradley, exhausted and tired, reflected on the events, he began to comprehend something he had not been able to grasp before: "I can understand the feeling which prompts a sailor to love his ship now. The Essex behaved bravely."[104] His empathic tone of admiration for common seamen is new to the otherwise rather arrogant voice of the saloon passenger elaborating on Lord Byron's poetical achievements and Horace's lyrics. The storm swept away established sets and norms, and reduced humankind to the fragile creatures they were.

This subchapter has analysed this most maritime cause of fear and now we can summarise the impact of 'transit' on reactive emotions such as fear: new insight is gained as control is lost and the scope of agency immensely shrunk. This is a fact applicable to 'transit' as a general concept and in-between period, whether at sea or on land. In moments of potential or actual danger, some people only then came to realize the state they were finding themselves in. If excitement or boredom, annoyances and joys had characterized the previous weeks and painted the journey in light colours, a gale made it impossible to steer clear of the surrounding limitations. Shipboard- (and accordingly: 'transit'-) boundaries took shape in the hearts and minds and feelings of the people when confronted with external sources highlighting them and their meaning: how dependent one is on strangers, how unstable life is, and

103 Both quotes taken from: Ridley, "Diary on Board the 'Melmerby,'" 1865/05/11–1865/09/06: 10.

104 Bradley, "Diary on Board the 'Essex,'" 1867/04/22–1867/07/22: 91.

how unsatisfactory it is to have nothing to do except to try to sleep, lie down, sit, wait, hope, smoke or calm down weeping children.

4.2 Worries and sorrows

Against this background then, anxiety, the sister of fear, makes more sense. Fed by observations, information, and then in particular by self-made experiences, states of anxiety evolve in transit that are more general, internalized and subjective. Worries and sorrows are examples of such an emotion. In and of itself nothing uniquely maritime, new reasons to worry emerged on board: the lack of news on current political affairs, the cold and the dampness, the loss of clothes to mildew, the quality of the water, the uncertainty of good weather, the chances of getting delayed in the doldrums, and more.[105]

Above all, the major targets of human worry were the nearest and dearest. There are some heart-breaking stories about the teenage daughter being concerned about her mother's deteriorating health, the father praying for his little son's recovery in the hospital, the mother watching beside the beds of their children, struck by measles, or the husband bringing his little daughter to the hospital to visit her sick mother.[106] Sure, the same narrative could be told on land. Without knowing that the Eddis family was actually migrating to Australia in the hope of offering the ailing mother better air and climate, that the children's bed was located in a steerage mess, and that the hospital was a small cabin in a ship's belly, it would not be obvious that the urgency and pressure felt by the daughters, fathers and mothers must have been of another

105 E.g. on the lack of world news: Wilson, "Diary on Board the 'Ernestina,'" 1864/10/27–1865/02/18: 1864/11/16 [18]; on cold and dampness: Skirving and Macintosh, *Memoirs of Dr. Robert Scot Skirving, 1859–1956*: 120–121 and Skinner, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar,'" 1850/04/29–1850/08/20: 1850/0715–17 [21+23]; on detention and delay: Miller, Frederick, Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Norfolk' to London and the 'Moravian' to Launceston. Extracts, 1861/04/16–1862/07/15 (State Library of Victoria) MS 13312; Box 3870/11 (6): 68.
106 Eddis, "Teenager's Diary on Board the 'Yorkshire' (1873/12/04–1875/02/23) And During First Time in Melbourne," 1873/12/04–1874/10/16: 1873/12/31 [6]+1874/02/11 [11]; Stead, Richard, Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll', 1875/07/30–1875/10/25 (State Library of New South Wales) MLMSS 4226: 1875/09/16 [22]; Soutter, "Diary on Board the 'Stracathro,'" 1882/05/22–1882/08/01: 11–17 and Pender, "Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw,'" 1883/01/12–1883/05/17: 1883/05/05ff [88–106].

kind. On board, however, the new worries were grouped around issues such as: the competence of the one and only doctor available, the many accidents caused by slipping or falling on deck, or the lack of medical provisions. Being exposed to extreme climate changes and diseases, often without room to impose proper quarantine, it does not come as a surprise that gloomy and melancholic passages occupied many passengers' thoughts. Sickness was not uncommon. Bedsharing with new-born babies,[107] lack of hygiene, stinky water closets, and all sorts of tiny animals contributed to raise the level of possible infection. Even on the early sailing vessels, dutiful authorities were demanding regular washing and cleaning, but this often proved hard to enforce in certain messes. The older the ships, the more passengers, and the longer the journey, the quicker a weak immune system gave in. Even in the best ships, the conditions were prone to alter during the voyage, and there was no chance to escape. What parents feared most was an infectious epidemic. The government was aware of that realistic danger and therefore introduced health checks, medical certificates, and surgeon-superintendents hired by the colony of destination. But because 'transit' is marked by its uncontrollability, caring about and for the loved ones became something to cling to and fill the hours with. In contrast to natural forces threatening the shipboard community as a whole, diseases were selective in picking their victims. Sickness therefore was an individual cause of anxiety, and it lost its power quasi concentrically with the people arranged farther or closer to the seat of disease.

In other words, the shades of fear/anxiety were of different colour, depending on the proximity and strength of connection to others: the closer the relationship the greater the attachment and emotional

107 This is what gave Jane E. Skinner, quoted above, a sleepless night, as she was sleeping in the same bed with her sister Caroline, who had just been confined of a little son. While Jane kept her little nephew next to her, she permanently worried about rolling over him: "I slept with her [i.e. sister Caroline] in the same bed that night. It was too rough for her to hold the babe so I took charge of the little dear. I put him next to the wall and lay in the middle myself. Poor little fellow I quite thought I must roll over him. I managed by layinq on my side with my knees and hands against the wall making a place for baby between, and Caroline wedging me so tight. Tired as I was I was absolutely afraid to close my eyes for my charge was to great and the dear little thing scarcely breathed, he lay so quiet." (Skinner, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar'," 1850/04/29–1850/08/20: 1850/06/25 [17].)

investment. Unlike many among his male colleagues, Walter Dutton did express his concerns verbally in a letter to his wife, written on September 3rd, 1858. He gave details about his friend Joe's deteriorating health, thus formulating his worries: "I am sorry to say that Joe is still in bed very ill. I don't know what he is going to make of it, your brother Wm [i.e., William] would not know him, he cannot eat anything and his spirits are down."[108] As with Dutton's friend Joe, individuals such as Thomas Pender's wife, Clara M. Eddis' mother and Lewis Pilcher's messmate all played a role in the emotional landscape that marked those historical actors' transit experiences, rendering it a touch darker. As with the terror conquering the passengers in the eye of a storm, the worry-laden letters and diaries primarily talked about daily visits to the hospital (Pender), observed physical improvements (Eddis), or noted medical diagnoses (Pilcher).[109]

On her way to Brisbane in July 1882, Pattie Soutter was deeply distressed because she could "scarcely bear to look at" her oldest son Dick suffering "very poorly" from measles. Her feelings for him and the two other children were more than just a general imbalance comparable to sorrows she had known before: they were explicit anxieties with actual bodily effects. Though not infected by measles herself, for Pattie Soutter the 14 days of constant worries about her children's recovery and her husband's injured hand belonged to "such a time of physical trial I never passed through".[110] It becomes clear that the apprehension she (1) linguistically uttered, also (2) bodily drained her, so that (3) it visibly affected her social relations and interactions.[111] In a shipboard context of mutual involvement, both supportive and broken relationships were perceived and recognized more quickly.

108 Dutton, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Sarah Dixon,'" 1858/08/29–1858/12/26: 1858/09/03 [1–2].

109 Pender, Thomas, Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw', 1883/01/12–1883/05/17 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15344; Box 4723/1: 1883/03/05ff [88–106]; Eddis, "Teenager's Diary on Board the 'Yorkshire' (1873/12/04–1875/02/23) And During First Time in Melbourne," 1873/12/04–1874/10/16: 1873/12/31 [6]+1874/02/5–11 [11]; Pilcher, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Nowshera,'" 1883/08–1883/09: 1883/08/13–15 [3].

110 Soutter, "Diary on Board the 'Stracathro,'" 1882/05/22–1882/08/01: 15–17.

111 These are again the three frameworks for analysing emotions as suggested in: Bourke, "Fear and Anxiety": 113.

Among so many travellers, lonely sick ones had a difficult standing defending their priority in terms of treatment and medical care. Without someone else to speak up for them, many ailing passengers were overlooked by the doctor. Understandably, therefore, the closest relatives and friends became crucial mediators[112] and their feelings of anxiety and worry sometimes determined the chances of recovery. There are some accounts of vigorous husbands fighting for their wives to receive strengthening stout. We see therefore how during transit, perhaps in contrast to before or after the passage, the usually rather passive "mood" of anxiety might turn into "emotional energy",[113] leading to action and effort for oneself or more often for someone else. Negatively speaking, carelessness was noticed as well and could have awful consequences. Robert S. Bradley was shocked by watching a father exercising his authority over his young daughter. He refused to let the doctor help her. As she was fading away, Bradley remarked with an utter lack of understanding:

> I would do nothing towards getting up the affair in any way unless his daughter greatly improved in health or was removed to the 1st Cabin where the Captain had offered him a berth for her and where she would be out of the reach of the noise. He won't accept the offer for some reason or other. I told him pretty plainly what I thought of his neglectful treatment of her: but he's too big a hypocrite to be insulted & apparently too cruel to make any alteration. Later on in the Evening he told me the Doctor gave no hopes of her.[114]

This reaction reveals a lot about the Victorian society of the late 1860s. Although morally enraged at the father-daughter relationship that so cruelly neglected the woman's need for quiet and calm, even the surgeon himself seemed stuck in a deadlock. Once more, analysing the

112 More on mediators in Chapter 6 "Managing Transit".
113 'Moods' = persistent, longer lasting feelings vs. 'emotional energy' = mood of excitement and enthusiasm in social movements and interpersonal interactions. (Jasper, "Emotions and Social Movements": 287.)
114 Bradley, Robert S., Diary on Board the 'Essex', 1867/04/22–1867/07/22 (National Library of Australia) MS 9010: 60–61.

subtle aspects of transit, such as worries and sorrows, sheds light on patriarchal structures, dynamics of interpersonal relationships, and the omnipresence of the neglected ones. This observation leads to the next, sad step that can sometimes follow fears and anxieties: grief and mourning.

5 Heartfelt Pain

Heart-rending narratives of sobbing parents having lost their child to the cruel claws of lethal diseases are not what marks the often very brief accounts of death and dying on board ship. Sometimes, the apparent lack of emotions in first-hand accounts might be grounded in a very rare religiously motivated fatalism based on the doctrine of original sin and high mortality rates in impoverished urban areas.[115] Sometimes, there could have been other reasons for what the sources reveal about mourning and suffering. The first attempt by William Doody (or: "Doory" or "Dooley")[116] to immigrate to Adelaide was stopped by more than one tragic event in 1854. An outbreak of cholera shortly after setting off from Liverpool forced the 'Dirigo' to return to Great Britain again. Among the many victims of this epidemic was Doody's sister, with whom he wanted to start life anew on the distant continent. Upon writing a letter to his brother-in-law (probably his other sister Betty's husband), Doody seemed to simply list all the depressive facts without giving insight into the state of his heart:

115 Murdoch, Lydia, "'The Dead and The Living': Child Death, the Public Mortuary Movement, and the Spaces of Grief and Selfhood in Victorian London," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 8, no. 3 (2015): 378–402. doi:10.1353/hcy.2015.0043: 381 and Seaton, Sarah, *Childhood and Death in Victorian England*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books, 2017: Chapter 5.

116 In the House of Commons Papers, ed., *Correspondence between Officers in Charge of Emigration Depot at Birkenhead, and Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners in Relation to Outbreak of Cholera on Board Emigrant Ship 'Dirigo',* 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers XLVI.463. London, 1854: 15 one single woman dying of cholera is called "Ann Doory", age 31. The transcriber of the original letter quoted in full length later read the name as "Dooley", but when compared with the passengers' list heading for Adelaide a few months later, "Doody" is confirmed: Agent's Immigrant List, and Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, Nominal List of Emigrants on Board the 'Dirigo' Despatched from Liverpool for Adelaide, 1854/11/22 (State Records of South Australia) 54/26:2.

> Liverpool 19 July [1854]
> Dear John
> I saw a letter this evening that Wm Taylor recieved [sic] from Betty I did not think you would have heard of our misfortune so soon or I should have wrote sooner we sailed from the river mersey on Thursday evening after laying off Birkenhead 9 days and on friday [sic] the Cholera broke out amongst the passengers we were in towe [sic] of a steam boat which took us into Cork harbour on Saturday morning and just after we got in the third person died we lay there untill [sic] 7 o'clock in the evening when the Cork and Liverpool steamer took us in towe for to return during that time there was 18 deaths and I do not know how many cases on Saturday morning about 8 o 'clock Ann Jane took very ill and on Sunday morning at four she breathed her last I attended upon her with several young women all the day and night but we could not save her from we sailed until we came back there was 43 died we arrived about ten on Monday Morning but could not get ashore until Wednesday I have been in Birkenhead all day to see if I could get any of our luggage but it will not come out of the ship until Saturd-day [sic] you must write to me and let me know where I shall send Anns box to as her cloths will be of use to Betty and it is no use to let them go to loss but I expect there will be a good many of them lost as I have lost some things my self and hers I would not know as the [sic] are not marked I will write again as soon as you send an answer
> I remain yours &
> Wm Doody[117]

This rather objective, materially-focused report irritates current-day readers, suggesting a cold-hearted Victorian age. Rightly put into its historical context,[118] however, the apparent apathy does not equal lethargy, and the omnipresence of death does not justify a quick conclusion

117 Doody, William, Letter to Brother-in-Law John on Board the 'Dirigo' after Outbreak of Cholera Causing the Vessel to Return to Liverpool, 1854/07/19 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS DOO.

118 "Quite simply, cutting-edge neuroscientists are discovering what linguistic theorists have been arguing all along: that language fundamentally shapes both the expression and the experience of emotion. There is no culture-free acontextual means of experiencing or

that would judge the working-class writers as being stoic about the loss of loved ones. Previous historical explanations would refer to a fatalism as one result of this familiarity, especially with mortality rates among infants, but today's research has shown that a more modified picture of handling death grasps the practices of mourning and grief better. Often, pain after bereavement was just expressed differently and was as equally strictly bound to social and gender values as today. The lack of passion to be observed in the ego-documents, novels, diaries and letters sometimes points to a more flexible and less linguistic form of gravity and grief.[119]

Besides, many were just literally lacking words. Not used to expressing one's feelings in a written way, they often needed to pick from a known store such as the Bible, oral tradition or proverbs. Confronted with the inadequacy of finding phrases that would match the emotions, many men and women with only a superficial education would simply abandon any attempt to do it.[120] In the example cited above, Doody stuck to narrating the facts. Ann Jane, most likely his older sister, was only one among many adding to the number of those falling victim to cholera. At the same time, though, he seemed shocked by the brevity and speed with which the disease overtook his sister. Less than 24 hours (Saturday 8 a.m. till Sunday morning 4 a.m.) after getting sick, she "breathed her last". Despite the care of the brother and "several young women", working hard to keep her alive, they "could not save her". With this fatal conclusion, Doody abruptly ceased talking about her death, and instead switched to the following days' proceedings and organizational matters. Probably overwhelmed by all the changes and shattered plans, he worried about the best possible further use of his deceased sister's clothes within the family. A contradiction? No. Material concerns proved no contradiction to honest mourning but were

accessing emotion." (Eustace, Nicole, Eugenia Lean, and Julie Livingston et al., "AHR Conversation: The Historical Study of Emotions," *American Historical Review* 117, no. 5 (2012): 1487–1531. doi:10.1093/ahr/117.5.1487: 1506.)

119 More on the "fatalism" side: Seaton, *Childhood and Death in Victorian England*: Chapter 5 and Strange, Julie-Marie, "'She Cried a Very Little': Death, Grief and Mourning in Working-Class Culture, c. 1880–1914," *Social History* 27, no. 2 (2002): 143–161. doi:10.1080/03071020210128373: 144–147.

120 Vincent, David, *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working Class Autobiography*. London, New York: Methuen, 1981: 40–42.

part of pragmatic and immediate decisions that had to be dealt with after bereavement. The mental and emotional process he went through did not seem to be worth buying more paper for, just to report details about his state towards his brother-in-law. No doubt, the experience of heavy loss marked the shortened and disrupted voyage for all passengers in this unique case study, where an epidemic forced the emigrant ship to return. It could be that by placing Ann Jane among 43 other victims of cholera, accepting this fate became easier for William Doody, when he saw himself as one common man eventually surrendering to death. Perhaps the relationship between him and his brother-in-law was not so close that he wanted to share his innermost pain on an expensive piece of paper. Perhaps all that he could cling to was the assurance that he tried his very best to deliver her from the pit, so that his comfort would lie in the sentence "I attended upon her with several young women all the day and night but we could not save her."[121]

To comfort the devastated ones after watching the suffering of so many, a grand picnic was initiated near the Emigration Depot at Birkenhead in Liverpool. Ample food and drinks, music and entertainment were offered, which apparently refreshed and "raise[d] the depressed spirits of the returned emigrants" considerably. This is what the *Adelaide Observer* reported months later, based on first-hand information.[122] It was an interesting official measure to express empathy, but Doody did not mention this picnic at all. He must have dealt with his grief differently or did not consider this "feeding of the three hundred" worth mentioning in a letter aimed at conveying sad news and organizational matters.

There were 426 passengers originally placed on the 'Dirigo', but only 250 emigrants in total took the very same ship, cleansed and fumigated, on its next voyage, boarding in spite of having experienced the dreadful delay and return in July: they did then finally succeed in reaching South

121 Doody, "Letter to Brother-in-Law John on Board the 'Dirigo' After Outbreak of Cholera Causing the Vessel to Return to Liverpool," 1854/07/19.
122 N. N., "Shipping Intelligence: Cholera on Board the Dirigo for Hobart Town," *Adelaide Observer*, 1854/10/21: 7.

Australia.[123] Among them was William Doody, listed as a 27-year-old "pastry cook" from Lancaster.[124]

5.1 Grief

In Protestant working class circles, a "good death" was the desired final chapter of one's earthly life. One of the characteristics of passing away in honour was a pre-death period in reverence and solitude, during which a clear consciousness enabled the last instructions, apologies and farewells to be addressed to the beloved ones. For this reason, sudden deaths like Ann Jane Doody's or suicides were morally shocking and left the family behind feeling rather naked. Life was precious, and so was death. Accordingly, the way William Doody wrote about how the cholera attacked his sister all of a sudden testifies to his being overwhelmed and unprepared. The lack of religious terminology or references surprises as well, since facing the lethal darkness with peace in mind and heart was seen as a great testimony of satisfaction, fullness, trust in God, and devotion. However, urgency obviously called for quick transfer of information and a short letter did not ask for personal reflections. Although the distinction between "good" and "bad" deaths is not always as clear-cut as early research wanted to have it, the general idea of representing virtues such as duty and piety unto the very end can be observed throughout various primary sources of the 19th century.[125] One case study from the 1850s that exemplifies exactly this pious attitude in the middle of losing a close family member is given in the account of John Slade. When the Slade family decided to leave for New South Wales, they consisted of a group of 13 people: including father Daniel, mother Sarah, and seven of their eight children (ages 13 to 29),

123 N. N., "English Shipping: Departure of the 'Dirigo,'" *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1854/11/13: 4.
124 Agent's Immigrant List and Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, "Nominal List of Emigrants on Board the 'Dirigo' Despatched from Liverpool for Adelaide," 1854/11/22:2.
125 Jalland, Patricia, *Death in the Victorian Family*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, esp. 59–76 on "Bad Deaths, Sudden Deaths, and Suicides". More critically when analysing how working classes dealt with death (in contrast to Jalland's focus on middle and upper classes): Strange, "'She Cried a Very Little'": 147.

two of which already had spouses, with the oldest son Emanuel even bringing two daughters from the previous marriages of him and his wife.[126] Aboard, the weight of this decision struck the oldest member more than anyone else. Never having seen the sea prior to registering as a passenger on board the 'Hydaspes', father Daniel Slade could not bear the "great change in mode of life and diet" and continued to be "low in health and spirit".[127] The cheerfulness and enthusiasm of his children did not help him get over this melancholic mood. When confronted with the reality of having underestimated the hardships and the finality of the decision, his health deteriorated.[128]

The dying scene recorded in 23-year-old John Slade's diary then reads like an Old Testament account, when the patriarchs gathered their children around their deathbed to bless them. It could well be seen as an example of a faithful way of departing – not for another continent, but this time for another sphere altogether:

> Oct. 11th. Mon. A child of the name of Earler died and was buried this morning. My father has a relapse of his Bronchitis and fever, and I fear, will not recover. At some 1/2 to 12 a.m., my beloved father breathed his last. We were all round him, and his last words were to me, he wished Mr. Gordon [i.e. Reverend of the Church of England] to pray with him; he did so, and I having fetched my wife to his side, held his hand in mine, and as he gave me his last look, his pulse ceased to beat, and the best of fathers was no more. Mother and my brother Ben [age 13] were unable to attend the burial at 1/2 past four. The scene was most impressive; being an Adult, Mr. Gordon read the beautiful service impressively. The body on

126 John Slade, the second son, emigrating with his wife Sarah, gave an introduction to his immigrated family and their relationships when starting to re-write his diary more than forty years afterwards in 1895: Slade, "Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes'," 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895]:1. In Sydney, the arriving immigrants' list of the barque 'Hydaspes' confirms the names and ages without listing the deceased father: Agent's Immigrant List, List of Immigrants per 'Hydaspes', 1852/12/17 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) Reel 2136, [4/4790].

127 Slade, "Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes'," 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895]: 7.

128 Daniel Slade's depressive and melancholic reaction confirms the thesis outlined in Chapter 2 "Controlling Transit" that the voyage itself had a significant impact on an individual's mental and physical health, and that this effect remained hidden from the officials' eyes for a long time. Similarly, the argument made in Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit" that insufficient preparation could play out brutally on board becomes palpable again.

> the grating, the flag for Pall, the passengers all around, the ship's officers all at hand, and a dead calm as the grating was tipped, and all on the world was over for him. He was a good father to us.[129]

For an entry from a working-class man (the deceased father was a gardener, the mother Sarah was illiterate, and John Slade himself used to work for a millwright's company), this extract is also curiously rich in its potential for a deeper analysis into the emotional landscape of a mid-century British family. The way Slade wrote is not typical of his age or profession, which makes it even more interesting (perhaps, Slade added some glorifying details in a revised version of his diary later.) As above, my focus here will be on (1) language, (2) performance, and (3) socio-culture. In contrast to the upper- and middle-class expressions of grief shaped by the language of novels, the Victorian working class did not necessarily put grief and mourning into sentences or words.[130] A merely linguistic approach looking for sorrow, heartbreaks, sadness or bereavement would not yield many results in the documents left behind by steerage or lower-class passengers. Slade's entry after his father's death therefore counts as an exceptional example of loss described to himself and to a known readership. Interestingly, the descriptive language used here includes various protagonists in one rather short passage: besides the father himself, there is another person mentioned by name ("a child of the name of Earler"), followed by the writer himself, his wife, his mother, his brother, and Rev. Mr Gordon, who played an essential role in the process. This reverend was not related to any of the people mentioned and therefore seems to hold the assemblies together – both the small one around the deathbed (or rather: death-berth) and the large one during the burial service.

The (1) language and (2) performance is simple but touching, revealing a close relationship between father and son. Though not laden with tears, Slade threw in glimpses of feelings – explicit ones like "I fear" or implicit ones like "beloved father". The bereavement weighs heavier when picturing the scene, which is reminiscent of Biblical accounts.

129 Slade: 15.
130 Strange, "'She Cried a Very Little'".

Indeed, this was most likely deliberately the case, since we know that Slade initiated and taught Bible classes himself to educate the adults[131] and was undoubtedly familiar with the King James Genesis text of Jacob blessing his children and grandchildren individually:

> And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days [...] And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.[132]

What also becomes clear through this journey is the overall basic familiarity with a shared common ground of the Anglican-Christian framework. Even if there was no explicit reference to religious thought, the intellectual foundation and the perspective taken on life and death would still lie in a deeply religious worldview. Eternity, vanity and suffering belong to the core experiences and topics running through the Biblical accounts, and no matter how secular the individual, people would recognize allusions to the regular King James readings. Anthropological experiences of loss and parting therefore not merely human, but also Christian, initially overcoming denominations and confessions. It goes without saying that the history of suffering in Western societies cannot be grasped without keeping this Christian core in mind: it is the underlying system that feelings and reactions were measured against, resonating implicitly in the structure, approaches and categories displayed.[133]

Similarly, Daniel Slade passed away in front of the whole family in piety after final prayers and with his hand held by the narrating son,

131 Slade, "Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes,'" 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895]: 5+15+17.

132 Genesis 49: 1+33 (The Bible. KJV).

133 See Mervart, David, "Republic of Letters Comes to Nagasaki: Record of a Translator's Struggle," *Transcultural Studies* 6, no. 2 (2015): 8–37. doi:10.17885/heiup.ts.22765, who emphasizes the impact of a commonly shared grid when analysing written correspondence of the past. Normally, those frameworks would not be explained or talked about. They would permeate the communication within the same cultural and educational setting – and often only become visible when confronted with another mentality of readings, narratives, or worldviews.

who claimed that his "last look" was directed at him. This process of a gradual farewell is tied together in this one long sentence in a remarkably dense manner involving almost all the senses (speaking, hearing, feeling and looking). Additionally, Slade repeated the fact four times in different words without using "death" or "to die" to refer to his father, as if he was trying to capture the final reality somehow: "breathed his last", "his pulse ceased to beat", "the best of fathers was no more", "all the world was over for him". This is as close as one can get to expressing sadness and grief over a beloved family member's death in shipboard diaries – and it is very close indeed. Saying goodbye and starting the process of moving on began immediately after the burial, which hence had to be remembered as something solemn and worthy, or – in Slade's own word – "impressive". Indeed, it was "most impressive" with a "beautiful service read impressively", which stood in stark contrast to the other funerals attended before. The emphasis that it was an appropriate way to let go of his father sounds a bit like a justification for the fact that a proper funeral could not be provided on board. Nor was there a chance of extended mourning for the widow or an opportunity to "bury Daniel Slade with his fathers" as Israel's patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did.[134] Against this background, the details of the short service were essential, given that it all had to happen so fast. In the entries to follow, there was no more mentioning of the father's loss, although one could imagine that the family would continue to talk about this. By the acts and interactions, the ways of behaviour, etc. (in short: the performance), therefore, emotions were expressed and communicated. Solidly embedded in the emotional community of its time, the people of this century understood each other without words. The liturgy and silence across the classes and hierarchical positions spoke of condolence as required.

With the phrase "a good father to us", Slade also took a step into applying the universal idea of a "good man" to an individual father-chil-

134 "And he [i.e. Jacob] charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah." Genesis 49: 29–31 (The Bible. KJV)

dren relationship. There was no need to define the adjective "good" any further within the (3) socio-cultural context given here. Assuming the common expectations of what a Christian father should look like, the connotations associated with the eulogy encompass work and family with self-sacrifice, devotion and strength. For the head of the Victorian working-class family, the aspect of nurturing would play out in bread-winning and investment into securing the family's wellbeing. Hence, Slade's comments about his father before his death characterized the man as someone deeply rooted in his home country, yet eager to seek the best for his family. Given that the intensity of painful sorrow varies according to the ties of attachment to the deceased or lost person, this short sentence of acknowledgment ("He was a good father to us") reveals more than just empty condolence. It shows the bondage, the admiration, and the gratitude the writer – speaking for the family as a whole – needed to express towards the deceased.[135]

The widow and youngest son refrained from attending the burial service, which illustrates other aspects of accepted emotional responses to death: helplessness, prospect of destitution, shattered dreams and material anxiety. The wife and underage teenage boy would have become painfully aware of the loss of their protector and provider, as well as their dependency upon him.[136] They also might have missed the opportunity to wake the dead or honour the corpse in a mortuary (an invention of the 19th century following a number of reports about the devastating, overcrowded circumstances many poor families found themselves in among the dead and the living).[137] On board ship, everything had to go faster. The burial took place on the very same day, barely leaving a chance for proper farewells, and although John Slade emphasized the solemnity and respect shown by the preacher, there is no denying the fact that the performance happened out of place and time. The role of mediators like the reverend will be looked at in more detail in Chapter 6 "Managing Transit", but it can already be stated that

135 Strange, Julie-Marie, "Fatherhood, Providing, and Attachment in Late Victorian and Edwardian Working-Class Families," *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 4 (2012): 1007–1027: 1013–1015.
136 Strange, "'She Cried a Very Little'": 143; Vincent, *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom*: 51–56.
137 Murdoch, "'The Dead and The Living'".

for processing the loss, the preacher became the mediator between life and death, both the deceased, just before breathing his last, and the family left behind.

5.2 Empathy

One last perspective linked to death and pain needs to be taken into account: empathy, when an individual faces other people's suffering in a commonly shared setting.[138] Accordingly, John Wilson's empathy seems wanting upon a first reading of his account that the first two deaths occurred only three days into sailing, and the bodies were committed into the sea "with all due honours". He then commented, probably with a sad smile on his lips: "I am afraid it will be of daily occurrence as there are far too many crammed together."[139] As pointed out before, Wilson's attitude makes more sense when considering that he was an unmarried saloon passenger without close relatives on board: the first deaths of some anonymous emigrants below would not automatically evoke empathy that would overflow into his diary writing. However, when his sad prognosis came true, Wilson eventually was affected by the speed of the deaths, following one after the other. Faced with the inevitability of keeping the undernourished children alive, though, he took another common stand in the discourse on poverty and social support – one of passive pity, blaming the others "of course it is our own interest to see after their welfare, but untill [sic] they are thinned better we cant [sic] expect anything else". Since allowing himself to identify more with the suffering ones on board might increase the pressure to help, he automatically chose to invent a "we" as opposed to "them" that, without any further or conscious explanation, verbally separated him from a group of people prone to experience loss and bereavement.[140]

138 For historical research on empathy: Raphael, Linda, "Imagining Another's Pain: Privilege and Limitation in Parent and Child Relations," in *Pain and Emotion in Modern History*, ed. Rob Boddice. Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014: 220–242 and Boddice, *The History of Emotions*: Chapter 5.
139 Wilson, "Diary on Board the 'Ernestina,'" 1864/10/27–1865/02/18: 1864/10/31 (?) [3].
140 Wilson: 1864/11/03 [5].

However, the lack of emotions in first-hand accounts does not always testify to power hierarchies and a personal unwillingness to step out of one's own comfort zone to truly see the other. 24-year-old Thomas Pender and his small family sailed on board the 'Allanshaw', a "fine roomy ship, capable of affording comfortable accommodation to all classes of immigrants".[141] Over 390 souls, including children, finally disembarked in Sydney in May 1883.[142] Counting the three days in Plymouth and the 15 days of quarantine in Sydney, this journey took 126 days.[143] Travelling in the 1880s, when steamships would not be an exceptional option anymore, some four months without walking on firm ground was indeed quite long.[144]

As their emigrant journey on the 'Allanshaw' proceeded, Pender's wife got sick and he had to take care of her and their baby daughter for quite a few days, often helping her to dress little Nellie or bringing her food. Still, he managed to keep up his gentlemanly style of writing his diary. Very orderly, he did not miss one single day, with the times for coffee, breakfast, tea and dinner structuring every entry, providing reports about events on board. Notwithstanding the strict routine displayed, this large ego-document is worth mentioning in itself: first for its length of 200 pages and second for its thoroughness.

His profession as compositor obviously made him a literate man,[145] and Pender's diary shows him as a dutiful husband to 21-year-old Margaret ("Maggie"), who he almost entirely refers to as "my wife", and as a father to the infant Nellie. As microhistory puts it, this actor thus offers himself as the "exceptional normal" to be "followed" at one particular point in time and space to present an exemplary (counter-)point to grand narratives.[146] Pender fit perfectly into the rationalized Victorian 1880s, where his (self-assigned) duty to record events and actions on

141 N. N., "The Immigrant Ship Allanshaw," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1883/05/18: 6.
142 Agent's Immigrant List, List of Immigrants per Ship 'Allanshaw', 1883/05/02 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) Reel 2142 [4/4807]: 55–71: 71.
143 Officially, the journey took 109 days, but including quarantine, Pender counted 129 days in the end: Pender, "Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw'," 1883/01/12–1883/05/17: 1883/05/17 [192].
144 Gothard, Jan, *Blue China: Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia*. Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001: 149–151.
145 Agent's Immigrant List, "List of Immigrants Per Ship 'Allanshaw'," 1883/05/02: 59.
146 Ghobrial, "Moving Stories and What They Tell Us": 249–250.

board carefully would not provide room for reflection and deep consideration. Although officially of Presbyterian confession, he was not a religious man. He never referred to personal prayers or Bible reading during the entire passage. At many religious meetings he "was conspicuous by his absence".[147] This style remains the same over the months as he reports deaths and sickness, conflicts among passengers and crew, and forthcoming concerts or dancing. His ego-document placed within their historical context, therefore, allows for a subjective entrance into this 19th century British man's world.[148]

Socio-culturally speaking, the Penders found themselves in a post-Enlightenment era, when expressing empathy and compassion verbally (especially from a personal perspective as an individual) was fairly new. For a close family member, the emotion of grief would be the more natural one – experienced and performed in like manner as shown above with the Slade's account. When it came to strangers, though, people that would not share any family- or blood-relation, the dominant feelings expected from a modern observer would be called "pity" or "compassion". Nevertheless, this sentiment cannot be taken for granted when placed in the historical context. For emotions to show, a conceptual landscape must exist in a human being's brain, enabling him/her to imagine a certain feeling. Neuropsychologically speaking, "simulation" can be seen as one "default mode for all mental activity".[149] In order to engage with an unknown person emotionally, an awareness of the "other" as an equal counterpart must be given. Otherwise, the barrier to feel with someone else might be too deeply buried under traditions, customs and habits – in opposition to true sympathy.[150]

Although brain researchers are now able to localize the ability to empathize, reading another person's feelings will always be filtered by the culturally embedded self, including belief systems and values.[151] The Judeo-Christian God introduces himself as a compassionate God

147 Pender, "Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw'," 1883/01/12–1883/05/17: 1883/03/25 [114–115].
148 Compare the way Stanley defines and justifies a microhistorical approach: Stanley, "Maidservants' Tales": 438.
149 Barrett, *How Emotions are Made*: 27–28.
150 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*: 119–120.
151 Boddice, *The History of Emotions*: Chapter 5.

throughout the Old and the New Testament. Based on this role model to be followed and closely linked to the considerations of the Enlightenment, the call to open one's eyes to the suffering of others resulted in various activities and movements explicitly aimed at reaching out.[152] On a more individual level, however, an appeal to empathy did not automatically lead to genuine compassion, especially when it stemmed from an authoritative commandment instead of from an inner disposition and understanding. Furthermore, it takes it to a further level when the capacity to sympathize with another is allowed to turn into something powerful and active. From a broader perspective, many diaries set an emphasis on the very first death "casting a gloom on all",[153] and, on rare occasions, some also described how shared compassion led to supportive initiatives for the suffering, such as collecting money for the remaining relatives.[154] When considering 'empathy', therefore, performative actions and indirect expressions need to be considered to uncover socially interactive affections – or the lack thereof.

In Pender's diary, ten losses are mentioned altogether, which is also the total number of deaths recorded in the official passengers' list: three adults and seven children (from new-born to toddler to child). The reasons and stories behind the deaths are expectable on a sailing tour to Australia in the 1880s, where especially new-born children and infants sometimes died without a specific reason. In addition, there was a feverish epidemic towards the end of the journey after a contentious stopover at the Cape of Good Hope: consumption, lung diseases and apoplexy. Sudden and expected deaths, tragic stories, and poor fates – Thomas Pender reported the facts. He gave background information about the private situation of the dead, kept record of the exact time of the burial service (usually at 7:30 am between his coffee and breakfast). He also

152 Among others, the most prominent ones would be the abolitionist movements and women's rights movements.

153 Saddington, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain,'" 1853/08/11–1853/10/29: 39; Cliney, Mrs W., Diary on Board the 'Queen of the Seas' and Recipe Book, 1855/08/07–1855/09/30 (State Library of Victoria) MS 14177; Box 4158/3: 1855/09/22.

154 E.g. Saddington, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain,'" 1853/08/11–1853/10/29: 39–40; Smith, "Diary on Board the 'Young Australia,'" 1864/05/09–1864/08/13: 125–127+130–131 or Eddis, "Teenager's Diary on Board the 'Yorkshire' (1873/12/04–1875/02/23) And During First Time in Melbourne," 1873/12/04–1874/10/16: 1873/12/09 [1].

narrated "peculiar" details causing extra excitement among the attendants, such as the weather delaying one funeral or the lack of weight tied to the corpse of a seven-year-old boy preventing the bundle from sinking into the water.[155] At first reading, the monotony of his entries seems dull. Besides, there is no elaboration on his life, his love, his future plans. To 21st century ears, Pender sounds rather cynical sometimes, playing on the verge of inappropriateness. When another child died, he perfectly well that the parents were not able to attend the burial service at all due to heart-breaking circumstances. The father was lying in bed, severely sick himself, while the grieving mother was busy looking after her new-born. What did Thomas Pender do? "I went up and got my coffee, and while enjoying it the burial service was being conducted."[156] Even when Archie, a five-year-old "sunshine" and friend of Pender's daughter Nellie, was presumptuously carried off by a disastrous fever overnight, the Penders preferred having breakfast to expressing their condolences in the cold outside.[157] The burial services he did attend also apparently left him without a bad taste in his mouth: standing at the side-rail, the best position to watch the body sink into the water, he did not feel bad about skipping the last part of the sermon afterwards to fetch his tea.

Is this a proof for Victorian heartlessness? By considering the diarist's general style and background, another perspective can be introduced. As mentioned above, the Penders' journey is marked by a long hospital stay during which Thomas Pender takes over responsibility for their baby daughter Nellie to relieve his wife. The context also includes the criticism received afterwards by the 'Allanshaw' for her unfortunate arrangement of the berths for the married couples and children: these were unusually set up in the centre of the ship, leaving no room for privacy from the watching eyes of the single men. Unlike other married couples, the Penders did not seem to have complained about this

155 Pender, "Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw'," 1883/01/12–1883/05/17: 1883/03/19–20 [107–110]+1883/04/17–18 [143–146].
156 Pender: 1883/04/20 [147–149].
157 In mid-April, the weather became freezing again, causing coughs and colds among the passengers. The day of the funeral, Pender also talks about it still being "very cold". Pender: 1883/04/19 [146–147].

obvious spatial misconstruction, but surely enjoyed some time for just the two of them while in the hospital, which could explain Pender's extended stays in this area of the ship, be it for feeding Nellie, bringing his wife some coffee, or reading emigrant advice books. Large crowds of people were the maritime normal, after all. The quieter hours of the day were the breakfast morning sessions that Pender apparently used for writing his diary in daylight as well. Creating and making room amid the crowdedness can be seen as a move aimed at protecting the core family by isolating them, especially in light of the epidemic threatening to spread more quickly among the passengers – in part due to this very crowdedness. As the number of infected patients rose, the bunks would have become the places where the fever would be caught, so managing isolation rose in importance. All this information is not recorded in Thomas Pender's notebook, nor does it shine through his allusions. A newspaper article in the famous *Sydney Morning Herald*, though, talked about the 'Allanshaw' and her struggles with scarlet fever, including the doctor's temporary helplessness because of the messy separation on board. The anonymous author of the article used this example to reproachfully insist upon a re-arrangement of the berths and compared the situation with the more respectful way vessels to Queensland or South Australia handled the very same practical challenge.[158]

Just as the newspaper pursued a politicized goal, so too did Pender pursue a goal of having a neat and accessible daily companion useful for keeping track of the voyage. He was not blind to family tragedies but remained the compositor – which was his actual job with which he had applied for the passage to Australia – of his own narrative. The main protagonist throughout his writing was himself. Self-fashioning, finally, reveals a lot about the principles and values that are cherished or looked down upon,[159] and Thomas Pender's emotional engagement with his environment is reflected in the following findings: He mentioned all deaths, including the infants and new-borns; he often included a

158 N. N., "The Immigrant Ship Allanshaw".
159 Fulbrook, Mary, and Ulinka Rublack, "In Relation: The 'Social Self' and Ego-Documents," *German History* 28, no. 3 (2010): 263–272. doi:10.1093/gerhis/ghq065.

short characterization on the dead, and he referred to the burials, even if he was not attending.

By doing so, he was perfectly in line with his version of handling pity. He paid tribute to the deceased by immortalizing them into his very own transit experience. The book whose pages he was expending his ink on, became his own memorial testifying to the act of emigration across the seas. Hence, its pages testified to the suffering of strangers Pender did not get to know properly.

When reflecting on the second child's body thrown into the sea, he remarked, perhaps with a mood somewhere situated between sadness and pragmatism "I observed that this was soon forgotten on board a ship."[160] Social anthropologist Paul Connerton distinguishes seven types of forgetting in his analysis of mourning and calls one "forgetting as annulment", occurring when an excess of information implicitly invites to do away with the topic altogether. This is not to say that this just serves as an excuse, but that sometimes "to say that something has been stored, in an archive or computer, is in effect to say that, though it is in principle always retrievable, we can afford to forget it."[161] Somehow, Pender's dealing with devastating deaths in his immediate neighbourhood, appears like a purposeful semi-ignorance: He acknowledged the dead person, and the erasure of a human life by deeming it worth shortly elaborating upon, and then deliberately turned away his attention to where he saw his actual responsibility lie. Hence, in a paradoxical way, the statement that "this [funeral service/deaths in general] was soon forgotten on board a ship" is both true and false. If not personally involved with the 'Allanshaw' dead like the mourning family of little Archie or the bereaved fiancé of Miss Jane Berry, those figures vanished fast from the memories of the surrounding people, individually sorting and prioritizing what was worth to be kept alive in mind. Forgetting is a peculiarly two-edged sword after all, either intensifying the suffering or relieving it.

160 Pender, "Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw'," 1883/01/12–1883/05/17: 1883/02/21 [67–69].
161 Connerton, Paul, *The Spirit of Mourning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011: 40.

Read from a microhistorical perspective and starting with the results of the case study, Thomas Pender's account could be taken as a literate Victorian man's coming to terms with his life and duty in the light of an unknown future. The stringent patterning of memorable and forgettable elements in Pender's own narrative helped construct and manage the formation of a new identity. His profession as compositor, the sickness of his young wife, and his only loose connection to religion put him in a position that demanded self-confidence and stability amid a changing environment. That is how he wanted to write himself into the story of the 'Allanshaw' and furthermore into the story of the Penders.[162]

Empathy, as understood today, shines through in the description of the "greatly affected mother", overshadowed though by the inner distance visible in the curiosity of "all necks stretched to see the body drop into the sea". Hence, his account could also be read as a witness to the male emergence of awareness to third-person details in a modern age, where rationalization overtook sentimentalism. Viewed from yet another perspective, the entries could also speak of Pender's fight against worries that his little family could fall victim to the potentially ravaging epidemic when it was "beginning to look serious". Non-identification with the other then became a protective move.[163]

Independent from the final interpretative decision, the analytic conclusions for the expression and role of empathy in the 19th century are the following: When comparing the 1883-sources of the 'Allanshaw' with similar ones, the suffering of others had the potential to generate a unifying emotional state of mourning, but it rarely did so in written accounts. Attending the funeral was one way to show up as a community, but given the unpleasantness of the event, not necessarily a very attractive one to record in personal diaries. The written examples of crying with a stranger or collecting money for the family left behind are scarce, as the dominating mode comes close to Pender's descriptive style. Paying condolence need not happen by shedding tears if dismay and consternation were communicated otherwise – and inquiring about the person and taking note of the funeral could mean a lot already

162 Connerton: 37.
163 Pender, "Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw'," 1883/01/12–1883/05/17: 1883/04/17–19 [144–147].

in the context of a crowded emigrant ship with hundreds of strangers. Also, the durability of a feeling like empathy does not tell us anything about the cold-heartedness of the 19th century, nor does it teach us about the stoicism acquired in transit periods altogether. This would be an over-interpretation of what a laboratory examination of Australian emigration is able to show.

5.3 Shock

This chapter will close with a look at the extreme case of suicide. There are some reports about attempted suicides, but sociologically speaking, they have to be treated differently, so I want to analyse actual suicides to end this chapter with. Although reading David Hastings might leave the impression that many migrants were prone to depression and gave up on life entirely due to the hardships of the voyage,[164] in reality these considerations only led to such a lethal outcome in exceptional cases. First, there were the sailors and seamen, whose destiny was marked by a constant confrontation with the threatening force of nature's fluid element – something which caused German army surgeon Hans Podestà to statistically compare the curiosities of the increase of mental health problems in the German army with the German navy.[165] Certain seamen, such as stokers working down below in the steamship's belly in the blazing heat of the fire, appeared particularly at risk to self-harm and mental distortion thanks to their gruelling job.[166] The harsh working conditions

164 "For some people the trial of the voyage was much more than just a depressing interlude in their lives. There were reports of migrants losing their minds and worse on the way out." (Hastings, David, *Over the Mountains of the Sea: Life on the Migrant Ships, 1870–1885*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2006: 51+57–58.)

165 Podestà, Hans, "Häufigkeit und Ursachen seelischer Erkrankungen in der deutschen Marine unter Vergleich mit der Statistik der Armee," *Archiv für Psychiatrie* 40, no. 3 (1905): 651–703. Interestingly, the results show that both in the army and in the navy, cases of mental illness increased over the 1880s and 1890s, but that neurasthenia and hysteria occurred much more frequently in the navy. This called for more awareness – also in the long run – of the various challenges military sailors had to bear, especially when at sea. For concepts and treatments of mental health in the 19th century, see Chapter 2 "Controlling Transit".

166 The German adventurer Kurt Faber presents a vivid description of the emaciating conditions in the machine room of the 'Altona', which – in his story of crossing the Red Sea – drove the French stoker crazy and made him suddenly jump into the sea: "Das ist die Umwelt, die den Wahnsinn weckt. Das ist die Hitze, die Mord, Totschlag und Selbstmord

for navy personnel and their exposure to hazard caused investigations into the correlation between heat and mental disturbance,[167] as well as the likelihood for terrible (head) accidents, brain concussions due to climate changes, alcohol consumption, tropical diseases and insufficient nutrition at sea, which could all affect the mind and disturb the brain.[168]

Apart from the physical hardships, the numerous exotic diseases that seamen could catch, the concussions, collisions, and the hopelessness at the inevitability of the state of affairs could all lead to a total despair of life.[169] This observation did not only hold true for the military navy, but also for "normal" (civilian/merchant) seamen not preparing for war. In private shipboard journals on board emigrant vessels or clipper ships, I was able to find a few examples where crewmembers "destroyed themselves" during a voyage.[170]

in den Köpfen ausbrütet! Wie viele Heizer hat das Rote Meer schon als Tribut gefordert? Auch die 'Altona' kam nicht zollfrei davon. Immer noch kann ich Jean, den kleinen, vertrockneten Franzosen vor mir sehen, wie er die Feuer fütterte in seiner letzten Stunde. Blutrot lag der Schein der rasenden Glut auf seinem schmächtigen Körper. Jean war ein Sozialist, Anarchist, Syndikalist, oder wie man das wohl nennen mag. […] Plötzlich warf er das Handwerkszeug hin und schaute mich an mit starren, irrsinnigen Augen. 'Ich werde ein Bad nehmen', sagte er mit unheimlicher Ruhe. 'Ein kaltes Bad, wie es die Reichen dort oben alle Tage können. Das wird mir gut tun. Und sag' mir nicht, daß ein Proletarier sich das nicht leisten könne, sacré nom de Dieu!' Mit affenartiger Geschwindigkeit flog er förmlich die engen, steilen Stufen hinauf an Deck und kopfüber in das Meer. Wir haben ihn nicht wieder gesehen. Und zu meiner Schande muß ich sagen: Er war auch vergessen, sobald er in den Wellen verschwunden war. Denn das war hier nichts Besonderes. Das kam auf jeder Reise vor und konnte jeden von uns im nächsten Augenblick packen." (Faber, Kurt, *Rund um die Erde: Irrfahrten und Abenteuer eines Grünhorns*. Heidelberg: Pfeffer, 1924: Chapter 12.)

167 "Auch geistige Verwirrung und plötzliche Selbstmorde infolge der unerträglichen Hitze sind bei Heizern oft beobachtet worden", commented Oscar Spitta in an early 20th century Germen handbook on hygiene and healthcare. Obviously, the serious effects for the mental health of stokers were no secret but still posed an unsolved problem in 1926. (Spitta, Oscar, "Wirkung von Wärme und Feuchtigkeit," in *Handbuch der Sozialen Hygiene und Gesundheitsfürsorge: Bd. 2: Gewerbehygiene und Gewerbekrankheiten*, ed. Adolf Gottstein, Arthur Schlossmann and Ludwig Teleky. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 1926: 397–409: 397–409.)

168 Reger, Karl-Heinz, *'Dann sprang er über Bord': Alltagspsychologie und psychische Erkrankung an Bord britischer Schiffe im 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014: 371.

169 Podestà, "Häufigkeit und Ursachen seelischer Erkrankungen in der deutschen Marine unter Vergleich mit der Statistik der Armee": 687.

