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# Baltic Hospitality from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century

Receiving Strangers in  
Northeastern Europe

*Edited by*

Sari Nauman · Wojtek Jezierski ·  
Christina Reimann · Leif Runefelt

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Christina Reimann · Leif Runefelt  
Editors

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## PREFACE

This volume and its individual contributions are the outcome of our collective research project and the effect of the inspiring workshop held online in December of 2020. The editors would like to thank the authors for their insightful contributions and for their openness and willingness to work with the conceptual framework developed specifically for this project.

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Gothenburg, Sweden  
Gothenburg, Sweden  
Stockholm, Sweden  
Huddinge, Sweden

Sari Nauman  
Wojtek Jezierski  
Christina Reimann  
Leif Runefelt

# PRAISE FOR *BALTIC HOSPITALITY FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY*

“This truly transhistorical volume – spanning over a millennium, from ca 1000 to ca 1900 – explores brilliantly the paradoxical nature of hospitality – both about receiving and rejecting strangers – in the Baltic Sea region. Covering a multifarious gallery of social groups – migrants, missionaries, soldiers, peddlers, merchants and vagrant musicians – the book demonstrates how deeply the hospitality is interlinked with securitization.”

—Marek Tamm, *Professor of Cultural History, Tallinn University,  
Estonia*

“This book contributes to a very timely public and scholarly debate on the issue of immigration in Europe from historical perspective. It is composed of theoretically sophisticated and empirically rich chapters unified in their focus on the issue of dealing with hospitality towards foreigners as a transhistorical phenomenon. The book convincingly highlights the limits and ambiguity of hospitality and demonstrate how specific responses depended on concrete historical, local, spatial, and cultural conditions. This is an important addition to the literature on immigration issues.”

—Andrea Spehar, *Associate Professor in Political Science and Director of  
the Centre on Global Migration, University of Gothenburg, Sweden*



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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction: Baltic Hospitality, 1000–1900

*Wojtek Jezierski, Sari Nauman, Christina Reimann,  
and Leif Runefelt*

Let us start with two writers working on the Baltic Rim, separated by more than seven centuries and over a thousand kilometers. The first,

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Adam of Bremen, was a schoolmaster attached to the Hamburg-Bremen episcopal chapter living in the second half of the eleventh century. The second, Immanuel Kant, was a professor of philosophy attached to the University of Königsberg—established in the former capital of the Teutonic Knights’ crusader state—living in the second half of the eighteenth century. The first famously invented the name for the Baltic Sea, deriving it from the Latin word for belt, *balticus*; the second offered a famous answer to the question: *Was ist Aufklärung?* In the context of this volume, however, the most salient link between the two men is that they both reflected on the question of hospitality as means of intercultural and interfaith interaction, something that was prompted by their spatially similar but historically very distinct contexts. In the fourth book of his *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae Pontificum* from the 1070s, which addressed the geography and proselytizing opportunities as well the customs of the peoples inhabiting the Baltic Rim, Adam passed the following judgment on all dwellers of the North, *Hyperboreans* in his terminology:

Although all Hyperboreans are noted for their hospitality, our Swedes are so in particular. To deny wayfarers entertainment is to them the basest of all shameful deeds, so much so that there is strife and contention among them over who is worthy to receive a guest. They show him every courtesy for as many days as he wishes to stay, vying with one another to take him to their friends in their several houses. These good traits they have in their customs.<sup>1</sup>

For Adam, this cultural inclination was a pre-condition to receive priests and, consequently, for converting those people to the Christian faith. Further, thanks to the expansion of the Latin Church to the north-eastern peripheries of Europe through Christianization and thanks to the emerging Hanseatic League, the Baltic coasts were drawn closer to each other. Over 700 years later, in his philosophical sketch *Toward Perpetual Peace* from 1795, Kant saw the laws and rights of hospitality primarily as a vehicle of trade and exchange. For him, hospitality paired with world citizenship was one of the conditions that would make possible the assurance of permanent international peace in Europe, even if the continent was actually on the brink of the Napoleonic Wars:



*Hospitality* (a host's conduct to his guest) means the right of a stranger not to be treated in a hostile manner by another upon his arrival on the other's territory.... It is not the *right of a guest* that the stranger has a claim to (which would require a special, charitable contract stipulating that he be made a member of the household for a certain period of time), but rather a right to visit, to which all human beings have a claim, to present oneself to society by virtue of the right of the common possession of the surface of the earth.... The right of hospitality, that is, the right of foreign arrivals, pertains, however, only to conditions of the possibility of *attempting* interaction with the old inhabitants.<sup>2</sup>

In the first case, local customs and courtesy were underpinned with emotion (shame); in the second case, worldwide universal laws and natural rights. The culturally particular contrasted with the common and normatively universal. Furthermore, the two authors' sense of belonging to their respective settled host communities and cities inescapably colored their views of hospitality. Adam's and Kant's explicit considerations of the topic, however, seemed to be more aligned with viewpoints of arriving guests and mobile strangers rather than with that of the receiving hosts of static communities.

What Adam and Kant also seem to have agreed upon was that hospitality constituted a threshold phenomenon, one that was negotiated and produced through the interaction between hosts and guests. In this volume, too, the threshold incidents related to hospitality are considered as moments of temporary and spatial as well as material and symbolic "inbetweenness" that informs the meetings of strangers. Such thresholds give reason to halt, and they signal the difficulty of passing; they are neither barriers nor means of smooth transitions. At the same time, as aptly put by Aleida Assmann and Jan Assmann, thresholds are there to be crossed over.<sup>3</sup>

This volume, in a transhistorical manner addresses the fundamentally linked positions of hosts and guests, united and torn apart during occasions of hospitality. While both Adam and Kant agreed that a host should offer some form of hospitality, and thus protection, to the approaching stranger, both authors recognized that hosts needed to strike a balance between offering help and protecting their own community. To achieve this, hospitality includes some form of security measures as well as rules and boundaries; if the guests violate either, they overstep the conditions of their welcome. It is thus the paradoxical simultaneity of receiving and rejecting, coupled with securitization practices, that our approach to

hospitality addresses. The chapters collected in this volume investigate the dilemmas and limits of hospitality, and what security measures were deployed by hosts and guests alike to come to terms with the uncertainties and risks inherent to their relationship.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, Adam's and Kant's reflections on the role and significance of hospitality emerged, quite symptomatically, in the context of the harbor cities in which the authors lived. In the eleventh century just as much as on the verge of the nineteenth century, the seaways and harbors were the main way of connecting people in the Baltic Sea region, both opening up intercultural exchange and constituting a potential source and arena of danger and conflict in equal measure. There is, in other words, an important maritime dimension and *thalassographic* quality to the spatiality of Baltic hospitality as it is considered in this volume.<sup>5</sup> Many of the examples of meetings and confrontations between different types of guests and strangers and their hosts studied here took place within earshot of waves hitting the seashore. Our conceptual and empirical focus on hospitality as a threshold cultural phenomenon characterized by constant tension between reception and rejection is therefore matched by our empirical focus on the coastal zones surrounding the Baltic Sea. These regions are historically viewed as thresholds between the habitable and uninhabitable. In both premodern and modern contexts, port cities and coastal areas occupied a symbolic position as the end point of where a lawful social order was actually possible, and beyond which threats both natural and political could arise.<sup>6</sup> This predicament dictated the establishment of situational or more permanent customs and rules of rapprochement and provisions of security for both hosts and strangers. This book engages with the practices and discourses of hospitality related to and resolved through provisions of security during confrontations between host communities and arriving strangers. In doing so, it offers insight into the microcosms located at the sea/land intersection and, more generally, into the wider historical legacy of Baltic hospitality.<sup>7</sup>

### SCOPE, FOCUS, AND QUESTIONS

This volume, consisting of fourteen empirical chapters, offers a trans-historical reflection on the conditions, experiences, predicaments, and entanglements of hospitality on the Baltic Rim between the turn of the second millennium and the beginning of the twentieth century. The first date has been chosen as a very imprecise starting point related to the

conceptualization of the Baltic Sea as a space of hospitality by Adam of Bremen. To be sure, his *Gesta* had long been preceded by other travelogues depicting welcoming or inhospitable attitudes and customs of the inhabitants of the Baltic Rim, such as Wulfstan of Hedeby's from the ninth century or Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's from the tenth, and so on.<sup>8</sup> However, in keeping with the Europeanization paradigm still dominant in medieval studies, the expansion of the Catholic world-system by means of colonization, conquest, and cultural expansion and their reception on the north-eastern peripheries during the High Middle Ages constitutes a qualitative break. This break justifies beginning our volume roughly around the time of Adam's conceptualization of the Baltic Sea, which additionally coincided with an explosion of accounts documenting these processes, giving us insight into practices of hospitality in the region.<sup>9</sup>

The closing period, the long nineteenth century (1789–1914), is justified by the fact that World War I radically changed the rules of the game when it comes to regulating the movement of people and the status of “strangers” through the constitutional and legal straitjackets of modern nation states. These pan-European changes, heralded by the British Aliens Act of 1905, spread all over the Baltic Rim. We draw the line prior to the point when these processes came into full swing during the interwar period, which would eventually lead to the crucial 1951 UN Refugee Convention.<sup>10</sup> This does not mean that hospitality as a way of conceptualizing meetings and confrontations between hosts and many types of guest or migrants has disappeared in the twentieth century. Despite the repeated pronouncements about the “end of hospitality,” which have particularly surged in the wake of the 2015 migration and asylum “crisis,”<sup>11</sup> it seems that the discourse of hospitality has consistently retained its ever-evolving and adaptive ethical, intellectual, and political vitality to reframe present as well as past views of migration, cultural exchange, and human responsibilities.<sup>12</sup> In the Baltic Rim context, the millennium that stretches between *c.*1000 and 1900 saw questions of hospitality be elevated very slowly onto an increasingly large scale. Practices of hospitality developed from the level of local customs and personal concerns, to the regulation of those obligations in precepts of law and, finally, towards the slowly emerging supralocal structures of responses and state-centered discourses of citizenship and alien status promoted by international laws.<sup>13</sup>

In a geographical, cultural, and historical sense, the Baltic Rim and the Baltic Sea—the Mediterranean of the North—are considered very broadly here. Our empirical focus is primarily on the coastal regions as spaces for

meetings and confrontations, as the ambiguous and precarious nature of the land/sea interface matches similar qualities of host–guest relations, intensifying the questions at hand. Receiving a stranger in this space could be a deliverance, and rejecting a stranger could be an act of obliteration. However, the central significance of seaborne contacts and networks, magnified by the extensive river systems, evidently bled in to the eastern hinterlands of the Baltic coasts, sometimes stretching hundreds and thousands of kilometres inland, yet still visibly shaped by this sea and its sea-centered cultures.<sup>14</sup> For this reason, the individual case studies, which cover all coasts of the Baltic Sea, include studies of the practices and spaces of hospitality performed as far east as Staraya Ladoga on the Volkhov River. As pointed out by Kristel Zilmer, “in terms of belonging within a broader network of travel routes that connected Northern Europe with areas to the east and south, the Baltic Sea region can also be shown to form a transit zone or a gateway that provided access to larger territories.”<sup>15</sup> These included territories as distant as north-western Russia and Constantinople, we might add. At the other end of the geographical and chronological spectrum, the coastal thresholds studied here include regions as far west as the Belgian and Dutch port cities, whose investigation addresses the fate of emigrants from the Baltic region on their way to the United States in the late nineteenth century. Those investigations point to moments and places that witnessed and participated in the global expansion of the people from the Baltic region, triggered by the processes of mass migration. This volume bears evidence to the fact that the cultural *balteus* of the Baltic stretched farther than the reach of its seawaters alone.

When it comes to its thematic focus and purpose, this volume studies why, how, and under what circumstances multifarious categories of guests and strangers—migrants, war refugees, prisoners of war, merchants, missionaries, vagrants, vagabonds, etc.—were portrayed as threats to local populations or as objects of their charity. We ask how these images guided the practical—political, administrative, and religious—responses of host communities in the Baltic Sea region, c.1000–1900. Further, we study how hospitality practices discriminated against certain categories of strangers in relation to their creed, ethnicity, national belonging, gender, and political or socioeconomic status. Crucially, this volume works with and elaborates upon a number of conceptual tools for transhistorical comparison of ideas, practices, and spaces of host–guest relations, offering new insights into premodern and modern legacies of (in-)hospitality in the Baltic Sea region by posing the following questions:

- How was the tension between hospitality and inhospitality resolved in concrete encounters and crises? Under what circumstances did hostility emerge?
- What representations of strangers did past local host communities create? How did these images guide their practical response towards various categories of strangers?
- What continuities and changes in approaches to strangers can be identified?

We depart from broad notions and traditions of hospitality borrowed from other disciplines<sup>16</sup> and engage with the concepts of host–guest relations as featured in the sources, with these case studies accounting for different historical spaces of hospitality and techniques of securitization vis-à-vis guests and strangers in premodern and modern settings. Our theoretical and methodological premises are deployed in the context of the Baltic Sea region, seen as a multilayered space of intercultural encounter and conflict. The significance and implications of this volume are threefold. First, it provides historical nuance and brings past understandings of hospitality to the often naïve claims about its universal and ethical potential, and about its inherently beneficial character promoted by some disciplines (especially by tourism and hospitality studies).<sup>17</sup> Second, by elaborating both the concepts and methods for studying host–guest relations, this volume makes examples from the Baltic region accessible and comparable with other strands in migration studies. Third, the volume’s longitudinal view on hospitality around the Baltic Sea puts the current debates about “migration crises” in this region (and elsewhere) in a much needed historical perspective.

## HOSPITALITY: BETWEEN SECURITY AND HOSTILITY

The central problem hardwired into the phenomenon of hospitality has a relational nature: “hospitality between whom?” Although the standard answer, rather self-evident and circular, identifies the relationship as one between hosts and guests/strangers, in reality, the positions of hosts and guests tend to be merely placeholders, empty subject positions. They need to be filled with concrete examples and considered in their historical context. For instance, what emerges from both Adam of Bremen’s and Kant’s ruminations on hospitality is the question of safety and security, that is, the irreducible risks that inhospitality poses

to the stranger: the concrete and foreseeable risks for his priestly readers and prospective missionaries in Adam's case, and more generalized and abstract risks in Kant's case. For both authors hospitality was essentially a way of avoiding or disarming the potentiality of hostility between the encountering parties. Accordingly, for the purposes of this volume we elaborate Jacques Derrida's claim that there is a critical continuum between hospitable and hostile behavior between host communities and arriving guests or strangers, a condition well encapsulated in his neologism *hostipitality*.<sup>18</sup> Host-guest relations, we argue, are transhistorically riddled with ambiguity and irreducible tension between two contradictory responses: receiving and rejecting guests/strangers.<sup>19</sup>

Because of this inherent ambiguity, we decided to refrain from defining what hospitality is. Instead, by treating this phenomenon as a historically contingent set of customs, institutions, and discourses of host-guest relations—more as an experiential rather than a conceptual problem—we allow for its senses and meanings to emerge from the contexts and sources under study. The investigations are nonetheless guided by certain contested aspects of hospitality: its ethical, commercial, legal, and power/resistance dimensions; its role in identity-formation and its way of functioning as a socio-politically integrative and disintegrative force; and its generosity and limitations.<sup>20</sup>

Customs, institutions, and discourses of hospitality are investigated in this volume as spatially situated techniques to cope with a double challenge: responding to perceptions of threat on the one hand, and, on the other, providing protection for host communities, but ideally also for arriving strangers and guests. The categories of strangers and guests are considered very broadly here to encompass many forms of human mobility and migration, from medieval merchants and individual missionaries to large groups of war refugees or vagrant entertainers. This type of conceptual expansiveness is not just unavoidable, but necessary and desirable. It is our contention that comparisons of mobility and its relations to hospitality over time and space have been thwarted by a lack of common concepts for addressing issues of refuge and migration.<sup>21</sup> Practitioners' as well as researchers' understanding of mobility, internal or external, has been commonly reduced to state phenomena and its concerns.<sup>22</sup> As such, migration has been defined as a central "domain of insecurity,"<sup>23</sup> meaning not only that mobility tends to incite insecurity, but also that in methodologically state-focused migration studies, insecurity is framed as a problem in need of an immediate solution. With their aspiration for a

far-reaching grasp over territories and peoples, states are a recent invention. Their territorial control, historically speaking, has operated more as a postulation than a reality.<sup>24</sup> During the bulk of the period studied here, states were still in the stage of emergence, and several of the chapters deal with pre-state areas. Other chapters deal with local responses to arriving strangers, which prevailed even in the late nineteenth century with bureaucratic nation states well in place.<sup>25</sup> We employ therefore a very broad definition of migration covering transient as well as longitudinal occurrences and forms of mobility having both a short- and long-distance character.<sup>26</sup> By focusing on situations in which arriving strangers were identified as having a claim to hospitality, but also as posing a potential security risk, we propose a platform within historical research regarding issues of hospitality across time and space.

To address the tensions between hospitality and hostility, this volume studies situations of hospitality on the Baltic and northern seafront through the lens of securitization. The analytical framework of “securitization” developed within the field of international relations to comprehend the “making” of security issues of various kinds,<sup>27</sup> and it has proven potent for historical research.<sup>28</sup> Securitization of migration is considered to be “a transversal political technology” used by diverse institutions to foster a sense of public threat and to affirm their role as providers of security.<sup>29</sup> The identification of an issue as a security threat carries normative connotations, compelling the community to respond with protective measures. These measures in turn might pose further security threats as securitization discriminates and tends to focus on certain groups rather than others.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, as security measures become an integral part of everyday lives, they run the risk of autoimmunization. The security measures taken to ensure the safety of the public may end up endangering those it was meant to protect.<sup>31</sup> Gestures of hospitality, too, involve measures to secure the uncertain, sometimes exceptional situation or crisis created by the arrival and (temporary) stay of unknown people. Situations of hospitality and moments of initial confrontation between host communities and arriving strangers provide a suitable setting to study how historical actors framed the arrival of newcomers in practical and discursive terms.<sup>32</sup>

Combining hospitality—or *hostipitality*—and securitization perspectives to analyze initial confrontations between host societies and arriving strangers throughout Baltic history is mutually enriching. On the one hand, the security-component of host–guest situations offers tangible

substance to the often vague assumption that hospitality, beyond charitable acts, represents a complex and ambiguous set of practices. The chapters in this volume show that providing hospitality was often imbued with measures taken to control and secure an unstable situation, pointing to the tension between viewing traveling people as a threat and conceiving of them as being in need of help. On the other hand, focusing on the initial encounters between host communities and arriving guests opens a micro-perspective on the ways and processes through which issues or events are turned into a security concern. The contributions consider in what ways the characteristics of arriving strangers were taken as decisive grounds for a host community to view the arrivals as a threat—be they Christian missionaries on the early medieval Baltic coasts, Finnish refugees in early modern Stockholm, Russian soldiers in early modern Livonia and Estonia, Italian vagrant musicians in nineteenth-century Sweden, or Eastern European transmigrants in late nineteenth-century Rotterdam and Antwerp. Together, the chapters investigate under what circumstances arriving strangers could be regarded as lucrative or benevolent guests, meriting hospitality and protection, and under what circumstances such hospitality could transform into either hidden or open hostility.

The case studies covering the time span from the Early Middle Ages to the early twentieth century provide substance to the often-made claim that studying history through the lens of security or securitization allows us to bridge the usual divide between the premodern and modern era, thus circumventing the statehood paradigm.<sup>33</sup> Although situations of hospitality call for contextualization and analysis of the contingencies of time and space, they are nevertheless appropriate for diachronic comparison. While most collections of historical securitization studies focus on one epoch,<sup>34</sup> other transhistorical volumes usually begin with the early modern period and do not include the Middle Ages.<sup>35</sup> This book sets out to fill this research gap by offering an chapter selection dealing with practices of hospitality in pre-state, proto-state- and nation state contexts and space formations, which, according to specific conditions and to a varying degree, involved securitization practices.

### HOSPITALITY: A SPATIAL APPROACH

In addition to “hospitality between whom?”, an equally important question underpinning the phenomenon of hospitality, especially when considered in conjunction with security, is: “hospitality where?” For this volume,



the question is addressed by paying equal attention to localizations and spatializations of hospitality.<sup>36</sup> Although host–guest relations tend to be primarily shaped by shared or distinct ideals and cultural norms, they are always practiced somewhere, within a concrete spatial context. To understand how initial encounters between hosts and strangers were resolved, we need to study these issues at the local level, paying attention to their spatial components and dynamics and their situated ethics.<sup>37</sup>

The individual chapters focus on local, initial encounters along the coasts of the Baltic Sea region, which during the period 1000–1914 meets the criteria of constituting a threshold space writ large. We have chosen the term threshold space over other conceptual contestants, such as frontier or borderland, precisely because of its detachment from the control of state entities. Despite the Baltic Rim’s many faces during the period in question—from a mythical space, pagan outpost, Hanseatic market place, interreligious meeting place and combat ground, to a short-lived inland sea of the Swedish empire, and a divider between east and west, north and central Europe—the region’s image was constantly marked by its position as a threshold between the known and unknown, friendly and hostile, habitable and uninhabitable lands.<sup>38</sup> The threshold of the land/sea divide in the Baltic region separated and united hosts and strangers, and set them in perpetual contact with each other. The threshold is an inherently ambiguous concept, implying the same tension as present in the concept of hospitality itself: the tension between receiving and rejecting others. It conceals and protects what is within its perimeter, while simultaneously inviting and inciting change.<sup>39</sup> The threshold space thus directly corresponds to the position of the stranger, who is relegated to “an ambivalent and unstable place vacillating between friendship and hostility, between outside and inside, ... between integration and exclusion.”<sup>40</sup> This is a contradictory predicament, well visible in the long history of the Baltic Sea, too.

The dilemma of receiving or rejecting strangers is exacerbated in urban or proto-urban settings, where the influx of strangers is intensified both in range and in scope. As loci of control as well as spaces of continual movement, these settings brought representatives of central, royal, or state power and local power holders and residents together, and subjected them to an influx of strangers, provoking security measures to deal with perceived threats as well as the potential benefits of increased trade and contact opportunities. By focusing on the local and spatial aspects of these security measures, the volume attempts to see beyond the policies and

strategies developed by state entities and distant authorities, and instead highlights direct responses in the initial meetings between strangers and hosts.

As local tensions between hostility and hospitality are translated into security issues, they tend to be negotiated and resolved spatially. Such spatial anchoring of host–guest relations, articulated from a point of tension between mobility and settlement, is clearly visible in both Adam of Bremen’s and Immanuel Kant’s texts. To follow social scientist Dan Bulley, “hospitality is the means by which *particular* spaces are brought into being as ‘homes,’ as embodying an *ethos*, a way of being: an *ethics*. Practices of hospitality carve out spaces as *mine* rather than yours, as places of belonging and non-belonging, and then manage and enforce their internal and external boundaries and behaviours.”<sup>41</sup> The aspects of this approach are elaborated further in the first chapter by Wojtek Jezierski, which serves as a conceptual-empirical bridge into the rest of the book.

Spatial negotiations often involve actions to secure and control those spaces where the confrontation between host community and arriving strangers take place. Sari Nauman’s chapter on the reception of refugees in early eighteenth-century Stockholm and Christina Reimann’s on transmigration through late nineteenth-century port cities exemplify this point. Thanks to the volume’s transhistorical outline, studies of hospitality situations in medieval proto-urban contexts allow for a fruitful expansion of the spatial approach to securitization processes, as demonstrated by the contribution on confrontations between arriving missionaries and pagan communities on the Baltic Sea coasts between the late tenth to mid-twelfth centuries. Though often temporary in ambition, these spatial solutions frequently survived the acute emergency that brought them forth. They became normalized, signaling the emergence of a new status quo that confronted the stranger and resident to the same degree.

By dealing with hospitality as a transhistorical phenomenon, this volume adds to existing research that has uncoupled the securitization paradigm from that of the state by focusing on local, (proto-) urban host communities as the initial providers of security in concrete spatial and local settings.<sup>42</sup> By turning to specific historical port cities and regions, the chapters localize these measures, and demonstrate how specific responses depended on concrete historical, local, spatial, and cultural conditions. At the same time, the volume points to similarities across space and time, preparing the ground for further investigations on the stimuli and incentives of spatial and temporal transformations.

## HOSPITALITY: A TRANSHISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The volume takes off in the southern coasts of the Baltic Sea. Wojtek Jezierski's chapter, which focuses on the difficult relations between pagan hosts and Christian guests who sought to fundamentally alter the life of the hosts through evangelization (sometimes paying the highest price for it, death), demonstrates how host–guest relations worked as discourses and practices that shaped intercultural encounters and conflicts. Based on the evidence from missionary historiography and hagiography from the tenth through twelfth centuries, the chapter demonstrates the importance of spatiality in negotiating hospitality and meetings in inimical contexts. These impromptu produced spaces of missionary hospitality were by no means politically or culturally stable. Rather, they built on a continuum between hospitable and hostile conduct between the parties involved, particularly because these encounters often had regime-changing religio-political implications. Producing such spaces and transgressing such boundaries could have lethal consequences, and host communities were often divided in their attitude towards arriving missionaries.

The predominant sense of hospitality's link to security in premodern contexts, however, seems to be its relation to commercial activities, which comes to the fore in the following cluster of chapters that bridge the medieval and the early modern period. First, Tatjana Jackson examines the host–guest relationship between the rulers of Ladoga, an intermediate stop on the trading route between the Baltic Sea and Novgorod, and Scandinavian traders (Vikings), as envisioned in Icelandic sagas (twelfth to thirteenth centuries). Jackson shows that hospitality and safety measures went hand in hand. Traveling from Ladoga to Novgorod was dangerous due to the wild river passages, evoking one of the basic and physical protective principles of hospitality: the duty of the host to assure safe passage for guests once accepted. The welcome guest merchant was one whom the host should not be afraid of, coming in peace and with unambiguous purposes. Hospitality on such occasions was less of a burden and more an element of mutual economic gain. Rejecting unwelcome trade guests was also easy: one either simply denied foreign merchants assistance in obtaining safe passage through dangerous river systems or refused to grant a trade peace to them altogether.

Tobias Boestad's chapter also focuses on problems of systemic reciprocity in discussing how the basic principles of commercial hospitality became objects of negotiation and legislation from the twelfth to the

fourteenth century. In the majority of Baltic trade contexts, there was little space for high-flying moral considerations of hospitality as universal principles. Instead, political and economic choices and necessities underpinned every specific occasion for welcome or rejection. Trade reciprocity seemed to constitute a basic foundation of hospitality, and it was mostly limited to the basic idea of mutual gain that was measured locally, in relation to economic strength as well as political and administrative capacity. For instance, the obligation to provide merchants with security was important but costly. It led to certain rulers declaring themselves unable to maintain security within their territory, leaving it to the travelers to solve any potential problems on their own.

In the following contribution, Pavel V. Lukin deals with relations between western traders and the local community of Novgorod over the twelfth to fifteenth centuries. He shows that in this crucial node of the long-distance trade network, the host community and the permanent guest community living in its midst depended on each other to such a large degree that this created somewhat involuntary grounds for hospitality and an amplified sense of needing to make everyday practices and relations between the parties work. While previous research, focusing on antagonism within official regulations and chronicles, has often depicted host-guest relations in Novgorod in negative terms, Lukin shows that everyday practices were more flexible and more hospitable, even if they remained ambiguous. These relations were organized through a formal and informal infrastructure and through spaces of hospitality, which developed out of the mutual need for trust within trade relations, as well as the permanent, centuries-long cohabitation of formally separate communities.

Concerns about maintaining social order when negotiating trade hospitality, which often implied that hosts would guarantee their trading guests' security, continued into the early modern period. Lovisa Olsson uses the wealth of sources from sixteenth-century towns and trade networks to examine the reception of visiting merchants in Lübeck, Stockholm, Reval (Tallinn), and Malmö, demonstrating how host-guest relations in these towns were shaped in accordance with social hierarchies. Trade hospitality was predominantly organized around the relations between well-established equals. Merchant guests, burghers in their home towns, received lodging in the homes of their equals and were provided with security and the right to store wares in private homes and warehouses. Less established traders found their accommodation in rowdy lodgings or even stayed on their ships, thus becoming objects for security measures

or targets of crime, rather than being provided security. Their position sat just at the outer edge of the host community in legal, social, and spatial terms.

Dorothee Goetze's chapter focuses on and develops the spatial aspects of hospitality and its relation to power, viewing hospitality as an expression of changing socio-political order. The case in point is the ritualized hospitality enacted when the town of Riga capitulated to Russian commander Boris Sheremetev in 1710. In the span of two weeks in July of this year, the inhabitants of Riga went from being besieged to occupied to then becoming Russian subjects. This transition was marked through carefully arranged manifestations of hospitality, which reflect the altered hierarchical order in well-chosen places thus making a swift symbolic transformation of the identity of the hosts—the Riga elite—into guests, and of the identity of their imposing guest into the new political host and master. The crucial element of this political makeover was the use of hostages—yet another element in the etymological, institutional, and political sense of hospitality<sup>43</sup>—who served as tools of surety and security in an unstable and potentially violent situation. Maintaining the host's responsibility for hospitality was central during the events, which ended with the population of Riga being offered the rights of guests—set within the framework of premodern political hospitality—in their own hometown.

In general, the set of problems informed by the discourses and practices of host–guest relations seemed to shift in the early modern period towards the military and the political, and their contexts of application were suspended between the local and the level of the state. Olof Blomqvist, Sari Nauman, and Sofia Gustavsson point in particular to the different ways in which hospitality continued to structure early modern societies and, vice versa, how social status shaped host–guest relations. Blomqvist examines the reception of prisoners of war in the cities of Uppsala (Sweden) and Aarhus (Denmark) over the years 1700–1721. Both states delegated the responsibility for war prisoners to local communities, which had to accommodate them according to the prisoners' social standing, meaning that citizens had to receive the enemy in their homes. While this costly, involuntary, and prolonged hospitality created tensions, court records show that they generated surprisingly few major conflicts. Mutual gains, mostly in terms of labor supply, counterweighted the costs of providing hospitality. Social and cultural similarities between hosts and

guests simplified matters, nonetheless: the situation for Russian Orthodox prisoners was worse than for Lutheran prisoners.

Nauman analyzes this delegation of hospitality to local communities further by examining the relations between the so-called Refugee Commission of Sweden's King Charles XII, the local population of Stockholm, and domestic war refugees fleeing to Sweden during the 1710s. The chapter addresses the basic dilemma of hospitality considered at both the local and state levels: namely, that the guest was supposed to eventually move on or abandon his/her temporary status, while fear of lingering strangers led to the negative treatment of refugees. While the king referred to the moral and political obligations of hospitality in his official communications, Nauman stresses how the commission's mandate pushed to distinguish between desirable and undesirable refugees. As migrants and local communities interrogated such attitudes, the situation quickly escalated into autoimmunization, meaning that security measures taken to ensure the safety of the community ended up endangering it. The Commission began to identify the refugees as a social problem and as a security issue for local communities.

Johannes Ljungberg's contribution qualifies the predominantly military and political view of hospitality during this period. In mid-eighteenth-century Altona, at that time ruled by the Danish crown, intermittent, accidental policemen of middling status took care of the city's security. Securing Altona vis-à-vis arriving strangers, these policemen acted in multiple capacities: as private citizens, as economic agents, and as men of law. The strain between these partially exclusive roles led to uneasy negotiations between policemen's private responsibilities, their community service in public places, and the need to control the domestic spaces of their richer compatriots, from which policemen were normally excluded because of their social standing. The citizen-led securitization of Altona proved untenable in the end; the task was eventually transferred to a professionalized police and decoupled from the issues of hospitality.

In her contribution, Gustafsson examines an unusual case of involuntary hospitality: the forced accommodation of soldiers and officers in the town of Helsinki during the 1750s. Helsinki, with a population of roughly 2000 inhabitants, received as many as 10,000 soldiers, many of whom, according to the Swedish statutes, were to be accommodated in the burghers' homes, clearly running the risk that the guests would overwhelm the hosts. The task was impossible to meet, but court records show that tensions were fewer than expected. The fact that hospitality was

involuntary did not impede the development of benevolent and reciprocal relations in the city. On the contrary, the records show that the situation was beneficial to many burghers, and that local authorities made efforts to provide security, not only to the host community but to the guests as well. The fact that a substantial number of Helsinki inhabitants profited from the situation through beer-brewing businesses simplified matters considerably.

The social and economic development from the late eighteenth century onwards profoundly changed patterns of migration and, accordingly, the character of hospitality and accompanying securitization moves. After the Napoleonic Wars, societies were gradually demilitarized and the accommodation of internal refugees, soldiers, or prisoners of war became a less burning issue. Instead, the increasing proletarianization went hand in hand with the growth of poverty in Europe, and the restructuring of the Baltic economies created new demographic movements and mobilities. In the context of formation of nation states, host communities increasingly considered arriving strangers as members of national and ethnic groups. To a larger degree than before, newcomers' national and ethnic belonging determined whether they were received as guests or rejected as undesirable strangers—and to what extent strangers were conceived of as a threat to the host communities' security. A pair of contributions, one by Johanna Wassholm and Anna Sundelin, and the other by Leif Runefelt, point to an interesting development of the discourse of hospitality and security related to the growth of a bourgeois or middle-class press. Wassholm and Sundelin examine local communities' attitudes towards mobile peddlers, a group of growing importance within the context of an increasing consumer market on the European periphery, in this case Finland and Sweden. While many locals appreciated peddlers for the consumer goods they distributed, the press instead turned them into a security issue, painting them as a danger to local communities and the nation as a whole. The press securitized peddlers as threats to morality and household economies, failing to notice the reciprocity between strangers and local communities documented by other sources.

Runefelt's contribution, which examines the attitudes towards foreign street entertainers in Sweden, goes in a similar direction. The numeric growth of itinerant entertainers around 1850 and their seemingly unproductive—from the point of view of local communities—way of earning their livelihood elicited a strong negative reaction. They came and went, but through the sheer frequency of their visits, vagrant entertainers

created a sense of constant presence. They looked more and more like the stranger that stayed rather than one that came and left. This created very little, if any, room for acts of charitable hospitality. The press, again, failed to notice the public appreciation of such performances and, accordingly, any reciprocity in the relationship between entertainers and local communities in Sweden. Instead, the use of exaggerated rhetoric in supralocal media securitized itinerant artists as nuisances of no economic worth.

The last contribution of this volume, by Christina Reimann, looks at the westward expansion of the Baltic Rim. Though the places examined, Antwerp and Rotterdam, are geographically far from the Baltic coasts, they served as intermediate stops for thousands of migrants from the Baltic region on their way to the United States over the period 1880–1914. Reimann examines inherent tensions and contradictions of discourse and practices of hospitality, charting how migrants were securitized through reception, accommodation, (medical) control, and their administrative “processing.” The author goes beyond the oft-used dichotomy between the security measures of authorities and the hospitable practices of aid organizations. All parties involved seemed eager, albeit for very different reasons, to provide security for refugees and to make them leave town as quickly as possible. The harbor and coastal space of hospitality produced there was, again, one of mobility and ambiguous short-term encounters, in keeping with the non-permanent nature of such host–guest relations.

Considered together, these contributions attest to the flexible and variable ways in which historical agents consistently adapted the basic features of hospitality to fit ever-changing circumstances. Some elements did remain stable: all chapters demonstrate the reciprocal and contingent qualities of hospitality acts. Reciprocity considered the obligations and rights placed on hosts and guests alike, urging hosts, at the very least, to recognize their guests and urging guests to pay heed to their hosts’ reluctance. Several of the contributions point out that social equality, mutual economic dependence, or political symmetry between guests and hosts facilitated and smoothed relations between the parties, minimizing the need to securitize the guests. Conversely, reciprocity was undermined when relations between guests and hosts were too unequal. Finally, the contingent character of host–guest relations lay in the fact that they were, on the one hand, guided by past encounters and future expectations of both hosts and guests, and, on the other, they had to be negotiated ad hoc and articulated anew in concrete meetings. This volume captures this



duality of Baltic hospitality, one which incorporated both long-lasting experiences and present, immediate urgencies.

As a whole, the volume points to a slow transformation in the nature and types of hospitality on the Baltic Rim. Jezierski shows how missionaries practically negotiated and pried open spaces of hospitality: evangelization contexts created a dangerous balancing act between hospitality and hostility for the involved parties. Christianization notwithstanding, from the turn of the first millennium and until the sixteenth century, the primary context for discourses and practices of hospitality was closely related to processes of establishing networks and trade connections across the Baltic Sea, as shown by Jackson, Boestad, Lukin, and Olsson. In multiple coastal contexts, hosts sought—through economic, social, religious, legal, and securitizing means—to identify and select benefits from potential threats brought about by merchant guests. The following period, from the late sixteenth century onwards, was characterized by wars in the Baltic Sea region. The victors often tended to fashion themselves as hosts and masters in newly conquered regions, as Goetze demonstrates. On the other hand, the common people who felt the consequences of these wars—soldiers, prisoners of war, and refugees in particular—had to adjust their positions as guests and navigate their dual status as insiders and outsiders in the recipient societies, as Blomqvist, Nauman, and Gustafsson illustrate. In the context of the emerging nation states in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the position of outsiders was articulated differently. Wassholm and Sundelin, Runefelt, and Reimann demonstrate the generally hostile attitudes national host communities developed towards peddlers, itinerant entertainers, and refugees in their respective contexts: public officials and dominant social groups would primarily frame them as a threat to the community's well-being. The ambivalence typical of host–guest relations prevailed on the local level nonetheless.

Transhistorically, the role of local host communities in migration and hospitality contexts remained decisive. They continued to be responsible for offering actual hospitality—often paired with security—and for interacting with strangers on a day-to-day basis. This meant that they often went beyond what was expected of them by laws, customs, rules of conduct, or policies imposed from above. Host communities responded to inherent contingencies and risks involved in host–guest relations by, more or less explicitly, choosing between desirable and undesirable strangers, guests, and migrants. In that manner, they effectively produced their own, situated, practical, and contested ethics and local iterations

of Baltic hospitalities, often quite detached from what schoolmasters or philosophers imagined.

### CODA: THE LEGACY OF BALTIC HOSPITALITY

The line and continuities of Baltic hospitality drawn between Adam of Bremen and Immanuel Kant at the beginning of this introduction did not suddenly end on the cusp of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It continued beyond the chronological scope of this volume, well into the present context in which this book appears and which informs the investigations it gathers and the main problems it posits. It must suffice to mention two additional data points on this long line of Baltic hospitality, which go beyond the chapters of this book.

The first is the 2015 so-called “migration crisis” and its aftermath in many countries around the Baltic Sea, and the way these countries opened, or refused to open, their borders to asylum-seeking migrants coming to Europe from Syria and other affected regions. Strikingly, the political debates and responses on the state as well as European level to this issue were almost universally dissociated from the discourse of hospitality and ethics of host–guest relations. In Scandinavia, and more broadly, in the Baltic Sea region, this wave of migration was seen invariably through the lens of the state: as an economic strain on the welfare-state and/or as a security issue and an assault on the integrity of the nation state. Yet, and contrary to the images of aliens as mere parasites or hostiles, recent studies conducted in the aftermath of this “crisis” have shown that discourses and practices of hospitality were in fact explicitly evoked and employed at the level of civil society and by NGOs—mostly through organizations of religious character, but by no means exclusively so.<sup>44</sup> Though often more charitable than rejecting, these hospitalities do reveal the full complexity and contested character of the phenomenon in a migration context that has been exorcized from the ethics of the state.

The second, more recent data point is the 2020 pandemic. The responses to this health crisis arrested mobility in the Baltic region, as well as globally, thus bringing tourism and the hospitality industry to its knees.<sup>45</sup> In line with restrictions, the physical conference planned in the run-up for this volume in April 2020 was canceled, as were most other academic ventures, adding to the overall demise of the hospitality business. The radical detachment between the two recent contexts and the contemporary compartmentalization of hospitality as a unilaterally beneficial ethics springing from commodified services calls for a reconsideration of the legacy of hospitality, in both the Baltic region and beyond. By

setting these recent predicaments in a longitudinal perspective, it is our hope this book can help imagine another present for hospitality viewed through its multiple pasts.

## NOTES

1. Adam of Bremen: lib. IV c. 21, 203.
2. Kant (2006 [1795]: 67–109 at 82, emphasis in the original).
3. “Schwellen sind dazu da, überschritten zu werden.” Assman and Assman (1997: 8) and Giesen (2012). See also Simmel (1994 [1909]).
4. Brown (2010), Claviez (2013), and Friese (2010).
5. Müller (2013), Müller (2020), Rüdiger (2017), and Gatrell (2017: 172–175).
6. Schmitt (1950; 1981), and Derrida (2001).
7. Brown (2010), Baker (2013), Giannacopoulos (2013), and Claviez (2013).
8. Foerster (2016), Jezierski (2016), and Melnikova (2012).
9. Blomkvist (2004) and Bartlett (1993); see also Murray (2009) and Mänd and Tamm (2020); Jezierski (2022).
10. Wray (2006), Gatrell (2017: 179–181), Oltmer (2017: 318–322), and Ther (2019: 158–184).
11. Le Blanc and Brugère (2017) and Korstanje (2018); see the special issue *E-MIGRINTER* (2020).
12. Bendixen and Weller (2020a).
13. Marrus (1985), Sassen (1999), Greefs and Winter (2018), Gustafsson and Sanders (2006), and Ther (2019).
14. Kirby (1990), Gerner et al. (2002), North (2015), Bertell et al. (2019), Jezierski and Hermanson (2016); *A Companion to the Hanseatic League* (2015), Drost and North (2013), Götz (2014), and Hurd (2010).
15. Zilmer (2006; 2010: 100–101) and Franklin (2021: 4).
16. Liebsch et al. (2016), Montandon (2004), Wodziński (2015), and Hellmuth (1984).
17. Cf. Lashley and Morrison (2001) and Lashley et al. (2007).
18. Derrida (2000), Derrida and Dufourmantelle (2000), and Benveniste (2016: 61–73).
19. Claviez (2013) and Thorpe et al. (2014).
20. Dikeç (2002), Bulley (2016), and Bendixsen and Wyller (2020a: 7–9).
21. Collier and Mahon (1993), Kleist (2017), and Marfleet (2007).
22. Dösemeci (2020: 258–266), Marfleet (2007: 139–143), and Oberprantacher (2016).
23. Huysmans (2006: 2–6), Messer et al. (2012), and Kleist (2017).
24. Krasner (2001: 17–19), Walker (1987: 74; 1991), and Jezierski et al. (2022).

25. For the importance of cities and localities in regulating migration up until the twentieth century, see Greefs and Winter (2018) and Reimann (2020).
26. For a broad definition of migration, see Lucassen and Lucassen (2014) and Messer et al. (2012).
27. The analytical perspective of securitization was developed within constructivist security studies and within the sociology of international relations. See, for the so-called Copenhagen School (CS), Waever (1995) and Buzan et al. (1998). For the so-called Paris school, see Balzacq (2011).
28. The securitization framework has been amply applied and developed for historical purposes by the Research Cluster “Dynamics of Security” at the Universities of Marburg and Gießen. See in particular Conze (2012; 2018: 82–101). For a critique of the concept from its own proponents, see MacDonald (2008) and Balzacq et al. (2016). See also Nauman (2021).
29. Bigo (2002).
30. See, e.g., Buzan et al. (1998).
31. On autoimmunization, see Derrida (2005: 34–35). For examples of discrimination and autoimmunization, see Mavelli (2017) and Burke (2013).
32. Pohl and Wodak (2012).
33. Zwierlein and Graf (2010) and Patzold (2012).
34. Carl et al. (2019) and Kampmann and Niggemann (2013).
35. Kampmann et al. (2017).
36. While “localization” is considered to be a geographic description, “spatialization” refers to the socially constructed character of space. However, the conceptual separation between geographical and social space has fiercely been criticized by Löw (2001) and Friese (2010).
37. Barnett (2005).
38. Gerner et al. (2002: 26–27, 33–123) and Blomkvist (2017).
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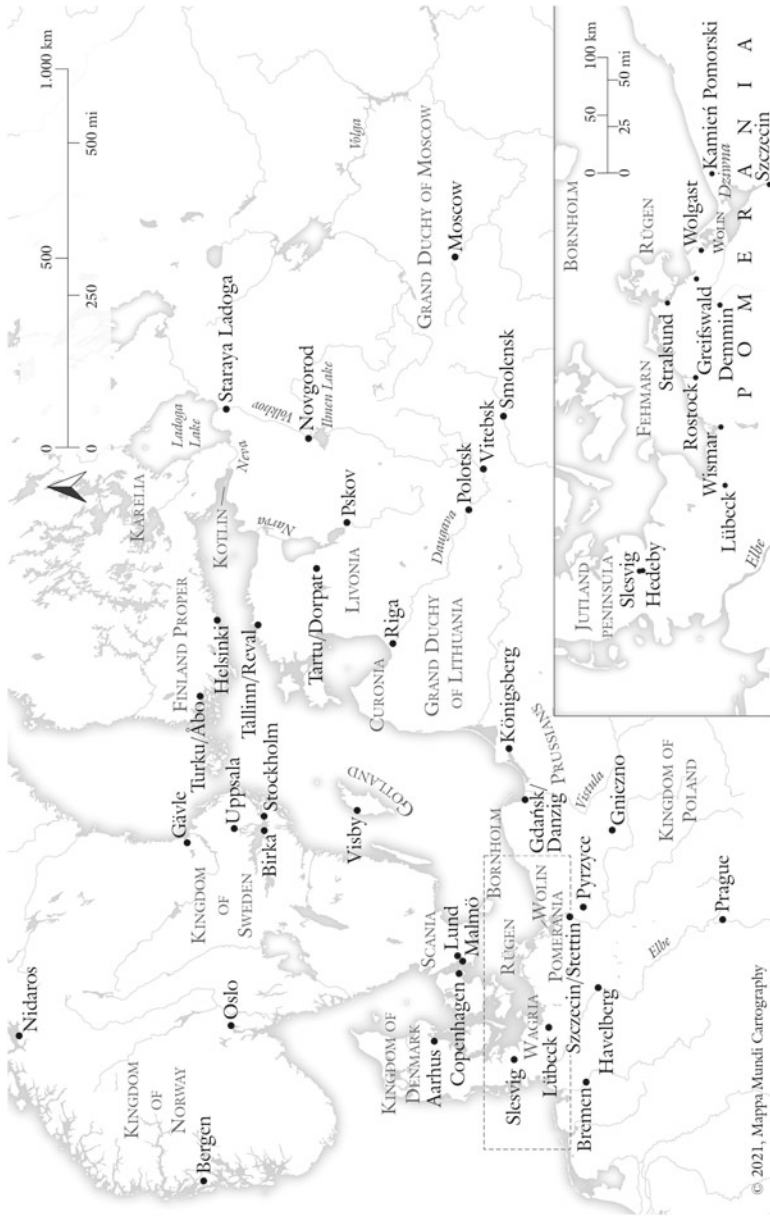
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PART I

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# Medieval Hospitalities





## Spaces of Hospitality on the Missionary Baltic Rim, Tenth–Twelfth Centuries

*Wojtek Jezierski*

The story goes that two monks ... came from ... Bohemia into the city of Rethra. Because they publicly proclaimed the Word of God there, they were tried in a council of the pagans first by diverse tortures, as they had desired, and finally beheaded for the sake of Christ. Their names indeed, although unknown to men, are, as we truly believe, recorded in heaven.<sup>1</sup>

Thus did Adam of Bremen in his *Gesta* describe the fate of two monks who reached the cult center of the Redarians (Redars) on the Baltic coast in northern Germany at some point in the eleventh century. The cruel irony of their fate was perhaps lost on Adam, however. Rethra was likely synonymous with the pagan center of Riedegost, whose onomastic etymology is usually interpreted as “happy/glad to receive guests.”<sup>2</sup> For

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the two missionary guests, this space of pagan hospitality par excellence turned out to be a killing ground.

As stated in the introduction to this volume, practices of hospitality have a threshold quality, which articulates the tensions between charitable welcoming and (hostile) rejection of arriving strangers. This tension tends to be resolved by means of securitization, often both on the part of guests and hosts. A neglected aspect of the connection between host–guest relations and safety measures is the question of spaces in which such meetings occurred, particularly their uncertain, sometimes contradictory nature, as is apparent in the example from Rethra. The aim of this chapter, which studies confrontations between missionary guests and pagan host communities on the Baltic Rim from the late tenth to mid-twelfth centuries, is to uncover the spatial dynamics and intercultural aspects of host–guest relations in missionary contexts. The questions guiding the following study are: how were *spaces* of hospitality produced and negotiated through such meetings? How was the arrival of this special type of Christian stranger and guest contained in terms of *power relations* and *security measures*? How did these interactions involve *hospitable* and *hostile attitudes*? And: what impact did the different features and functions of spaces of hospitality have on the *(self-)identifications* of the hosts and guests?

Although the processes of missionary activity, conversion, and Christianization of the Baltic Rim have been studied from countless viewpoints, the topic of host–guest relations as a way of shaping intercultural meetings and spaces remains understudied. So far, it has been explored in individual geographical and textual contexts, such as Livonia or Wagria,<sup>3</sup> or through mapping the geography of “barbarian,” pre-Christian notions of hospitality. The latter type of studies, which often rely on external Christian accounts, provides the necessary background about the general customs and means of hospitality, and the pagan beliefs behind them.<sup>4</sup> Such studies, however, tend to be written in an ethnographic tone, which favors the normative, charitable dimensions of host–guest relations in typical situations, and which clearly distinguishes such means of interaction from open hostility. In this chapter, I show that this standpoint is difficult to sustain because such claims are made at the expense of hospitality’s ambiguous, conflictual, and strategic aspects, which came to the fore during intercultural confrontations between missionary guests and pagan host communities. Despite the widespread conviction among the contemporaries, often shared by scholars, that the distinction between

hospitable and hostile conduct was well-delineated and absolute, in reality there existed a continuum between these attitudes towards strangers.<sup>5</sup>

Conceptually, I follow Dan Bulley's definition of hospitality as "a *spatial relational practice with affective dimensions*" and "it is this combination of the spatial and affective which makes hospitality a complex interplay of ethics and power relations."<sup>6</sup> As far as the method is concerned, I focus on spatiality of host-guest relations and the role played by power and identity-formation in such spatial developments. Here, too, I follow Bulley, for whom hospitality "is the means by which *particular* spaces are brought into being as 'homes,' as embodying an *ethos*, a way of being: an *ethics*. Practices of hospitality carve out spaces as *mine* rather than yours, as places of belonging and non-belonging, and then manage and enforce their internal and external boundaries and behaviours."<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, spaces of hospitality and the links between such spaces and their users, i.e. hosts and guests, are also characterized with the same ambivalence, inbetweenness, and deep-seated relationality as hospitality itself.<sup>8</sup> To grasp these spatial aspects, the method proposed here focuses on the symbolic structuring mechanisms and the functional and political concatenations of the collectively produced spaces of hospitality. These were spaces, which shaped—and were shaped by—the identities of their producers and the power relations between them.<sup>9</sup>

These questions, concepts, and methods are applied to examples of hagiographic and historiographic texts about missionaries who proselytized on the southern Baltic Rim, such as St. Adalbert of Prague (c.956–997) or St. Otto of Bamberg (c.1060–1139) and about less well-known figures like the two Bohemian monks.<sup>10</sup> It is an undeniably anecdotal and biased type of evidence, but my ambition is not to showcase a representative map of all conceivable types of spaces of hospitality. Rather, by focusing on critical case studies, I can offer some hopefully generalizable insights about the way in which the spatial mechanics of host-guest relations and their situational ambiguity shaped the articulation of religiopolitical thresholds on the missionary Baltic Rim; such interactions were performed in concrete confrontations, which made the relations of hospitality between missionary guests and pagan hosts a highly uncertain intercultural process.<sup>11</sup> In exploring these problems, it is precisely the cultural bias and symbolic violence informing the sources about these confrontations that are of interest.



As for the outline, each of the five cases of spaces of hospitality—assembly, kitchen, harborage, antechamber, and asylum—explores and expands upon one or several spatio-thematic dimensions. The investigation of each space of hospitality focuses on one central case of a missionary guest confronting a pagan host community on the coasts of the Baltic Sea, with some aspects filled in with evidence from other examples.

### ASSEMBLY: ST. ADALBERT, 997

The central and well-explored institution of pagan hospitality in Slavic and Germanic contexts is the sacred peace of the pagan assemblies, which protected the arriving guests.<sup>12</sup> Yet, as we saw in the opening example, due to this public sanction and the strongly political character of these religions, Christian worship performed by missionaries was commonly viewed by their hosts as an open challenge, one for which the strangers sometimes had to pay with their lives. It is from the tension between these two imperatives—pagan hosts' protection of guests and protection of their own public space—that the conditional character and ambiguity of hospitality seem to stem.

This tension and contradiction is clearly visible in St. Adalbert of Prague's failed attempt to convert the Prussians in the spring of 997. We know of this thanks to St. Adalbert's earliest hagiographies (the *Vita prior* [VP] by Johannes Canaparius, written c.999, and the *Vita altera* [VA] by Bruno of Querfurt, written in two versions c.1004–1008), based on eyewitness accounts by the missionary's companions, Benedict and Gaudentius.<sup>13</sup> For the sake of clarity, it is useful to offer a brief synopsis of St. Adalbert's final fate and then retrace the steps in greater detail in order to focus on the spatial aspects of his failed mission. Having secured his apostolic license to preach to the pagans and having received backing from the Polish Duke Bolesław I the Brave (r. 992–1025), the self-exiled bishop of Prague, along with his two followers, first arrived at the port city of Gdańsk on the Baltic coast. After they successfully preached and baptized the local pagans, the missionaries continued eastward along the coast to more remote Prussian (or perhaps Pomerelian) tribes. The first contact was hostile: upon their arrival they were beaten up on the peripheries of an unknown community. Subsequently, the missionary guests were confronted by and debated with the locals at the assembly, only to be expelled to the peripheries again. After five days, the missionaries

were attacked by a group of Prussians yet again; St. Adalbert was killed while his companions were allowed to escape to tell this story.<sup>14</sup>

The sources have a great deal to tell us about the spatiality of this mission and about the protective hospitality of pagan assemblies, including the ways it did or did not radiate to the outer layers of the Prussian ecumene. To reiterate their movements: the three men arrived in Prussia from Gdańsk by boat, which they left on the shore, and soon came to a little island on an unknown river. “But there came the owners of that place [*“loci possessores”*] and kicked them out with blows.”<sup>15</sup> They escaped to the other side of the river. “When evening came, the owner of that property [*“dominus uille”*] had ... Adalbert brought to the village. The ... crowd gathered from all sides and stood by watching ... what would happen to him.”<sup>16</sup> In this central, public setting, Adalbert identified himself as the apostle and bishop of the Prussians. He stated that the aim of his journey was to convert them and make them abandon their idols. Importantly, St. Adalbert’s also alluded to the military protection of his mission by Duke Bolesław I.<sup>17</sup> Yet, “they, by now quite outraged, raised a terrible row shouting blasphemous words at him, and threatened to kill him.”<sup>18</sup> The rejection of the strangers also became clear in the speech supposedly delivered by one of the Prussians:

“Only a quick departure may give you some hope to stay alive; if you stay here even a little longer, you will not escape a certain death! This entire realm, to which we stand as gateway, and we ourselves obey one common law and have one single way of life [*“communis lex imperat et unus uiuendi”*!]! But you, who have a different law, unknown to us, will lose your heads tomorrow if you do not go away tonight!” That very night they were put in a small vessel [*“nauculam”*] and, going back, they stayed for five days in some village.<sup>19</sup>

To pause here: in contrast to Canaparius, who portrayed the identity of the three men as *sanctus Adalbertus* and his *fratres*, Bruno presented them as guests or strangers (*hospites*) in the region.<sup>20</sup> From the point of view on hospitality as a phenomenon that ranged between the rejection and reception of strangers, the speech of the Prussians, regardless of its fabricated character, represented a full rejection of the guests, thereby articulating hospitality as a spatial-affective practice. It was an aggressive statement, which declared the Prussian territory as “our” region or home with its own laws and values. Although the pagans’ aggression was a

common motif in missionary texts, this was conceivably a typical reaction among pagan tribes confronted with the prospect of regime change.<sup>21</sup> The arrival of St. Adalbert and his companions thus produced a space of hospitality at the assembly, which in Bruno's version was the local market (*mercatum*).<sup>22</sup> The confrontation triggered the local community's securitizing reaction, which in turn assigned roles to the participants as hosts and guest. However, one should mention that on the outer periphery of this space of hospitality there loomed large the absent presence of the Polish duke in Gniezno who was the guests' protector, which counterbalanced the power of the pagan center where this confrontation took place.<sup>23</sup>

Still, given the assembly space's central political role, the hagiographers accentuated this meeting as a clash of two legal orders and culturally irreconcilable ways of life (*regnum, communis lex, unus ordo uiuendi*). Though this scene is a Christian interpretation of pagan attitudes, it corresponds not only with comparative ritualistic interpretations of similar conversion narratives,<sup>24</sup> but also with the ideas about hospitality's power dimensions. To follow Émile Benveniste's etymological argument, hospitality is a practice of establishing the host as "the one precisely, 'the very one' i.e. the master and the dominant part in a host-guest relation."<sup>25</sup> What is at stake on the threshold of hospitality are thus the identities of the participants and, consequently, the legal orders and cosmologies behind them.<sup>26</sup> These cosmic frames are particularly visible in Bruno's version of the Prussian's speech to Adalbert: "Because of people like you ... the earth will no longer yield its crops [Genesis 4:12], the trees will not bear fruit, new animals will not be born, the old will die. Get outside our borders immediately!"<sup>27</sup> In the pagans' eyes—as envisioned by the two authors—the guests disregarded their subordinate position. They were not just trespassers but invaders who endangered the hosts' existential security, and against whom the community had to be protected.

After this, the fate of the missionaries appears to have been sealed, though this is only the effect of the retrospective viewpoint of the authors.<sup>28</sup> In fact, the sequence of events suggests that the hosts first deescalated the situation and simply expelled the Christian guests by putting them on a boat. The second, fatal attack by the Prussians happened outside the gravitational center of their ecumene, without the violence-inhibiting function of the assembly.<sup>29</sup> According to Bruno's account, the killer was a pagan priest who intended to avenge his brother who had been killed by the Poles, suggesting that the murder was the

result of personal vengeance, rather than of a communal decision. Regardless of the actual motivations, in that final stage a short-lasting space of hostility emerged between the *hospes* and the *hostes*.<sup>30</sup> Like before, this space could not be shared, nor could the invaders' presence be tolerated. The solution, however, was no longer expulsion, but the murder of the leader of the strangers, St. Adalbert.

### KITCHEN: BRUNO OF QUERFURT, 1009

The ambiguity of hospitality and of the space in which the confrontations between missionaries and pagans took place also comes to the surface in the *Historia de predicacione episcopi Brunonis*. This laconic report of Bruno of Querfurt's (c.974–1009) martyrdom and mission to the Prussians is an eyewitness account of Wipert, one of Bruno's companions, who was blinded and set free by the pagans.<sup>31</sup>

After the missionaries entered the country (*patria*) of the pagans, they were put before their king, Nethimer, where Bishop Bruno celebrated mass for the people gathered there. But the king interrupted: "We have the gods whom we venerate and in whom we believe. We do not want to follow your words." Hearing this, Bruno ordered that the figures of the pagan gods be brought forward, and he then threw them into the fire whereby the flames devoured (*Ignis uero accepit et deuorauit*) them. In response, the king had a great fire built up and ordered that the bishop be thrown into it. "If the fire burns and devours him [*Si illum ignis comburit et deuorat*"], you all will know that his teaching is in vain, but if something else happens we will start believing in this God all the more quickly." What followed was an ordeal: the bishop, clothed in the episcopal vestments, set his throne in the middle of the fire and spent the duration of seven psalms sung by his companions within the flames. Bruno came out unscathed, and the king instantly converted to Christianity, together with 300 other men.<sup>32</sup>

Incidentally, this was not the first time Bruno and, presumably, Wipert were confronted with an enraged crowd like this. A year earlier, in 1008, after he spent a month in Kievan Rus' with Vladimir the Great (r. 980–1015), Bruno and his followers tried to convert the Pechenegs on the shores of the Black Sea (inhabiting the region between the Ural Mountains and the Volga River). When they entered the enemy territory (*terra inimicorum*), they traveled safely; but on the journey's third day, the missionaries were nearly killed, although they were ultimately left

unharméd. After two days, as they reached a more populous but hostile region (*occurrentibus nobis hostibus*), Bruno and his followers were taken in front of the assembly.

and we and our horses were whipped. An innumerable crowd came together, with cruel eyes, and they raised a horrible noise: a thousand threatened to cut us to pieces with axes and with drawn swords held over our necks. We were tormented until nightfall, and dragged this way and that, until the leading men of the region, who seized us by force from their hands [i.e. those of our tormentors], having heard our ideas, since they were judicious, knew that we had entered their land to do good.<sup>33</sup>

After these initial setbacks, Bruno and his companions continued to proselytize among the Pechenegs for five months, and only then did they journey, via Poland, to the Prussians on the Baltic coast.<sup>34</sup>

Notwithstanding that Bruno's triumph in Prussia turned sour right away, as the unexpected arrival of the brother of King Nethimer saw the order given to kill the missionaries and blind Wipert, a question arises: what does this ordeal by fire mean from the point of view of hospitality? What kind of space does it produce? It is my contention that this whole scene can be likened to a sort of cook-off between the hosting king and the missionary guest. Even though the author of the account does not explicitly use the vocabulary of host-guest relations, the ambiguity implicit in such relations can help us account for this confrontation. According to *Lewis and Short*, the root of the Latin word *hostis*, stranger—which evolved into meaning enemy—was Sanskrit *ghas-*, *ghásati*: to consume, eat, and destroy. This link to food also takes us to the root of *hospes* (host), which is *pa-* (cf. *pater*) and *pasco*: to feed. On this reading, the host is the person responsible (the master) for feeding the guest/stranger—with a risk that the latter turns out to be an enemy.<sup>35</sup>

Though etymology is rarely a satisfactory explanation on its own, the connection spelled out here is a good starting point from which to clarify the scene from Wipert's testimony. The arriving strangers clearly sought to transform the local masters, i.e. the hosts of the meeting, by converting them and destroying their deities. The old gods were to be devoured, consumed by flames. Though Wipert does not explicitly refer to this, we know from other theaters of Christianization that missionaries sometimes used pagan figurines as fuel for the preparation of food. For instance, in Szczecin in 1124, Otto of Bamberg, wanting to erase the

local cult of Triglav, gave out the wood from the destroyed temple to the converted locals so they could use it as fuel for cooking.<sup>36</sup> Seen together, these two examples demonstrate that the invading missionary guests not only toppled and replaced the local religiopolitical order, but they also effectively consumed the pagan gods and had the converts do the same.

Although Wipert's story did not make the link between consumption, theophagy, and hospitality overt, it is the fact that the bishop also ended up in the fire that suggests there is a reason to posit this ritualistic-culinary interpretation. Just as the pagan gods were devoured by the fire, so too would Bruno be devoured by flames, as Nethimer insisted. The consuming flames worked as an ordeal, a test of the efficacy of the two rival religious orders, a motif commonly found in conversion narratives and serving as a catalyst of conversion.<sup>37</sup> What we see here is a very different type of space of hospitality: a sacrificial kitchen, or a reversed potlatch whose participants, instead of destroying their possessions, throw each other into the fire.<sup>38</sup> The flames symbolically achieve two opposing goals simultaneously: on the one hand, they devour and destroy the representatives (idols) of the old religion; and, on the other, they cook and pre-digest the representative (Bruno) of the new one, thus making his teaching more edible for the new believers.<sup>39</sup> As a result, this logic of sacrifice through the fire, around which the hosts and guests gather, establishes a compensatory and ambiguous equivalence between the old gods and the priest of the new one. According to Benveniste, this type of compensatory equivalence is visible in the notion of *hostia*, which belongs to the same etymological family as *hospes*, *hostis*, and *hospitalitas*: "its real sense is 'the victim which serves to appease the anger of the gods.'"<sup>40</sup> Regardless of the chronological gap between the senses of *hostia* reconstructed by Benveniste and those found in the missionary sources studied here, this notion has some explanatory value when it comes to the meeting of 1009.

It is crucial to remember that Wipert followed Bruno for at least a couple of years, and that the latter had developed a set of ideas about missionary sacrifice and the similarity of martyrs to *hostiae*. These ideas can be found in his writings, and he likely shared them to his companions.<sup>41</sup> For instance, in his *Vita secunda* of St. Adalbert, Bruno hit back at the idea presented in the first hagiography, namely that the killing of the Prague bishop was a pagan sacrifice by the Prussians. Instead, on Bruno's reading, St. Adalbert became a venerated communion (*mactata hostia*, from *macto*, *-are*: honor, sacrifice, slaughter), sacrificed for the sins of the

Christians to intercede with God. In other words, what was at stake in this debate was a fundamental transformation of St. Adalbert's identity as a martyr through a logic of the compensatory equivalence between hosts, *hostiae*, and guests—a transformation that Bruno was hoping to achieve himself through his own mission.<sup>42</sup>

Summing up, the seemingly plain and straightforwardly simple account of Bruno's ordeal and the confrontation between the pagan hosts and the missionary guests is structured by the sacrificial dimension of hospitality. Here in this kitchen of hospitality, the identities and social orders of the participants were produced and devoured. The initially troubled but successful reception of the Christian strangers in 1009 nonetheless soon turned into their ultimate rejection and martyrdom. Ironically, the missionary guests died from the hands of those members of the pagan host community who had not participated in the original cook-off.

#### HARBORAGE: BERNHARD THE SPANIARD, 1122

Probably in 1122, a certain Bernhard, a Spanish bishop and hermit, arrived to the Baltic harbor of Wolin in Pomerania with the aim of converting the Pomeranians, although the region had already been under the influence of Christian Polish and German rulers since at least the early eleventh century.<sup>43</sup> By the time Otto of Bamberg commenced the full-scale conversion of the region in the 1120s, of which Bernhard's mission was a forerunner, there were some small Christian communities living in Pomerania, which was generally still seen as a pagan territory.<sup>44</sup>

Bernhard arrived to Wolin together with a guide and an interpreter, he also had received Duke Bolesław III the Wrymouth's (r. 1102–1138) permission to preach there.<sup>45</sup> The moment he entered the city, however, the inhabitants interrogated him about his identity and intentions. "He declared that he was the servant of the true God ... and had been sent by Him in order that he might lead them from the error of idolatry into the way of truth." The Wolinians reacted with predictable resentment: "We will not receive you nor listen to you. ... If then you have any regard for your life, return as quickly as possible to the place from which you came!"<sup>46</sup> Bernhard, however, decided to prove his point with an ordeal by fire akin to Bruno's:

Set fire to some house that has collapsed through old age and is not of use to anyone, and throw me into the midst: if, when the house has been

consumed by the flames, I shall come out from the fire uninjured, then know that I have been sent by Him to whose rule fire and every created thing is subject, and whom all the elements serve.<sup>47</sup>

Baffled, the leaders of the inhabitants (*sacerdotes et seniores plebis*) debated among themselves the threat posed by the missionary guest and its wider ramifications in a manner that can be interpreted as a securitizing response for their community:

This is a foolish and desperate person who ... seeks death and goes of his own accord to meet it. We are beset by his villainy, which seeks to exact vengeance because he has been rejected by us, and to involve us in his own destruction. For if one house is set on fire, the destruction of the whole city must follow.<sup>48</sup>

The Wolinians' self-protective decision was neither to listen nor receive Bernhard, nor to do him any harm. Again, the space of the assembly mitigated violence. In this case, the caution of the hosts was motivated by the memory of St. Adalbert's murder over a century earlier, whose perpetrators, the Prussians, suffered heavily in the wake of Polish retaliation. Though it seems unlikely that the memory of the Prague bishop's martyrdom was circulating among the Pomeranians, this de-escalating exchange can be interpreted as a signal that the Wolinians were making decisions in the light of the recent military expeditions of Bolesław III, and were conscious of the threat of revenge.<sup>49</sup> Rather than killing Bernhard, their instinct was to push him back by putting him on a boat again and sending him to the sea.

Suddenly, grabbing an axe, Bernhard attacked the holy of the holies of the Wolinians, a column raised in commemoration of the mythical founder of the city, Julius Caesar. "The pagans would not permit this, and rushing upon him with great anger, struck him in a cruel fashion and left him half dead."<sup>50</sup> Bernhard still raised himself up and resumed his preaching again. Eventually, the pagan priest grew tired of the whole situation and dragged him from the crowds:

they placed him with his monk and interpreter on his own boat, saying, "If you have so great a desire to preach, preach to the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air, and beware that you presume not to cross the boundary of our land, for there is not a single person who will receive you."<sup>51</sup>



After this Bernhard returned to Poland.

The main problem that the Wolinian hosts had with Bernhard was the state in which he arrived and the discrepancy between his destitute condition and the glorious message he preached. True to his eremitic calling, he approached the city “barefoot and in a despicable garment.”<sup>52</sup> The primary frame through which his pagan hosts saw him was materialistic, however: “How can we believe that you are the messenger of the supreme God? Whereas He is full of glory and endowed with all wealth, you are despicable and are so poor that you cannot even provide shoes for your feet.”<sup>53</sup> For them, he was clearly in utter need, “for it is only to relieve your poverty that you have come hither.”<sup>54</sup> Even among themselves, the pagan leaders explained Bernhard’s insanity and desperation by referring to his “excessive poverty.”<sup>55</sup> The deliberations of the Pomeranians are matched by the report from his mission, which Bernhard delivered to Duke Bolesław III in Gniezno:

They are animals and are altogether ignorant of spiritual gifts [*“spiritualium donorum”*], and so they judge a man only by his outward appearance. They rejected me on the ground of my poverty, but if some influential preacher, whose honour and wealth they would respect, were to go to them, I expect that they would of their own accord submit to the yoke of Christ.<sup>56</sup>

Otto’s hagiographers contrasted Bernhard’s mendicant missionary strategy with what the Spaniard later himself advised to Otto of Bamberg: to blind the Pomeranians with ostentatious wealth and not to make oneself dependent on the pagan hosts’ gifts, but rather to be generous to them. Such an approach was apparently better suited to the animal-like nature of the people they were dealing with.<sup>57</sup>

Bernhard’s example is representative of a larger tradition of missioning. In his works, Bruno of Querfurt proposed a similar, if not even more radical tactic: missionaries should learn the local languages, stop shaving their heads and beards, change their rich clerical vestments—which their pagan hosts found horrifying—to shabby cloths and live off the work of their hands, like the Apostles. “Having become like them, we could live with them with greater familiarity, talk to them and live with them.”<sup>58</sup> What he recommended to his followers was cohabitation and not just a brief intercultural encounter. By mimicking the identity of their hosts, the missionary guests would move into the pagan communities and convert them from within.

In contrast, the missionary strategy based on Bernhard's later advice to Otto of Bamberg attributed to the pagan hosts a view that the rivalry between their domestic gods and the new Christian God was directly measurable by the prosperity of their advocates. For instance, after his arrival to Szczecin, Otto regularly paraded the city's streets in his snow-white pontifical vestments and frequented the city's most public spaces, such as the market, and was accompanied by his similarly vested followers, making sure the inhabitants took good notice of their wealth.<sup>59</sup> The evangelical ideals of poverty represented by the Spanish bishop were in conflict with local views and thus made for a poor tool of conversion.<sup>60</sup> Further, these contradictions led to conflicting perspectives and feelings of ambiguity towards the character of Bernhard. By giving himself to the Wolinians as a negative gift—a burden—he was putting them in debt. For his hosts, he was a pauper who turned Wolin into a space of hospitality equivalent to a harborage and its inhabitants into almoners. Even if in his own view, he was a humble guest and his hosts were poor in spiritual gifts, in their view he wanted to control them with the gift of himself.<sup>61</sup>

From the perspective of this volume, it is hard not to notice that the concerns about the poor economic status of arriving strangers expressed by host communities and the latter's tendency to frame the aliens as a sustenance and security issue seem like a transhistorical problem. An arriving stranger often tends to be perceived as an unprovoked and hence undeserved burden on the hosts. The perspective of host communities and the type of relationship that emerges from such a confrontation is captured by the concept of *intolerable dependency* proposed by Judith Butler. The relationship of hospitality was thus an ethico-political bind, which rendered a stranger's position ambivalent in the eyes of the host, which is particularly visible in our contemporary distinctions between desirable and undesirable or unwanted migrants.<sup>62</sup> This unsolicited, anger-provoking bind and associated dependency could become intolerable and lead to the refusal of sheltering guests. In Bernhard's case, his perceived economic reliance on the Wolinians was further exacerbated by his physical threats against their central sacred object, politically imperiling their religiopolitical order, and materially endangering the livelihood and homes of his hosts: i.e., all the objects and spaces from which they derived their master identity as hosts. He thus had to be expelled.

## ANTECHAMBER: ST. OTTO OF BAMBERG, 1124–1125, 1128

So far, all the examples of spaces of hospitality have showcased missionaries directly addressing the centers of their pagan hosts' communal lives and their assemblies. This reflects the main model of Christianization in the Baltic Sea region, which started with the pagan elites in front of their community.<sup>63</sup> Although the three hagiographies of St. Otto of Bamberg show that the bishop employed the same tactics in his conversion of the Pomeranians, they also show how he sometimes approached the centers of the pagan host communities in an indirect and protracted way. Just like in the case of St. Adalbert's *vitae*, juxtaposing the different perspectives of the three accounts of Otto's mission—the *Prüfeninger Vita* (VP, composed c.1140–1146), the *Vita* by Ebo of Michelsberg (Ebo, composed c.1151–1159), and the *Dialogus* by Herbord of Michelsberg (Herbord, c.1159)—against each other will be instrumental in arriving at the competing spatial practices and ambiguous mechanisms of hospitality in this and the following section.<sup>64</sup>

Probably in the spring of 1124, as Otto's expedition approached Pyrzyce (German: Pyritz, located in north-western Poland) late at night, the missionary and his party observed a loud pagan feast taking place in the city. The bishop realized it would not be "advantageous or wise as *unexpected guests* to approach a crowd of excited people that night," and spent the night hidden in the vicinity.<sup>65</sup> The next morning, Otto carefully reached out to the elders through go-betweens, and negotiated for his reception and the conditions of conversion of the inhabitants, assuring them that he neither needed nor expected any gifts from them. The pagans "conducted them ... to the place reserved for visitors [*'ad hospicii locum'*], which was a large space at the entrance to the camp ... and here they put up their tents while the barbarians kindly and gently assisted and made themselves in every way useful."<sup>66</sup> In this external space of hospitality, the bishop and his entourage stayed for three weeks to prepare for the mass baptisms.<sup>67</sup>

This incremental approach was repeated on other occasions, in both welcoming and in hostile circumstances. In Wolin, the missionaries "spread their tents in front of the town and remained there for seven days," daily nagging the inhabitants with questions of whether they would convert. Eventually the Wolinians said their decision would be conditioned on that made by the Szczecinians.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, during his second Pomeranian mission in 1128, in which Otto and his companions entered

the region from the west (via Germany), one of their targets was Demmin in Mecklenburg. As one of the hagiographers notes, the prefect of the town “received us in a friendly manner and said that he would treat the others as his guests, and at the same time, he pointed out an open space for us to occupy in an old castle near the town,” where the expedition put up its tents.<sup>69</sup> To put it in Georg Simmel’s terms, these missionary guests were not “the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather the man who comes today and stays tomorrow.”<sup>70</sup> And, in this case, they were the guests who sought to fundamentally transform their hosts.

