

The Case of Fabian Philip, Karlskrona's First Jewish Entrepreneur: A Swedish Example of the Port Jews Phenomenon?

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The City of Karlskrona

The city of Karlskrona was founded in 1680 to become the one and only naval city of Sweden. The creation of a Swedish Baltic Empire and inclusions of territories in the Northern part of Germany and the former Danish Scania counties in the south of Sweden, had shifted the centre of Sweden from the Mälaren region and Stockholm to the Eastern part of the county Blekinge. The foundation of the naval city of Karlskrona was the largest part of the naval reform that was launched in 1679, which made Karlskrona the principal navy base of Sweden.¹ The fact that Karlskrona was the only naval city of Sweden has to be considered. The size of the different Christian parishes in Karlskrona reflects the social composition of the city. Two thirds of Karlskrona's inhabitants belonged to the non-territorial Royal Karlskrona Admiralty Parish, where membership was based on employment in the Swedish Royal Navy. As two thirds of Karlskrona's population relied on the navy for their revenue and livelihood, it was, thus, the naval establishment, which created the society of Karlskrona.²

The backbone of the manning system of the Swedish Royal Navy were the conscripted sailors who were enrolled every spring at the navy base in Karlskrona, in total 3,000 men.³ During winter the conscripted sailors lived as farmers in provided crofts in the countryside of Sweden. They were complemented by marine soldiers who voluntarily enlisted in the navy. In total the Garrison of Karlskrona was by far the largest in early modern Sweden, counting 3,000 men.⁴ This situation has not earlier been stressed by Swedish historians; instead the Garrison of Gothenburg, counting 800 men, has been studied as one of the largest in Sweden.⁵ The manning system meant that there was a constant flow of people embarking and disembarking ships or manning the industrial naval production

of the naval dockyard. The consequence for the city of Karlskrona was that the population never was homogenous, but rather heterogenic.

International duty was an integrated part of the Swedish naval officers training and this also contributed to heterogenic society of Karlskrona. In 1739 the tradition within the officer's corps to engage in foreign naval service was institutionalized by new regulations. A first lieutenant could be promoted to navy lieutenant in the Swedish Royal Navy when three years of seafaring was fulfilled on Swedish or Foreign naval or merchant ships. If the seafaring was undertaken on foreign ships the officers were obliged to follow *Instruktionen för till sjöfart permitterade officerare* (Instructions for officers on leave for shipping).⁶ Due to the foreign service, Swedish naval officers were part of a global network and, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Swedish Royal Navy had already expressed the necessity of international experience.

Jewish Immigration to Sweden

Influenced by Prussia in the 1770's, the Enlightened King of Sweden, Gustav III, wanted to invite Jews to reform and initiate a revitalizing of the Swedish economy. According to Rita Bredefeldt the policy presented by the Swedish government regarded Jews as economic agents in the European context.⁷ By 1779 the Swedish Parliament passed the *Bill of Religious Freedom* and Jews were allowed to settle in Sweden for the first time. The Church Law of 1686, which had previously regulated the presence of alien worshippers, stated that Muslims, Jews, Turks and Pagans entering Sweden had to be baptized; otherwise they were fined and expelled. Based on the same legal foundation, the Swedish Lutheran Church had a monopoly of faith in Sweden.

Entering Stockholm in 1780, Fabian Philip was the seventh Jew granted permission to stay in Sweden. Jewish settlement in Sweden was regulated by the Board of Trade in the 1782 *Law of Jews*, which stated that Jews were not able to become Swedish subjects and that the Jewish settlements were restricted to the three Swedish cities of Norrköping, Gothenburg and Stockholm. But Philip chose not to stay in Stockholm, going south instead to apply for and receive trading rights in the naval City of Karlskrona.

In 1924 Hugo Valentin, a leading Swedish historian of Jewish history, wrote his magnum opus on Swedish Jewish history. In his *History of the Jews in Sweden*, which has since become a standard work on this subject, Valentin presents the city of Karlskrona as being the most Jew-hostile city in early modern Sweden.⁸

Since then, the Valentin statement has formed the general knowledge about Jews in early modern Karlskrona. In 2012 Karl Bergman reproduced Valentin's statement and added that no private entrepreneur in Sweden or Karlskrona had the economic or organizational capability to form an industrial production on the same level as the naval establishment.⁹ However, the Port Jews Phenomenon makes it possible to evaluate the unique social context that was formed in naval cities.¹⁰ By applying the theory formulated by Victor Karády of Jews constituting a sort of proto-bourgeois stratum in the free markets of the early capitalistic system, this paper will challenge the former general knowledge about Jews in Karlskrona. Further, new empirical material such as economic treaties and purchase contracts strengthen the possibility of reinterpreting former evaluations.