170 See e.g. Ramsdale, "Diary While with English Brigade, on Board the 'Clifton', and in Queensland," 1859/09/01–1862/08/28: 12. On the 'Clifton', the ship surgeon killed himself early on, so that the author Harry H. Ramsdale was forced to take over this job until a new surgeon could be taken on board at the next port. This case will be of further interest in

The diaries, letters and newspaper articles preferred euphemistic phrases to circumvent the term "self-murder" or suicide. "Committing oneself to the deep" or "throwing oneself overboard" were the oceanographically adapted phrases to express forms of ending one's life. If there was no farewell note to be found, sometimes rumour was all that was left to explain a missing person's motives. Unfortunately, I could not find a more detailed account of whether and how a religious service would have been conducted in a case where the corpse would have still been available, as the churches' position towards "self-murderers" – though shifting from pitiless condemnation towards mercy in the 19th century – remained a highly contested matter.[171] But the suddenness of death in suicides would not automatically change the emigrants' reaction to it, even if it happened to be a bloodier suicide with a catastrophic story behind it. There was little room for public grief, consternation, or empathy. The cause might be very contested and thorough, but social restrictions, performative rules and verbal expressions of joys and sorrows would prevail, only gradually shifting over the decades. On board a ship, then, with the brevity and fragility of life in mind, sticking to known and established forms of interacting and feeling would be the go-to form.

This is why Jane Skinner's account of a tragic suicide did not differ too much from her previous telling of the story of a little boy's death. In the end, death was death, and in the 19th century a single woman of faith was bound to feel sorry for the abrupt ending of another person's life, especially when nobody had expected it:

> On the 13th At breakfast time a young man Mr Judge was missing from the table. They looked in every part of the ship and found his note. He had been very desponent [sic] all the voyage. Had so regretted leaving his home and gave himself up. He sent for Uncle John to read to him one night and said he was going to die. He appeared very steady and sung very beautifully. The day was very rough and the poor young man had

Chapter 6 "Managing Transit".

171 Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*: 69–71 and Shepherd, Anna, *Institutionalizing the Insane in Nineteenth-Century England*, Studies for the Society for the Social History of Medicine 20. London, New York: Routledge, 2014: 115–117.

> of course commited [sic] himself to the deep to throw a meloncholy [sic] over all and in consequence the party was put off untill [sic] next day. [...] Sunday 16 My eyes felt very weak. I went to prayers and they prayed for poor Mr Judge and little Bobby [Skinner's nephew] kept talking.[172]

She did attend the funeral, and she expended a note in her diary on that news. And on she went – heading towards Australia, transiting through emotional ups and downs on board one single ship.

6 Emotional, Global Microhistory

It is obviously impossible for a historian to entirely reconstruct and resurrect the emotions and feelings of people from the past, but this need not lead researchers to shrink back from asking and approaching these questions altogether. On the contrary: It should make them even keener to pursue a microhistorically founded, emotionally aware, and well-researched global agenda that would help pursue an anthropological desire to better encapsulate past actors' contexts. Global history then can be an advisor, working together with the history of emotions to "discover hidden or unexpected connections that present familiar phenomena in a new light".[173]

This also holds true for all the feelings and emotions covered in this chapter by means of a few examples, and their statements about the concept of 'transit' and its effect on an individual. Since 'transit' is exposing human beings to an unfamiliar and temporally limited setting, this period reduces anthropological and cultural desires and customs to their foundation. 'Transit' lays bare the raw material of manifested and incorporated emotions, bringing forth the basic needs in all their flexibility. Studying emotions and "following the actors"[174] in 'transit' can thus reveal the ways in which changed and changing opportunities

172 Skinner, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar,'" 1850/04/29–1850/08/20: 1850/06/13+16 [15].
173 Osterhammel and Saunier, "Global History": 29.
174 Latour, Bruno, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Clarendon Lectures in Management Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005: 237.

influence the expression, interpretation and purpose of feelings within a given historical, imperial and global context, when:

> the historian [is required] to imagine the world as seen by her subjects, to examine and reexamine the terrain on which they worked, travelled, fought, sued, and rebelled. Insisting on this human scale, microhistory reconstructs the dense social and cultural contexts in which people made decisions, revealing how power relations appear more complex, and social norms more amenable to negotiation, when they are viewed at the scale of the village or household rather than the nation or region.[175]

We now leave this chapter's focus on the individual's transit experience, but stay "at the scale of the village or household" (or rather at the scale of the wooden vessel or emigrant class) in order to highlight the dynamics of a community's transit experience in the next two chapters.

175 Stanley, "Maidservants' Tales": 438.

[Chapter 5] Crossing Transit – Unity and Borders

1 Structures of Unity and Borders

Wednesday 25th May [1853]
Weather very fine and wind favourable. About eight o'clock when just finishing breakfast in our mess room or sleeping room whichever we call it (Third Cabin) we were alarmed by a sudden cry from the lower deck as if something serious had or was about to occur. My first impression was that some person had fallen overboard – and on running to the place I saw such a sight as my eyes never before gazed upon and I hope will never do again – a man had cut his own throat and was laying bleeding on the deck. He had made two large gashes in his neck – one right in front that had touched his windpipe and the other and more dangerous one was not far from the ear near the juggier vein. The Doctor was presently on the spot and did all that could be done to save his life but from the first it was evident to all that there was no chance for him. He lingered on in great pain and misery until eleven o'clock p.m. when he died.

We (the passengers) were all gone to bed before he died and ere we arose at five o'clock in the morning he was thrown overboard according to custom [sic]. He was a middle aged man who had engaged to work his passage out to Melbourne in our ship – probably not being able to pay his passage. Although a very few years ago he was a rich man worth many thousands of pounds he had, however, by extravagance and dissipation managed to squander it away and was consequently reduced to the undesirable position in which we found him on board the Falcon [sic]. He was stationed in the galley to assist the cooks (black ones of course) and there is no doubt that he was ordered and driven about by them – functioning in a manner that would have been anything but agreeable even to those who had been accustomed to the humblest and most laborious occupations. We may easily conceive then what must have been his feelings when placed in such a position – so different from what he had been always been accustomed.

> The Captain and the Doctor paid every attention to him – scarcely ever leaving him. There was also a Mr Ray, a Methodist Minister, on board who was very attentive in administering to his spiritual wants. In answer to questions from the Captain as to his reason for doing such a dreadful thing he said that the black people, meaning the cooks, had threatened to throw him overboard for not·doing some work they required him to do. That was all the reason he alleged for it. All parties on board appeared much affected by the occurrence and a general gloom was cast on the whole for that day.[1]

For Andrew McDonell, a 26-year-old single man from Temple Sowerby, Westmoreland, England,[2] the day before had been emotionally exhausting already. When the steamship had set the 'Falcon' loose and turned back to port (steamships were used to tug sailing vessels across the Liverpool River and out into the sea), the passengers had also had to say goodbye to people who had joined the pilot of the tug because they had not wanted to say goodbye to their dear parting ones any minute earlier. All at once, the ultimacy and finality of emigration lay heavy upon the community so the "good cheer on parting […] came off a very poor affair." No doubt, "many hearts appeared too full for cheering and rejoicing".[3] Such was the atmosphere as McDonell captured it in his shipboard diary when suddenly a dying middle-aged Englishman was found on deck. He was soon identified as one of the kitchen staff who had cut himself to set an end to his own life. Suicides – as stated in the previous chapter – were unusual incidents but not unknown, either in

1 McDonell, Andrew, Diary on Board the 'Falcon', 1853/05/22–1853/08/14 (State Library of Victoria) MS 12436: 1853/05/25 [2].
2 Colonial Secretary's Office Victoria, Inward Overseas Passenger Lists (Aug–Dec 1853. British and Foreign Ports), 1853/01/01–1853/12/31 (Public Record Office of Victoria) VPRS 947/P0000: 424. Available online: Public Record Office Victoria, "Unassisted Passenger Lists (1852–1923): Record Series Number (VPRS): 947," updated 2022/01/12 <prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/explore-topic/passenger-records-and-immigration/unassisted-passenger-lists>, accessed 2023/06/09. The search items used were "McDonald" and "Falcon", because in the passengers' lists the author of the diary is listed as "Andrew McDonald"; in contrast to "McDonell", the way he would spell his last name himself.
3 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon,'" 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [2].

transit or on land. No matter the geographical setting, they certainly aroused a chill.

McDonell was caught by the story behind the tragic death of this formerly wealthy and now impoverished man. After demise and mismanagement had robbed him of his business, he had decided to emigrate. Having no money available or opposing the idea of debt to the government when applying for an assisted passage (or not being eligible for an assisted passage for other reasons),[4] he had signed up for the option of "working his passage out" as a cook's assistant. In the case of the fast clipper ship 'Falcon', this would have meant 84 days[5] at sea, labouring to enable a new start in Australia. However, for this man, the working conditions were anything but reassuring. His bosses, "black ones of course",[6] maltreated the inexperienced man. Within days, he despaired of life altogether. Had it dawned on him that if he could not even bear an "uncivilized" man's job, then he surely would not fit the Australian outback? Was it that he began to realize the hopelessness of his prospects compared to the other immigrants, whose food he prepared? Was it that the atmosphere in the galley was so poisonous that he was soaked in cold sweat hours before his shift? Was it that the thought of being commanded by the racial other for an unknown number of weeks in the middle of the ocean left him doubting his identity as a well-educated, white middle-class man? Was it that his fading health warned him of ever trying to make it through to Melbourne if he was already feebly shaking after the first few days?

McDonell told neither his diary nor his readers. Probably, he did not know himself. All that he was able to find out through ship's rumour was that the man had tried to destroy himself due to something galley-related – something that had to do with open or hidden borders within social communities. Shifting the focus from the individual to the community as intended in the following two chapters means also broadening our view to include implicit and explicit expressions of borders and group identity on a larger level. After having analysed the individuals'

4 See Chapter 2 "Controlling Transit".
5 N. N., "Victoria," *The Shipping Gazette and Sydney General Trade List*, 1853/08/27: 5.
6 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon'," 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [2].

emotional landscape in the midst of maritime change and their personal (re-)definition of feelings, our attention now turns to the dynamics within certain classes, communities and groups of people in transit. In this chapter, the journey of the 'Falcon' will serve as an example to explore various maritime spaces and sites of interaction to be found in transit. Following an in-depth analysis, I will pick out different aspects feeding into the notions of unity and borders within given and emerging communities.

The crew formed one of the quite clearly distinguishable groups on board, in comparison to the temporary travellers, the changing masses, the passers-by. Carpenter, first mate, cook, steward, purser, boatswain, boy, able seaman, second officer, ordinary sailor – from the emigrant's perspective, they all belonged to the ship, representing the unfamiliar maritime territory they now found themselves in, and yet they provided faces and voices to this "wooden world".[7] Adding something between fascination and irritation, the sailors completed their transit-impression. Some of the passengers even struggled to understand "how any body in their senses can 'like to go to sea'", which put the crew in a place of rather untouchable curiosity and detachment from familiar surroundings.[8] Therefore, the ship's crew dynamics deserve a closer look as well, insofar as they automatically fed into the transit experience of all travellers. Strife and conflict were repeatedly fuelled by and roused by issues of authority, which will be the focus of the next paragraph, and which can best be investigated in the strictly hierarchically ordered ship's crew.

7 Ward, Edward, *The Wooden World Dissected: In the Character of a Ship of War: As also the Characters of all the Officers, from the Captain to the Common Sailor. A New Edition*. London, 1795. Ward's sarcastically dark analysis of the different "characters of all the officers" must be read as harsh criticism from a callous and experienced observer of his days. See Bourne, Ruth, "The Wooden World Dissected," *Pacific Historical Review* 14, no. 3 (1945): 326–334. doi:10.2307/3635895.

8 Bradley, Robert S., Diary on Board the 'Essex', 1867/04/22–1867/07/22 (National Library of Australia) MS 9010: 90.

1.1 Authority

Deeply engrained in the basic structure of a vessel is the order. Top-down relations, duty, responsibility, discipline and obedience – notions which newbies had to accept and obey early on. When most boys started "before the mast", they were of a young age (13–14 years; often even younger in the Royal Navy of the 18th century).[9] Reaching a higher position was hard and it was clear to everyone that education, experience and breeding meant a lot these days. 'Authority' was never a given, but often a contested and fragile concept in the flow.

On board the 'Falcon', the galley turned out to be the place of hierarchical inversion, where the formerly well-situated Englishman found himself at the bottom of the social order with chefs above him, whose tone and duties might have appeared to him unbearably abusive. But not only in the subsections, the enclosed rooms on board, did the subordinate oppose the superordinate, or did the superordinate lord it over the subordinate. When thinking about 'unity' and 'borders', the transgression of borders happened on multiple levels depending on the significance of the moment. Emigrant diaries often talked about rows and fighting among sailors that were caused by some sort of alcohol distribution and lack of discipline.

Most crews were raised in the very often multiculturally diverse merchant service. In contrast to the Royal Navy, working in the merchant shipping service was notoriously known for misery and hardship, and reforms to legally improve working conditions had real effects only comparatively late in the 19th century. Private shipping companies, such as the *Black Ball Line*, contributed to the stagnation or progress of legislative initiatives; and the government was not always clear regarding who to blame or who to assign in terms of carrying out new measures,

9 Pietsch, Roland, "Hearts of Oak and Jolly Tars? Heroism and Insanity in the Georgian Navy," *Journal for Maritime Research* 15, no. 1 (2013): 69–82. doi:10.1080/21533369.2013.783169: 71–74; Stammers, Michael K., *Emigrant Clippers to Australia: The Black Ball Line, its Operation, People and Ships, 1852–1871*. Barnoldswick: Milepost Research, 2013: 126–135; Charlwood, *The Long Farewell*: 138.

such as the same diet for the crew as for the steerage passengers (a major improvement in terms of food for seamen).[10]

Emigrant ships were organized differently than "ordinary" merchant clippers: in addition to the crew running the vessel, there were also those responsible for the passengers' and travellers' well-being.[11] To gain an idea of the numbers working and living beside the emigrants: Angela Woolcock's statistics for smaller Queensland sailing vessels count an average amount of 39 crew members for 365 emigrants in the 1850s and 1860s, while Rod Fraser notes that the fully rigged large clipper ship 'Champion of the Seas' had a total number of 120 men working for 735 emigrants in 1854.[12] For many seamen trained in merchant vessels, each emigrant ship with changing manning and passengers seemed to provide a new chance to test the boundaries and the captain's authority at the same time. Terrestrial norms and rules could not be automatically copied and pasted to maritime reality. For the emigrants this often was a novelty. For the crew this gave way to re-define their position in front of a different audience on a regular basis.

There are hardly any diaries from carpenters, cooks or officers accompanying the hundreds and thousands of would-be colonists to Australia. Illiteracy, especially among the lower-deck seamen, lack of education, shortage of paper material, and time pressure, as well as geographical and archive-political circumstances play into that. Lacking the sailors' perception, the source material in the archives can only give access to the dynamics of an emigrant vessel's crew through the eyes of the travelling passengers.[13]

Due to this imbalance in the historian's working material, it is difficult to tell whether many of the seemingly unusual events were actually typical of every sea voyage. On the other hand, it is only the significance of transit and the uniqueness of the journey in the emigrants' biog-

10 See Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 118–121 and Woolcock, Helen R., *Rights of Passage: Emigration to Australia in the 19th Century*. London: Tavistock, 1986: 146–148.
11 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 120.
12 Woolcock, *Rights of Passage*: 161–162 and Fraser, Rod, ed., *The 'Champion of the Seas'*. Glen Waverley: Pilgrim Printing Services, 1999: 114. For every voyage, Fraser collected a detailed list with each crew member's name.
13 Charlwood, *The Long Farewell*: 133.

raphies which preserved this processing of borders at sea until today. Through multiple filters (interpretation, reading, editing, writing) and the awareness that most passengers were unfamiliar with the rules and norms governing shipboard life and work, a space emerges to reflect and disclose the constructed nature of social and hierarchical structures in a maritime culture.[14]

From the passengers' viewpoint, one startling revelation for many was that of underlying tensions and fierce confrontation. It was not entirely surprising that the details among the positions of the lower ranks were disputable, or that dependencies, loyalties, friendships and competition were re-arrangeable. Most of the more contemplative diaries and letters originated from first- or second-class passengers anyway, so the points of contact with the common sailors were narrowly restricted (officially, ordinary seamen were not allowed to mix with emigrants) and rarely became reality. The ship's architectural policy guarded the spaces of privilege and limited the "socially ambiguous spaces" such as the upper deck or the hospital.[15]

Often, an interesting and sometimes rather shocking observation for passengers of every class was to watch the captain (or "master" as he used to be called before the 18th century)[16] interact with his subordinates. His authority was regarded as generally untouchable and unquestioned. Numerous novels and poems bore witness to that. Indeed, shipboard hierarchy was set, and the captain commanded, ordered and oversaw everything during the voyage. He was ultimately responsible for what happened on board and what was decided in the end. His men were bound to his ship for the duration of their contracts, and the extension and establishment of a written maritime law based upon underlying principles contributed to affirming roles and duties properly. However, with the increasing opportunities for shipping companies to

14 On merchant marine culture: Carol-Dekker, Lydia, "Maritime Culture: A Sociological Perspective," *International Journal of Maritime History* 30, no. 2 (2018): 302–314. doi:10.1177/0843871418765711.

15 Connor, "Passengers, Emigrants and Modern Men": 180–181.

16 Witt, Jann M., "'During the Voyage Every Captain is Monarch of the Ship': The Merchant Captain from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Maritime History* 8, no. 2 (2001): 165–194: 165. In the 19th century, both terms ("master" and "captain") were used interchangeably.

send orders to a ship from a distance (telegrams etc.), the merchant captain was gradually losing his sole authority and independence.[17] This similarly affected the captain of an emigrant vessel, which was also usually run by a hired shipping company, as he became more liable to the owners and the government, i.e. the British Commissioners or Agent-Generals of certain Australian states chartering the vessel. Positive reviews by the passengers, signed letters of gratitude, and gratuities by the Australian state paid to the caring officers landing the immigrants safely all helped to improve the relationship between the ones in charge and the passengers.[18]

The mates working on board were obliged to obey a strict routine with set watches, tasks, and times of rest and food. Upon being hired, the sailors had signed a Crew Agreement regulating the basic rules and wages. Commonly, sailors would not stay with the same ship, but they found themselves new ships after discharge at the port of arrival, thus working from voyage to voyage.[19] In general, it can be said that the 19th century was an interesting century to observe democratic convictions and the ideas of human rights for labourers somehow enter a strictly hierarchically ordered system based on masculine and disciplinary power.[20] This ambivalence and the sometimes silent, sometimes outspoken negotiation processes testify to a rising awareness and self-consciousness of the seafaring people.

Public mutinies barely happened on emigrant vessels. The mutiny on the 'Bounty' in 1789 may have been quite famous, but from the landlubber's perspective, this was the exception confirming the rule, and it certainly was not to be expected on an emigrant ship. Having said that,

17 Witt, "'During the Voyage Every Captain is Monarch of the Ship'": 168–171.
18 There are numerous examples for gratuities paid to well-meaning captains, officers, surgeons and matrons. As an example for New South Wales in the 1870s see Hobbins, Peter, Anne Clarke, and Ursula K. Frederick, "Born on the Voyage: Inscribing Emigrant Communities in the Twilight of Sail," *International Journal of Maritime History* 31, no. 4 (2019): 787–813. doi:10.1177/0843871419874001: 796–797.
19 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 120–121+128–129.
20 As de Oliveira Torres points out for the US-American merchant marine in the 19th century: Oliveira Torres, Rodrigo de, "Handling the Ship: Rights and Duties of Masters, Mates, Seamen and Owners of Ships in Nineteenth-Century Merchant Marine," *International Journal of Maritime History* 26, no. 3 (2014): 587–599. doi:10.1177/0843871414543626.

mutual respect and obedience according to hierarchy were not to be taken for granted. Minor offences happened regularly, with punishment ranging from physical to financial consequences. The Merchant Shipping Act 1855 gives a good idea about frequent offences and the corresponding fines:

OFFENCE [sic]	**Amount of Fine**
Not being on board at the time fixed by the agreement	Two day's pay
Not returning on board at the expiration of leave	One day's pay
Insolence or contemptuous language or behaviour towards the Master or any Mate	One day's pay
Striking or assaulting any person on board or belonging to the Ship	Two day's pay
Quarrelling or provoking to quarrel	One day's pay
Swearing or using improper language	One day's pay
Bringing or having on board spirituous liquors	Three day's pay
Carrying a sheath-knife	One day's pay
Drunkenness – First offence	Two day's half allowance of provisions
Drunkenness – Second offence	Two day's pay
Neglect on the part of the Officer in charge of the watch to place the look-out properly	Two day's pay
Sleeping or gross negligence while on look-out	Two day's pay
Not extinguishing lights at the times ordered	One day's pay
Smoking below	One day's pay
Neglecting to bring up, open out, and air bedding, when ordered	Half-a-day's pay
(For the Cook) – Not having any meal of the Crew ready at the appointed time	One day's pay
Not attending Divine Service on Sunday, unless prevented by sickness or duty of the Ship	One day's pay
Interrupting Divine Service by indecorous conduct	One day's pay
Not being cleaned, shaved, and washed on Sundays	One day's pay
Washing clothes on a Sunday	One day's pay
Secreting contraband goods on board with intent to smuggle	One month's pay
Destroying or defacing the copy of the agreement which is made accessible to the Crew	One day's pay

> If any officer is guilty of any act or default which is made subject to a Fine, he shall be liable to a Fine of twice the number of Day's Pay which would be exacted for a like act or default from a Seaman, and such Fine shall be paid and applied in the same manner as other Fines.[21]

If a court decision was necessary, the master – albeit with the undefeatable authority on the ship – had to wait until anchoring to hand over the "insubordinate" or rebellious sailors. Following the Mercantile Marine Act of 1850, a captain, especially on foreign voyages, would have to keep an Official Log – not only for tracking the route with longitude and latitude, but also for noting unusual occurrences, seamen's misconduct, desertions and disciplinary measurements.[22]

If the captain was threatened with a knife by his own violent crew and reacted with insecurity, this was recognized by someone like the gold seeker Walter Dutton in a negative way and diminished his credibility and status in the eyes of the passengers. It also had impacts on the atmosphere among the emigrants, leading to a frightful hesitancy and "terror" within a difficult community. This impression and the underlying tensions were then intensified by the observation that the captain sold alcohol freely to crew and passengers alike. The weakness of the captain's position in this example directly influenced and convulsed the invisible scaffold of the emigrant vessel. This led to the conclusion that the captain did not seem to care much about the freight: "[November 11th, 1858] The Captain is much to blame in selling them the drink, but he derives a profit from the sale of grog and I suppose our lives are not of much consequence."[23]

On the other hand, an exaggeratedly authoritative manner did not necessarily help improve the relationship between super- and subordi-

21 Taken from: Fraser, *The 'Champion of the Seas'*: 253.
22 National Archives, "Research Guide: Crew Lists and Agreements and Log Books of Merchant Ships 1747–1860", updated 2019/03/19 <nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/crew-lists-agreements-log-books-merchant-ships-1747-1860/>, accessed 2021/08/16. For an example see Fraser with verbatim extracts from various log books of the 'Champion of the Seas' on her voyages from Liverpool to Melbourne: Fraser, *The 'Champion of the Seas'*: 232–272.
23 Dutton, Walter, Diary and Letter on Board the 'Sarah Dixon', 1858/08/29–1858/12/26 (Museum Victoria) HT 23918: [3+5+8+10].

nates. When for example, the experienced Scottish captain Fillan had still not communicated the expected behaviour and tasks to his crew three weeks into the voyage, and only harshly and unmercifully did so after a bitter row between two drunk sailors, his dominant manner only added more fuel to the already existing tension. According to saloon passenger John Wilson on board the 'Ernestina', this strategy was doomed to fail. It was no wonder that the first and second mate did not work collaboratively together as leaders, because "he [i.e. the captain] makes them too much his inferiors" instead of sharing and delegating trustfully his many responsibilities to the officers underneath.[24] Wilson's suggestion to almost equalise the first and second officer with the captain would definitely be a huge step and maybe even an affront against the maritime culture, but his general observation is confirmed in other sources as well: a master with tyrannical tendencies clinging to a false idea of absolute rulership was not the father figure some would cherish as an ideal monarch.[25]

Even more contested and prone to conflict than the highest position was the lowest position. The boy apprentices of very young age, learning with older seamen on deck, repeatedly became the target of mockery by more mature sailors. Initiations into this men's world, its ideals of masculinity, and outbursts of inner tension among the ones without rank and honour were also occasionally observed by the travelling company on board.[26] For the ordinary seamen, the so-called "Jack Tars", masculinity remained a charged issue throughout the first half of the 19th century, even despite and with an emotionalizing flow of sentimentalism

24 Wilson, John, Diary on Board the 'Ernestina', 1864/10/27–1865/02/18 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9134; Box 4475/13: 14.

25 More on authorities and mediators on emigrant vessels in Chapter 6 "Managing Transit". For the US merchant marine: Oliveira Torres, Rodrigo de, "Handling the Ship: Rights and Duties of Masters, Mates, Seamen and Owners of Ships in Nineteenth-Century Merchant Marine," *International Journal of Maritime History* 26, no. 3 (2014): 587–599. doi:10.1177/0843871414543626: 598.

26 E.g. Brummit, Robert, The Two Shipboard Diaries of Dr. Robert Brummit (England to Melbourne and Back in the Clipper 'True Briton', December 1874 to September 1875 & The Red Sea Cable Expedition in the Steamship, the 'Chiltern', November 1875 to March 1876), 1874/12/22–1876/03/16 (State Library of Victoria) MS 14927; Box 4641/5: 8. On the cabin boys and their experiences on European ships see e.g. Witt, "'During the Voyage Every Captain is Monarch of the Ship'": 186–187.

and democratisation. Though tears might be added to an accepted, loyal and genuine sailor, the younger generations still admired and longed for the characteristic devices of roughness and strength.[27]

It certainly was no homogenous, synergistically supportive unity that helped the travellers reach their destination. As mentioned before, whenever intra-crew dynamics (captain vs. mates vs. surgeon vs. purser vs. cook vs. stewards vs. able seamen vs. boys, etc.) appeared on the yellowed pages of an emigrant's journal, it was usually built around a negative event. The astonished tone of the writers describing rows, drinking, punishment with irons, disciplinary measures or mockery shows that an emigrant ship was something different than other seafaring machines. The presumed totality of an institution such as a wooden vessel was an embattled notion indeed. This holds true for probably all culturally enclosed settings, but in this special environment with sea-inexperienced eyes, ears and mouths, any existing rivalry and competition might find new spaces to inflame. In front of an audience made up of hundreds of temporarily available and directly affected men, women and children, any humiliation would weigh heavier, any insult would be more public, and any punishment ceremony more dramatic. Facing such a challenge, some staff members might feel pushed towards justifying and defending their position more eagerly than others. This could either turn into an underreaction (as Dutton pointed out when he watched the captain's futile attempts to govern his strong men on the 'Sarah Dixon' in 1858) or an overreaction (as John Wilson interpreted the captain's "firm" and "strict" rulership on board the 'Ernestina' in 1864). Australian historian Greg Dening in his book "Mr. Bligh's Bad Language"[28] compares the ship to a theatre stage, on which the bad or misguided performance of an individual had the potential to change the plot entirely. The higher the standing and the more responsibility an actor was given, the more decisive his actions, words and gestures suddenly became. Familiarity with the written and unwritten code became crucial for securing effective communication.

27 Begiato, Joanne, "Tears and the Manly Sailor in England, c. 1760–1860," *Journal for Maritime Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 117–133. doi:10.1080/21533369.2015.1094981.
28 Dening, Greg, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

This underlying principle can be used for any emigrant ship as well. Hence, in every case the interaction with the others was measured against an ideal of how to rule a ship or govern a group of subordinates. Those patterns differed, of course, but within a maritime culture-setting, the hierarchical agency was determined by the hierarchical status. However, it was not an unquestioned structure, as shown by zooming in on different models of behaviour for the captain, mate and sailor from within the crew community. New opportunities to buy alcohol, new passengers to win over, new allies to form a plot with – for many reasons, the fights and conflicts over authority can be interpreted as repeated reassurances of one's own rightful position in a hierarchically strict setting. Attempts to overthrow and circumvent the boundaries challenged the individuals to hold fast to their privileges and defend them against and in light of others. If the atmosphere was not marked by mutual respect and a certain will to adapt to varying circumstances, any sign of weakness or shortage of confidence would be recognized and maybe even give a chance for another person's usurpation.

Upon returning to the first case study in this section, the journey of the 'Falcon' in 1853, when the cook's assistant committed suicide shortly after departure, the same model becomes visible: authority enforced in an inflexibly harsh form can break a person's will quickly. The cook's assistant came from a wealthier English background, but after bankruptcy, he found himself ordered about by someone he would – if on land – not voluntarily pay his respect. Confronted with the lowness of his social status on board then, he seemed unable to cope with the command to follow the cook's strict instructions and the inescapability of his situation. This was shipboard life; such were the rules. For the Englishman with no maritime experience, this would have meant learning those rules, getting acquainted with the cultural system on the 'Falcon' – and in particular in the galley – and then moving on to develop and take possession of his own role within that. But the circumstances and his personal weakness overwhelmed the miserable man. This again offered the hierarchically higher cooks even more room to lord it over their helper. Whenever assigned authority and responsibility are played off against each other in socially complex situations, insecurities and abuse are close at hand.

1.2 Racism

The 'Falcon' situation in fact reveals yet another layer of complexity apart from authority issues. The skin colour of the cooks was not merely mentioned in passing by the diarist recording the sad news about the bloody galley tragedy: "He was stationed in the galley to assist the cooks (black ones of course) and there is no doubt that he was ordered and driven about by them."[29]

This detail gains importance as the context is unravelled. From the point of view of an Australian immigrant in the second half of the 19th century, most British emigrant vessels presented themselves with primarily white crewmembers. They came from all over the United Kingdom and surrounding isles, sometimes from Scandinavia (whenever in the crew list instead of a town, the country's name is given as "Norway, Sweden, Denmark"), sometimes from the United States, sometimes from continental Europe.[30] Joseph Conrad's third novel "The Nigger of the Narcissus", published in 1897, testifies to national diversity on board merchant vessels. In fact, "the crews in these (fictitious) ships are more English than in the ships Conrad (as Korzeniowski) really sailed in."[31] As an emigrant from Poland, whose career path eventually led him to become a British master mariner, Conrad thus still remained a permanent foreigner in the heart of his chosen home country. If this was the experience of an uncommonly successful seaman, commander and master like him, it is not difficult to imagine that in the 1850s – years earlier – for other foreigners with less linguistic fluency and darker skin colour, the adaptation and working conditions must have been highly pressurized and demanding.

Besides, the Slavery Abolition Act of the United Kingdom had only been passed in 1833. This places the cooks' dark skin colour within a context possibly laden with prejudices and biases. When heading south

29 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon,'" 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [2].
30 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 129. E.g. the lists in Fraser, *The 'Champion of the Seas'* : 262–269.
31 Kramer, Jürgen, "Conrad's Crew Revisited," in *Fictions of the Sea: Critical Perspectives on the Ocean in British Literature and Culture*, ed. Bernhard Klein. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002: 157–175: 166–169.

on the 'Hydaspes' in September 1852, steerage passenger John Slade discovered the 'Julinder' carrying "negroes, captured from the slavers, and being taken as free laborers to the West Indies" – apparently an "amusing sight" to watch "the bulwarks and lower rigging crowded with the black figures and colored [sic] wrappings". His somehow indifferent comment shows how very normal racial comments were, and it also proves that the discourse on free and enforced labour was familiar to a large working-class family like the Slades.[32] Robert Bradley had another encounter with enslaved people. On her way to Melbourne on May 4th, 1867, the 'Essex' passed a "full nigger ship bearing the Dutch flag" and the interested second-class passenger Bradley simply found it a curious encounter – curious enough to be proud that he had figured out the ship's name ('Schiedam'). Instead of then commenting on the cruelty of slavery, as one could have assumed of a well-educated and reflective young man as Bradley, he simply judged her "a very fine vessel".[33]

Obviously, racial generalizations and discrimination did not stop on multicultural vessels. On the contrary. Deliberately blackened faces sometimes became part of the maritime festive culture and ritual celebrations such as the Dead Horse ceremony or a New Year's Eve with mock "Ethiopians".[34] The derogatory perspective was deeply engrained in the Victorian worldview until the late 1880s, as shown by an extract by saloon passenger Charles Care on board the R.M.S. 'Orient' in 1888. When visiting Aden after crossing the Red Sea, he condemned the "least humane of the passengers" for attacking native sellers of food in their boats or molesting the inhabitants during their religious practice – while at the same time, expressing his "interest" and "amusement" at the "splendid condition of the teeth of the natives here", leading him to draw conclusions about the character of this "fairly robust race", to

32 Slade, John, Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes', 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895] (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 5101: 12.

33 Bradley, "Diary on Board the 'Essex'," 1867/04/22–1867/07/22: 13.

34 For the Dead Horse ceremony: Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 179. An example for a New Year's Eve amusement with the first and second officer dressing up as Ethiopians and playing "negro music" is recorded by Ramsdale: Ramsdale, Harry H., Diary while with English Brigade, on Board the 'Clifton', and in Queensland, 1859/09/01–1862/08/28 (Wellcome Library) MS.5324: 19–20.

the extent that they were generalized as being "for the most part good humoured, although their chief characteristic generally is treacherous".[35]

Similar comments occur in other accounts of visits ashore in an oriental or tropical setting like the port of Aden, where coal and other cargo used to be loaded on the steamships, and where – as assisted passenger Pilcher put it in his diary from 1883 – "100 blacks of three sorts" were seen.[36] Hence, the actual definition of "blackness" depended on the (white) historical writer. Sometimes they were talking about "natives from Africa"[37] or "niggers" from Sierra Leone,[38] sometimes about "exotic" looking people in Portuguese St Vincent[39] or some islands,[40] sometimes about the "Lascars", the East Indian sailors of the British Empire.[41]

It was far more common to stick to evolutionist ideas of higher and lower races than to defend human equality on all levels – especially among the crew themselves. The likelihood of black sailors was also higher under US-American command than on British ships. This is also what James Mulligan noticed after deciding to embark on the 'S. Curling' on his unassisted passage to Melbourne in 1860:

> The Ship S. Curling & captain Geo. W. Gilchrist was what is engaged for she is an American ship so is the Commander & all the officers the 1st mate is son to the Captain or rather Commander, there is two other mates 2nd and 3rd the third is a very stout rough man and appears like

35 Care, Charles, Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient', 1888/03/03–1888/04/12 (Museum Victoria) HT 30972: 55–57.

36 Pilcher, Lewis, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Nowshera', 1883/08–1883/09 (National Library of Australia) MS 9533: 1883/08/09 [2].

37 Care, "Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient'," 1888/03/03–1888/04/12: 55.

38 Saddington, Robert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1853/08/11–1853/10/29 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS GRE: 14.

39 E.g. Royle, Emily E., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Kent' and in Australia, 1880/11/17–1881/06/01 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 2613: 7–9

40 E.g. Metelmann, Franz, Tagebuch einer Reise nach Australien an Bord der S.S. 'Sorrento', 1882/01–1882/04 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) M 1573: 1882/03/02 [1–2].

41 Gothard, Jan, *Blue China: Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia*. Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001: 159–160 provides the case study of the S.S. 'Jumna' in 1900, where the relationship between the "natives" or the "black" lascars became the object of a court investigation in Australia.

> a bully, the sailors 30 in number are all blacks except two or three they appear to be hard working men.[42]

He then quickly saw his suspicions concerning the third mate confirmed upon witnessing the continuous mocking of the black sailors by this man – and it became clear that the reason for the oppressive behaviour was not only one of power abuse, but also one of racist logics:

> 26th February 1860 […] The sailors have laboured very hard from our outset & some of them recieved [sic] very bad treatment from one of the mates, who I believe delights in exercising authority with cruelty to the men because he is a muscular man himself however the captain who appears quite a steady little man has I understand reproved the 3rd Mate for his ill treatment of the black sailors […]
>
> Friday 2nd March 1860 […] We are getting on slowly, the wind still blows against us, our sailors are wearied out and yet there appears no rest for them but work, work, away unceasing night and day The mates too are wrought & oppressed [sic] some of them are not able to speak scarcely with shouting at the sailors who after they have one tack taken they must prepare for another They are continualy [sic] climbing & pulling rigging or on reefing sails what a dissagreeable [sic] life a sailor has and yet I believe they would not work nor would they stay upon land after being trained to the sea though I would compair [sic] a sweeps life better than theirs and after all the hardship they endure from the inclemency of the weather and I may say also the inclemency of the mates who treats them very indifferently if they do not jump at a word of command "The roap [sic] end" or a, piece of a board is taken to them, they are blacks & do not complain but it is my opinion a white man would not endure what they do I often hear it said of a good worker that he "wrought like a black" the phrase is a true one they certainly do work well and as far as I can judge they do their duty or at least I have not seen any of them shrink from his duty yet.[43]

42 Mulligan, James V., Lynette F. McClenaghan, and Pat McClenaghan, *From County Down to Down Under: Diary of James Venture Mulligan 1860*. Armidale: Pat McClenaghan, 1991: 5.

43 Mulligan, McClenaghan, and McClenaghan: 11+17–18.

Confronted with the brutality of the sailors' fate, without any rights or legal security from their superiors' cruelty, Mulligan was shocked at the violent "treatment the poor darkies receive every day or 2" and wondered: "It is strange to me if there is no laws to prevent this or rather to protect the poor dark sailors. It is worse than the slave trade." Lacking further words, he tried to make sense of the beating and shouting by putting his aghast emotions into a short, cynical poem, displaying a lack of understanding of distorted American notions of freedom and liberty:

> The cruel wicked mates
> The darkies sorely beats
> They exercise their cruelty
> Though Briton bears the name be free
> The ship she is a yankee
> Our captain is the same
> And since that land they are come from
> The mates are not to blame.[44]

Left with this failed attempt to assign responsibility for the guilt observed, Mulligan continued his journey, somehow disillusioned of American principles and values.

In 1878, another unassisted emigrant, James C. Shears, was sadly reminded of the prejudices still alive, when he overheard the reason for a punishment sentenced upon one of the crewmembers. In contrast to the American 'S. Curling', where Mulligan watched the mates battering the black sailors mercilessly, Shears' emigrant vessel was commanded by a captain opposing racist argumentation: the large steamship 'Aconcagua', with well over 400 passengers, had just hired some of the Portuguese-speaking "black" boys from St Vincent for the ship, when "one of the firemen [was] put in irons because he would not work with the Blacks (absurd)". Captain George N. Coulon would not accept this reasoning and punished the sailor harshly. As explained in the subchapter before, the master of the ship had the authority to discipline his subordinates. The moral judgment "absurd", which Shears passed on

44 Mulligan, McClenaghan, and McClenaghan: 59–60.

this behaviour, is worth noting. It reveals an awareness of utterly contrary opinions and anthropological ideas embodied by the young writer and the anonymous fireman. Throughout the journey, Shears recorded another instance of himself actively engaging with the "blacks", which stands in stark contrast to a refusal to work with those men altogether.[45]

There is material from roughly the same period that displays a more balanced picture. Dr Thornton's description of his "Cabin Stewart, a pleasant looking black man" seems to be a positive racial remark, although clearly still colonially influenced.[46] In contrast to the anonymous workers in steamship port cities also referred to as "blacks", the accompanying British ship crew often had black members as part of the catering crew, employed in the galley.[47] Serving in roles such as stewards or bakers automatically brought them in closer contact with the passengers than work as ordinary sailors or seamen.

Against this historical background, the incident on the 'Falcon', where the kitchen assistant under the headship of black cooks put an end to his life after few days of employment can be re-visited. Put in context, some of the details the diarist offered about the middle-aged man's biography become more significant. Combined with the anti-black, colonially racist, and imperially ideologically shaped upbringing that this previously successful and wealthy Englishman would have enjoyed, the totality of his social relegation must have been crushing down on him, especially in the wake of a financial and professional demise.

Summing up, the aspect of 'race' adds to the very individual experience of transit for this one man found bleeding on deck in the morning of May 1853, insofar as it turned an already jumbled period of social and private re-orientation from one life stage to a less comfortable and completely unfamiliar one into an even more confrontational one. Seeing his worldview and white anthropological convictions shaken, he

45 Shears, James C., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Aconcagua', 1878/10/23–1878/11/23 (State Library of Victoria) MS 10872; Box 4455/13: 6 and N.N., "Arrival of the 'Aconcagua,'" *Age*, 1878/12/14: 6 for ship and journey details.

46 Thornton, Frances, Diary of Surgeon's Wife on Board the 'Selkirkshire', 1882/07/19–1882/09/14 (National Library of Australia) MS 1025: [4+14–15]. The interesting follow-up story is that the black steward, when teased by the surgeon for his being too close to white women, apparently unexpectedly then showed him a picture of his "very bonny white wife".

47 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 134–135.

seemed to be robbed of all he would have regarded as honourable and appropriate. The status symbols representing stability and his achievements he had been proud of did not belong to him anymore. Instead, the black cooks, in other contexts objects of scorn, contempt, or – if lucky – generous pity, were placed above and before him to command and order him about. It was a reversal of the somehow unquestioned hierarchy dominating his pre-transit world, and the shock could have been intensified by the racial component: the black men exaggerating their power, the white man unable to deal with his low position.

Of course, a complete in-depth understanding is beyond any historian's analysis. But to underline the point just made, one last, telling example shedding light on the treatment of non-white sailors shall be made. On the very same page that announced the arrival of the emigrant ship 'Falcon' in the New South Wales newspaper *The Shipping Gazette and Sydney General Trade List* on 27th August 1853, the reader could find the Water Police Office news of the day. One of those short articles tells the story of a Malay seaman from the ship 'Marchioness of Londonerry', who was charged with "cutting and maiming" two of his colleagues. The language used to refer to the aggressor reveals doubts about his mental sanity, but it also hints at racist tensions piled up during the ship's previous journey: the Malay seaman, who was caught after a failed attempt at flight, explained himself by accusing the victims of "constantly teasing him, he being the only Malay seaman on board". Is it by chance that one of the severely injured victims was the "Barrandarry" (i.e., the cook), and that both were identified as "natives of Pahang", a federal state of Malaysia? Probably not. On board ship and among the working men, maritime spaces such as galley, deck, machine room and mess cabin were shaped and ordered by ideas of race and hierarchy. They could be intensified by additional barriers coming with a multicultural group of people marked by different languages, appearances and religions. The Malay culprit's claim to be the only sailor from Malaysia seems strange because both victims came from Pahang, Malaysia. Was it a regional dispute? Was it a colonial contest of colonizers, collaboratives, and colonized? One of the victims bore a British name (John Dobre), so maybe he was of colonial descent with an English education or someone who chose a British first name upon being employed by a colonial vessel. After all,

the anonymous culprit needed a translator to communicate during the trial, while John Dobre, the victim, did not. Whether or not this was the case, maltreatment, revenge and racial complications were no exception in the 19th century maritime world. This observation has been verified in transit investigations over the centuries, with contributing aspects of upbringing, language, skin colour and colonialism.[48] In spite of being exceptionally graphic, the 'Falcon' transit remains a child of its times.

1.3 Work

For the transit setting being considered here, the passengers formed a group of people flexibly belonging to the location. The crew members were the working men and the ship was their chosen working place, the sea their chosen natural environment. They were the ones with an assigned task, even if the seamen's identity and job duties often remained a floating mystery to any emigrants carefully observing them. However, boundaries between crew and emigrants were not as distinct as they might appear at first glance. Identities can be mingled, blending into each other easier than one might expect. After all, the 'Falcon' suicide victim was not a stereotypical galley apprentice on board a sailing vessel but rather someone with the dream of settling in Australia: he had engaged to work his passage out to Melbourne, physically labouring to achieve this dream. This fluidity – not a "pure" emigrant, not a "true" seashell – creates identification obstacles and intensifies the transit-related notion of wavering in-betweenness.

Several emigrants came to Australia (or when desiring to return to Europe, left Australia again) in this way. They chose to work on board as stewards or in the service if they were unable to pay their passage and also unable to afford or apply for an assisted passage. Their transit experience was certainly different from the average emigrant's – although it has become evident by now that a "standard version" of 'transit' does not exist.[49]

48 N. N., "Victoria".
49 Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 134 and Brown, Elaine, "The Voyage of the 'Fortitude,'" in *Brisbane: Schemes and Dreams*, ed. Jennifer Harrison and Barry Shaw. Brisbane History Group Papers 23. Moorooka: Boolarong Press, 2014: 54–73: 57. Other source examples are e.g. White, "Letters and Diary on Board the 'Sultana' and in Melbourne,"

With or without a fixed categorization, the fact is that from the outsider's point of view, the cook's assistant on the 'Falcon' did not belong to the emigrants. The *Shipping Gazette and Sydney General Trade List* praised the voyage's extraordinarily low mortality rate: "only one death occurred on the voyage, and that an infant."[50] The complete unawareness or neglect of the Englishman's suicide might be surprising at first sight, but the ordinary passenger list filled out by the surgeon and the captain at the port of immigration accounted for the officially registered emigrants. No attention would be paid to other people temporarily engaged in new roles, even if they were technically emigrating as well. So this man just fell through the cracks due to his ambiguous state of "working his passage out". He was not accepted by the "real" crew, nor was he counted among the future Australian colonists. Consequently, he was not given a proper funeral in front of the passenger community (something essential for handling grief as shown in the chapter before), but after breathing his last was just "thrown overboard according to custom" in the early morning hours "ere we (i.e., the passengers) arose".[51]

Was this ambiguous position worth the risk? Two positive examples will close this analysis of work-related in-betweenness. When John W. Eisdell wrote down his memoirs at the end of his life as a "bush parson" in the outback, he recalled his emigrant journey to Australia on board the 'Northumberland' in 1882. In a short and entertaining account, he recorded the captain's pedagogic reaction to another in-between figure, a stowaway: instead of handcuffing the "stranger", the master "pointed out to him that he had committed a serious offence and had made himself liable to six months' hard labour". The master's general kindness and clemency helped his disciplinary words motivate the stowaway to grasp this special opportunity. Eisdell tells the story in semi-Christian phrases of tempering justice with mercy, concluding: "our 'Old Man' was a very human person and, after giving the prisoner a serious talk, put him to work in the ship's galley, where he proved himself a valua-

1858/11/21–1859/09/02: 5; Stock, Walter, Letter on Board the 'Hereford', 1882/02/21 (Caird Library and Archive) AGC/S/18: 4 or Skirving, Robert S., and Ann Macintosh, *Memoirs of Dr. Robert Scot Skirving, 1859–1956*. Darlinghurst: Foreland Press, 1988: 129.

50 N. N., "Victoria".

51 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon,'" 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [2].

ble hand", although – as we know from the suicide case on board the 'Falcon' – "the work in the galley is no light task".[52]

Another similar example can be found from 1858 – in terms of shipping conditions and technological innovations, this was decades closer to the main case study above of the cook assistant's suicide on the 'Falcon' in 1853. Another lucky and diligent stowaway found his desires to reach Australia successfully fulfilled after being integrated as crew into the galley on the 'Sultana', which apparently had enough space to welcome a "little fellow" with open arms. At least, this is what George White optimistically predicted when he characterized the stowaway as a "likely chap" who "will get on" even without "friends on board".[53] It is interesting, however, that on this same voyage, both a stowaway and a "person working his passage out" were mentioned. The latter had been hired as a steward, while the former became a cook's assistant. The steward utterly failed and was prone to ridicule and laughter for his incompetence in handling "the plates, coffee-pot, knives, forks and spoons" leaving him with the "execrations of some, and the laughter of others" and making him the perfect victim for "the boys [to] make a game of him". White appears to see the reason for his ill fate in the total mismatch of job and person: a steward should be "a smart chap fit for any emergency" whilst the man given that position here would be more suitable as a "raw country Blacksmiths apprentice".[54] Clearly that accounted for the difference in perception and reception of instable transit experiences as well. Not only did it depend on the receiving party's suspicious attitude, the aggressive tone, the indirect hatred or the unwillingness to integrate yet another person; it also depended on the individual's resources and capital as well as their openness and courage to actively humble oneself, to seek a place within a given community, and to endure temporal toil and torture for the sake of a desired outcome. Often the unpleasant work would be handed over to the unskilled newcomers, so that the ordinary seamen could avoid doing the donkeywork. In addition to that, shipboard circumstances (such as the

52 Eisdell, *Back Country*: 11.
53 White, "Letters and Diary on Board the 'Sultana' and in Melbourne," 1858/11/21–1859/09/02:3.
54 White: 5.

weather) beyond the control or prediction of humankind would block or free group processes in the making of 'transit'.

To sum this point up, the focus on work has shown that even the most basic group identities, i.e., crew or passengers, were not as clear cut as lists and statistics of the day would suggest. When the newspaper praised the astonishingly low passenger mortality rate on the voyage of the 'Falcon', they deliberately neglected and probably were not even informed about the suicide at the start of that voyage, which had cost the life of an intended Australian colonist. Disguised as a "true sailor" and counted among the galley crew, he went unnoticed – on multiple levels. Those working their passage out and stowaways, or people like them, are the shadowy in-betweens who reveal underlying group sections and grey areas in a supposedly stable community. Exposing and pointing to existing social tensions, they are interesting research objects because they unveil the human need to cross social borders in transit. By the very essence of their being they are called to make the most of what they have. In contrast to the ordinary emigrant or the normal sailor, they had to tell their story in front of an audience that viewed them as the "other". Some stowaways interpreted it as an invitation to come up with half-truths or convincing pretence, others could not cope with the demand for performance, the distrust they met, or the duties laid upon them – and were crushed.