An initial distancing and gradual preparation of the hosts for the unexpected guests/strangers (*insolitos hospites*) arrival from a nearby location is a spatial leitmotif in Otto’s missionary strategy. By occupying the antechambers of pagan communities, Otto’s strategy relates to Simmel’s idea about the ambiguity of the stranger, whereby the host’s interaction with an unfamiliar guest designates a contradictory spatial relationship. For the host, the relation with a stranger/guest is not one of “distance and disinterest,” but rather “a distinct structure composed of remoteness and nearness, indifference and involvement.”<sup>71</sup> The type of stranger—represented by Otto and his entourage—was culturally and religiously distant, but physically near. Looking out from the inside of Demmin, Wolin, Pyrzyce, or Szczecin, the missionaries occupied an ambiguous space of hospitality, right outside the door of their home, on the threshold, where the other’s “proximity is remote” and his “distance is close.”<sup>72</sup>

Conversely, from the perspective of the missionary guests looking from the outside in, the ambiguity and hazards associated with these antechambers were noticeable too. The risk was not just physical—the potential of the hosts becoming suddenly hostile. There was spiritual danger as well. This aspect can be seen in an episode from Havelberg (in Sachsen-Anhalt) where Otto’s expedition had stopped before Demmin. On the day of their arrival, the apostate inhabitants placed flags around the city to celebrate the pagan god Gerovit. “When the man of God perceived this, he ... refused to enter the walls of the town, but waited in front of the gate and, having summoned Widikind [Witikingus], the ruler of the place asked him why he permitted this idolatry to be practiced.”<sup>73</sup> The pagan *sacrum* in the city was a symbolic danger for the missionary guests and made the space inhospitable to them. The antechambers outside pagan centers provided only relative (spiritual) safety for the guests.<sup>74</sup>

The last point touches on the issue of power when it comes to those antechambers. As seen in the Wolin case, for the pagan hosts the places of hospice, where they put their Christian guests, were the source and locations of an unwelcome but unavoidable distress. For the missionaries, on the other hand, these spaces served as bases from which they tried to project their evangelical message to the political elites in the center. Yet, the relationship between these outer spaces of hospitality and the centers of pagan host communities was highly volatile, which is clear when we examine the case of Wolin from 1124 more closely.

Otto and his companions came to Wolin from Kamień Pomorski on boats led by local guides, who advised the missionaries to enter the city at night. The logic was that if he approached the Wolinians incrementally, he would have a better chance at coaxing them to support his cause. The missionaries thus secretly made their way into the city, directly into the duke's stronghold, which was surrounded with a ban serving as an asylum for guests, a unique space of hospitality. When the inhabitants discovered the missionaries at dawn, they were enraged and expelled the encroaching guests from the city by denying them asylum, despite Duke Wartislaw's (Warcisław, c.1091/1092–1135) wishes. Worse yet, on the missionaries' way out across the bridges of Wolin, Otto was attacked by one of the pagans, but was saved by his companions. Finally, the guests "went then across the lake and broke down the bridge behind us, for fear lest the people should attack us again." There, on the opposite bank of the Dziwna River, they stayed for fifteen days waiting for their hosts to change their mind.<sup>75</sup>

During those two weeks, the missionary guests sought to assuage their hosts by means of indirect influence (*per ambages*), so characteristic for antechambers. As noted by Carl Schmitt, antechamber and the center develop particular avenues and dialectics of communication, here expressed through gift-giving, negotiations, building and tearing down of physical and symbolic bridges, and threats and violence. The missionaries' interpreters went back and forth communicating with a more amicable and cooperative portion of the Wolinian leaders. Every now and then the negotiating elders came out too. They blamed the "stupid ... section of the people" and presented the guests with an opportunity to slowly drive a wedge between the hosts. The bishop praised and exhorted the elders, but also threatened that he would call upon Duke Bolesław to avenge the insults he had received with a brutal intervention, which could be averted only through their speedy conversion.<sup>76</sup> While the hosts

needed to hurry, the guests could afford to wait, which marked the status differential between them.<sup>77</sup> Here, too, the Polish duke constituted the outermost orbit of this space of hospitality, suggesting that the Wolin antechamber was open to two political contexts simultaneously: Pomeranian and Polish. Put differently, the emergence of this space of hospitality created uncertainty about the political structure of Wolin and established an alternative power center outside the city.<sup>78</sup> From the vantage of the missionary guests, these two weeks divided the members of the host community into friends and enemies. Ultimately, the Wolinians ceded their decision regarding conversion to Szczecin.<sup>79</sup> As a guest, Otto was too powerful for them to master—they trusted that more dominant hosts would give him a proper reception: namely, by killing him.

### ASYLUM: ST. OTTO OF BAMBERG, 1124

As mentioned above, upon the arrival of Otto's expedition to Wolin in 1124, where they were escorted by the Pomeranian Duke Wartislav, the missionary guests used the privilege of protection of the duke's court—a physical space of hospitality surrounded by a ban (Herbord: "*lex talis erat, ut quolibet hoste persequente securus ibi consisteret et illesus*"; Ebo: "*Mos autem est ... ut princeps terre in singulis castris propriam sedem et mansionem habeat, in quam quicumque fugerit, tutum ab inimicis asylum possidet.*"). According to Otto's hagiographers, all cities in Pomerania recognized this ancient custom: anyone granted refuge (*hospicium*) in the duke's house was protected from any hostility.<sup>80</sup> The limits of such hospitality were very unclear, however. Following the *Prüfeninger Vita*, the bishop of Bamberg was exposed to danger the moment he started preaching in public.<sup>81</sup> Following Ebo's account, by the time the Wolinians had noticed the missionary guests' presence, they sensed that the Christians abused the privilege of asylum to overthrow their ancient, divinely instituted laws, which were the source of the Wolinians' master identity. This was sufficient cause to expel the unwelcome strangers from the duke's mansion.<sup>82</sup> Finally, in Herbord's version, the Wolinians first subjected the guests to an interpellation, an act of forced self-identification, which took place against the backdrop of the hosts' identities, the duke's power, and the quasi-legal framework of asylum.<sup>83</sup> As a result, the identity of the missionary guests became stretched to the full scope of the polysemy behind the notion of *hostis*: simultaneously, the missionaries were the duke's *guests* and his subjects' *enemies*. Assaulted by

the inhabitants, the missionaries fled the duke's court, briefly barricading themselves in some building in the city (supposedly a bathhouse), whose walls the Wolinians tore down in short order but let the missionaries escape the city.<sup>84</sup>

This example shows that the institutions, customs, and norms of hospitality—often depicted by Christian authors as central to pagan communal life—seldom operated in an automatic fashion.<sup>85</sup> They were instead conditional and dependent on the power relations in specific circumstances. In 1124, it took very little for the enraged hosts in Wolin to ignore the obligations and sacred provisions of the ban and asylum towards these specific guests who were seen as enemies. To put this in spatial terms, the supposedly strict divide between the protective asylum of hospitality and the hostility looming outside was, in fact, often highly permeable. Otto and his companions learned this lesson the hard way when the Wolinians attacked the courtyard and later tore down the bathhouse's wall, thereby showing both physically and figuratively how little distance there actually was between spaces of hostility and hospitality.<sup>86</sup>

The second point addresses, again, the power differentials within the host community in Wolin. According to Karol Modzelewski, it seems that in many European contexts, the obligations of hospitality and the protection of strangers were initially a collective responsibility of entire pagan tribes and communities.<sup>87</sup> Over time, political leaders took over these prerogatives—an arrangement clearly visible in the Pomeranian example. Sometimes, however, a duke's free wish to give protection to someone did not align with popular sentiment. This was definitely so in Wartislaw's case, who was already afraid to practice Christianity publicly among his pagan subjects.<sup>88</sup> As far as giving hospitality and protection to strangers (or declarations of them as enemies) are concerned, it seems that little was set in stone. Instead, there was a tension between the ruler's *potestas* vis-à-vis the communal authority as embodied in popular action.<sup>89</sup> This sacred, ancient custom of asylum in Pomerania turned out to be not so sacred after all; it was a practice based on a brittle agreement, open for renegotiation in the face of concrete conflicts about who was to securitize the host community, and from what.

These two types of ambiguity—one concerning the spatial limits between hostility and hospitality, and the other concerning the indeterminate locus of authority where the power to withhold or offer welcome in

Wolin actually lay—relate to Giorgio Agamben’s remarks about the institutional and linguistic ambiguity of the ban and the undecided status and identity of people subjected to it:

The semantic ambiguity ... [of] “banned” in Romance languages [was such that it] originally meant both “at the mercy of” and “out of free will, freely”, both “excluded, banned” and “open to all, free”. The ban is the force of simultaneous attraction and repulsion that ties together the two poles of sovereign exception: bare life and power, *homo sacer* and the sovereign.<sup>90</sup>

This semantic ambiguity applied also to the linguistic—Germanic and Slavic—crossroads in Pomerania.<sup>91</sup> In this respect, for Otto of Bamberg, the asylum space in Wolin offered the chance to assume the identity he hoped for: that of a martyr and a saint, a specifically Christian version of the figure of *homo sacer*. On his way out of the city, the bishop was simultaneously formally protected by the duke’s ban and actually banished by the people, open for anyone to kill.<sup>92</sup> As Herbord notes, when they were besieged in the bathhouse, the bishop said he desired to receive a blow in the name of Christ. After leaving the building, and before the missionaries destroyed the bridge behind them, Otto received three near-lethal blows from some furious Wolinians, but his companions’ bodies shielded him from receiving the fatal blow. As they safely recovered on the other side of the river, Otto complained that their defense stopped him from gaining the palm of martyrdom, to which one of his followers answered: “Let it suffice, master, that to us you appeared to receive it,” though the bishop nevertheless regretted that this prize was stolen from him.<sup>93</sup>

Even though this entire episode is a rhetorical construct, and despite the fact that Herbord’s text was one voice in a debate about Otto’s sanctity, this scene reveals the crucial problem explored here: the bewildering way in which questions of identity were articulated in spaces of hospitality. Here, the ambiguity is related to the quasi-martyr status of Otto. In contrast to Bruno of Querfurt or St. Adalbert, however, the bishop of Bamberg did not experience the transformation of his identity through martyrdom in Pomerania in 1124. Still, in the world of the text and in the minds of his readers, Otto enjoyed for a moment two incompatible identities—that of a missionary bishop and that of a holy man—which his canonization fused together and formally recognized in 1189.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

When Adam of Bremen praised the natural hospitality of the inhabitants of the North—to reference the example that opened this volume’s introduction—he was likely alluding to the baseline precepts and customary conduct towards guests, provided they showed proper deference towards their pagan hosts. If the lives of all missionary guests in pagan communities terminated as abruptly and bloodily as those of the two Bohemian monks in Rethra, such praise would make little sense. For Adam, such natural hospitality was a channel through which the Christian message could be communicated to the pagans and which provided a safeguard against hostility.<sup>94</sup> This chapter, on the other hand, has focused on exceptionally dramatic cases of host–guest relations, often taking place during the initial stages of conversion, which undermined those communities’ traditional norms. Exactly because of their extraordinary character, these encounters reveal so much about the ambiguity and violent dimensions of host–guest relations, which likely remained inactive in usual circumstances. Still, this sketch of spaces of hospitality offers an opportunity for teasing out some wider conclusions about the relation of hospitality to practices of securitization and spatialization on the Baltic Rim.

First, the relations between pagan hosts and missionary guests very often came down to the balance of power within the ongoing conflicts between the parties. Such extreme, potentially regime-changing hospitality called for extraordinary means of securitization. In the course of these confrontations, the roles, identities, and positions of authority were produced from which the hosts—individual and previously sanctioned, or collective and spontaneously emerging—took responsibility for securitizing the community vis-à-vis the arriving guests. These subjective positions were not stable, however. Usually, the lines between hosts/guests and friends/enemies were drawn clearly, as the initial examples have shown; but on rare occasions, they seemed very thin indeed, almost non-existent in fact. Depending on the circumstances, some groups or individuals within host communities moved closer or farther away from their compatriots or guests, served as go-betweens, switched sides, etc. What enabled this movement could perhaps be attributed to hospitality’s generally processual and uncertain character, which provided for the articulation of the situationally bound identities of the participants.

Second, the spatiality of hospitality seems to have been characterized by an ambiguous and dislocatory potential. For sure, a great deal of the

host–guest relations studied here relied on customary preexisting and controllable spatial and institutional infrastructures: mediators and gateways, the protective ban of the assemblies, marketplaces, ports, asylums, and places outside cities allocated to arriving guests. Beside these fixed locations, however, many less structured spaces of hospitality can be identified. They emerged ad hoc, were improvised, claimed and denied, generously granted or assertively usurped, physically fought over, etc. Such permanent and provisional spaces often proved to be movable, changing their welcoming or rejecting nature with shifts in location or in the tone of the relationship between the parties. In terms of size, these spaces were also very stretchable. They could contract and become restricted to the brief face-to-face encounters in the here-and-now of the participants, clearly delimited (an island, a marketplace, a duke’s court, a temple, peripheries of a city), or they could expand their orbits, sometimes even encompassing distant rulers within their bounds.

Although it is impossible to say to what extent the historical actors studied here were conscious of the uncertain and ambiguous character of hospitality, they actively, if unwittingly, produced these very qualities through their spatial practices by testing and pushing the limits of host–guest relations in Baltic missionary contexts. To some degree, uncertainty and ambiguity stemmed from the interference between and amplification of the symbolic overlaps and multiple functions and aspects of spaces of hospitality, which exceeded any regulations, customs, or anyone’s capacity to fully control them. It seems that in the age of Christianization in the Baltic Rim, the negotiated thresholds and contested spaces of hospitality functioned both as unavoidable traps and as necessary passages.

## NOTES

1. Adam of Bremen: lib. III, c. 19 (18), scholion 71, 352–352; Tschan (2002: 131).
2. Rosik (2020: 212–226), Gieysztor (1982: 127–134), and Strzelczyk (1970: 450–451). Riedegost can also be spelled as Radigast, Radogost, Radogoszcz, or Radogošć, all derived from the deity Redigast. It is important to note that alternative explanations as to the meaning of this place name interpret it as “hosting the council/assembly.” Thietmar of Merseburg: lib. VI, cc. 23 (17)–25 (18), 266–271.
3. Jezierski (2015, 2020).
4. Hellmuth (1984), Modzelewski (2015), Kujawiński (2004), and Perron (2009).

5. Derrida (2000), Derrida and Dufourmantelle (2000), and Bourdieu (1977: 191–193).
6. Bulley (2017: 7).
7. Bulley (2017: 4), Bourdieu (1990: 271–283), and Appadurai (2013: 121–123).
8. Friese (2004) and Giesen (2012).
9. Lefebvre (1991: 71), Glasze (2009), and Franklin (2021: 86).
10. These missionary guests do not fall neatly under the category of the Simmelian, ideal-typical “objective strangers,” i.e. those who have had no prior contact with their host communities (Simmel 1971: 145–146). The regions and host communities they traveled to had been previously visited by Christian merchants and other missionaries, and were sometimes partially inhabited by Christians; cf. Kujawiński (2004: 19).
11. Jaspert (2007: 56–65).
12. Modzelewski (2015: 94, 293–330), Bartlett (2007: 60–61), Gelting (2007: 73–79), and Berend et al. (2013: 112–137).
13. Banaszkiwicz (2014: 292–314), Sosnowski (2013b: 20–83), and Labuda (2004: 220–226).
14. Wood (2001: 210–211) and Słupecki (2009, 2013).
15. Canaparius: c. 28, 170–171; Johannes Canaparius’s authorship of the ‘Passio Sancti Adalberti Martiris Christi,’ commonly known as *Vita prior*, has been cast into doubt by Sosnowski (2013b); for the purposes of this study, however, the issue of authorship is irrelevant.
16. Canaparius: c. 28, 170–171; Kujawiński (2004: 21–22).
17. Banaszkiwicz (2014: 298–302).
18. Canaparius: c. 28, 172–173.
19. Canaparius: c. 28, 172–173.
20. Bruno VA: c. 24, 102–103: ‘Ibi aliquos dies steterunt et fama volans paganorum auribus adduxit habere se hospites ex alio orbe ignoto habitu et inaudito cultu.’ c. 25, 106–107: ‘bonos hospites [...] ad aures hospitum’; c. 30, 110–111: ‘requiem hospitum turbant.’
21. Sosnowski (2013a), Rosik (2010b: 151–159), and Wood (2013: 10–15).
22. Bruno VA: c. 25, 104; Banaszkiwicz (2018: 13–27).
23. Banaszkiwicz (2014: 299–300).
24. von Padberg (1995: 105–113).
25. Benveniste (2016: 73–74).
26. Derrida (2000: 4–5) and Bourdieu (1990: 228–233).
27. Bruno VA: c. 25, 106–107.
28. Canaparius: cc. 28–30, 170–181.
29. Modzelewski (2005: 41–49) and Boroń (1999).
30. Bruno VA: c. 30, 110–112: ‘requiem hospitum turbant [...] hostes agnoscunt.’
31. Wood (2018: 11–26).

32. Wipert: 70–73; Kujawiński (2004: 35–36).
33. Bruno Epistola: 99–100; tr. Wood (2010: 252–253).
34. Wood (2001: 236–239) and Falkowski (2010: 179–207).
35. ‘Hostis,’ ‘hospes’ in Lewis and Short (1969: 866–867); ‘Hospes’ in TLL: 3019–3031; ‘Gast,’ in Kluge (2011: 334) and Minkinen (2007: 53–60).
36. VP: lib. II, c. 12, 158–161; Herbord: lib. II, c. 31, 396–397; Rosik (2010a: 287) and Modzelewski (2015: 373–374).
37. von Padberg (1995: 126–129, 263–294) and Kujawiński (2004: 44–46).
38. Detienne and Vernant (1983) and Mauss (1990: 6–7, 13, 81).
39. Rosik (2010a: 397–398), Kujawiński (2004: 44–45), Levi-Strauss (1969: 81–108), Detienne and Vernant (1983), and Sahllins (1983).
40. Benveniste (2016: 66–67).
41. Bruno VQF: cc. 7, 13, 26, 31; Figurski (2012) and Wood (2010).
42. Bruno VA: c. 34, 116–117; Figurski (2012: 76–78) and Jezierski (2015: 148–149; 2019: 246–247; 2020: 423–424).
43. Rosik (2010a: 160).
44. Rosik (2018) and Rębkowski (2019).
45. Ebo: lib II, c. 1, 212–213.
46. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 214–215; Robinson (1920: 21).
47. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 214; Robinson (1920: 21).
48. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 214–215; Robinson (1920: 21).
49. Rosik (2010a, b: 163).
50. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 216–217; Robinson (1920: 20–21).
51. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 216–217; Robinson (1920: 22).
52. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 214–215.
53. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 214–215; Robinson (1920: 20–21).
54. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 214–215; Robinson (1920: 21).
55. Ebo: lib. II, c. 1, 214–215; Robinson (1920: 21).
56. Ebo: lib. II, c. 2, 216–217; Robinson (1920: 22).
57. Ebo: lib. II, c. 2, 216–217; Rosik (2010a: 163–167), Boroń (2009: 33–35), and Kujawiński (2004: 40–43).
58. Bruno VQF: c. 10, 246–249; Bruno VA: c. 26, 106–107.
59. VP: lib. II, c. 8, 154; Herbord: lib. II, c. 26, 384; Bartlett (1985) and von Padberg (2003: 117–120).
60. Kujawiński (2004: 35–43).
61. Graeber (2014: 65–74), Mauss (1990), Simmel (1971: 170–172, 175–176), Barnett (2005: 12–14), and Franklin (2021: 86–87).
62. Butler (2020: 96–98), Randeria and Karagiannis (2020), and Simmel (1971: 164–166).
63. Kujawiński (2004: 31–33, 52–55), von Padberg (2003: 95–102; 1995: 219–226), and Bartlett (1985).
64. Rosik (2010a: 47–56).

65. Herbord: lib. II, c. 14, 358–359; Robinson (1920: 42) and Rosik (2010a: 211–221).
66. Herbord: lib. II, c. 14, 362–363; Robinson (1920: 44).
67. Herbord: lib. II, cc. 15–18, 362–363; according to Ebo, Otto remained in Pyrzyce for just two weeks, see Ebo: lib. II, c. 5, 226–227.
68. Ebo: lib. II, c. 7, 228–229.
69. Herbord: lib. III, c. 1, 418–419; Rosik (2010a: 400–404).
70. Simmel (1971: 143).
71. Simmel (1971: 143–149) and Barnett (2005: 5–6, 10–12).
72. Simmel (1971: 143–144), Friese (2004: 68), and Benveniste (2016: 254–255).
73. Ebo: lib. III, c. 3, 244–247; Robinson (1920: 116–117).
74. Rosik (2010a: 393–396) and Kujawiński (2004: 46–51).
75. Herbord: lib. II, cc. 24–25, 378–385; Robinson (1920: 64); According to Ebo: lib. II, c. 7, 228–229, this sojourn on the opposite bank—a sort of antechamber of hospitality—only lasted for seven days.
76. Herbord: lib. II, c. 25, 384–385; Graeber (2014: 73–74).
77. Puff (2019: 27–30) and Bourdieu (2000: 221–231).
78. Schmitt (1994: 17–20), Puff (2019), and Rosik (2010a: 250–251).
79. Rosik (2010a: 250–253).
80. VP: lib II, c. 5, 150–151; Ebo: lib II, c. 7, 228–229; Herbord: lib. II, c. 24, 380–381; Modzelewski (2015: 305–306, 309–310).
81. VP: lib II, c. 5, 150–151.
82. Ebo: lib II, c. VII, 228–229; Rosik (2010a: 246–247).
83. Herbord: lib. II, c. 24, 380–381; Althusser (2001: 106–109, 114–115) and Butler (1997: 106–109, 114–115).
84. Herbord: lib. II, c. 24, 380–381.
85. Modzelewski (2015: 26–41).
86. Agamben (1998: 111).
87. Modzelewski (2015: 26–41, 356).
88. Rosik (2010a: 198–204).
89. Agamben (2005: 74–88) and Smith (2020).
90. Agamben (1998: 110).
91. Modzelewski (2015: 297–298).
92. Agamben (1998: 71–111), Jezierski (2008: 163–164), and Behrman (2020: 1–67).
93. Herbord: lib. II, cc. 24–25, 380–385; Robinson (1920: 64).
94. Adam of Bremen: lib. IV, c. 21, 462–465.

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# Ladoga as a Gateway on the Road from the Varangians to the Greeks: Icelandic Sagas on Security Measures, Eleventh–Thirteenth Centuries

*Tatjana N. Jackson*

## MARE NOSTRUM (“OUR SEA”): INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Sailing in the Baltic Sea in the Viking Age and the Middle Ages was the basis of life within the vast territories of northern and north-eastern Europe. This inland sea was a kind of *mare nostrum* for the peoples of the European north. Due to its geographical position, the Baltic Sea had long formed a network of routes connecting the peoples living on its shores. Already in the eighth and ninth centuries, the inhabitants of this region witnessed the growth of trading centers of a similar type, such as Kaupang, Birka, Hedeby, Ladoga, etc. The exchange of goods (the so-called Baltic trade) was carried out on the basis of common currency—glass beads to

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start with, then Arabic silver, and, later, German and English silver coins. Still, this connection of peoples did not always have positive connotations. The Baltic Sea region might be characterized as a general space of the unsafety and insecurity of travel, quite typical of this period.<sup>1</sup> The dichotomy of meanings and characteristics of what was happening on the shores of the Baltic Sea might be conveyed by such pairs of words as *peace—war*, *peace—absence of peace* (which is not the same as *war*), *safety—danger*, *security—insecurity*, *hospitality—hostility*.<sup>2</sup> Trade was a far from safe undertaking, both for merchants and natives. Merchants could turn out to be pirates, the Vikings, while local residents could behave in quite an unfriendly manner toward the newcomers.

Sources from different parts of the Baltic region emphasize the safety and security problems that arose and describe various ways of solving them. Adam of Bremen in the 1070s writes in his *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* that the people of Björkö, a trading place often visited by merchants from Denmark, Norway, and the southern Baltic, were forced to block the sea entrance to Björkö by masses of hidden rocks, making its passage perilous not only for the pirates but for themselves as well.<sup>3</sup> Regardless of whether these obstacles were created by nature or people,<sup>4</sup> this is how Adam saw the situation. In his mid-thirteenth-century *Knýtlinga saga*, Olafur Thordarson (Ólafur Þorðarson) puts the following words in the mouth of Emperor Henry V (r. 1111–1125): “It is customary in many lands for men of authority to keep the harbours on their coasts locked, and collect large fees. Not only that, it helps protect the kingdom in case of war.”<sup>5</sup> On the emperor’s advice, Knud Lavard (Knútr lávarðr, d. 1131), the Danish prince and duke of Schleswig, blocked the Schlei, a narrow inlet of the Baltic Sea, with the help of iron chains and timber structures. He did this because “at that time Denmark suffered badly from attacks by the heathen, and other Baltic peoples, who spent summers looting and harrying both merchants and those ashore.”<sup>6</sup> Snorri Sturluson presents the Baltic Sea in his *Heimskringla* (c.1230) as a region still crowded with Viking pirates. Thus, according to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, Estonian Vikings seized a merchant ship on which Astrid (Ástriðr) and the young Olaf (Óláfr—the future Norwegian king Olaf Tryggvason, r. 995–1000) were heading (c.970) from Sweden to Old Rus.<sup>7</sup> An example of how raiding and peaceful trade went hand in hand is given by Snorri when he tells of “a man called Loðinn, from Vík, wealthy and of good family,” who “frequently went on trading voyages, but sometimes went raiding.”<sup>8</sup> According to Snorri, the Norwegian Jarl/Earl Erik

(Eiríkr, r. 1000–1011), who went on a Viking campaign to obtain booty, “made first for Gotland and lay off there for a long period during the summer and waylaid trading ships that were sailing to that country or else vikings.”<sup>9</sup> *The Chronicle of Novgorod* (written soon after 1234) reports s.a. 1188 about the attack on Gotland against Novgorodian merchants, and describes the response: “in the spring they let no man of their own go beyond the sea from Novgorod, and gave no envoy to the Varangians, but they sent them away without peace.”<sup>10</sup> Issues of security, hospitality, and peace seemed indeed closely tied.

In this chapter, I focus on a particular means of securitization employed by the Russian princes in the first half of the eleventh century as it was described in the Icelandic sagas. The sagas were written in the middle of the thirteenth century and come down to us in still later manuscripts. Despite the time gap between the events and their record, the saga information is reliable to some degree. Sagas contain descriptions of hospitality provided by the *konungar af Hólmgarði*, i.e., Russian princes, toward the former and future Norwegian kings. They tell how the Russian princes took charge over the young Norwegian kings’ sons, how they put them at the head of the army that protects the entire country, or how they offered them part of their land to rule over, but these descriptions are in accordance with a certain stereotype, a literary formula aimed at praising a noble Scandinavian outside his own country, which reduces the reliability of saga information.<sup>11</sup> However, the descriptions of security measures that will be discussed in this chapter are unique and therefore seem trustworthy.

In the first step, I concentrate on the long waterway from Scandinavia eastwards, along the Baltic Sea and beyond, and how this waterway was imagined in the minds of medieval Scandinavians. Second, I describe the location of Ladoga and the difficulties along this waterway from Ladoga to Novgorod. Third, I turn to three descriptions of the following situation contained in the sagas: Norwegians who have sailed to Ladoga send one of their own to the Russian prince for a travel permit, and as a group they embark on a journey only upon receiving this permission. The security means in question—namely, a right to travel through his territory, from Aldeigjuborg to Hólmgarðr (i.e., from Ladoga to Novgorod), given by the Russian prince to the merchants and noblemen arriving from Norway—might be considered simultaneously as a manifestation of hospitality, as assistance to help them overcome the distance, as protection from attacks by local residents, and as a security measure, a protection of local

population against unwanted guests. To clarify this, I focus on the terminology of the sagas, in particular on the term “peace” used to designate a guarantee of personal security. Since these three themes are atypical compared to the other saga material, they are likely to reflect, at least to some extent, historical reality, which can be corroborated with archaeological evidence as well as with the evidence from Old Russian sources, as I do in the final section of the chapter. In so doing, I will show the way the issues of hospitality and safety were tightly interconnected in the most remote corner of the Baltic in the first half of the eleventh century.

. . . *TENDATUR USQUE IN GRECIAM*  
 (“...EXTENDS EVEN TO GREECE”)

Adam of Bremen believed that the Baltic Sea, this gulf of the Ocean, “extends a long distance through the Scythian regions even to Greece.”<sup>12</sup> He also says that from Schleswig “ships usually proceed to Slavia or to Sweden or to Samland, even to Greece,”<sup>13</sup> and that from the island of Bornholm ships “are usually dispatched to the barbarians and to Greece,” and that “oracular responses are sought” in Courland “from all parts of the world, especially by Spaniards and Greeks.”<sup>14</sup> As a result, Schleswig, Bornholm, *Iumne* (Wolin), *Ostrogard Ruzziae*, and Greece are for Adam stations on one and the same waterway, which is not far from the truth. After all, the mental map of this learned cleric, who had not made any long voyages, arose as a mixture of information obtained both through a study of the writings available to him and inquiries of his contemporaries, particularly his Scandinavian informants. The river system of Eastern Europe (leading in particular to Greece) was an ideal road for long-distance international trade and well-known to Scandinavian Vikings (Fig. 3.1). I do not think that the Baltic Rim should be seen as stretching as far as the Black Sea. I follow Kristel Zilmer’s conceptualization of this region “in terms of belonging within a broader network of travel routes that connected Northern Europe with areas to the east and south, the Baltic Sea region can also be shown to form a transit zone or a gateway that provided access to larger territories.”<sup>15</sup> In her studies of the waterway traffic, Zilmer does not simply examine the Baltic region as comprising the sea and the immediate coastal lands, but includes in her study adjacent areas connected to the Baltic Sea by many rivers. In her view, the Baltic region “covers not only the sea basin and surrounding coastal areas but radiates out to include further inland territories that are either fully or



**Fig. 3.1** Trade routes from Scandinavia via Eastern Europe. Map by Alexey Frolov

in a substantial part located within the drainage basin.” She also includes north-western Russia, “an attractive destination for traffic that at least led through the Baltic region.”<sup>16</sup>



*ALDEIGJUBORG OK JARLSRÍKI ÞAT, ER ÞAR  
LIGGR TIL* (“ALDEIGJUBORG AND THE JARL’S  
DOMINION THAT BELONGS WITH IT”)

Let me begin by focusing on (Staraya) Ladoga,<sup>17</sup> a settlement on the left bank of the Volkhov River, 12 km from its inflow into Lake Ladoga. To get to Ladoga from Scandinavia, travelers had to go in the eastern direction through the Baltic Sea, the Gulf of Finland, then 74 km along the Neva River, enter Lake Ladoga and continue along its southern bank to reach where the Volkhov River flows into the lake, before finally traveling against the current up the Volkhov. The Volkhov River (224 km long) connects two lakes, Il'men' (where its source is) and Ladoga (where its mouth is), and two significant towns in Old Rus', namely Novgorod and Ladoga. On the way from the Gulf of Finland to the East European Plain, Ladoga was unavoidable.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, Ladoga is a place where the sea route comes to an end and an inland river route begins. Both of them required special and different sailing skills, which meant the ships had to be re-equipped or even changed.<sup>19</sup> Not far from Ladoga, upstream the Volkhov River, there were the most dangerous of the Eastern European rapids, the Volkhovskie (Gostinopol'skie) rapids. They stretched for 9 km between the steep limestone banks that were over 20 m high. Thirty kilometers farther downstream began the other rapids—these ones known as the Pchevskie—which stretched for another 9 km and created further difficulties for navigation. Overcoming the rapids required travelers to reload goods, transporting them overland along the river, and dragging or pulling ships on ropes along the coast. The conditions for crossing the rapids are described in detail in the 1269 treaty of Novgorod with Lübeck and Gotland.<sup>20</sup> The ships on which the Germans brought their goods to the Novgorodian Land could not pass the Volkhov rapids. The goods were reloaded onto flat-bottomed Novgorodian boats that were led to Il'men' by local pilots. Even experienced pilots were not safe when passing the rapids, as evidenced by a clear division of responsibility: the German guests were responsible for the ship itself, whereas the pilots were not responsible for the sunken goods.<sup>21</sup>

Archeological materials demonstrate that Ladoga started to develop by the middle of the eighth century,<sup>22</sup> and by the second half of the eighth and early ninth century, Ladoga had already become a major node of international trade. Hoards of Arab dirhams (from 786, 808, and 847), Mediterranean glass beads, ceramics from the Near East, Baltic

amber, ceramics, and carved bone from Friesland characterize the scope of Ladoga's contacts.<sup>23</sup>

The earliest Ladoga may have been a center of proto-state formation in the Northern Volkhov and Lake Ladoga region. A settlement where ships arrived, armed people gathered, and considerable wealth was accumulated clearly had to be controlled by someone and become an object of self-securitization. Certain guarantees were required so that the system of trade centers in the Baltic could function properly, which typically meant that the ships entering the harbor would not be stolen or burnt and that visitors would neither rob nor kill each other. At that time, such guarantees could only be given by a local ruler who possessed authority and military strength. No "remote control" would be effective in this situation, and indeed, the subordinate position of Ladoga in relation to Novgorod is a much later phenomenon.<sup>24</sup>

From the moment of its foundation, Ladoga was the center of a particular administrative district, *gorodovaja volost'*,<sup>25</sup> located along the rapids of the Volkhov. Satellite settlements and road stations that were part of this volost' controlled the lower reaches of the Volkhov (about 60 km long) and attended to the international shipping.<sup>26</sup> The location of fortified settlements on the Volkhov—Lyubsha, Novye Duboviki, Gorodishche, Kholopiy gorodok, and some others—served as the trade route. They are known as the most dangerous parts of the rapids, which lay a day's distance of sailing from one another.<sup>27</sup> The time when this system formed might only be determined, according to Sergey Kuz'min, through archeological data that would indicate the origin of a settlement in the area of the rapids in the tenth century.<sup>28</sup> Importantly, hospitality and safety measures went hand in hand in this context. Outposts located along the Volkhov, on the one hand, were able to prevent an enemy from getting in and, on the other hand, provided assistance to merchants. Securitization in this case was multilayered: it was the protection of those living inland from the newcomers, and the protection of the newcomers from those living along the way as well as from the physical dangers of the journey itself. These outposts can be seen as a form of "distributed safety," or "distributed security," with Ladoga making up the key element in this quasi-system, since no one could leave Ladoga and go south without permission and assistance from the political centers in this region.

Surprisingly, probably because the route through Ladoga was a natural and necessary stopover, it is rarely mentioned in the sagas similarly to all the other obvious routes.<sup>29</sup> Still, when it does appear it constitutes this

crucial, intermediate station on the way from Scandinavia to Novgorod (and its rulers) and back. Three stories deserve our attention.

### PEACE, SECURITY, AND HOSPITALITY

The *Saga of Magnús the Good and Haraldr the Harsh Ruler in Morkin-skinna* (1217–1222), one of the three big compendia of the kings' sagas, tells how Magnus (Magnús, the future Magnus I the Good, r. 1035–1047), a five-year-old boy left in Rus' by his father Olaf II (Óláfr Haraldsson, r. 1014–1028, the future St. Olaf) before his last battle at Stiklestad in 1030, was returned to his homeland by some Norwegian magnates so that the title of king could be conferred on him.<sup>30</sup> The chapter about Magnus's return to Norway opens with a statement about the severance of trade relations between Rus' and Norway, more precisely between Yaroslav the Wise (Jarizleifr, r. 1019–1054 as Grand Prince of Kiev) and Sven (Sveinn, d. 1035), the son of the Danish King Cnut the Great (Knútr inn ríki, r. 1018–1035), who was installed by his father as ruler of Norway (1030–1035) after St. Olaf's death:

At this time there was hostility between Sveinn Álfífuson and King Yaroslav because King Yaroslav correctly judged that the Norwegians had betrayed Saint Óláfr. For a time there was no trade between them.<sup>31</sup>

What the saga labels “a betrayal of St. Olaf” is the fact that in 1030 the Norwegian magnates allied with King Cnut the Great of England and Denmark (r. 1016/18–1035), and met the future holy ruler in battle near Trondheim where Olaf was killed. According to Elena Melnikova, the comment that there was no trade peace under Sven suggests that such peace had existed before that. She states that during St. Olaf's reign, roughly between 1024 and 1028, a trade peace with Rus' was concluded ensuring free trade and the safety of Norwegian merchants in Rus'.<sup>32</sup>

These saga events might thus be dated to 1034. We learn of two wealthy Norwegian merchants, Karl and his brother Bjørn (Bjørn), who “intend to make a trading voyage” to Old Rus' (in *Morinskinna*'s terms “í Austrveg”). They realize that “because of the declarations of King Sveinn and King Yaroslav and the hostility [‘ófriðr’] between them the voyage is hardly without danger [‘má þat kalla eigi varligt’].”<sup>33</sup> What kind of danger or risk is referred to here? First of all, the absence of a trade peace with a given polity meant a ban against merchants sailing to that region,

and punishment of them in the case of violation of this prohibition. Karl's words on the merchants' return confirm this: "It occurs to me that we had no permission for this voyage to the Baltic, and there is every reason to think that the king will have a case against us ... there will be some risk both to our property and lives."<sup>34</sup> Karl's words indicate that trade relations were a political matter, and a merchant going to another country had to obtain permission from his ruler. This probably only extended to the periods when a trade peace was absent.

There was also another risk: the inhospitality of local residents. And this is what the travelers encountered. When they sailed "at a big market center" in the Rus' [Austríki] and "anchored with the intention of purchasing what they needed," the natives "refused to trade with them." It is telling that this happened "as soon as the natives realized that they were Norwegians." The situation got to the point that "it was shaping up for a battle, and the natives were ready to attack."<sup>35</sup> Karl stopped the attack of local residents by saying that their king might not like such treatment of "foreigners who come with articles for trade," and then went to King Yaroslav, which means that the trading city was in his state, and it could be only Ladoga. The saga does not provide any details about where and on what terms Karl's fellow travelers stayed in Ladoga, only tells of his journey, but again without any details: "There is no information about his trip until he came before King Yaroslav and greeted him."<sup>36</sup> Further events did not develop in a favorable way for the Norwegian either. Having found out who he was and where he had come from, Yaroslav "ordered that he be taken and put in irons, and this was done."<sup>37</sup> However, at the request of Magnus, he released Karl: "Prince Magnús wants you to be granted a truce ['grið']"<sup>38</sup> (and to "all those Norwegians," adds *Flateyjarbók*).<sup>39</sup> Yaroslav suggested that Karl should either go to his ship and conduct their trade as they wished (there is an interpolation in *Hulda*: "and make sure that you have peace ['grið'] from other natives if I give you freedom"),<sup>40</sup> or spend the winter with him and go on his mission in the spring. Karl agreed to the second proposal and departed in the spring with Yaroslav's instructions to Norway, but there he fell into captivity. He managed to escape with the help of Kalv Arnason (Kálfr Árnason), a Norwegian magnate who had been fighting in the Battle at Stiklestad against St. Olaf, but who now swore allegiance to his son Magnus.

They sailed east to Russia [‘Garðaríki’] to meet with Magnús. He and King Yaroslav were overjoyed to see Karl. He told them all about his travels, then placed Kálfr’s case before Magnús ... Karl said: “Kálfr will now swear to you that he did not strike your father King Óláfr.” ... Then the king and Magnús took up the matter between them.... They sent for Kálfr, for whom Karl had already secured a truce.<sup>41</sup>

Clearly, the same situation is repeated in the saga story twice. First, only Karl went to King Yaroslav, while a group of merchants stayed behind. The plan was likely for Karl to obtain a “peace” (permission) for the rest of them to travel from Ladoga to Novgorod. When Yaroslav freed Karl, he said that Magnus wanted a truce (peace) to be granted to him and all the Norwegians, which means that this “peace” for Karl was not a liberation from imprisonment, but a right to travel and transport goods which applied to his Norwegian compatriots awaiting him in Ladoga. The interpolation in *Hulda* that contrasts the “peace” (*gríð*) from local residents and the “freedom” (*frjálsi*) received from the king makes clear that the concept of “peace” also included “personal security.” In the second part of this account, Karl and Kalv Arnason went to Rus’ together, but only Karl came before Yaroslav. This means that Kalv, a hostile and unwelcome guest, had to wait somewhere (in Ladoga?) before being given a “peace” to travel. The “peace” that Karl received for Kalv was most likely a guarantee of his immunity, since Yaroslav and Magnus were convinced that Magnus’ father, St. Olaf, had been killed by Kalv. Upon his arrival to Yaroslav, Kalv “swore an oath that he had not struck a blow at King Óláfr, and he committed himself to support Magnús faithfully.”<sup>42</sup> Even if this version of Kalv’s arrival in Rus’ contradicts other versions of the same plot in the kings’ sagas, this story provides important information, namely, that a noble Norwegian and a political opponent of the Russian prince had to wait to be granted the right to travel inland. The most likely place for Kalv’s temporary stay—an antechamber, as it were—was Ladoga.

My second example is a fragment from the last chapter of *Óláfs saga Haraldssonar* in Snorri Sturluson’s *Heimskringla*. Snorri, although he used *Morkinskinna* as a source, omits the story of Karl and merely describes how a group of Norwegian magnates—and not only Kalv Arnason—went to Rus’ in 1035 after the young Magnus:

They travelled in the spring east over Kjølur to Jamtaland [Jämtland], then to Helsingjaland [Hälsingland] and came out into Svþjóð [Sweden], got ships there, travelling in the summer east to Garðaríki [Rus’], arriving in

the autumn at Aldeigjuborg [Ladoga]. Then they sent messengers up to Hólmgarðr [Novgorod] to see King Jarisleifr [Yaroslav] with this message, that they were offering King Óláfr the Saint's son Magnús that they would receive him and accompany him to Norway and give him support so that he might obtain his patrimony, and uphold him as king over the land. So when this message reached King Jarisleifr, then he took counsel with the queen and his other leading people. They reached agreement that the Norwegians should be sent word and summoned there to see King Jarisleifr and Magnús and his people. They were given safe conduct for this journey. So when they got to Hólmgarðr, then it was decided between them that the Northmen who had come there should pay homage to Magnús and become his men, and they confirmed this by oaths with Kálfr and all the men who had been against King Óláfr at Stiklarstaðir [Stiklestad].<sup>43</sup>

Again, it follows from the saga that all those Norwegians who had arrived at Ladoga (listed explicitly) did not venture further into the country, but sent ambassadors to the prince with an oral message about the purpose of their trip. Having discussed the situation, Yarolsav decided to send word to the Norwegians who remained in Ladoga and thus summon them to come before him. Snorri clarifies that they were given peace (*gríð*) for their trip. To term *gríð*, “peace,” used here (“in pl., metaph. *a truce, peace, pardon*”)<sup>44</sup> differs from the synonymous *fríðr* in that it expresses a concept limited in time or space. Following *The Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*, the expression *selja gríð* means “to conclude a temporary truce, usually legally bound by oath, for the period until there is a settlement of a conflict.”<sup>45</sup> *Járnsíða*, a law code that Magnús VI of Norway (r. 1268–1280) had issued for Iceland in 1271–1274, gives an explicit example: “If a man wants to go to a *thing* [assembly] summoned by means of an arrow message [i.e., in case of war, etc.], against whom charges had been brought there earlier, then bonds should guarantee him safety [‘selja gríð’] on the way to this thing and back, a five-day guarantee in summer and half-a-month guarantee in winter.”<sup>46</sup>

*Heimskringla* thus intimates a guaranteed safe passage from Ladoga to Novgorod, but one of a different character than safe passage given to the merchants as reported in *Morkinskinna*. In the first part of the story recounted in *Morkinskinna*, the measures were intended to protect those men from attacks by local residents and to help them overcome the difficult waterway: i.e., hospitality and security for trade guests. In the second part of this story dealing with a Norwegian magnate, an

opponent of the father of the Norwegian prince staying at the Russian court, those measures served to prevent a potentially dangerous foreigner from entering the territory, in which case hospitality concerned security measures and codes of conduct protecting the host community. Finally, as described in the fragment from Snorri's *Heimskringla* dealing with the same Norwegian and his companions (also Norwegian magnates), the essence of these measures was to help the Norwegians on their way home, that is hospitable assistance and security for the departing guests.

The final, third example comes from *Eymundar þáttur* in *Flateyjarbók*. It concerns a trip of a certain Eymundr Hringsson and Ragnarr Agnarsson to Rus' sometime between 1016 and 1019. The fragment describes a similar course of action to those above, although the text here contains an obvious contradiction:

Without breaking their journey, Eymund and his men travelled to Novgorod in the east to King Jarisleif [Yaroslav], whom they visited first at the request of Ragnar. King Jarisleif was son-in-law to King Olaf of Sweden, being married to his daughter Ingigerd. As soon as the king heard of their arrival, he sent messengers bearing an offer of safe conduct and an invitation to a lavish feast [‘til fridrar uæitzslu’], which they accepted gladly.<sup>47</sup>

The story opens with a statement that the two men did not stop on their way until they came to Yaroslav (and here a stereotypical formula of the type *letta ferð sinni* “to alight from, to interrupt a journey” is used).<sup>48</sup> But in three phrases it turns out that they had to have stopped: only after Yaroslav had learnt of their arrival, he sent them “peace.” Here, however, instead of *fridr* (meaning both peace, but also personal security, inviolability) the term *fridland* (a peace-land or friendly country) is employed which was “used in the laws of old freebooters (*víkingar*), who made a compact not to plunder a country, on condition of having there a free asylum and free market.”<sup>49</sup> It seems that, in contrast to the stereotypical story, the text reflects a real situation, namely the difficulty faced by the noble Scandinavians in reaching Novgorod without a delay and a stop in Ladoga. These foreigners are neither merchants, who had arrived during the absence of a trade peace between the two countries, nor political opponents of the Russian prince and his distinguished guest. The saga does not hint at the difficulties that these guests might have encountered while awaiting permission to travel further. As a result, it seems that in

the eyes of the saga authors, Ladoga was a kind of a gateway, a space of (in-)hospitality, and a waiting room whose nature depended on the status and intentions of the arriving aliens.

The question arises as to what period the described events and hospitality arrangements reflect. The early eleventh century, when Eymundr and his companions went to Rus' to meet Prince Yaroslav? Or the late fourteenth century, when *Eymundar þáttr* became part of the Icelandic manuscript *Flateyjarbók* (1387–1394)? The above-mentioned stereotypical formula of an uninterrupted travel was used in the sagas when their authors did not have any information about the events that had occurred on the way, and this technique was regularly used in the sagas. If the compiler of *Flateyjarbók* deliberately introduced the details about the “peace” given to the travelers by Yaroslav into the saga, he must have omitted the automatic “travel formula.” But as he was probably unfamiliar with the route, he did not pay any attention to the remark that the travelers had received the “peace” for the duration of their journey from the king. Apparently, the compiler did not realize that while waiting to be given this “peace” they must have been accommodated somewhere, in all likelihood in Ladoga.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The three saga excerpts are unique when it comes to providing insight into the security measures embedded in codes of hospitality. Sagas repeatedly describe how Scandinavian kings, jarls, merchants, and travelers came to Rus', but they only discuss safety measures in connection with Yaroslav's reign. This is not a coincidence. Historians of Old Rus' record a number of cardinal changes that took place during Yaroslav the Wise's time in power. The first and most important of them was a transition from personal (spontaneous) relations to inter-state (systemic) relations.<sup>50</sup> It is likely that the sagas have reflected Yaroslav's direct participation in the events described.

A retrospective view suggests that in the eleventh century, the security of the visiting merchants (and not only merchants) was ensured in the same way as it would be a century and a half later. I have already mentioned the account of *The Chronicle of Novgorod* s.a. 1188: in response to the attack on Novgorodian merchants on Gotland, the Russian party “let no man of their own go beyond sea from Novgorod.” Importantly, they “gave no envoy [‘ни съла въдаша’] to the Varangians,



but they sent them away without peace [‘без мира’].<sup>51</sup> This meant that the Varangians who left Novgorod had no guarantees of personal security. They had no “peace,” i. e., no kind of official document, nor was there any “envoy” with them, i. e., no person obliged to accompany foreigners within the Novgorodian Land, both upon arrival and departure.<sup>52</sup> The existence of such a tradition is confirmed by the relevant articles of trade agreements.<sup>53</sup> The envoys carrying out these duties are mentioned in the Treaty of Novgorod with Gotland (the Gothic Coast), Lübeck and German cities on peace and trade (1259–1260),<sup>54</sup> and in the Treaty of Novgorod with Lübeck and Gotland (1269).<sup>55</sup> These two treaties emphasize the fact that they confirm or reinstate “the old peace treaty,” which according to scholars had been an intermediate treaty between the one written down in 1259–1260 and the earliest one, written on the same parchment, that is datable to 1191–1192 (or 1201).<sup>56</sup> It is likely that this treaty summed up at least two centuries of relations between Novgorod and Scandinavian countries, and a century or half-century of Novgorod–German relations. In turn, it laid the foundations for further trade relations in the eastern Baltic.<sup>57</sup> According to the preamble, the agreement of 1191–1192 was a confirmation of the old peace treaty<sup>58</sup>; however, the content and the date of the latter are unknown.

Archeological data, for their part, demonstrate that at an early stage of its existence, Ladoga, along with trade and craft functions, assumed functions of a frontier fortress that protected an area to the south of Lake Ladoga and the route inland. This is evidenced by three stone fortresses built successively at the mouth of the river Ladozhka in the ninth, twelfth, and sixteenth centuries.<sup>59</sup> A chain of similar fortified settlements located along the Volkhov served as strongholds and control stations on the waterway from Ladoga to Novgorod.<sup>60</sup>

We can only make assumptions as to how exactly control functions were carried out, how information was transmitted, and in what form the “peace” was given in this area. Long discussions on the emblematics of the Old Russian princes from the tenth to the first half of the thirteenth century<sup>61</sup> has led, among other things, to one interesting hypothesis. Silver and bronze trapezoidal pendants with the symbols of the Rurikids, found mainly in the large urban centers of Old Rus’, are likely to have been the attributes of officials, and served as credentials for diplomatic representatives and administrative officials, like the Old Norse *jartegnir*,<sup>62</sup> repeatedly mentioned in the Icelandic sagas.<sup>63</sup> It is quite natural that Ladoga occupied a key position on the route from the Baltic Sea to the

depths of Old Rus' and further to the east. Anatolij Kirpichnikov believes that the trade and defensive functions of the Ladoga region, that clearly stood out during the period of Novgorod–Hanseatic commerce, had been inherited from a much earlier period.<sup>64</sup> In the sagas, we find confirmation of this thesis, and the three saga texts discussed above—containing information on the permission to travel through his territory issued by the Russian prince Yaroslav the Wise in the first half of the eleventh century—reflect a real situation: namely, the existence of a system that combined hospitality and safety measures for both host communities and incoming guests along this route.

## NOTES

1. Reuter (2006).
2. On peace, see Lambert (2009).
3. Adam of Bremen: lib. I, c. 60; Tschan (2002: 51–52): “For the people of Björkö, very often assailed by the inroads of pirates, who are numerous there, have set about deceiving by cunning artifices the enemies whom they could not resist by force of arms. They have blocked that bight of the restless sea for a hundred or more stadia by masses of hidden rocks, making its passage as perilous for themselves as for the pirates. All the ships of the Danes and Northmen, as well as those of the Slavs and Sembi and the other Scythian people, are wont to meet at stated times for the diverse necessities of trade.”
4. Kohlmann (1908: 73).
5. Hermann Pálsson and Edwards (1986: 125–126) [Knýtll: 199, ch. 85].
6. Hermann Pálsson and Edwards (1986: 126) [Knýtll: 199–200, ch. 86].
7. Finlay and Faulkes (2011: 140): “She travelled with some merchants.... But as they sailed east by sea, vikings came against them. They were Eistr (Estonians)” [Hkr: 1, 230].
8. Finlay and Faulkes (2011: 187) [Hkr: 1, 301].
9. Finlay and Faulkes (2011: 211) [Hkr: 1, 337].
10. Michell and Forbes (1914: 34) [NPL: 39].
11. See Jackson (2019a: 115–172).
12. Tschan (2002: 193) [Adam of Bremen: lib. IV, c. 10].
13. Tschan (2002: 187) [Adam of Bremen: lib. IV, c. 1].
14. Tschan (2002: 197) [Adam of Bremen: lib. IV, c. 16].
15. Zilmer (2010: 100–101).
16. Zilmer (2005).
17. Prior to 1703, the town was called simply *Ladoga*.
18. Kirpichnikov (2014: 82).
19. Nosov (2012: 103).

20. Yanin (1990: 84), Skvairs and Ferdinand (2002: 49, 274–275), Skvairs (2003: 187–200), Khrustal'jov and Bondar (2011).
21. “And if the Germans and Gotlanders arrive along the Volkhov to the rapids, they should without delay demand the rapids’ pilots and put those good people into their ships and pay them, as it had been from olden times, but not more. And if a merchant comes up in Gostinopolye, he gives as much as he used to give from olden times, but not more.... And if a boat that had left for the goods, or is loaded with goods, is crushed, it should not be paid for, but for hiring a boat one should pay” [GVNP: 59, No. 31].
22. The oldest dendrochronological date from Ladoga is 753.
23. Lebedev (1985: 210).
24. Platonova and Lapshin (2018: 430).
25. See the title of this paragraph.
26. Kirpichnikov et al. (1985: 50), cf. Nosov (1981, 1984), Sorokin (1993), Kirpichnikov and Sarabjanov (1996: 54–56).
27. Konetskij and Nosov (1985).
28. Kuzmin (1998).
29. Jackson (2019a: 85–92).
30. It is preserved in GKS 1009 fol (*ca.* 1275). A variant of this saga is preserved in AM 66 fol (*Hulda*) of the late fourteenth century. The lacunae of GKS 1009 fol are filled with a text from GKS 1005 fol (*Flateyjarbók*), namely the quires added to it in the second half of the fifteenth century.
31. Andersson and Gade (2000: 91) [Msk: 1, 6–7].
32. Melnikova (1997a, 1997b).
33. Andersson and Gade (2000: 91) [Msk: 1, 7].
34. Andersson and Gade (2000: 93) [Msk: 1, 10].
35. Andersson and Gade (2000: 91) [Msk: 1, 8].
36. Andersson and Gade (2000: 91) [Msk: 1, 8].
37. Andersson and Gade (2000: 92) [Msk: 1, 9].
38. Andersson and Gade (2000: 92) [Msk: 1, 9].
39. Flat: 3, 255.
40. Fms (1831: 9–10).
41. Andersson and Gade (2000: 97) [Msk: 1, 17].
42. Andersson and Gade (2000: 97) [Msk: 1, 17].
43. Finlay and Faulkes (2014): 277 [Hkr: 2, 414–415].
44. An Icelandic-English Dictionary: 214–215.
45. Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog *s.v. gríð*.
46. Járnsíða: 270.
47. Hermann Pálsson and Edwards (1989: 72) [Flat: 2, 120].
48. An Icelandic-English Dictionary: 385.
49. *Ibid.*: 173.

50. Melnikova (2011).
51. NPL: 39.
52. Rybina (1986: 29, n. 15).
53. On these treaties, see Feldbrugge (2001: 182–186).
54. “If a winter guest [i.e. a merchant who has arrived in winter] is not accompanied by either our envoy or Novgorodin merchants [traveling] from Novgorod or from Gotland, and if something happens to German merchants on the way from [the island of] Kotlin to Novgorod, or from Novgorod to Kotlin, while they are without an envoy, then there should be no claims to Novgorod, as it stood in the old treaty” [GVNP: 57, No. 29]. On the dating of this treaty, see Khoroshkevich 1997: 128–129.
55. “And winter guests should come on a guarantee of the prince, and the *posadnik*, and all Novgorodians, according to the old treaty, without obstacles. And they should take on a Novgorodian envoy and Novgorodian merchants, according to the old treaty. And if they do not take the Novgorodian envoy and something happens on the way from Novgorod to Kotlin, then the prince and the Novgorodians do not care” [GVNP: 58, No. 31].
56. Khoroshkevich (1997: 130), see Rybina (1989).
57. Khoroshkevich (1997: 128).
58. GVNP: 55, No. 28.
59. Kirpichnikov (1984).
60. On such settlements, see Nosov (2012).
61. See Molchanov (1999).
62. Beletskij (2004), Molchanov (2010), Tsemushau (2018).
63. *Jartegnir* (МН. Ч. ОТ *jartegn*, n.) has the meaning of “credentials” accompanying an oral message (*orðsending*) “which a messenger had to produce in proof that his word was true” (An Icelandic-English Dictionary: 324). See, for instance, Hermann Pálsson and Edwards 1986: 72: “...delivered the message from King Knut along with the tokens of proof...” (Knýtl, ch. 42). I am inclined to think that the *jartegnir* accompanying an oral message are for saga authors something similar to the seals accompanying a written message of a later time (Jackson 2019b).
64. Kirpichnikov (1979: 96).

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# Merchants and Guests: Laws and Conditions of Baltic Trade Hospitality, Twelfth–Fourteenth Centuries

*Tobias Boestad*

On the medieval Baltic Rim, foreign merchants staying in town for their trade were usually called guests. Although speaking very different languages, the people of the Baltic not only used remarkably similar words to refer to strangers—*gast* in Middle Low German, *gæster* in Scandinavian languages, and *гостъ* (*gostʹ*) in Old Russian: they also used these terms in similar ways. Such terms have received little comment, and the attention they have received has often been from narrow, national points of view.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the linguistic similarities underlying the term guest raise questions of whether, and how far, medieval coastal societies around the Baltic Sea might have shared common conceptions of trade hospitality.

This problem is too vast to be addressed in its entirety here, since it would, among other things, require precise comparative investigations

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on the evolution of the notion of “guest” within Germanic, Scandinavian, and Slavic languages and on their linguistic relations to each other.<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this volume, the focus will fall on the issues that the reception of foreign merchants and the securitization of their trade raised within host communities. Indeed, trade hospitality has until now mostly been considered from the guests’ perspective. The dangers of traveling and staying within a foreign community have been well emphasized, although it is equally clear that such risks never prevented merchants from searching for profit abroad.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, scholars have paid scant attention to the threats that such guests posed to their hosts, nor to the hosts’ attitudes toward guests—even if such aspects are occasionally alluded to in studies on trade diplomacy.<sup>4</sup> In this respect, introducing the notion of trade hospitality allows us to question the principles of such a diplomacy. To what extent were the Baltic communities prepared, able, and willing to provide safety to foreign merchants, and under what conditions?

Investigating trade hospitality from a legal point of view requires a few conceptual clarifications. First, this particular kind of hospitality was usually not directed toward individuals but toward groups of merchants; the collective dimensions of such hospitality must have had an impact on how communities perceived and provided it. Second, it must be emphasized that in contrast to the frequent references to “guests,” “hospitality” is almost never mentioned as such in the sources about foreign trade, which instead prefer to talk about “peace,” “security,” or “protection.” Trade hospitality was, indeed, quite different from hospitality in its narrow sense: most of the time, it was codified by oral or written trade agreements, and trade hospitality did not necessarily involve the provision of food, drink, and shelter to the guests. From a legal standpoint, we may therefore assume that, rather than being a right that foreigners—or groups of foreigners—would have been entitled to, hospitality toward merchant guests was either a moral principle or a political guideline that a community and its rulers could choose to follow when setting out their policies.

This paper focuses on the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, a time of major change within Baltic societies. During this period, the Baltic region experienced Christianization, urbanization, and the creation of increasingly centralized and extensive princely powers, all of which enhanced and were fueled by increased migrations and commercial relations.<sup>5</sup> This period also coincides with the expansion of German trade and the

progressive emergence of the Hanse, to which we will pay particular attention as German merchants are far better documented than their Scandinavian, Slavic, or East Baltic counterparts. Most examples will compare the Scandinavian and Russian communities' conceptions of trade hospitality through their laws, trade treaties, and behaviors toward foreign merchants. Although Norway is not strictly speaking part of the Baltic Rim, it will be included in this investigation because the notion of guest was used in the same way there, and because its rich documentation sheds light on important aspects of this question.

Departing from a critique of the German/Catholic chroniclers' guest-perspective division of the Baltic people into hospitable and inhospitable communities, this paper argues that trade hospitality was an ambivalent enterprise because it was never unconditional and it always required negotiation. After considering the actual protections and guarantees that Baltic communities were able and willing to offer to their merchant guests, this chapter will then highlight some of the conditions under which safety could be provided. It will end by illustrating some of the strategies that host communities could adopt when guests did not satisfy these conditions.

### HOSPITABLE AND INHOSPITABLE COMMUNITIES?

When writing about pre-Christian Baltic openness to strangers, Catholic chroniclers tended to divide communities into either hospitable or hostile nations. Adam of Bremen stated that many of the pagan Slavs living in Fehmarn and Rügen were “pirates (*pyratis*) and very cruel bandits, who spare none of the people who pass by.” The Curonians were considered to be a “very cruel people,” and their dreadful reputation continued to be evoked in the thirteenth-century *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, according to which the Christians who came to their land “were robbed of life as well as goods.”<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the Bremen schoolmaster praised the equally pagan Sambians or Prussians for being “very human people, who present themselves to help those who sink in the sea or are attacked by pirates,” while “no people can be found who are more honest and benign in character and hospitality” than the Wends.<sup>7</sup>

May we speak of trade (in-)hospitality in all these cases? It is true that while Adam of Bremen uses the word *hospitalitas* in its strictest sense—i.e., as a reference to the food, shelter, and bed the Swedes and the Wends used to give to their visitors—other communities were described

as helpful and friendly, but not explicitly as “hospitable.” However, the relevance of such a distinction remains doubtful, since the sources from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries confirm that intercommunity business relationships were frequently coupled with friendly personal ties. According to Henry of Livonia’s *Chronicon Livoniae*, the German merchants were “bound by friendship” with the Livs from the Daugava region, which allowed them to support Bishop Meinhard’s (c. 1135–1196) efforts to convert them in the late twelfth century. This mission led to the Christianization of Livonia, i.e., modern-day Latvia and southern Estonia.<sup>8</sup> The first statutes of the German settlers in Gotland start with extensive regulations about intercommunity marriages, which suggests that such unions must have been frequent.<sup>9</sup> In 1331, the German merchants in Novgorod were informed by “Russians who were their friends” that a mob was gathering to besiege their yard amid a larger conflict between the guests and their hosts.<sup>10</sup> Hospitality, when provided by a whole community to a guest merchant or a group of merchants, should therefore be considered, in a broad sense, as friendliness and openness to foreigners.

The narrative sources’ conception of hospitality as a natural feature that a community either possessed or not is obviously a one-sided view. Given that the aforementioned account of the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* was meant to announce—and justify—military campaigns against the Curo-nians, its depiction may have reflected the hostility of the latter toward Christians, rather than reflecting some fundamentally inhospitable nature. On the other hand, as most of these testimonies likely conveyed the opinions of German merchants and/or Catholic missionaries—two categories of actors who frequently followed each other’s tracks—we may assume that they also reflected the geography of German or—more generally—Catholic merchants’ trade agreements in the Baltic. Later comparisons have shown that the learned and abstract concept of pirate was usually not mobilized as a description of an objective social reality, but rather as a way of discrediting or criminalizing enemies.<sup>11</sup> When speaking out against Estonian banditry at sea, Henry of Livonia’s *Chronicon Livoniae* also blamed the Gotlandic merchants for refusing to break their trade agreements with the pirates.<sup>12</sup> Although some communities might have been more open than others, most of them were probably hospitable to *some* extent, to *some* guests, and under *certain* conditions.

Moving from the guests' to the hosts' perspective, one may ask why a given community would open up to foreign merchants and intercommunity trade during the Middle Ages. Different actors may have had different interests and positions, although the sources usually do not reflect those clearly. Some rulers undoubtedly found openness profitable. In 1161, Duke Henry the Lion of Saxony (r. 1142–1182) confirmed the Gotlandic merchants' rights in his duchy, but asked them in return to “visit [his newly re-founded] harbor of Lübeck more diligently” in order to increase its commercial revenues.<sup>13</sup> A century later, the Swedish ruler Birger Magnusson (r. 1290–1318) used the support of the German merchants in order to strengthen his own domination in the region around Stockholm, which at that time was growing in prominence.<sup>14</sup> Such policies may have benefited some social strata of the local communities, especially those involved in external trade. In some cases, they may even have been lifesaving, like when German merchants ended a famine in Novgorod by importing meals and supplies, as the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* reports s.a. 6739/1231.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, uncontrolled openness carried its own risks. *Sverris saga* reports that King Sverre Sigurdsson of Norway (r. 1184–1202) once expressed his appreciation of foreign trade in a public speech in Bergen in 1186. He praised English merchants for “bringing wheat and honey, flour and cloth,” that is, “such things that make this land richer, and we cannot do without.” But at the same time, he condemned the Germans,

who have come here in great numbers, with large ships intending to carry away butter and dry fish, of which the exportation much impoverished the land; and they bring wine in return, which people strive to purchase, both my men, townsmen and merchants.<sup>16</sup>

Sverre concluded by declaring: “If they wish to preserve their lives and property, let them depart at once; their business has become harmful to us and to our realm.”<sup>17</sup> This was the speech of a king who defended the interests of his whole realm. At the same time, it gives the impression that while the land was impoverished, some elites—“my men, townsmen, and merchants”—may have found it beneficial to trade with the Germans. Within the host community, one may thus identify at least three different categories of actors: those who were willing and able to involve themselves in external trade, those who were not, and finally the rulers—sometimes

backed by religious institutions—who negotiated with the foreigners in the name of the community, but may also have taken care of their own interests in the process.

### PROVIDING SAFETY—BUT AT WHAT COST?

One of the merchants' main expectations as guests was for safety during their travel and stay. In the High Middle Ages, this was not self-evident. Travel stories and saga literature insist on the multiple dangers of mobility, and examples of shipwrecks, attacks by robbers, or outbreaks of xenophobia are plentiful in the sources.<sup>18</sup> These sources often reflect the viewpoint of guests, and they have led scholars to conclude that without specific treaties, privileges, and trade peace agreements, the legal status of foreigners would have been very precarious within medieval societies.<sup>19</sup> From the community's and its ruler's perspective, however, such treaties raised questions over what level of safety they were prepared to provide. This meant considering not only the ways in which they could benefit from receiving foreign merchants, but also to what extent they were ready to commit themselves toward the needs of the merchants.

Implementation was an especially crucial issue when considering the protection on offer to the guests during their comings and goings. The many uncertainties of the maritime Baltic environment and its sparse population may explain the hosts' reluctance to guarantee their guests' safety while traveling. When the German and Gotlandic merchants renewed their treaty with Prince Yaroslav Yaroslavich (r. 1266–1271) of Novgorod in 1268–1269, they claimed that princely protection should start from the moment the merchants passed the island of Berkö (Koivisto) in the Gulf of Finland. This claim was apparently dismissed, since the final treaty stated that princely jurisdiction would start only at Kotlin (Kronstadt), i.e., 60 kilometers to the east.<sup>20</sup> It seems that the prince refused to extend his protection as far as the merchants wanted him to, since this would have obliged him to guarantee their security in areas he did not actually control. The reluctance to protect may have been even stronger on the part of those princes whose lands did not form a stopping-point, but were instead only traveled through by merchants en route elsewhere.

Accordingly, the safety provided by princes to merchants en route through the Baltic region was different and, in some respects, less extensive than in other North European regions, although the terms used

to refer to such safety were sometimes the same. For instance, in the Rhine valley, the thirteenth-century *conductus* referred to an extensive safeguard whereby a prince promised compensation for any loss that a merchant would suffer on his lands, provided that the merchant had paid the requisite tolls and, sometimes, a specific tax.<sup>21</sup> Evidence of a similar system exists on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea, but it is unusual and rather unrepresentative. In 1224, Vitslav I of Rügen (r. 1221–1250) promised the merchants from Lübeck that if they were robbed and the thief could not be arrested, he would “reimburse what has been robbed personally.”<sup>22</sup> In 1254, Duke Wartislaw III of Pomerania-Demmin (r. 1219–1264) promised all merchants who wished to visit his newly founded city of Greifswald—probably in order to make it more attractive—that if anyone happened to lose goods by spoliation in a well-defined maritime area around Rügen, he would reimburse them with double the value of their loss.<sup>23</sup> Such guarantees may have influenced the claims made by German merchants for compensation in even more remote regions. In their complaints to an unnamed prince of Vitebsk (c. 1300), the consuls of Riga, whose merchants had been tied, beaten, and robbed, demanded that he “repay their goods to these people, to whom all this happened on your lands and in your city.”<sup>24</sup> However, such claims remained infrequent and were usually dismissed. The German *conductus* never became dominant in the Baltic basin.

Although the word *conductus* was used by the Slavic and Scandinavian rulers from the thirteenth century onwards, especially in their relations with the German merchants who may have imported this concept, the level of protection it offered seems to have been much more modest than its Rhenish equivalent. This safeguard was usually free of charge for the individual guests—although the beneficiary group or city may have paid the prince to ratify the agreement.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the ruler claimed no responsibility if his guests were attacked by his enemies or by bandits. At best, he would order his officials to help the victims recover their goods, as the Danish King, Erik Menved (r. 1286–1319), did in 1287 after some merchants from Lübeck had been robbed under his conduct in Estonia.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, the Swedish Duke Erik Magnusson (r. 1302–1318) wrote to Lübeck City Council in 1312 “about the goods that have been unjustly robbed from your burghers on the Neva river, under our conduct,” and promised to “intervene carefully in our lands and cooperate with you as well as we can.”<sup>27</sup> Repayment was an option only if the prince’s own officials were responsible for the loss, as suggested



by Count Henry of Oldenburg's (r. 1233–1271) promise in 1262 that “we and all those who are or were at our service will bring no harm to [the merchants’] and their friends,” or the duke of Wolgast’s promise of “free conduct without any demand from our bailiff or officials” in 1302.<sup>28</sup> In this respect, the mid-fourteenth century Hanse cities may be considered as an intermediary ground where both levels of protection coexisted.<sup>29</sup>

The insufficiency of the *conductus* that the Baltic coastal communities were able to offer to their merchant guests may be explained by its maladjustment to a vast, scarcely populated, and mostly maritime environment. In the Baltic Rim, notions of *conductus* or *protectio* were frequently combined with more specific provisions, such as immunity in case of shipwreck, which granted survivors the right to keep salvageable goods. The customary *ius naufragii*, according to which stranded goods belonged to those who found them or to the local lord, was one of the most hotly debated legal issues in the thirteenth-century Baltic, and many rulers were urged by German merchants and by the church to abolish it in their lands.<sup>30</sup> In Livonia, immunity in case of shipwreck was usually associated with free access to the coast, the merchants being allowed to cut wood to repair their boats, to feed their horses in the nearest meadows, and even to search for, capture, and prosecute thieves.<sup>31</sup>

When it comes to the Novgorodians, they manifested their hospitality to their “winter guests” by taking them “on the prince’s hand” (*uppe des koninges hant*, according to the German translation of the 1269 treaty), i.e., by sending an escort to meet them at the mouth of the Neva.<sup>32</sup> Such safeguards are mentioned in the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*, which states that Russian and German merchants interrupted their trade with the Novgorodians after they had been attacked by the Varangians in different places around the Baltic, and that “they sent no envoy to the Varangians, but they sent them away without peace.”<sup>33</sup> In contrast, Prince Andrey III Alexandrovich of Novgorod (r. 1294–1304) promised the German merchants that “if the way was not clear for them through the rivers, the prince would send his man to lead these guests and inform them.”<sup>34</sup> Such guarantees were appreciated and even requested by the German merchants; but from the hosts’ perspective, they may have been considered advantageous too, since they were easier to provide than compensation in the event of loss.

In comparison, safety may have seemed less difficult for the ruler to provide once merchants reached their target city. In this respect, the main objective was not to prevent trade conflicts between guests and

local population, for such conflicts were almost unavoidable, but rather to prevent them from escalating by elaborating upon common tools of dispute settlement.<sup>35</sup> Most of the time, the main issue was whether and to what extent the ruler would allow local customs and legislation to apply to the guests to the same degree as they applied to the locals, i.e., whether the former would be entitled to fair trials. This principle seems to have been commonly granted by Scandinavian rulers. For example, in Sweden, Earl Birger Magnusson (r. 1248–66) promised the Lübeckers that they would be judged “according to the laws of the land” (*secundum leges patrie*)—a right that was soon extended to people from other cities as well. Similarly, in Norway, the thirteenth-century *Law of Gulathing* stated that “every man is worth a trial when it comes to his goods,” and that “all foreign men coming to this land shall be given the same legal treatment as peasants.”<sup>36</sup> Most of the guarantees that the princes of Novgorod and Smolensk offered their guests show a close affinity to Russian domestic law.<sup>37</sup> Trade agreements sometimes even adapted the law of evidence when it was deemed too unfavorable to the guests. The so-called “treaty of the unknown prince” of Smolensk, which may have been elaborated around 1240, declared that

when a Smolensker trades with a German, the Smolensker will not take only a Smolensker as a witness. And similarly, a German will not take only a German as a witness. They will have to take both a Russian and a German as witnesses, and so it will be about testimony for all quarrels between a Smolensker and a German.<sup>38</sup>

Similarly, a privilege issued by King Erik Menved allowed Dutch merchants from Harderwijk to “freely use the German tongue or another that they know” when they had to take an oath before a Danish court.<sup>39</sup>

A trickier question was whether the guests should be allowed to form autonomous associations and jurisdictions within the host community. Travel associations (*Fahrtgenossenschaften*) existed at different levels, and some of them were even a prerequisite to long-distance trade, since they helped the merchants to defend themselves collectively or arbitrate internal disputes.<sup>40</sup> But from the local ruler’s perspective, acknowledging autonomous guest jurisdictions could mean sacrificing some of his own authority and risking being perceived as unjust by his subjects. The responses to this question, in form of concrete provisions, varied significantly from one marketplace to another; indeed, they varied not only

according to the communities' level of hospitality, but also to the number of guests and their specific demands. In Gotland, the German merchants had their own church, which they had started to build in the late twelfth century and which was consecrated by the bishop of Linköping in 1225.<sup>41</sup> In Novgorod and Smolensk too, the guests were allowed to build their own church, along with a courtyard where they could lodge and gather during their stay—the Peterhof of Novgorod—although some of them continued to find lodging outside.<sup>42</sup> In 1298, Polish Duke Władysław I Łokietek (Ladislaus the Short, r. 1267/1320–1333) allowed the merchants of Lübeck to build a yard (*pallacium*) in his city of Gdańsk, “in which they shall store their goods and merchandise and judge all their judicial, civil, and criminal cases.”<sup>43</sup> In Scania, where thriving seasonal fairs developed around the herring fisheries in the late twelfth century, small land concessions (*vitten*) were given by the Danish kings to the many German cities involved in this trade. These agreements allowed the city councils to appoint their own bailiffs to settle internal disputes among the merchants, whose huts (*boden*) piled up in the *vitte*.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, no such infrastructure is known in the Swedish kingdom except for Gotland, perhaps because the well-attested winter guests were few enough to be lodged by the trade cities' inns and their burghers.<sup>45</sup>

Yet, within the confines of the host community, providing safety to foreign merchants was never an easy matter. When giving legal guarantees to his guests, a ruler always had to consider not only his own interest, but also the interests of his population: to what extent were locals willing to provide hospitality to trading merchants? The evidence from Novgorod shows how easily conflicts could escalate and spin out of the prince's control. For instance, in the late thirteenth century, a German embassy was dispatched to recover goods that had apparently been stolen from the merchants sometime before.<sup>46</sup> Although the emissaries never actually met the prince, the report they addressed to their home cities shows that he accepted no responsibility for misdeeds that had allegedly been committed against his will. In a meeting between the German emissaries, the Novgorodian alderman Symen, and four of the prince's men, the alderman shifted liability on to the ruler, according to the “letter of justice that the Lord Prince had elaborated between him, us, and the Germans”—i.e., Prince Yaroslav Yaroslavich's treaty of 1269. However, one of the prince's men responded:

What does the Prince have to do with this? The Lord Prince does not have these goods, you Novgorodians have them and you shared them with your *smerdis*. The *smerdis* are yours and therefore you must respond by the law.<sup>47</sup>

As no agreement could be reached, the Germans ultimately left Novgorod empty-handed. On their way home, they were overtaken by a princely emissary, who insisted that the prince had sworn his innocence in this case, and that although the Novgorodians claimed they wanted to keep their written agreements with the Germans, they had the spoils and were the only party responsible for the robbery. Therefore, the prince said, “if you are men, give them back what they have done to you, and reciprocate as well as you can.”<sup>48</sup> This utterly surprising behavior suggests that the merchants may have been the collateral victims of an internal conflict between the prince and the Novgorodians. Unable to provide safety, he had no option but to encourage his guests to retaliate themselves.

