Traces of Transnational Relations in the Eighteenth Century

Edited by Tim Berndtsson, Annie Mattsson, Mathias Persson, Vera Sundin and Marie-Christine Skuncke
# Contents

Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 7  
Mathias Persson and Annie Mattsson

Carrot and Stick: The Nordic Foreign Policy of Sir Robert Walpole ........... 13  
Phillip Sargeant

Competition and Cooperation: Swedish Consuls in North Africa and  
Sweden’s Position in the World, 1791–1802 ................................................................. 37  
Fredrik Kämpe

Communities, Limits and the Ability to Cross Borders: Two Swedes’  
Experiences in Constantinople during the Eighteenth Century .................. 53  
Karin Berner

Johan Leven Ekelund – Equerry, Traveller and Writer ................................. 75  
Anna Backman

The Roast Charade: Travelling Recipes and their Alteration in the Long  
Eighteenth Century ....................................................................................................... 99  
Helga Müllneritsch

Bringing Into the Light, or Increasing Darkness With Darkness: Jacob  
Wilde’s Rewriting of Samuel Pufendorf’s Account of Swedish Ancient  
History ............................................................................................................................. 121  
Tim Berndtsson

L’Amour Raisonnable: *Précieuse* Perspectives on Love –  
Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht and the French Seventeenth-Century  
Salon ................................................................................................................................... 147  
Vera Sundin
List of Abbreviations ............................................................................................. 161
Bibliography ........................................................................................................ 162
Contributors ........................................................................................................... 183
Introduction

Mathias Persson and Annie Mattson

On the 3–4 April 2014, nine master’s and doctoral students from Uppsala University, the University of Liverpool and the University of York presented their work-in-progress at a workshop in Uppsala on the topic of transnational relations in the eighteenth century. A keynote address, ‘Ruptures and convergences: Eighteenth-century Europe and the world’, was delivered by prof. Margaret R. Hunt, who holds one of the chairs at the Department of History in Uppsala. The participants were subsequently invited to contribute to a conference volume, which – as the title suggests – has assumed the form of the present anthology.

The workshop was arranged by one of the seven ‘research nodes’ initiated by the Faculty of Arts at Uppsala University in the spring of 2012. These nodes were to operate until 2015 and to serve as meeting places between researchers and master’s students, as well as between various disciplines within the humanities. The primary purpose of this venture was to integrate the master’s students in the surrounding scholarly community by gradually leading them into the process of research in close collaboration with doctoral students, lecturers and professors. Through this initiative, master’s theses within the faculty have been able to benefit from both an expanded student–researcher interface and a renewed emphasis on interdisciplinary cooperation. The nodes have also been of advantage to the researchers and doctoral students who have engaged with them, not least through the extensive networking they have brought about and sustained.

One of the meeting places referred to was the node ‘Eighteenth-Century Sweden in an International Perspective’. The global and transnational dimension of the eighteenth century is the subject of lively research and, in several respects, heated controversy among scholars. The period has, for instance, been regarded as the starting point for the notion of human rights, but also as a time when nascent European colonialism resulted in exploitation and oppression of non-European peoples. Regardless of exactly how the century is conceptualised, Sweden was clearly an active participant in its transnational interchange and growing globalisation, as the Swedish East India Company and the scientific journeys of the Linnaean disciples demonstrate.
Formally based at the Department of Literature, the node ‘Eighteenth-Century Sweden in an International Perspective’ emanated from deliberations between the Departments of Literature, History of Science and Ideas, and Philosophy, which together provided its organisational platform. The node has comprised students and researchers from a number of fields: aesthetics, art, history, economic history, history of ideas and science, philosophy, literature and rhetoric have all been integral to its endeavour to consider eighteenth-century Sweden from an angle other than the traditional, nation-oriented outlook which, until fairly recently, tended to dominate domestic studies of the early modern period.

The unifying theme of the node, which is also the glue binding this anthology together, has been the exchange between Sweden and the world at large; or, more precisely, how people, texts, ideas and objects moved and travelled between the Swedish realm and areas abroad, within Europe as well as further afield. Central questions have been the crossing of borders, and dynamic and mutual processes of transformation, reception and interpretation. In terms of theoretical approaches, the node has derived inspiration from global history, post-colonial studies, research on translation and cultural transfer, gender history, network theory, and theories dealing with the connections between material culture and discursive figurations.

The transnational leitmotif has been reflected in outreach to kindred researchers and environments abroad, and the node has established a wide scholarly network not just nationally, but internationally as well. Apart from seminars and field trips to Swedish locales of interest, the node has invited foreign guest lecturers and organised visits to two British institutes with similar profiles, the Centre for Eighteenth Century Studies at the University of York and Eighteenth-Century Worlds at the University of Liverpool, in 2013 and 2014 respectively. Like the node, these institutes display a multidisciplinary character, a network structure and a propensity for international partnerships relating to the long eighteenth century in all of its miscellaneous manifestations.

The present book is quite broad and disparate in scope, both geographically and thematically. This blatant heterogeneity, however, mirrors not only current historiography, but also the eighteenth century itself. As Roy Porter, the author of several magisterial and wide-ranging tomes on eighteenth-century thought, has aptly stressed, the hallmark of the century was pluralism: ‘there never was a monolithic “Enlightenment project”’. For that reason, analyses of the period need to be multifaceted and comprehensive. Another authority on the period, Daniel Roche, has likewise cautioned against exaggerating coherence and indicated the value in ‘comparing points of view that historians have usually kept separate’. From this perspective, disparity and manifoldness become assets rather than weaknesses, as the juxtaposition of diverse elements has a heuristic potential and corresponds
more accurately to the past than narratives that oversimplify it in an implicit, and often inadvertent, quest for uniformities.

That is not to say that the articles in this volume have nothing in common with one another. On the contrary, there are conspicuous overlaps, for example when it comes to the Great Northern War and its reverberations in various contexts, and the impact of French culture and erudition on actors in the Swedish realm. Further intersections are images of ‘others’, transactions of knowledge, and Sweden’s contacts with the Muslim world. Although such tangible commonalities link some of the texts, the overarching idea behind the anthology is to let less evident patterns crystallise by themselves within the set time frame. As the reader will notice, the discovery of affinities is by no means a straightforward or predictable process.

Even so, the book progresses along a thematic trajectory of sorts. It starts with Phillip Sargeant’s exposition of Sir Robert Walpole’s tenure as First Lord of the Treasury in Great Britain and the foreign policy of his ministry with regard to the Baltic in the mid-eighteenth century. Walpole and his administration pragmatically employed treaties, subsidies and naval pressure to effect a peaceful foreign policy in the region, designed to guarantee stability and prosperity for the ascending British Empire. By analysing and contextualising Walpole’s handling of the precarious situation in Scandinavia in the wake of the Great Northern War, Sargeant not only exposes the practice, extent and effectiveness of Walpolian foreign policy, which he, incidentally, views as paradigmatic, but also brings the area of early eighteenth-century foreign policy as a whole to the forefront, while letting it serve as a hub for a diversity of research fields.

Next, Fredrik Kämpe discusses the relationship between Sweden and the Barbary States during the French revolutionary wars, in the light of the intelligence submitted to Stockholm by Swedish consuls and naval officers, who are used as examples of how agents of a minor power could and did have an impact on their country’s position in the world. As in the case of Walpole outlined above, the principal aim of the Swedish state and its emissaries was to preserve peace in order to facilitate commerce and enhance national prosperity. The maintenance of amity required clarity in communication with the government, more specifically the Convoy Office, at home, since any misunderstandings could have dire consequences for Sweden’s Mediterranean trade. Where necessary, the Swedish consuls made temporary pacts with the representatives of other small and neutral powers, such as Denmark and the United States. At times, they also resorted to threats and bribes to get their way, although their capacities in these respects were comparatively limited. All in all, then, despite the circumstance that the Swedish envoys had less room for manoeuvre than those of more powerful states, they still had the ability to affect their country’s chances.

While Sargeant and Kämpe highlight political matters, the articles that follow occupy themselves with transfers of knowledge. Like Kämpe, Karin
Berner analyses Swedish interactions with the Muslim world, in her case by perusing the travelogues of the cleric Sven Agrell and the natural historian Jacob Jonas Björnstähl to find out how visitors to Constantinople in the 1710s and 1770s experienced and adapted to the unfamiliar setting they were inevitably confronted with. Although Swedes did not have access to all parts of the city, they could use disguises or bribes to circumvent the physical restrictions. Getting to grips with the limitations imposed by cultural, linguistic and social hurdles was a much greater challenge. However, the boundaries between the non-Turkish minorities were less accentuated than those between them and the majority population. For instance, Swedish travellers and emissaries belonged to both a Lutheran and a Western identity community, and as a rule they were open to alien faiths and cultures. Berner’s conclusion is that Constantinople did indeed witness and allow for crossings of borders, but only provisionally, unless a formal religious conversion took place.

Anna Backman explores the transnational aspects of equestrian practice through a biographical study of an Uppsala academy equerry, Johan Leven Ekelund, who traversed Europe and even visited Persia in search of tacit knowledge in the first half of the eighteenth century. The art of riding was to a large extent transmitted by highly skilled, travelling professionals like Leven, whose journey epitomises the individual character of each trajectory and the interweaving of various threads of knowledge. Leven’s overall equestrian achievement highlights the porosity of early modern geographical borders and the way the usefulness of the knowledge transferred mattered more than its place of origin; like the aforementioned Swedish sojourners in Constantinople, Leven accordingly kept an open mind with respect to foreign lands. His influences were European, and both his itinerary and his writings in Swedish, which refer to Italian, English and German as well as French authorities, challenge the view that riding academies were principally a French phenomenon.

Helga Müllneritsch deals with another kind of transnational exchange, namely a travelling recipe, as she probes whether the Austrian Rost Pfiff – a recipe from a manuscript cookery book of 1818 – constituted a version of the roast beef that during the eighteenth century evolved into an English ‘national dish’ of great symbolic value. By means of an investigation of four very popular Austrian cookery books from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it is eventually established that Rost Pfiff borrowed only its name from English roast beef, while its preparation and ingredients imply that it actually derived from a French dish, boeuf à la mode. This mix-up can largely be explained by the likeness between the dishes when served and underscores that the naming of dishes is not necessarily a straightforward or easily comprehensible affair; rather, it may well amount to an arbitrary and muddled process that defies preconceived, common-sense assumptions.
The third and final section of the conference volume focuses on imaginaries and textual configurations. Tim Berndtsson examines Swedish state historiography in relation to its foreign equivalents through the lens of Jacob Wilde’s rewriting in the 1730s and 1740s of Samuel Pufendorf’s account of Sweden’s ancient history. Wilde adhered to an increasingly contested model of historiography, whose practitioners pored over archival texts in order to convey their contents to a limited but discriminating audience that strove to anchor Sweden’s sovereignty in ancient myths. Consequently, Wilde’s editing of Pufendorf’s Swedish history ushered in a melange of antiquarian speculation, which tied in with his duty as a faithful state servant to disseminate arguments in favour of the Swedish realm abroad and to foster loyal and patriotic subjects at home. Wilde was thus guided by a dual allegiance, to his sources and to the state, a dichotomy he grappled with throughout his writing of history.

Last but not least, Vera Sundin delves into the impact of French protofeminist female authors – the précieuses – on the famed mid-eighteenth-century Swedish poet Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht and her thoughts on love, which were typified both by the traditional ideal of amour passion and by the emergent romantic love code. Like Wilde, she thus lived, worked and cognised in a transitional phase between disparate modes of conceptualising the human world. Nordenflycht rejected marriage on the grounds that it fettered women and did not accommodate love. Instead, she advocated the romantic ideal of self-realisation through love and formulated an alternative to customary amorous affection – tender and soulful friendships that liberated love without engendering adultery. In such relationships, men and women were to interact on equal terms, which could only happen on a soul-to-soul basis and in the absence of sexual activity.

To be sure, the subject of transnational relations is not just refreshing and inventive, but also dauntingly intricate and vast. However, as the title of this book and the earlier description of its aim make clear, Traces of Transnational Relations in the Eighteenth Century in no way aspires to be a comprehensive or definitive narrative of eighteenth-century transnationalism. Rather, it looks into a few instances of this complex issue in order to shed new light on a multilayered past, not least by means of the unpremeditated and fruitful interconnections that exist between the contributions.

Carrot and Stick:
The Nordic Foreign Policy of Sir Robert Walpole

Phillip Sargeant

Robert Walpole inherited considerable responsibilities upon obtaining the office of First Lord of the Treasury in 1721. His ministry presided over an important ‘expansionist phase’ in British history, ‘which was based upon the exploitation of the sea routes of the world’.

The early eighteenth century was an inestimably important time in world history, as both the foundations and ruins of empires can be located within the period. The political situation in the Baltic remained uncertain, with much resting on whether people of various Nordic states would choose to pursue measures for peace or war. These decisions would have lasting ramifications for Europe, since they would impact the economic and political development of neighbouring countries and contour the strategic concerns of maritime powers such as Britain.

It had long been clear to a number of contemporaries that whichever nation could ‘attain to and continue the greatest trade and number of shipping will get and keep the sovereignty of the seas and consequently, the greatest dominion of the world’.

A significant amount of early modern historical research has been conducted in the realms of social and political culture, government and statecraft, economics and trade. This is far from an exhaustive list of disciplines that aid a holistic understanding of the past, and examining each of these subjects in isolation usually proves of limited use and can in many ways be problematic, as each province regularly affects and encroaches upon another. However, very often these diverse areas convene at a single interface in which investigations are made expedient; here that hub is the study of foreign policy.

Jeremy Black’s seminal publication British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole initially served to open a forum for debate in the historiography, having proved that ‘much work still needs to be done’, as the ‘diplomatic story’ was far from complete. Since this invitation, scholarship on the subject has been renewed from a number of different historical approaches. Some of the most prominent and valuable contributions have been provided
by Andrew Thompson, Brendan Simms, Nick Harding and Torsten Riotte, each having pioneered work on Britain’s Hanoverian connection. Ranging from articles such as those by Carola Nordbäck and Sven Lilja in edited collections to new and concise monographs, a recent spate of publications seems to point towards a reignition of interest in the topic.

Despite numerous efforts to clarify the workings of early eighteenth-century foreign policy, it remains evident that far more attention should be paid to this particular subject and period. The relationship British diplomats sought to establish with their Nordic counterparts remains one of the most neglected areas of study in comparison with works published on relations between other continental nations. Research material on the northern theatre of operations is scarce, therefore, an incisive exposition is required to properly understand the intricacies of diplomacy in the Baltic. This work aims to bridge a significant gap in the historiography and will serve to provide context on the precarious situation that Walpole encountered in Scandinavia. The examination of primary source evidence will illuminate the outlook of British contemporaries in terms of their perspectives on the roles, directions and applications of Nordic foreign policy. Manuscript material, in conjunction with a holistic overview of the period, will help to gauge how extensively and effectively the diplomatic initiatives championed by Walpole’s ministry served to press the ambitions of their countrymen abroad.

New ambassadors, agents and ministers accompanied Walpole into high office after 1721, forming an administration that sought not only to govern, but reinforce Britain’s status as the foremost trading nation in Europe. Michael Howard has maintained that during this period, ‘war’ and ‘trade’ had become synonymous and ‘interchangeable terms’, a statement which reveals the complexities that Walpole encountered in seeking to separate these two aspects, in order to realise the endeavours of his king, country and colleagues. In reflection, Philip Woodfine echoed the aspirations of many eighteenth-century Europeans when he expressed that their nations had ‘much to gain from peace’. Robert Walpole was not alone in his pursuit of a pacific foreign policy; assistance came from a number of influential statesmen in Britain and on the continent. Don José Patiño of Spain and Cardinal Fleury of France had found that a period of respite was beneficial and necessary to expand the prospects of their countries effectively. Count Arvid Horn, a premier minister in Sweden, was also inclined towards a lasting peace, his stature and importance coinciding with his reputation as a person who could relieve the burdens and repercussions of a bitter Northern War. Newly appointed Lord Marshal (lantmarskalk) in 1720, the outlook of Horn and his supporters would help forge a long period of cooperation between Britain’s new administration and its Nordic neighbours.

The early eighteenth century was a relatively unique time in European history regarding international diplomacy. Walpole’s tenure was a calm between three storms, those tempestuous events being the War of Spanish Suc-
cession, the War of Austrian Succession and the Seven Years War. The first conflict had witnessed a strong continental commitment to standing armies, hitherto unmatched in British memory. The second war adopted a similar approach, with military measures and a deviation from strict arbitration having isolated Britain and destroyed many diplomatic relations that had been established during Walpole’s tenure. A strategy of the third conflict was largely a product of the administration of William Pitt, a ministry that strove to expedite British imperial expansion through highly aggressive acts of amphibious warfare. The premiership of Robert Walpole provides a relatively exclusive case study within the broader scope of foreign policy research, for so rarely had a First Lord been more disposed to peaceful, diplomatic approaches whilst being so averse to belligerent and militaristic measures. During a cessation of arms, new opportunities for compromise were presented, but it was also a time fraught with dangers and intrigue. For a number of politicians, both in government and aspiring to public office, tranquillity and the attainment of peace often meant political stability, a situation that proved antithetical to their ambitions to subvert the government and obtain places. A desire for revenge, wealth, power and status drove a number of contemporaries to be discontent with the pace and direction of a pacific foreign policy. Both Walpole and Horn would suffer the same fate, forced to resign at the behest of ‘patriot’ factions pressing for war and a more aggressive commitment to secure the national interest.

David Ormrod, Chris Evans and Göran Rydén have reiterated that the continued hegemony of British sea power during the period rested on regular shipments of iron and tar from the Baltic. Although Walpole’s administration struggled to alleviate Britain’s reliance on Swedish naval stores, domestic manufacture and new supply lines from its American colonies proved difficult to facilitate. During the reign of Queen Anne, at a time when war in the Baltic impeded commercial relations, the British government placed generous bounties on tar imports from America, but this incentive had not been enough to encourage a legal and voluminous conveyance of high quality materials back to home waters. The precarious dependency on Baltic stores meant that Britain had to remain on good terms with its Nordic neighbours; conversely, if Sweden wanted Britain to remain its biggest customer then friendship had to be reciprocal. Subsidy and maritime pressure had the capacity to exacerbate problems as well as alleviate them. Wielding these multi-purpose tools was a dangerous balancing act for early modern statesmen. The precautions they required were readily considered, and it can be seen that no significant naval engagements or hostilities were witnessed from Walpole’s arrival in office in 1721 until the outbreak of war with Spain and the capture of Portobelo in 1740, marking the end of nineteen years of limited, relatively uninterrupted naval manoeuvres.

With Europe in a peculiar state of ‘peace without rest and war without hostilities’, politicians grappled with internal and external threats on a regul-
lar basis, and nowhere was this more apparent than in Scandinavia. Political relations were in need of repair upon Walpole’s arrival in office, and with so much blood and treasure on the line, ready to be spilled, his ministry aimed to remedy this neglected and persistent problem. As James Henretta argued, Walpole’s administration invested heavily in subsidies to regions of the globe in which Britain would benefit significantly from commerce. This was a vital strategy to reign supreme over foreign competition and secure lucrative access to resources and trading rights. Members of the Board of Trade and Privy Council were aware that Britain relied on the Baltic for its fisheries, and also for the importation of hemp, tar and iron that was used to forge weapons, slave manacles and plantation tools, all the cold hard trappings of an early modern seaborne empire.

It was clear to the First Lord, as it was to a number of his international contemporaries, that the prevention of war signalled strong trade agreements, security and most importantly, national recovery, all at a minimal cost to the public purse. Having advocated a foreign policy of peace, various administrations attempted to appease and relieve the apprehensions of their countrymen, exhausting all diplomatic measures necessary to avoid armed confrontation and hostilities. The Royal Navy, treaties and international finance were utilised extensively by Walpole’s ministry, as part of an attempt to fulfil Britain’s role as a mediator of European affairs, but without having to engage in expensive and often ruinous acts of war. These tools were applied in various ways to establish diplomatic alliances, secure peace, foster commerce, negotiate the settlement of grievances and maintain the flow of imported goods vital to British power. The first part of this article will focus upon two fundamental methods of British diplomacy during Walpole’s tenure in office, the role of subsidy and the framing of conventions, approaches that are characterised in modern terminology as ‘the carrot’. Part two will highlight the other half of this idiom, ‘the stick’, a simultaneous application of maritime pressure and the part it played in characterising the foreign policy of Walpole’s administration.

The Carrot

The geographical and governmental characteristics of Britain differ in many respects from those of its continental neighbours, which share extensive boundaries of land with rival nations. David French has claimed that Britain emerged from the War of Spanish Succession a first-rank world power. Despite a body of water separating the small island from mainland Europe, Britain during this period no longer had to act ‘intermittently’ as a mediator in continental disputes, for war and trade had earned it a constant seat at the table of international relations. As matters of commerce can be said to have taken centre stage in debates throughout the period, Walpole relied on his
fellow politicians to find ways in which they could ensure the security and development of the trading communities that they were obliged to protect and support. In an age of peace and with many nations recouping their losses, Walpole understood the merit of diplomatic measures to ensure the credit, prosperity and political stability of the nation, without the application of the sword that had been the principal strategy of previous administrations. Consequently, aptitude and adroitness were two of the most important qualities that needed to be embodied in Secretaries of State such as Charles Townshend, a minister who made it his task to formulate solutions to press Britain’s influence across the globe amicably, without having to revert to hostilities. It proved an ambitious foreign policy to facilitate the maintenance of global peace predominantly through diplomatic protocols. In this section, the role of subsidy and treaties as diplomatic measures in foreign policy will be investigated, alongside the extent of their effectiveness in helping Walpole achieve his ambitions of Baltic tranquillity and British prosperity.

With demand for goods and services often outstripping a finite supply, one of the more controversial methods used by Walpole’s administration to promote Britain’s influence on global affairs was through the subsidisation of merchants, mercenaries, mariners, and even foreign envoys such as François-Louis de St. Saphorin and Lucas Schaub. Throughout the early eighteenth century, the Royal Navy remained one of Britain’s most important branches of national defence. Maritime strategies continued to be prioritised by politicians, which resulted in a significant investment of time and resources in what are currently referred to as ‘blue water’ policies. A great number of contemporaries believed that ‘England’s safety was secured by the Channel and by her navy’. This was a popular outlook that cut across many partisan and factional lines.

Blue water policies revolved around the doctrine that while the navy acted as Britain’s primary arm for defence, small squadrons and entire fleets could also operate on foreign expeditions, providing global reach in a number of useful ways and for sustained periods of time. However, a vein of contention runs through a number of Black’s works concerning the utility, or rather the frequent futility of maritime measures adopted during the period. Strong cases can be made to reveal that the deployment of the Royal Navy, especially in the process of pacification, often hindered more than it helped in tricky situations. Likewise, the mobilisation of mercenary forces not only caused diplomatic rifts, but also raised the problem of resolving jurisdiction and command. Although this article seeks to show that these two arms were used in a passive, non-confrontational posture under Walpole in comparison with other administrations, they were methods that continually breached the sovereignty of other nations and encroached on the authority of neighbouring governments. As one contemporary remarked ‘according to the proverb, tis easy to find a stick to beat a dog’, and this was often an affront
that nullified all the good work diplomats had tried to achieve with the carrot.\textsuperscript{31} In a voice of caution, the Duke of Newcastle intimated to Walpole that ‘if an opposition be made by sending a fleet or granting subsidies’ to Nordic nations, the result would be that a number of Jacobites would find willing military allies in foreign courts.\textsuperscript{32}

With these caveats in mind, it can be seen that during this period, both the Royal Navy and the subsidisation of mercenaries could serve as assets to be deployed offensively or defensively, for a significant number of Britons felt the need to reinforce negotiations by having the capabilities to follow up with violence if absolutely necessary. Primary importance continued to be placed on the navy, the preferred contingency force, as many remained sceptical of intervention through the utilisation of foreign troops.\textsuperscript{33} Walpole and his ministers frequently clashed with their peers when attempting to employ large bodies of foreign soldiers during times of peace.\textsuperscript{34} Despite these qualms, the ends outweighed the means for politicians such as Townshend, who found utility in the purchase of troops to supplement the diplomatic options of his office. Until his resignation in 1730, Townshend had been a chief architect behind the project to establish peace and a system of European alliances through the use of subsidy.\textsuperscript{35} Combined arms and operations appealed to Townshend; it was his view that ‘before this, the power of Great Britain lay only in its fleet, which though strong and of great command in maritime cases [...] we had no land forces to spare, the respect our fleet carried could not spread its influence so far as was necessary’.\textsuperscript{36} International bribery and the employment of mercenaries were viewed by Walpole’s ministry as fundamental strategies that ensured Britain remained at the forefront of European state politics.

Britain aimed to apply pressure and project influence over continental affairs through the movement of mercenaries to coerce, buffer and defend allies such as Hanover, without engaging deliberately in hostile military actions.\textsuperscript{37} The subsidisation of mercenaries was nothing new to European states; it had been a strategy used regularly for many centuries prior.\textsuperscript{38} There were, however, marked differences in the way Walpole’s ministry employed and manoeuvred these forces. For other nations, the purchase of mercenaries had normally been an additional expense incurred during times of strife and as a surplus to regular requirement. Contrary to the usual precedent, Walpole’s administration sought to subsidise during times of peace, and throughout these periods of respite, contractors in British pay became not so much dogs of war as ‘performing poodles’, fulfilling the role of ceremonial guard dogs and never to be used other than to maintain a show of strength.\textsuperscript{39} Very rarely did mercenaries clash, but on 4 November 1738, after the breakdown of diplomatic relations between Denmark and Sweden, Christian VI dispatched a force to invade Steinhorst.\textsuperscript{40} Hanoverian soldiers were put to the test and eventually repelled the Danish contingent, although it took a great deal of self restraint on the part of the British Crown not to
pursue further military action.\textsuperscript{41} Robert Walpole served two monarchs who sometimes proved reluctant to forestall hostilities. Lord Hervey, a contemporary of the First Lord, believed that Walpole used British soldiers and foreign mercenaries as a method of permitting ‘His Majesty the satisfaction of brandishing a sword in the scabbard which he would never permit him to draw’.\textsuperscript{42}

A number of publications by Steve Murdoch have served to refresh the present historiography, by providing a greater appreciation of the networks, extent and influence of British privateers in the Baltic.\textsuperscript{43} The deposition of James II had prompted the emigration of a number of indigenous Britons who chose to remain loyal to the Stuart dynasty.\textsuperscript{44} France, Spain and the Holy Roman Empire utilised the services of Jacobites in matters of politics, commerce and war. Tsar Peter I employed some under his banner as naval commanders, men who understood the British coastline and Nordic navigational routes intimately.\textsuperscript{45} The expertise and abilities of British subjects were attractive, lucrative and desirable to people in neighbouring countries. As early as 1720, directors of the British East India Company were troubled to learn that English pilots had been operating ships from the port of Ostend on behalf of their rivals.\textsuperscript{46} Although a strong case has been made by Murdoch indicating that large pockets of privateers operated in the Nordic regions during the period, it was not indigenous Britons that were called to serve their country’s interests abroad. A scarcity of suitable men was a significant factor in why foreign, not native troops, were selected for service as mercenaries, but fundamentally, the choice to employ foreign soldiers was grounded upon political and financial reasons.\textsuperscript{47}

One benefit of purchasing mercenaries instead of expanding a standing army was that Walpole’s ministry could establish a continental presence in peacetime, without having an army present in Britain. Moreover, these privateer armies usually proved more cost effective and flexible than regular state troops, in that they could be quickly raised, mobilised and disbanded.\textsuperscript{48} Subsidy contracts also served to bind the rulers who provided mercenaries into useful alliances, since, as contractors, they had to comply with the aims of a pacific foreign policy if they were to receive their next financial instalment. Long contracts settled during times of peace ensured a low price and if hostilities erupted, rival nations were denied opportunities to augment their armies, as large bodies of hired forces would already be engaged in the service of Britain. There were many prominent military contractors during this period, Sweden, Denmark, Hanover and Hesse Cassel being the most proficient in raising mercenaries, and each secured subsidy from Britain during Walpole’s time in office.\textsuperscript{49} A landmark subsidy contract was signed on 12 March 1726, the fruition of Townshend’s ambition. The Secretary of State had managed to orchestrate the support of Sweden and Hesse in one binding convention, having purchased 12,000 Hessians for instalments totalling
£125,000, with £75,000 of the funds diverted to alleviate the debts of the son of Charles I, Frederick I of Sweden.50

Walpole presided over a treasury that could marshal considerable financial credit, with patronage acting as one of the most important diplomatic methods the First Lord could use ‘to preserve the balance of power in the North, by keeping each nation within its due bounds’.51 Walpole’s ministry took advantage of the vulnerable financial situation of other European nations, in order to assert British interests and preserve peace. His policies in the Baltic would be tested early in his tenure.52 The principal belligerent who threatened the tranquillity of northern Europe was Charles Frederick of Holstein-Gottorp, a dispossessed duke and son in law to Peter I, frequently manoeuvred by the Russian monarchy as an instrument to coerce neighbouring nations through the threat of invasion.53 Charles had been intent on recovering Schleswig from the possession of Frederick IV of Denmark, but Walpole’s administration was prepared to take significant action to prevent this, for the Danes had guaranteed the mutual protection of new continental acquisitions for George I, the bishoprics of Bremen and Verden.54 The two dominions provided the king’s electorate of Hanover with coastal access and the capacity to undertake commercial operations. Concerns hit closer to home for some British diplomats who held the view that if Charles Frederick acceded the Swedish throne, his allegiance would reside indefatigably with Peter I. In such a case it was believed that the tsar would become ‘master of the Baltic, which is so near Scotland that it will not be a difficult matter for him enterprising a very great disturbance.’55 With these apprehensions at the forefront of disputes between rival Nordic nations, British diplomats began to work closely with Horn, President of the Swedish Chancery, to facilitate the establishment of peace and the hegemony of British trade in the Baltic, two factors that had been missing during the latter years of Queen Anne’s reign.56 Black has highlighted how, to ensure peace and prosperity, Walpole reversed the allegiances that his predecessor James Stanhope had established, which signalled a new era in British foreign policy.57

A power struggle had developed between rival ministers during Walpole’s early years in office, which affected the direction of Nordic foreign policy. Proceedings stalled as Townshend, brother in law to the First Lord, stood in direct competition with John Carteret, a favourite of the king, in a bid for supremacy concerning Scandinavian affairs. Carteret had urged the armament of the Royal Navy for service in the Baltic as early as 1723, but Townshend’s council prevailed on his king ‘not to assist Sweden with a farthing of money’ until a treaty was signed.58 The persistent threats of invasion from all the Nordic countries eventually spurred Lords Carteret and Townshend to request an initial sum of £200,000 from the civil list of George I, alongside the despatch of a naval squadron for the defence of Denmark and Sweden.59 The cost of purchasing the promises of pacification in the Baltic proved difficult for Walpole to advocate, for ‘it has never been
known in England for parliament to give subsidies to anyone in times of peace’. Even Horatio Walpole, brother to the First Lord, close supporter and diplomat to his ministry expressed concerns over the utility of spending immense sums on a body of Swedish soldiers with no war to use them in. A number of Swedish ambassadors in mediation with Russia were led to believe that no treaties for cooperation would be signed if Sweden continued to support British interests; George I reiterated equally that Sweden would receive no remittance if found involved in Russian designs.

A strict course of neutrality proved difficult to achieve and Nordic diplomacy descended into a tug of war, with sides chosen and enemies declared. The allure of cooperating with Walpole’s foreign policy in exchange for monetary rewards was dealt a severe blow when on 4 March 1724 Russia signed the Treaty of Stockholm, after Sweden had promised restitution and military support for Charles Frederick. In July of the same year, rumours circulated that the Swedish king Frederick I wished to abdicate; Horn had been held to ransom by an irredentist faction of politicians and renewed war in the Baltic seemed inevitable. With events having quickly escalated, Walpole’s foreign policy of maintaining peace and security for all British subjects operating in northern waters had been imperilled. In response, Townshend dispatched one of his most trusted henchmen, Stephen Poyntz, to press British interests through diplomatic measures once more. Arriving at Stockholm in October 1724, Poyntz, with his deep pockets, respected authority and consoling personality, was eventually able to frame two significant treaties of alliance. Peter I had also used the medium of subsidy, having spent large sums securing the promises of Sweden to help restore Charles to Schleswig, but in the face of renewed efforts to restore peace, Poyntz managed to outbid Russia and form an alliance with Sweden and Denmark. In an attempt to stem a descent into war, George I had been willing to furnish Frederick I with a three year contract of £50,000 per annum. A shrewd diplomat in the framing of subsidy contracts, Poyntz tried to make it clear that Britain remained the only country that could provide the financial and naval means necessary to defend any Baltic nation from invasion.

It can be seen that unlike his predecessor James Stanhope, Walpole and his fellow ministers isolated Russia diplomatically, having redirected their efforts into aiding Denmark and Sweden financially in a ‘northern league’. Coercing the Swedes with the threat of what was initially promised as a defensive naval presence, while bribing them with lucrative contracts, Walpole’s administration had sunk a great deal of resources into securing peace with Sweden through subsidy. There was a risk that ministers of the Swedish Diet (Riksdag) would default on their agreements and fall into contrary schemes. Poyntz made Horn aware that ‘Denmark is a power that has forces both by sea and land, which may be put in such a posture and with much less expense than Sweden will cost, as not only to counterbalance their loss, but even to make them feel their error if they should desert such good and useful friends as we
There was a flexibility in subsidy that allowed Britain to shift allegiances or purchase new nations to help maintain its interests, and it was made clear that no belligerent nation that worked contrary to a pacific foreign policy would receive Britain’s support.72

The importance that Black has placed upon the personality and acumen of diplomatic envoys is vindicated in the case of Poyntz. His departure from Stockholm coincided with a group highly sympathetic to the Holsteinian
cause having risen to prominence, which signalled the end of British hegemony in steering Swedish affairs.\textsuperscript{73} Poyntz only helped to stem the tide of the Hats’ rise to prominence, and their opponents were eventually forced to succumb to the complex, constrained and multifaceted political events that had occurred in Sweden. Walpole faced a crisis in the Baltic as the Swedish government became unresponsive to the threat of naval pressure and declined offers to renew subsidy contracts.\textsuperscript{74} In the midst of a power struggle, Horn, who had long supported measures for peace and frugality, resigned as Sweden offered France the chance to purchase mercenaries to support the claims of Stanisław Leszczyński, a contender for the Polish throne. These actions jeopardised European tranquillity and Britain’s mediation in the attempt to ensure the fair election of a new Polish king.\textsuperscript{75}

The rapid transformation of Swedish politics revealed the fragility of peaceful and diplomatic measures. The civil list of George I had run into considerable debt in an attempt to avert war and Walpole learned once more that in domestic and foreign politics, patronage and money could not always purchase long term support or firmly establish policy. Despite these shortcomings, it can also be seen that the repudiation of subsidy sometimes proved effective in securing peace. Increasingly distanced from British influence, the Swedish government had denied itself a source of revenue that it had come to rely upon. Those in opposition to Horn’s policies soon found it difficult to realise their ambitions without reliable financial reinforcement; it was remarked that ‘the whole nation in their hearts are for a war if they could support one’.\textsuperscript{76}

\textbf{The Stick}

It was a belief of Arthur Wilson that there was a ‘deeply rooted and prevalent conception of naval warfare’ throughout the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{77} Some understood the benefits that a redoubtable navy could provide in that an enemy could be defeated without having to destroy them completely. Defensive naval manoeuvres and an ‘indirect approach’ were strategies frequently utilised by early-modern British statesmen.\textsuperscript{78} This was part of a long history that Basil Hart drew upon when he formulated his didactic and distinct characterisation of a ‘British Way in Warfare’.\textsuperscript{79} Unlike many of his predecessors and successors, Robert Walpole attempted to avoid the perils of continental conflict by limiting the use and employment of both mercenaries and regular soldiers. In a similar vein, during the twenty one year period that he resided in office, the Royal Navy was also used sparingly, in order to avoid diplomatic rupture and war, despite it remaining one of the country’s most ubiquitous and traditional of fighting forces.
Many strategies were presented to Walpole during his administration that stipulated how best to secure the national interest, which in Britain, according to many, rested upon the strength of the country’s naval force. In January 1729, Edward Vernon laid the late Vice Admiral Hosier’s instructions before the House of Commons and accused Walpole’s government of incompetence, having stated that the policy of blockade was futile, that it lacked the aggressive action needed to secure decisive results. Maintaining peace, policing territory and securing restitution were not easy polices to reconcile in a constantly expanding trading empire, especially when a number of contemporaries advocated bellicose intervention in foreign affairs. A naval squadron cruising in the territory of another nation was the equivalent of an army appearing on the doorstep of a continental power. Working within a complex system of European alliances, Walpole’s ministry needed to be careful in the policies that they sanctioned, for as Newcastle aptly observed, ‘the affairs of the north and south are so interwoven together that any stand or rub that happens in either place must in consequence affect the other’. At the death of Charles XII, it was hoped that a new Swedish prince would abandon the militaristic policies of his predecessor and be more inclined to measures of peace than war. It was ruminated in Britain that ‘perhaps too it may contribute to the peace of the south’, for a ‘more sedate and judicious’ sovereign would in turn force Spain to yield to the goal of tranquillity and unity, leaving it bereft of the ‘powerful diversions it expected from the arms of Sweden’. What is more, many merchants sailing under British colours navigated the same routes as other nations, from the Baltic to the South Atlantic. Friction often occurred where piracy and interloping resulted in ships being seized and restitution being demanded.