In any case, the recipe for a successful crossing of borders through the means of physical effort involved: (1) the individual's character, willingness, and talent, (2) the in-group's tolerance and openness, and (3) the unique circumstances of each voyage, such as a skill shortage aboard or specific weather conditions. Upon closer investigation, it becomes clear that the challenge meant an acceptance of the status quo including all the hurdles and stumbling blocks. Instead of rebelling against it or insisting on one's apparent rights, 'resilience' was required. In Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit", resilience was defined as not breaking despite heavy-laden external factors. Resilience in group settings highlights another facet of this survival factor. The conditions for becoming a member were aggravated by additionally trying determinants, such as the untimely arrival and the lack of knowledge about set rules of getting along with each other, the barriers of language, education, vocab-

ulary of technical terms, rituals. By adapting openly and cultivating thankfulness for the possibility to travel at all, the chances for making friends nevertheless were higher. From the other side of the receiving party, it demanded a similar attitude. Hostility against a supposed threat or engrained prejudices split the group. By accepting the status quo, the "us vs. them" feeling would lose weight and allow a reassembling of society that did not emphasize the differences but cherished the common ground by literally working together without caring about the "when" and "how" of biographical shortcuts and detours for a limited period of time.

This, however, was the ideal reaction. Human beings, whether in transit or not, usually do not act in a reasonable way but are driven by emotions, feelings, fears, and opinions. This holds true for the individual and consequently multiplies itself within a community. When there is tension within a group not settled yet, certain people look for a way to release this tension. Directing it against a clearly different group might be a huge step as the gap to bridge appeared too big and also unrelated. If one steerage family father was annoyed with his messmates, but did not dare to approach the mess steward, he could unload his anger at the sailors – but this would be random and strange. However, if there was a former stowaway, who would be counted among the steerage passengers,[55] but worked with the sailors and struggled to steady oneself, teasing this person would be closer at hand than teasing a "normal" sailor. This is what reality often looked like: as yet undefined "others" became objects of scorn faster than people already assigned to a group through their work description, duties, tasks and rights. This is why there were various instances for mockery and bullying across groups. The stowaway "Johnny-come-lately" was regularly made fun of by the emigrants he had to serve on the 'Champion of the Seas'; the "raw blacksmith's apprentice" working as a steward earned the laughter of both the second-class passengers and the sailors for his clumsiness on the 'Sul-

55 Several stowaways would be counted among the steerage passengers upon arrival and after working their passage out. (Woolcock, *Rights of Passage*: 42).

tana'; the black cooks on the 'Falcon' oppressed their hired emigrant-assistant to the point of death.[56]

2 Practices of Unity and Borders

After having analysed three basic social and relational structures in transit (authority, race, work), the following subchapters will zoom in on different forms of social interaction which also require an opposite human party: fighting, loving, supporting. The questions are: In which way did a crossing of social boundaries happen? Did this act of crossing affect a third party or maybe even the whole community? Is there a 'transit'-specific way to this kind of interaction? The basic distinction between passengers and crew will build the scaffold, but a more differentiated class focus will be added in the closing analysis of the more hidden and subtler and mental interactions (despising, admiring, participating) across the groups.

2.1 Fighting

Probably most non-work associated physical contact within a group of passengers and crew happened with the involvement of drink and fists. Riots on deck were a frequent nuisance for the diarist Andrew McDonell, who complained about the unreasonable purchase of alcohol by passengers from the purser and by the sailors from the passengers. Strong drink caused most of the trouble. The stereotypical "drunken sailor" caused many conflicts among the crew, although the consumption of alcohol was strictly regulated, at least, officially – in practice, it was difficult to control.[57]

56 Edwards, John M., "Diary on Board the 'Champion of the Seas', Melbourne 1867/07/24–1867/11/05," in *The 'Champion of the Seas'*, ed. Rod Fraser. Glen Waverley: Pilgrim Printing Services, 1999: 68–90: 76; White, "Letters and Diary on Board the 'Sultana' and in Melbourne," 1858/11/21–1859/09/02:5; McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon'," 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [2].
57 See Berry, Stephen R., *A Path in the Mighty Waters: Shipboard Life and Atlantic Crossings to the New World*. New Haven, London, 2015: 154; Stammers, *Emigrant Clippers to Australia*: 131; Witt, "'During the Voyage Every Captain is Monarch of the Ship'": 177–179.

Before condemning the excessive use of alcohol, it needs to be noted that since the late 17th century, rum had belonged to the Royal Navy's daily ration because it was safe to drink, in contrast to stored water. It was only in 1731 that the Admiralty started restricting the amount of alcohol distributed, and invented "grog" as some sort of diluted rum mixed with distilled water. As time went on, and sober mariners were needed in war situations, the ration continued to be reduced in amount and only given out once a day.[58] With the 19th century's increasing passenger trade came a time of negotiating and defining new boundaries to be kept on passenger ships. Additionally, there were more chances to gain access to alcohol through emigrants.

On a ship like the 'Falcon' in the 1850s, run by the Bristol-based trading and shipping company *Gibbs, Bright & Co*, the British emigrants could embrace more liquid liberty and buy any amount from the purser. This regularly led to noisy Saturday nights with scenes reminding the annoyed observer McDonell of dark nights on Liverpool streets, confirming a negative prejudice against the British working class:

> The British people on the whole – or perhaps more particularly the labouring classes – have become so habituated to drinking or getting drunk on the Saturday Night that they cannot think of going to bed sober, if possible [sic] any drink can be got. […]

With no restriction on the amount of alcohol for the travellers, drunkenness inevitably deteriorated so much that the captain intervened and set up a temporary prohibition. McDonell probably would have preferred the captain do something about this habit earlier, realizing that through the senseless sale of grog to the sailors, the ignorant passengers were threatening the lives of everyone on board:

> This habit, though much to be regretted wherever it prevails, I should not think much about here if the passengers alone only indulged in it; although we have had some cases of them getting beastly drunk and

58 Norton, Louis A., "Rum. The Spirit of the Sea," *Naval History* 31, no. 2 (2017): 20–23 and Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*: 120.

> making complete pigs of themselves. But when we see the sailors and officers of the ship, on whom so much responsibility rests as to the management of a ship with nearly three hundred souls on board, it becomes rather a serious consideration for those who have any anxiety for their own lives.

The danger lay in the disastrous interaction between passengers and sailors. As McDonell put it: As long as the groups remained separated, the quarrels would only pile up shame on the backs of the socially deprived "labouring classes", but combined with the sailors, the fighting was directed against the more respectable and reasonable travellers, putting them in real danger. [59]

William A. Smith observed the same procedure over ten years later on his journey to Brisbane: passengers were selling alcohol to sailors, who would then temporarily lose their ability to work properly at all. After replacing the seamen with sober volunteers, a minor row between one steerage passengers and a sailor led to an imposition of "more stringent regulations regarding the obtaining of it [i.e. the liquor] for the future".[60]

The two examples given here caused comparatively minor damage to all the fists involved. But the heavier the riots and the more febrile the atmosphere, the more violent the physical crew-passenger interactions could get. This could go both ways: On board the S.S. 'London' in 1864, an irascible passenger knocked the steward down, who rebuked him for taking too much of his share. This caused a huge fight including second-class passengers like the writer Albert Reynolds himself and increased the dissatisfaction with the amount of food provided. From the author's point of view, the verdict passed on the aggressive emigrant companion seemed fair.[61] In another transit situation, where crew and passengers met physically, it almost ended in murder. An engineer had invited a third-class passenger into his cabin to play cards, which was

59 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon'," 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/07/10–17 [11].
60 Smith, William A., Diary on Board the 'Young Australia', 1864/05/09–1864/08/13 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1815; Box 9593: 55–56.
61 Reynolds, Albert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'London', 1864/10/26–1864/12/14 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS LON: 1864/11/03 [10–11].

against the rules, strictly speaking. Severe trouble occurred when, following a game-related disagreement, the belligerent engineer picked up a hammer and beat the passenger so badly he was in a "critical state". In fact, he was only prevented from killing him when another sailor passed the cabin and heard the desperate cries for help over the noise of the strong wind.[62]

Extreme cases such as these were highly exceptional, but they help to reveal 'transit' structures more quickly. A closer look at Walter Dutton's passage helps to explain comparable outbreaks of crew-passenger explosions. This journey has already been cited above as an example for a captain's weakened authority in the face of "three or four desperate villains" among his crew, who would regularly beat each other up and openly threaten the master with a knife.[63] In his letter back home to his "dear wife and children", 33-year-old Dutton blamed alcohol and immorality for tainting his transit-experience as an unassisted steerage passenger in the second half of 1858, travelling from Liverpool to the Victorian goldfields on the 'Sarah Dixon'. This journey started with a hopeful tone, as the community decided to collectively pay for the first poor stowaway's passage.[64] Soon, however, difficulties increased on board, and Dutton watched the carpenter nearly striking down the black cook with an axe and almost paying for this attack with his life due to other enraged crewmembers. He saw fights between passengers and crew due to national tensions between Scotland and Ireland. Clearly, the leery and devious atmosphere existing among the crew splashed over onto the 190 intermediate and steerage passengers. It seems that gambling and riots were counted as ordinary events, so this automatically lowered the barrier to more extreme reactions, given the expectably challenging shipboard circumstances. The way the sailors dealt with one another would be mirrored in the passengers' interactions, and vice versa – repeated clashes took place between them. Indeed, the sailor with the knife who had previously caused trouble

62 Armitage, Nancy, Diary on Board the 'Parramatta' (Diary with Poems and Notes), 1875/08/27–1875/11/26 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) F2525: 1875/11/07 [12].

63 Dutton, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Sarah Dixon'," 1858/08/29–1858/12/26: 1858/10/13 [5] and Chapter 5, subchapter 1.1 on "authority".

64 Dutton: 1858/08/29 [1] and the analysis of "work" in Chapter 5, subchapter 1.3.

among his companions, then came a few nights later and intruded "the next room to mine & threatened to stab somebody, at the same time he was brandishing his open knife". Dutton himself witnessed the "ruffian" regaling himself with his power to scare the others off, but the sad truth was that despite the obvious danger from that particular man, Dutton saw no chance to stop him: "This morning the Captain offers to keep him in irons, if any of the passengers will be witness against him when at Melbourne – however it would not be policy to do any such thing, as they would probably get half killed by the crew, who with hardly one exception are a choice lot of ruffians."[65]

How could such a strained atmosphere of intimidation manifest itself after all? The emigrant ship can be seen as a community in the making. The individuals with their own emotions were subject to their specific background, knowledge and culture (see Chapter 4 "Feeling Transit"), but as individuals taken together, they also formed groups, some prescribed and some self-created. I have already emphasized the role of underlying structures such as authority, race and work duties in regulating and distinguishing within the overarching shipboard community. If people stuck to the rules and accepted the sociocultural principles, most tensions could be calmed down fast. This was not the always the case, though. Certain human beings in unfamiliar, instable settings – key characteristics of 'transit' – will seek to push the boundaries. Motives were manifold and are hard to decipher centuries later, but the grey zones were often arenas of encounter between groups. On board, this would be the upper deck, the hospital, the floors between the messes, or the galley. More metaphorically, they would be dinner time, washing days, Saturday nights, or festive events – all occasions predestined for testing limitations and "crossing over". This aspect of insecurity, shaking up immediate surroundings and impacting structures further apart is what all the fighting incidents share. Where beating happened in front of others, the audience – and be it only one or two by-standers – multiplied the shock. This shock was based on the conscious defiance of politeness, general respect and mutual consideration. On an analytical level, rows in transit therefore created little

65 Dutton: 1858/09/08–1858/10/07 [2–4].

'interstices' of anarchy. The concept of 'interstice', as developed by sociologist Elena Fontanari in her study of 21st century refugees' subjectivity, marks a "very small space that emerges from a friction, a sort of *fracture* within a system of power".[66] In her analysis, 'interstices' occur when "marginal subjects, who are *in excess*, hence *build up*, *establish* through struggles, a small space *in the middle* of the law and the city".[67] The concept of 'interstice' fits well with the dynamics and agency observations of steerage passengers on British emigrant ships 150 years earlier: Fontanaro likewise extends the common, primarily spatial use of 'transit' and takes the concept to denote the "temporal experience" of a sometimes extremely "lengthened transit condition" defined by "waiting and suspension".[68]

Usually, hard blows did not appear out of the blue. They were often preceded by gambling, drinking, infidelity or discrimination, which triggered the individuals to actively introduce explosive potential to a given system of power. Without anyone intervening, spaces then became more negotiable, leading to riskier moves and sometimes ending up in fisticuffs – or terrifyingly menaced knife attacks. In the same way some refugees gathered at Görlitzer Park in Berlin to physically protest against the fragility of their identity status and somehow "conquered" interstices,[69] 19th century groups fought with similar practices to renegotiate borders. Met with no resistance, the gradual pushing of boundaries led to the emergence of small interstices without legal or juridical backing. In this way, every fight among the crew or passengers – or between these groups – established another little space temporarily run by different means. For the duration of the scuffle, at least, physical strength or weapons dominated, rendering void any previously agreed rules.

This model explains the increasingly nervous atmosphere, the underlying fear, and the infringements on board the 'Sarah Dixon' in 1858. It was only possible for the anonymous "ruffian" with a flashing knife to

66 Fontanari, Elena, *Lives in Transit: An Ethnographic Study of Refugees' Subjectivity Across European Borders,* Studies in Migration and Diaspora. Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2019: 134.

67 Fontanari: 126.

68 Fontanari: 172.

69 Fontanari: 178–185.

invade the passengers' most intimate refuge, the shared steerage rooms, because borders had previously been crossed. The aggressive sailor confronted the captain first, gathered like-minded supporters around himself, and announced stabbings to the travellers, becoming the leading figure almost embodying a "lawless" space, an interstice, whose wrath nobody wanted to incur. Where this interstice transgressed its temporary character and turned into a more permanent state, other legal systems could be abrogated more easily, intensifying the impending threat of more dangerous crossings and actual murder – not only across the divide between passengers and crew, but also among the passengers themselves.

This holds also true for an incident at the end of the 19th century, as narrated by Charles Care, who was travelling on the steamship R.M.S. 'Orient' in 1888. Until March 13th, the first ten days of this voyage with stopovers at Gibraltar and Naples had been very pleasant ones for the culturally interested saloon passenger that he was. Of course, he had not been pleased to hear about alcohol abuse or grouse rats in the cabins at night, but until then he had been lucky enough to be spared from direct experiences of drunkenness or the beasts' visits.[70]

This large ship was also the temporary home of a celebrity of the Victorian age: Miss Ada Ward, a famous English actress and a popular star in Adelaide. Australian newspapers had proudly announced her crossing of the ocean to head for the Australian sunshine on board the R.M.S. 'Orient'.[71] However, the interstice which Care was confronted with on March 13th had a lethal outcome which made the whole ship freeze for a moment. A young steerage passenger had been suffering from consumption for a while, but breathed his last in shocking circumstances. Apparently, his "cabin companions" were partly responsible for his death because they had not looked after him well – badly enough for him to need to be taken to hospital, where it was too late to save his life. When this bad treatment became public, "the whole of the steerage passengers caused a commotion by raising 'mob law'" and turned against

70 Care, "Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient'," 1888/03/03–1888/04/12: 37+25–27.
71 In Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, West and South Australia, the newspapers waited for the star actress Ada Ward to arrive in Melbourne, e.g. N.N., "Miscellaneous: Miss Ada Ward," *South Australian Register*, 1888/04/16: 2.

two of the dead man's messmates. It sounds as if these two "ruffians" then had to be rescued from the enraged masses by placing them into a locked cabin, where they anxiously hid themselves from the others until skipper and captain had decided upon further steps. Their guilt seemed confirmed, after all.[72]

Apart from the sadness of the event itself, one very interesting aspect in linguistic terms is the depreciative term "mob law" that Care picked to describe the steerage atmosphere and driving force of common action. This phrase sounds like an oxymoron, as the noun "mob" would originally refer to a "disorderly or riotous crowd", often with an association to crime and anarchy. Late 19th century common compounds confirm this connotation, listing "mob madness", "mob-storm", "mob warfare".[73] On the contrary "law" as the "rule of conduct imposed by authority" is a key term of civilization and education, order and structure, indicating something stable and secure.[74] Two legal systems and understandings seem to clash here. But in this case the united effort of this unrestrained crowd of common people yearning for revenge luckily accorded with the intention of the installed authorities, i.e., the skipper and the captain. So the chaos lurking beneath the surface could be prevented by considerate reaction and acknowledgment of the apparent injustice against the victim. By calling the moment of uproar "mob law" Care indicates that he did perceive a potential danger evolving from giving free reign to the masses: a permanent interstice run by a group of people who had crossed social borders and reached for unapproved rights. The steerage passengers were ready to take matters into their own hands. While they were in the process of doing that, of transiting from one position to another by claiming the right to act against the perpetrators, these target persons withdrew by locking themselves into a cabin. Now it lay in the hands of the skipper and the captain to pass the ultimate judgment on the event (after the funeral). This became a crucial point of the voyage, as space, belongings, accesses, etc. were at

72 Care, "Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient'," 1888/03/03–1888/04/12: 37–39.
73 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "mob, n.2 (and adv.)", updated 2021/06 <oed.com/view/Entry/120464>, accessed 2021/08/17.
74 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "law, n.1", updated 2021/06 <oed.com/view/Entry/106405>, accessed 2021/08/17.

stake. In the case of the R.M.S. 'Orient', it seems the inner-class segments were settled again afterwards. Since Care neither mentioned the final outcome nor any further outstanding confrontation within the steerage community in his diary, the danger of the interstice turning into a space run by its own principles must have been ruled out.[75]

It remains unclear what punishment the two messmates who intentionally failed to care for their suffering and dying fellow immigrant received in the end, but the condemnation of their potentially anarchic conduct is clearly stated.

The same example provided by Care also reveals a lot about inner structures and crossings within passenger communities as they happen to occur in transit settings generally. Shifting the focus from the physical violence and demand for unapproved legal rights, we also find verbal bullying, mockery and harassment as negative forms of interacting with the others. The effects on the micro-level should not be ignored even when the conflict did not involve people paying with their lives or similar tragic endings to that of the sick man on the R.M.S. 'Orient' in 1888.

Bullying is an interaction that often occurred across groups and against less identifiable figures than emigrants working their passage out or stowaways. In the 19th century source material, the deliberate vexing and harassing of a person by repeated attacks or petty tyranny in words or deeds would be referred to as "to bully", "to harass", "to distress", "to vex", "to slander" or "to ill use". Unlike rows and blows loudly disrupting a peaceful night, repeatedly hurtful insults remained invisible to the eyes and ears of many. They often happened under the surface of apparently homogenous groups like single men and single women. Shared life circumstances among people with the same relationship status, which determined how emigrating strangers were grouped on board, should create bonding and minimize tensions but imposed homogeneity and uniformity could not wipe out other categories of identity, such as nationality, religion, language or profession. Indeed, as the Irish emigrant Joseph G. Stewart experienced in 1879, national and religious differences caused the most hostility: he observed con-

75 Care, Charles, Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient', 1888/03/03–1888/04/12 (Museum Victoria) HT 30972: 25–27.

flicts between "English Skotch & Irish Americans", "Orangemen Fenians Freemasons" and other "odd fellows" of "all kind of secret societies", commenting that "we can't expect any thing else". One man suffered in particular from the "ill will" when he suddenly found himself soaked in mud after "they threw a bucket of dirty water on him in bed".[76] Similarly, another diarist, David Yaun, observed how a "simple harmless man (an Englishman) in the married peoples department" fell victim to some people who took "a great delight in annoying" him. In his entry, he clearly assigned the reason for the trouble to national features, not making a secret about his opinion on the "Irish savages" on board.[77]

Those less physically violent forms of fighting ranged from devious insults or backbiting through to circulating rumours or nerve-racking venomous jokes. Although the overarching idea of privacy and the right to protect one's private sphere from external attacks was fairly new to the European modern age, the Christian principle of loving your neighbour would speak against such mockery in theory. In practice, however, the specific transit situation added new opportunities to prove oneself. A close-reading approach shows that subtle or purposeful bullying became easier in the enclosed setting of a ship, leaving not much room to hide or flee from the observant eyes of the tormenter. It is therefore no surprise that most acts happened in the biggest and poorest entities on board. A large number of men and women thrown together without any other goal than reaching the Australian shore safely, where they would immediately be separated again – this forced them to find other factors to cling to for orientation. There was no shared task or project. Therefore, excitement and food for talk often came through forming sub-groups through common interests (e.g., belief systems) and then marking the territory by assigning a common enemy.

Most of this mingling and playing passed by unnoticed, leaving no trace in written records available for today's historians. But every now

76 Stewart, Joseph G., Diary and Letter on Board and about the 'Northampton', 1879/10/14–1880/03/10 (Caird Library and Archive) MSS 89/057: 1879/11/19 [20–21].

77 Yaun, David, Daphne I. Spence, and Jenny Yaun, *David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864: His Account, in Diary Form, of his Family's Voyage from England to Australia aboard the 'General Caulfield'*. Frenchs Forest: Jennifer Anne Lake and Geoffrey Norman Lake, 1991: 1864/06/24 [8–9].

and then it did pop up in the letters, diaries, and memories, even if the witnesses were not directly involved. This observation justifies the thesis that tensions among a few individuals can have major effects on the whole community – even without a funeral event or an archival call number for further research. The short glimpses of harassment in close quarters reveal that people were unsure how to deal with forms of social interaction adequately, or even failed to do so. Simply narrating what was going on and pitying the victim barely satisfied the reflective mind of writers like Susan Austen, Charles Care, Walter Dutton, Samuel Laver, Andrew McDonell, John Stewart and David Yaun. And yet, the reflection and the emotional coping happened after the pen was laid aside – when queuing for breakfast, cleaning the upper deck, washing clothes, attending Sunday service or trying to sleep. In the midst of all this, buckets of filthy water thrown at unsuspecting sleepers became the news of the day. After trying to make sense of the reasons for attacking someone else's privacy, the conclusion might only be "some ill will", but this process of reflection shows that communities did develop as the voyage went on. In the process of adapting to weather, travelling, shipboard routine, spare time and more, every community formed its own rules and communication styles. There was only a brief time available for this process, so communities in transit remained "in the making", and therefore, the consequences differed greatly, even for similar offenses. That there were consequences, however, was undeniable. For example, on the 'Tornado', the Captain threatened to reduce food rations for the second cabin in order to bring forth a confession about repeated attacks on one traveller, and on the 'General Caulfield', the boozy celebration of crossing the equator was cancelled, which the assisted migrant David Yaun assumed was a preventive measure undertaken by the captain to avoid further trouble with unruly Irish passengers.[78]

Less tangible effects of fights and discord directed against certain people generally created a slightly poisoned atmosphere of distrust. Sometimes, the background and reason for uncomfortable feelings

78 Wilson, "Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Tornado,'" 1858/05/17–1858/07/08: 1858/06/09 [5–6] and Yaun, Spence, and Yaun, *David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864*: 8–9.

in a group remained hidden, but on the 'Fitzjames' in 1856, matron Susan Austen finally understood the complexities of why the 95 single women she was responsible for continued to quarrel and rebel against her. Some individuals negatively stood out as behaving badly, accusing others of scandals, and opposing all authorities. For the matron, this was mainly personified by Mary Henderson and Ellen Dowling, who ran about exaggerating, spreading negative rumour about messmates, deliberately frightening others with black pinching at night, and insulting the matron.[79] Unfortunately, others followed this bad example and soon destroyed all hopes of forming a supportive community among the single women. Austen desperately tried to reach out to the girls and cared for sick patients like 23-year-old Esther[80] Firman, who she long regarded as one of the victims "particularly marked out as a subject of scandal".[81] It was shocking for Austen to then find out that this very Esther Firman was one of the main agitators causing the negative atmosphere. She was the brain behind numerous scandalous stories, thus working secretly against the surgeon, the matron and other girls by telling lies while at the same time pretending to be a sufferer of unfair harassment herself:

> 23rd [January 1857]
> How little capable of judging by appearances I feel when I look back and consider the interest and sympathy I felt toward Hester Firman. And not me only but also the Surgeon, Sub Matrons and many others. Yet we have found her the most depraved & malicious person that we have met with here, being so quiet and apparently so inoffensive, we all supposed her to be. But far from being what we believed her, we find her to be the most deceptive and wicked person that can be immagined [sic] – may God forgive her and change her heart. We all thought that because Mary Henderson was noisy and abusive that she invented what she many times

79 Austen, Susan, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames', 1856/12/23–1857/04/01 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 9/6212: esp. 1856/12/31 [22 in original/4 in transcript]+1857/03/09 [36–37 in original/9 in transcript].
80 In Austen's diary, there are different variants of spelling this woman's first name: Esther, Ester, Hester. In the final passenger list, it is spelled "Esther", which will be used here.
81 Austen: 1856/12/21 [16 in original/2 in transcript].

> started. Yet although she is malicious when excited and will exagerate [sic] if she has heard any slander, it does not appear that she is often the author of her statements – but the former will invent and repeat the most shocking falsehoods.
>
> She came out of the hospital, the 20th, and has barely escaped the jaws of death, yet even while in the Hospital (and receiving the greatest attention & care from the Surgeon and kindness and sympathy from every one who was permitted to visit her), she was scheming and plotting to defame the characters of many of the other young people […][82]

Spinning threads from her hospital bed, it seemed, mistrustfulness spread like yeast, permeating every person and relationship within the social structure in an irreversible way, as "[w]hat little confidence there was is now destroyed I fear. And distrust and suspicion are the feelings of all for every one's face expresses it".[83] A visible change in the facial expressions had taken place due to the intentional sowing of lies and half-truths. For the matron and the surgeon, it was hard to accept that they had been deceived and failed to stem the flood of suspicion. The rest of the journey was marked by insecurity and disobedience. In her most private moments, Susan Austen even regretted that she had been persuaded to apply for this job as a matron without knowing about the loneliness felt amid hostile or suspicious people.[84]

The steady breaching of rules had probably started already with forbidden contacts between single men and women at Plymouth Depot before departure (something attracting further investigations regarding the moral setting in England upon arrival in Australia).[85] Here, many rumours might have had their origin – stories that would be re-told, exaggerated and scandalized. Weeks of transit without occupation, no real employment, and a lack of knitting and sewing equipment stirred

82 Austen: 1857/01/23 [31–32 in original/7 in transcript].

83 Austen: 1857/01/29 [33 in original/8 in transcript].

84 Austen: 1857/01/16+20 [25+28 in original/5–6 in transcript]. A more concise analysis of Austen's experience, her responsibility and duties will follow in the next chapter (Chapter 6 "Managing Transit").

85 Walcott, Stephen, "Letter to Colonial Secretary, New South Wales. On Conduct of Single Migrants on 'Fitzjames' and in Plymouth Depôt," in *Entry Book of Correspondence: Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania.* London, 1857–1858 (National Archives) CO 386/129: 103–104.

up gossiping among the single women cooped up on board this sailing vessel. In addition to that, many of the women were illiterate or could barely read or write.[86] Austen quickly realized that the dynamics of an enclosed shipboard community would be determined by a few extrovert leaders. Judging from what she could observe in the first few days together with the 95 single women at the emigration depot and in port, she realistically drew the conclusion that it would not be easy to establish an appreciative and encouraging environment. The tendencies towards a bad and detrimental group feeling were already clear: "I cannot induce them as yet to unite in prayer and I am grieved to say theft, lying and slander prevail most shockingly – I fear however that a few leads the many. How they may get on is impossible to determine yet."[87]

As seen before, her prediction came true. Consideration for each other and honesty were not given a chance among the female passengers on the 'Fitzjames'. Although some performed well, helping others, and taking care of each other, the majority were tainted by agitators of evil thought: above all others, these were Mary Henderson and – for Austen shockingly – Esther Firman. Austen spoke of the "same spirit […] actuat[ing] the young women" for worse.[88] The idea of an unclean spirit disturbing all good intentions and taking possession of a whole community is metaphorically comprehensible. However, it defers the agency to some shadowy and ghostly entity. This expression then seems to be the attempt to identify a causal chain. During the voyage, Austen gradually gained an overview and understood the underlying structures leading to a handful of women influencing the others through their bad example and shaping the whole community. She constantly strove to name them, identify them, and separate them from the others

86 This is also what Austen was afraid of after counting the large numbers of imperfect reading or writing skills: "I much fear that it will be impossible to do but little toward their improvement as every days experience convinced me many, very many cannot see that they need it." Later, her worries proved right: "[…] there is no employment for them by day and the consequence is, they cannot sleep at night[…]" Austen, "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames'," 1856/12/23–1857/04/01: 1856/12/17 [15–16 in original/2 in transcript]+1857/01/20 [28 in original/6 in transcript].
87 Austen: 1856/12/17 [16 in original/2 in transcript].
88 Austen: 1856/12/21 [16 in original/2 in transcript].

to prevent the evil "spirit" gaining even more power. It was a futile fight and mainly because of the character of the weapons used in this battle.

In contrast to the physical forms of interacting against each other (hits, punches, blows, rows, threats, pranks), the whispered lies, the nasty looks, the meaningful gestures, or the hidden conversations behind the back all contributed to a gradual change of social principles and built walls within a community. The deliberate distribution of certain pieces of knowledge (true or not) led to the evolution of spaces of mystery, presumption and insecurity.[89] This strategy intensified dependencies upon the claimed insiders and it also undermined authorities through the creation of a sub-society of "adepts". According to Austen's subjective account, Firman was one step ahead for most of the voyage. She fed the easily excitable Henderson with ever new scandalous information and ingeniously professionalized the relationships to the already existing groups on board. Siding with the Protestants first with an open profession of faith, then shifting to the Irish Catholics by uttering the wish to convert to Catholicism, she irritated the masses so that surgeon and matron could not tell truth from lie anymore.

Telling the story of the female 'Fitzjames' emigrants in this way, I simply followed the narrative suggested by Susan Austen in her diary. As they were sailing towards Sydney, the complexities of friends and foes seemed to overwhelm her. Her disappointment upon discovering the dark side of yet another one of her "sheep" shows that the general scheme conducted by a few "depraved" and quarrelsome single women finally destroyed "what little confidence there was". Quoting the epistle of the apostle James[90] and applying it to the current situation of hurtful slander and numerous rumours, Austen ascertained in January: "Truly, the Tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity for behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth, and oh that they were wise and would consider

89 "That the Surgeon had been censured basely and cruely [sic] (if the truth could be found out), by others beside H F appears certain. But the motive for it will no doubt forever remain a mystery..." (Austen: 1857/01/29 [32 in original/8 in transcript].)

90 "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." James 3:6 (The Bible. KJV).

this, that they would consider their latter end."[91] Fighting with words became at least as powerful as the violent exchange of fists. The diligent and grateful girls, however, seemed to get lost in the historic account, while the rebellious and malignant ones dominated the discourse. With scheming and accusations against each other, the fire was kept alive even beyond the day of arrival in Sydney.

This is something historians generally struggle with when analysing societies and events from a historical perspective: The ordinary and the normal disappear quickly. Hence, as a principle of human interaction, something as fluid as atmosphere undergoes many changes fast. When it comes to enclosed settings like ships, some people quickly perceive how there is more opportunity available to exert power over others – or at least to crave for extended realms of influence. Thus, key agents of group dynamics do not lean back on their assigned position within a community but test the boundaries. Social life is essentially built through human interaction, be it sophisticated strategy, clever spontaneity, or coincidental reaction. In this subchapter, the confrontative forms of physical or verbal fighting were investigated in various contexts. In all cases, a crossing of boundaries happened through a movement of "coming too close". Both punching and gossiping always goes too far – it destroys trusted relationships, and sometimes more, by ignoring personal rights. In transit, the line between "too close" and "close" becomes even thinner because a wholly new estimation of space comes into play. On board, every inch became a precious and radically contested entity. If in steerage, even in March 1879, "our bunks are all fitted up between decks, not private at all. Side by side and just a curtain hung in front",[92] the barriers preventing intrusions into other people's most intimate affairs are dramatically lower, to the extent that intrusions become barely avoidable. The conditions on Queensland ships in the 1870s can serve as an example for general narrowness: a bunk of 94cm with a minimum of 76cm headroom above, so that married couples shared one apartment "which we divide at night in the centre by

91 Austen: 1857/01/19+20 [26–27 in original/6 in transcript].
92 Allbon, Elizabeth F., Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1879/03/21–1879/06/13); Letters to England (1879–1888); Newspaper Reports (1890); Photographs (Edited by Judith Woods), 1879–1890 (National Library of Australia) MS Acc11.033: 1879/03/23 [1].

a curtain but by day we are altogether [sic]".[93] One bunk was used by the husband and wife plus children under 12, or – in the single people's compartments – by two single persons.[94]

Just a curtain separating one family from the other, just a glimpse, just a comment, just a jostle against some stranger on the way to the toilets – everything was in close proximity, and everyone watched. An individual's own body and biography became a commodity, tradable by sometimes merciless hands. If intended, it was easy to find something to pick up or tease each other with, be it through hits or rumour. Due to short communication paths everywhere, it was a greater challenge to keep distance than to interfere or intermingle. The general setting made space more accessible to lower hierarchies as well. There was certainly a distinction between one family and the other, but the fact of sharing the same food, the same bathroom, the same routine and the same weather conditions made crossings easier.

This phenomenon of increased social tension was indeed something uniquely specific to transitory phases. Even Susan Austen, the matron on board the 'Fitzjames', where some girls caused so much trouble and bewilderment, could not help comparing the atmosphere and potential with her "former experience in large hospitals in London". She expected "about the same amount of ill temper, scandal and such like evils here (in proportion to numbers) as is generally found where large masses of any people happen (from whatever cause) to be together for any length of time. One great evil is the want of constant employment."[95] This latter factor would lead to alcohol and boredom becoming dangerous, constant companions instead.

Like many others, Austen realized in the end that her expectations did not meet with transit reality, as what she had anticipated would only partially help her in navigating the complexities of the sub-community she was to deal with.[96] 'Transit' in its condensed form as a special entity

93 Ridley, Isabella, Diary on Board the 'Melmerby', 1865/05/11–1865/09/06 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) F849: 1865/07/24 [7].
94 Gothard, *Blue China*: 120–121.
95 Austen, "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames'," 1856/12/23–1857/04/01: 1857/01/26 [31 in original/7 in transcript].
96 See Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit" on expectations and experience.

between two significantly different states of life and personhood[97] intensified the experiences she had observed with "large hospital" or "crowds squeezed together". It was impossible to escape or shorten the amount of time. To fight for space and power, the "tongue" (i.e., language), became the chosen tool – and it came with a great potential to disturb quickly. Another example of exclusion through word and deed is that of messmates conspiring against one person, a "woman from the north of Scotland", to "get rid of her from their berth". In this case, possessions of other people had been deliberately put into this woman's box or lent her beforehand, in order to accuse her of stealing the articles afterwards. Additionally, the Scottish accent became another barrier in connecting with each other. Her defence was slightly difficult to understand for English observers like Samuel Laver, who recounted this public trial in his diary from the 'Mermaid' in 1859. The verdict was postponed to the next day and held the ship in suspense. When the scheme was revealed in front of attentive passengers, a neutral jury and the captain-judge, it led to the shipboard community of different classes siding with the "poor innocent woman", condemning the unjust treatment and clapping for the fair release of the falsely accused.[98] James Qualtrough, another diarist of lower class travelling with his wife and eight of his children, who like many "hundreds gathered to see the event", believed "the cheerings and hurrahs the woman received could have been heard […] at two miles distance and afterwards, hooting and hallooing after Atkinson [i.e. the accuser]". His praises for the captain's wise dealing with the affair ended this entry with a personal note on how desirable such a just judge would have been in his personal life with an unsettled case of injustice in his home on the Isle of Man.[99]

This is where Laver's and Qualtrough's accounts on this woman end. However, from what is known about community set-ups and long-last-

97 See Foxhall, Katherine, "From Convicts to Colonists: The Health of Prisoners and the Voyage to Australia, 1823–53," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39, no. 1 (2011): 1–19.

98 Laver, Samuel, Diary on Board the 'Mermaid', 1859/07/09–1859/09/30 (State Library of Victoria) MS 10961; Box 4448/13: 1859/08/16–17 [13–14].

99 Qualtrough, James, "Diary on Board the 'Mermaid', 1859/07/11–1859/10/19: Taken from the Book 'A Quota of Qualtroughs'", updated 2021 <www.qualtrough.org/mermaid-p1.html>, accessed 2021/08/26: 1859/08/16–17 [4]. Probably, James Qualtrough was indebted to the

ing effects of mischief, the continuation of the Scottish woman's voyage can be imagined. Her transit was not over and despite "winning the day" in front of the jury on that Wednesday in August 1859, the hostile family in her mess initiating the false accusation would probably neither forget this humiliating experience nor change their mind towards her. There were still two more months to go and some stormy seas to pass until Auckland – weeks that would put a strain on everybody's nerves and make space for increasing aversions on all sides, especially when the actual intention of creating some physical distance between the two opposing parties had been denied.

In gender terms, bullying conducted by spoken and whispered means would stereotypically be assigned to women, especially when it came to aspects of morality. Abuse, slander and fights, of course, did not only happen in the single people's compartments: for many families, the voyage was a challenging period of emotional drought and would bring to light hidden violence. Although beatings happened behind closed doors in the English countryside or the tiny apartments of fabric workers, on board ship the news soon had it that "most of the wives were afraid of their husbands and the greater part of the men thrashed their wives". For young Emma White in 1853, who just a few weeks ago got married to her "Charley", it must have been an unsettling observation.[100] The Victorian idealization of the home as a safe haven and resting place in complete unity between husband and wife stood in stark contrast to the other reality displayed in British middle-class households: domestic violence.[101] As today, this was a widespread, but publicly concealed, downside of gender relationships. In this case, another aspect of human behaviour in exceptional, laboratory situations is displayed: when stress

man mentioned here as someone "the Lord would have to take vengeance on" – and most likely, this injustice had caused the Qualtrough family to leave the Isle of Man and move to distant New Zealand despite being 51 and 47 years of age already.

100 White, Emma, Letter about Voyage on Board the 'Emigrant' and Impressions of Australia, 1853/05/08 (National Library of Australia) MS 3878: 5.

101 Griffin, Ben, *The Politics of Gender in Victorian Britain: Masculinity, Political Culture and the Struggle for Women's Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012: 40–43 talks about the rise of this "safe haven" ideology and the separation of public and private spheres as one common theme in 19th century advice literature on marriage and explains how this narrative hindered the legal process of granting property rights to women.

and insecurity increased and the relationship between two or more people was unstable anyway, the pressure of the uncomfortable in-between might lead to irrational reactions familiar to an individual already. If husbands had maltreated their wives before, they would not necessarily change what they were used to just because the environment changed entirely. On the contrary: Instead of suppressing the aggressive moves for the sake of one's own reputation, sometimes the additional maritime challenge would rather worsen the aggression and lack of self-control. If men (and it would be men mostly – though not exclusively[102]) were never taught to cope with discontent and anger other than by physically turning against their wives, the shadowy legal regulations concerning domestic violence in Great Britain and Australia would confirm the women's hesitancy to speak out against their husbands. Furthermore, the jurisdiction on board ship was yet another complicated factor, and more difficult cases would have to be decided upon on shore because of the captain's limited legal power.

In the Victorian Empire in general, cruelty, assault, battering and murder of male and female spouses played a big role in many mid-19th-century sensation novels and fed into the public discourse of questioning the domestic ideals of class and family.[103] In real life, though, married women had few options to prosecute their assaulting husbands: it needed a great deal of initiative and complaint to have a case investigated. In Great Britain (Ireland first did not agree), divorce became an option for women only after the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857. They also had to show evidence for "aggravating factors" such as incest, bigamy or abandonment. This law – especially with such a shame-laden topic – often indirectly protected the perpetrator.[104]

102 See Tromp, Marlene, "'Throwing the Wedding-Shoe': Foundational Violence, Unhappy Couples, and Murderous Women," *Victorian Review* 39, no. 2 (2013): 39–43.
103 Walsh, Bridget, *Domestic Murder in Nineteenth-Century England: Literary and Cultural Representations*. Farnham: Taylor & Francis Group, 2014: 93–122.
104 See Urquhart, Diane, "Irish Divorce and Domestic Violence, 1857–1922," *Women's History Review* 22, no. 5 (2013): 820–837. doi:10.1080/09612025.2013.767101; Tromp, "'Throwing the Wedding-Shoe'", and Ailwood, Sarah, Patricia Easteal, and Jessica Kennedy, "Law's Indifference to Women's Experience of Violence: Colonial and Contemporary Australia," *Women's Studies International Forum* 35, no. 2 (2012): 86–96: 88–89.

Therefore, even in cases of obvious battering, the atmosphere would be dominated by embarrassment and denial on the sailing vessel 'Emigrant' in 1853, where Emma White was travelling. Although she would not elaborate on the deeper implications to be felt in the married compartment, the tone of the letter she sent back home was rather gloomy and dark, which matched the visible presence of violence in the most intimate relationships all around her.[105]

Views on domestic ideology, marriage images and pre-destined gender roles did change over time. Negative forms of patriarchy and male abuse based on falsely interpreted biblical arguments were not tacitly accepted throughout; they entered the public discourse even beyond fiction novels or autobiographies. With religious re-orientation after close-reading approaches in evangelical circles, marriage advice literature after 1870 would rather emphasize comradeship as a uniting factor. If two equal partners were joined together, compromise and surrender were the new principles highlighted in Victorian sermons and articles towards the end of the 19th century. Hence, the observations made for the case of the 'Emigrant' in 1853, and the shy way of semi-dealing with domestic abuse that Emma White displayed cannot be generalized for all difficult marriages in transit, although it fits with the social group and time she belonged to.[106]

2.2 Loving

Having introduced considerations of crossing across gender borders, this now clearly entails a look at the more positively connotated forms of interaction: flirtations, love affairs and sexual liaisons. When it came to singlehood, the following, official strategy was prevalent: instead of tacit ignorance among married couples, moral regulations were set forth, particularly to protect single women from all sorts of male intrusion. The government assisted about 90,000 single women to emigrate from Great Britain to all Australian colonies between 1860 and

105 White, "Letter About Voyage on Board the 'Emigrant' and Impressions of Australia," 1853/05/08: 5.
106 Griffin, *The Politics of Gender in Victorian Britain*: 126–136.

1900, including some middle-class governesses and many more working-class women. In 19th-century words, the danger of proximity paired with boredom and temptation was an explosive combination, which required strict rules and barriers. In many newspaper articles, passenger complaints and political debates, the horror scenario of a floating "Sodom and Gomorrah" was brought up repeatedly.[107]

The single men were as bored as the single women, and in part also interested in getting to know the female parties. Although space was scarce in general, every inch on board was cleverly distributed in order to ensure the maximum distance between the single women and single men, primarily achieved by locating the married quarters in-between them. Indeed, for young single men like Walter Stock, the group of emigrating single women remained mysteriously distant throughout the entire journey on the 'Hereford' in 1882. In his letter written to his relatives "Will and Nell", he expressed an underlying surprise at realizing how very guarded they were kept:

> The order & rules kept on board is very strict. The single women are kept all by themselves and on no account is anyone allowed to go there except on Sunday when their relations are allowed to visit them on the poop for an hour […] They [i.e. the single women] also have the pleasantest part of the ship & are allowed to use the poop as a promenade to show how particular they are.[108]

Because of the strict rules and the observing eyes of the matron on board, connecting with each other was sometimes easier during the period waiting at the emigration depots in Great Britain, where moral responsibilities were not automatically handed over to a respected authority. This is why the above-mentioned 'Fitzjames' bore a history

107 Number of government-assisted single women migrating from GB to AUS between 1860–1900: 18,000 (NSW); 13,000 (Vic); 9,100 (SA); 46,000 (Qld); 1,700 (WA); 1,600 (Tasmania) = 90,000. (Gothard, *Blue China*: 2 and already in Gothard, Jan, "Wives or Workers? Single British Female Migration to Colonial Australia," in *Women, Gender and Labour Migration: Historical and Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Pamela Sharpe. Routledge Research in Gender and History 5. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002: 145–161: 147.).
108 Stock, "Letter on Board the 'Hereford,'" 1882/02/21: 5–6.

of crossed borders upon leaving Plymouth Depot in 1856: soon after arrival in Sydney, complaints about "misconduct" reached the Immigration Board, and the subsequent investigations ended by blaming the lax regulations separating single men and women from each other at Plymouth Depot.[109]

Under careful supervision of the matron, the single women segregated in this manner were sometimes granted access to the most privileged place on the ship: the poop deck. This is the highest deck, located to the rear of the ship, and is where the captain and officers would execute their commands. Only cabin passengers would be allowed to stroll about there.[110] By allowing the government-assisted emigrant women to enter this exclusive area for recreation and fresh air, according to Jan Gothard's analysis, the emigrant women could be compared to the caged hens in their coops, which were likewise located on the poop – they could look down upon everyone else and yet had no rights to claim over this widely visible space. The fellow emigrants from their own class remained as far away as possible. The metaphor of a theatre performance proclaiming Victorian gender and class values fits well here, too.[111]

However, mutual observation and real encounter on the poop deck among the parties already "dwelling" there, so it was not unusual to hear scandalous stories about girls and higher-ranking officials (captain, first or second mates, officers, ship surgeon etc.). The previously quoted 24-year-old Yorkshireman Walter Stock wrote about the third mate "laughing & joking with one of the women" and the captain's

109 Walcott, "Letter to Colonial Secretary, New South Wales. On Conduct of Single Migrants on 'Fitzjames' and in Plymouth Depôt". Matron Jane Austen, whose diary was quoted above as well had troubles understanding the emotional disturbances caused by a likely time of social interaction before departure. For some of the single women therefore, the single men were not unknown strangers anymore, which explains some of the difficulties occurring during the voyage of the 'Fitzjames'. (Austen, "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames'," 1856/12/23–1857/04/01.)

110 Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*: 117–119.

111 "In all these conflicts, the poop deck emerges as a highly visible, indeed an elevated, stage for contests over social authority, with the single women (the protected), the emigrant men (the excluded), parents and relatives (the supplanted) and sometimes passengers of a different class (the affronted) all vying with the matron for the role of director. Here indeed was theatre in the making." (Gothard, *Blue China*: 134–137.)

immediate intervention.[112] The captain could or did not always stop flirtations and relationships; he sometimes participated or closed his eyes to the business of keeping mistresses during the passage out.[113] However, any cases which were discovered and denounced could lead to court inquiries with legal consequences afterwards. The subsequent debates in the newspapers and the media in general, of course, contributed to a morally suspicious gaze at the emigrant ships in some parts of society. Gothard recounts publicly discussed cases of the poop deck, which happened on some of the early emigrant ships in the 1850s and 1860s.[114]

In contrast to the higher-ranking officials, ordinary seamen were not allowed on the poop deck. Being far away from their loved ones at home themselves, some tried to get in contact with the "fair sex" nevertheless. An incident where three sailors dressed up as women to mingle with the passengers on the poop was certainly an exception but this breach of law, narrated by steerage passenger John Slade on the 'Hydaspes' in 1852, highlights the presence of social and spatial boundaries on board.[115] However, no rules could not prevent interactions entirely: within the range of their agency, both men and women developed tactics to communicate with each other. Playing hide-and-seek kept both the lovers and the authorities busy. Captain Hatfield moaned in annoyance at the "undecent" girls using holes in the walls of the toilet room as letterboxes.[116] Even though an exchange of secret love letters was a less startling way of courting, consequences according to law would still follow when the senders and recipients were found and identified.[117]

112 Stock, "Letter on Board the 'Hereford,'" 1882/02/21: 5–6.
113 Examples for the captain and the officers' mistresses are to be found in: Mereweather, *Life on Board an Emigrant Ship*: 82; Loyd, I., Diary/Letter on Dutch Emigrant Ship to Australia, N. N. (Caird Library and Archive) MSS/71/061: 3 or Zouche, Isaiah de, Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen' (Original and Transcript with Further Sources (Letters, Examination Protocols, Newspaper Extracts, Notes, etc.)), 1875/04/19–1875/10/30 (State Library of Queensland) OM 67–8; Box 8630: 1875/08/15 [49 in original/14 in transcript].
114 Gothard, *Blue China*: 132–135.
115 Slade, "Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes,'" 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895]: 1852/09/29 [12].
116 Hatfield, Samuel A., Captain Hatfield's Private Log on Board the 'Plantagenet'. Emigrants from Plymouth to Sydney 1856 (Edited by William E. Hatfield), 1856/10/12–1857/02/13 [2001] (Vaughan Evans Library) 910.45 HAT: 65–67.
117 Too bad, though, for a certain Shack von Tromp that his love letter dedicated to his "dear Miss" was found on deck the 'Fusilier' and then printed in the humorous section of the public ship newspaper to make fun of him – including all spelling mistakes and overly

The rule-makers and moral guards in government and empire saw both the emigrating single men from the working class and the sailors as groups that that would evoke stereotypical accusations – the latter due to their gender and lonesome job situation. So there were calls for the enforcement of strict separation rules between single women, single men and the seamen. The emphasis was on raising barriers to mitigate a demoralizing effect of transit, not forgetting the real danger of rape and sexual abuse, either.[118]

Proper engagements would have been allowed without secret intercourse beforehand. However, attempts were not always successful, as shown by Jane E. Skinner immediately turning down an unexpected proposal sent to her by a stranger when travelling to Brisbane with her brother, sister-in-law and their children.

> In the evening an offer of marriage in a letter was forwarded to me by a gentleman from whom I least expected. A nobleman's son Mr Allen but they say it is a false name, besides my heart won't lodge there he is too mild. The night was rough.[119]

Love and sexual desire were not only issues among the single people on board and a marriage certificate was not an automatic sign of fidelity, so it could happen that "the married women are ten times worse than

sentimental phrases. (N. N., How We Went to Queensland on Board the 'Fusilier', 1864 (A weekly journal (incomplete) written on board the ship Fusilier, from 14th May 1864 to 20th August 1864. The Captain of the Fusilier was C.D.B. Carvosso. Printed version), 1864/05/14–1864/08/20 (Fryer Library) F706: 1864/08/06.)