It thus appears that the safety of guests could never be taken for granted. Although both the prince and the Novgorodians seem to have been aware of the commitments they had sworn and written down, and of the legitimacy of their guests’ claims—the only disagreement between them was about liability—they had failed to provide the protection they had promised. On the other hand, whereas safety on the way raised the question of a ruler’s ability to control his sometimes vast lands, the case makes clear that safety on the spot also depended largely on the various components of the host community’s friendliness toward the guests and its willingness to engage in trade.

## CONDITIONS OF TRADE HOSPITALITY

Trade hospitality was everything but unconditional. As discussed in the introduction to this volume, the status of guests included rules and boundaries that rulers and local populations expected foreign merchants to follow. Most importantly, the presence of merchants was accepted only because it was judged beneficial or even necessary to the community.

Although economic interests must often have played an important role in how communities welcomed merchants, they were rarely spelled out in quite so much detail as they were in the above-mentioned speech of King Sverre, where English merchants were far more preferable to the troublesome and undesirable German trade.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, most trade treaties

discussed in this paper were issued by rulers concerned with expressing their superior rank, which usually left little room for expressions of gratitude.

The host communities mostly made their economic expectations clear in periods of food shortage, as illustrated by the letter that the bishop of Polotsk sent to Riga in the late thirteenth century about a newly reached trade agreement:

I was not at home but with my father the metropolitan; but now I am back to my position and to St. Sofia, and I have heard of your lawful friendship with my son Vytenis. Just the same, my children, was your first friendship with the Polotsker, my children: all what you need shall be yours; and you, make sure that my sons will not lack of what they need. You may now bring grain to Polotsk.<sup>50</sup>

Similarly, when Lübeck suspended its trade with Norway in the mid-thirteenth century, King Haakon IV Haakonsson (r. 1217–1263) had no choice but to ask them to “send us your ships in the summer as usual, with grain and malt, and allow our merchants license to trade, for there is a scarcity of such things in our kingdom.”<sup>51</sup> The same vital need for foodstuffs appears in the background of King Magnus III of Sweden’s (r. 1275–1290) charter to the German and Scandinavian merchants of Gotland from 1276, which allowed them to go and sell their goods at their discretion, “unless there is such dearth that no one, wherever he comes from, may refuse to sell his grains and meat.”<sup>52</sup> Although Western luxury cloths were undoubtedly highly appreciated, the Baltic communities could do without them; foodstuff, on the other hand, was considered much more necessary, especially in periods of shortage.

Regardless of the Baltic host communities’ commercial interests, we may identify at least four legal conditions that they imposed on their guests: reciprocity, observance of spatial and temporal boundaries, legal compliance, and peace-keeping.

(1) Reciprocity clauses have sometimes given rise to lively debates, since they were, quite inappropriately, considered as evidence that merchants from both parties must have taken part in long-distance trade. The most famous example of such discussions is the so-called “Treaty of Artlenburg” concluded by Duke Henry the Lion with the Gotlanders (1161), whose reciprocity clause has for a long time been interpreted in German scholarship as a sort of Trojan horse meant to help German

merchants gain a foothold in Gotland, a claim Scandinavian research has fiercely denied. Most scholars now acknowledge that the sources do not allow for such readings.<sup>53</sup>

Indeed, reciprocity clauses were frequent in twelfth- and thirteenth-century trade treaties, even in charters given by Scandinavian rulers to German merchants. At the end of his privilege to the Lübeckers, the Swedish ruler Birger Magnusson demanded “insistently that you honor those who would like to come to you from our lands as your people; and in return, we will honor those who come from your city as our people.”<sup>54</sup> Claims for reciprocity played a major role in the conflict between the Norwegian kingdom and the German cities in the late thirteenth century. In 1285, King Erik II of Norway (r. 1280–1299) offered some liberties to the German merchants, “provided that the merchants of our realm sailing to your cities will have and receive from you the rights, liberties, and other things they used to have in the past.”<sup>55</sup> One year later, Duke Haakon, later King of Norway (r. 1284–1299), informed the Germans that since a truce had been reached, they would be allowed to stay in Oslo again: “therefore,” he demanded “that you return the favor to our men crossing the sea to your places.”<sup>56</sup> In 1294, the king and the duke concluded their final treaties with the Germans by stating that its provisions will only be valid “if all liberties are granted by the same cities to our men.”<sup>57</sup>

Reciprocity clauses were especially important in the trade charters granted by the Russian princes, especially those of Smolensk. Prince Mstislav Davidovich’s (d. 1230) treaty of 1229 stated this principle for the first time in its preamble: “a law was written, which must apply to the Russians in Riga and on the Gotlandic coast and equally to the Germans in Smolensk.” This was repeated in practically all of its almost 40 provisions, with sentences such as: “the same right shall be given to the Russians in Riga and on the Gotlandic coast.”<sup>58</sup> Most provisions contained in the treaty of the unknown Prince of Smolensk (c. 1240) were formulated according to the Russian guests’ perspective, though the provisions always specified that “the same [law] shall apply to the Germans in Smolensk.” This observation is all the more significant as some of these articles refer to a specifically Russian context. For example, Prince Mstislav Davidovich’s treaty specified that Russian carriers would have to help the Germans cross the so-called *volok*—i.e., to transport their wares from the upper Daugava River to the Dnieper:

And when a Voloker loads German or Smolenscian wares in his carriage to take them over the Voloĥ, and if some of the wares are lost, then all the Volokers shall pay. *The same right will be given to the Russians in Riga and on the Gotlandic coast.*<sup>59</sup>

Examples like these have led commentators to conclude that such reciprocity clauses were most likely of only symbolic value, since the German-Russian treaties are thought to have fostered German trade in the Rus', rather than the opposite.<sup>60</sup> While the merits of such a conclusion are debatable, for the present purposes such provisions illustrate the importance of reciprocity in Baltic conceptions of trade hospitality.<sup>61</sup>

(2) Guests had to comply with the spatial and temporal provisions of hospitality. These limitations, however, differed from place to place, and guests were sometimes given the option of negotiating them. Thus, most Russian and East Baltic princes accepted the German merchants' requests to go further inland and trade with Karelian Finns and other Russian principalities, so long as they did so at their own risk.<sup>62</sup> But the most important concern was that their guests remained on well-established and secure tracks, as expressed by their promise to provide a "clean way" (Rus. *путь чистый*, Ger. *reine weg*). The guests heading to Novgorod were required to find and take on an envoy for their journey. In the letter that the prince of Novgorod sent to the German cities in 1300/1301, he promised them "three land ways through my lands and a fourth one through the rivers."<sup>63</sup> In 1338, a treaty concluded by the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order and the city of Riga with the Lithuanian prince granted safety to the merchants on both banks of the Daugava and "as far as they can throw a spear."<sup>64</sup> The purpose of the last condition must have been to secure a space specifically dedicated to trade in the context of recurring raids.<sup>65</sup>

By comparison, the Scandinavian boundaries of economic hospitality look different, both in shape and in purpose. Most of them were not aimed at securing trade routes, but rather at protecting the realm and its consumers against the negative effects of uncontrolled foreign trade. This is why in Norway foreign trade was prohibited north of Bergen, and the ordinance adopted by the burghers of this city in the name of their king in 1282 denied their guests the right to buy cattle from the inland farmsteads.<sup>66</sup> In Sweden, the town legislation elaborated by King Magnus Eriksson around 1360 specified that "no guest shall ride up into the land to trade or to require payment of a debt."<sup>67</sup> Such limitations may

also be explained by fiscal considerations. In any case, even if one cannot exclude that similar limitations had long existed at the local level, most such provisions found in the sources from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries—be they in Scandinavia or in the Rus’—seem closely related to the consolidation of princely authority and the constitution of large-scale political entities.

(3) A third condition of economic hospitality was compliance with local laws and customs, even if it was admitted that some of those needed adapting in order to apply to foreigners. In Scandinavia, this aspect was considered a natural counterpart to the legal protection enjoyed by foreign merchants: since the guests were to be protected by the “laws of the land,” they were also expected to abide by them. This condition seems to have been straightforward for the German merchants themselves, according to the principle that the ruler should “make a full complement of justice [*plenum iusticie complementum*] according to the laws of the land,” which is expressed through very similar formulas in many of their Scandinavian charters.<sup>68</sup> The Swedish ruler Birger Magnusson’s much-discussed provision allowed Lübeckers to “stay some time with us and live in our realm” if they agreed to “use and be ruled by the laws of our land and henceforth be called Swedes” should therefore be considered as two-sided. It was neither a simple guarantee of safety nor just a means of preventing the creation of autonomous alien communities in the Swedish realm, as has frequently been argued,<sup>69</sup> but both at the same time, as suggested by the double verb “use and be ruled by” (*utantur* and *regantur*) and by the reciprocity clause that immediately follows. Legally speaking, such longer-term immigrants were supposed to cease being guests.

From the Scandinavian rulers’ perspective, such conditions were particularly important for those guests who planned to stay for an extended period of several months, if not years. This type of guest ought to participate in some of the tasks, burdens, and activities that were essential to community life. Admittedly, King Magnus III’s privilege of 1276 exempted all merchants of Gotland planning to winter in Sweden from paying two ordinary taxes, *byargäld* and *allmänningsgäld*. These taxes seem to have been paid by all local men, even if their exact nature remains uncertain<sup>70</sup>; but since this provision is not mentioned in any other privilege, Magnus III’s exemption may be the exception confirming the rule. Around 1360, *Magnus Eriksson’s Town Law* still stipulated that guests had to pay the ordinary taxes “if they stayed in town for Christmas and



Easter.”<sup>71</sup> In Norway, *Magnus Lagabøte’s Town Law* (1276) specified that all men could be summoned to take part in the night patrols, and that merchants were expected to help haul large ships ashore if they stayed in town for more than three nights.<sup>72</sup> These obligations were deemed to be excessive by the Germans; they quickly negotiated a privilege stating that these obligations would only apply to those merchants who wintered on the spot. After renewed conflicts, the privilege of 1294 exempted all German guests (*hospites*) from night patrols, but in 1320, a new ordinance insisted that “foreign winter residents” had to abide by the town law just “like other Norwegians” (*sæm aðrer Norðmenn*).<sup>73</sup> Thus, despite the concessions that some merchants managed to obtain, guests remaining in Scandinavian realms over winter were generally expected to contribute to communal life and were liable to the same sorts of duties—including the requirement to defend the realm against external aggressors—as were the regular subjects of their host realm.

(4) Many charters that addressed trade hospitality stressed the importance of upholding of peace, which in its broadest sense meant the absence of war, danger, and violence.<sup>74</sup> This was especially true for the German-Russian trade treaties. Rather than emphasizing their strong connections with Russian domestic law, they usually expressed their ambition to “restore peace” by creating a law “that would be held by the Russians with the Latin tongue and by the Latin tongue with the Russians.”<sup>75</sup> However, the notion of peace also recurs throughout the preambles of German-Scandinavian trade treaties, such as Henry the Lion’s treaty with the Gotlanders (1161), which sought to “replace the bad dissension between the Germans and the Gotlanders with the old unity and concord,” and to put an end to “the various wrongdoings – which are aversions, enmities, homicide – caused by the dissension of both people.”<sup>76</sup> Birger Magnusson’s charter to the Lübeckers similarly insisted on the necessity of restoring a former peace, for “if the quarrels and disputes wisely settled by our ancestors must be revoked again and again in vain, men will never be able to find the secure concord of peace.”<sup>77</sup> Vague statements such as these were, of course, especially prominent in those treaties aimed at ending a period of conflict. The principle they express may, however, be seen as the base of all other conditions of trade hospitality.

Indeed, although the responsibility for keeping the peace lay with both parties, the hosts clearly expected their guests to attend to this closely. This was explicitly stated by the Novgorodians in 1331, after two Russians

had been killed in a night-time scuffle with a small group of armed and, apparently, drunk Germans in Novgorod. The next day, according to a merchant representative who reported this episode in a letter to Riga City Council, a mob gathered in front of the Peterhof and demanded compensation. Lengthy negotiations then ensued between the Germans and the Novgorodians and their officials, who allegedly threatened to kill all the guests. To settle the case, the Germans were finally summoned to “kiss the cross”—i.e., to take an oath—affirming a letter that reported the incident by presenting the Russian behavior in a very favorable light. Although humiliatingly biased, this account is of interest because of how it idealizes the Novgorodians’ reaction. They apparently told their guests: “Come and see the wounded and the dead. Why did you run out with an army in the night? *You are not our lords, you are guests!*”<sup>78</sup> One cannot discount the possibility that this account had been forged or exaggerated by the German merchants themselves, since they were trying to defend their position. At any rate, it seems clear that endangering the peace by brandishing arms and fighting with them constituted a severe offense against this fundamental condition of hospitality. In fact, a violation of this condition would most likely lead to an interruption of hospitality.

### EXPPELLING THE GUESTS—OR RETAINING THEM?

This raises the question of how the local population and authorities reacted when they thought that their guests did not abide by the conditions of their hospitality. What resources did they have to punish guests who violated peace, or who refused to comply with the local customs or submit to local justice? Arguably, the severity of the hosts’ response to violations of such conditions depended on the gravity of the guests’ offense. We may, however, highlight some typical strategies adopted by the host communities in order to solve this type of problem.

The most extreme way to deal with hostile guests was to expel them. As foreign merchants could hardly maintain themselves within a host community in which they had no support, the revocation of hospitality appears to have been a frequent consequence of more serious conflicts between hosts and guests. The Novgorodians expelled the so-called Varangians after their attacks on Russian and German merchants in 1188. This conflict seems to have lasted for twelve years, since in 1201, the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* states, “they let the Varangians go over the sea without peace.... And in the autumn the Varangians came by land

for peace; and they gave them peace at their own will.”<sup>79</sup> As a much later example, in 1397, the Lithuanian Prince Vytautas the Great (r. 1392–1430) suspended the trade peace (*kopvrede*) that the German merchants enjoyed in Polotsk and gave them four weeks to leave.<sup>80</sup>

In the twelfth century, such interruptions of hospitality were especially frequent when merchants were suspected of colluding with missionaries. According to Helmold of Bosau (c. 1120–after 1177), German merchants staying on Rügen in the autumn of 1168 were expelled by the Slavic prince after the pagan population had been warned that a priest had accompanied them and was preparing to hold a mass on their territory.<sup>81</sup> According to Henry of Livonia’s *Chronicon Livoniae*, the pagan Livs decided that all clerics who stayed in Livonia after Easter should be killed, and that “the [Christian] merchants who remained there would be killed” as well. This decision was a consequence of the battle that had opposed Bishop Berthold of Livonia (d. 1198) and his men to the local population during the winter of 1197/1198. In both cases, merchants were, rightly or wrongly, accused of supporting the host community’s enemies. In the latter case, however, the merchants, “taking thought for their lives, gave gifts to the elders” and thus saved their lives.<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, the unconditional expulsion of foreign merchants seems to have been rather unusual, and it often served as a last resort. So long as foreign trade was perceived as beneficial to the community, terminating all commercial interactions seemed counterproductive. Instead, when the Novgorodians were in conflict with their German guests, they consistently tried to force them to stay, all the while searching for the most favorable compromise possible. This was the case in 1331: the Germans remained confined in their yard for the duration of the conflict to the extent that their customary place of hospitality became as much a prison as a shelter. When a new conflict broke out six years later, the Novgorodians posted their people in front of the yard “and let no man out without their permission.”<sup>83</sup> And in 1406, the Peterhof managed to inform Reval that the Germans had been denied the right to leave Novgorod, thereby warning merchants on their way to the city of the danger.<sup>84</sup> From the Russian perspective, this strategy must have seemed rational, since as long as the guests were kept on site, so to speak, they remained a minority at the mercy of the ruler and/or the mob; conversely, once the guests departed, they gained a bargaining advantage and could negotiate their return more effectively. Such power relations were perfectly understood

by the German merchants themselves, who weaponized long-lasting and effective trade blockades for political and economic purposes.<sup>85</sup>

This guest-detention strategy was also a common way to deal with individual criminals. The Swedish town laws make clear that local authorities were concerned with preventing the culpable guest from leaving without first paying compensation for his offenses. When it comes to homicide, the thirteenth-century *Björköarätt* specified that a burgher who had committed such a crime would have forty days to leave town if he did not pay compensation. But, “if a guest kills a man and is found guilty with six witnesses, he shall not leave the city before he has paid the penalty for the murder,” which meant he was to be locked up in order to prevent him from escaping or from being killed by the victim’s relatives.<sup>86</sup>

If successfully implemented, the guest-detention strategy was undoubtedly a softer and preferable alternative to the principle of collective liability that local communities sometimes tried to enforce when the suspect could not be found. This principle was expressed by the Novgorodians in their conflict with the Germans after a Russian merchant was robbed and killed on the Narva river in 1337. According to a German account, the Novgorodian emissaries to the Peterhof declared that the two suspects—merchants named Velebracht and Herbord—were members of the German community, which made the community collectively liable. Because the Germans stated that all those present were innocent, the emissaries declared that “all the Novgorodians have sent us to you, and want you, as a pledge, to lay out as much good as what has been taken from our brothers.”<sup>87</sup> In some cases, this principle of collective liability could also serve as a justification for the reprisals that the local community might take against a missing suspect’s countrymen. Despite recurring German protestations, retaliation and the seizure of goods remained viable techniques of conflict management, although recent approaches suggest that aims behind such strategies were less about solving conflicts and more about forcing negotiations, and that they were often used in this way by the German cities themselves.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, the feuds that might result from retaliation often turned out to be harmful for both communities, which may have made this option undesirable.

From a conflict-management perspective, guest-detention may therefore have been a way of preventing the advantage that foreign merchants could gain from their mobility by forcing them to negotiate from a weak position. As such, it also helped to prevent escalation. On the other hand, the severe conflicts to which the sources bear witness should not

overshadow the less serious disputes that often go unmentioned. Trade agreements suggest that minor violations of the conditions of hospitality generated proportional responses. Most of the time, the hosts must have relied on their ability to solve such cases through arbitration or before the local courts.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Baltic trade hospitality from the twelfth to the fourteenth century abided by legal principles and conditions that were often shared across different regions and communities. The most widespread of these principles was reciprocity, which remained customary in Baltic trade agreements even when mentioned it may have been merely symbolic. Another recurrent condition of trade hospitality was the upholding of peace, and more generally the compliance with local laws and customs: foreigners' presence was accepted as long as it did not jeopardize a community's security or its internal social order. Other expectations were more community-specific, such as those touching on how guests were to be involved in communal life and duties, which seem to have been especially important in Scandinavia. Trade hospitality often seems to have taken place within specific temporal and spatial boundaries, but those seem to have been thought about differently from one marketplace or principality to another.

Although many Baltic communities were in principle open to foreign merchants, the conditions of trade hospitality were subject to a number of legal, political, and economic considerations that fundamentally revolved around the question of the risks and benefits that the guests' presence brought to the hosts. Trade agreements and negotiations show that communities and their rulers were concerned with their ability to securitize the presence of foreigners and trade, be it en route or on the spot, and were reluctant to promise protections that they might subsequently be unable to enforce. While the guarantees conceded by Baltic rulers may seem somewhat unambitious compared to those from other regions, the relatively low level of securitization of Baltic trade seems to have been adapted to the specificities of its maritime and scarcely populated environment. In this respect, the limited vocabulary of securitization should not obliterate the significant differences between the effective instances of peace and protections that were granted to strangers.

Altogether, the constant (re-)negotiations of the conditions of trade securitization leave little room for a moral economy of hospitality, where

foreign merchants would have been welcomed in accordance with a set of moral values and principles. Instead, commercial openness appears to have been a political choice that a community made after having carefully assessed the profits that it stood to gain.

## NOTES

1. For instance, Swedish scholarship usually considers that foreigners were called “guests” since they were supposed to be lodged by local members of the community (Holmbäck and Wessén 1966: 147–148, n. 182). However true this observation may be for Sweden, it does not apply to the Russian principalities, where many Gotlandic and German merchants remained *zocmu* (*gosti*) while they gathered in their own courtyards.
2. Benveniste (2016: 61–73).
3. Fell (1984), Lund (1987), Müller-Boysen (1990), Reuter (1996), Lestremau and Malbos (2013).
4. E.g., Grohse (2015).
5. For general context, see Blomkvist (2005), North (2011).
6. Adam of Bremen: lib. IV, c. 18, 244; LRC, v. 354–356, 9, Jezierski (2020).
7. Adam of Bremen: lib. II, c. 22, 79; Adam of Bremen: lib. IV, c. 18, 244–245.
8. Henricus: lib. I, c. 2, 2. On the Livonian crusades, see Bysted et al. (2012), Selart (2015).
9. Schlüter (1908: 492–499).
10. HUB, vol. 2, no. 505.
11. On the concept of piracy and how it appears in late medieval sources, see Prétou (2016: 93–116), Höhn (2019: 127–144).
12. Henricus, lib. VII, c. 2, 19–20, Henricus, lib. XXX, c. 1, 215–216, Blomkvist (2005: 344–345), Mägi (2018).
13. HUB, vol. 1, no. 15.
14. Dahlbäck (1998: 22).
15. Chronicle of Novgorod, s.a. 6739, 71.
16. Sverris saga, c. 104.
17. Ibid. Grohse (2015: 67–68, 71–73). Accordingly, the King Hákon Hákonarson’s privilege to the Lübeckers (1247–1248) specifies that “we do not want our merchants to import any Lübeck beer” (DN, vol. 5, no. 1).
18. Le Jan (2005), Lestremau and Malbos (2013: 36–44).
19. Schultze (1908), Schultze (1911), Thieme (1971), Jahnke (2014: 27), Nedkvitne (2014: 300). Trade peace agreements were frequently issued by host communities and their rulers since the Viking Age in order to

- provide their guests with some form of legal protection (Fell 1984; Lund 1987). See too Benham (2013). A trade peace (*kopvrede*) is mentioned in German-Russian trade relations as late as in the 1390s, see HUB, vol. 5, no. 247.
20. Goetz (1917: 93).
  21. This system may have been inspired of the *conductus* implemented by the count of Champagne to foster the growth of their fairs in the twelfth century, see Dubois (2001), Evergates (2016: 75–79). About the *conductus* in general, see Craecker-Dussart (1974), Kintzinger (2003), Haferlach (1914), Müller (1991), Rothmann (1998: 81–101).
  22. UB Lübeck, vol. 1, no. 27.
  23. Pommersche und Rügische Landes-Urkunden, no. 35.
  25. E.g., UB Lübeck, vol. 1, no. 215. On the system of customs in the Scandinavian realms, see Jahnke (2019).
  24. LECUB, vol. 6, no. 3059.
  26. DD, vol. II: 2, no. 409; DD, vol. II: 3, no. 276.
  27. DD, vol. II: 6, no. 473.
  28. UB Lübeck, vol. 1, no. 53; HUB, vol. 2, no. 17.
  29. On the *conductus* in the Hanseatic cities: Haferlach (1914).
  30. On the *ius naufragii*: Niitemaa (1955), Huschner (2017, 2018).
  31. LECUB, vol. 1, no. 453.
  32. Goetz (1917: 93).
  33. Chronicle of Novgorod: s.a. 6696, 39, Lind (1994), Blomkvist (2005: 461–465).
  34. LECUB, vol. 6, no. 3061.
  35. Cordes and Höhn (2018).
  36. Gutathingslov, c. 34, 20; c. 200, 71; SDHK, no. 629. Nedkvitne (2014: 300).
  37. It has been argued that some German-Russian trade treaties may have reflected an early Scandinavian legal tradition—supposedly dating back to early Gotlandic-Russian or Swedish-Russian trade treaties—rather than a genuinely Russian one (Yrwing 1940: 208–210; Blomkvist 2005: 447–459). Although the existence of such agreements is very likely, the argument is unconvincing: see Boestad (Forthcoming).
  38. Goetz (1917: 310), Ivanovs and Kuzņecovs (2009: 516). The Smolensk documents are quoted according to their edition by Aleksandrs Ivanovs and Anatolijs Kuzņecovs, which is the most recent and precise available edition. However, the dating of these charters and especially of the so-called “treaty of the unknown prince” are still debated. As Ivanovs’ and Kuzņecovs’ arguments on this matter are contested, this paper will follow the apparently dominant scholarly opinion, as expressed by Kučkin (1966: 105–106) and Petrukhin (2012: 394–396).

39. DD, vol. II: 7, no. 375. Such an adaptation of domestic law should not be interpreted as a form of rationalization of evidence, as often suggested (Cordes 2013: 295–296), but rather as an adjustment to inter-community conflicts.
40. Müller-Boysen (1990), Hammel-Kiesow (2015), Jahnke (2017).
41. SDHK, no. 434, Jahnke (2011: 29–47).
42. These aspects are addressed more specifically in Pavel V. Lukin’s contribution to the present volume. On the Novgorodian trade yards, i.e., the German Peterhof and the Gotlandic Gotenhof, see Rybina (1986). The oldest manuscript of the 1229 treaty of Smolensk (ms. E) mentions a “German church” (*немцькои б[о]жн[и]ци*), where the guests could keep their own weights. A later addition to this manuscript even mentions “the German houses and yards that were bought in Smolensk” (Goetz 2017: 284–285, 293; Ivanovs and Kuzņecovs 2009: 534, 536). Rybina (2001: 209–210).
43. HUB, vol. 1, no. 1288.
44. Jahnke (2000: 207–212; 2009: 173–175), Sicking (2016).
45. E.g. SDHK, no. 1000.
46. Lukin (2017: 525–527), Lukin and Polekhov (2018). This episode has usually been dated to 1292, although an alternative date of the early 1270s has been also proposed: Rowell (1992: 13–16).
47. HUB, vol. 1, no. 1093. On the problematic term *smerdis*, see Lukin and Polekhov (2018: 191–193).
48. HUB, vol. 1, no. 1093.
49. Sverris saga, c. 104.
50. LECUB, vol. 6, no. 3056. The Lithuanian prince Vytenis ruled from ca. 1295 to 1316.
51. DN, vol. 5, no. 1; Grohse (2015: 73–76). It may similarly be referred to King Eric II of Norway’s (r. 1280–1299) ordinance of 1282, which forbade German merchants from buying butter or stockfish during the winter, unless they had grain to sell in return (Norges Gamle Love, vol. 3, no. 2, § 2). In 1316, a new ordinance complained about German imports of “strong beer and cloths which our land does not need,” while exporting “what we need most and cannot do without, which is stockfish and butter” (Norges Gamle Love, vol. 3, no. 47); Nedkvitne (2014: 305).
52. SDHK, no. 1000.
53. HUB, vol. 1, no. 15. The German point of view has been defended, *inter alia*, in Rörig (1940: 4–13), Brandt (1956), Kattinger (1999: 85–109). For the Scandinavian criticism, see Yrwing (1940: 109–137), Blomkvist (2005: 415–441), Jahnke (2011: 32–36).
54. SDHK, no. 629.
55. DN, vol. 5, no. 13.
56. DN, vol. 5, no. 15.



57. DN, vol. 5, no. 23.
58. Ivanovs and Kuzņecovs (2009: 529–536), Goetz (1917: 235–236, 259).
59. Ivanovs and Kuzņecovs (2009: 532), Goetz (1917: 264–265) (quoted after ms. E), my emphasis.
60. Goetz (1917: 165, 247, 262, 273, 303).
61. It should be emphasized that this aspect was not specifically Baltic, since reciprocity clauses were also employed during the German merchants' negotiations with the countess of Flanders in 1252–1253 (Stein 1902: 74, no. IV).
62. Goetz (1917: c. 6, 84), c. 1a, 95.
63. LECUB, vol. 6, no. 3061.
64. HUB, vol. 2, no. 628 § 5.
65. Mažeika (1994: 71–72).
66. Norges Gamle Love, vol. 3, no. 2.
67. Magnus Erikssons Stadslag, Köpmålabalken, c. XXX, § 1.
68. This formula recurs with slight variations in Sweden (SDHK, no. 629), Denmark (DD, vol. II: 3, no. 111) and Norway (DN, vol. 5, no. 13), which may be explained by intertextuality.
69. Ahnlund (1929: 3–4), Dahlbäck (1998: 22), Gustafsson (2006: 20–21), Kattinger (1999: 438–439), Kumlien (1988: 9–10).
70. Line (2007: 231).
71. SDHK, no. 1000, Magnus Erikssons Stadslag, Konungabalken, c. XIX.
72. Magnus Lagabøtes bylov, lib. VI, c. 3 and 17.
73. DN, vol. 5, no. 10, 23; Norges Gamle Love, vol. 3, no. 64.
74. About the complexity of the medieval notions of peace, see Fell (1984), Lund (1987), Benham (2011, 189–191).
75. Quoted after the treaty of Smolensk, ms. A (Ivanovs and Kuzņecovs 2009: 563). Similarly, Alexander Nevsky's charter to the Germans (*ca.* 1259) “put all [disagreements] aside and concluded peace on this law,” on which see Boestad (forthcoming).
76. HUB, vol. 1, no. 15.
77. SDHK, no. 629.
78. HUB, vol. 2, no. 505. My emphasis.
79. Chronicle of Novgorod, s.a. 6709, 45.
80. HUB, vol. 5, no. 247.
81. Helmold of Bosau, c. 108, 374–375. Jezierski (2015: 148–150).
82. Henricus, lib. 2 c. 10, 11. Brundage (2003: 34), Jezierski (2020).
83. HUB, vol. 2, no. 599.
84. HUB, vol. 5, no. 751.
85. Poeck (2000), Nazarova (2005).
86. Bjärköarätt, c. 14, § 9–10.
87. HUB, vol. 2, no. 599.
88. There is no room here for a thorough investigation of this legal problem, see, however, Höhn (2021: 294–333).

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# German Merchants in Novgorod: Hospitality and Hostility, Twelfth–Fifteenth Centuries

*Pavel V. Lukin*

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the Novgorodians and the German merchants who would later form the Hanseatic League, from the late twelfth century until the fall of the Novgorodian Republic in 1478, presents a striking example of long-term and ongoing interaction between communities that differed in ethnicity, culture, and Christian denominations, within the broad geographical territory of medieval northern Europe. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Hanseatic merchants had effectively monopolized trade contacts between Northwest Rus' (Novgorod and Pskov) and Western Europe. The abundant resources controlled by Novgorod—mainly fur and wax—made the city one of the most important partners of the Hanse. As a result, one of the four Hanseatic Kontors, St. Peter's Yard, was established in Novgorod (the other three were in

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major economic centers of the time, such as London, Bruges, and Bergen in Norway).

Modern German and Russian historians have written a number of valuable works comprehensively covering the subject of Novgorodian-Hanseatic interactions.<sup>1</sup> These works, however, have focused not so much upon people and how they saw each other, and more on the structure of the trade, its legal basis, diplomacy (negotiations and treaties), and the history of St. Peter's Yard itself. Admittedly, such approach is to some extent supported by the very nature of sources. There is a unique corpus of sources allowing one to study contacts between Hanseatic merchants and Novgorodians—numerous documents dating mostly from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, written in Middle Low German, and related to the activities of the Hanseatic Kontor in Novgorod. Unfortunately, the Novgorodian archives from the Independence Era do not survive, yet some important evidence can be found in Novgorodian sources, particularly chronicles and literary works. To repurpose a well-known saying: in Hanseatic correspondence, good news was no news. When relations between Novgorod and the Hanse were calm and peaceful, the parties had no claims against each other and did not leave a paper trail. Only when problems arose did extensive correspondence emerge, sometimes between the Hanseatic cities themselves (in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, these were mostly the main Hanseatic cities of Livonia: Riga, Reval (Tallinn), and Dorpat (Tartu)), between these cities and Novgorod, and between the Hanseatic cities and the Kontor in Novgorod. To some extent the same is true for the extant Novgorodian sources. Novgorodian chroniclers, just as their Western counterparts, were mostly interested in out of the ordinary events, such as church-building, natural disasters (viewed as acts of God), and wars and conflicts, especially including those involving the Hanse. Nevertheless, upon closer examination, especially if one pays attention not only to what the sources say explicitly, but also to what they say implicitly, the picture becomes more nuanced.

In recent decades, both Russian and German scholarship has seen a number of works exploring the relationships between the Novgorodians and the Hanseatic merchants outside the “hostility paradigm,” but even these hardly explore the subject of hospitality.<sup>2</sup> Not so long ago, the question of how members of a Hanseatic Kontor and locals perceived each other was raised with reference to Bergen in Norway, and some

methodological approaches were suggested. These—after some adaptation, since the author’s focus was on how people from the Hanse saw the “others” (the Norse, the English, and the Dutch)—are applicable to the Novgorodian situation as well.<sup>3</sup>

As the introduction to this volume suggests, the notions of hospitality and hostility are not unambiguous and can hardly be separated clearly from each other. Immanuel Kant in his essay *Toward Perpetual Peace* argues that “hospitality (a host’s conduct to his guest) means the right of a stranger not to be treated in a hostile manner by another upon his arrival on the other’s territory.” But what exactly is “a hostile manner?” What Kant then cites as a classic example of inhospitable behavior is precisely those relationships based on trade: “If one compares with this [hospitality towards strangers] the *inhospitable* behavior of the civilized states in our part of the world, especially the commercial ones, the injustice that the latter show when visiting foreign lands and peoples ... takes on terrifying proportions.”<sup>4</sup> Kant implicitly alluded to European colonialism, in which even commercial relations (presumably, mutually beneficial) were permeated by the ideas of political, cultural, religious, or ethnic superiority. These ideas would be incompatible with true hospitality. So, how do the Novgorodian-Hanseatic relations and attitudes toward each other fit into Kant’s perspective? To what extent were these relations determined by hostility of the type described above? If, despite all the disputes and conflicts, they were indeed largely based on the recognition of the guests’ right “not to be treated in a hostile manner,” which would include granting them (at least theoretically) the right to security, then these relationships should also be seen in the context of hospitality.

Below I will argue that, although relationships between the residents of the Hanseatic Kontor in Novgorod and the locals were far from idyllic, they cannot be considered as entirely hostile. They seem to be best described as a kind of ambiguous hospitality.

### THE INFRA-STRUCTURE OF HOSPITALITY AND ITS LEGAL ASPECTS

The main residences of the Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod were the so-called “trading yards.” During the period between the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, two such yards can be identified, though both had been established long before. The “Gothic Yard,” named after the Isle of Gotland in the Baltic Sea (an important point of the trading

routes from Northwest Rus' to Scandinavia and Northern Germany), had certainly existed by the late eleventh or early twelfth century. There is some evidence that St. Olaf's Church, founded by the Scandinavians and situated within the Gothic Yard, could have well functioned in the second half of the eleventh century: a runestone from Sjusta in Central Sweden (U 687) bears an inscription in the memory of a certain *Spjall-bödi*, who died in St. Olaf's Church in *Hólmgarðr* (the Old Norse name of Novgorod).<sup>5</sup> This runic inscription was produced by the rune carver Öpir (ØpiR) who was active in the second half of the eleventh century and the beginning of the twelfth century.<sup>6</sup> In 1152, the Novgorodian chronicle mentions a Varangian, that is Scandinavian, church in Novgorod.<sup>7</sup> The 1268 draft of the treaty between the German cities and Novgorod mentions on several occasions the "court of the Goths" (*curia Gotensium*), and it even once refers to "the court of the Goths, with St. Olaf's Church and churchyard."<sup>8</sup>

The second, "German Yard" was from its beginnings used by German merchants. Its first mention is found in the same 1268 draft treaty (*curia Theuthonicorum*), but it had almost certainly existed before this date, and had likely been founded in the late twelfth century.<sup>9</sup> Its other name, derived from St. Peter's Church, was "St. Peter's Yard" (Peterhof), and it was this name that was extended to the whole Hanseatic Kontor in Novgorod, which was initially run by the German merchant community of Gotland, then by Lübeck, and, finally, by the Hanseatic cities of Livonia (Riga, Reval, and Dorpat). The Gothic Yard also became part of the German Hanseatic Kontor, which rented it from Gotland.<sup>10</sup>

In the first half of the fifteenth century, in the heyday of the Novgorodian-Hanseatic trade, the total number of German merchants of various ranks staying in Novgorod sometimes reached about 200 (as was the case in 1430s),<sup>11</sup> which may have made up approximately 1% of the total population of Novgorod at the time. The status of Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod was ambiguous. On the one hand, they were normally expected to stay within enclosed quarters, or yards, although even this, as we shall see below, was not always followed in practice. Both the Hanseatic and Novgorodian authorities sought to minimize their contacts with locals. On the other hand, complete isolation was neither possible nor actually desirable. Commercial tasks required interaction on a regular basis, ranging from day-to-day contacts to invitations for representatives of the German trading community to attend the local popular

assembly, the *veche* (Low German: *in eme openbaren dinghe*, as it was in 1425).<sup>12</sup> Novgorodian authorities tried to make Germans participate in the roadway paving or its financing (which was a kind of duty imposed normally on local communities).<sup>13</sup> So when it came to everyday business, guests could be considered as a part of the hosts' community. Naturally, this made the issue of the hospitality/hostility toward the Hanseatic merchants routine and dependent on particular circumstances.

All conflicts between the Novgorodians and Hanseatic merchants, according to the treaties between Novgorod and the Hanse, were to be solved legally, a provision which was first specified in the treaty of 1269.<sup>14</sup> Monopolizing relationships with Hanseatic merchants was considered particularly important by the Novgorodian authorities. Treaties between Novgorod and the grand dukes of Vladimir (later, of Moscow), who since the second half of the thirteenth century were also recognized as princes of Novgorod, repeatedly included a clause under which princes were not allowed to interfere with the relationships between Novgorod and the community of German merchants in the republic. It was first enshrined in the 1268 treaty between Novgorod and Grand Duke Yaroslav Yaroslavich (1230–1271): “And you, prince, shall trade at the German Yard [only] through our brothers,<sup>15</sup> and you shall not close the Yard and shall not put your bailiffs there.”<sup>16</sup> Thus, the princes and any merchants “from the *Huz*” (literally “from Below”), i.e., from Northeast Rus', were allowed to trade only via Novgorodian intermediaries, but not on their own. Nor they were entitled to exercise any administrative or judicial powers over the community of German merchants.

The key role of handling disputes with the community of German merchants in Novgorod was assigned to one of the three higher magistrates of the Novgorod Republic, the *tysyatsky* (literally “thousandman,” while the German sources call him *hertoch*, duke). Disputes of grave importance were to be heard “at the yard of St. John's, in the presence of the *posadnik*, the *tysyatsky*, and the merchants.”<sup>17</sup> Put differently, such cases were to be considered by the court represented by the *tysyatsky*, another (and the main) Novgorodian magistrate known as the *posadnik* (in German sources, *borchgreve* or *borgermester*, burgrave, burgomaster), and the chiefs of the Novgorodian merchant communities, in front of the Church of St. John the Baptist-on-Opoki at the Market Side of Novgorod. In reality, this procedure was often neglected, however. The *tysyatsky* could make decisions about contentious cases at his home, claiming that the local bailiffs (*vögte*) of the Hanseatic cities also judged

at any place of their choice<sup>18</sup>; or, even worse, the hearing might be interfered with by the Novgorodian popular assembly, the *veche*. If this was the case, things could go as far as they did in 1425, when, according to the Novgorod-based Hanseatic merchants, during an especially bitter conflict the Novgorodians “for five days would summon one or two assemblies daily on our case, so sometimes they were standing there until after lunchtime, and they came to the assembly running like rabid dogs, as if some wanted to have us boiled and others – roasted, and the very least they wanted was sending us shackled to the house of the bailiff.”<sup>19</sup>

In spite of numerous conflicts, the best type of relationship between Novgorod and the Hanse was nevertheless considered to be described as a “solid” (i.e., stable, uninterrupted, and long-lasting) peace. When, in 1392 following a long-running conflict, Novgorod and the Hanse made the so-called “Niebur’s Peace Treaty” (named after Johann Niebur, Ratmann and Burgomaster of Lübeck, who participated in the negotiation and signing of the treaty), a Novgorodian chronicler viewed the treaty as follows: “The same winter ... the ... envoys of the *Nemtsy* came to Novgorod, and took their merchandise; and kissed the Cross, and began to build their yard anew, because for seven years there had been no stable peace.”<sup>20</sup> While the chronicler’s lines are indeed laconic, which is quite typical for the Novgorodian literary tradition, it is still clear that good relations with the Hanse were seen by the Novgorodian elites as the norm. Naturally, the norm was interpreted by the Novgorodians to their advantage, but this was also true for the Hanseatic people.

The administration of St. Peter’s Yard, for its part, tried to limit any unauthorized interaction between German merchants and the Novgorodians. Among other things, the statute of the Yard (the *Schra*, in the fourth recension, dating from the second half of the fourteenth century) had a clause forbidding Germans from allowing Novgorodians to stay with them at night (“when dogs are let out”) under penalty of a fine. However, justifications for the ban were not of a political, ideological, or moral nature, but much more down-to-earth: the authors of the statute feared that if any Russian stuck around, the guard dogs released at St. Peter’s Yard at night might bite him and the Hanseatic community would thus face a lawsuit.<sup>21</sup> Home delivery of silver from the yard to Russians was also prohibited.<sup>22</sup> The statute also totally prohibited the Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod from playing dice, but the fine for playing “at Russian yards,” i.e., when staying with Novgorodians, was five times higher, and the perpetrator would consequently be stripped of “the Yard’s

rights,” that is, expelled from the Kontor.<sup>23</sup> At least during the night, the expectation was that this space of hospitality would be sealed off.

Special emphasis in the *Schra* and other Hanseatic regulations of trade between the Hanse and Novgorod was placed on outlawing the so-called *borch*. This word, in the context of the Novgorodian-Hanseatic relationships, referred to a broad range of practices, which included any kind of trade outside of a normal trade-exchange interaction taking place at the designated place and time. During a period when bartering was predominant, this mostly meant the direct exchange of commodities. The receipt of the goods had to be immediately followed by payment on the spot. Fixed monetary prices (presumably in Novgorodian *grivnas* of silver, and later in *rubles*) were only set for equivalent quantities of goods from each party.<sup>24</sup> The Hanse sought to minimize—or even outlaw—all other kinds of trade, e.g., buying or selling a commodity in one city under the obligation to exchange it for some other commodity in another city at the agreed time. The Novgorodian *Schra* (the fifth recension, dating from the end of the fourteenth century) has a clause directly banning such practices: “Of trading on credit. Furthermore, German merchants should never buy from, or sell to, any Russian in Novgorod any goods on credit, but [should] accurately and fairly trade one [kind of goods] for another. This is to be observed under the threat of exclusion from the yard [i.e. St. Peter’s Yard] and a fine of fifty marks.”<sup>25</sup> The prohibition against trading on credit was justified by the objective to avoid overpayment and fraud; but at the same time, it essentially limited any informal interaction with the Novgorodians.<sup>26</sup> Thus, all these measures were supposed to provide security to the community of the German merchants in Novgorod. However, this desire for self-security was balanced by the need to remain in contact with locals, and in many respects, it contradicted the very nature of trade. This fact created a very specific, ambivalent kind of rhetoric present in both Hanseatic and Novgorodian sources, one vacillating between segregation and hospitality.

### AMBIVALENT RHETORIC OF (IN-)HOSPITALITY

The policy aimed at limiting contact between the Novgorodians and the Hanseatic merchants was backed up by the ethnic rhetoric of segregation that dominated both Novgorodian and Hanseatic sources. The Russian sources consistently refer to Hanseatic merchants as Germans, while the Novgorodians in Hanseatic sources are often referred to not

just as Novgorodians, but as “Russians from Novgorod.” For instance, the sources mention a “Russian from Novgorod, called David” (*Rüsse van Naußgarden, de het Daewyde*),<sup>27</sup> or, the “senior Russian ambassadors from Novgorod” (*drapelike Rusche boden van Nowgharden*).<sup>28</sup> Most often, the Novgorodians were generically labelled as Russians. The word “Russians” in formal Hanseatic correspondence typically referred to the Novgorodian authorities in general, including “all Novgorod the Great,” that is, the political community of Novgorod represented by the *veche*. Thus, in 1401, envoys of the Hanseatic towns to the *Hansetag* (congress of representatives of the Hanseatic cities) in Lübeck specified that their message to Novgorod was directed to “...Russians, namely, the Archbishop of Novgorod, *nameesnicken* [officials representing the prince in Novgorod], burgomasters, thousandmen and all Novgorod the Great.”<sup>29</sup> Such classification may have been reinforced by the fact that the full name of the German Kontor (actually, the very term Kontor is of later origin) in the Novgorodian Independence Era included an ethnic self-identification: *de meyne Dudesche kopman to Nogarden* (“all of the German merchants in Novgorod”).

Even at the earliest stage when Scandinavian merchants used the Gothic Yard, attempts were made to limit contact between them and the Novgorodians, especially when it came to religious practices. The evidence from *The Questions of Kirik*, a text from the 1140s or 1150s (a record of questions that a Novgorodian hieromonk named Kirik asked the Orthodox bishops, especially Niphont, the archbishop of Novgorod, along with the answers he received), indicates that Novgorodians would sometimes take their children “to pray in the Varangian church.” This act was punishable by a six-week penitence, but the very fact of prohibition suggests that this illegal practice, in the eyes of the Orthodox hierarchs acting in their capacity of hosts, was not uncommon in Novgorod. The same text says that adherents of the Latin faith (that is, of Roman Catholicism) in Novgorod converted to Orthodoxy, which required the relevant canonical procedure.<sup>30</sup>

As far as the problem of definitions used by both parties for referring to each other is concerned, some of them can be described as exclusive. These, as mentioned above, particularly centered on ethnic definitions like *Nemtsy* or *Russen*, literally, “Germans” and “Russians,” though the meanings of these words are not identical with those of the present day. However, in some contexts and situations, other, more



inclusive designations were used. Such was the designation of Novgorodians as Christians. This religious characterization, at least implicitly, smoothed over the confessional differences between Roman Catholicism and Russian Orthodoxy.

In contrast, even the historian Norbert Angermann, who did not share the hostility discourse represented by mainstream scholarship, believed that the Hanseatic people and Novgorodians did not always see each other in negative terms, but rather in ambivalent terms. He went as far as to suggest that positive experiences contradicted the formal discrepancy between the religious beliefs of both parties. He also stated that the Novgorodian clergy used to instil hostility toward the Hanseatic merchants, while the latter, on the contrary, felt that their belonging to Roman Catholic Church was crucial for their identity, which led to hostility toward Orthodox Russians.<sup>31</sup> However, one should take into consideration the differences between historical periods and specific historical contexts, often ignored by historians. The Hanseatic people seem to have seen Novgorodians of the Independence Era (before 1478) and the Russians of Muscovy differently. The narrow religious designations of Russians appear in the Hanseatic correspondence only after the annexation of Novgorod by Moscow; the annexation of the city by a new, more powerful host may have changed the perception of its inhabitants in the eyes of the guests. Angermann cites two sources. A letter from the Reval authorities to those of Lübeck reports on “starting combat against the Schismatic Russians.”<sup>32</sup> However, this letter was written at the height of the war between Livonia (including the Hanseatic cities within the Livonian territory), allied with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, against Ivan III, Grand Duke of Moscow and All Russia (r. 1462–1505). Actually, the text was written on the day immediately following the battle at River Seritsa (Pskovian Land, south of Izborsk) on August 27, 1501, in which the Russians were defeated by the Livonians.<sup>33</sup> Naturally, in this context, any ambivalence toward the subjects of the Grand Duke of Moscow would have been out of place. Moreover, this document never refers specifically to the Novgorodians, and even though a Novgorodian unit was indeed present at Seritsa, as attested by a Pskovian chronicle, the newly established Novgorodian land-owners were actually Muscovite nobles who resettled the Novgorodian Land after Ivan III had forced the Novgorodian nobility out of there. Most important of all, the unit was commanded by the Grand Duke’s voivode.<sup>34</sup>

Another Hanseatic document from 1503 uses somewhat different wording but to the same effect, speaking of the damage caused on the part of “treacherous cursed Russians” (*der affgesneden vormaliedieden Russchen*).<sup>35</sup> The word *afgesneden*, past participle of *afsniden* (to split off) bears, among other meanings, that of a schismatic, sectarian, or heretic, i.e., a person who seceded from the Church. However, most notably in this case, it is used by a group of *Russian* merchants staying in Riga, who refer to some other Russians, their competitors, possibly from Polotsk!<sup>36</sup> Thus, this particular designation in this context likely bore no religious meaning at all, as both parties were presumably Orthodox, and must be interpreted as a mere insult.<sup>37</sup>

There is no good reason to see the Novgorodians—still less, Russians in general—as a homogenous mass sharing the same ideology and the same views about the Hanse, the Hanseatic merchants, and Western people in general. As evidence of the anti-Latin sentiment dominating Novgorod, Angermann cited *The Tale of Posadnik Dobrynia* (also known as *The Tale of a ropata*<sup>38</sup> in *Novgorod*), although he correctly identified this story as legendary.<sup>39</sup> There is no good reason to identify any genuine historicity in the *Tale*.<sup>40</sup>

However, this does not mean that the *Tale* is of no value for a historian. Its value is of a different nature though: among other things, it reflects a fifteenth-century Novgorodian’s idea of how the Hanseatic people should be treated. The *Tale* tells the tragic story of a certain Dobrynia, who, according to the legend, was once the *posadnik* (burgomaster) of Novgorod and was requested by “the Germans from all the seventy cities” to grant them a site for building a *ropata*, that is, a Roman Catholic church, in the city center dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. For a bribe, he agreed to give them a site at the marketplace, which then required removing the wooden Orthodox Church of St. John the Baptist and transferring it elsewhere. However, a judgment fell upon the burgomaster for this act. When Dobrynia was returning home from the *veche* (the popular assembly) by boat along the Volkhov, a heavy gale suddenly came; the boat was overturned and the burgomaster drowned. “For his own malignancy,” the author concludes, “he did not receive a proper burial as an Orthodox should.”<sup>41</sup>

Some details indicate that the author of the *Tale* belonged to the pro-Muscovite party, which, during the acute political conflict of the early 1470s in Novgorod, opposed those who favored the alliance with the

Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This is suggested by both its general tenor—indeed, strongly anti-Catholic—and its glorification of “our lords the Grand Dukes of Rus.” Novgorod is directly referred to as their *votchina* (inherited estate). One can naturally expect that a text of this kind would treat the “Germans” most harshly. However, even the *Tale* portrays them in somewhat ambivalent terms, to use Angermann’s words. On the one hand, the German guests’ request to build a Catholic church in the middle of Novgorod is denied, and the Novgorodians on that occasion are said by the *Tale’s* author to have cited the New Testament phrase, “and what communion hath light with darkness,” which clearly implies that the Catholics are seen as Satan’s agents. On the other hand, the beginning of the *Tale* says that the Novgorodians, at the time of the events, lived “in their freedom and with all lands had peace and harmony,” and this is followed by the account of how Germans sent “their ambassador from all the seventy cities.”<sup>42</sup> The Russian word for harmony used here is *sovokupleniye*, which, among other things, meant “unity, alliance, close relations.”<sup>43</sup> Thus, the author of the *Tale* apparently saw close cooperation between Novgorod and the Hanse, and saw the very fact of German presence in Novgorod as the norm. What vexes him is the eventual Catholic proselytism in Novgorod, rather than the German presence itself. This feeling of vexation, however, seems to have been shared by Novgorodian elites in general. The treaty (or perhaps the extant draft of it) that Novgorod made in 1471, shortly before the Novgorodians were defeated by the Muscovites at the Shelon River, at the initiative of its pro-Lithuanian party with Casimir IV Jagiellon, king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania (r. 1440–1492), has a separate clause specifying: “And thou, good King, shalt not build any Roman churches in Novgorod the Great, nor in the *prigorody* of Novgorod,<sup>44</sup> nor in the whole Novgorodian Land.”<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, Casimir, who was a Catholic, was accepted as a sovereign of Novgorod and his *namestnik* (governor) was invited to the city. Thus, not all forms of cooperation or alliance with the West were considered to be unacceptable in Novgorod, only those involving the construction of Latin churches.

Novgorodian chronicles, which were primarily written by the archbishops’ scribes, contain few if any religious invectives against German “guests” (*Nemtsy*) who traded with Novgorod; indeed, at least one reference of a quite different nature—flattering, in fact—survives. In 1230/31, autumn frost in the Novgorodian Land resulted in a severe famine, so that people were forced to eat horse, dog, and cat meat; even instances

of cannibalism occurred. Mass deaths ensued.<sup>46</sup> The following year saw deliverance come from the West, however. According to the chronicler, “God showed His mercy towards us sinners. He did His mercy quickly. The *Nemtsy* came from beyond the [Baltic] sea with corn and with flour, and they did much good, for this town was already near its end.”<sup>47</sup> Notably, here the *Nemtsy*—i.e., the merchant guests—are represented as agents of God’s will and divine mercy sent to the rescue of the host community, effectively assuring its food security. One should pay attention to the fact that this entry was written, as previously mentioned, by a chronicler working for the archbishop of Novgorod (likely Archbishops Spyridon and Dalmatius).<sup>48</sup>

A totally opposite set of qualities is given to the *Nemtsy* who waged wars against Novgorod, namely the Teutonic Knights and Swedes.<sup>49</sup> Again, there does not seem to have been a common view shared by all Novgorodians. There must have been some variety in contemporary views and a certain degree of rethinking after the fact. Details of this complex picture are elusive due to the nature of the sources, but some traces can still be observed. For instance, a chronicle entry describing an attack by *Nemtsy* (literally “Germans”) on the Novgorodian Land is succinct and virtually unemotional: “...for our sins the *Nemtsy* attacked Ladoga and burned it.”<sup>50</sup> The event in question is a 1313 incident when a Swedish troop raided Ladoga, one of the fortified outposts of Novgorod.<sup>51</sup> The later, revised Novgorod chronicles from the fifteenth century, however, recount the same event, but characterize the *Nemtsy* in pejorative terms, describing them as “our foes” and “accursed.”<sup>52</sup> Obviously, these accursed or cursed *Nemtsy* had absolutely nothing to do with the Hanse. Moreover, in these same years, in the early fourteenth century, they were busy at the Neva and Ladoga Lake robbing precisely those merchants from Lübeck who traded with Novgorod. There is little doubt that in the fifteenth century Novgorodian readers of these revised chronicles could harbor negative feelings toward the *Nemtsy* in general and, in particular, toward those living nearest to them, i.e., the guests inhabiting St. Peter’s Yard.

It is noteworthy that Hanseatic merchants could seek help or blessings from the Orthodox archbishop of Novgorod; the fact that, formally, the Catholics and the Orthodox were expected to see each other as schismatics and heretics does not seem to have been any hindrance at all to such interactions. The archbishop of Novgorod sometimes mediated between the Novgorodian authorities and the community of German

merchants in Novgorod. A striking example of this mediatory role is the abovementioned case of the 1425–1426 conflict, when the archbishop’s intercession for the Hanseatic merchants actually contributed to physically saving their lives.<sup>53</sup> An earlier Hanseatic message, from 1409, went so far as to refer to the current archbishop of Novgorod, John III (r. 1388–1415), as “our holy father” (*ynsen hilgen vader*).<sup>54</sup>

Ethnic and religious designations were only one of the available forms of rhetoric, even if they represented the most ideologically charged one. In practice, descriptions related to the status or activities of German merchants and their Russian partners could have held as much, if not more, significance. Sometimes, such designations were quite important in the context of hospitality. Thus, the treaties between Novgorod and the Hanse refer to the Hanseatic merchants as guests. This word sounds like the Middle Low German *gast* and Russian *gost’* (гость), and would have been mutually intelligible, despite the fact that the Middle Low German word did not bear the specific connotation that the equivalent in Old Russian had. Unlike in present-day Russian, the Old Russian *gost’* meant not only guest as stranger, but also served as a special term for a “merchant trading in another city or overseas.”<sup>55</sup> Whenever an Old Russian document was translated into Middle Low German, the word *gost’* would be rendered as *gast*. The notion of guest apparently had positive connotations in this context: a guest was one who had to be protected and cared for. This is directly stated, for instance, in a 1405 letter from the Novgorodian authorities to those of Dorpat offering to extend an earlier treaty beyond its original term: “We shall protect your guests as our [men] according to the cross-kissing, and you shall protect our guests according to the cross-kissing.”<sup>56</sup> Thus, the document mainly focuses on hospitality manifested through securitization, achieved in part by ritualistic and spiritual means.

A curious example of a search for an integrative rather than divisive rhetoric for Novgorod-Hanseatic relations is the use of the term “neighbors” (*сусѣду*, *nabers*) as a form of address. This was originally an Old Russian form of address, which was then borrowed by German partners and used in their own letters to the Novgorodian authorities. Interestingly, the Hanseatic translators used to render the Old Russian address “our neighbors” (сусѣди наши) into terms more common from the perspective of Western courtesy, adding adjectives such as *guden/leven* [*nabers*] (“good/beloved neighbors”).<sup>57</sup> The logic of hospitality, or, rather, good neighborliness, was thus manifested even at the linguistic level.

## EVERYDAY PRACTICES VS. STRICT LEGAL REGULATIONS

As demonstrated, even at the level of rhetoric, the Hanseatic people in Novgorod had never been generally portrayed as purely evil. In everyday life, this non-polarizing image of the “other,” despite all formal restrictions, provided opportunities for contacts between hosts and guests. This was possible through what might be termed an informal infrastructure and spaces of hospitality, which remain important for us to emphasize.

Regardless of the opposition from the Hanseatic cities and their prohibitions, German merchants could stay and keep their commodities at Novgorodian households rather than at St. Peter’s Yard. For instance, on May 5, 1421, the Dorpat authorities wrote to the authorities of Reval about some merchants who arrived to Novgorod from Narva and Neva and, apparently untroubled by the possible seizure of their property by the Novgorodian administration, they “stayed at Russian households” (*legeren zik up der Russen hove*), in defiance of the clause of the statute of St. Peter’s Yard.<sup>58</sup>

The prohibition against trading on credit (*borch*) was also repeatedly violated.<sup>59</sup> Thus, the letter of August 16, 1406, from the community of German merchants in Novgorod to the authorities of Reval, reports that the community’s assembly (*stevene*) raised the issue of offenses committed by two Hanseatic merchants, Bernd van Anklem and Claws Huxer. They were accused of “trading on credit with the Russians” (*hadden myd den Russen to borge gekopslaget*). In practice, this meant that Claws Huxer “traded here, in Novgorod, with two or three Russians, not in his own name, but on behalf of two or three other men.” Bernd van Anklem did the same, “and they arranged selling some dye and woolen cloth to the other party in Novgorod at the agreed price, in order to then get fur from a Russian in Narva and, in exchange, to supply this Russian with cloth.”<sup>60</sup> This piece of evidence reveals a network of informal and close interactions between Novgorodians and Hanseatic merchants. This network covered not just Novgorod, but also Narva, a town closely tied to the Hanse but not formally Hanseatic (Narva belonged to the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order). Due to its special status, this Livonian town was used both by Russians and the Hanse as a kind of neutral territory, a space of more equitable trade hospitality. This scheme apparently involved many people: contractors themselves, their suppliers, those who transported goods, and so on. These informal practices, which would have been impossible without mutual trust, point to the desire of both sides

(perhaps irrespective of the subjective will of each of them) to build up trade-based peaceful relations between different nations.<sup>61</sup>

Letters from the German merchant community in Novgorod to the Hanseatic cities of Livonia are full of complaints of injustice of the *tysyatsky* (thousandman) who, as specified in Novgorodian-Hanseatic treaties, was in charge of hearing disputes (see above). However, not only does the content of such complaints matter, but so too does the context in which they were made. A letter of July 1, 1407 from the German merchants staying in Novgorod to the Reval authorities complained about a delay in judicial proceedings: “we have visited the *hertog* [i.e. ‘thousandman’] many times, and each time he would let us go, saying nice words to us, but never gave us any clue we might hold on to, which raised our suspicions.”<sup>62</sup> Despite the delay, one of the three senior elected magistrates of Novgorod found it necessary to treat the Hanseatic merchants most courteously, speaking to them in “nice words” (*met guden worden*).

What often attracted the Novgorodians was the tavern that had been opened at St. Peter’s Yard, where high-quality German beer was served. The Hanseatic community in Novgorod, in a letter to the Reval authorities of December 13, 1412, demanded that this source of trouble be shut down: “Russians keep invoking the issue of the tavern run by the *hovesknecht* [steward of the Yard], in particular, of the trouble that can be caused by those Russians who come there for drinking, and the merchants think it a good idea that the tavern be suppressed.”<sup>63</sup> The administration of the German merchant community—at the request of the Novgorodian party in fact—struggled to control the Novgorodians’ insatiable thirst for German beer. A clause addressing this was even included in the statute of the Kontor, outlawing brewers from the Hanseatic Gothic yard: “no beer men who sell beer should stay at the Gothic Yard, as long as the St. Peter’s Yard stands, for through that the [Hanseatic] merchant community had a lot of trouble and received many rebukes from the Russians. So, we unanimously agreed that beer men who sell beer should not stay there [at the Gothic Yard].”<sup>64</sup> As we have seen above, prohibitions of this kind indicate that they were broken on a regular basis. Thus, the tavern (whatever the intentions of both parties were) de facto became a space of hospitality that was created, paradoxically, not by the hosts for the guests, but rather by the guests themselves. It was a space, if not directly intended for inviting the hosts, then at least it was likely used for informal interactions with them.

Getting down to an even deeper level of everyday practices, one can easily see what the strict prohibitions described above were worth in real life—not much. Probably in 1416, the Reval authorities gave instructions to their ambassadors leaving for Novgorod. During the negotiations with the Novgorodian authorities the ambassadors were expected, among other things, to raise the issue “of those young men staying in Novgorod who play dice and play board games [*up den worptafelen*], and [even] with women in the bath.”<sup>65</sup> Since the German merchant community in Novgorod was all-male, the women in question must have been Russian. They probably came to the bath of St. Peter’s Yard: the document clearly refers to a specific bath familiar to the authors.<sup>66</sup> Activities of this kind were, as already noted above, strictly prohibited by the *Schra*—at least in theory. Indeed, the *Schra* only explicitly forbade Novgorodians from staying at St. Peter’s Yard at night, but Novgorodian women playing games with German merchants in the bath would obviously violate the spirit, if not the letter of the regulations—as we recall, only dice as such were made illegal explicitly. Anyway, day-to-day contacts could not be effectively eliminated by either the Hanseatic or Novgorodian party, and the evidence cited by Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz indicates that the administration of a Kontor (in this case, Bergen) could well turn a blind eye on such inappropriate contacts if the latter did not directly threaten the security of the community.<sup>67</sup>

These and other informal contacts resulted in the emergence of a Novgorodian network of “secret friends” who would inform Hanseatic merchants of possible threats from the Novgorodian authorities. Such threats primarily concerned the seizure of their property and the detention of merchants themselves; neither was uncommon in the conditions of frequent trade wars between Novgorod and the Hanse.

The fact that the Hanseatic merchants had friends in Novgorod is attested to in a number of sources.<sup>68</sup> However, this subject has received little scholarly attention, at least in part because it does not fit into the discourse of hostility which had long prevailed in the historiography. Sometimes, such friendships gained political importance. Through such friends, the Hanseatic cities were often able to obtain important political information. On September 22, 1405, the German merchant community in Novgorod informed the Reval authority that Novgorod was visited by the ambassadors from Vytautas, grand duke of Lithuania (r. 1392–1430), and Ivan Mikhailovich, prince of Tver (r. 1399–1425), who demanded the extradition of Yuriy Sviatoslavich, prince of Smolensk



(r. 1386–1392, 1401–1404), the latter an ardent opponent of Vytautas, had fled to Novgorod. The Hanseatic merchants were informed by some “Russians” who also told them that the ambassadors “greatly threatened” the Novgorodians.<sup>69</sup>

Another document explicitly labels these political informers “friends” of the Hanseatic people, and even more specifically, “secret friends.” In the early fifteenth century, the Narva *hauskomtur* (an official of the Teutonic Order) wrote to the Reval authorities that “our secret friends” (*unse heimeliken vrunde*) sent reports from Novgorod about the relationship between Novgorod and Moscow.<sup>70</sup> In this context, *vrunt* is not merely a personal friend. This Middle Low German term corresponds to the Old Russian *приятели* (*priyatel'*) which involved not only personal attachment, but also belonging to one's circle of followers or sympathizers. A direct parallel to the evidence cited above is the *Novgorodian First Chronicle's* account of one of the most important events in the history of Novgorodian republicanism, which some scholars have called “the Novgorodian Revolution”—namely, the 1136 deposition of Prince Vsevolod Mstislavich (r. 1117–1132, 1132–1136) and the subsequent power struggle. The next year, after he had escaped to Pskov, Vsevolod decided to return, “wishing to take his seat again on his own throne in Novgorod, secretly called on men of Novgorod and of Pleskov, his friends.”<sup>71</sup> In this sense, it hardly matters whether the “friends” in question were actually personal friends, or were instead agents under the influence of the Hanse. The Middle Low German *vrunt*, just as the Old Russian *priyatel'*, could mean both a personal friend and a supporter or follower—the two meanings are not mutually exclusive.<sup>72</sup> What is important is that having such friends may have been a way of hacking or gaming the security system of the hosts, and therefore a method of protecting oneself.

Sometimes, the Novgorodian friends of the Hanseatic merchants warned them of dangers. Thus, in May 1409, the German merchant community in Novgorod cautioned the Dorpat authorities against any negotiations with Novgorod until the goods seized by the Novgorodian authorities were returned: “And we are advised by the Russians who want to be our friends to write to the [Hanseatic] towns and tell them that they should not send any mission here, nor make any negotiations until the goods are returned.”<sup>73</sup> This gives the impression that Novgorodians looked to the possibility of friendship with Hanseatic trade guests as something prestigious for them. In spite of all regulations on both

the Hanseatic and the Novgorodian side, personal contacts and hospitality between Novgorodians and Germans did exist and provided their interactions with an implicit but very significant background that cannot be overlooked if one wants to adequately understand how the mutually beneficial Novgorodian-Hanseatic relationship had been functioning for centuries.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The historiography of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was dominated by a very dark picture of the relationship between the Novgorodians and Hanseatic merchants. My observations do not corroborate this view and bring us to the conclusion that this Black Legend, which assumed that the relationship between the Novgorodians and German merchants had been predominantly hostile and based upon mutual distrust, needs to be revised. Indeed, it is not the case that the Black Legend should be replaced with a golden one. Rather, the lens of hospitality allows us to better account for the ambiguity of relations and attitudes between Novgorodians and Hanseatic merchants, which were highly dependent on political expediency and varied among social and political groups. Even the most conservative voices never advocated total hostility. The need for contact with the Hanse was both well understood by the Novgorodian political elites and, apparently, was not opposed by common people. Novgorod was able to shape a variety of notions and practices, which allowed it, despite conflicts, to efficiently maintain contact with the large German merchant community for centuries. At the same time, the desire of the authorities of the Hanseatic cities and of the leaders of the German merchant community in Novgorod for self-securitization was often in conflict with the need to maintain everyday contacts, including informal ones. This rapprochement was fueled, of course, not just by mutual interest at the interpersonal level—though this should not be underestimated—but by the fact that maintaining relations with the Hanse was vital for Novgorod. Moreover, there is some evidence that not only a narrow segment of the Novgorodian elite was interested in these relations, but so too was the broader community. This is indirectly confirmed by the range of Hanseatic commodities exported to Novgorod. Thus, the most popular broadcloth was that from Poperinge in Flanders, a cheaper and lower-quality option than the luxury broadcloth from Ypres. This indicates that the imported textiles were used not only by

the nobility, but also by the Novgorodian middle-class of tradesmen and craftsmen.<sup>74</sup> These were exactly the social groups that comprised the bulk of the people of Novgorod the Great, who enjoyed full rights. This was actually the key reason for why butter would ultimately overpower guns. Conflicts, despite all their rhetoric of threats, were always resolved peacefully. In full accordance with the model offered by Immanuel Kant, in the case of the relations between Novgorod and the Hanse, trade created if not an ideal, “perpetual peace,” then at the least it created a mental basis for reconciliation and compromise. As a result, both formal and informal structures of hospitality had survived until the Hanseatic Kontor in Novgorod was closed by order of Grand Duke of Moscow Ivan III in 1494.

## NOTES

1. See: Goetz (1922), Khoroshkevich (1963), Kazakova (1975).
2. See, for instance: Angermann and Endell (1989), Angermann (1994) (for a cogent critique of the hostility discourse of the earlier historiography, valuable remarks and well-posed questions); Squires and Ferdinand (2002), Squires (2009), Lukin (2018).
3. Wubs-Mrozewicz (2013). See the same work for a list of references to literature on “otherness” or “alterity” in the context of the Hanse and Hanseatic Kontors.
4. Kant (2006: 82–83).
5. Melnikova (2001: 7.29, 38–339), Zilmer (2005: 161–162) (see *ibid.* for the photo of the boulder with the inscription), Jackson (2010: 158).
6. Åhlén: 25–27. For valuable advice on Novgorod–Scandinavian relations and some other issues, I am grateful to Tatjana N. Jackson.
7. PSRL, 3: 215; For the English translation, see *Chronicle of Novgorod*: 21.
8. HUB, 1: no. 229–233, 663.
9. HUB, 1: no. 229–233, 663; Rybina (1986: 26–31).
10. Rybina (1986: 89–94).
11. Goetz (1922: 347–348).
12. LECUB, 1, 7: no. 221, 311.
13. DKU: 149–150; GVNP: no. 42, 75–76. On the legal status of the Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod, see also Feldbrugge (2009: 270–274).
14. GVNP: no. 31, 58–61.
15. Novgorodian merchants.
16. GVNP: no. 3, 13. On the date of the treaty, see Yanin (1990: 147–148).
17. GVNP: no. 31, 60.

18. HUB, 6: no. 359, 638.
19. LECUB, 1, 7: no. 221, 311.
20. PSRL, 3: 384; Chronicle of Novgorod: 162–163.
21. Schra: § 54, 141.
22. Schra: § 63, 143.
23. Schra: § 77, 147.
24. Goetz (1922: 356), Kleinenberg (1970: 137).
25. Schra: § 3, 127.
26. Goetz (1922: 361–363).
27. HUB, 5: no. 69, 119.
28. HR–1, 4: no. 362, 380.
29. HR–1, 5: no. 16, 28.
30. RIB, 6: 26–27, 60.
31. Angermann (1994: 193–195).
32. LECUB, 2, 2: no. 106, 162.
33. Bazilevich (1952: 477–478), Kazakova (1975: 222–223).
34. PSRL, 5, 1: 85. On the removal of Novgorodian landlords and the transfer of their lands to Muscovites after Novgorod had been annexed by Moscow, see Bernadskii (1961: 314–352).
35. LECUB, 2, 2: no. 321, 428.
36. LECUB, 2, 2: 321, n. 5.
37. См.: MHWB, 1: 40.
38. I.e., the Catholic church.
39. Angermann (1994: 194–195). There are three surviving recensions, of which one is very late, dating from the late 1500s or early 1600s. See Rybina (1978), Dmitriev (1989), Turilov (2019). As for the dates of the other two recensions and their textual relationships, opinions have differed. The generally accepted opinion has been that the earlier one is the so-called Volokolamsk recension, written between the mid-fifteenth century and early sixteenth century (the extant manuscripts date from the sixteenth century). However, Elena A. Rybina suggested that the earlier of the two was the other, Synodal recension (the seventeenth-century manuscript). She believed that this version had some historical basis that could be traced back to the twelfth century (Rybina 1978). However, her arguments are not convincing, and the Volokolamsk recension is most likely the earliest since the Synodal one is full of anachronisms. It is most likely the creation of a later author who might not even have been a Novgorodian, which can explain its serious flaws and inconsistencies. It seems that the Synodal recension of the *Tale* may have been inspired by one of the conflicts between Muscovy and its western Catholic neighbours, which often happened in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. This, however, along with the textual history of the *Tale* as such, is outside the scope of the present study.

40. Cf. Rybina (1989: 47).
41. Nikol'skii (1907: 107–110).
42. Nikol'skii (1907: 107).
43. SIRA, 22: 60.
44. Пригороды (literally suburbs) were towns in the wider land of Novgorod that were dependent on Novgorod the Great no matter where they were actually situated.
45. GVNP: no. 77, 132.
46. On the famine, see Pashuto (2011: 275, 278, 280) (the role of the Germans is nevertheless downplayed).
47. PSRL, 3: 70–71; Chronicle of Novgorod: 77.
48. Gippius (2006: 215).
49. The Swedes could be also referred to as *Nemtsy* (“Germans”) in chronicles, which is yet another reminder that “ethnic” definitions of this sort are somewhat fluid.
50. PSRL, 3: 94; the English translation in Chronicle of Novgorod: 118 is erroneous.
51. Shaskol'skii (1987: 69–71).
52. PSRL, 4, 1: 255; PSRL, 42: 87; PSRL, 6, 1: 371.
53. Lukin (2020: 102–104). Curiously enough, another work by Angermann does mention the fact that the Hanseatic merchants asked the archbishop of Novgorod for a blessing, an action that would only be possible if, first, they expected to receive his blessing (which indicates that the archbishop was not exactly raised in an atmosphere of hostility against German Catholics), and secondly, provided that they did not see him as a graceless schismatic (Angermann and Endell 1989: 89).
54. “Wy laten groten unsen hilgen vader Johanne, ertzbisschoppe to Nowgarden” (HUB, 5: no. 469, 892).
55. SDRYa, 2: 372–373; MHWB, 2,1: 23–24. On the cognate relationship between Russian *gost'*, Gothic *gasts* and German *Gast*, see Vasmer, 1: 447–448.
56. “wi wyllen juwen gast vorwaren gelyk den unsen na der cruskussynghe, unde vorwaret gy unsen gast na der kruskussynghe” (ГБНП: no. 48, 86).
57. См. об этом: Squires and Ferdinand (2002: 243–244).
58. HR-1, 7: no. 175, 308.
59. Khoroshkevich (1977: 132–133), Bessudnova (2019: 3–4). Marina Bessudnova sees these kinds of violations as an innovation that only became widespread in the fifteenth century; but, in my opinion, the reason for the seemingly higher frequency of such incidents at that time is a straightforward preservation bias – there are much more surviving Hanseatic documents from that period. The prohibition of any trade except bartering appears already in a 1318 regulation, later included in the fourth recension of the *Schra*: “no one should buy or accept on credit

- any goods in Novgorod and pay for it in Dorpat or elsewhere, but always pay for the goods where they are bought [i.e. in Novgorod]” (Schra: § 94, 152). This clearly indicates that such a practice, contrary to the prohibition outlined in the *Schra*, was already common by the early fourteenth century, which somewhat undermines Bessudnova’s arguments.
60. HUB, 5: no. 385–386, 736.
  61. See Kant (2006: 88).
  62. HUB, 5: no. 415–416, 794.
  63. HUB, 5: no. 565, 1086.
  64. Schra: § 114, 163.
  65. HR-1, 6: no. 248, 281.
  66. See also Angermann and Endell (1989: 95, n. 33). On medieval baths and saunas in the context of Baltic hospitality, see Jeziński (2020: 410–417).
  67. Wubs-Mrozewicz (2013: 163–164).
  68. Goetz (1922: 341), Angermann and Endell (1989: 89). For correct remarks on this subject by Norbert Angermann, see Angermann (1994: 198).
  69. HUB, 5, no. 684, S. 351.
  70. HUB, 5, no. 472, S. 244.
  71. PSRL, 3: 25; Chronicle of Novgorod: 15.
  72. MHWB, 1: 1016–1017.
  73. HUB, 5: 461.
  74. Khoroshkevich (1963: 182–185). For the Novgorodian consumer market of the Independence Era, sources are lacking, but there is some later evidence from other parts of Russia. For instance, in the 1540s some peasants of Suzdal Uyezd, owned by the Monastery of the Savior in Yaroslavl, wore Poperinge broadcloth: see Florya (2020).