It was claimed that ‘the fundamental maxim of England is the settling and securing of her commerce. England, never prompted by the spirit of conquest, attacks not the state of others unless provoked by an insult upon her trade’. As an island maritime power, Britain lay relatively secure behind what some referred to as its ‘wooden walls’ and the prevailing weather. Walpole and his associates had found utility in augmenting the blue water policies of his predecessors, but unlike former ministries, Walpole’s administration marked a different approach to using the navy. The application of pressure through naval blockade and cruising was the preferred mode of action from 1721 to 1739. The First Lord often deemed it necessary for Royal Navy squadrons to cruise off the coasts of other nations, in order to protect trade by providing a visible presence and deterrence to any vessels looking to take advantage of vulnerabilities in supply lines. Both the War of Spanish Succession and the Seven Years War, which occurred directly before and after Walpole’s tenure in office had witnessed pitched naval battles and harbour raids, engagements which Walpole may have been inclined to ‘regard as being purely episodic, devoid of decisive results and interesting only as gratuitous exhibitions of strength’. In an age where ships were
more valuable than factories and ‘a captured vessel belonging to a merchant or to one of the English companies makes the nation cry out more than does the loss of ten battles’, the foremost priority for Britain was peace, and from that aim came security and prosperity.  

Consequently, under the guidance of Walpole’s ministry, British foreign policy was not directed to proving the might of Royal Navy vessels in battle, but to avoiding engagements altogether. A powerful squadron worked best when it could overawe other nations and deter them from posing any challenge, in order to force countries such as Russia to accept the diplomatic options presented to them, rather than hazard any losses in acts of defiance. Powerful battle fleets had been sailing to the Baltic since 1715, and during Walpole’s administration, two major blockades would be sanctioned in that particular theatre, which remained in an almost permanent state of cold war. Peter I of Russia and subsequent tsars threatened the Hessian kings Frederick I of Sweden and Frederick IV of Denmark with invasion and the incitement of civil war. The risk of renewed hostilities in the Baltic between these countries and the ever watchful eyes of Prussia, France and the Holy Roman Empire meant that admirals posted to these stations had to be careful in the actions that they pursued. Armed with two weapons, a pen and the sword, the skilful command of a squadron was a task equally important as providing calculated mediation at foreign courts. Commanders were issued with diplomatic credentials, they had to be astute and open negotiations before they opened fire in order to reconcile nations to a peace that was paramount to trade.

Britain had been recognised as one of the strongest maritime powers during the period. Nations such as the Dutch Republic regularly expected Britain to share in the task of international peacekeeping, particularly by exercising its main asset, the Royal Navy. Britain had also been a country shunned by many Baltic nations previously for its failure to grant assistance when Peter I descended upon Sweden during the Great Northern War. From the outset of his tenure, Walpole had openly joined the cause of Sweden and Denmark. The annual dispatch of a British fleet had been designed to safeguard the two Hessian states from invasion, by allowing them time to build their own forces and defences. The first sanctioned blockade was conducted by Admiral Sir John Norris, who was dispatched in 1721 in order to stop the losses that British merchants were suffering at the hands of privateers, to stabilise the political situation in potentially hostile waters and to prevent the invasion of Sweden by Denmark. To achieve these objectives, Norris patrolled the mouth of the Gulf of Finland and was ordered that if Peter I ‘should undertake to come out with his Grand Fleet or his gallies, make use of the great occasion to deal a decisive stroke’. As he had done previously in 1715, Norris was also tasked to blockade access to Stralsund and Danzig. Dispatched to these ports to receive satisfaction in person, if local governors refused to comply with the demands that Norris conveyed
from Britain, he was ordered to ‘stop their trade, annoy them and by means oblige them to a compliance’.  


At Danzig, the bone of contention was the taxation of British subjects and their limited use of the Vistula. Access to this river had been granted by treaty and was a privilege that merchants from other nations had also been afforded. Norris quickly manoeuvred through the Sound with his fleet. This
prompted Captain James Jefferyes, resident at the port of Danzig, to use the impending presence of the Royal Navy to press Bürgermeister Dusseldorf to renegotiate the restoration of British trading rights. Managers of busy ports such as Danzig were normally granted a certain degree of discretionary power and autonomy over their region through charters, royal licences and local traditions. The long history of armed conflicts having hindered trade was not lost on Jefferyes, who avoided the temptation to teach Dusseldorf a lesson by waiting for the Royal Navy to appear. Instead, Jefferyes was able to appeal to a temperamental man who had the capacity to make life unnecessarily difficult for British subjects engaged in commercial activity under his auspices. Having averted bloodshed and embargo through confrontation and economic warfare, Jefferyes was thankful that ‘His Majesty has been pleased to take in favour of the city, by ordering Admiral Norris to suspend (at least for some time) the execution of his instructions’. The timely postponement of arms revealed the patience and flexibility of a pacific foreign policy under Walpole’s administration. Increasingly costly squadrons continued to be sent every year under Norris, until the second major blockades conducted by Sir Charles Wager began in April 1726.

The Great Northern War had come to a close with the signing of the treaties of Madrid and Nystad in 1721, but despite these agreements, tensions had failed to ebb in Europe. Russian courtiers had appended their signatures to the Treaty of Vienna in 1725, which elevated the threat of hostilities. This act brought previous disputes to a new climax, with Spain, Russia and Austria set against the signatory nations of the Treaty of Hanover. With powerful nations in Europe having split into rival blocs, ministers of each country worked to address the perennial grievances that had resulted in abject confrontation. The cost of militarisation and reprisals in former years had caused all nations involved to seek a way to end their state of undeclared war, culminating in the framing of the Preliminaries of Paris, signed on 31 May 1727, in which another uneasy peace was declared and concessions were exchanged. Prior to the Preliminaries being ratified and during the month of June 1726, Europe had been at the brink of war. Poyntz emphasised to Frederick I that ‘the fleet we shall send will cost the nation above £350,000 preventing the Muscovites putting to sea, or to beat them if they should see fit to appear’. Having equipped and assembled a large naval force which seemed primed to strike, and not denying her proliferation of arms, Catherine I stated that she had no ill intent or designs against the Baltic powers and that her preparations were merely a war-game ‘to exercise their soldiers and sailors as usual’. Ironically, it was claimed in Muscovite publications that this stand-off was the result of a British withdrawal from negotiations with the Russian court. It remains unclear whether the tsarina was sincere concerning the reasons for armament, but her official stance was that the newly found support for British interests in neighbouring Nordic coun-
tries had once again left Russia bereft of allies and that preparations had been made to defend her nation accordingly.\textsuperscript{98} In a remarkably prescient fashion, Lord Chandos intimated to a friend that ‘the sending of the fleets abroad has been an honour to the King and a security to his allies, but should the same be practised again, it would create great discontents’.\textsuperscript{99} Indeed the political situation had changed in Sweden by the time Admiral Wager arrived with his fleet in Stockholm. His presence was largely unwelcome and met with apprehension, a tribute to the endeavours of a faction under the direction of Karl Gyllenborg and Thomas Plomgren, a group of merchants and politicians who had been busy eroding Britain’s diplomatic links with Sweden.\textsuperscript{100} This coterie would later identify themselves as ‘Hats’, and whilst many members had formerly been at the head of a Holsteinian cohort in an attempt to restore Charles to Schleswig, their ideology had warped and expanded beyond the focus of one man in order to appeal to a wider range of Swedes. They promised commercial and economic transformation free from British interference and concerns. Revenge was sought against Russia, but they did not seek the assistance of the Royal Navy in such an endeavour, for they deemed France their natural trading partner and military ally.

After residing for three weeks at the island of Elsnabben and having spent a considerable amount of time relieving anxieties concerning the intentions of the Britannic fleet, Wager sailed to the Gulf of Finland to face the Russian navy operating out of Cronslot.\textsuperscript{101} Commanding twenty ships of the line, on 29 May 1726 Wager began his blockade of Reval. Express orders were issued that no Russian commercial activity was to be hindered, but if any naval vessels ventured out of port, it was to be deemed an act of war and they were to be destroyed. In August 1726, Wager moved to blockade Admiral Fyodor Apraksin at Petersburg.\textsuperscript{102} Facing the prospect of engaging fourteen Russian men of war and with the location of many armed galleys unaccounted for, it was understood that a naval engagement between these two forces would inflict significant casualties on both sides, therefore, making the avoidance of conflict a priority for both British and Russian squadrons. Lieutenant Curtis Barnett had been dispatched from Wager’s flagship in order to liaise with Count Apraksin and his vice admiral, Thomas Gordon. Upon the exchange of fine gifts, flattery and mutual marks of respect, ‘Count Apraksin told him he loved the English and that all the Russian Nation loved the English’.\textsuperscript{103} The margin for error had been narrow, but negotiation had served to avert a crisis. Throughout the naval operations conducted by Norris and Wager, Russia never proved confident enough to risk open war, jeopardise military campaigns or lose vessels in an attempt to break the British blockades.\textsuperscript{104}

Admirals of the Royal Navy often played dangerous bluffs that were rarely called by opposing forces. Power perceived often resulted in power being achieved. This authority was projected through British vessels encroaching
on the sovereignty of rival nations and threatening hostilities, but it was clear that neither officers nor diplomats in Nordic stations wanted such threats to pass the event horizon and spill into bloodshed. The measures taken by Walpole’s ministry in the Baltic had been a far cry from the inaction of previous administrations. Formerly, British politicians had been apprehensive of the Royal Navy being outperformed and embarrassed by the tsar’s Russian fleet, and had either willingly or begrudgingly allowed Peter I to dominate the Swedish coastline relatively unmolested during the Great Northern War. Defeat was still a valid concern for Walpole’s ministry, but a marked change is noticed in that squadrons were routinely dispatched and prepared to reinforce diplomatic initiatives with deadly force.

Black has argued that the maritime measures which Walpole and subsequent ministries adopted often overreached the capabilities of the Royal Navy, but served nonetheless to ‘project British power’ in order to influence European affairs. Continental nations such as France and Spain shared extensive borders with other countries and relied upon the strength of their military and the tact of their diplomatic representatives. As an island nation, Britain’s security rested largely upon its supremacy of the seas. Alfred Mahan expressed a view that the ‘command of the sea could not be shared’ if a maritime power such as Britain aspired to reign supreme in matters of commerce and European diplomacy. Yet it was not the actions of the Royal Navy that proved Britain could rely upon its mastery of the waves to ensure its continued prosperity and hegemony, but rather the inaction of the navy and the limited role it played which served to demonstrate its power. The threat and utilisation of indirect measures such as blockade and cruising often led to Britain securing lucrative benefits from rival nations. As a mediator in European affairs and in the pursuit of peace, Walpole had to be judicious in the ways that he deployed the navy to press Britain’s interests. To this end, admirals often acted as ambassadors, and for a naval commander who was to be posted to a theatre with a squadron, ‘diplomatic discretion and strategic acumen were prime qualifications’. Walpole’s own political outlook of peace seemed to have filtered into naval policy, particularly through the influence of his friend and First Lord of the Admiralty, Wager. A letter awaited Wager from Townshend upon his return from one Baltic expedition, reading: ‘His Majesty has commanded me to let you know from him that he was before persuaded you was [sic] a very good admiral, but he now sees that you are likewise an able minister’.

Many interesting uses of ‘armed diplomacy’ can be witnessed during this period. Whilst monumental feats in battle, such as the actions of Nelson at Trafalgar tend to be celebrated as archetypal examples of good naval policy, historians would benefit from further investigation into the merits of Walpole’s limited application of the navy. Robert Walpole’s tenure in office demonstrated the flexibility of subsidy, treaties and maritime power, all of which were geared towards making ‘England secure at home and respected.
abroad. These initiatives gave Britain the capacity to press its interests across the globe and obtain that most lucrative and difficult factor in diplomacy, the maintenance of an honourable peace.

List of geographical locations, contemporary and modern designations:

Cronslot: Kronstadt
Danzig: Gdańsk
Reval: Tallinn
The Sound: Øresund
Vistula: Wisła

6 Naturally and very reasonably, there are also many other lenses through which periods can be examined.
7 Jeremy Black, British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 182; this was a 1985 transposition of his PhD thesis.
9 See bibliography.
19 With the exception of the siege of Gibraltar in 1727, an embarrassing flashpoint which both Spanish and British officials continually pretended had not actually occurred, with each nation denying responsibility.
31 TNA, CO. 388/24, Anonymous Papers relating to the Sugar and Tobacco Trade, 22 Jul. 1724, f. 185.
33 BL. ST. Ms 251, The Duke of Newcastle to the Lord Privy Seal, 28 May 1734, Claremont, f. 75.
36 BL. ST. Ms 251, Lord Townshend, 7/18 Oct. 1723, Göhrde, f. 57.
38 Howard, War in European History, pp. 20, 25, 29, 38, 58; French, British Way in Warfare, p. 4.
39 Howard, War in European History, p. 73.
40 Steinhorst resides on the frontier between Saxe-Lauenberg and Holstein.
44 Steve Murdoch, Network North: Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Associations in Northern Europe 1603–1743 (Leiden, 2005); Peter Paul Bajer, Scots in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 16th–18th Centuries (Leiden, 2012).
46 TNA, CO. 388/22, Petition presented by Thomas Woolley, Secretary to the East India Company, 15 Sep. 1720, London, East India House, f. 137.
47 Robert Walpole’s ministry allocated approximately 4 percent of the nation’s war budget per annum for the purpose of employing mercenaries, a figure that was to increase at the outbreak of the War of Jenkins’s Ear, as conflict inflated the cost and demand for sell-swords; Brewer, Sinews of Power, p. 32; French, British Way in Warfare, p. 59. For figures, statistical data and computations, see BL. Add. Ms. 29449-50, Grants in Parliament for the Public Services, vols. I–II.
48 French, British Way in Warfare, p. 10.
49 Arthur McCandless-Wilson, French Foreign Policy During the Administration of Cardinal Fleury (Harvard, 1936), p. 257; CUL, CH(H), Political Papers, 26/93, Some considerations upon the project for making at this time, a defensive alliance between Great Britain, Denmark and Sweden, 1736; Hanover; Chance, Alliance of Hanover, p. 35.
Charles I, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, father of Frederick I of Sweden, grandfather to the Prince of Orange and neighbour to George I of Hanover and Frederick William I of Prussia; Chance, *Alliance of Hanover*, pp. 165–69, 172–73.

CUL, CH(H), *Political Papers*, 26/93, Some considerations upon the project. . .; Howard, *War in European History*, p. 37; French, *British Way in Warfare*, p. xii.


BL, ST. Ms 251, Lord Townshend to Robert Walpole, 6 Aug. 1723, NS, Private, Hanover, f. 18.


BL, Add. Ms. 48981, Horatio Walpole to Stephen Poyntz, 1 Sep. 1726, Fontainebleau, f. 137.

TNA, 104/155, Charles Townshend to William Finch, 22 Aug. 1721, Whitehall; TNA, 104/155, Charles Townshend to William Finch, 26 Sep. 1721, Whitehall; there was also talk of a peace congress to be hosted in Nystad, Finland.


TNA, 104/155, Charles Townshend to William Finch, 6 Jul. 1724, Whitehall.


70 BL, Add. Ms. 63749, Horatio Walpole to Robert Walpole, 4 Nov. 1736, Hanover, f. 293.
77 Wilson, French Foreign Policy, p. 80.
82 The Huntington Library (THL), San Marino, California, USA, Ms ST. 57, Vol. 16, Lord Chandos to Mr Senserf, 26 Dec. 1718, f. 74.
83 CUL, CH(H), Political Papers, 73/11-1, Observations on the Designs of Spanish Policy, Minuted by Coxe, probably by the Sicilian Priests, 2 Feb. 1729.
85 BL, Add. Ms. 33028, Instructions to Vice Admiral Hosier, 12 Sep. 1727, f. 65; Coxe, Memoirs of Walpole, p. 204.
86 Wilson, French Foreign Policy, p. 82.


91 BL, Add. Ms. 28146, Frederick I, King of Sweden to Sir John Norris, 22 May 1721, Stockholm, f. 112.


98 BL, Add. Ms. 48036, Edward Vernon’s Notes on the Baltic Campaign, f. 18.

99 THL, Ms. ST. 57, Vol. 28, Lord Chandos to Monsieur Hallungens, 9 Sep. 1726, OS, Bath, f. 323.


103 BL, Add. Ms. 48036, Edward Vernon’s Notes on the Baltic Campaign, f. 10.

104 The role that Britain played in the Baltic during the War of Polish Succession is a complex subject that may be explored in my forthcoming PhD thesis.


110 BL, ST. Ms. 251, The Duke of Newcastle to the Lord Privy Seal, 28 May 1734, Claremont, f. 75.
Competition and Cooperation: Swedish Consuls in North Africa and Sweden’s Position in the World, 1791–1802

Fredrik Kämpe

Consuls and other trade agents were an important part of the global network of trade that developed during the early modern period. They made sure that when ships entered ports, their masters would be provided with knowledge of local prices and markets. In North Africa, European consuls also had diplomatic duties, since maintaining good relations with the North African leaders was vital in keeping the corsair fleets of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, or the Barbary States as they were called, from attacking European merchantmen. If the consul could also make sure that rival countries had trouble establishing such relations, then so much the better. Great powers like Britain and France could use their navies to threaten the leaders of Barbary. Other countries had to pay for safety by sending precious items and naval stores to the Barbary States, thereby arming them in the process. And poor nations often found it problematic sending enough gifts, especially as they felt that the leaders of Barbary increased their demands over time. The consuls’ task was a difficult one, and if they came from a poor country, with limited naval power to send to the Mediterranean, fewer options were open to them. But the consuls of such nations still made choices, and they often succeeded. How? That is the question this article will explore. What could the representatives of a minor, poor and militarily weak power do, and what did they do? Using Swedish consuls in North Africa at the end of the eighteenth century as an example, I will look into that question and show how even the representatives of a minor power could and did affect their country’s position in the world.

During the eighteenth century, the Mediterranean was the main focus of Sweden’s merchant fleet. This was because, in the view of Swedish politicians, it was a region where the country could find raw materials for import and new markets for Swedish export products. Since Sweden lacked resource-rich colonies, the Mediterranean trade was supposed to offer an alter-
native that could help its economy to grow. This mercantilist\textsuperscript{111} way of thinking about the economy was especially strong in Stockholm, and therefore had a major impact on Swedish trade policy. But the politicians also knew that participation in the carrying trade was yet another opportunity for Swedish trade and navigation to grow.\textsuperscript{112}


For Sweden to be able to keep a large merchant fleet in the Mediterranean, and to have an advantage in the carrying trade over other countries, its flag needed to be respected. The many European wars and the corsair fleets of the North African powers meant that shipping was constantly under the threat of being captured by corsairs and privateers. Sweden’s navy was not large enough to be able to patrol the Mediterranean with more than a couple of frigates at any time and therefore could not effectively protect Swedish shipping. Frigates could also be used as convoy ships, but they seldom went further than Gibraltar. Once in the Mediterranean, Swedish merchantmen had to fend for themselves. Besides, convoys were known to be slow and they limited the freedom of the merchant vessels by forcing them to stay in groups, making it harder for individual masters to seek out the best ports and prices.\textsuperscript{113}

This situation caused Sweden, and other minor powers, to pursue a policy whereby they attempted to remain neutral in European wars and to negotiate and maintain peace treaties with the Barbary States – the Ottoman regencies of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli and the independent sultanate of Morocco. In return for these peace treaties, the states in question demanded tribute. To be able to maintain the treaties, the Swedish government needed representatives in North Africa who could send home information about what was happening and what needed to be done. This was one of the consuls’ most important
duties, and from their reports we can see what choices they made and how they argued in favour of them. In this article, we will look at the information consuls and other Swedish representatives sent back concerning Sweden’s relations with the North African powers. The representatives who were not consuls were often frigate commanders with orders to act as negotiators in North Africa, and their reports are therefore just as significant as the consuls’. How these consuls and naval officers wrote about the region they were stationed in and how they related Sweden’s role there to a larger international context will be important. It will show how the Swedish representatives, constantly aware of the limited resources at their disposal, used whatever means they had to maintain peaceful relations with the Barbary States. They were competing with other small, neutral powers for shares in the carrying trade but, as we will see, the Swedes were faced with a complex situation which meant that they often had to make decisions involving cooperation rather than competition with those powers.

In earlier research quite a few cases can be found in which the representatives of neutral powers cooperated with each other. Such accounts indicate that the Swedes, Danes and Americans cooperated more frequently with each other than with other, non-neutral powers. This happened despite the fact that they also were competitors in the neutral carrying trade. Previous research has not offered any explanations for this cooperation, and so the question of why it occurred remains unanswered. By asking what the representatives of minor powers could do we can come closer to understanding their actions.

The period 1791–1802 has been chosen because it was a time when the Swedish policy was really put to the test. The French revolutionary wars brought more opportunities in the carrying trade for those who remained neutral, but also more privateers and naval squadrons that would not always bother to respect the freedom of the neutral flags. During this period, both Algiers, in 1791, and Tripoli, in 1796, declared war on Sweden. It was also at this time that the number of Swedish merchantmen entering the Mediterranean each year reached its peak. It has been estimated that, at the end of the eighteenth century, the Swedish merchant fleet was the fifth largest in Europe.

The disposition of this article is as follows. First, we will look at the theoretical assumptions about Sweden’s position in the world on which the article is built. This will help to structure the results. We will then move on to three empirical sections. In the first, we will deal with the information the Swedes sent home from North Africa and see how much Swedish relations with the Barbary States depended on the consuls writing clear reports that were not misunderstood. The following two sections will be concerned with the kind of game the Swedish representatives played in North Africa. First we will see how and when they played the same game as the great powers, and then how Sweden’s position as a neutral power also opened up quite
unique possibilities for them. The three empirical parts of the article are followed by a concluding section.

Sweden as one player among many

Sweden was one of many actors in the Mediterranean, and can be said to have acted within an international system of sovereign states. The concept of an international system is common in international relations theory, and is used to explain how those relations work. There are many different ways to define it. A well-known example is the Westphalian system, which developed after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The most important part of this system is the sovereign state. Even if all states are sovereign, however, it does not imply that they are all equally important players in the system. Great powers are in many ways more important than minor ones, as they can have a greater impact on the system. This does not mean, though, that the minor powers have no control of their own policies. They simply have less room for manoeuvre than their more powerful neighbours. In this article, I regard the British, the French and to some extent the Spanish as maritime great powers and the United States, Denmark, Sweden, Venice, the Dutch Republic and the Barbary States as minor powers. Portugal will be seen as a more powerful country than the minor powers, but not quite a great power.

What can we say about Sweden’s position in this system? The country was a minor power with limited resources to draw on in its dealings with other nations. Its navy was respectable, but quite small compared with the major maritime powers of Europe, and the bulk of it was needed in the Baltic to protect Swedish interests there. Sweden was quite a poor nation, and the carrying trade in the Mediterranean served as a way to keep a large merchant fleet busy and to make profits for the country, despite it having a limited array of export goods to offer. The Mediterranean could also supply the Swedes with cheap salt, which was one of the reasons for sending ships there. In addition, Sweden was fairly peripheral in geographical terms and could often stay out of the many conflicts in continental Europe. This meant that neutrality was frequently a possible choice. To sum up, Sweden was geographically peripheral, neutral and weak, both economically and militarily, but had a large merchant fleet. It did everything it could to make sure its flag was respected by everyone, so that it could keep this fleet busy carrying goods belonging to merchants from states whose flags were less respected. In this way, neutral powers were able to profit from European conflicts. The position in the international system of a geographically peripheral, weak and neutral power was one Sweden shared with Denmark and the United States. As has been mentioned, it was with the consuls of those countries that the Swedish consuls cooperated the most.
Information and misinformation

To have any chance of success in its trade policy, the Swedish state needed access to reliable and up-to-date information. In Sweden there was a specific public authority responsible for Mediterranean affairs, the Convoy Office (Konvokommissariatet). It was responsible for paying the Swedish consuls, and organised convoys, negotiated the peace treaties with the Barbary States, and made sure gifts were sent to their leaders as necessary. The consuls reported to the Office when they needed to, explaining what was happening in the region and what they were doing. These reports were vital to the Convoy Office. Stockholm was far away from the Mediterranean ports and the consulates. This meant that the reports sent back by Sweden’s representatives in the region had to travel far, and often through areas of conflict. It could take several months for them to arrive in Stockholm, and therefore it was essential that they were well written and clear. If anything was misunderstood, the consequence could be war.

Before we look at actual examples of the significance of reliable information, it is important to clarify how the Swedes were viewed by the various parties involved, to provide us with a picture of the context within which they were acting. In 1791, the dey of Algiers declared war on Sweden, as it was late in paying tribute to him. The Algerian corsairs were sent out to find Swedish merchantmen to capture, but the dey gave the Swedes some respite before sending his ships, and thanks to this the consular network was able to warn the merchantmen of the danger before any vessels were seized. In 1792, the newly appointed Swedish consul Matthias Skjöldebrand managed to negotiate a new peace treaty with Algiers. Regarding Sweden as a minor state and comparing it to other minor powers, the dey agreed to make peace on the same terms as with the Danes, the Dutch and the Venetians. Skjöldebrand did manage to secure slightly better terms for his country, but it is clear that he too considered it to be a minor power with very limited resources. When Skjöldebrand sent his report home, he attached the Danish peace treaty so that the Convoy Committee would have something to compare the Swedish treaty with. That it was the Danish treaty he enclosed was hardly a coincidence.

The Swedish representatives often compared their country’s situation in the Mediterranean with that of the Danes and tried to do better, or at least not worse, than them. For example, when the Swedes were negotiating a peace treaty with Tripoli in 1798, after the Tripolitan pasha had begun demanding more tribute from them in 1796, the Swedish negotiator Major L. G. Blessingh had been instructed by the king to investigate how much the Danes had paid. In his report, Blessingh informed the Swedish government that he had managed to negotiate peace on terms that were a little better than those secured by Denmark. However, he reported, since the Danes had agreed to everything the pasha had wanted, the negotiations had been
much harder for him. Whether or not this was true, it provided Blessingh with an opportunity to blame the Danes for the high cost of peace. It also shows how he understood that the actions of one power could have consequences for others. The Swedish consul to Tripoli, Johan Widell, thought that the Danes had tried to make sure in their negotiations with the pasha that the Swedes would not get better terms than they themselves were accorded.123

The Swedes were clearly in competition with the Danes. Consuls and officers were aware that all the neutral powers were competing in the carrying trade, and that when one of them had problems it meant more trade and profits for the others. Whether competitors faced difficulties because of the European war, or because of problematic relations with the North African states, did not matter. The Swedish consul to Livorno, Peter Vilhelm Törngren, wrote in a report in 1792, for example, that he hoped the war with Algiers could be ended quickly so that Sweden could take advantage of the fact that the French flag was enjoying less safety in the Mediterranean, creating greater opportunities for neutral shipping.124 In this very unstable and unpredictable context, in which relative positions changed rapidly, the Swedish representatives had to provide the Convoy Office with as accurate reports as possible. This was often not an easy task.

A good example of just how important it was that the representatives were clear in their letters can be found in Skjöldebrand’s reports after the peace treaty of 1792. In the years that followed, the European war would make it increasingly problematic to send the gifts the dey had been promised, since many of them were considered contraband by the British and the French. Skjöldebrand had to try everything to prevent the dey from declaring war on Sweden again. He therefore suggested to him that the Swedes be allowed to pay in cash rather than in goods, since cash would be much safer to deliver.125 The Convoy Committee agreed that it would be a better idea and instructed Skjöldebrand to try to reach an agreement with the dey.126 After more than a year, a report finally arrived in Stockholm in which Skjöldebrand seemed to say that he had been successful.127 The Committee decided to stop the acquisition of the goods and send a bill of exchange instead. When this reached Skjöldebrand he realised that the Committee must have misunderstood his last report. He had not, in fact, yet come to an agreement with the dey, and the Algerian leader was now furious that he would have to wait even longer. Skjöldebrand could barely stop him from declaring war again.128 Because of a report which was not clearly written, the peace between Algiers and Sweden almost broke down. Skjöldebrand had reason to be more careful in future.

The reports of the Swedish consul to Morocco, Pehr Wik, also show how difficult it could be to send reliable information. In the early 1790s, Morocco was thrown into a civil war in which different lords fought for control of its territory. This meant that the roads became dangerous, and for several years
the European consuls in Tangier received little news of what was happening in the country. The news they did receive was mostly rumour. It was important that the Swedish state knew what was happening, because a new sultan would mean that new gifts had to be sent. However, if they were sent to a sultan who later lost the struggle, the peace treaty would be threatened and that could disrupt Swedish navigation in the Mediterranean.

In his reports Wik showed that he was fully aware of this situation. He and the other European consuls constantly had to balance between supporting the local ruler at Tangier and not taking sides in case that ruler was later defeated. Wik was very careful when he reported rumours, clearly stating that the information he had was unreliable. But it was the only information he had and he therefore included it in his reports, so that the Convoy Committee would at least know as much as he did. Unreliable information had to be considered better than no information at all.

There was also always the risk that a representative’s lack of skill could make reports from North Africa unreliable. The Captain of the Admiralty Anders Cöster was sent to Tripoli as vice consul in late 1797 to support the old consul Johan Widell, who was in poor health. As Widell turned out to be too ill to continue as consul, Cöster took over responsibility for Swedish affairs in Tripoli. He remained there for two years as de facto consul, although officially he was still only vice consul. During his time in Tripoli, Cöster sent quite a few reports back to Sweden, but most of them are very confusing and it is often difficult to understand what he meant. According to Lieutenant Colonel Carl Gustaf Tornqvist, who was in Tripoli in 1801 to negotiate a new peace treaty with the pasha, Cöster was easily angered and, as a result, became unclear and his opinions difficult to understand. This, Tornqvist believed, could be the reason his reports were as confusing as they were. One example was when, shortly after his arrival, Cöster reported that a British doctor living in Tripoli was dangerous and not to be trusted, but in a later dispatch suddenly, and without explanation, described this same man as his closest friend. In contrast to Wik and Skjöldebrand, Cöster was not careful when writing his reports, making it difficult for the Convoy Office to know what was happening in Tripoli. The situation with a pasha who threatened the safety of Swedish navigation was made worse by the fact that the Convoy Office received reports they did not understand.

Maintaining good relations with the rulers of the North African states was no easy task, but as long as a consul was successful in showing that he was the best man for the job, he could count on support from the Swedish state. Of course, to do this he had to convince the Convoy Office that he was able to get the best possible results at the lowest possible cost. Often, however, the support the consuls received was limited by the fact that the funds of the Convoy Office did not allow for much spending. All in all, Sweden’s representatives wrote as detailed reports as they could, and most of them were careful to point out when their reports were based on unreliable information.
Promises and threats

When they could, Swedish consuls and officers used the same methods as those of the great powers. Through bribes and threats, the leaders of the Barbary States could be persuaded to leave ships alone. Of course, the great powers were in a much better position to use these methods than the minor ones. A poor country with a small navy did not have much to offer and was not much of a threat to the states of North Africa. Sweden, however, was a major supplier of naval stores and these were in great demand in the region. When given the option to do so, the Swedes sent naval stores as gifts to North Africa but, as was mentioned above, wars often prevented them from exporting such supplies. We will now look at a few events illustrating how Swedish representatives dealt with the problematic situation of maintaining peaceful relations with the Barbary States, despite having very limited military and economic resources available to them.

The reports sent to Stockholm often described how the ever-increasing demands from the North African states were very problematic for poor countries. In 1791, before the civil war, Wik was waiting for a Swedish frigate loaded with presents for the Moroccan sultan, but was worried that the sultan and important Moroccans would want more than usual because a Portuguese ambassador had recently spent a great deal of money in the country. Colonel Måns von Rosenstein, the commander of the frigate sailing to Morocco, wrote home explaining that the Portuguese, British and other ambassadors had spent too much money there, which had made the Moroccans greedier. And when Skjöldebrand was going to Algiers to negotiate in 1792, he reported that he thought the Spanish had paid far too much for their peace treaty and that it would be difficult for a poor country like Sweden if the dey wanted more of the same. But the Swedes’ straitened circumstances and inability to compete with the richer nations were not the only limitation they faced. The fact that their navy was small and bound up in the Baltic also created problems, as this gave the leaders of Barbary less reason to fear retaliations for their attacks on Swedish merchantmen.

Vice Consul Cöster, who in his reports seems to have been very impressed by the British navy and Lord Nelson in particular, often asked for a couple of Swedish frigates to visit Tripoli to scare its leader into accepting a peace treaty that was favourable for Sweden. He was certain that the pasha would get the message. In Algiers, Skjöldebrand would probably not have agreed that it was simply a matter of sending a couple of ships. He mentioned in a report that even large navies could not do much against the dey, as the harbour was easily defended. The only effect such attacks had was to make the dey think he was invincible. Now, Tripoli was a weaker power than Algiers, but that did not mean that its harbour was defenceless.

Although Cöster wanted the navy to send frigates to teach the pasha a lesson, the Swedish government was not willing to do so before everything else
had been tried. Twice they sent naval officers as negotiators, but when Tornqvist had negotiated the second peace treaty, at a price the Swedish king simply could not accept, preparations to send a squadron to the Mediterranean were put in hand.\textsuperscript{137} Due to the difficulties communicating with Tripoli, the new Swedish consul there, Pehr Niclas Burström, would not be informed of these plans until the squadron was already in the Mediterranean. His reports show, however, that he understood that a squadron was probably on its way.\textsuperscript{138} Until he knew for certain, he chose to buy as much time as he could by saying that he was sure Tornqvist would come back with the sum of money he and the pasha had agreed upon. He said that Tornqvist’s frigate was in Livorno which was under blockade, and that the ship needed repairs before it could return.\textsuperscript{139} But when he finally received news of the squadron’s arrival in the Mediterranean, he changed his tone and informed the pasha that Swedish warships were on their way.\textsuperscript{140} So, after promising the Tripolitan leader that Sweden would pay, and thereby buying Swedish ships in the region valuable time, he was suddenly in a position to threaten the use of force, something usually only the great powers were able to do.

The Danes and Americans as competitors and friends

The squadron that was sent to the Mediterranean in 1801 to force the pasha of Tripoli to accept a peace treaty on terms that were acceptable to Sweden consisted of just three frigates and a brig of war, which would join a fourth frigate already cruising there. The brig was lost at sea en route, so only the frigates arrived. They were used to blockade the harbour of Tripoli and to convoy merchantmen in the Mediterranean. Since the Americans were also in conflict with Tripoli and had a squadron in these waters, the commanders of the squadrons agreed to assist each other. Together they convoyed merchantmen of both nations and tried to hold Tripoli under blockade, but it proved too much for such a small force. Swedish and American ships were still captured by Tripolitan corsairs, and smaller vessels could sneak in and out of the harbour despite the presence of the frigates. The French chargé d’affaires in Tripoli, Burström reported, explained that the problem was that there were no ships of the line present.\textsuperscript{141} Only they would carry heavy enough guns to threaten the fortifications of the city. But according to Burström the frigates were also too large to effectively blockade the port, since smaller vessels were able to navigate closer to the rocky shores than they could. The blockade had therefore strengthened rather than weakened the pasha’s determination.\textsuperscript{142} Thus the ships that Sweden was able to send were too few and, ironically, both too large and too small to be able to really threaten him. The Swedes simply could not defeat Tripoli with military might.
During the conflict with Tripoli from 1796 to 1802, more than twenty Swedish ships and around 200 sailors were captured by Tripolitan cruisers. The sailors had to be looked after by the consul in Tripoli, one reason being that their clothes wore out during their captivity and had to be replaced from time to time. The peace after 1798 had been unstable, and when the pasha declared war on Sweden again in 1800, the Swedish government feared that its consul would no longer be allowed to take care of the country’s affairs in Tripoli and that the captives would thereby be cut off from any contact with Sweden. The Convoy Office therefore instructed the Danish consul Nicolai Christian Nissen to take over the care of the Swedish captives in the event of Vice Consul Cöster, the only Swedish representative left in Tripoli, being unable to continue. Also, in 1801, the Swedish king instructed the Convoy Office to ask Nissen to help negotiate the release of as many Swedish captives as possible by pretending that some of their relatives wanted to pay for their release. He knew that Denmark had paid a lot for their peaceful relations with the Barbary States and that by doing so they had hoped to be the only neutral flag from northern Europe in the Mediterranean. But he had also heard that Nissen was a good man and thought that he would help the Swedes, especially as they had helped the Danes during a recent conflict with Tunis.