118 Around the same time, a Select Committee on German Immigration in the New South Wales Legislative Council investigated shocking conditions for girls on German vessels of the early 1850s. They decided upon further regulations for their own emigrant ships. When interviewing the ship's surgeon Dr Charles F. Eichler in May 1858, the Board of Investigation was very interested in separation policies: "49. Was any distinction made between married and single? No. 50. All were put together? Yes. 51. Do you know what the effect of that was? Disorderly life, undoubtedly. […] 60. Do you consider the effect of the voyage was to demoralise them? I should think so, under those conditions of living." (New South Wales Legislative Council, Report from the Select Committee of the Legislative Council […] to Inquire into the Present System of German Immigration into this Colony, 1858/08/11 (State Library of New South Wales) T/RAV/FM4/4: Minutes of Evidence: 6.)

119 Skinner, Jane E., Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar', 1850/04/29–1850/08/20 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 59; TR 1789; Box 9593: 1850/07/15 [22].

the single women",[120] especially since the watchful eyes of the authorities would have focussed on the single women. For two married men journeying out to Melbourne in the second half of the 1850s, Robert Hepburn and Walter Dutton, it was a shock to hear that married women, often "going out [to Australia] to join [their] husband", would start affairs with the sailors and other male companions on board. The two writers did not know each other but had a similar judgement: these women's behaviour was an outright immorality and a "disgrace", which could taint the public picture of all females.[121] However, a reaction other than condemnation was shown by Charles Dean in 1883 when he heard about intimacy between a married woman and a sailor. A recently married young Swede of 18 had initiated a late-evening tea session with a Swedish sailor. Dean described an empathic pity for the pretty girl, when her 38-year-old husband, "one of thease Sneeking [sic] Quite Sort of Men", called the captain to order her out of the sailor's cabin. It is remarkable that sympathy was expressed for the girl's position here: in the 1850s, the comment from a religious family man would be expected to read like Hepburn's and Dutton's. As referred to above, however, the change in the perception and obligation of gender roles in the course of the century would impact the attitude of a pious husband and father like Charles Dean in the 1880s.[122] In contrast to the working class steerage passengers from the 1850s, Dean agreed with "all the People [who] Seem Verry [sic] Sorry for they Say if her Husband had of Kept her cumpany [sic] She would not of had to look for other company". Responsibility for a lasting and healthy relationship was now regarded as a mutual commitment binding both partners to take care of each other – something which was obviously lacking in the Swedish couple's covenant as they were hardly seen spending time together. The captain's verdict then separated the couple and placed them with the

120 Dutton, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Sarah Dixon,'" 1858/08/29–1858/12/26: 1858/10/19 [5–6].

121 Hepburn, Robert, Diary and Letters on Board the 'Saldanha', 1856/06/05–1856/10/04 (State Library of Victoria) MS 13998; Box 121/4 (6): 22 and Dutton, "Diary and Letter on Board the 'Sarah Dixon,'" 1858/08/29–1858/12/26: 1858/10/06 [4].

122 Griffin, *The Politics of Gender in Victorian Britain*: 126–136.

single passengers, and a final judgment would be passed on arrival on the sailor as well.[123]

It must be noted, though, that all this careful separation policy only applied to steerage or third class, i.e., a socially pre-selected group of people from primarily more rural and less wealthy backgrounds. Moralized pictures of seductive girls and dangerous men were mainly projected on the lower classes. 'Class' indeed is a powerful category to understand the consequent employment of a double (or triple) standard. In contrast to second, third or intermediate class, first-class passengers would not have to waste one single thought on social distancing among equally placed men and women. In addition, from the 1860s onward, a growing number of unassisted female migrants chose a cabin instead of steerage.[124] It was, perhaps, no wonder that the mixing of genders in a generally small group of saloon passengers contributed to romantic reflections and subtle flirtations while having dinner in the saloon, dancing on the poop deck and discussing literary texts. Historians know more about these people's transit experience, since the corpus of sources is biased towards the (generally more literate) higher classes. The comparatively large number of first-hand accounts provides the reader with detailed character sketches and gossip and news from aboard.[125]

One example is John W. Eisdell. In his published memoirs dedicated to his grandchildren, he nostalgically remembers the "good community" among the nine first-class passengers in 1882, and confesses: "Truth to tell, in our narrow surroundings even more than friendships were quickly accomplished, and we were given to understand that troths were plighted long before we had passed the southernmost point of

123 Dean, Charles H., Diary on Board the 'Goalpara', 1883/11/07–1884/01/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 61; M 753; Box 9593: 9–10. Another extreme case from an earlier voyage is recorded on a 1842 journey to New Zealand, where an Irish husband and the doctor almost duelled each other over the jealous cabin passenger's wife as quoted in: Brett, Henry, *White Wings: Vol. 2: Founding of the Provinces and Old-Time Shipping. Passenger Ships from 1840 to 1885*, 2 vols. Auckland: The Brett Printing Company Ltd, 1928: 35–36.
124 See McLennan, "Glimpses of Unassisted English Women Arriving in Victoria, 1860–1900".
125 Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*: 9–12; Gothard, *Blue China*: 8–9 and Pietsch, Tamson, "Bodies at Sea: Travelling to Australia in the Age of Sail," *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 2 (2016): 209–228. doi:10.1017/S1740022816000061: 212.

Europe." But when being honest, he admits: "I have never heard that in any case matrimony came of it!" With no moral judge or official guideline imposed upon the saloon passengers, Eisdell's frivolous and playful tone fits with a stereotypical idea of the rich enjoying short-lived romances as and when they occur.[126]

Of course, not everything was freely possible for everyone situated in cabin or saloon or upper deck. The under-18s, for example, would often have to navigate between "the angry looks of the papas" and "the vigilant watchings of the mammas".[127] Nevertheless, history proved that – in contrast to Eisdell's flippant prediction – the mutual sympathy need not be short-lived. Some even hardly endured waiting until the end of the voyage to finally get married. Since weddings were only officially acknowledged and valid when approved by a clergyman, the right to wed two lovers was usually located ashore. If the exception happened and some version of a wedding took place aboard, it was clear that there had to be some sort of legal agreement beforehand to make this possible at all. The curious and quite unique case of a private wedding on the 'Young Australia' on May 20th, 1864, showed that the nature of this relationship remained "(to use a mild expression) mysterious".[128] Under normal circumstances, neither captains nor surgeons could sanction weddings. The surgeon-superintendent Eustace J. Walsh had to pay for his ignorance of that particular law when he oversaw a marriage ceremony on board the emigrant ship 'Joshua' in 1852 between the ship's schoolmaster and his fiancée, who was travelling on the same ship among the single emigrant women. Dr. Walsh's justification was that the schoolmaster felt so lovesick during the voyage, "his anxiety to

126 Eisdell, *Back Country*:4.
127 "The young people of the party particularly afforded all on board abundant entertainment; but neither the angry looks of the papas, nor the vigilant watchings of the mammas, prevented two young ladies from getting husbands! One very cleverly ran away during the bustle of landing, and it was some time before her sorrowing family received the certificate of her marriage. The other young lady was more discreet, she obtained the consent of her parents, and a few weeks after, went up the country with her husband, a young dissenting minister, who, poor fellow, seemed very grateful for having a companion on his long journey." (Ramsay-Laye, Elizabeth, *Social Life and Manners in Australia: Being the Notes of Eight Years Experience*. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861: 3–4.)
128 Smith, "Diary on Board the 'Young Australia'," 1864/05/09–1864/08/13: 27–29.

marry was weakening him in mind and body and rendering him incapable of performing his duties as Schoolmaster". The Colonial Office rejected this emotional explanation and cut Dr. Walsh's gratuity by a large amount.[129]

Engagements on board were celebrated regularly; and for every decade in the second half of the 19th century, at least one saloon passenger's account in the diaries analysed here mentioned the sometimes astonishingly quick proceedings, usually leading to a feast or small celebration ceremony with drinks in the evening.[130] Such events did have effects on the whole shipboard community, raising questions about the speed, the nature of attraction, the reasons or the capital involved.

In any case, love relationships gave food for talk – including all variants of relationship status. There were the married couples who decided to split up according to gender (mothers and daughters vs. fathers and sons) for the duration of the voyage to save money, when single fares were cheaper than family bookings. This separation was a purposeful and pragmatic agreement, which contributed to a somewhat artificial border.[131] There were the women journeying out to be reunited with their husbands or fiancés already in Australia. Mrs. Robertson, a Scottish widow and mother of two, who was "in such a hurry" to meet her future husband Colonel Barber in Australia and desired "to be married on board as soon as she gets there". Her plan was fulfilled despite lacking friends in Melbourne to act as witnesses to pledging the troths thanks to the active support of the young single man Robert Tindall. He had

129 Murdoch, Thomas W., and Frederic Rogers, "Letter to Herman Merivale. On Stoppage of £28 Part of Gratuity of Dr. Walsh, Late Surgeon-Superintendent of the Emigrant Ship 'Joshua'," in *Letters to the Colonial Office. Australia.* London, 1852/07/22–1853/07/13 (National Archives) CO386/70: 124–127.

130 E.g Saddington, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain'," 1853/08/11–1853/10/29: 27 or Jensen, Christian O., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Barmen', 1889/11/08–1890/01/31 (National Library of Australia) MS 8750: L5.

131 "We have lots of families going out, and, strange to say, the husbands of many of them are with us and their sons, and the mothers and girls with the females. I have enquired of some how this is and they say it is something cheaper." (Robinson, Thomas, Letter/Diary Written to his Wife on Board the 'Cuyco' and in Australia (AJCP Microfilm), 1889/10/25–1889/12/13 (National Library of Australia) M 844: 1889/10/29 [5].)

made friends with her little daughters during the voyage and agreed to "play the part of father to one who is at least 12 years my senior".[132]

The 13-year-old Clara M. Eddis seemed generally annoyed by the men chasing after unmarried women everywhere, but she admired the 15-year-old "Fraulein" Gessner, who found herself a lover. To connect with this young man was probably easier for the German girl because she was travelling without her parents.[133] Catherine S. Roxburgh sent a shipboard letter to her sister reamarking on the danger for a pretty girl of being on board without male protection from either father or brother. As a woman travelling for health reasons, she developed feelings somewhere between pity and jealousy when watching another girl, Cordelia Husband, "sapping the foundations of several hearts on board". Her behaviour was vividly discussed and condemned everywhere, but Roxburgh chose to ascribe Husband's behaviour to "inconsideration and ignorance of the world", including daintiness, youth and wrong role models. The lovelornness and courtship attempts of the various admirers obviously occupied the minds and thoughts of most passengers quickly, and sometimes more than the individual was comfortable with ("I fear my dear Emma, you will think I have been far too prolific, I find I have given two good pages on Miss C. H's concerns […]").[134] In like manner, young Annie Henning, travelling with her sick brother, enjoyed herself on the steamship passage in 1853 and reflected on matchmaking, carefully watching the gentlemen's manners and the other women's clothes. As long as nothing directly interfered with her comfort zone, it was an agreeable company. When the first couple Mr. Hutchinson and Miss Fitzgerald announced their engagement and started to act exclusively, regularly occupying the public music room

132 Tindall, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain' and during First Weeks in Melbourne et al.," 1873/10/24–1874/01: 20–26+37–38 with p. 25 on Mrs. Robertson's character and p. 37–38 on being introduced to Colonel Barber and the actual wedding ceremony on board, where Tindall was "the only gentleman who was witness".

133 Eddis, Clara M., Teenager's Diary on Board the 'Yorkshire' (1873/12/04–1875/02/23) and during First Time in Melbourne, 1873/12/04–1874/10/16 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS YOR: 11+13.

134 Roxburgh, Catherine S., Letters Written to her Sister by Catherine S. Roxburgh, Daughter of the Captain, from the Ship 'General Hewett', 1852/11/22 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) D 167: 6–8.

for very private gatherings, she readily joined the general "great complaints" about the lovers' inconsiderateness.[135]

Upper-class emigrant Nancy Armitage also had a reticent and ambiguous reaction to two engagements announced shortly after one another. In her very personal diary, she happily recounted that "a particular favourite of mine" got engaged to a nice young man, whereas the other "talk on an upcoming marriage in Sydney" made her raise her eyebrows. A "queer kind of love" this must be, she then concluded, between the grey-haired doctor and a 25-year-old lady from first-class. This combination was strange both due to age differences and due to their biographies. It was well known that the doctor had recently grieved the loss of his wife, so that the suddenness of the new affiliation was surprising. Yet, in contrast to the utter condemnation of any approaches among single women and single men in lower deck, the crossing of these borders was – perhaps with a light taint of indecency – graciously overlooked and accepted. The gradually changing idea of love as mutual affection and psychologically founded dependence gained ground among the upper classes. Unnoticed by most passengers, this double standard in judging romantic relationships on board lays bare the internalized principles and foundations of class society, which 'transit' would not directly shake. The pen and paper thoughts of primarily well-educated cabin passengers generally supported a policy of separation; the reckless first-class traveller spontaneously kissing a pretty girl when paying a visit to the second-cabin passengers was judged because of his crossing the "class" line rather than because of his physically encroaching on the girl's private sphere.[136]

Altogether, the raising of borders and barriers was true for some but did not pertain to others. Crossings of these borders and barriers necessarily happened: it is enough to consider the temporariness of the in-between among a set of randomly allocated individuals who would

135 Thomas, Joan, *The Sea Journals of Annie and Amy Henning*. Sydney: John Ferguson, 1984: 31+37. Annie Henning emigrated to Sydney in 1853 on board the S.S. 'Great Britain' with her brother Biddulph. A year later, they were followed by their sister Amy Henning, travelling on the 'Calcutta' in 1854.

136 Armitage, "Diary on Board the 'Parramatta,'" 1875/08/27–1875/11/26. The two subsequently announced engagements are on p. 10; the molesting kiss is discussed on p. 3–4.

scatter into the Australian wilderness after arrival. Despite the notion of 'love' becoming seen more as an affectionate attachment of two partners during this period,[137] none of the diaries I analysed openly talked about personal attachments. At most, some women suggested some likings and preferences. Love and sexuality under transit-circumstances were a community thing, permeating the ship but individually dealt with by references to a third party, fed by observations and rumours. The moral principles of Victorian society were being tested in diary entries, reflective letters, dinner table debates, concert eye contacts, toilet-love letters, and poop deck flirtations.

Here the different perspectives employed by different people makes the difference. A more flexible attitude would shine through (1) if the journey was individualized and viewed as primarily detached from every obligation and biography. Then, considerations of possible, negative consequences were pushed aside to seize the moment. Usually, the vanishing of personal prayers brought with it a laxer attitude towards flirtations. But even for the ones celebrating a feigned moral liberation for saloon and cabin, this temporary freedom had to go along prescribed paths. The crucial question asked then was "Is it appropriate?" for the community aboard. Relationships in the making would be evaluated using the definition of appropriateness – an appropriateness mainly limited to and concentrated on the particular shipboard community. In transit, with social discrepancies and clashes extraordinarily close to each other in the floating nutshell, behaviours were quickly perceived across the bulwarks, galley and decks. Talk was cheap and daily life was boring, so "it is curious how everything that is said and done here is immediately known from one end of the ship to the other".[138] This attitude was completely incomprehensible to those whose perspective would be more holistic: (2) if 'transit' was part of a big storyline and embedded in the same social structures pre- and post-dating departure and arrival. This made such an approach valid beyond the hull as it consciously used former convictions. If people believed in the

137 For earlier research on the development of husband and wife-relationships as lovers and supporters, see Suitor, Jill, "Husband's Participation in Childbirth: A Nineteenth-Century Phenomenon," *Journal of Family History* 6, no. 3 (1981): 278–293.
138 Thomas, *The Sea Journals of Annie and Amy Henning*: 31.

justification of an external power who knew better what was helpful and healthy (God, the moral law, the colonial authorities), the non-individual principles would prevail, over social standards or tolerated immoralities. In the words of a popular emigrant guide upon referring to the Christian duty:

> Obedience to lawful authority is everywhere and in every community the soul of safety and peace, but it is pre-eminently so on shipboard. […] Your voyage will thus, instead of being, what it too often is, a blank in life, or an event disconnected with the rest of your days, be an effective discipline for the enterprise which is before you. You may acquire or strengthen habits of self-control, self-reliance, thoughtfulness, and decision, which will stand you in good stead all the rest of your life.[139]

Where more religious awareness reigned, fidelity and chastity were regarded as precious virtues. This ex-transitory based reference point would lead to a more generalizable opinion. Flirtations were regarded as proof of attention-seeking and shallowness; the married women travelling to be reunited with their husbands in Australia would stay faithful to their waiting partner; the officers would respect the single girls' privacy and rather seek a permanent relationship.[140]

The two perspectives sketched out here are not mutually exclusive but explain the seemingly contradictory verdicts passed on loving as one mean of interacting on board. Based on this, the words of Clotilda Bayne appear in a different light. She was a privileged young lady, engaged to Charles L. Marson, a curate already in Australia and was preparing to travel out to marry him. After tearful and heartrending goodbyes to dear friends in England, she wondered about her decision

139 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, The Emigrant's Voyage (Emigrant Tracts 1652), London 1873 (Cambridge University Library) 1873.6.636: 9–10.
140 One example for this type of life decision is given in Havelock Ellis' spiritual biography. Havelock Ellis, a captain's son, recalls meeting Alfred Morris in Sydney, "who threw up his position as mate on my father's ship to marry a penniless and ordinary emigrant girl and settle in Australia" – a decision which led to a large family with hardships in labour and private life, but which enabled Morris to support young Ellis in his early years in Australia. (Ellis, Havelock, *My Life*. London: William Heinemann, 1940: 113–115.)

to leave England before concluding: "Love needs no justification."[141] As shown in this subchapter: It sometimes does.

2.3 Supporting

Of course, there were plenty of other passenger interactions possible between bitter fights and romantic love – they could simply make friends within their new 'transit' community. Those positive relationships without a romantic note were key to creating the unique atmosphere characterizing each voyage. It required a decision to be patient with each other, following the advice: "Of all places in the world, a ship is the most undesirable in which to have persistent strife and rankling animosities."[142]

Clever group formations within the range of an individual's sphere of influence were therefore very welcome. Andrew McDonell on board the 'Falcon', the young single emigrant who had recounted the terrible suicide by the cook's assistant in one of his earliest entries on May 25th, then moved on a few days later to introduce his messmates. He readily seized the opportunity to initiate the task they had been given to "form ourselves into lots of twelve", aiming at joining "men with whom we could mess together comfortably". As a bachelor in steerage, he knew that enriching connections with the male companions as well as good communication to organize the daily chores were essential to surviving the long journey. According to his first impressions, the combination they settled on was a great success: there was a common ground that made him positive about the others. Everyone knew at least one other man, so that there was some sort of familiarity already – reliable principles to assume at least agreeable comradeship. Not everyone was as lucky as this group of twelve, including Andrew McDonell, John and George Proud and Walter Oates, who had mutual contacts and were

141 Bayne, Clotilda, Diary of Fiancée Preparing for Emigration on Board the S.S. 'Orizaba' (1890/05/04–1890/06/03) and during First Time in South Australia as Wife to Charles L. Marson, 1890/01/01–1890/12/31 (National Library of Australia) MS 2733: 26 [96].

142 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, "The Emigrant's Voyage," London 1873: 13.

therefore acquainted with one or more fellow migrants on board right from the start.[143]

The eager search for links with others became even more relevant given the obligation of socializing with strangers. When Samuel Laver in the second cabin found out that a young woman from his home area in Claverham was emigrating on the same ship as well, he observed his immediate emotional high and concluded: "It seems good so far away from home to meet a person from the same part as myself." Surprised by his joy himself, he realized the uniqueness of 'transit': under other circumstances, meeting "Farmer Binning's daughter" somewhere would not even be an information worth mentioning. On board the 'Mermaid' with months at sea ahead, however, this was a reason to rejoice.[144]

Many single travellers, male or female, were missing their closest relatives and dear ones, so the companions in fate they encountered aboard built the core material for relationships. Their cabin partners or steerage messmates had the potential to replace brothers or sisters. No doubt, this setting could result in hidden or open bullying and exclusion, but it could also lead to true support and enjoyment. "We have got on capitally with everyone and have been in the nicest set" records cabin passenger Alice Archer in a letter to her mother in 1886, probably also because: "I suppose we made up our minds to enjoy it from the beginning."[145] Hence, an essential precondition was mutual agreement on expectations and similar priorities concerning trust and what community should look like. McDonell's group of men also "agreed to eat together like one family as the best and most expeditious way".[146] Accordingly, the willingness to share, partake and be attentive to one another unified the messmates.

The linking point was the same destiny and place they shared with a group of random people. Reaching out to one another and starting a conversation was easier when there were but few inches between one

143 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon,'" 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [3].
144 Laver, "Diary on Board the 'Mermaid,'" 1859/07/09–1859/09/30: 1859/07/30 [8].
145 Archer, Alice, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Liguria' (1886/10–1886/12) and in Australia (1886/12–1887/06) + Letter to Mother during the Voyage (1886/12/07), 1886/10/28–1887/06/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) M 1588; Box 9593: 47.
146 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon,'" 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [3].

berth or one seat and another. For non-romantic friendships between crew and passengers, the natural spaces of encounter were rarer and so true friendship is hardly recorded.

Contact between higher class passengers and higher officials was nothing unusual, although it was mostly limited to intellectualized discussions, meals, drinks, concerts or games. More commonly, saloon and cabin passengers used to dine with the captain and his first mate, the surgeon and perhaps the boatswain. Also, their conversations would be publicly observable when on the poop deck. Depending on the concept of 'authority' represented, a fatherly captain would also be open to talk to young men or get to know the surgeon's wife, for example. Poorer passengers could gain access to the captain if they were to stick out among the masses: an example was Thomas Pender, who was asked to play the violin for the single girls and afterwards invited to a drink with the captain.[147]

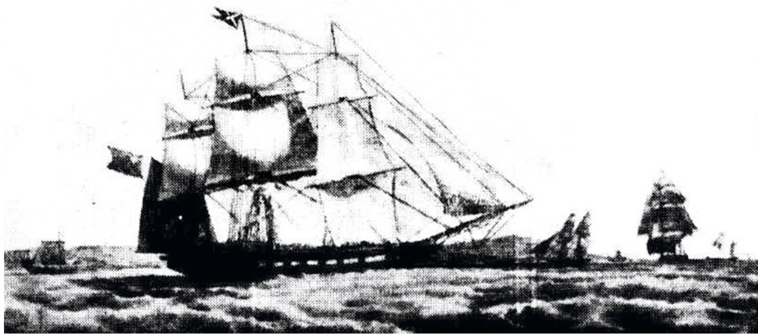


Figure 3: The 'Falcon' as printed in a newspaper article from 1941

'Transit' also had the power to bring separate groups together. Andrew McDonell experienced the sea as "no respecter of persons"[148] in an

147 Some examples for encounters on an almost equal footing with the captain from the 1880s: Marchant, Samuel T., Diary on Board the 'Thirlmere', 1882/11/18–1882/12/30 (National Library of Australia) MS 801: 1882/11/18 [1]; Thornton, "Diary of Surgeon's Wife on Board the 'Selkirkshire'," 1882/07/19–1882/09/14: 1882/07/24 [8] and Pender, Thomas, Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw', 1883/01/12–1883/05/17 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15344; Box 4723/1: 1883/03/20 [109].

148 Yaun, Spence, and Yaun, *David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864*: 21.

illustrative and dramatic way which resulted in a special identification with the ship 'Falcon' and "our sailors". In the night of June 12th, 1853, shortly after having crossed the equator line, the second mate oversaw the watch through the dark. They had had a speedy voyage with the "fine craft of 1200 tons" and had been at sea for about three weeks.[149]

A beautiful Saturday was coming to an end, the passengers had thoroughly enjoyed some music and dancing, and McDonell was getting ready for bed after 10pm – "little suspecting what was to befall us before morning". Suddenly, the 'Zuleika', a foreign 800-ton barque appeared, smaller and lighter than the 'Falcon' with over 270 passengers. The other ship's cargo of 600 tons of rice was on its way to Europe (McDonell names London as port of destination, two newspaper articles claim Bremen as the goal).[150] Somehow the pace and direction of both ships was painfully unfortunate, leaving the sailing vessels no room to evade each other anymore:

> Every moment brought them nearer together and it soon became evident our worst fears were to be realised. […] The vessels came nearer and nearer until crash they went together, the bows of our ship striking the other amidships just before the main mast.[151]

McDonell watched the collision happen, observing the anxious sailors, the confused and overwhelmed second mate trying to prevent the worst, and the shocked eyes of the passengers. But damage was inescapable. Both vessels had directly run into one another, so that all sails were just "one entangled mass". People in the married compartments, like emigrant Moritz Michaelis and his wife, had been sleeping safe and sound but awoke with a start and were ordered to put on life jackets before assembling in the main cabin. An upheaval of contradicting emotions and chaos broke out.[152]

149 Michaelis, Archie, "Sailing Days: Trials of a Pioneer," *Age*, 1941/06/14: 11.
150 Michaelis, "Sailing Days" and N. N., "Victoria".
151 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon,'" 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/06/08–1853/06/11 [7].
152 Michaelis, "Sailing Days".

Over the next two days, the captain and sailors of the rammed 'Zuleika' joined the luckily rather undamaged 'Falcon', while eagerly working on separating the two intertwined vessels. Two Dutch ships spotted the flags of distress, stopped and actively assisted with emptying the 'Zuleika', setting up a replacement jibboom and pumping water out of her, before accompanying the provisionally repaired vessel to the next port. It was a "only by good luck – little short of the miraculous" that the 'Falcon' could be mended quickly and move on, after being detained for three days.

A closer reading of McDonell's detailed account reveals more than just bare facts about this dangerous accident at sea. It is also an account of how borders were crossed between crew and passengers, between landlubbers and seashells, and between English third cabin passengers and Dutch sailors. It is a story of identification and growing together, which can be seen happening gradually as McDonell switches from talking about the "the sailors" to "our sailors", "our ship", and "our passengers". The people on board the 'Falcon' melted together in the united and uniting project when they were asked and saw the need to work side by side with the seamen, "plying backwards and forwards between the ships" to unload the 'Zuleika'.

> Sunday 12th June
> […] This morning, on examining the Zuleika […] it was agreed to make a determined effort to get her clear and likewise ascertain, if possible, what damage she had sustained. To do this the principle part of our sailors with all the passengers that could be induced to volunteer their services were taken to the disabled ship and soon commenced to pumping and discharging her […]
>
> It was a pitiful sight to see many hundred bags of rice thrown into the sea but it was impossible to save the ship without so there was no alternative. A great quantity of our passengers exerted themselves most effectively. For myself, I think I never worked so hard for four or five hours in my life – sometimes at the pumps, at others heaving the rice into the sea. The consequence was that before night we got all the water out of her and began to entertain hopes of her getting to some port in safety.[153]

153 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon'," 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/06/12 [9].

This shared destiny and rescue from drowning despite the mishap made ordinary conversations with the sailors and higher-ranking officials much easier and smoother. All had escaped death (with one exception, none of the 'Zuleika'-crew died from the collision), so the fragility of life and the necessity of united effort prevailed. McDonell talked with the Dutch sailors from the 'Henrietta Elizabeth Susannah', a Dutch barque from China to Rotterdam, which had voluntarily stopped and helped the disabled ships to disentangle and to discharge the 'Zuleika'. This encounter and the respect the sailors paid to their exemplarily selfless captain's "generous and humane character" left a very positive impression on McDonell.[154]

The increase of first-person plural possessive pronouns in McDonell's report sticks out and testifies to the growing sense of belonging which was forged in the fire of the almost-shipwreck. The passengers actively helping to throw rice overboard and supporting the sailors turned into essential additional hands; they were no longer just annoying freight with stupid questions and no further use in the eyes of the seamen.[155] The aloof sailors with strange customs, whose private territory the passengers seemed to invade, turned into admirably diligent co-workers exerting themselves to the utmost to efficiently keep the ship going. The enforced manpower effort gave unintended insight into both worlds and reduced prejudices. McDonell's respect for dedicated and competent captains on his ship and on the Dutch ships grew; the anonymous workers became "our sailors", and the huge mass of travellers across the classes became "our passengers". Not all of them earned his praise for their investment; McDonell harshly criticized "both passengers and crew" for "cursing and swearing as usual". It is interesting to note here how the movement towards distinguishing between workers and travellers no longer the prevalent marker to separate groups aboard. In contrast, the behaviour, the commitment, the reaction to an external

154 Especially after an anonymous ship ignored the flags of distress and moved on without halting, the "goodness and humanity of the [two Dutch] Captains in wishing to assist us in our distress" was even more appreciated. (McDonell: 1853/06/08–1853/06/12 [8–9].)
155 "Saturday, 4th June […] My own opinion is that the whole crew from the Captain downwards, are so annoyed by inquiries of all kinds that they just say anything to get rid of them." (McDonell: 1853/06/04 [6].)

misfortune united the shipboard community, and split it into new, different perceived groups. In that sense, the collision and some passengers' working and praying together was a blessing in disguise in the end. The 'Falcon' and her lucky outcome of this crash, the quick-witted process of rescuing the damaged 'Zuleika' and her men, and the common effort as a company of passengers and sailors contributed to Captain Taylor's good reputation and future fame. Such was the result of an intense blurring of social lines in an extreme situation.

But even in less dramatic encounters, practical support in daily chores was a real chance for male passengers to connect with the sailors. Sailing vessels demanded physical endeavour and when external pressures increased, steerage passengers regularly had to lend a hand in pumping, cleaning and repairing. The latter, in particular, was a general duty that became important after any heavy swells. This applied to all classes, even to slightly snobbish Robert Bradley in second cabin, who had looked with a purely scientific gaze at the sailors as somehow strange maritime people and wanted to analyse their "nautical language", their customs and their ocean songs.[156] Until then, Bradley felt more like the neutral observer watching a stimulating and exotic culture in front of him. On the small sailing ship 'Essex' with only about 80 passengers, his inclination was directed towards reading classical literature and getting to know some gentlemen companions. Amid a strong blowing wind and monstrous waves shaking the vessel, he still remained astonishingly factual in his vivid writing style. But then: "at about 4 o'clock on Thursday morning the voice of the skipper in stentorian tones was heard calling upon the passengers to get up and assist in clearing the deck of our cabin of water." Bradley continued to describe the laymen's barefoot, but "assiduous" efforts to get rid of the water, joining forces with the permanently working sailors in the darkest night. This experience certainly changed their attitude towards each other. Finishing off his carefully written account of the storm the next calm day, he concluded: "I can understand the feeling which prompts

156 "N.B. I intend before the voyage is out to get a collection of these songs from the sailors. – I apprehend it will be unique." (Bradley, "Diary on Board the 'Essex'," 1867/04/22–1867/07/22: 6.)

a sailor to love his ship now. The Essex behaved bravely."[157] Work on board steamships looked different and more technical but required the same sort of help for simpler jobs in times of trouble.[158]

The act of purposefully defending the vessel evidently enhanced a bonding process that overcame stereotypical opinions and mutual reservations. Be it taking turns in watches at night, carrying buckets full of salt water, or scrubbing the deck – access to the maritime world and a crossing of boundaries as such was often initiated by a natural force summoning all manpower to show spirit.

3 Attitudes of Unity and Borders

So far, both structures and practices relating to unity and borders have been analysed. In the last section, attitudes of unity and borders will be under observation: the way people and classes relate to and think about each other. Angelika Epple and Walter Erhart state that comparisons are in many respects a ubiquitous phenomenon – with "comparisons as a condition of mind and comparing as a social practice".[159] As a social practice then, actors need to "assume comparability and then relate similarities and differences between two or more entities", measured against a reasonable tertium comparationis.[160]

When in transit, the very notion of exposure to other social beings and the absence of many familiar structures, combined with a sense of adventure and enforced pragmatism, intensified the need for such "entities" to define and defend one's own standing and status in society. To understand the cultural context that nursed the emigrants and

157 Bradley: 87–91.
158 E.g. Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company, Memo from the Management for the Board. (On Assistance Rendered by Passengers on the Occasion of the Late Accident to Mooltan), 1868/07/30 (Caird Library and Archive) P&O/3/8.
159 Epple, Angelika, and Walter Erhart, "Practices of Comparing: A New Research Agenda Between Typological and Historical Approaches," in *Practices of Comparing: Towards a New Understanding of a Fundamental Human Practice*, ed. Angelika Epple, Walter Erhart and Johannes Grave. Bielefeld: Bielefeld University Press, transcript Verlag, 2020: 11–28: 12. They are both members of the SFB "Practices of Comparing. Ordering and Changing the World" in Bielefeld.
160 Epple and Erhart: 15–16.

travellers aboard sailing vessels and steamships to Australia in the 19th century, a brief introduction to the history of comparing and its evolving types from the 17th to the early 20th century will follow.

Willibald Steinmetz distinguishes three types of social comparisons: (1) 'above/below' comparisons, (2) 'better/worse' comparisons and (3) the assertion of being 'simply different'. Although he defines the first type primarily as remnant of an ancient regime structure, a metahistorical analysis quickly shows that it is not simply a pre-modern technique, but something human beings and groups do frequently and throughout "to position themselves against significant others in concrete situations". Concrete situations (like transit situations) certainly fall into that category. The condensed setting presented a British society in miniature and placed it onto a few hundred yards of wooden material with no room to physically escape, so comparison lay closer at hand than in many other ordinary Victorian people's lives. Under ordinary circumstances, a middle-class citizen in London would not have a careful selection of the working class live a few steps away (down the hatch), and a working-class citizen in London would not regularly watch a careful selection of the rich interact (as they did on the poop).

The direction in which social comparison happened then paved the way to a certain attitude towards others. According to critical French moralists in late 17th and early 18th century, upwards comparisons were something to laugh at, while downwards comparisons often proved the disrespectful and inappropriate attitude of the "grands". In 18th-century United Kingdom, status symbols, luxury, fashion, education and habits intensified the relevance of showing wealth and behaviour for others and oneself to compare.[161]

The discourse on social privileges was a Western phenomenon taking different shapes in Continental Europe, in the United Kingdom, and in the USA. With the enlightenment and the concept of equality gaining ground, comparisons were no longer merely oriented within a particular class. Instead, flexibly adapted standards of acceptance, success and effi-

161 Steinmetz, Willibald, "Above/Below, Better/Worse or Simply Different? Metamorphoses of Social Comparison, 1600–1900," in *The Force of Comparison: A New Perspective on Modern European History and the Contemporary World*, ed. Willibald Steinmetz. New German Historical Perspectives 11. New York: Berghahn, 2019: 80–112: 83–84.

ciency gave new options for better/worse comparison schemes across society. Industrialization and capitalism imprinted competitive thinking onto society and individualized choices and effort. At the same time, some elite writers across Europe, starting with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) and reverberating in John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), began to distance themselves from the mainstream by re-thinking education, a healthy child's mindset, and the danger of comparison. They hailed the idea of individualism, uniqueness, and originality without enforced conformity and external pressure to live up to a certain standard.[162]

In line with Steinmetz's argument, the following analysis seeks to understand the attitudes and the corresponding feelings displayed as different actors of the shipboard community consciously and subconsciously compared themselves with others. This will help to see the rigidity, the semi-permeability, and the power of classes and groups in transit.[163] Here, Geoffrey E.R. Lloyd's analysis of motivations for comparing is of additional value. He introduces "comparatism" to denote "not the first-order activity of making comparisons, but rather the second-order one of analysing how comparisons are used". In his chapter on the use of comparisons, he differentiates five valences:

1. To postulate superiority over the other
2. To acknowledge superiority of the other
3. To stress the similarities between the comparanda
4. To stress the differences and show the incomparability
5. To acquire new knowledge through comparing.[164]

With that in mind, the following attitudes and feelings towards the other emerge from comparing oneself: (1) contempt/arrogance; (2) envy/admiration, and (3) embracement.

Those three main groups combine all three variants of social comparison suggested by Steinmetz and combined with Lloyd: The 'above/

162 Steinmetz: 93–97.
163 Steinmetz: 104.
164 Lloyd, Geoffrey E., *Analogical Investigations: Historical and Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Human Reasoning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015: 29–31. Also Epple and Erhart, "Practices of Comparing": 23.

below' comparisons testify to a pre-modern train of thought. Although most people embarking as saloon passengers would proudly regard themselves as enlightened thinkers, their upbringing and mentality would still be rooted in hierarchical principles of society. In transit, when the known routine of the day presented itself differently, the validity of anthropological theory was tested. What motivated such comparisons? In Lloyd's typology, comparisons resulting in an arrogant and despising view would claim that the comparing party members were defending their own superiority and sometimes even insist on the differences to negate all possible comparability (Lloyd's first and sometimes also fourth valence).

The 'better/worse' comparisons testify to a society judging worth and success by quantifiable items or by fixed absolute standards, such as birth or race. In Great Britain and in the USA, this competitive way of thinking had already started in the mid-18th century, so it would include the Australian emigrants, who were mostly "common men".[165] For the community aboard, this could either nurture envy, jealousy and resentment or increase admiration. Either way, such comparatism acknowledged the other comparata to be superior (Lloyd's second valence); and this could be done both teeth-gnashingly and with a deep sigh of longing.

The third way is the way out. 'Simply different', which ideally means waiving comparison at all, was difficult to obtain in extreme, social settings like transit. But acknowledging disunity because of palpable distinctions and yet remaining content by seeking acceptance despite the differences was one alternative to withstand negative emotions. If the negative effects of comparing threatened to take control over a community, at least one party needed to make use of his/her agency and resist. New opportunities could emerge by not giving too much weight to the results of comparisons and by preventing them from leading to the erection of borders between people. Where surprises were not dismissed as impossible or exceptional, neither unexpected similarities nor differences stirred hostility, but could be celebrated. Sometimes, they even led to new insight and knowledge (Lloyd's third and fifth valence).

165 Steinmetz, "Above/Below, Better/Worse or Simply Different?": 103–104.

3.1 Contempt and arrogance

Before analysing contempt and arrogance, we must acknowledge a gap marking most of the first-class diary accounts, both on Australian voyages and on transatlantic journeys: they rarely speak about anyone other than their immediate fellow travellers. It is striking that for many travellers, the only points of reference, talk of the day, topics to discuss or people of interest were those to be found within sight. On this level, they practiced detailed better/worse comparisons about trifling things, while at the same time, there is a yawning void when it came to the living conditions of lower-class passengers or sailors from the working class. The more rigid the class identity and ignorance were, the fewer the instances of first-class diary accounts that mentioned second- or third-class passengers. When all the information presented about lower classes only happened to be through hearsay account, any chance for interaction beyond one's own social class was ruled out.

The very rejection of comparing oneself to others could speak of a "noble" self-consciousness and self-assurance, ideally based on unshaken convictions exempt from demands and expectations. On the other hand, a lack of reference to others, who were radically different from one's own peer group, could also speak of selfish ignorance, a blindness that never thought outside the box. In transit and in the 19th century, those two extremes can be found mainly in writings of the upper classes. Understandably, hierarchical ideals of separation and class policies on a ship were copied as they were known from the society on land. Without the initiative of the individual, even the closest settings as given in transit remained without impact on the knowledge and experience system when not seized as opportunities to deepen and lift one's perspective. Steamships from famous companies like *Cunard* or *P&O* would not even mention the steerage emigrants explicitly in their flyers when inviting first-class tourists. The additional "cargo" transported across the Atlantic either served as almost zoological objects of observation for the saloon passengers or their existence was just forgotten on the upper deck.[166]

166 See Burgess, Douglas R., *Engines of Empire: Steamships and the Victorian Imagination*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016: 155–158, also quoting from Stevenson, *The*

This attitude ran across the classes and testified to a hierarchically structured view on society, which would lead the first-class passengers to look down upon the second and the third class, the second-class on the third, and so on. In the Victorian mentality, this was the familiar and therefore easiest perspective; something to be taken as God-given and therefore irreversible. Rejection and contempt, plus the urge to distance oneself from the other, could be based on a feeling of superiority – be it in terms of finance, knowledge, education, manners, experience or morale. The upper deck passengers could literally shut their cabin doors, close the hatches, and then forget about the emigrants down below.

Sometimes, however, there would be encounters, often conveyed through the sense of hearing. One example would be a female passenger who complained about the "common people" playing the piano, referring to an event where a musician from the intermediate class led an evening with music and dancing.[167] Another example that could be heard was a less joyful one: "some screams from below"[168] would remind the hearer that there were other groups below suffering even more from some extreme maritime circumstances. However, there is rarely any additional level of reflection – neither on social or spatial injustice nor true pity – found in accounts like Donald G. Sutherland's diary on board the 'Northumberland' with about 400 passengers to Melbourne, Sydney, and New Zealand in 1876. He remained assured after realizing the privilege of travelling first cabin, particularly in heavy weather. Comparing his conditions with lower class circumstances, the

Amateur Emigrant. Across the Plains. The Silverado Squatters. This lack of writings about lower-class emigrants on the same ship, as found in first-class passenger diaries, is also a striking observation in transatlantic voyages: Boter, Babs, "Heavenly Sensations and Communal Celebrations: Experiences of Liminality in Transatlantic Journeys," in *Tales of Transit: Narrative Migrant Spaces in Atlantic Perspective, 1850–1950*, ed. Michael Boyden, Hans Krabbendam and Liselotte Vandenbussche. American Studies. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013: 179–196: 186–191.

167 Fleming, Hugh, Diary on Board the 'Loch Torridon', 1885/05/26–1885/08/23 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9149; Box 4476/14: 1885/07/01 [17]. Of course, this is – in Steinmetz' categorization – not only an above/below comparison, but also a better/worse type. The crucial point here is, however, that the lady quoted in the source example explicitly refers to the class hierarchy when speaking about "common people" she would not want to be identifying herself with. Her complaint about the musical quality of the pianist therefore shows her pre-structured, pre-transit mindset drawing social comparisons.

168 White, "Letters and Diary on Board the 'Sultana' and in Melbourne," 1858/11/21–1859/09/02:2.

outcome was a self-centred relief, reaffirming his superiority – literally represented by the height of the already mentioned poop deck:

> Friday 29th September 1876: […] Our deck is the poop and it is about 15 feet higher than the other. The sea is no' so apt to come in. […]
>
> Saturday 30th September 1876: […] On the main deck, I mean the 2nd class, the water was sometimes 2 feet deep. The passengers were of course all below. There is nothing for which I am more thankful than that I took a first-class cabin passage. Those poor wretches of the 2nd and 3rd class have a horrible time of it especially in heavy weather. I must not forget to mention that we just cleared the Bay of Biscay when the storm came on.[169]

The abrupt change of subject to nautical facts concerning the route speaks of this arrogant ignorance or ignorant arrogance typical of many cabin passengers.[170]

The "us vs. them" notion runs like a common thread through the emigrant passage. On Sundays, the different classes would show up on (their) deck to celebrate service or enjoy a day off. But the closer the observational chance through possibly communal church events, the greater was the need to emphasize the stark contrast. Against Sutherland's stereotypical suspicion that the second and third class would fight continually, he still wondered at the prospect of successful colonization in Australia, when describing the unimaginably "rough looking", "fiendish appearance", and "hideous looking" figures "crawling out to enjoy the fresh air and sunshine". The animalistic terms used here remind of insects or cave mammals, declaring the utmost incomparability between himself and them. This mentality made an approximation between the classes impossible. With 'classes' pre-existing as categories to foster comparisons, the case was clear quite soon and, in a class

169 Sutherland, Donald G., Diary on Board the 'Northumberland' (Edited by Marina Eaton in 2013), 1876/09/21–1876/11/22 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15572; Box 4667/9: 1876/09/29+30 [7–8].

170 See also for gentlewomen: Curtin, Emma, "Gentility Afloat: Gentlewomen's Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830–80," *Australian Historical Studies* 26, no. 105 (1995): 634–652. doi:10.1080/10314619508595987.

society, it did not need special reasons for justifying inner distancing. Those people would insist on the right to separate.[171]

The outcome was an arrogant attitude, which would give birth to contempt and lead to unreflected, beastly associations to diminish the other group's standing. Of course, this attitude would not always come to the fore. On land, it might even remain hidden in the hearts of the people so that they often would not be aware of their pride themselves. In a private diary, however, formulating one's thoughts into sentences after certain events could catalyse the deepest convictions about social standing across the classes and bring them to light.

It was different within any one class, when meeting a stranger with different customs, accent, religion or financial resources in the mess next door. Sharing steerage meant sharing the same food ration, the same washing and cleaning routine, and the same toilet. Then, the contempt/arrogance-group's first reaction was to withdraw, but this is spatially and physically impossible on board one ship, so a huge inner effort to immediately distance oneself from a stereotypically worse "other" can be observed. Stereotypes pre-order and pre-structure a person's mindset and when clung to unreflectedly, they are perpetuated and hammered into mentality. This characterized the view of David Yaun, for example, himself a steerage passenger. When looking at his fellow travellers from Ireland he was eager to draw a bold line between his family's manners and their behaviour. Like Donald G. Sutherland he made use of animal language to dehumanize the observed and establish some sort of "primi inter pares" position:

> The constant howling and yelling of the Irishmen who convert their compartment into what any passer-by would consider a menagerie of wild beasts. They are the most savage uncultivated animals that can be conceived, they employ language of the coarsest kind, and quarrelling (and fighting if they durst) is their constant delight.[172]

171 "There are nearly 300 in the same part that I am in and I can tell you that if I had to do it over again I would not go. I could go 2nd Cabin. The place that I am in is called the Intermediate but there is no division between us and the steerage." (Bedford, Mary A., "Diary on Board the 'Champion of the Seas', Melbourne, 1864/08/07–1864/11/17," in *The 'Champion of the Seas'*, ed. Rod Fraser. Glen Waverley: Pilgrim Printing Services, 1999: 52–67: 53.)
172 Yaun, Spence, and Yaun, *David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864*: 15.

A similar aversion can be observed years later and in a different gender when, Pattie Soutter, mother and wife from a well-to-do Yorkshire family, saw her fellow steerage passengers for the first time:

> Sun. June 4th 'Tis a most lovely morning – the sea is as calm as a lake, no wind and scarcely a ripple. To look up and beyond the vessel one would almost think Sunday was in the atmosphere, but on the deck and down below there is little of peace or quiet. How very enjoyable the voyage would be now were it not for the disturbing element amongst us. Never in my life have I been brought into such close contact with what must be, I think, the very lowest grade of society save one, and that the criminal. The association is anything but a thing to be desired, only there is one thing helps us to bear it – it is only for a short time.[173]

With her husband Willie and her children, the woman had embarked as a free passenger on the 'Stracathro', a ship bound for Brisbane in mid-1882. The 319 passengers were almost split in two equal halves of English and Irish emigrants. For Soutter, the emphasis of differences between her and the "dirty" families was a way of reaffirming her own identity and higher social standing. Nationality and education became the prevalent means of distinction. After booking her steerage passage, she wanted anything but to be put on one level with "the very lowest grade of society", so she comforted herself with the words "it is only for a short time".[174]

Speaking with Lloyd, this practice is exemplary of the fourth valance of comparatism, when the comparing party built a wall and zealously fought to make it unconquerable.[175] It testifies to an insecurity about

173 Soutter, Pattie, Diary on Board the 'Stracathro', 1882/05/22–1882/08/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1882–0; TR 1882–3; Box 9593: 1882/06/04 [9].
174 Soutter, Pattie, Diary on Board the 'Stracathro', 1882/05/22–1882/08/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1882–0; TR 1882–3; Box 9593: 1882/06/06 [10–11]. In similar terms and with equally pejorative, animalistic words the Irish are referred to in the words of other steerage passengers like Edmonds, Walter, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1873/11/24–1873/12/20 (Brunel Institute and Archive Bristol) Voyage Box 41/Item 4: 1872/11/24 [1] or the Scot Yaun, Spence, and Yaun, *David Yaun's Epic Voyage 1864*: 15.
175 "[…] in a fourth role for comparatism the Other is thought to be not just difficult to comprehend, but strictly incomprehensible." (Lloyd, *Analogical Investigations*: 31.)

one's own belonging, intensified through the instability of the 'transit' and transitory passage to follow. This insecurity pushes back because Soutter refused to admit any tertium comparationis that could question the neat picture of an educated and diligent English family. The almost aggressive tone ruled out any chance to obligingly support each other as a community from the start. Here, Pattie Soutter, the 34-year-old wife of the schoolmaster and mother of three in 1882, David Yaun, the 38-year-old steerage passenger from Scotland in 1864, and Donald Gray Sutherland, the self-conscious, 24-year-old, unmarried first-class passenger in 1876 all meet on common ground.

But contempt not only resulted from one-directional 'above/below' comparisons from the socially high to the socially low. It could also become a mutual dislike. When the one part perceived the despise showered upon them by the comparing party, this could automatically trigger a closer peer-connection within the compared group. Upon facing a common counterpart, the underdogs could strengthen their aversion against the seemingly better "rich and snooty", leading to a mirrored withdrawal on the other part. Rolling their eyes at the captain's haughty gaze, the second class would certainly turn away from seeking the attention of saloon passengers or higher-ranking officials, and instead focus on their own values, creating their own identity. Where there was no interaction wished from either side, the inner bonding could be promoted.[176]

The hierarchical scaffolding as a foundation of comparison on land was therefore updated to a transitory version at sea, but without major progressive modifications in terms of flexibility, exchange or intermingling. Steinmetz calls it the pre-modern form of comparison, probably also due to its tendency to stagnate, which fits well with the observation made in the analysis of 'transit' here, namely that the 'above/below' mode left little room for innovation and change on a community level. Where directional, spatial terms dominate, 'transit' identity was constructed in consciously dissociating oneself from the other, so that

176 This is what happened on the 'Young Australia' among second-class passengers travelling with William A. Smith and other single men after special entertainment was announced for the first-class only: Smith, "Diary on Board the 'Young Australia,'" 1864/05/09–1864/08/13: 1864/06/07 [65–67].

smaller entities of group communities emerged. There was not a reversal of the social upside and downside per se, but a shifting of the evaluation of both ends of a horizontal scale. Accordingly, by turning the displayed arrogance into an argument against the other, the 'Falcon' passengers in the second cabin were united by a common conviction that the saloon travellers would not be fit for Australia due to their snobbishness.