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# Guests or Strangers? The Reception of Visiting Merchants in the Towns of the Baltic Rim, 1515–1559

*Lovisa Olsson*

During the sixteenth century, the Baltic Sea was teeming with ships connecting the towns around it through trade. Intense and expanding long-distance trade brought a variety of merchants, skippers, and sailors to busy port towns. This chapter investigates the reception of the people involved in long-distance trade across the Baltic when they visited foreign towns for trading purposes. I will argue that the traders' social positions traveled from the home community with them, and affected how they were received in the community they visited. The two main legal constructs that determined a person's legal identity and rights, *burgher* and *guest*, were closely related, and the privileges of the guest were bestowed by the hospitality of a burgher. Many of the visitors who were brought to the Baltic ports by the long-distance trade were not received

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as guests. This chapter will explore how variations in reception shaped the opportunities and practical circumstances of the visitors, and how visitors were associated with perceived dangers of vagrancy and established social hierarchies within the early modern towns of Lübeck, Stockholm, Reval (Tallinn), and Malmö.

## TRADE AND SPACE

A spatial approach will be used in this chapter to better understand the position and reception of visiting traders in sixteenth-century Baltic towns. Spatiality is here understood as a tool for analyzing the mutual embeddedness of societal structures and physical space. According to Henri Lefebvre, a physical place cannot be conceptually separated from the social practices that take place in it, as the social practices and the physical scene for them are mutually constructed. The production of a social space can be understood through a conceptual triad: it encompasses the level of everyday spatial practices; the level of the representations of space shaped by power and ideology; and the level of the representational space where the lived experience of spatial practices and the rules and restrictions placed upon them by society come together and engage in discourse.<sup>1</sup> These three analytical levels will be used to interpret the interplay of the practical spatial organization of trade and the social, economic, and legal structures of urban society. Space is a key ingredient for understanding the role of the visitor. The visitor or guest is constructed by individuals physically moving from one geographic place to another, making them temporary visitors rather than permanent residents in the visited town. The three levels of the production of space can be understood in the sense of the physical presence of the visitor, the rules and legislation surrounding their presence in the visited community, and the interplay and adaptations that take place when these two aspects interact. In this chapter, the term *visiting trader* is used inclusively to describe persons who visit a town in which they do not reside for trading purposes. The terms *guest* and *merchant*, on the other hand, were both legally restricted terms that only applied to some of the individuals who traveled to the Baltic towns for trade.

An inspiration for this approach is Douglas Harreld's interpretation of the relationship between space and trade during the ascent of Antwerp to reach its leading position as a trading city.<sup>2</sup> It was in Antwerp that the first bourses were constructed, inspiring other mercantile hubs like London

and Bruges to follow suit. Bourses have been seen as the precursors of banks, providing a space where financial arrangements could be made.<sup>3</sup> Douglas Harreld argues that the movement of large-scale economic transactions into the Antwerp bourse was preceded by the movement of the wholesale trade from the streets and open markets into the private homes of wealthy merchants. Harreld claims that the sixteenth century saw an increasing separation between retail and wholesale trade, where the former continued to be conducted in public, while deals involving larger sums moved into the separate, exclusive space of merchants' homes. Here, the home would play multiple roles as a showroom, warehouse, and a space for privately entertaining prospective trading partners and closing deals. According to Harreld, this eventually led to the gentrification of the inner city of Antwerp, where common peddlers were banned from selling in the streets.<sup>4</sup> Inspired by Harreld's arguments about the central role played by private homes of burghers in the transition from a medieval economy of open trade in markets and streets to more exclusive dealings in bourses and later banks, this study pays particular attention to visitors' accommodation, the use of private homes for trade, and attitudes towards visiting traders in the open spaces in the Baltic towns.

### RESEARCH ON URBAN SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND TRADE NETWORKS

It has been claimed that a shared economic culture united the Baltic region, despite conflicts between political rulers and the different languages and religious confessions of the region's inhabitants.<sup>5</sup> Researchers have attempted to create an understanding of this economic culture from two angles: that of long-distance trade connecting the different countries and ports, and that of the similarities in the internal organization of the trading towns. This chapter aims to fill the gap between these two perspectives, as they yield conflicting perspectives on the social structures of the communities involved in long-distance trade.

Research on long-distance trade tends to focus on issues such as opportunities, risks, and legal rights at sea and in foreign ports. Emphasis is placed on Baltic merchants as free agents in search of profit in loose, non-hierarchical networks of mid-level merchants.<sup>6</sup> Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz and Stuart Jenks describe the long-distance trade around the Baltic as different from that of other important regions, like the Mediterranean

and southern Europe, because of its small-scale and flexible trading partnerships. They argue that larger companies were rare, and that most merchants would prefer to spread their risk by entering into multiple, separate partnerships rather than organize themselves in large corporations. This created a system that lacked both a narrow elite and large numbers of subordinates, which was a more common way to organize trade in other regions.<sup>7</sup> The various conflicts between groups of merchants have been studied and understood as reflecting a reality where merchants from different political realms fought over privileges and business opportunities in the Baltic towns, positioning Hanseatics against the Dutch or Scandinavians.<sup>8</sup> According to Carsten Jahnke, current research remains influenced by an older research tradition that attempted to view the political units of medieval and early modern Europe as the predecessors of later nation states, and therefore only published sources that lead towards such a view, further describing the Hanseatic League as a German federation and military power.<sup>9</sup> More recent research depicts merchants' interests in primarily economic rather than political terms, and the agenda behind their cooperation focuses on dealing with threats and obstacles to a successful trade.<sup>10</sup>

The second angle of research focused on networks and social positions within the towns, describes the increasing hierarchization of social relations, with the urban population divided into burghers and non-burghers, and the social and political elite of wholesale merchants gradually closing ranks against less affluent burghers.<sup>11</sup> Medieval town life revolved around the inclusion or exclusion from sworn brotherhoods and communities. The most important such community was the burghership, whose members were sworn in through a guarantor, and who were expected to pay taxes and help defend and run their town in exchange for the legal rights and privileges bestowed on burghers. At the apex of the hierarchy was the town council, which managed the town's political and legal system (together with some form of oversight by a representative of the local prince).<sup>12</sup> The guilds were a similar form of community, organizing merchants and craftsmen, although some of them were torn apart by the Reformation during the period covered by this study. In the case of long-distance traders, Anu Mänd has shown that the merchants' guilds of the Hanseatic towns operated with clear distinctions between burghers and non-burghers, married and unmarried merchants, investors, and wage-earners.<sup>13</sup> Mänd, as well as Marie-Louise Pelus-Kaplan, regards the differences between burgher and non-burgher merchants in terms of

a life-cycle system, where a young merchant would move into burgher-ship, marriage, and membership of the Great Guild at successive stages of his life.<sup>14</sup> A common characteristic of the fellowship of the guilds, the burghers, and the town councils was that they created trust by how their members were accepted, and through the oaths they all swore: namely, to protect their communities, help the members of the fellowship and obey its rules. John Padgett, examining the politics of the city-state of Florence, argues that the main requirement for election into the ruling group was to be well connected and settled, with social ties within the community, making the individual more likely to live up to his obligations and less likely to cut ties and run from debts and responsibilities.<sup>15</sup>

Using spatial analysis to understand the reception and position of visiting traders in the Baltic port towns can help bridge these two different approaches. How does the view of the equal and free mid-level merchant fit into the hierarchical social structures of the early modern towns? What spaces were available to the visiting merchant or trader in communities where one either was or was not a sworn member of a fellowship?

### SOURCES FOR THE STATUS OF VISITORS IN THE BALTIC TOWNS

A starting point for understanding the treatment and reception of visitors can be found in the medieval laws that regulated trade in the early modern towns, as presented in Tobias Boestad's chapter. Stefan Ullrich has compared the Lübeck law with the laws of the Scandinavian countries in order to establish the extent to which later Scandinavian laws were influenced by earlier Lübeck law. He finds that the terms *guest* (gäst/gast in Scandinavian and Low German) and *guest law* (gästrätt/gastrecht) are central to the codes regulating long-distance trade, and that similar content is found in all the legal codes on this subject. The main aim of the laws was to confine guests to wholesale trade and to protect the position of local, resident burghers as middlemen who enjoyed exclusive rights to the retail trade. Guests were limited to selling in bulk to local merchants, and were only allowed to trade with one another under certain circumstances. While guests were subject to limitations in comparison to local burghers, within these confines they did have legal rights and were permitted to trade and file complaints to the court, just like local burghers.<sup>16</sup> Ullrich also claims that the laws that regulated guests' conduct were introduced to facilitate trade by protecting

visiting merchants, as foreigners had previously lacked any legal rights when visiting other communities.<sup>17</sup> The term “guest” was evidently used to describe an individual involved in long-distance trade, since it is mainly mentioned in relation to this activity. But not all traders or visiting foreigners were guests. As Ullrich points out, the laws of the Baltic towns recognized no category of free, independent guests. A guest was a person who was received in the home of a host. Receiving a guest, in the sense used by the law, meant not only providing them with bread and board in your home, but also accepting legal responsibility for their conduct and obligations.<sup>18</sup> In relation to the wider town community, hosts would vouch for their guests. This can be viewed as a security measure: the host would assume the risk that their guest posed to the community by accepting responsibility for any deeds committed by the guest or for any business left unfinished.

The laws on trade are not very detailed: the Lübeck law, which was used in most Hanseatic towns, contains only a few sections dealing with foreign merchants. The interpretation of the relative lack of detail in the laws varies. In Ullrich’s opinion, Lübeck had a more lax and openminded attitude towards visiting traders than did the Scandinavian countries, and this was because the town was so dependent on attracting them that it could not afford to be otherwise.<sup>19</sup> Carsten Jahnke, on the other hand, claims that Lübeck did not have many regulations for foreign visitors because the town did simply not receive many; the port was used mostly for transit and its dealings were mainly run by the local Lübeck merchants.<sup>20</sup>

As the old medieval laws did not cover the complexity of sixteenth-century trade, and the interpretation of laws and charters varies among scholars, the daily dealings of the local courts provide a fuller account of the reception of guests and other visitors. The primary sources for this study are the court records of the town councils of Lübeck, Stockholm, Reval, and Malmö, covering the period 1515–1559. The records were produced by the local town courts, the running of which was the responsibility of the town councils, and dealt with a variety of cases, big and small.<sup>21</sup> While the laws and legal structures that produced the sources were similar in all the towns studied, there are some differences worth mentioning. They vary in size, with Lübeck at c.25,000 inhabitants being far larger than Stockholm at about 7000, Reval at 6500 and Malmö at 3000–5000 inhabitants.<sup>22</sup> All four towns were, however, active participants in the Baltic long-distance trade occupying strategic



positions. Differences in size have one important effect on the source material: Lübeck's larger population of merchants who were involved in long-distance trade meant that the court of Lübeck was more experienced in dealing with cases about this kind of trade, and this shows up in the records with their more formulaic ways of describing complicated trade relations and transactions involving large sums of money in comparison to records from the other towns. The records from Stockholm and Malmö deal with all sorts of criminal and civil cases, while the records from Lübeck and Reval primarily concern trade law, inheritance, litigation, and foreclosures—most criminal cases there were dealt with in a lower court and did not come before the council unless they involved aspects difficult for the lower court to solve.<sup>23</sup> For this study, the focal point has been cases concerning visiting traders and merchants, which are similarly presented in all the materials. As the laws regarding guests are similar and the Baltic towns have been claimed to share a common economic culture, this study attempts to describe the practices and features that can be found across the region, rather than provide a comparison and discuss differences between the towns. What is analyzed here is the practical realities visible in the court cases, not the views of local rulers on trade or those involved in it, which varied between regions and over the time period of this study.

Naturally, the examples of visitors and their accommodation that appear in the court records capture problems and conflicts, and not the smooth running of daily business. In the cases involving visiting traders, the issues to be addressed might have been raised by the authorities themselves, by local residents or by the visitors, all providing different perspectives on the practices involved in the reception of visiting traders. In this chapter, the visitors will be discussed in two categories: those who stayed as guests in the homes of local burghers, and those who did not and instead lodged on their ships or in rented temporary accommodation. The sources reveal that these two groups were composed of individuals from different social strata, and that the forms of accommodation each group used intersected with established town hierarchies, access to business opportunities, and the perceived threat that the visitors posed to the community.

## THE HOST–GUEST RELATIONSHIP

The positions of host and guest were created when the host provided hospitality to a guest by housing him. The ownership of property within the town walls was important to burghers, as demonstrated by a steady flow of court cases about sales, inheritance, pledging as security, and the foreclosure of real estate. Owning a house in town was not only a matter of having somewhere to live, but also served as the hub of the resident merchant's business. Most of the work would be conducted from the writing chamber, and goods could be stored in and sold from the house's cellars. Owning property within the town walls provided the basis for entering the town community as a burgher, and the property could be pledged as a security to facilitate larger investments or pay off debts.<sup>24</sup> The possibility of entertaining guests was yet another important aspect made possible through home ownership. The host–guest relationship in the context of daily life can be understood much as it is practiced today: we find mention of food and drink, keeping company by the fireplace, and being offered accommodation for longer or shorter stays.<sup>25</sup> However, the relationship between guest and host had another dimension in that providing hospitality to guests was tied to business arrangements and shaped by the legal framework governing trade.

As mentioned above, providing hospitality to a guest was not without its risks, and hosts had reason to carefully consider to whom they extended their hospitality. Hosts were responsible for their guests' conduct, and in the case of the guest leaving before paying their expenses, the host was at risk of having to pick up the tab. In the court of Reval, Hans Scheper was asked to take responsibility for the debts of the guests he had offered housing to and for whose conduct he was thus the guarantor.<sup>26</sup> In an example from Stockholm, the young guest of the merchant "Little" Erik, named Alff, had gone around town making rather shady deals, selling the same hops to several people and using the advance payments to settle his debts, while leaving the buyers with receipts and instructions to come by Erik's house to pick up their hops. By the time his misconduct was discovered, Alff had left the country.<sup>27</sup> Nor were guests safe from the hazards of leaving their wares with a host. In Lübeck, the skipper Hans Barcke filed a lawsuit after some locked chests containing gold and coins had been broken into and emptied at night from a joint storage space where he had left them. The court decided that because the

keys to the chests had not been left in the care of the custodian, he was not liable for the missing contents.<sup>28</sup>

The arrangement that hosts were responsible for their guests lowered the risk that temporary visitors posed to the community, but only at the expense of the individual host who took on the risk instead. Still, there were good reasons for merchants and traders to assume the roles of guest and host. It is clear from the court records that extended hospitality brought advantages to both parties. New charters and cases show that officials considered it problematic when the businesses of the guest and the host were not kept as separate as they should be for taxation purposes. For example, hosts were suspected of housing guests and taking advantage of this position by buying all the goods carried on their ships before they were brought to market, or moving goods into houses or cellars by night, depriving others of the opportunity to make bids on the goods.<sup>29</sup> Guests were accused of leaving goods with hosts to sell retail over the year, aiming to collect the earnings later, thus finding their way around the ban against visitors participating in retail trade.<sup>30</sup> From the remaining accounts of the Malmö merchant Ditlev Enbeck, Emilie Andersen draws the conclusion that his incomes were largely based on acting as a host for visiting merchants and buying their unsold cargo at a fixed price upon their departure, to sell at profit over the rest of the year.<sup>31</sup> Despite concerns over guests cutting corners with trade legislation, the town councils were lenient towards visitors considered as guests. In Lübeck, the council judged in favor of the right of guests to equal shares of assets in the case of bankruptcy, so long as they had evidence of the debt.<sup>32</sup> In Stockholm, the council forgave illegal actions when a guest, supported with an oath by local burghers, claimed not to have known the law due to not understanding the language.<sup>33</sup>

The host–guest relationship sometimes takes the appearance of a long-standing business partnership used by merchants to provide a local base for their business. This could be mutually beneficial, with trading partners sending goods back and forth between their residences. As long as a guest was registered as such with the local officials, and appropriate fees were paid for staying over the winter when the sailing season was over, the guest did not need to stay in town to maintain such an arrangement.<sup>34</sup> Trading partners abroad are sometimes described as “hosts,” such as when the merchandise was sent from one town to the other, to the host’s house, while the guest clearly remained in their own hometown.<sup>35</sup> It seems the host–guest relationship enabled more efficient partnerships, making

it possible for guests to use hosts as covers for getting around the regulations on their trade, evading some fees and enjoying the practical benefits of having a base for trade abroad. To offer hospitality through housing, a house was needed, and to offer the legal privileges for local trade, burghership was required. This is partially in keeping with the intention of the law to reserve the position of middlemen to local burghers, but it meant that only those burghers who had the means to extend hospitality to the right kind of guest would reap the benefits.

The relation between the spatial practices, which involved offering hospitality to visiting trade companions, and the legal framework for handling the risk of outsiders in the community produced an interesting development in the representational space where they met. Merchants appear to have used the concept of a visitor's need for basic hospitality to bend the legislation to their own best interests by securing exclusive arrangements for burghers and merchants, while keeping those who lacked the same social standing out. By using the exclusive space of their homes to maintain power over who to include or who to leave out, profitable business arrangements could be secured. The physical presence and needs of a visiting guest, over time and through innovative practices, moved through the inflexible letters of the law to be infused with new purpose and meaning in the increasingly complex early modern trading networks.

Allowing visitors into the exclusive space of the merchant's home could, however, pose risks other than being burdened with the guest's debts. On October 15, 1547, emotions were running high in the town hall of Stockholm. The widow Anna had been ordered to present herself to the court to "lay off her reputation for a whore."<sup>36</sup> This reputation had been spread by Anna's recently deceased husband, the iron-merchant Peder Matsson. Before his death, he had spread the word that he suspected Anna of having had relations with a guest who had stayed with the couple previously, a man named Rasmus Jute (from the Danish region Jutland). According to the records, Peder "had a bad thought about this Jutlander, that he had come too close to his spouse, as he always complained to many of his friends," and the court thought that Anna needed to answer these accusations before she could marry again. What upset the council was that Anna had not obeyed this order, but instead sought refuge with the queen in the castle; the queen offered Anna her support, and forbade the town council from taking any further actions. Anna married Rasmus Jute at church the next day. The town council was

outraged that Anna had married her late husband's "worst enemy." It seems as if the idea of a guest in a burgher household entering untoward relations with the burgher's wife was perceived by the council as very problematic, given that they included an account of these events in the records, even though they were not really legal or political matters since there had been no proper trial or formal sentence.<sup>37</sup> Marital status was generally one of the differences between journeymen and burghers. The domestic life of a burgher brought status as the head of a household, which would usually include a wife. Accepting a guest into the household was a matter of trust, which in this case appears to have been broken, showcasing again the risks to which hosts were exposed.

The idea of a wife having relations with a guest emerges clearly from Rosa Salzberg's study of lodging houses in Venice. Salzberg claims that women were often responsible for the day-to-day practical work of offering hospitality to guests. As Venice grew into a mercantile hub, this meant more trade-related visitors, and the increased demand for lodging provided opportunities for women to earn an income. Offering lodging was a way for widows and single women to earn a living while remaining in the domestic sphere, and Salzberg shows that when licenses were introduced for renting out rooms, 60% of the permit-holders were women. Even in households that were headed by a man, it was probably the wife or other women of the household who managed the practical aspects of tending to guests: both male and female hosts had an important role as mediators between visitors and the visited community.<sup>38</sup>

Although the cases found in the present study are limited in number, there is evidence that widows and other women offered lodging to visitors in sixteenth-century Baltic towns as well. As our material comprises court cases, such evidence is mainly found in lawsuits where widows sought payment from guests. The town councils were generally keen to protect the widows and children of late merchants. In Lübeck, the burgomaster himself paid an outstanding amount owed to two widows, Rykel Kannen and Anneken Knollen, for the debt that Anneken's late husband had incurred by lodging at Rykel's house.<sup>39</sup> In Stockholm, a man from Gävle had stolen a substantial amount of money from "his own hostess," the widow of a burgher in town, and the court examined all the ways he had spent it to find out there was nothing left, before they convicted the man and sent him to the gallows.<sup>40</sup>

## STAYING ON THE SHIPS

Not all visitors were received as guests by a burgher or a burgher's widow. The visiting traders that are represented in court cases are oftentimes instead said to have stayed and lived on their anchored ships or in simple, temporary lodgings. Forming communities of their own, the harbors come across as rowdy places with a range of disturbances, such as drunkenness and fighting, as well as hijacking and piracy on the open waters nearby.<sup>41</sup> This space, constructed by the temporary presence of ships that came and went, existed on the borderline of the town. Some visitors were evidently able to stay for extended periods on the anchored ships, a practice not appreciated by town officials, who repeatedly called on them to attend court where they were told to finish their business and leave.<sup>42</sup> In Stockholm, a group of such visitors were called to the town hall on November 22, 1550 only to be told that they should conclude their business within six weeks and then leave. This is somewhat remarkable because late November was well past the normal sailing season and not generally considered a safe time to set sail on the stormy Baltic. However, come March the following year they were still in Stockholm and were again called to court, where they were fined, much to their discontent.<sup>43</sup> Since people were banned from constructing fires on the anchored ships, it seems a rather uncomfortable way to spend a Nordic winter.<sup>44</sup>

Nor did the ship always offer safe accommodation. For example, two Rostock ship-owners, Jacob Niekarck, and Jacob Föge, had anchored their ship in Malmö harbor. On the morning of September 9, 1558, Jacob Niekarck, accompanied by his coxswain, came to the Malmö customhouse to inform officials that when they awoke on the ship that morning, they were unable to find Jakob's partner. A group of merchants followed him to the ship and searched it and the belongings of the missing man, before finding him dead in the water a few meters from the ships, wearing only his night garments. After examining the body, the group swore that they could find no signs of violence and it was judged that he must have fallen off the ship.<sup>45</sup>

The men staying on the ships were described by the courts as "jungen knechten," "kóbswener" or "peberszuenne," sometimes also skippers.<sup>46</sup> These are words often used to describe journeymen merchants or merchants' servants. In the system of long-distance trade, they were usually employees or junior partners of more established merchants, although some of them might have been working entirely independently.

While clearly holding responsibility for ships and cargoes, they did not hold burgher status in any town. In the hierarchies of the early modern towns, such men are comparable to journeymen in the craft guilds: i.e., men with some skills and responsibilities, but not (yet) accepted into the burgher community or settled with a household of their own. A journeyman within a craft guild would usually live in his master's household, but this was obviously not an option available to the traveling journeymen. Some merchants owned houses abroad to house servants and journeymen, or they paid for lodging for their visiting journeymen.<sup>47</sup> Unlike settled merchants, these journeymen and servants remained on the threshold of the community, socially as well as spatially, traveling from town to town.

Marie-Louise Pelus-Kaplan depicts this as a life-cycle event, where traveling with ships and goods to foreign ports in the employment of or in partnership with a more senior merchant was a learning process for younger merchants-in-the-making, taking them around the ports of the region to learn the ropes and tricks of the trade in different places and helping them build networks of their own.<sup>48</sup> However, by this period, very few of the journeymen within the craft guilds could become masters themselves, and many were kept in subordinate positions for a long time, a cause of considerable discontent.<sup>49</sup> There is an absence of research looking at how many of the merchants' servants or journeymen merchants eventually became settled as wholesale merchants. However, considering that entry to this community would require both financial resources and support from established burghers, it cannot be taken for granted that this door would swing open for anyone wanting in.

### THE PYRAMID OF TRUST: VISITORS AND SECURITY

Visiting traders who were received as guests in the household of a local burgher would be integrated into the legal and social hierarchies of the town, which were based on belonging to a household. When the community could place the responsibility for a visitor's actions on a reliable burgher, the potential threat to the social order that the visitor posed could be managed. The group of young or unsettled men who stayed with their ships or in taverns and brothels did not fit into this framework. Their presence in such places, as well as in the streets and open spaces, was viewed with suspicion, and the records include numerous complaints about unlawful trade, criminal behavior, and general disturbances, such as

drunkenness, fighting, and making noise. In Reval, traveling merchants and merchant's servants were accused of harming the burghers' livelihoods by selling goods in the street in open shops and gateways, and for trading with strangers outside the harbor.<sup>50</sup> In Malmö, this group was accused of drinking in the streets and behind the chapel during mass, and visiting traders were ordered to take up lodgings with burghers.<sup>51</sup> Without a local host and mediator with the community, the risk that such men posed fell on local society and the town councils. The gentrification that Douglas Harreld described in Antwerp, where trade moved into merchants' private residences and the streets were cleared of peddlers and petty traders, appears to have been an ambition of the town councils of the Baltic region as well, although judging by the court records, it seems to have been rather unsuccessful.

A case registered in the records of the Malmö town council in October 1554 illustrates the sort of behavior that was perceived as problematic. The young servant Peder Iude was sent by his master to settle a debt in Malmö. Upon arrival, the young man first settled in with his host, the burgher Hans Hess, but after having a meal there, he left his host and continued to another burgher's house, where he spent long hours drinking. Later, he departed from this place as well to wander off to the harbors in the company of two prostitutes, with whom he spent the night in the town inn, bragging about how much money he was carrying with him. Meanwhile, the local bailiff had grown suspicious as there had recently been a number of robberies in the vicinity of the town, thinking that perhaps the young man had not come into his money in an honest way. Thus, Peter Iude was picked up and allegedly beaten up quite badly before his errand was clarified and he was delivered by the bailiff to the house of Hans Hess again. Hess was provided with money for his board and was instructed to keep the young servant inside the house until he had finished his errands. In effect, it seems that the burgher who was the intended host of the young man was held accountable for keeping him off the streets and out of trouble, and the burgher's home was effectively used as a jail until his young guest left town.<sup>52</sup> In this case, the spatial practice of receiving guests and the legal framework of making hosts responsible for their guests transformed the space of the host's home into an ad hoc jail.

In Stockholm, several cases of merchants and journeymen merchants visiting taverns or open houses where drinks were sold ended up in violent court cases. In 1545, two traveling journeymen merchants from Lübeck,



Jost Vikman and Bertil Bruntorp, accused a soldier of murdering their colleague, Hans von Kampen, in a house where he was buying drinks alongside a group of soldiers.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, in 1553 the merchant Hans Gammal and two of his friends were called to court to defend themselves against the allegation that they, following a night of gambling, had ambushed and attacked another gambler, taking back the money they had lost.<sup>54</sup>

Apart from staying on the ships, paying for lodging in taverns or brothels appears to have been an option for some visitors. In a murder case in Stockholm, several temporary visitors were described as staying in the “house of young Sybil.”<sup>55</sup> The journeyman merchant Hans Skotte (the Scot) was the prime suspect. On the morning of February 23, 1551, a piper was found dead on the street outside of Sybil’s house, where he had been drinking the night before. Sybil was described as the property owner, charging the visitors for their stay; but it was also said that she had some of the men visit her bed at night. The description of the household includes men of various origins drinking, looking for more beverages, visiting the beds of women in the house, and sleeping piled up together. The residents testified that the piper had been sitting at a window drinking, but would or could not say if his demise came from falling out of the window or from being subjected to some sort of violence. However, they could testify that Hans Skotte had been out on the street late at night. Hans Skotte admitted to having been outside on the street that night and claimed that he saw the piper in the street and kicked the man a few times to find out if he was sleeping or dead, but that he had then returned to the bed of a woman in the house. The woman he slept with supported this testimony. Hans Skotte and the other residents were ordered to attend the court within a fortnight and bring witnesses who could swear to their innocence and good conduct in order to free themselves of suspicion.<sup>56</sup> The records contain no indication that this happened; instead, there is a note that Hans Skotte married a local woman within a week of the incident and that he became the owner of a property in town and of shares in a ship as part of the marriage settlement.<sup>57</sup> It is difficult to say whether the marriage had anything to do with the accusation of murder, but it is possible that marrying into the community helped Skotte’s case. He receives no further mention in the case of the dead piper.

An examination of the court records shows that the descriptions of visiting merchants usually included their names, their places of residence,

and their positions in their home community, for example, “Valentyn Jerichow, burgher of Wismar.”<sup>58</sup> Rarely are visitors from other Baltic towns described as strangers or foreigners, nor with epithets like “Germans” or “Danes.” The cases where such terms are used typically describe those individuals for whom no hometown or parish of origin was known. Nor do we find any examples of religious confession being used to distinguish individuals or groups. Individuals engaged in trade were usually described as burghers (*borger*), councilors (*radman/ratsherren*) journeyman merchants (*köpgesäll/koppgesellen*) or servants (*sven/diener*). Town councilors and burghers from other towns were often referred to as honorable or honest, while the other categories of person usually appear in the sources without any further description.<sup>59</sup> When dealing with visitors, the town court clearly saw their places of residence and their social standing within their own home communities as the most important attributes.

Although a high level of mobility would appear to be a natural concomitant of the concept of long-distance trade, the transient nature of unsettled visitors appears to have been a concern for the settled burgher society. An example of the conflict between the mobile nature of long-distance trade and the expectations to be settled and loyal to a community is showcased in an incident from the records of Stockholm. In April 1546, a knife fight broke out in the Stockholm customhouse. The journeyman merchant Oluff Larson had complained about the high customs duties, saying that he would henceforth move to Lübeck and instead enroll himself as a journeyman merchant there, where the customs duties there were much lower. He would then be able to come to Stockholm and remain at the docks with the other German journeymen merchants, and no longer bother with Swedish taxation. Erik Swenson, the man responsible for collecting the customs duties that day, told him that because he was born in Sweden, it was his duty to pay his customs duties there, and not in Lübeck. Insults were exchanged and the incident ended with both men drawing their daggers and with both being slightly injured.<sup>60</sup> This conflict puts into relief the microcosm of the trading world around the Baltic; on the one hand, it displays a greater interest in economic success than in respecting political boundaries and entities, and, on the other, it demonstrates the importance of staying settled and connected and of fulfilling the obligations that came with a social position.

Perceptions of an individual’s honor and trustworthiness mirrored the social hierarchies of the early modern towns, with members of the council

on top, resident burghers close on their heels, followed by unsworn members of the community like servants and journeymen, and, at the bottom of hierarchy, were the strangers. Ideas of trustworthiness were closely tied to forms of spatial belonging. Those who had a clear connection and sense of belonging to a certain place, even if not in the town they visited, were perceived as far more trustworthy than were those who did not clearly belong to a specific place. Here again, we can apply the triangular concept of space: inhabiting a home was a spatial practice, but it also had implications within the legal framework of urban society, since those with a fixed address and ties to their community were identifiable and able to be held to account, producing a situation whereby the settled person was viewed as trustworthy and the unsettled as unreliable. However, there is one final group that appears to have been regarded even less favorably than strangers, namely, those individuals who had been members of a community but had later fled to avoid their obligations or had otherwise been excluded from their community. For example, in reference to a burgher who had fled town, leaving others to bear his by debts or legal obligations, the town council of Malmö said that he “has gone and deserted, with no regard for his own obligations, debts or honor, thus placing the poor men, his fellow citizens, who had stood bail for him, in such indebtedness, harm and ruin.”<sup>61</sup> Another case, this one in Stockholm, concerned Jacob Lehman of Danzig/Gdańsk, whose reputation preceded his arrival: his claims to collect money owed to his wife were rejected because it was already known that he had fled his own home to evade his debts.<sup>62</sup> This pyramid of trust echoes John Padgett’s claim that trust was closely linked to the ties that bound an individual to a community, with burghers and councilors tied to their community through households, sworn oaths, and the ownership of property, while servants and journeymen had weaker ties, strangers had no ties, and those who had been expelled or escaped had severed or destroyed all ties to the community.<sup>63</sup> The extended hospitality that created the privileged position of the guest was linked to trust, and trust was based on the bonds to the community that made the visitor less likely to cheat or cause harm.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has shown that the reception of visiting traders was based on a balance between the potential for lucrative trade they offered and the threat that temporary visitors posed to the social order. Local burghers

were willing to accept the risk and responsibility posed by such visitors, but only when they saw opportunities for personal gain in doing so. High-ranking burgher merchants would thus be provided with hospitality in a local burgher's home and thereby receive social standing and a level of respect in the visited community. Low-ranking journeymen and unsettled traders, on the other hand, might have to stay on their ships or pay for lodging in places of ill repute. The visitors who were not housed with a burgher were viewed as problematic by the local authorities, since no host assumed responsibility for their behavior, nor did their presence fit into the household-based social structure.

Even though the world of long-distance trade was built on geographical mobility, this study shows that there was a strong connection between the concept of a property-owning burgher and the notion of a guest. Burghers were legally privileged permanent residents, while guests were legally privileged visitors. Burghers had access to the property that was required to perform the role of the host, and thereby to turn their visiting trade partners into guests, a mutually profitable arrangement. The embeddedness of spatial, social, and legal structures becomes apparent in how burghers' homes formed the foundation for the physical reception and handling of visitors and goods, the social position as a burgher in the town community, and the opportunity this provided to endow business partners with the legally privileged status of guest. Guests were granted access to townhouses and shops, which opened up exclusive business opportunities. Journeymen merchants were mostly restricted to staying in rowdy and uncomfortable lodging on ships in the harbor, or in taverns and brothels, excluding them from the business opportunities of those visitors who were accepted as guests by local merchants. Their position outside, or, at most, on the threshold of the burgher community, was spatial as well as legal and social.

These findings do not undermine the concept of equal trade relations between mid-level merchants that has often been presented in previous research. Rather, the point is that the terms *merchant* and *guest* do not encompass everyone involved in the trading networks, but instead refer only to the privileged elite of this community. The relations between two resident burgher merchants, sending goods back and forth between their respective residences, is one of the trade arrangements visible in the court records. Such people were members of sworn communities, owned properties, and were considered trustworthy and attractive partners in the trading networks. However, much of the actual traveling and trading

was conducted by other groups of people who had not yet achieved this status—and might never do so. The partnerships of the Baltic region might have been smaller in scale than those of the Mediterranean, but there was no shortage of subordinates. Individuals who had not attained full membership of the community of the trading networks of the Baltic are not fully captured through terms like *guests*, *merchants*, or *burghers*, as they often did not belong to any of these groups. Those who did fit into these descriptions held the political and legal power of the towns, and with it, the power to regulate and monitor the use of space. The distinctions observed between burghers and others can be interpreted as a means of protecting the exclusivity and privileges of the former group against people who were below them on the social ladder. This was done through the legal and economic construct of the guest, which was spatially performed by utilizing the rights of the property holder to invite in desired company while excluding others.

Douglas Harreld described the sixteenth century as a transitional period, when the bulk trade and more substantial trade deals moving away from the streets and into the private homes of merchants. This was a step on the way towards the use of more formal institutions like bourses and banks, creating a separate, exclusive space where the chosen few could conduct their business.<sup>64</sup> The same concern for individuals who were not part of the established merchant community, conducting illicit trade on the streets and open spaces, can be seen in the Baltic towns, though the towns do not appear to have successfully eliminated these activities. Interestingly, in parts of the Baltic, as well as other parts of northern Europe, this transition coincides with the Reformation and thus with the demise of the religious guilds. While some traders' guilds remained in the Baltic region, their position had been more prominent during the medieval period, when they are described as places where connections and partnerships were formed through the act of commensality. The guilds were exclusive in the same way as the burgher community, requiring oath-taking and recommendations from a member, but were not as exclusive as an invitation to a private home.<sup>65</sup> The sixteenth century can be seen as period of transition for the trading communities, during which civil society and its social networks were relied upon in the interval between the demise of medieval guilds and the rise of early modern institutions

like bourses and banks. Reframing the concept of the host–guest relationship, once a way of providing housing for visiting traders, into a legal and economic concept enabling the provision of favorable terms for business partnerships between settled merchants, can, in this light, be viewed as an element of the development towards increasingly advanced financial arrangements and more exclusive spaces for trade.

## NOTES

1. Lefebvre (1991).
2. Harreld (2003).
3. Calibi (2017).
4. Harreld (2003: 657–668).
5. Brand and Müller (2007: 7–8).
6. Wubs-Mrozewicz (2013).
7. Jenks (2013), Wubs-Mrozewicz (2013: 10–12).
8. See, for example, Kumlien (1953), Sicking (2007), Wubs-Mrozewicz (2007).
9. Jahnke (2017).
10. Wubs-Mrozewicz (2017).
11. See, for example, Gustafsson (2006), Hauschild (1997), Isenman (2014), Lamberg (2001).
12. Gustafsson (2006).
13. Mänd (2013: 229–250).
14. Pelus-Kaplan (2013).
15. McLean and Padgett (2011: 2).
16. Ullrich (2008: 119–123).
17. Ullrich (2008: 104–105).
18. Ullrich (2008: 105–108).
19. Ullrich (2008: 111–115).
20. Jahnke (2017: 241–242).
21. Kallioinen (2012: 6, 55).
22. Hauschild (1997: 346), Lamberg (2001: 21, 206), Kämpf (2013: 26).
23. Kallioinen (2012: 55), Hauschild (1997: 236–237), Gustafsson (2006: 82–85), Kämpf (2013: 40–46).
24. Stark (1993). See, for example, STb 2:2: 181–182; RUB: nr. 332.
25. See, for example, STb 2:2: 69; RUB: nr. 241; STb 2:1: 216–217.
26. RUB: nr. 784.
27. STb 2:1: 120.
28. LRU 3: nr. 510.

29. See, for example, STb 2:1: 19; MSb 1: 236–239; LRU 3: nr. 651; RUB: nr. 993.
30. See, for example, STb 2:1: 173; LRU 3 nr. 229.
31. Andersen (1954: 122–123).
32. LRU 3: nr. 199.
33. STb 2:2: 173–174.
34. Ullrich (2008: 106–107).
35. See, for example, STb 2:2: 52; STb 2:1: 24–25.
36. STb 2:1: 259.
37. STb 2:1: 259.
38. Salzberg (2019).
39. LRU 3: nr. 332.
40. STb 2:1: 252.
41. See, for example, STb 2:2: 140; RUB: nr. 477; LRU 3: nr. 482; MSb 2: 35–36, 407.
42. See, for example, STb 2:2: 95, 127; MSb 2: 35–36; RUB: nr. 381, 382.
43. STb 2:2: 127.
44. Hallerdt (2006: 33).
45. MSb 2: 407–408.
46. See, for example, STb 2:2: 95, 127; MSb 2: 35–36; RUB: nr. 381, 382.
47. STb 2:2: 69.
48. Pelus-Kaplan (2013).
49. Mazo Karras (2003: 109–151).
50. RUB: nr. 381–383.
51. See, for example, STb 2:2: 95, 127; MSb 2: 35–36; RUB: nr. 381, 382.
52. MSb 2: 210–212.
53. STb 2:1: 71–72.
54. STb 2:2: 232–234.
55. STb 2:2: 104.
56. STb 2:2: 104–106.
57. STb 2:2: 111.
58. LRU 3: nr. 645.
59. See, for example, STb 2:1: 10, 173, 295; STb 2:2: 10–13; RUB: nr. 380, 792; LRU 3: nr. 386; MSb 2: 404.
60. STb 2:1: 177.
61. MSb 2: 44.
62. STb 2:2: 174.
63. McLean and Padgett (2011).
64. Harreld (2003).
65. Haugland (2012).

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PART II

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Early Modern Hospitalities





# Ritualized Hospitality: The Negotiations of the Riga Capitulation and the *Adventus* of Boris Sheremetev in July 1710

*Dorothee Goetze*

In the summer of 1726, Aubry de la Motraye, an educated Frenchman, traveled through the south and the east of the Baltic Sea region. His journey took him from the Netherlands, through to the north of the Holy Roman Empire and Prussia, on to Poland–Lithuania and then to the Baltic as far as Saint Petersburg. Six years later, in 1732, he published the third volume of his travel account, which described this particular journey through the Baltic Sea region.<sup>1</sup> Typical for the period, his travelogue offers a colorful mix of information on travel as such, i.e., the means of transport, traffic routes, accommodation and travel conditions, but it also provides information on the regions and places he passed through and their history, combining factual descriptions and anecdotes. One of

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these details is particularly interesting for the focus of this study: While describing his stay in Riga and the history of this city, de la Motraye mentions that,

It has been pretended, that the Governour of *Riga*'s Refusing to shew Prince *Menzikoff* and General *le Fort* the Fortification of that Place, when the Grand Czarian Embassy passed that Way, was the original cause of the War declared against *Sweden* by the Czar and the King of *Poland*: It was said also, that, when Prince *Menzikoff* reported this Affair, aggravating the Refusal of the Governour, who, in all other Respects, did all possible Honour to the Embassy, the Czar answered, That *he hoped to see the Day, when he should be able to refuse the same Thing to the King of Sweden himself.*<sup>2</sup>

This anecdote refers to the temporal and spatial horizon of the investigation, the Great Northern War (1700–1721), which broke out only three years after Tsar Peter I's (1672–1725) stay in Riga, and the Swedish Baltic provinces Estonia and Livonia; it also relates to this volume's analytical key concept and showcases the great importance that contemporaries attributed to hospitality. Unfulfilled (expectations of) hospitality is stylized as the probable real cause of war in the Baltic Sea region. It was Peter I himself who "originally justified his war [against Sweden] as retribution for disrespect and injuries that he had suffered while visiting Riga during his Grand Embassy to Europe in 1697."<sup>3</sup>

The explanation seems insufficient and unlikely from the point of view of modern research, and Pärtel Piirimäe points out that this was also true for contemporaries when he emphasizes that such an argument "was rather outdated in the context of contemporary international law."<sup>4</sup> But the episode nevertheless provides insights into the effort taken by contemporaries who tried to explain events of their presence in keeping with their world of experience and their normative horizons, thus, highlighting the importance of hospitality.

"The basic function of hospitality is to establish a relationship or to promote an already established relationship."<sup>5</sup> Hospitality is understood as means of interaction between hosts and guests.<sup>6</sup> It structures and thus regulates relations between insiders and outsiders and applies to both the private and the public.<sup>7</sup> Judith Still stresses that hospitality is a structure with "no fixed content."<sup>8</sup> Thus, "it *opens* a space and forms of exchange that *allow* for encounter."<sup>9</sup> Even more than that, hospitality creates spaces

based on the relation of the one(s) offering and the one(s) receiving hospitality. Hospitality both describes and constitutes this relationship. What is more, hospitality is culturally bound and practices of hospitality vary in space and time.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the introductory episode hints that there were shared notions of what people expected hospitality to be that were then actualized by participants through their particular actions in concrete situations. This example also shows that there were limitations to hospitality. However, the general question whether these limitations were experienced by all participants involved or whether they could be set and perceived unilaterally must remain unanswered in the context of this study.

German historian Gabriele Jancke identifies two master narratives of hospitality: economization of hospitality and hospitality as part of state or nation formation.<sup>11</sup> Heidrun Friese likewise refers to the connection between hospitality and “the political and legal institutions of the community or the state.”<sup>12</sup> While the economization narrative concentrates on travelers and their reports and addresses the administration and handling of resources of hospitality as well as an increasingly widespread mobility, the state formation narrative emphasizes border-crossing and managing encounters with strangers in the context of social groups defined in national, religious or ethnical terms, and the political and territorial macrostructures surrounding them.<sup>13</sup> By focusing on the moment regarded as the beginning of Russian rule in the Baltic, the present study ties in with this latter perspective.

The year 1710 is considered as the starting point of Russian rule in the Baltic, after the provinces of Estonia and Livonia, which had been Swedish since 1560 and 1629, respectively, had been successively occupied by Russian troops. In October 1709, the second siege of Riga began during the Great Northern War. By the time Peter I declared war on Charles XII of Sweden (1682–1718) in August 1700, Russian units had already given support to Saxon troops when they tried to conquer Riga in February of that same year.

However, the attackers were defeated by the Swedish army in the summer of 1701. In the second attempt, the Russian troops were successful, and after a nine-month siege, the city surrendered on July 4, 1710. These events are well known to the historiography of the Baltic.

In this precarious phase in the midst of war, which can be characterized by the collapse of an existing (political) order and a high degree of physical, social and political insecurity, the first encounters that took place

were between the besieged and the attackers, between those who surrendered and the new rulers. These meetings were sensitive situations, not least because they happened in the context of military conflict and consequently carried with them the potential for escalating violence. Here, a core characteristic of hospitality is reflected even in the external framework of these encounters: the inseparable connection between hospitality and hostility.<sup>14</sup>

In this situation, the two parties to the encounter—the Livonian knighthood and the representatives of the city of Riga on the one hand, and the Russian Field Marshal General Boris Sheremetev (1652–1719) on the other—employed forms of ritualized hospitality which allowed them to establish frameworks for non-violent communication, thus contributing to the securitization of their encounter.<sup>15</sup> Friese points out that “practices of hospitality aim to bridle antagonism and hostility.”<sup>16</sup> “Acts of hospitality [...] are structurally transformative,” meaning that “givers and/or receivers of hospitality are [...] not the same after the event as they were before.”<sup>17</sup> How these events of ritualized hospitality were shaped was thus also a reflection of the shifting relationships and power relations between the parties involved. This is demonstrated in two examples: the negotiations preceding the city’s capitulation on July 4, 1710, and the entry of Russian Field Marshal General Boris Sheremetev into Riga ten days later.

Due to Riga’s symbolic and strategic importance in the ongoing war, as well as its economic importance as the biggest city in the Baltic, the events of 1709–1710 generated a wide media echo.<sup>18</sup> No contemporary printed accounts of the surrender and homage of other places in the Baltic Sea region, such as Dorpat (Tartu) in 1704, Reval (Tallinn) and Pernau (Pärnu) in 1710, Stade in 1712 or Stettin (Szczecin) or Stralsund in 1715 can be found in comparable numbers or described in similar detail.<sup>19</sup> In addition to pamphlets describing the siege and surrender of Riga to Russian troops, chronicles of its citizens and records of the Livonian knighthood and the Riga city assembly (*Bürgerschaft*) have been preserved and were published in print, then and later.



## TURNING HOSTILES INTO GUESTS: HOSTAGE PROVISION DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE RIGA CAPITULATIONS

From the end of June 1710, the Swedish governor-general Nils Stromberg (1646–1723) and Livonian estates, i.e., the Livonian knight-hood and city assembly of Riga, negotiated the surrender of the city with Russian Field Marshal General Boris Sheremetev. The terms on which a city would surrender were formulated in a so-called capitulation. Surrendering to the Russian troops would transform the besieged Swedish city into an *occupatio bellica*. In early modern international law, this was the war-related appropriation of an object, i.e., a territory or a movable or immovable thing or a person. These objects were regarded as ownerless: the conqueror, through his victory and the associated appropriation, acquired the power to rule and thus also acquired full sovereignty over it, replacing the previous ruler. Peace treaties could confirm the new state of rule, but were not required to do so since the new state of affairs resulted from a factual situation.<sup>20</sup> Capitulations had the character of a treaty and were valid for the duration of the war; thus, as legal instruments, they did not have far-reaching, binding obligations under international law. In addition to military matters, they also regulated the interests of the submitting cities and allowed for the establishment of the current situation's legal foundations. This gives capitulations the additional character of an instrument of security.<sup>21</sup>

The initiation and negotiation of capitulations followed an established and well-known procedure, which can also be traced in the case of Riga. In accordance with contemporary war practice, hostages were exchanged between the parties at the beginning of the negotiations. Hostage-giving has been known as a security tool since ancient times. In the current research, this phenomenon has been studied mainly for the Middle Ages, less so for the early modern period.<sup>22</sup> But the provision of hostages was common until the eighteenth century. The prevalence of this practice can be guessed from the fact that the German jurist and publicist Johann Christian Lünig (1662–1740) explicitly mentions it in his *Theatrum Cereemoniale*, a comprehensive description of contemporary ceremonial, published in two volumes in 1719 and 1720. He, too, emphasizes the importance of providing hostages as a means of securing negotiations, and he refers to the hostage as “a pledge,” noting that such figures were “sent away for security until that which was promised was fulfilled.”<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, the fact that the exchange of hostages finds its entry in a work of contemporary ceremonial science indicates its high degree of ritualization. The role of hostages as a security instrument in the context of early modern peace negotiations has recently been discussed by Rebecca Valerius and Horst Carl, using the example of the peace negotiations of Madrid (1526) and Vervins (1598). They emphasize that hostages were used in the early modern period as a means of securing the contents of treaties, but due to the lack of enforcement mechanisms, this instrument can only be considered effective to a limited extent. More important for the hostages' position was their communicative potential.<sup>24</sup>

In the present case, the provision of hostages was intended to make negotiations possible and thus overcome hostility. In this objective, the giving of hostages coincides with a central function of hospitality: hospitable practices "aim at reliability."<sup>25</sup> On the one hand, the hostages compensated for the lack of trust between the enemy parties, and, on the other, according to the recesses of the Livonian knighthood, they were to influence the negotiations in the interests of their respective negotiating party. On June 25, the Livonian knighthood consented to the Swedish governor-general's request to initiate negotiations with the enemy and his proposal of a mutual hostage exchange to secure the negotiations.<sup>26</sup> And they urged such action in the following conferences with him, as well as the exchange of hostages necessary for this purpose.<sup>27</sup>

In the context of negotiations, including surrenders, being a hostage was necessarily a voluntary act.<sup>28</sup> This means that the hostages did not obtain their status through force, but were expected to freely place themselves in the hands of the other side and thus become guests for an unforeseeable period of time—their stay depended on the duration of negotiations and the implementation of the results.<sup>29</sup> In the case at hand, the hostages only remained with their hosts for four days. On July 1, they were exchanged. Leonhard Kagg, a Swedish soldier present at the exchange, mentions in his diary that on the previous day, i.e., on June 30, the members of the Riga garrison were ordered to reinforce the troops on the counter-guard, which was located near the city gate through which the Russian hostages were to enter the city, with about 60 men.<sup>30</sup> This shows that, although provision of hostages and exchanging them were established procedures of securitization, there were apparently also security concerns. It is unknown from the available sources to what in concrete terms these concerns referred. Conceivably, the besieged might have worried about the safety of the guests, as well as fear that the enemies

could misuse the situation to take advantage of the exchange of hostages and make an (renewed) attack on the city. It is evident that in this phase, hostility dominated the encounter. Both potential concerns indicate how risky and insecure the initial act of hospitality was for both the designated guests and hosts.<sup>31</sup>

The importance attributed to hostages is obvious in the stated expectations of the Livonian knighthood, who not only made the welfare of its members dependent on the hostages but also believed that “if the hostage is well received by both sides ... the final purpose of the agreement should proceed all the better.”<sup>32</sup> So it was the treatment of the hostages, or in other words, the hospitality towards them, that mattered, and which thus became a decisive factor of successful securitization. The provision of hostages was consequently a security instrument that required acts of hospitality in order to be effective: hostages had to be received, accommodated and supplied with food during their stay with their hosts. Moreover, they had to be entertained. All of this had to be organized in advance. From the records of the Riga city assembly and the Livonian knighthood, it is evident that while the hostage-giving was obviously considered a common and proven means of negotiation, the estates at the same time endeavored to keep the burdens associated with the reception of these guests as low as possible. This ambivalence can be explained by Jancke’s finding that hospitality associated with hostage situations was a necessary form of hospitality, which could be paired with obligation and coercion, in contrast to voluntary hospitality. These necessary forms of hospitality were a public matter that had to be shouldered by society as a whole, in this case economically by the estates.<sup>33</sup>

When Sheremetev demanded hostages from the other party on June 29, Riga’s vice governor, Johann Adolf Clodt von Jürgensburg (1658–1720), took this as an opportunity to raise the issue of financing the sustenance of the Russian hostages in a meeting with the representatives of the Livonian knighthood and suggested that the knighthood and the city should share the costs.<sup>34</sup> It took a good two days before an agreement could be reached about the distribution of costs. On June 28, Jürgensburg had suggested that the enemy hostages be accommodated in the house of the absent Riga *Statthalter* Michael Strohkirch († 1724) and that he wanted to stay there himself to entertain them if the city would bear the costs. The representatives of the city assembly agreed to pay for the wine, while the knighthood was to cover the rest. After their initial agreement, however, the members of the knighthood withdrew

their commitment. It was not until two days later that a new agreement was reached regarding the provisioning of the hostages: the knighthood agreed to cover one-third of the costs incurred, while the remaining two-thirds were to be borne by the city. An innkeeper called Michael Gösen was charged with serving a table of 12 people daily at noon, and in the evening with “five perfectly good dishes,” as it is said in the sources. Two of these people were ordinary guests, and the other ten were the expected Russian hostages together with an additional company. For these ten, Gösen was to receive two guilders per person each day. Bread, wine and water were provided separately.<sup>35</sup>

On July 1, the Livonian land marshal and about 100 members of the Riga garrison received three Russian guests at the agreed-upon place for exchange in the suburb and escorted them into the city.<sup>36</sup> While the reception of the Russian hostages is only briefly described in the sources, the reception of those transferred to the Russians by the Riga side is described in more detail: The hostages and the deputies of the Riga city assembly were met at the exchange place like honored guests. The Russian commander-in-chief Sheremetev demanded that hostages be given only from the knighthood, but left the Riga city assembly free to send its own deputies. The field marshal general sent three six-horse carriages to transport them to the Russian camp. They were accompanied by 100 cavalrymen who rode ahead of the carriages, and an equal number of infantrymen who followed the carriages.<sup>37</sup> Here, too, the ambivalence inherent to hospitality becomes clear: on the one hand, the escort served to pay respect to and honor the guests, but, at the same time, since they were still hostiles, the security aspect cannot be overlooked. The hostages had to be secured so that nothing happened to them, but also so that they could cause no harm.

The host, Sheremetev, received the hostages “personally in front of the gate ... with a handshake” and guided them with his suite into the building to the most representative room.<sup>38</sup> This reception emphasizes in a strong symbolic language the willingness of the Russian side to welcome the foreign hostages as equal members of the princely society, thus turning them into guests and overcoming their hostility. Here, Jancke’s observation that “hospitality ... took place primarily within members of a community, and that meant in group cultures and according to the rules of belonging,” receives confirmation.<sup>39</sup> The hostages were treated as official representatives of the opposite side and thus as welcome guests. Both the bringing-in and the open-air reception translate this readiness to offer

welcome into the language of ceremonial. At the same time, these actions can be interpreted as a means of paying respect and tribute to the role of the representative and, at least in the case of the hostages, to their noble background. “[T]he diverse practices of hospitality which transform the stranger, the guest, into a human and social being have been understood as processes which order ambivalences in an effort to place the unknown, albeit precariously, within the social geography.”<sup>40</sup> From this perspective, it is understandable that no distinction was made between the municipal deputies and the noble members of the group. This was tantamount to a rise in status and rank for the urban delegates.

For lunch and dinner, the guests were treated to three courses each. The first two courses are said to have included “25 different dishes” and “the third course is said to have consisted of pyramids with jams, [and] in addition three different wines were served.”<sup>41</sup> Only the field marshal general, Russian minister Gerhard Johann von Löwenwolde († 1723), the generals and the hostages as well as the city of Riga’s deputies took part in the meals, while the other officers “waited behind their chairs.”<sup>42</sup> This shows that only the circle of the highest-ranking sat at the table, thus giving the guests a special honor. Moreover, instrumental music provided entertainment for the guests.<sup>43</sup> On the morning of the second day in the Russian camp, the hostages were led to a table “with pyramids of all kinds of preserved food in the middle and filled tea sets at one end, but coffee at the other.”<sup>44</sup>

The description of the meals is based on the oral report by one of Riga’s burgomeisters, Hermann Witte von Nordeck (1652–1710), and documented in the files of the Riga city assembly. He described the treatment of the Swedish hostages and the deputies of the city of Riga in the Russian camp. Due to its context and the way it was preserved, it cannot be assumed that the report was intended for a wide audience, but was primarily addressed to the municipal decision-makers. That the representation of the common meal had such a central place in the description of the mayor need not surprise us. Tables, food and drink were symbols both of hospitality and social hierarchical orders.<sup>45</sup> The detailed account of the meals in the hostile camp and at the enemy table took on the same communicative and securitizing functions as the communal meal eaten there itself. The aim of the banquet was to establish or confirm friendship, even if it was organized out of obligation and thus formed part of a necessary and ritualized hospitality. The meal was thus explicitly about emphasizing the common, the connected, the trusted and about

the exclusion of hostility.<sup>46</sup> The meal, as well as its description, became an expression of “confidence-building, adherence to treaties, containment of violence, and intensification of contacts.”<sup>47</sup>

Witte von Nordeck’s report made it possible for his audience to be convinced of the good treatment of the hostages by the Russian side, because talking banquets “had the meaning as information about status, hierarchy, both for rank in comparison with other hospitable situations and for social hierarchy in comparison with hosts and guests of other status.”<sup>48</sup> As Jancke explains: “The number of dishes and courses could already suffice as information about the level in which the meal was to be classified; if additional information was given about the type of food and wine, then it also had the task of conveying the message of quality, honor and social rank.”<sup>49</sup> In writing about the treatment of the hostages, von Nordeck’s description tried to engender feelings of friendship and trust towards the enemy within the members of the Riga city assembly, helping them evaluate whether the fundamental condition for the success of their chosen security measure had been met, whereby they might thus transform a relationship of enmity into one of amity.

On closer observation, the quantitative difference in the hospitality provided to the hostages is striking. While the Russian side allegedly served two three-course meals per day—with the main courses alone comprising 50 dishes—and offered several types of wine and even luxury goods, such as coffee, the food on hand in Riga was sparse, with only five dishes served twice a day. Nevertheless, the more modest supply in Riga seems to have been considered appropriate by the Russian side. This may have had something to do with the circumstances of the preceding nine-month siege and the knowledge that the Riga inhabitants did not have the resources for more sumptuous meals. However, it is equally plausible that Witte von Nordeck’s description is an overemphasis on Russian hospitality, designed to convince his audience of the generosity, civility, friendliness and courtesy of the enemy hosts. This may have been necessary to build up confidence in the opposite party, given the cruelty and violence of the preceding siege, as well as the still widespread anti-Russian resentment that had gained new momentum by the propaganda during the Great Northern War.<sup>50</sup>

Indeed, the care of the hostages in Riga was probably not without complications, otherwise governor-general Stromberg would not have complained on July 2 that he was “displeased about the hospitality towards the hostages, which did not happen as it should.” What exactly

gave rise to the governor-general's criticism, however, is not clear from the available sources and literature. The Burgrave of Riga, in turn, justified the measures taken and complained about the large number of guests as well as their alleged all-day consumption of alcohol, which was perceived as excessive.<sup>51</sup> This finding indicates that norms of hospitality did not only apply to hosts, but to guests as well. There were (implicit) expectations of how guests should behave. In the present case, two issues were sources of irritation and thus contradicted the hosts' expectations: the number of persons who had to be served and their consumption of alcohol. Such norms "are to order the ambivalent relationship between host and guest to protect both from the 'smallest injury, and exclude any possibility of hostility'."<sup>52</sup> In this case, the violation of norms was apparently not considered so serious as to jeopardize the success of the hostage exchange.

We do not learn more about the stay and treatment of the hostages from the source material available. But the provision of hostages and the fulfillment of associated demands for hospitality obviously accomplished its confidence-building function. In so doing, it not only transformed hostiles into hostages and hostages into guests but resulted in the securitization of the relationship between the attackers and the city and the Livonian estates by laying the foundations of a new relationship in the form of a capitulation which turned attackers into conquerors, and the besieged city into an *occupatio bellica* whose status was sanctioned by international law.<sup>53</sup> Even though the framework for this relationship was still hostile, the insecurity and danger of war could thus be managed.

### WELCOMING THE NEW HOST: THE ADVENTUS OF FIELD MARSHAL GENERAL BORIS SHEREMETEV TO RIGA

On July 14, 1710, only a few days after the capitulations had been signed, the members of the Livonian knighthood and the Riga city assembly performed homage towards the new ruler. André Holenstein defines "homage as a legal act of recognition by a subordinate to the address of his master, executed by vow or oath."<sup>54</sup> Political oaths aimed at building a trusting political relationship, as Sari Nauman argues.<sup>55</sup> The fact that homage was demanded following surrender was in accordance with the contemporary *ius in bello*.<sup>56</sup> In the case of Riga, the rapid claim for the execution of homage reflects, on the one hand, the Russian understanding that "the incorporation of people in the course of imperial expansion ...

was primarily carried out on the basis of the oath of the natives”—this also applied to the Baltic provinces—and, on the other hand, this insistence was rooted in the tsar’s political goal of securing de facto possession of the Baltic provinces, contrary to the assurances given to Augustus of Saxony and Poland (1670–1733).<sup>57</sup> The homage turned occupied Riga into a Russian city and the oath-swearers into subjects of the tsar, who regarded their inclusion in his realm as an act of grace.<sup>58</sup> And the wild and dangerous war situation, which had prevailed until only ten days before this event, was transformed into a new ruling order, which, like all pre-modern rule, inherently carried the promise of the sovereign’s protection and security. Andreas Gestrich and Bernhard Schmitt stress that despite the fact that changes of rulership were a defining characteristic of the early modern period, the encounters between rulers and ruled who were strangers to each other posed a major challenge.<sup>59</sup> In the present case, the homage was preceded by the entry of the ruler’s representative into the city. A ruler’s *adventus* into the city already had a legally constitutive character, which was especially true for first entries into a city, as in the case of Riga.<sup>60</sup> The entry not only visibly represented the ruling order to the outside world but at the same time consolidated it and thus contributed to its security. Gabriele Jancke explicitly characterizes the *adventus* of the ruler or his representative as in the case of Riga as a festive and highly ritualized form of hospitality; however, she does not provide an in-depth discussion of it.<sup>61</sup> The Russian Field Marshal General Sheremetev’s demand to enter into Riga and receive homage clearly shows that even in this case we should not talk about a voluntary, but rather a necessary act of hospitality, one which reflected the new power positions of the participants.<sup>62</sup> The representative of the occupying power could decide whether the occupied had to offer him hospitality.

The ruler’s *adventus* followed a relatively standardized choreography. Gerrit Jasper Schenk, who intensively analyzed this phenomenon in the late medieval Holy Roman Empire, distinguishes between the *adventus* itself and the *adventus* ceremonial, which he divides into six phases: the preparatory phase, meeting (*occursio*), entry and reception (*ingressus*), procession through the city (*processio*), visit to the main church (*offeritorium*) as well as the accommodation in the city.<sup>63</sup> These phases can also be reconstructed in the case under scrutiny.

There is little information in the sources about the preparations and any arrangements for the course of events and ceremonial, but the material suggests that Sheremetev set the order of events and the ceremonial



for his entry.<sup>64</sup> Apparently, he wanted a procession led by the knighthood. This is suggested by the advice given by the Russian city commander von Osten, who told the members of the knighthood that he “would not consider it unwise, if the knighthood would take the trouble for its own recommendation, to escort [Sheremetev] on his way to the city on horseback as [is] customary.” Considering the loss of horses from the siege, “those who had no horses and wanted to prove their willingness to do so, should be helped by the [Russian] generalship with as many capable horses as necessary for this purpose.”<sup>65</sup> Rejecting the designated guest’s expectations here would inevitably engender new hostility between the field marshal general and the knighthood. Bearing in mind the entire course of events leading up to the *adventus*—the war, capitulation and provision of hostages—it must therefore be doubted whether the members of the Livonian knighthood actually had a choice. Here, the coercive nature of this hospitality situation comes to the fore: this is further underlined by the fact that the members of the group to be hosted, the Russian generalship, offered to help those who were to provide hospitality fulfill the hospitable tasks assigned to them.

On the morning of July 14, about 40 members of the Livonian knighthood assembled on horseback “in the castle garden” in front of the castle “to give more splendor” to the entry of General Field Marshal Sheremetev.<sup>66</sup> Between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., a group of members of the Livonian knighthood under the leadership of Baron Mengden left with an unknown number of Riga city assembly members through the so-called Charles Gate towards the Russian camp to meet Sheremetev and accompany him on his way to the city.<sup>67</sup> From the very beginning of the event, the members of the hosting community were at the service of the guest, giving him guidance and thus not only paying tribute to him but, above all, enhancing his prestige. And even if it is not in the foreground, the security aspect is always implicit in an escort of honor.

The fact that the party from Riga traveled all the way to the expected guest and virtually picked him up at his front door can be interpreted as an expression of the greatest honor. This act was also, however, simultaneously inserted into another narrative inherent in the events: In the immediate vicinity of the Russian camp, the hosts themselves turned into guests. This is also reflected in their behavior, which was very subservient and demonstrated the significant power differential that worked to the disadvantage of the arriving party. They approached the Russian camp on foot, after having dismounted from their horses shortly

before Dreylinghof to walk the last part of the way to the tent of the field marshal general, opposite to which they lined up. Requesting an audience, which Sheremetev granted them, they were even turned into supplicants.<sup>68</sup> The field marshal general thanked them in full for the well-mannered speech which Baron Mengden gave.<sup>69</sup>

The act of dismounting and the speech have been described for the Middle Ages as elements of the *occursio*.<sup>70</sup> In the present case, however, such acts were designed solely to emphasize the power of the designated guest. This is evident from the sheer number of hosts riding out to meet him. The hosts behavior further underlines the asymmetry of power between the subservient hosts and the designated guest. The hosts do not wait until the guest's physical appearance to dismount but do so well before reaching his camp. Moreover, they have to ask for an audience before they can give their speech. Sheremetev then decided on a processional formation for the march: two grenadier officers, followed by 38 grenadiers on horseback, then 16 servants also on horseback, after whom came 36 hand-horses, followed by ten partly empty and partly occupied carriages, drawn by six horses each, then two officers to each horse, thereafter the members of the Riga city assembly on horseback, followed by the members of the Livonian knighthood, also on horseback, then the general's Guard Corps, consisting of 72 men, followed by another coach with noble gentlemen, and finally the richly gilded carriage of the field marshal general drawn by six horses. In the front of this coach rode some trumpeters and two drummers, then a standard. The carriage was accompanied by Turkish dressed footmen. It was followed by a kettledrummer, four further trumpeters, two French horn players and eight oboists. The final part of the formation was comprised of some servants on horseback.<sup>71</sup> In total, the procession included more than 300 people. At 11 a.m., they started moving towards the city.<sup>72</sup> The sheer number of people arriving in a city that had until recently been under siege and bombardment must have posed a major challenge to the hosts. The majority of the guests were members of the military. They were expected to stay in the city, at least temporarily. On a symbolic level, the size of the procession already indicated that it was not an ordinary guest, but instead the new ruler of the city, who literally wanted to fill the city with his people.

On his first step through Charles Gate into the city, Sheremetev was received by the burgomeister and council, who presented him with two golden keys on a velvet pillow.<sup>73</sup> In this moment, shots were fired from the guns of the city and the citadel.<sup>74</sup> Crossing the city gate marks

the crossing of a threshold. The arriving party becomes a guest at the moment of entering urban space. He enters the space of the other, the host who welcomes him, which is visibly demarcated and protected by walls. Thus, the guest is admitted into the protective space of the city. The symbolic handing over of the city keys fundamentally changed this situation, however. By accepting the keys, the guest became the city lord and thus became the host. He was now in control of the city (gates) and could decide who was and was not allowed to stay there. The previous hosts became guests in their own city. Moreover, the handing over of the keys symbolizes the recognition of the person entering as the legitimate ruler of the city. According to Schenk, the handing over of the keys represented the core of the *adventus* ceremonial.<sup>75</sup> Regularly, the keys were returned to the representatives immediately after the handover. Thus, the new lord of the city entrusted city representatives with the control of the city by proxy, and at the same time he reverted to being a guest.<sup>76</sup> This was apparently not done in the present case: this underlines Sheremetev's acquisition of control over Riga and the transformation of the city into a space of Russian rule.

The impression of the Russian field marshal general's control over the city was reinforced by the fact that foreign soldiers lined the streets from the city gate to the castle, all along Sheremetev's processional route.<sup>77</sup> A Russian garrison replaced the Swedish one in Riga on July 10, so the city was already militarily occupied and controlled by strangers. Considering the large crowd accompanying Sheremetev, the placement of soldiers along the parade route must be interpreted not only as having symbolic import but also as a concrete security measure. It was the guests who had taken control of the city and who guaranteed public security now. Beyond this role reversal, it is interesting to note that according to the accounts of the Riga city assembly, the offering of the keys was not a voluntary act of hospitality or tribute paying—although that ritualized tradition existed—but was instead demanded by Sheremetev in exchange for the concessions made by the Russian party in the negotiation of the capitulation.<sup>78</sup> This incorporated tokens of symbolic subordination to diplomatic gift-giving practices.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, this reveals very clearly that hospitality, or elements of hospitality, in the given case was not a value or norm in and of itself, as is often discussed in research, but could actually form the object of exchange, being used as an immaterial (trade) good.<sup>80</sup>

The procession continued up to the castle, where the deputy of the land marshal, the unmounted members of the Livonian knighthood, the

landed nobility and the clergy awaited the field marshal general so that they could pay their respects.<sup>81</sup> Once again, the new host was received. He was met in front of the castle at the bottom of the stair case and led from there to an elevated chair in the hall, the so-called *Großer Ritter-Saal* in the castle.<sup>82</sup> There, Captain Menck held a speech in German, a so-called “*Bewillkommungs-Rede*,” for Sheremetev on behalf of the Livonian knighthood.<sup>83</sup> Although this speech was labeled as a welcome address and thus fit into the hospitable framework of the whole event, its main purpose was to assure the knighthood of the tsar’s willingness to confirm their privileges after the homage was completed. For the second time that day, the members of knighthood played the role of supplicants. Afterwards, Sheremetev attended a church service in the Russian chapel, while the members of the Livonian knighthood retired to an adjacent room. The field marshal general was then led into the castle church, where the superintendent gave the homage sermon. Here ended the actual *adventus*: Sheremetev did not stay in the city, but returned to his camp after accepting the homage.<sup>84</sup> This indicates that the field marshal general’s entry was not mainly concerned with him being welcomed into the city and staying there, but primarily about demonstrating the city’s appropriation, which was made visible to the outside world in the language of hospitality.

After the sermon, the members of the Livonian knighthood took the oath of homage before the altar, for which there was no generally valid ceremonial, according to Lünig.<sup>85</sup> The field marshal general, accompanied by the members of the Livonian knighthood who preceded him, then went into the town to the market square, where a stage clad in red cloth had been erected before the town hall; on this stage stood a red velvet-lined chair under a golden-fringed sky, raised on three steps. With the *Rittersaal* in the castle and the market square with the town hall, the field marshal general had access to two rooms and spaces central to the political life of the city and the whole province, both of which had been sumptuously equipped in his honor. After Sheremetev had taken his place beside the chair, the members of the Riga city assembly, followed by the elders of the guilds, entered the stage and swore the oath of homage.<sup>86</sup> Following this, the field marshal general returned to his carriage. The departure route taken by Sheremetev looked to outside eyes exactly the same as had his entry into the city.<sup>87</sup> But something decisive had now changed: the members of the knighthood and the *Bürgerschaft* now provided the escort to the representative of their new sovereign. In his camp, Sheremetev

invited them in—they thus became guests, who, according to the sources, were treated with all courtesy.<sup>88</sup> The host, however, remained in his role as a host.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In July 1710, the inhabitants of Riga underwent two status changes within only two weeks: from besieged to occupied and from occupied to Russian subjects. With each of these transformations of their legal status, they formally gained more security. These changes were embedded in acts of ritualized hospitality, each of which fulfilled a different function. In the case of the capitulations, the hostages' position and the appropriate hospitality provided to these hostile guests functioned as a security tool that facilitated non-violent communication and also helped to build trust between the opposing parties. Shortly after the capitulations were signed, the Russian Field Marshal General Sheremetev made his entry into Riga. Although the parties involved used expressions of ritualized hospitality, the display of Russia's claim to power dominated events, so that the city's population did not primarily welcome a guest but their new host, by whose entry into Riga they were made guests in their own city. While the hostage exchange was aimed at mutual reassurance, Sheremetev's *adventus* into Riga was designed to secure Russian rule.

## NOTES

1. On Aubry de la Motraye, see Goetze (2018: esp. 54–56).
2. Motraye (1732: 104). All italics in original.
3. Piirimäe (2014: 71); Wittram (1964: 136–142).
4. Piirimäe (2007: 81).
5. Selwyn (2000: 19).
6. See the introduction by the editors of this volume.
7. See Still (2011: 5); Heal (2011: 1).
8. See Still (2011: 5).
9. See Friese (2004: 74). All italics in original. On the spatial dimension of hospitality, see also the introduction to this volume.
10. See Still (2011: 5); similarly, Heal (2011: 4).
11. On the problem of master narratives, see the reflections of Jarausch and Sabrow (2002).
12. Friese (2004: 69).
13. See Jancke (2013: 17).

14. On the connection between hospitality and hostility, see Kearney (2016), who discusses the possibility and impossibility of hospitality; Friese (2004: 69).
15. See Selwyn (2000: 20).
16. Friese (2004: 70).
17. Selwyn (2000: 20).
18. See Tuchtenhagen (2005); Harder-Gersdorff (2005).
19. Stade, Stralsund and Stettin were the most important cities in the Swedish duchies of Bremen, Verden and Western Pomerania in the north of the Holy Roman Empire. The territory of Bremen was occupied by the Danish army in 1712 and, at the same time, Verden was invaded by Hanoverian troops. In 1715, Danish troops also occupied Western Pomerania. See the themed number of *Stader Jahrbuch* 2019, which is dedicated to the events of the Great Northern War in the former duchies of Bremen and Verden, as well as Meier (2008).
20. Steiger (2006: 214–237).
21. Ungern-Sternberg (2014: 18–23).
22. Selected: Kintzinger (1995); Kosto (2012); Bennet and Weikert (2017).
23. Lünig (1720: 1237). According to Heal (2011: 4) such descriptions of the conventions of hospitality were a late phenomenon in the early modern period.
24. See Valerius and Carl (2019).
25. Friese (2004: 70).
26. See Schirren (1865: 316).
27. See Schirren (1865: 317, 319–320).
28. See Valerius and Carl (2019: 489).
29. This interpretation corresponds with Jancke's wide understanding of hospitality, which includes, e.g., exile situations as well as military quartering, though she does not mention hostage situations explicitly. See Jancke (2013: 144).
30. See Kagg (1912: 165).
31. Valerius and Carl (2019: 492) also explicitly point out the elaborate security measures during the exchange of hostages.
32. Schirren (1865: 320).
33. See Jancke (2013: 144, 198–207).
34. See Schirren (1865: 320).
35. See Blumerincq (1902: 3–4, 7). In the recesses of the knighthood, it is said that on June 28, 1710, its members agreed to pay one half of the costs incurred, see Schirren (1865: 320).
36. See Schirren (1865: 324).
37. See Schirren (1865: 324); Blumerincq (1902: 12).
38. See Blumerincq (1902: 12).

39. Jancke (2013: 144–145) (quote at 144). The idea of the princely society (*société des princes*) was coined by Bély (1999).
40. Friese (2004: 71).
41. See Blumerincq (1902: 12).
42. See Blumerincq (1902: 12).
43. See Blumerincq (1902: 12).
44. See Blumerincq (1902: 12).
45. See Jancke (2013: 335–362).
46. See Jancke (2013: 204).
47. Strohmeier (2017: 627).
48. Jancke (2013: 343).
49. Jancke (2013: 345).
50. On the perception of Peter I and Russia, see, e.g., Blome (2000).
51. Buchholtz (1892: 306). Blumerincq (1902: 11) has summarized the report in question.
52. Friese (2004: 70).
53. On the Baltic capitulations, see Brüggemann et al. (2014).
54. Holenstein (1991: 9). On early modern homage, see also Nauman (2017); Brademann (2014); Keller (1994).
55. See Nauman (2017: 19).
56. See note 20. Further examples of homage enforced by occupiers can be found in Brademann (2014: 194).
57. Vulpius (2020: 55) (quote). On Peter I's decision to keep the Baltic provinces, see Piirimäe (2014: 72–74).
58. See Vulpius (2020: 56–66).
59. See Gestrich and Schmitt (2013: 9–10).
60. Schenk (2003: 292); Tenfelde (1982: 55).
61. See Jancke (2013: 400–401).
62. See Blumerincq (1902: 20–21, 23–26); Schirren (1865: 331).
63. See Schenk (2003: 239–242). On the early modern ruler's *adventus*, see Rudolph (2011: 80–185). Still essential to this Dotzauer (1973); Tenfelde (1982); from the perspective of art history, see Kremer (2020).
64. See, e.g., Schirren (1865: 330). Additionally, on the preparations for the homage, see Blumerincq (1902: 21, 23–25).
65. Schirren (1865: 330–331).
66. See Schirren (1865: 331–332).
67. See Helms (1711: [27]); *Einzug* (1710: [2]); Schirren (1865: 331–332).
68. See Schirren (1865: 332); *Einzug* (1710: [2]).
69. See Schirren (1865: 332).
70. See Schenk (2003: 279–280).
71. See Helms (1711: [27–28]). Similar, albeit less detailed, *Einzug* 1710: [2–3], and, more cursorily, Schirren (1865: 332).
72. See Helms (1711: [27]).