The Swedish consuls to Tripoli, however, were sometimes sceptical about their Danish counterparts. Vice Consul Cöster had in 1798 asked for permission to leave Tripoli for six months, and the Convoy Office had agreed to this. The king decided that during Cöster’s leave he should hand over responsibility for Swedish affairs to the Danish consul, whose name is not mentioned in the archive but who cannot have been Nissen, since the latter did not arrive until 1800. Cöster refused since, according to him, the Danish representative could not even take care of his own affairs. He did not necessarily mean that the consul was unskilled (although this was his usual opinion of the people around him). Probably, he simply meant that the pasha refused to meet the Dane, who was thus prevented from taking care of his country’s affairs. Instead, Cöster decided to hand over Sweden’s affairs to the man who was both the British consulate secretary and the Portuguese consul and who, according to Cöster, was a friend to him and to Sweden. As it turned out, however, this man was anything but a friend of Sweden, and tried to get the pasha to place unreasonable demands on the neutral powers so as to make peace between them and Tripoli impossible.

Cöster was not a very skilled consul and was not capable of handling Swedish affairs in a way that the Swedish government found acceptable, and therefore a successor, Burström, was appointed, arriving in December 1800. He, too, would view the Danish consul with scepticism. When the pasha, in the presence of all the European consuls, declared war on the Swedes in May 1802, after they had failed to ratify Tornqvist’s treaty of 1801, Burström noted that Nissen had smiled. This Burström saw as a sign that the Dane had
been involved in the pasha’s decision to declare war against Sweden.\textsuperscript{148} He was wrong, however; it later became clear that the hidden enemy had been the French mediator Naudi, who had been instructed by his government to help the Swedes, but had instead secretly worked against them. Thus, according to Burström, the Danish consul was not guilty of plotting against the Swedes, but he was still guilty of smiling at their misfortune.\textsuperscript{149} Whether Naudi was acting contrary to his orders, or following some secret orders to make it appear as if he was supporting the Swedes when in reality he was not, we cannot tell from Burström’s reports.

It was not only Sweden’s representatives in Tripoli who suspected other powers of secretly trying to make matters in North Africa problematic for the neutral states. In Algiers, Skjöldebrand reported that a Spanish shipwright had been appointed to the Algerian court and that he suspected that the shipwright had secret orders from the court of Spain to make sure that the naval stores the dey demanded from lesser European powers would be of unreasonable dimensions, making them impossible to deliver. The dey would then have reason to declare war against these unfortunate countries.\textsuperscript{150} Skjöldebrand was annoyed that another nation would do this to the neutral powers. Whether the Spanish really had instructed the shipwright to cause problems for other Europeans is hard to say, but both Skjöldebrand and other Swedish consuls often blamed richer powers for weakening the positions of the poorer, neutral ones. It was usually members of the former group that were viewed with scepticism by the Swedes, and sometimes they even chose to ignore Swedish interests directly, without any secrecy. When the Portuguese negotiated a peace treaty with Tripoli in 1799, they gave two Swedish ships to the pasha. The vessels had first been captured by the pasha’s corsairs and then seized again by the Portuguese on their way to Tripoli. But instead of returning them to their original owners, the Portuguese saw their chance to make a gift to the pasha which they did not have to pay for. Cöster was not in a position to protest.\textsuperscript{151}

All in all then, Sweden’s consuls and representatives saw their country as a neutral power with limited resources and much in common with other neutral powers. The Swedes thought it was reasonable that they should be treated like the Danes and, when in trouble, often cooperated with them and the Americans. They were suspicious of the great powers and richer countries like Portugal, and it is clear that they viewed them differently than they did the neutral powers. When consuls were angry that other powers were trying to influence the Barbary States so that they would attack weaker countries, this was usually seen as something belligerent powers did to the neutral powers in general. That is, it was not usually written about as something that all other powers did against Sweden in particular, but rather as something a more prominent power like Spain did either against all others or against neutral flags in particular. Only rarely did a Swedish consul suspect another neutral power of secretly plotting against his country’s interests, and in the
only case of it that I have found, the one involving Nissen, those suspicions turned out to be unfounded.

I have discovered only one instance of a Swedish consul reporting that he was actively seeking to make a Barbary leader demand an unreasonable amount of tribute from another power. This was when the Neapolitans were close to making peace with Algiers. The consulate secretary Per Erik Skjöldebrand, Matthias Skjöldebrand’s brother who was taking care of Swedish affairs in Algiers while his brother was back in Sweden to get married, reported that he was trying to persuade the dey to make unreasonable demands of the nations seeking peace with Algiers. He had no orders to do so, but reasoned that if the dey had peace treaties with too many powers, this would mean less income from his corsair fleet, since there would be no ships left to capture. This would push the Algerians to begin asking more of everyone they were at peace with, including Sweden.152 A Swedish representative actively plotting against other European powers was, it seems, very unusual. In fact, commenting on the proposed instructions for Burström when he was to be sent as the new consul to Tripoli, the king thought that he should be instructed to seek as far as possible to have good relations with the consuls of other powers and not to give them any valid reason to distrust him.153 That is, as long as the other consuls gave Burström no cause to act differently, he should leave them alone and focus only on Swedish affairs.

Conclusion

The first and most important job the Swedish consuls had to do was to make sure that peace with the Barbary States was maintained. They did this by reporting to the Convoy Office what was happening in the region and what actions were needed. If they failed, the Swedes could not easily continue trading in the Mediterranean. Since they were involved in the carrying trade, transporting goods belonging to non-Swedish merchants, only peaceful relations with the Barbary States and neutrality in Europe could ensure that foreign merchants would continue to prefer Swedish ships over their own. Of course, fewer neutral nations taking part in the carrying trade meant more to do for the Swedish ships, and the country’s representatives were clearly aware of this.

The consuls and naval officers were also aware that what other powers did had consequences for themselves, and vice versa. They knew the Swedes were competing with these other powers, both major and minor, but when in trouble they would usually seek the help of the other small, neutral countries rather than the great powers. One reason for this could be that they thought it more likely that another neutral, weak power comparable to Sweden would face the same problems and have the same goals as the Swedes, and therefore be more sympathetic to their cause. The examples we have seen in this
article of Swedes choosing to seek support from powers like Portugal or France did not end well for the Swedish cause. This does not mean that the major powers never helped the weaker ones, but it does suggest that it could be better to cooperate with a comparable power, since it would mean a more equal relationship, in which both parties had something to offer each other. And given the limited resources the Swedes and other neutral states had at their disposal, the chances were that it was sometimes better to cooperate than to compete.

This cooperation between the neutral powers can also be explained by the fact that competition with the other neutrals for shares in the carrying trade always seems to have been secondary to the primary concern of maintaining the peace treaties with the Barbary States. Without these, it would have been very difficult for Swedish ships to visit Mediterranean ports at all, since the cost of protecting the ships would have increased, making them less interesting for foreign merchants to use as carriers. Another important point to keep in mind is that the struggle with the Barbary States was not a struggle between Christianity and Islam, as is sometimes suggested, but simply a struggle for the opportunity to partake in an economically and politically interesting part of the world. However, when an opportunity to outcompete another neutral power presented itself, the Swedes usually seized it. Thus, any cooperation with another neutral country only went on for as long as both parties considered it fruitful for their own affairs. When either of them could maintain the peace without the other’s help, their cooperation ended. For example, when the Swedes got their peace treaty with Tripoli in 1802 they stopped blockading the port, while the Americans continued. That is, the Christian Swedes did not try to make the Muslim pasha agree to a new peace treaty with both Christian powers, but were concerned only with their own affairs. If they could have peace with Tripoli, the fact that the Americans could not was not considered to be their problem.

At the beginning of this article, I asked what representatives of a minor power could do, and what they did do. They sent reports home, and even though these were often based on unreliable news they sent them anyway, since this information still had to be considered better than no information at all. Because of this, judging the credibility of the information could be difficult, and sometimes the reports were misunderstood. Owing to the distance they had to travel, it could be months before a mistake and its consequences were known both in North Africa and in Stockholm, and therefore mistakes could have very serious consequences.

The consuls not only wrote reports; they also worked actively themselves to maintain the peace treaties, often by doing the same things as consuls of mightier powers. They used threats and bribes just like them, but had fewer means to back the threats up and less money to spend on bribes. Owing to Sweden’s position in the international system, its consuls had less room for manoeuvre than their counterparts from more powerful states, but this did
not mean that they could do nothing to affect their country’s position. As a neutral nation, the Swedes occupied a position in the system outside that of the belligerent powers, which meant that they could offer cheap transport of goods. By using this neutrality to their advantage, for example by joining forces with other, similarly placed powers, they could strengthen their own position despite a lack of resources. That is to say, Sweden’s representatives did have at least some room for manoeuvre, and if they were skilful that room could be sufficient to make sure that Swedish trade policy was successful.

111 Mercantilism was the idea that a nation’s power could be increased by a positive balance of trade, with low imports and high exports. In mercantilist theory, imports should be raw materials and exports manufactured goods. For more on mercantilism, see Ronald Findlay & Kevin H. O’Rourke, Power and Plenty: Trade, War, and the World Economy in the Second Millennium (Princeton, 2007), pp. 227–29.

112 See Einar Ekegård, Studier i svensk handelspolitik under den tidigare frihetstiden (Uppsala, 1924), pp. 136–44 and 207–208.


114 See, for example, Lawrence A. Peskin, Captives and Countrymen: Barbary Slavery and the American Public, 1785–1816 (Baltimore, 2009), pp. 156, 193; Eskil Borg, Svenska konsuler och slavar i barbareskkaparnas Tripoli: En studie i makt, girighet, våld och förtryck (Lund, 1987), p. 218.

115 For figures on the number of Swedish ships passing Cape Finisterre in Spain from 1739 to 1800, see Müller, Consuls, p. 162.


117 For more on the international system, see Joseph S. Nye & David A. Welch, Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History (Upper Saddle River, 2013), chs 1 and 2.

118 For figures on the strength of European and American navies, see Richard Harding, Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650–1830 (London, 1999), pp. 289–95.

119 Riksarkivet (The National Archives) (RA), Stockholm, Sweden, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1791, No. 47.

120 During the period 1791–97 the Convoy Office was replaced with a Committee. This was done because the government wanted a cheaper organisation, but it turned out to be even more expensive, which was why the Convoy Office was restored in 1797. For our purposes the reorganisation was nothing more than a change of name, but it explains why there will sometimes be references here to the Convoy Committee.

121 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1792, No. 58.

122 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1797, No. 52.

123 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1798, No. 60.

124 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1792, No. 67.

125 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1793, No. 32.

126 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, B, 1793, No. 45.

127 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1794, No. 84.
128 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1794, No. 88.
129 See, for example, RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1792, Nos. 38–40.
130 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1801, No. 72.
132 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1791, No. 40.
133 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1791, No. 20.
134 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1792, No. 56.
135 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1799, Letter on page 780.
136 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1792, No. 58.
137 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1801, No. 22 (the letter itself is wrongly numbered as 23, but listed as No. 22).
138 See, for example, RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1801, No. 165.
139 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1801, No. 170.
140 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1802, No. 171.
141 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1802, No. 175.
142 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1802, No. 180.
143 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, B, 1800, No. 83.
144 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1801, No. 11.
145 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, B, 1799, No. 76.
146 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1800, No. 124.
147 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1801, No. 72.
148 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1802, No. 175.
149 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1803, No. 196.
150 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1793, No. 32.
151 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1799, Letter on p. 792.
152 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1797, No. 122.
153 RA, Konvojkommissariatets arkiv, E I, 1800, No. 17.
Communities, Limits and the Ability to Cross Borders: Two Swedes’ Experiences in Constantinople during the Eighteenth Century

Karin Berner

The eighteenth-century Swedes who settled abroad often encountered the same difficulties as today’s immigrants as they struggled to adapt to a new society. During that century, many Swedes stayed for some years in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, and tried to establish an everyday life there. They had freedom of religion and far-reaching autonomy, and could move freely around the city, but still they found it nearly impossible to become a part of Ottoman society. The fact that they were Europeans and Christians prevented intercourse with Turks and limited their ability to converse in and practise the language. Instead, they were included in communities with other minorities, especially with Northern and Western Europeans, but also with Armenians and Greeks, and in exceptional cases Jews. Europeans could temporarily cross boundaries by disguising themselves, but only so-called renegades, Europeans who had converted to Islam and become part of Ottoman society, were completely accepted by the Turks.

In this article, I study texts written by Sven Agrell and Jacob Jonas Björnståhl, two Swedish men who, for various reasons, spent a number of years in Istanbul during the eighteenth century. Both produced their texts during their stay in the Ottoman Empire and wrote about Constantinople, its inhabitants, and everyday life and manners. Based on their texts, I explore the strategies that the authors, and other Swedes, used to adapt to prevailing religious, political and social conditions in the city during this period. I discuss their contacts with people of other religious or cultural backgrounds and the communities they were part of. Furthermore, I look at the limitations and opportunities as regards crossing borders which the authors and other Swedes experienced in Constantinople during the eighteenth century.
Clarification of names

In the eighteenth century the Ottoman Empire was a great power that stretched far into Europe and Asia and surrounded the greater part of the Mediterranean Sea. The Swedes called this large empire Turkey and the area was also known as the Levant. Irrespective of origin, Europeans usually referred to everyone living in the empire as Turks, except for Jews and Christians. Consequently, even Arabs of North Africa were described as Turks in Swedish travel writings of the period. In a similar way, the Ottomans used the name Franks for all Europeans living in the quarter of Istanbul called Pera, today’s Beyoğlu.

The Swedes still called the capital, today’s Istanbul, by its Christian name, Constantinople, while the Turks used the name Stamboll or Istanbul. In Arabic, Turkish and Persian texts, it was often mentioned as Constantinija. Both Agrell and Björnstad wrote about the different names of the city, and at the end of his stay Agrell named it Stamboll instead of Constantinople, but Björnstad continued to use Constantinople. In this text, the different names of the capital, the empire and its people are used synonymously.

In travel writing and diplomatic reports, Europeans often mentioned the Sublime Porte, which was the government of Turkey. Diplomats of different countries had very little contact with the sultan, but more with the grand vizier, who ruled the empire and took all decisions relating to foreign envoys. Usually ambassadors and other envoys were invited to only one audience with the sultan.

Sweden and the Ottoman Empire

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Sweden and Turkey had little contact, but regarded themselves as partners because of their common enemy, Russia. In the summer of 1709, when the Swedish army lost the battle of Poltava, King Charles XII and some 1,800 soldiers and others accompanying the army took refuge in the Ottoman Empire, staying there for more than five years. This development affected relations between Sweden and the empire. Diplomatic contacts expanded. Swedish envoys stayed in Constantinople and Turkish envoys were frequently sent to Stockholm, primarily to apply for repayment of loans taken by the king during his stay in the empire. For the same reason, citizens of the Ottoman Empire, mainly Turks and Jews, temporarily settled in Swedish cities.

Charles XII, who first settled in Bender, in today’s Moldova, and later in Adrianople, was impressed by and curious about the empire in which he was residing, and sent out three Swedish Orient expeditions during his stay, to explore the enormous Ottoman Empire, mainly Constantinople, ancient sites and the Holy Land. The king also examined the possibility of estab-
lishing trade between the countries, but it was not until the 1730s that 
*Levantiska kompaniet*, a Swedish trade company, began to sail to the ports of
the Levant. The Swedish traders sold iron and timber products and bought
salt for Sweden, but the ships also took part in the carrying trade on the
Mediterranean.\(^{163}\) Much of the trade was handled from Smyrna, today’s Iz-
mir, where Swedes also settled.\(^{164}\)

When Charles XII returned to his kingdom, most Swedes followed his
example, but relations with Turkey were still considered important, and from
the 1730s there was a legation stationed in the capital, consisting of diplo-
matic personnel, service staff and men of the church.\(^{165}\) The priests had
spiritual care of all Protestants in the city, and especially of Swedish seamen
who arrived on Swedish, Dutch or British ships.\(^{166}\) Gustaf Celsing, and his
two sons Gustaf and Ulric, served as secretaries and envoys of the Swedish
legation during most of the eighteenth century. The elder Gustaf, who was
one of the secretaries to the temporary legation in Constantinople when
Charles XII was staying in the Ottoman Empire, sent his sons to Uppsala
University to study Oriental languages and they later made careers in
Constantinople.\(^ {167}\)

Swedish diplomats brought back to Sweden manuscripts, books, paintings
and other objects, and the Celsing brothers collected Turkish art and even
furnished their homes in Sweden in the Turkish style.\(^ {168}\) Turkish style be-
came fashionable in the middle of the eighteenth century; rich Swedes were
portrayed in Turkish clothes, and words like kiosk, pavilion, divan, sofa and
ottoman made their debut in the Swedish language.\(^ {169}\)

During the century, Swedish explorers travelled through parts of the em-
pire, among them the Linnaean Fredric Hasselquist, who surveyed plants and
animals in the Holy Land, and Swedish linguists like Matthias Norberg
studied languages and early Persian, Turkish and Arabic literature in
Constantinople.\(^ {170}\) In the 1770s, when Gustav III became king of Sweden,
there were military exchanges between the countries and Swedish military
experts settled for some time in the Ottoman Empire.\(^ {171}\) Most Swedes who
found their way to Constantinople in the eighteenth century stayed at the
Swedish legation.

**Sven Agrell and Jonas Jacob Björnståhl**

Although many Swedes stayed in Constantinople during the eighteenth cen-
tury, there are only a few known texts about their everyday life there. Most
travel writers wrote for a public at home who wanted to read about dangers
on the trip, experiences at holy places and people with exotic habits. I have
chosen to use the writings of two Swedes with rather different backgrounds,
but whose texts provide a good deal of information about everyday life in the
city. The first writer lived in Constantinople at the beginning of the century
and the second settled there in the 1770s. Both stayed for some years, belonged to a number of different communities in the city, and wrote of people, their habits and Ottoman society.

The first author, the clergyman Sven Agrell, probably knew very little of the Ottoman Empire when he fled to Bender with Charles XII and what was left of the Swedish army. Soon the king sent him, and the priest and Orientalist Mikael Eneman, to Istanbul to serve the Lutherans in the city and to search for Lutheran slaves from the Baltic area, which belonged to the Swedish empire. Several Swedish scholars have written about Eneman and his Orient expedition to Egypt and the Holy Land, including Christian Callmer in *In Orientem: Svenskars färder och forskningar i den europeiska och asiatiska Orienten under 1700-talet* and Åsa Karlsson in *Den kända och okända Orienten: Svenska resenärer i Osmanska riket under 1700-talet*. Hardly any have written about Agrell who, when Eneman left Constantinople on his expedition in August 1711, was the only priest in the parish.

Agrell wrote a diary during his three-year stay in the capital, from December 1709 to December 1712. The published version runs to about 370 pages, consisting of his diary and an explanation of how the court ruled. In the foreword from 1988, Gunnar T. Westrin states that Agrell’s diary probably served as the basis for letters written to his uncle Samuel Ausén, who was curious about the Ottoman Empire and its citizens, and regularly sent letters asking questions about it. Agrell often wrote about the letters from Ausén and was very clearly answering the questions he was asked, but he included the same content in letters to his mother’s new husband, referred to by Agrell as ‘dear father’. Parts of the diary are just short notes on church services, letters he has written, or visits by the Swedish envoy, other diplomats or Turkish officials, but other days he has written several pages about events in the city, people’s habits, or his own excursions or visits. Agrell usually wrote in a direct way, simply recording what was happening, without judging events or people, except when he wrote about Russians in general or Turkish officials working against Swedish interests. He also wrote disparagingly about the Turks’ hunger for money, their oppression of women, and the life that the Greek upper class lived at their summer residences.

The Swedish legation moved to Adrianople in December 1712 and Agrell died there, sometime in the spring or summer of 1713. His diary first remained in private ownership, but was later donated to the Swedish National Archives by Götiska förbundet and was finally published in 1909 by August Quennerstedt, almost 200 years after it was written.

Jonas Jacob Björnståhl, the second writer, was an explorer and professor of Oriental languages and Greek, who travelled in Europe for twelve years. He spent his final years, from May 1776 to January 1779, in Constantinople studying languages and literature, before continuing to Greece, where he died in Thessaloniki half a year later. He wrote to be published, and regularly sent letters containing observations and experiences to the Swedish pub-
lisher Carl Christoffer Gjörwell, who issued his letters from Turkey in 1780 as part three of Björnstadhl’s major six-volume travelogue *Resa till Frankrike, Italien, Sweitz, Tyskland, Holland, Ängland, Turkiet och Grekland*, which was translated into German, Dutch and Italian.

Björnstadhl is one of the European travellers whom scholars have seen as maintaining prejudices and stereotypical views of the Orient, as described by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*. The Swedish historian Åsa Karlsson gives examples of how a European discourse of the Orient emerged. Björnstadhl, who was part of that discourse, had studied the Orient by reading travel books and a variety of Oriental documents before he went there, and in Turkey he travelled and socialised mainly with Europeans, which reinforced his preconceived image of the Orient.

In *Konsten att resa: Essäer om lärda svenska resenärer*, Jacob Christensson writes that Björnstadhl was the typical educated man of the eighteenth century, an open-minded cosmopolitan who travelled slowly to experience things with his own eyes and ears, and with the aim of informing his readers about matters nobody had written about before. However, new difficulties that he experienced in the Ottoman Empire made him more critical than he had been earlier during his travels. In his letters, it becomes clear that Björnstadhl was continuously comparing his own and others’ predetermined images of the Orient with what he saw and experienced on the spot. Startling statements can be found, like when, after only two days in the Ottoman Empire, he wrote that ignorance and arrogance were the most important features of the Turkish national character, or when, in a letter dated 3 June 1778, he recorded that it was difficult to write about a country without taste, where everything was upside down. At the same time, he wanted to challenge known prejudices and inform other Orientalists by offering what he saw as a truthful account of the Orient as he experienced it in Istanbul. Probably it was more important to him to inform Europeans than to describe the Orient in a neutral way. As we will see later, he also tried to find ways into Ottoman society and socialised a great deal with his Armenian teachers. Although Björnstadhl’s letters are full of prejudice, they are useful for my purpose, because he wrote of everyday life and Ottoman society. Many Swedish scholars have written about Björnstadhl and his travels, and at present scholars at Lund University and the University of Copenhagen are working on a four-year project on the subject.

When Björnstadhl died in Thessaloniki, the publisher Gjörwell commissioned the clergyman at the Swedish legation in Constantinople, Carl Petter Blomberg, to make a summary of his travels from his time in Switzerland to his death. Part 5, which contains Björnstadhl’s travel account from the Ottoman Empire, is therefore edited and the author’s words may have been manipulated. I have mainly studied his fifteen letters in part 3, which he sent before he died, consisting of some 300 pages.
Constantinople – a contact zone

In *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, the American professor Mary Louise Pratt discusses the concept of the *contact zone*. It is a place, often a trading city or a colony, where people of different cultures meet, clash and live side by side. Usually, there are dominant groups, and minorities have to adapt and submit to their culture and rules. Eighteenth-century Constantinople can be seen as such a zone, a bustling market town where goods from most parts of the world changed hands, and although geographically it was located in Europe, it was a place where east met west. Björnståhl compared the city to the Tower of Babel because of the multitude of languages spoken there. There existed freedom of religion for all minorities, and traditionally minority groups had lived with extensive autonomy in their own neighbourhoods under a system of what were known as *millets*. Non-Muslims were separated according to their religious affiliation, and the highest religious leader of each group was in charge of his *millet*. However, during the eighteenth century the *millet* system had lost its importance and even though Franks still lived in Petra most inhabitants of the city chose their neighbourhoods according to their living standard rather than their ethnicity.

People from minority groups could reach high positions in society, and the Norwegian professor Bernt Brendemoen discusses in *Det kosmopolitiskes, nostalgiske Istanbul* how first Jews and later Armenians and Greeks were economically and politically important to Ottoman society. It was also common to find renegades in high places. Agrell wrote from time to time about meetings with one of them, Ali Pasha, a Swedish captain, baptised Henrik Vilhelmsson Kuyl, who had been captured while working for Venice, and who had then converted and in Agrell’s time sailed under the Ottoman flag. He was well regarded, had established a living in the city, and named his two sons Mustafa and Achmed.

Swedish citizens in Constantinople during the eighteenth century

Approximately 1,800 Swedes and people working for the Swedish army went with Charles XII to Bender, and most of them stayed where the king resided, or rode back and forth to Constantinople on his behalf. Only a few Swedes were permanently stationed in the Ottoman capital at that time. At first the Swedish legation there consisted of the envoy Martin Neugebauer, the secretaries Hans Perman and Gustaf Celsing, the priests Mikael Eneman and Sven Agrell, and service staff. Agrell mentioned a physician, a chef, a butler, an equerry, a steward, twelve lackeys, servants and maids. On special occasions the envoy hired extra lackeys to make a grander impression,
which was considered important by both the Swedes and the Turks. When the new Swedish envoy Tomas Funck replaced Neugebauer in May 1711, Charles XII sent him a number of prominent people to expand the Swedish legation at audiences.

The number of staff at the Swedish legation seems to have remained fairly constant during the century. In The Swedish Palace in Istanbul: A Thousand Years of Cooperation Between Turkey and Sweden, Sture Theolin informs us that when the younger Gustaf Celsing bought the Swedish Palace in 1757, the legation had a staff of just over twenty. In a letter dated 3 October 1778, Björnståhl wrote about the Swedish Palace and the household of envoy Ulrik Celsing. Janissaries excluded, he told his readers, the legation consisted of a little over twenty people.

The number of Swedish subjects in Istanbul increased markedly when ships with Swedish sailors tied up at the city’s port. They arrived on Swedish, Dutch or British ships, and in Björnståhl’s time church services on such occasions were accordingly held in Swedish rather than German. The number of Swedes also rose when Charles XII sent military envoys or other men to the capital on various missions. Often they came to borrow money or to negotiate with the sultan’s men, or with the envoys of other countries, as Agrell records. Björnståhl, too, wrote about Swedish military men sent to the Ottoman Empire by the Swedish king Gustav III. He met one of them, the naval officer Fredrik Ankarloo, who in summer 1778 visited Tharapia.

together with French and Turkish officers. At that time, plague was ravaging the capital, and all the foreign legations stayed at their summer residences in Tharapia.198

Both Agrell and Björnståhl mentioned Swedish servants, lackeys, maids and journeymen in their texts. For example, Agrell and his travel companions were each accompanied by a servant when they left Bender for Constantinople, and from his diary it appears that lackeys or servants ran errands or delivered letters for members of the legation.199 Björnståhl wrote about a careless journeyman blacksmith who ignored warnings and died of the plague.200

Sometimes Swedes studied languages in Istanbul. One of them was a linguistically gifted captain, Sten Arfwedson, who had learnt Turkish on his own in Bender and came to Constantinople in the summer of 1710 to improve his skills and help other Swedes as an interpreter.201 Usually clergymen, secretaries and envoys at the Swedish legation studied Turkish, but it was not until the 1770s that Orientalists like Björnståhl arrived.

An unknown number of slaves from Sweden, often women, lived involuntarily in Istanbul, captured by Russians in their many battles with the Swedes, and sold on markets in Constantinople. When Agrell, and later the Swedish clergyman Magnus Troilius who arrived in the city in 1737, met them, both priests wrote that some had been in captivity for so long that they had forgotten their mother tongue and their Protestant faith, and were now Catholics or Muslims and spoke Greek, Russian or Turkish.202 This upset Troilius and he accused the Catholic monks of the Ordo Sanctissimae Trinitatis redemptionis captivorum (Trinitarian Order) of redeeming Protestant slaves only if they converted and became Catholics.203 Agrell even met Swedish slaves in the Russian minister’s residence in Constantinople, when he was sent for to give communion to the physician Kröger, who had been serving the Swedish army when he was captured in Ukraine.204

The fate of the Swedish subjects held as slaves in Turkish, Jewish and Greek families was a concern for the Swedish legation. Charles XII had given Eneman instructions to seek out Swedish slaves in the capital, and the envoy Neugebauer redeemed more than thirty at his own expense during his one and a half years in the city. Some of those freed stayed and worked at the legation, while others were sent to Bender or left with the envoy when he was relocated to Bremen.205 Even after Charles XII had returned to Sweden, the slave issue aroused concern. Swedish congregations and the cities of Frankfurt and Worms spent decades raising collections to redeem slaves in the Ottoman Empire, but also to build a Protestant church in Constantinople.206 The promoter of the church was the priest Magnus Troilius. On his way home to Sweden, Troilius travelled through many Protestant German cities and tried to influence how the funds raised by them would be used.207
The Lutheran community

Europeans in the eighteenth century primarily identified themselves by their religious affiliation, which for Swedes meant that they were primarily Lutherans and only secondarily Swedes. The texts of both Agrell and Björnståhl show how people with the same faith formed a community across cultural, class and national boundaries, and how that community shared in its members’ sorrows and joys. Agrell wrote, for example, about visiting sick members, holding funerals and baptising children. The first child he baptised was named Christina. Her mother had recently been redeemed from slavery in a Greek family. Sometimes he had to bury children he had baptised just a short time before. That was the case with the equerry’s young son Anders, who died of plague in the summer of 1712.

Agrell and his companion Eneman immediately began their mission by holding church services for the permanent members of the legation and other Lutherans in the city. They had no church and therefore held services in the envoy’s house. This being the only Lutheran congregation in the city, people of many different nationalities found their way there, and the services were therefore conducted in German. The Lutheran community also cooperated with the Reformed congregation, and when its leader was away, members of that faith, mostly Dutchmen, came to worship with the Lutherans.

In his diary, Agrell noted everybody who, apart from the usual congregation, attended communion, and his entries show that many Europeans of different nationalities were staying in Constantinople. On 10 January 1711, for example, the envoy’s chef from Silesia in Poland, Lieutenant Marquetti’s Saxon servant, the Hungarian Talapa’s valet and Colonel Grotthus’s valet from Holstein made their first visit. On 18 August the same year, Agrell for the first time welcomed the envoy’s steward from Mecklenburg, equerry Petter Skåningh from Västmanland in Sweden and his wife Anna Maria Ängelin from Prussia, a lackey from Berlin, Johan Roschi from Danzig, and the maid Anna from Livonia, who had just been redeemed from slavery. Often journeymen with German names attended services. Agrell mentioned a couple of cloth journeymen, but also a journeyman dyer and a journeyman musician.

From descriptions in Björnståhl’s letters and Agrell’s diary we can see that the Lutheran community in Constantinople remained much the same throughout the century. The acquisition of the Swedish Palace facilitated the work of the legation, and church services after that were held in a beautiful chapel within the palace, although rarely more than thirty people were present at the same time. Most members of the community were still German, and the services were conducted in German, except for days on which there were many Swedish seamen staying in the city, when the priest spoke Swedish.
Swedes’ contacts with people of other religious affiliations

In both Agrell’s and Björnstähl’s texts, a picture emerges of a community across religious and cultural boundaries at the Swedish legation, with the envoy as its leader and father figure. The legation staff were probably not just Swedes and Lutherans. When Björnstähl wrote about the Swedish Palace in Constantinople, he mentioned that the service staff consisted of Greeks and a few Catholics. According to Theolin, the envoy Gustaf Celsing had a steward, a butler, four footmen, a janitor, a purchaser, a chef, a kitchen helper, a gardener, two stable hands and two washerwomen, but the nationalities of his staff are not known. The legation secretaries also had servants. In 1751, the then secretary Georg Wilhelm Sillén wrote that his valet wanted to resign his post and that he had to employ a new one. Some time later, he took on Anton Rudelbachen, who had previously worked as a weaver in Stockholm.

The Turkish guard, comprising at least four janissaries, also had their rooms at the legation. They were always Muslims, but received their pay from the envoy and participated in celebrating every Christian or Islamic festival. On such occasions, the janissaries presented all the members of the legation with fruit and expected gifts of coins in return. The biggest festival of the year was the Ramadan Bayram celebration, when the fasting month of Ramadan ended and the janissaries at the legation were dressed in new clothes. The envoy also bought many Bayram gifts, mainly for influential people in the Sublime Porte. In the account books of the 1790s, the envoy recorded such expenses every year.

Agrell wrote that, in his day, there were always an aga, two siauses and four janissaries working for the Swedish legation. He explained that aga meant ‘lord’, and in every foreign minister’s house there was such an official to keep an eye on the legation and, together with the janissaries, to guard it and maintain order. Siauses were a sort of legal representative who ensured that cases were taken up in the courts. In a letter, Björnstähl wrote that in every European minister’s house there were a minimum of four janissaries. He also wrote that not only Franks and Greeks lived in Pera; many houses in the area were inhabited by Turkish families.