> The passengers are all well dressed and appear to be a very respectable class of people – in fact if all be true that I have read respecting life in Australia, many of them are rather too respectable – or I might perhaps more appropriately say, too snobbish or dandified for consoling themselves very easily to the hardships and privations of Australian life as represented by many of those who have experienced it.[177]

With the country's convict background in mind and since most unforced Australian immigrants originated from the working class, the upper classes' self-assertion was not met with acceptance by the excluded group. In the light of the "Australian life as represented by many of those who have experienced it", 'transit' changed the value of components such as musical talent, Shakespeare-expertise, fancy clothes and respectable cultivation. Attentive steerage passengers might see the contempt, deride the despise as 'old fashioned', and hold on to egalitarian principles among their own peer group. Lacking a large middle class from the start, Australia's society differed from the rigid class society in the United Kingdom. This opened new windows of opportunity for the otherwise underprivileged workers and craftsmen, who upon stepping onto the Australian shore would often enter a place shaped by prisoners' hands.[178]

All in all, there are two forms of contempt evolving from 'above/below' comparisons: the short-sighted approach and the long-term perspective. The first often characterized the saloon passengers or the ones who regarded themselves as socially higher within their own shipboard

177 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon'," 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/22 [1].
178 Smith, Babette, "The Making of the Australian Working Class: Delivered to the Sydney Mechanics Institute", updated 2020/10/07 <www.academia.edu/44563150/The_Making_of_the_Australian_Working_Class>, accessed 2024/10/22.

class. On board, they applied what they had deemed acceptable before the journey and judged the others accordingly. The latter was embodied by steerage passengers like Andrew McDonell on the 'Falcon'. They would not swallow the previously prevailing equation of higher class and general superiority: instead, they looked forward to an Australia where the underdogs' skills and characteristics could actually turn out to be of great advantage.

3.2 Envy and admiration

McDonell's quote above can be read as an example of a typical 'above/below' comparison, but it is only a tiny step to read it as a 'better/worse' comparison as well, which leads to another, under-researched feeling characteristic for social communities. The Western, post-Enlightenment epoch of globalization, connections and industrialization in a growing meritocracy fostered another emotion typical of cross-sectional spaces: "admiration" and its evil twin "envy". These might not be listed in the standard "basic emotions", but 'transit' knows this socially bound and dependent emotion well.[179]

In the 19th century, envy would be one of the "passions" included in studies on "ressentiment" and automatically viewed as "unjustified, frustrated, and effete—regardless of whether the relation it points to is imaginary or not". The reputation ascribed to envy would increasingly receive a female touch as if this was a passion that women were especially prone to.[180] At the same time, philosopher and existentialist Søren Kierkegaard pondered about the distinction and close relatedness between admiration and envy. Pure admiration would marvel at someone else's position, achievements, looks or skills without desiring it for him-/herself. The admirer therefore stays content and actively observes the environment in "happy self-abandon". An envious person in contrast feels wanting in comparison with someone else's advantages. His/her behaviour then changes in an attempt to hide the admiration

179 Ekman, Paul, "What Scientists Who Study Emotion Agree About," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 11, no. 1 (2016): 31–34. doi:10.1177/1745691615596992: 32.
180 Ngai, Sianne, *Ugly Feelings*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005: 128–129.

by claiming, in a narrow-minded way, that there is nothing missing in a mode of "unhappy self-assertion".[181]

Drawing from written accounts, the expression of this "feeling of mortification and ill-will occasioned by the contemplation of superior advantages possessed by another" therefore rarely appears outspokenly blunt (concealing the shamefully laden emotions in the culture of the day), but it can be found between the lines.[182] When seeking the underlying emotional community principles as they emerged from comparison, a good observer would suspect tension between the groups aboard sooner or later. It was similar back then. Better/worse comparisons have the potential to be turned into grudging mischief or violent aggression. Food and drink were one aspect of shipboard life triggering comparisons. To name the most obvious distinctions first: intermediate and steerage had to cook for themselves, while the second- and first-class passengers had food service.[183] 24-year-old single man Walter Stock did not verbally envy the saloon menu and was generally happy with the "plain & pretty good food", but what he did state explicitly was that when pondering his daily intakes, memories of home "often made my mouth water". When the 'Hereford' was loading sheep and fowls, Walter Stock emphasized in his letter to "Will and Nell" that those meat deliveries were only meant for the "captain's table" and not "for us poor beggars". This better quality and quantity could be seen and also heard – bleating and clucking. For the almost 400 emigrants and at least ten crewmembers working their passage out, this must have been given enough potential for wishful thinking when waiting in front of the galley to receive the daily portion of emigrant provisions.[184]

It is interesting to note that whenever there was a complaint about nutrition (which regularly led to ferocious petitions), critique referred

181 Kierkegaard, Søren, *The Sickness unto Death*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1849 [1941]]: 96–97.

182 "envy, n.: […]3. a. The feeling of mortification and ill-will occasioned by the contemplation of superior advantages possessed by another. 4. Without notion of malevolence: †a. Desire to equal another in achievement or excellence; emulation. Obsolete. rare. b. A longing for the advantages enjoyed by another person." (Oxford English Dictionary Online, "envy, n.", updated 06/2021 <oed.com/view/Entry/63106.>, accessed 2021/08/17).

183 See Laver, "Diary on Board the 'Mermaid,'" 1859/07/09–1859/09/30: 1859/07/12–13 [2–3].

184 Stock, "Letter on Board the 'Hereford,'" 1882/02/21: 3–4.

to the quality or quantity only. References to other classes and their privileges or to the captain and his officers were seldom. When appealing for better bread, water, biscuits, etc., the strategy was not based on craving someone else's advantages, but rather on insisting on one's individual rights. Comparisons between the portions did not serve as arguments for improving diets.

Albert Reynolds travelled second-class on board one of the very early steamships – the S.S. 'London'. He already lived in Australia and was just returning to Melbourne after a visit to England with his brother and sister-in-law in 1864. One Friday night in November, a concert was held on the poop. Somehow, before or in the middle of that event, he was positively surprised by a friendly move by Lady Charlotte Bacon and Captain J.B. Martin. Reynolds, only one unimportant passenger out of 151 non-saloon travellers, felt honoured by a personal conversation and the invitation to join the first-class passengers in watching the concert for a while. This was an unexpected approach "without any pride". His comment already signifies that the usual interactions between the classes would show little mutual interest – because of the clinging to familiar schemes of class differences particularly marked by contempt as outlined above. The transit setting, however, shrunk the distance in that case, so that Reynolds and some of his likewise invited companions could join the other class. This joining implied an adaptation as well. When looking around and drawing better/worse comparisons, Reynolds named the nobles (Count and Countess de Lapasture) and carefully observed and watched the proceedings and performance. His conclusion sums up the admiration he felt without really identifying with them (although he did not seem entirely put off or desiring to emulate them): "The whole was conducted in first rate style. I can assure you we have a great number of stylish people with us." The next sentence then continued with the announcement of a concert "in our cabin", of which he would add a detailed report later. Access to the high society obviously was a privilege and something to marvel at, but for Reynolds, he was not personally hurt by the separation, and instead focused on his surroundings afterwards. He also kept the "us vs. them" language alive.[185]

185 Reynolds, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'London,'" 1864/10/26–1864/12/14: 1864/11/11 [15]. Steerage passenger Edward Thomas Fuller similarly recounts an invitation to watch the

In a similar, yet less rhetorical way, Walter Edmonds, steerage passenger on the steamship S.S. 'Great Britain', dealt with the separation policy evident in cultural events. He secretly listened to a special first- and second-class concert in the evening by sneaking in unnoticed. Edmonds especially admired the pianist[186] and enjoyed the moment without an apparent amount of ill-will or resistance against the injustice of exclusion as third cabin passengers. Instead, he seemed content with his tactical success and listed this special experience among other entertaining events – surely as a highlight, but nothing more than that. In his short diary, he did not question the distinction between the classes, but at the same time, he was not overly troubled by it. According to his subjective notes, the seed of mischievous envy would not grow and poison the atmosphere within Edmonds' reach at least. Others in his immediate neighbourhood acted differently – fighting against each other and drinking too much until alcohol was banished for steerage. Edmonds again recounted that first- and second-class passengers were exempt from this prohibition, but merely confirmed the validity and need for that choice, wondering why this had not been announced even earlier. His categories of comparison were not along the lines of social structures engrained in the shipboard classes. When it came to better/worse comparisons, he accepted restricted and public rooms according to classes, and then looked at the individuals' behaviour. He was neither rejecting the steerage disposition by trying to distance himself from them like the contempt-group would do, nor was he blinded by the glamour of saloon passengers and desperately trying to emulate them by drawing closer. When the saloon passengers had their "champaign supper [sic]" at the end of the voyage, he simply commented that the noise and the exuberance was very disturbing. All in all, Edmonds used the same principles of judgment for both steerage and saloon, which shows that he was not driven by above/below-standards in his comparisons on moral issues and values.

saloon passengers sports game on the poop: Fuller, Edward T., Letter to Family on Board the 'Superb', 1886/12/27 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS SUP: 1886/11/26 [10–11].

186 Edmonds, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain'," 1873/11/24–1873/12/20: 1873/12/03 [2].

What do these observations mean for the shipboard community? Tensions and disagreements belonged to the experience of transit and were unavoidable, since certain features and privileges already came with the choice of the class to travel in. On the way to Australia, where a more egalitarian society was dreamed of, triggers of social dissatisfaction and unrest could be interpreted differently. Through generalization and by adding too much weight onto any one particular aspect, admiration could tip the balance and become a self-destructive envy sucking all cheerful energy. Neither Reynolds nor Edmonds fell victim to that. Following Lloyd's second comparatism valence, they "acknowledged the superiority" of the other class. This they did for individual aspects (such as the concert quality) – but for nothing more than that.

3.3 Embracement

Coming from a hierarchical mindset and society, what stands out when reading other instances of comparisons is a recurring sense of astonishment. This astonishment was often expressed when the ideas about certain social groups that people had acquired on land were negated by transit reality. Upon comparing stereotypes and realizing that "the passengers generally were of a far more respectable and intelligent class than is usually found in this department of passenger ships", the transit experience differed from the assumption.[187] This is where a chance for a unique community emerged, made possible by the in-between situation. To arrive there, the given framework had to be flexible enough to allow for surprises. If that was not the case, the observation would either pass by without further reflection (as analysed above, resulting in ignorance and contempt) or be labelled as the "exception proving the rule". When the anonymous writer on board the steamship 'Somersetshire' in 1880 was annoyed by the complaints of the third cabin and steerage, he did not think about equal rights for the "far more respectable and intelligent class", but instead explained their discontent with

187 See Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit".

the diet with a general tendency to grumble at everything. The Other was not taken seriously.[188]

Sometimes, however, the 'transit' novelty would encourage people to make contact with strangers they would otherwise not spend time with. Wherever borders like fears and prejudices were overcome after drawing the comparison, new group constellations would be possible. Curiosity and astonishment then could motivate further interaction, and this was possible after finding out both that the other was 'simply different' and 'very similar'. Finally, to use Lloyd's fifth valence of how comparisons are used, even new knowledge was acquired through comparing.[189]

In 1880, the same year the above-mentioned 'Somersetshire' sailed, the S.S. 'Kent' carried Emma Royle and her family in the first cabin to Melbourne. A mother of four children, she was very busy all day, but also open to entertainment events. It was early December and the steamship had just crossed the line, celebrating this milestone with Neptune's appearance – a source of fun and joy for the onboard community and especially for the kids.[190] Only a few days afterwards, the second-class passengers organized a "concert and reading", which she decided to join as well, "of course", and was taken by the positive atmosphere together. Royle's conclusion about the second class was so remarkable that she thought it worth proclaiming: "Let me here mention that we find there are any number of extremely nice people in that part and some are very clever, among them too are some good singers but principally gentlemen." When sharing the fascination of music and manners, Royle decided to not be driven by borders she would have taken for granted in the class society in England. Delighted by the event, the quality, and the people, she even joined the choir spontaneously to sing "'Rock me to sleep Mother' quite impromptu as they were short of female voices". She neither regretted her participation nor worried too much about an infection after the doctor announced cases of measles in second class the day after.[191]

188 A Passenger, Narrative of a Voyage from England to Australia in the S.S. 'Somersetshire', 1879/12/13–1880/02/16 (National Library of Australia) PETHpam 2513: 6–7.
189 Lloyd, *Analogical Investigations*: 23.
190 See Chapter 4 "Feeling Transit", subchapter 3.2. "Celebrations".
191 Royle, "Diary on Board the S.S. 'Kent' and in Australia," 1880/11/17–1881/06/01: 1880/12/06 [10–14].

Likewise, second-class passengers could discover unity across the classes when discovering a meeting that had not been socially predetermined. One Sunday in June 1864, after having endured some weeks of disappointing public church service on the poop,[192] single man William Smith dared to join a service mainly attended by steerage passengers in the married people's compartment – and after hearing an "impressive sermon from Colossians 1:12" by the old navy man Gerrard Russell, he continued to prefer this service in the "deck house" to the one on the poop deck. He did not mind being in the minority with his choice, but instead praised the preacher's wit and the meetings throughout the voyage.[193]

With an increasing initiative for the common good, Smith then not only started a hugely successful second-class ship newspaper with general readership[194] but also somehow seemed to rise as an advocate for shipboard community. Becoming convinced of a shared ground beyond social structures, he regularly visited the steerage service in the married people's quarter, conducted by the old Mr Russell. He was gradually joined by others who had left the poop service, eventually commenting in mid-July 1864: "the place was crammed & I feel convinced that the services in this place are more earnest than the public one in the Saloon." Smith reflected on the old preacher's bad grammar, only to conclude that his linguistic skills did not matter in the end. The "heart overflowing with love for God and man", the "sound sense and practical Christianity", the "fervour & earnestness" and the shared hymns sufficed for attracting earnest people from all classes.[195]

Church services, concerts, education initiatives, newspaper projects, festivities, hospitals: they all had the potential to create spaces with a broader accessibility and an outspokenly wider audience. They func-

192 The surgeon would read the service when no reverend was available, but apparently, the doctor aboard the 'Young Australia' was not very keen to perform this very duty. On the contrary: "altogether the performance was a solemn farce & everybody including the Doctor, seemed highly pleased when all was over." (Smith, "Diary on Board the 'Young Australia,'" 1864/05/09–1864/08/13: 33–34.)

193 Smith: 100+135–136+162–163.

194 Smith: 156–158+113–114+130+164–168.

195 Smith: 113–114+164–165. Other diarists mention church services with familiar hymns across the classes as well, e.g. Care, "Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient,'" 1888/03/03–1888/04/12: 49.

tioned differently and had an agenda of their own, which meant the socially determinant factors could lose their dominant power and be replaced by values and entities such as faith, art, or health. The socially stereotypical for-and-against reasons no longer prevailed. Where the often shallowly proclaimed ideals of a borderless, unified body of Christ[196] actually became equalising religious spheres, they sometimes could turn into catalysators of comparisons resulting in an intermingling of classes and an expression of shared emotions.[197]

4 Back to the Galley

Along the lines of unity and borders, 'transit' became a space of experiencing community through structures, practices and attitudes. The social individual did not find him- or herself uniquely exposed to a bundle of impressions to deal with. The pre-structure of classes and groups plus the spatial separation offered orientation in a challenging environment, but they were not as manifest as they appeared at first sight. "Transit' also questioned concepts known before, because 'authority', 'race', and 'work', for example, acquired new meaning and were valued and interpreted differently in a season of change. As a whole, the transit community needed to agree on certain forms of communication and interaction. Through fighting, loving and supporting, closeness and distance shrunk, in both planned and unexpected manners. When interested in the subtler feelings and attitudes towards one another, zooming in on the practice of comparisons proved fruitful. Three different types of comparisons could be found aboard, all having a different outcome regarding attitudes and atmosphere in transit. Contempt, admiration and embracement distinguished the accounts and consequently also the experience of the in-between.

Navigating between the opposing and demanding forces emerging from the paradox of unity and borders so deeply characteristic of 'transit' involves key factors that can be found in the balance of accept-

196 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28 (The Bible. KJV)
197 Rosenwein, Barbara H., *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006: 201.

ance and consciousness. If both were lacking, then people most likely insisted on the distinctions they had either loved or hated before. Animosity, oppression, ignorance and despair could follow. One brutal example was the suicide of the bankrupt Englishman working his passage out in 1853, who was maltreated by the black cooks, and whose name never appeared on any official passenger list.

Acceptance of the given circumstances without holding too fast to the categories from home (especially concerning authority and obedience, bullying or despise) formed a more flexibly adaptable serenity. Consciousness in observing injustice or the overexercise of control meant resting in the assurance of the in-between by not taking everything to heart. If 'transit' was regarded as opening new windows of opportunity to re-evaluate manners or learn from the supposedly lowly, then something like "community despite" could be the effect. This could mean joining the crew in stormy weather to secure the masts, finding the love of one's life, profiting from a lay minister's devoted sermon, or killing the seed of envy by bonding with the closest peer group.

This chapter started in the galley with the bloody destruction of one person's body and the subsequent deconstruction of seemingly stable categories and borders where the line between crew and passengers was blurred. It will now end in the galley as well, but with a cheerful building of one person's body, where the attempt to blur the line between crew and passengers did succeed. In his letter from December 27th, 1886, Edward T. Fuller proudly told his family about a special sort of gained experience:

> Dec 25 […] We get three half quarter loaves a week which is not much. But I lend a hand with the stewards cleaning knives & silver and I always sit down to breakfast with them & getting grub after lunch & after dinner at night. I help one ~~particular steward~~ [sic] of the saloon stewards to clean knives in a machine & have received grub ever since we started which ~~make~~ [sic] has made me so fat you would not know me. I ~~busted the~~ [sic] can hardly button my clothes & my face is a picture and I am as happy as a king.[198]

198 Fuller, Edward T., Letter to Family on Board the 'Superb', 1886/12/27 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS SUP: 1886/12/25 [14–15].

Fuller was "as happy as a king" on Christmas Eve and in the days before because he benefitted from the leftovers that a rich minority neglected. He marvelled at the cakes and the dinner prepared, especially when comparing this with the small portions of bread his bunk would receive otherwise. But he was satisfied with celebrating the little joys, not letting envy and strife grow inside his heart. Focusing on the benefits of work as tedious as cleaning cutlery in the hot galley, this attitude would make a difference in how 'transit' was perceived. When given borders turned into invitations and interstices became meeting places, then unity or the content acceptance of disunity had a chance to create a positive atmosphere, ranging from mutual acceptance to "family" spirit among "respectable" comrades.[199]

199 McDonell, "Diary on Board the 'Falcon,'" 1853/05/22–1853/08/14: 1853/05/25 [3].

[Chapter 6] Managing Transit – Responsibility and Rebellion

1 The Concept of 'Mediator'

"As all is not gold that glitters, so all is not 'guilt' that is called so."[1] Sometimes things are different than they appear to be at first sight. The Sydney newspaper *The Freeman's Journal* used this modified idiom to introduce an article about "The Doings on Board the 'Stebonheath'" on the second page of its weekly edition on Saturday, March 13th, 1858. Referring to a complicated and widely discussed court case relating to the named emigrant ship that originally dealt with a charge of immorality and disobedience against shipboard authorities, this Catholic paper presented a reversal of the roles of perpetrators and victims. Two shipboard authorities, namely the surgeon-superintendent and the matron, were accused of lying and falsely exercising their power against the emigrants instead of seeking their good. A look at the case serves to examine the question of actual guilt and proper responsibility within 'transit' as a holistic undertaking with political deciders, individuals and communities and involving negotiations, control, imaginations, feelings and crossings. The question zooms in on persons who take up a role essential for 'transit': mediators of the instable.

These people filled positions such as surgeon-superintendent, matron, nurse, reverend, schoolmaster, president of the steerage committee, or spokesman of the third class. They found themselves entrusted with responsibility for a designated period. In this way, they acted as mediators in transit: between the captain and the steerage, between sickness and an ill patient, between single women and sailors, between God and men, between children and education, or between the third class and the commissioners, for example.

Before moving on to characterise and conceptualise their function and impact, a closer look at the research literature shows other instances

1 N. N., "The Doings on Board 'The Stebonheath,'" *Freeman's Journal*, 1858/03/13: 2.

of using this term "mediator". In transcultural and migration studies, it primarily serves as a synonym for translator or interpreter, often overseen by the apparently more powerful.[2] Obviously, the aspect of communication is essential. In 'transit', language plays a key role, as knowledge and information are expressed and explained, including peace making and harmonising within a social setting. One condition for a person to be qualified as mediator is that he or she has sufficient insight into both parties by means of linguistic fluency, cultural experience or social training. At the best of times, the mediator knows both sides well enough to adapt easily and understand what is going on, taking the initiative to use the skills cleverly from then on.[3]

In sociology and social studies, objects or concepts serve as mediators. According to the actor-network-theory (ANT), mediators are "means to produce the social". In his famous call for "Reassembling the Social", Bruno Latour claims that actors are embedded in a social world defined by uncertainties. Their actions are uncertain, the outcome is uncertain and they are accompanied by a "concatenation of mediators" multiplying the uncertainties. 'Mediators' can be events like panel discussions, objects like computers, symbols like a tribe's totem, and more – all of these communicate between someone and/or something. In contrast to neutral and neglectable 'intermediaries', mediators

2 See Alvstad, Cecilia, "The Transatlantic Voyage as a Translational Process: What Migrant Letters Can Tell Us," in *Tales of Transit: Narrative Migrant Spaces in Atlantic Perspective, 1850–1950*, ed. Michael Boyden, Hans Krabbendam and Liselotte Vandenbussche. American Studies. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013: 103–119: 105 and Desai, Ashwin, *Inside Indian Indenture: A South African Story, 1860–1914*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010: 91ff. For the related concept of "broker" between "the local system and the larger whole" in anthropological studies, see Geertz, Clifford, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, no. 2 (1960): 228–249 and the use of the word in the already cited Dening, Greg, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992: 178.

3 See both Ernst, Waltraud, "The Indianization of Colonial Medicine: The Case of Psychiatry in Early-Twentieth-Century British India," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Wissenschaft, Technik und Medizin* 20, no. 2 (2012): 61–89. doi:10.1007/s00048-012-0068-7 and Johnston, Anna, ""'Tahiti, 'the Desire of Our Eyes'": Missionary Travel Narratives and Imperial Surveillance," in *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire*, ed. Helen Gilbert and Anna Johnston. Travel Writing Across the Disciplines 4. New York, et al.: Peter Lang, 2002: 65–83, who study two colonial sites where the agency of conscious native mediators made them irreplaceable for the colonizers as they helped and established and shaped the trouble-shooting and controlling autonomously.

transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry". They contribute to the proceedings, offer opportunities and account for surprises in social contexts. They have the power to change and influence the output tremendously, and can work between individuals, groups and objects.[4] Building on that basic definition and in line with the physiological understanding of mediators as carriers and influencers of chemical reactions,[5] Roland Wenzlhuemer and Martin Dusinberre view connections in global history as 'mediators'. Conceptualized as such, trains and ships can turn into temporal and spatial mediators, too.[6]

I am taking this notion one step further, combining the transcultural, neurobiological and sociological approaches and going back to the more literal meaning of the noun "mediator": "person who intervenes between two parties, esp. for the purpose of effecting reconciliation; an intercessor; a person who brings about an agreement, treaty, etc., or settles a dispute by mediation."[7] In this chapter, mediators are therefore understood as:

- Historical actors.
- Managers of one aspect of transit life for other individuals.
- People who experience the tensions and dynamics more than others because they not only deal with personal challenges, but also with the experiences of companions, strangers' emotions, general obligations, etc. Like the ANT mediators, they carry, translate, and interpret the various aspects of transit, shaping both the input and the output.

4 Latour, Bruno, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory,* Clarendon Lectures in Management Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005: 37–42.
5 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "mediator, n. ", updated 2020/12 <oed.com/view/Entry/115670>, accessed 2021/01/26: 3c and Weiner, Herbert, "Psychosomatic Medicine and the Mind-Body Relation," in *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology*, ed. Edwin R. Wallace and John Gach. Boston: Springer US, 2008: 781–834.
6 Dusinberre, Martin, and Roland Wenzlhuemer, "Editorial – Being in Transit: Ships and Global Incompatibilities," *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 2 (2016): 155–162. doi:10.1017/S1740022816000036: 158–159.
7 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "mediator, n.": 1b.

– Not a neutral person, but one of three in a "trinity of actants",[8] deeply involved with the proceedings in front of them since their fate is bound up with the things and persons mediated.

Confronted with a sheer cacophony of impressions and tensions, people tended to look for orientation beyond impersonally written codes of conduct or rules. 'Mediators' are this type of role model for experiencing transit, whose performance, success and failing becomes validated and evaluated by the involved ones and the external observers. The aspect of person-orientation makes them so interesting to historians tracing the dynamics of the in-between for human beings. The public nature of their operations and ministry leaves traces in sources largely overseen so far: the standard copies of letters of gratitude or complaint signed by travellers, whose written inheritance only consists of their names on the passenger list.

Most mediators were assigned to a field of expertise in which they automatically became role models. Good or bad, they offered guidance and exercised control. Despite being carefully selected and rated before a sanctified assignment to a government-chartered emigrant ship, those officials (such as surgeons, matrons, schoolmasters) were still often the subject of severe accusations after arrival. Some doctors were sentenced for alcohol abuse or maltreatment of patients, notwithstanding previously presented excellent medical certificates. Others spoke of extreme mental stress and exhaustion, as they realized the weight of their duty, and collapsed. In both cases, it could be claimed they had a lack of what today would be deemed "social and personal skills". Intellectual expertise alone could not bear the complete experience of transit as a mediator. Under such tense circumstances, which mediators could emerge mostly unharmed with praise for their job? What personality traits were required to truly become a 'mediator' in the original sense,

8 Jöns, Heike, Michael Heffernan, and Peter Meusburger, "Mobilities of Knowledge: An Introduction," in *Mobilities of Knowledge*, ed. Heike Jöns, Michael Heffernan and Peter Meusburger. Knowledge and Space 10. Online Publication: Springer International Publishing, 2017: 1–19: 3, referring with that expression to Jöns, Heike, "Dynamic Hybrids and the Geographies of Technoscience: Discussing Conceptual Resources beyond the Human/Non-Human Binary," *Social and Cultural Geography* 7, no. 4 (2006): 559–580. doi:10.1080/14649360600825703.

someone whose impact on the two parties is respected and conducive? Answers for those questions might then also be generalized to identify what made a transit community – at sea or elsewhere, past and present – strong and hopeful, thus completing the findings from Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit", where the focus lay on the individual emigrant's resilience.

To do so, the abovementioned case study of the 'Stebonheath' emigrant ship to Sydney in 1858 will serve as a template for discovering what earned criticism and what brought forth honour in the aftermath. The attendees' reactions of compliance and complaint, obedience and opposition lay bare the tensions of groups and communities. The main genre analysed will be newspaper articles, which often printed court interrogations, parliamentary decisions and interviews at length. The discourse around surgeon-superintendent Dr William J. Rowland and matron Miss Jane E. Chase show how deeply intertwined the physical and the mental were, and that lone warriors were doomed to fail. After presenting the case of the 'Stebonheath', the mediators in charge of the body will be investigated. This includes the whole range of health, corporal punishment, morality and sexuality. It will zoom in on the surgeon-superintendent, but also on hospital assistants, voluntary physicians and the captain. Because it is so closely connected, and many surgeons had to conduct spiritual routines as well, aspects of mind and soul come next. Topics covered here are education, knowledge, skills and teaching. Besides protagonists such as schoolteachers, lecturers and reverends, the focus will be on the matron in her role as female supervisor and protector.

2 News about the 'Stebonheath'

Every emigrant ship arriving at the colonial ports in Australia brought interesting "objects" with it, and the newspapers were well aware of that floating potential. It is no wonder the Australian journalists leapt upon every fascinating development, including secret liaisons, sneaky tyrants or outstanding heroes and heroines! At first sight, an experienced surgeon taking his responsibility to care for medical needs and uphold law and order aboard very seriously and an equally well-to-do matron would offer little more than a short note of arrival in the shipping news.

However, somehow, somebody dared to dig deeper when hearing about the death of 18-year-old Ann Cox, who arrived on board the 'Stebonheath' in a critical state and breathed her last shortly afterwards in the Sydney Infirmary, where she was taken after landing. A first lengthy article in the *Empire* revealed some "extraordinary disclosures" for the curious reader, as an autopsy brought to light severe discrepancies and the jury was confronted with more witnesses and details than expected, paving the way for more inquiries to come.

Doctor McFarlane, first physician of the Sydney Infirmary, spoke for the Medical Board of New South Wales and presented the results of the autopsy: the generally healthy young girl had several strange wounds (hip, hand, etc.) and an inflamed left wrist with pus leading to lethal irritative fever. Apparently, the wrist had not been treated well on board and became inflamed. Who was to be held responsible for her death? Was it the surgeon, Dr William J. Rowland, who had examined her three weeks ago during the journey for a burning pain under her arm, but did not keep her in hospital? Or was it something else, other than the physical affliction, that cost her her life? The coroner added to the description that there "was no evidence that the wrist had been treated at all" and added the scandalous observations: "the hymen was not perfect; there were no marks of violence in that region; she was pregnant, and might have conceived within ten days; this, no doubt, would slightly excite the brain […]."[9]

The tragic story of the girl from Troubridge, Wiltshire, excited the public longing for outrageous news. Witness accounts were published in newspapers across the country. The matron was also interrogated immediately. With 150 married and single women plus children all under her charge and her experience of completing three Australian passages previously, Jane Elinor Chase did not claim that she had been able to oversee and watch everything on board. However, given the circumstances – which were disclosed gradually as well – she was "not surprised at her being enceinte" as she had once "found the deceased

9 N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures," *Empire*, 1858/03/05: 4: 4/1. The tone of this article already suggests scandals to come.

girl in the single men's compartment, sitting between two sailors, and one had his arm round her neck".[10]

Fellow passengers and confidants contributed to the stories around Ann Cox. One of them, who served as a nurse during the voyage, knew that Cox was very lonely, had expressed no joy of life anymore, and was hoping for death after she had become sick at sea.[11] Rumour also had it that there was an anonymous man she was desperately scared of,[12] that a mysterious hatch fall and other accidents had caused a painful injury, and that her last wishes and feverish "nonsense talk" could be interpreted as desiring admission of some secret guilt.[13]

Some described her conduct as "generally light on board" (matron Jane Chase), others swore she was "a very good girl" (fellow single woman Bridget Griffin) and "well conducted" (nurse Ann Wonnocott) in contrast to many of the English girls. Probably, it was somewhere in the middle.

After all of this, the jury was very quick in passing a sentence on the matter. Only ten minutes into their deliberations, they already announced their verdict: death from injuries and from mental pressure due to illegal sexual intercourse. They added: "We are of unan-

10 Jane Chase, matron: "[…] six days after we left England, I found the deceased girl in the single men's compartment, sitting between two sailors, and one had his arm round her neck […] this time that I speak of is the only time that I ever saw any impropriety on the part of the deceased girl in taking liberties with the sailors by being with them; she could have intercourse, with the single emigrants if she chose […] I am not surprised at her being enceinte, as her conduct was generally light on board the ship […]" (N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures": 4/1.)

11 Ann Wonnocott, nurse: "I have heard her say since she has been ill, that she wished she was dead; she asked and obtained permission for my daughter to read to her; my daughter was no intimate acquaintance of the deceased, nor had [the] deceased any particular female friend on board." (N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures": 4/2.)

12 William J. Rowland, surgeon-superintendent: "[…] she had an aspect of perfect terror, and asked me to protect her […] she seemed a little better, but still kept complaining about 'this man;' I could not find out from her whether there was any reason for her complaint." (N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures": 4/2.)

13 Alexander Duffy, hospital assistant: "I was told afterwards that she was unwell; I went down to see her; she was seated on her berth, and I saw there was something the matter with her; I seated myself alongside of her; she appeared as if she was affected in the brain as she talked a good deal of nonsense, and said she had done a good many things on board ship; I said keep your mind to yourself and you are all right." (N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures": 4/2.)

imous opinion, that from the evidence produced, the deceased, Ann Cox, died from injuries sustained from falls, while on board the ship Stebonheath, accelerated by the excitement produced from illicit connexion with some person on board." But that was not all:

> The jury also attached to their verdict the following rider: "And we also express our displeasure and censure of the immorality of the single women and sailors; and we further highly commend the conduct of Miss Chase, the matron, and also of Dr. Roland [sic] the surgeon-superintendent."[14]

Indeed, this sensational article about a marathon inquiry (from 11am to 7pm) set the wheels of investigation and the printing presses in motion. Five days later, the complete text was reprinted in the two major Melbourne newspapers *Age* and *Argus*. The *Age* already pointed to the upcoming proceedings and took advantage of the "sex sells" strategy by changing the headline to "Extraordinary Immorality on Board the Stebonheath".[15] Cox's death, therefore, was explained by a combination of physical, mental and spiritual negligence, as well as her injuries. With this multicausal argumentation, the jury underlined both the inextricable togetherness of body, mind and soul in transit and the inextricable responsibility for health.

But the case was not closed yet, as "all is not gold that glitters".[16] On March 10th, 1858, the same day that Melbourne heard about the "extraordinary immorality", the *Sydney Morning Herald* had another update to proclaim, something which would change the whole narrative and give it a completely different colouring. Their equally lengthy article was simply entitled "The Stebonheath. Meeting of Emigrants per Stebonheath", but it was a turning point in the case. A group of about 20 former passengers of the doomed ship had gathered at Baker's Hotel across the street in view of the Supreme Court after reading what had been spread about the character of the recent immigrants "with the utmost astonishment

14 N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures": 4/3.
15 N. N., "Extraordinary Immorality on Board the Stebonheath: Inquest at Sydney," *Age*, 1858/03/10: 5 and N. N., "The Emigrant Ship 'Stebonheath'. Extraordinary Disclosures," *The Argus*, 1858/03/10: 7.
16 N. N., "The Doings on Board 'The Stebonheath'".

and disgust". Some of them had personally experienced the effect of such merciless generalizations of "gross immorality" as put forth by matron and surgeon when vainly attempting to find a job. Fiercely rejecting the moral verdict and the harsh language, several immigrants claimed that many accusations were simply "false" or exaggerated. They questioned the whole process around Ann Cox's sudden death. According to them, there might have been a huge problem with moral character indeed, but not all the girls had behaved in a casual sexual manner, and not all the sailors were breaking "open the single females' compartment 14 nights running to have access to the girls",[17] as matron Chase had described it. On the contrary: The real offenders were the main accusers: "both the surgeon of the vessel and Miss Chase, the matron, were wholly unqualified to fill with propriety the situations to which they were appointed."[18]

Apparently, the surgeon was occasionally not sober himself,[19] and had cruelly inflicted physical punishment on two obstreperous single women (Helen/Ellen Loughborough and Henrietta Jackson) by locking them up for several hours and overnight in two tiny boxes erected as provisional prison cells. Handcuffed with irons around their wrists and forced to stand for hours without access to water or food, they were only released after Captain Connell interceded. The women's statements complement each other in painting a very dark picture of a dangerous liaison between an abusive surgeon and a ruthless matron.[20]

No doubt the following vivid revelations about drunkenness, aggression, oppression, insults and sadism had a huge impact on the biographies of surgeon William J. Rowland and matron Jane Chase. As the stories became public, they were subject to critical questions on what had taken place during that almost five months transit from Plymouth to Sydney. The appointed mediators of transit had to step in front of the jury again: surgeon, matron, hospital assistant, nurse and reverend. What are we to make of this? The Australian press exhibited a variety of reactions, as is common in similarly ambiguous cases. Some declared

17 N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures": 4/1.

18 N. N., "The Stebonheath: Meeting of Emigrants per Stebonheath," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1858/03/10: 4

19 N. N., "Meeting of Emigrants per Stebonheath," *Tasmanian Weekly News*, 1858/03/27: 6.

20 N. N., "The Stebonheath," *Mount Alexander Mail*, 1858/03/26: 3.

that "the character of that ship will ever remain on record as one of the most abominable ever engaged in the service" and mourned the "mighty wrong to send us young females without virtue" thus painting a dark picture of a future society with negative female impact.[21] Others, like *The Freemans's Journal* cited previously, sided with the poor emigrants having suffered under the intemperate rule of an inattentive surgeon and a zealous matron, who were now waiting for the results of the investigation to be cleared of their stigma. They were suspicious of the "closed door inquiry", the committee's possible partiality, and the curious selection of witnesses who were invited or rejected; they demanded a careful observation by the free press of what the powerful might decide.[22] One word stood against the other.

With research literature, it is also difficult to find a common ground. Although not citing any sources in detail, it soon becomes clear that poet and historian Eric C. Rolls[23] in his book on Chinese-Australian relationships directly copied[24] some of the more outspoken emigrants' opinions and took them to be true. When he analysed and compared shipping conditions, he took the 'Stebonheath' as a worst-case scenario to drastically paint a terrifying picture of a tyrant surgeon and a callous matron.

> Ann Cox, eighteen years old, taken off the ship ill, died in hospital. She was found to be recently pregnant and had bruises and wounds that had turned septic. After her inquest which exonerated the matron and the ship's doctor, public meetings of the passengers exposed a different story. Matron Jane Chase was a self-righteous and self-serving religious zealot […] the doctor, William Rowland, a sadistic drunk.[25]

21 N. N., "The Stebonheath," *Illawarra Mercury*, 1858/03/11: 2.
22 N. N., "The Stebonheath," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1858/03/11: 4 and with a similar message the Catholic newspaper *Freeman's Journal* in N. N., "The Doings on Board 'The Stebonheath'".
23 See Griffiths, Tom, "'Rolls, Eric Charles (1923–2007)': [Original Publication: Sydney Morning Herald, 7 November 2007]", updated 2007 <oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/rolls-eric-charles-19069/text30658>, accessed 2023/06/08.
24 The wording is partly copied and pasted from the meeting of the emigrants at the end of March 1858, as e.g. Mrs Lewis' judgment on matron Jane Chase in N. N., "The Stebonheath".
25 Rolls, Eric C., *Sojourners: The Epic Story of China's Centuries-Old Relationship with Australia*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1992: 156–157.

I will not try to identify victim or perpetrator from hindsight. What is noteworthy above all is the impact of the observer. Whether some personality trait is positive or whether it is negative is heavily influenced – if not determined – by what is talked about it afterwards; and Australia was watching and reading the news with great interest in spring and summer 1858.

For the purpose of this chapter, the focus will not be on the moral topic, which has been covered in the previous chapter, but on the contested role of the designated transit mediators as they were torn between high praise and utter condemnation in the public discourse. This will help to construct the meaning of accepted management and allows for conclusions to be drawn concerning the general character and conditions for being led through the in-between. With an increasing number of details and witness accounts, the overarching question changed. It was not so much about the moral conduct of the immigrants anymore, but about the "real character of the management of the ship"[26] and consequently about what qualified a person for a position of leadership and authority.

3 The Failures of a Surgeon

After analysing the public view (newspaper articles and letters to the editor) taken from this peculiar case study, the theoretical view (government regulations and laws), the involved ones' view (patients, friends, spouses), and the personal view (surgeons' own writings) will be looked at. Though the newspaper articles seem to cover all the various perspectives already, sorting them according to the genres and perspectives involved is essential, so that a character sketch can be traced of an allrounder 'transit' skilled mediator of the 19th century.

26 „We say then, that so far as the case has been accessible to the public there is strong reason to think that the charges against the people by the Stebonheath are, upon the whole, unfounded, and that there is equally strong reason to believe that they have been made in order to disguise the real character of the management of the ship, and to prevent any credit being given to those accusations which might be expected at the close of a voyage." (N. N., "The Stebonheath," *Adelaide Times*, 1858/04/23: 2–3.) Even in South Australia, the 'Stebonheath' case stirred up a discourse.

3.1 The public view

Always a self-conscious man, Dr William J. Rowland knew his duty well: supervising the passengers, securing health, upholding morality, ensuring order. When he was appointed surgeon-superintendent on the 'Stebonheath' to New South Wales in 1857, he needed no repeated instruction sheet. In addition to the physical health of the emigrants, order and discipline also lay in the hands of the surgeon-superintendent. The British Passenger Act of 1855 applied to all ships with more than 30 steerage passengers and promised a surgeon-superintendent to work side-by-side with the captain for the good of the whole ship. His professional training was the first condition to apply for this post on an Australia-bound emigrant ship. Most surgeons had graduated from universities across Europe and were interested in research, could demonstrate a long tradition of maritime and naval medicine, and had a liking for adventure. Rowland clearly saw himself "at the forefront of the rising profession of medical practitioners".[27]

For bringing the 355 emigrants back to shore safely, a respectable gratuity waited for him on the other side of the world. Because of their outstanding role and the scientific opportunities, surgeon-superintendents could make a lot of money compared to their colleagues in Victorian Britain, where studying medicine could lead to difficulties in making a living. With each successful voyage complemented, they would climb up the ladder of financial success.[28] Also, he was not scared of the sea, and he would be his own master in the medical field. Self-consciousness was not what he was lacking in life. Looking back at six journeys as a young

27 Haines, Robin, "Ships, Families and Surgeons: Migrant Voyages to Australia in the Age of Sail," in *Health and Medicine at Sea, 1700–1900*, ed. David B. Haycock and Sally Archer. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009: 172–194: 181. Also Woolcock, Helen R., "Medical Supervision on Nineteenth Century Emigrant Ships: The Voyage of the 'Clifton', 1861–1862," in *Pioneer Medicine in Australia*, ed. John H. Pearn. Brisbane: Amphion Press, 1988: 65–76: 67–68.

28 Haines, Robin, *Doctors at Sea: Emigrant Voyages to Colonial Australia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005: 76–80.

physician, where he had helped deliver about 2,700[29] new colonists to Sydney and Melbourne, Rowland felt ready for his seventh passage.[30]

Not long after setting sail at the end of September, a gale at the Bay of Biscay struck the wooden vessel at full tilt on October 6th, 1857. Only with united forces could a panic outburst be prevented: the screaming women and children below received extra comfort from the more experienced sailors calming them down. The chief officer Mr Dray[31] was severely injured, alongside other courageous men, one boy lost his life, and the ship lost its mast. The 'Stebonheath' was forced to land about 30 miles away from Bordeaux in France for repairs, which took almost a whole month. According to his own writings, Rowland could not find any rest during this compulsory stay. With an eagle eye, he was observing the men and the women – single ones in particular – and prevented immoral behaviour as far as possible. His detailed and lively report[32] on misconduct between sailors and single women, and the lack of respect towards him and the matron, was received with great interest at the *Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*. The sailors seemed unwilling to refrain from talking to the women and reacted with threats of mutiny if forced to keep a distance by order of the sur-

29 "In conclusion, I may remark, that of the two thousand and seven hundred emigrants who have come to Australia under my charge, thirteen only have I ever found it necessary to put under arrest, and of this number ten were on board the Stebonheath." (Rowland, William J., "The Stebonheath: To the Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald. Dated April 17th, 1858," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1858/04/26: 2–3.)

30 To emphasize his experience in his first hearing, Rowland referred to his having "been five times with immigrants to this colony and twice to Melbourne" before commenting on the dead girl Ann Cox. (N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath. Extraordinary Disclosures," *Empire*, 1858/03/05: 4.)

31 Chief officer Dray would be the only crewmember getting out of this investigation with only praise for his uprightness: "The first mate alone of the ship's officers did his duty, and his doing it made him so obnoxious to the crew that for self-preservation he was forced to carry a pistol on his person. It is a pity that the rules of the service will not admit of his receiving some extra acknowledgment. But, beyond a paragraph of praise, he obtains no further reward than if, not having been subjected to special temptation, he had exhibited no special virtue in resisting it." (N. N., "Thursday, April 22, 1858," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1858/04/22: 5.)

32 Rowland, William J., Letters to Sir Walcott and Colonial Land and Emigration Commission (On Proceedings when in France and Affair between Seamen and Single Women on 'Stebonheath' at France), 1857/10/16+23 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) A3380; 58/2102.

geon or captain. Tension was building up between the passengers Rowland had to supervise and the crew Rowland had to communicate with. However, his account reads like a hero's tale: secretly calling for help in the French language, removing the main leaders of the mutiny, cleaning the ship with the help of the single men,[33] defending the lawful first mate against the huge, dangerous boatswain with fists and lashes, and more. Rowland exhausted himself in performing his duty and translating instructions from the French officials. Bathing in his newly acquired power position and also complaining about the increase of tasks and the opposition by the crew – all due to his knowledge of French – he liked to show off his achievements and his zeal for morality. Herman Merivale, Under-Secretary for the Colonies in the Colonial Office in London, and his superior Henry Labouchere were very intrigued by the "courage and energy displayed" and approved of an extra £10 gratuity for Rowland and his helpers in this time of crisis.[34]

When finally leaving France, the relationship between Rowland, Captain Connell, and the crew had suffered significantly already. Rowland's initiative – to order help from French vessels, to apply disciplinary measurements against sailors, to insist on absolutely no contact between single men and single women, and to make the male passengers work like sailors under extreme circumstances – must have been viewed critically. "Unjustly", as Rowland was quick to explain, thus stealing the 'Stebonheath'-sailors' thunder in advance:

33 Rowland later was also accused of having breached the law by instrumentalizing the single men to have the ship cleaned. Indeed, the 1866 "Instructions to Surgeons Superintendents" prohibit the employment of emigrants for sailor's work (see Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, *Instructions to Surgeons Superintendents of Government Emigrant Ships*. London: George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1866: 13), but Rowland in his letter argued with the exceptionality of the storm and shipwreck-situation. (Rowland, William J., Letters to Sir Walcott and Colonial Land and Emigration Commission (On Proceedings when in France and Affair between Seamen and Single Women on 'Stebonheath' at France), 1857/10/16+23 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) A3380; 58/2102: Second letter, p. 7.)

34 Merivale, Herman, Letter to Emigration Commissioners, 1857/11/26 in *Emigration Entry Books: Australia. Letters from Secretary of State. Domestic.* London, 1855–1857 (National Archives) CO 385/28: 373–374

> During the whole of this matter it has been necessary for me to appear far more prominently than I wish, for being the only person on board the ship understanding French, no communications could take place between the ships' Officers and the French Officials civil or military or naval without my presence. I must therefore, have often appeared to the Seamen to be giving orders and directions concerning them when in fact I was only translating. This quite accounts for their complaint that they were not accustomed to be under the orders of a Doctor. My knowledge of French is quite a decided nuisance; I get no peace in consequence. In addition to all my ordinary duties, a large portion of the business of the ship passes through my hands. I am perpetually interrupted in my own business to attend to that of the ship.[35]

"His own business" continued in the weeks to follow, as did opposition from the side of the emigrants and the sailors. The official instructions stated that a surgeon-superintendent was indeed responsible for upholding discipline and could require obedience from the emigrants as his charges. The emigrating single women stood between the captain, the matron and the surgeon, but counted as the surgeon's inferiors, too.[36] When Rowland extended his sphere of influence to the mutinous crew, the conflict aggravated. The eager doctor carefully wrote down all the grievances and accused the captain and the officers upon arrival in Sydney immediately. For him, attack was the best form of defence, and he was convinced of the appropriateness of his actions.

Obviously, this supervisor fell victim to a misinterpretation of his authority and role by failing to smooth the tensions at hand. Later, when the investigations on Ann Cox's death exploded and became an extended examination of his performance, Rowland acted decisively: upon receiving the news about the upcoming prosecution for his confinement and assault against the two women, he fled. Neither his defender nor Rowland himself showed up at the court. The surgeon was gone without a trace. The papers speculated about his destination,

35 Rowland, "Letters to Sir Walcott and Colonial Land and Emigration Commission," 1857/10/16+23: Second letter, p. 13.

36 Woolcock, "Medical Supervision on Nineteenth Century Emigrant Ships": 67–68.

interpreting his disappearance as further evidence of his guilt and his flight as an attempt to escape punishment. Even suicide was feared.[37]

But Rowland had not killed himself. Shortly after, on April 17th, Rowland wrote a letter to the editor of the famous New South Wales newspaper, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, to refute the accusations. In gross words of self-pity, he lamented about a surgeon-superintendent's manifold duty and justified his actions with reference to his official rights. Apparently, he had only built the prison cells symbolically to underline his earnestness in securing order on board – for the sake of all the people on board. The actual and real-life use of the cells came about just because of "female waywardness" and had been entirely the fault of the women and sailors. The reason why he had fled the trial was a mental breakdown as a consequence of the pressure and accusations he had received.[38] Two weeks later, the *Sydney Morning Herald* published an extract of Rowland's letter of defence again and replied to it. According to them, the surgeon could not repair or restore his negative reputation by this extensive letter of justification; a vain attempt to "vindicate his conduct through our columns".[39]

The next day, a mysterious "medical practitioner" commented on Rowland's defence and backed his thesis. The identity of the writer remained unknown; he claimed not to be acquainted with Rowland. Perhaps Rowland had written the second letter himself anonymously. Regardless, the arguments remained the same: complicated job, stubborn subordinates, mutinous crew, hysterical exaggeration of chastisement; too much to mediate, too little support, too autonomous the actants. In addition to that, the unknown colleague blamed the newspapers for their biased condemnation of coercion despite obvious disobedience.[40]

37 See e.g. N. N., "Sydney: From Our Own Correspondent," *Moreton Bay Courier*, 1858/03/31: 4 or the official report in Browne, Hutchinson H., Gother K. Mann, and Haynes G. Alleyne, "Parliamentary Paper. Emigrant Ship Stebonheath: Report of the Immigration Board," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1858/04/22: 8: Point 56.
38 Rowland, "The Stebonheath". Abridged and reprinted e.g. in another NSW paper two days later: N. N., "The Stebonheath (Abridged from the Herald)," *Northern Times*, 1858/04/28: 2–3.
39 N. N., "The Emigrant Ship Stebonheath," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1858/05/10: 6.
40 A Medical Practitioner, "The Surgeon-Superintendent of the Stebonheath: To the Editor of the Empire," *Empire*, 1858/05/11: 3.