The Naval City Approach

According to naval historian Nicolas Rodger, the Royal Navy became an international venture for the first time in the 1690's, by sending yard officers and artificers to Cadiz with the assignment to learn and gather information. The Royal Navy yards faced challenges, which no private undertaking knew or understood. Moreover the Royal Navy yards had a strong multiplier effect on employment, private investment and urban expansion. The British dockyards had entered the industrial age a hundred years before the rest of Great Britain. Both private suppliers of goods and master craftsmen within or alongside the dockyards supplied goods or services and the wide range of patterns they supplied can be seen as an index of the complexity of the dockyards' work.¹¹

Industrialization was started by the dividends of labour and mechanization. Lennart Schön states that industrialization is characterized by large-scale production for mass-consumption, whereby knowledge and science are systematically used to increase production. The industrial revolution meant that the industrial labour's share in the total employment increased drastically, urbanization rose and new social relations were created. But to economic historian Schön, industrialization also meant that capital replaced a large part of labour in the production process.¹² According to Urve Lepasoon, Karlskrona was an early modern industrial centre of Sweden. She argues that production at the naval dockyard in Karlskrona was characterized by serial production and the reorganization of labour. The production of naval ships, with its complexity of materials, skills and variety of tasks demanded a new way of organizing labour. But Lepasoon's observations are limited to the naval dockyard. She does not investigate how this early modern

industrial plant affected the local life of Karlskrona, even though two-thirds of the total working force of Karlskrona was employed by the navy during the eighteenth century.¹³

The naval city of Rochefort-sur-Mer was founded in 1668, only 12 years earlier than Karlskrona. Lepasoon points out a correspondence on the topic of naval cities between French and Swedish policymakers and argues that Karlskrona and Rochefort together were a French-Swedish joint venture. In any case, both being naval cities, Rochefort and Karlskrona are regarded as Twin Cities.¹⁴ Rochefort-sur-Mer is characterized by Michel Foucault in *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, 1975) where he sees in the naval city a new structure of society: "In France, it seems that Rochefort served both as experiment and model. A port, especially a military port, is – with its circulation of goods, men signed up willingly or by force, sailors embarking and disembarking, diseases and epidemics – a place of desertion, smuggling and contagion: it is a crossroads for dangerous mixtures, a meeting-place for forbidden circulations."¹⁵ What Michel Foucault describes is the production of all the necessities for naval war, for which the naval cities were constructed. The naval cities represented two forces of social transformation, industrialization and naval warfare, which were combined in the 'purpose built' naval stations.

In 1749 the Royal Chart Commission was issued to create demographic statistics on the population of Sweden. Due to the well-kept Church charters it was a relatively easy assignment to fulfill. But the Royal Karlskrona Admiralty parish did not succeed in this task. In a letter sent to the Royal Chart Commission in 1792, the Admiralty Consistory explained that due to the intense monthly circulation of hired soldiers and carpenters, the parish was not able to compile population statistics.¹⁶ On a political level, Jan Glete points to the fact that the eighteenth century is characterized by political separation. During the eighteenth century the central administration and the Admiralty Board in Karlskrona each progressively developed in different directions. Earlier, when the principal navy base was situated in Stockholm, the Wasa kings supervised and controlled the central administration of the Swedish Royal Navy. But the foundation of Karlskrona in 1680 created a 600-kilometre distance between the central administration and the Admiralty Board. Because of this physical distance, both the King and the central administration could not exercise direct control of the naval base.¹⁷

It is quite obvious that Karlskrona presents the same early modern naval city characteristics as its continental European and British counterparts. But one should not equate the early modern naval city of Karlskrona with other Swedish

cities. In 1930 William Anderson points out that in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Karlskrona, by the Baltic Sea, was connected with other port cities, which together formed a cultural area. The city was not only Swedish. It had always had an international outlook. Karlskrona featured a mosaic of international influences, a gateway to the greater world, “a Brest and Toulon with the same mixture of life and boundless Sunday stillness and melancholy typical to all naval cities.”¹⁸ But how did the naval city of Karlskrona express itself socially? Did the early modern industrial and naval war production affect the social life in Karlskrona? Early modern Sweden was a religiously homogeneous state where Lutheranism was the only faith allowed. But in 1779 partial religious freedom was issued and wealthy Jews were welcomed to settle in Sweden. Through an examination of the integration of the local Jewish presence in Karlskrona from 1780 and onward, insight into the social dimensions of the naval city can be reached.