Janissaries accompanied the Swedes when they went out into the city, and Agrell was glad of their presence, because he was afraid of people he called ‘Levantines’ or ‘boatmen’. These were people of varying origin, mainly renegades and Greeks, who plundered and murdered in the city and in the waters around Constantinople. On a couple of occasions he wrote about attacks on people he knew, or about Levantines breaking into houses and killing household members. Sillén, secretary to the Swedish legation in the 1750s, wrote that people feared the Levantines and regarded them as a scourge. Björnstähl never mentioned Levantines, and seldom wrote about
janissaries. He sometimes wandered about the capital in disguise, with only one of his teachers as company, but it may be that the janissaries were so obvious that he just did not mention them, or that security arrangements were different from at the beginning of the century. He wrote that all Europeans in the city lived in freedom and safety under the patronage of their respective ministers, with freedom of religion and opportunities to engage in crafts and trade. According to Björnståhl, there was no more tolerant government than the Turkish one.\(^{227}\)

When Swedes travelled within the empire, janissaries were essential, and sometimes Agrell mentioned that they came to his aid when people tried to cheat him or he needed help. For longer trips, Europeans hired such escorts. On Agrell’s first journey in December 1709, from Bender to Constantinople, the Swedish group of eight people relied on a Turk who arranged food, horses and lodgings and finally, in Constantinople, accompanied them to the Swedish envoy.\(^{228}\) In July 1712, Agrell, the secretary Celsing and Agrell’s landlord, an English watchmaker, went to the hot springs at Bursa. One day they rented horses and horsemen to climb the 2,500 metre high mountain near the city. On the way down, the horsemen tried to delay the journey to get paid for an additional day, but the janissaries intervened and forced them to move on.\(^{229}\)

Björnståhl wrote that his janissary Ahmed Basha was a trustworthy man. He accompanied Björnståhl on his travels in Greece and on one occasion saved him from twelve Albanians lying in wait on either side of the road.\(^{230}\) Ahmed Basha also sent a secret letter to the Swedish consul in Thessaloniki to get help when Björnståhl became ill. The Swedish rescue party found them, but Björnståhl’s life could not be saved.\(^{231}\)

Although he was a Lutheran priest, Agrell’s notes on the customs and traditions of other religions were open-minded and neutral, and he socialised with religious leaders from different communities. Alone or with other Europeans, he visited churches, synagogues and mosques and attended religious ceremonies. For example, on the Greek Maundy Thursday in 1711, Agrell visited Fener, a quarter where Greeks and Jews lived, to watch the patriarch wash the feet of twelve beggars, and he viewed the major procession and participated in the Orthodox mass.\(^{232}\) Together with other Swedes, he rode out in the city to witness how the Turks celebrated the end of Ramadan, and at the Jewish New Year he attended ceremonies in a synagogue along with Eneman and his best friend, an English priest.\(^{233}\) He described how he visited the Jesuit College in the Galata quarter and attended the service surrounded by monks, and on another occasion he witnessed a dervish ceremony in a small mosque near the envoy’s palace.\(^{234}\) In the article ‘The Image of the Turks and Turkey as depicted by Scandinavian Travellers’, Bernt Brendemoen mentions tourist attractions which all Franks were supposed to have seen during their visit to Constantinople, such as the whirling dervishes or the sultan’s procession to Friday prayers.\(^{235}\) Agrell and
Björnståhl seem to have been good tourists, and Björnståhl was even fortunate enough to witness the new English ambassador’s audience with the sultan.236

Swedes at the legation had daily contact with teachers and dragomans, who were usually Greek or Armenian. A dragoman worked at the Sublime Porte or at a foreign legation and carried messages between the legation and the Sublime Porte or other Turkish officials. Björnståhl especially seems to have appreciated the friendship and company of his two teachers, and the friendship appears to have been mutual. During the unusually severe plague in the summer of 1778, Björnståhl was forced to interrupt his studies in Turkish when the Swedes were banned from meeting Turks, Armenians, Jews and Greeks. He still spoke to one of his teachers, Ismael Effendi, but outdoors at a distance, so as not to be infected, and Ismael came to him to borrow money when his two sons, who had often visited Björnståhl, died of plague.237

Although they did not meet while the plague raged, his other teacher, Emin Effendi, continued his work for Björnståhl translating texts in Raghib Pasha’s library. When other Europeans wanted transcripts of texts, Björnståhl made sure Emin was paid for his services.238 He also reported that Emin composed a beautiful piece titled ‘1778’ in honour of the newborn Swedish crown prince.239

In Agrell’s time Swedes, especially the envoy, had frequent contact with Turkish dignitaries, both officially and unofficially, which was perhaps necessary as the king was residing in the Ottoman Empire and wars against the common enemy Russia both ended and started during the period. Despite this, Swedes did not associate in private with Turkish officials, other than renegades. It seems that the latter could move freely between their old and their new identity and mix with both Europeans and Turks. Swedes had frequent dealings with the former Swede, the renegade Ali Pasha, and another renegade named Mr Thalman. They sometimes had dinner together, even though Turkish officials were not allowed to eat with Europeans, and on one occasion even a Turkish captain joined them.240

Swedes’ relations with the staff of other European legations seem to have been dictated more by social rank and politics than by religion. Envoys constantly paid grand visits to each other, but also consorted in other ways. Europeans kept track of each other, and Agrell wrote down all the envoy’s visits and the people he spent time with in private. He also noted all the other ministers’ visits to each other or to the sultan or grand vizier.241 They socialised not only in the city, but also in the country houses in Tharapia where all but Russia and Venice, which had their summer residences further up the Black Sea, had established themselves. On the Prince Islands, rich Greeks and most Franks also met during the hottest months of the year as they sought to get away from the heat and the plague.242
Björnståhl wrote with pride about the Swedish legation, which he regarded as the most linguistically skilled of the European legations in the city. The envoy Celsing spoke and read Turkish and managed without an interpreter, and both the secretary von Heidenstam and the preacher Blomberg diligently studied the language. Björnståhl was also satisfied with the legation’s knowledge of Ottoman society and Islamic traditions. He wrote about one day when the Swedish chapel received some unusual visitors. Turkish scholars, probably imams, had seen the chapel and, puzzled at its similarity to a mosque, wanted to investigate the inside of the building. They were pleased when they found no Madonna, paintings or figures, and that the altar was in the same direction as their mihrab. Some days later the men came back with other scholars and examined the chapel even more closely. Björnståhl thought that the scholars now talked approvingly of the Swedes because of their chapel, their language skills and knowledge of Turkish history and society, and the fact that the legation even owned a Koran.

Neither Agrell nor Björnståhl mentioned any socialising with Russians, a nation often seen as an enemy of Sweden during the eighteenth century. The only exceptions were when Agrell gave communion to Protestants kept as prisoners or slaves by the Russians. Both authors wrote disparagingly of them. Agrell, for example, mentioned that the Russian ambassador had tried to move into his new house and arrange a big party to celebrate the anniversary of the victory at Poltava, prompting the Turkish authorities to intervene, and that Russian officers had stolen birds on a visit to the Dutch legation. Björnståhl wrote about how the Turks loathed the Russians because they were pickpockets and stole in church, and noted that Turks never stole. Shopkeepers simply put a piece of string across the front of their shop when they left it. Björnståhl was afraid that the Russians’ bad behaviour would make the Turks dislike all Franks in the city. Relations between Swedes and Russians staying in Constantinople sometimes improved, however, and in the 1750s they even socialised.

Sometimes different religious beliefs caused discord, especially with Catholics. Agrell wrote, for example, about a sick Hungarian woman, who had been trying for two months to send for him because she wanted to see a Lutheran priest before she died, but Jesuits had obstructed her messenger.

Limits and difficulties

In nearly every letter Björnståhl sent from Istanbul, he complained about the difficulties a Christian faced in getting into Ottoman society. He believed that a people’s language was always born out of its customs, and therefore the best way to get to know a people was through its language, but there were many obstacles in the way of a Christian wanting to learn Turkish on the spot in Istanbul. In his very first letter from the city, Björnståhl wrote
about the difficulties of the Ottoman language. The use of several different alphabets and the varying pronunciations encountered in different parts of the empire hampered learning and understanding. Björnåhl wrote that even dragomans and Turkish scholars who had been studying for twenty to thirty years could not read every kind of text. There were no good dictionaries Europeans could use, and Björnåhl could not rely on books written by Europeans because of all their prejudices, or texts by Greeks, owing to their hostile perspective.250

Despite all the linguistic difficulties, they were nothing compared with social barriers. Custom did not allow Christians to socialise with Turks or Armenians, which meant fewer opportunities to practise the language. Women, who according to Björnåhl gladly chatted away for a while, he could not meet at all, and Turkish scholars were not an option, because they did not talk any European language. The scholars of different nationalities in Constantinople lacked a common language and could not easily communicate and exchange knowledge.251 Björnåhl did not think it was sufficient to socialise with the dragomans. They were Armenians or Greeks and not Turks, and although they knew the language reasonably well, they did not know everything about the city and its customs, and did not have access to all the information sought.252 Nonetheless, the social barriers do not seem to have been completely insurmountable. Björnåhl did occasionally manage to socialise with Turks. He wrote that Turkish men sometimes joined him for a glass of wine, and if nobody saw it this even happened in the evenings of Ramadan.253 When the Swedish prince Gustav Adolf was born, many Turks took part in the celebrations, and on his last journey, on a boat heading for Greece, Björnåhl celebrated the Swedish king’s birthday and drank together with other Swedes and two Turkish gentlemen.254 In Greece, he and his janissary travelled for a while with two Turkish men, Hagdi Ali and a merchant.255

Crossing borders

Björnåhl found several solutions to the problems involved in getting into Ottoman society, but considered them all too time-consuming. One was to convert to Islam, so as to be fully accepted. People who converted changed millet and became part of the Turkish community, and in Constantinople there were many renegades with high social positions. As an example of this, Ali Pasha told Agrell that Ottoman shipping was dependent on renegades, because Turkish sea captains lacked the necessary knowledge. Agrell wrote that Ali Pasha was almost the only captain who could sail the Mediterranean without help, and that there were renegades serving on every ship.256

Usually renegades had converted voluntarily, but Agrell’s diary tells the story of some Swedish subjects who had to change religion against their will.
The Swedish envoy claimed that the Russian ambassador in Constantinople had stolen the men from Greek traders, while the ambassador stated that he had bought them with his own money. The Russian ambassador arrested the men and the Swedish envoy turned to the grand vizier for help. The grand vizier resolved the dispute without favouring either Sweden or Russia. The men who agreed to convert were released as free men, and became Turks and *bostangi*, gardeners in the sultan’s seraglio. One man, Görgen, who refused was sent back to the Russian jail.  

Another way for a European to gain access to Ottoman culture cost good money. It was possible to hire a scholar to come and teach you for one hour a day, but it was a slow way to go and mostly involved writing and reading, rather than conversing.

Björnståhl stressed that foreigners had to stay for a long time in the empire to successfully study its manners and customs, but even then they could not be sure to learn anything about the country. Some socialised only with the Franks, and therefore people who had grown up in Pera could be ignorant of the city and its inhabitants. Björnståhl wrote that such people had been in Turkey, but not with the Turks, nor had they spoken to them.  

In spite of the difficulties, most of the European countries represented in Constantinople during the century found it necessary to educate the future dragomans, envoys and consuls of the Levant. They had one or two young students, known as *jeunes de langue*, on the spot in the city studying languages, customs and government. Sweden had no *jeune de langue*.

Another way of learning about people and their manners was by studying their writings. Björnståhl discovered Raghib Pasha’s library, a public library in the city filled with scholarly books in Turkish, Arabic and Persian. Even Europeans were allowed to borrow from it, and a librarian fetched the writings visitors wanted to study. There were several libraries open to Europeans, but the ones belonging to mosques and the sultan’s seraglio were closed to Christians. Nonetheless, a friend of Björnståhl told him that he had paid several visits to the sultan’s library. According to Björnståhl, very few Franks knew about or visited these libraries.

One way of crossing borders and not attracting attention was by the use of disguise. Björnståhl travelled disguised in Turkish clothes, beard and moustache and with armed janissaries when he went to Greece, because of rumours that Albanians had kidnapped Franks and sent a severed finger to relatives or to the victim’s envoy. If they did not get money, the Frank was sold as a slave. Björnståhl was also afraid of being taken for a Russian spy on his travels.

Often the reasons were not as dramatic as this when Swedes disguised themselves; it could simply be a way to get into places from which they were
otherwise barred. As a Christian and a Frank, Agrell could not enter the Hagia Sophia, for example, but disguised, and on payment of a bribe, he was able to do so secretly. A Christian could also witness the sultan’s public appearance in disguise.263

After a few weeks in the Ottoman Empire, Björnståhl dressed in Turkish clothes so as to look less barbaric in the eyes of the Turks, and to get closer to the people and their habits and customs. He kept only his handkerchief, his watch and his snuffbox.264 Björnståhl donned a disguise so as to be able to walk anywhere in the city with his teachers without being noticed, and in Agrell’s time the Swedish envoy often disguised himself so as not to reveal visits to European or Turkish officials. One evening, the Dutch ambassador held a secret party in a house near the Canal to celebrate the deposition of a disliked grand vizier. This was the grand vizier who had forced the former Swedish subjects Agrell wrote about to convert to Islam. Such celebrations had to be conducted with extreme caution, so the envoy disguised himself in Turkish attire.265 In August 1710 the envoy attended a mufti, a religious leader, in his house. He was accompanied by only three men and had to go in disguise, because a mufti was not permitted to give public audiences.266

Business concerning Charles XII and his imminent departure also demanded discretion, and the envoy, the secretaries and Swedes on special missions sometimes disguised themselves in order to be able to submit letters or meet Turkish officials without being recognised by the Russians or other enemies.267

**Conclusion**

As we have seen, there were many Swedes and other Europeans in the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century. The Swedes we know of often stayed at their country’s legation, but there were many unknown people as well, such as slaves from contemporary Sweden, who were commonly seen in Constantinople in Agrell’s time. A few were freed from slavery, but probably the majority lived for so long in the Ottoman Empire that they assimilated and became part of Ottoman society.

Europeans could move freely about the city, but did not have access to all places, such as Turkish homes, some mosques and the sultan’s seraglio. However, a disguise and a bribe often made a difference. Swedes felt that the biggest limitations were not physical but cultural and linguistic, and Björnståhl wrote that people from minorities could live their whole life in Constantinople without being able to speak Turkish fluently. It was possible for minorities there to manage without an ability to speak, read or write the language. Björnståhl found it difficult to study it on the spot in the city, but he also found ways to slowly improve with the help of teachers, transcripts and studies of texts.
Swedes and other Lutherans formed a community that cut across cultural and national boundaries, but Swedes were members of other communities as well. Staff working for the Swedish envoy, for example, formed a kind of household, and Swedes were part of the Frank community that socialised in many ways in Pera, on the Prince Islands and at the summer residences in Tharapia. Although religious affiliation was the primary way of identifying people, Franks and Greeks socialised across religious boundaries, more often following social rank or political dividing lines. Swedes and Russians hardly ever socialised. The boundaries between minorities were not as sharp as those between them and the Turks. Swedes visited synagogues and churches and attended religious celebrations. Sometimes priests like Agrell were upset at the behaviour of Catholic monks and fought with them for souls, but more often the two writers and the Swedes they wrote about were curious and open-minded about differences in religion and culture.

Contacts with Turkish officials were diplomatic and ceremonial and Swedes could not socialise with them in private, except with renegades who seem to have had one foot in each culture and could freely mix with people from both groups. Swedes sometimes disguised themselves and paid secret visits to officials or delivered letters for the sultan or the grand vizier, unnoticed by other nations. Often the Europeans kept an eye on each other and on all public visits to the officials of other European countries or the Ottoman Empire.

Opportunities did exist to cross borders. Limits could be temporarily transcended by means of disguise, or by residing with interpreters or teachers, but in order to change millet and become part of Ottoman society, Europeans had to convert. Most renegades mentioned by Agrell and Björnståhl held high positions in society and seem to have been pleased with their change of religion and their new lives.

The friendship between Sweden and the Ottoman Empire continued after the eighteenth century, but the countries were no longer as important to each other politically. New envoys, secretaries, priests and other staff served at the Swedish legation in Constantinople, and in 1877 a permanent Ottoman legation was established in Stockholm. Swedes continued to travel to Constantinople, mostly painters and authors who were curious about the Orient and painted or wrote about it. Many of them were affected by travel writers and Orientalists like Björnståhl, but this article is not their story.

The number of Swedes who reached Bender together with Charles XII differs between sources, from a few hundred men to 2,000.


Charles XII could not travel as he liked in the empire and had to stay in Bender. After the skirmish in Bender in 1713, he was sent to the castle of Timurtash, close to Adrianople.


Nils Staf, *De svenska legationspredikanterna i Konstantinopel* (Uppsala, 1977), pp. 36, 43–44.


Agrell, *Dagbok*, p. 279.


Agrell, *Dagbok*, Quennerstedt’s foreword, p. xii; see, for example, pp. 168, 266.

Agrell, *Dagbok*, Westrin’s foreword, pp. 8–9; see, for example, pp. 182–86, 205.

The Gothic League.

‘Travels to France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Britain, Turkey and Greece’ (author’s translation).


183 See, for example, Björnståhl, *Resa*, part 3, pp. 6–7, 45–49.
188 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Crisis and change, 1590–1699' in Halil İnalcık & Donald Quataert (eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 580–81, 604–05.
194 Theolin, *Swedish Palace*, pp. 66, 70. A problem with Theolin’s book is that he does not account for his sources in a scholarly way.
197 Agrell, *Dagbok*, see for example pp. 92, 247, 302.
199 Agrell, *Dagbok*, pp. 51, 90.
204 Agrell, *Dagbok*, p. 310.
208 See, for example, Agrell, *Dagbok*, pp. 144, 333.
210 Agrell, *Dagbok*, p. 312.
212 Agrell, *Dagbok*, p. 198.
213 Agrell, *Dagbok*, p. 278.
216 Theolin, *Swedish Palace*, p. 70.
Björnståhl’s name for the major celebration that ends Ramadan was ‘Eiram’.

Brendemoen, ‘The Image of the Turks and Turkey as depicted by Scandinavian Travellers’, in Edgeir Benum et al. (eds.), Are We Captives of History? Historical Essays on Turkey and Europe (Oslo, 2007), pp. 97–100.
263 Agrell, *Dagbok*, pp. 76, 266.
265 Agrell, *Dagbok*, p. 115.
266 Agrell, *Dagbok*, p. 143.
267 See, for example, Agrell, *Dagbok*, pp. 125, 144.
Johan Leven Ekelund –
Equerry, Traveller and Writer

Anna Backman

Research on early modern riding academies tends to focus on the Italian schools and the academies in France, with the emphasis on their role in preparing young noblemen for life at court, where the ability to execute movements of the high school of dressage constituted an important cultural capital throughout the seventeenth century. Riding academies were not, however, unique to those two nations. They existed in most European countries, and the art of riding had a transnational character, with riders and staff travelling from academy to academy to learn. The academies did not cease to exist after the demise of equestrian pageants. In fact, a couple of the establishments present in the seventeenth century are still operating today. One example is the Department of Riding at Uppsala University. It was founded in 1663 as part of the university’s endeavour to offer tuition in *exercitia* – practical subjects – to young noblemen. In our own day it is a modern riding school offering equestrian activities for students, staff and the general public.

The most prominent holder of the position of Academy Equerry in Uppsala was Johan Leven Ekelund, who travelled across Europe and even to Persia to work and learn, and who led the riding school from 1744 until his death in 1775.269

Leven was a writer, and a number of manuscripts attributed to him are preserved in Swedish archives. Most of them belong to Uppsala University Library. As his works were never published, knowledge of them has been limited to a small number of hippologists, most of whom have read about him in the few books that briefly mention his work as academy equerry.270

So far no research has been done on the manuscripts, which cover most aspects of horsemanship, from veterinary medicine and farriery to the finer points of manège riding. Leven has put an impressive body of knowledge on paper and, if published, most of his writings would have been the first of their kind in Swedish.

By studying Leven’s trajectory, I would like to challenge the notion that riding academies were a predominantly French phenomenon in the seven-
teenth and eighteenth centuries, and instead draw attention to the transna-
tional character of the field of knowledge an equerry needed to master. Through a close reading of Leven’s manuscripts, I have been able to extract enough information to roughly trace his footsteps across central Europe and into Asia, where he appears to have gained practical skills in horsemanship as a kind of journeyman working his way from one equestrian establishment to the next. In his works, he refers to books by French, Italian and English writers, broadening the geographical scope of his knowledge even more.

Leven shared his practical knowledge of riding through the horses he trained in Uppsala, and through his instruction of the students riding these horses. He also gave lectures and demonstrations in anatomy and other aspects of horsemanship. Some of his theoretical knowledge was put on paper. His writing appears to be aimed at a Swedish audience. I analyse how Leven relates to science, language and nationality in his manuscripts and how he presents his knowledge to the Swedish reader, noting that he refers to contemporary scientific methods to validate his work and carefully selects his language in order to share his knowledge with a Swedish audience without losing precision. In his assessments of the work of others, quality appears to have been a more important criterion than nationality. Through this paper, I would like to put forward Leven as an example of the itinerant category of highly skilled professionals that equerries were, thereby increasing understanding of how knowledge of horsemanship was spread across Europe, either as a practice transmitted from person to person, or by the written word set out in manuals.

Leven’s manuscripts at Uppsala University Library

The richest source of information about the first half of Leven’s life is his manuscripts, in which he now and then supplies fragments of information about himself. These should not, of course, be regarded as absolute truths, and in some cases it seems likely that they are part of an agenda seeking to validate his work by mentioning names or places. I have tried to evaluate their accuracy by studying some of their contexts, something which I will return to below. One of the reasons I do not wish to dismiss Leven’s notes is that, without them, there is not much to work on. I have not been able to find any earlier trace of Leven in official records than the entry in the muster rolls of the Swedish Royal Horse Guards (Livregementet till häst), also mentioned in Svenskt biografiskt lexikon, stating that Johan Lewen Ekelund, rider and sergeant of the Nyland Dragoon Regiment (Nylands Dragonregemente), had been appointed quartermaster of the regiment on 26 March 1739. In March 1744 Leven was appointed academy equerry by royal warrant. When he died on 22 September 1775, the church records state that he was 73 years old, so he may have been born in 1701 or 1702.
The only other source I have found that speaks of Leven’s life before 1739 is Anders Fredrik Skjöldebrand, who studied under Leven in his youth. He writes that there were rumours that Leven was the natural son of Peter the Great, to whom he bore a great resemblance. Skjöldebrand claims that Leven had been suspected of involvement in a conspiracy after the death of the tsar, and sent abroad with a substantial allowance. He then studied the art of riding at the best riding schools in Europe until he ran out of money, which may have forced him to enrol in the Swedish army. At the time of writing, I cannot ascertain whether or not there is any substance to this often-quoted description of Leven, which forms a large part of the article about him in the most important Swedish biographical dictionary, Svenskt biografiskt lexikon. There are, however, enough comments about Leven’s background in his own works to suggest that he did travel extensively, gathering knowledge and learning skills that he brought with him to the riding school in Uppsala.

There are eight bound volumes of manuscripts attributed to Johan Leven Ekelund in the collection of Uppsala University. Four of them consist of lecture notes, transcripts of Leven’s manuals and a couple of remedies for horse diseases. Three of these volumes are signed by named students of Leven and one is in an unknown hand. The remaining four volumes contain eleven titled manuscripts that are either written in Leven’s hand, or have comments in his hand, suggesting that they were authorised by him. In the Uppsala University Archives I found a hitherto unknown document: a deed of donation written a couple of months before Leven’s death, expressing his wish to give a number of his manuscripts to the university library. The document also contains a list of the titles included in the donation. The titles listed deviate slightly from those of the manuscripts bound in the four volumes just mentioned, in that the wording does not match exactly letter by letter, but they correspond well enough to be easily identifiable, and they are all there. These four volumes, moreover, are bound in matching half-bindings bearing the text ‘Ekelunds Mscr. N.1–4’ on the spine, making them stand out from the others. Some of the titles have comments by Leven, clearly claiming authorship and stating that the contents are new or that they describe his own methods. One of the titles is the earliest manual published in Swedish, General Mattias Alexander von Ungern-Sternberg’s translation of Claude Bourgelat’s Le Nouveau Newcastle, ou nouveau traité de cavalerie géométrique, théorique et pratique. The Swedish translation was published in 1752 and a printed copy of it with Leven’s comments in the margins is bound in one of his volumes of manuscripts. I have limited my study to these four volumes, as I find it highly probable that they form the donation Leven made to the university library.
The Russian years

As mentioned earlier, very little is known about Leven’s childhood. Supposing that he did grow up in St Petersburg, it is likely that his background was slightly more prosaic than Skjöldebrand suggests. Leven does not say much about his early years in the manuscripts. There are some references to things he did in his youth, but ‘youth’ can be quite a large time span. It is of course important not to put too much trust in autobiographical comments, but I would nevertheless like to discuss some possible scenarios that could have brought Leven to St Petersburg.

Leven was of roughly the same age as that new and bustling city, full of people from all over Europe. There were a couple of thousand Swedish prisoners of war and people from the parts of the Baltic recently conquered by the Russians, many of them ethnic Germans or Swedes. Most of the prisoners were practically slaves or serfs, set to work building the new city. But people with certain skills, such as craftsmen or teachers, could be allowed to have their own households, run their own businesses and even travel. Leven could have been the son of a Swedish prisoner, or even a prisoner himself. Swedish officers often had young boys serving them as stewards. These boys, if taken prisoner, could improve their prospects by entering Russian service. On the other hand, Leven may just as well have had a privileged childhood, for instance in one of the families of free Swedes in St Petersburg. Then there is the possibility that he grew up somewhere else and that the Russian city was just a stop on his journey to learn and to build a career.

St Petersburg was a city of opportunities. There were many ways for a young man to rise in the ranks, not least if he was bright, presentable and handsome. Peter the Great’s ambitions to modernise the country meant that schools were opened, foreign professionals recruited and Russians sent on travels all over Europe to study. It was a dynamic environment. Instruction in riding had, on and off, been available to St Petersburg youth at least since Ernst Glück launched his gymnasium, open to boys from all ranks, in 1703. It is more difficult to assess where Leven could have received tuition in veterinary medicine. Max J. Okenfuss, in his article about early technical training in St Petersburg, notes that such training was mainly aimed at those destined for the army or navy and normally took place outside of the classrooms, and that there are very few records of it. He also notes that many of the teachers were foreigners, recruited by Peter because of their skills.

The École Vétérinaire de Lyon, opened by Claude Bourgelat in 1762, is generally considered the earliest veterinary school in the world. That does not mean that veterinary medicine did not exist before that. Just as barbers performed surgery on humans, specialised farriers – maréchaux in French or Kurschmiede in German – did surgery on horses. German Kurschmiede were renowned for their skills, and it is not unlikely that some came to St Petersburg
to teach as part of the Petrine project to reform the army. Veterinary medicine could also have been taught by Russians who had been abroad. From 1707 onwards, hundreds of Russian officers were sent to other countries to study. An army college was founded in 1719, but little is known about its early years.

Leven’s *Genera Morborum* (‘Genera of Diseases’), as well as his will and his teaching manual, provide some hints on where he received his early education, what he learned, and what he aimed to become. The will suggests that he spent time in Russia, when he mentions his *Therapeutique* containing remedies for horses that he tried out in that country. Some of the many case studies in the *Genera Morborum* have a date or a place. Writing about scabies, Leven says that he managed to cure a couple of horses at a Russian stud by isolating them in a barn from February to May. He also writes that he was entrusted with the management of many studs during his years of travelling, suggesting that he gathered experience in more than one place. A note in his manual on horse training tells us that he had been at the Russian imperial manège. By this, he probably means the Imperial Stables in St Petersburg, built between 1720 and 1723 after Peter the Great had seen and been inspired by the *Grande Écurie* at Versailles a couple of years earlier. A further note in *Genera Morborum* says that he accompanied the Russian army on a campaign to Persia (probably during the Russo-Persian war of 1722–23), observing a couple of horrible cases of elephantiasis in mediocre nags in Kerman. On the way there, he relieved a Tatar horse of a urinary stone the size of an egg by a successful surgical procedure. This information combined suggests that Leven spent a couple of years in Russia in the 1720s, and that he probably served in the cavalry. He also appears to have aimed to secure the skills necessary to become a first-class equerry, fit for service at the finest establishments.

The equerry as a medium for transferring practice

The equerry held a very important position in early modern horse culture. A royal stable, for instance, could be a huge facility with hundreds of horses and employees. An equerry aspiring to manage a top-class royal, private or military establishment would need profound knowledge and experience of a variety of subjects, such as riding, carriage driving and breeding. He also needed a knowledge of horses’ diseases and their treatment, farriery, horsemanship and feeding. An equerry who had travelled would have experienced things being done in different ways, bringing new knowledge and methods to his employer’s stables. Most of the everyday work around the stables was based on practice, tacit knowledge passed on orally between staff. The same applied in the manège.
Although Jacob Gillberg (1724–93) probably used a French picture by Charles Parrocel as a template for this image, it is also quite representative of what a Swedish cavalryman would have looked like in the middle of the eighteenth century. By Jacob Gillberg, ‘Ryttare beväpnad med värja och karbin’. Source: Uppsala University Library.
Riding is an extremely physical activity. It is very much about balancing the bodies of horse and rider so as to restrict the horse’s movement as little as possible, and aligning their centres of gravity so that the horse carries more weight on its strong hindquarters. This enables the rider to control the horse through small movements of the seat and to ride with one hand on the reins, freeing the other hand for other purposes such as holding a weapon or a dressage whip. Riding is also about communicating with the horse without words through the seat, the legs, and the hand holding the reins. Even nowadays, with access to video cameras and even computerised artificial horses with built-in sensors, it is difficult to transfer this knowledge from person to person. The best media are still the horse and the rider themselves, just as in the eighteenth century. The best way to learn is for beginners to ride seasoned school horses, and for experienced riders to train young horses. Now, as then, trainers travel to teach, riders travel to learn, and well-trained horses are exported and imported, fetching high prices. Young eighteenth-century noblemen went on peregrinations, visiting riding academies all over Europe. It seems likely that aspiring equerries could have made similar journeys. The academies employed riders who exercised and schooled the horses to keep them in perfect condition for their noble students, and a good rider would have been able to work his way from academy to academy, learning as he went.

From the source material I have found so far, it is not possible to determine how Leven financed his education and his journey through Europe. Bearing in mind that manège riding has generally been viewed as a pursuit of the uppermost elite, it could be tempting to look upon his skills as a sign of an elite background. There could of course be a grain of truth in Skjöldebrand’s story, even if it seems unlikely. Illegitimate son or not, he could very well have received a grant from Peter the Great to study abroad, like so many other young Russian professionals. The tsar’s imperial stables required horses fit for an emperor to ride and staff to keep them trained to perfection, for riding was so much more than a mode of transport. Throughout the early modern period in Europe, horsemanship was an excellent way to express power, wealth and education. According to Patricia Franz, skill as a rider was the most important way for men of the European elite in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to prove their status. The major cities regularly staged fantastic spectacles in which the horse was a central participant. Royal weddings, coronations and funerals often included parades with hundreds of horses. Festivities were accompanied by tournaments, carousels or horse ballets.

These splendid displays on horseback paraded many types of value. One was the sheer economic value of the horses and their tack, the expensive animals also providing a large surface on which to display luxurious textiles, pearls and gemstones. Another was the cultural capital, the value of the knowledge behind the skills displayed by the rider, who was expected to
make his horse execute the dressage movements with invisible signals, preferably with an air of nonchalant elegance, or *sprezzatura*. Acquiring such skills was a time-consuming pursuit, especially since the people really worth impressing would also be very good riders and hence demanding judges of the performance. Training had to start as early as possible, on carefully selected school horses under the instruction of an experienced equerry. A mastery of riding at the highest level would therefore be a sign that the rider was from a family which had had wealth and power for generations, distinguishing them from people with ‘new money’ who would never be able to catch up.

There was, however, a group of people outside the aristocracy who mastered the art of riding just as well as, or even better than, the noblemen. They were the professional riders responsible for training young horses and exercising the older ones, keeping them finely tuned when their masters did not have time to ride them. The position of equerries and riding masters in relation to their employers could be a bit awkward. They were masters of an art considered very prestigious, which ought to have bestowed on them even higher status than their employers, while their position as hired servants automatically gave them a lower status. They were also often in a position quite close to their employers. For example, royal Masters of the Horse frequently played an important role in the education of young princes and often held a high rank at court. Equerries were sometimes sent abroad to select and buy horses, or to deliver horses sent as gifts to foreign courts. The latter journeys were partly diplomatic in character, since such transactions often had a political dimension, gift-giving being an important part of diplomacy. Travelling meant an opportunity for the transaction of knowledge. The equerry accompanying a valuable horse would stay at the receiving court long enough to make sure the animal settled in, to show it to the recipient, and probably to instruct the staff on how it ought to be ridden. Leven mentions one such horse in his manual on horse training, in a comment that confirms that he trained horses at the imperial manège in St Petersburg. He writes about a horse he had been training which could trot in a very flamboyant and elegant manner. The horse, which was considered unique, was then sent to the Viennese court as a gift.

**An equerry’s pilgrimage**

Vienna was, incidentally, one of the stops Leven claims to have made on his journey through Europe. The city hosted a number of riding academies and fine stables, the finest being the imperial manège, which is still operating as the Spanish Riding School in the Hofburg in central Vienna. The riding school is considered the oldest in the world, marking 20 September 1565 as its inaugural date, the date of the first official record mentioning an outdoor
manège being built next to the Hofburg. The Habsburgs were early adopters of the Italian horse ballets because of their connections with the Medici family in Florence. The Italian influence was still strong when Leven visited the imperial manège. Leven looked upon the Italian school as the origin of manège riding, and briefly mentions having visited riding schools in Italy.

Leven was very proud of his achievements in Vienna, and comments on them a number of times in the manuscripts. He also mentions visiting two other royal establishments. He claims to have visited the school of Saxony, by which he probably means the Königlich-Sächsische Ritter- und Militärakademie Dresden founded in 1725 by Augustus II the Strong. He also writes about watching First Rider Wendorf and Equerry Bockenhusen training horses in the Royal Stables of Copenhagen, which like the royal establishments of the Habsburg monarchy and the Holy Roman Empire had a strong tradition of manège riding. All of these places would have been attractive for an aspiring riding master to visit and had strong traditions of equestrian pageantry, the Saxon prince-electors being particularly famous for their lavish carousels and tournaments in the sixteenth century. Saxony was also the base of one of the early great riding masters, Engelhart von Löhneysen (1552–1625). Löhneysen was equerry to the elector of Saxony, had studied the art of riding in Naples, and brought the methods of the influential Neapolitan riding master Giovanni Battista Pignatelli to Dresden.

The royal establishments were not the only places where good riding was practised and taught. Young aristocrats who went to university, whether in one place or on a peregrination, had the opportunity to develop their level of riding at the noblemen’s academies that were to be found in most university towns. Leven visited the riding school in Tübingen, probably the Collegium Illustre connected to the university, where he saw Oberstallmeister Berga execute redoppes.

Typically, a noblemen’s academy would offer tuition in subjects not taught by the university, but necessary for an officer, courtier or diplomat. This would be the place to go to learn modern languages, mathematics and drawing (mainly for fortification and mapping), as well as physical accomplishments – fencing, dancing and riding. These physical exercises were not just for show. Riding, for instance, served to control the body and attain harmony. A body in harmony was not just a metaphor for personal virtue, but also reflected a political ideal that saw harmony as a sign of good government. In art history, the rider’s hand in a royal equestrian portrait is often interpreted as a metaphor of how the sovereign rules his subjects.

Several researchers argue that the idea behind noblemen’s academies was that they would prevent physical and moral decay among noble youth. Traditionally, their main rite of passage to manhood would have been to see action on the battlefield. As fewer and fewer noblemen participated in mounted combat, there was an increased need for an arena in which they
could prove their virtues on horseback, with sword in hand. Patricia Franz writes:

The courts of Renaissance Italy, no less than those of Burgundy, England and France, celebrated the chivalric ethos in literature, jousts and tournaments. Such events were expressive of more than competition and display. Even as the equestrian statue gave form to a revived, muscular classicism, it was the living horse that excited envy and delight, the means by which a ruling family could project its power, its vitality and its virtu.

The art of riding did more than preserve old values. It helped young noblemen develop characteristics that were increasingly important for a new, refined type of courtier. Some researchers even suggest that the development of manège riding may have contributed to the rise of humanism, as the riders started to realise that the horse was a thinking being with an ability to learn and feel. Hilda Nelson, for example, describes Louis XIII’s riding master Antoine de Pluvinel (1552–1620) as an early representative of seventeenth-century humanism partly because he rejected the Renaissance notion that the horse should submit to human force. Instead, he emphasised that it would be more conducive to the young rider’s development to try to understand the horse and to use knowledge and sound judgement to solve training problems. Pluvinel also believed that the students ought to be taught in the same mild manner, to develop their courtesy, judgement, patience and virtue.

The riding academy in Uppsala

In early seventeenth-century Sweden, there was some concern about whether journeys to foreign universities were to the advantage or detriment of a young man’s character. Some young men spent quite a lot of money on other things than books and tuition, especially those who went to Paris. Others never returned, having succumbed to the dangers of travelling. Those were bodies lost – worse was the threat of losing young men’s souls to Catholicism. There were also concerns about the boys who did not receive any education. Instead, they were left to potter around their fathers’ estates, ending up spoilt and useless to the Crown. A Swedish alternative was urgently needed. A Collegium Illustre headed by, among others, King Gustav Adolf’s old teacher Johan Skytte was opened in Stockholm in 1626, but closed again in 1629 when plague hit the city. Queen Christina made at least one attempt to start a noblemen’s academy. The academy at Rörstrand in Stockholm operated from 1649 to 1651 under the management of Hans Rotkirch, who had thirty school horses at his disposal. Christina also donated the stables of Uppsala Castle to the university in 1648. The plan was to erect a new, palatial university building on the site. That plan was never realised,
the stables remained in use, and there are indications that for some years the
queen provided horses and a rider who could give lessons to students.307

In 1663, a royal decree was issued ordering the university to offer instruc-
tion in the exercitia, the subjects normally taught at the noblemen’s acade-
 mies.308 The castle stable building was rebuilt to house these disciplines,
including a stable and a covered manège. The riding school started on a large
scale, with twenty-two horses donated by the chancellor Magnus Gabriel de
la Gardie, but gradually funding became a problem and in 1702 it was
closed. It did not open again until 1739, when Georg Friedrich von Walden
managed to persuade the authorities to revive it and to employ him as
academy equerry. In 1744, von Walden was appointed equerry at the royal
studs of Strömsholm and Kungsör, and was succeeded by Leven in the Upps-
sala post the same year.