He had no chance. Rowland was never hired as surgeon-superintendent again. He decided to go into politics instead and settled in Victoria, where he briefly served as an elected member in the Footscray municipality near Melbourne in 1860. A curious announcement in the Melbourne newspaper *Argus* two years later is puzzling: a certain Captain Brookes from London "earnestly requested" for "any information with respect to the fate, or present residency of this gentleman" referred to as "William Johnson Rowland, Esq. Surgeon, of Kerang, Lower Loddon, Victoria", offering an address in Hatton Garden, London and a reward of £3. The connection remains a mystery.[41] Finally, Rowland's life was cut short at the age of 35 by a tragic, painful accident living as a self-made farmer in New South Wales.[42]

3.2 The theoretical view

Throughout the whole process with its contradictory newspaper articles, comments, witness accounts and reports, one key discussion was surprisingly absent. Rowland talked about it at length, but his problem fell on deaf ears as regards newspaper articles. He complained that neither the Passenger's Act nor the governments' regulations were precise in defining the limits and borders of how to enact and perform the role of a surgeon, endowed with the weight of responsibility:

> The Passenger Act, while professing to empower the surgeon to exact obedience, unfortunately omits to mention the precise manner in which his authority is to be enforced at sea, and the Government "Instructions to Surgeons" are equally vague on the subject, simply stating that "corporal punishment" is not to be resorted to, thus implying that, short of flogging, all means usual for preserving discipline at sea are perfectly proper and lawful.[43]

41 N. N., "The News of the Day," *Age*, 1859/07/04: 5 and N. N., "Missing Friends, Messages, etc." *The Argus*, 1862/04/19: 1.
42 See compiled information on William J. Rowland in the AMPI database: Beissel, Ian, "Art.: 'William Johnson Rowland'", updated 2015/09/22 <medicalpioneers.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi?detail=1&id=747>, accessed 2023/06/08. The details of his "melancholy accident" (pierced by a harrow) can be found here: N. N., "Sydney News: Melancholy Accident," *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, 1863/04/25: 3.
43 Rowland, "The Stebonheath":3.

While he admitted that he still needed to "learn by what milder method these violent women could have been brought to order", the overall question actually remained: How then should and could an officially installed communicator and mediator of transit fulfil his duty wisely to supervise "morality, health, cleanliness, and orderly conduct"?[44]

After all, every prospective surgeon-superintendent candidate had to sign an agreement with the Australian colonial government, in which he was given "full power and control" with the order that "the maintenance of discipline and good order is entirely in his own hands".[45] According to the 1866 "Instructions to Surgeons Superintendents of Government Emigrant Ships", corporal punishment was forbidden to be exercised by the surgeon, and only in extreme cases could he approach the captain to support him with disciplinary measurements. But this should be the last resort and never the doctor's initiative.[46]

Clearly, a closer look at the formal background is needed. What exactly did the instructions to surgeons require? Was it as vague as Rowland claimed? According to James Wheeler, secretary to John Douglas, the Agent-General for Emigration to Queensland, the instructions were plain to both doctors and passengers.[47] This claim is confirmed by his-

44 Rowland, "The Stebonheath".

45 The verbatim example from the Queensland instructions reads as follows: "The Surgeon-Superintendent of these ships is placed by the Queensland Government in the position of the fullest authority, being supreme in everything not connected with the sailing of the ship, in which alone the Captain possesses any control. The appointment of the Matrons, Constables, Cook, and other subordinate officers on board, is, by authority given on his appointment at the Queensland Office, vested in the Surgeon-Superintendent, who has power also to remove such persons from office, if found necessary. [...] The Medical Officer, having thus full power and control, the maintenance of discipline and good order is entirely in his own hands." (Queensland Government Emigration Office, *Instructions to Surgeon-Superintendents of Queensland Ships Sailing under the Direction of H.M. Queensland Government*. London: Rees & Co., 1869: 99–100.)

46 "31. It is hardly necessary to state that corporal punishment on board must on no account be resorted to […] 33. The Surgeon, in case of need, can appeal to the Captain for his aid and cooperation in enforcing the requisite discipline on board, especially where the Crew are concerned." (Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, *Instructions to Surgeons Superintendents of Government Emigrant Ships*: 12–13.)

47 Massie, Hugh H., John Douglas, and James Wheeler, "Letters on Case of Dr Mindelet, Surgeon-Superintendent on Board the 'Young Australia', 1870/10/03+1870/12/02" in *Votes and Proceedings. 2nd Session*. Brisbane 1871/04/12–1871/06/07 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) FRY PER J 916.K3: 912–921: 920.

torian Robin Haines' research on medical pioneers on Australian emigrant ships. The "Instructions to Surgeons on Emigrant Ships" were based on the tried and tested convict ship regulations (unfortunately, only very few reports recording life and death aboard have survived until today).[48] Her findings show that the aim was to secure qualitatively high medical care, because in the 19th century only 2% of assisted migrants from the United Kingdom died en route or arrived in a very instable state in Australia. Many unassisted migrants also travelled on board official emigrant ships and enjoyed the privilege of the surgeon's presence and expertise. Likewise, many private vessels hired a doctor to guarantee safety.[49]

The question of the type of person required for a task such as this finds an answer in the instructions of 1866 that emphasized the paramount foundations of an emigrant surgeon-superintendent's attitude towards his work – or, rather, his calling:

> By scrupulously regulating his own conduct and demeanour, and by a firm and decided, but kind and conciliatory, exercise of his functions – by a considerate attention to the feelings of the people, and an impartial and just bearing in any questions which may arise among them, – and by showing an interest in their well-being and comfort, there can be little doubt that over persons so circumstanced an officer in the position of Surgeon Superintendent may acquire a very great influence. But it is equally evident that any want of temper or justice or attention on his part would alienate the Emigrants from him, and make the performance of his duties proportionably more difficult.
>
> Nor is it only towards the Emigrants that the Surgeon Superintendent should well consider the relation in which he stands. As their protector it will be his duty to watch over the conduct of the Master and Officers of the Ship and Crew in all that relates to the Emigrants […]

48 Haines, "Ships, Families and Surgeons": 174. On the gap in emigrant surgeons' logs in the archives, see FN 6.
49 Haines: 191. On the assumptions to be made about unassisted migrant voyages, see Haines, *Doctors at Sea*: 191, FN 9.

> His relations with the Officers of the ship will require the exercise of as much discretion and firmness as his relations with the Emigrants; and on his exercise of those qualities will depend not less his own comfort than the success of the voyage.[50]

Such a conscious and well-balanced surgeon had different duties divided into four stages of the emigration process: "1st, on joining the ship; 2nd, at the time of the people's embarkation; 3rd, during the voyage; and 4th, after the voyage is over."[51] As can be expected, the requirements during the voyage occupy the majority of this: altogether 51 out of 85 points (Points 29–79). The summary reads as follows:

> The principal objects of the Surgeon Superintendent's attention during the voyage will be the maintenance of good order and regularity among the people; the management of the Dietary; the care of the Sick; and the keeping of a Journal which shall constitute a sufficient record of the proceedings on all these subjects.[52]

The next fifty points list what lay behind moral supervision, food management, medical duties, and bureaucratic tasks. Based on the expected duties, several conclusions can be drawn about the character traits that are, by implication, also expected:

Table 3: A surgeon's duties and character

A surgeon's duties during the voyage	Conclusion on surgeon's character
Upholding order and discipline without coercive equipment (Point 30)	Authoritative and self-conscious
No corporal punishment; when needed enforcing discipline through the captain (Point 31+33)	Judicious and self-controlled
Intentional and purposeful leadership right from the start to establish "regular habits" (Point 32)	Target-oriented and well-structured

50 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, *Instructions to Surgeons Superintendents of Government Emigrant Ships*: 5–6.
51 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners: 6.
52 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners: 12.

A surgeon's duties during the voyage	Conclusion on surgeon's character
No unmarried women as servant or helper alone in his presence; awareness of moral responsibility for the vessel (Point 34)	Morally tactful and considerate
Close cooperation with matron, captain (Point 77), teacher (Point 46+48) etc.	Communicative and sociable for professional teamwork; not a loner
Diet management (Point 26) and hygiene regulations (Points 36–37)	Caring and tidy
Appointment of able assistants in kitchen and messes (Point 21) Appointment, control, supervision, and (if required) dismissal of co-workers, such as assistants, school-masters, sub-matrons etc. (Point 53)	Leadership and personnel management qualities
Report about proceedings; keeping exact journal of the voyage plus medical journal (Point 78–79)	Thorough, concentrative, and self-organized
Preventing and curing disease (Point 62–73)	Skilled and medically competent
"Firm and decided, but kind and conciliatory"	Role model with resilient mindset[53]

The observation that character was actually what counted in the end can be made by considering the example of someone who failed in the fulfilment of his duty, namely Captain Connell of the 'Stebonheath'. Confronted with secret liaisons by the second and third mate and with an exaggeratedly authoritative surgeon, the captain fled from his responsibility. During the enforced repairs off the coast of France, he spent a lot of time on shore, and then he remained invisible throughout the voyage, too – only sometimes speaking up in cases of utter emergency. According to the general testimony, he therefore was "a good tempered person, but that when his interference was sought for, he afforded it with apparent reluctance", ignoring the mutinous spirit of the crew.[54] Surely, he was an able seaman and knew the wind and the waves, but he tried to ignore or evade the social-interaction side of his field of duties

53 'Stebonheath' surgeon William J. Rowland later explained that he disappeared before the trial started because of "mental weariness and exhaustion I experienced from the excessive harass of the latter part of the voyage". Taking the limits of his resilience level as an argument, Rowland demonstrated his mental instability. (Rowland, "The Stebonheath".)
54 Browne, Mann, and Alleyne, "Parliamentary Paper. Emigrant Ship Stebonheath": Point 17.

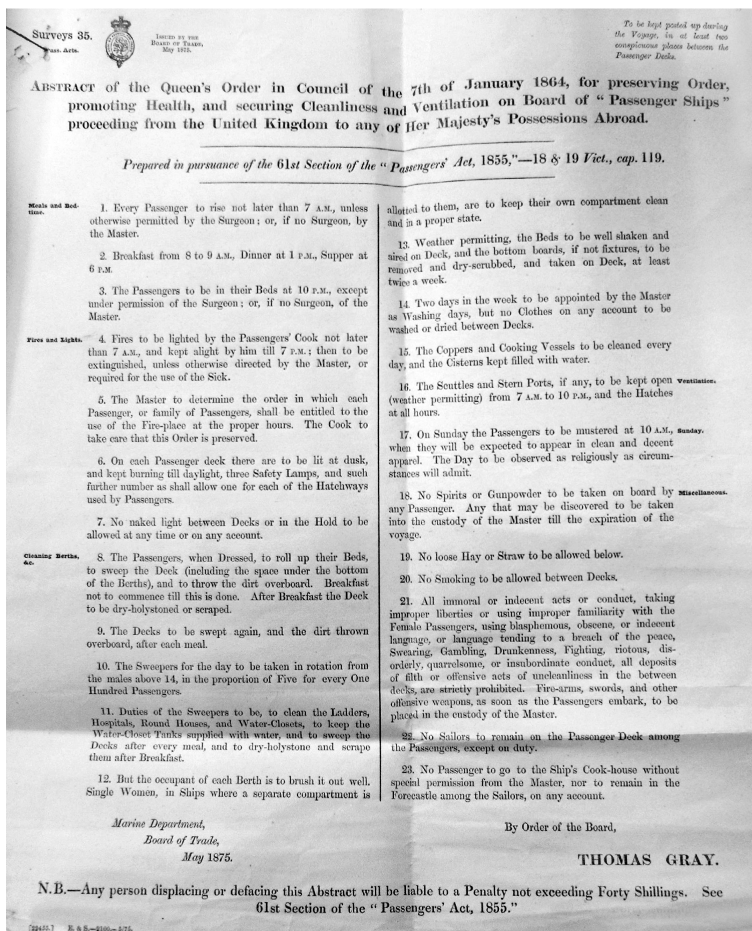
if possible. This allowed free reign to the more dominant figures on board the 'Stebonheath'.

Surgeon William J. Rowland and Captain James Connell represent two ways to fail as designated mediators in a transit situation. The special feature of 'transit' here is that they are irresistibly entangled in the proceedings themselves, perhaps more than in less confined settings elsewhere. Both mediators were called on to set and enforce regulations for the physical, mental, moral and spiritual wellbeing of the shipboard community, including both crew and passengers. This was the triangle they were embedded in. Despite being paid for working on board, the surgeon was not considered a member of the crew, nor did he usually intend on emigrating, like the other non-crew people on board – the passengers. He was a government agent and did not belong to either of those categories. Professionally, the captain belonged to the crew as their head, but privately he aligned with the first-class passengers, so can be considered a civilian. In other words, both surgeon and captain literally stood in-between. Their roles included the communication of concepts (rules, knowledge, etc.) and overseeing contacts (cooperations, affairs, conflicts, etc.). In our example, both failed in these roles.

Connell represents the lax, weak boss with a deep aversion to conflict. The ideal master cooperated with the surgeon and oversaw the crew; he was experienced, temperate, communicative, kind, and a "judicious disciplinarian".[55] But Connell viewed his responsibility and the duty to speak out openly against irregularities as burdensome and would have preferred to just pin the rules of conduct on the steerage walls again, make the passengers read them, and hope for their obedience out of their own free will. Instead of stepping in, he would rather patiently endure troubles than insist on the following rules: [56]

55 Woolcock, Helen R., *Rights of Passage: Emigration to Australia in the 19th Century*. London: Tavistock, 1986: 170–171.

56 This is one later example of what the rules hanging in the passengers' tract looked like. The placard above is the first draft of an updated version for the otherwise simply reprinted "Queen's Order […] for preserving Order, promoting Health, and securing Cleanliness and Ventilation on Board of 'Passenger Ships'". (Board of Trade. Marine Department, Emigration. Printed Placard of Rules for Emigrants on Board Passenger Ships, 1875 (National Archives) MT 9/110/M7119_75.)



Surveys 35.
Pass. Acts.

Issued by the Board of Trade, May 1875.

To be kept posted up during the Voyage, in at least two conspicuous places between the Passenger Decks.

Abstract of the Queen's Order in Council of the 7th of January 1864, for preserving Order, promoting Health, and securing Cleanliness and Ventilation on Board of "Passenger Ships" proceeding from the United Kingdom to any of Her Majesty's Possessions Abroad.

Prepared in pursuance of the 61*st Section of the "Passengers' Act,* 1855,"—18 & 19 *Vict., cap.* 119.

Meals and Bed-time.

1. Every Passenger to rise not later than 7 A.M., unless otherwise permitted by the Surgeon; or, if no Surgeon, by the Master.

2. Breakfast from 8 to 9 A.M., Dinner at 1 P.M., Supper at 6 P.M.

3. The Passengers to be in their Beds at 10 P.M., except under permission of the Surgeon; or, if no Surgeon, of the Master.

Fires and Lights.

4. Fires to be lighted by the Passengers' Cook not later than 7 A.M., and kept alight by him till 7 P.M.; then to be extinguished, unless otherwise directed by the Master, or required for the use of the Sick.

5. The Master to determine the order in which each Passenger, or family of Passengers, shall be entitled to the use of the Fire-place at the proper hours. The Cook to take care that this Order is preserved.

6. On each Passenger deck there are to be lit at dusk, and kept burning till daylight, three Safety Lamps, and such further number as shall allow one for each of the Hatchways used by Passengers.

7. No naked light between Decks or in the Hold to be allowed at any time or on any account.

Cleaning Berths, &c.

8. The Passengers, when Dressed, to roll up their Beds, to sweep the Deck (including the space under the bottom of the Berths), and to throw the dirt overboard. Breakfast not to commence till this is done. After Breakfast the Deck to be dry-holystoned or scraped.

9. The Decks to be swept again, and the dirt thrown overboard, after each meal.

10. The Sweepers for the day to be taken in rotation from the males above 14, in the proportion of Five for every One Hundred Passengers.

11. Duties of the Sweepers to be, to clean the Ladders, Hospitals, Round Houses, and Water-Closets, to keep the Water-Closet Tanks supplied with water, and to sweep the Decks after every meal, and to dry-holystone and scrape them after Breakfast.

12. But the occupant of each Berth is to brush it out well. Single Women, in Ships where a separate compartment is allotted to them, are to keep their own compartment clean and in a proper state.

13. Weather permitting, the Beds to be well shaken and aired on Deck, and the bottom boards, if not fixtures, to be removed and dry-scrubbed, and taken on Deck, at least twice a week.

14. Two days in the week to be appointed by the Master as Washing days, but no Clothes on any account to be washed or dried between Decks.

15. The Coppers and Cooking Vessels to be cleaned every day, and the Cisterns kept filled with water.

Ventilation.

16. The Scuttles and Stern Ports, if any, to be kept open (weather permitting) from 7 A.M. to 10 P.M., and the Hatches at all hours.

Sunday.

17. On Sunday the Passengers to be mustered at 10 A.M., when they will be expected to appear in clean and decent apparel. The Day to be observed as religiously as circumstances will admit.

Miscellaneous.

18. No Spirits or Gunpowder to be taken on board by any Passenger. Any that may be discovered to be taken into the custody of the Master till the expiration of the voyage.

19. No loose Hay or Straw to be allowed below.

20. No Smoking to be allowed between Decks.

21. All immoral or indecent acts or conduct, taking improper liberties or using improper familiarity with the Female Passengers, using blasphemous, obscene, or indecent language, or language tending to a breach of the peace, Swearing, Gambling, Drunkenness, Fighting, riotous, disorderly, quarrelsome, or insubordinate conduct, all deposits of filth or offensive acts of uncleanliness in the between decks, are strictly prohibited. Fire-arms, swords, and other offensive weapons, as soon as the Passengers embark, to be placed in the custody of the Master.

22. No Sailors to remain on the Passenger Deck among the Passengers, except on duty.

23. No Passenger to go to the Ship's Cook-house without special permission from the Master, nor to remain in the Forecastle among the Sailors, on any account.

Marine Department,
Board of Trade,
May 1875.

By Order of the Board,

THOMAS GRAY.

N.B.—Any person displacing or defacing this Abstract will be liable to a Penalty not exceeding Forty Shillings. See 61st Section of the "Passengers' Act, 1855."

[22455.] E. & S.—2100.—5/75.

Figure 4: Placard of updated version of rules, hanging in the passengers' tract on board emigrant ships

Rowland represents the inflexible, legalistic Englishman with a hot temper, who lacked sang-froid and self-control. Quick to suspect meddling against his authority, he made sure that everybody knew about his rights and power. His previous medical career was not discussed in the newspapers but concern and debate did arise regarding a significant flaw of his whole personality: Rowland forgot the human being behind the rules. He put too much emphasis on the dry principles.

Interpreting values such as "respect" and "obedience" in his own terms and measuring other people's conduct against his own ideal, he saw rebels and opposers everywhere. In addition, he seemed to occasionally drink too much alcohol,[57] probably to battle stress and pressure when finding himself surrounded by potential competitors. His construction of tiny boxes as prison cells without options to sit down and his brutal treatment of the two girls, handcuffing them behind their back to the point of utter exhaustion, both testified to his pure hubris against any supposed resistance. Generalizing the apparently traumatic events in France, he viewed every apparently flirty girl as someone deserving the harshest punishment possible.

Here, the concept of a mediator as sketched out in theory above helps to explain the disconnection and the breaking of cooperative togetherness within an emotional and social transit community. In the "trinity of actants", a 'mediator' impacts the outcome without putting too much weight on him- or herself. He or she is concerned about the whole, not about him- or herself. Without the mediator, the effect would be different (the arrow has another colour).

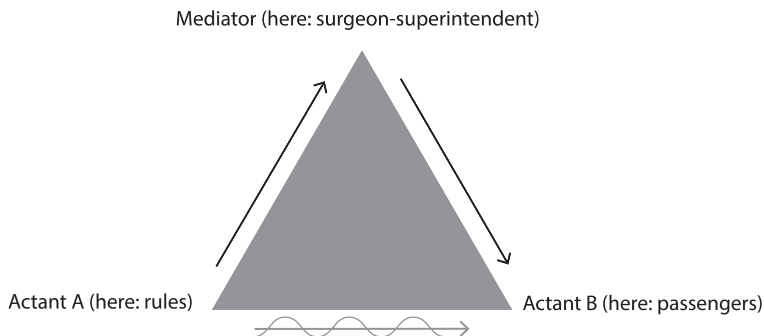


Figure 5: Trinity of actants: Mediator

57 His alcohol abuse was discussed by the 'Stebonheath' emigrants as well: "Mr. Patrick Bolton seconded the resolution. He declared that he had frequently seen the doctor in a state of intoxication, and that on one occasion he was so tipsy that he fell down the steps leading up the hatchway to the deck three times in his endeavour to reach the latter." (N. N., "Meeting of Emigrants per Stebonheath".)

In contrast to a 'mediator', an 'intermediary' (like Captain Connell) would have no measurable impact on any of the actants. He would simply carry A to B:

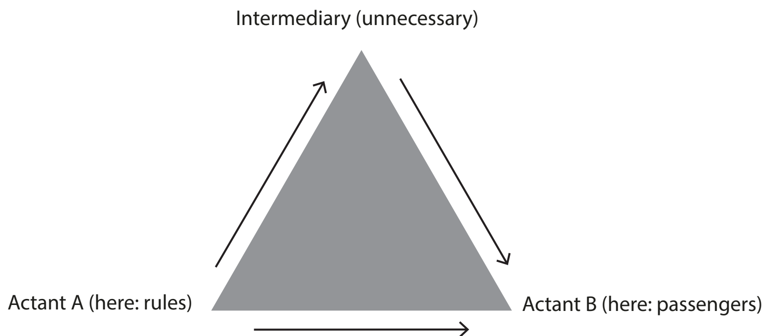


Figure 6: Trinity of actants: Intermediary

In tension-filled, complex transits, 'mediators' are required. Transits need more than mere intermediaries as channels conveying information. Connell, the weak-yet-friendly captain without a backbone in the midst of a rowdy crew, slipped into the role of an 'intermediary'. His lack of determination was the "fatal defect in men placed in authority in unquiet times".[58] The only time he did confront the doctor's semi-pedagogic measurements was when he ordered the removal of the irons from the two women's hands in the "prison cells" the surgeon had installed. This was when the injustice against the two girls was at its absolute peak. However, Connell never showed up in person to look after Henrietta Jackson and Helen Loughborough while they were locked up and in pain.[59] His invisibility testified to his huge failure as a mediator – a role he rejected.

In contrast, Rowland with his personality misinterpreted the role of the 'mediator'. He focussed too much on himself and his standing. He

58 N. N., "Thursday, April 22, 1858".
59 "She (i.e. Henrietta Jackson) was again locked up until about 11 o'clock at night, when Duffy came to take the irons off, stating that the captain had interceded with the doctor. They were immediately locked up again until next morning, and, with the exception of a short reprieve, kept in durance until 8 or 9 o'clock the following night." (N. N., "The Stebonheath").

regarded every move and complaint as an attack against his own person and thus overestimated the weight of his role, which led to a partly self-inflicted state of stress "from the mental weariness and exhaustion I experienced from the excessive harass of the latter part of the voyage".[60] The verdict by the Board of Investigation fit this character study well:

> 27. There can be little doubt that most of these errors have been brought about by the erroneous opinion which he entertained of his own importance, and of the authority with which he considered himself invested by the Commissioners' Regulations, as well as by the instructions contained in the Queen's Order in Council in reference to passenger ships.[61]

3.3 The involved ones' view

Although the booklet Rowland invoked must have been an earlier version of the instructions, the character sketch and the condemnation of irascibility were generally communicated. According to the surrounding people close to and within transit as well, a common idea of the personality needed for maritime medical roles must have existed. Both the letters of gratitude and the petitions handed in by the emigrants after the journey frequently show that a balanced temper and reliability belonged to the main requisites. On January 14th, 1875, Adelaide B. Revia, a young woman who had recovered from a serious illness, publicly praised the surgeon's "great skill and kindness" in a letter to the editor of the ship newspaper *Winefred Marvel*. She thanked Dr Concanon for never "falter[ing] in his duty as doctor, and I may say, friend; not a friend to me only, but it [sic] one to all on board".[62]

Perhaps with less flowery and artificially crafted praise, nevertheless equally pre-formulated words, most letters of gratitude carried the same message: the surgeon-superintendent was praised for fulfilling his duty "in the most satisfactory manner" and appreciated as a respected

60 Rowland, "The Stebonheath":3.
61 Browne, Mann, and Alleyne, "Parliamentary Paper. Emigrant Ship Stebonheath": Point 27.
62 Hetherington, Frederick W., ed., *Life on an Emigrant Ship: Being Twelve Numbers of a Ship's Newspaper Entitled 'The Winefred Marvel'*, 3rd ed. Uxbridge, 1895: 1875/01/14 [16].

person dedicated to the security and well-being of those in his care.[63] Apart from the surgeon, it was typical for each class of immigrants to offer testimonials to the key figures with responsibility, especially the captain and matron. Those documents were signed and handed over in a ritualized ceremony at the end of a voyage.[64] Given that the relief of arriving successfully resulted in them having a generally forgiving character, actual complaints and petitions required closer attention. Controlling forces had been established to scrutinize the vessel before and after the journey, so major failures would stand out quickly – as soon as the Immigration Officer came to check the ship for hygiene and health, or imposed a quarantine.[65] As in the case of the 'Stebonheath' with Dr Rowland, or in related cases, a negative evaluation could mostly be traced back to a lack of attention, medical incompetence or drunkenness (with the latter being frequently lamented).[66]

With the analytical concept in mind, it can be seen that the emigrants were the active recipients of whatever the surgeon conveyed to them concerning the rules set by the government and the maritime circumstances. Furthermore, as a mediator the surgeon selected the parts essential for the individual shipboard community, he translated the basics, and he took care of the implementation. As reasonable agents, the emigrants would then be asked to evaluate the mediator's performance and make report to the non-maritime powers who had set up the

63 Hobbins, Peter, Anne Clarke, and Ursula K. Frederick, "Born on the Voyage: Inscribing Emigrant Communities in the Twilight of Sail," *International Journal of Maritime History* 31, no. 4 (2019): 787–813. doi:10.1177/0843871419874001: 799.
64 Pietsch, Tamson, "Bodies at Sea: Travelling to Australia in the Age of Sail," *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 2 (2016): 209–228. doi:10.1017/S1740022816000061: 226. Pietsch emphasizes the artificial nature of collectively gathered signatures of each class. Sometimes, though, some deliberately refused to put their name underneath a letter of gratitude, insisting on their own critical view.
65 Haines, *Doctors at Sea*: 178.
66 Haines, "Ships, Families and Surgeons": 192. On doctors under the influence of liquor, see e.g. Pender, Thomas, Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw', 1883/01/12–1883/05/17 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15344; Box 4723/1: 1883/01/27–29 [26–32]. Migrant Thomas Pender self-consciously confronts Dr George Pearson, persistently fighting for proper medicine to strengthen his wife by opposing an "intoxicated " doctor, eventually bringing him before the captain. Finally, he is granted free access to stout and medicine for his ailing wife.

framework of 'transit' (such as immigration societies, British officials, colonial politicians, or the legislative assembly).[67]

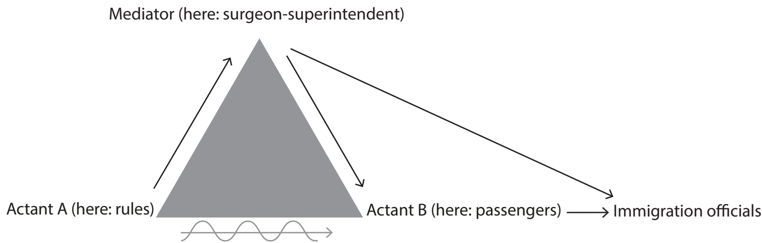


Figure 7: Trinity of actants: Mediator 2

Interestingly, the surgeon-superintendent's behaviour, manners and personal investment counted above anything else. The regulations themselves and the instructions to be followed were rarely criticized in these testimonials. Certainly, the rules might not have pleased every emigrant, but when it came to the surgeon, he was held responsible for embodying a good and honourable way of dealing with 'transit'. His authority fell together with his position; he became the ideal transit expert; he embodied the perfect manager; he was the go-to-man, the reliable in-between person to know the government's rules, to approach the captain, to apply cleanliness, to secure well-being and provision, and to give counsel to all suffering from emotional and physical hardship.

The extent of this burden greatly astonished the wife of Dr James Thornton, surgeon on the 'Selkirkshire'. Frances Thornton knew her husband and his zeal, but she was surprised to see how absorbed he was in the tasks and duties. His appointment had been quite spontaneous for an emigrant ship from Glasgow to Rockhampton (Queensland), so preparation was somewhat hectic for the newlywed. For Frances, it was also her first time at sea, and in the blink of an eye, she found herself sharing a sailing vessel with 408 emigrants and a large crew – under

67 See Chapter 1 "Negotiating Transit", where these specific actors and institutions are introduced. Building on that, Chapter 2 "Controlling Transit" sheds light on the failures of exercising control over the emigrants. This fits nicely with the focus here, where the mediators are now judged according to their performance.

the command of Captain Reid.[68] Being the only full paying passenger in the saloon, she was even more fixed upon her husband and penned on July 26th, 1882:

> In the evening I sat in my cabin and listened to the girls singing hymns, James had to conduct the prayers for the single girls tonight, as the matron was ill. He has a very great deal to do, beginning his first round at eight in the morning, and being kept going pretty near all day long, among so many people, who are always wanting something.[69]

For the wife, it became clear soon that her husband's communicative and diplomatic skills were precious in this position. For herself, she needed her own space and soon turned her cabin into a neat, upper-class English home. Though she also enjoyed interacting with the children in steerage once a week, generously distributing sweets to them, Frances was glad about her freedom to decide whether to join the "people" or stay in the luxury of her own cabin.[70] Dr Thornton would have to talk to the matron, the captain, the officers, any one of the 253 Scottish emigrants, the farm labourers, the domestic servants, the old and the young. A respected and dedicated man, he seemed to be well liked among the passengers. At least this is what Frances proudly wrote down: When he "registered the first baby born on board the Selkirkshire", he was allowed to call him "John Thornton Shaw [sic]". The gratitude and respect towards the doctor were thus inscribed on the infant's fate in the form of his name – a common, moving testimony of successful (medical and personal) mediation.[71]

68 N. N., "The Brisbane Courier: Friday, September 15, 1882," *The Brisbane Courier*, 1882/09/15: 4–5: 5.

69 Thornton, Frances, Diary of Surgeon's Wife on Board the 'Selkirkshire', 1882/07/19–1882/09/14 (National Library of Australia) MS 1025: 1882/07/26 [11]. Frances Thornton's diary, as that of an emigrant surgeon's wife, is a unique ego document.

70 Thornton: 1882/07/28 [13] (spending day sewing in cabin)+1882/08/06 [18] (distributing sweets to the children)+1882/08/07 [19] (tidying up rooms and forgetting about maritime place)+1882/08/12 [25] (new hammock for surgeon's wife; decision to not attend concert of the "people"), etc.

71 Thornton: 1882/08/24 [32]. On the practice of naming children after the captain, the doctor, or the ship, see Chapter 4, subchapter 3 "Joyful laughter", and also Hobbins, Clarke, and Frederick, "Born on the Voyage".

Challenges on board emigrant ships often meant rebellion or disobedience by others. Of course, medical challenges such as diarrhoea, measles or any other epidemic disease also caused much trouble and sorrow, but because of the complexity of transit, the doctors often had to function as mediating actors of discipline and admonishment. Like his seemingly tyrannical colleague Dr Rowland on the 'Stebonheath', Dr Thornton was also confronted with an apparently brazen single girl. In contrast to Dr Rowland, however, he seemed to have reacted with more awareness, ordering her to strict confinement for 24 hours between decks. The circumstances are disclosed from the researcher and Thornton's wife only mentioned this incident in passing.[72]

Perhaps Rowland's wife would have referred to her husband's punishment measurements on the 'Stebonheath' in an equally positive way in her diary. However, the contrast between both surgeons and their understanding of discipline shows that the problem lay not in the act of punishing someone for his or her disobedience, but in the intemperance and inappropriateness of the measure. Put in historical context and against the background of Victorian pedagogic ideals, this incident reveals the contemporary attitude: it was okay to confine emigrants – as long as it was not an emotional overreaction endangering their physical and mental well-being as in the case of the 'Stebonheath', when two girls were handcuffed and squeezed into self-installed prison cells. Consequently, core character traits for a surgeon, as important as medical knowledge, would have been temperance and self-control, with a lack of these being among the main negative reasons to dismiss any surgeon.[73] For the on-board observers therefore, the surgeon ideally was:

72 "Today one of the single women got into trouble, and James ordered her to be confined between decks for 24 hours for punishment." (Thornton, "Diary of Surgeon's Wife on Board the 'Selkirkshire'," 1882/07/19–1882/09/14: 1882/08/02 [16].)

73 E.g. Murdoch, Thomas W., and Frederic Rogers, "Letter to Herman Merivale. On Dr Wilkinson the Surgeon Superintendent of the 'Cambodia' Relative to the Conduct of the Latter," in *Letters to the Colonial Office. Australia.* London, 1852/07/22–1853/07/13 (National Archives) CO386/70: 180–183 and Jordan, Henry, Letter to Colonial Secretary. March Report, 1865/03/25 (Queensland State Archives) QSA 219; DUP COL/12: Point 1+2. Private complaints in personal diaries are numerous, such as: Cliney, Mrs W., Diary on Board the 'Queen of the Seas' and Recipe Book, 1855/08/07–1855/09/30 (State Library of Victoria) MS 14177; Box 4158/3: 1855/09/17–18 or Mayes, William J., Diary on Board the 'Alexander Duthie', 1882/11/11–1883/02/05 (National Maritime Museum) REF MS ALE:16+24+25–26.

> sensible of the deep responsibility of his position, inasmuch as he felt that having for the time the moral as well as medical charge of the people, he was bound to do all in his power to preserve their honour unspotted, as one who must give account to his God.[74]

Although, the stress and work overload brought some surgeons close to burn-out, to put it in today's terms, an engaged doctor's investment was praised and admired by many: "J.C. is very ill poor girl she has had long & severe illness & our noble Doctor is not well today we all feel for him, he is so kind and warm hearted. He has been overwrought in the hospital [sic], that has made him ill."[75]

With this quote, the following conclusions can be drawn: Up until now, 'transit' has been viewed in terms of how it impacted the individual and the community. With the 'mediator' as an analytical tool neglected by 'transit' research so far, the specificity of 'transit' reaches a deeper level of understanding. People in transit seek role models because the space of experience created by 'transit' is something difficult to negotiate, control, imagine, feel, cross and manage. Many 'transit'-affected individuals were overwhelmed by the abstract complexity of the space between 'already' and 'not yet', by the various instabilities of 'transit', and by its re-framing of familiar notions. So they clung gratefully to a living, breathing human being as a "friend […] to all on board".[76] If the mediator was unaware of that very function or unconscious of the emigrants' observing and watchful eyes, then they would fail tremendously. Not primarily because of any objectively approvable skills or certificates, but because of a lack of empathy, communicative skills, caring nature or flexibility.

74 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, "The Young Emigrants. Or, a Voyage to Australia. Part I-III," London 1850: Part II: 6–7.
75 Armstrong (Holley), Mary, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Severn' (1863), Diary on Board the 'Alfred' back to England (1864), and Matron's Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1873–1874) (Transcribed by Barry Harris), 1863/07/14–1874/02/01 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS SEV: 1863/09/10 [8].
76 Hetherington, *Life on an Emigrant Ship*: 1875/01/14 [16].

3.4 The personal view

But how did the surgeons-superintendents themselves see their position? Many did not travel with their spouses, so they were alone when they adjourned to their private cabin after long hours of work. Did the observers' and critical evaluators' voices align with the experiences and perceptions of the ones here identified as 'mediators'? Were they aware of or did they become aware of their role as 'mediator'? To help find answers, the next case study will look at first-hand diary material from a man in the position of a doctor at sea, even if he did find himself in this role rather spontaneously.

In the 1860s, a few years after the 'Stebonheath', the 'Clifton' set sail. The 'Clifton' was a clipper ship of the *Black Ball Line*, which was hired by the Queensland government to load 240 passengers in London, Gravesend, sail on to Plymouth for some more emigrants, and then head for Brisbane, Australia. Only five days into the journey, however, the duly qualified surgeon Dr George Young cut his own throat. This was a suicide, like the one analysed above when one of the assistant cooks took his own life,[77] but with much greater impact on the ship: for those aboard, with seasickness raging across the classes, the filthy vessel became even darker with the surgeon-superintendent gone, especially given the very bloody manner. In this situation, intermediate passenger Harry Hayter Ramsdale stood up and, according to his private journal, stepped into the role as the new interim surgeon for ten days until the 'Clifton' reached the port in Plymouth in December 1861, where a replacement surgeon called John Spencer had been ordered from London via telegraph. Taking the "peculiar circumstances" as a weighty argument for the merits of his work, when demanding his gratuity later Spencer claimed that he "to the utmost of his ability exerted himself for the health and comfort of every one [sic] on board".[78] However, simi-

77 See Chapter 5 "Crossing Transit"" and the voyage of the 'Falcon' in 1853.
78 Woolcock, "Medical Supervision on Nineteenth Century Emigrant Ships". Woolcock partly quotes the letter Spencer wrote to the Immigration Agent in Brisbane. The full text reads as follows: "Having been telegraph [sic] in London on a sudden emergency to take charge of a large body of Emigrants to this Port as Surgeon Superintendant [sic] under peculiar circumstances the Surgeon previously appointed having terminated his existence by

larly to the case of the 'Stebonheath', the passengers judged the surgeon's performance completely differently: they were very dissatisfied. Upon his inspection after 124 days at sea, the immigration agent was received with a list of complaints. Again, the ambivalence of the role becomes clear when reading the Immigration Agent's report to the Immigration Office in Brisbane:

> With respect to the Surgeon's professional competency I, of course, had no means of forming an opinion: neither am I sufficiently acquainted with the position such offices hold on board these vessels to enable me to determine how far the Surgeon of the 'Clifton' is to be considered culpable for the want of order and cleanliness so manifest in this vessel.[79]

Given the short history of Queensland's independency from New South Wales and their inexperience of organizing emigrant vessels when this case occurred in 1862, the insecurity of the agent might become more understandable. The same British Passenger Act lay the foundation for installing a medical practitioner aboard an emigrant vessel to secure order, health and cleanliness. Yet, the overall problem is only emphasized once again: How could this be upheld? Where did passengers' expectations clash with reality? What was the surgeon responsible for?

A good starting point is given by Ramsdale's diary. In the passenger list he is listed as an intermediate passenger, a farmer of 30 years. After arrival in Queensland, he earned his living as a farmer and storekeeper, and without his diary, no public trace would be left testifying to his spontaneous engagement in the maritime hospital.[80] When he was asked

his own act, I trust you will give me the usual allowance to Surgeons, having to the utmost of my ability exerted myself for the health and comfort of every one [sic] on board." (Spencer, John, Letter by Surgeon of the 'Clifton' to Immigration Agent (Request for Surgeon's Gratuity), 1862/04/19 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 846759; 1862/1365 (COL/A29).)

79 Kemball, Arthur, Letter to Government Immigration Office (Immigration Agent, Inspection of 'Clifton' and 'Montmorency'), 1862/04/15 (Queensland State Archives) Item ID 846758; 1862/1243; (COL/A28).

80 Eileen B. Johnson, editor of the series "They Came Direct. Immigration Vessels to Queensland" collected source material on the 'Clifton' as well, but she did not come across Ramsdale's diary so there is no information about how medical supervision was upheld during the time between the first surgeon's suicide and the second surgeon's arrival on board: Johnson, Eileen B., ed., *'Clifton' 1862,* They Came Direct. Immigration Vessels to Queensland.

by the captain to step in as semi-surgeon out of the blue (he must have had some medical background), he was willing to help, but likewise unprepared for the task after years away from patients and wounds, "as time has weakened my medical knowledge".[81] Therefore, the vivid descriptions in his journal show the experience of sudden responsibility. This unusual confrontation with the position makes his personal reflections particularly valuable for understanding that the surgeon was indeed more than merely a doctor or a moral policeman. In practice, he was the go-to man for the emigrants when they needed any form of assistance, whether in medical questions or private affairs.

What struck Ramsland was the steerage – as a place to stay, as people to communicate with, as objects and subjects of general care:

> [1861/11/27] I never felt so fatigued as when I turned in about 2 PM of the 26th having been down the steerage no less than 18 times & attending the intermediate; prescribing & disposing and actually obliged to turn to & make gruel: the steerage presents a sad spectacle, one can see nothing but invalids huddled together in a confined, low hub (?), hear nothing but groans and retching, smell nothing but vomitings, walk on nothing but rejected breakfasts and dinners & feel nothing but disgust. The wind blowing with but slight deviation from the quarter of yesterday. I turned in at 2 PM [...][82]

Births, consumption, fever – the list could be continued. Although Ramsdale quickly got used to the new job, the intensity of his duties, and the necessity to visit the patients repeatedly, he was relieved to hand the job over to the official replacement surgeon Dr Spencer. The latter apparently displayed a lack of care, but Ramsdale returned to the status of ordinary passenger nonetheless. We can gather this, for example,

Maryborough, 2001. However, the whole story is recorded in the overview about Ramsdale in the Australian Medical Pioneers Index: Smith, Gillian A., "Art.: 'Henry Hayter Ramsdale'", updated 2019/04/14 <medicalpioneers.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi?detail=1&id=3771>, accessed 2023/06/19.

81 Ramsdale, Harry H., Diary while with English Brigade, on Board the 'Clifton', and in Queensland, 1859/09/01–1862/08/28 (Wellcome Library) MS.5324: 14.

82 Ramsdale: 13–14.

from an entry on January 12th when a certain Mrs. Miller [or "Martin"] gave birth to her daughter: she did not want the actual surgeon to look after her. Ramsdale explained: "The Mrs [?] who was confined last night on Thursday asked Mr Gundry [i.e. the 3rd Mate] to ask the Captn to allow me to attend her; of course he could not do so; neither did I wish it."[83] The official surgeon Dr Spencer might have felt similarly to another colleague, Dr Mindelet, another last-minute replacement surgeon travelling to Queensland in 1870. His report was very negative, and Queensland's Under Colonial Secretary Hugh H. Massie summed up the problem by stating that the appointment "at the very last moment" was an ill choice for the "responsible and very difficult position of surgeon-superintendent of an emigrant ship, and it is quite clear from his own remarks, that he did not understand the nature of it himself".[84]

This leads back to the question of what a good mediator in the position of a surgeon-superintendent needed to bring with him. First, he must want the role. He might not fully understand or imagine "the nature of it", but he must be willing to adapt, flexibly, open-mindedly and self-sacrificially. The attractions of a nice financial surplus did not suffice to do the job properly. On the 'Stebonheath', William J. Rowland overestimated his role; on the 'Clifton', George Young, who committed suicide, was mentally too unstable; Harry H. Ramsdale, who took over for ten days, despised the constant demands from poorer people and preferred a more relaxed time with like-minded travellers; the replacement surgeon John Spencer on the 'Clifton' did not care about the patients enough.

In contrast to these selected examples from the late 1850s and early 1860s, which illustrate the dangers of being overcharged by the duties, the loneliness, and the necessary flexibility, there are also some very positive ego-documents from surgeons-superintendents in later years who embraced the role of the 'mediator' wholeheartedly. As individuals, every one of them interpreted the performance differently. The biased nature of ego-documents notwithstanding, there are examples

83 Ramsdale: 25.
84 Massie, Douglas and Wheeler, "Letters on Case of Dr Mindelet, Surgeon-Superintendent on Board the 'Young Australia'," 1870/10/03+1870/12/02: 919.

of content surgeons' reflections that are in line with what the passengers praised about a good surgeon when handing out "letters of gratitude" after the journey.

4 The Failures of a Matron

In what way can the findings deduced from considering the surgeon's position from different angles be applied to a general character sketch required of mediators in transit? An attempt to answer this question will lead to the second person with official responsibility over a group of emigrants: the matron.

Her role was unique: In an all-male maritime setting, she was the only woman on board in a position of power. Her protégées were the women located aft, i.e., in the back of the ship, where all unaccompanied married women and every girl older than 12 or 14 years were berthed.[85] In the 1850s and 1860s, initiatives to teach and care for the emigrating single girls met with an increasing political concern about the future female colonists' well-being on the journey. The *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (SPCK) took an active role in demanding and supplying material for moral, practical and evangelical support for all migrants as early as 1846. In the early days, the ship surgeon usually chose an older, female emigrant from among the married quarters to act as overseer for the single women, helping to keep them busy and orderly. But this did not comply with the ideal of a competent and skilled advisor and caretaker for the girls. It was one way to become a matron, though not the professional path.[86]

With the *British Ladies' Female Emigration Society* (BLFES) leading the way, other women committees and societies joined forces in promoting a "protected journey"[87] and solid education during the voyage. Boxes with sewing, knitting and crochet material became standard equipment on emigrant ships. The BLFES, which was also known as

85 Gothard, Jan, *Blue China: Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia*. Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001: 115.
86 Haines, "Ships, Families and Surgeons": 183.
87 On 19th century "safe-passage narratives", regarding not only ocean travel but also travel, work, transportation, etc., see Chilton, *Agents of Empire*: 40–65.

the *British Matron Society*, also came up with a list of qualified middle-class women professionalized in teaching and caring for working class women. Those matrons could then be hired for government-assisted emigrant ships, which since 1849/50 all had a matron aboard, either appointed by the surgeon or by women's societies.[88] When sailing in 1858 on the 'Stebonheath', matron Jane Chase seems to have been placed among the emigrants, day and night, without a private cabin. And she barely received a proper salary afterwards. Given these circumstances in the mid-19th century, female activists like Maria Rye called for an appropriate recognition of this important work aboard. This was sometimes conducted outspokenly and bluntly, by grieving about the hypocrisy and "most pitiful parsimony" of egoistic male authorities continuing to pay the matrons only "sums lower than the lowest cabin-boy on deck" despite their "brave" efforts.[89]

Eventually, these calls did lead to the granting of some privileges during the voyage and a financial gratuity upon arrival back in England. As expected, the relationship with the surgeon-superintendent was a contested one – they could either work hand-in-hand or compete against each other as fiery rivals. There were examples for both extremes, owing to the special situation and the characters of the matron, the emigrants, and the surgeon-superintendent. With the latter being the main 'mediator' aboard, she was still subordinate to him.[90]

88 Gordon, Peter, and David Doughan, *Dictionary of British Women's Organisations, 1825–1960,* Woburn Education Series). London, Portland: Woburn Press, 2001: 28–29 and Rye, Maria S., "Emigrant-Ship Matrons," *The English Woman's Journal* 5, no. 25 (1860): 24–36: 27–28, as well as Queensland Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings (2nd Census), 1863/11/26–1864/05/20 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) FRY PER J 916.K3: 920 for an example of official correspondence with the *BLFES* to hire matrons on government-assisted emigrant ships.

89 "We can only add in conclusion our sincere regret that men should be found either in England or in Australia, who for so lengthened a period could watch the working of these brave women, bear testimony to their usefulness, and rectify the evils arising from strange and inexperienced surgeons, and know that the same causes must produce the same effects under the management of inexperienced and strange matrons, so long, and yet offer no helping hand, paying them sums lower than the lowest cabin-boy on deck, and placing them, even in the matter of physical wants, on an equality with the emigrants themselves." (Rye, "Emigrant-Ship Matrons": 36.)

90 See the chapter entitled "A season of industry" in Gothard, *Blue China*: 89–108. One historical example is the mutual exchange of charges brought against each other by surgeon Dr. Hinxman and Matron Smith, or her husband Mr Smith, who also was the schoolmaster

Permanently hired matrons had to keep a journal, similarly to the surgeon, and then show it to the *Ladies' Visiting Committee* or the Government Immigration Agent upon arrival.[91] One reason for a lack of discourse on the matrons might lie in missing documents since, unfortunately, not many matrons' journals have survived. In the Eastern Australian colony archives (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria), I only found two small boxes containing about six files entitled "Matron's Diary and Work Book" for different emigrant ships sailing to Sydney in the late 1850s.[92] Rowan Strong laments the loss of Christian matron reports altogether; Jen Gothard writes of some other diaries in Western Australian archives from the 1890s and early 20th century and mentions records for South Australia for the 1900s; Ian Nicholson's "Log of Logs" confirms this source gap by listing only 13 preserved matron diaries in the State Archives Offices of New South Wales and Western Australia.[93] The *BLFES* kept record of its most renowned and prominent matrons, some of whom earned a reputation for accompanying numerous young women to the Australian colonies. One of them was Jane Chase, the matron on board the ill-fated 'Stebonheath' of 1858.