Port Jews

The concept of Port Jews identifies port cities on the Western European Atlantic Seaboard and in the Mediterranean Sea to be areas offering civic inclusion of Jews earlier than in other regions. These cities were maritime trading centres, characterized by a tolerant pragmatic atmosphere and with a population willing and able to include Jews. The superior legal status offered the Jews a distinctive stepping-stone to emancipation.¹⁹ But the Port Jew concept has been limited by its focus on the Sephardic Jewish experience. In an attempt to make the concept more general and to make it possible to include non-Sephardic Jews, Lois C. Dubin proposes a list of five slightly different criteria to define early modern Port Jews. She highlights:

1. location in a dynamic maritime trading center that was part of a society or polity that valued international commerce;
2. perception by others of Jewish commercial aptitude and hence utility;
3. invitation or acceptance of Jewish merchants along with other non-Jewish merchants for the purpose of developing commerce;
4. a relatively favorable legal and civil status for Jewish merchants, roughly comparable to that of other merchant groups, though not necessarily in all respects; and
5. a Jewish self-consciousness with a strong degree of relation, that is, (a) a keen sense of connection to, and network with, other Jewish merchants

living elsewhere, merchants who were kin or business partners, often both, and also sometimes potential immigrants, and (b) also a keen sense of interaction and comparison to other non-Jewish merchants in the given port city.²⁰

Currently, none of the early modern cities in the Baltic area is considered a Port Jew environment. If Karlskrona is to be imagined as one, the naval city's production for war has to replace the dynamic trading centre and the non-Jewish merchants have to be replaced by the officers, the dominant social category of the naval city. The key to understanding if this can be done is to examine the pattern of international duty within the officer's corps of the Swedish Royal Navy and as a consequence, what kinds of attitudes towards alien cultures were expressed.

The Jewish parish of the naval city of Portsmouth has been investigated by Tony Kushner. According to the original sets of conditions Portsmouth cannot be interpreted as an example of the Port Jews phenomena. But not seeing the phenomena as an exclusive Sephardic experience and elaborating with time frames Kushner manages to fit Portsmouth into the model.²¹ Fabian Philip being an Ashkenazim and Karlskrona a naval city focused on the production for war, also disqualifies Karlskrona from being an example of the Port Jews phenomenon. But similar to Portsmouth, the Jewish history of Karlskrona has been overlooked by the mainstream Jewish narrative of Sweden. As in Great Britain, the Jewish history of Sweden is a history of the Capital. The unique Jewish experience of Portsmouth therefore has been overlooked by historians in Great Britain. The same conditions are valid in the case of Karlskrona.

The reflection of the local geographical space within the Port Jews-model, Kushner confirms that the local environment is a product of global movements. The function of Portsmouth as one of the Royal Navy's most important naval stations accessed the city to a global network that formed the city's identity. The close and important contacts with the Royal Navy were vital for the Jewish presence and further development. The difference between the Swedish Royal Navy and the Royal Navy was so profound that it is questionable if a comparison can be made. The Baltic Squadron of the Royal Navy in 1810–1812 was itself larger than the Swedish Royal Navy.²² The Royal Navy operated on a global level while the Swedish Royal Navy operated mostly in its local Baltic theatre. Despite this, due to the manning system of the Swedish Royal Navy, Karlskrona was a part of a global network and the local culture was formed by global movements.

The Economic Role of Jews in Early Modern Europe

Victor Karády argues that during the process of abolition of feudalism and at the start of the process of industrialization Jews were better prepared than their fellow-competitors to adopt the economic behaviour and life strategies required by the emergent free markets. The same restrictions and occupational choices that had been imposed on Jews prior to emancipation were subsequently to evolve into what was more or less a distinctive set of conditions for successful engagement in free markets of the early capitalistic system. At the very outset of modernization, precisely due to their earlier exclusion from the main branches of the feudal economy, Jews constituted a sort of proto-bourgeois stratum, inasmuch as they were already then driven to certain forms of rational behaviour, including the principle of maximizing profitability, risk assessment, calculation of anticipated rate of return, entrepreneurial innovations, exploration of new economic markets and minimizing of consumption in order to maximize capital accumulation. These factors would later be characterized as having emanated from the capitalistic spirit.²³

In as much as prior research on Jewish integration in Karlskrona has emphasized the anti-Semitic sentiments among the Burghers, I will need to relate to the phenomenon. My basic understanding of anti-Semitism is hostility against Jews as persons and the Jewish faith in general. Anti-Semitism in eighteenth century Sweden was based on a Medieval Christian conception, which had presented a fundamental image of the Jew.²⁴ During the late eighteenth century scholars have identified a primitive and fundamental fear of Jews in the Swedish society. This fear originated in Christian anti-Judaism and the Enlightenment's disdain of the 'fanatic' and 'fundamental' Jew.²⁵