The riding school blossomed under Leven’s management, and the possi-
bility of receiving good instruction in riding attracted both students and army
officers.309 Uppsala at the time was not only Sweden’s ecclesiastical capital
and main university town, it was also in a way a military town. It did not
have a permanent garrison, but almost every summer one infantry regiment
and half of Leven’s old cavalry regiment – Livregementet till häst – would
meet there for exercises and inspection. The latter was a life-guard regiment,
and the king would often inspect it in person. These exercises and inspec-
tions were important arenas for showing off good horsemanship. Two lists of
riding students survive, from the spring and autumn terms of 1760.310 There,
students testify that they have received tuition from Leven. Most are univer-
sity students from the nobility, but there are also a couple of cavalry officers,
one non-commissioned officer, three non-noble students, and the piquer –
probably some kind of working student.

Leven also taught veterinary medicine. Henry Waxberg, one of Sweden’s
most prominent horse historians, seems to be one of very few people who
have taken any notice of Leven’s work in the veterinary field. In a book
commemorating the bicentenary of organised veterinary medicine in the
country, he states that the name Johan Leven Ekelund ought to be remem-
bered in the annals of Swedish veterinary history.311 According to Waxberg,
Ekelund gave anatomy lessons in which horses were dissected. He also gave
lectures on the diseases of horses and how to cure them, lectures that attract-
ed large groups of students from all faculties. One question still left unan-
swered is what relationship he had to the professors of medicine in Uppsala
at the time, Carl Linnaeus and the elder Nils Rosén von Rosenstein, and
whether he was involved in or excluded from the decision to send three stu-
dents to Bourgelat’s veterinary school in 1763.
The Exercitia House in Uppsala in the 1760s. It is tempting to imagine that the man with the dog is Leven teaching his students. Picture from Busser, Johan Benedict, Utkast till beskrifning om Upsala. D. 2 (Uppsala, 1769), p. 157. Source: Uppsala University Library.

Writing for a Swedish audience

Since Leven’s manuscripts are all written in the vernacular, with the exception that he prefers to use the Italian or Latin nomenclature in some specific cases that will be presented below, my general impression is that he is purposefully striving to make his knowledge accessible to a Swedish, and pre-
dominantly a military, audience. In the 1740s, when Leven started his work in Uppsala, there were only a couple of printed publications on horsemanship in Swedish, mainly concerning remedies for diseases. In the early 1770s, when Leven was preparing his manuscripts for publication and/or donation, there were not that many more. The only riding manual in Swedish was the translation of *Le Nouveau Newcastle* (see above). Quite a few books on medicine, though, were published in the 1760s and 1770s. The first ones by Peter Hernqvist, a disciple of Linnaeus who had studied with Bourgelat in Lyon and was biding his time, waiting for funding to start a veterinary school of his own, appeared in 1773. A couple of texts by Johann-Baptist von Sind (1709–76), equerry of the elector of Cologne, were translated into Swedish and published in 1774. They were about army veterinary medicine, biting, and the training of young cavalry horses. There was a commission working on new regulations for the cavalry, but these were not published until 1779.312

Some of Leven’s manuscripts are dedicated to two influential figures in equestrian Sweden, the Royal Master of the Horse, Adam Horn (1717–78), and the Marshal of the Realm, Hans Hendrich von Liewen (1703–81). Both were devoted horsemen. Horn wrote several texts on horsemanship which are preserved in the National Library of Sweden, and is believed to be the main author of the cavalry regulations of 1779. Von Liewen managed the royal studs at Strömsholm and Flyinge, and Leven addresses him as ‘the greatest master of the cavalry and the greatest horseman he knows’.313 The manuscript dedicated to Horn is *Häste-Skolan* (‘The Horse School’), which Leven states is aimed at the young riders of Sweden.314 The dedication to von Liewen concerns a number of texts on conformation and farriery. Leven asks von Liewen to judge whether they would be suitable to print for the needs of non-commissioned officers and privates of the Swedish cavalry.

The establishment of taxonomies and nomenclatures for horsemanship

One noteworthy aspect of Leven’s work is his endeavour to apply some of the scientific methods of his day to horsemanship. Throughout his years of service as academy equerry, the chair in medicine and botany in Uppsala was held by Carl Linnaeus, and Leven studied the Linnaean taxonomy and employed it in his own work. His *Genera Morborum* is an equestrian equivalent of Linnaeus’s work by the same title from 1763, in which Linnaeus organises diseases, names them in Latin following a binomial nomenclature, and adds the Swedish names.315 Leven writes in his deed of donation that he has followed Linnaeus’s system, and he does indeed include most of the diseases in his manuscript, with their Latin names.316
There are differences, though. Some diseases are not applicable to horses – he notes, for instance, that horses cannot vomit. And while Linnaeus’s descriptions of the diseases are sharp and crystal-clear, Leven is more cautious in his definitions. He is aware that similar diseases are sometimes confused, he knows that it is wise to be careful when attempting retrospective diagnoses from historical sources, and when giving the Swedish name of a disease he often also writes it in other languages for clarity, mostly German, French and English. Another difference compared with Linnaeus is that, whereas the botanist only gives the name and the symptoms of a disease, Leven adds comments describing cases he has come across, very often with one or more examples of autopsies on the carcasses of deceased horses.

Leven also uses elements of Linnaean systematics in his text about the horse’s movements, placing them in taxonomic ranks. Just like Linnaeus, Leven was concerned with developing an exactness in the nomenclature of his science. Generally, he strives to develop a Swedish nomenclature, manège riding being one exception. In this particular text he uses the Swedish expressions for the taxonomic ranks, but Italian for the names of the movements. He sees the Italian nomenclature as the most exact, being the one used by old Italian masters and the school in Vienna, both held in high esteem by Leven and regarded by him as important authorities on the art of riding. His copy of the Swedish translation of Le Nouveau Newcastle has several comments complaining that the terminology has become inexact and confused by too many steps of translation from the Italian which he assumes that the Duke of Newcastle would have learned as a student at Giambattista Pignatelli’s (c.1525–1600) famous riding school in Naples.

Another exception is medicine. In his treatise on how to find faults in a horse, from the first years of the 1770s, Leven writes that he uses the Latin surgical terminology in parallel with the Swedish nomenclature he is trying to establish, since it is more exact than the French. French would otherwise have been a natural choice for treatises on veterinary medicine, because by this time the influence of Bourgelat’s veterinary school had begun to dominate the output of that genre.

**Leven and the French**

A negative attitude to the French and to French methods of horsemanship is frequently apparent in Leven’s texts. It does not seem to be the nationality in itself that bothers him, but he does show quite a lot of contempt for practices brought to Sweden by people who had travelled to France and learned new methods, and for some unnamed French authors on horsemanship. It is also possible to detect a note of jealousy, for instance when he writes:
Maybe I too could try to impress other people and make them believe me, and gain a reputation, especially if I mentioned that I have already had my métier as my profession for 50 years, that I have been a trusted and respected equerry in more places than in this country, and that, with much ado, I have wandered through many countries to gain knowledge of horsemanship, but to what avail, since I have confessed to not having been to France? [. . .] A single word from a person who has hardly breathed the air of Paris, and who has not learned more than to copy the ridiculous French so-called little masters, would say straight to our faces that all other nations were blind and that we poor Swedes especially ought to go to Paris, to become at least half-learned.321 Would not such a masterful judgement suffice to overthrow the most well-founded demonstration?322

This passage, and other similar remarks, suggest that the new French ideas were received with interest in Sweden, and that Leven may have seen this as a threat to the methods he himself was promoting, and possibly also to his career opportunities. He was, however, able to present convincing arguments for his dislike of the French methods.

In Leven’s opinion, French riding had become too far removed from the field, and the work of the old Italian masters had been diluted. For instance, the French had started to rely on the wall of the manège as a tool for executing certain movements, and to keep the horse’s body in position. Leven fears that this type of training will cause problems in the cavalry (there being no walls in the field), and suggests that the French ought to turn to Newcastle and Pignatelli in order to learn how to do things right. He also states that every rider who is familiar with those authors will agree that Bourgelat does not base his writing on practice.323 He does, though, praise another French equerry and writer, Salomon de La Broue (1510–1610), who had studied with Pignatelli in Naples and who published a riding manual in 1601.324 He even states that Newcastle and La Broue are the only writers he recognises as true masters, on account of their interpretation of Pignatelli’s methods.325

Leven often refers to mechanics in his texts on riding and the horse’s movements, and an often occurring critique against other authors of riding manuals is that their advice goes against the laws of nature. In one of his comments on Bourgelat, he finds it ridiculous that every author so far has tried to promote their own method instead of studying the natural laws that unite man and horse. He states that the rules of the art of riding are not conditional, but depend on the laws of nature. Knowledge of these laws turns riding into a science.326 It was very important to Leven that riding and horsemanship were founded in practice, and he often refers to his own experience in order to validate his ideas. And although he appears to hold even the most showy and ornamental manège riding in high esteem, he is careful to emphasise the importance of riding being useful. It was not enough for riding to look good, as in the beautiful prints of the expensive
riding manuals on the shelves of noblemen’s libraries. It had to be good, and it had to work outside the manège.

When it comes to veterinary medicine, one does not have to be an expert to realise that Leven’s contempt may have been well founded. Some of the negative examples he gives of French methods are, if true, hair-raising. One procedure was called églander and involved either cutting or tying off the salivary glands. Leven does not mention the purpose of the operation, but rightly states that the horse needs its saliva to aid digestion. Some horses stick their tongue out when ridden or in harness, to avoid the pressure of the bit generally caused by rough hands on the reins. This is a visible sign of inadequate horsemanship. One quick fix for this problem, which Leven disliked, was to cut the tongue off. He argued against the practices of cutting tendons and veins to cure various problems, stating that ‘any sensible person can be assured that all the parts given by the Creator for the needs of this animal must not be harmed by ignorance or want of judgement, nor mutilated or entirely removed to the inevitable harm and injury of the creature’.

He also warns against the method of faire nager de cheval, ‘dry-land swimming’ for the horse. This procedure was supposed to cure horses that had dislocated their shoulders, betraying a deep ignorance of the horse’s anatomy. As Leven correctly points out, the horse cannot dislocate its shoulder, since the foreleg has no skeletal connection with the torso and thus there is no joint to dislocate. The method consisted in first having several strong men tug in all directions at the ‘dislocated’ front leg. Then the healthy front leg was tied up under the horse’s body and the horse made to jump around on the injured leg. According to Leven, horses were usually ruined for life by this treatment.

Although Leven accuses French riding of being a corrupted and diluted version of the Italian school that he admires, it is not the novelty of the French surgical methods he criticises, but rather the opposite. He recognises some of them from the books of the old masters, and confesses to having believed in them himself once. What upsets him is that people blindly believe in the authority of French (and for that matter German) authors, without considering the advances in knowledge of anatomy that have been made since the books were written. An interesting topic for further research would be to examine the books of writers such as von Sind and Hernqvist to see if the methods that Leven criticises can be found there, and whether the publication of these books could have been a source of jealousy or annoyance for Leven.

Relying on the wall as a tool when riding is a short cut. Cutting off the tongue of a horse that is uncomfortable with his bit, and with the rider’s hand on the reins, is a short cut. The former practice compromises the quality of the work, the latter is pure abuse. Not everyone had picked up on Pluvinel’s recommendation to treat the horse gently. To quite a lot of people, a horse
was a vehicle, an object to be used and abused as it pleased the human being. It was also a financial investment, and the temptation to use it a little too much, too early, was understandable. This, however, shortened the horse’s lifespan. One of the few positive comments Leven has to make about *Nya Newcastle* concerns the passage stating that young horses should not be worked too hard.

In his own treatise on how to determine the age of a horse, Leven draws on his experience from the East to illustrate that it pays off to wait. He had seen some very aged Persian and Tatar horses doing full work, and claims that it was quite normal for them to be ridden at the age of 36–40 years. As a comparison, a Swedish cavalry horse would normally be retired at 20. ‘Work’ for Eastern horses, according to Leven, meant galloping across the steppes for a whole day without being fed or watered. Occasionally horses older than 40 years would be ridden by older men, but then as a slower mode of transport around the settlements. The key to this longevity, Leven states, was that they were not fully worked until they were at least 8 years old. That Swedish horses could also get very old is exemplified by Leven’s school horse Aga, who taught young men the art of riding until he was 36 years old, but eventually had to be put down because of problems with his teeth.

**Concluding remarks**

The history of the art of riding as seen through Western European eyes has had a tendency to follow a narrow trajectory, and concerning the early modern period tends to focus on the Italian and French courts and their riding masters. Corinne Doucet and Daniel Roche have contributed to a broader and deeper understanding of the practice of manège riding in France, adding greatly to our knowledge of how the riding establishments operated and how they interacted with society. Miklós Jankovich, in his pioneering study of Hungarian horsemanship, presents a melting pot in which the horse culture of the East meets that of the West – with a particular focus on how the horsemanship of the steppe riders gained influence in Western Europe. It was in the eighteenth century that the hussar style changed the cavalry of the West. This was also the century when horses of oriental blood started to dominate horse racing, contributing to the foundation of the English Thoroughbred, a development which Donna Landry studies in her work *Noble Brutes.* Greg Bankoff and Susanna Swart have expanded the history of manège riding beyond the borders of Europe by inviting researchers to write about how it was interpreted in places like South Africa, Indonesia and South America.

Leven’s itinerary on his pilgrimage to gather knowledge before settling in Uppsala is an example of how each trajectory is individual, and how the
paths of knowledge have criss-crossed over time and space. Geographical borders were not absolute – Leven practised riding considered ‘Italian’ in Vienna and brought it with him to Sweden. One of his most esteemed authorities on Italian riding was the Duke of Newcastle, an English nobleman who had learned to ride in Naples and who wrote his famous riding manual in French while living in exile in Antwerp, where he moved exactly a century before Leven came to Uppsala. To Leven, the quality of the knowledge, and its foundation in practice, were more important than its geographical origin. In my opinion, he was right. The rules of riding have to follow the laws of nature. This makes good riding timeless.

Appendix

Manuscripts by Johan Leven Ekelund donated to Uppsala University Library according to the list of 9 September 1775 in the Acta Consistorii, with the corresponding shelf marks in Uppsala University Library (lower-case letters added to the shelf marks by the author):

- **UUB D 1360**  
  *Genera Morborum* (‘Genera of Diseases’).

- **UUB D 1363a**  
  Dedication to Hans Hendrich von Liewen.

- **UUB D 1363b**  
  *En kort beskrivning på hästens utvärtes synliga delar; samt några anmärkningar och varningar mot hofslagranes [sic] skadelige operationes* (‘A short description of the visible parts of the horse; and some comments and warnings about the harmful treatments of farriers’).

- **UUB D 1363c**  
  *Kundskap om hästens fel och lyten i korthet nämnade, til den mindre kunniges efterrättelse* (‘Knowledge of the horse’s faults and defects, to be adopted by the less knowledgeable’).

- **UUB D 1363d**  
  *Kunskap om Häste åldren och underrättelse å de därpå wissaste kännemärken* (‘Knowledge of the horse’s age and information about the most reliable signs thereof’).

- **UUB D 1363e**  
  *Nya Newcastle*, with comments by Leven.
**UUB D 1363f**  
*Absolute reglor till ridkonsten. Efter naturlige Lagar. Huru en Ryttare med sin kropp, styrhanden och sina skänklar, skall skickeligen operera på en efter bemälte, eller så kallade mechaniska Lagar tillriden häst. Första instruction af Ridscholan som kallas Ryttare Scholan af Kongl. Stallmästaren och Riddaren Johan Leven Ekelund*  
(‘Complete rules on the art of riding. According to the laws of nature. How a rider, with his body, rein hand and legs, should skilfully operate on a horse trained by the mentioned, or so-called mechanical, laws. The first instruction of the riding school which is called the school of riders by the Royal Equerry and Knight Johan Leven Ekelund’).

**UUB D 1376a**  
*Kongl. Academie Stallmästarens Johan Leven Ekelund’s Systeme om Hästens Rörelser besynnerligen de regelbundna konstiga som uptages uti Manegen eller Ridskolan*  
(‘The Royal Academy Equerry and Knight Johan Leven Ekelund’s system of the movements of the horse, especially the regular, artful ones included in *The Ma-nège or The Riding School*’).

**UUB D 1376b**  
*Hippo-graphia geometrica.*

**UUB D 1376c**  
*Kort underrättelse huruledes pröfva en hästs rörelser, at deraf kunna döma, om han är ducktig eller duglig til en Ridhäst eller dertil fehlacktig?*  
(‘Short communication on how to try out the horse’s movements, to judge thereby whether he is good or useful as a riding horse or wrong for that purpose’).

**UUB D 1376d**  
*Om Hofslagare Konsten. Underrättelse åt en Hofslagare, på hwad sätt han skickeligen skall utwerka hästars hovar, och dem tillbörligen besko, samt huru dymedelst de felaktige kunna omlagas och botas*  
(‘On the art of farriery. Information for a farrier, in what way he should trim the hooves of horses, and shoe them appropriately, and how thereby the faulty can be mended and cured’).
Ett kort utdrag af Stallmästarens Johan Lévens fundna decouvert utsatt år 1736 (då han kommit från orientaliska länder till Europa) på häste kroppens semetri: som de af Naturen uti Europa och i synnerhet å Nordiske landsorten, till bästa perfection äro danade (‘A short excerpt from the Equerry Johan Léven’s discovery established in the year of 1736 (when he had returned to Europe from oriental countries) on the symmetry of the horse’s body: the way they are shaped by Nature to perfection in Europe and especially in the Northern countryside’).

Häste-Skolan eller andra delen af Rid-Skolan. Undervisning huru en Konst Ryttare en häst tillbörligen efter dess naturliga rörelse lagar dressera eller tillrida skall. Författadt af Konglige Stallmästare och Riddaren Johan Leven Ekelund (‘The Horse School or the second part of the Riding School. Education on how an artful rider should train or school a horse according to its natural movements. Written by the Royal Equerry and Knight Johan Leven Ekelund’).

269 I spell his name in the manner most commonly found in the manuscripts attributed to him, in the contemporary Programmata of Uppsala University, and in the Uppsala University Library (UUB) catalogue of manuscripts. I call him Leven for short throughout the text, as he seems to have stopped using the surname Ekelund towards the end of his life.
271 Krigsarkivet (The Military Archives) (KrA), Stockholm, Sweden, SE/KrA/0023/0/796 (1741), Generalmönsterrulla för Livregementet till häst 1741.
272 UUB U 65q. Swederus, M. B., Stallmästare: Excerpter ur Uppsala universitetets arkiv. Magnus Bernhard Swederus (1840–1917) was an assistant at Uppsala University Library and gathered excerpts from the university archives thematically.
273 Landsarkivet i Uppsala (The Regional State Archive of Uppsala) (ULA), Sweden, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamlings kyrkoarkiv, Död- och begravningsböcker, SE/ULA/11632/F/2 (1741–1776).


276 UUB D 1360, D 1363, D 1376 and D 1378. I have subdivided the volumes by suffixing letters (for example, D 1363a–f). See appendix.

277 Uppsala University Archives (UUA), Sweden, EIIIa: 77 *Acta Consistorii* 1775.


283 UUB D 1360, Svea hovrätt: Adliga bouppteckningar, SE/RA/420422/01/E IXb/102 (1775 28/10–22/12).

284 ‘Manège’ can either mean dressage riding at a very high level, often including the ‘airs above the ground’, in which the horse performs advanced school jumps such as the *capriole*; or the enclosed area, indoors or outdoors, where this type of riding is practised.

285 UUB D 1378.


290 Franz, pp. 103–104.

291 UUB D 1378.


293 See, for instance, the dedication at the beginning of UUB D 1378.

294 UUB D 1378.

296 UUB D 1378.


298 UUB D 1378. A redoppe is when you charge forward in a straight line and make a sharp, 180-degree turn.


301 See, for example, Franz, p. 114.

302 Tucker writes that only a small proportion of French noblemen served in the cavalry from the fifteenth century onwards. Tucker, *From Destrier to Danseur*, pp. 37, 51.

303 Franz, p. 98.


306 Sjöstrand, pp. 232 ff.

307 UUB U 65q. In the minutes of the Consistorium Academicum from 1670, Olof Rudbeck the Elder mentions that there used to be a rider in Christina’s time, and minutes from 1680 specify how the equerry was financed during her reign.


309 Professor Daniel Melanderhjelm describes this period, not without contempt, in an account of the university from 1783, in which he refers to the popularity of the riding academy under Leven’s management as an ‘epidemic’. Daniel Melanderhjelm, ‘Berättelse och tankar om Academien i Upsala’, in Clas Annerstedt, *Uppsala universitets historia*, bihang V handlingar 1777–1792 (Uppsala, 1913), pp. 112–13.

310 UUB U 65q.


312 *Reglemente för arméens cavalerie: [Del 1], Första delen, innehållande: 1:o Recrüt-scholan. 2:o Remonte-scholan. 3:o Exercitie reglemente för en squadron* (Stockholm, 1779).

313 UUB D 1363a.

314 UUB D 1378.


316 UUA EIIIa: 77 Acta Consistorii 1775.

317 UUB D 1376a.

318 UUD D 1378.

319 UUB D 1363e. Newcastle did not study under Pignatelli, who died when the former was a child.
Leven means ‘petits-maîtres’ (fops), but writes ‘små mästare’ which translates as ‘little masters’.

UUB D 1363b. ‘Kanske jag och kunde försöka att imponera och påbörja andra att tro mig, och skaffa mig något anseende, hälst om jag nämde att jag redan på 50 års tid gjordt profession av min metiér, att jag på flere ställen, än här i riken varit betrodd och välfrägdad stallmästare, och att jag med nog möda, vandrat igenom flere länder, för att skaffa mig insigt om Hästans Kunskap, men hvad förmådde alt det, när jag redan tillståt mig att varit i Frankrike? [. . .] Ett enda löst ord af en som knappast andats luften i Paris, och ej hunnit lära mera , än att efterapa de fjolliga Franska så kallade små mästare, skulle ju säga det i synen att alla andra Nationer vore stockblinda och att vi stackare svenske i synnerhet borde resa til Paris, för att lära oss åtminstone til halfs. Vore icke en så myndig sentence tilräckelig att omkull-störta den mäst wälgrundade Demonstration?’

Salomon de La Broue, *Le Cavalerice françois* (Paris, 1602). It should be noted that Pignatelli did not publish any manual himself; his teachings were known through the writings of his students.

The examples that follow are all from UUB D 1363e.

‘Af förestående korta underrättelse förmodar jag att hvar förnuftig kan med säkerhet anta att alla delar som av Skaparen till detta djurets nödvändiga behof, blifvit tillskapade, ej må af okunnighet eller oförstånd på något sätt skadas, mindre stympas eller alldeles borttagas till creaturets därpå följande ofelbara skada och stora mehn.’


The Roast Charade: Travelling Recipes and their Alteration in the Long Eighteenth Century

Helga Müllneritsch

In this paper, I wish to focus on selected ‘travelling’ recipes and explore possible reasons for their successful adoption or rejection. The dishes we eat are more than just energy supplies for our bodies; they give us a feeling of continuity and identity, and carry powerful symbolic significance. Via food, both individuals and groups are able to generate a sense of ‘home’ and membership of a particular social or ethnic group. Certain meals or food preparation methods are also seen as ‘typical’ of a region and are often used to express particular political views. In the long eighteenth century, for example, food items which were imported from the colonies – like coffee, tea, sugar, tobacco or spices – had much more influence on the attitudes of the British towards their Empire than pamphlets, newspapers or travel narratives. But this phenomenon was not limited to the British Empire; in the 1780s, goulash – formerly a dish restricted to Hungarian herdsmen and peasant communities – was used by the Hungarian nobility as a symbol of opposition to the attempts by the Austrian emperor, Joseph II, to modernise the economy and society, as well as to his aim of building a united empire, encompassing Austria, Bohemia and Hungary.

The naming of adopted dishes can often be traced to a variety of political and social considerations. One of them is the prestige that can come with a foreign-sounding name because of the symbolic significance of foreign dishes (which are perceived as exotic, expensive etc.), with the result that travelling dishes either keep their foreign name or are even given a foreign-sounding name without actually being new or foreign. However, travelling recipes can also be named after a certain dish that is already known and happens to be similar in the way it is prepared, making it less exotic and easier for people to relate to.

The recipe that I will focus on here is taken from a cookery book from the early nineteenth century (dated 1818). Such cookery books for women – Frauenkochbücher – often rely on the transmission of written material that was most likely taken from unbound recipe collections; the recipe texts are
therefore often much older than the books in which they can now be found. Recipes of this kind are sometimes located within a European context, which means that similar recipes appear in the cookery books of different countries. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century it became a part of everyday linguistic practice to note down recipes, and so this text type can be seen as an example of the Verschriftlichung des Lebens (whereby many areas of everyday life were committed to the medium of writing), and in particular of the writing habits of women. Politically, by the time the cookery book was written in 1818, the Holy Roman Empire had already been abolished for about twelve years and Austria was ruled by Francis I, its first emperor, with Prince Klemens von Metternich as minister of foreign affairs, who implemented a repressive and autocratic regime. In the following analysis, it will be interesting to see whether the political situation of the time might be mirrored in the manuscript, i.e. in the non-appearance of recipes from enemy countries.

In the cookery book studied here – a manuscript from the Graz University Library with the number 1963 – we find not only French, Spanish, Bohemian and Turkish recipes, but also instructions for preparing a dish called Rost Pfiff (ff. 67v–68r). The name of this recipe seems to point directly to the English national dish roast beef (given the obvious phonetic similarity between Brit. Eng. [ɹəʊst biːf] and Austr. Ger. [ɾəʊst pfiːf]). The origin of the dish therefore seems obvious – but only at first sight. Looking more closely at the recipe itself leads to some surprising discoveries.

The ingredients of Rost Pfiff are beef, bacon, cloves, cinnamon, onions, carrots, wine, water, bread crust and bay leaves. First, the meat has to be beaten and larded with bacon, cloves and cinnamon. A casserole dish is lined with a bed of sliced onions and carrots, onto which the beef is then laid and a mixture of half water and half wine poured on top. Finally, bread crusts and bay leaves are added and the casserole is sealed tightly with coarse dough, so that the steam stays in the pot. The meat has to be cooked for five hours and is meant to be served with a sauce consisting of the broth and the puréed vegetables. The German text reads, in rough translation:

Rost Pfiff. First take 6 pounds of beef which is good to stew, beat it well with a rolling pin and lard it with bacon, cloves and cinnamon. Line a casserole with onion and carrots, then add a mixture of half wine and half water, baked bread crust and bay leaves. Cover with a tin lid and seal the lid with coarse dough, to prevent the steam getting out. Put it on the embers, braise it well and let it cook for 5 hours. When it is ready to serve, dress the meat, sieve the sauce and pour it on top, it is good.
Cookery book from 1818. From UBG, Sondersammlungen, Ms. 163. Source: Graz University Library.
Singen Brötli Gebeten.

...
Recipe of *Rost Pfiff* from 1818. From UBG, Sondersammlungen, Ms. 163. Source: Graz University Library.
Inevitably we may wonder: is this a recipe for a roast at all? *Rost Pfiff* is cooked in a pot and not in fact roasted, i.e. not ‘carefully balanced on a revolving spit before a glowing fire’, as Helen Gaffney describes the traditional way of making roast beef.\(^{349}\) In the *Rost Pfiff* recipe, a mixture of water and wine is poured over the meat and the lid is closed tight. ‘Typical’ roast beef however, considered the national dish of England (preferably served with Yorkshire pudding), is nowadays – as it has been since the eighteenth century at least, as I will explain later – characterised not only by the cut of the beef (topside/silverside, sirloin, forerib or thick flank), but also by the care which has to be exercised when preparing the meat and cooking it rare, medium or well-done – with all the nuances. Television chef and cookery book author Nigel Slater is clear and unambiguous about this, when he states: ‘And it really must, must be rare; cook it for longer and all sensuous, wanton pleasure is lost. You might as well roast your slippers.’\(^{350}\)

If *Rost Pfiff* is not even a roast, then the recipe can hardly derive from the famous English dish. That means we need to ask further questions. What dish might be behind the recipe’s name, and how did it come to be called what it is? Is it possible that the name was chosen because of a certain prestige associated with *roast beef*?\(^{351}\) Or might there actually have been a version of roast beef which was popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, whereby the beef was not roasted, but cooked in a tightly closed casserole? The example of *blanc manger* shows clearly how much travelling recipes can change over time: the medieval ‘white dish’ of chicken, fish or rice eventually changed into a dessert. To gain clarity in the *Rost Pfiff* case, it is necessary to shed some light on the history of roast beef and its rise to an English national dish, in order to find out more about its symbolic qualities. In this context it will be interesting to see what value beef had in the eighteenth century in Britain or, more precisely, England.

Inevitably we must define a text corpus for comparison purposes, consisting in this case of four very popular Austrian cookery books, printed in Graz/Styria from 1686 to 1858.\(^{352}\) This is a valid corpus, because even if we do not know who wrote manuscript 1963 or the area to which it belongs, the written language of the cookery book manuscript shows that it can be located in southern Germany or Austria. The oldest printed Austrian cookery book, the *Koch- und Artzney-Buch* (1688, 2nd edition),\(^{353}\) is also the first cookery book of the corpus, followed by the *Gräzerisches Kochbuch* (1804, 8th edition),\(^{354}\) the *Allerneuestes Kochbuch für Fleisch- und Fasttäge* (1825, 4th edition),\(^{355}\) and finally the first edition of the *Süddeutsche Küche* (1858).\(^{356}\) These published books can also be regarded as the ‘highlights’ of Styrian (and Austrian) cookery book literature from the late seventeenth to the mid nineteenth century, based on the large number of new editions and the fact that many other contemporary cookery books incorporate (according to common practice at the time) the recipes provided by these select few examples, giving them a status of originality.\(^{357}\) The corpus will help us to
work out which dish Rost Pfiff might actually derive from and subsequently shed light on the travelling of recipes in Europe.

Roast beef – the construction of a ‘national dish’

In the instance of roast beef, we see a clear case of constructing a national identity. In medieval times beef was by no means a highly valued meat; indeed, it was considered rather vulgar and not worth mentioning in medieval cookery books, although it was eaten quite often, accounting for about half of the total consumption of meat in the fifteenth century. In the sixteenth century beef then started to be seen as a simple and nourishing dish suitable for the ‘healthy Englishman’ and in the seventeenth century it finally began to shed its reputation as a ‘vulgar’ sort of meat. English cuisine even became famous for its excellent roasts.

The eighteenth century, however, brought a massive change in the perception of beef. Because of trade with the colonies and new food, spices and recipes finding their way into the British Empire, allowing almost everybody to interact with foreign cultures without the need to travel, and especially in the second half of the century, it became necessary for Great Britain in general to differentiate itself from these foreign influences. As mentioned before, coffee, tea, sugar or tobacco were making their way onto the table of almost every Briton, and were much more prevalent than pamphlets, newspapers or travel narratives. It may come as little surprise that, in the light of this, certain traditional dishes started to be seen as ‘national’ in contrast to the new foreign influences, and so ‘[r]oast beef, haggis and frothing beer certainly carried connotations of Englishness, Scottishness and sometimes Britishness’.

The satirical song The Roast Beef of Old England, first performed in 1735, was invented as a political statement against Robert Walpole, who was faced with accusations of cowardice because of his positive position towards Spain, while anti-Spanish sentiment grew among the British public. The song denounces the ‘degeneration’ of the contemporary Englishman, who is delighted by ‘fancy French food’ and is in no way similar to his robust, strong – and beef-eating – ancestors. The song reflects the public mood at that time, when French and Indian cuisine especially were seen as ‘intruders’ and roast beef therefore became a symbolic ‘bastion of uncorrupted and incorruptible English authenticity’ against foreign influences.

Hannah Glasse, one of the best-known cookery book writers of the eighteenth century (The Art of Cookery made plain and easy, first published in 1747), launches a virulent attack on French cooks and their ‘French Tricks’, which can be read in the foreword of The Art of Cookery. Glasse also provides us with a recipe for a roast which we might want to consider a primordial recipe for roast beef – the method of preparation has probably
undergone minor changes and variations over the centuries, but the basic method has always remained the same:

If Beef, be sure to Paper the Top, and baste it well all the Time it is roasting, and throw a Handful of Salt on it. When you see the Smoke draw to the Fire, it is near enough; then take off the Paper, baste it well, and drudge it with a little Flour to make a fine Froth. (Never salt your roast Meat before you lay it to the Fire, for that draws out all the Gravy. If you would keep it a few Days before you dress it, dry it very well with a clean Cloth, then flour it all over, and hang it where the Air will come to it; but be sure always to mind that there is no damp Place about it, if there is you must dry it well with a Cloth.) Take up your Meat, and garnish your Dish with nothing but Horse-raddish.368

As far as English or British cuisine is concerned, we should note that roast beef is a roast and is never cooked in a closed casserole. But it is a long way for a dish to travel across Europe to southern Germany and Austria, and therefore possible that recipes for roast beef may have undergone major changes. Analysis of the corpus sheds light on this matter.

Recipes for roast beef in published Austrian cookery books

It is important to emphasise that popular German encyclopaedias of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries include entries for roast beef (s.v. Rost beef, Rinderbraten, Rostbraten), which clearly point out that the meat has to be roasted on a spit or in a pan.369 Braising it – cooking it in a tightly closed pot – is not listed as an option. It might be thought that beef was perhaps eaten less frequently in the south of Germany or in Austria, but in fact Britain was not the only European country consuming a fairly large amount of meat; in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the average Austrian adult consumed about 800 grams of meat per day.370 Studies show that beef was one of the most commonly eaten types of meat in eighteenth-century Austria. One major difference lay in the way it was prepared: in the British Empire and northern Germany, beef was preferably roasted, whereas in south Germany and Austria it was usually braised in a closed casserole and hardly ever roasted.371 In the late eighteenth century, roast beef found its way from England to the German-speaking countries, but especially in the south it was not a great success, possibly due to the unfamiliar and complicated preparation method.372 Also, French and Italian cuisine had a much greater impact on the south, whereas northern Germany had closer contact with English and Dutch cuisine.373

The Austrian cookery books studied here are written by commoners for commoners, but the authors try to provide a range of recipes which could also be served on the tables of the aristocracy. Accordingly, it is almost
mandatory for published cookery books of this period to include Italian, Bohemian, Polish, Spanish, English, French and Dutch recipes. There are in fact quite a few English recipes (or recipes referred to as English) in all the publications belonging to the corpus – mainly recipes for puddings, cakes, pastries, sauces, jellies, stews and jams.

When it comes to a recipe for roast beef, however, the analysis of the corpus is surprising. Only the Süddeutsche Küche provides a recipe explicitly named Roastbeef. It is a rather meagre version of the English original: a piece of sirloin is beaten, boned and rolled, salted and put on a spit. During the cooking process it is basted with water (not butter or gravy!) and it is taken off the spit when it is well cooked. Finally, the roast is cut into slices (pieces) and served with potatoes. The Austrian recipe reads as follows (in rough translation):

Roastbeef. A good piece of sirloin must be beaten, deboned, wrapped into a sausage shape, salted and put on a skewer. Baste it constantly with water while it is roasting. Take it off the skewer when it is very juicy. Cut it into pieces, garnish with potatoes and serve.

It is possible, though, that the corpus contains recipes for roasts which are not necessarily entitled roast beef.

The next step of our analysis includes recipes for English roasts, because they may possibly correspond to roast beef despite having a different name. This time the search is for recipes called Englische Braten (English roasts) or similar. There are at least three that match. The Grätzerisches Kochbuch provides us with a recipe for a roast where the beef first has to be larded with bacon, marinated for one or two days, wrapped into paper covered in bacon, onions and lemon peel, and finally roasted on a spit. Although this roast may indeed be delicious, it is far removed from the one Glasse recorded in The Art of Cookery. Much closer to the English model is the recipe in the Allerneuestes Kochbuch, which is a rather simple one using a piece of sirloin, salt, pepper and butter. It should be noted that the meat is salted before it is roasted (a method Glasse did not recommend), but otherwise it has quite a lot of similarity to ‘plain, honest roast beef’. The Englischer Braten in the Süddeutsche Küche, too, is rather plain and very similar to the recipe mentioned above. The only difference is that the meat is covered with bacon and the suggestion is to serve it with whole or mashed potatoes.