4.1 Background story

Matron Jane Chase, the 'Stebonheath' matron who severely accused the girls of immorality first and was then questioned herself about her role

aboard, in: Immigration Board, and Colonial Secretary's Office Queensland, Report, Letters, and Enclosures on Charge by Dr. Henry J. Hinxman, Surgeon on Ship 'Elizabeth Ann Bright', against William Smith, 1865/01 (Queensland State Archives) 1865/145; 1865/58; 1865/57.

91 The first page of a matron's diary form given by the *BLFES* contained the "Instructions to the Matron on Board Ship" with paragraph IX stating: "The Matron's Diary must be given up to one of the Ladies' Visiting Committee; or (if no member of the Committee visit the Immigrants, either at the Depôt or onboard), to the Government Immigration Agent. The Matron's letter to the Central Committee to be posted as soon as possible after arrival in the Colony." (See e.g. Brearley, Jane, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Mary Ann', 1856/11/25–1857/03/19–25 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 9/6212 et al.)

92 I am grateful to the friendly archivists at the State Record and Archives Sydney for pointing me to those rare documents with the call numbers 9/6212 and 9/6213.

93 Strong, Rowan, "Globalising British Christianity in the Nineteenth Century: The Imperial Anglican Emigrant Chaplaincy 1846–c. 1910," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 43, no. 1 (2015): 1–32: 12–14, Gothard, *Blue China*: 112, and Nicholson, Ian, ed., *The Log of Logs: Vol. 1,* 3 vols., Roebuck Society Publication 41. Nambour, 1990: 335+508.

in a villain plot alongside the cruel surgeon-superintendent, wrote a public letter of defence to the Australian newspapers. Her main argument was that the reporter and the audience had a wrong picture of her. Her self-sacrificing efforts were not appreciated, and the rebellious opposition from some of the women had only deteriorated throughout the journey. Her sincere investment to perform her duty had not been recognized. It had been the surgeon Dr Rowland whose power and incalculable temper had led to exaggerated disciplinary measurements with regards to a few passengers.[94] The *Northern Times*, another New South Wales paper, was not convinced by her attempt to shift the blame: their reporter commented on the "sleeky, oily, and hypocritical" tone, and still held the matron responsible for slandering a whole group of new immigrants and for not speaking out against the instalment of mini-prison cells.[95]

Despite one of the imprisoned girls submitting a change to her previous statement, surprisingly speaking out in favour of the matron and supporting her overall good will and earnest care for the benefit of the girls,[96] Chase was earnestly rebuked for her conduct, her compliance and her rigorousness in dealing with the women. The final report of the Immigration Board also made it clear: "the Board feel that they cannot, after what has occurred, recommend her for future employment."[97]

Subsequently, but going unreported in the Australian press, Jane Chase submitted a petition to ask for a removal of the ban on her serving again as matron on emigrant ships. She was not even 30 years of age yet and was willing and ready to pursue a career at sea. The arguments

94 Chase, Jane, "To the Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1858/03/25: 8 and reprinted on the same day in the *Empire*: Chase, Jane, "The Stebonheath: To the Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald," *Empire*, 1858/03/25: 5.

95 "The tone of her letter throughout is sleek, oily, and hypocritical, and if construed with the utmost lavour, fails to relieve the matron from the scorn and contempt which must attend her unwomanly and uncharitable conduct. She has been forced after what has come to light to give some explanation of her grossly exaggerated statements, and she has made the impossible defence. It comes too late, and is extracted by too urgent facts and circumstances to be worthy of implicit belief." (N. N., "The Stebonheath," *Northern Times*, 1858/03/27: 2.)

96 Jackson, Henrietta, "The Stebonheath: To the Editor of the Empire," *Empire*, 1858/04/03: 5.

97 Browne, Mann, and Alleyne, "Parliamentary Paper. Emigrant Ship Stebonheath": Point 54.

for and against this petition followed the line of distinguishing between the matron's authority and the surgeon's, and the hierarchy between them.[98] Furthermore, she insisted she had learned from her mistakes. This request must have been granted, since she later appeared on several journeys to Australia over the years, eventually earning a standing as one of the most experienced matrons the *BLFES* had to offer.[99] Had she learned? We do not know exactly, but there is evidence that her character did not completely change. More than twenty years later, mention can be found again of her conduct and principles of supervising the single women. An anonymous diarist on board the S.S. 'Almora' talked about the very matron Jane Chase as an "old woman" (now age 53) ruling with an iron rod:

> [1882/12/27]
> Miss Chase told two of the Girls to move, in a very insolent tone One of the Girls objected to be spoken to in that manner, that She was not a convict, the Old Woman says You are a convict
>
> The Girl retorted sharply Old Woman sent for the Dr Dr sent for Capn A kind of inquiry was held, but those that heard Old Woman abuse the Girls was not called. Consequently 3 to 1 against Girl, She was ordered below, but refused & dared anyone to remove her until the proper time when she would go of her own accord. Great indignation at the way She treats the Girls. They must sit when on deck where She orders them not where they like to.
>
> Cabin passenger & 4 Mate sitting in Music room. Windows open the distance Capn ordered. Old Dame insists on them being closed – the passenger opened them again, this was repeated several times. Passenger demanded an apology. One of the Girls not in good health. She is very

98 Immigration Office Sydney, Letter to the Colonial Secretary, relative to Miss Chase (On Petition from Jane Elinor Chase, Late Matron on Board the Ship 'Stebonheath', Praying Further Employment in Emigration Service), 1858/06/09 et al. (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 58/2102.

99 According to Gothard, Jane Chase accompanied altogether 30 passages between 1857 and 1886. (Gothard, *Blue China*: 103.)

> quiet & a great favourite. She did something to displease the Old Girl – She told the Girl – She had not long to live & she should behave herself on earth – The poor Girl sobbed bitterly.[100]

Because of the relevance and obvious similarity to the 'Stebonheath' case years earlier, it can be stated with some certainty that Chase did not become a mediator communicating peace and bringing forth the best of the ones she was in charge of (or indeed herself).

But these were not the last words. The next and final trace we have of Jane Elinor Chase as a public figure is an obituary in the *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* in 1896, which testifies to her heritage and achievements. Announced as a "Pioneer of Female Immigration", she was celebrated for 42 voyages to Australia, including the first female load to Queensland. She was not praised for her positive impact on many young women's lives, not for having been a "best friend and protector",[101] but was remembered in the end as a "remarkable traveller".[102] One might wonder if this was what she had been pursuing with her career.

The public narrative and constructed persona of the matron can be reduced to a characterization as a perfect balance of "firmness and gentleness". This sounds familiar: the analysis of the surgeon-superintendent's character showed it should reconcile similar traits. Together this supports the thesis that a transit 'mediator' was more than a neutral managing and organizing machine. In fact, the pedagogic and educative burden assigned to this role came to the fore already when combining the various views on the surgeon in the subchapter before. Based on these findings, there is reason to move on and further investigate the practical implications of the characteristics. In contrast to the surgeon-superintendent, the matron was more explicitly called to embody motherhood. Drawing the line to images of parenthood is less obvi-

100 N. N., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Almora', 1882/11/22–1883/01/13 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OM 90–78: 38–40.
101 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and K.E. Ferguson, Hints to Matrons of Emigrant Ships (Emigrant Tracts 3), London 1850 (National Library of Australia) NK2411: 13.
102 N. N., "A Pioneer of Female Immigration," *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 1896/07/25: 12.

ous when merely looking at the surgeon-superintendent. As a woman, however, the matron was automatically compared to female figures of authority: since these were themselves a rarity in the Victorian age (except for the queen, of course), she was quickly associated with a mother rather than with a well-trained working woman of education and knowledge. This being the only reference point for many male travellers – not to forget the captain, the mates, and the surgeon – she had to make the best of this "peculiar position". Likewise, the institutions and societies nourished the idea of tender parenthood to defend themselves against possible immoral suspicions and the smouldering stigma when it came to adult women, self-consciously travelling the world without children to care for at home (although some matrons were married or widowed).[103] The public narrative insisted on "convincing maternal personas" dedicated to help and protect whole-heartedly.[104] The paradox of serving as some sort of mother to a mixed group of younger women while yet not bound to a marriage relationship or children proved to be a challenge of identity and function aboard (as seen with matron Chase on the 'Stebonheath'). With the help of the concept of the 'mediator', the "two main requisites of firmness and gentleness" will therefore be analysed in historical practice.[105]

4.2 Firmness

Not every single woman aiming for Australia on an assisted emigrant ship welcomed the well-meant opportunity to improve domestic skills, grow in Christian faith, make new friends, and learn how to sew. But the day was strictly regulated and in particular she was to stay in her assigned quarters most of the time.

103 Chilton, *Agents of Empire*: 57 and starting with female convict ships: Damousi, Joy, *Depraved and Disorderly: Female Convicts, Sexuality and Gender in Colonial Australia*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997: Chapter 1.
104 Chilton, *Agents of Empire*: 58.
105 "Her position will be a peculiar one: and her object ought to be to exercise a moral influence over all in the ship; as much over the superior officers, as over the young emigrants. For who will deny the potency of female influence, if it combine the two great requisites of *firmness* and *gentleness*?" (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Ferguson, "Hints to Matrons of Emigrant Ships," London 1850: 8.)

The matron was assigned to oversee a colourful bouquet of nationality, age, social background and confessions for an incalculable amount of mentally straining transit time. In addition to the demanding circumstances elaborated in the chapters before, her job was morally charged – even more so than the surgeon's job – as the "safe-passage narratives" repeatedly warned of abuse and mistreatment of girls on voyages.

Surely, the emphasis of "firmness" in a matron's persona did not arrive out of the blue. Just like any mediator, she would have to communicate between two actants constantly: in her case this means her protégées and the authorities, or the government rules and the girls. In any case, the peculiarity of her position was that within the masculine crew environment, she represented the "fair sex" and had to stand up for their well-being. A difficult job, indeed, especially when she was not familiar with any of the girls she was responsible for. The chemistry had to be right. It was closeness – in terms of gender affiliation, living conditions and daily interaction – that markedly distinguished her post from the surgeon's.

The surgeon's duties were manifold. More than anyone else, he had to manage all the passengers, secure their physical health and make sure that order was kept. A more distant role model for many emigrants, he was seen and carefully observed from afar rather than known personally. The matron, on the other hand, had to personally connect with a pre-defined group of people, set apart by their gender and their marital status. Despite some enthusiastic proclamations to extend her impact beyond the female population on board,[106] her sphere of direct influence was mainly limited to the 30 to 150 individuals placed aft.

What then would help find the true degree of firmness needed to navigate her mediator's role? Experience might be one favourable component to look at more closely. In conflict situations, the quality of a matron's firmness would be tested over and over again, as Chase's story proved from beginning to end. A matron too severe would bring about the exact opposite reaction of what she had aimed for. This could happen behind her back, as in the case of the 'Stebonheath', when young Ann Cox was found pregnant upon autopsy, or openly, as in comparably

106 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Ferguson: 8+16–17.

much discussed court inquiries. Under the judicious eyes of the male authorities and some opposing girls, the matron could easily fall into the trap of "obstinacy".[107] Apparently, the conclusion of many emigrant ship inquiries was 'six of one and half a dozen of the other': they all came down to mourning either the lack of discipline or the excess of it. Firmness was welcomed, yes, but not too much. And society applied double standards according to gender: Dr Rowland's "severity" and "gross abuse of power" was certainly different from matron Chase's "too great severity".[108]

Experience, indeed, was a tricky component for mediators: As outlined above when analysing the surrounding people's viewpoint on the surgeon, the mediator was assumed to know everything. For almost every single emigrant, this was the first sea voyage ever: no matter how well prepared they were or not,[109] the real-life confrontation with the waves was breath-taking, so they would welcome a person of authority to provide general orientation and guidance. But when this former experience led to a false sense of assurance, killing flexibility and empathy, the outcome could be devastating. For Dr Rowland and matron Chase, this was the fatal wound in their performances as mediators: an exaggeration of "firmness" due to overly rigid principles.

Was it better then to come with absolutely no job and sea experience and thus have room for adaption and more flexibility? Together with the other passengers, a matron such as this would be sleeping in bunks for the first time, overcoming her first seasickness, having to find her way to the toilets on a rolling vessel, enduring her first storm, and spotting the sharks. This might be advantageous, but at the same time she would need to practically apply the theoretical rules and teach the others. This double burden could also lead to overexercised firmness.

107 In line with my findings: On analysing the case of matron Rogers on the 'Hydrabad' in 1875, Gothard concludes: "The line between 'firmness of character' and 'obstinacy' was certainly a tricky one for matrons to negotiate, drawn as it was by men not entirely sympathetic to women asserting independent authority." (Gothard, *Blue China*: 139.)
108 N. N., "Thursday, April 22, 1858" and Browne, Mann, and Alleyne, "Parliamentary Paper. Emigrant Ship Stebonheath".
109 See Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit".

It does not sound as if the matron on the huge emigrant vessel 'Champion of the Seas' in 1864 had chaperoned a group of single girls to Australia before. This matron appeared "noisy" and unkind right from the start to Mary Bedford, a 23-year-old intermediate passenger travelling with the other single women and aiming at being united with her fiancé in rural Australia. Her first impression was then sadly confirmed with each day. There was constant fighting between the matron and the unmarried women. Physical attacks, shouting and beating marked the poisoned atmosphere in the single women's compartment. In fact, it was not only the relationship between the matron and her charges which was unstable: instead of fulfilling her role as a mediator between the women and the crew, the matron also got into trouble with the mates, the water stewards, and everyone else on board: "There is not one on the vessel that likes her. She is the most disagreeable woman I ever saw in my life." The sailors provoked the matron to anger, and she provoked them – a vicious circle without a mutual solution in sight. While the otherwise highly praised captain did not seem to take the conflicts seriously enough and "laughs it off", the mates incited "the girls they should beat" the matron. Amid rough weather, smouldering war and uncomfortable berthing circumstances, Bedford found refuge in her strong Christian faith. When she and the almost 600 emigrants arrived in Melbourne, she must have been more than relieved to be removed from "such a hurtful woman" bossing her around.[110]

This was one way to react to a lack of experience: helplessly "shouting like some one out of her mind",[111] thus squandering all credibility and becoming both a dreaded and disdained laughingstock. Insecurity could lead a matron to take another, dangerous, path by reducing her resoluteness:

> The matron was not quite strict enough, it was her first voyage out, also the doctor's. We fared very well on board. The passengers' cook used to fry us pancakes and make us pies and bake us potatoes, and we used

110 Bedford, "Diary on Board the 'Champion of the Seas', Melbourne, 1864/08/07–1864/11/17": 53+56+61. There were 595 emigrants listed on the 11th voyage of the 'Champion of the Seas' (p. 13).
111 Bedford: 53.

> to club together and the matron would have a cup with us. The girls used to be allowed to see their friends from two till four o'clock; directly [when] the four bells rung the matron used to go and fetch them up on their own deck.[112]

E. Smith's brief letter to her parents quoted here did not speak of scandalous events aboard, but for the writer the matron's lack of firmness was clearly due to the inexperience of the matron/surgeon duo.

If it was not experience but truly attitude and personality that determined how the mediator handled conflicts, what would this look like? One positive example occurs in a common traveller's journal: John Slade and his extended family on the 'Hydaspes', who lost their father during the voyage in 1852,[113] reports an incident with one of his sisters, who fell out with the matron Mrs. Rose and was consequently removed from the family mess. For Slade, this was perfectly fine and in absolute accordance with the law: "Of course, as we have agreed to certain regulations, and endowed certain persons with authority, we were obliged to comply without vexatious murmur." Mrs. Rose obviously knew her rights and how to communicate her authority even to the husbands and brothers aboard. Her disciplinary measurements were well-grounded and public (John Slade observed the punishment of "a nonsensical little gipsy looking young woman […] placed in confinement") and she stayed in touch with the married women, too. For example, John Slade's wife chatted naturally with Mrs. Rose on the deck for a while.[114]

Some thirty years later, another matron's watchful eyes were applauded and welcomed as guaranteeing safeguarding for the unmarried girls in troublesome company: a month into a journey of the on the 'Goalpara', steerage passenger Charles H. Dean decided to send his oldest daughter Eliza to the single women's compartment. Although

112 Smith, E.: Letter to Parents, 1874/07/25, in: Hetherington, Frederick W., ed., *Letters from Queensland Emigrants: With other Interesting Information*. Uxbridge: Queensland Printing Works, 1874: 3–4.
113 See Chapter 4 "Feeling Transit".
114 Slade, John, Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes', 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895] (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 5101: 1852/10/22+25+29.

Eliza was only 10 years old then, the parents thought it best to keep her away from the married people's quarter:

> the Matram [sic] is Verry [sic] Strict. She Says it takes her all her to Manage them. we have Sent our Eliza up theare [sic] as it is Not fit for her to be wheare [sic] we are as they are Such a Mixed Lot of Men, Good & Bad of all Sorts and Creeds. Some of them are Digusting [sic] in theare [sic] Manners. Not fit to be in Existence. i wont explain all but you can gess [sic] what i mean, so i thought it would be better for her to be with the sindle [sic] girls. she as [sic] got with a Verry [sic] nice girls for Company and the Matrom [sic] Keeps a sharp eye on them. She is sowing all the Day now and going to school.[115]

Entrusting their girl to matron McAlister was the Deans' way of protecting their daughter, knowing that the matron took her duty seriously, and was in line with their pedagogical ideals. It seems like McAlister had done the job before and knew how to interact with the different groups on board. But even if not – she was aware of her rights and duties, answering to her superiors and the God she believed in, and did not care too much about everyone's opinion. People-pleasers and people-neglecters would both fail.

To emphasize this, a final source needs to be mentioned: One of the rare matron's diaries gives ample insight into the struggles of understanding the girls and protecting them – from men and from each other. Matron Susan Austen on the 'Fitzjames' had to take care of 108 young women over a period of more than three months from Plymouth to Sydney. After having worked in large London hospitals, she had sought a new working place, so this was her first engagement as ship matron for the *BLFES*.[116] Although her friends had surely wanted the best for her when they "obtained for her the situation of Matron", she soon real-

115 Dean, Charles H., Diary on Board the 'Goalpara', 1883/11/07–1884/01/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 61; M 753; Box 9593: 1883/12/25+26 [12].
116 Austen, Susan, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames', 1856/12/23–1857/04/01 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 9/6212: 1857/01/26 [30 in original/7 in transcript]. This case has already been looked at from a different angle in the previous chapter (see Chapter 5 "Crossing Transit").

ized that the constant battle against lies, theft and slander was more tiring than she had ever imagined. Speaking in Christian vocabulary, she had come from a place of hope to direct willing hearts to the truth and pasturing diligent young women, but then reality caught her off guard. Even before the start, while in the Plymouth Emigration Depot, some single men and women had become "friends", which intensified their drive towards each other during the journey. Although the management of the depot was critically investigated in a subsequent inquiry after certain moral complaints,[117] the management aboard could not ask for external help: the surgeon Dodd and matron Austen were on their own during transit. Abusive language, hypocritical conspiracies and bullying turned the whole voyage into one dreary and – above all – lonesome battle: "I feel how responsible is my situation among those under my care nor can I find one among them I can call Fraind [sic]."[118]

Austen did not take it easy, but this being her first appointment, she lacked the courage to intervene, finding herself opposed by girls like Fanny Collins "insolent beyond description" or Bridget Ryan, who did not care about the schedule. Rebellion within the framework of strict regulations was sometimes openly loud: "[…] but she will take no advice but tells me she will do as she likes […] saying how dare you [sic] speak to me [sic] […] as soon as I speak, she interferes and is constantly using language too shocking to name here."[119]

The authorities regarded the young women as in need of protection and education. The young women, however, did not automatically swallow this pill of helplessness. At least for the in-between period of transit, where the illusion of convention-less liberty conquered the minds of some girls, some sought to break free from the social fetters restraining them before. Independence proclaimed its right when the watchful eyes of the brothers, husbands, fiancés or parents were removed.

Matron Austen had enough common sense to sympathize with the attractions around: "Everything on board ship is new to most and full

117 Walcott, "Letter to Colonial Secretary, New South Wales. On Conduct of Single Migrants on 'Fitzjames' and in Plymouth Depôt": 103–104.

118 Austen, "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames'," 1856/12/23–1857/04/01: 1857/01/16 [25 in original/5 in transcript].

119 Austen: 1857/01/11+14+18 [13–25 in original/5–6 in transcript].

of excitement to all." This note confirms the thesis that because of the newness and the chances involved therein there was a need for a guide, an explainer and a 'mediator', whose requirements were higher than under other circumstances. Austen realized that ordinary disciplinary measurements would not suffice here: "Their tempers, talents, religion and disposition are so varied that it requires something more than normal strength to keep any order among them." This is perfectly in line with the call for a special kind of "firmness" needed for a surgeon or a matron or any other mediator.[120]

What did Austen try, in order to fill this exhausting role? Her diary reveals that in the first stage, her rebukes were non-physical, verbal utterances, to which the girls would sometimes respond with provocative insults or threats. The second stage of escalation was tight surveillance. When the discussions fell on deaf ears, the surgeon announced a stricter rule: "none of the single women shall at any time or on any account go to the Dispensary unless accompanied by my self or one of the Sub Matrons."[121] Later, the surgeon also cancelled the raisins and sweets as a form of punishment. Although Austen generally recoiled from this "escort", deeming it stupid, she saw no other solution and received positive feedback from several girls, who understood the true motivation behind that law.[122]

After some harsh disappointments crushing all efforts to find a common ground of respect, Austen seemed to have become somewhat resigned, with her diary entries becoming more sporadic towards the end of the voyage. The insulting messages and the shouting at night continued to steal her sleep, but she tried to change her focus from the dominant troublemakers to those maintaining a low profile. This might have been the point when she gave up on the public role as 'mediator', removing herself from the stage as far as possible. She still managed the daily chores with the willing ones but left the others to their fate as long as no further scandal was to occur.

120 Austen: 1857/01/16 [25 in original/5 in transcript].
121 As the surgeons selected hospital assistants, matrons usually appointed sub-matrons during the voyage, too.
122 Austen: 1857/01/21+03/09 [28+34 in original/7+9 in transcript].

> Everything that kindness could suggest the Surgeon has certainly had recourse to. But it has failed and I now find them precisely what I at first described them. There is the same system of slander and annoying each other. Thus a few depraved women placed among a large number of those who would (but for them) have been orderly, peaceable and submissive have destroyed every confidence in those placed over them and induces them to resist all authority and led the unwary into many great evils…[123]

With this conclusion in mind, Austen stopped insisting upon the matron's authority, as it did not clothe her. Facing such distrust and rebellion among the women, other matrons like the abovementioned Jane Chase had reacted by adhering to a tyrannical despotism as hard as iron in order to break the opposition. Thus, they chose a sort of "active intermediary" role, in which they as individual matrons themselves hid behind the regulations and rules. Applying a "too strict" policy by hook or by crook failed, due to a mistaken understanding of "firmness" that was without a heart. However, Austen was not in danger of an uncontrolled outburst of brutal despair. She would not yell or scream, but rather be shocked and ashamed by the women's language and deviousness. Her way out of "mediating" was to hide behind a "passive intermediary" role.

Nonetheless, Austen did not cease her reflections, when she retreated to this sort of "intermediary" and ceased to actively engage in making the rules more comprehensible and the tensions between the different parties less strenuous. Meditating on the causes behind the idleness, the uproar and the mockery, she soon reckoned that a decent amount of work would have helped her exercise her tasks: she was lacking material to keep the women busy throughout the 15 weeks at sea. Apparently, the BLFES had not supplied her with sufficient calico, cotton, needles etc. to distribute to those in her care. Religious or useful books were only interesting for the more educated ones.[124] In fact, out of 108 single women on her ship, only "33 read and write well" and "28 cannot read

123 Austen: 1857/02/15 [37 in original/10 in transcript].
124 Austen: 1857/01/26 [30–31 in original/7–8 in transcript].

at all".[125] Many of the illiterate women were not interested in improving their skills, and instead – in the eyes of the matron – wasted their time, went to sleep late at night and stayed in bed in the mornings without intentions to change their manners. "This is not to be wondered at for there is no employment for them by day and the consequence is, they cannot sleep at night."[126]

All in all, it becomes clear that a suitable degree of "firmness" had to be struggled for fervently – both by the mediator him/herself and by the actants. All parties had to cooperate, and only with the support of other authorities aboard could the matron be "firm". In the matron's case, because of the variety of personalities, the spatial and emotional proximity to the protégées, and the gender expectations, no overall recipe could be applied.

Although theoretically installed as a mother figure, the matron was certainly no parent. This was shown in reality, where the somehow artificial position of authority given to the matron led some women to give obstreperous replies, insult her or lie to her openly. 'Transit' opened a space to test the boundaries and when the appointed mediator failed to adapt them accordingly by either being too strict or too lenient, the key component "firmness" could become the decisive and fatal verdict, turning the mediator into an intermediary, and the mother figure into an impersonal machine.

4.3 Gentleness

There were the rebellious, sassy and disobedient girls on the one hand – and the timid, shy and fearful ones on the other. Wisdom and tact in winning them for the good was the missionary task assigned to the matron, as the *SPCK* in the "Hints to Matrons of Emigrant Ships" put it: "No one should undertake the office of a matron who does not regard it as a missionary work; investing her with solemn responsibilities, and leading her to feel her absolute dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit."[127]

125 Austen: 1856/12 [14 in original/2 in transcript].
126 Austen: 1857/01/16 [25 in original/5 in transcript].
127 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Ferguson, "Hints to Matrons of Emigrant Ships," London 1850: 8.

With that ideal in mind, the matron would be equipped to listen, counsel and lead the women on the path of virtue. The language of moulding and forming the still soft and malleable females feeds into the imagery of crafting objects of pottery with a sixth sense to deal sensibly in "the management of such varied characters!", when "some would require positive dealing, while others would be won by a gentle word".[128]

This applied especially to the sphere of sexuality because a simplistic ban on flirting with the men would evoke opposition. Following the path of re-interpretation was recommended by the SPCK, in which the matron was to protect the girls from naively believing promises of eternal love given by the sailors. The tone and voice of this little booklet underlined the notion of urgency when it came to the programme conducted instead, which was meant to teach them to control their affections, preserving them for the better. The depiction of (passive) good girls vs. (active) bad guys was common among 19th century travel narratives distributed by women's societies in particular (not only by the Protestant spokeswomen of the day).

In a similar manner to the previous subchapter, here the notion of "gentleness" will be analysed by looking at one positive example of a matron's experience. Having analysed matrons receiving negative reports and fighting against difficulties at length, the following journal is written by a woman with confidence. Mary Holley, born Armstrong, managed several voyages as a matron and two of these passages are recorded in transcribed diaries stored in the *Vaughan Evans Library* of the *Australian National Maritime Museum* in Sydney. Her memories are a vivid example of a matron's positive transit experiences, as she is called to encourage and oversee the girls on board the 'Severn' (1863) and the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1873–1874).

According to her journal, the situation Susan Austen could only long for was reality for matron Mary Armstrong. There were about 100 women on the 'Severn' and they were eager to learn, with the illiterate very interested in studying earnestly: "They seem as if they could not hear enough [...] I am happy to see those that can't read is very anxious

128 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Ferguson: 9.

to learn."[129] This first impression continued and motivated the matron to invest even more – despite stormy weather, broken toilets, and uncomfortable surroundings:

> 13th September 1863 Very stormey [sic] but the wind is in our favour. [...] The sea is very high, the sight is very glorious to look out. The girls are all busy, some of them patching a quilt & others knitting. They are very anxious and obedient which makes our journey very pleasant. I never seem to think I do enough for them. Our water closets are very insufficient, the water sloshed on the floor. The floor was very damp. Clases [sic] meet downstairs it is so very rough lessons very well said Questions well answered from the second chapt. of the Acts of the Apostles I read the people a lesson on the life of Joseph. They all listened with great attention.[130]

This description sounds like a utopian dream, especially after reading a tired matron's thoughts and reports of an utterly distrustful community on board the 'Fitzjames' five years before. Of course, the ego-documents analysed here are not to be taken at face-value but represent a self-constructed narrative of one's own and other people's performance.[131] Nonetheless, both matrons were in charge of about equally large group of women from England and Ireland on their way to Sydney in the 1850s/60s. Employed by the BLFES, they were to hand in their diaries

129 Armstrong (Holley), "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Severn' (1863), Diary on Board the 'Alfred' Back to England (1864), and Matron's Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1873–1874)," 1863/07/14–1874/02/01: 1863/08/02–13 [3–4].
130 Armstrong (Holley): 1863/09/13 [8].
131 Some important publications on ego-documents (newest to oldest): Ulbrich, Claudia, Kaspar von Greyerz, and Lorenz Heiligensetzer, eds., *Mapping the 'I': Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland,* Egodocuments and History Series 8. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015; Schaser, Angelika, "Schreiben, um dazuzugehören: Konversionserzählungen im 19. Jahrhundert," in *Selbstzeugnis und Person: Transkulturelle Perspektiven*, ed. Claudia Ulbrich, Hans Medick and Angelika Schaser. Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit 20. Köln, et al.: Böhlau, 2012: 381–398; Fulbrook, Mary, and Ulinka Rublack, "In Relation: The 'Social Self' and Ego-Documents," *German History* 28, no. 3 (2010): 263–272. doi:10.1093/gerhis/ghq065; Greyerz, Kaspar von, "Ego-Documents: The Last Word?," *German History* 28, no. 3 (2010): 273–282. doi:10.1093/gerhis/ghq064; Bähr, Andreas, Peter Burschel, and Gabriele Jancke, eds., *Räume des Selbst: Selbstzeugnisforschung transkulturell,* Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit 19. Köln et al.: Böhlau, 2007.

and bear witness about the emigrant women's behaviour upon arrival. So the difference is striking and it is justified to draw a quick comparison with the focus on "gentleness" and attitude.

Matron Mary Armstrong's language is marked by faithful references to Bible passages, prayers and devotion. As a faithful Protestant in charge of a mainly Catholic group of women, she nevertheless met the Catholic doctor Dr Ambrose Newbold and the girls with general respect, following the instructions from the *BLFES*.[132] She consulted closely with the doctor and usually worked together with him, but also immediately called for action herself when convinced of the appropriateness and urgency of the matter. For example, while the surgeon was still reluctant to act, Armstrong rebuked a neglectful nurse harshly upon finding out that she had left a very sick patient in a dirty state. She did not hesitate before ordering a thorough cleaning, washing and changing of clothes, and thus brought about great relief to one of "her" suffering girls.[133]

The voyage of the 'Severn' was not necessarily happier than the one of the 'Fitzjames'. In Armstrong's diary, annoyances, the clash of cultures and moral standards, the lack of hygiene, fearful gales, deaths of children, melancholic desires, and bad food all appeared as ordinaries of daily shipboard life as well. However, she always found a way to shift her focus from the whining to the doing, from the wailing to the hoping. To chisel out the techniques of strength and resilience, it is revealing to see how she privately admonished and strengthened herself when prone to sink into nostalgia or frustration:

> […] I must say all the girls are kind. The sea is looking boisterous. Our ship is like a cradle in this mighty ocean. As I am writing I think I see my dear sister going to the prayer meetings Thursday evening 8 PM. I will go & have prayers also. The storm is rising just as I see dear Mr Torrance

132 N. N., Matron's Diary on Board the 'Golconda', 1857/02/03–1857/05/25 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 9/6213 (57/1716): Letter to the Matron by the Ladies of the Committee, Birkenhead 1857/01/28 [3].

133 Armstrong (Holley), "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Severn' (1863), Diary on Board the 'Alfred' Back to England (1864), and Matron's Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1873–1874)," 1863/07/14–1874/02/01: 1863/09/22 [10].

> enter the church. I wish I was there. But when I think I committed all to Him that overrules all things well. I came without a murmur why should I suggest it now, I must leave & go for the medicine & give the report for the evening to the Dr.[134]

With that very same attitude, she approached the hardships and fears of the women – understanding their worries but teaching them to look away from themselves and rely on God instead. Her "gentleness" therefore was not a soft and ridiculous lenience, but a goal-oriented practice. She did not hesitate either to angrily throw a candle used for rituals of "abomnible [sic] superstition" into the sea or to vigorously "call [the girls] to silence" when panic broke out in the dead of a stormy night, or to carefully look after the sick girls' improvements. The job did not rest easy on her. Judging from her own perspective, what led to her becoming a role model for some emigrants like "one young girl [who] clasped me round the neck & wished she could be like me. Not to be afraid" during the "roughest" night ever?[135]

The story she told herself, in the wake of nights under deck, unfolds as follows: Armstrong was not naïve but expected trouble right from the start. However, she was determined to throw her heart into that project while anchoring her joy at an "eternal" place, separating her self-worth and success from the shipboard company's judgment and behaviour. This set her free to not take everything personally, as she had handed back final responsibility into the hands of the Almighty. When she thus "made up her mind to undergo every difficulty for thy poor Emigrants" during the first sleepless night at the Emigration Depot in Plymouth, the role of a mediator in gentleness became her conscious choice.[136] When it then came to pass that many emigrants were open to instruction, she received this as a gift with open hands. Consequently, she marvelled at this "very happy company […] all so obliging to each other" or expressed her honest pleasure in the girls' progress in knowl-

134 Armstrong (Holley): 1863/09/24 [11].
135 Armstrong (Holley): 1863/09/15+22 [9+10]. This is a perfect and ideal(ized) description of a matron-girl relationship, where the matron was admired by the young women.
136 Armstrong (Holley): 1863/07/07 [1].

edge and cleanliness.[137] This outcome was nothing she had expected when encountering the spotted group in the Emigration Depot. But she motivated the women to keep going, praising the diligent ones, and not letting her mood be tainted by the disobedient ones.

When picking out these pious expressions of emotions, struggles, prayers and thoughts, Armstrong appears like an angel, who used her gentleness as a weapon to disarm rebellious plans and was surprised at the positive result herself. Of course, this is not the whole picture. To relativize the bright depiction of "kindness and harmony" centred around the matron's exemplary behaviour, other sources can help us to reach a more modified conclusion of gentleness.

In the archive, there are extracts of three personal shipboard diaries written by Armstrong: the one on board the 'Severn' as matron, another one shortly after as passenger on the way back home to Plymouth (the ticket being part of her salary as matron), and another one ten years later, when she again served as a matron accompanying single women to Australia, this time on the 'Samuel Plimsoll' in 1873/74. Now a mother herself and intending to settle in Sydney afterwards, Mary Armstrong (now under the name of Mary Holley) was heading south with her little son Herbert John. Her style of writing still contains the same motives and Christian references, but she appears more determined and self-conscious, especially in pursuing cleanliness more than the doctor and in caring for the (new-born) children.[138] The earlier, perhaps too extreme, need to justify and reassure herself of her sense of mission had decreased, but a commitment to the emigrants in charge had remained.

With the analysed historical actor's development in mind, the findings on gentleness as character trait essential for mediating well can be summed up as a personal, positive attitude towards every fellow human, a tolerant heart and a benevolent mindset, which could be rooted in a strong (Christian) faith and/or humanitarian convictions.

137 Armstrong (Holley): 1863/08/29 [6].
138 Armstrong (Holley): 1873/12/12 [33].

4.4 The matron as mother figure

The detailed analysis of two different matrons' diaries helped to understand what could be meant by a spiritual and personal leadership as required of the female mediator. It became clear that reasons for an unhelpful attempt to support the transit actants did not merely lie in outward factors, such as lack of experience. Instead, with the chance of applying for this post of official authority came the notion that this appointment was a calling rather than a job. Only with that in mind, with a clear vision and a "heart for the girls" (or the people altogether), would the hardships become bearable and the opposition easier to endure. Resilience, as outlined before in Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit", was again to be anchored beyond the sea. Devoted surgeons and matrons focused on the others before themselves, emphatically understood their troubles, and yet were convinced of the need to guard boundaries; they were self-controlled and willing to take a break and laugh at themselves.

To test the previous hypothesis that the ideal matron was to embody a mother figure, it might be useful to take a closer look at a paper given by Frances E. Hoggan, one of the 19th-century fighters for women's rights and the first female doctor in Wales. Talking about the importance of the mother in society and family, she stated:

> The position of the wife and mother in the family is one which calls for the best thought of individuals and of the nation. If the mother is dwarfed, the children cannot grow to their full mental and moral stature, for the most enduring of all memories, the ones which survive all later impressions, and stamp most powerfully the impress of character on the individual, are those which centre in the early home of childhood, and group themselves round the mother as the pivot of the family and of the home.[139]

139 Hoggan, Frances E., *The Position of the Mother in the Family in Its Legal and Scientific Aspects: Read at the Annual Congress of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, Held at Birmingham in 1884, and Published by Permission of the Council*. Manchester: A. Ireland and Co., Printers, 1884: 5.

Based on that idea of a nourishing, caring and tender mother as the source of morale and humanity at the core of society, three aspects can be mentioned. First, there is the common reference to the women as "single girls", denying them their maturity and placing them on one level with children. Matron Jane Brearley on the 'Mary Ann' in 1856/57 assessed the behaviour of some difficult emigrants as "very sassy" – an adjective more commonly used for toddlers and children than for women in their twenties.[140] Second, the language used by the women's societies feeds into that narrative by speaking about preparing the "girls" for being a mother and wife. Recalling the very female imagery of birth and childcare, a mother's reward was set in front of the matrons as a prize worth striving for:

> The performance of these duties will no doubt involve much personal fatigue, and great mental anxiety; but a matron will be richly repaid if she avert vice, and see the young women entrusted to her charge arrive in the colony with an untarnished name, prepared to occupy their different positions with new feelings of responsibility and new hopes of usefulness, the result of the prayerful counsels of their kind matron.[141]

The role as the matron's "own children" is often taken up by the women themselves and proudly placed in women societies' annual reports even as late as 1898. The following extract is taken from a letter to the *United British Women's Emigration Association*, written by "M. J. T." (most likely Mary Jane Davies or Martha A. Tennyson), probably on board the S.S. 'Cornwall' to West Australia under the supervision of the experienced matron Miss Monk, surgeon-superintendent Dr. Derbyshire and Captain Young in 1890:[142]

140 Brearley, "Matron's Diary on Board the 'Mary Ann'," 1856/11/25–1857/03/19–25: 10–12.
141 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Ferguson, "Hints to Matrons of Emigrant Ships," London 1850: 16.
142 Darbyshire's transit experience was published in 1991, juxtaposing the personal and the official journal: Darbyshire, Douglas E., *In Time for Lunch: The Personal Diary and the Official Journal of Douglas E. Darbyshire, Surgeon in Charge of the Young Women Emigrants Sailing in the S.S. 'Cornwall' from England to Australia, 1898*. Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1991.

> From servants who went out with Free Passages to West Australia,–
> Dear Madam, – Just a few lines to let you now [sic] how I am getting on. Well, I enjoyed myself on the ship. Miss Monk was so nice to us all, and for her and the captain they cannot be praised enough. Miss Monk could not be kinder to us all when we were in the ship if we had all have been her own children. She shall never be forgotten by me anyway, nor any of the rest of the girls for her kindness, everything was for the girls […].[143]

Third, the physical description of either too strict or too lean matrons seems to deny a femininity pleasant and worth striving for. The negative image of a "lean vinegar-faced woman, well on in her fifties, with a tongue like a rasp and an inborn acidity sufficient to make her a menace in a dairy"[144] is repeatedly found in some emigrant diaries. Frustrated, disappointed and disillusioned "Old Dame[s]" like Miss Bant or Miss Chase on the 'Stebonheath' (who appears again on the S.S. 'Almora') presented anything but a pleasant and admirable picture of womanhood to the unmarried youngsters. A haggard elderly spinster with a strident voice and a dogged face, grimly determined to impose moral rules upon the girls did not fit with the loving mother in an ideal Victorian middle-class home.

Of course, those used to pretty bedrooms and identifying themselves as "gentlewomen" would not travel steerage, but choose the comfort of a homely cabin, far away from the matron's influence.[145] Most of the single women, though, would be travelling in steerage with the prospect of a tough working-class environment waiting for them overseas. Some were travelling alone, some with children to be united with

143 United British Women's Emigration Association, Report 1898 (Women's Library London School of Economics) 325.24109171241 UNI: 26.

144 Skirving, Robert S., and Ann Macintosh, *Memoirs of Dr. Robert Scot Skirving, 1859–1956*. Darlinghurst: Foreland Press, 1988: 126. Surgeon-superintendent Dr Skirving thus describes the matron Miss Bant in his memoirs and recalls an incident when she once asked him to help her, as some "girls refused to get out of their bunks to dress and do the usual domestic chores very properly required from all emigrants". Young Skirving and the skipper then borrowed from advice found in articles and threatened to turn the hose on the girls – successfully.

145 Curtin, Emma, "Gentility Afloat: Gentlewomen's Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830–80," *Australian Historical Studies* 26, no. 105 (1995): 634–652. doi:10.1080/10314619508595987.

their husbands; some were engaged, some had no male colonist waiting for them in Australia yet. Although marriage was not their highest goal (against the generalizations to be found in contemporary and historical literature), the domestic sphere was in fact the space aimed for – usually as housemaids firstly and possibly as future wives secondly.[146]

Considering all that and coming full circle, matrons were indirectly asked to fulfil a parental job and ideally personify a model that the women could look up to and learn from. In fact, the very term "matron" speaks for itself and underlines that statement well. As physician and social reformer Frances E. Hoggan pointed out in her paper, quoted from above, on the legal and scientific position of the mother, a quick etymological look at the term reveals that engrained in the "word matron [having come down to us from early Roman times], the marriage tie is conceived of only in its relation to motherhood".[147] Matron and motherhood were inseparable, and the authority of the matron aboard therefore automatically associated with the authority of a mater familias. However, in transit, traditional and social expectations were more flexible, and each matron could define her role accordingly, adjusting her focus individually. Hence, the characteristics typical of 'mediators' in general received a special tinge with the rise of self-conscious women in charge.

Self-consciousness and active engagement not only mark the good surgeons and matrons, but also other roles aboard. With the help of the 'mediator' concept, additional agents can be identified, whose impact on the transit experience should not be underestimated. To finish this final chapter, the volunteer mediators, who can also be found in other transit settings, are worth taking a closer look at, as they broaden the perspective on the shipboard community to places and people who may not have left any written traces in the archives.

146 Gothard, Jan, "Wives or Workers? Single British Female Migration to Colonial Australia," in *Women, Gender and Labour Migration: Historical and Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Pamela Sharpe. Routledge Research in Gender and History 5. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002: 145–161; 151–154.
147 Hoggan, *The Position of the Mother in the Family in Its Legal and Scientific Aspects*; 6.

5 The Volunteer Mediators

5.1 Teaching

Apart from medical and moral duties, both surgeons and matrons were called on to take care of education. Matrons had to encourage the illiterate women and provide reading material for them. It was not only the females who could (or should) take the voyage as an opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills. If the voyage was not to be a "blank in life", this automatically implied making the most of it, and the authorities were not hesitant in defining usefulness in a certain way.

> Much benefit has resulted to the Emigrants, adults as well as children, from the improvement of their education in ships, when proper facilities and encouragement have been afforded to them. Surgeons are therefore requested to devote their best attention to this important object.[148]

A proper number of books for everyone, the formation of reading and listening classes, and the institution of school classes for the children were recommended. An ordinary emigrant vessel therefore provided a teacher and/or a religious instructor, who was either appointed by the commissioners or by the surgeon. What did a surgeon look out for when selecting one?

> And if one has not been previously appointed by the Commissioners or their Officer, he will select from amongst the Emigrants the fittest person he can for the office of Teacher, exempting him from the ordinary duties of the Emigrant.[149]

Taking the pedagogic roles of official and unofficial schoolmasters, instructors, teachers, etc. and considering them with regards to the concept of a 'mediator' and the emphases in the triangle scheme illus-

148 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, The Emigrant's Voyage (Emigrant Tracts 1652), London 1873 (Cambridge University Library) 1873.6.636: 10.
149 Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, *Instructions to Surgeons Superintendents of Government Emigrant Ships*: 15–17.

trated above, we realize the importance of (1) the content to be conveyed, (2) the format and manner of teaching, and (3) the audience to be addressed. Also, just as in the longer analysis of the outstanding mediators (surgeon and matron) before, personality and character had a significant impact when it came to teaching.

For many, it appears the subjects worth investing time and energy in on board ship were languages, science, literature and theology. This could be due to the intrinsic motivation of either the teacher or the learner. In the early years, where the school structure had not yet been fixed on government emigrant ships, some teachers still emerged. Some clearly seemed to be "the whole and sole promoter of the school": Reverend John D. Mereweather, for example, was shocked by some of the emigrant's manners and lack of hope. Moved by the "poor people's" condition, he almost immediately initiated a school with lessons, where he would call the 15–20 children together and instruct them accordingly.[150]

He taught them singing, reading and writing, as well as making them understand religious subjects. The girls received lessons in needlework, too. For Mereweather, the in-between period had great positive and negative potential, which motivated him to use his knowledge as a learned man autonomously by focusing on the children. He saw this as a mission and counterstrike against some parents' bad influence; he started to act and talk like a caring father for the two oldest boys, who he supported in particular. In line with the 'mediator' concept in 'transit', the aspect of being a role model and moral supervisor came to the fore in his reflections, when he found himself in the position of a life guide and proud mentor at the end of the voyage reflecting Christian ideals of approved knowledge:

> June 13th […] To-day I examined all the children. Find that they have made much progress, during the voyage, in spelling, reading, and Scripture knowledge, but not much in writing. In fact, now every child who is of an age to read, can read; and all, except the very little ones, can answer easy questions on religious subjects. The elder ones can say the Church Catechism word for word, and seem to understand the nature

150 Mereweather, *Life on Board an Emigrant Ship*: 12+20–21.

> of the Holy Sacraments. Throughout the voyage they have been in the habit of learning the Collects of the Sundays and other holydays. My two boys can say by heart twenty out of the thirty-nine Articles, and prove them pretty well by texts from Scriptures. They can also say many of the Church Prayers. I hope that, by the blessing of God, the children have not morally deteriorated during the voyage, though I am sure that the parents have.[151]

Thirty years later, when schoolmasters belonged to the standard "establishments" of a proper emigrant ship, the mission and dedication was still comparable. William and Martha "Pattie" Soutter emigrated to Queensland on board the 'Stracathro'; William was appointed schoolmaster when they were still in the Emigration Depot in Plymouth. Pattie, whose incomplete diary has been preserved, mainly looked after their own three children, but also supported her husband in organizing the teaching and managing the library:

> Tues June 6th [1882] […] We held school today – it takes both of us to do it and pretty hard work for us, attending to our own children's personal wants, preparing our food, etc. Three nights in the week we have the library, and the other three Willie has a young men's class. It begins to feel very much warmer. The dirty family are developing wonderfully […][152]

When the first days turned into weeks and then into months of enduring storms, measles and stench, Pattie had to withdraw from teaching others and was caught up between the hospital and the married people's quarter with her youngest son. Not so her husband: William managed to navigate between the steerage passengers and the higher-ranking officers to the approval of all. In the middle of an awful storm, William used the relationships to the families he had built up through the classroom and – according to his wife's narrative – became a comforter to some of

151 Mereweather: 70.
152 Soutter, Pattie, Diary on Board the 'Stracathro', 1882/05/22–1882/08/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1882–0; TR 1882–3; Box 9593: 10.

the scared adults, too.[153] Sharing the same values and concerns for the emigrants' improvement, the surgeon Dr. Wilkinson was also content with the schoolmaster's efforts. They both worked together in a mutually respectful way – united through the common vision and endeavour.[154]

To expand the picture to the higher classes also, the same investment can be found in smaller groups, where musical lessons, language classes and science courses would be found. The mediating aspect would play a role when a cabin passenger like Charles Phelps, who had family connections both in Madeira and in England, would privately train his Portuguese servant Alexandre Siamet in mathematics during the voyage. But not only hierarchical relationships allowed for mediation. Travelling on the small vessel 'Scotia' with only about 35 passengers, Phelps also found time to teach fellow cabin passenger Miss Hart some Portuguese and thus make additional use of his linguistic skills on a ship where Portuguese and English speakers would share space together. In fact, by teaching the lady, the servant became involved, too, as he soon engaged in the learning process: "Alexandre says he would not help Miss Hart at meals unless she asks for what she wants in Portuguese, as he says she knows it well enough." Hence, translation, communication, and interaction remain key features of mediation.[155]

153 "[1882/07/04] On Saturday night we had a most dreadful thunderstorm and rain – and such rain; it came down in sheets. There was no such thing as sleep […] There were some strong men a bit shaky in their nerves and Willie so successfully worked upon some of their excited feelings that overcome by fear their devotions were most certainly earnest for once. I will confess I was terribly afraid for a time and never went to bed until nearly 4 a.m." (Soutter, Pattie, Diary on Board the 'Stracathro', 1882/05/22–1882/08/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1882–0; TR 1882–3; Box 9593: 15–16.)

154 See the compilation of sources on the passage of the 'Stracathro' by McLaren, Jocelyn, *The Voyage of the 'Stracathro' from Plymouth to Brisbane 1882*. Bli Bli: Jocelyn McLaren, 1998: 20.

155 Phelps, Charles, Journal on Board the 'Scotia', 1853/12/05–1854/07/30 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 2793: 4–5 for teaching Alexandre; 10–11 for teaching Miss Hart. That Phelps had family in Portugal and England can be deduced from his mother's explanatory note on the first page of the diary he had sent to her after safely arriving in Sydney.

5.2 Preaching and peacemaking

Translation, communication and interaction also worked on the spiritual level. The surgeon's religious duties have already been mentioned. Not every ship had different travelling ministers to perform the service for all denominations, which is why the surgeon had to make sure that each faith could be practiced, at least with the basic elements on Sundays. When there was a religious person with teaching skills on board, however, this was a great opportunity to become a mediator. Often the surgeons would be happy to delegate this task to someone trained and/or enthusiastic about teaching the Bible. From 1850s onwards, individual emigrants would often lead the services. The full range of confessions and Christian groups would have needed Catholic priests, Anglican reverends, Baptist ministers and Methodist preachers – but obviously few ships covered the full panorama.