73. See *Einzug* (1710: [3]); Schirren (1865: 332).
74. See *Einzug* (1710: [3]); Helms (1711: [28]).
75. See Schenk (2003: 347).
76. See Schenk (2003: 347–348).
77. See Helms (1711: [27]); *Einzug* (1710: [3]).
78. See Blumerincq (1902: 13).
79. It was customary to pay respect and gratitude to the envoys of the other side after successful negotiations by giving them gifts. On diplomatic gift giving, see Windler (2020); Althoff and Stollberg-Rillinger (2015); Häberlein and Jeggle (2013); Duchhardt (1972).
80. For discussion about hospitality as a universal norm, see the introduction to this volume.
81. See *Einzug* (1710: [3]); Schirren (1865: 332).
82. See *Einzug* (1710: [3]); Schirren (1865: 332).
83. See *Einzug* (1710: [3]); Schirren (1865: 332). The episode of the welcome address is missing in Helms (1711). The text of the welcome address can be found in: *Bewillkomungs-Rede*.
84. See Schenk (2003: 381).
85. See *Einzug* (1710: [3–4]); Helms (1711: [28]); Schirren (1865: 332–333). See Lünig (1720: 821), and note also Nauman (2017).
86. See *Einzug* (1710: [4]); Helms (1711: [28]); Schirren (1865: 333) without any details; Blumerincq (1902: 27–28).
87. See *Einzug* (1710: [4]); Helms (1711: [28]); Schirren (1865: 333) without any details; Blumerincq (1902: 28).
88. See *Einzug* (1710: [4]); Helms (1711: [28]); Schirren (1865: 333).

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# Receiving the Enemy: Involuntary Hospitality and Prisoners of War in Denmark and Sweden, 1700–1721

*Olof Blomqvist*

In the context of providing hospitality, the act of receiving the enemy arguably constitutes one of the most extreme situations imaginable. The question of how hosts and guests are to defuse potential conflicts are relevant in every act of hospitality, but seldom are they as acute as when they identify each other as members of opposing sides in an ongoing war. A case that captures this problem in the early modern period is the interaction between civilian communities and prisoners of war.

The Great Northern War (1700–1721) resulted in large-scale migration all around the Baltic Sea, and a part of this movement was the forced migration of prisoners of war. Fighting for geopolitical dominance in northern Europe, the warring parties of Sweden, on the one hand, and a coalition of Denmark, Russia and Saxony-Poland, on the other, captured

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tens of thousands of soldiers over two decades of conflict. Some of these captives regained their freedom in the field, whether through escape or prisoner exchange, but many others were removed from the warzones and brought to towns and villages in the hinterlands. Their arrival brought the native population into direct and everyday contact with enemy soldiers and, as many of these prisoners remained in captivity for years or even decades, they became part of the host community's experience of wartime migration, just as much as more traditional groups of migrants.

In this chapter, I study how the host communities in the Danish town of Aarhus and the Swedish town of Uppsala approached the question of providing security in everyday interactions with prisoners of war. What role did notions of hospitality play in the treatment of these prisoners? How did the hosts react to the presence of enemy soldiers? And what internal and external factors influenced this interaction?

The Great Northern War occurred at a time when the treatment of prisoners of war was undergoing significant changes. On the one hand, the state's successive monopolization of warfare meant that captured enemy soldiers were transformed from the private booty of their captor to state property. On the other, the treatment of prisoners was increasingly regulated by the emerging notion of international laws of war. But, even though there were many motives for *taking* prisoners in the field, the early modern state was less interested in actually *keeping* prisoners for a longer period of time. According to the military ideals of the time, captivity was intended to be a brief experience. Rather than incarcerating captive enemy soldiers, captors generally preferred to either press them into their own forces, or exchange them as soon as possible.<sup>1</sup> And yet, this ideal appears to have been increasingly difficult to uphold in the course of the early modern era. Warring states found themselves stuck with large numbers of captive soldiers and the question of what to do with them. The Great Northern War is a case in point. Exchange negotiations broke down repeatedly between Sweden and the coalition states even as the war kept dragging on year after year. As a result, many prisoners of war remained in captivity for decades.<sup>2</sup>

In many ways, these prisoners of war constituted an extreme example of strangers in the host community. Besides their distant geographical origin and their foreign customs, their perceived strangeness was reinforced by the fact that they were identified as enemies of the realm. Their presence in the host community was involuntary, decreed by the captor state, and

the length of their stay was indefinite, dependent as it was on the developments of international politics. What especially marked these prisoners out as a group, however, was that they presented the host community with a dual problem of securitization. On the one hand, there was the question of how to prevent the prisoners from escaping and returning to active service; on the other, there was the question of how to protect the host community from the potential threat that these captive soldiers presented.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how established notions of public hospitality allowed the Danish and Swedish crown to mobilize local resources for supporting prisoners of war. However, this hospitality had to be negotiated between the state and the host community, particularly in the face of growing demands for wartime labor and the wider military developments on the international scene. The result of these negotiations, I argue, was a process of social integration, which served as a mechanism for providing security in the everyday interactions between prisoners and hosts.

### CAPTIVITY AS PUBLIC HOSPITALITY

Previous research suggests that notions of hospitality played a significant role in the early modern notion of war captivity. Captivity reflected the social order of early modern society in the sense that the social hierarchy was reproduced through the contrasting treatment of officers and common soldiers. Scholars have in particular emphasized how this hierarchy was expressed in the hospitality with which captors usually received captive officers. Acts of hospitality toward vanquished foes can be seen as expressing ideals of knightly chivalry and notions of restricted, civilized warfare, but they were fundamentally founded on a distinct sense of class solidarity shared among the officers of both sides. The ruling elites of Europe generally recognized each other as social equals, and captors therefore tended to treat high-ranking prisoners of war as something like distinguished—although involuntary—guests.<sup>3</sup> Captive officers were granted extensive privileges on the basis of their word of honor that they would not exploit their relative freedom to escape.<sup>4</sup> They were allowed to maintain a lifestyle that reflected their social status, retaining their own servants and cooks; they could rent comfortable accommodations, at their own expense; and they were invited to partake in the social activities of the local elite.<sup>5</sup> Obvious examples from the Great Northern War include the



Russian prince Alexander Archilovich Bagrationi (1674–1711) and the Swedish field marshal Magnus Stenbock (1665–1717) who, during their years of captivity, were regular guests of the royal courts in Stockholm and Copenhagen, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

This hospitable treatment of captive enemies should not be overly idealized—captivity could well be full of hardships, even for captive officers—but it clearly reflected the social hierarchy of early modern society, characterized, as it was, by its social exclusivity. The fraternization among the officers naturally excluded the common soldiers, who were neither highborn enough to be let into the noble salons, nor deemed honorable enough that they could be released on parole. Although this chivalrous hospitality was reserved for the higher echelons of society, other forms of hospitality likely influenced the treatment of the common soldier.

Gabrielle Jancke argues that the early modern concept of hospitality was much broader than the modern definition: hospitality was not just a religious and ethical concept, but a legal one. In religious and ethical terms, hospitality was essentially perceived as an altruistic act of the host—it was a private act of friendship, which established a reciprocal relationship between host and guest. Early modern jurists, by contrast, conceptualized a distinction between this form of *private hospitality* on the one hand and, on the other, a form of *public hospitality* which was defined as necessary rather than voluntary.<sup>7</sup> Jancke writes that hospitality in this latter sense was considered a matter for society as a whole, rather than for the individual, and she links this concept to the household-based economy of early modern society. As most production took place within households, hospitality was a crucial strategy that enabled resource mobilization for public ventures. Legal texts and philosophical tractates consequently recognized public hospitality as a fundamental component of the social order.<sup>8</sup>

This concept of public hospitality was legitimized as a necessary expression of the common good of society. In contrast to the act of private hospitality which was based on a community of friendship—that of the table companions (Ger. *Tischgenossen*)—the act of public hospitality instead manifested *the community of the realm*. This was a community based on the principle that all members of society, united by common norms and laws, had an obligation to provide for the needs of the common good, which translated into a duty to offer certain acts of hospitality. In effect, Jancke argues, providing public hospitality was seen as an

act of submission. Accepting his duty to show hospitality, the host recognized the authority of king and crown as well as displayed his loyalty to the realm.<sup>9</sup>

There were many forms of public hospitality, but one of the prime examples was the billeting of military personnel.<sup>10</sup> In a time when dedicated military barracks were rare, civilian households were required to accommodate and feed soldiers for the length of their stay in the host community. According to Jancke, these billeted soldiers served as concrete representations of the state in the local community and, as such, hospitality toward these soldiers symbolically reaffirmed the political order and its legal norms.<sup>11</sup> But the military billeting also demonstrates that inherent to this concept of public hospitality was the notion that it need not have been voluntary nor consensual.<sup>12</sup> An obvious indication of this is the fact that the state sometimes employed military billeting as a weapon with which to subdue dissident communities.<sup>13</sup> Billeting was generally perceived as a heavy burden by the affected communities—not just in terms of its material demands, but because of the resulting tensions it produced within individual households.<sup>14</sup> Scholars argue that many of the conflicts between soldiers and civilians resulted from the fact that soldiers refused to recognize their position as guests in the household, thus challenging the authority of the family father.<sup>15</sup>

This notion of public hospitality, I argue, was crucial for the treatment of prisoners of war during the Great Northern War. Few scholars have systematically engaged with the question of how the day-to-day management of early modern captivity was organized, but it is widely agreed that the state did not, by itself, possess the necessary resources to intern large numbers of captive soldiers for any lengthy period of time. Dedicated prisoner camps, like those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were out of the question.<sup>16</sup> A common solution was to delegate the cost of captivity. Renauld Morieux, who studies the developing treatment of prisoners of war during the second half of the eighteenth century, demonstrates that the French and British crown relied extensively on private contractors to organize essentially every aspect of life in captivity.<sup>17</sup> I will demonstrate that the Danish and Swedish crowns instead solved this problem by employing the concept of public hospitality.

## CAPTIVITY IN AARHUS AND UPPSALA: AN OVERVIEW

Aarhus and Uppsala were two of the many towns in the Danish and Swedish realms that were forced to accommodate captive soldiers during the course of the Great Northern War. The archives provide unusually accessible sources on captivity in these two towns, both in a national and an international comparison. The main body of source material consists of, on the one hand, the archives of the local royal administration (Dan. *Amt*, Swe. *Länsstyrelse*) and, on the other, those of the local magistrates. These archives provide a diverse range of sources—correspondence between the communal authorities and the crown, minutes of the communal council meetings, court records, and, above all, a diverse collection of prisoner muster rolls.

Individually, these sources mostly provide only summary information on the prisoners of war, but compiling the scraps of information in a database proves them to be a rich window into the everyday organization of war captivity. This method allows me to partially reconstruct the activities of individual prisoners of war, starting from their arrival in the host community and following them until their departure. The fragmentary nature of the sources means, however, that generalized figures and conclusions—such as the exact number of prisoners in the community at a given time—need to be regarded first and foremost as estimations.

Despite differences with regard to their local and national context, the situations in Aarhus and Uppsala shared many similarities. Although small in comparison to the larger Europe-wide context, both towns were fairly sizable in the Scandinavian context and served as important regional economic and administrative centers. Furthermore, the war put both communities under severe economic and demographic pressure.

As the fifth largest town in Denmark, with approximately 3500 inhabitants, Aarhus was an important hub for both domestic and international trade and, as such, the war with Sweden was a severe blow to the local economy. A general decline in wartime shipping, the actions by Swedish privateers, and state demands for extensive military billeting put the local burghers under significant economic pressure.<sup>18</sup> Besides the obligation to billet military personnel, from the summer of 1713 and onward came the demand to support large numbers of prisoners of war. After the surrender of the Swedish army at Tönningen in May of that year, thousands of Swedish prisoners were brought to Denmark and distributed in towns across Jutland and Zealand.<sup>19</sup> Aarhus initially received a particularly large group of about 1200 prisoners,<sup>20</sup> but within a year this number had

been significantly reduced. A number of prisoners supposedly escaped to Sweden, others were relocated to neighboring towns, and the remaining prisoners were increasingly dispersed over Aarhus' surrounding countryside. By the spring of 1717, there were 71 prisoners permanently residing in the town<sup>21</sup> with at least 150 further prisoners living in the neighboring rural parishes.<sup>22</sup> Some of these prisoners eventually married local women and settled in Denmark permanently, but most of them would have returned to Sweden following the end of the war in 1720.

Uppsala, in turn, only had about 2500 inhabitants but was still one of the larger towns in Sweden by the outbreak of war in the year 1700.<sup>23</sup> The town was primarily known for its university, cathedral, and royal castle, making Uppsala a center for ecclesiastic and royal administration. The war years, however, ushered in a long series of local catastrophes. Fire destroyed large parts of the town in 1702, including the castle and the cathedral. In the early years of the 1710s, severe dearth resulted in a region-wide famine, closely followed by a plague epidemic that decimated the town population. Although the number of prisoners sent to Uppsala was smaller than those in Aarhus, they still constituted a significant presence in the community. A group of 28 Russian prisoners of war arrived in November 1709,<sup>24</sup> followed by a group of 43 Danish soldiers in June 1710.<sup>25</sup> Many of these prisoners fell victim to the plague epidemic in 1710–1711, but the 40 odd prisoners who survived remained in the town for several years, until 1716.<sup>26</sup>

This overview highlights a significant difference between the two towns in terms of the composition of the prisoner population. In ethnic and confessional terms, the prisoners in Aarhus were relatively homogenous as a group, whereas the prisoners who arrived in Uppsala were far more diverse, demonstrated above all by the empirical distinction between Danish and Russian prisoners of war. It needs to be emphasized that the epithets “Danish” and “Russian,” in this context, were not inherently understood in ethnic terms, but were rather defined as administrative categories, identifying the prisoners based on which hostile state they served.<sup>27</sup> Yet, even so, the two groups displayed significant variety in terms of the geographical and cultural origin of the prisoners—particularly in confessional terms. Whereas the Danish prisoners were all Lutherans, the Russian prisoners were Russian Orthodox. This heterogeneity among the prisoners in Uppsala allows for an interesting comparison between the contrasting experiences of the two groups.

## DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITY

The question of how these prisoners were to be housed and fed was inevitably tied to the problem of security. Inspired by the model of military billeting, the Danish and Swedish crown relied on the host communities to support the prisoners during their time in captivity. As such, the royal authorities delegated much of the responsibility for the practical organization of captivity onto the host community and, crucially, this included the duty to provide much of the necessary security arrangements.

The situation for prisoners of war in Aarhus directly resembled that of billeted soldiers. The prisoners were lodged as guests in private households and administratively integrated into the pre-existing framework of military billeting, under the auspice of the so-called “quartering committee” (Dan. *indkvarteringsvesenet*), normally tasked with arranging the quartering of regular troops.<sup>28</sup>

In Uppsala, by contrast, the Danish and Russian prisoners were initially housed in the ruins of Uppsala castle. Although the burned-out shell had been marked for demolition following the city fire of 1702, there were still a number of cellar vaults beneath the building, which were deemed as appropriately secure accommodation for prisoners of war.<sup>29</sup> However, the host community was still responsible for feeding the prisoners, and the spatial segregation did not by any means isolate the prisoners from the resident population. The prisoners living in the castle were allowed to move about in the town during daytime, and several locals evidently visited the prisoners in their quarters to offer them food or drink.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, during the course of their captivity, many of the prisoners eventually moved out of the castle to settle in the town proper, as they found employment in the service of local burghers.

Regardless of the way housing was arranged, the resident population was expected to ensure the security of these prisoners, both individually and collectively. In Aarhus, the individual hosts were held accountable for the prisoners living in their homes, and royal decrees threatened them with heavy fines in case a prisoner succeeded in escaping.<sup>31</sup> Anecdotes further demonstrate that when a prisoner did run away, it was up to the individual host to track him down.<sup>32</sup> Although the crown initially stationed a troop of 300 cuirassiers to keep the peace in the town, this responsibility eventually also fell on the burghers as the guard force was called away. The situation in Uppsala was similar. According to royal

instructions from 1706, prisoners of war were subjected to a night-time curfew, starting at 9 p.m. in the summer or at 7 p.m. in the winter, and it was up to the individual hosts to ensure that the prisoners followed the regulations.<sup>33</sup> Extensive duties also fell on the burgher militia. Besides patrolling the streets at night, the burghers were supposed to provide six militiamen to stand guard over the prisoners in the castle, night and day.<sup>34</sup>

This prisoner policy clearly prioritized the crown's fiscal interests over questions of security. Advocating the principle of public hospitality, the crown delegated the cost of captivity onto the host community, but the policy necessitated a delicate balancing act. On the one hand, the state faced the problem of how to legitimize the demands of public hospitality in the eyes of the hosts. The host community, on the other hand, was left with the problem of how to provide security in the everyday interaction between hosts and prisoners. The solution to these two problems, I argue, was connected.

### LEGITIMACY AND COMPENSATION

The prisoners' claim to public hospitality was questionable. In many aspects, billeting prisoners of war was not that different from billeting regular soldiers, but the legitimacy of the military billeting arguably rested, to no small degree, on the fact that the soldier was an agent of the state and thus a manifestation of the common security interests of the realm. The prisoner of war was not—rather, he was a symbol of the external threat to the community. When the crown requested the host community to extend public hospitality to captive enemy soldiers it thus diluted the notion that public hospitality manifested the community of the realm, which Jancke sees at the fundamental legitimating basis for the concept.

Indeed, the host community in Uppsala and Aarhus did question the legitimacy of the prisoner policy. These protests were primarily associated with the prisoners' arrival in the community. Local authorities argued that the demand to accommodate prisoners of war was unjust in face of the economic and demographic pressure under which the host communities had already suffered. The Aarhus magistrate complained bitterly to the local governor (Dan. *stiftsamtmand*) about the heavy burden which had been placed on the residents of the town. The request to accommodate 1200 Swedish prisoners—besides a number of regular army troops—resulted in such a shortage on housing, he claimed, that each household

had to accept up to ten lodgers at a time. What was worse, other neighboring towns were said to be free from having to billet altogether.<sup>35</sup> The Uppsala magistrate was less vocal in his criticism, but appears to have allied with the regional governor (Swe. *Landshövding*) in protest against the prisoner policy. Writing to the Royal Council in May 1710, the governor declared that supporting prisoners of war in Uppsala would be outright impossible. Besides the alleged lack of secure facilities to house the prisoners, the present dearth meant that there was simply no food to be had in the entire region.<sup>36</sup> Individual burghers also continually protested against the extensive demands placed on the town militia to perform guard duty; they complained either formally, in the town hall,<sup>37</sup> or informally, by simply neglecting to undertake these duties.<sup>38</sup>

That individual communities challenged state demands on local resources was not uncommon, but these local protests did not target the crown's demands on billeting per se, but rather focused on the prisoner policy in particular. The dubious legitimacy of extending public hospitality to prisoners of war allowed the host community a venue to criticize wartime resource mobilization.<sup>39</sup>

The protests focused attention on the question of how the state ought to compensate the hosts for their hospitality. From the outset, the Danish and Swedish prisoner policy stated that each prisoner of war was initially entitled to a daily prisoner allowance. Financed by the local war contribution tax, this sum was intended to cover the daily costs for food and accommodation.<sup>40</sup> In practice, the tax-funded prisoner allowance really served to compensate the prisoner's host—a practice very similar to the system of military billeting.<sup>41</sup> However, in recognition of the problem of legitimacy, the crown also proposed another kind of deal. In an address, primarily directed at the local elite of rural landowners and urban master artisans, the crown offered individual hosts the opportunity to employ prisoners of war as laborers, provided that they accepted full responsibility for feeding and watching over them.

The Swedish crown had already adopted this line on prisoner labor in 1706, as soon as large numbers of prisoners of war started to arrive in Sweden. On several occasions, the regional governor in Uppsala actively encouraged civilians to take prisoners into their service.<sup>42</sup> Integral to the deal was that the prisoners currently quartered in the castle cellar would be allowed to move into the employer's home.

The Danish crown's policy on prisoner labor was more categorical, in the sense that it prescribed compulsory work-duty for prisoners of war.

All prisoners, except for the old and infirm, were expected to “work for their fare.”<sup>43</sup> Initially, the act of hiring prisoner labor was voluntary, like in Sweden, but the Danish policy eventually went one step further. A royal decree from 1715 declared that each prisoner of war was to be permanently assigned to a particular employer, who would henceforth be responsible for accommodating and supporting him for the duration of the war. The plan envisaged dividing a total of 249 prisoners between members of the rural elite—mainly parish pastors and major landowners—and the burghers of the local towns.<sup>44</sup> The residents of Aarhus were eventually assigned 20 of these prisoners of war, besides a further 50 odd prisoners who were deemed unemployable and who were thus supported through the contribution tax.<sup>45</sup>

In one sense, allowing civilians to hire prisoner labor was a continuation of the crown’s strategy to delegate the cost of prisoner upkeep onto the host community. Laboring prisoners lost their entitlement to the prisoner allowance, as the crown renounced its economic responsibility toward them; as such, each new laboring prisoner freed up tax revenue for other, war-related expenses. But, crucially, the state explicitly presented prisoner labor as a way to compensate the local elite for the effects of the wartime resource mobilization. Military conscriptions had resulted in a growing shortage of male laborers, and the crown proposed that prisoner labor would, to some extent, be able to fill in for the mobilized native work force.<sup>46</sup>

This policy on prisoner labor, I argue, redefined the fundamentals of public hospitality. Instead of basing the claim to hospitality on the idea of a collective duty to the common good, hospitality was now conditioned on the prisoner performing labor.

This policy indeed appears to have been welcomed in the host communities as several members of the local elite were quite eager to hire prisoner labor. From Aarhus there is evidence suggesting that a veritable black market for prisoner labor emerged, where burghers and landowners bribed local representatives of the crown with offers of money and favors to acquire certain prisoners of war.<sup>47</sup> Some evidently tried to get hold of as many prisoners as possible, such as the baron Christian Guldencrone (1676–1746), one of the major landowners of the region. In 1715, he had been assigned three prisoners of war to his estate of Vilhelmsborg, in accordance with the royal prisoner policy, but by 1717 he was in the process of hiring another 12 prisoners.<sup>48</sup>



Part of the success of the labor policy, particularly in Uppsala, was the fact that the prisoners provided local employers with a source of quality labor. Several of the prisoners who arrived in the town had received occupational training prior to enlisting in the army, which made them a valuable asset to local master artisans searching for apprentices. This is clearly demonstrated by a list of 20 Uppsala burghers who, already in 1706, declared their interest in hiring prisoner labor. More than half of these prospective employers were explicitly looking for prisoners with specific skillsets—from wagonmakers and carpenters to cobblers.<sup>49</sup> Later examples further yield cases of master artisans who successfully headhunted prisoners with certain occupational qualifications.<sup>50</sup>

Many prisoners also seem to have welcomed the opportunity to work. The source corpus provides several examples of prisoners who explicitly appealed to the local authorities for the right to enter into service.<sup>51</sup> Labor evidently offered the prisoners an opportunity to improve their material situation—this was particularly so for the prisoners accommodated in the cellar of Uppsala castle. Finding a position of employment gave them the chance to leave the cellar vaults for more comfortable accommodation in the town.

The position of these laboring prisoners must not be mistaken for slave labor. The royal authorities evidently intended that the prisoners would be a source of cheap labor, but this did not mean that the prisoners were bereft of all agency. Both in Aarhus and in Uppsala, employment could take the form of a regular service contract, such as the one between local judge Frans Roscher and prisoner Lorentz Bauman in Uppsala. According to a later description, the judge had approached Bauman with the offer of entering his service and eventually the two of them agreed that Bauman was to serve Roscher until Michaelmas (the customary end date for service contracts at this time) for a daily wage of 9 *öre kopparmynt*, in addition to food and lodging.<sup>52</sup> The prisoners' agency on the local labor market is particularly evident in the numerous indignant complaints about prisoners in and around Aarhus who left their appointed hosts to sell their services to the highest bidder.<sup>53</sup> In both towns, some prisoners even established independent businesses.<sup>54</sup>

The Danish prisoner Hans Christopher Becker in Uppsala can exemplify a prisoner's career during the course of captivity. Arriving in Uppsala in 1710, he was initially housed in the castle cellar, together with the other prisoners of war, but sometime in 1711 he was hired by a local burgher and moved to the employer's house in town. The employer was,

by all accounts, the master hatter Simon Novelius, who in addition to Becker also hired two other prisoners of war around the same time.<sup>55</sup> By 1713, however, Becker had left the hatter's service, set himself up as a cobbler and applied to be accepted as a local burgher.<sup>56</sup> He married a Swedish woman and, judging by a later court case, he was able not only to support himself and his new family, but also to rent a small house or apartment.<sup>57</sup>

## SECURITY THROUGH INTEGRATION

Somewhat paradoxically, the policy on prisoner labor also appears to have been a solution to the problem of securitization. The fact that the state relinquished much of its direct control over the prisoners by allowing individual locals to hire them might have been expected to exacerbate the security problem. The result of this policy, however, was that the prisoners became integrated as members of local households—a process of integration that, in itself, appears to have functioned as a mechanism for providing security in the daily interaction between prisoners and hosts.

Maria Ågren argues that the division of labor in early modern households both served as a manifestation of social hierarchies and as a strong integrative force in society. Every person who was involved in household production—from the master and mistress to maids and farmhands—had a recognized position in the social hierarchy, both inside the household and in the wider community. Taking part in household production thus served as a fundamental basis for inclusion in a community.<sup>58</sup>

Service in local households thus bound prisoner and host together into networks of social relationships. Although clearly hierarchical, the master-servant relationship was a reciprocal relationship of mutual obligations that secured for the prisoner a defined place in the life of the household. In contrast to billeted soldiers, prisoners of war were not simply passive consumers of the household's resources, but active participants in its production.

Intermarriages between prisoners of war and native women appear as the most striking testimony of the process of integration. During the years of captivity, a number of prisoners in both Aarhus and Uppsala married native women and declared that they wanted to stay in the country permanently. In Aarhus, a muster roll from 1718 lists 11 prisoners who had married and settled in the town.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, 11 of the prisoners in Uppsala married local women between the years 1713 and 1715.<sup>60</sup> In

some of these latter cases, local parish records imply how integration in local households helped anchor the prisoners in the local community. For example, when the above-mentioned prisoner Becker christened his newborn daughter in Uppsala cathedral, on July 9, 1713, the local baptism record names master hatter Simon Novelius, his former employer, as the girl's godfather.<sup>61</sup> The act of naming Novelius as the godfather of his daughter was clearly a way for Becker to demonstrate his local connections, and suggests that his relationship to the hatter was a crucial form of social capital, useful in legitimizing Becker's presence in the community.

A significant product of this development was a shift in the temporal perspectives of both prisoners and hosts. From the outset, prisoners of war were inherently defined as temporary visitors. The length of their stay was never determined in advance, but they were ultimately expected to leave the community—either through the event of a prisoner exchange or because of the end of the war. However, as some of these prisoners became embedded in the host community through work, marriage and social relationships, their presence was increasingly perceived as something permanent.

This integration of prisoners into local networks of social relations seems to have provided a strategy for mitigating potential conflicts between prisoners and hosts. Despite their continued presence in the host community, there is a striking absence in the sources of any sense that the prisoners would have been perceived as constituting a physical threat to the locals. Court records from Uppsala offer an interesting perspective on this as the prisoners of war in the town became integrated into the local judicial system and subjected to the civil code of law.<sup>62</sup> Local court records document a number of conflicts between prisoners and locals, but these cases do not suggest any general animosity between the two groups. The nine documented cases where prisoners of war were sentenced for brawls or assaults between 1710 and 1714 are more or less indistinguishable from other cases of interpersonal violence from this time.<sup>63</sup> Further, the eight cases where prisoners were sentenced for offenses of fornication or adultery testifies to their close interaction with members of the host community.<sup>64</sup> A general impression of the magisterial protocols is that the communal authorities viewed the local students and regular billeted soldiers as posing much larger threats to public order than the prisoners of war did.

Not all prisoners experienced this process on equal terms, however, and the contrasts between the groups of Danish and Russian prisoners

in Uppsala is particularly striking. The Danish prisoners appear to have achieved a relatively high level of integration within the local labor market, as exemplified in the story of Hans Christopher Becker. All in all, of the 26 Danish prisoners who lived in the town between 1711 and 1716, at least 19 had some form of employment at one time or another.<sup>65</sup> These prisoners worked in a variety of different fields, some as artisan apprentices, others as garden servants at the royal estate of Ekolsund, and a few in more exotic occupations, such as one prisoner who was hired as the official town drummer. By contrast, accounts of the Russian prisoners' activities are much rarer. The sources suggest that several of these prisoners carried out odd jobs now and then, but it is only possible to identify four who had any form of long-term employment.<sup>66</sup> The contrast between the two groups is even more evident when considering prisoner marriages in the town. *All* of the 11 prisoners who married local women in Uppsala belonged to the group of Danish prisoners. It thus seems that although the two groups lived in parallel in the town for almost six years, the Danish prisoners became increasingly more integrated in the community, whereas the Russians continued to live on the social periphery.

The most important factor behind this discrepancy seems to be the cultural clash that the Russian prisoners experienced in their interaction with the resident population. Arriving in Uppsala in 1709, the Russian prisoners appear to have had great difficulties in communication with the locals. A court record from November 1711, for example, suggests that communication was only possible through three-step interpretation.<sup>67</sup> However, probably more of a problem than the linguistic barrier was their Russian Orthodox faith. In confessional terms, the Swedish realm was a highly homogenous society at the beginning of the eighteenth century (as was the kingdom of Denmark). Known in historiography as the era of Lutheran orthodoxy, this was a time when the Lutheran state church had a major influence on the political and legal structures of the realm. Consequently, foreigners who professed a deviant faith were subjected to social and legal restrictions—for example, any Russian prisoner who wished to marry a Swedish woman first had to convert to Lutheranism.<sup>68</sup> Thus, the process of integration for prisoners who shared the Lutheran faith of the hosts (such as the Danish prisoners in Uppsala or the Swedish in Aarhus) was much smoother than it was for the Russians, whose religious traditions effectively marked them out as strangers.

## THE GEOGRAPHY OF WAR

The developments in Aarhus and Uppsala did not occur in a vacuum, but were dependent on events taking place on the international scene. The geography of war, in particular, had a significant impact on the interaction between the prisoners and their hosts; the relative distance or proximity of enemy forces strongly influenced local perceptions of the level of potential threat that prisoners posed.

The two towns were, initially, situated far away from the actual theater of war and as long as the fighting took place overseas—in Poland, Pomerania, Livonia, and Russia—the prisoners seem to have been viewed as posing little in the way of an active threat to the host community. The situation in Uppsala changed drastically, however, between 1709 and 1716. After initial Swedish victories at the beginning of the conflict, the strategic situation of the realm deteriorated following the defeat of the Swedish field army at the Battle of Poltava, in June 1709. For the inhabitants of Uppsala, the most pressing concern was the advance of Russian armies into Finland, just on the other side of the Bothnian Bay. In 1713, Russian forces captured Helsinki, and in the following years, they successively occupied the whole of Finland.<sup>69</sup> In Uppsala, the arrival of large numbers of refugees from Finland would doubtless have increased the local awareness of the strategic setbacks in the east.<sup>70</sup>

The proximity of Russian forces appears to have heightened tensions between the host population and the Russian prisoners in Uppsala. In April 1715, a burgher reported to the magistrate that a Russian prisoner had threatened a local innkeeper with what would happen to her in an anticipated Russian invasion. Supposedly, the prisoner had told the mistress of the house that “the Russians will soon be here to cut your breasts off [...] and slap you on the mouth with them. The other hags they will make gunpowder out of.”<sup>71</sup>

Reflecting this development, the minutes of the Uppsala magistrate show how Russian prisoners of war were increasingly perceived as a growing security threat. Notably, concerns about the diligence of the burgher militia became a common topic in the magistrate’s sessions, a theme that had been virtually non-existent in previous years. Between August and October 1715 alone, the magistrate dealt with the matter in at least five separate sittings.<sup>72</sup> There is no reason to suspect that this newfound interest in the burgher militia was spurred on by sudden laps in the militiamen’s sense of duty. Rather, it reflected the growing sense of

direct military threat to the community. These concerns clearly became all the more alarming by the sudden escape of one of the Russian prisoners in August 1715. Following this incident, the magistrate gathered the local burghers to emphasize the considerable threat that the Russian prisoners constituted to the security of the realm. Living in the country for such a long time, these people could, supposedly, provide the enemy with invaluable information and they would do whatever they could to reach the hostile troops in Finland if they succeeded in their escape.<sup>73</sup> Importantly, however, these concerns were directed not toward prisoners of war in general, but specifically at the group of Russian prisoners. By contrast, there are no indications of similar tensions between the Danish prisoners and their hosts.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS: RECEIVING THE ENEMY AND NEGOTIATING HOSPITALITY

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that notions of public hospitality were instrumental for the treatment of prisoners of war during the time of the Great Northern War. The prisoner policy of the Danish and Swedish crown tapped into established systems of public hospitality, modeled on the billeting of military personnel. The crown employed norms of hospitality to mobilize local resources for the war effort, delegating the cost of feeding and guarding the prisoners onto the host community. In line with Jancke's argument, the reception of prisoners of war in Aarhus and Uppsala testifies to the important role hospitality played in the structure of the early modern state.

At the same time, however, negotiations between the state and the host community regarding the legitimacy of the prisoner policy redefined these very notions of hospitality. The prisoner policy relinquished the idea that public hospitality was founded on a fundamental solidarity between members of the community of the realm. Prisoners of war were entitled to hospitality despite the fact that they were not members of the realm, but, quite the opposite, were identified as its enemies. Instead, the prisoners were expected to compensate their hosts by performing labor.

The result of these negotiations was a relationship between the resident population and the prisoners of war which combined two competing sets of roles. First of all, there was the relationship between hosts and guests. The prisoners were temporary, involuntary visitors in the host community and the resident population was charged with seeing to their

needs. Simultaneously, however, the interaction was also characterized by the relationship between masters and servants. Through service arrangements, the prisoners were formally placed in a subordinate position to their hosts and employers, expected to serve and obey.

The dynamic between these partially conflicting sets of relationships seems to have served as a mechanism for providing security in the interaction between prisoners and hosts. I argue that this development was dependent on a number of factors internal and external to the host community. Crucially, the structure of the early modern household economy linked hosts and prisoners of war in networks of social relations. As farmhands, domestic servants, and artisan apprentices, the laboring prisoners actively contributed to the production of the household and were thus perceived as less of a burden by the host community. This dynamic was further reinforced by the wartime labor demand in the two towns. The growing labor deficit due to military drafts and epidemics made the laboring prisoners a valuable asset to local employers, but it also provided the prisoners themselves with a relatively strong bargaining position in the local labor market. Importantly, however, these local developments in Aarhus and Uppsala played out against the backdrop of the larger military and political developments of the Great Northern War. The local process of integration was conditioned by the relative distance to the theater of war, and tensions between prisoners and locals increased as the war advanced closer to home. In Uppsala, the Russian occupation of Finland and the perceived threat of a Russian invasion appears to have activated an increasingly hostile attitude toward the Russian prisoners on the part of the local population.

In conclusion, this negotiated hospitality served both as an integrative and an excluding force. Service in local households inserted prisoners of war in networks of social relations that fueled a process of integration, but this process appears to have been contingent upon cultural and religious conformity to the norms of the host community. Whereas the Danish, Lutheran prisoners in Uppsala succeeded in finding employment and marrying local women, the Russian prisoners continued to live on the social margins of the community, marked as strangers by their deviant faith.

## NOTES

1. Starting at the end of the sixteenth century, a system of bilateral treaties, so called *cartels*, was established in Europe, which structured the exchange and ransoming of prisoners of war. Such treaties generally stipulated that captives should be exchanged within four weeks of capture—preferably even within two weeks. Hohrath (1999: 163–165).
2. For an extended discussion on the breakdown of Swedish–Russian and Swedish–Danish exchange negotiations, see Almqvist (1942, 1944, 1945), Tuxen and Harbou (1915).
3. Hohrath (1999: 158).
4. Hohrath (1999: 154–157). For a further discussion on the dynamics of captivity and notions of honor, see Morieux (2013).
5. Blomqvist (2014: 27–33), Voigtländer (1999: 183).
6. Almqvist (1942: 67–68), Marklund (2008).
7. Jancke (2013: 198–221).
8. Jancke (2013: 198–201).
9. Jancke (2013: 204–205).
10. Jancke (2013: 198–201).
11. Jancke (2013: 204–205).
12. Jancke (2013: 198–201).
13. Lorenz (2007: 167). An example of such practice was the “dragonnades” in seventeenth-century France—a royal policy that explicitly targeted Huguenot (Protestant) households when quartering troops, in an attempt to force these households to convert to Catholicism. See van der Linden (2015: 21–22).
14. Kleinhagenbrock (2008).
15. Collstedt (2012: 222–224), Lorenz (2007: 175).
16. Scheipers (2010: 8), Hohrath (1999: 152–160).
17. Morieux (2019: 183–189). See also Rommelse and Downing (2018).
18. Degn (1998: 261 and 290–291).
19. Tuxen and Harbou (1915: 246–250).
20. Danish National Archive (hereafter DNA), Havreballegård og Stjernholm amter 1683–1799 (hereafter HSA), Dokumenter angående svenske fanger 1713–1721 (hereafter Dokumenter), Aug. 10, 1713.
21. DNA, Århus Rådstue (hereafter ÅR), Indkvarteringsvæsenet, Indkvartering af Svenske fanger 1713–1718 (hereafter Indkvartering), Feb. 22, 1717.
22. This rough estimation is based on figures from a number of prisoner muster rolls from Havreballegaard–Stjernholm Amt, collected by the royal governor von Plessen in the early months of 1717, and should be considered as the minimum number of prisoners in the region at the time. See DNA, HSA, Dokumenter.



23. Lilja (1996).
24. Swedish National Archive (hereafter SNA), Länsstyrelsen i Uppsala län (hereafter LUL), Landskontoret, Handlingar rörande ryska, polska, sachsiska och danska fångar (hereafter Handlingar), undated prisoner muster roll from Uppsala, plausibly from 1716.
25. SNA, LUL, Handlingar, Jan. 14, 1716.
26. Besides these two particular groups, Uppsala housed other prisoners of war both in the years before 1709 and after 1716, but for the sake of this particular study, I have chosen to focus on the above-mentioned groups of Russian and Danish prisoners, as they present the longest continuous presence in the host community.
27. A survey of 40 Danish prisoners of war, from June 1710, claims that sixteen of them originated from the electorate of Saxony, six from Norway, two from the Netherlands, one from France, and the rest from various German principalities. None of the prisoners came from the actual kingdom of Denmark. See SNA, LUL, Handlingar, June 21, 1710. For a further discussion on national categorization of prisoners of war, see Blomqvist (2014).
28. DNA, ÅR, Indkvartering, May 22 and May 26, 1713.
29. SNA Uppsala rådhusrätt och magistrat, dombok (hereafter Uppsala), Nov. 22, 1709.
30. See, for example: SNA, Uppsala, Jan. 12 and Feb. 20, 1711.
31. DNA, HSA, Dokumenter, Letters to the bailiffs of Nim, Bierre, Hads and Galten hundreds, Apr. 16, 1715.
32. DNA, HSA, Dokumenter, letter from Christer Sommer to royal inspector Eggers, Feb. 12, 1717.
33. SNA, LUL, Handlingar, June 26, 1706.
34. SNA, Uppsala, Dec. 1, 1709.
35. DNA, HSA, Dokumenter, Aug. 10, 1713.
36. SNA Defensionskommissionen, skrivelser från myndigheter och enskilda, vol. 208, May 25, 1710.
37. SNA, Uppsala, Oct. 3, 1715.
38. SNA, Uppsala, Aug. 24 and Oct. 5, 1715. Anecdotes from other Swedish towns testify to the fact that the dissatisfaction with guard duty was a national phenomenon. See Almqvist (1942: 123; 1944: 501).
39. For a further discussion on this topic, see Blomqvist (forthcoming).
40. In Sweden, this allowance amounted to the value of 3 öre silvermynt, in Denmark, to 6 schillings. DNA, HSA, Rescripeter, vol. 66, Apr. 5, 1715; SNA, LUL, Handlingar, Sept. 14, 1713.
41. Skjold Pedersen (2005: 351–353).
42. SNA, Uppsala, Dec. 18, 1711; May 30, 1713. On the Swedish policy on prisoner labour, see Blomqvist (2014).

43. DNA, ÅR, Indkomne breve Nov. 2, 1713; original quote: “at arbeide for deres føde”.
44. DNA, HSA, Rescripeter, vol. 66, Apr. 5, 1715.
45. DNA, ÅR, Indkvartering, Feb. 22, 1717.
46. SNA, Uppsala, May 30, 1706. Historian Kekke Stadin argues that army drafts severely hampered the economy of several Swedish towns during the war, see Stadin (1979).
47. DNA, HSA, Dokumenter, note from Peder Hansen Heyde to royal inspector Eggers, undated, but probably written in April 1715, and note from Pastor Niels Hejde, Apr. 24, 1715.
48. DNA, HSA, Dokumenter, Feb. 5, 1717.
49. SNA, LUL, Handlingar, letter from the Uppsala magistrate, June 27, 1706.
50. A prisoner muster roll from June 22, 1710 records the supposed occupational skills of the Danish prisoners in Uppsala. According to this document, prisoner Adam Grossman had received training as a hatter and Valentin Merkler as a tanner. A later account, from May 1711, demonstrates that the two had entered the service of master hatter Novelius and master tanner Åkerman, respectively. See SNA, LUL, Handlingar, June 22, 1710, May 6, 1711.
51. See, for example, DNA, HSA, Dokumenter, labour permit for Laurs Pohve, Oct. 19, 1717; SNA, LUL, Handlingar, attachment to extract from the minutes of the magistrate, June 20, 1714.
52. SNA Svea Hovrätt, Advokatfiskalens arkiv, Renoverade domböcker, vol. 902 (hereafter SHaa), Sept. 28, 1714.
53. See DNA, HSA, Dokumenter, Oct. 24, 1715; Nov. 4, 1716; Feb. 12 and 28, 1717.
54. See DNA, ÅR, Indkvartering, Apr. 6, 1718; SNA, LUL, Handlingar, Jan. 14, 1716.
55. SNA, LUL, Handlingar, undated prisoner muster roll, probably from the autumn of 1711.
56. SNA, LUL, Handlingar rörande Uppsala slott, undated prisoner muster roll, probably from June 1713.
57. SNA, Uppsala, Apr. 26, 1714.
58. Ågren (2017: 1–21).
59. DNA, ÅR, Indkvartering, Apr. 6, 1718.
60. SNA, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamlings kyrkoarkiv, Lysninga- och vigselböcker vol. 1, Feb. 8, Mar. 15, May 25 and June 14, 1713, Oct. 17, 1714; SNA, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamlings kyrkoarkiv, Födelse- och dopböcker vol. 1, July 9, 1713; SNA, Helga Trefaldigheten kyrkoarkiv, Lysnings- och vigselböcker vol. 1, May 27, 1714. See further SNA, Uppsala, Sept. 22, 1713, Feb. 25 and Dec. 4, 1714, Feb. 14, 1715.

61. SNA Uppsala domkyrkoförsamlings kyrkoarkiv, Födelse- och dopböcker vol. 1, July 9, 1713.
62. To what extent this legal integration of prisoners of war also happened in Aarhus is difficult to say. I have found few traces in local court records that would suggest that prisoners of war were placed under civilian jurisdiction, but the findings are inconclusive. Local court records remain largely unavailable for the timespan of this study, and the volumes to which I do have access have proven difficult to process.
63. See SNA, Uppsala, Jan. 29 and June 4, 1712, Apr. 7, 1713, Apr. 26 and Oct. 4, 1714; SNA LUL, Uppsala slotts rätt vol. 1, Sept. 28, 1710, Aug. 19, 1711 (two cases); SNA, SHaa, Sept. 4, 1713.
64. See SNA, Uppsala, Dec. 22, 1711, June 15, 1713; Sept. 11, Oct. 13 and Nov. 17, 1714; Jan. 17, 1716; SNA, SHaa, June 17, 1713; SNA Ulleråkers härads rätt, Domböcker vol. 2, May 9, 1712.
65. This figure is based on information compiled from prisoner muster rolls and court records from the Uppsala magisterial court. See SNA, Uppsala, Apr. 11, 1715; SNA, LUL, Handlingar, May 6, 1711 and June 19, 1713; LUL, Skrivelser från Uppsala stad, Dec. 23 and 30, 1713.
66. A prisoner muster roll from 1712 declares two Russian prisoners to be working for the local postmaster and one for a Swedish colonel. A court record from the district court of Håbo mentions another Russian prisoner serving at the Brantshammar post station. SNA, LUL, Handlingar, Mar. 17, 1712; SNA, SHaa, July 17, 1713.
67. As the court passed its sentence, it was first translated by a local pastor, presumably from Swedish to Latin, and then by one of the Russian prisoners, presumably from Latin to Russian. SNA, LUL, Uppsala slotts rätt vol. 1, Nov. 28, 1711.
68. Blomqvist (2014: 55).
69. Aminoff-Winbeg (2007: 54–66).
70. Nauman (2019). See also Nauman's contribution to this volume.
71. SNA, Uppsala, Apr. 11, 1715.
72. SNA, Uppsala, Aug. 25 and 29, Oct. 3, 5 and 15, 1715.
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# Conditional Hospitality Toward Internal Refugees: Sweden During the Great Northern War, 1700–1721

*Sari Nauman*

Refugees are one of the groups most prone to securitization.<sup>1</sup> Their situation is characterized by intense uncertainty, especially so if their flight is unplanned, and basic security questions—where to seek shelter, where to get food—suddenly become acute. In the eighteenth century, the difficulties of contacting friends or relatives during times of duress further worsened the refugees' chances of activating their security network, both at home and in their recipient country. Many of those who fled left spouses, children, or parents behind, with little or no possibility of ever finding them again. The uncertainty of the refugees' situation is mirrored by that of the recipient country. In deciding whether to receive or reject

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a refugee, the host needs to consider both possible risks and potential gains: is the refugee identified as a person in need or a threat? Can the host society accommodate the refugee, and if so how and at what cost? As no international agreements on the reception of refugees or even definitions of this group existed during the eighteenth century, the possibility of them being accepted into safe harbors was dependent upon the hospitality of their recipient countries.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter traces the Swedish reception of refugees fleeing Russian attacks in Finland and Sweden's Baltic provinces during the Great Northern War (1700–1721). By investigating central and local authorities' acts of hospitality and analyzing what responses their decisions provoked from local populations and refugees, it provides a deeper understanding of the contingent relationship between recipient communities and refugees during the early modern period. The chapter traces the reception of these refugees in terms of delegated and conditional hospitality, and the responses that this hospitality provoked among refugees. I argue that the delegation of hospitality localized decisions on rejection and reception and brought forth other conditions on hospitality beyond what had been formulated by King Charles XII (1682–1718, r. 1697–1718) and the Royal Council. These conditions forced the refugees to build networks, but also triggered verbal and violent conflicts between local authorities, local communities, and refugees.

As argued in the introduction to this volume, hospitality is not an entirely benevolent concept. Rather, all acts of hospitality are entwined with acts of restraint, deciding where, how, and when a guest is welcomed. These decisions, made in the initial encounter between host and guest, define the conditions of hospitality that, as Jacques Derrida astutely remarks, is a foundational quality of the concept.<sup>3</sup> Welcoming a guest is always a risk, as the sovereignty that the host embodies is fractured when the guest enters. The guest might hamper the host's ability to enforce conditions and may also present conditions to the host.<sup>4</sup> Instead of focusing solely on the initial encounter between host and guest, Dan Bulley therefore suggests studying the continual interactions between them. By extending the temporality of hospitality, we can seek to understand how hospitality is managed and controlled, and thereby move beyond the sovereign decisions to the micropractices of everyday encounters.<sup>5</sup>

Surviving testimonies of early modern refugees are rare, which has resulted in a one-sided focus on host experiences within early modern



refugee research.<sup>6</sup> Yet, hospitality is an encounter, built in part on reciprocity. It is therefore crucial to extend the investigation to include guest experiences and responses. The conditions of hospitality are construed through the various security measures that central and local authorities implemented. I am searching for practices of upholding or readdressing hospitality issues in the longer run: the practical solutions to the risk situation that these actors—both host communities and guest refugees—found themselves in, as well as the resultant risks that these solutions produced. In doing so, I draw from research on securitization in assessing when and how the situation was securitized, i.e., identified as posing a (potential) risk, and investigating how this risk was managed.<sup>7</sup>

As security measures and hospitality conditions are imposed in an ongoing hospitality situation, the actions of host and guest become entangled with reactions. Their contingent relationship merits a study that extends beyond the initial encounter, to identify acts of hospitality that may also entail acts of hostility that generate mistrust between the parties. In this chapter, I therefore analyze host security measures and guest securities in an extended temporality, covering roughly ten years of conditions and responses. While ten years might seem a bit short term for premodern studies, most research on modern refugees covers only one or two years, due to the need for immediate analysis. The historical case study can thus provide us with what is sorely lacking in our present-day understanding of the refugee experience: a focus on the contingent reactions to conditional hospitality. Moreover, for the refugees and local communities in question in this chapter, ten years was far longer than they envisioned their hospitality dilemma to last—as we shall see, the refugees were only meant to stay in Sweden temporarily.

## HOSPITALITY TOWARD REFUGEES IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA

Due to continuous religious and colonial warfare, the early modern period witnessed an unprecedented number of refugees seeking protection; in Europe alone, several hundred thousand people were forced away from their homes. Religion has been placed at the center of this narrative to the point that the experiences of religious refugees have eclipsed those of all others. Arguments about the purgation of the *Corpus Christi* triggered

the expulsions of Jews and Muslims, processes exacerbated by the confessionalizations of the Reformation era, then encompassing multiple religious groups: (non-)Anabaptists from Münster, Calvinists from England, Huguenots from France, Protestants and subsequently Catholics from the Netherlands, only to name a few of the most prominent examples.<sup>8</sup>

Religious refugees founded exile communities, seeking towns on or near borders and coasts where connections were good and networks with others of the same confession were preferably already established.<sup>9</sup> They narrated their lived experiences in terms of “heroic exile,” likening it to the Biblical expulsion from Israel. According to several scholars, this narrative helped to bind the exiles closer together by identifying a common enemy—their banishers—and elevating themselves above those who stayed behind as stronger in faith, willing to sacrifice their families, homes, and safety.<sup>10</sup> The exile set in motion what Geert Janssen calls “religiously informed long-distance solidarities,” with co-confessionalists donating money to support diasporas or other people who risked persecution or exile.<sup>11</sup>

The strong moral claims of religious exile helped mark the early modern refugee as someone entitled to help. Even though there was no legal obligation for any ruler to provide help or protection to refugees, both rulers and scholars regularly recognized the precarious situation of these migrants and offered some hospitality. Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), one of the most prominent legal scholars of the period, explicitly linked receiving refugees to the obligation of hosts to offer hospitality toward those in need.<sup>12</sup> Still, this hospitality was reserved for certain confessions and excluded others, and final decisions over which groups deserved hospitality often depended on the potential economic prospects of receiving the refugees; merchants, for example, were more welcome than paupers.<sup>13</sup> Although some cities were indisputably reluctant to offer protection to exiles and refugees, others actively attempted to attract these groups in the hopes of gaining economic profit from their arrival.<sup>14</sup> The Swedish empire during this period was a Lutheran confessional state where the activities of other religious convictions were severely restricted. The country did nevertheless welcome a few religious refugees of other confessions, expecting them to contribute to trade and commerce.<sup>15</sup>

Still, aliens posed a potential threat to the ideas of confessional unity that were on the rise in most European states during these centuries. The ruler’s obligation to protect pertained primarily to his or her own subjects. It was part of the political contract, and as long as the subjects

upheld their end of the deal—providing the ruler with taxes and staying faithful—the ruler should defend them.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, offering hospitality to one's own subjects was arguably an unquestionable duty for every king. However, the composite kingdoms of this period made identifying one's own subjects a somewhat complicated business.<sup>17</sup> In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Swedish empire encompassed present-day Sweden<sup>18</sup> and Finland, as well as territories in Ingria, Estonia, Livonia, Pomerania and Bremen-Verden. Swedish and German were the main administrative languages, with French on the rise, but in parts of Finland only Finnish was understood, and several other languages and dialects were also in use throughout the entire realm. Moreover, some territories had special regulations. The Baltic provinces had negotiated the right to their own legal systems, but had no representation in the Swedish *riksdag* (parliament), and cities along the Baltic coast often had special privileges relating to trade and politics. Every territory thus had its own specific circumstances, differentiating them from each other and standing in the way of the national, unitary states imagined during the nineteenth century.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, the early modern state's endeavor to control immigration was nothing compared to its efforts to control movements within the country. Subjects on the move were generally considered unruly; control was easier if they stayed in place.<sup>20</sup> The Swedish empire was no exception: during the sixteenth century, institutions were set in place to monitor the birth and death of every inhabitant, as well as noting movements, marriages, and income.<sup>21</sup> In order to travel internally, passports were required for all from the early eighteenth century onward.<sup>22</sup> As Hagar Kotef argues, states' control of movement was never absolute, nor did they intend it to be. Instead, the states closely monitored some subjects, those whose movements they defined as threatening, whereas other subjects could move about more freely. To enforce these norms, states used security measures to varying degrees.<sup>23</sup> Thus, while an official could deny passports to beggars, a nobleman traveling to his estates would have had no trouble in acquiring one.

To sum up, the early modern state had a somewhat ambivalent relationship to migrants. Religious refugees could be offered both hospitality and protection, provided they belonged to the preferred confession and depending on their status and economic usefulness to the recipient country, but they could just as easily be turned down on the grounds of posing a threat to order and confessional unity. Internal refugees were an

even more precarious group, as they could be classified as both outsiders and insiders, depending on the situation at hand. The lack of research on internally displaced persons, who fled due to the many wars during the early modern period, further motivates the present study's aims to investigate how this group was received locally and in practice.

### THE OFFICIAL STORY: PROVIDING SECURITY FOR ALL SUBJECTS

Having repeatedly proven its military prowess during the seventeenth century, at the beginning of the Great Northern War, the Swedish empire was at the height of its power and one of the major players in Europe. While the first decade of the war seemed to confirm the empire's leading position, the tide turned at the battle of Poltava in 1709, after which the Swedish armies started to suffer defeat after defeat. As Russian troops sacked and occupied Swedish territories, tens of thousands of Swedish subjects fled their homes. During the first decade, as the war raged in the Baltic provinces, most refugees fled by land, although some traveled across the Gulf of Finland to Vyborg, Helsinki, and Åbo (Turku). Others started to reach Sweden, prompting the Royal Council in 1709 to instruct the consistory of Åbo to deter refugees from leaving for Stockholm, as the city found it difficult to receive them all.<sup>24</sup> Russian troops reached Vyborg in 1710 and, within a few years, Helsinki and Åbo as well, with more refugees moving toward Sweden as a result. From 1711 and onward, the Swedish royal power's position on the refugee movements changed: King Charles XII urged all subjects to leave for Sweden.<sup>25</sup> Over the next decade, between 20,000 and 30,000 refugees reached Sweden's eastern coast.<sup>26</sup>

These refugees arrived in Sweden during wartime and, moreover, during a war that Sweden was losing. Their arrival also came hot on the heels of years of crop failures, dearth, and fires, and coincided with the arrival of large groups of Danish and Russian war prisoners.<sup>27</sup> The conditions for receiving a sudden influx of people in need of help were not ideal. To manage the refugee situation, Charles XII formed a commission in 1712. In order to define the conditions of hospitality and the security measures taken against the internal refugees, I here analyze the documents of this commission, together with official ordinances and instructions issued by the Swedish royal power and enacted by local authorities.<sup>28</sup> In the following section, I turn to the refugees' voices and their descriptions

of the delegated and conditional hospitality they met by analyzing refugee supplications through which refugees pleaded with the king, the Royal Council, or local authorities for help. As most of the refugees relocated to Stockholm, which was also the base for the commission, my investigation is heavily tilted to this town. I have nonetheless chosen to include all supplications regardless of where the supplicant resided in order to provide a fuller picture of the refugees' situation and responses to hospitality conditions and security measures.<sup>29</sup> Official policies covering the whole realm are also included.

The commission consisted of three representatives each from the noble, ecclesiastical, and burgher estates. A few of the representatives were refugees themselves, as the king and Council saw the need for members with personal experience of flight.<sup>30</sup> These refugees thus gained the opportunity, but also the responsibility, to secure their own situation. According to the commission's instruction, dated July 30, 1712, its main aim was to ensure a fair distribution of the refugee funds.<sup>31</sup> The principle of fairness was built on ideas of compensation and hierarchy.<sup>32</sup> Accordingly, those who had lost the most would also receive the most: nobles and wealthy burghers who had left large country estates at the hands of the enemy were to be compensated, not only for their economic loss, but also for their fidelity and loyalty to the state.<sup>33</sup> During the early modern wars, conquerors frequently made offers to wealthier individuals to retain their lands in exchange for obedience and a commitment to undertake obligations toward the new regime. King Charles XII took these individuals' decision to flee as proof of their loyalty to him. After this group had received its share, the instruction dictated that the commission should consider those who had left smaller estates.<sup>34</sup>

The rest of the instruction was devoted to defining those who were *undeserving* of help. State servants who still received a salary were entitled to receive help with rent, but not sustenance. Merchants or artisans, especially those who had managed to rescue some of their property, were excluded from aid and were to find work instead. According to its instruction, the commission was to generate a list of such refugees and hand it over to the city magistrates, who were responsible for following up on its provisions. Young and healthy refugees were also excluded, as they, according to the instruction, should be able to find work "with good people, for clothes and food."<sup>35</sup> Finally, those who were poor and fragile were not the responsibility of the commission, but should instead be delegated to the poorhouses.<sup>36</sup>

The reason for separating deserving from undeserving refugees seems to have been an awareness of the funds' insufficiency to cover all refugees' needs. Nevertheless, the commission was alert to the fact that the refugees themselves might not agree about the fairness of this strategy, and that undeserving refugees might try to gain funds illicitly. The commission thus identified the undeserving refugees as posing a potential threat to its ability to fulfill its mission. To secure this threat, it demanded letters of conduct from every applicant. These certificates and testimonies were to contain information on the refugee's station, lost property, age, health, and family size. Furthermore, even the deserving refugees generated a measure of official mistrust: to ensure that no refugee received funds more than once per distribution, each recipient had to provide the commission with a verification, stating name, place, date, and the amount of money received. These verifications, together with a list of all recipients and the amount of support bestowed upon them, were sent to the Royal Chancellery for scrutiny.<sup>37</sup> Hence, while central authorities formulated a policy of hospitality, the conditions it placed on this hospitality—based on ideas of fairness—caused the commission to securitize the refugees. As a security measure, it set up a temporary administrative system, which in turn was supported by the king and the Royal Council.

When it came to carrying out the security measures in practice, the commission soon realized that they created risks of their own. First of all, the matter of inspecting certifications and verifications could not be trusted to local communities, who might not be able to separate genuine ones from fake ones and who might also try to promote their own situation at the expense of other localities. The commission alone had to be responsible for the distribution of monies. Still, funds were gathered locally, provided by the people in voluntary collections during church services around the realm, rather than by the king—another case of delegated hospitality. Priests were therefore to send the funds to Stockholm, where the commission could count them and then redistribute them to deserving refugees.<sup>38</sup> This system posed practical problems. The collections were often made in pieces of copper plate money which were not easily transportable, and transporting them took considerable time; the commission often failed to receive specific collections.<sup>39</sup> Second, due to the increasing number of refugees, it soon became apparent that the funds were insufficient even for the refugees identified as deserving.<sup>40</sup> In 1715, the situation was desperate. In a letter to the king, the commission stated that,

after the enemy's incursion in Ostrobothnia [in northern Finland, 1714], the number of refugees is found to be considerably higher, and upon their adamant request, the commission has not been able to refuse them a share of the refugee funds in the same proportion as the others.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, many refugee artisans had not been able to find work as the instruction expected them to, and it had proven hazardous for the commission to discriminate against the young and healthy,

in part because of their sheer number, as they, during the days of distribution, have shown up at the House of Nobility [*Riddarhuset*, where the distribution took place] in such great numbers, that the commission has not been able to execute the distributions without great trouble, as when the door has been opened, they have stormed in at once, and in part as to be able to avoid their attacks in the streets, and intrusions in the houses, it has been necessary to distribute something to each of them.<sup>42</sup>

As the quotation shows, the refugees did not agree on the distributary principles employed by the state. According to the commission, the populace shared this sentiment. "False stories" circulated among the city folk and peasantry that funds would only be distributed to the more distinguished refugees, and that those of their own station would be completely left out—not altogether untrue, as we have seen.<sup>43</sup> Many refugees had therefore taken to beggary, and as people failed to see how their offered collections made any difference, they had simply stopped offering: "very little is given on the collection plates."<sup>44</sup>

It seems that King Charles XII, at the end of 1715, asked a prominent priest, Jöran Nordberg (1677–1744), for advice on the refugee situation. Of humble origin, Nordberg had quickly risen in rank as he followed the king on his campaign in Saxony and Russia. After the Russians had captured him in the decisive battle of Poltava, Nordberg spent a few years in Russian captivity before being liberated in 1715, joining the king as he returned to Sweden. During 1716, he served as the king's personal confessor.<sup>45</sup> In a memorial of 1715, Nordberg summarized the situation in a way worthy of a lengthy quotation:

The widespread beggary, by the common multitude, by the doors and in the houses, has not declined the slightest.... Quite a few are healthy and ready, but, as has been told, overly lewd, so that some of what they gather they consume in drunkenness and the racket that commonly follows; some,

under the pretext of seeking alms, enter the houses and steal what they come across; some, when one requests their work for pay, are either so overpriced that one is forced to let them be, or they refuse on the grounds that they do not want to, and even dare to answer that the devil himself may work.... With this free and self-indulgent living, their children and youths know nothing of a Christian chastisement, but are brought up in beggary and depravity and sloth.<sup>46</sup>

Nordberg had spent six months in Stockholm after his release from captivity and had experienced the situation firsthand. He claimed to have received several complaints stating that the situation in Stockholm was out of control. The memorial suggests that the hospitality with which the populace had initially received the refugees had turned into hostility as the number of refugees increased and the funds proved insufficient.

To remedy the situation, Nordberg suggested several solutions, many of them spatial. First, he proposed that the authorities should distribute the common refugees within the country, taking up deserted farms, so that each parish was responsible for helping two or three refugees. In just a few years, Nordberg argued, these refugees would start to earn money for the state rather than drain it. Second, to save the commission's funds, he proposed that the commission should exclude widows of rank from their distribution and instead house them with burghers within the city—alternatively, the burghers of the city could give monthly alms to support them. Third, bishops were to be in charge of looking after all refugee priests. Fourth, if all went according to plan, the commission's funds would suffice for the rest, wherefore Nordberg advised the king to prohibit beggary.<sup>47</sup> Shortly after Nordberg had written his memorial, King Charles XII issued a decree following Nordberg's propositions in detail.<sup>48</sup> We do not know to what degree local authorities followed the directions, nor how they received them, although there are indications that Nordberg's suggestions could be difficult to enforce. For example, Nordberg acknowledged that housing widows might be too costly for some burghers and suggested that several households could share in the responsibility.<sup>49</sup>

To summarize, as the number of refugees coming to Sweden during the 1710s grew, the authorities—the king, Council, and commission—increasingly identified the Finnish and Baltic refugees as security threats to the internal order in Stockholm and other areas. While formulating



a policy of hospitality, the royal power delegated its practical implementation to its commission, local authorities, and communities. After separating deserving from undeserving refugees, the commission identified both groups as potential threats. The security measures employed to deal with the potential threats entailed further risks, especially after the refugees seem to have become desperate. Several solutions were suggested, mainly spatial. Despite, or because of, these solutions, there is evidence suggesting that people around the country, and particularly in Stockholm, were growing weary of the many refugees in need of help. One aspect of the authorities' proposed security measures stands out: they were all short term. Voluntary gifts drained the country and waned in later years. The authorities offered no proposals to give the refugees permanent positions, be it in state service or as merchants in cities, nor did they provide the refugees with any permanent lodgings. This all indicates that a main condition imposed by central and local authorities for the provision of hospitality to refugees was that it was temporary: the refugees should return to their previous homes in Finland and the Baltic provinces after the war had ended. As we will see shortly, the refugees shared this desire.

### THE LOCAL STORIES: STRANGERS STRUGGLING WITH INSECURITY

Thus I plead with the utmost humbleness that wellborn Sir Chancellor and Deputy General will offer me, an age-old widow and an all too miserable refugee, his gentle hand, and with some money from said funds come to my aid, lest I will be forced to perish and here lose this poor life, which I have until now rescued from so much danger, and now must sustain with the bread of tears and the wheat of misery.<sup>50</sup>

Anna Ditlevsdotter, who wrote the supplication above, had lost everything. She fled from Vyborg in 1710, leaving behind her children and what little property she had. The journey to Stockholm took her two months, during which she suffered “an almost decisive deadly disease and great failure and hunger.”<sup>51</sup> In Stockholm, she found herself “in my old age in this, to me, entirely unfamiliar [*främmande*] place, not only having no human and compassionate Christian to rest my head against, but also without knowing any way out.”<sup>52</sup> Asking for alms from the commission is presented as her last resort.<sup>53</sup>

Anna's situation was far from unique. During the final decade of the Great Northern War and the years that followed immediately after, refugees sent countless supplications explaining their desperate situation to the king, Council, or commission. Of these supplications, almost 300 are preserved in the archives to this day.<sup>54</sup> Research on supplications has shown them to be highly formalized instruments of communication between subjects and ruler, explicitly presenting the recipient as a merciful ruler and the senders as desolate paupers with no legal claims for help. Implicitly, the supplications acted as the institutionalization of a system of alms and assistance for those in need.<sup>55</sup> The refugees from Finland and the Baltic provinces used their supplications as a form of guarantee to present themselves as worthy and deserving of help, directly addressing the main risk that the Swedish authorities had identified: that the recipients of the alms would be undeserving.

However, judging from the information the supplicants provided, they did not necessarily have the same definition of "deserving" as the state. Of course, like the authorities, some refugees spoke of their loyalty to the crown and of having left money or property in their flight. Their main focus, however, fell on their present state: they presented themselves as desolate beings with no other option than seeking relief from the king and authorities. Many supplicants were widows and had small children under their care. Many were sick, weak, or disabled. Many had received help from "Christian people," but as time passed, such help was getting harder to come by. Others had trouble receiving any help at all: "therefore it is most lamentable that I hear nothing else from people than angry and evil words, from which my heart may often break into pieces, and this over things which I cannot help, so help me God; that I am miserable, poor, and a refugee."<sup>56</sup>

Several refugees referred to the fact that they found themselves alone, without friends or family, as "strangers," or "in a strange place;" they claimed that they were outsiders.<sup>57</sup> This position made their lack of money especially grievous. The early modern everyday economy rested on numerous small loans from friends and family to pay for quotidian necessities. Debts could be secured by movable property, but just as frequently by one's good name—exactly the resources that the refugees arriving in Stockholm, without friends or families, so desperately lacked. Being outside these credit networks would have been severely detrimental to their ability to find sustenance.<sup>58</sup>

Without credit networks, the refugees depended on alms. Quite a few attested that the residents of Stockholm had initially been quite hospitable and generous toward them, housing them, and providing them with money and food.<sup>59</sup> As the war continued, this generosity seems to have dwindled, much as Jöran Nordberg had noticed. As Elisabeth Jöransdotter explained in her supplication to the king, on behalf of “all refugees from Ingria and Carelia[,] ... if we come to their [the residents’ of Stockholm] door, they show no mercy but refer us instead to the refugee fund.”<sup>60</sup> Over time, even the local community thus delegated the responsibility for receiving the refugees to the commission.

To receive money from the commission, the refugees were presented with two major challenges: proving themselves eligible for support and collecting their allotted share. As noted above, the commission demanded certificates or testimonies of each applicant’s status. Such certificates had to be written by someone who knew the refugee and had some standing in society—preferably a priest or commanding officer. For better-situated refugees, this requirement seldom posed any difficulties; if the commissioners did not already know them, their connections to other noblemen or well-to-do merchants in the city ensured them of favorable testimonies. For other refugees, such certificates were harder to come by. Moreover, the strict guidelines as to who was entitled to receive support excluded many in need of help. It is likely that many poor or disabled refugees chose not to report to the commission at all, so as not to be forced into bad employment or the poorhouses.

For those who were recognized as eligible for support, the cost of traveling to Stockholm to collect it could well surpass their share. The commission distributed its funds twice yearly: on midsummer and Christmas. Several quittances attest that the exact date for distribution was not set in advance, but depended on when the commission had finished collecting and counting its funds. This procedure led to rumors spreading among the refugees about on which day the distribution would take place. Refugees would have to stay in Stockholm for several days in advance so as not to risk missing out. Finding a place to live and buying food in an already crowded city for days, or sometimes even weeks, severely strained the refugees’ already limited economies.<sup>61</sup>

To meet this challenge, some sent representatives instead. This networking can be understood as a reaction to the security measures taken by the commission to centralize the distribution of funds and limit it to twice a year. Refugees who were allotted larger sums often made use

of representatives, some sending prominent men to collect their money, some using their secretaries.<sup>62</sup> Other representatives seem to have taken on the task as a favor to friends or business colleagues.<sup>63</sup> Most often, the representative was a family member. For example, inspector Elias Moderus collected in total 42 *daler* for his mother's daughter (presumably from a previous or latter marriage), his sister and her daughter on September 12, 1716.<sup>64</sup> In some cases, the representative combined assisting his own family with helping others. The day before, Elias had collected the allotted money for three other refugees as well as his brother, all living near the city of Nyköping, where Elias was located himself.<sup>65</sup> As guessed from his relations, Elias was also a refugee, and that same year he received 18 *daler* to support his wife and child.<sup>66</sup>

By appointing and acting as representatives, the refugees built networks within and across their places of residence. A few representatives stand out for their efforts in collecting numerous small funds for many refugees. The single most notable of these was the secretary Salomon Nidelberg, who in 1716 alone procured no less than 1760 *daler* on behalf of 86 refugees. The shares were strikingly small: 54 of the refugees were bestowed with 20 *daler* or less. These refugees probably lacked the funds to travel to Stockholm themselves to receive their allotted share. There are also a few notes demonstrating that people who did not know Nidelberg from before hired and compensated him for his services.<sup>67</sup> Considering the large amount of money that Nidelberg collected, and the fact that he had to reside in Stockholm for at least four months in 1716 to carry out his operation, it is likely that others paid him as well.<sup>68</sup> Other representatives filled similar functions to Nidelberg, acting on behalf of several other refugees who sometimes paid them for doing so.<sup>69</sup> Referrals, and the odd letter suggesting that not all representatives fulfilled their duties, indicate that the refugees exchanged experiences and helped each other navigate their difficult situation.<sup>70</sup>

As the number of refugees rose in 1715, and as the hospitality of the inhabitants of Sweden waned, some of the refugees asked for permission to return home to Finland instead. Several peasants of the Åbo archipelago relayed how they had fought against the Russians during the spring, who retaliated by burning down their villages and farmlands. With nothing left to sustain them, the peasants had sailed to Stockholm hoping to receive some salt. Now they wished to return, "so that the tyrannical enemy may not, due to us being here, burn our houses and

homes, and abduct our wives and children [casting them] into humiliating serfdom.”<sup>71</sup> Several other refugees also indicated that they had not planned for a long stay in Stockholm, but were hoping to return to their homesteads.<sup>72</sup>

These cases denote the refugees’ strenuous situation between a dwindling hospitality in Sweden and open hostility in Finland. They had intended that their flight from home would be only temporary, but external circumstances forced a longer absence. Charles XII denied their requests.<sup>73</sup> He did not specify his reasons for refusal, but it was likely, at least in part, motivated out of fear that the Russians would benefit from the peasants’ return, as the conqueror might force the peasants to pay taxes. The supplications to the king attest to the despair that this strategic decision elicited from the refugees. Several had traveled in secrecy to trade in Sweden, as the Russians had forbidden such trips, and feared that Russian soldiers would punish their families if they noticed their absence.<sup>74</sup>

### CONCLUDING REMARKS: A FRAIL HOSPITALITY

This chapter has traced the reception of Finnish and Baltic refugees in Sweden during the Great Northern War in terms of delegated and conditional hospitality, as well as the responses it provoked. My analysis has shown that Swedish authorities employed a number of security measures to deal with the perceived threats that the war and the internal refugees posed. When enemy soldiers occupied the Swedish territories around the Baltic Sea, King Charles XII acted as a rightful and honorable prince should: he urged his subjects to leave their homes and come to Sweden so that he could protect them and provide them with everything they needed. In exchange for their loyalty, he would offer them safety. In security terms, he identified the enemy as the main threat and his people as the ones to whom he owed protection, and he acted accordingly.

The king delegated the practical protection and reception of refugees first and foremost to a newly formed refugee commission. This commission identified a particular risk: that the refugees might try and take advantage of the situation by using tricks to get support that they were not entitled to receive. Thus, from the commissioners’ perspective, the refugees constituted a potential security threat to the Swedish state and its finances. To counteract this threat, the commission set up an administrative safety net, distributing all funds locally in Stockholm and demanding

verifications and certificates from those who received such funds. These security measures were meant to ensure that no refugee received more than his or her share. The commission sought to avoid being taken advantage of; it sought to protect its hospitality and its sovereignty over the refugees.

However, rather than negating the risks, the measures ended up threatening the very fabric of hospitality. My analysis has shown that the commission's guidelines for distributing funds were considered unfair by both refugees and the population in general. The difficulties faced by the refugees in receiving the funds, which they considered themselves to be entitled to, created rifts between the commission and the refugees. As we have seen, the commissioners themselves felt threatened as refugees forced their way into their meetings and demanded money. Both the commissioners and Jöran Nordberg described the refugees as unruly, taking over the streets with their loitering and attacks on decent people. Their descriptions are uncannily similar to how Derrida describes those who are shut out from hospitality: the rogues, the degenerates, the *voyous*, who are "unoccupied, if not unemployed, and actively occupied with occupying the streets."<sup>75</sup>

According to Derrida, the conditions placed on each hospitality situation are not only prerequisites of extending that hospitality, they also effectively undermine it. As the host seeks to extend hospitality to the other by defining the other as precisely that—the "other"—and impose limitations upon him or her, hospitality ends up attacking itself. This autoimmune quality of hospitality separates insiders from outsiders, those who deserve help from those who are labeled as undeserving.<sup>76</sup> As we have seen, autoimmunization fluctuates over time. During the first few years, the refugees in Sweden were met with fewer conditions and limitations, and they could receive help by knocking on the right door. The security measures imposed by the commission, however, aggravated the situation to the point of creating additional risks, forcing the refugees to circumvent the authorities to protect themselves. The growing distrust between refugees, authorities, and local communities seems to have escalated around 1715. The population stopped giving funds and refused hospitality to refugees knocking on their doors. Such autoimmune reactions, where security measures put both hosts and guests at risk, along with other xenophobic tendencies, may have compelled the refugees to build their own networks.