So far, so good – but our Rost Pfiff shows no similarity either to the recipe for Roastbeef provided in the Süddeutsche Küche, or to the recipes for Englische Braten. What recipe lies behind this name? Once again, the answer can be found in our text corpus.
French boeuf à la mode

The oldest cookery book of the corpus, the *Koch- und Artzney-Buch* from 1688, may not include a recipe for an English roast, but it does tell us how to cook beef *auf English* (in English style):

How to cook beef in English style. Take a piece of good topside of beef and trim it carefully, so as not to cut it apart. Take bacon which is a finger long and a finger thick and lard the meat carefully; the bacon must be well salted and seasoned. Lard the meat nicely lengthwise, take a pot or cauldron big enough for the meat, then let it boil well and take care that it is always well covered; when the meat is getting soft, put an onion studded with cloves in the pot and a piece of ginger, broken into pieces, and coarse pepper, delicate herbs, such as rosemary, thyme, three bay leaves; half an hour before one wants to serve it, the fat must be skimmed off and 1 Seidl [= 0.35 litre] of good wine and half a Seidl of good vinegar poured in; take mushrooms and ox palate, both must be cut up small, and let it all boil down until the broth is thick, then dress the meat nicely and adjust to taste with the mushrooms and the ox palate.  

In the research literature, this recipe is considered to be congruent with the French recipe *boeuf à la mode* and a precursor of the modern *Wiener Tellerfleisch* (boiled beef).

Why the French dish is called ‘English’ remains to be answered, but the *Rindfleisch auf English* already makes us suspicious – and finally the recipe for *Rindfleisch Boeuf a la Mode* in the *Grätzerisches Kochbuch* is all we need to be convinced: we have found the dish that lies behind the name *Rost Pfiff*. The recipe reads as follows (in rough translation):

Beef Boeuf a la Mode. Take a good piece of sirloin, lard it with bacon and ham, each cut into finger-thick slices, after that put bacon fat, ham, thyme, bay leaves, basil, onions, lemon peel, whole cloves, mace, good wine vinegar and beef broth in a casserole or tin mould, salt it, and put the larded beef in there too, cover it well, and close it with dough, so that no steam gets out. When you think that the meat is tender, put it to one side and let it cool. When it has cooled, take it out, clean it neatly, put it in the dish and garnish it nicely. This meat can also be served warm with its own sauce, but before serving the sauce must be strained, and the fat must be neatly removed.

The similarities to our *Rost Pfiff* are obvious. The ingredients are very similar and the meat is prepared in the same way. The lid of the casserole has to be closed tightly with a piece of dough, and after boiling for several hours, the beef can be served with a finely strained sauce.

A serving option which the manuscript does not give is the possibility of eating the meat not only warm, but cold as well – a suggestion we find in Glasse’s *The Art of Cookery*:
Beef à la Mode in Pieces. You must take a Buttock of Beef, cut it into two Pound Pieces, lard them with Bacon, fry them Brown, put them into a Pot that will just hold them, put in two Quarts of Broth or Gravy, a few Sweet Herbs, an Onion, some Mace, Cloves, Nutmeg, Pepper and Salt; when that is done, cover it close, and stew till it is tender, skim off all the Fat, lay the Meat in the Dish, and strain the Sauce over it. You may serve it up hot or cold.383

In Anna-Maria Bußwald’s *Allerneuestes Kochbuch* we find a recipe (no. 306) for *Boeuf à la Mode*, which provides quite detailed preparation instructions (given here in rough translation):

Boeuf à la Mode. The meat must be a piece of topside from a good ox, which must be fat; beat it with a large knife or a rolling pin, to make it tender; after that, cut one-finger-long and finger-thick bacon and ham, which do not have a bad smell; also, chop these herbs very finely: parsley, shallots, basil, thyme, mix them with bacon and ham on a plate, add pepper, a little nutmeg and salt; lard the meat with this using a large wooden larding needle; if you don’t have one, pierce the meat with the knife, and put in bacon and ham alternately; after that take a casserole dish, which has a well-closing lid, put bacon rinds on the bottom, put the meat on top, cover it also with bacon; around the sides put some veal, [a couple of or some] whole onions, carrots, parsnips, a little basil, thyme and one bay leaf, a little mace, several cloves; pour a [small] glass of wine over it, cover it tight with the lid, around the lid make a coarse dough of water and flour, close it all around with dough and paper, so that no steam gets out; put it into an oven, or put a small glowing fire on top of and beneath it, braise it for 4 hours; after that, put it aside until it is cool, so that it does not lose its taste. After that open it [the casserole], take the meat out, skim the fat nicely, but sieve the sauce through a fine sieve. If you want to serve it hot, and if you have a good broth, add 2 spoonfuls of it, put it in a dish big enough for the meat and the sauce; if you have no good broth, then make a roux with a spoonful of flour and put it in the sauce; after that put it on a small glowing fire, let it boil very slowly, so that it does not become too tender. When it is time to serve, add the juice of a half or whole lemon, depending on the sauce, also lemon peel without the pith, to give the sauce a nice taste. When you want to serve it, first brush the dish in which you want to serve it with garlic, take the lemon peel out and serve the meat warm for the first course. If you want to serve it cold for the second course, however, do as described for salted meat; but after the sauce is sieved, let it boil down on the fire for a moment. Finally, add lemon juice and put it in a dish which is big enough for the meat, pour the sauce into it, put the meat on top, salt it, and if you want to serve it, put a serviette over the dish, turn the dish around and turn the meat out onto the serviette and serve it in a large piece for the second course. Many also pour a little tarragon [Berchtram = Bertram, Lat. *Artemisia dracunculus*] vinegar over it, if it is served cold.384

Bußwald, like Glasse, suggests that the meat can be eaten hot or cold; in the latter case, it can be served with vinegar.
In the *Süddeutsche Küche* we find a recipe not only for *Englisches Rindfleisch*, but also for *boeuf à la mode*, the two printed consecutively (text in rough translation):

English beef. A nice piece of beef (similar to so-called Weißbraten [sirloin]) cut as a loin roast, is salted and larded, and also rubbed with crushed juniper berries, thyme, marjoram, basil, rosemary and lemon peel, and put aside to rest for 24 hours. Then it is put together with everything needed for marinade no. 2 in a pan; also add a bit of uncooked ham, close the lid and braise until tender. After that the juices must be drained [from the meat], the root vegetables are cooked in fat, dusted, put together with the juices and when everything is boiled down, [the sauce] must be sieved and poured on the meat. When it is served, one pours just a little of the sauce on the meat, serving the rest in a separate bowl.

Boeuf à la mode. Is prepared like the recipe above, but nothing is rubbed onto the meat; as well as with bacon, it can also be larded with tongue, both cut into small finger-long and finger-thick strips, which are inserted obliquely. Or: One can chop onions, lemon peel, thyme and anchovies very small, and roll the bacon which is used for larding in the mixture, but then the tongue can be omitted. One can also put sugar into lard, let it caramelise and add it to the meat before it is dusted. When the sauce has been sieved, the meat, which is cut into pieces, has to be boiled with it for one hour.

It is interesting to see how similar these recipes are and how little they changed over time. The recipes for *boeuf à la mode* from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are fundamentally similar to the one for *Rindfleisch auff Englich zu kochen* in the *Koch- und Artzneybuch* – a recipe which is not only a French dish incorrectly referred to as an English beef recipe, but which can also be seen as a forerunner of *Wiener Tellerfleisch* – and to the recipes for *boeuf à la mode* in the *Grätzerisches Kochbuch* and the *Süddeutsche Küche*.

Interestingly the *Koch- und Artzney-Buch* from the seventeenth century claims the French dish to be an English one, while the recipe in the *Süddeutsche Küche* presents the French dish after the English recipe and, given the way the method of preparation is described, it almost seems as if *boeuf à la mode* is a variation of *Englisches Rindfleisch*. The recipe in the *Allerneuestes Kochbuch*, with the option of eating the dish hot or cold, clearly shows the evolution of *boeuf à la mode* to *Wiener Tellerfleisch* and to *Tellerfleisch* as it is now served in Bavaria.

**Conclusion**

What, then, can we learn from this short study? We started with the mysterious dish called *Rost Pfiff*, recorded in the Austrian cookery book manuscript
1963, which seems to refer to English roast beef – not only because of the phonetic similarity, but also because of the piece of beef that is its main ingredient. It was very tempting to think of this English ‘national dish’, because of the strong symbolic function which it assumed in the eighteenth century. The roast was used as a political statement, as well as to portray the inhabitants of the British Empire as honest, strong and healthy people with high morals; it also served as a contrast to foreign influences, mainly from the colonies or France. A closer study of the method of preparation, however, revealed that Rost Pfiff does not derive from an English but from a French recipe – boeuf à la mode. Furthermore, it may be noted that meat, or beef in particular, was not roasted in southern Germany and Austria, but boiled, braised or stewed, in contrast to north Germany, which had a much closer relationship to England and therefore shared many of its cooking habits. It is easy to accept that, over the course of the journey to the south of the German-speaking countries, roast beef may have lost its political and symbolic connotations and instead simply come to be considered a tasty and exotic dish.

With regard to our opening question about the possibility of political conflicts (such as the Napoleonic Wars) having an impact on the decision to reject recipes or include them in the cookery book manuscript, it cannot be claimed that such an influence is visible. Moreover, it seems rather unlikely that the French name would have been replaced by an English one to hide the origins of Rost Pfiff. Quite the opposite is the case in cookery, it seems. Whatever the political animosities, a simple rule applies: it is the taste which matters most. Even Glasse, who is by no means a friend of French cooks and fanciness, notes rather pragmatically that she has ‘indeed given some of her Dishes French Names to distinguish them, because they are known by those Names’ and that ‘it matters not whether they be call’d by a French, Dutch or English Name, so they are good’.³⁸⁶

The corpus used for our analysis also revealed a high degree of arbitrariness and lack of clarity in the naming of dishes, as was demonstrated by the English names for French dishes and vice versa. Furthermore, it became clear which parts of the recipe changed down the centuries – spices and herbs, parts of the preparation like the beating of the meat to soften it, dough to close the lid tightly, and various ingredients – and which parts remained stable, like the larding of the beef with bacon, the braising of the meat, and the sauce made out of the finely puréed herbs and vegetables.

To find an answer to our main question concerning the naming of Rost Pfiff, it is important to keep in mind that Glasse also provides a recipe for boeuf à la mode, with the suggestion that it may be served hot or cold. As I have pointed out already, boeuf à la mode is said to be a precursor of Wiener Tellerfleisch, and if we follow the recipe through the centuries, this evolution is easy to imagine, although it is not a direct route – the Grätzerisches Kochbuch, for example, does not give the option of eating the beef cold,
neither does the *Süddeutsche Küche* (although there we can find a recipe for *Kaltes Rindfleisch*[^387] [cold beef], which is similar to the Bavarian *Tellerfleisch*).

Both *roast beef* and *boeuf à la mode* can be served hot or cold and cut into thin slices. It may be assumed that the French recipe (in the text corpus, moreover, repeatedly presented as English) was mistaken for a recipe for roast beef because of the similar appearance of the dish as it was served. Taking this into account, it is understandable that the name *Rost Pfiff* was – probably without irony – adopted from the English recipe, while the preparation method matches the French dish, which was presumably quite popular at that time, especially in south Germany and Austria. It is possible that the male or female scribe or author who wrote the cookery book in 1818 knew the name of the new English national dish (maybe from sources such as novels or magazines), which grew more and more popular during the eighteenth century, but did not know anything about how it was prepared, since roasted beef was rather unusual in southern Germany and Austria at that time.

What the writer certainly did know from real life was *boeuf à la mode*; maybe he or she wanted to add a recipe for a prestigious dish to the manuscript and assumed that *roast beef* was a kind of *boeuf à la mode* – not too unlikely, given that the French recipe was mistaken for an English dish in various popular printed cookery books, which the writer may have used either to copy out some recipes or at least as templates. At this point, however, such hypotheses can be nothing more than ideas that could form the basis for further research.

[^336]: The term ‘travelling recipes’ means recipes which serve as exotic ‘souvenirs’, worth being noted down and remembered (with the intention of cooking the dishes one day), and which thus find their way from one country to another. It is used synonymously with the ‘floating’ (or ‘wandering’) quality of recipe texts, as described in Hans Ramge, “‘Ich folg vielmehr // Der Tugend und dem Fleiß, die bringen Ehr.” Zur Sprache im Kochbuch von Goethes Großmutter’, in Gudrun Marci-Boehncke & Jörg Riecke (eds.), *Von Mythen und Mären* – Mittelalterliche Kulturgeschichte im Spiegel einer Wissenschaftler-Biographie (Olms, 2006), pp. 417–40 (p. 437).


[^340]: The German term *Frauenkochbuch* (‘woman’s cookery book’) refers to cookery books written by and/or for women. Usually a woman’s name is noted, although it is often uncertain whether it is the name of the owner or the writer. The term *Frauenkochbuch* is ambiguous, but commonly accepted. Cf. Thomas Gloning, *Das hand-


343 Francis (Franz) I (reigned 1804–35) had been the last Holy Roman Emperor as Francis II, reigning from 1792 until 1806. After Napoleon had declared himself emperor in 1804, Francis I was involved from the start of his reign until Napoleon’s defeat in 1815 in military conflicts with the French and the Napoleonic Wars, followed by the re-establishment of the territorial divisions of Europe at the Congress of Vienna in 1814/15. In 1806 Prince Klemens von Metternich was given almost total control of foreign affairs (and over the emperor) in his role as foreign minister; he was involved in the creation of the Quadruple Alliance (Great Britain, Russia, Prussia and Austria) and the German Confederation under Austrian leadership (including territories ruled by the kings of England, the Netherlands and Denmark), which was heavily dominated by his reactionary influence until 1848. Cf. Alan W. Ertl, Toward an Understanding of Europe: A Political Economic Précis of Continental Integration (Florida, 2008), pp. 319–20; see also ‘German Confederation’ and ‘Quadruple Alliance’, in Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th Edition (New York, 2014); for an overview, see Peter H. Wilson, ‘The Meaning of Empire in Central Europe around 1800’, in Allen Forrest & Peter H. Wilson (eds.), The Bee and the Eagle: Napoleonic France and the End of the Holy Roman Empire, 1806 (Houndmills, 2009), pp. 26–33. France joined the Quadruple Alliance in 1818 to form a Quintuple Alliance. Britain, which had refused to sign the declaration of the Holy Alliance (agreed amongst the emperors of Russia and Austria and the king of Prussia) in 1815, retired into splendid isolation, repelled by the reactionary solidarity. Cf. John Cannon, ‘Holy Alliance’, in John Cannon (ed.), The Oxford Companion to British History (Oxford, 2009 [e-book]); also, ‘Holy Alliance’, ‘Quadruple Alliance’, CEE.


345 According to the headings the recipes come from foreign countries, but this does not necessarily mean that they really are foreign. Conversely, it is possible that some recipes not marked as foreign in their headings are in fact dishes originating from other countries.

346 For more information concerning possible reasons for this mistake (e.g. the use of Upper German written language, the lower educational level of women, and a lack of knowledge of foreign languages), see Peter Wiesinger, Das österreichische Deutsch in Gegenwart und Geschichte (Vienna and Berlin, 2006); Peter Wiesinger, ‘Österreichische Adelsbriefe des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts als Textsorte’, in Franz Simmler (ed.) Textsortentypologien und Textallianzen von der Mitte des 15. bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts (Berlin, 2004), pp. 289–310 (pp. 296 f.); and Ingo Reiffenstein, ‘Frauenbriefe des 18. Jahrhunderts als sprachgeschichtliche Quellen’,
Transcription policy: the intention of the transcriptions of recipe texts provided by the author has been to produce accurate and consistently transcribed texts. No distinction is made between the different palaeographic letter forms of long-s and short-s, both versions being represented as ‘s’. The ligature of long-s and z is represented as ‘ß’ (sharp s, eszett). Headings are set in line with the body text. Text connectors at the end of a line have been skipped, and virgules are given as forward slashes. Superscripts have been regularised. However, there has been no regularisation of orthography (u and v stay unchanged, separator characters are represented as hyphens), although redundant words at the bottom of the page have been deleted. If a recipe continues on a second page, the page break is not marked. Capitals are regularised. Corrupted letters are underlined.

‘Rost Pfiff. Erstlich nihm 6. lb bradiges Rindfleisch, Klopfe es wohl mit einen Nudlwalger spicke es mit Speck, gewürz Nageln, Zimath, beleg ein Kastrol mit Zwifel und gelben Ruben, hernach nehme halb Wein und halb Wasser, gebachene Brodrinten, Lorberblatl decke es zu mit Blech vermachs mit einen Teig das der Tampf [f. 68r] nicht heraus kommt, richte es auf die Glut, dünste es wohl ab, und lasse es 5 Stund dünsten, wird es Zeit zum Anrichten, so richte das Fleisch an, laß die Soß durchpassiern, und gieße es darauf, ist gut.’


Ein Koch- und Artzney-Buch (Grätz [Graz], Widmanstetterische Erben, 1688), http://sosa2.uni-graz.at/sosa/druckschriften/dergedeckteTisch/drucke/ub-sosa-kochbuch1688.php (accessed 22 Jan. 2014). The famous published cookery book of Duchess Eleonora Maria Rosalia von Eggenberg, née Duchess of Liechtenstein, the Freiwillig auffgesprungener Granat-Apfel, has not been included in the text corpus. The reason for this is that the recipe Rindfleisch auff Englisch zu kochen is an almost exact copy of the recipe from the Koch- und Artzney-Buch. See Eleonora Maria Rosalia, Herzogin von Troppau und Jägerndorf, Freiwillig aufgesprungener Granat-Apfel des christlichen Samariters . . . (Leipzig, 1709), no. 172, p. 32,
Furthermore, the Granat-Apffel contains neither a recipe for roast beef nor a similar recipe to Rost Pfiff.

354] Jacob M[elin], Grätzerisches durch Erfahrung geprüftes Kochbuch (Graz, 1804), reprint with a postscript and glossary by Franz Maier-Bruck (Graz, 1978).


358 For the king’s table, game or poultry was considered more suitable. Cf. Gilly Lehmann, The British Housewife (Totnes, 2003), p. 24.

359 Lehmann, British Housewife, p. 29.

360 Cf. Lehmann, British Housewife, p. 36.


362 It should be pointed out again that this tendency is not restricted to the British Empire, but can be seen as ubiquitous. The invention of tradition leads immediately to the invention of stereotypes – examples are the Hungarian goulash already discussed, invented as a political statement against Joseph II, but adopted by the Austrian nobility with no awareness of its symbolic function; Swiss fondue; or German stew. Cf. Kisbán, ‘Dishes as Samples and Symbols’, pp. 205–07; Sandgruber, ‘Österreichische Nationalspeisen’, p. 183. The attempt to construct a link between certain foods and dishes and a social or ethnic group not only serves to establish the connection with a suitable historical past, but also to distinguish the group in question from others. Cf. Eric Hobsbawm, ‘Introduction: Inventing Traditions’, in Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger (eds.), The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge, 2007), p. 2.

363 Bickham, ‘Eating the Empire’, p. 94. According to Hobsbawm, this phenomenon is no surprise, as it is closely linked to the invention of the ‘nation’, with the necessity of creating new (national) symbols and traditions, using old materials and putting them into a different context to serve a certain purpose. Cf. Hobsbawm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 7, 13.

364 The first and third verse read as follows: ‘When mighty roast beef was the Englishman’s food, / It ennobled our hearts, and enriched our blood; / Our soldiers were brave, and our courtiers were good. / O, the Roast Beef of old England, / And O, the old English Roast Beef! / [. . .] / Our fathers of old were robust, stout, and strong, / And kept open house with good cheer all day long, / Which made their plump tenants rejoice in this song. / O, the Roast Beef / [. . .]’, Henry Fielding, ‘The Roast Beef of Old England’, in Francis Hovey Stoddard & Bliss Carman (eds.), The
368 Glasse, Art of Cookery, p. 3.
370 Cf. Elke Hammer-Luza, ‘Alltagsleben in Graz’, in Walter Brunner (ed.), Geschichte der Stadt Graz (Graz, 2003), vol. 2, pp. 391–502 (p. 414); also cf. Roman Sandgruber, Die Anfänge der Konsumgesellschaft: Konsumgüterverbrauch, Lebensstandard und Alltagskultur in Österreich im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert (Munich, 1982), pp. 160–61. In contrast to this, Wiegelmann states that in the sixteenth century, at the beginning of the seventeenth and around 1800 in Austria (and particularly in Styria), pastries were consumed much more than meat. In northern Germany, however, it was the other way round. See Günter Wiegelmann, Alltags- und Festspeisen in Mitteleuropa: Innovationen, Strukturen und Regionen vom späten Mittelalter bis zum 20. Jahrhundert (2nd edn, Münster, 2006), pp. 39 and 46; on the situation in Styria (around 1820) in particular, see p. 58. After 1800, however, the consumption of meat increased throughout Europe. See Wiegelmann, Alltags- und Festspeisen, pp. 67, 208. With regard to the differences in consumption of braised and roasted beef, Wiegelmann, too, notices that beef was more commonly braised in Austria and south Germany than roasted. See Wiegelmann, Alltags- und Festspeisen, p. 207.
372 Cf. Wiegelmann, Alltags- und Festspeisen, pp. 38, 207 (esp. note 6). Also cf. Glasse, Art of Cookery, p. 3. Glasse here explains several things a cook has to pay attention to in making a roast: ‘I shall first begin with Roast and Boil’d of all Sorts, and must desire the Cook to order her Fire according to what she is to dress; if any Thing very little or thin, then a pretty little brisk Fire, that it may be done quick and nice: If a very large Joint, then be sure a good Fire be laid to cake. Let it be clear at the Bottom; and when your Meat is Half done, move the Dripping-pan and Spit a
little from the Fire, and stir up a good brisk Fire; for according to the Goodness of your Fire, your Meat will be done sooner or later.’

373 Cf. Wiegelmann, Alltags- und Festspeisen, pp. 43, 46.


376 Salter, ‘Catholic Middle Ages’, p. 113.


379 Boeuf à la mode is thought to be a creation of François-Pierre de La Varenne, one of the most important chefs of the seventeenth century. Pierre François La Varenne, Le cuisinier françois, enseignant la manière de bien apprester et assaisonner toutes sortes de viands . . . légumes, . . . par le sieur de La Varenne . . . (Paris, 1651), http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k114423k.r=.langFR (accessed 31 Dec. 2013). The recipe can be found on p. 50 and reads as follows: ‘53. Bœuf à la mode. Battez le bien & le lardez auce de gros lard, puis le mettez cuire dans vn pot auce bon bœullon, vn bouquet, & toutes sortes d’espices, & le tout estant bien consommé seruez auce la sauce.’ Shortly afterwards, in 1653, an English translation was made (in the English edition, the recipe can be found on p. 44): ‘53. Beefe a la mode. Beat it well, and lard it with great lard, then seeth it in a pot with good broth, a bundle of herbs, and all kind of spices, and when all is well consumed, serve with the sauce.’ Pierre François La Varenne, The French cook: Prescribing the way of making ready of all sorts of meats, fish and flesh, with the proper sauces, either to procure appetite, or to advance the power of digestion. [. . .] Written in French by Monsieur De La Varenne, clerk of the kitchin to the Lord Marquesse of Uxelles, and now Englished by I.D.G. (London, 1653), http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:111078:36 (accessed 31 Dec. 2013).
Tellerfleisch is boiled beef (or pork); in Vienna the meat is cooked in broth (bouillon) and served with vermicelli and root vegetables. In Bavaria, however, it is served without broth, arranged on a plate, finely sliced and with horseradish (and vinegar). See Pohl, *Die österreichische Küchensprache*, p. 147; and cf. [Christina Zacker,] *Das neue Lexikon, Küche und Keller: Mehr als 5000 Stichwörter von A bis Z* (Paderborn, 2005), p. 301.


Glate, *The Art of Cookery*, p. ii [itals in original].
Bringing Into the Light, or Increasing Darkness With Darkness: Jacob Wilde’s Rewriting of Samuel Pufendorf’s Account of Swedish Ancient History

Tim Berndtsson

Facts are but the Play-things of lawyers,– Tops and Hoops, forever a-spin. . .
Alas, the Historian may indulge no such idle Rotating. History is not Chronology, for that is left to Lawyers,– nor is it Remembrance, for Remembrance belongs to the People. History can as little pretend to the Veracity of the one, as claim the Power of the other,– her Practitioners, to survive, must soon learn the arts of the quidnunc, spy, and Taproom Wit,– that there may ever continue more than one life-line back into a Past we risk, each day, losing our forebears in forever,– not a Chain of single Links, for one broken Link could lose us All,– rather, a great disorderly Tangle of Lines, long and short, weak and strong, vanishing into the Mnemonick Deep, with only their Destination in common.388

As the quote from Thomas Pynchon’s post-modern eighteen-century pastiche novel Mason & Dixon suggests, the business of combining the thin, entangled threads of historical facts into a durable cord is a delicate craft. The historian should not aspire to become omniscient, to forge history into a great chain (an image which is perhaps only an illusory forgery?), but rather use the ability of ‘Taproom Wit’ to see behind facts ‘forever a-spin’, and modestly prevent some of the brittle traces of the past from disappearing into the depth of oblivion.

It has long been recognised that historiography, at its roots, is pervaded by the friction between, on the one hand, cold facts and source data, and on the other, politically imbedded story-telling and rhetorical construction; we have, for example, Benedetto Croce’s saying that all history is contemporary history.389 This friction, however, is also historically determined. Croce’s slogan would probably have seemed either obvious or quite meaningless to an eighteen-century European historiographer steeped in the tradition of historia magistra vitae – history as a teacher of life – according to which
history essentially meant the gathering of historical material for present moral and political purposes. Insofar as the historiographer was employed and supervised by the State, and this was usually the case at least in the early part of the century, those purposes were to advance the historic and legal arguments in support of the state abroad and to foster loyal citizen at home.

Consequently, being a historiographer in the Swedish realm during the eighteenth-century meant working as a state-employed bureaucrat with the task of defending the state’s honour against antagonistic foreign histories, as well as inspiring patriotic pride in the glorious work and days of ancestors among Swedes. At least, that is what Jacob Wilde (1679–1755), Swedish state historiographer (*historiographus regni*) from 1719 to 1755, meant when he stated that the historian ‘is and is held to be a servant of the state, who should watch over and defend its rights and benefits’. Wilde himself was proud to admit that he worked ‘on behalf of his office and by superior order’.

The question explored in this article, can be articulated as follows: What were the pressing motives of a Swedish state historiographer in Sweden’s ‘Age of Liberty’ and how was a Swedish historical work determined by general trends and changes in foreign historiography? I offer some tentative answers to this question by reflecting on the role of Wilde, and specifically by looking at his reworking of the Swedish history written by his well-known predecessor Samuel (von) Pufendorf (1632–1694).

When explaining the nature of his profession, Wilde himself claimed he regarded it as his ‘duty’ as historiographer to:

write according to the official documents [*acta publica*] and defend the clauses therein to the honour of the nation, with all the reasons that common sense and political constitution and Natural law [*regulæ politices ac juris naturæ*] permits; because a historiographer must not write all what he wants, means and thinks, but [only that] what he finds in the official documents.

The quote highlights Wilde’s two essential ideals for (national) history writing: being loyal to one’s sources and being loyal to the king and/or the state (i.e. one’s employer). A major theme of this article is Wilde’s struggle to reconcile these ideals in his historiographical texts.

Wilde has been a relatively unnoticed figure in previous research. This can be explained by the limited influence his works have had on the reading public outside the walls of academia, as well as their cumbersome literary style. Wilde’s works are indeed somewhat cryptic to the modern reader, but they are nonetheless important sources for understanding the role of history and historiography in early modern Sweden. Among his oeuvre, the Pufendorf edition stands out as an intriguing piece of historiographical rhetoric, but not necessarily a successful one, as I will show in this study.
The Swedish state historiographer Jacob Wilde and his predecessor Pufendorf

Jacob Wilde was born in Courland, in today’s Latvia, and came to Sweden relatively late in life when appointed state historiographer on the recommendation of the privy councillor Gustaf Cronhielm in 1719. Wilde had earlier held academic chairs in the Swedish provinces of Dorpat and Greifswald, but lost them as the provinces were successively overtaken by Russian armies in the Great Northern War. He did most of his work in the field of legal and constitutional history, and was given an important role in the attempt to give historical legitimacy to the new parliamentary constitution initiated by Arvid Horn and his supporters in the ruling Swedish nobility after the death of the childless Charles XII in 1718 and the abolition of the Caroline autocracy (in which the king had held all executive power).395

However, the publication of Wilde’s first major historiographical work was severely delayed by his reluctance to conform to the political demands of his superiors. His *Sueciae historia pragmatica* which was ready for publication in 1723 and was intended as the first part of a large project covering the whole of Swedish history, caused a protracted conflict between him and the Chancery College (*Kanslikollegium*), the institution that employed and censored the state historiographer. First Wilde tried to make this body responsible for the contents of his works, which it refused to agree to. Later the censor Johan Rosenadler argued that Wilde was too apologetic about the legal grounds for the Caroline autocracy; a very sensitive subject in the early times of the Swedish parliamentary ‘Age of Liberty’. Although Wilde clearly opposed the reign of Charles XII and in principle rejected the constitutional notion of a ‘king by God’s grace’, he denied that the king’s reign had formally been in violation of the Swedish constitution, and partly for that reason the publication of his work was prevented until 1731. This feud probably had political grounds, as Wilde undoubtedly sympathised with individuals belonging to the network that would later become the so-called Hat party, who were opponents of Chancellor Horn and less critical of the Caroline rule than Horn’s party.396 However, as Knut Nordlund has pointed out, the conflict also soon took the form of a personal quarrel between Rosenadler, who as censor considered himself above the historiographer, and Wilde, who stubbornly refused to compromise with the historical details.397

Wilde’s main argument for this refusal was that the allegations against Caroline despotism misrepresented the honourable ‘fact’ that Sweden, from the time of its first ancient kings, had an essentially unbroken line of constitutionally legitimate monarchs. This direct and unbroken link to the ancient age, to the Origin, was of vital importance, and it is telling that Wilde described his historical works as an addition to Olof Rudbeck’s grand project on the mythological origins of Sweden. (Rudbeck, to whom we will return,
is now perhaps most (in)famous for his thesis that the Swedish peninsula was in fact the re-emerged island of Atlantis.)

It is in the context of the political reorientation after the end of Caroline autocracy, as well as of the changing preconditions for the historical genre on the international scene, that the works of Wilde stand out as interesting artefacts of the intellectual conflicts of their time. After the publication of the first part of *Sueciae historia pragmatica*, the Chancery College gave no support to the further work by the author on this Swedish history. Instead, after a time he was set to work on a revised and translated edition of the former Swedish historiographer Samuel Pufendorf’s work on Swedish history called *Continuirt. Einleitung zu der Historie der vornehmsten Reiche und Staaten von Europa*, worinnen des Königreichs Schweden Geschichte, [. . .] insonderheit beschreiben werden from 1686.398

This history was an additional volume to Pufendorf’s *Einleitung zu der Historie der vornehmsten Reiche und Staaten von Europa*, published in German in 1682.399 In that volume, the history of Sweden unfolds over roughly the same textual space which the eleven other kingdoms (and the whole history of the ancient world) were given in the *Einleitung* volume. Wilde’s edition of the Swedish history was called *Fordom Sweriges historiafriherrens Samuelis von Puffendorff ‘Inledning til swenska statens historie’ med wederbörlige tilökningar, bewis och anmerkningar*, and was published in two volumes in 1738 and 1743.400 However, the first of these, called ‘The Preparation’ (Förberedelsen), actually features many discussions with no direct connection to Pufendorf, although some points do have implications for Pufendorf’s text. The second volume comprises Wilde’s translation of Pufendorf’s history up to the middle of the twelfth-century, together with an overwhelming commentary apparatus, which constitutes a historical account of its own, aside from the main text.

Why, then, was Pufendorf’s history relevant in the eighteenth-century? Today, Pufendorf may, outside a circle of specialists, only be ‘remembered as an obscure German with a funny name, who followed Grotius in the development of international law’.401 However, during the early eighteenth-century, he was a central figure in the discourse of natural law, which at that time was a vital concern for almost everyone engaged in the Republic of Letters.402 Thus, when Pufendorf became professor in Lund in 1668 and later accepted the position of Swedish state historiographer in 1677, it was something of a triumph for the young Swedish empire, comparable to Queen Christina’s recruiting of Descartes a few decades earlier.403

In his treatises in jurisprudence, Wilde was deeply influenced by the system of natural law that had been codified in Pufendorf’s work *De jure naturae et gentium* (1672). This should come as no surprise. Pufendorf dominated the university curriculum in both law and history from the late seventeenth-century onwards, not only in Sweden but throughout northern Europe.404 (Wilde himself had also been professor in Jus Naturae et Gentium
in Pernau.) Pufendorf’s works on Swedish history were obvious points of reference for anyone dealing with the subject, and his narratives might, from an international standpoint, be taken as representing the "official" Swedish history of Sweden at that time. However, with his interest in constitutional law, political philosophy and contemporary international diplomacy, Pufendorf was comparatively uninterested in issues of ancient history, and seems to have had but little contact with the antiquarian speculations of his Uppsala colleague Rudbeck.405

Wilde was connected with the works of both these iconic scholars of the seventeenth-century. But the views of Pufendorf and Rudbeck conflicted – and Wilde, as will be seen, did not fully approve of either. His rendering of Pufendorf’s Swedish history must be regarded not only as a way of dealing with Swedish history, but also as an attempt to get to grips with the Swedish historiographical tradition. By studying Wilde’s historiographical methods as they were practiced in his edition of Pufendorf’s history of Sweden, and by examining the communicative situation in which the work was published, it is possible, almost synecdochically, to recognise the conflicting trends in the writing of history during this period.

Wilde’s revision of Pufendorf in editorial context

When Wilde embarked on his project of translating and commenting on Pufendorf, it was not to be the first version of Pufendorf’s Einleitung in Swedish. Already in 1680, the first volume had appeared in that language (two years before the ‘original’ German text was published), translated by the poet and historian Petrus Brask. In 1688, Brask had also translated the second volume, containing Pufendorf’s Swedish history. If there was a need for a new edition, it was not because of any corruption in Brask’s translation of the ‘original’, as it is both complete and faithful in relation to the German text. The need felt by the Chancery College to publish a new version of Pufendorf in Swedish was prompted, rather, by political and ideological considerations. Also, the old one had long been out of print. Moreover, there was a need to produce an up-to-date, comprehensive and stylistically more pleasing history of Sweden for a new generation of readers. Yet another motive was the diffusion of modified editions of Pufendorf’s history in Europe and the threat that this supposedly posed to the national honour. To elucidate the last point, I will highlight the editorial and publishing practices applied in other European editions, before proceeding to the discussions in the Chancery College that preceded the one Wilde now produced.

For the kind of revisionary procedure that Wilde undertook on Pufendorf’s text was not unique at the time. The principles of text editing were more permissive in the early modern period than they are today (to put it mildly), and although some writers had a clear sense of ownership of their...
texts, institutionalised copyright was non-existent. Indeed, both the German Einleitung and Brask’s hastily made translation of it were initiated by Pufendorf himself to forestall a pirate edition of notes taken at his lectures, issued by some of his former students at Lund. Pufendorf’s reputation in general, and the widespread popularity of his Einleitung in particular, gave rise to a vast number of later editions of the work. When Wilde published the first part of his Inledning in 1738, there existed more than fifty editions of the Einleitung, published in German, English, French, Latin, Dutch and Russian. These editions vary significantly in relation both to the ‘original’ German and to each other, which makes the transformations of this work a first-class example of early modern publishing procedure. To illustrate this point, a few examples from the European continent may be given.

A common feature of the editions from the eighteenth-century is the incorporation of contemporary history, continuing (and altering) the out-dated accounts of contemporary politics given in the original text by Pufendorf. The title of a German edition (of both volumes) from 1718–1719, published by Gottfried Frankenstein, to which we will shortly return, gives an indication of this practice. The first volume is called: Einleitung [. . .], von neuem gedruckt, und biß auf den Baadischen Frieden abermahl fortgesetzt und vermehrt, deßgleichen mit neuem Vorbericht versehen, darinnen des Authoris Politische Anmerckungen nach dermahligem geänderten Zustand der Sachen erläütert sind. On the title page of a French edition (Introduction à l’histoire générale. . .) from 1721, the editor likewise declares the work to be a new ‘version’, to which he has attached ‘Memoires pour servir à la vie de Mr. le Baron de Pufendorf’. The different editors thus updated Pufendorf’s history, just as one winds up an old inherited clock. The importance attached to the fact that Pufendorf wrote the history indicates how his name (like that of a good clockmaker) signified reliable authority.