The Anglican church started building an imperial network of emigrant chaplains in close cooperation with the SPCK and another society with related goals, the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*. During and after the establishment of this network, the emigrating clergymen would be in touch with local colonial bishops and connected churches all over the British Empire.[156] Installing a permanent minister aboard, comparable to the schoolmaster, was repeatedly petitioned, but because of the surgeon's duty, most bible study groups and prayer meetings would continue to be voluntary initiatives. Hence, the agency of the individual was called for.[157]

How did the religious professionals end up on board ship when usually they were not assigned to work as emigrant chaplains on the long voyages to Australia and New Zealand? Some followed the calling of their churches abroad, which needed pastors for the colonists. Baptist ministers Charles Stewart embarked on the 'Fortitude' in the late 1840s to found a church in Moreton Bay, and his brother-in-Christ-and-

156 Strong, "Globalising British Christianity in the Nineteenth Century": 11–12.
157 See Strong, Rowan, *Victorian Christianity and Emigrant Voyages to British Colonies, c.1840–c.1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017: 201–263 on religious professionals in emigrant ships.

fellowship, Benjamin G. Wilson boarded the 'Tornado' about ten years later to do the same in Brisbane's city centre.[158]

People like Stewart and Wilson are only two of the individuals in transit who moved away from merely fostering their own well-being and looked around, caring for the spiritual well-being of their fellow travellers as well. To name but a few over the centuries and destinations (most of them have already been mentioned in the course of this book): in the 1850s, Congregationalist John Slade organized Bible classes for adults; Protestant Robert Hepburn delivered a sermon in front of a big audience; in the 1860s, Anglican minister Frederick Miller fervently fought against physical weakness to perform divine service whenever possible on the 'Moravian'; Presbyterian minister Alexander Caldwell led two services every Sunday; and in the 1870s, the nuns under the direction of Mother Mary Mulquin held regular Catholic messes on the S.S. 'Great Britain'.[159]

The people mentioned are examples of believing Christians who saw the time on board as a chance to show love to their neighbours and encourage the meek – to mediate. This could be a "mediation", which brought about peace (as the Apostle Paul defined it when speaking of Jesus, the only "mediator between God and men").[160] Peacemaking and harmonising as special transit tasks for mediators are the final activities this chapter will close with.

It is not a new insight to state there were ample reasons for tensions and conflicts aboard. Neither is it new that tensions were intensified

158 Brown, Elaine, "The Voyage of the 'Fortitude'," in Brisbane: Schemes and Dreams, ed. Jennifer Harrison and Barry Shaw. Brisbane History Group Papers 23. Moorooka: Boolarong Press, 2014: 54–73: 56 and Wilson, Benjamin G., Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Tornado', 1858/05/17–1858/07/08 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) M 1763; Box 9593. Religious motives for emigrating have been analysed already in Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit".
159 Slade, "Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes'," 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895]: 15; Hepburn, Robert, Diary and Letters on Board the 'Saldanha', 1856/06/05–1856/10/04 (State Library of Victoria) MS 13998; Box 121/4 (6): 83; Miller, Frederick, Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Norfolk' to London and the 'Moravian' to Launceston. Extracts, 1861/04/16–1862/07/15 (State Library of Victoria) MS 13312; Box 3870/11 (6): 66+72–73; N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger," The Brisbane Courier (Supplement to the Brisbane Courier), 1865/01/09: 1; Mulquin, Mary P., Mother Mary's Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1873/10/22–1873/12/21 (Brunel Institute and Archive Bristol) Voyage Box 41, Item 2.
160 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 2:5 (The Bible. KJV).

when the multiple emotional, physical, moral and social facets of 'transit' became tangible. Because of the circumstances, the process of reconciliation was often harder and required translator skills to bring the voices into a constructive dialogue.[161] Gentleness and firmness, key characteristics of each mediator, were essential here, but for particularly heated discussions, yet another level of communication and understanding was required. For sudden and urgent problems, temporary mediators could be a major help for the community. In contrast to the permanent transit mediators with their general social duties, namely the surgeon and matron, these temporary authorities could step in, manage and sort out, but then leave again. For this role, social and empathic people were perfect.

Again, success did not depend on the assigned expectation and title, but on the attitude and character of the individual, whether he or she agreed to be a real 'mediator' and not only an 'intermediary' repeating dry, written rules. When one of the preachers on the 'Mermaid' in 1859 failed to calm down some mocking troublemakers in steerage, he had obviously fallen back on an unconvincing 'intermediary' strategy – merely repeating the law that the steerage passengers were laughing at.[162] In contrast to that, and on a different emigrant ship, an example of specific mediation and peace-work is presented at its best. If we are to believe Baptist minister Benjamin G. Wilson's personal diary, he was once asked in a similar situation to arbitrate between two parties in the second cabin – and addressed the cockerels so successfully that the captain later listened to another reconciliatory suggestion positively. Wilson aimed at building bridges between the crew and passengers and initiated a shared tea gathering, which apparently proved a successful and pleasant event for the attendees.[163]

Passengers who could come up with uniting ideas of basic mediation also included other people who were not trained missionaries

161 "Of all places in the world, a ship is the most undesirable in which to have persistent strife and rankling animosities." (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, "The Emigrant's Voyage," London 1873: 13.)
162 Laver, Samuel, Diary on Board the 'Mermaid', 1859/07/09–1859/09/30 (State Library of Victoria) MS 10961; Box 4448/13: 1859/09/29 [25].
163 Wilson, "Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Tornado,'" 1858/05/17–1858/07/08: 5–6.

of the church. The ordinary Protestant emigrant James V. Mulligan was discontent with being ignored as steerage passenger and formed a steerage committee on the 'S. Curling' in 1860. As its first president, he would call together the newly established committee to solve interpersonal problems. Mulligan soon went on to help communicate and actively work for understanding between young Protestant missionaries and Roman Catholics, between a rebellious young steward and his colleagues in the galley, and between a second-class passenger and the captain.[164] It was not an easy journey to get there. Only after some severely frustrating attempts to win over his comrades for active work for a better, healthier and more peaceful community aboard and to make the common transit experience a bit lighter, Mulligan and his friends finally broke through with their idea. But then this last quote is written in the manner of someone who chose to take responsibility. When reflecting on the very first self-organized steerage concert, Mulligan sketches out the concept and effect of 'mediating':

> Our concert commenced at 7 O.C. Mr Angove in the chair a very pleasant night it was and very entertaining, it was most surprising to think how a rough people such as we could be brought to such order and all by the exception of 2 or 3 intelligent working men who was determined we were visited by several of the intermediate and second cabin passengers and likewise the ships officers Who all appeared delighted with our program[165]

Indeed, his quote can be taken to sum up this chapter: it is all about "2 or 3 intelligent working men who was determined" – transit mediators in their element.

164 Mulligan, James V., Lynette F. McClenaghan, and Pat McClenaghan, From County Down to Down Under: Diary of James Venture Mulligan 1860. Armidale: Pat McClenaghan, 1991: 43–47.
165 Mulligan, McClenaghan, and McClenaghan: 32.

Concluding Transit

> 16 Aug 1875
> How I count the degrees of longitude! I may never see Queensland, surrounded as I am by enemies belonging to the ship. A knock on the head, the stab of a knife may end my life at any moment! Thank God I am doing my duty.[1]

After several years of experience as a medical doctor in hospitals and other ships, Isaiah de Zouche, an Irishman, single and in his mid-30s, decided to apply for a position as emigrant ship surgeon for the Colony of Queensland. His certificates were valid, his reputation was good, so he was appointed to the Barque 'Star Queen' under the command of Captain Henry Downing.

In the beginning, everything seemed fine. Altogether about 300 passengers came on board (with the size of the vessel in mind, the *Age* introduced the ship later as "particularly crowded"[2]). Provisions were loaded and ticked off by the purser Edwin Wright and the third mate William Bellamy. Surgeon de Zouche wrote enthusiastic letters to his sisters Cecilia and Mary, introducing them to the many duties he had. He also became acquainted with the experienced matron Elizabeth Curry, who was in charge of the single women, and liked her conscientiousness.[3]

As can be seen from the extract shown above, however, things did not remain well, but deteriorated slowly. Soon after the departure, the single men from steerage started to complain about short rations of food. Matron Curry also saw her young women wondering about the tiny portions they got for lunch and their constant thirst. De Zouche

1 Zouche, Isaiah de, Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen' (Original and Transcript with Further Sources (Letters, Examination Protocols, Newspaper Extracts, Notes, etc.)), 1875/04/19–1875/10/30 (State Library of Queensland) OM 67–8; Box 8630: 1875/08/16 [56 in original/16 in transcript].
2 N. N., "Shipping.: Hobson's Bay," *Age*, 1875/09/01: 2.
3 Zouche, "Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen,'" 1875/04/19–1875/10/30: 1875/05/01 +1875/06/06 [1B–2 in transcript].

carefully counted the weight of the portions, and then confronted the purser Wright, who was responsible for distributing the provisions, with the fact that the passengers were being deprived of their rightful share of food. In meticulous details, de Zouche narrated the following discussions, comments and conversations word by word.[4]

This specific conflict was based on immigration regulations laid out long before the 'Star Queen' had set sail to Brisbane. Both the second cabin passengers complaining about the short ration and the surgeon admonishing the purser built their whole argumentation on official instructions passed by the Queensland Parliament in the Legislative Assembly – the very assembly this present book opened with.

In Chapter 1 "Negotiating Transit", 'transit' was presented as an entangled concept that does not occur in a vacuum. Embedded in previously set and interchangeable social, political and personal spaces, each and every transit experience can only be understood in its historical context. Although the key element was the act of travelling at sea, the complexities cannot be understood without the "deciders" before and afterwards. It was only this embeddedness that enabled the passengers to raise their voices and act as members of a legally recognized body.

When the 'Star Queen' was sailing in 1875, after more than a decade of political experience, the first chaotic ups and downs of parliamentary debate had ceased and produced a more sophisticated administrative structure and routine. Upon arrival in Brisbane, an already existing "Board of Immigration Inquiry" opened a new file on "alleged deficiency of provisions on board the Barque 'Star Queen', with immigrants from London to Queensland". The board assigned men to examine the vessel at the port, interviewed witnesses and collected evidence. Obviously, the immigration regulations had been tested and tried throughout the years. Although still a disputed topic, negotiating transit was now based on given laws.

In like manner, the independent political investigators of the inquiry board based their calculations on requirements defined by the "Imperial Passenger Act", the "Queensland Regulations", and the "Passenger Act", which demanded enough food for 140 days, sufficient ventilation,

4 Zouche: 1875/07/30–31 [5–6 in transcript].

and enough deck space for every "statute adult".[5] The making of the weights and coordination of imperial and national principles had led to a dietary scale agreed upon. These documents gave the ship surgeon Isaiah de Zouche a strong position. Hence, he could accuse the purser of depriving the passengers "from 1/4 to 2/5 and even 1/2 of the allowance, according to the dietary scale. Flour, treacle, butter, meat (salt and preserved), rice, oatmeal, vegetables, lime juice, and peas were systematically kept back."[6]

On board, the use of manipulated scales kept this hidden for a while, but after 90 days no biscuits were available anymore. The captain simply ignored the complaints and laughed at the surgeon's zeal. But the purser confessed to the matron that he had been giving out short rations long before, in order to prevent starvation.[7] There were other issues apart from the nutrition: both the second and the third mate became interested in one of the female free migrants, called Julia McCarthy;[8] all Welsh single men turned out to be traveling under false names; Captain Downing's (ab)use of alcohol increased; the sole first cabin passenger aligned with some second cabin passengers against the doctor; and when all this gradually came to the fore, there were still at least 25 days to go until Maryborough.

In the accusations laid before the board of inquiry then, the effect of such a disrupted entity as 'transit' are clearly displayed. The peculiar nature of 19th century long-distance migration was that transit was regulated and set from pre- and post-transit places, but it came into

5 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland," in *Votes and Proceedings: Vol. 2*. Brisbane, 1876 (Fryer Library) FRY PER J 916. K3: 1137–1183: Report by Chairman F.O. Darvall et al.: 1143–1144.
6 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": Preliminary Report by Isaiah de Zouche, 1875/08/31: 1139–1142.
7 Zouche, "Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen,'" 1875/04/19–1875/10/30: 1875/08/11 [10 in transcript].
8 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": 1875/09/27: 1164 on the second officer Mr. Fleet and Zouche, "Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen,'" 1875/04/19–1875/10/30: 1875/15 [49 in original/14 in transcript] on the third mate William Bellamy.

existence in a laboratory space, almost freed from the direct influence of its designers. Of course, the surgeon could vehemently insist on justice and point out breaches of the law, but out at sea he had no real power to change the situation. As soon as the biscuits were gone, they were gone:

> At length I ascertained that the passengers' stores, meat, and flour *were taken to supply the cabin table,* as the purser stated, *by Captain Downing's* orders, and I was obliged to appoint men to watch the weighing out of the provisions. But even this precaution did not avail, for means were still found to keep back the rations. Passengers used to go about the deck, saying they were being cheated and starved, and writing "Star-*ving* Queen" in various places about the ship.[9]

In the very first case study at the beginning of this book, powerful players such as immigration agent Henry Jordan, Colonial Secretary George Herbert, or ship owner James Baines, who were negotiating transit with each other, happened to be in privileged positions as politicians or private business companies prioritising money over humanitarian motives. The 'Star Queen' situation was no different. When de Zouche, in the manner of a self-appointed detective, interviewed the full-paying steerage passenger and schoolmaster William Hillier, he encountered a story of secret, financial deals: apparently, there had been a previous agreement between the captain, the purser and someone from the ship owners' group, "a person calling himself Captain Roberts",[10] to make

9 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": Preliminary Report by Isaiah de Zouche, 1875/08/31: 1140.

10 Immigration Department Queensland, "The 'Star Queen' Enquiry: Report of the Immigration Board into the Charges of Short Victualling of the above Vessel," *The Telegraph*, 1875/09/23: 2. Under which authority this "Captain Roberts" acted is unclear, but he is called the ship's "husband" by the third mate William Bellamy and seemed to take up a decisive role in the process of surveying provisions with tainted means. He can be counted among the group of private ship owners involved in the migration business, who wanted to design 'transit' according to their liking. (Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": 1181.)

additional money by under-provisioning. The headline of de Zouche's diary entry therefore read "Profit to Capt, Purser and Co of £1000!"[11]

However, in contrast to the 1860s, the mid-1870s offered more ways to communicate across the seas. Telegraphy allowed for faster and more urgent messages, something the confused immigration agent Jordan in London, the protagonist of the first chapter, would probably have loved to use to clarify responsibilities. In his era it was almost easier for him to embark a vessel to Brisbane himself, in a particularly messy political and private situation, than having to wait again for months for an answer after his own letter would have arrived.

De Zouche encouraged the passengers to support a request to put into Melbourne for fresh supplies before sailing further to Brisbane. After some hesitation, Captain Downing gave in. In Melbourne then, the surgeon immediately asked for advice from the Victorian immigration office on how to pursue a proper investigation into the problems on board. What is unique is that here the officials stepped in as actors again: these are the officials who decided upon and oversaw transit from a non-maritime place and who were usually not involved in the unfolding of transit as it actually occurred at sea. They appeared here as cooperative partners in sorting a mess. By interrupting the flow of transit and stopping in another Australian port, additional players outside the ship were invited in to influence the course of events. This assigned the roles of the good guys and the bad guys anew. With the help of telegrams between the Chief Secretary of Victoria in Melbourne, the Colonial Secretary in Brisbane, the surgeon, and the captain of the 'Star Queen', instructions were exchanged on how to proceed. In this manner, information about the irregularities on the 'Star Queen' already reached the destination before the arrival of the emigrant ship, setting up everything for an inquiry against the captain and the purser.[12]

11 Zouche, "Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen'," 1875/04/19–1875/10/30: 875/08/15 [48–49 in original/14 in transcript]. More on that eavesdropping and conspiracy in a secret memorandum given to the surgeon by William Hillier himself, dated 1875/08/22 [22 in transcript].

12 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": Telegram by Colonial Secretary Brisbane to Captain of the 'Star Queen', 1875/09/02: 1139.

More evidence for the impact of the group of "deciders" on the unfolding of 'transit' and the individuals caught up within can be observed in the captain's behaviour. The 'Star Queen' was originally bound for Maryborough, Queensland's second largest port,[13] where the shipowners were waiting for it. After receiving the instructions from the Colonial Secretary of Queensland to "bring [his] ship to Brisbane in place of Maryborough"[14] and being confronted with an unavoidable lawsuit, he struggled with the decision of whether to follow the order from the shipowner, Mr Harris, to come to Maryborough or whether the Colonial Secretary's call to Brisbane was binding instead. Caught between the British and the Australian side, the captain realized his and his transit's dependency on external forces.

Control was not in his hands no matter how much he wanted it to be. Others also found transit to be an entity that was barely controllable despite many rules and regulations. Analysing several cases of mentally unstable and thus unwanted immigrants arriving in Australia, Chapter 2 "Controlling Transit" had shown how transit borders could still be semi-permeable. Prevention of fraud or mental problems was not guaranteed by given rules. In the story of the 'Star Queen', the committee investigating the charges of short victualling discovered a very unexpected additional problem upon questioning and examining the immigrants:

> While passing the single girls two "statute adults" named Bridget and Elizabeth Molloy presented themselves. Their diminutive stature attracted attention, and an enquiry being made of their parents, it turned out that their ages were respectively nine and eleven years! Yet they had been entered by the Home Agent and charged to the Government as adults. It was also discovered that all – we think without any exception – of the men who came from Abermawddy, in Wales, and part of those who came

13 Manderson, Pennie, ed., *The Voyages to Queensland by the 'Star Queen': Compiled Work*. Maryborough: Pennie Manderson (Self-Publication), 1997: 25.
14 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": Telegram by Colonial Secretary Brisbane to Captain of the 'Star Queen', 1875/09/02: 1139.

> from the County Clare, in Ireland, had come out under assumed names. The men were told that if they wished a free passage they must *assume* certain names prescribed to them by the agent. On their promising to do this, they were supplied with their tickets and the necessary certificates, all being made out in those other names.[15]

False ages and wrong identities – the cases brought to light here were surely not the only immigrants sneaking into Australia and experiencing transit under a veil of assumptions, half-truths and lies. For the officials in charge, a discovery such as this would lead to attempts to identify a "scapegoat" in Great Britain who had approved these immigrants – as outlined in the case of unwanted immigrants with mental instabilities in Chapter 2.

What happened to the little girls Bridget (age 9) and Elizabeth (age 11), who were numbered among the "statute adults" as "single women" and who therefore had to endure the lengthy and troublesome voyage with little food separated from their parents in the married quarters? The impacts of such a journey on the individual can only be guessed, but after having looked at 'transit' from without and within, it is safe to say that this experience would have left a trace on their further personal development. It has been shown that disturbances, depression and hysteria could be a result of the extreme situation on board and the pressure on an individual's identity. For the men travelling with certificates under false names given to them by the agents, the voyage must have also been challenging. De Zouche already discovered the truth soon after departure.[16] Not knowing whether they would be sent back to the United Kingdom because of this fraud, at least some of the men from Glamorganshire must have suffered from worries other than a lack of water and rice. They were extraordinarily lucky, however, because in the end it was not them but the British emigration agents who were declared guilty – of "intolerable remissness". Though com-

15 N. N., "The Arrival of the 'Star Queen'," *Maryborough Chronicle, Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser*, 1875/09/30: 2

16 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": 1875/09/29: 1169.

ing out "without special examination or certificates, under assumed names", the many "false" immigrants appeared "so respectable, so well conducted and so robust" that they won the public's favour and were allowed to stay.[17] Despite the happy ending for them, they surely had not expected that the surgeon would blow their cover so quickly but had imagined their own transit experience would be different.

Speaking of imagining transit as analysed in Chapter 3 "Imagining Transit", expectations and reality clashed on board the 'Star Queen' as well. Short provisions, a despotic captain, bad ventilation, and love-affairs were not unique to this voyage. On the contrary: As one anonymous commentator in the Brisbane newspaper *Telegraph* put it:

> There's a regular hubbub about the short victualling of the 'Star Queen' immigrant ship – just as if that sort of thing was something new in Queensland immigrant ships. Why, bless my life, when I came to the colony twelve years ago […] the pursers steelyards on board that ship only weighed thirteen ounces to the pound when we started, and gradually got lighter and lighter, until, long before we reached Moreton Bay, they would barely pull ten ounces to the pound. And his measures were just the same.[18]

It was therefore not a singular incident, but a shared transit memory for many migrants, although the actual experience of hunger, delays and seasickness remained a unique challenge for everyone involved, including the surgeon-superintendent. Dr. de Zouche might have nourished idealistic and heroic ideas beforehand, but his convictions and beliefs in human goodness and trustworthiness were clearly put to the test aboard. His way to stay healthy and build resilience was to keep up his writing.

In the middle of the chaos, the surgeon's diary gives valuable insight into power relations, questions of authority and hidden means. In contrast to many of his colleagues, de Zouche diligently wrote down

17 N. N., "[No Title]," *Maryborough Chronicle, Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser*, 1875/10/02: 2, also printed in Manderson, *The Voyages to Queensland by the 'Star Queen'*: 45–46.
18 N. N., "Odd Notes," *Brisbane Telegraph*, 1875/09/18: 5.

everything that happened during the voyage in a personal logbook, often quoting verbatim, and commented his notes later as well. He copied drafts and letters, entrances from the official medical log, and short notices to the crew. Dedicated to ensuring the emigrants' welfare, he insisted on his rights and instructions in front of the captain and was determined to publish the crimes after arrival. No wonder he sometimes broke down under the enormous pressure he had to face. He received anonymous letters that threatened him openly and not so openly. Loneliness, melancholia and lack of sleep then led to the entry cited at the beginning of this conclusive chapter:

> 16 Aug 1875
> How I count the degrees of longitude! I may never see Queensland, surrounded as I am by enemies belonging to the ship. A knock on the head, the stab of a knife may end my life at any moment! Thank God I am doing my duty.[19]

Fear and worries, empathy and grief – de Zouche carried the weight of 'transit', physically and mentally: "Owing to exhaustion from the fatigue and anxiety of the last few days I was unable to conduct divine service today […]."[20] A few days later, he wrote "I felt ill all day, headache, the old pain in the arms, and as if in a waking dream. I lay down from 4.15 till 7 but only slept about half an hour, so many thoughts running through my mind." Similar worries crept into the passengers' hearts: "Mr Carrie told me this morning that he could not sleep thinking of everything."[21]

Similar transit feelings (as shown in Chapter 4 "Feeling Transit") also occupied the less articulate hearts on board: this can be deduced from the anonymous complaints by the steerage passengers, who suffered from insufficient food, bad water and deficient medicine. They noticed the tensions between the authorities and understood that the reason for this present situation was not a mutual alliance of the powerful aboard. De Zouche noticed mutinous and violent vibes piling up

19 Zouche, "Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen,'" 1875/04/19–1875/10/30: 1875/08/16 [56 in original/16 in transcript].
20 Zouche: 1875/08/15 [51–52 in original/15 in transcript].
21 Both quotes from the same entry: Zouche: 1875/08/19 [18 in transcript].

below deck. Some protested anonymously but effectively against the cheating by "writing 'Star-*ving* Queen' in various places about the ship." Thomas Tennison, Philip Larkin and their friends were even "determined to go in a body to Captain Downing" and demand their rights to check the exact number of provisions for themselves. But despite their official request and the supportive voice of the surgeon, the captain refused to let steerage passengers into the hold.[22]

The surgeon's self-assured attitude then provoked the captain, who vehemently accused De Zouche of "crossing him at every point" by siding with the emigrants and insisting on changing course to buy new provisions in Melbourne. Crossing and interfering could result in new definitions of boundaries, such as hierarchies, classes or work privileges. This happened on the 'Star Queen', too. The second cabin passengers, for example, split over how to deal with the problems. By choosing one side or the other, they suddenly became closer to either the captain or the surgeon, thus building alliances across the passenger-crew distinction.[23] As in Chapter 5 "Crossing Transit", 'authority' was never a given, but often a contested and fragile concept in flux:

> For my own part I care nothing for the mere authority, except that it is intimately associated with the welfare of the passengers, and being entrusted with that authority by the Queensland Government, I did not allow it to be disregarded.[24]

Much more could be said about the successes and failures of the mediators designated to manage transit by applying the analysis used in

22 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": 1140 and Zouche, "Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen,'" 1875/04/19–1875/10/30: Extract from Medical Log from 1875/08/14 [43–44 in original/14–15 in transcript].

23 William Nettlingham opposed de Zouche's rebuke of illegally walking on the poop and sided with the captain, while Gordon Carrie supported the surgeon and both spoke highly of each other during the inquiry.

24 Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Report of the Board of Immigration on an Inquiry into an Alleged Deficiency of Provisions on Board the Barque 'Star Queen,' with Immigrants from London to Queensland": 1140.

Chapter 6 "Managing Transit". The captain first played the part of a peacemaker between the overly engaged surgeon and the overcharged purser by holding one-on-one conversations with each of them. And the purser, freshly and spontaneously appointed to this important position, apparently admitted in private conversation with the matron his being overwhelmed by all the duties and responsibilities.[25]

In this case study, the public narrative declared the matron and the surgeon to be the heroes in the story, whereas the captain and the purser were the villains. In the end, a long inquiry at the Water Police Court in Queensland sentenced the captain to pay a fine for deliberately under-provisioning an overcrowded vessel, with the knowledge of the purser and the third mate.[26]

Nevertheless, many questions remained unanswered, even against the background of newspaper articles, telegrams, witness accounts, official reports and editorial comments. Reading de Zouche's notes is like reading the struggle of an individual trying to make sense of what was happening before and behind the scenes on board the 'Star Queen'. It is an attempt to uncover networks of arrangements, profit, money-making, lying and conspiracies. An attempt to unravel the meaning, impact and consistency of 'transit'. In short, it matches quite well the aim of this present book, so one last quote from an emigrant journal now serves to bring the book to a close:

> Friday Dec 22nd.
> Morning cold, cough a bit troublesome for a few minutes after I turned out. I was not aware until now, having just paged this journal that I had written so much, and I am afraid, to so little purpose, for I cannot think there will be half a dozen persons who will come to wade through such an uneventful voyage, the account of which is so tamely written. Losing interest am I? Well perhaps so, but courage lad or rather resolution Joe.[27]

25 Zouche, "Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen'," 1875/04/19–1875/10/30: 1875/08/02 [7 in transcript].

26 Immigration Department Queensland, "The 'Star Queen' Enquiry".

27 Mayes, William J., Diary on Board the 'Alexander Duthie', 1882/11/11–1883/02/05 (National Maritime Museum) REF MS ALE: 1882/12/22 [19].

William John "Joe" Mayes was wrong. I did read his diary with interest – more than 130 years later – and drew from it much more than another boring account of a voyage long gone. I read it as one example of experiencing transit. And I wrote about it, as a call to apply a variety of questions and layers to any instance of the in-between, be it at sea, on a plane, in the club or in the suburb. By doing so, we can draw closer to that which human beings find motivation in, struggle with and overcome.

Like Mayes, I was not aware until now, having just paged this book, that I had written so much. I hope there will be more than half a dozen persons who will come to wade through such an eventful book without losing interest on the way.

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Bible Translations

English Standard Version (ESV)

King James Version (KJV)

Appendix

Unpublished Shipboard Diaries in Chronological Order (1850–1898)[1]

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1850/04/21– 1850/08/15	Skinner, Jane E., Diary and Letter on Board the 'Candahar', 1850/04/29–1850/08/20 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane), OMR 59; TR 1789; Box 9593	SA	f	Steerage Single Travelling with relatives
1852/08/24– 1852/12/24	Goddard, Eliza, and Alan F. Taylor, Diary of Steerage Passenger on Board the 'General Hewett' (Information on Ship and Passengers with Transcript of Diary. Edited by Alan F. Taylor), 1852/08/14–1852/11/30 [2008] (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 9205	NSW	f	Steerage Married Children
1852/08/26– 1852/12/18	Slade, John, Diary on Board the 'Hydaspes", 1852/08/10–1852/12/30 [1895] (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 5101	NSW	m	Steerage Married Children Assisted migrant (?)
1852/11/28– 1853/03/12	Vaughan, Samuel B., Diary on Board the 'Medway', 1852/11/11–1853/04/04 (State Library of Victoria) MS 8628; Box 946/3(b)	Vic	m	Cabin Married
1853/01/22– 1853/04/29	Annison, George, Diary on Board the 'Emigrant' and in Australia, 1853/01/22–1853/11/08 (National Library of Australia) MS 3878	Vic	m	Steerage Single Unassisted migrant
1853/01/22– 1853/04/29	White, Emma, Letter About Voyage on Board the 'Emigrant' and Impressions of Australia, 1853/05/08 (National Library of Australia) MS 3878	Vic	f	Married Unassisted migrant
1853/05/25– 1853/08/16	McDonell, Andrew, Diary on Board the 'Falcon', 1853/05/22–1853/08/14 (State Library of Victoria) MS 12436	Vic	m	Steerage Single Unassisted migrant

1 Most of the diaries are quoted throughout the book.

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1853/05/25–1853/08/27 (?)	Saunders, John, Diary on Board the 'N. N.' (Pages missing), 1853/05/25–1853/08/28 (State Library of New South Wales) MLMSS 9903	NSW	m	Cabin Married Unassisted migrant (?)
1853/06/26–1853/10/26	H[owell], Mr., Diary on Board the 'Kate' (Letter being a Journal), 1853/06/24–1853/10/25 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS KAT	NSW	m	Cabin Married Children Unassisted migrant
1853/08/11–1853/10/26	Saddington, Robert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1853/08/11–1853/10/29 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS GRE	NSW	m	Cabin Single Unassisted migrant (?)
1853/12/05–1854/04/04	Phelps, Charles, Journal on Board the 'Scotia', 1853/12/05–1854/07/30 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 2793	NSW	m	Cabin Single Unassisted migrant
1854/04/07–1854/05/28	Thompson, William, Diary on Board the 'Meteor', 1854/04/07–1854/05/28 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9085; Box 104/5	Vic	m	Cabin Unassisted migrant
1854/08/01	Dowling, Alfred, Logbook on Board the 'Blackwall', 1854/08/01–1856/01/28 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9027; Box 4490/12	Vic	m	Midshipman
1855/02/06–1855/05/26	Adams, William J., Diary on Board the 'Victory' and Scrapbook (1855–1860), 1855/02/01–1855/05/24 (State Library of New South Wales) MLMSS 1068	NSW	m	Steerage Married Assisted migrant
1855/08/07–1855/11/12	Cliney, Mrs W., Diary on Board the 'Queen of the Seas' and Recipe Book, 1855/08/07–1855/09/30 (State Library of Victoria) MS 14177; Box 4158/3	Vic	f	Cabin

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1856/06/05– 1856/09/17	Hepburn, Robert, Diary and Letters on Board the 'Saldanha', 1856/06/05–1856/10/04 (State Library of Victoria) MS 13998; Box 121/4 (6)	Vic	m	Steerage Married Travelling without family Unassisted migrant
1856/10/12– 1857/02/13	Hatfield, Samuel A., Captain Hatfield's Private Log on Board the 'Plantagenet'. Emigrants from Plymouth to Sydney 1856 (Edited by William E. Hatfield), 1856/10/12–1857/02/13 [2001] (Vaughan Evans Library) 910.45 HAT	NSW	m	Captain Married
1856/11/25– 1857/03/19–25	Brearley, Jane, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Mary Ann', 1856/11/25–1857/03/19–25 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 9/6212	NSW	f	Matron Married One child
1856/12/23– 1857/04/01	Austen, Susan, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Fitzjames', 1856/12/23–1857/04/01 (State Archives and Records of New South Wales) 9/6212	NSW	f	Matron
1858/05/20–858/08/21 (Melbourne)– 1858/08/29 (Sydney)– 1858/09/12 (Brisbane)	Wilson, Benjamin G., Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Tornado', 1858/05/17–1858/07/08 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) M 1763; Box 9593	Qld	m	Saloon Married Children
1858/08/29– 1858/12/28	Dutton, Walter, Diary and Letter on Board the 'Sarah Dixon', 1858/08/29–1858/12/26 (Museum Victoria) HT 23918	Vic	m	Steerage (?) Married Travelling without family Unassisted migrant
1858/11/21– 1859/02/13	White, George, Letters and Diary on Board the 'Sultana' and in Melbourne (Transcription Incomplete), 1858/11/21–1859/09/02 (Immigration Museum, Melbourne)	Vic	m	Second class Single (19) Unassisted migrant
1859/07/11– 1859/10/19	Laver, Samuel, Diary on Board the 'Mermaid', 1859/07/09–1859/09/30 (State Library of Victoria) MS 10961; Box 4448/13	NZ	m	Second class Single Unassisted migrant

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1859/12/17– 1860/04/13	Gardner, Agnes, Diary on Board the 'Lord Clyde', 1859/12/17–1860/02/24 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9492; Box 4598/7	Vic	f	Second Class Teenager (17) Travelling with family Unassisted migrant
1861/11/21– 1862/04/09	Ramsdale, Harry H., Diary while with English Brigade, on Board the 'Clifton', and in Queensland, 1859/09/01–1862/08/28 (Wellcome Library) MS.5324	Qld	m	Saloon Married Travelling without wife Unassisted migrant Soldier; Medical assistant
1861/04–1861/07/18 (to London on the 'Norfolk') 1862/04/09–862/07/15 (to Melbourne on the 'Moravian'; to Launceston on the 'Royal Shepherd')	Miller, Frederick, Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Norfolk' to London and the 'Moravian' to Launceston. Extracts, 1861/04/16–1862/07/15 (State Library of Victoria) MS 13312; Box 3870/11 (6)	Vic–UK UK–Tas-mania	m	Saloon Married Travelling without family
1862/02/21– 1862/02/25– 1862/06/28	Thomas, John, Diary on Board the 'City of Brisbane' ("The Journey"), 1862/02/26–1862/07/14 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) F2527	Qld	m	Cabin Single
1863/07/14– 1863/01/10	Armstrong (Holley), Mary, Matron's Diary on Board the 'Severn' (1863), Diary on Board the 'Alfred' Back to England (1864), and Matron's Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1873–1874) (Transcribed by Barry Harris), 1863/07/14–1874/02/01 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS SEV	NSW	f	Matron
1864/05/08– 1864/08/13	Smith, William A., Diary on Board the 'Young Australia', 1864/05/09–1864/08/13 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1815; Box 9593	Qld	m	Second Class Single

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1864/09/12–1865/01/05	N. N., "The Elizabeth Ann Bright. Notes by a Passenger," The Brisbane Courier (Supplement to the Brisbane Courier), 1865/01/09: 1	Qld	m	Single
1864/10/26–1865/01/03	Reynolds, Albert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'London', 1864/10/26–1864/12/14 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS LON	Vic	m	Second Class
1864/10/27–1865/02/19	Wilson, John, Diary on Board the 'Ernestina', 1864/10/27–1865/02/18 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9134; Box 4475/13	NZ	m	Saloon Single
1865/04/30–1865/08/12	Cannon, William, Diary on Board the 'Suffolk' (Voyage from Melbourne to London), 1865/04/25–1865/08/09 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS SUF	GB	m	
1865/05/03–1865/09/09	Ridley, Isabella, Diary on Board the 'Melmerby', 1865/05/11–1865/09/06 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) F849	Qld	f	Second Class Married Assisted migrant
1866/12/22–1867/03/08	Beckett, Robert, Extracts from Diary in London, on Board the 'Underley' and in Melbourne, with Letter Written During the Voyage, 1854/11/05–1889/12/31 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9576; Box 4293/3	Vic	m	Steerage Married Children Free passage
1867/04/22–1867/07/22	Bradley, Robert S., Diary on Board the 'Essex', 1867/04/22–1867/07/22 (National Library of Australia) MS 9010	Vic	m	Cabin Single (28) Unassisted migrant
1868/08/24–1868/08/29–1868/11/21	Kemp, Joseph, Diary on Board the 'Suffolk', 1868/08/21–1868/11/21 (State Library of Victoria) MS 12171; Box 2766/1	Vic	m	Crew member (?) Single
1869/08/11–1869/10/13	D'Ouseley, Rosamond A., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1869/08/11–1869/10/13 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 63; Box 9593	Vic	f	Second class Single

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1873/10/24–1873/12/21	Mulquin, Mary P., Mother Mary's Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1873/10/22–1873/12/21 (Brunel Institute and Archive Bristol) Voyage Box 41, Item 2	Vic / Qld	f	Saloon Single Nun
1873/10/24–1873/12/21	Tindall, Robert, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain' and during First Weeks in Melbourne et al., 1873/10/24–1874/01 (Brunel Institute and Archive Bristol) Voyage Box 41, Item 1	Vic	m	Saloon Single
1873/10/24–1873/12/21	Edmonds, Walter, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Great Britain', 1873/11/24–1873/12/20 (Brunel Institute and Archive Bristol) Voyage Box 41/Item 4	Vic	m	Steerage Single Unassisted migrant
1873/12/04–1874/02/23	Eddis, Edward W., Narrative Poem about Voyage of the 'Yorkshire'. Written for Concert on Board, 1873/12/04–1874/02/23 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS YOR	Vic	m	Saloon Married Unassisted migrant
1873/12/04–1874/02/23	Eddis, Clara M., Teenager's Diary on Board the 'Yorkshire' (1873/12/04–1875/02/23) and during First Time in Melbourne, 1873/12/04–1874/10/16 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS YOR	Vic	f	Saloon Teenager (13) Travelling with family Unassisted migrant
1874/12/22–1875/04/12	Brummit, Robert, The Two Shipboard Diaries of Dr. Robert Brummit (England to Melbourne and Back in the Clipper 'True Briton', December 1874 to September 1875 & The Red Sea Cable Expedition in the Steamship, the 'Chiltern', November 1875 to March 1876), 1874/12/22–1876/03/16 (State Library of Victoria) MS 14927; Box 4641/5	Vic	m	Surgeon
1875/05/02(?)–1875/08/07	Anthony, Charles, Reverend's Diary on Board the 'Dunnottar Castle', 1875/04/26–1875/08/03 (State Library of Victoria) MS 14208	Vic	m	Saloon Married One child Unassisted migrant Minister

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1875/05/13– 1875/08/31	Zouche, Isaiah de, Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Star Queen' (Original and Transcript with Further Sources (Letters, Examination Protocols, Newspaper Extracts, Notes, etc.)), 1875/04/19–1875/10/30 (State Library of Queensland) OM 67–8; Box 8630	Qld	m	Saloon Single Surgeon
1875/08/06– 1875/10/22	Stead, Richard, Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll', 1875/07/30–1875/10/25 (State Library of New South Wales) MLMSS 4226	NSW	m	Steerage Married Three children Police Constable
1875/08/27– 1875/11/23	Armitage, Nancy, Diary on Board the 'Parramatta' (Diary with Poems and Notes), 1875/08/27–1875/11/26 (Fryer Library, Brisbane) F2525	NSW	f	Cabin Single Unassisted migrant
1876/06/02– 1876/08/19	Sayer, William, Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (Access through personal contact with Dr. Peter Hobbins), 1876/05/29–1876/08/29 (Papers of Ann Pine)	NSW	m	Steerage Single Assisted Passenger
1876/09/21– 1876/11/22	Sutherland, Donald G., Diary on Board the 'Northumberland' (Edited by Marina Eaton in 2013), 1876/09/21–1876/11/22 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15572; Box 4667/9	Vic	m	First Class Single
1878/03/01– 1878/06/15	Cameron, Mary, Diary on Board the 'Sobraon', 1878/03/01–1878/06/17 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9517; Box 4502/12	GB	f	Cabin Return passage to England
1878/10/28– 1878/12/14– 1878/12/18	Shears, James C., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Aconcagua', 1878/10/23–1878/11/23 (State Library of Victoria) MS 10872; Box 4455/13	SA Vic NSW	m	Single (20) Unassisted passenger

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1879/03/21–1879/06/27	Allbon, Elizabeth F., Diary on Board the 'Samuel Plimsoll' (1879/03/21–1879/06/13); Letters to England (1879–1888); Newspaper Reports (1890); Photographs (Edited by Judith Woods), 1879–1890 (National Library of Australia) MS Acc11.033	NSW	f	Steerage Married (25) One child, gives birth to second child on board
1879/07/04–1879/09/27	Clarke, William, Diary on Board the 'Invercargill' and During First Days in New Zealand, 1879/06/27–1879/10/01 (Caird Library and Archive) TRN/19	NZ	m	Single Travelling with brother Free Passage
1879/10/02–1880/01/12	Stewart, Joseph G., Diary and Letter on Board and About the 'Northampton', 1879/10/14–1880/03/10 (Caird Library and Archive) MSS 89/057	NSW	m	Steerage Single (22)
1879/10/24–1880/01/24	Krüger, Gustav, A Few Lines of My Voyage from Hamburg to Melbourne (Translated by Hilda Brenner), 1879/10/24–1880/01/24 (State Library of Victoria) MS 11524; Box 1774/9 Ship 'La Rochelle'	Vic	m	Single
1879/12/22–1880/02/16	A Passenger, Narrative of a Voyage from England to Australia in the S.S. 'Somersetshire', 1879/12/13–1880/02/16 (National Library of Australia) PETHpam 2513	Vic	m	Second class
1880/11/17–1881/01/09	Royle, Emily E., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Kent' and in Australia, 1880/11/17–1881/06/01 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 2613	Vic	f	Saloon Married Four children
1880/12/17–1881/04/05	Holmes, Charles, Diary on Board the 'Earl Granville' (Dec 1880–Apr 1881) And Letters to Parents (Apr 1881) (AJCP Microfilm), 1880/12/13–1881/04/14 (National Library of Australia) M 1860	Qld	m	Steerage Single man
1882/01–1882/04/02	Metelmann, Franz, Tagebuch einer Reise nach Australien an Bord der S.S. 'Sorrento', 1882/01–1882/04 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) M 1573	NSW	m	Steerage Single

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1882/02/02– 1882/04/22	Stock, Walter, Letter on Board the 'Hereford', 1882/02/21 (Caird Library and Archive) AGC/S/18	NSW	m	Steerage Single
1882/05/25– 1882/09/03	Soutter, Pattie, Diary on Board the 'Stracathro', 1882/05/22–1882/08/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1882–0; TR 1882–3; Box 9593	Qld	f	Steerage Married Three children Free passenger
1882/07/20– 1882/11/02	Thornton, Frances, Diary of Surgeon's Wife on Board the 'Selkirkshire', 1882/07/19–1882/09/14 (National Library of Australia) MS 1025	Qld	f	Saloon Married (Surgeon's wife) Unassisted migrant
1882/09/28– 1883/10/07– 1883/01/03	Maffey, John, Papers: (1) Surgeon's Diary on Board the 'Parramatta' (1882/09/28–1883/01/09); (2) 'Petrel Papers' Ship Newspaper; (3) 'Parramatta Journal' for Children; (4) Menu Christmas Day, 1882–1883 (State Library of New South Wales) MLMSS 2716 / Items 1–4	NSW	m	Intermediate Class
1882/10/06– 1882/12/30	Marchant, Samuel T., Diary on Board the 'Thirlmere', 1882/11/18–1882/12/30 (National Library of Australia) MS 801	Vic	m	Saloon Single (20) Bookseller
1882/11/12– 1883/02/05	Mayes, William J., Diary on Board the 'Alexander Duthie', 1882/11/11–1883/02/05 (National Maritime Museum) REF MS ALE	NSW	m	Single Second class
1882/11/22– 1883/01/13	N. N., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Almora', 1882/11/22–1883/01/13 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OM 90–78	Qld	m	?
1883/01/12–1883/05/02 (quarantine: 1883/05/18)	Pender, Thomas, Diary on Board the 'Allanshaw', 1883/01/12–1883/05/17 (State Library of Victoria) MS 15344; Box 4723/1	NSW	m	Married One girl
1883/06/21– 1883/10/05	Blaikie, Alexander, Diary by Passenger by Ship 'Southesk' to Queensland, 1883/06/18–1883/10/05 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) TR 1890	Qld	m	Steerage (?) Single (21)

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1883/07/18(?)–1883/09/14	Pilcher, Lewis, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Nowshera', 1883/08–1883/09 (National Library of Australia) MS 9533	Qld	m	Married Four children Assisted migrant
1883/11/07–1884/01/01	Dean, Charles H., Diary on Board the 'Goalpara', 1883/11/07–1884/01/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) OMR 61; M 753; Box 9593	Qld	m	Steerage Married Children Assisted migrant
1884/01/19–1884/03/15	Rogers, Emma P., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Warwick', 1884/01/19–1884/03/15 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) MLMSS 8106	NSW	f	Steerage Single (19) Assisted migrant
1885/04/22–1885/07/25	Walker, H.A., Diary on Board the 'Mermerus' (1885) with Letter to Daughter (1944), 1885/04/22–1885/07/27 (Mitchell Library, Sydney) ML A2883; CY 1959	Vic	m	Saloon
1885/05/26–1885/08/22	Fleming, Hugh, Diary on Board the 'Loch Torridon', 1885/05/26–1885/08/23 (State Library of Victoria) MS 9149; Box 4476/14	Vic	m	First or second class Unassisted migrant
1885/09/15–1886/01/05 (?)	Philips, Harold, Notebook During Passage to Brisbane Per Sailing Ship 'Kapunda', 1885/09/15–1886/04/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) AC 28413, Box 16461	Qld	m	Second class Single
1886/06/17–1886/08/14	Anderson, William, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Cloncurry' (Written on a Voyage from Scotland to Queensland. Incomplete), 1886/06/17–1886/07/08 (Vaughan Evans Library) REF MS CLO	Qld	m	Steerage (?) Married One son Bounty emigrant

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1886/10/18–1887/01/04	Snodgrass, Jane S., Diary on Board the 'Long Loch' and Letter from Colac, 1886/10/18–1887/01/17) http://www.theshipslist.com/accounts/Loch-Long_1886.shtml	Vic	f	Cabin Married Travelling without husband Five children Unassisted migrant
1886/10/29–1886/12/12	Archer, Alice, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Liguria' (1886/10–1886/12) and in Australia (1886/12–1887/06) + Letter to Mother During the Voyage (1886/12/07), 1886/10/28–1887/06/01 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) M 1588; Box 9593	Vic	f	First cabin/ Saloon (?) Single Travelling with uncle Unassisted migrant
1887/11/08–1888/01/22	Main, George, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Selembria', 1887/11/07–1888/02/26 (National Library of Australia) MS 8749	NSW	m	Steerage (?) Single (18) Travelling with brother Labourer
1888/03/02–1888/04/12	Care, Charles, Diary on Board the R.M.S. 'Orient', 1888/03/03–1888/04/12 (Museum Victoria) HT 30972	Vic	m	Saloon Single
1888/09/25–1889/01/03	Gedge, Edith S., Diary on Board the 'Sobraon', 1888/09/25–1889/01/03 (National Library of Australia) MS 9054	Vic	f	Saloon Single
1889/10/25–1889/12/01	Robinson, Thomas, Letter/Diary Written to His Wife on Board the 'Cuyco' and in Australia (AJCP Microfilm), 1889/10/25–1889/12/13 (National Library of Australia) M 844	WA	m	Second Class Married Travelling without wife
1889/11/14–1890/01/21	Jensen, Christian O., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Barmen', 1889/11/08–1890/01/31 (National Library of Australia) MS 8750	NSW	m	Married One son

Dates of Travel	Diary	Colony of Arrival	Gender (m=male; f=female)	Personal Details
1889/12/12–1890/02/05	Dunham, Fanny, Diary on Board the S.S. 'Quetta' (1889/12/12–1890/02/05) and during First Years in Brisbane, 1889/12/12–1895/08/14 (John Oxley Library, Brisbane) M 359; Box 5115	Qld	f	Married (35) Two children Assisted migrant
1890/04/10 (?)–1890/06/03	Bayne, Clotilda, Diary of Fiancée Preparing for Emigration on Board the S.S. 'Orizaba' (1890/05/04–1890/06/03) And During First Time in South Australia as Wife to Charles L. Marson, 1890/01/01–1890/12/31 (National Library of Australia) MS 2733	SA	f	Cabin Engaged
1898/02/18–1898/04/01	N. N., Diary on Board the S.S. 'Ophir', 1898/02/18–1899/04/15 (State Library of Victoria) MS 13675; Box 4044/3	NSW		
N.N.	Loyd, I., Diary/Letter on Dutch Emigrant Ship to Australia, N. N. (Caird Library and Archive) MSS/71/061	NSW	m	Married

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In the 19th century, all British migrants to Australia shared a unique time on the high seas, where seasickness, storms and interpersonal conflicts contributed to the lived and felt reality, as did concerts, sunsets and friendships. The passengers had to navigate closeness and separation, boredom and excitement, life and death. Structures of power, responsibility and authority were omnipresent, fragile and contested. This experience is reflected on and documented in diaries, letters, guidebooks, political papers, newspaper articles, and ship surgeons' journals.

This book explores case studies from about 110 sailing vessels and steamships on their way from the United Kingdom to the eastern Australian colonies between 1848 and 1898. Taking this as an exemplary laboratory setting for experiencing transit, it aims to enrich the concept of transit with emotional, experiential, social, and mental aspects – perspectives that have received too little attention in historical research so far.

Daniela Dyck studied History, English, Latin and Education in Heidelberg. She earned her PhD degree in Modern History from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München as part of the DFG-SNF-research project "Lives in Transit. Steamship passages in the late-19th and early-20th century world". Since then, she has been working in the field of teacher education, science management, and project administration.

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