Another reaction for refugees was to try and return home. Such efforts were thwarted by the authorities both locally and centrally. Fearing that the returning refugees might collaborate with Russian troops, the refugees were ordered to stay put. This decision further testifies to the authorities' distrust of the refugees. It endangered not only the refugees, but also their families in Finland, who were left to try to explain their family members' illicit absence to the occupying power. Thus, even though the authorities' policy was to welcome the refugees, and several documents attest to their efforts to do so, the fear that the refugees would abuse the hospitality on offer inspired the authorities to impose several conditions on it. These conditions generated mutual distrust between the refugees, the population in general, and the authorities: the refugees were supposedly devious, the population ungenerous and unfriendly, the authorities inaccessible and cheap. That the hospitality actions were of a provisional character further exacerbated this state of affairs.

My analysis of the security measures employed by central and local authorities indicates that their offered hospitality hinged on the refugees remaining in Sweden temporarily—as soon as the war ended, they were expected to return home. Although the refugees seem to have shared this desire, their responses to their circumstances also included networking that may have had more long-term effects than have been studied here. The investigation demonstrates the frailty both of hospitality and of early modern rulers' obligation to protect their subjects. Although all agreed that the ruler was bound by that obligation, and although the ruler issued instructions to fulfill it, the practical solutions to hospitality dilemmas were enacted locally. And as we have seen, that local communities would assume responsibility for fulfilling their ruler's obligations could not be taken for granted.

## NOTES

1. Bourbeau (2011: 1–2); Huysmans (2006: 45–62).
2. Janssen (2020); Kaplan (2018); Lachenicht (2017).
3. Derrida (2000a: 4–5; 2000b).
4. Derrida (2000b: 123–124).
5. Bulley (2017: 12–14). See also Bendixsen and Wyller (2019: 7–9).
6. Kleist (2017: 166).
7. Conze (2012); Huysmans (2006); Zwierlein (2012). See also Nauman (2021b).

8. See, for example, Descimon and Ruiz Ibáñez (2005); Janssen (2014); Krawarik (2010); Spohnholz and Waite (2014); Terpstra (2015).
9. Terpstra (2015: 157).
10. Janssen (2017); Müller (2016: 203–205); Terpstra (2015).
11. Janssen (2020: 235).
12. de Wilde (2017). For a somewhat more critical view, see Cavallar (2002: 121–167).
13. Janssen (2020); Kaplan (2018).
14. Janssen (2014); Kaplan (2018); Lachenicht (2017, 2019).
15. Brismark and Lundqvist (2017: 128f.); Kilbom (1958); Murdöch (2010).
16. Brett (2017); Höpfl and Thompson (1979); Kahn (2004). On this obligation in Sweden, see Nauman (2017, 2021a).
17. On composite kingdoms, see Elliott (1992); Koenigsberger (1989).
18. In the following, “Sweden” denotes the geographical area of Sweden, known as such both today and during the period in question here. To separate this territory from the realm, I use “the Swedish empire” to denote the political entity of the kingdom of Sweden, with all its underlying territories.
19. See, for example, Gustafsson (1998).
20. Nauman (2020: 131–132).
21. Glete (2002); Nilsson (1990).
22. Andersson (2018: 53–58); Lövgren (2000).
23. Kotef (2015). See also, Scott (1998); Torpey (2000).
24. Snellman (1970: 106).
25. The Swedish National Archive (hereafter SNA), Riksregistraturet (the Royal Registry, hereafter RR), vol. 651, letter of Mar. 9, 1711, p. 99.
26. Aminoff-Winberg (2007: 95–103).
27. See Blomqvist’s contribution to this volume.
28. Files of the commission are located in the SNA, Äldre kommittéer (Older Committées, hereafter ÄK) 449, vol. 1, 2. Ordinances and instructions are found either in the missionary archive, or in SNA, Letters to the King. There were in fact two separate commissions. The first asked to be dismissed in 1715, after which a second was formed with some continuity of its membership. As the commissions’ work continued unhindered and no considerable difference is discernible between their position against refugees, they will here be treated together, in keeping with previous research, see Aminoff-Winberg (2007).
29. The residence of the supplicant is not always specified in the material. When the place of residence is important to the analysis, it will be remarked upon.
30. Snellman (1970, 1971). The commissions’ members were replaced in 1714, but the re-election of one of the burgher representatives assured a certain continuity.



31. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, instruction July 30, 1712, §1.
32. On the principle of fairness in early modern Sweden, see Andersson (2020); Karlsson (1994: 243–247).
33. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, instruction July 30, 1712, §1.
34. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, instruction July 30, 1712, §2.
35. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, instruction July 30, 1712, §7. All translations in this chapter are by the author.
36. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, instruction July 30, 1712.
37. Johanna Aminoff-Winberg has published the lists, at <https://www.genealogia.fi/hakem/flykting/flykting1.htm>. Verifications are less well preserved, but those of 1716 are located in SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2.
38. Aminoff-Winberg (2007: 71–72); Snellman (1970: 100–106).
39. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, letter from the commission to the King, no date but resolved Feb. 18, 1713, letter of Sept. 28, 1714, letter of May 10, 1715.
40. See for example SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, letter from the commission to the King, Dec. 9, 1713, letter of Sept. 28, 1714, letter of June 21, 1715.
41. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, letter from the commission to the king, May 10, 1715.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ingrid Marie von Post, “Jöran Nordberg,” in *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon* (Stockholm 1990–1991), p. 161.
46. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, memorial of Jöran Nordberg, Jan. 30, 1716.
47. Ibid.
48. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, “Kungl. Maj:ts förordning angående flyktingar,” 1716.
49. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1, memorial of Jöran Nordberg, Jan. 30, 1716.
50. SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 31, supplication of Anna Ditlevsdotter, no date.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. The supplications are located either in SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 1 and 2, or in SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 31 and 32.
55. Almbjär (2019).
56. SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 32, supplication of Annika Johansdotter Falk, no date.
57. See, for example, SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 32, the supplications of the Schroddersers, Catharina Krook and Catharina Palm, all without date; SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 31, the supplications of Lischen Johansdotter, no date, and Karin Gabrielsdotter, Mar. 9, 1716; SNA, ÄK 449,

- vol. 1, the supplication of Anna Greta Wassman and Christina Nilsson, no date.
58. See, for example, SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 32, the supplications of Jacob von Erdtman and Ingeborg Lithorenia, both without date. On the early modern credit market, see Dermineur (2018); Muldrew (1998).
  59. See, for example, SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 31, the supplications of Carina Bender, no date, Sara Johansdotter Flitman, after Oct. 10, 1708, and Elisabeth Raed, after Aug. 12, 1708.
  60. SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 32, supplication of Elisabeth Jöransdotter, no date.
  61. See, for example, SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 617, 645, 719, and 727.
  62. Compare SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 75 and 602. See also SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 449, 452, and 453.
  63. For other examples of representatives, see SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 40, 81, 137, and 636. Women could fill this function; see SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 103, 134, 195, and 636. Several of the representatives belonged to the absolute elite of Swedish society (names such as Snoilsky, note 75), indicating that the refugees in question also were well established.
  64. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, note 240. Translating 42 *daler* to present monetary value is difficult, as the early modern economy was largely upheld by payments in kind; it roughly equals a farmhand's annual salary, but the farmhand would also receive housing, food, and clothes. See Edvinsson and Söderberg (2011); Lindström and Mispelaere (2015).
  65. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 81, 83, 84, and 85.
  66. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, "Designation och förteckning," p. 22. Elias Moderus and his brother Olof are present in Johanna Aminoff Winberg's list over refugees, <https://www.genealogia.fi/hakem/flykting/flykting19.htm>.
  67. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 553 and 878.
  68. See, for example, SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, notes 322, 631, 800, and 878.
  69. For example, Johan Fritz helped over twenty refugees, and Anders Lanaus and E. Moderus helped a handful each, see SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2.
  70. SNA, ÄK 449, vol. 2, note 895.
  71. SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 31, supplication by Anders Jacobsson and others, presented May 7, 1715.
  72. See, for example, SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 31, supplications from Kärffwid Andersdotter and others, Ludvig Henriksson and others, and Anders Grå and others, no dates.
  73. The request was explicitly refused in a letter dated Feb. 19, 1715, see SNA, RR vol. 680, but similar requests had been denied locally earlier as well.
  74. See, for example, SNA, Letters to the king, vol. 31, supplication by Kärffwid Andersdotter and others, no date but probably around summer

1715, supplication by Lars Andersson and others, May 7, 1715, and supplication by Anders Grå and others, no date but probably around summer 1715.

75. Derrida (2005: 65).

76. Bulley (2017: 148–149); Derrida (2000b: 53; 2005: 34–35, 63–66).

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## Between Home and the City: Receiving and Controlling Strangers in Altona, 1740–1765

*Johannes Ljungberg*

Altona was built for receiving strangers. In 1664 it was made the first free town of the Danish realm, and it was granted freedom of trade, tolls, and religion. The city space contained public sites of worships for Lutherans, Catholics, French and German Reformed, as well as German and Portuguese Jews.<sup>1</sup> The openness of Altona was also tangible in terms of its boundaries. The city lacked walls, fortifications, and, until 1744, even border stones, all of which normally entailed mechanisms of social inclusion and exclusion as well as the practical function of controlling

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strangers who arrived at the city.<sup>2</sup> When Altona's city president Hans Rantzau referred to the city's codified freedoms in a speech at the city hall in 1746, he strikingly added the "freedom of coming and going."<sup>3</sup>

This was about to change. In 1748, the city's burgher captains, heads of the local militia, were instructed to patrol their neighborhood every evening after 10 p.m., or "at the latest" after 11 p.m., and knock on every house door, "both guesthouses and private houses."<sup>4</sup> Those staying in the houses at that late hour were presumed to be night guests.<sup>5</sup> The instruction prescribed that the captains should make sure that newly arrived strangers, regardless of gender or social status, were properly registered, and that the inspected houses did not host any so-called "suspicious people."<sup>6</sup> This reform reflected shifting expectations on the part of hosts and host communities in early modern Europe: the duty to offer guests a safe haven was changed into an obligation to register and report any disturbance of order to the authorities.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the thrust of the 1748 instruction was not unique to Altona, but it was particularly challenging for a free town. Another essential dimension of this reform that makes Altona an intriguing case for researching shifting practices of hospitality and security is the role of the townsmen who were instructed to carry out these duties.<sup>8</sup> While many cities increased public security by demanding written attestations from arrivals at the city gates—thereby replacing the ancient dress codes—the reforms in Altona relied heavily on patrolling burgher captains.<sup>9</sup> One specific incident, recounted in a petition to the Danish king and signed by all 22 burgher captains, illustrates the difficulties in performing these tasks.

One evening in 1764, the Altona townsman Johann Stephan Arnold was instructed by the city's police director Johann Peter Willebrand to enter the house of the royal postmaster in order to ask strangers spending the night there who they were and what they were doing in the city.<sup>10</sup> He was expected to investigate this matter in keeping with his duty as a burgher captain. However, Captain Arnold did not comply with the order and did not enter the postmaster's house. He stated that people staying there would most probably be insulted if he, a normal burgher "even though he is a captain,"<sup>11</sup> would initiate such "private interrogations."<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, he argued that they would have to show respect if an assistant to the police director would ask these questions "in the name of his master."<sup>13</sup> In short, the burgher captains feared they would be perceived as private persons instead of public officeholders when crossing the threshold into the house. This episode just recounted supported the

burgher captains' wider argument that the patrolling tasks should henceforth be handled by assistants to the city's police office. The police office had been installed in 1754 as an additional reform to increase public security, and was led by a police director appointed by the Danish king instead of the townsmen themselves.

This chapter investigates how conflicting expectations of hospitality and security in mid-eighteenth-century Altona affected perceptions of private and professional responsibilities. The example of Altona offers an illuminating case with which to examine how a system of public security was rapidly introduced in a free town, with ordinary townsmen expected to maintain and enforce it under supervision from a professional police director educated in Law. Particular attention will therefore be devoted to how the burgher captains' dual capacities as public officials and private persons affected their lives and willingness to perform their duties. In other words, this chapter will not focus so much on the effects of their work, as their work's effect on them.

The changes in Altona emerged amidst a context of rising interest in police regulation as a tool to increase wealth and security in expanding cities. Police regulation was rooted in cameralistic thought, which promised a favorable trade balance, increased productivity, and attractive policies for both merchants and inhabitants.<sup>14</sup> The instruction for Altona's first police master, issued in 1754, repeated the obligation that every host register those who were staying in their houses by name, occupation, and place of origin.<sup>15</sup> In addition, the instruction also stipulated that a census would be held under the police master's watch twice a year, at the feasts of Ascension and Saint Martin, in order to make sure that no exceptions were made, especially not for soldiers. Apart from the stricter registration of strangers, the police instruction included typical policies of the time regarding religious matters, moral behavior, business, and infrastructure.<sup>16</sup> Research on how police regulation was introduced in eighteenth-century cities has pointed to a combination of intervention from above and initiatives from below.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the dispute about Captain Arnold's mission to Postmaster Schäfer's house demonstrates how townsmen themselves asked for professionalized policing forces.

The seventeen-page petition signed by the entire corps serves as the empirical starting point for this study. It is one single primary source, but it can rightly be considered significant because it articulated a fundamental and joint declaration from all the burgher captains. Further investigations in Landesarchiv Schleswig-Holstein have revealed that this petition was

preceded by several individual applications from captains asking to be relieved of their duties. These documents have been consulted to offer additional evidence. Also, various administrative correspondence between Altona and Copenhagen further illuminate discussions about the functionality of the burgher militias by revealing points of contention and fragilities within the new system. One of these conflicts, which will be explained in more detail, followed on the heels of a burgher militias' instruction to the owner of the *Rathweinskeller* to close for the night.

But, before returning to the hardships of the burgher captains, it is important to clarify the broader expectations surrounding hospitality in Altona. In addition to sources from Landesarchiv Schleswig–Holstein, further information on this topic is also found in the book *Abrégé de la Police* (1765), written by Altona's second police director, Johann Peter Willebrand (1719–1786) during his period of office from 1759 to 1766. In this book, the police director depicts a utopian urban order, according to cameralistic thought, utilizing in part concrete references to Altona.<sup>18</sup> This book by Willebrand, together with several preserved manuscripts which he sent to Copenhagen, offers an ideal starting point to explore expectations of hospitality in the city, as seen from the perspective of the very public officeholder who was responsible for balancing ideals of hospitality and security.

## RECEIVING STRANGERS IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

The first impression one gives to strangers arriving to a city, whether one receives them politely or impolitely, has a major influence on their decision to stay there or if they prefer to go back.<sup>19</sup>

These were police director Willebrand's words about host–guest relations in the ideal city. However, this relationship was not described as an expression of hospitality, which is explained in greater detail elsewhere in his book. Instead, the headline to Willebrand's statement was “politeness towards strangers,” and in the following paragraph, the author specifies that he was referring particularly to wealthy people who might expect special treatment. Concerning such figures, Willebrand argued in favor of turning a blind eye both to violations of legislation against luxury and, in another paragraph, smuggling, simply because the city would benefit more from making exceptions for the wealthy than it would by risking to

lose these people. More generally, he also argued for a moderate approach when it came to applying the city's laws to strangers.<sup>20</sup> The principle of giving strangers a good impression of the city also occupied his thoughts when it came to material representation. In the police records, he repeatedly complained about the deteriorated state of two very visible places in the city: the ditches along the border to Hamburg and a crumbled wall forming part of the city hall. He described emphatically and with irritation how a visitor arriving to Altona from Hamburg was met by a stinking ditch full of excrement.<sup>21</sup> Judging from the documentation of the border regulations with the Hamburg magistrate, this problem had existed for decades.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, a visitor entering from Hamburg very soon passed by the crumbled wall of the city hall which, according to Willebrand, provoked "all strangers to hold the police director's office accountable for such a disgraceful omission."<sup>23</sup> In this context, the reception of strangers was linked to the public image and reputation of the city and its police office, and further related to the continuous campaigns for attracting newcomers.

Hospitality, in Willebrand's terminology, was something very practical. The paragraph entitled "Hospitality" in his book dealt with how to ensure that guests had somewhere to stay. With reference to Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* (1721), he praised the "oriental nations" for practicing hospitality in ways that went far beyond European standards.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, guesthouses in Constantinople embraced a principle of offering guests three nights' stay for free, whereas the general, equivalent principle in European states was only one night.<sup>25</sup> This "one-night principle" can be found in the sources from Altona, too. For example, in the regulation for craftsmen of 1732, migrating journeymen (*Gesällten*) were promised one night's funded stay while searching occupation in the city.<sup>26</sup> In the same way, passing soldiers, after tough negotiations between the city magistrate and the German Chancellery in Copenhagen, were limited to one night's stay (which, according to the preserved documentation, could be made into an economic transaction).<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the number of nights to be offered to guests, Willebrand also discussed how the institutions of "piously funded" guesthouses for poor people served as an expression of hospitality. Such institutions were not found in Altona, but he did point out how well such institutions functioned in Lübeck, where he had lived previously. Falling under the remit of these guesthouses, which resembled the traditional *Hospitalen*

in which the sick, the poor, and the pilgrims were taken care of, Willebrand also included people who were traveling for the sake of work.<sup>28</sup> Willebrand had many other ideas of public institutions and services. In addition to libraries and other cultural facilities, he stressed the importance of offering places where arriving strangers (*étrangers qui arrivent*) and travelers (*voïageurs*) could eat, as well as people who lived in single households (*célibataires*).<sup>29</sup> Here we get a glimpse of the eighteenth-century city and its gradual division of spaces for working, eating, and comfort.<sup>30</sup> There is archival evidence that the city magistrate, at least to some degree, discussed such ideas. In 1757, a townsman named Johann Köbrell sent a petition to the Danish king asking for an economic contribution to create an *auberge* suitable for receiving traveling strangers (*fremde Passagiers*). He argued that such an arrangement would serve the common good, since people otherwise normally stayed in Hamburg.<sup>31</sup> In the end, the Royal Chancellery let the local authorities decide on that matter. They did not provide Köbrell with funds, but instead supplied him with a piece of land, arguing that the city had no problem with lodging guests as it was, without going into any further detail.

Indeed, Willebrand's general approach to treat the subject of hospitality as a practical public duty had some resonance with his time. Similar ideas were formulated amid processes of reform of the inner order of cities; here, as Karl Härter notes, the line between public security and public welfare was less clear in the second half of the eighteenth century than it would be later.<sup>32</sup> Jurists in the early modern German lands identified three categories of hospitality, the provision of which were deemed essential and mandatory for every city: *publica* (public representation), *necessaria* (travelers, soldiers, and other groups who needed to travel due to their occupation), and *mercenaria* (merchants).<sup>33</sup> The latter included, as standard, travelers.<sup>34</sup> Each city was expected to solve these matters, even if each type of guest or form of hospitality, with the exception of public representation, was considered a matter of private responsibility for the common good, rather than something that the city should legislate about.<sup>35</sup>

So where did people stay in Altona? There is good reason to believe that people belonging to the higher social strata generally stayed in private houses, such as the postmaster's house. More advanced commercial businesses generally had already moved from outdoor markets to private houses by the sixteenth century in European cities.<sup>36</sup> In Altona, the opportunities for receiving guests in imposing indoor facilities were on

the rise after the major merchant houses had created the *Gesellschaft der Commercirenden* (the Merchant Society) in 1760.<sup>37</sup> Their houses were gathered in a specific quarter of the city between Elbstraße, with its market squares, and Königstraße, with its many public buildings. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the Danish architect C. F. Hansen (1756–1845) was recruited to add flavor and prestige to these structures. Likewise, distinguished political guests were received in private houses. This is demonstrated, for example, in the lodging registers for King Christian VII's (1749–1808, r. 1766–1808) visit to Altona in June 1767, which displays the names (and, for lower servants, just their titles) of those guests who stayed in specific Altonian citizens' houses. According to this preserved register, both police director Willebrand and postmaster Schäfer were hosting men of high rank, while one of the police assistants and some of the burgher captains were listed as hosts for people whose names were not even written down.<sup>38</sup> The very fact that the burgher captains were instructed to investigate private houses clearly indicates that people of lower status, under normal circumstances, were expected to be found there as well. The police records reveal that unregistered people, sometimes categorized as *Gesindel*, were sometimes found staying overnight in private houses. Previous research on similar systems of control in early modern cities has also demonstrated well that particularly people of lower status were not registered as guests. As Riita Laitinen suggests, based on her findings in seventeenth-century Turku/Åbo in Finland, foreign merchants were housed legally and peasants illegally in burgher houses.<sup>39</sup>

### AT THE THRESHOLD OF THE RATHWEINSKELLER

Apart from private houses, the burgher captains were also instructed to visit so-called *Wirtshäuser*—taverns that typically also served as inns. Research on these institutions has indicated that such guesthouses took over much of the hosting activity from ordinary households during the early modern period. This development came with the commercialization of the institution, both in the fees charged for a stay and in the consumption of goods on the spot.<sup>40</sup> In 1744, Altona had around 300 *Wein- and Bierschenken* (Eng. *taverns*).<sup>41</sup> This number far exceeded the average for a German eighteenth-century city, which was around one inn per 200 inhabitants.<sup>42</sup> This high number reflects the combination of a strong beer and *Brandtwein* industry and Altona's popularity as a day-resort for thirsty Hamburgers. Four of the major *Wirtshäuser* were

granted tax exemptions, presumably with the expectation to facilitate the reception of guests.<sup>43</sup>

These taverns and inns effectively encompassed different types of thresholds between the public, private, and secret, which were all related to their functions as spaces of hospitality. The administration of the police office in Altona repeatedly categorized *Wirtshäuser* as public houses or places, as opposed to private ones.<sup>44</sup> Numerous studies have demonstrated that these institutions were generally characterized by permanent access, which, in line with urban praxis, was marked out materially with a sign outside the building.<sup>45</sup> However, it has also been noted that while the authorities tended to treat these houses as public spaces, they were often built just as private houses and offered inner rooms that could be used for less public matters.<sup>46</sup> Chambers, parlors, passage rooms, and backrooms invited suspicion, not least since the generally thin partitions often were permeable to sound.<sup>47</sup> The ambiguities made these buildings areas of projection for both multifunctional use and intense regulation.<sup>48</sup> For example, a Danish ordinance against gambling in both private and public houses, introduced in Altona in 1753, specifically mentioned chambers found behind locked doors as places of concern.<sup>49</sup> When the ordinance was repeated in 1761, innkeepers were requested to report on what they knew about illegal, hidden practices in these spaces.<sup>50</sup>

When it came to the powers of enforcement wielded by the burgher militias, however, the temporal aspect of regulation was of primary value. At 10 p.m., public houses had to close. If the burgher militias performed their prescribed duty, they could very well show up to make sure that the public houses had indeed adhered to the regulations. This situation implied an ambiguity in relation to various normative expectations. At nightfall, the host's ancient duty to offer protection for guests staying overnight might potentially kick in. This entailed a perception of the house as a protected area, and the night as particularly sacred.<sup>51</sup> According to Ann B. Tlustý's study on public houses in sixteenth-century Augsburg, guests could reasonably expect to have a right to visit the host's home, and this could be considered a matter of public duty, rather than an expression of voluntary hospitality.<sup>52</sup> This was not evident. Early modern jurists debated whether the host had a public, obligatory role to play in this regard.<sup>53</sup> Another, less contested expectation was that it was the host's responsibility to guarantee that the guests got home safe.<sup>54</sup> One thing was sure: the guests who were present when the local militia arrived could be drawn into petty conflicts.

One incident that has left extensive traces in the archives—because the host penned an angry petition to the German Chancellery in Copenhagen—concerns a conflict following a burgher militia’s visit to the city’s *Rathweinkeller* in 1757. According to the host, Georg Ludwig Keyser, the militia had ordered “several strangers” to leave his house once it was after the official closing time. Keyser presented several arguments against his treatment at the hands of the militia. First, he complained that he risked losing his business to competing wine houses. Second, he referred to the royal privileges for his business and, accordingly, he expected special treatment. Indeed, in light of such privileges, his wine house was certainly of a more exclusive kind than other public houses in the local hierarchy, at least based on existing categories of legal status.<sup>55</sup> Keyser was obviously irked after having experienced first-hand the application of the instruction to the burgher captains to visit houses regardless of legal status (*Stände*).<sup>56</sup> He stressed that his place had been peaceful (*in Ruhe und Frieden*) until the burgher militia arrived, and in so doing, he appealed to reasonable expectations of order, which at that time were referred to as ideals of tranquility.<sup>57</sup> He then juxtaposed his peaceful house to “suspicious houses where constant noise and conflict is to be found.”<sup>58</sup>

Third, he expanded on the theme of honor. He claimed that a specific burgher captain had insulted both the strangers and him, which had put his honest reputation among “all *honetten* burghers” at risk. In order to restore his honor and set an example for other strangers, who might otherwise be deterred by this incident, he insisted that the burgher captain in question should be put in prison for eight days on a diet of water and bread alone.<sup>59</sup> Finally, Keyser advanced arguments about the nature of the space that his house represented. He demanded that “the *Policey*” would once and for all leave his “*Wohnung*” undisturbed, and that the individuals serving as burgher captains should be banned from entering the building.<sup>60</sup> They were no longer welcome to drink the city’s most exclusive wine.

Several boundaries were at play. To begin with, Keyser denied the city’s public security force access to his house. Moreover, the use of the term “*Wohnung*” signaled an intrusion into a room of a more private quality. Previous research has identified this type of a domestic conceptualization of place as a response to regulation. Such a boundary making often came with material aspects; doors and windows facing the street were typically closed, while those facing the yard or the neighborhood were kept open.<sup>61</sup> When evaluating this conceptualization of domestic space,



it is also relevant to bear in mind that evening sociability in German cities at the time could take place in both public taverns and in more domestic settings.<sup>62</sup>

Both the Supreme President Henning von Qualen (1703–1785, in service 1751–1766) and the magistrate council rejected Keyser's demands. The Supreme President stressed that he must act against such an evident violation of regulations, but he also added that Keyser might well be treated more favorably in the future if he did not make so much fuss about the militia performing their duties.<sup>63</sup> This comment suggests that the boundaries of this contentious space of public hospitality and security were not so clear-cut in practice. More intriguingly, both the Supreme President and the magistrate council firmly denied Keyser's demand that the burgher captains should be barred from entering his house. As for the alleged cases of defamation, they directed Keyser to the courts. Nevertheless, they did stress how important it was that the burgher captains were not denied access to Keyser's house. While this could be interpreted as an expression of the general principle of the accessibility of *Wirtshäuser*, the explicit rationale offered by both institutions was far more practical: if the burgher captains were not allowed into Keyser's wine house, they could be barred entry elsewhere as well. The magistrate council, closer to the local realities, further expressed concern that the burgher captains could, accordingly, be denied access to other confraternities in the social fabric of the city or that their children could be refused as apprentices, which was a substantial threat to craftsmen families.<sup>64</sup>

Keyser's complaint of having been subject to insulting and dishonorable treatment may well have served the functional purpose of minimizing the key regulatory issue of his inn's opening hours. Judging from previous research, formulating vehement accusations seems to have been an efficient way of dancing around such incidents. In an illuminating study of conflicts in public houses in eighteenth-century Lyon, Susanne Rau has demonstrated that the local court gladly followed up accusations about insults rather than late opening hours, even in cases where guests felt they had been dishonored by being denied an unlawfully late drink.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, Tlusty has suggested that focusing on insults was an acceptable way of legitimizing a conflict around public houses (and defences of drunkenness were the most effective way of being exculpated for such incidents).<sup>66</sup> In light of these examples, one might suspect that Keyser primarily wanted an exception to be made in his case.

What we do know is that Keyser highlighted the fact that the strangers witnessed the scene, and this provided an overarching explanation of why the burgher militia's act was horrible. Another thing is also sure: his attack on the burgher captains as both agents of the public security system and private persons hit them hard.

### THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BURGHER CAPTAINS

Within two decades, between 1748 and 1764, the public office of the burgher captains was first mooted as an idea, implemented, then heavily criticized, and subsequently significantly scaled back. To begin with, the decision to employ citizens for the task to patrol the city at night was a recurrent topic of debate in the administrative correspondence between Altona and Copenhagen. In a memorandum entitled "Reflection about the inner order" (*Gedanken über die innerliche Verfassung*), written in 1759, the former city president Bernard Leopold Volkmar von Schomburg (1705–1771, in service 1736–1746) raised an objection to employing citizens for such purposes based on economic grounds.<sup>67</sup> If townsmen would serve during the night between Friday and Saturday, they would have to sleep on Friday afternoon and hence be unable to work on Saturday either. Furthermore, they would certainly claim to keep Sunday as their day of rest, and the craftsmen would also be free during Monday, in accordance with their tradition. Schomburg added that such "republican ideas" —by which townsmen were thought suitable for such time-consuming tasks—had been rebuffed in Hamburg and that people were drawn to Altona because of the lack of such policies. Finally, Schomburg stressed that these extra tasks would make it increasingly difficult for the appointed townsmen to support their wives and children economically. He concluded with an appeal to his successor as city president as well as to the magistrate council to "let the poor townsmen perform their work in peace."<sup>68</sup>

The first documented call for the abolition of the office as burgher captain was heard only four years after its introduction, in 1752. The request, signed by a group of townsmen, addressed the need for a chief of police instead, arguing that the burgher militias were temporary and dysfunctional units.<sup>69</sup> There is good reason to believe that the authors of the letter did not exaggerate when they claimed that the burgher captains often forsook their duties. During the 1750s, several burgher captains indeed resigned, some of them after having penned a request

to the German Chancellery in Copenhagen in which they asked to be relieved from their service.<sup>70</sup> Writing to the Danish king was a strategy they resorted to after the city magistrate had denied their requests to resign. Their pleas were eventually accepted by the Supreme President, in the name of the sovereign.

Two of these petitions have been preserved, together with the administrative correspondence they generated.<sup>71</sup> Similar to the joint petition of 1764, the arguments expressed in these single petitions discussed the issues from a more practical and social point of view, as opposed to Schomburg's rational calculations. Thus, they provide us with further insights about the points of contention surfacing in the wake of the new system having been put into practice. When it came to society's lower strata, they complained about the increasing workload in the expanding city. They claimed it was difficult to expel "suspicious people" without the aid of a city wall or some other effective demarcation of space that could facilitate greater protection and security. Issues concerning the amount of time required to discharge militia duties were fundamental to the burgher captains' requests to leave their office. But the captains also signaled three additional factors growing out of their experiences in the role and the tensions that resulted from private persons taking public office. Briefly, these three factors were: private business, personal health, and domestic occupations.

First, the burgher captains argued that what they had sacrificed for the public good had to be balanced against duties they described as private business or business considerations.<sup>72</sup> In part, such was a plain statement that the work was time-consuming, especially when combined with other public duties that these same individuals performed for the city. The city magistrate remained unimpressed by this argument. They commented that public offices had always come with the expectation to abstain from certain private businesses.<sup>73</sup> The petitioners meant, however, that it was particularly harmful for them to serve as burgher captains. One of them stressed that he had made enemies in the neighborhood because of his role in that office.<sup>74</sup> Another captain made the same argument, adding that it was particularly harmful for the businesses of merchants if they served as burgher captains, claiming that he himself was the only merchant who continued to trade out of the twenty-two men currently in office.<sup>75</sup> These arguments resonate well with two documented cases that have already been mentioned: the conflicts around the *Rathweinskeller* in 1754 and the postmaster's house in 1764. The

joint petition in the wake of the latter incident raised a rhetorical question that puts its finger on the central issue: “What would a man answer his co-citizen when interrogated every week if he was lodging suspicious people?”<sup>76</sup> In other words, burgher captains were not seen as professional police servants, but private persons. The joint petition continued: “And what would a stranger, a respectable man, an officer, or another stranger who stays for a couple of days in a public guesthouse or a private house reply when a burgher captain asks him who he is?”<sup>77</sup> These scenes capture the problems of patrolling both the neighborhood and houses of people of higher social status, such as the postmaster’s house or the *Rathweinskeller*. Furthermore, all petitions made frequent reference to the fact that other burgher captains had had their resignations accepted. They also assured the authorities that they were performing other tasks for the public good instead.<sup>78</sup> The petitioners emphasized even more the non-professional character of the task by stressing that this was a voluntary task, not mandatory, and that it should not be allowed to deny someone permission to take leave.<sup>79</sup> The city magistrate, however, expressed their concerns in correspondence to Copenhagen, stating that too many changes to the positions and personnel of the burgher captain squad would be detrimental for the city.<sup>80</sup>

Second, there was the issue of the burgher captains’ personal health. The petition of 1764 mentioned that the night rounds could be violent, which is also confirmed in accounts of the police office indicating that some of the burgher captains were compensated for damages caused by fights while on duty during nights.<sup>81</sup> According to the burgher captains themselves, it was the city’s expansion during the past decades that had made the task significantly more challenging, as there were now more “suspicious people” to keep track of. Another health issue was the cold winter nights. Both individual applicants attached a medical certificate confirming the bodily damage suffered by winter night rounds.<sup>82</sup> The city magistrate was unimpressed. It argued that the problem could easily be solved by the installation of small indoor facilities, which the burgher captains could use as their bases.<sup>83</sup> The concerns of the captains, however, went deeper. One of the burgher captains described his request to resign due to the cold winter nights as a “question of conscience,” since bad health would subsequently risk making his wife a widow and his children orphans.<sup>84</sup> This might well be seen as an overstatement, but the joint petition did indeed further appeal to this domestic perspective of the captains’ families.

Finally, the petitioning burgher captains highlighted that their service at night led to significant “omissions of their domestic occupations.”<sup>85</sup> They stressed that they were complaining not only for themselves but also for their children.<sup>86</sup> This highlighted issues of being able to support one’s family economically, in line with the former city president Schomburg’s argument. Artisans, in particular, put considerable stock in an ideal of being self-supportive.<sup>87</sup> But there are grounds to ask if this wish to withdraw physically to home—which received no further explanation—also expressed a desire to stay with family, both to ensure domestic security and to enjoy the night rest. Furthermore, the emotionalization of family relations, and the division between living and working spaces, are crucial factors when explaining the observable trends in urban life towards withdrawal to domestic space by the turn of the nineteenth century.<sup>88</sup> Using the night as a time for rest was, for natural reasons, an ancient attitude. But it was also hailed by the former city president Schomburg as well as police director Willebrand as a reaction against increasing nocturnal lights and activities in eighteenth-century cities.<sup>89</sup> Regardless of how this is associated with larger historical processes, the declared withdrawal from the public office as burgher captain had domestic motivations.

Police director Willebrand commented that the burgher captains’ petition was well written, but he completely rejected its demands.<sup>90</sup> Instead, he accused the captains of lacking patriotic spirit. On a practical level, Willebrand remarked that the applicants had not attended meetings to leave reports, that they were mostly amusing themselves instead of patrolling the city, “gambling and drinking at the cost of the city [...] in the name of a militia,”<sup>91</sup> and that their complaint was instigated by one specific leader: Carsten Cölln, a “republican spirit.” In the end, the burgher captains could claim a partial victory, as the new instruction to police assistants, dating from 1766, instructed these servants to inspect one innkeeper per day in Altona or in the nearby village Ottensen.<sup>92</sup> The randomly kept police protocols from their duty confirm that they did so.<sup>93</sup> The protocols detailing fines also record some of the names of those hosts who were fined for not having reported their guests in advance.<sup>94</sup>

### IDEALIZED AS HOSTS—PERCEIVED AS INTRUDERS

To summarize, when Altona increased its system for public security in 1748, a significant burden was placed on the burgher captains. Their duties to patrol the expanding city were reported as both extensive and

risky, but most of all, prevailing social norms undermined its purpose as well as the motivation of the people involved. Reports coming after incidents concerning the postmaster's house and the *Rathweinskeller*, as well as individual and collective requests to leave office, all point to how the duty as burgher captain triggered conflicts—and most importantly, conflicts in which no distinction was made between the professional role and the private person. The burgher captains were not perceived as incumbents of a public office. Instead, they were seen as non-professionals, and their reputation, business, access to locations in the city, and future opportunities for themselves and their family members were all endangered.

The conflicts rested on the collision of ideals of hospitality and security, as well as distinctions between private and public spaces. The forces responsible for patrolling Altona were explicitly instructed to visit both private and public houses, but thresholds to houses of high status were protected, based on a number of factors: business, privilege, domestic terminology, ideals of tranquility, professionalism, and—as an overarching argument—the gentle treatment of strangers, or the very presence of strangers itself. From the other side, the burgher captains explained their willingness to withdraw from office, at least in part, because of their desire to spend the night at home with their families. Seen from a wider historical perspective, these arguments were articulated in a context marked by urbanization, professionalization, and increasing divisions between spaces for work, home, and comfort.

In a wider historical perspective, these conflicts in Altona stand out as an intriguing example of colliding expectations on the citizen's private responsibilities and the professionalization of urban regulation of the eighteenth century. In his book *Abrégé de la Police*, police director Willebrand envisioned a society in which “a stranger would not be shocked to be asked about his name, his occupation, his motives, and the whereabouts of his residence,” regardless of whether the one asking the questions was a burgher captain or a police assistant.<sup>95</sup> He concluded: “nothing contributes more to maintaining order in the city than if the burgher captains were to perform this duty.”<sup>96</sup> Such an ideal of a utopian system in which normal townsmen, the genuine representatives of the host community, were recruited to receive and monitor strangers corresponded pretty well to the instructions for the burgher captains when they received their patrolling duties in 1748. However, evidently, this ideal corresponded very poorly to the existing norms and social fabric

of Altona. The thorny position of the burgher captains as both idealized hosts and perceived intruders triggered requests for a more clear-cut division between home and city.

## NOTES

1. See Kopitzsch (1982).
2. On the importance of city gates, see Jütte (2014: 204–227); Boes (2007: 92).
3. Hans Rantzau (1693–1769, in service 1746–1749). LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3747: 11.
4. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3886: 103: “sowohl in Wirths- als Privat-Häusern.”
5. Copenhagen, Rigsarkivet (Danish National Archives, hereafter DNA), Tyske Kancelli, Slesvig-holstein-lauenburgske Kancelli, Patenten (1670–1770), B5.60, 175: 376–378. Similar systems were introduced at the same time in other cities. For example, in Cologne it was stated that a list of night guests would be reported to the city hall one hour at the latest after the officially prescribed closing hour (see Schwerhoff 2006: 364–365).
6. LSH, Abt. 65.2, Nr. 3886: 103: “verdächtige Leute.”
7. Schulz (1987: 237–242).
8. To be sure, the patrolling local militia was not an institution unique to Altona. Research has even demonstrated that such militias were often both unpopular and dysfunctional. Wealthy burghers gladly paid to escape the duty or found ways to avoid the strictures imposed by the militia. See Boes (2007: 92, 108–110), Eibach (2007: 20, 24–25), Laitinen (2007: 607), Schwerhoff (2006: 365), Sälter (2006: 131).
9. For example, in Frankfurt am Main passports were introduced in 1689, and after 1731, official dress codes were no longer published (see Boes 2007: 110–111).
10. Schleswig, Landesarchiv Schleswig-Holstein (hereafter LSH), Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 158–159.
11. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 159: “einen Bürgersmann, wenn gleich Capitain.”
12. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 176: “privat Inquisitionen.”
13. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 159: “in Namen seines Herrn.”
14. Nokkala and Miller (2020).
15. Such a system of registration was practiced in many European cities (see, for example, Mączak 1995: 118; Boes 2007: 109–110; Jütte 2014: 216–217).
16. See, for example, Sälter (2004: 165–175), Simon (2004: 381–481), and for the Danish realm, Tamm (2008). The police regulation in Altona regarding religious matters is discussed in Ljungberg (2022).

17. See Blickle (1998), and for the Danish realm, Mührmann-Lund (2011).
18. Willebrand 1765.
19. Willebrand 1765: book 2, article 328, 123: “La premiere impression que l’on donne aux Étrangers qui arrivent dans une Ville, par une Réception polie ou impolite influé beaucoup sur leur Résolution à s’y fixer, où à s’en retourner au plutôt.” The headline of the section is “De la Politesse envers les Étrangers qui arrivent.”
20. Willebrand 1765: book 2, article 329, 125–126.
21. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3888: 50.
22. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 143: 72.
23. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3888: 40: “die Schande einer solchen Unterlaßung, von allen Fremden, auf das Contores Policy-Directores geschrieben wird.”
24. Willebrand 1765: book 1, article 51, 81–83.
25. On the one-night principle, see Jancke (2013: 206–207).
26. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3883, article 22, 30.
27. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3939: 81–104. In 1765, the innkeeper Cordt Hinrich Dölling was charged for one *Nacht-Quartier* for a troop passing through his inn, apparently without having met them in person, see 117–118, 135–136, 143–150, 171–173.
28. Willebrand 1765: book 1, article 51, 81–83. For similarities with *Hospitalen*, see Rau and Schwerhoff (2004: 27).
29. Willebrand 1765: book 2, article 274, 80–81.
30. Hayen (2007: 130–141); Tosh (2008: 6).
31. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3882:I: 69–80.
32. Härter (2013: 198–200).
33. Jancke (2013: 198–210, 304–305).
34. Keechang (2000: 24–25).
35. Jancke (2013: 198–210, 304–305).
36. See Lovisa Olsson’s contribution to this volume, as well as Harreld (2003). For an illuminating case study of Augsburg, see Jachmann (2010: 197).
37. Kopitzsch (1982: 712).
38. DNA, Overhofmarskallatet, Sager vedr. kongeliges rejser (1719–1900), 1766: Christian VII Vallø, Frederiksborg, Altona, Holsten mm, 7 – I.K.11 – I.K.13, 212.
39. Laitinen (2017: 85).
40. Rau and Schwerhoff (2004: 27).
41. The number of 300 comes from the city president Bernard Leopold Volkmar von Schomburg (1736–1746), see LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3740: 60.
42. According to Susanne Rau, an average eighteenth-century German city had one inn per 200 inhabitants, see Rau 2004.



43. Saye-Mühle, Idens-Hof, Französischer Hof, and Rütterischer Hof, see no. 3882: II: 42.
44. For example LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 175: “in einem öffentlichen Wirtshause oder in einem privat Hause”; LSH, Abt. 65.2, Nr. 3772: 5: “auf denen Gaße, in den Wirths-Häusern oder in Bürgerhäußern, auch anderswo auf der Stadt.”
45. Kümin (2006).
46. Tlusty (2006), Krug-Richter (2006).
47. For perspectives from England on these issues, see Brown (2009: 69, 73–74); Gowing (2000: 134).
48. Schwerhoff (2006: 363), Tlusty (2004), Krug-Richter (2004: 110).
49. Tyske Kancelli, Diverse sager, Trykte kgl. forordninger (1567, 1629–1770), BX.171: 520.
50. Tyske Kancelli, Diverse sager, Trykte kgl. forordninger (1567, 1629–1770), BX.171: 591.
51. For a discussion on these and related aspects of *Hausfrieden*, see Schmidt-Voges (2010: 197–217).
52. Tlusty (2001: 161).
53. Jancke (2013: 403–406).
54. Schwerhoff (2006: 364–365).
55. Cf. Kümin (2007: 91–93), Rau (2007: 104–105).
56. For discussion about the control of houses belonging to people of different social status in eighteenth-century London, see McEwan (2011: 53).
57. Schmidt-Voges (2010: 198–202).
58. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3882: I: 95: “verdächtige Häuser worin beständiger Larm und Streit ist.”
59. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3882: I: 108–113, 138–139.
60. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3882: I: 96: “die Polickey aber mich ferner in meiner Rathweinkeller Wohnung zu turbiren.”
61. Laitinen (2007: 608–609).
62. Schindler (1992).
63. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3882: I: 86–89, 101–107, 141–143.
64. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3882: I: 86–89, 101–107, 141–143.
65. Rau (2007: 108–110).
66. Tlusty (2001: 130–131).
67. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3740: 82–85.
68. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3740: 83: “die armen Bürger in Ruhe bey ihrer Arbeit lassen solte.”
69. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3749: 111–118.
70. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927:I: 57.

71. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927:I: 8–32 (supplicant: Johann Christian Bothe, 1756); 34–67 (supplicant: Johann Martin Wetzel, 1758); LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 156–160, 174–177 (joint petition, 1764). In one of the cases, the city president von Qualen referred to the fact that there had been more than the two cases mentioned.
72. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 13. The words used here were “gemeinen Wesen” and “Privat-Nutzens.”
73. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 65.
74. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 13.
75. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 44–45.
76. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 175: “Was würde ihm doch wohl sein Mitbürger antworten, wenn er wöchentlich bey demselben nach verdächtigen Leuten.”
77. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 175: “Was würde ein fremder, vornehmer Mann, ein Officer, oder ein andere fremder Mann, der in einem öffentlichen Wirtshaus, oder in einem Privathause auf einige Tage sein Quartier genommen, dem Captaine deselben Bezirks für Antwort geben, oder wie würde er ihn begegnen, wenn letztere ihn fragen wollte, wer er sey? was er hier wolle? was er betriebe? und was dergleichen fragen her sind, die doch geschehen müsten, wenn man von der verdächtiger Anverdächtigkeit einer solchen Person unterrichtet werde wollte.”
78. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 20, 24, 40.
79. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 20–21: “eine freywillige Beliebung der Bürgerschaft, folglich mit keinem solchen Zwang verknüpft, daß nicht Officierer zumahl unter dringen Gründen ihrer Dimission erhalten sollten.”
80. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927:I: 16, 67.
81. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3887: 94–96.
82. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 13, 44–45.
83. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 15.
84. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3927: I: 19.
85. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 174: “in jeder Wache einen ganzen Tag mit Versäumung ihrer Hauslichen Geschäfte.”
86. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 160: “nicht nur wir für unserer ringeste Person, sondern auch für unsere Kinder.”
87. Zucca Micheletto (2015: 766–767).
88. Hatje (2015: 503), Tosh (2008: 4).
89. Willebrand 1765: book 2, article 224–229, 37–41. On the struggle against nocturnal lights and activities in eighteenth-century cities, see Koslofsky (2011: 157–197).
90. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 168–173.
91. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3915: 171: “Trink und Spiel, auf Kosten der gantzen Stadt [...] unter Namen einer *Patrouille* herumspatzieren.”

92. LASH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3887: 133–134: “zu einem Wirth in Altona und Ottensen gehen, und sich erkundigen, wer bey ihm logiert sey; auch überhaupt vigiliere ob ein Wirth in Altona und Ottensen, ohne e vorhero anzuzeigen, jemand bey sich zubeherbergen aufgenommen habe.”
93. LASH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3887: “Rapport”, no. 1–15.
94. LSH, Abt. 65.2, no. 3888: For example December 12, 1761; January 31, 1765.
95. Willebrand 1765: book 2, article 210, 26: “un Étranger ne doit pas être choqué, s’il est questionné succinctément sur son Nom, son Emploi, les Motifs qui l’aménent, & le Logement qu’il compte d’occuper.”
96. Willebrand 1765: book 2, article 211, 27–28: “Rien aussi ne contribue plus à entretenir l’Ordre dans une Ville, quelque grande qu’elle soit, que lorsque les Subalternes des Compagnies de la Bourgeoisie sont obliges de declarer périodiquement à leur Capitaines ce qui s’est passé de nouveau dans leur District pendant la Semaine, quels Etrangers y sont arrives, & chez qui, selon les apparences, des Gens suspects sont allés loger.”

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# Friend or Foe? Soldiers and Civilians in Helsinki, 1747–1807

*Sofia Gustafsson*

## INTRODUCTION

The town of Helsinki, founded in 1550, had always been militarily important in the Swedish realm, but in the eighteenth century, its strategic importance grew. In 1748, the construction of the sea fortress Sveaborg (nowadays Suomenlinna) outside of Helsinki began and military presence in the town increased. The influx of soldiers peaked in the early 1750s. The construction works halted in 1757, but, during Gustavus III's reign (1746–1792, r. 1771–1792), the construction works were resumed and the Russo-Swedish War (1788–1790) led to a new wave of military staff arriving in Helsinki. Garrison regiments remained in Helsinki until 1809, when Finland was annexed to the Russian empire. Hence, in terms of receiving guests, Helsinki was extreme. The number of soldiers far outnumbered the civilian population: in the 1750s, the population grew from 1500 inhabitants to around 2000, while the number of military

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personnel amounted to almost 10,000 individuals, sometimes accompanied by their families. Although the peak-season lasted for just a few summer months, some officers and soldiers stayed for years. The state's right to deploy soldiers could not be questioned, but since the army arrived in peacetime to its own country, it had to negotiate with the local community and authorities.<sup>1</sup>

The locals' hospitality towards military staff was not voluntary. However, the coercive aspect does not mean that the concept of hospitality does not apply. As historian Gabriele Jancke has shown, the early modern era also knew of the legal concept of *public hospitality*; all households were obligated to provide for the needs of the common good and the state, which meant a duty to offer certain acts of hospitality, e.g., to accommodate military staff.<sup>2</sup> This hospitality was an act of submission to the state and refusing it would have been an attack on the legal order and the authority of the state. According to Swedish law, burghers were obliged to accommodate soldiers in their own homes. They had to cater for the soldiers' needs for food and shelter, but, at the same time, local authorities also tried to protect local inhabitants from their negative effects. As historian Jean-François Tanguy points out for nineteenth-century Rennes (Brittany), the three main risks for local inhabitants when soldiers arrived in town were related to public health, public order, and the billeting of soldiers to their homes.<sup>3</sup> It was in the hosts' and the local authorities' interest to minimize their own expenses and inconveniences. In mid-eighteenth-century Helsinki, public health was not a concern, yet, but the large-scaled billeting was an acute problem. Public order was also a pressing concern: to avoid chaos, it was necessary for everyone to know their proper place and behave accordingly.

Even involuntary hospitality was not unconditional. The host was still the master of his own house.<sup>4</sup> The army was supposed to maintain discipline and control its staff, and the soldiers were expected to comply with certain behavioural norms implicit in being guests. Both hosts and guests were subject to different types of security measures. The concept of "hostipitality," introduced by Jacques Derrida, captures the locals' ambiguous feelings. Derrida deconstructs the idea of hospitality and reveals the potential hostility that underpins it. He argues that as the guest is welcomed into the host's home, certain conditions and expectations must be met.<sup>5</sup> In Helsinki, the local hosts could define their boundaries, but their guests represented the state and could demand the hosts' submission to the state. Hospitality and hierarchy clashed;

the demands of the army may have been framed as polite requests, but they were in reality commands. As will be shown in this chapter, local property-owners in Helsinki welcomed guests into their homes, but they complained about it and did their best to avoid it.

The sources used in this study were mainly produced by local civil authorities and the courts. The town council organized the billeting, gave permission for taverns to serve alcohol to guests, and dealt with complaints. In the local courts, matters regarding debts, slander, and violence were settled. The source sample will reveal a common problem to this source type: they focus on conflicts rather than on peaceful coexistence. Smooth relations where everybody behaved as expected and no problems occurred hardly left any traces in the sources.

This chapter focuses on two town problems previously studied by Tanguy: billeting and public order. The focus regarding public order will mainly be on social order; the primary aim of the negotiations between the army and the local authorities was to maintain peace by maintaining the social order. The chapter will not address the question of public health, since the local authorities only rarely concerned themselves with those questions. The last sections expand the scope a little further, exploring the sexual and economic relations between hosts and guests. The focus lies on those two periods when billeting was most extensive, namely the intense fortress construction period in the 1750s and Russo-Swedish War of 1788–1790.

## BACKGROUND

In 1747, Helsinki had around 1300 inhabitants, but after the beginning of the construction of Sveaborg, the local population increased rapidly.<sup>6</sup> In 1750, the town had over 1500 inhabitants and in the late 1750s, over 2000. The growth slowed in the 1760s, but by 1780, the town had over 2500 inhabitants, and in 1800, just over 3000.<sup>7</sup> The demographic growth was fastest in the 1750s and moved at a slower pace during Gustavus III's reign. Since the billeting system was based on the household, however, the number of households might be more relevant than the number of individual inhabitants. In 1750, Helsinki had 249 taxpaying households, but in the late 1750s, the number had risen to over 400 households. In the 1760s, the number was reduced slightly to 360 households. The rapid growth later picked up again: in 1780 there were roughly 450 taxpaying households and in 1800, around 570.<sup>8</sup> The number of households grew

faster than the population: while the population grew by 98% between 1750 and 1800, the number of households increased by 130%.

The wealthy merchant elite formed a small group of the population. Most burghers were craftsmen or petty burghers, such as butchers and tavern-keepers. However, many urban dwellers lacked burghers' rights completely. These inhabitants could either belong to the higher social strata or to the lowest; among them were, for example, servants, apprentices, and manufacturing workers, as well as priests and civil servants.<sup>9</sup>

Upon the army's arrival, burgher status was both an advantage and a disadvantage. The billeted soldiers were distributed among the burghers in proportion to their taxes, so the wealthier a burgher was, the more soldiers he had to accommodate. Nevertheless, burghers also had a profitable privilege: in eighteenth-century Sweden, the right to produce and sell alcohol and beer was usually reserved to burghers. The petty burghers traditionally had a collective right to the alcohol business. Tavern-keeping was not that strictly regulated, but this business too was dominated by petty burghers. Traditionally, brewing and tavern-keeping tended to be carried out by widows.<sup>10</sup>

Helsinki was thus a socially heterogeneous town with a strict social hierarchy and social order. Different social groups had different obligations, but also different means of possibly profiting from the army's presence. Their interests as hosts would have been quite different. For some of them, the soldiers were a nuisance, a competition, and a cost; for others, they were customers, a workforce, and an opportunity for social mobility. Yet, the army's personnel formed a heterogeneous group, too, whose members enjoyed different opportunities for blending in and adapting to the local way of living. Roughly, the army's personnel in Helsinki can be divided into three groups: allotted soldiers, enlisted soldiers, and the civil staff employed by the army.

The allotted regiments formed the construction workforce for the fortress. In the summer of 1749, there were around 2800 allotted Finnish soldiers deployed in Helsinki, whereas in the summer of 1750, their numbers had grown to around 6000. In 1751, allotted regiments from central Sweden were sent to Finland, and an average of 7000 soldiers worked in Helsinki on a daily basis. The peak did not last for long. Already by 1756, the number of soldiers had fallen to 2000. The Seven Years' War (1756–1763) halted the construction works altogether, and, after 1757, the allotted regiments disappeared almost entirely for decades. Finnish allotted soldiers usually stayed in Helsinki from May until September,

while Swedish soldiers could also stay over the winter.<sup>11</sup> The allotted Finnish soldiers were farmers with a small croft in the countryside, where their families usually remained during the husband's deployment. On their leaves, the Finnish soldiers usually walked home.<sup>12</sup> In the countryside, they blended in with the local crofters, and the people of Helsinki probably viewed them mostly as provincial peasants.<sup>13</sup> In Helsinki, the magistrate's protocols and the court records rarely mention allotted soldiers; such figures only occasionally engaged in economic activities within the town, and the local authorities showed little concern over them.

The enlisted regiments formed the garrison on Sveaborg and became a permanent part of Helsinki's daily life during these years. The first battalions from the enlisted Finnish Artillery regiment had arrived in Helsinki in 1744, and further artillery battalions soon followed. In 1751–1753, two enlisted infantry regiments arrived in Helsinki as well, which included around 2000 soldiers plus their families. These regiments partly left Helsinki during the Seven Years' War, but later returned, staying until 1808. The fortification had staff in Helsinki since the 1740s, and from the 1760s onwards, the fleet also had staff permanently deployed there.<sup>14</sup>

The enlisted soldiers and their families settled down for longer periods. High-ranking officers could also bring their servants and other staff. The enlisted soldiers came from very different social backgrounds. Some soldiers had an artisanal education, for example, having been trained as carpenters or tailors, but never advancing to the rank of master.<sup>15</sup> High-ranking officers often belonged to the noble and land-owning elite, but among the common soldiers were many landless and unskilled men, sometimes recruited by force as permitted by law where they were identified as vagrants or beggars. Enlisted soldiers had a worse reputation than allotted soldiers; they were considered as less disciplined and as posing a greater threat to public order. The enlisted infantry regiments arriving in Helsinki in the 1750s consisted of soldiers recruited in Sweden or from German-speaking areas, sometimes even from farther away. Only later did the authorities start to recruit infantry from within Finland.<sup>16</sup> The locals probably felt greater reluctance towards the billeted soldiers, and, in the 1750s, when both tenure regiments and enlisted regiments were deployed in Helsinki, conflicts were more likely to occur between Helsinki's inhabitants and staff from the enlisted regiments. However, the enlisted soldiers stayed longer and lived closer to the civilians, which might explain part of this phenomenon.<sup>17</sup>

The third group of military personnel was the civil staff employed by the army. Most of them were craftsmen, such as blacksmiths or masons, but we also find sailors, clerks, and medical staff among their ranks. Many craftsmen were recruited from German-speaking areas, especially technical experts. These people lived in a borderland between the military and civilian society, and it was not always clear which norms and rules applied to them. Some were just temporary visitors, while others settled down in Helsinki and joined the local host community. Professionally, these craftsmen had a lot in common with the local burghers and could thus be considered as competitors, but they were also a valuable workforce.<sup>18</sup>

### BILLETING<sup>19</sup>

In Sweden, the billeting system was a duty imposed on the burghers that already existed in the sixteenth century, and it was implemented in Helsinki at around the same time.<sup>20</sup> In the seventeenth century, garrison cities were mainly found in the Baltic States, Ingria, and Karelia, but after the Great Northern War (1700–1721), garrisons reappeared in Finnish towns.<sup>21</sup> The burghers had to provide accommodation either in the form of living space or in monetary compensation. If the army required accommodation in the burghers' homes, certain standards had to be met. Each burgher received a suitable officer or some soldiers as guests and had to provide them with heating, lighting, and bedding.<sup>22</sup>

The burghers' duty to accommodate soldiers in their homes applied to garrison regiments only; it did not extend to the regiments deployed for construction works. Hence, the burghers could negotiate with the army about such arrangements.<sup>23</sup> The allotted workforce was mainly accommodated in barracks or tents. One simple reason for this was the lack of space: Colonel Augustin Ehrensvärd (1710–1772) wrote in 1748 that soldiers had to be accommodated in saunas, sheds, and outhouses due to the absence of other possible solutions, and he further claimed that it was nearly impossible to accommodate even one more soldier in Helsinki.<sup>24</sup> Even before work on the fortress began, Ehrensvärd had started to build barracks for the soldiers.<sup>25</sup> However, the locals still had to accommodate some officers from allotted regiments.<sup>26</sup>

Due to a lack of sources, it is impossible to determine how many soldiers the burghers in Helsinki had to accommodate and for how long. In May 1751, when both Swedish allotted regiments and enlisted regiments started to arrive in Helsinki, those who were accommodated

comprised one general, one colonel, two lieutenant colonels, one major, one artillery scribe, eleven captains, 32 lieutenants and ensigns, 35 non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and 522 soldiers. The officers belonged to both the allotted and enlisted regiments, while the soldiers were all enlisted artillerists.<sup>27</sup> In 1753, instead of the two companies from the artillery regiment that had earlier been accommodated, the town now had to accommodate four companies.<sup>28</sup> In 1754, at least two of the artillery companies eventually moved out to the fortress island.

The duty to accommodate soldiers also extended to their families.<sup>29</sup> In Sweden, soldiers were usually married, and enlisted soldiers' wives often followed their husbands into deployment.<sup>30</sup> The families' right to accommodation could even extend to after the soldier himself had moved into a barrack. After the artillery regiment had moved out to the fortress island in 1754, many families thus remained in town, and in June 1755, councillor Nils Larsson Burtz complained that soldiers' families were still living in Helsinki.<sup>31</sup> For the wives, staying in town offered opportunities for earning money by washing, sewing, nursing, or cooking. Many women also sold food and beverages, either in small stands or as they circulated through the streets.<sup>32</sup>

The burden of accommodating soldiers gradually diminished after 1755. In September 1757, Anders Johan Nordenskiöld (1696–1763) promised that the billeting in Helsinki would stop as soon as all soldiers could be lodged in barracks. However, it is uncertain exactly when the last soldiers moved out of the local burghers' homes. The Crown implemented large-scale billeting in Helsinki for shorter periods even later, like when troops returned from the Pomeranian War (1757–1762) or after a fire destroyed some barracks in 1771.<sup>33</sup> The accommodation problem re-emerged in the 1790s during and after the Russo-Swedish war.<sup>34</sup>

The Crown tried to secure a certain standard of living for soldiers and to uphold the military hierarchy and social order. According to the accommodation prescript of 1720, a general or a colonel was entitled to a certain standard, including a bigger room and a smaller chamber, a kitchen, a cellar, a room for his servants, a stable for four horses, one good bed, and two poorer beds. For lieutenant colonels and majors, the requirements included a bigger room and a smaller chamber, a kitchen, one good bed, one poorer bed, lodgments for his servants together with the host's servants, as well as a stable for two horses. For captains, the requirements were a room or a chamber, one good bed, one poorer bed,

and lodgings for one male servant. Lieutenants and ensigns were entitled to a small chamber, one good bed, one poorer bed, and lodgings for a male servant. NCOs and soldiers had to be content with a bed and lodging with their hosts.<sup>35</sup> These requirements can be understood as security measures employed to protect both hosts and guests. While soldiers were not forced to be content with insufficient arrangements, the guidelines nevertheless made clear that they could not demand too much from their hosts either.

Still, in Helsinki, it was simply impossible to fulfil these requirements. In the 1750s, 250–400 households were unable to accommodate the thousands of soldiers according to these standards, especially since officers were entitled to the equivalent of a small house. Several complaints to the local authorities demonstrate that soldiers struggled to obtain the standard to which they were entitled.<sup>36</sup> Everyone knew about the lack of space, and there seems to have been some agreement that it was untenable to ask for what the guidelines stipulated. Thus, most complaints centred on things other than rooms. Often, officers complained that they had not received enough candles or firewood, while the common soldiers objected to the lack of bedding.<sup>37</sup> The standards in Helsinki also fell short during the Russo-Swedish War, at which time the town council had to accommodate several officers in the same room.<sup>38</sup>

Billeting also triggered complaints from the burghers. The Swedish Diet debated the question in the 1760s and passed a new regulation in 1766, according to which the burghers obtained the right to commute for billeting duty into a monetary payment instead. Other homeowners in the cities were from then on obliged to lodge soldiers, although the nobility and clergy remained exempt.<sup>39</sup> Other homeowners had in fact been involved earlier as well, sometimes even priests and noblemen, by voluntarily helping and renting out spare rooms. Still, they had not been legally obligated to do so. Only in extraordinary situations had the statutes of 1720 given town councils the opportunity to request that all local homeowners provide lodgings. In Helsinki, the desperate local authorities likely used this option. In March 1750, the *feldsher* Kyhl had officers living in his house, and in October the same year, the lower civil servant Jöran Wervelin was summoned to court for not having repaired his house in an effort to avoid accommodating soldiers.<sup>40</sup>

As Wervelin's case shows, locals could try to escape from their duties through means of hidden resistance. As the town council's minutes show, billeting was far from popular among the locals. An honest way to escape



it was to rent rooms somewhere else for the billeted soldiers; a burgher did not have to accommodate the soldiers in his own house, he just had to arrange accommodation for them at his own expense.<sup>41</sup> Another, although less acceptable, way was to refer to the regulations and claim that it was impossible to meet their guidelines. In 1789, the merchant Johan Sederholm protested that he could not accommodate Lieutenant Bentzelstierna, because the latter would have had to share a room with other officers, since there were no chambers left. This would have been against the statutes and the merchant therefore refused to receive the lieutenant.<sup>42</sup>

Even the town council could be reluctant to billet an officer, and it sometimes hid behind the statutes. The newly appointed Colonel Cronhjelm, commander of an infantry regiment on garrison duty and the local commander-in-chief, experienced this upon his arrival in Helsinki. He complained in August 1753 to the town council that he had not received any quarters. However, the council declared that they were unable to help him. Since no commander-in-chief had ever been billeted in Helsinki before, they found it necessary to await instructions from Stockholm regarding how many rooms he was entitled to. Cronhjelm replied that he would in that case use the commander-in-chief's power and take quarters where it best suited him.<sup>43</sup>

The army was aware of the civilians' dislike of accommodating soldiers, and in 1750 came up with a system to create a bonus for good hosts who provided accommodation without complaints. Lieutenant Ribbing from the artillery suggested that the soldiers should be relocated among the burghers, so that good hosts would be granted good-natured and modest soldiers, while burghers who failed to follow the rules would receive troublemakers. The town council had no objections to this plan, provided that no one would have to accommodate more soldiers than before.<sup>44</sup> It is doubtful whether this plan was ever implemented, but maybe the threat of it was enough to frighten burghers into compliance.

## LIVING TOGETHER

A description from Helsinki during the Russo-Swedish war shows how local living arrangements could turn into an excessive number of billeted soldiers and badly behaving guests.<sup>45</sup> In November 1789, the local merchant Carl Etholén complained about the improper behaviour of two captains and the damage they caused to his house, and he also complained

about the number of soldiers he had to accommodate. Even before Etholén was assigned these two captains, he had struggled with a severe shortage of space in his house. He was already accommodating two other officers and their servants, as well as three NCOs, which likely meant at least seven persons, maybe more. The adult members of the Etholén household, staff and family included, totalled seven themselves, according to the tax record,<sup>46</sup> making them a minority in their own home.

The military rank of the officers assigned to Etholén is not mentioned in the court records, but they would have been entitled to at least one chamber each, while the NCOs needed a bed each. The two new captains should, according to the prescript from 1720, have one room each. Moreover, the home was used for the merchant's business: on the ground floor was his shop, a room for his bookkeeper and other employees, and a small chamber he used himself. The upper floor consisted of one bigger room and two small chambers. This floor was occupied by his wife, children, and sister-in-law, as well as by the female staff. It is clear that Etholén could not possibly have accommodated all these soldiers according to the official regulations. His house was simply not big enough for his guests.

Since the Etholén family was short of space, the two officers lived in a rented room in the house of his uncle's widow. The officers' servants and the three NCOs lived in Etholén's servants' quarters. Despite this, two more captains had been billeted to his upper floor, and they were determined to move in, not at all behaving as proper guests. While their host was away at a wedding, the captains forced open the doors and carried up their belongings. Later at night, while the household was sound asleep, they came back, forcing the Etholén family to flee their own home to their neighbours. The town council pitied Etholén and decided that the captains should stay at the vicarage until other quarters were available. The captains were also ordered to compensate Etholén for the damage to his doors.<sup>47</sup>

By entering the premises by force, the soldiers clearly broke the code of conduct for guests. During peacetime, soldiers were not supposed to enter into people's homes by force, which would have been an intrusion and a breach of domicile. Cases where civilians sued soldiers because of threats, violence, or damage to property were rare in Helsinki, even during the peak years of billeting in the 1750s.<sup>48</sup> Only a few exceptions are visible in the sources, which further accentuate the general absence of legal conflict. In 1753, the innkeeper Gustaf Wetter accused Lieutenant Stjernvall and NCO Schönström of having arrived at his house in the

middle of the night, shouting, yelling, kicking his door, and demanding accommodation. The material damages were insignificant; the burgher was mainly upset at having been woken up.<sup>49</sup> This slight inconvenience was enough to make him complain in court, which indicates that the local inhabitants did not quietly suffer intrusions into their homes.

In similar cases, the soldiers were the aggressive party, forcing themselves into local inhabitants' homes. However, based on the civil court records, it was more likely that local civilians attacked soldiers, rather than the other way around. Between 1752 and 1755, the lower civil court processed seven cases where soldiers or their wives accused civilians of manhandling them, but only three cases where civilians accused soldiers.<sup>50</sup> Historian Petri Talvitie's study of soldiers' criminality in Helsinki shows that civilians were more prone to violence than soldiers were.<sup>51</sup>

The butcher Gudmund Methers often got himself into trouble, sometimes with military staff. In May 1756, he was accused of hitting a soldier's wife named Anna Maria Sjöberg. Together with her husband, she and her children had been billeted at Methers' house. As one of her children had been crying, she had threatened him with a beating unless he quieted down. The butcher tried to calm her down, at which she started to slander the butcher, who in turn hit her.<sup>52</sup> In this case, the problem was obviously not only the butcher's temper. Rather, the conflict concerned the authority of the house and the maintenance of social order. As Derrida points out, a condition for hospitality is that the host always remains the patron, the master of his own home, exercising sovereignty over the space that he opens to the stranger.<sup>53</sup> The soldier's family members were guests and were expected to respect the homeowner's authority.

The same problems regarding the authority of the master of the house when faced with billeted soldiers has been described by historian Christopher Collstedt for seventeenth-century Scania. Collstedt argues that the conflict between soldiers and civilians was partly related to the cultural concept of honour and partly to the religious concept of the household hierarchy. The Lutheran household hierarchy, instituted by the Church, gave the male master power over his household: women, children, servants, and other members of the household should obey him. This patriarchal social order also applied to men: adult sons, male servants, and other male household members were supposed to conform. Billeted soldiers were difficult to fit into this model, and conflicts could hardly be avoided.<sup>54</sup>

When wives and widows acted as householders, they too possessed authority over other household members. Women became violent, too: in 1754, the carrier's wife Annika Carlsdotter Palin was accused of slandering and beating NCO Jacob Drossel's lover, madame Holthausen, who had been baking bread at Palin's home.<sup>55</sup> Men could also fall victim to the local civilians' anger, as demonstrated when the enlisted soldier Jacob Östman accused a customs inspector and his wife of attacking him both verbally and physically in 1755.<sup>56</sup>

In all known cases, civilians attacked common soldiers or low-ranking NCOs. There is no indication that locals ever became violent towards high-ranking officers or noblemen. The host's authority in his or her home had limits, and aggression was restricted to people of the same, or lower, social standing. In Helsinki, two different social orders collided in the host/guest relations: the social order of the household and the social order of the state. Local householders were the Crown's subjects, and they had to bend to the state's hierarchy. An attack on a person of rank would have questioned this social order and could have been interpreted as an attack on the state.

## PUBLIC SPACES

Civilians not only shared their homes with the soldiers but they also shared public spaces. The most difficult space to share was the church: the Ulrika Eleonora Church in Helsinki was tiny, far too small for the growing population, and the army did not construct any church of their own. Sharing the church proved to be a longer lasting problem than billeting. This too was a matter of negotiation between local civilians and the army, where the delicate balance of two conflicting social orders had to be maintained.

The seating order in church reflected the social order, both in town and in the realm. Every important man in town had his own seat, reflecting his social status, wealth, and reputation. The closer the seat was to the altar, the more distinguished was its occupant. First came the nobility and the staff of the county governor, then the local councillors, and so on in descending order of rank.<sup>57</sup> Since the burghers had their own seats in church, the army caused problems when they claimed seats of their own. The soldiers were supposed to stay on the gallery, which was far too small to accommodate them all. Many high-ranked officers belonged to the nobility and were of higher social standing than the local burghers.

They maintained that this status should be reflected in their seating. Yet, the burghers of Helsinki refused, as their downgrading of seating would have indicated a downgrading of social standing. This conflict dragged on every Sunday—or at least on bigger holidays—for decades.<sup>58</sup>

The growing urban population and the arrival of more military staff in Helsinki during the 1788–1790 war made the problem acute. The church council received complaints about crowded benches and aisles. In 1788, it finally settled on a simple solution: to hold separate services for the army and the civilians. According to the council, this would implement better order in the church.<sup>59</sup> After the war, local townsmen advocated a definite separation between the civil and the military congregations, but the army disagreed. They saw the separation as highly undesirable, as a shared communion was supposed to remind people of the equality and harmony between the two congregations.<sup>60</sup> Symbolically, the act of sharing a meal in front of God was a gesture of hospitality and denying the guest a place around the “table” was an offence.

Another public space, which the locals refused to share with the army, was the cemetery, located beside the church. However, there is no indication that the army ever tried to invade this kingdom of the dead. The common soldiers were buried either on Vallisaari island or outside town on a burial ground that had formerly been used to bury victims of the big famine in the 1690s and the plague of 1710.<sup>61</sup> Exceptions were made only for the most important officers. For example, Colonel Augustin Ehrensward was temporarily buried in Helsinki’s cemetery while a tomb was prepared for him at the fortress.<sup>62</sup> Hospitality thus mainly applied to the living, but when the local cemetery became too small for the townspeople themselves, their new cemetery was placed in close vicinity to the military cemetery—but it was just slightly better maintained and surrounded by a wall to mark the division.<sup>63</sup>

The new cemetery was needed due to an outbreak of louse-born relapsing fever in 1788–1791, killing around 200 civil inhabitants. The disease originated with Russian war prisoners and spread among soldiers during the summer of 1788. It then rapidly infected civilians, but the local authorities adopted only a handful of measures to secure public health. In January 1790, the town council urged the municipal physician to combat the disease. He made a public announcement that the inhabitants should air their houses and sweep their floors with spruce boughs.<sup>64</sup> In the eighteenth century, the mechanism of contagion was unknown; the disease was attributed to bad air, not to crowded living conditions.<sup>65</sup>

## TAVERNS

Helsinki's inhabitants shared streets, the marketplace, and other outdoor spaces with the army. The soldiers caused disturbances outdoors, as packs of shouting soldiers roamed through town after the taverns' closing time. In the 1770s, the public prosecutor Carl Fredrik Lytke complained to the county governor that soldiers from Sveaborg arrived in town on their days off and that their nocturnal noises prevented the inhabitants from sleeping.<sup>66</sup> In the eighteenth century, Helsinki lacked a police force; instead, it was the local fire patrols and the army's guards who were responsible for maintaining public order at night. In 1753, the town council decided to employ fireguards for patrolling the streets at night throughout the year. Their task was to look for fires, but also to uphold public order. However, these guards were usually old men, sometimes disabled, and in the event of brawls, they rang their bells to get assistance from the army's guards.<sup>67</sup>

The question of drunken soldiers divided the locals, since tavern-keeping and beer-brewing formed important livelihoods for many of them. Taverns were often kept at home and billeted soldiers were guaranteed customers. The local inhabitants did not have to feed the soldiers at their own expense since the state provided the soldiers with salaries and some food. Yet, the state expected the locals to sell drinks to paying soldiers.<sup>68</sup> In 1747, before the enormous building project started, there were thirteen legal and registered tavern-keepers in Helsinki, but by the next year their number had risen to 75.<sup>69</sup> In 1757, when most soldiers had left Helsinki, the number of legal taverns fell to seventeen.<sup>70</sup> After the enlisted regiments returned to Helsinki after the Seven Years' War, the number of taverns started to grow yet again. In the late 1770s, there were 50 taverns, and in 1788, just on the verge of Gustavus III's Russian War, the number had risen to nearly 100.<sup>71</sup>

The local authorities and burghers fiercely defended their lucrative alcohol business from intruders.<sup>72</sup> Despite their best efforts, there were nevertheless plenty of illegal taverns.<sup>73</sup> In 1784, the burghers complained to the commander of Sveaborg about illegal taverns kept by soldiers on leave and their wives. According to the burghers, these taverns caused noise and brawls, and led to numerous thefts. No mention was made of legal taverns, which, in the eyes of the burghers at least, seem to have been free from such problems. The burghers wanted to get rid of their unwanted competitors, preferring that soldiers on leave skip town

altogether and return to their home regions. The commander solemnly declared that soldiers were forbidden to keep taverns, but it is unlikely that this prohibition had any effect. To please the burghers, the army often issued prohibitions and requests that nevertheless seem to have had little effect.<sup>74</sup>

In the 1750s, everyone, from poor widows to wealthy councillors, was involved in the alcohol business. Through this strategy, the locals turned the influx of military personnel into an economic advantage. In the late eighteenth century, the tavern business had become a business for the less wealthy. Nearly all petty burghers won their livelihood either completely or in part from taverns.<sup>75</sup> This might explain why the local authorities were more concerned about the immoral living in the 1790s than they were in the 1750s, since by then the councillors' own economic interests were no longer involved.