Another common practice was to make offprints of certain parts of the Einleitung. Especially popular was the chapter on the Vatican, which Pufendorf, positioned in arch-Lutheran Sweden, dared to give a secular and frank depiction of and make several critical remarks about. In connection with these offprints, mention may also be made of the curious anonymous pamphlet A short account of the union betwixt Sweden, Denmark and Norway, which commenced about the year 1396, and was broke about the Year 1523. Taken from Puffendorf’s History of Sweden. . . Fit to be perus’d by Scotsmen at this juncture. Published in Scotland in 1706, it is a four-page summary of Pufendorf’s rather long account of the Kalmar Union, compiling the negative reflections on Denmark in order to make a horrifying analogy that might discourage Scotsmen from the impending union with England. Political motives are also evident in the debut work of the later famous Danish writer Ludvig Holberg, Introduction til de fornemste Europæiske Rigers Historier, from 1713. Although Holberg himself considered that his work differed a great deal from Pufendorf’s, his contemporary colleague Andreas Hojer
dismissed it as a mere copy.409 The most notable differences between Holberg and Pufendorf appear in the chapters on Sweden and Denmark. In Pufendorf’s account, the Danes are to blame for almost all wars and disagreements between the countries. In Holberg’s account, the histories have an almost entirely inverted moral.

Thus, rather than thinking of Pufendorf’s German text from 1682 and 1686 as a fixed ‘original’, one should perhaps see it as a body of textual material, a general historical testimony carrying the name of Pufendorf, which later publishers and editing authors could use as it suited their own purposes (didactic, political, economic etc.). In the next section, we will look at the purposes of the Swedish Chancery College.

The political motives prompting Wilde’s edition of Pufendorf

On 25 May 1733 it was explicitly stated in the minutes of the Chancery College that the state historiographer Wilde should write a continuation of, and make changes to, Pufendorf’s Swedish history, to be published in a new edition.410 The next day, Wilde was called to the parlour outside the Chancery College meeting room, where

His Excellency Councillor and President Count Horn asked him [Wilde] if he did not want to undertake the task of continuing with Pufendorf’s Introduction to Swedish History. To which he said yes. He [Wilde] thereafter raised the question whether the chapter on Sweden’s interests could not be changed and 2 members of the Royal Council be appointed as censors of the work, namely the Royal Councillors [Gustaf] Celsing and [Joachim] Neres. Which was granted, whereupon he [Wilde] took his leave.411

As all of this was granted without discussion, the entry suggests that Wilde either had the trust of Horn, or at least was not regarded as a troublemaker. The chapter on Sweden’s political interests that Wilde mentions is probably the concluding section of Pufendorf’s Swedish history.

In the Einleitung the history of each of the kingdoms described ends with relatively short sections commenting on the people, the (economic) geography, and the political relations of the kingdom in question. It is probably the last of these sections that Wilde (and apparently his political associates) wanted to see changed. For example, Pufendorf’s assertions that Narva and Nöteborg formed a safe Swedish line of defence against possible Russian attack, which he thought unlikely, no doubt rang hollow after the loss of those strongholds to the Russians in the Great Northern War. Thus, Wilde set about his task, submitting parts of his work to examination by the censors as he proceeded.
Beside the historical changes that had overtaken Pufendorf’s account of contemporary Swedish politics, there was also a political threat posed by foreign editions of the *Einleitung*. The second volume of the aforementioned Frankfurt edition, the history of Sweden, came with a newly written prefacing chapter on recent Swedish history, with a particular focus on the political intricacies after the death of Charles XII. The preface put forward arguments against the claim to the throne of the dead king’s younger sister Ulrika Eleonora and her husband Friedrich of Hessen-Kassel (who ultimately ascended the Swedish throne), and argued in favour of the son of the dead king’s deceased older sister Hedvig Sophia, Charles Fredrick of Holstein, thereby casting suspicion on the actions of the Swedish nobility, who became the actual rulers after Ulrika Eleonora’s coronation. The case made in the preface was supported by references to passages in Pufendorf’s history describing Sweden’s constitution. Needless to say, such an account was regarded as a challenge by the statesmen in the Chancery College.

A minute from 28 January 1737 mentions a refutation of the Frankfurt preface:

> Secretary Wilde has inserted a refutation of several passages regarding Sweden in the preface to Pufendorf’s Swedish history that was published in German in the year 1719 in Frankfurt; both the preface and the refutation were read [to the members of the Chancery College, who] decided that the secretary should leave out the Frankfurt preface from the Swedish edition of Pufendorf’s history with its remarks, and when he got to the period of the Swedish history on which the German writer erred, refute this in general terms in his remarks.

A few months later, in May, Wilde was called back to receive further instructions on the refutation. It is evident that the Chancery College had current issues in mind when it instructed Wilde to make a new edition of Pufendorf – not least the still delicate question of governmental authority after the death of Charles XII. But Wilde, the historian, also attended to issues of a historiographical nature, as will be demonstrated in the next section.

Wilde’s criticism of Pufendorf’s historiographical method

The first volume of Wilde’s Pufendorf edition, *Förberedelsen*, starts with a disclaimer. For the greater pleasure of the reader, Wilde says, he would rather have written Sweden’s history from scratch:

> without scrutinising, criticising and changing the work of my celebrated predecessors and other learned men; but I have stood by my duty to revere and
obey the will of those concerned [the Chancery College] and hope that the
critique will not hinder the history from being to the taste of wise and prudent
readers, as trustworthiness replaces what is lacking in likeability.\textsuperscript{416}

Wilde was evidently using a style of humility that was conventional in pref-
faces. But one may also suspect that, at the very beginning of this large un-
dertaking, he was already having some real doubts as to its fruitfulness.

Perhaps Wilde felt insulted because he had been ordered to issue an edi-
tion of a fifty-year-old history, rather than continue with his own \textit{Sueciae
historia pragmatica}? However, as a loyal servant he did his duty: ‘Notwith-
standing all the troubles that have faced me, [I] have spared no diligence or
cost, in doing my duty and, according to the desires of those concerned, in
explaining, improving and fulfilling what is lacking in Baron Pufendorf’s
Introduction to the History of the Swedish State.’\textsuperscript{417}

As noted in the introduction of this paper, Wilde speaks of himself not as
a neutral scholar, but as a dutiful subject, following not his own wishes, but
orders given from above, by the state. Notwithstanding the close institutional
ties between state interests and historiography previously discussed, this
attitude is also absolutely central to Wilde’s ethos as historiographer. He
does what he does because that is what he is obliged and ordered to do.

But in general, the contemporary political issues, evident in the Chancery
College minutes and Wilde’s proposal to ‘change the chapter on Sweden’s
interest’ were only vaguely touched upon in his edition. And when it comes
to the actual commentary on Pufendorf, the political motives are not as evi-
dent. The mentioned refutation of the Frankfurt edition is not published in
\textit{Förberedelsen} because, as we saw, the Chancery College did not want it to
be inserted into the work. Instead, it was only referred to as being made pub-
lic for the ‘persuasion of foreigners’ in a forthcoming Latin translation (by
Anders Wilde, published in 1741) and as being ‘already known’ to the Swe-
dish public from a previously published separate print.\textsuperscript{418} The Frankfurt edi-
tion was, however, attacked \textit{en passant} in a long discussion on the topic of
whether Sweden, in ancient times, had had an elective or hereditary monar-
chy (probably an attempt to carry out the instruction to ‘refute [it] in general
terms’). In \textit{Förberedelsen}, the critique of Pufendorf’s historical narrative at
large is rather expressed in historiographical terms, and relates partly to
structure and partly to content.

Beginning with the structure, Wilde argued that Pufendorf’s narrative was
chronologically vague and unconcerned with epochs. In memorials to the
Chancery College, where Wilde reported on his on-going work, he excused
the considerable length of his attached manuscript with reference to ‘the
great disorder, regarding events, as well as geography, genealogy and chro-
nology’ in Pufendorf’s text.\textsuperscript{419} Patrik Hall has, somewhat wittily, likened
Wilde to a historiographical Linnaeus.\textsuperscript{420} It is a comparison that hits the
mark, as Wilde’s work is full of systematic orders and series.\textsuperscript{421} He would
indeed have made a fitting example in Michel Foucault’s study of the taxonomic gaze in the sciences of the Classical Age.  

Wilde’s initial operation was thus to order the material in a systematic, chronological form. The central argument behind his enforcement of a new timeline is as follows: (1) History is like a ‘chain’ or a ‘body’ whose parts cannot be moved without causing (providentially guided) movements in the totality. (2) On that basis, the ‘man well versed in history’ can make ‘prognostica politica or guesses about issues of the state, based on probability’ through a ‘comparison of past and present’ (i.e. the *historia magistra vitae* formula), and he increases his accuracy by gaining more knowledge about the moving forces of history. (3) Such forces he learns about by reading histories with distinct timelines that supports explanations of causal connections between separate events in the history constituted by the historian’s narrative. Wilde’s belief in the historiographer’s ability to reveal the underlying causality, the connections ‘beneath the surface’ of events, is to be seen in the light of the overarching theory of the moral and political functionality of history – the historian reveals the connections between events and puts them into a chain, as a basis for predicting the future. The connections between ‘time, things and persons’ were not clearly marked by Pufendorf, according to Wilde, who therefore intended to make them explicit. This criticism prompted the insertion of a new epochal chapter division in Pufendorf’s text (which lacked such a division), based on Wilde’s schemes.

Wilde’s Rudbeckian criticism of Pufendorf’s (lack of) ancient history

Wilde also had a good deal of criticism in store for Pufendorf’s account of the ancient history of Sweden. Since this critique seems to have consumed most of his editorial energy, it is worthwhile dwelling upon the main thrust of it: Pufendorf’s general avoidance of interpreting myths in a Euhemeristic mode. Euhemerism (named so after the ancient Greek philosopher Euhemerus) was originally a method applied by the early Christian missionaries in order to account for the heathens’ polytheistic beliefs by interpreting them as allegorical myths. It made its way into the Scandinavian historiographical tradition in Snorri’s *Edda* and *Heimskringla*. According to Snorri, the *Aesir* were not gods but mighty chieftains of a Scythian people, with one called Odin or Woden as their patriarch. The *Aesir* impersonated gods to create a myth around themselves in order to gain power. By invoking Snorri’s basic idea and method, Wilde was able to explain away the old false beliefs of the Swedish ‘ancestors’. He also hinted that the original inhabitants of Sweden, before the warrior Scythians under Odin came from Asia
and seduced them, were a kind of noble heathens – perhaps even proto-
Christians of sorts.

The Euhemeristic method was certainly a powerful tool, as it enabled his-
torians to make legible historiographical accounts (and arguments) out of
myths, having first ‘translated’ them. It is this method that Rudbeck used on
an almost cosmic scale, as he tried to find hidden references to the Nordic
past in myths from all around the ancient world, by means of etymological
acrobatics and a peculiar kind of archaeological method. In this way, the
history of the current Swedish nation could, via Odin and the Swedes’ al-
leged Gothic heritage, be connected to the foundations of universal history,
or to be more exact: the histories of the Greco-Roman ancients and the
Bible. Thus it was possible for the Swedish state, which by the middle of the
seventeenth-century had suddenly become a great power, to sport a history
that seemed appropriate to this role. It was this method of ‘deepening’ the
past by translating myths that Wilde found wanting in Pufendorf’s history
and that he wished to impose upon it. In Wilde’s summary of his method of
procedure in Förberedelsen, his commentary on the history is equated to an
application of Rudbeck on Pufendorf’s text:

Especially the outstandingly profound and learned Doct. Rudbeck in his
Atlantica, in which he revealed with great distincton his learning, diligence
and zeal for the Fatherland, and also so well paved the way for me, that
nothing is wanting there but milestones, which could then also, where
accounts differ, serve as signposts. Furthermore I have taken pains to find the
most notable changes, and assign them to their own ages, which then seem to
be reasonably sufficient, in a comparison of domestic and foreign accounts,
to remedy most of the disorder and misunderstandings. And so I have now
used this historical method as a basis for my commentary on Baron von
Pufendorf’s introduction, which I have otherwise left unchanged in its former
shape and order, in accordance with the wishes of His Royal Majesty and the
Chancery College of the realm.426

However, when we turn away from what Wilde said that he wanted (or
rather, was obliged) to do, and instead try to examine what he actually did,
things get more complicated. Not only was Wilde less of an orthodox
Rudbeckian than he claimed to be. In addition, his patriotic ambition to
‘publicly with the pen defend the right of the State, the honour of the
Kingdom and the inviolable customs of the people, with the reliability of
history itself’ was undermined by his manner of establishing ‘historical
reliability’ with an almost fanatical interest in details and historical
curiosities – what we loosely could call his ‘scholarly’, or ‘fact-fetishistic’,
side.427

In the next section we will see how Wilde struggled to get Pufendorf’s
summarising account of Sweden’s ancient history to conform to his own
basically Rudbeckian view. We will also note how a conflict between
different modes of writing and conceiving history is displayed in Wilde’s reworking, which in effect destabilises Pufendorf’s text from within.

The arguments in Wilde’s critical commentary on Pufendorf’s ancient history

Wilde’s habit of plunging into seemingly secondary issues is clearly present already in the first volume and its preparatory theoretical discussions. This volume not only outlines Wilde’s general historical approach and the grounds for the Swedish monarchical constitution. It also presents several ancient and early medieval lineages, discusses Odin and the Scythian heritage, and contains an appendix setting out ‘Leibniz critique of Newton’s thoughts on the problems of the old chronology’, all in quite a confused fashion. The ‘scholarly’ strain in Wilde’s writing becomes all the more evident in confrontation with Pufendorf’s rather sparing account of Swedish ancient history.

Did Pufendorf offer a rival, and perhaps less glorious, explanation for the origins of the Northerners? Not at all; the very first sentence of his Swedish history, contains a claim in true Rudbeckian tradition: ‘That Sweden is the oldest kingdom in Europe cannot be doubted by anyone, who has any knowledge of the old monuments in this land.’ This wording very closely resembles that found in Gustavus Adolphus’s instruction to the College of Antiquities in 1630, which stated that: ‘No nation has older or more famous monuments than we [Sweden]. That proves that we are the oldest people, and that our tongue is the oldest.’ It is thus probable that Pufendorf was here consciously demonstrating his Swedish loyalty. Indeed, the first chapter of the Continuirte Einleitung reads almost like a schoolboy essay on the genesis of Sweden, in the manner in which it had been taught for decades: the first immigrants were a group led by Magog (a grandchild of Noah), who out of curiosity went to follow the North star, and ended up in Uppland. From them there sprang a Gothic people, who migrated to Asia but returned, during the age of Alexander the Great, in the shape of Scythian warriors.

However, already in the second paragraph, Pufendorf relativized this history: ‘But who the first immigrants of Sweden were, and what year after the flood they came, is left for others to search for, as we believe that nothing unambiguous can be found in such ancient things.’ Although he does not actually go against the Swedish antiquarians’ grain, Pufendorf takes the Pilatean way out, clearing his own intellectual conscience (and his international reputation) from some of their wild speculations. It is this tendency to avoid the problems of mythological origins that Wilde cannot accept.

In a note on the sentence by Pufendorf, Wilde remarks with disfavour:

Reason may investigate everything, and hence put it in doubt, but not leave it aside as the Sceptics wanted. History is based on traditions, oral as well as
written, from the dark, mythic and historical age. All of them [the histories of ancient times] are certainly not beyond doubt, but rather, according to the character of their time, more or less probable, and should by the writer be gathered, evaluated and put before the reader for examination, whereupon they might be approved or disapproved. 

Indeed, it may be thought that Wilde is actually right in this criticism of Pufendorf, who instead of critically examining the old histories, was content to accept some, reject others, and refer the question of source validity to the old historiographers. (This was also Pufendorf’s weak spot, as he knew nothing about runes and only a little of the Swedish language.) But more interesting from the perspective of this article is to note how Wilde, as a counter-move, engaged in the antiquarian activity of bringing heaps of historical evidence together for the readers to examine.

To the first ‘chapter’ of Pufendorf’s text, which is four pages long (the chapter division, as we recall, is solely Wilde’s construction), Wilde has added fifteen notes, which extend over thirty-four pages. The longest of these, note five in the first paragraph, stretches from page 10 to page 36. It is interesting in that it does not engage with Pufendorf, but with Rudbeck. The discussion begins with some general remarks about Noah, Odin and the people of Troy (all held to be connected, in some way, to the origins of Scandinavia) as well as a short catalogue of foreign praise of Rudbeck. The note then develops into a general critique of Rudbeck’s time-schemes in Atlantica. A long digression on Rudbeck’s faulty etymological derivations of the roots of the Christmas celebration in Scandinavia (pp. 27–31) is the tour de force of Wilde’s criticism. The structure of the first chapter is not untypical. The second chapter of Pufendorf’s text is also four pages long, and is provided with Wilde with twenty-three pages of notes; the third has two pages of text and eleven pages of notes, and so on.

Wilde is seemingly trying to outdo Pufendorf’s narrative with a competing narrative in his notes, which not only argues against the main text, but also gives an alternative full-scale account, with a vast amount of source material, often displayed in long quotations. As we have seen, Wilde also argues against other historiographical accounts of Sweden’s ancient history, accounts which Pufendorf either took for granted or cautiously ignored. The rhetorical effect of these notes is of course that the ‘authorial voice’ of Pufendorf is undermined, and his authority (which at the level of direct statements, Wilde claimed to hold in high esteem) is subverted. The abundance of his commentaries indicated that there were two different historiographical discourses in play at the same time.
The end of the first chapter in Jacob Wilde’s edition of Samuel Pufendorf’s Swedish history, and the beginning of Wilde’s commenting notes on the translated text. Wilde’s abounding commentaries had the effect of undermining the authority of Pufendorf’s historical account. Wilde, Jacob [Samuel von Pufendorf], *Fordom Sweriges historiographus friherrens Samuelis von Puffendorffs ’Inledning til swenska statens historie’ med wederbörlige tilökningar, bewis och anmerkningar försedd af Jacob Wilde. Andra delen* (Stockholm, 1743), p. 5. Source: Uppsala University Library.
Different early modern modes of historiography

As Arnoldo Momigliani has pointed out, one cannot easily equate antiquarian studies and historiography during the early modern period. Although they sometimes overlapped (as in the case of Rudbeck), the fabrication of historical narratives on the one hand and academic studies in, and publications of, ‘antiquities’ on the other were generally regarded as two distinct activities with separate traditions. State historiographers were as a rule grounded in a narrative tradition, which often focused on more or less contemporary history in its political (martial, diplomatical, dynastical, economical) aspects. Pufendorf is an almost paradigmatic example of this.

Antiquarianism, in contrast, primarily revolved around gathering sources, be it manuscripts, monuments or oral tradition. This endeavour was intensely supported by the state during the second half of the seventeenth century, when, for rhetorical purposes, the Swedish state apparatus developed a strong interest in national origins. The results of antiquarian activity were used in patriotic propaganda of the Swedish war-state, during the ‘Age of Greatness’. However, in the reign of Charles XII, the state’s interest in national antiquities diminished (along with its finances). In the eighteenth century, after the death of the king in 1718 and the old state antiquarian Johan Peringsköld in 1720, ideological antiquarianism was marginalised. But antiquarianism as a historiographical attitude did not cease to exist, and we see how it reveals itself in Wilde’s commentaries on Pufendorf. Like the antiquarians, Wilde is deeply engaged in the project of erecting the nation’s present honour on the international stage on the foundation of its glorious origin and past.

Swedish antiquarian studies were directly connected to the ideology of ‘Gothicism’, a discourse occupied with legends of the Goths, especially the one that claimed that they became the ‘conquerors of Rome’ and therefore, in some sense, the rightful heirs of the Romans. Despite Wilde’s critical scrutiny, and his strikingly harsh judgment of the sixteenth century Gothicist historians Johannes and Olaus Magnus, he operated within the tradition of Gothicism. As the Goths were believed to have arisen from ‘the north’, Swedish Gothicist historians judged that this must have been the Swedish region of Götaland, and the antiquarians’ interest in finds of ‘Gothic’ monuments inside the kingdom’s borders, such as rune stones, and also traces of Gothic myths in the oral traditions among the peasants, was motivated by this alleged heritage. Although Rudbeck was not formally appointed as an antiquarian, his Atlantica became, itself, the very monument of the collective endeavours to gather the remainders of yore under the Gothicist banner.

This ethno-cultural heritage not only bestowed prestige, but was also relevant in a political discourse. A general Gothicist idea was that of a once existing Gothic German-Scandinavian realm, which Wilde called the ‘Odinian Empire’. This was later split into the kingdoms of Denmark and
Sweden, and Wilde went to great lengths to prove that the ‘Danish prelates’ pretensions to primacy in the North were based on a misunderstanding of the Danish annals; the kings listed there were really the kings of Sweden, who in fact also ruled Denmark, following a decision by Odin. Denmark was thus, in origin, only a ‘province’ of Sweden. Wilde sees in Odin the very initiator of the Gothic lust for brave warrior deeds, and as an imperial ruler he is both a moral exemplum and a precursor of later Swedish ‘warrior kings’, such as Gustavus II Adolphus.

Pufendorf was of course aware of the political need to claim ancient legitimacy, not least in the context of territorial conflicts. However, he was sometimes rather careless in his treatment of details in the early periods, something Wilde never failed to point out. In one note, Wilde discusses Pufendorf’s deviation from the source Eric Messenius, which resulted in him confusing King Inge with two other kings both named Frey. Wilde concludes, almost with a sigh: ‘Few words, but much disorder, which might rather be ignored than corrected: but what will then become of historical reliability, which should above all be searched and cared for?’

This gives us a clue of one of the reasons for Wilde’s massive commentaries: as a historical thinker and writer, he was very keen on and particular about ‘hard facts’. Being schooled in the Swedish variant of Gothic antiquarianism, Wilde regarded it as his duty to comment upon historical documents and even more so to compile them and ‘bring them out into the daylight’, to use his own favourite catchphrase. History, then, became reliable only when backed with solid sets of documents. But how was this received by the non-academic Swedish public, which Wilde was surely meant to address?

The fate of Wilde’s Pufendorf edition

It is again crucial to remember that the position of state historiographer was not an academic one, but an appointment in service of the state. Pufendorf was the first Swedish state historiographer who wrote history in the vernacular, and also the first to be translated into Swedish. Pufendorf embodies a sort of shift, which he himself can be said to have inaugurated when, in the preface to the Einleitung, he identified the intended readership of this introductory work, not as learned clerks and scholars, but as politically active nobles and state servants in spe.

We must also remind ourselves that, in Pufendorf’s days, Latin was the default language of learning. Even if the Swedish eighteenth-century witnessed an enduring and emotionally charged debate about the need for academics to write in the national language, Latin still dominated the academic scene. The success of the Einleitung is partly explained by the fact that it was accessible outside the universities, i.e. not written in Latin or adorned with a bulky apparatus of facts and legal argumentation. When Wilde was
instructed to edit a new Swedish translation of Pufendorf, this edition too
was most likely intended, not for academic purposes, but – like other Euro-
pean vernacular editions – for a contemporary public, involved in the politi-
cal practicalities of the state. The main purpose of foreign editions of
Pufendorf’s *Einleitung* was to update, and possibly revise, it in the light of
contemporary politics. In contrast, Wilde’s edition essentially consists of a
colossal critique of Pufendorf’s lack of meticulousness and does not even
remotely touch on recent historical events.

Wilde was repeatedly criticised for his complicated and demanding style,
and even a reader like the publicist Carl Christoffer Gjörwell, well known
for his fondness for antiquarian studies, remarked that his ‘style did not pos-
sess all the clarity and likeability that cursory readers demand’. Wilde was
indeed conscious of this criticism but chose not to heed it. On the contrary,
he attacked historiographers who gave in to the demands of lazy, cursory
readers:

> That the disorder [in Swedish ancient history] has hitherto not been cured
> stems mostly from the fact that writers have conformed to the reader’s incli-
nation and taste. Most [readers] seek entertainment and diversion: truthful in-
vestigations into the correct chronology, and the adjusting of confused, dark
and entangled accounts, give them a headache.

However, says Wilde, ‘this [critique] is necessary for the reliability of
history, which serves the honour of the realm and its people’.

It is hard to tell how Wilde’s employers in the Chancery College viewed
the result of his historiographical struggle for patriotic honour. On the one
hand, his Pufendorf edition was obviously published with their approval. On
the other, the expected third part, on modern history, which was promised on
the last page of the second part of Wilde’s edition, was never written; the
part which, at least judging from the minutes of the College, was supposed to
be politically the most significant one. As the Pufendorf edition is not
mentioned after 1743, as far as I have been able to find, it is possible that the
Chancery College may simply have lost interest in the project. Wilde’s criti-
cism had taken its time, and the political needs of 1743 were not the same as
those of 1733. It is probable that Wilde’s task became politically obsolete, or
that the project was successively aborted after Wilde became blind in 1741.

The first page of Anders Wilde’s Swedish translation of *Suecia historia
pragmatica* (titled *Swenska statsförfattningars, eller almänneliga rätts histo-
rrie*) published in 1749, may shed some light on the issue. Here Anders
writes that his father had had to interrupt his work on commenting Pufendorf
as he felt that he must once again defend the ‘old history’, which had been
called into question. This is a reference to a work called *Svea rikes historia*
(‘The History of Sweden’), published in 1747 by Olof Dalin, which triggered
an infected debate about Sweden’s ancient past. From this conflict, I will try to derive a kind of poetic moral.

Bringing into the light, or increasing darkness with darkness: a concluding moral

In 1744, the year after the now sightless Wilde had finally published the second volume of Pufendorf’s Swedish history, Olof Dalin – not a man of the university, jurisprudence or antiquities, but a writer of a satirical periodical, state official and royal courtier – was given the task of writing an entirely new Swedish history from scratch. Dalin, for sure, was strongly influenced by Wilde’s conception of history and the rigour of his proofs, and followed him in many details, as he also politely admitted, praising the ‘incomparable utility’ of Wilde’s work and his great ‘erudition’. However, in the preface to the first part of Svea rikes historia, Dalin, in witty prose inspired by the Dane Holberg, claimed that the search for indubitable facts in the dimness of ancient history was ‘more than childish, it is to increase darkness with darkness, a vain quarrel, in which none may be judge’. A strike directed at the Rudbeckian antiquarians, among them Wilde. In addition, Dalin, supported by friends engaged in the natural sciences, drastically claimed that Sweden lacked any mythical ancient history, at least before Christ, as the land had been totally covered in ocean water. The water had only subsided centuries later, which put the origin of ancient Swedish history nearly 1000 years later than in Wilde’s version. Wilde, as one might expect, did not take this well. With his son Anders as a (somewhat unreliable) ghost writer, Jacob composed a diatribe against Dalin, which was inserted in Svenska Svenska statsförfattningars [. . .] historia. In the foreword to this work, Anders recounts his father’s credentials in terms we have heard before – ‘dutifulness’, ‘historical reliability’, ‘having made many rare documents public’ etc. – before accusing Dalin of humiliating the fatherland in the eyes of foreigners and finally calling for censorship of Dalin’s work if he did not retract his claims. In order to refute Dalin, Jacob and Anders also furnished the Swedish translation of Jacob’s work with a vast number of footnotes. These pointed out every deviation Dalin’s account had made from true (i.e. Wilde–Rudbeckian) history and provided painstakingly detailed counterarguments against his theses in roughly the same manner as earlier in the Pufendorf edition. Nevertheless, Dalin did not retract. Fate also had a last ironic twist in store for Wilde, as neither Dalin’s slightly blasphemous theory, nor his factual mistakes (meticulously catalogued by Wilde) could prevent the controversial courtier from taking over the position of historiographus regni after Wilde’s death in 1755. Moreover, Dalin’s Svea rikes historia became the
first historical work of the eighteenth century that was able to replace Pufendorf and Rudbeck, as a standard Swedish history; a national epic read by an emergent ‘public’. Now, the moral is not that Dalin, being the more ‘modern’ of the two, ‘defeated’ Wilde and that historiography progressed as a discipline. If modernity comes down to scholarly rigour and methodology, Dalin did not take historiography any further than Wilde – rather the contrary. If it is taken to mean source criticism and scepticism towards myths, Dalin, too, often indulged in highly romanticised stories about the first inhabitants of Sweden, whom he supposed to be not Scythian warriors, but shepherding ones, with a rococo-pastoral lifestyle.

What I am proposing, rather, is this: during the eighteenth century Wilde’s model of historiography – the scrutinizing ‘scrapbooking’ of old texts in the archive of the state in order to bring the material ‘into the light’ for the benefit of a few judicious readers who sought to ground the nation’s sovereignty in its ancient myths – was challenged. The challenge came from the popular type of rhetorically effective, ‘literary’ historiography, which relied more on emotionally appealing picturesque episodes, from the politically important events of recent history, and less on the detailed investigations of mythical accounts in old manuscripts, which only ‘increase[d] darkness with darkness’. Wilde’s antiquarian model might be said to have been ‘static’ in its displaying of sources, relying strictly on the logos inherent in a ‘reliable history’. Dalin’s significantly more frequent use of rhetorical figures and narration, inspired by recent continental histories, could instead be seen as intending the rhetorical effect of movere, the arousing of emotions.

This ‘narrative turn’ towards a public readership of historiography was supported by the concise and politically oriented works of Pufendorf; not least the Einleitung and the Swedish history – the very work that Wilde turned into a hotchpotch of antiquarian speculations! Thus, Pufendorf’s Swedish history, after Wilde’s editing, became an infertile hybrid, partly self-contradictory, as Wilde tried to transfer his predecessor’s text into a tradition from which it had originally diverted. Struggling to conjoin the historiographical poles of ‘facts’ and ‘construction’, Wilde sided with the antiquarians, and a sort of ‘fact-fetishism’, when the type of history favoured in the ‘Republic of Letters’ was instead politically embedded storytelling. Wilde did indeed do his duty, but he miscalculated the rhetorical purpose. One is left with a picture of the isolated old historiographer cloistered among the documents of the state archives, working on his history, year after year, while outside, international political settings and ideas on the intellectual scene were rapidly changing – history itself was revolving.

Pufendorf has come to be hailed as a leading figure of the German Früh-Aufklärung, and Dalin as one of the few vindicators of Enlightenment in Sweden. Of the blind Jacob Wilde, not even a single portrait remains. His name may not have vanished into the darkness; rather, it has been doomed to
linger in the dusk of academic footnotes. If not fair, it is at least poetically apt.

391 ‘[. . .] är och hålles för en Statens Sysloman, som bör bewaka och försvara des rätt och förmåner [. . .]’; ‘skrifver å embetets wägnar och på befallning.’ Both quotations are taken from an article by Patrik Hall, ‘Jacob Wilde – den glömda svenske statsteoretikern’, *Statsvetenskaplig Tidsskrift* (1997), pp. 275–96 (p. 285), to which I am indebted. Hall also emphasises the extent to which Wilde regarded himself as a civil servant. All citations given in English that are taken from Swedish sources are my own translations. I have tried to make these translations ‘readable’, i.e. to convey the meaning rather than the style. The original text is included in the note following the quotation(s), as here.
393 ‘[A]tt skrifva efter acta publica och defendera de däruti befintliga satserna till nationens heder med alla de skäl, som sunda förnuftet och regulæ politices ac juris naturæ vid handen gifva, ty en historiographus får icke skrifva all det han vill, menar och tänker, utan det han i actus publicus finner.’ Quoted from Knut Nordlund ‘Om censureringen af Jacob Wildes “Historia Pragmatica”’ *Historisk Tidskrift* (1902), pp. 263–92 (p. 279).
As mentioned Wilde was recruited by Gustaf Cronhielm, and he had defended Georg Heinrich von Görtz and Carl Gyllenborg (later leader of the Hat-party) after they had been arrested in England, in a book called De jure et judice legatorum diatribe (1717, under the pseudonym Stephanus Cassius). Wilde also corresponded with the two devout Hat-party members Carl Gustaf Tessin and (the elder) Eric Benzelius, who supported him in the conflict in the Chancery College (Nordlund, ‘Om censureringen’, pp. 274–75, 283). The letters do not, however, contain any explicit political discussion.

Nordlund ‘Om censureringen’, p. 280. Wilde also insisted that his censors should burden themselves with examining all his sources in extenso, something that evidently annoyed them. Nilsén, Att ‘stoppa munnen’, p. 124.

Translates as: ‘Continued introduction to the history of the principal kingdoms and states of Europe, in which especially the history of the Kingdom of Sweden is described.’

Translates as: ‘An introduction to the history of the principal kingdoms and states of Europe.’

Translates as: ‘The former Swedish historiographer Baron Samuel von Pufendorf’s introduction to the history of the Swedish state with appropriate additions, evidences and comments.’

Leonard Krieger, The Politics of Discretion: Pufendorf and the Acceptance of Natural Law (New York, 1965), p. 3. This is an important work, as Krieger was one of the first modern scholars to discuss Pufendorf. A somewhat dated, but still very valuable survey of Pufendorf’s research can be found in Detlef Döring, Pufendorf Studien: Beiträge zur Biographie Samuel Pufendorfs und zu seiner Entwicklung als Historiker und theologischer schriftsteller (Berlin, 1992), Döring himself being the contemporary scholar who has worked and published most extensively on Pufendorf. Another central scholar in contemporary research on the German lawyer and historian is the American Michael J. Seidler, who has commented and translated several of Pufendorf’s works into English. Most research on Pufendorf concerns his writings on natural law. A good introduction to the research on Pufendorf’s role in this tradition is Knud Haakonsen’s Natural Law and Moral Philosophy: From Grotius to the Scottish Enlightenment (Cambridge, 1996).


For more information about Pufendorf’s biography, see Oscar Malmström, Samuel Pufendorf och hans arbeten i svensk historia (Stockholm, 1899) and Detlef Döring Samuel Pufendorf in der Welt des 17. Jahrhunderts. Untersuchungen zur Biographie Pufendorfs und zu seinem Wirken als Politiker und Theologe (Frankfurt, 2012).


Little is known about the contact between Pufendorf and Rudbeck. As Döring points out, Pufendorf had books by Rudbeck in his library, which he had been given by Rudbeck himself. (Döring, Pufendorf in der Welt des 17. Jahrhunderts, p. 347.) However, in 1685, Pufendorf joined a group from the College of Antiquities.

406 The Swedish pirated edition was called *Politica inculpata*. See Pufendorf, *Gesammelte Werke. Band. 1*, No. 84, p. 119. The lectures also form the base of the authorised Einleitung.

407 The number increases greatly if we count the sequels separately (mainly the volume with the entire Swedish history), the appendices and offprints of single chapters. For a comprehensive list of editions, see the bibliography elaborated by Michael J. Seidler in Samuel von Pufendorf, *An Introduction to the History of the Principal Kingdoms and States of Europe*, tr. J. Crull, ed. M. Seidler (Indianapolis 2013) – a list which has served as basis for this study on different Einleitung editions.

408 Translates as: ‘Introduction. . . reprinted and continued and amplified up to the Treaty of Baden, likewise supplied with a new preface in which the author’s [i.e. the editor’s], political remarks about the changed situation of things is presented.’


411 RA, Kanslikollegium serie: A II a: 46: 26 Apr. 1733. ‘Hans Excelence Riksrådet och Präsidenten greve Horn honom förestälte, om icke han will sig påtaga, att continua med Puffendorfs Inledning till Svenska Historien. Hwartill han bejakade. Men derhos påminte om icke det Capitlet öfver Sweriges Interesse kunde blifwa ändrat. och att 2ne af Kungl. Collegi Ledemöterne kunde förordnas det samma att censurera, nemligen herrarn Kungliga Råden Celsing och Neres. Hwilket Bifölls, hwarmed han tog sitt afsked.’ The neat political balance between the censors indicates that Wilde was simply asking for something which Horn probably already intended to grant him. The censors, Neres and Celsing, belonged to opposing factions of the College and thus, as a pair, represented a political counter-balance to each other.


413 It seems to have taken quite some time for the Swedes to discover the Frankfurt edition, or at least the political threat it represented. The first time I have found the issue mentioned is in 1733, when Rosenadler reports to the College of a translation of Pufendorf’s history, which it decides to forward to Wilde. This reference, though, is somewhat unclear, as no names or titles are stated. RA, Kanslikollegium serie: A II a: 46: 30 Mar. 1733.

til Puffendorfs Swenska historia, som på Tyska utkommit året 1719 i Frankfurt, så
uplästes både Förtalet och Refutat[ionen [sic] Fand godt at Secretararen i den
Swenska editionen af Puffendorfs historia med des anmärkningar utlema det Frank-
furtska förtalet, samt när Han kommer til den Perioden af Swenska Historien, i
hwilken den tyska scribenten fehlat, han då i sina anmärkningar sådant i generella
termer wederalgger.