The thriving tavern business in town generated moral concerns. The prospering nightlife with drinking, dancing, and gambling in particular was considered to be a bad example for the local youth. Female camp followers were mainly the concern of the army, and the local authorities preferred to stay away from the army's internal affairs. Still, there were worries regarding public health, specifically about sexually transmitted diseases. Obviously, the local authorities also suspected that civilian inhabitants were involved. In 1790, an announcement was made in church that people who allowed immoral behaviour in their houses would be punished.<sup>76</sup>

## SEXUAL RELATIONS

Gambling, drinking, and "immoral living" were a concern, but maybe not as much as might have been expected. In general, the local authorities did not turn such phenomena into a security issue. Sexual relations between soldiers and local women had existed since the 1740s.<sup>77</sup> During the years 1752–1755, we find thirty trials regarding pre-marital sexual relations involving soldiers and local women in the Helsinki court records.<sup>78</sup> The court often took these trials quite lightly and the penalties for wrongdoing were not too harsh. After the army's arrival, the number of children born out of wedlock increased dramatically,<sup>79</sup> but a similar trend can be observed in other eighteenth-century Swedish towns. The army, therefore, was not necessarily deserving of all the blame.<sup>80</sup>

The camp followers were considered the army's problem and civil authorities rarely interfered. In the 1750s, we find only two cases of women accused of immoral living in the civil court's records. These women were non-locals, which might explain why they were deported to the spinning-house in Turku.<sup>81</sup> In the 1760s, the army tried to deport a local unemployed woman, Justina Mosberg, who was accused of immoral living and said to suffer from a sexually transmitted disease. In her case, the local authorities reacted swiftly, bringing her before the civil court. Many witnesses defended her; she was a good girl, just a little too interested in dancing, they said, and a new employer quickly appeared with a job offer.<sup>82</sup> Justina's father had been a local entrepreneur who died heavily indebted when she was just a child, and she was viewed as a member of the local community who had fallen into misfortune.<sup>83</sup> Her case shows that the local community protested furiously and went to great efforts if the army tried to touch one of its own members, no matter how such individuals behaved. As a guest, the army should respect the host community's integrity and authority in its own town, and allow the local community to deal with its own members according to its own rules and principles. Strangers could be deported, but the army could not dictate how the host community should act towards local inhabitants.

It is easy to assume that soldiers abandoned their local sweethearts if the women fell pregnant. However, contrary to many other European countries, the Swedish army encouraged soldiers to marry.<sup>84</sup> It was not only the common soldiers without rank who married local women, but officers, NCOs, and other military staff also did so. The marriages between the civil and military population spread to higher social strata in the late eighteenth century and provided the hosts with an opportunity to climb the social ladder. A common trend was that the children of wealthy merchants started marrying poorer members of the nobility: accommodating high-ranking officers in their homes opened up a fast lane for local merchants' daughters to meet suitable officers and noblemen with an eye to marriage.<sup>85</sup>

## ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The mixing of the civilian and military population in Helsinki through marriage was a slow process, but the two groups swiftly found other ways to meet. Exchanges of goods and services between hosts and guests occurred even outside the alcohol business. The local court



records reveal a large degree of economic interaction: in 1752–1755, nearly 36% of all civil court cases where military personnel was involved concerned economic transactions.<sup>86</sup> The soldiers could act as debtors, creditors, sellers, buyers, or employees. For example, in 1754, the soldier Henrik Nymalm demanded payment for a cow from the butcher Gabriel Wikström,<sup>87</sup> while the soldier Johan Hortenius argued with carrier Palin about the sale of a horse.<sup>88</sup>

Court records also show that soldiers worked for locals. The Crown paid enlisted soldiers poorly; the Swedish military system was built on regular periods of leave so that soldiers could take employment elsewhere.<sup>89</sup> The Crown's motivation for this system was financial, but it could also be seen as providing a boon for host communities in garrison towns, supplying them with a cheap workforce. Yet, in Helsinki, the army was worried about the lack of suitable jobs for thousands of soldiers. The general governor of Finland, Gustaf Fredrik von Rosen (1688–1759), therefore decided to increase the enlisted soldiers' salaries, but this arrangement ended in 1753. There is no evidence that the soldiers' options for finding employment had improved by then; these cuts were purely motivated by poor state finances.<sup>90</sup>

Some soldiers worked as day-labourers in town or on manors in the surrounding countryside. Once again, it is only when a conflict arose that we can find these cases. For example, in 1755, the enlisted soldier Anders Selling complained that he had not received his salary from the high-ranked civil servant Anders Hellenius, who had employed Selling to paint his house in red.<sup>91</sup> In the 1760s, the soldier Martin Gutatis faced similar problems after doing forestry work at Gumtåkt manor, owned by a local merchant.<sup>92</sup> However, in their complaints about illegal taverns in 1784, the locals also complained about soldiers on leave staying in town.<sup>93</sup> Here, soldiers seeking jobs were depicted as a nuisance and a threat towards public order; the locals wanted them to leave town when they were on leave. The soldiers and their wives seem to have been perceived as especially irritating when they sold alcohol and food, a business the locals preferred to keep to themselves. The guests were supposed to be content with the jobs the hosts offered them, not to become entrepreneurs themselves in lucrative trades.

For some skilled soldiers and military personnel, it was easier to find jobs since local entrepreneurs were in desperate need of them. The fortress construction boosted the brickwork industry in Helsinki and its hinterlands, but the locals lacked the necessary expertise. Military staff

who had worked in the Crown's brick factory were therefore crucial for these brickwork facilities. The enriched merchants in Helsinki also started to build ships, but the lack of a skilled workforce forced them to recruit soldiers from the Crown's shipyard. They even negotiated directly with the army and the Crown to get skilled shipbuilders.<sup>94</sup>

Due to the lack of a skilled workforce in the 1740s and 1750s, local authorities actively recruited craftsmen from Stockholm. Moreover, up to 20% of the enlisted soldiers were former apprentices. Even though crafts in eighteenth-century Sweden were restricted to masters and burghers, until 1789, soldiers too were permitted to sell their own products directly to consumers if they did not set up regular workshops or employ staff.<sup>95</sup> Local craftsmen strongly resented this competition; sometimes they ransacked soldiers' quarters and brought matters to court. They could also protest when military craftsmen wanted to establish themselves as masters and burghers in Helsinki. Nevertheless, this was the quest of individual guilds and craftsmen, not a common pursuit shared by all inhabitants. The local authorities tried to avoid these conflicts, and even after 1789, courts often dismissed such cases. The trials reveal that many local inhabitants were involved themselves, usually as customers. However, they could also participate actively by letting out workshops or providing soldiers with tools.<sup>96</sup> Usually, the local burghers stuck together against the guests, at least publicly, but in these cases, the lines between them visibly cracked. Public hospitality did not have to be gratuitous or unselfish, but the hosts could certainly try to benefit from it.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Helsinki offers an extreme example of military presence in a garrison town, turning the civilians into a minority in their own hometown. It is also an extreme example of hospitality, where the guests clearly outnumbered their hosts. The townspeople were forced by law to show public hospitality for the common good of the realm, although they complained about the billeting and sometimes tried to escape their duties through forms of hidden resistance.

Yet, although Helsinki was an extreme case, it was also a typical case. All over Europe, garrison towns experienced the problems that Jean-François Tanguy has identified: billeting of soldiers, disturbance of the public order, and threats towards public health.<sup>97</sup> For Helsinki in the eighteenth century, billeting periodically reached such tremendous

proportions that the local authorities had to focus on maintaining social order at all costs in order to preserve public order.

Although hospitality in Helsinki was not voluntary, it was never unconditional. The soldiers were guests and were expected to behave accordingly. Hospitality was a constant matter of negotiation between the army and the civilians. The local inhabitants had to maintain a delicate balance between submission to the state and the assertion of their authority in their town and homes. To avoid open conflict, it was necessary to maintain social order in a way that suited both the army and the civilians. State and military hierarchies had to be respected, but so too did the master's position in his household and the local inhabitants' right to their own public spaces. This was no easy task, but they somehow managed; the town remained functional and relatively calm, and violent confrontations were rare.

Both the army and the local authorities took measures to promote security in town for both soldiers and civilians. Still, it is only in the late eighteenth century that we find evidence of nightlife being securitized. The hospitality of the locals always showed signs of what Jacques Derrida has called "hostipitality." Homeowners sought to maintain authority over their households and could even use their fists to force guests to respect them. The burghers and the local authorities also made it clear to the army that they did not accept intrusions into businesses that they regarded as being under their privileged control, nor would the host community quietly watch when the army claimed jurisdiction over local inhabitants.

However, not all interactions between hosts and guests were coercive or involuntary. For decades, many inhabitants of Helsinki earned their livelihood through tavern-keeping and beer-brewing. Hospitality had its advantages for those who were able to see its positive aspects. The army staff provided local entrepreneurs with a skilled workforce and could offer suitable husbands for local women. Some soldiers were more welcome than others, depending on their social standing and their skills. Not all locals nor all soldiers were alike or shared the same interests: public hospitality could make some people prosper while others perished.

## NOTES

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12. Ericsson (1997: 40–41), Viljanti (1940: 95), Vuorimies (2015: 53–99), Gustafsson (2018: 183–186).
13. Screen (2007: 57–58), Niemelä (1990: 189).
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38. HCA, Town Council Archive, Ca:95, Protocols of Helsinki Town Council Nov. 16, 1789.
39. Gidlöf (1976: 723).
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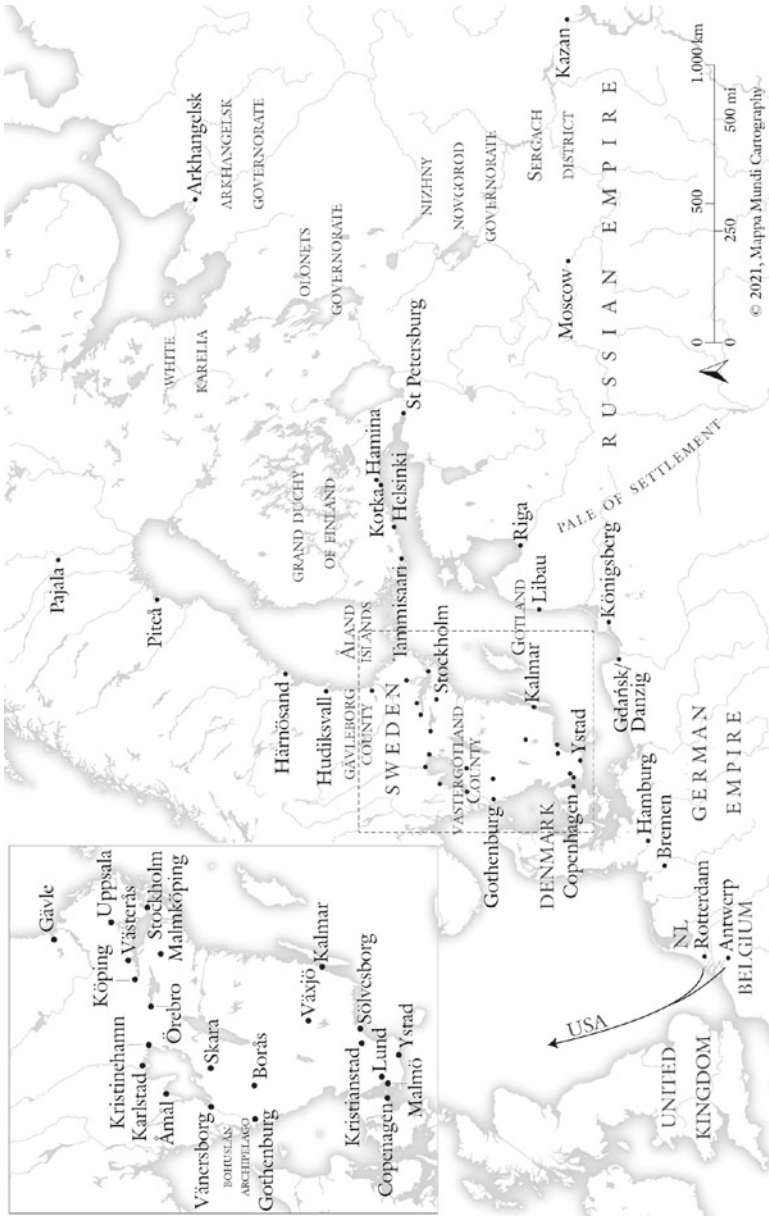
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PART III

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## Modern Hospitalities





# Threat or Nuisance? Foreign Street Entertainers in the Swedish Press, 1800–1880

*Leif Runefelt*

This chapter discusses attitudes in the Swedish press 1800–1880 towards foreign market and street entertainers in Sweden. I argue that there was a major shift in these attitudes around 1850, when street entertainers generally came to be seen as a threat to society. While hospitality per se—providing actual entertainers with food and shelter—had never been an issue in the press, newspapers in fact tolerated and, to some extent, even appreciated entertainers during the first half of the century. By mid-century, a discourse suddenly arose that resembled contemporary efforts to securitize migration issues, focusing on the need to reject foreign entertainers.<sup>1</sup> Germans came to be regarded in a particularly negative way, an attitude grounded in a traditional Swedish conception of Germans

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as greedy and willing to do anything for money. I show that entertainers came under attack mainly through three rhetorical themes: as idlers and beggars disguised as musicians; as acoustic polluters; and as people who maltreated innocent children. Taken together, these behaviors corrupted the morals of honorable albeit somewhat easily misled Swedes. The rhetoric was harsh, and it reminds us of some of the arguments used in recent debates on migrants in Sweden in the twenty-first century.

The chapter is based on an inventory of the recently digitized Swedish daily press. Until a few years ago, this material was inaccessible and difficult to work with, but is now especially fruitful for mapping out the contours of various research questions, both in terms of the frequency of phenomena, such as foreign entertainers in Sweden, and of attitudes towards them. However, during the period of investigation, the press consisted mostly if not completely of the opinions of the educated middle-class and bourgeoisie. Hence, I argue that the rhetoric was inefficient as it failed to mobilize any substantial audience to support the critics. The entertainers were in fact popular among the less well-off members of the population, many of whom considered the entertainers as purveyors of a cheap and appreciated product. The criticism about sound pollution was a particularly weak link in the rhetorical chain. To some extent, this type of criticism undermined the very security discourse it was part of, and which focused on entertainers as a societal threat. The emphasis on the entertainers' production of noise entailed the rhetorical construction of an inconvenience for the urban privileged middle-class, rather than of an acute moral and economic threat. This was not a viable method for mobilizing any broader support to reject entertainers. I conclude the chapter with an extreme example of the possible consequences that such attitudes could have for individual entertainers, namely the murder of art-rider Louis Bono; by looking at this example, I link the shift in attitudes around mid-century to contemporary theories of securitization as well as to recent Swedish attempts to construct an image of Romani beggars as a threat to society.

### THE FIRST HALF OF THE 1800S: ENTERTAINERS AS A NON-ISSUE

Foreign entertainers have traveled around the Baltic Sea area since at least the seventeenth century, and probably long before that. During the early eighteenth century, they were comprised mainly of Italians who carried

peepshow-boxes, showing small animals, and who performed dances and acrobatics, often called Savoyards, regardless of whether the performers actually came from the Savoy. An ordinance from 1741 prohibited foreign entertainers and other itinerant groups, especially singling out Savoyards.<sup>2</sup> The Italians and others who came to Sweden were usually migrants intending to return to their native countries. They came from poor areas but were not necessarily driven by poverty; they operated within marginal economic systems that were based on itinerant trades and transhumance.<sup>3</sup> Common all over Europe, their number grew during the late eighteenth century, with some of them arriving in Sweden. While this migration has been studied in other regions of Europe, there is no research for the case of Sweden.<sup>4</sup>

Frank Bovenkerk and Loes Ruland have studied labor migration in the context of some Italian lines of trade, such as mosaic makers and chimney sweepers who entered the Netherlands during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They have shown that these professions met a demand in the receiving country, which meant that the migrants could preserve a distinctiveness while being received within the prevalent social and economic order.<sup>5</sup> At least according to national and local authorities and elites, the entertainers discussed in this chapter did not satisfy any societal demand. This placed them more in the margins of society. They were not only foreigners conceived of as not fulfilling any actual need in society, but they were also itinerant within a society that for centuries had demonstrated a deep mistrust towards spatially mobile and unsettled people. This may lead the historian to conclude that the authorities acted with a great deal of suspicion towards entertainers, especially since legislation as well as local ordinances made possible their immediate rejection.<sup>6</sup> However, as will be shown, the situation on the ground was not that simple.

The entertainers arriving in Sweden via Denmark or from across the Baltic Sea in the early nineteenth century were not a homogenous group. They can, roughly speaking, be divided into two groups, each with a different status and each of which was depicted in the press in different ways. On the one hand, there were the entertainers who represented a more professionalized and specialized entertainment, and who often claimed to better satisfy the entertainment demands of the urban population through various means, such as exhibitions of wax cabinets, menageries, mechanics, and advanced gymnastics. Most such entertainers were Italian, though itinerant mechanics were frequently German, and



artistic riders and acrobats came from several European countries. None—or almost none—of these figures was Swedish. These entertainers not only advertised in the press, but usually also performed in spaces related to the urban bourgeois world: at the town hall, in higher-end restaurants, or in private homes of the urban middle-class. They were not regarded as particularly problematic.

On the other hand, there were the entertainers who worked the streets, market squares and roads: men with peepshow-boxes and organ grinders, walking from town to town. Exhibitors of *cameræ obscuræ* and *laternæ magicæ* had walked the town streets since at least the early eighteenth century, while the organ grinders came roughly a century later. These individuals are strikingly elusive in the historical sources. A painting by Alexander Lauréus from 1809 shows an exhibitor of a peepshow in the street Storkyrkobrinken in Stockholm.<sup>7</sup> A comic description of Stockholm from 1823 described both men with peepshows and organ grinders as common features at the recreational island of Djurgården, where the more well-off from the population promenaded during the weekends.<sup>8</sup> This group did not advertise and remained more or less invisible in the press during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Everything points to an increase in the number of itinerant entertainers from the 1820s and onwards, a development which intensified during the 1840s. We see this in the increasing number of advertisements for entertainers, as well as in the growing number of comments in the press mentioning the large number of itinerant entertainers of both high and low status. This phenomenon was not limited to the larger towns. While there is no research looking specifically at the smaller Swedish towns, Monica Miscali has shown that Italian entertainers visited even the smallest Norwegian towns and villages.<sup>9</sup> The fact that such figures received increased attention in the small-town press indicates—as will be shown below—that the same is true for Sweden as well. By the mid-nineteenth century, many newcomers to Sweden were Germans (or, in many cases, conceived by local audiences to be Germans regardless of origin). During the 1840s, the press also started to mention street and market entertainment more frequently, using words such as “foreign artists” to describe the performers, making it hard to identify the geographic origins of entertainers. While explicit references to Italians in the press faded somewhat, there is no reason to believe that Italians stopped coming to Sweden to make money by entertaining.

From the 1840s, German itinerant musicians toured the Baltic areas, as well as many other parts of the world. For instance, at this time, many musicians from Pfalz went all over the world to make a living as street musicians, as shown by Samantha Owens in an article on German street musicians in New Zealand.<sup>10</sup> Their compatriots who traveled to Sweden were often said to have come from Hannover, rather than Pfalz, if they were not simply described as coming from “Germany.” According to Owens, the kingdom of Hannover had a strong reputation when it came to military music, which made many German-speaking musicians claim that they were from Hannover. In Sweden, the same could be said about Austria, which enjoyed an equally good reputation.<sup>11</sup>

A caveat is needed when it comes to German entertainers in Sweden. Even if authorities saw the passports and other documents of such figures, the press and the public did not. They often had to guess, identifying as “Germans” those who spoke German or who had a name sounding German. However, Swedish is a small language and very few foreign entertainers spoke it. German, on the other hand, was quite functional in Sweden, and many entertainers knew German. We can assume that several entertainers who performed in Sweden spoke German, and thus were taken to be German. One example was the guitarist Giuseppe Zella from Naples, who, when in trouble with the police in 1845 and despite of his name and origin, was described as “a German musician.”<sup>12</sup>

This has some importance because “Germans” were viewed in particularly negative terms after 1850. It is reasonable to assume that apart from ethnic Germans, several other individuals, such as Zella, were also included in this group. We may further assume that some of them were Jews, as the number of itinerant Jewish individuals grew in Sweden during the nineteenth century. In the Swedish press, however, there were few mentions of Jewish entertainers, and the degree of antisemitism was low in this regard, despite being an ever-present force in Swedish society and the Swedish press during the whole of the nineteenth century.

Judging from the press, the degree to which society tolerated and accepted foreign entertainers during the first half of the century is striking. Their itinerant existence stood in direct conflict with two basic principles of the Swedish state since at least the seventeenth century, if not earlier. The first was the principle of settlement: society was based on and depended on households that were fixed to a specific place from which to earn their subsistence. This principle created a deep mistrust towards mobile people within society, as well as an accompanying legal framework

to fight and control them. The second was the principle of righteous sustenance: the demand placed on every individual to support oneself through useful and purposeful work. This principle guided Swedish social politics for centuries, leading to hard and sometimes brutal policies against begging and every line of trade that was deemed less useful, especially when performed by able-bodied individuals. It is well-established within Swedish research that authorities and representatives of the press intensified the struggle against both itinerant individuals and perceptions of idleness during the first half of the nineteenth century, and the targets of this struggle were figures such as peddlers, farmers involved in inter-regional trade and everyone who might be conceived of as *lösdrivare*, i.e., drifters lacking employment.<sup>13</sup>

In this light, it was not only the press that showed benevolence towards entertainers specifically, but so too did the authorities. The ability to travel in Sweden as an entertainer, required local permits and a passport (until 1862)—and it seems that entertainers did not encounter serious problems in obtaining the proper documentation. This allowed them to wander through the realm without being accused of being drifters or vagrants, i.e., without being subject to arrest and deportation. The authorities seem to have admitted a need for entertainment in society, and they seem also to have accepted that it had to be itinerant, no doubt because of the strikingly small size of Swedish towns, making it impossible to have any settled entertainers. The ordinance of 1741, renewed in 1748, remained valid during the early nineteenth century, formally prohibiting most street entertainment and especially the ones performed by foreigners. But this prohibition existed only on paper, as authorities in general provided the necessary permits to entertainers, including tightrope dancers and other sorts of act that were specifically mentioned in the ordinances. The press published advertisements without any comments, and even provided reviews of some of the more established entertainers.

The simpler entertainers were ignored, but were neither condemned nor criticized. Reports from markets might mention the presence of entertainers without commenting on them in any negative way; other such reports might even express regret at the fact that there were too few of them. For instance, in the autumn 1829, *Weckoblad från Gefle* lamented that no itinerant entertainers had visited the town for a while, nor was one likely to turn up in the near future.<sup>14</sup> The only criticism against entertainment expressed in the press before the 1840s was a mercantilist one directed at the more established entertainers. Some writers in the press

deemed it shameful that Swedes paid foreigners money for a product of such low value as entertainment. An anonymous writer in *Calmarbladet* 1829 (anonymity was standard in Swedish nineteenth-century newspapers) thus intimated that most entertainers were foreign speculators trying to claim the assets of Swedes.<sup>15</sup>

### A FOREIGN MASS OF BEGGARS: THE RHETORIC HARDENS

However, this general good will towards entertainers—at least the street and market entertainers—would come to an end. In a “Consideration of the life in Stockholm,” printed in *Stockholms Dagblad* 1844, attitudes towards even the simpler entertainers were still factual and rather unbiased. According to the writer, there had always existed “an artistic department” within the poorer segments of the population—individuals trying to make a living from music, such as organ grinders. “They play a kind of *miserere mei*,” regarding themselves to be “somewhat indispensable to the comfort of others.” At the least, the musicians themselves claimed to deliver a valuable service, and the writer did not disagree with them.<sup>16</sup>

From the 1850s, attitudes changed. The number of complaints increased; the language became harsher. During the early 1850s, many voices of the press started to construct an image of entertainers as a threat towards the order of society. In 1852, at the autumn fair in Växjö, thirteen organ grinders along with several other entertainers were reportedly present. According to the press, they all should have been locked up and thrown out of town, so it could rid itself of this “impertinent, idle, and mostly foreign horde of beggars.”<sup>17</sup> In 1853, *Christinehamnsbladet* highlighted the danger of entertainers, noting what the paper perceived as large waves of migration. Emigration to America was increasing, whereby an already poor country lost able-bodied workers. And what did Sweden get in return? “To us migrates a large horde of acrobats, tightrope dancers, organ grinders, *marktschreiers*, Jews and proselytes,” all intending to suck the good out of the nation. When migrants went back home, “they laugh at the stupidity of Swedes, clearly not forgetting to inform their friends at home about it.”<sup>18</sup> The arguments ring a bell for anyone who follows the contemporary debate on migration: the nation is flooded by foreigners who do not have to be here, but who are cunning in their efforts to exploit the naïve residents. The antisemitic Stockholm newspaper *Folkets Röst* argued in 1853—also in a way that resembles

contemporary debates—that while poor Swedes were arrested and prosecuted for begging due to the laws against vagrancy, “a whole pack of Jews and Italians, with their organs and monkeys, could roam the streets of the town and beg,” without the intervention of the authorities.<sup>19</sup>

From this point on, the rhetoric was considerably harsh. The fair in Sölvesborg in 1856 was apparently invaded by “a legion of German beggars of both sexes.” The Örebro paper *Nerikes Allehanda* complained in 1864 that the town was weak on entertainers, and called them “vagrant scum” and “a scorn of the realm.” *Köpings Tidning* called them foreign idlers and usurers exploiting simple-minded Swedes, and *Folkets röst* compared them to insects.<sup>20</sup> The vocabulary used well-known fears in attempts to mobilize an image of the entertainers as a threat: legion, scum, pack of beggars, idlers, bloodsuckers, scorn of the land, usurers, vagrants. The Gothenburg paper *Säsongen* in 1879 advised every reader to never give any money to the entertainers—in that way the “foreign grasshoppers” would have to leave the country.<sup>21</sup>

*Folkets Röst* claimed that entertainers got special treatment. Writers found the authorities to be soft on them: foreigners committed their begging under disguise and got away with it, while ordinary Swedes fell under the well-developed and often harshly applied vagrancy laws. However, entertainers were also considered to pose a sort of moral contagion. In 1873, the Uppsala paper *Korrespondenten* was shocked to see fully able-bodied individuals not only engaged in playing music, but also demonstrating a “hatred towards useful occupations,” clearly taking to music only to disguise their begging. Their presence was dangerous and provided an education for the young in the vagrant lifestyle.<sup>22</sup> Being popular among the lower orders of the population, entertainers not only exercised a bad influence on people, but they also created crowds, which in turn led to theft and unruliness.<sup>23</sup>

What may have been the causes behind this new rhetoric? The most immediate answer is growing European poverty and proletarianization. Antony Kitts has shown how the number of vagrants, beggars, and itinerant individuals increased rapidly in France around 1850, which accordingly led to hardening attitudes towards these groups. Several scholars have pointed to the growing number of foreign entertainers in London at this time. In 1849, Henry Mayhew started to write the chronicles that eventually led to his famous work on poverty in London, *London Labour and the London Poor*, in which street entertainers played a special role.<sup>24</sup> John E. Zucchi’s study of Italian children working in

entertainment in London, Paris, and New York also pinpoints the mid-century as a period of demographic significance, when the number of children increased. Along with other scholars, Zucchi has shown how Italian migration increased during the first half of the nineteenth century due to structural problems facing agriculture in less fertile regions, which was combined with difficult conditions for land ownership and major demographic growth. Tobias Widmaier argues that while German itinerant musicians were not outcast proletarians, their way of supporting themselves was a consequence of the proletarianization and of the increased difficulties in supporting a family from agriculture during this same period.<sup>25</sup>

Swedish towns were small. In fact, in 1850, there were 2.6 million inhabitants in London, while there were only 350,000 in *all* Swedish towns taken together. Stockholm was the largest city with only 90,000 inhabitants in 1850; the second largest, Gothenburg, had only 26,000. Despite this, developments in Sweden were similar to those of the larger cities. The number of entertainers in Sweden clearly grew, both those who performed in town halls and theater houses and those who performed on the streets. Entertainers also tended to gather en masse at the fairs. The example of Växjö in 1852 and its thirteen organ grinders provides one indication of this development; another comes from the five organ grinders and an animal exhibitor (with two camels) who were present at the 1863 fair in Pajala, 80 kilometers north of the arctic circle. Is this surprising? No, for as one source put it: “All the way up there, has this detrimental life of scoundrels spread its destructive net.”<sup>26</sup> Yet another sign of this European poverty was that a number of Swedish organ grinders showed up in the press, usually under headlines where honest people should not appear, i.e., in sections reporting on “court and police matters” (Swe: “*Rättegångs- och polissaker*”).<sup>27</sup> This was certainly an effect of the ongoing proletarianization of the agricultural sector, in Sweden as well as on the continent, which created large numbers of unpropertied people seeking to escape the harsh conditions of their local communities.<sup>28</sup>

However, the figures who stand out most prominently in the press material are the Germans. The arrival of a great many Germans seems to have amplified the negative rhetoric towards itinerant entertainers. Research looking at London has shown how a deeply rooted racism towards Italians played an important role in driving the negative reactions towards organ grinders and other entertainers. The Italians were

described as hot-headed, impulsive, and prone to violence and coarseness. For instance, *Punch* campaigned against Italian street entertainers in strongly racist terms for more than a decade until a law was approved in 1864 that regulated their right to the streets.<sup>29</sup> In Sweden, these stereotypical characterizations of Italians were expressed in ethnographic descriptions and in fictional texts, such as the many serial novels published in newspapers. However, they were never activated regarding the actual Italian entertainers, neither during the early nineteenth century nor later when entertainers were heavily criticized. Few made use of a racist or xenophobe image of the Italian as some radically different and dangerous “other.” Instead, many aimed at the Germans.

When, during the 1840s, the press started mentioning the appearance of German musicians, it did so in mostly uncritical terms. *Gefleborgs Läns Tidning* noticed in 1844 that a group of German male musicians passed through town, amused children and the less educated during the days, and entertained the urban population in the evenings. They were accompanied by three female harpists, described as three German Graces, a reference to one of the most popular motifs in contemporary art, the Three Graces (by Canova, Thorvaldsen, etc.).<sup>30</sup> This unbiased—or even positive tone—turned into a negative one after 1850: now, no graces were to be seen, only legions of German beggars of both sexes. *Nya Wermlands-tidningen* reported in 1857 that the fair in Karlstad had been peaceful despite the vagrant Germans. *Fäderneslandet* stated in 1862 that only those musicians who were regarded as the worst of all in “*das große Vaterland*” came to Sweden, where they acted with “unlimited impertinence” and as if they were the greatest artists.<sup>31</sup>

This contempt for Germans was firmly anchored in Swedish tradition. The writer in *Fäderneslandet* started with the claim that Germans were always themselves, no matter where you found them. How? This was explained in several other articles. It was not primarily their impertinence, their arrogance, or their lack of musical skills—many Germans in Sweden were obviously quite good musicians. No, the genuinely German characteristic was their will and their ability to make money out of whatever: “*etwas zu verdienen*” was the German’s motto. “What does the German not do for money?”, a writer asked in *Upsala* in 1871, in answer to the question of why German itinerant musicians played *La Marseillaise* during the Franco-Prussian war (1870–1871). The Ystad paper *Skånska Telegraf* noticed the same behavior, adding: “But what does the German not do for money, as the proverb says?” The expression was indeed an

old Swedish proverb, used long before the entertainers were considered a problem.<sup>32</sup> In keeping with this, the German entertainers were also accused of illegal or immoral trade, such as selling cheap rubbish on the side to the less astute members of the population.<sup>33</sup>

While this stereotype remained a good springboard for an explicit hatred towards Germans, the hostility directed their way was probably further underpinned by other factors. The first Schleswig war of 1848–1849 engendered a general hostility towards Germany during this epoch of Scandinavianism, not least since there was also a company of Swedish volunteers fighting on the Danish side. The sympathies for the Danes had not lessened by the second Schleswig war of 1864, and the Swedish media mostly signed up for the French during the Franco-Prussian war. In its mention of the presence of German musicians, a report from 1864 coming from the market in Malmköping suggested that German musicians were less welcome in Sweden because “their business in Denmark had created a hatred towards Germans in the heart of every honest Swede.”<sup>34</sup> These aggressions made the German not only an impertinent bloodsucker, but also a potential “enemy among us.” While a certain amount of antisemitism probably enhanced the animosity—some of the Germans were actually Jews—this was not something that was revealed in the press. One example of antisemitism was mentioned above, and other papers might describe itinerant fair traders, if not entertainers, as “German peddle-Jews” (Swe: “*tyska schacker-judar*”). The Swedish contempt of Germans did indeed resemble classic stereotypes of the Jews, but it nevertheless was really directed towards the Germans.

### NOISE—A MIDDLE-CLASS NUISANCE

The European proletarianization encouraged people in countless barren areas to take to the roads to find provision, and some of these roads led to Sweden. As their numbers grew, another aspect of the migrants’ activities came to the fore: noise. While making noise in the streets was a crime in Sweden, punishable by a fine since the seventeenth century, this legislation did not cover performing music in public. The musicians’ and other entertainers’ musical performances—most entertainers used music as either a marketing tool or as part of their exhibitions—could not be defined as noise, albeit many seemed to have grown tired of it by the 1850s. The organ grinders in particular were heavily criticized. They were



either performers in themselves, walking the streets, or part of larger exhibitions, such as panoramas or menageries. Since the barrel organ required no musical skills whatsoever, it was an easy instrument for any entertainer to use.

When the volume of entertainers of all kinds grew, the volume of music in towns increased as well. Already in 1842, a letter to *Stockholms Dagblad* asked if there really was no way of getting rid of the organ grinders: “Of course one has to suffer a lot for one’s sins, but to be stalked for a lifetime by these abysmal representatives of music is somewhat too much.”<sup>35</sup> Another reader responded to the letter, stating that the organ grinders were appreciated by the lower orders of the town population, while at the time noting that there were worse sources of noise, such as the outcries twenty-four/seven by the fire guards.<sup>36</sup> By the 1850s, no one defended the barrel organs. They were said to make a constant noise well into the late evening, especially on market days. This was true also of small rural towns, such as Kristinehamn, Vänersborg, and Åmål.<sup>37</sup> In Åmål, a town with 1300 inhabitants, the local newspaper *Åmåls Veckoblad* complained in 1857 about the large number of foreign organ grinders roaming the streets, seemingly without the law being able to act against them. Although they were forbidden in other countries, in Sweden, they could freely produce their horrible music, and “make the eardrums of people getting in their way explode.”<sup>38</sup> With the barrel organs came a host of other musical activities, such as drums and trumpets serving as highlights for exhibitions, fiddlers, and German brass bands “performing the most ear-tearing” music. One writer reported on four musicians with oboes and a bagpipe, producing “the German Katzenjammer, capable of torturing people to death.”<sup>39</sup>

Even though the letter to *Stockholms Dagblad* of 1842 had a comic tone, it ended on a serious note, claiming that the musicians had breached the so-called “*hemfrid*” or “house-peace,” that is, the right that every Swede was supposed to enjoy of not having strangers intrude in one’s own home.<sup>40</sup> This became an issue during the 1850s and 1860s when demands were made on the authorities to take action against entertainers. A discussion in a town council meeting of Kalmar in 1863, printed in the local press, illustrates this. Complaints about “foreigners exhibiting panoramas, performing with barrel organs, animal exhibitions and so forth” had increased to the extent that there was a strong general will to prohibit them locally. However, this was not an easy task. While it was unproblematic to issue a prohibition against performing in the streets

and at fairs and squares (and just such a prohibition was issued in 1864), Kalmar, like most Swedish towns, was constructed in such a way that the houses' facades looked directly towards the street, and they had courtyards at the rear. These yards were beyond the limits of the town's jurisdiction, remaining under the control of the property owners. The entertainers entered the yards, playing music—or causing noise—and if the property owner was absent, there was nothing that could be done. These intrusions, or, as one writer stated it, “musical murder attempts,” generated much frustration in the press.<sup>41</sup>

As shown by John M. Picker for London, it is too easy to assume that an increased number of street entertainers explains the growing number of complaints. Although it is hard to prove for the case of Sweden, it is reasonable to believe that the growing number of complaints was a consequence of another process of social change taking place. Alongside proletarianization, the urban middle-class was growing, and within it were many professionals who lacked workplaces or offices, such as writers, artists, civil servants, scientists, jurists, and, not least, journalists. The Swedish middle-class had, since the creation of an urbane culture at the end of the eighteenth century, cultivated the ideals of decency and respectability as markers of their class and distinction in relation to the lesser population. Belonging to urbane culture was defined by a refined lifestyle, combined with the avoidance of bodily labor. This middle-class life was disrupted by the noises of the organ grinders and the *Katzenjammer* of street entertainers.<sup>42</sup> Picker refers to Jacques Attali's early study on the relation between power and sound, where the middle-class struggle against noise may be seen as an establishment of power over town spaces and over the behaviors of the lower classes.<sup>43</sup>

An example in the Stockholm journal *Figaro* from 1880 may illustrate this point. The writer complained that it was almost impossible to promenade on Djurgården island because of all the noise made by organ grinders, panorama exhibitors, etc. However, promenading at Djurgården had been one of the most important activities for Stockholm's urbane culture since the late eighteenth century; it was the foremost place for displaying respectability and success, where decent conversations were held, businesses and marriages arranged, and polite greetings distributed. This manifestation of both lifestyle and power was destroyed by working-class music—by noise.<sup>44</sup>

The middle-class criticism of street music sheds some light on the construction of the image of foreign entertainers as a threat. In fact, it

seems as if they were not so much a threat to society as a nuisance to the middle-class, busy constructing and confirming its own identity and its control over public spaces. An obvious problem with the musicians, which the critics did not bring to the fore, was that they were popular and appreciated. As mentioned above, entertainers drew big crowds. While the writer in *Åmåls Veckoblad* complained about how their music destroyed eardrums, he also revealed that they attracted substantial crowds.<sup>45</sup> This was a problem for the writers in the press in their attempts to depict the entertainers as a national threat. Writers perhaps gained sympathy from their own class, but it seems unlikely that they gained the necessary attention—let alone support—of the working class, rural or urban. Less urbane people seemed to have liked the street entertainers.

The sources leave us with very few traces of the appreciation and joy felt towards street entertainment and music, apart from the recurring statements that such activities did in fact draw crowds. There are instances when even the middle-class seemed to appreciate itinerant musicians, something that is especially apparent in a few notices from balls held by and for the well-off urban population, where local entrepreneurs managed to hire itinerant musicians to perform the dance music, which would otherwise be hard to accomplish in small Swedish towns.<sup>46</sup> The examples are too few to allow for any conclusions, but it is tempting to regard this in relation to music as opposed to noise: the producers of “noise” were also the providers of music.

In London, a well-known law, *Act for the Better Regulation of Street Music in the Metropolis*, was introduced in 1864 with the purpose of regulating the problem of foreign street musicians.<sup>47</sup> At the same time, Swedish authorities, both on a national level and in local communities, made efforts to rid themselves of the same problem. In Stockholm, a prohibition was introduced against street musicians—though it was considered tame—allowing them to play in some public spaces; and the courtyards of houses were still beyond the reach of legislation.<sup>48</sup> It may have had some effect, as it led to complaints from smaller towns that they were flooded by street entertainers from Stockholm.<sup>49</sup> On the national level, the ordinance for extraordinary taxes (Swe. *bevillningsförordningen*) of 1862 introduced a clause in which all foreign entertainers were charged a fee for every performance—however, the act did not capture the street wanderers, but only the better-organized entertainers, such as those with menageries or wax cabinets. In 1864, there was a small wave of local prohibitions, often hailed in the press as absolutely necessary: examples

can be found for Kalmar, Västerås, Örebro, Borås, Kristianstad, and other towns.<sup>50</sup> These local regulations in small Swedish towns seem to have had one thing in common with the law made for the great metropolis of London: they were inefficient, nor did they lower the number of complaints in any substantial way. If observed at all, they mostly just pushed the entertainers on to the next town.

### CHILD LABOR: COMPASSION OR CONTEMPT?

The press left no room for hospitality towards entertainers. Even when performers were generally accepted during the first half of the century, nobody expressed any interest in how they lived or where they were when not performing, and nobody asked after their wellbeing. When the rhetoric grew tough on them, concerns over their wellbeing probably became even less relevant. From the 1850s, the press only expressed a limited and specific compassion from time to time, but the aim in so doing was to elicit an emotional response that played a part in constructing the negative image of the entertainers. This compassion concerned the children.

In his book *The Little Slaves of the Harp*, Zucchi has shown how the exploitation of Italian children by entertainers in London, Paris, and New York became a major social issue from the 1850s, reaching a crescendo in the 1870s. Children who begged through the guise of playing music or displaying a trained monkey were discussed in press articles as an acute social issue—even if those articles considerably exaggerated the number of children. The *New York Times* claimed that as many as 7000 Italian children roamed the streets, while the limited data we have points to the actual number being around 350. The children were portrayed in two ways: on the one hand, as a serious nuisance in city life, and on the other, as innocent victims exploited by adult countrymen of ill-intent.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, it is a known fact that many Italian children were severely exploited and mistreated within the so-called *padrone* system, one in which children and young adults were leased to itinerant countrymen by parents or relatives in order to make a living on far-away streets. It may be of some interest to see if this problem was present in the Swedish press at all, and if feelings of compassion for such children might have affected wider attitudes towards the entertainers.

Child labor was an integral part of entertainment in Sweden. As soon as there were newspapers in which to advertise, in the 1760s, children's

performances were marketed to the reading public.<sup>52</sup> Many entertainers traveled as loose family groups, and the young members also needed to contribute. For a long time, the papers expressed no opinions about this; such practices were probably seen as natural, and the performances of children were often among the most appreciated in reviews. Of course, there were differences between the family businesses of established entertainers and young Savoyard boys walking the streets with a peepshow box, but neither the former nor the latter were discussed in the press. In some cases, the activities were dangerous, such as tightrope dancing on elevated ropes and art riding on full-grown horses. Child labor was taken for granted; a notice in *Malmö Tidning* in 1835 pointed out that an adult woman and a boy walked the town exhibiting a peepshow with biblical motifs, arguing that such activities should be prohibited—but only because of the low quality of the images. The performer per se and his or her personal condition was not an issue.<sup>53</sup>

These children sometimes elicited in a roundabout way, such as when an accident occurred at the fair in Skara 1842. An impoverished boy without a passport or other documentation had joined an itinerant menagerie, and, by accident, he upset the company bear, receiving a hard blow on the leg which forced him to use a crutch. When the menagerie left town, it left the boy behind without no regard for his future well-being. The local paper found this behavior heartless and felt compassion for the boy. How the local community was supposed to help the boy was not mentioned, however. Since he was a Swede, he was probably just given a passport, and forced to return to his home parish in accordance with vagrant laws.<sup>54</sup>

Although the *padrone* system is nearby invisible in the Swedish press, some traces of it nevertheless survive. One such example is an official notification of two missing persons made in 1845 by the Italian organ grinder Dominique Taddei, searching for two escaped young organ grinders aged seventeen and eighteen.<sup>55</sup> During the 1860s and 1870s, we find examples of criticism against the entertainers' use of children. Claes Rosenqvist, in his book on theater and entertainment in the north of Sweden, demonstrates how child performances could be regarded as both charming and despicable, referring specifically to a group of acrobats performing in Piteå in 1864. A reviewer in the local paper could not understand how anyone could find joy in watching "small, emaciated and mistreated children's unnatural body movements."<sup>56</sup> In 1878, a writer in *Dagens Nyheter* attacked a specific act as disgusting because it involved "the smallest

gymnasts in the world,” two Italian siblings by the name of Martinelli of which the youngest was only three years old. While small children like these had been used by entertainers for more than a century, the writer now claimed that it was “a barbaric way to treat a little child,” “a disgusting event” and an example of “how far people are willing to go in terms of inhumanity just to make money.”<sup>57</sup> This criticism of child labor was probably in line with new philanthropic attitudes among the Swedish middle-class. However, tropes and complaints about child labor may also have been a tool for the critics in the press, helping them construct the image of foreign entertainers as a source of immorality and as a threat to society.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS: THE DEATH OF LOUIS BONO AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREATS

The press and lawmakers obviously grew tired of entertainers. The general public, probably not so much: there were very few cases of violent crime or serious harassment of entertainers. One exception was the murder of Louis Bono, an acrobat and art-rider, who was killed at the market of Hammar outside of the northern town of Härnösand in June 1871. The murder was reported mainly in the local newspaper, *Härnösandsposten*, but was also mentioned in the Stockholm press. Bono had come to Hammar to entertain the market visitors, but was beaten to death in front of them. *Härnösandsposten* stated that it was a shame that “a stranger” was brutally murdered without anyone intervening. The newspaper drew reports from the police interrogations of witnesses. The perpetrators, the worker Per Lindström and farmer Erik Sjögren, both local inhabitants, were supposed to have screamed: “Kill the damn German!” (Swe. “*Slå ihjäl den f-e [förbannade] tysken*”). Two of the four market guards, who were supposed to uphold public order at the market, witnessed the killing but had not done anything to stop it. One of them described the murder with the words: “The Germans had come there and got a bottle in the head” (Swe. “*De tuske gett sig dit å fått en butelja te skallen*”).<sup>58</sup>

The case of Bono highlights a main problem in processes of securitization and of the constructions of threats: the need of an audience. Within the scholarship of securitization, the mobilization of an audience is key. An audience can hardly be created out of nothing; rhetoric needs fertile soil in which to grow.<sup>59</sup> The Swedish press represented and was

written for the educated middle-class, which hardly required mobilization against street entertainers; by mid-century, it was probably standard behavior for anyone who made claims to belong to the middle-class to distance himself (and even more so, herself) from street activities, from the popular markets, and from working-class pleasures. The members of society who needed mobilizing were the working classes, rural and urban. But this was not possible because they in fact appreciated the entertainers. Thus, a class perspective is necessary to understand the criticism against entertainers: the middle-class was in the process of constructing itself as the dominant social group, and it thus needed to oppress—or at least despise—simpler forms of entertainment. The middle-class could not produce any real effective rhetoric against entertainers in terms of mobilization.

However, the tragic fate of Louis Bono indicates that maybe one of the components of that rhetoric did have the potential to mobilize a larger audience: the hatred towards Germans. As it seems, Bono was killed because of this hatred, perhaps intensified at that particular time by the Franco-Prussian war. Bono was not German. The name points to Italy, and he was also referred to by the police as “the art rider Louis Bono from Italy.”<sup>60</sup> In fact, Bono was part of a network of families, the Bono-Gautiers, who had worked in Sweden for generations as itinerant entertainers. Contempt for Germans was a well-established feature across broad layers of the Swedish population. The rhetoric against Germans enjoyed a fertile soil in which to grow. To define music as noise was unable to mobilize any large audience; to define a specific group as greedy parasites feasting on an otherwise healthy social body could.

However, Louis Bono and the Bono-Gautiers perhaps point to another important factor in changing attitudes towards foreign entertainers. Georg Simmel once wrote that the stranger was not “the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather the man who comes today and stays tomorrow.”<sup>61</sup> This fits the Bono-Gautiers perfectly. They were “strangers among us,” and perhaps the changing rhetoric of the 1850s was the result of a growing perception that most street entertainers came and stayed, rather than stayed and left, as they had before. This development saw two main issues emerge, which were seen as being particularly serious. The first was the entertainers’ line of trade: even though these figures were ostensibly performing, the performances themselves were viewed as disguised forms of begging. While there was already a substantial and oppressive legislation against vagrancy and begging, the

entertainers seemed to be able to bypass its prescriptions. The second issue concerned the noise. Did they provide music or create noise? This particular criticism represents a defense of the middle-class lifestyle: it is clear that the sounds of the entertainers did not fit with the ideal image of the city landscape of the better-offs, based on order, decency, respectability, and comfort. Again, there was a legislation against making noise in towns, but music—no matter if it was badly performed or constantly played—evaded it. A third issue was the entertainers' apparent treatment of children. While this was never a prominent part of the criticism against entertainers, as it was in the major European and American cities during the 1860s and 1870s, it was nevertheless used to strengthen the image of the foreign entertainer as an immoral stranger to Swedish society.

The press' attitude towards entertainers is interesting in relation to securitization, especially the process of the discursive construction of a phenomenon as a threat at a particular time and place. It is obvious that the rhetoric both became harsher and much more frequent at a time when Sweden, as well as large parts of Europe and America, experienced a drastic increase in the number of migrating entertainers, especially musicians. This change of tone happened quickly. From being a non-issue for decades, or even a much-desired attraction for pleasure-starved small-town populations, entertainers suddenly became foreign scum, posing serious harm to both eardrums and society. Here, a fruitful distinction can be made between sudden threats and more institutionalized ones, threats that are conceived as latent within societies: at the time of the boom of foreign entertainers, complex legislation dealing with the centuries-old threats of vagrancy, mendicancy, spatial mobility, supposedly deviant groups such as Romani and Travelers, and noise was already in existence. Thus, on paper, there existed a strong apparatus to deal with this new threat. Still, both press rhetoric and national and local regulations were deemed toothless. Once the image of itinerant entertainers as unwelcome took hold, the problem remained.

There is a clear parallel between the discourse on entertainers in the mid-nineteenth century and the discourse on Romani beggars from central Europe in Sweden during the 2010s. The contemporary debate, in a country where begging was rare until the arrival of Romani beggars following the extension of the European Union eastwards in 2007, clearly showed a cognitive mix-up between threat and nuisance. When beggars were soon found outside every food-store, they were presented as a



threat to society, despite the fact that they are harmless, just a nuisance, a phenomenon that people feel uncomfortable with—they are *undesirable*, to use a fruitful concept from modern migration research.<sup>62</sup> The Swedes are a rich people with plenty of space; a few people sitting outside food-stores asking for money cannot hurt them, yet a strong societal discourse of security and threat has nevertheless influenced attitudes towards such individuals. Using Didier Bigo’s word, an attempt was made to create *unease*, equating harmless nuisances with established ideas of threats.<sup>63</sup> The sharpened rhetoric in the 1850s against migrant entertainers in a similar way equated nuisance (noise) with well-established threats towards society (vagrancy, mendicancy, etc.) to produce the image of the entertainer as an imminent danger.

## NOTES

1. On contemporary securitization narratives of migration, see, for instance, Kovár (2020: 565–567) with references.
2. “Förordning, angående löst och onyttigt Folk, som från utrikes orter inkomma, samt om Tiggeriers hämmande,” Jan. 10, 1741, in *Utdrag 1742–1829*: 1752–1753.
3. Pizzorusso (2001), see also Bovenkerk and Ruland (1992: 934).
4. The only work touching the subject is Catomeris (1988), which focuses on a later period and is not a scientific study.
5. Bovenkerk and Ruland (1992: 936).
6. The legal framework in regard to entertainment is discussed in Nordmark (1990).
7. The painting, entitled “Gubben med skåpet. Motiv från Storkyrko-brinken” (“Old man with cabinet. View from Storkyrkogården,”) can be viewed at <https://stockholmskallan.stockholm.se/post/4249> (Stockholms Stadsmuseum 2151 0).
8. af Wetterstedt (1823).
9. Miscali (2017: 34).
10. Owens (2018), Widmaier (2007: 156–157), shows that while many musicians came from Pfalz, many regions in German-speaking Europe produced itinerant musicians.
11. Owens (2018: 39–40). In “Musik på Gustafsberg,” *Bobusläns Tidning*, July 17, 1880: 2, some German musicians were said to “play falsely” by claiming to be Austrians.
12. “Rättegångs- och Polis-ärenden,” *Medborgaren*, Dec. 16, 1845: 3–4.
13. Johansson (2016: 99–109, 195f.), Lundqvist (2008: chapter 2), Runefelt (2014: 47–68).

14. "Gefle den 16:de October," *Weckoblad från Gefle*, Oct. 17, 1829: 1; see also, for instance, "Götheborg," *Götheborgsposten*, Aug. 10, 1827: 1; "Inrikes Underrättelser," *Sjömannen och Handtverkaren*, Aug. 19, 1836: 3; "Inrikes," *Östgötha Correspondenten*, Mar. 17, 1841: 1; "Inrikes," *Calmar Läns och Ölands Tidning*, July 3, 1841.
15. "Inrikes Nyheter," *Calmarbladet*, Sept. 30, 1829; see also "Helsingar från Norr," *Gefleborgs Läns Tidning*, Mar. 13, 1841: 1.
16. "Betraktelser öfwer Stockholmslifwet. VIII," *Stockholms Dagblad*, Apr. 13, 1844: 1.
17. "Wexjö," *Skara Tidning*, Nov. 13, 1852: 3.
18. "Inrikes," *Christinehamnsbladet*, Jan. 22, 1853: 1–2.
19. Untitled article, *Folkets Röst*, Jan. 22, 1853: 3.
20. "Inrikes Nyheter," *Correspondenten från Landskrona*, Feb. 16, 1856: 1; "Örebro," *Nerikes Allehanda*, July 16, 1864: 1–2; "Köping," *Köpings Tidning*, Sept. 16, 1870: 2; "En fiffig musiker," *Folkets Röst*, May 26, 1858: 3.
21. "Krönika," *Säsongen*, May 17, 1879: 2.
22. "Str. Alleh [Strängnäs Allehanda]," *Correspondenten*, Aug. 12, 1873: 1.
23. "(Införes på begäran)," *Christinehamns Allehanda*, Mar. 26, 1856: 1; "Upsala," *Upsala*, Feb. 7, 1868: 2.
24. Kitts (2011), McAllister (2013), Prasch (2013).
25. Zucchi (1992, esp. chapter 1), Angelini (1992), Widmaier (2007: 158–160, 167).
26. "Korrespondens. Haparanda den 28 Nov. 1863," *Norrbottensposten*, Dec. 5, 1863.
27. "Rättegångs- och Polissaker," *Folkets röst*, Nov. 12, 1851: 3; "Rättegångs- och Polissaker," *Norrlandsposten*, Dec. 8, 1853: 3; "Rättegångs- och Polissaker," *Fäderneslandet*, July 31, 1861: 3; "Rättegångs- och Polissaker," *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*, Apr. 19, 1862: 3.
28. Cf. Winberg (1975: 17).
29. McAllister (2013), Picker (1999: 432–433).
30. "Gefle den 10 Sept.," *Gefleborgs Läns Tidning*, Sept. 11, 1844: 1.
31. "Carlstad," *Nya Wermlandstidningen*, July 11, 1857: 1; "Bref till syster Ulla," *Fäderneslandet*, Sept. 20, 1862: 1.
32. The proverb was known since the early nineteenth century, and was used actively by writers before the arrival of the German musicians, Holm (1964: 337), cf. Nicander (1831: 65), Almquist (1996 [1838]: 295).
33. "Norrbotten. Luleå den 4 Augusti," *Norrbottenskuriren*, Aug. 4, 1864: 1; "Oroligheterna vid Edeförs marknad," *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, Aug. 1, 1865: 2.
34. "Malmköping den 30 Sept 1856 [sic!]," *Fäderneslandet*, Oct. 5, 1864: 2.
35. "Ges det då ingen möjlighet att bli af med 'dessa positivspelare,'" *Stockholms Dagblad*, Aug. 12, 1842: 1.

36. "Insändt," *Aftonbladet*, Aug. 13, 1842: 3.
37. "Införes på begäran," *Christinehamns Allehanda*, Mar. 26, 1856: 1; "Öppet sändebref till Onkel Jakob. IV," *Tidning för Wenersborgs Stad och Land*, Sept. 24, 1856: 3.
38. "Åmål," *Åmåls Weckoblad*, Jan. 27, 1857: 1.
39. "Bref från Lysekil," *Göteborgsposten*, July 10, 1877: 1; "Wenersborg d. 30 juli," *Tidning för Wenersborgs Stad och Land*, July 30, 1877: 2.
40. "Ges det då ingen möjlighet att bli af med 'dessa positivspelare'," *Stockholms Dagblad*, Aug. 12, 1842: 1.
41. "Kalmar," *Barometern*, Oct. 17, 1863; "Insändt," *Barometern*, Oct. 21, 1863: 1; "Musikaliska mordförsök": "Landsorten," *Smålandsposten*, Aug. 11, 1877: 2. See also, for instance, "Bref till syster Ulla," *Fäderneslandet*, Mar. 3, 1860: 1.
42. Picker (1999), see also Zucchi (1992: 35), Owens (2018: 44–45), Cockayne (2002) shows how this collision between respectability and "noise" occurred much earlier in England than in Sweden.
43. Picker (1999: 430), Attali (1985: 8).
44. "På utkiken," *Figaro*, May 30, 1880: 1.
45. "Åmål," *Åmåls Weckoblad*, Jan. 27, 1857: 1. See also "Bref till lilla kusin," *Post- och Inrikes Tidningar*, Aug. 31, 1861: 4.
46. "(Insändt)," *Arboga-Bladet*, Dec. 22, 1848: 3; "Upsala," *Upsala*, July 11, 1878: 2.
47. McAllister (2013: 106–109).
48. "Kommuncynism," *Aftonbladet*, May 22, 1861: 3.
49. "Eskilstuna den 21 September," *Eskilstuna Allehanda*, Sept. 21, 1861: 3.
50. Kalmar: "Kungörelse," *Barometern*, Feb. 2, 1864: 1; see several articles from the previous autumn, such as "Kalmar," Oct. 17, 1863; "Insändt," Oct. 21, 1863; "Staden," *Westmanlands Läns Tidning*, Mar. 15, 1864: 3; "Från Landsorten," *Nya Wexjöbladet*, Mar. 26, 1864: 3; "Örebro," *Nerikes Allehanda*, July 16, 1864: 2; see also, "Örebro," July 27, 1864: 2; "Kungörelse," *Borås Tidning*, Dec. 17, 1864: 1; "Bort med positiv-virtuoserne!," *Kristianstadsbladet*, Dec. 28, 1864: 1.
51. Zucchi (1992: 39); On portrayals of Savoyard children in Paris, see Ferraris-Besso (2018: 258–271).
52. One of the earliest Swedish advertisements is for a group of Dutch acrobats with a 3 ½-year old performer, *Norrköpings Tidningar*, Apr. 4, 1761: 2.
53. "Inrikes," *Malmö Tidning*, May 2, 1835: 2.
54. "Skara," *Skara Tidning*, July 14, 1842: 3.
55. "Kungörelser," *Stockholms Dagblad*, Jan. 16, 1845: 1.
56. "Norrbotten. Luleå den 2 Juni," *Norrbottnenskuriren*, June 2, 1864: 2.
57. "Barnplågeri," *Dagens Nyheter*, Aug. 10, 1874: 2.

58. "Från Ådalen skrifwes om Hammars marknad," *Härnösandsposten*, June 21, 1871: 2.
59. Balzacq (2005: 182–184), McDonald (2008).
60. "Dråp," *Härnösandsposten*, June 21, 1871: 2.
61. Simmel (1971: 143).
62. Randeria and Karagiannis (2020: 220–221).
63. Bigo (2002, esp. n. 8).

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# Hospitality and Rejection: Peddlers and Host Communities in the Northern Baltic, 1850–1920

*Anna Sundelin and Johanna Wassholm*

Peddlers were one of many social groups in the late nineteenth century whose livelihood depended on temporary or constant mobility. Itinerant traders crossed regional and national borders, arriving in stationary local communities as outsiders. In his famous essay “The Stranger,” published in 1908, Georg Simmel portrays the potentially threatening “outsider” as a trader.<sup>1</sup> In her seminal book on peddling in Europe, historian Laurence Fontaine maintains that peddlers generally evoked ambivalent emotions; on the one hand, they were received as anticipated guests and, on the other, they were viewed with suspicion, especially due to their mobile

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lifestyle.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, we examine the ambivalent reception of itinerant traders as pointed out by both Simmel and Fontaine in the context of late nineteenth-century Sweden and Finland. We argue that the perception of peddlers, either as guests to be welcomed or as a security issue, depended on the situational and relational context, on the traders' origin, and on the capacity of different social groups within the host communities to make their voices heard. In fact, the categories of "peddlers" and "host communities" were culturally, socially, and economically heterogeneous entities that encompassed a multitude of conflicting interests. Peddlers, local merchants, authorities, and the consumer hosts all had their own interests in their interactions and they strove to create their own space in which to operate. By disclosing this heterogeneity and the contradictory relationships between peddlers and the recipient communities, this chapter adds nuance to former research results on trader-host relations along the northern shores of the Baltic Sea.

We analyze gestures of hospitality and rejection toward four groups of peddlers, each of which differed from their host communities in terms of geographic origin, ethnicity, language, and confession. The so-called *knallar* were ethnic Swedes, mainly from Västergötland County in Sweden, while the other three groups of peddlers originated in the multiethnic Russian Empire. The "Rucksack Russians" were from White Sea Karelia, a region bordering the Grand Duchy of Finland; the Eastern European Jews originated from the empire's western provinces; and the Muslim Tatars came from the Nizhny Novgorod Governorate. We investigate hospitality and/or rejection that these traders were granted, with a focus on three themes: the threats that the peddlers were perceived to pose and the security measures taken to address them, the reciprocal relationships between traders and hosts, and the gestures of hospitality and rejection in light of ambivalent encounters around the goods that the peddlers carried with them. We use the analytical terms of hospitality and securitization to capture the ambivalence and reciprocity that characterized trader-host relations. According to the anthropologist Tom Selwyn, hospitality and hostility should be viewed as opposite ends of a single spectrum. For the hosts, hospitality can be a means to establish or uphold a relationship by befriending a former or potential enemy.<sup>3</sup> However, the motives for showing hospitality to outsiders are not only altruistic; allowing an outsider into the house also offers an opportunity for the host to monitor the guest.<sup>4</sup> Securitization, in turn, refers to the rhetoric and the practical means through which various actors in the host

community handled peddling as a security issue and took measures to address it.<sup>5</sup>

Previous research has shown that mobile petty trade has left relatively few and fragmentary traces in historical sources, no doubt a result of its informal character and existence in a gray zone between the legal and illegal.<sup>6</sup> To meet the challenge posed by the scarcity of documentation, we combine two types of sources: newspaper articles and responses to ethnographic questionnaires. Searchable digital newspaper archives at the Finnish National Library and the Royal Library of Sweden have opened up new possibilities to localize the fragmentary mentions of itinerant petty trade in the press. Newspaper articles are contemporary with the events they depict but pose source-critical challenges that need to be acknowledged. The press mainly represents the local authorities' and merchants' predominantly negative attitudes toward peddlers; newspaper articles can therefore be expected to stress rejection, rather than hospitality.<sup>7</sup> Yet, the press played an important role in forming public opinion in the period under study; newspapers both described and contributed to shaping reality.<sup>8</sup> Through its influence on public opinion, the press directly or indirectly affected the ways in which host communities received peddlers.

The newspaper articles can be read alongside the responses to three ethnographic questionnaires dealing with itinerant trade: the West Gothians' Trade-questionnaire (*Västgötarnas handel*, 1933) preserved at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm; the questionnaire Trade and Fairs (*Handel och marknad*, 1938), held at ULMA in Uppsala; and the questionnaire Russian Itinerant Traders (*Kringvandrande ryska handelsmän*, 1957/1968), held at the Cultural Studies archive *Cultura* at Åbo Akademi University in Turku.<sup>9</sup> Created by ethnologists from the 1920s onwards, these questionnaires originally responded to a perceived need to document the traditional agrarian society in the Northern Baltic that was seen as under threat from modernization. Until the 1950s, documentation focused on gathering knowledge about the customs and material culture of traditional rural society. From the late 1950s onwards, questionnaires were used to answer new types of inquiries related to cultural contact and societal change.<sup>10</sup> Ethnographic questionnaires are retrospective in character, being conducted several decades after the events they purport to describe. Reminiscences can arguably be affected, and even distorted, by factors such as forgetfulness, nostalgia, reliance on

second-hand information, and leading questions.<sup>11</sup> Still, the questionnaires gave a voice to people who had encountered peddlers in their everyday lives and who had received them as guests. Thus, the responses contain information about the informal side of peddling that newspapers or official sources do not reveal, including lodgings and food, personal relations between peddlers and hosts, everyday trading encounters, and the emotions that the traded goods evoked.<sup>12</sup> The two Swedish questionnaires, sent out to the network of informants that the archives established, do not contain explicit questions relating to hospitality and rejection; however, responses to other questions on trader-host interactions indirectly illuminate hospitality-related issues. The Finnish questionnaire on Russian itinerant traders, on the contrary, explicitly addresses the topic. A section entitled “Reception in the village” lists questions such as: How were the peddlers received? Did the locals look forward to their visits? Did everyone receive them well? Was the peddler protected from the rural police?

Combining newspaper articles and ethnographic questionnaires allows us to address the source-critical challenges that both source types pose and therefore to offer a more nuanced understanding of hospitality and rejection in trader-host relations than an analysis of a single source type would make possible. Thus, the methodological aim of the chapter is to illustrate how the character of the analyzed sources will inevitably affect the conclusions that can be drawn about hospitality and rejection. We also aim to nuance former research on itinerant petty trade by including several groups of peddlers in the analysis. Even though mobile trade was strikingly transnational, peddlers have usually been studied as separate groups in a single national setting.<sup>13</sup> Swedish researchers have mainly studied the mobile livelihood of *knallar*, while Finnish scholars have focused on the “Rucksack Russians.”<sup>14</sup> The Jewish and the Tatar peddlers have been the subjects of a number of articles with a focus on legislation, cultural encounters, and the stereotypical preconceived notions associated with ethnified trade.<sup>15</sup>

### PEDDLERS IN THE NORTHERN BALTIC: TRADERS FROM NEAR AND AFAR

Situated in the northern periphery of the Baltic Sea, late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Sweden and Finland were similar in many ways. While politically separated since 1809, when Finland was transformed into

a semi-autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire, they shared a long common history, and social and economic contacts across the Bothnian Sea were dense. Both were still predominantly agrarian societies covering vast territories that were more sparsely populated than regions along the southern shores of the Baltic Sea. Partly due to the long distances between communities, peddlers played a central role in the circulation of commodities in the late nineteenth century, a period that has been described as the zenith of mobile trading in terms of scope and variety.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the growing supply of and demand for consumer goods that can be discerned from the mid-nineteenth century, the development of modern transport technologies partly explains the influx of peddlers from the outside into the Northern Baltic. The expanding railway network made migration, travel, and the transport of commodities faster and more efficient both within states and across national borders.<sup>17</sup> In particular, the linking of the Finnish railway system to that of Russia in 1870 made the region more accessible to itinerant traders from the Russian Empire.<sup>18</sup> Peddlers could now effectively utilize trading networks that stretched from St. Petersburg to the Russian interior, from Moscow all the way to Kazan, an important market town some 800 kilometers to the east.<sup>19</sup> In turn, regular steamship routes made journey times between ports along the shores of the Baltic Sea faster than ever before, which also benefited domestic peddlers, who carried both imported and local goods.<sup>20</sup>

The four groups of peddlers investigated here differed from one another in terms of the origin and legal status of their trade. The Swedish peddlers originated in the southern parts of Västergötland County, whose inhabitants had enjoyed the privilege to peddle for hundreds of years. These itinerant traders were called *knallar* or *västgötar*, denominations that were also used as generic terms for peddlers in colloquial speech.<sup>21</sup> *Knallar* traded all over Sweden, occasionally crossing borders into Norway, Denmark, and Finland. The liberal Swedish Trade Law of 1864, which followed the principles of freedom of trade, abolished the old regional privilege.<sup>22</sup> Itinerant trade waned somewhat in the last decades of the century, but Swedish peddlers continued to play an important role in the distribution of consumer goods in the more remote regions of the country. The “Rucksack Russians” mainly originated from White Sea Karelia, a region of the Arkhangelsk Governorate of the Russian Empire, and from the northern parts of the Olonets Governorate, bordering the

Grand Duchy of Finland. As the region failed to offer subsistence all year around, peddling had been an important additional source of income for its inhabitants for centuries. Peddlers from Russian Karelia traded all over Finland, as well as in northern Sweden and Norway.<sup>23</sup> The Eastern European Jews and the Tatars were newcomers in the Northern Baltic, arriving only in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Jews originated in the Pale of Settlement in the western parts of the Russian Empire and started to migrate to Sweden in the 1860s. They were part of a broad European migration movement from east to west, a result of many concurrent factors, such as a demographic crisis, harsh economic conjunctures, and pogroms. More than two million Jews left Eastern Europe in the decades preceding the First World War.<sup>24</sup> Most ultimately aimed to migrate to the United States, but some settled permanently in Western Europe, including Sweden.<sup>25</sup> Tatar peddlers arrived in Finland around the same time, also forming part of a migration of diverse groups of Tatars from the Russian interior toward the Baltic Sea.<sup>26</sup> Those who arrived in Finland mostly originated from a few villages in the Sergach district in the Nizhny Novgorod Governorate, roughly 550 kilometers east of Moscow. Many had previously resided in St. Petersburg, where they had gained a seasonal or permanent livelihood as petty traders.<sup>27</sup> In a way that was typical for migrant newcomers, the Tatars and Russian Jews initially engaged in petty trade, a low-threshold livelihood that did not require any investment.<sup>28</sup> Swedish law allowed foreigners to peddle between 1864 and 1886, and a conspicuously liberal immigration policy facilitated mobility. As for Finland, the Grand Duchy had its own internal legislation and separate citizenship rights, despite being a part of the Russian Empire. Peddling was forbidden to anyone without citizenship rights, including the Russian Karelians and Tatars, who as Muslims could not even acquire them.<sup>29</sup> Despite the formal prohibition, it is a well-known fact that the customers, often even the authorities, turned a blind eye on illicit peddling.<sup>30</sup>

The four groups of peddlers differed from both each other and their stationary customers to varying degrees. *Knallar* were the most similar to their hosts, although they were also in some respects perceived as “outsiders” or “strangers” by local society. In contrast to the other three groups, they did not differ from their hosts regarding language, ethnicity, or nationality. The “Rucksack Russians” from White Sea Karelia were the equivalent of *knallar* in Finland, although they were neither Finns nor Finnish citizens. While they differed from their Finnish customers

through their Orthodox faith and some cultural attributes, such as clothing, Karelians were perceived as being closely related to the Finns. Most also spoke Karelian, in this period considered a dialect of Finnish, and could therefore communicate effortlessly with their customers. While a shared language naturally facilitated communication, previous research has shown that linguistic differences did not pose a severe impediment. Peddlers who traded in the Swedish-speaking regions of Finland, on the Åland Islands, and along the Baltic coast, quickly learned the basic vocabulary needed for trading.<sup>31</sup> The Eastern European Jews and Tatars differed more from their Northern Baltic host communities in terms of appearance, language, and confession. The Tatars represented the first Muslims that people in the region encountered in their everyday lives, and attitudes toward them were affected by a derogatory “Oriental” image.<sup>32</sup> Jews, in turn, were associated with negatively charged anti-Semitic stereotypes that had been central to European thought for centuries.<sup>33</sup> Tatar and Jewish peddlers were relatively few in absolute numbers, amounting to a few thousand at most. Yet, against the background of pejorative preconceived notions, they attracted attention in the host communities due to their mobile lifestyle and their distinct appearance.<sup>34</sup>

### MOBILE TRADE IN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES: PERCEIVED THREATS AND SECURITY MEASURES

Peddlers’ mobile lifestyle was commonly associated with a diverse set of threats in both Sweden and Finland. Mobility was viewed as a potential menace in societies based on the notion of “estates,” in which every individual ideally occupied a fixed social and geographic place.<sup>35</sup> While the estate-based society was slowly transforming into a modern class society in the course of the nineteenth century, negative attitudes toward mobility prevailed among those in the stationary society who were responsible for maintaining order or who felt their personal interests to be threatened. Thus, mobile people were commonly viewed with suspicion, and their “otherness” was utilized to create and sustain mechanisms of caution and fear. In times of distress, in particular, they often became scapegoats who were allegedly to blame for harm and conflicts.<sup>36</sup> This aspect of rejection was highlighted in contemporary newspaper articles in both countries, in which peddlers were associated with threats, such as illegal trade, the spread of infectious diseases, and the moral degradation allegedly caused by “unnecessary” and “excessive” consumption.

The need for security measures, that is, the need to protect the local society against the perceived threats posed by mobile traders, was often linked to alleged economic risks that peddlers represented. This need was usually voiced by established Swedish and Finnish merchants, the segment of the local society whose interests peddling was most likely to harm. The merchants' argument centered on the allegation that itinerant trade caused financial loss both locally and nationally. Foreign peddlers, in particular, were accused of utilizing their position in the gray zone of legality in a manner that made them unjust competitors to "honest" local merchants. The dishonest competition included the selling of contraband commodities and the evasion of taxes and other trading fees that the merchants had to pay.<sup>37</sup> In both Sweden and Finland, contradictory legislation and its inconsistent application made it difficult for merchants to keep peddlers out. The obscurities surrounding the regulations were reflected in short notices in the newspapers, which contained questions about whether specific traders (for instance, Jews or Tatars) were allowed to peddle at all.<sup>38</sup> Merchants also criticized the authorities' lax attitude toward illicit trade, blaming them for evading their responsibility as guardians of law and order. In 1900, for instance, merchants in Gothenburg notified the county governor that Polish Jews were illicitly conducting large-scale ambulatory trade in the Bohuslän archipelago.<sup>39</sup> In the Finnish coastal town of Kotka, local merchants in the 1880s and 1890s repeatedly complained about unfair treatment, as the town authorities failed to banish Tatar traders like their colleagues in neighboring Hamina had done.<sup>40</sup> Similar complaints occurred in other Finnish towns; for example, in an editorial letter in the Tammisaari local newspaper in 1892, merchants provocatively asked how long the town administration intended to allow Tatars to wander from house to house, selling their "Russian rags and cloths."<sup>41</sup>

Influencing trade legislation was another strategy that merchants utilized to enforce the rejection of peddlers. Swedish merchant associations criticized the Swedish Trade Law of 1864, which allowed foreigners to peddle. While recognizing the benefits of freedom of trade, the merchants drew attention to the "obvious nuisances" that foreign peddlers caused. The "flood of complaints" that had allegedly been voiced around the country was presented as proof of the regrettable fact that foreigners had transformed peddling into a "distorted picture" of what it had once been.<sup>42</sup> The association's goal was to revise the law in a more

protectionist direction. The first revision, made in 1879, stated that non-Swedish citizens had to acquire special permission to practice peddling. In 1886, a motion to further revise the law was submitted to parliament. Containing explicit anti-Semitic rhetoric, the new law from 1887 prohibited foreigners from pursuing peddling. As most Eastern European Jews lacked citizenship, some of them decided to leave Sweden.<sup>43</sup> Others continued peddling, albeit illegally.<sup>44</sup> In Finland, the law prohibited peddling to foreigners, but the question of whether it should be legalized was repeatedly discussed in the Diet.<sup>45</sup> Like their Swedish colleagues, Finnish merchants vehemently opposed the more liberal regulatory approaches to peddling. While opinions on the matter were divided in the Estates, the prohibition remained in force in the otherwise liberal Trade Act of 1879. Those who opposed a more liberal stance commonly referred to contemporary transnational debates that stressed the economic and sanitary harm caused by peddling.<sup>46</sup>

The sanitary threat that foreign peddlers allegedly posed became especially topical toward the end of the nineteenth century. The increased mobility of people and goods brought with it the risk of diseases spreading faster. In particular, the cholera epidemics that regularly occurred in Russia, spreading westward from the Empire's interior, provoked fears that peddlers from the affected regions would act as vectors. In light of this, the authorities in Finland, like in many other European countries, took securitization measures that aimed to restrict the spread of disease. One important measure was to cancel fairs that attracted large crowds and were visited by traders with networks stretching between Finland and Russia. For instance, following news of a cholera outbreak in Russia in 1892, fairs in several Finnish towns were canceled by Senate decree.<sup>47</sup>

The securitization measures were promoted by campaigns in Finnish newspapers, which urged people to refrain from contact with mobile traders from Russia. In 1892, the inhabitants of Turku were warned that Tatars and other traders from cholera-infested regions in Russia would arrive at the town's autumn fair in large numbers with commodities such as leather goods, furs, and textiles potentially constituting vectors of disease transmission. Demands were made that these items should not be allowed into town, or at least not until they had been thoroughly disinfected.<sup>48</sup> The news about the securitization measures that had been taken in Finland were also reported in the Swedish press.<sup>49</sup> In the next two decades, similar campaigns recurred in Finland. In times when the threat of cholera was high, the press encouraged people to avoid contact with



all “strangers, especially mobile traders,” and not to allow peddlers from Russia to enter their homes.<sup>50</sup> In this context, itinerant traders and their goods were commonly equated with dirt and poor hygiene.<sup>51</sup> Dirt—real or imagined—was typically associated with the “other” in late nineteenth-century society, and was commonly used to justify exclusionary practices and ethnic class distinctions.<sup>52</sup>

As these examples illustrate, the newspaper sources, representing the views of the local merchants and authorities, primarily stressed the threats posed by the peddlers and the security measures needed to address them. However, the fact that peddling prevailed—despite the picture of the trader as a threatening element—suggests that the measures were not completely accepted by the customers and that demand for the peddlers’ goods and services must have continued to exist.

### AMBIGUOUS RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PEDDLERS AND THE HOST COMMUNITIES

In responses to the ethnographic questionnaires, the threats usually associated with peddlers in the press are largely absent. Here, the arrival of a peddler to the village is mostly described in neutral terms. Some responses even convey a sense of positive anticipation, describing the peddlers as eagerly awaited guests.<sup>53</sup> In such contexts, the peddler’s visit represented a welcomed break from the monotony of everyday life—a “breeze from another, more eventful, world,” or, as one respondent puts it, a virtual “feast.”<sup>54</sup>

The emotions of joy and excitement that respondents express are linked to the reciprocal gains that the encounter with mobile traders could bring about, such as the access to new and exciting goods, entertainment, and information that peddlers brought from the outside world.<sup>55</sup> Like other mobile groups, itinerant traders played an important role as intermediaries of news, rumors, and gossip in an era in which communication technologies remained underdeveloped. Although the telegraph, telephone, and railway network reduced distances in the late nineteenth century, such novelties reached the peripheries of the sparsely populated rural regions of Sweden and Finland with significant delay.<sup>56</sup> One respondent from the secluded southwestern Finnish archipelago maintains that the peddlers, in a sense, substituted for the still rare telephones.<sup>57</sup> Peddlers also conveyed news and private letters between relatives and acquaintances residing in other villages along their routes. Such messages

could contain, for example, news of a child being born or of someone having died.<sup>58</sup>

One respondent relates that upon the peddler's arrival, coffee was served, and maids and farmhands were allowed to take a break from their tasks to come in for a chat.<sup>59</sup> The accounts generally reflect hospitality in general, but also the itinerant traders' dependency on their hosts' hospitality for sheer survival. The market for eating out, especially in rural regions, was underdeveloped in the late nineteenth century, and providing visitors with food was perceived as a social obligation.<sup>60</sup> The same applied to lodging. While peddlers sometimes stayed overnight at inns along the road, or slept outside in the warm season, they mostly found shelter in private homes. Mobile traders tended to follow the same routes every year, and responses to all three questionnaires reveal that they returned to specific households year after year.<sup>61</sup> Although showing hospitality toward guests was considered a social obligation, the peddler-host relationship was based on reciprocity. The peddlers paid for food and shelter with money or commodities,<sup>62</sup> and respondents mention that hosts even accepted as payment news, gossip, or the exciting stories that peddlers recounted about their journeys.<sup>63</sup>

Establishing friendly relationships within the host community was important for peddlers, as people were less prone to offer quarter to unknown travelers.<sup>64</sup> Responses to the questionnaires imply that peddlers could be received as "old acquaintances," even as a "kind of kin," and that long-term friendships based on mutual trust were established between traders and their hosts.<sup>65</sup> However, it must be noted that the anticipation of guests and the long-lasting friendships mainly refer to *knallar* in the Swedish case and to "Rucksack Russians" in the Finnish, while Jews and Tatars are seldom or never mentioned as guests. The absence of these groups of peddlers in the sources is partly explained by the fact that the questionnaires did not contain separate questions about them and that their number was relatively low. Another observation is that, compared to *knallar* and "Rucksack Russians," who commonly appear in the responses with personal names and positive characterizations,<sup>66</sup> Jews and Tatars are not mentioned as individuals but as a collective associated with anti-Semitic or Oriental stereotypes. Thus, while *knallar* and "Rucksack Russians" are described more positively in the questionnaires than in the newspapers, Jews and Tatars are depicted pejoratively in both.<sup>67</sup>

Relationships between peddlers and hosts also contained a gendered aspect, as many respondents imply that young girls and women especially welcomed peddlers warmly.<sup>68</sup> Love relationships that sometimes formed between mobile traders and local women occasionally resulted in marriage. For instance, a “Rucksack Russian” ended up marrying the daughter of one of the well-to-do families on the Åland Islands, while a *knalle* became a wealthy and influential man in the local parish after marrying a propertied farmer’s daughter.<sup>69</sup> Such relationships could also bring reciprocal gains. Before the 1879 Trade Act allowed foreigners to open rural shops in Finland, non-Finnish citizens could only get involved in the local business by opening shops in the name of a local acquaintance or by marrying a local woman. This opportunity was important for the “Rucksack Russians,” some of whom in time abandoned their itinerant lifestyle to become stationary shopkeepers in Finland.<sup>70</sup>

While many residents welcomed peddlers with hospitality, relationships within the host communities could also be troublesome. As foreign peddlers’ trade was illegal for most of the period under study, the mobile traders came into conflict with the local police forces that occasionally chased them out of suspicion of conducting illicit transactions. Swedish newspapers repeatedly contained short paragraphs informing about peddlers who had been detained. For instance, one article reported on a group of Polish Jews from Stockholm, Lund, and Malmö, three of whom were Russian subjects, who were arrested near Uppsala in 1901.<sup>71</sup> Likewise, the Finnish press reported on the detainments of “Rucksack Russians” and Tatars.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, Finnish newspapers urged locals to denounce to the police any instances of itinerant traders engaging in illicit trade or selling fake goods.<sup>73</sup> If found guilty, the peddlers would be fined and their commodities confiscated.<sup>74</sup> However, both the newspapers and responses to the questionnaires contain evidence of the local consumers commonly siding with the peddlers, hiding them and their goods from the authorities.<sup>75</sup>

At the same time, the peddlers’ mobile lifestyle always encompassed an element of danger for them. Newspapers in both Sweden and Finland contain portrayals of peddlers being physically harassed while selling. In some stories, a peddler enters a house, in which only the children or the women are at home, only to later be confronted by returning husbands, brothers, or parents of the “victims,” who then mishandle the peddlers and chase them away.<sup>76</sup> This type of rejection could also be collective, as in the story of a “mob” of locals that took the law into their own

hands, threatening a group of Jewish traders spotted near the Swedish coastal town of Hudiksvall with violence if they were ever to return.<sup>77</sup> Such narratives reflect a patriarchal ideal, but must also be viewed in light of negative ethnic stereotyping. Collective action was usually taken against Jews, which suggests that these sorts of attacks were directed toward those groups of peddlers that differed most from the host community in terms of ethnicity and confession.

In the most extreme form of rejection, peddlers were robbed or even murdered. The fact that they carried money and valuable goods with them while journeying alone or in small groups in remote regions made them tempting prey for potential malefactors.<sup>78</sup> Both the newspapers and responses to the questionnaires contain examples of peddlers from all the groups under study falling victim to robbers and murderers. Newspapers also report on court cases and sometimes convey detailed depictions of the committed crime.<sup>79</sup> In one such story, a peddler caught a local youngster's attention while selling at a farm. The youngster followed the trader and attempted to rob him of his valuables, which resulted in a fight, in which the peddler was killed. The accounts of how the criminals were caught follow a pattern as well. Usually, suspicions were evoked when the perpetrator began to spend more money than he was reasonably thought to possess or handed out gifts to relatives and acquaintances.<sup>80</sup> Accounts of violent crime also appear in responses to the questionnaires, where they reflect the local society's oral tradition and collective memory. Many respondents recount that they heard stories of peddlers being robbed or murdered in a specific place.<sup>81</sup>

The above examples show that responses to ethnographic questionnaires describe gestures of hospitality within informal encounters between peddlers and host communities that are absent in the newspapers, such as the long-term friendships based on mutual trust or the hosts' willingness to protect the peddlers from the local police. These gestures were based on reciprocal gains that hospitable relations brought to both the peddlers and the hosts. On the other hand, not all host-guest relationships were characterized by hospitality. At times, locals took collective action to expel peddlers, but such examples are mainly found in the newspapers and reflect a normative measure to secure the local community. Furthermore, Tatars and Jews in particular were associated with pejorative stereotypes found in the newspapers and the ethnographic questionnaires alike that reinforced rejection.

## HOSPITALITY AND AMBIVALENT ENCOUNTERS AROUND COMMODITIES

Reciprocal relationships between peddlers and hosts evolved around the exchange of commodities, which provided the bedrock for interactions between locals and strangers. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were eventful times for retail trade and consumption: distribution networks improved and the amount of new consumer goods on the market increased. At the same time, advertising and falling prices kindled new dreams and desires for commodities, and placed the novelties within reach of more people on Europe's northern periphery.<sup>82</sup> Although new shops were opening, many consumers, especially those in sparsely populated areas, still depended on older forms of retail, such as fairs, auctions, and peddling.<sup>83</sup> Thus, the hospitable receptions that peddlers often received in Sweden and Finland can be partly explained by the traders' capacity to fulfill the customers' desires for goods, especially in remote regions. On the other hand, as Simmel states, the peddler was commonly viewed as a "stranger" because he arrived with goods that were produced outside the host community.<sup>84</sup> In this respect, his visit also posed a potential threat often met by securitization practices.

As potential consumers, the hosts had several motives in welcoming itinerant peddlers. Mobile traders carried with them a wide assortment of lightweight commodities. The "Rucksack Russians" mostly sold industrially manufactured textiles, and from the mid-nineteenth century, also ready-made clothes. In addition, they offered smaller items, such as pins, needles, ribbons, and foodstuffs.<sup>85</sup> Textiles were the main commodity of *knallar*, too, although in previous centuries they had carried a wider assortment of goods. As the *knallars'* trade started to wane from the 1860s onwards, their textile trade was partially replaced by that of the Eastern European Jews, who also sold ready-made clothes of foreign production, and minor goods like pins, needles, and buttons.<sup>86</sup> The Tatars also carried a wide assortment of goods, including furs, carpets, handkerchiefs, and toys.<sup>87</sup>

In the ethnographic questionnaires, respondents reminisced that they made better and more affordable purchases from peddlers than they did in the local stores.<sup>88</sup> Others maintained that the peddlers could procure new and exciting items that were not found locally. In particular, the peddlers from Russia utilized their transnational trading networks, which

stretched all the way to Russian trading centers such as Arkhangelsk, St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kazan.<sup>89</sup> Research in the field of consumption history has shown that commodities have the capacity to evoke positive emotions. Hosts receiving peddlers in their homes probably found pleasure in looking at and examining new, beautiful, and exotic items. Especially for the lower social strata, access to new objects also opened an opportunity to feel involved in modern consumer society.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, trading encompassed a performative element that in itself could attract spectators. The peddlers' vivacious display of their goods, not to mention the lively haggling that characterized trading, had the potential to turn the encounter into an amusing spectacle.<sup>91</sup> One Swedish respondent maintained that it was all the talking that made the exchanges happen, rather than the items as such.<sup>92</sup>

Other reasons why the hosts would receive peddlers hospitably was the option for flexible payment that they offered. While customers often paid for goods in ready money, they could also exchange them for commodities that had a resale value, such as furs, skins, rags, bristles, and hair. Barter was a common practice in petty trade at a time when ready money was scarce.<sup>93</sup> Another option was credit, a system that by nature depended on mutual trust. Sellers had to trust that customers would pay for the goods during their next visit.<sup>94</sup> At the same time, offering credit was one method of strengthening relations with the hosts.

While these examples point to the reciprocal benefits that trade offered to both sellers and buyers, the encounters between them appear in a more negative light in the newspapers. Here, the mobile traders' goods were without exception described as being of low quality or fake; for instance, Tatars allegedly sold "authentic Siberian skins" that turned out to be rabbit skins, and Jews sold fake linen ware and pocket-watches of poor quality.<sup>95</sup> To make matters worse, peddlers were accused of distributing harmful substances—such as alcohol, medicines, and poison—that they sometimes diluted to lure customers.<sup>96</sup> The fraudulent practices that the peddlers allegedly used are described with a strikingly stereotypical rhetoric. In a typical story, the peddler from outside utilized his "well-oiled tongue" to lure inexperienced local customers into buying low-quality goods that they did not even need.<sup>97</sup> In light of all these menaces, newspapers occasionally published warnings that encouraged prospective consumers to reject peddlers and to refrain from buying their goods.<sup>98</sup> The trading methods by Tatars and Jews were usually described as trickier than those of *knallar* and "Rucksack Russians."

Such warnings in the press represented the views of authorities and local merchants, who had an interest in applying security measures to keep peddlers out. Adopting a superior perspective, the press' rhetoric reflects a general derogatory attitude toward the consumption by the lower classes of society and by women.<sup>99</sup> The male consumer was usually portrayed as naïve and wasteful, while his female counterpart was condemned for her vanity and desire for novelties.<sup>100</sup> One form of trade that evoked extreme resentment and moral indignation was the booming hair trade of the 1870s, spurred on by the chignon, a trendy coiffure fashion that required false hair and encouraged peddlers to accept long braids in exchange for their goods.<sup>101</sup> Many newspaper correspondents warned that girls and women who fell for the alluring words of the peddlers would lose their pride and shame their family.<sup>102</sup>

This form of rejection not only represents the ambition of certain social groups to keep peddlers out by presenting both them and their customers in a negative light, but also represents a patriarchal society as reflected in the responses to the questionnaires as well as in the newspapers. For instance, a Swedish respondent maintained that women had to be "watched over" when peddlers arrived, as they were easily lured into buying their gaudy headcloths and fine textiles.<sup>103</sup> Other examples refer to the threat that the "Rucksack Russians" posed with their tendency to try to seduce their female hosts.<sup>104</sup> Thus, it was not only local authorities and merchants who had an interest in applying security measures to keep peddlers out, but so too did husbands and fathers.

The ambivalent encounters around the commodities both fostered hospitality gestures and gave rise to security measures. The ethnographic questionnaires illustrate how hospitality toward peddlers provided hosts with access to new exciting and affordable goods and entertainment. The newspapers, in turn, reinforced rejection by stressing low-quality and fake goods, the traders' delusive selling methods, and the demoralizing effects that the encounter could have on the allegedly naïve and vain hosts. Again, the fact that peddling prevailed despite such warnings and security measures illustrates the ambivalence inherent to the reception of peddlers.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study of host–guest relations between mobile peddlers and receiving communities on the northern shores of the Baltic in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reveals that the sources largely determine the

degree to which these relations were characterized by hospitality or rejection. In the newspapers, the peddlers' mobile lifestyle was associated with preconceived notions of economic and sanitary threats requiring security measures. The threats were often voiced by local merchants who saw the peddlers as unjust competitors, or by local authorities who were responsible for maintaining order and protecting local society from perceived outside threats. The security measures were promoted through newspaper campaigns, in which the local population was urged to reject itinerant traders by refraining from contact with them and their goods, or by denouncing them to the local police for conducting illicit trade. This form of normative rejection was particularly harsh when the authorities tried to hinder the spread of cholera epidemics; especially in the 1890s, fairs in Finland were repeatedly restricted or canceled to keep out peddlers who arrived from cholera-infested regions in Russia. Newspapers represent a superior perspective, one in which the authorities applied security measures to protect "ignorant" consumers, especially women, from allegedly dishonest peddlers.

In contrast, responses to ethnographic questionnaires suggest a more hospitable attitude toward peddlers. In these reminiscences, the arrival of a peddler is viewed neutrally or positively as a welcomed break from a monotonous everyday life, and as a "fresh breeze" from the outside world that evoked positive emotions. In a manner that is characteristic of hospitality, the relations between peddlers and host communities were based on reciprocity. The peddlers depended on their local hosts for lodging and food, and it was, therefore, essential for them to establish friendly relations and mutual trust with the people who resided along their routes. Some relations are described as friendships of long standing, and some even ended in marriage and integration into the host community. While showing hospitality was considered a social obligation, receiving peddlers was also beneficial for the hosts insofar as they gained access to new, exciting commodities, entertainment, and news and personal messages from the outside world.

However, local relations were always ambivalent. Peddlers were in constant danger of being robbed, mishandled, or even murdered, and the police occasionally arrested them on suspicion of illegal trade. Regarding hospitality and rejection, we can discern a graded scale where peddlers that differed most from the host communities in cultural and ethnic terms were met with a stronger degree of rejection than those who were culturally closer. The scale stretches from *knallar*, who were Swedes and



whose trade was legal, to the other three groups of peddlers who all originated from the multiethnic Russian Empire and who were met with negative preconceived notions due to their geographic origin, appearance, ethnicity, and confession. As the “Rucksack Russians” were perceived as culturally and linguistically related to the Finns, they were in many ways received in a similarly friendly way as *knallar*. The hosts’ relations with the Eastern European Jews and Muslim Tatars, however, are described with a pejorative and stereotypical rhetoric in both the newspapers and the ethnographic questionnaires.

The ambivalence that the sources reveal underlines the situational and relational character of hospitality and rejection, which is explained by intersecting and conflicting interests among individuals and groups in the host society. It is important to note that neither the newspapers nor the ethnographic questionnaires represent the peddlers’ own experiences of hospitality and rejection. Still, by combining the two different types of sources, we can create a more nuanced view of the reality that peddlers faced in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Northern Baltic than an analysis of a single source type would make possible.

## NOTES

1. Simmel (1971 [1908]: 144).
2. Fontaine (1996: 5).
3. Selwyn (2001: 19, 33).
4. Lashley (2017: 3).
5. Conze (2012: 458–459).
6. See, e.g., Mikkola and Stark (2009: 4–6), Wassholm and Östman (2021: 17–19).
7. Wassholm (2020: 10–1), Wassholm and Sundelin (2020: 119–120).
8. Mikkola and Stark (2009: 5), Stark (2011: 40–42).
9. The questionnaires are hereinafter referred to as Nm 48, ULMA M148, and KIVÅ 9/9b.
10. Lilja (2016: 21–25).
11. Lilja (2016: 25–26), Hagström and Marander-Eklund (2005: 16–20), Korkiakangas et al. (2016: 20–21).
12. Jones (2002: 33), Mikkola and Stark (2009: 4–6), Wassholm and Sundelin (2018a: 203), Söderberg and Magnusson (1997: 7).
13. The exception is a short overview of peddling in the Nordics by the ethnologist Göran Rosander (1980).
14. On *knallar*, see Sterner (1970), Boger and Larsson (1985), Lundqvist (2008). On “Rucksack Russians,” see Nevalainen (2016), Naakka-Korhonen (1988), Storå (1989, 1991), Wassholm and Sundelin (2018b).

15. On Eastern European Jews, see Stare (1996a, b), Carlsson (2004: 126–144), Hammarström (2007, 2016), Wassholm (2017). On Tatars, see Wassholm (2018, 2020), Elmgrén (2020).
16. Lundqvist (2008: 19–20), Rosander (1980: 21–22).
17. Brinkmann (2013: 6).
18. Hjerppe (1989: 81–82).
19. Wassholm (2020: 13–14).
20. Lundqvist (2008: 138).
21. In this chapter, we use the term *knalle* to refer to Swedish peddlers in general.
22. Lundqvist (2008: 43).
23. Nevalainen (2016: 84).
24. Brinkmann (2013: 3–5), Lüthi (2013: 29). Finnish law prohibited Jews from settling in Finland. In 1858, a Russian decree stated that soldiers of the Russian army who finished their service could stay permanently in the town where they had been stationed. Civil Jewish communities were established in Helsinki, Turku, and Vyborg, but as their livelihood was restricted to petty trade in their towns of residence, Finnish Jews rarely peddled in rural regions. See Wassholm (2017: 593–596), Ekholm (2019: 77–79). Jews did, however, visit fairs around Finland. See Wassholm (2021).
25. Bredefeldt (1997: 34–35), Hammarström (2007: 96).
26. Cwiklinski (2016: 3).
27. Leitzinger (1999: 25), Baibulat (2004: 14), Wassholm (2020: 14). A few Tatar traders also moved to Sweden, but they were too few to form a community: see Sorgenfrei (2020: 82–84).
28. Gjernes (2012: 148).
29. Carlsson (2013: 57–58), Nevalainen (2016: 84).
30. Wassholm (2020: 16).
31. Storå (1989: 34), Wassholm and Sundelin (2018b: 145–147).
32. For early mentions of Tatars in the Finnish press, see *Tammerfors Aftonblad* Sept. 8, 1882: 2; *Kaiku* July 7 28, 1883: 2; *Satakunta* Sept. 12, 1883: 3; *Åbo Tidning* Sept. 23, 1885: 3. See also Elmgrén (2020: 27–29).
33. Carlsson (2004: 141).
34. Wassholm (2020: 14), Bredefeldt (1997: 34–35), Hammarström (2007: 96).
35. Runefelt (2011: 183–184).
36. Häkkinen (2005: 226–227), Stare (1996b: 32).
37. *Smålandsposten* Feb. 16, 1886: 2; *Dalpilen* Oct. 22, 1886: 1, *Höganäs Tidning* Jan. 17, 1899: 2; *Ny Tid* Dec. 14, 1900: 3; *Östgöten* Jan. 11, 1902: 4.

38. Wassholm (2020: 16). On contradictory regulation, see Lindberg (2018: 207–209), Wassholm and Sundelin (2018a: 199).
39. *Ny Tid* Dec. 14, 1900: 3; *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten* Dec. 17, 1900: 2. For similar examples, see, e.g., *Blekingeposten* Mar. 13, 1868: 3; *Helsingborgs Dagblad* June 8, 1886: 2.
40. *Kotka* July 15, 1885: 3; Apr. 24, 1886: 3; *Kotkan Sanomat* Nov. 29, 1892: 2. For similar complaints, see *Åbo Underrättelser* Dec. 10, 1898: 2; *Perä-Pohjolainen* Aug. 20, 1898: 4.
41. *Vestra Nyland* Sept. 23, 1892: 3.
42. *Smålandsposten* Feb. 16, 1886: 2; *Helsingborgs Dagblad* June 8, 1886: 2.
43. Carlsson (2004: 134–144, 2013: 57–58). For instance, the lost opportunity to continue peddling was mentioned as the reason behind the emigration to the United States of a group of Jews residing in Lund in 1888. *Korrespondenten* May 3, 1888: 2; *Trelleborgstidningen* Aug. 21, 1897: 2.
44. Hammarström (2007: 111).
45. The prohibition caused tensions between the Finnish and the Russian administration, culminating in 1900 when a Russian decree made peddling in Finland legal for all Russian subjects. Tommila (1999: 255–256).
46. Lindberg (2018: 215–218).
47. Pesonen (1980: 382–383), Nygård (2004: 214–216), Wassholm (2018: 225–227).
48. *Åbo Underrättelser* Sep. 14, 1892: 2.
49. *Smålandspostens Veckoblad* Aug. 18, 1892: 1; *Södra Dalarnes Tidning* Aug. 19, 1892: 3.
50. *Åbo Underrättelser* Sept. 14, 1892: 2. For similar warnings, see *Vestra Nyland* Sept. 9, 1892: 2, Oct. 3, 1893: 2; *Ekenäs Tidning* Oct. 7, 1893: 2; *Hämäläinen* Sept. 23, 1893: 1; Sept. 27, 1893: 3; *Turun Lehti* Aug. 25, 1894: 2–3.
51. *Östra Finland* Sept. 7, 1892: 3; *Turun Lehti* Aug. 25, 1894: 2–3.
52. Masquelier (2005: 6–7), Häkkinen (2005: 226–227).
53. See, e.g., Nm 48: E.U. 3991, 5568; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 695: 2, 709: 3, 715: 1–2, 719: 3, 764: 3.
54. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2075: 2, 2093: 5–6, 2302: 1, FM 960: 10; ULMA M148: 13556.
55. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2079: 1, 2093: 7, FM 977: 2; Nm 48: E.U. 3991, 5647; ULMA M148: 13556, 13572.
56. Rosander (1980: 84), Häkkinen (2005: 250).
57. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2143: 3.
58. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2128, 2140: 3, 2143: 3.
59. Nm 48: E.U. 5568.

60. Beardsworth and Keil (2002: 101, 104).
61. Nm 48: E.U. 3991, 5695; ULMA M148: 13406, 13663, 13668; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 722:3, FM 980: 3, 985: 4.
62. Nm 48: E.U. 3991; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 722: 3, 734: 2, 737: 1, FM 844: 4.
63. Nm 48: E.U. 5695.
64. Nm 48: E.U. 5695.
65. Nm 48: E.U. 3991, 5568, 5695; ULMA M148: 13406, 13572, 13663, 13668; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 722: 3, 985: 4.
66. Positive descriptions include, for instance, “good-natured” and “joyful;” see, e.g., Nm 48: E.U. 459; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 729: 1, 734: 2, FM 988: 2.
67. Jacqueline Stare, however, has found examples of hospitable reception and friendships in interviews with and in letters written by Jewish peddlers. Stare (1996a: 22, 24–25, 29).
68. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 695: 2, 727: 2, 747: 4. See also Naakka-Korhonen (1988: 176–177).
69. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2165; Nm 48: E.U. 5650; ULMA M148: 32776.
70. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 699: 1,709:2, 2076, 2140, FM 916: 2.
71. *Tidning för Skaraborgs Län* Jan. 18, 1901: 3.
72. *Hämeen Sanomat* Dec. 7, 1886: 2; *Päivälehti* May 4, 1898: 4; *Wasa Tidning* May 7, 1898: 2; *Kotka* Apr. 14, 1898: 3.
73. *Fäderneslandet* Aug. 22, 1860: 2; *Figaro* June 2, 1888: 2.
74. *Jämtlandsposten* Aug. 1, 1902: 4.
75. See, e.g., KIVÅ 9/9b: M 691: 2, 698: 3; *Aura* Apr. 20, 1888: 10; *Wasa-Posten* May 5, 1899: 2; *Åland* May 12, 1899: 1. See also Nevalainen (2016: 119–120).
76. *Fäderneslandet* July 26, 1871: 2. For other examples of violence against Jews, see, e.g., *Nerikes Allehanda* Feb. 26, 1875: 2; *Trosa Tidning* Dec. 11, 1880: 2.
77. *Göteborgs Annonsblad* Apr. 4, 1871: 2.
78. See, e.g., Sterner (1970: 199), Blom (1996: 95–103), Lamm (1996: 104–109), Nevalainen (2016: 125–131), Diner (2015: 127–130).
79. *Hufvudstadsbladet* Apr. 22, 1871: 2; May 28, 1875: 2; *Blekinge Läns Tidning* Feb. 14, 1874: 2; *Wiipurin Uutiset* May 15, 1880: 3; *Borgåbladet* Aug. 23, 1882: 1; *Mikkelin Sanomat* May 16, 1888: 3; *Rauman Lehti* May 19, 1888: 2; *Östra Finland* Oct. 9, 1888: 2.
80. See, e.g., *Morgonbladet* Jan. 19, 1882: 2.
81. Nm 48: E.U. 5618, 5666; ULMA M148: 13745, 15607, 19104; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 781: 5, FM 910: 8.
82. Stearns (2001: 47–49), Trentmann (2016: 37–39).
83. Furnée and Lesger (2014: 1–3), Wassholm and Sundelin (2018b: 136–137), Alanen (1957: 206–207, 229, 275).
84. Simmel (1971 [1908]: 144–145).

85. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2053; 2054: 1, 2056, 2059: 3–4, 2076; 2107, 2140: 2.
86. Lundqvist (2008: 244–245).
87. *Norra Posten* Oct. 31, 1888: 3; *Nystads Tidning* Feb. 5, 1896: 1; *Fredrikshamns Tidning* Oct. 7, 1896: 2. See also Wassholm (2018: 220–221).
88. Nm 48: E.U. 459; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2077; 2165: 2.
89. Naakka-Korhonen (1988), Wassholm (2020).
90. Bowlby (1985: 1–2), Mikkola and Stark (2009: 4), Wassholm and Sundelin (2018b: 141–142).
91. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 2136: 2, 2070. On the performative element of trading, see Fontaine (1996: 81), Storå (1989: 3).
92. ULMA M148: 13556.
93. Lundqvist (2008: 185), Wassholm and Sundelin (2018b: 138).
94. On credit in the questionnaires, see Nm 48: E.U. 3991; KIVÅ 9/9b: M 775: 1, M 951: 1; 959: 2; ULMA M148: 19104. See also Lundqvist (2008: 185), Kaukiainen (2006: 138–142).
95. *Turun Lehti* Sept. 15, 1888: 2; *Fäderneslandet* Aug. 22, 1860: 2; *Söderhamns Tidning* Nov. 24, 1883: 3; *Veckotidningen Tiden* Dec. 6, 1884: 1; *Skåningen Eslöfs Tidning* Dec. 6, 1900: 2. Similar descriptions also appear in responses to the questionnaires, but they are relatively few. In one such example, a “Rucksack Russian” tore off the original mark on a cloth, falsely maintaining that it was manufactured by Finlayson in Tampere, a brand that signaled good quality to his Finnish customers. KIVÅ 9/9b: FM 814: 1.
96. *Wasa Tidning* Aug. 3, 1886: 3.
97. Wassholm (2020: 14–15).
98. *Folkets Röst* Aug. 22, 1860: 3; *Wasa Tidning* Aug. 3, 1886: 3.
99. Trentmann (2016: 27–39), Ahlberger (1996: 59), Runefelt (2011: 140–141).
100. See, e.g., *Carlsclrona Weckoblad* Apr. 10, 1867: 3.
101. Wassholm and Sundelin (2020: 5).
102. *Folkvännen* May 18, 1870: 1; *Tapio* Apr. 27, 1872: 1; *Helsingfors Dagblad* May 1, 1872: 2; *Lounas* Nov. 13, 1893: 3.
103. Nm 48: E.U. 5618. See also KIVÅ 9/9b: M 675: 3, 676: 1–2, 751.
104. KIVÅ 9/9b: M 675: 3, 676: 1–2, 751.

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*Dalpilen*

*Ekenäs Tidning*

*Figaro*

*Folkets Röst*

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*Tammerfors Aftonblad*  
*Tapio*  
*Tidning för Skaraborgs Län*  
*Trelleborgstidningen*  
*Trosa Tidning*  
*Turun Lehti*  
*Veckotidningen Tiden*  
*Vestra Nyland*  
*Wasa-Posten*  
*Wasa Tidning*  
*Wiipurin Uutiset*

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# Hospitality and Securitization in Times of Cholera: Eastern European Migrants in Rotterdam and Antwerp, 1880–1914

*Christina Reimann*

Yesterday, the Polish-Russian migrants were served a substantial soup for lunch on board the ship. This meal raised their morale and made these dispossessed people more confident about their future. As the ship departed, there was a happy atmosphere among the crowd, and to say goodbye the migrants praised the hospitable city with friendly acclamations.<sup>1</sup>

*Journal de Gand*, April 9, 1879

Western European port cities had been spaces of transit for Europeans migrating to the Americas since at least the 1830s. In the 1860s, competition was growing among the Northern seaports on the continent, as

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cities started to consider the emigration traffic as a valuable source of income.<sup>2</sup> Between 1870 and 1914, transatlantic mass migration became a “big business” and middle-sized ports like Antwerp and Rotterdam tried to keep up with the bigger German ports of Hamburg and Bremen.<sup>3</sup> The emigrants, who until 1880 were mainly of German origin, were usually welcomed as transitional guests in Rotterdam and Antwerp. Especially with the installation of direct shipping lines between Rotterdam and New York by the Holland America Line in 1872, and between Antwerp and New York by the Red Star Line in 1873, transmigration and the cities’ hospitality toward their temporary guests evolved into an important driving force for the development of the two port cities.<sup>4</sup> Yet, from 1880 onward, as emigration from the Russian and Austrian-Hungarian Empires increased, the port cities started to view transmigration not only as an asset, but also as a security issue. This perception sharpened with the outbreak of the cholera pandemic in 1892. The contagious disease was a moment of crisis that crystallized fears and stereotypes toward people from “the East,” and in many ways transformed the reception of transmigrants, particularly Russians, in the ports. Especially following the outbreak of the pandemic, Antwerp and Rotterdam granted the Eastern European transmigrants an increasingly cool reception that bordered on outright rejection: while abiding to the rules of being a host, the port cities endeavored to ensure the speedy departure of the migrants and to secure their stay when in the host cities. Encapsulated in the embarking scene described in the *Journal de Gand*, different city actors received the migrants, accommodated them, and covered their basic needs. They did so not only to protect and care for the migrants, as one-dimensional notions of hospitality would imply, but also—or even particularly so—in order to secure the cities from the assumed negative effects of Eastern Europeans’ transmigration: financial expenses, disturbances of social order, and risks for public health.

In this chapter, the notion of “Eastern Europeans” designates the group of people who in contemporary sources were most often referred to as “Russians,” or “Eastern Jews” (“*Ostjuden*”), or sometimes as Polish or Romanian Jews. These contemporary designations embraced all migrants originating from the Russian and Austrian-Hungarian Empires, hence they included people from the Baltics. The presence of Baltic migrants among the “Russians” and “*Ostjuden*” arriving in the western port cities is further affirmed by the direct shipping link between Antwerp and the Baltic seaport Libau.<sup>5</sup> Baltic migrants were invisible in the sources

that neither distinguished between Jews from the Russian or Austrian-Hungarian Empire nor between, for example, Poles or Estonian people. Nonetheless, this final chapter of the volume offers still another dimension of the complexity of “the Baltics” by focusing on the westward migration of Baltic people during the great emigration from Eastern Europe to the Americas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Hospitality denotes a temporary phenomenon. But it is not only the generally transient character of host-guest-relations that makes hospitality a useful analytical lens through which to reinterpret the reception of Eastern European transmigrants in the port cities, but three further characteristics of hospitality. First, hospitality, unlike some forms of charity, is not always voluntary or altruistic. Instead, it may come as an obligation for the host and a right for the guest.<sup>6</sup> Hospitality is conditional and implies reciprocity: the guests have to comply with specific behavioral patterns implied by their status as guests.<sup>7</sup> In the case of the transmigrants, the city actors expected them to contribute to the economic development of both the port and the city. Hence, in a host-guest relationship, the host’s interests, concerns, intentions, and objectives come into play. Seen from this perspective, hospitality aligns well with the securitization perspective that focuses on why and by which rhetoric and practical means different actors turned (or tried to turn) a social phenomenon into a security issue needing remedy.<sup>8</sup> Securitization in the context of transmigration means that diverse institutions and city actors tried to foster a sense of public threat around the temporary stay of people from the East. The actors that considered themselves as guardians of the cities’ security prompted the city audiences to “build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations, thoughts, and intuitions), about the critical vulnerability of the cities’ well-being” due to the transmigrants.<sup>9</sup> Other than protective hospitality, which denotes the host’s attitude toward vulnerable guests,<sup>10</sup> securitizing hospitality implies that both the hosts and the guests are targets of securitizing measures, that is, of measures to remedy the perceived risks and hazards posed by the transmigration.

Second, hospitality denotes the establishment of a relationship between a host and a guest who are strangers to one another through the exchange of goods and services.<sup>11</sup> The cities perceived the Eastern European migrants arriving in the ports around the turn of the century as strangers. The “encounter with the unknown,” as well as the doubt surrounding strangers and the potential threat they posed, largely determined the

extent to which city actors' hospitality practices were imbued with securitization.<sup>12</sup> Third, hospitality is suitable to make sense of the paradoxical situation in the ports that may be described as refusing reception. Hospitality can easily transform into its opposite, hostility, and thereby, imply rejection.<sup>13</sup> Yet, even unwanted guests can—and have to be—hosted, although the host may fear, distrust, or despise them.<sup>14</sup> Overall, with the arrival of Eastern European emigrants, two basic city elements came into conflict in the ports: the agora where commerce and exchange need open reception, and the fortress where the city community needs order and protection from the outside to develop.<sup>15</sup>

A wealth of literature exists on the emigration from Eastern Europe to the Americas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a lot of work dedicated to Jewish migration.<sup>16</sup> While earlier studies mostly focused on the arrival and settlement of the migrants in the New World,<sup>17</sup> more recent research has focused on the migration process itself, whereby port cities as transit stations have come under scrutiny.<sup>18</sup> So too have Antwerp and Rotterdam. In addition to general overviews about the functioning of the emigration ports,<sup>19</sup> several studies have explored and adequately described the handling of the Eastern Europeans' transmigration by the port cities.<sup>20</sup> Some effort has been made to capture the agency of the migrants that remains hidden in most available sources.<sup>21</sup> While noticing that Eastern Europeans' transmigration involved practices and discourses of both hospitality and securitization in the ports, existing research has not established any analytical link between these practices. Researchers interested in migration control have focused on (state) practices deployed in order to handle migration as a security problem. They have studied (private-run) medical control centers as well as local and national authorities' expulsion practices.<sup>22</sup> Historians studying private initiatives for the support of the migrants, on the other hand, have been attentive to aid societies accommodating arriving migrants, often focusing on the reception of Eastern European Jews within the Jewish community.<sup>23</sup> Hence, the conflicts, contradictions, and paradoxes in how different actors in Antwerp and Rotterdam acted as hosts toward Eastern European migrants, a set of discourses and practices that are best described by the oxymoron of refusing reception, have not yet been illuminated. Nor have Antwerp and Rotterdam been looked at together and in a comparative manner. While the neighboring ports were competing for the bigger share of the profitable transmigration traffic,



they nevertheless observed the other city's securitization efforts, particularly in times of cholera. Set amid the background of a rather similar socio-political system in Belgium and the Netherlands, the securitizing hospitality in the two cities featured both similarities and differences.

This chapter analyzes the very tensions and contradictions inherent to the reception of Eastern Europeans who were both wanted and unwanted—but in any event temporary—guests in the port cities. Tensions existed between different variants of hospitality offered to the migrants by different city actors, such as securitizing, commercial, and missionizing hospitality. While the city authorities, especially since the outbreak of cholera in 1892, saw transmigration mainly as a security problem, shipping companies and lodging house owners still perceived them as paying guests, and some aid societies used the migrants' transit stop for civilizing projects. However, interests, concerns, objectives, and intentions within different groups of city actors were not even, but often contradictory in themselves. At the same time, concerns of different actors could align, as did, for example, the city authorities' and the aid societies' objectives when securing the migrants' stay in the ports. Each group of actors, most importantly the city authorities, shipping companies, lodging house owners, and aid societies, was torn between the need to receive the migrants duly, the quality of migrants as an asset for their business, their perception of the danger the migrants might present to the city, and their own economic, religious, or other interests. In the complexity of the situation, different securitizing efforts did not only target the migrants, but could also be directed toward other city actors that were assumed to have jeopardized the city's security, for example, lodging house owners who did not abide by the city authorities' conception of hygiene during the cholera epidemic. The objects that were assumed to need protection varied from public health, social status, the city's international reputation, economic profit, and the migrants' well-being; these objects fluctuated not only according to the actors' perspective, but also according to the changing circumstances.

This chapter will investigate Antwerp's and Rotterdam's hospitality toward Eastern European transmigrants as an assemblage of sometimes concurring and sometimes contrasting discourses and practices by different city actors whose actions were interwoven and dependent upon each other. The groups of actors include the city authorities and government representatives; agents of foreign and local shipping lines; aid

organizations—most importantly Jewish help committees but also Christian proselytization societies; lodging house owners; local media; and the general public that most often remained an observer but was sometimes actively involved. Public policy-makers took into account and relied upon private activities, while private actors operated within a political framework that was continuously subject to change, not least depending on how the steamship companies or the lodging house owners were behaving or on how the media was reporting about Antwerp or Rotterdam as transit stations.

The chapter opens with a short overview over the transmigration through Antwerp and Rotterdam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The second section analyzes public and private migration policies up until the cholera outbreak in 1892. The third part focuses on how the pandemic affected the way migrants were received in the ports. The fourth section considers the aid societies' contribution to securitizing hospitality, especially by the Jewish help societies: the Society for the Support of Needy Transmigrants Montefiore in Rotterdam and the Jewish "Ezra" Philanthropic Society for the Protection of Emigrants in Antwerp. The entire period of study covered here thus begins with the outset of mass emigration from Eastern Europe in 1880 and ends with the outbreak of the First World War, which interrupted the migration traffic through Western European port cities.

## HOSPITALITY TOWARD UNWANTED GUESTS: EASTERN EUROPEAN MIGRANTS IN ANTWERP AND ROTTERDAM

At the end of the nineteenth century, Antwerp developed from a peripheral textile center in the Austrian Netherlands into a major distribution port for the rapidly industrializing Belgium.<sup>24</sup> By 1900, the city's population totaled about 300,000 residents, making it the country's biggest city.<sup>25</sup> In Rotterdam, demographic expansion and the city's economic transformation into an international port also took place in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup> Around 1850, the city had only 90,000 inhabitants, but this number grew to approximately 320,000 in 1899.<sup>27</sup> As with many port cities, both Antwerp and Rotterdam owed their demographic expansion to immigration. Between 1900 and 1918, about thirteen percent of Antwerp's inhabitants were non-Belgian, most often of German or Dutch origin.<sup>28</sup> Rotterdam started to attract migrants during the 1870s port expansion, many of whom arrived from

the national hinterland. Between 1880 and 1910, only ten percent of Rotterdam's newcomers came from abroad, primarily from Germany and Belgium.<sup>29</sup> Eastern Europeans also contributed to the rising population in these port cities from the 1880s onwards.<sup>30</sup> In Antwerp, people from the Russian Empire constituted the third-largest migrant community.<sup>31</sup> In fact, while some transmigrants only resided a couple of days in the port cities, others' (transit) stay lasted for varying lengths of time, ranging from several weeks to many years—or a lifetime.

Starting from the 1880s, as transportation became more affordable, even poorer people from the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires started migrating toward the Americas, in particular to the United States.<sup>32</sup> With the arrival of Eastern Europeans, the port cities' attitude toward transmigration changed dramatically. In Western Europeans' mental maps, Eastern Europe was a culturally underdeveloped region where people lacked notions of hygiene and order. Russian and Polish Jewish migrants in particular were associated with rootlessness and uncontrolled movement, and were considered as carriers of diseases and epidemics that supposedly originated in the East.<sup>33</sup> Previously, the port cities had mostly seen single men from Central Europe migrating to the United States. Yet, from the 1880s onwards, Eastern Europeans, and Jews in particular, traveled as families, making the transit more complex to deal with.<sup>34</sup> Moving away from seeing migration as a valuable source of income, port city actors were afraid transmigration would turn into a financial burden and a sanitary problem and might disturb the social order.

The outbreaks of cholera in 1892, 1905, and 1909 decisively marked this change in attitude. In the pandemic context, transmigrants, who until then had been mostly feared for their poverty, came to be seen as potential carriers of the infectious disease. For the city authorities, in particular, transmigration turned from being seen only as a lucrative business opportunity—in fact, it remained lucrative—into also being perceived as a security issue. Many city actors transformed the commercial hospitality they had provided for the less numerous, less outlandish, and financially and physically abled single migrants from Western and Central Europe into a new form of securitizing hospitality. When receiving the Eastern Europeans, most city actors, including the aid societies that supported the emigrants on their transit stop, now became particularly eager to make sure that the migrants continued their journey as quickly as possible.

There is debate among historians about the extent to which special distrust toward Jews determined the handling of migrants at the borders and at the embarking and disembarking stations. Some argue that the debates on Jewish migration around 1900 must be understood in the general context of reactions toward Southern and Eastern European migration, whereas others point to a specific concern among receiving societies regarding the “so-called Jewish problem.”<sup>35</sup> This chapter analyzes the port cities’ hospitality toward Eastern European migrants, both Jews and non-Jews. To be sure, Antwerp and Rotterdam’s securitizing hospitality was to a large degree determined by anti-Semitic opinions and stereotypes due to contemporaries’ impression that most migrants were Jewish. However, the cities’ reluctant reception of migrants—bordering on refusal—was just as saturated with anti-Russian sentiments and a general dislike toward people from Eastern Europe.<sup>36</sup>

In contrast to the German emigrants or the Western European immigrants that Antwerp and Rotterdam were well acquainted with, Eastern European migrants represented strangeness and were thought of as speaking outlandish languages, wearing bizarre clothes, and following odd religious practices.<sup>37</sup> Contemporary observers reporting in the media expressed this same impression of strangeness for the Jewish communities, which reinforced the alignment of hospitality practices and discourses. Not least, the transmigrants’ ever-rising numbers made the city actors’ concern as to how to approach the transmigration continue to grow.<sup>38</sup> Especially since 1895, the number of Eastern European transmigrants increased rapidly in both cities. In 1906, a total of 35,366 people from Eastern Europe traveled through Antwerp. At the peak of migration in 1912/13, some 47,935 transmigrants per year passed through the Belgian port.<sup>39</sup> Rotterdam saw its first high point in 1907 with more than 40,000 Eastern Europeans traveling through the city. Like Antwerp, the peak came in 1913, with more than 50,000 transmigrants—especially from the Russian Empire—choosing Rotterdam as their debarking station.<sup>40</sup>

### PUBLIC–PRIVATE MIGRATION POLICY: BUSINESS, PROTECTION, AND MOBILITY CONTROL IN THE 1880S

When migration from Eastern Europe slowly started to take off in the 1880s, a policy and regulative framework to channel the activities around transmigration were already in place in the port cities. These sets of

rules were meant to guarantee the economic profit that the emigration traffic could bring for the developing port cities by securing the migrants' transit experience. Until the outbreak of cholera in 1892, these regulatory mechanisms continued to function in mostly the same way. A decade before the pandemic, however, and with the sharpening of the US immigration policy, health checks were already becoming more frequent in the ports. These medical controls primarily targeted Eastern European migrants who were suspected of carrying infectious diseases.<sup>41</sup>

In Belgium, the young state soon realized the economic advantage it stood to gain from the emigration traffic, and started to promote Antwerp as a port, issuing laws to regulate the traffic from the late 1830s.<sup>42</sup> These regulations were intended not only to protect the emigrants and the citizens of Antwerp, but also to convince foreign governments—and the migrants themselves—of the serious character of the Belgian emigration service.<sup>43</sup> From 1850, the Emigration Inspection Service was in charge of the surveillance of emigration, including medical controls and the inspection of ships.<sup>44</sup> A law from 1873 created the position of the Government Commissioner for Emigration who would henceforth play a central role in all official activities concerning emigration. The commissioner was responsible for investigating every possible manner of increasing emigration traffic through Antwerp. Simultaneously, he had to make sure that regulations were correctly enforced, that emigrants were protected from bad-faith agents and lodging house owners, and that migrants were properly informed of their rights. The commissioner sent all his findings to the governor and to the Minister for Foreign Affairs; his office thus left a wealth of correspondence, reflecting the degree to which Belgian authorities conceived of emigration via Antwerp as an important political and, at times, security issue.<sup>45</sup>

This was not true to the same extent in the Netherlands. While there is plenty of official communication regarding Eastern European emigrants in Antwerp, comparable sources do not survive in the Dutch archives.<sup>46</sup> A law from 1861 first established the so-called Commissions for the Surveillance and Control of Emigration in the port cities as well as in inland border towns.<sup>47</sup> The primary task of the Rotterdam commissioners was to foster Rotterdam's reputation as an emigration port. The Commission controlled the emigrants' lodging houses and their accommodation on the ships, checked the contracts signed with the shipping companies' agents, and offered medical inspections. The Surveillance Commission also opened an information office where migrants could find advice and

support during their transit stay. They placed advertisements in German newspapers, distributed leaflets among the migrants to inform them about the Commission's existence, and posted the text of the 1861 law in train stations, ocean liners, and in the Rotterdam lodging houses to inform the migrants about their rights.<sup>48</sup> The Commissioners were committed to protecting the emigrants as far as possible—so long as trade and traffic were not hampered by the protection measures.<sup>49</sup> Yet, external factors soon came into play, affecting commercial hospitality in Rotterdam, and shaping practices of the inspection of transmigrants in both port cities.

From 1880 onwards, the stricter immigration regulations enacted by the United States reverberated in European ports. Cities like Antwerp and Rotterdam turned into centers of migration control and health checks.<sup>50</sup> The steamship companies and the authorities of the transit countries assumed control of this because they had to cover the costs associated with the return of a migrant who was denied entry into the United States.<sup>51</sup> Over the years, as the United States refused entry to an increasing number of Eastern Europeans, the Belgian and Dutch governments transferred the responsibility for taking care of stranded and returned migrants to the shipping companies, the Red Star Line and the Holland America Line respectively.<sup>52</sup> Hence, the securitization of transmigration in Rotterdam and Antwerp developed as a mix of private and public initiatives and responsibilities, with waiting halls and medical control centers in the ports run by the steamship companies.<sup>53</sup> However, national and city authorities viewed the steamship companies—there were also foreign companies operating in the ports—and their subagents in particular not only as an asset for the city, but also as a potential source of danger, both for the migrants and for the cities. To counteract fraudulent shipping agents, the Belgian authorities enacted an authorization procedure to control the agents' reliability.<sup>54</sup> Fraudulent agents and subcontractors, some of whom were condemned by court procedure,<sup>55</sup> nevertheless remained a frequent phenomenon in both cities, and the authorities and aid societies were kept busy with protecting migrants from them, mainly in order to secure the cities' reputation as emigration ports.<sup>56</sup>

Hospitality practices in both cities were shaped by the perception of the Eastern European migrants as helpless and disoriented. The general view on Eastern European migrants in the ports, including the Jewish help organizations,<sup>57</sup> tended to inspire pity upon them, often by infantilizing them and depicting them as deprived of any agency.<sup>58</sup> Contemporary

accounts abound of astonished descriptions of the emigrants' weird clothes, movements, and gestures that all seemed to demonstrate their profound misery and suffering, especially with regard to the Jews.<sup>59</sup> Local and national media had an important role in constructing this image; by describing the migrants as victims, journalists in the port cities were seemingly trying to convey the idea of a compassionate city. A Belgian news agency dispatch from 1903 read as follows:

For the past two days, men, women, and children wearing bizarre clothes have been wandering the streets of Antwerp. These people are Macedonian refugees who had to flee their native soil to search for peace elsewhere as they cannot find it in their home country. Where are they going? They would not be able to tell themselves, poor wretches.<sup>60</sup>

Regardless of whether the Eastern European migrants, especially the Jews, had had to flee from prosecution and violence in their home countries, they were usually perceived as victims in the port cities. Not least because of the migrants' assumed victimhood,<sup>61</sup> in the early phase of Eastern Europeans' emigration via Antwerp and Rotterdam, public authorities, private companies, and aid societies offered a type of hospitality that can best be characterized as paternalistic protection. The protective measures always implied practices of control that, in turn, were meant to protect the cities from disturbances of public order. This concern was based on the fact that migrants from Eastern Europe were more likely to stay in the port cities due to financial problems or health issues, and therefore more likely to rely on poor relief. Migrants from Western Europe who had settled in the port cities, on the contrary, were often viewed as business competitors.<sup>62</sup>

The authorities' securitizing effort was more pronounced in Antwerp than in Rotterdam. Dutch authorities at the national, provincial, and city level were less committed to the control of transmigration than were their Belgian counterparts. In Rotterdam, private actors, shipping companies, and aid societies provided the bulk of activities for securitizing hospitality toward Eastern European migrants, and the authorities there controlled such activities less than the Belgian officials did.<sup>63</sup> However, nuances need to be made to this overall picture: When many Romanian Jews arrived in Rotterdam in 1900, the municipality provided a special building to accommodate them and thereby to securitize the situation, as the authorities deemed that the Eastern Europeans would otherwise have threatened

public order by wandering around.<sup>64</sup> Yet, overall, Belgian authorities showed more anxiety in controlling transmigration; they provided greater safeguards and care, but, at the same time, they contained and restricted the migrants' mobility more than their Rotterdam counterparts. To put it bluntly: more hospitality implied more securitization, which once again confirms the intrinsic affinity between the two concepts.

### THE OUTBREAKS OF CHOLERA AND THE RECEPTION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN TRANSMIGRANTS SINCE 1892

On June 20, 1911, at a time when the danger of cholera—mostly spread by contaminated water and food—was ever present, the Antwerp daily newspaper *Le Matin* published an article pointing to the supposedly blatant difference between Antwerp's and Rotterdam's handling of the transmigration of Eastern European migrants.<sup>65</sup> The author seems to have represented business interests in the lively transmigration traffic, revealing himself to be a fierce critic of the strict Belgian migration regime that included health checks by the authorities at the train station. According to the journalist's Dutch interview partner, in Rotterdam, only private shipping companies carried out health checks, doing this on their own initiative and at the migrants' hotels shortly before embarkation, not in the central station or in special halls erected for this purpose like in Antwerp. Impressed by the Dutch liberal spirit that viewed Eastern European migrants as clients, even during a cholera outbreak, the Belgian author concluded:

The same emigrants who are so dangerous in Antwerp become entirely inoffensive in Rotterdam... Our minister of the interior used the cholera phantom to justify the creation of the health control center in the central station.<sup>66</sup>

To be sure, there was a difference in approach toward transmigration between Rotterdam and Antwerp, even in times of cholera. Yet, it is safe to say that the Dutch port city followed most Western Europeans' view that the cholera epidemic originated in the East and that Russian migrants in particular posed a potential danger for public health.<sup>67</sup> Amidst a global context of the medicalization of borders, Rotterdam was similar to other cities and, as the historian Barbara Lüthi put it, the “image of the *Ostjude* (eastern Jew) symbolized widespread fears of a foreign invasion, which



often was imagined as an invasion of germs.”<sup>68</sup> There is some evidence that Dutch authorities, with the outbreak of cholera and the closing of the Hamburg harbor to Russian migrants in 1892, installed stricter border controls to hinder Russian migrants from reaching the port of Rotterdam—some of these migrants arrived in Antwerp instead.<sup>69</sup> Belgian authorities hesitated to install such border controls, as this would have affected the steamboat companies’ business interests and, by extension, the city’s economic wealth.<sup>70</sup>

It is safe to say that in both Antwerp and Rotterdam, starting from 1892, hygiene and sanitary conditions became the most important issues concerning transmigration for the authorities, the steam shipping companies, and the aid organizations. Numerous hygienic measures adopted in the context of the cholera outbreak, such as the Dutch border controls or the quarantine in the Antwerp harbor, explicitly targeted “Russian migrants” only. However, the way in which city actors integrated the intensified securitization around cholera into their previously established hospitality structures varied considerably, with some actors contributing very little to the increased securitization effort, like the lodging house owners or, to a lesser extent, the local media.

In Antwerp, hygiene measures ranged from medical checks upon the emigrants’ arrival, disinfecting their luggage, an obligatory bath at the hotel, or quarantine in the harbor.<sup>71</sup> However, in their practical application, the quarantine measures were uneven and inconsistent, once more giving evidence of the tensions and concerns shaping the securitization of hospitality toward Eastern European migrants in the Belgian port city. To be sure, most city actors agreed that “this category of [Russian Jewish] emigrants” represented an “acute danger for our city;” and that Russian migrants were “unwelcome here from a hygienic point of view and with respect to their [unlikely] admission to the United States.”<sup>72</sup> The sanitary danger appeared even more acute when migrants arrived by boat from the Baltic seaport of Libau. Given the “disastrous sanitary conditions” on board the ships, the migrants had to undergo a severe medical check and were not allowed to disembark for at least twenty-four hours.<sup>73</sup>

There was less agreement concerning the quarantine measures imposed by the US administration in the summer of 1893. During the first cholera epidemic, the US government demanded that migrants from Eastern Europe quarantine for at least five days in the European port cities before continuing their journey to the United States.<sup>74</sup> The Belgian Emigration Commissioner judged these quarantine measures to be “inhumane toward

the migrants” and “disastrous for the port of Antwerp.”<sup>75</sup> The Red Star Line, seeing its business interests at stake, added that the quarantine rules were “illegal in Belgium.”<sup>76</sup> Finally, the Antwerp Governor urged the Minister of Foreign Affairs to stop the quarantine measures (though they were never put into practice anyways)<sup>77</sup> because they “were damaging for the steamship companies as well as for the migrants to whom we owe protection.”<sup>78</sup>

As the cholera epidemic made Eastern Europeans appear as an acute danger for public health, commercial and protective hospitality gestures did not disappear, since the business interests of steamship companies and the port city as a whole in transmigration remained the same. The emigrant hotel erected by the Holland America Line in the Rotterdam port emblematically represented the merging of commercial, protective, and securitizing hospitality. Built in 1893 according to modern standards regarding sanitary facilities, fire protection, lighting, and aeration, it was intended to guarantee the migrants safe and comfortable accommodation with, additionally, a “splendid view over the Maas,” as a local newspaper noted in its praising article about the new hotel.<sup>79</sup> At the same time, the hotel contributed to the securitization of transmigration because it included extra quarantine rooms for people suspected of carrying a contagious disease.<sup>80</sup>

However, the great majority of migrant hotels in Antwerp and Rotterdam offered inadequate accommodation, especially in times of an epidemic.<sup>81</sup> The many shabby lodging houses, many of which were run by the Red Star Line in Antwerp, not only lacked decent sanitary facilities, but they were also often overcrowded. Considered to be a major problem even before 1892, in times of cholera, the lodging houses and their owners became a main concern for public and private actors trying to improve hygiene and thus decrease the risk of cholera infections among the migrants—and the city dwellers.<sup>82</sup> Help societies contributed to this effort by controlling the migrants’ lodging houses, boasting about how they were contributing to the betterment of the situation, a success that the city authorities attributed to the official hygiene service.<sup>83</sup> Residents of the Antwerp Handelslei, a street near the central station, saw the lodging houses as a security problem, too. In a protest letter to the Antwerp Mayor from May 1906, these Antwerp citizens declared that they were bothered by the presence of Eastern Europeans in the streets and by the opening of yet more migrant accommodation. The authors urged the authorities to take measures against the shabby hotels: these

provided the actual reason for why migrants spent their time outside, thereby endangering public order and health.<sup>84</sup> Together with private companies and the emigration commissioner, city dwellers used migrants' security as a rhetorical means to secure their own objectives, namely a lively and profitable emigration traffic, or a peaceful neighborhood.

The commercial objectives pursued by hotel owners were often able to hinder attempts by both local and national health authorities to ameliorate the hygienic situation in the lodging houses. This, in turn, fed into the securitization discourse concerning the Eastern Europeans and the risk they posed to public health when staying in overcrowded accommodation. Yet, while most city actors agreed that the deficient sanitary conditions in the city were highly problematic, there was a broad consensus that migrants' place of origin and their lack of hygiene were primarily to blame for the outbreak of diseases. These pejorative descriptions of Eastern Europeans have to be placed in their colonial context, where notions of "hygiene" were intensely debated and Eastern Europeans' transmigration was often viewed on par with "colonial hygiene."<sup>85</sup>

However, the securitization of transmigration in the port cities was not all-embracing. In the Belgian port city, securitization discourses and practices were not entirely in accordance with each other, especially in the case of quarantine measures. Business interests in the ports were strong enough to counter effective measures against the spread of disease in the lodging houses. Moreover, non-exhaustive research among the local press indicates that neither Antwerp's nor Rotterdam's local newspapers actively participated in making the transmigration of Eastern Europeans in times of cholera a serious security problem. Among Rotterdam's authorities, transmigration did not develop into a pressing political and security issue at all.<sup>86</sup>

### AID SOCIETIES' HOSPITALITY AND THE SAFEGUARD OF INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES (1880–1914)

Neither the Rotterdam nor the Antwerp public welfare bureau provided any material help for the transmigrants.<sup>87</sup> Hospitality toward the often-needy Eastern European migrants in its most basic understanding, that is, providing food, accommodation, and clothing, was entirely left to private actors. As transmigrants from Eastern Europe became more numerous, the Jewish Montefiore society in Rotterdam and the Ezra society in Antwerp became the main private actors catering for Eastern European

transmigrants, both Jews and non-Jews. Hence, hospitality practices in accordance with the Jewish religious and moral codex largely determined the reception of transmigrants by private actors. The *hachmosas ourechiem* principle, which translates as “hospitality,” asks each Jew to open his or her house for travelers. The Jewish help committees were meant to remove the burden of this religious duty from the individual by assuming responsibility themselves and bundling the various hospitality practices together.<sup>88</sup> Jewish help organizations did not, however, receive migrants in a radically different way compared to the authorities or other city residents. The Jewish aid societies generally saw their Eastern European co-religionists as victims of prosecution, which was a main motive behind their hospitable gestures.<sup>89</sup> They provided migrants with (kosher) food, new clothes, medical care, and temporary lodging, as well as with practical information and overseas contacts. Like the official emigration services, the societies protected their co-religionists from swindlers who offered them expensive accommodation of the lowest standard; from unscrupulous shipping agents; from the “white slave trade,” the alleged trafficking and sexual enslavement of European women<sup>90</sup>; and from Christian institutions trying to proselytize among the Jews.<sup>91</sup>

The help that aid committees provided for migrants was not pure charity, but was also carried out in efforts to safeguard their own interests and objectives, which often—sometimes even explicitly so—aligned with those of the authorities.<sup>92</sup> An important motive of the financial supporters of the help committees was the concern of the established Jews that their Eastern European co-religionists might become a burden for the general public, thereby potentially discrediting the Jewish community in the city.<sup>93</sup> By catering for the arriving migrants, the help societies strove to sustain and further develop the Jewish community’s bourgeois cultural capital.<sup>94</sup> The aid committees, therefore, had a strong interest in helping the transmigrants continue their journey quickly.<sup>95</sup> Most importantly, the aid committees wanted to avoid the situation whereby Eastern European migrants started begging in the streets, thus disturbing public order and risking expulsion by the public authorities. In order to facilitate the transmigrants’ departure, national authorities sometimes even paid for return tickets of impoverished Eastern Europeans, rather than seeing them settle permanently in the port cities.<sup>96</sup> Public authorities and help organizations cooperated even when calibrating the type of reception offered to the Eastern European migrants.<sup>97</sup>

The Jewish communities' hospitality toward migrants was largely shaped by negative stereotypes about their Eastern European co-religionists, stereotypes which the Jewish communities shared with the general public. Western emancipated Jews viewed emigrants as backwards, with strange clothing, language, and behavior, as well as commenting on their orthodox traditional religious practices.<sup>98</sup> The reception that Western Jewish communities provided for the Eastern Europeans was often imbued with a civilizing and educating project.<sup>99</sup> This civilizing project often targeted the migrants' supposed lack of hygiene, which in the context of the cholera outbreak took over most other security considerations. It is against this background that we have to read the article about the Montefiore lodging house in Rotterdam, published in the illustrated magazine *Op de Hoogte*, in a report praising the Jewish help society in 1914. The article noted that "Dutch cleanliness" prevailed in Montefiore's lodging house, despite the restricted means and minimal personnel the society had at its disposal.<sup>100</sup> The media industriously conveyed the image of the "caring" city, while at the same time cultivated the idea that migrants were in need of "civilizing" measures.

In Antwerp, the most significant help organization, the Jewish "Ezra" Philanthropic Society for the Protection of Emigrants, was founded in 1903 and active in the Belgian port city until the 1940s.<sup>101</sup> Although Ezra's hospitality practices were diverse, inspired both by religious as well as socioeconomic objectives, its activities all aimed at controlling and securitizing transmigration, and thus securing the city of Antwerp, the migrants, and the Jewish community. Moral obligations toward the migrating co-religionists and the societies' own concerns in securing the Jewish community's status in the city went hand in hand to shape Ezra's hospitality toward Eastern Europeans. The Rotterdam-based Society for the Support of Needy Transmigrants Montefiore, active from 1883 to 1914, provided accommodation and practical help for the migrants.<sup>102</sup> The aid committee was an initiative of a Rotterdam Jew, and was directed primarily toward Jewish migrants; but, like the Antwerp Ezra, it gave support to non-Jewish migrants too.<sup>103</sup> Both Jewish and non-Jewish migrants, in order to receive help, had to prove their needs through processes that the Montefiore society controlled on a regular basis.<sup>104</sup> Thus, even when looking at the aid organizations, we should not differentiate too strictly between the reception of Jewish and non-Jewish transmigrants in the port cities. The control that migrants underwent when

presenting themselves to the help organizations also emphasizes similarities in the practices performed by aid organizations on the one hand, and the authorities on the other, when confronting Eastern European transmigrants. Both port cities' securitizing hospitality toward Eastern European migrants depended entirely upon the contributions by private help committees, especially the Jewish. As the authorities and the aid societies followed similar interests and objectives, city officials trusted the private actors to keep the migrants from the streets and to play a significant role in helping secure public order.

Rotterdam also saw the foundation of Christian conversion institutions, like the so-called Dutch Society for Proselytizing among Israel, which was named Elim, after the oasis where according to the Old Testament Moses and his followers paused during their exodus from Egypt.<sup>105</sup> Started in 1892, Elim grew into a well-organized society that earned official recognition in 1901 when its statutes received royal consent. To be sure, the alignment of the provision of practical help to the migrants and the pursuit of special, particularly religious, goals were most evident in case of conversion societies like Elim. Yet, other Christian societies catering for their migrating co-religionists, like the transnational Catholic Saint Rafael Society, also pursued its own agenda when supporting the migrants.<sup>106</sup> In addition to practical help, the transmigrants were to receive religious enlightenment during their stay.<sup>107</sup> Saint Rafael not only offered information and arranged decent accommodation; most importantly, it allowed the transmigrants to speak with a priest before departure.<sup>108</sup> One might argue that the goal-oriented hospitality of the Christian societies was geared less toward rejecting migrants than was the reception provided for migrants by their Jewish co-religionists. While Jewish societies mainly feared an extended stay in the ports by the migrants, Christian societies, in contrast, needed time to do their proselytizing work, so they were less eager to push the migrants toward an immediate departure. To some extent, Christian societies viewed the migrants as less of a danger than their Jewish counterparts and the authorities, but instead welcomed them as (potential) Christians. Elim's and Saint-Raphael's highly focused but less securitizing hospitality once again testifies to the complexities and paradoxes of hospitality in the port cities around 1900.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The critical notion of hospitality combined with the analytical concept of securitization has allowed us to go beyond the usual dichotomy between “migration control” imposed by the authorities and “philanthropy” offered by the aid organizations in the context of Eastern Europeans’ transmigration through the port cities of Antwerp and Rotterdam. Practices of hospitably and of providing security—for the migrants and the city—were intimately intertwined, regardless of which city we look at. There was no contrast between, on the one hand, city authorities securitizing the transit migration and, on the other, aid societies’ benevolent behavior toward the arriving strangers. Jewish help committees were just as eager to see the Eastern Europeans leave again quickly because they feared that their continuous presence might negatively affect the Jewish community’s status within the city. The securitization efforts undertaken by Belgian authorities and the city of Antwerp were more pronounced than those undertaken by Dutch authorities and the city of Rotterdam. Yet, most actors’ securitizing hospitality practices toward Eastern European migrants show more similarities than differences in the two port cities, so that we are justified in speaking about a common securitizing hospitality toward Eastern European transmigrants in Antwerp and Rotterdam. All city actors who provided hospitality for the migrants did so by following self-interested agendas, driven primarily by the pursuit of economic, social, and health security.

## NOTES

1. All translations from French and Dutch into English are my own.
2. Feys and Prokopovych (2016).
3. Feys (2013).
4. Feys and Prokopovych (2016), Feys (2013), van de Laar (2016).
5. Liepāja in present-day Latvia.
6. Derrida (2001: 4), referring to Kant (1970).
7. Benveniste et al. (1973: 77).
8. Conze (2012: 458–459).
9. Balzacq (2011: 3).
10. Lashley (2001: 6).
11. Selwyn (2001: 19, 34).
12. Friese (2004: 70).
13. Derrida (2001: 3), Selwyn (2001: 20).

14. Derrida (2001: 3). On the etymological relationship between ‘guest’ and ‘enemy’—*hostis/hospes*—see Benveniste et al. (1973: 75–79).
15. van den Broek Chávez and van der Rest (2014: 33–34), Kotkin (2005).
16. See most recently, Goldin et al. (2020) and the classic Wischnitzer (1948). See also Zahra (2016).
17. Just (1988).
18. Alroey (2011), Boyden (2013), Brinkmann (2013a), Caestecker and Feys (2010), Hoerder (1993), Feys and Prokopovych (2016).
19. On Antwerp, see Spelkens (1976). On Rotterdam, see van der Valk (1976).
20. On Antwerp, see Caestecker (2013), Caestecker and Feys (2010); and the chapter on transmigration in Ronin (1993). On Rotterdam, see van de Laar (2016) and Leenders (1993). See also some of the semi-scientific books, such as Everaert (2002), Zevenbergen (2001).
21. Goldin et al. (2020), Caestecker (2013), Ronin (1993).
22. On Antwerp, see Caestecker and Feys (2010), and on Rotterdam, see van der Valk (1976).
23. On Jewish aid societies, see Brinkmann (2007). On the Dutch case, see Tammes (2013). See also Vloeberghs (2010), Groeneveld (1999), Coene (1998), Van Schip (1996).
24. Winter (2009).
25. Kruithof (1964: 509–510).
26. Bruggeman and van de Laar (1998: 150).
27. Boumann and Boumann (1952: 15–17).
28. Devos (2010: 251).
29. Lucassen (2006: 25–38).
30. Schreiber (1996), Tammes (2013: 9–13).
31. Ronin (1993: 353).
32. Weber (2013: 85), Zahra (2016).
33. Lüthi (2013: 35).
34. Alroey (2011: 37).
35. Lüthi (2013: 30).
36. Ronin (1993: 10), Lüthi (2013: 35).
37. Brinkmann (2007: 73–74).
38. Spelkens (1976: 114–115), van der Valk (1976: 165).
39. Spelkens (1976: 114–115).
40. van der Valk (1976: 165).
41. Lüthi (2013: 30).
42. Spelkens (1976: 57), Caestecker and Feys (2010: 263).
43. Spelkens (1976: 62).
44. Spelkens (1976: 58–59), Caestecker and Feys (2010: 263).
45. Rijksarchief Beveren, Archief van de Provincie Antwerpen (hereafter RBA), BE-A0511/PAA618 Scheepvaart en Landverhuizing (hereafter SL).



46. The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted my research in the Dutch National Archives. Four archival boxes might contain additional documents about transmigration via Rotterdam.
47. Commissie van toezigt op den doortogt en het vervoer van landverhuizers.
48. Stadsarchief Rotterdam (hereafter SR) 444-01, Archieven van de Gemeenteraad en het College van Burgermeester en Wethouders van Rotterdam (hereafter AGBW), inv. 6035: Verslag van de toestand van de gemeente met bijlagen; van der Valk (1976: 153, 158–160).
49. Nationaal Archief Den Haag (hereafter AND), 2.16.60.04 Ministerie van Waterstaat, Handel- en Nijverheid inv. 129: letter, July 26, 1883.
50. Brinkmann (2013b: 18).
51. Brinkmann (2013b: 2).
52. AND, 2.05.03 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: A-dossiers, inv. 293: Commissie voor de herziening van de wetgeving op de landverhuizers, 1912.
53. Felix Archief Antwerpen (hereafter FAA), Archief van het Havenbedrijf Antwerpen, inv. MA-HB/308: Wachtzaal en toebehoren voor de Emigratiedienst, Red Star Line.
54. RBA, SL, inv. 194.
55. *Gazet van Antwerpen*, May 24, 1907.
56. FAA, Archieven van de Stad Antwerpen, Publieke taken (hereafter AP), inv. 731/1057; RBA, SL, inv. 190; Archives Nationales Bruxelles (hereafter ANB), I 160 Archives du Ministère de la Justice, Sûreté publique (hereafter MJS), inv. 256; Ezra (1928: 4).
57. Ezra (1928: 15).
58. *Le Matin, Journal Quotidien*, February 8, 1906.
59. Romer (1986: 75).
60. ANB, MJS, inv. 255.
61. Ronin (1993: 203). Recent research has raised doubts concerning the relationship between anti-Jewish violence and the emigration movements from Eastern Europe. Brinkmann (2007: 82).
62. *La Voix du Peuple*, December 31, 1891.
63. Leenders (1993: 125).
64. SR, AGBW, inv. 6082: Verslag van de toestand van de gemeente; Montefiore (1901: 18).
65. Vloeberghs (2009–2009).
66. *Le Matin. Journal Quotidien*, June 20, 1911.
67. *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, July 27, 1894.
68. Lüthi (2013: 30). See also, Assainissement et Salubrité de l’Habitation (1914).
69. FAA, AP, Landverhuizing 1876–1923, inv. MA/2257/2; RBA, SL, inv. 232: Belgian Delegation The Hague to Provincial Governor Antwerp, June 21, 1893.

70. RBA, SL, inv. 232: Emigration Commissioner to Antwerp Governor, August 16, 1893.
71. FAA, AP, Gezondheidsdienst. Onderrichtingen voor landverhuizerslogementen, 1906–1928, inv. MA/27816 A: Emigration Service, sitting report, September 29, 1908; RBA, SL, inv. 229, 232.
72. RBA, SL, inv. 232: Emigration Commissioner to Antwerp Governor, July 18, 1895. See also ANB, MJS, inv. 265.
73. RBA, SL, inv. 232: Emigration Commissioner to Antwerp Governor, May 13, 1896.
74. Markel (1999).
75. RBA, SL, inv. 237: Emigration Commissioner to Antwerp Governor, October 7, 1893.
76. RBA, SL, inv. 237: RSL to Antwerp governor, October 24, 1893.
77. RBA, SL, inv. 237: Emigration Commissioner to Antwerp Governor, October 2, 1893.
78. RBA, SL, inv. 237: Antwerp Governor to Minister of Foreign Affairs, October 30, 1893.
79. *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, February 6, 1893, quoted in: Zevenbergen (2001: 57).
80. Romer (1986: 73), Wentholt (1973: 57–58).
81. In 1903, Antwerp counted eighteen so-called *logementshuizen*, sixteen of which belonged to the Red Star Line. Everaert (2002: 14).
82. FAA, AP, inv. 731/1059: Police, report on lodging houses, July 1873.
83. Société Belge de l'Archange Raphaël 1890: 6; FAA, AP, Gezondheidsdienst, inv. MA/27816 A: Onderrichtingen voor landverhuizerslogementen, 1906–1928.
84. FAA, AP, Landverhuizing 1876–1923, inv. MA/2257/2: Letter May 15, 1906; Gezondheidsdienst, inv. MA/27816 A: Antwerp Mayor to Police Inspectors, April 26, 1906 and Medical Service to Antwerp Mayor, June 12, 1913.
85. Assainissement et Salubrité de l'Habitation (1914: 112).
86. SR, AGBW, inv. 6034–6123: Verslag van de toestand.
87. The archives of the Antwerp *Weldadigheidsbureel* and of the Rotterdam *Gemeentesecretarie Armenwezen* do not contain any documents about the reception of Eastern European migrants.
88. Van Schip (1996: 399).
89. Montefiore (1901: 4).
90. According to Greefs and Winter (2020: 210), most alleged incidences of “white slave trafficking” have been exposed as propaganda. However, there are indications of personal bondage via a system of transfer premiums and personal debts, which likely made it difficult or even impossible to leave the trade.
91. Weber (2013: 86), Ezra (1928: 3–4).

92. Ezra (1928: 4).
93. Weber (2013: 86), Leenders (1993: 126), Alroey (2011: 37).
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