415 Pufendorf’s Swedish history, written during the absolutist ‘Age of Greatness’,
also had a general tendency to praise absolutist rulers, a tendency which the Chan-
cery College, one of the organisational bases for Swedish parliamentary rule during
the ‘Age of Liberty’, probably wanted to tone down.

416 ‘Jag hade wäl af fri hand, med mindre möda och Läsarenas, kan hända, större
nöje, kunnat och welat författa Sweriges Historie, utan at nagelfara, critiquera och
ändra min almännel. Berömde Företrädares och andre lärde Männs arbete; men iag
hafwer hållit mig plichtig at wörda och lyda wederbörandes godtfinnande och
hoppas critiquen lärer så mycket mindre hindra historien, at komma uti förståndige
och owälduge Läsares tycke, som tilförlåteligheten ersätter hwad på behageligheten
afgår.’ Jacob Wilde [Samuel von Pufendorf], Fordom Sweriges historiographi fri-
herrens Samuelis von Puffendorff ‘Inledning til swenska statens historie’ med we-
derbörlige tilökningar, bewis och anmerkningar försedd af Jacob Wilde. Första
delen eller förberedelsen (Stockholm, 1738), preface.

417 ‘Oachtadt alle mig eljest mötande swårigheter, haft flit och bekostnad ospardt, at
skiöta min syßla, och efter wederbörandes åstundan förklara, bättra och upfylla
hwad på Bar. Pufendorffs Inledning til Swenska Statens Historie brister.’ Wilde,
Förberedelsen, preface.

418 Wilde Förberedelsen, pp. 1, 370.
419 ‘[Noterna har] warit nödiga, för den oreda skull [. . .] såwäl i anseende til Saker-
na, som til Geographie, Genealogie och Chronologie.’ RA, Rikshistriografens me-
421 At times, these systems confuse the modern reader much more than they help.
However, while most of his systematisations are nowadays happily forgotten, Wilde
can still be credited with introducing one of the most enduring epochal systems of
Swedish historiography ever made: the threefold division of Sweden’s past into a
prehistoric age, medieval age, and a new (modern) age.

422 Michel Foucault, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences
(London, 1970), pp.72, 120.
423 Wilde, Förberedelsen, p. 2.
424 ‘han kan, medelst jämförande af forna och närwarande tids omständigheter,
upstålla sina så callad prognostica politica eller gißningar om Statssaker, på en
sanolikhets grund. . .’ Wilde, Förberedelsen, p. 4.
425 Wilde, Förberedelsen, p. 6.
426 ‘Serdeles den öfwer mättan diupstinige och lärde Doct. Rudbek uti sin Atlantica,
därutì med stort beröm å daga sin lärdom, flit och nit för Fäderenslandet, samt så wäl
banat wägen för mig, at intet mera därwid felas, än milestolpar, de där och, wid
efterrättelsernas skiljachtighet, kunde tiena til wägwisare. Därtill har jag nu
äfwenwähl winlagt mig at utleta de merkeligaste förändringar, och at föra dem til
sina egna tidehwarf, som tyckas någorlunda kunna göra til fyllest, wid in-
and sker eller efterrättelser jämkande, til mästa oredans och mißförståndets afhielpande.

427 ’at offentligen med pennan förswara, Statens rätt, Rikets heder, och folckets ostraffelige seder, med siefwa historiens tillföritlighet.’ Quoted from Jacob Wilde, Sweriges historiographi Jacob Wildes svenska statsförfattningars, eller almänne-liga rätts historie (Stockholm, 1749), preface.


430 ‘Wer aber die ersten Einwohner von Schweden gewesen, und in welchem Jahre nach der Sündfluth sie allđar angelanget, wollen wir anderen lassen nachsuchen, weil wir glauben, Daß in solchen uhralten Dingen nichts unzweifelhautes zu finden zey.’ Pufendorf Continuirte Einleitung, p. 4.

431 This reservation did not, however, stop a writer such as Holberg from making fun of Pufendorf’s assertion that Sweden was the oldest kingdom in Europe. Was it reasonable to assume that Europe’s first settlers really travelled all the way through the beautiful continent and then decided to live in the coldest land in the north? Holberg asked his readers rhetorically in the first paragraph in the chapter on Swedish history in his Introduction, a paragraph which is formed as a sardonic answer to Pufendorf. Ludvig Holberg, Introduction til de fornemste Europeiske Rigers Historier (1711), in Carl. S. Petersen (ed.) Ludvig Holbergs samlede skrifter I (Copenhagen, 1913), p. 313.


434 Widenberg, Fäderneslandets antikviteter. See also Mattias Legnér, Fäder-nesladnets rätta beskrivning: Mötet mellan antikvarisk forskning och ekonomisk nyttokult i 1700-talets Sverige (Helsinki, 2004).
For the history of the state antiquarian and the College of Antiquities, see Henrik Schück’s massive work *Kgl. Vitterhets- historie- och antikvitetsakademien*, 8 vol. (Stockholm, 1932–44).


Wilde’s fascination with Odin is also noted by Hall, *Den svenskaste historien*, p. 88 et passim.


In a long memorandum to the Chancery College from 1740, in which Wilde recounts his merits as a historiographer in order to secure a salary for his amanuensis, he repeats the phrase ‘brought into the daylight’ numerous times, almost in every sentence. Although the phrase was not unconventional, its conspicuous recurrence clearly signifies that he conceived his work as a historian as an activity of ‘bringing forth’ the unseen and unnoticed. See RA, Kanslikollegium E. IV. 16: 30 Jan. 1740.


‘hans skrifart ej ägde al den tydelighet och behagelighet, som flygtiga Läsare fodra.’ Carl Christoffer Gjörwell, *Den swänska Mercurius*, 3:2 1757:10, p. 457. See also Nordlund, who mentions several complaints made about Wilde’s complicated style in *Sueciae historia pragmatica* ‘which’, said censor Johan Brauner, ‘is unsuitable for a history, and in which one much desires a perspicuity that is the principle of true style’ [‘hvilken är otjänlig til en historia, och varutni man mycket desiderar en perspicuetit, som är praecipua virtus styli’]. Nordlund, ‘Om censureringen’, p. 283.


Wilde, *Swenska statsförfattningars, eller almänneliga rätts historie*, preface.
This claim was seen as an attack on both the national and the biblical history of origin and thus sparked an infected debate that raged for almost the rest of the century. See Tore Frängsmyr, Geologi och skapelsetro: Föreställningar om jordens historia från Hiärne till Bergman (Stockholm, 1969). Dalin defended his thesis in the second part of Svea rikes historia.

Wilde, Svenska statsförfattningars [. . .] historie, preface.

Cf. Hall ‘Jacob Wilde’, pp. 277–78. Hall has remarked on the strangeness of these footnotes directed at Dalin’s work. Penned by Anders Wilde, the notes do not only often repeat many of the arguments in Jacob’s main text, but also sometimes draws conclusions that are not supported in the main text – like a strange dialogue between father and son.


An indication of this is the memorandum Dalin wrote before starting to work on his Swedish history. In that work, he says, he will focus mainly on ‘the clearer and more confident time, in the same manner as Daniel wrote l’Histoire de France, that is, each and every king’s history, one after the other.’ (‘den klarare och säkrare tiden, på samma sätt som Daniel har skrivit l’Histoire de France näml. vars och ens konungs historia, den ena efter den andra’). Quoted from Ingemar Carlsson, Olof von Dalin: samhällsdebattör, historiker, språkförnyare (Varberg, 1997), p. 88.
Is love common to all cultures? Anthropological as well as historical research has shown that it is.\textsuperscript{455} Or rather, research has shown that falling passionately in love is probably something that people do, and have done, all over the planet and at all times. The romantic love complex, however, in which love is associated with monogamous, lifelong relationships between two individuals who have freely chosen one another, is, it seems, specific to the Western world. Niklas Luhmann traces the birth of romantic love to Britain in the late eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{456} At that time, a tumultuous and in many ways progressive period in European history, the role of marriage was being transformed. Consequently, and inevitably, this brought about a change in what people were able to expect from married life. Through romantic love, there was suddenly a possibility of self-fulfilment – a notion which had hardly existed in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. This romantic belief still holds a dominant position in Western societies and, on the whole, the rise of romantic love marks perhaps the most fundamental change of love code in the last three hundred years.

Thus, when presented with love poetry from early modern times, we, as modern readers, will generally have a different understanding of the concept of love than the poet had – and since we do not recognise the code, we are likely both to miss and to misunderstand certain nuances in the text. Love, as in having a strong sense of affection, or even passion, for something or someone, may be an experience shared by people throughout history, but the way love is manifested depends on time and context. Bearing these challenges in mind, reading early modern love poetry still gives us a rare opportunity to explore other perspectives on love, which were forgotten or marginalised as the romantic love complex emerged.

The poet Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht (1718–63) wrote extensively on the subject of love and is the author of some of the canonical Swedish love poems of the eighteenth century, ‘Öfver en hyacint’ (‘On a hyacinth’) being perhaps the most famous of all.\textsuperscript{457} Her love poems generally have a note of
tragedy and are written in a musical, plaintive style. Often, they discuss love (what it is, what it does, what it could or should be) in relation to Enlightenment subjects, such as female emancipation and education. Her works bear traces of so-called précieuse ideas – an adjective sometimes used to pack together learned French aristocratic women who frequented the Parisian salons in the mid seventeenth century.

The précieuses have become famous for their original and radical thoughts on the role of women. At a time when witch-hunts still ravaged Europe and the legal rights of women were inadequate, they discussed whether marriage should be a one-year contract and if it would not be preferable to make men responsible for the upbringing of children. Generally, love and marriage were popular topics of conversation in the salons. Nordenflycht’s admiration for certain précieuse authors has long been known. However, no studies have been made of the way she developed their ideas in a Swedish eighteenth-century context. In this article, I aim to look at the views of love expressed in a selection of poems by Nordenflycht, bringing the précieuse heritage into focus. How did she transmit and transform their ideas? What kinds of love are presented in her texts and how should they be understood?

Furthermore, I hope to convey a piece of knowledge which is perhaps less evident today than it was to Nordenflycht and the French seventeenth-century précieuses: love is serious. That is, the way people love is not simply a private matter; a relationship is not a bubble existing outside society, invisible and irrelevant to everyone except those involved. Love – its forms and manifestations – ultimately touches upon justice and equality.

My analysis will concentrate mainly on two poems: ‘Den unga herdinnan Dorillas qwäde’ (‘The song of the young shepherdess Dorilla’), published in Qvinligt Tankespel 1746–47 (‘Female play of thought 1746–47’; 1747), and ‘Säg mig Damon sad’ Lysandra’ (‘Tell me Damon said Lysandra’), published in Witterhets Arbeten II (‘Literary works II’, an approximate translation; 1762). Several other poems will also be cited. These are: ‘Nymodig kärleks art’ (‘The nature of modern love’), ‘Fröjas Räfst’ (‘Freyja’s inquisition’), ‘Vänskapsmål’ (‘The goal of friendship’) and ‘Mit öde’ (‘My destiny’).

The most important poems in my analysis, ‘Den unga herdinnan Dorillas qwäde’ and ‘Säg mig Damon sad’ Lysandra’, have been chosen for their relevance to the question at issue. In addition, an in-depth study of a limited number of texts seems preferable to a brief survey of a vast array of confusingly similar love poems. Nordenflycht was an extremely assured debater who, throughout her life, consistently advocated practically the same ideological messages with admirable stamina. Her advocacy of female emancipation, for example, runs through nearly all her texts in some form. She does not give in. Thus, even though ‘Den unga herdinnan Dorillas qwäde’ and ‘Säg mig Damon sad’ Lysandra’ were written many years apart, Nordenflycht’s voice does not alter. All of her writings on love should be seen as different meditations on the same complex of problems.
As an introduction to my literary analysis, I shall provide the reader with a brief survey of the European history of love in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In order to understand Nordenflycht’s context and how it differs from our own, it is necessary to grasp the distinctive features of romantic love. This will not only deepen our understanding of Nordenflycht’s work, but will also show how shifts in the love code change attitudes to friendship, marriage and other related issues, particularly in the protofeminist sphere to which Nordenflycht belongs. As we shall see, the solutions she proposes to the problem of female subordination in eighteenth-century societies are completely dependent on the way love is perceived in her time.

The romantic perspective on love

In the late eighteenth century, passion and attraction, two components not formerly considered vital to marital success, were incorporated into the concept of marriage. Husband and wife were thus expected to offer each other both endurance and sublime love. Luhmann writes: ‘By the end of the eighteenth century, the unity of a marriage of love and conjugal love was generally professed to be the principle of the natural perfection of mankind.’

The development of romantic love runs parallel to that of the bourgeois family ideal and, importantly, the rise of the novel. Anthony Giddens writes:

> Romantic love introduced the idea of a narrative into an individual’s life – a formula which radically extended the reflexivity of sublime love. The telling of a story is one of the meanings of ‘romance’, but this story now became individualised, inserting self and other into a personal narrative which had no particular reference to wider social processes.

Romantic love also plays an important part in changing the meaning of virtue. It does so by incorporating sexuality and, at the same time, breaking with it. Here, the bourgeois family ideal is a driving force. ‘I was ever of opinion, that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single, and only talked of population,’ the vicar of Wakefield says in Oliver Goldsmith’s famous novel, published in 1766. Being that of a religious man with national interests in mind, the vicar’s attitude is symptomatic. Having a large, loving family, a pleasant home and an affectionate marriage was the ideal of the time, encouraged by both the church and society in general. Reproduction and tenderness are thus considered important to marriage, but the biological implications – meaning, the way these things are linked to sex – remain a taboo subject.
The romantic love complex has proved a great success in the Western world and still holds a dominant position. One might even argue that it is in some ways enlarging its territory, given that gays and lesbians, formerly excluded from the possibility of marrying, are now gaining that right in many countries. It is likely that a majority of the population in Europe and North America, regardless of sexual orientation, believes that being successful in love means finding ‘that perfect someone’ with whom one can share a lifelong relationship (possibly a marriage) based on both passion and intellectual affinity. The two parties in this relationship are free individuals who have chosen to form an entity because of their mutual attraction, but also for rational and practical purposes (such as wanting the same kind of life), which will help them reach their full potential as human beings. Furthermore, they maintain the unity of the relationship by creating a common romantic identity, a story of ‘us’ – how we met, when we moved in together, our anniversary as a couple, our home, our songs etc. This ‘novelway’ of thinking – that is, understanding one’s life by means of a narrative formula – is of course the necessary requirement for the creation of such a common romantic history. Giddens writes: ‘A romance was no longer, as it generally had been before, a specifically unreal conjuring of possibilities in a realm of fiction. Instead, it became a potential avenue for controlling the future, as well as a form of psychological security (in principle) for those whose lives were touched by it.’

The romantic way of expressing and understanding love, which many of us take for granted and encounter in popular culture on a daily basis, would hardly have been possible before the late eighteenth century. During the second half of the seventeenth century and the early part of the eighteenth, the form of the love code in Western Europe was amour passion – a term which I will return to later on. Thus, when the précieuses were gallantly conversing in the salons of Paris, they understood the concept of love through the amour passion code. Nordenflycht, at the height of her literary career in the mid eighteenth century, was active in a period of transition and renegotiation. It is tempting to think that this instability created a dynamic climate, giving an ambitious and argumentative poet the context she needed to develop an original attitude, combining both radical and traditional thoughts.

Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht and the précieuse influence

A characteristic feature of Nordenflycht was her strong and unswerving desire for knowledge and, importantly, her firm belief that, even as a woman, she had the right to education. The literary historian Torkel Stålmarck
quotes her: ‘To me, everything was like a riddle. A desire to know the connections of everything brought me an unrest that was unusual.’ In this section, I will give a brief account of her biography, before moving on to her love poems.

Nordenflycht was born in 1718 into a family belonging to Stockholm’s middle stratum – her mother being the daughter of a vicar and her father a clerk, who was raised to the nobility after long and dutiful service in his department. From a young age, Nordenflycht was an avid reader. Her parents were at first enthusiastic and encouraged their gifted daughter to study both German and Latin, but in time they changed their mind, since a girl with a scholarly education was not believed to make an attractive bride. Instead, she was taught, with some reluctance on her part, to embroider and make lace. However, she eventually managed to resume her studies in literature, philosophy and theology. In 1743, Nordenflycht published her first collection of poems, Den Sörgande Turtur-Dufwan (‘The mourning turtle dove’). She was a unique figure in male-dominated polite society, as she, as a woman, was able to live by her pen. This was made possible by financial support from rich patrons – a common situation for artists and authors in the eighteenth century. Nordenflycht’s most famous benefactor was the Swedish queen Lovisa Ulrika, whom she in return honoured with several literary dedications.

Being both a noblewoman and a widow (from the age of 24), Nordenflycht enjoyed a kind of freedom and independence that was inaccessible to most women at that time. She was able to gain high acclaim as a poet and became a central figure of the prominent Swedish intellectual society Tankebyggarorden (Order of the Thought Builders). Throughout her life, she remained an important advocate of female emancipation. Her devotion to these issues, which, as mentioned above, focused primarily on women’s rights to education and to engage in intellectual work, is omnipresent in her literary output, sometimes as the main theme of a poem or story and sometimes as a subtext. In Nordenflycht’s writings, there is a natural connection between freedom, justice and love. This is something that she has in common with the précieuses.

First of all though, it must be said that, in many ways, the term précieuse is highly problematic. Partly because it is normally seen as a pejorative word, meaning ‘affected’, and partly because it gives the impression that the précieuses formed a literary grouping or an ideologically homogeneous movement. Such was not the case. However, it is true that the salons of seventeenth-century Paris accommodated a number of highly learned women who were authors and protofeminist thinkers. The salon hosted by Catherine de Vivonne in the Hôtel de Rambouillet in the 1620s–40s is usually seen as the first précieuse salon. After that, both men and women gathered in different salons throughout Paris to converse with one another in the witty and playful manner of the time, until there was a decline in the
latter decades of the seventeenth century. The literary historian Henrik Schück, in a slightly condescending manner, characterised the typical précieuse as ‘a kind of hybrid of professor, littérateur and shepherdess’. More importantly, the salons constituted a forum where love and gender could be discussed.

In this article, I use the word précieuse to designate something or someone linked to the protofeminist aspects of the Parisian salons. A definition is needed, because every historian studying the subject seems to approach the word differently. The American historian Carolyn C. Lougee, for example, in her important study Le Paradis des Femmes: Women, Salons, and Social Stratification in Seventeenth-Century France (1976), claims to follow the example of Antoine Baudeau de Somaize, author of the Grand Dictionnaire des Prétieuses (1660), in labelling every ‘woman who frequents a salon, a member of Parisian polite society’ a précieuse. The French seventeenth-century specialist Roger Duchêne, on the other hand, questions the credibility of Somaize’s long list of précieuses: ‘[il] les multiplia pour grossir son livre’ (‘he multiplied them in order to make his book thicker’).

However, despite these divergences of opinion concerning the number of the précieuses and the nature of la préciosité, practically every historian studying précieuse literature stresses the importance of certain salon women. Two of them, Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701) and Antoinette Deshoulières (1638–94), were authors that Nordenflycht admired and referred to in several texts. It is worth mentioning that she shared their aristocratic background (although Scudéry and Deshoulières belonged to a higher stratum), and while many emancipatory ideas promoted among the précieuses were radical at the time, neither they nor Nordenflycht’s précieuse-inspired protofeminism of the eighteenth century extended to women of the lower strata.

**Literary analysis**

‘Den unga herdinnan Dorillas qwäde’ is, as was popular at the time, a pastoral poem, told from the perspective of Dorilla herself. She tells us about the love that the shepherd Tirsis (or Thyrsis, as the name is commonly transliterated into English) once felt for her – a love which, it turns out, he has now given to someone else. Dorilla’s sentiments are not actually expressed, but the tone of the poem can be described as a restrained, thoughtful melancholy. ‘Den unga herdinnan Dorillas qwäde’ portrays an interesting conflict between two different ways of looking at love: Tirsis’ way and Dorilla’s.

To give an example of this, I have quoted the third and the sixth stanza of the poem.
Tirsis alt jemt den ro berömmer
Och säger kärlek nöge ger:
Af honom sjelf twäert om jag dömmer,
Då jag ser,
At han sin kärleks smärta glömmer
Qwäfwa ner..

(Tirsis always praises that peace
And says that love gives pleasure:
By himself I judge differently,
When I see
That his own pain he has forgotten to
Smother)

[.. .][.. .]

Och fast han sedt mig ofta gråta,
Lammen, som kommit ur min wård:
Fast jag begrof, med ögon wåta, Lilla Mård, Lilla Mård,
Nämner han mig, hur tyks det låta,
Grym och hård.

(And although he has often seen me crying
Over the lambs that were lost from my charge:
Although I buried, with wet eyes,
Little Mård, Little Mård,
He calls me, how is it possible,
Cruel and harsh.)

Tirsis loves in a way that must be called passionate: he is entirely possessed by love, as if it were a spell or a disease, and thinks of nothing else, which, perhaps paradoxically, makes him insensitive to other people’s emotions. His self-knowledge is non-existent and he seems more obsessed with being in love than actually being in love with someone. This means that he is disloyal to everything and everyone but the fiery sensation that he is experiencing.

Portraying a person in love like this is entirely compatible with amour passion. Giddens writes:

Passionate love has always been liberating, but only in the sense of generating a break with routine and duty. It was precisely this quality of amour passion which set it apart from existing institutions. Ideals of romantic love, by contrast, inserted themselves directly into the emergent ties between freedom and self-realisation.

In the era of amour passion, marriage and love had very little to do with one another (naturally, there were exceptions, but I am focusing on the general
tendencies). Thus, it was believed that the domain of love and passion existed outside, and often in opposition to, established institutions. Love and passion possibly meant adultery or sex before marriage – actions which jeopardised the order and norms of society. Needless to say, the personal risks were much greater for women than for men. In literature from this period, love is often portrayed as a dangerous, subversive and mysterious je ne sais quoi, which might smite someone, turning his or her life upside down, as in Tirsis’ case. Given that love was set apart from established institutions, it was seen as irreconcilable with marriage. ‘By laying claim to time, love destroys itself. It dissolves the characteristics which had lent wings to the imagination and replaces it with familiarity,’ Luhmann writes. However, when the romantic love complex takes over, this changes. As love was incorporated into marriage, it no longer imperilled the order of society per se.

Dorilla despises Tirsis’ way of loving precisely because it means a loss of self-control. Her idea of pleasure is different from his, which links all pleasurable things to love. Dorilla appreciates ‘her freedom’, consisting of solitary contemplation, music, spending time in nature and the company of domesticated animals, such as Lilla Mård and the lambs of the sixth stanza. ‘Go away, love, with your bow, / I have named you my enemy’, the shepherdess exclaims in the last stanza.

Many of the love metaphors used in ‘Den unga herdinnan Dorillas qwäde’ are repeated in ‘Säg mig Damon sad’ Lysandra’, where, in typical amour passion fashion, love is compared to fire, flames and other wild, treacherous things, such as deliria and storms. Moreover, flower imagery appears in both poems, in the form of roses and lilies. I see this as a symbol of fragility and corruptibility, but also of the pleasant and beautiful sides to love, which may of course coexist with anxiety and the fear of losing a loved one.

‘Säg mig Damon sad’ Lysandra’ is written as a dialogue between lovers, Lysandra being the questioner and Damon the respondent (again, the names of the personae derive from a pastoral tradition). In six stanzas of eight lines each, Lysandra asks her cherished shepherd if there is anything she can do to diminish his love. Perhaps if she treats him harshly? If she contradicts him, and never agrees to any of his ideas? If she is jealous without cause? If she forgets to be on her guard and happens to look tenderly at another man? If, or when, she loses the beauty of her youth? To all of these questions, Damon says no and answers, though in different wordings, that trials make love grow stronger and greater.

The last stanza, however, is different:

Hvad kan då min sällhet röra? 
Damon’s eld ej ändring får, 
Den skall all min lycka göra,  
Den på tid och skiften rår.
Tryggt jag törs min frihet våga;
Äkta bojor taga an.
Nej sad’ Damon, all min låga,
Släcknar om jag blir din man. 485

(What may then change my bliss?
Damon’s fire does not alter,
It shall make all my happiness,
It is stronger than time and vicissitudes.
Safely I dare to risk my freedom;
Array myself in marriage bonds.
No, said Damon, all my fire,
Dies if I become your husband.)

Seemingly, Damon’s positive answers to Lysandra’s difficult and demanding questions have fortified her belief in their union and led her to assume that marriage would be the natural ‘next step’ – but here, she is instantly rebuked. In the concluding moral of the poem, Nordenflycht makes it perfectly clear to the reader that love and marriage are not compatible. As Luhmann, quoted above, asserts: ‘By laying claim to time, love destroys itself’ – or, quite simply, Damon knows that he will not be able to maintain his love for Lysandra if it becomes a matrimonial obligation, a promise that must be kept for better or for worse. 486 Again, this sceptical attitude towards marriage is a characteristic feature of amour passion, which the précieuses emphasised even more. 487 Not surprisingly, given that the wife had to subordinate herself to her husband. 488

‘Säg mig Damon sad’ Lysandra’ does not project the same negative image of passionate, fiery love as ‘Den unga herdinnan Dorillas qwäde’, in which Tirsis, the one smitten, is repeatedly questioned and ridiculed. Still, both poems have in common a portrayal of passionate love as fragile and transient. A similar depiction can be found in the poem ‘Nymodig kärleks art’, where Nordenflycht asks: ‘Should love be fidelity’s slave? / The strong fire, the free flame / It can change to and fro.’ 489

L’amour raisonnable and tender friendships

The texts analysed so far show that Nordenflycht was clearly affected by the amour passion ideas of her time. Another kind of love, however, frequently appears in her writings, although to find it we have to turn to other poems. I have chosen to call this view of love l’amour raisonnable (the name is borrowed from an epigram in Qwinligt Tankespel 1746–47). 490 Nordenflycht’s ‘reasonable’ kind of love contains elements of both précieuse ideas and romantic love and has been purged of all that is passionate, sensual and bewitching. Instead, l’amour raisonnable equals a tender friendship between
man and woman. I have only found heterosexual portrayals of it in Nordenflycht’s writings and, in any case, depictions of female friendships are scarce. Possibly, being a deeply religious Protestant, she feared that strong companionships between women would risk creating something too reminiscent of a nunnery. However, that is only a hypothesis.

The parties to Nordenflycht’s tender friendships share a profound and immediate understanding of the world and are loyal to one another, but lay no claim on each other with respect to marriage. Rather, it is their souls that meet in a free, spiritual and non-hierarchical union. A couple like this can be found in the story ‘Fröjas Räfst’ – Hildur and Adil. When they are first introduced to us, the shepherdess Hildur is said to be as fair as the fertility goddess (who is called Freyja in Norse mythology, Swedish Fröja or Freja), but later we learn that, due to a sin committed by Adil, she has lost her beauty. However, Adil does not mind this, since he is not in love with her looks. He only cares for her soul – and her reason, which is ‘as vast as her heart is great’.

Subsequently, Adil shares his belief that friendship is what makes love last:

Those who have believed themselves to know the human heart, and pictured its affections, have frequently described love as inconstant, and have let [the heart] tire of its pleasures as soon as it owns them. [. . .] The love that only rules over the senses cannot be constant. But perhaps it is the fault of fate or of mortals that they so often forget the needs of the heart when they love, and do not search for a friend in the object of their love?

Although the soulful friendship described in ‘Fröjas Räfst’ is portrayed as an ideal, there are few representations of couples like Hildur and Adil in Nordenflycht’s writings – perhaps because many of her texts on love are imbued with a tragic mood. Mostly, this *amour raisonnable* is simply presented as something to strive for, as a dream or a prize. In the poem ‘Vänskapsmål’ she writes: ‘To what avail are all the gifts of happiness, / If they are not shared with a friend / Whose heart answers me, / Whose mind thinks like mine? / When the cruelties of time violate everything else, / The law of friendship remains sacred’.

This stress on tender friendships and the equality of all human souls, regardless of sex, reflects two important characteristics of précieuse thought. Roger Duchêne derives the very expression ‘amitié tendre’ from the novel *Clélie* (1654–60) by Madeleine de Scudéry. Carolyn C. Lougee, on the other hand, designates the précieuse search for perfect friendships in the Parisian salons as ‘nothing other than the institutionalization of adultery’. Nordenflycht, however, was the antithesis of a libertine and cannot be accused of having advocated infidelity. Nonetheless, she seems to have been inspired by the précieuse idea of an equal friendship of the soul between the
sexes. The importance of cultivating one’s spiritual, or even ethereal, qualities was echoed among these early modern protofeminists. As Lougee quotes the seventeenth-century author Michel de Pure: ‘The Précieuse is not the daughter of her father or her mother; she has neither [. . .] Nor is she the work of sensible, material nature; she is an extract of the spirit, an abstraction of the reason.’498 The thinking of the précieuses seems to have been that a woman, striving for emancipation or independence (even in relation to her beloved), must free herself of the body on which society has forced the yoke of subordination – and that this liberation of hers should go so far that the only thing remaining is a kind of spirit, a soul. In Nordenflycht’s case, this aspiration leads to the complete exclusion of sexuality from her writings.

However, in other respects, the gap of a hundred years separating eighteenth-century Sweden and the seventeenth-century France of the précieuses is clearly apparent: to a certain extent, l’amour raisonnable breaks with amour passion and heralds romantic love. Many of Nordenflycht’s poems depict love as a way for the individual to reach some kind of self-realisation. In the late poem ‘Mit öde’, for example, the narrator describes how she attains the ‘true goals of wisdom’ through her relationship with a Friend, ‘sensible, wise and good’.499 Moreover, the last stanza of ‘Vänskapsmål’ begins: ‘For two people who tie bonds of friendship / On [the foundation of] common thoughts, virtue, and sense / The purpose of their lives become one.’500

Nordenflycht’s writings date from a time when the love code was slowly beginning to change shape, from amour passion to romantic love. She rejected marriage, because as yet it offered no room for love and could only chain a woman, but embraced the romantic ideal of self-realisation through love. Nordenflycht invented an alternative to traditional amorous attachments: tender, soulful friendships – charitable relationships which neither put love in shackles, nor ushered in adultery. She wanted men and women to meet on equal terms and found that such meetings could only take place soul to soul, on a level where sex no longer mattered.

457 In her lifetime, however, she was famous not only as a lyric poet, but as a woman of letters, writing in many genres.
458 The first line of the poem reads ‘Säg mig Damon sad’ Lysandra’. The poem itself has no title.
‘Nymodig kärleks art’ was published in Qwinligt Tankespel 1746–47 (1747), ‘Fröjas Räfsl’ in Witterhets Arbeten II (1762), ‘Vånskapsmål’ in Våra försök I (1753), and ‘Mit öde’ in Utvalda Arbeten (1774, posthumously).

Ann Öhrberg, Vittra fruntimmer: Författarroll och retorik hos frihetstidens kvinnliga författare (Hedemora, 2001), p. 253. As the term ‘feminism’ emerges in the late nineteenth century, a time very different from Nordenflycht’s eighteenth-century Sweden and the seventeenth-century France of the précieuses, I believe it would be misleading to use it to describe their ideas of female emancipation (also, anachronistic usage of the word ‘feminism’ risks watering down its meaning). However, in many ways, they anticipate feminism. Consequently, I find the term ‘protofeminism’ relevant. For a thorough discussion of this complex of problems, see Öhrberg, pp. 243 ff.

Giddens, Transformation of Intimacy, p. 40.

Luhmann, Love as Passion, p. 146.

In The Rise of the Novel (Harmondsworth, 1970 (1963)), Ian Watt dates this to the time of Henry Fielding, Daniel Defoe and Samuel Richardson, roughly meaning the second half of the eighteenth century.


Giddens, Transformation of Intimacy, p. 41.

Luhmann, Love as Passion, pp. 48 ff.


The following dates and general facts concerning Nordenflycht’s biography can be found, for instance, in Stålmarck, Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht.


For a list of names of identifiable précieuses, see Carolyn C. Lougee, Le Paradis des Femmes: Women, Salons, and Social Stratification in Seventeenth-Century France (Princeton, 1976), p. 215. However, as can be seen in note 5, I do not agree with Lougee’s description of the précieuses as ‘feminists’. For a statement of the reasons behind her use of the word ‘feminism’, see Lougee, p. 7.


Duchêne, Les Précieuses, p. 51.

Mentioned in John Kruse’s biography from 1895, for instance. Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht: Ett skaldinne-porträtt från Sveriges rococo-tid (Lund, 1895).

All the English translations of Nordenflycht’s poetry in this article are my own. I have endeavoured to retain the literal meaning of each text, but – to the reader’s displeasure – neither the rhymes nor the rhythm.

Lilla Mård was the name of a dog that Nordenflycht cared for.
‘Derför fly kärlek, med din båga, / Jag har dig för min owän nämt’, 

‘Skal kärlek wara trohets slaf? / Den starka eld, den fria låga / Han kan ju wäxla 
til och af’, 
Qwinligt Tankespel 1746–47, p. 154.

‘En Wän, förnuftig, wis och god [ . . . ] [t]il wishets sanna mål mig leder’: 

‘Emellan två, som vänasknnyta, / På lika tankar, dygd och vett / Blir lefnads 
ändamålet ett’: Våra Försök I, p. 29.
List of abbreviations

Add. Ms.: Additional Manuscripts
BL: British Library
CUL: Cambridge University Library
CH(H): Cholmondeley (Houghton) Papers
CO: Colonial Office
FO: Foreign Office
HMC: Historical Manuscripts Commission
KrA: The Military Archives of Sweden
NS: New Style
OS: Old Style
RA: The National Archives of Sweden
SP: State Papers
ST: Stowe Papers
THL: The Huntington Library
TNA: The National Archives
ULA: The Regional State Archive of Uppsala
UUA: Uppsala University Archives
UUB: Uppsala University Library
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MATHIAS PERSSON holds a Ph.D. in the history of science and ideas. His doctoral dissertation dealt with German images of Sweden in the eighteenth century and he is currently a researcher in the Department of Economic History at Uppsala University, where he is working on a project about the political dimension of Stockholm’s Royal Academy of Sciences in the 1700s.

ANNIE MATTSSON holds a Ph.D. in Literature. Her doctoral dissertation dealt with libels against the Swedish king Gustaf III and she is currently a researcher in the Department of Literature at Uppsala University, where she is working on a study of the archive of the Royal Police Chamber of Stockholm 1776–1791.

PHILLIP SARGEANT is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the History Department at the University of Liverpool. Utilising themes concerning domestic, economic and foreign policy, his research centres on producing a new history of the administration of Sir Robert Walpole.

FREDRIK KÄMPE holds a degree of Master of Arts with history as a primary field of study. His main research interest is maritime history, particularly early modern Swedish long-distance shipping and its conditions. He is currently working as a guide at the Swedish Naval Museum in Karlskrona.

KARIN BERNER is an MA student in the Department of History at Uppsala University and works as a teacher in secondary school. Her field of research is contacts between Sweden and the Ottoman Empire during the eighteenth century, with a focus on direct contacts involving different groups living in Istanbul.

ANNA BACKMAN holds a degree of Master of Arts in Literature and works as assistant curator at The Linnaean Gardens of Uppsala. For her master’s thesis she studied Academy Equerry Johan Leven Ekelund’s manuscripts on horsemanship and she is currently working on broadening the perspective of equestrianism in the long eighteenth century.

HELGA MÜLLNERITSCH is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Liverpool. Her thesis focuses on
the *Frauenkochbuch* (woman’s cookery book) as object, female authorship and ownership, and the recipes with their variations and their symbolic significance.

TIM BERNDTSSON is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Literature at Uppsala University. He is currently working on a dissertation on the establishment of Freemasonic archives during the eighteenth century.

VERA SUNDIN is an MA student of Literature at Uppsala University and is currently working on a master’s thesis on the Swedish poet Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht, the *précieuses* and protofeminism. Her research interests include the history of emotions, Francophilia, gender studies and the pastoral mode.
38. Torbjörn Gustafsson Chorell, Fascination (2008)

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Inst. för idé- och lärdomshistoria
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