The Jewish Settlement of Karlskrona

On July 24, 1780 the Jewish traders Fabian Philip and Emanuel Samuel received permission from the authorities in Karlskrona to settle and to start a trade business in the city. The Traders' Guild opposed the application but the City Board based its decision on the *Bill of Religious Freedom*, which favoured alien worshipers who wanted to engage in trade business.²⁶ When the 1782 *Law of Jews* was passed, the Jewish settlement in Karlskrona became illegal. The four Jews who had been granted rights of trade in Karlskrona were informed by the City Board to leave. Threatened by expulsion, the Jewish trader Fabian Philip turned to Henrik af

Trolle, Admiral of the Fleet, and made an offer to contribute to the naval industrial complex by building a sailcloth factory, In return Philip wanted an exception from the restrictions on settlement for Jews in Sweden.

Admiral af Trolle applied to the King for exception from the restrictions on settlement on the behalf of Fabian Philip. Fabian Philip personally, and his family were granted a Royal permission to settle in Karlskrona, with the stipulation that a sailcloth factory was built and production of sailcloth was started.²⁷ Admiral af Trolle was heading the largest industrial enterprise in Sweden by 1782. For one century the Swedish Royal Navy had trimmed its industrial production by improvements in techniques and rationalizations of production. In the offer presented by Fabian Philip, Henrik af Trolle probably realized the common economic interests between the Swedish Royal Navy and the Jewish entrepreneur. At the same time Philip showed that he belonged to the Jewish proto-bourgeois stratum of Europe.²⁸

During the first two years Fabian Philip spent in Karlskrona, the Swedish government had launched a great reconstruction of the Swedish Royal Navy. In 1781 admiral Fredric Henric af Chapman commenced the construction of 20 large man-of-wars at the naval shipyard in Karlskrona.²⁹ Threatened by expulsion and losing his livelihood, Fabian Philip was forced to turn the situation into a favourable economic position. The solution was to become a naval contractor in a field in which the industrial centre of the Swedish Royal Navy lacked capacity. Even though the sail was the primary propulsion mechanism in a sailing fleet, sailcloth production did not exist in Karlskrona. Fabian Philip recognized this and saw it as his new field of economic employment.

Jan Glete defines the Swedish Royal Navy as the most complex organization of early modern Sweden. By the beginning of the 1770s the naval shipyard had turned into a formal corporate structure due to undertaken reforms.³⁰ Nicholas Rodger shows that the Royal Navy had become an international enterprise by 1690.³¹ Being a naval city, Karlskrona was dominated by the navy and the naval yard. Therefore the naval officers replaced the burghers as the most dominant group of the city. Heading the large corporate structure of the Swedish Royal Navy the officers appreciated the contribution of the Jewish presence.

Reactions from the Trading Society

The 1782 *Law of Jews* gave the Trading Society legal backing for their complaints against the Jewish presence in Karlskrona. It is obvious that Hugo Valentin interpreted the complaints performed by the Board of Guilds against Fabian Philip as

an expression of anti-Semitism: "Fabian Philip [...] who more than anyone else among the Swedish Jews being exposed to the Burghers bitter hatred".³² But this statement was probably formed by the 1920's and a reaction to the anti-Semitic discourse that dominated the Swedish society at the time that Valentin undertook his historical research on the Jews of Sweden. A reinterpretation of the documents from the 1780's used by Valentin shows no anti-Semitic rhetoric. Instead the legal matter was stressed.

In the autumn of 1783 the Traders Guild raised complaints against Philip, stressing the fact that he had not yet started the production of sailcloth and was furthermore engaged in commerce in the city:

that, under the Regulations issued here in the Kingdom on the 27th of May, 1782 for the Jewish Nation, it must stand in the way in the matter of his place of residence, even so, not only will the manufacturing establishment allowed by statute, but even his prohibited merchandising of satin, handkerchiefs, linens and quality fabrics, etc., in every way, wrong the Merchandising Citizenry of this city; for that, lawful correction is called upon herein and that the Jew, Philip, and others, namely his Jewish employees, be prohibited, under the penalty of fines, from continuing to carry on such unlawful merchandising and further that a certain time limit be set for the dissolution of the manufacturing establishment, with the provision that otherwise the aforementioned will be forfeited.³³

The Traders Guild argued within the legal framework, as was their only chance to get rid of the, from their perspective, illegal competition. By marking Fabian Philip's Jewishness, the Traders Guild can be accused of trying to apply to an anti-Semitic discourse within the local administration of Karlskrona. But the use of the name 'Jew' does not express any hostility towards Philip or his Jewishness as such. In this case it is a marker of nationality, emphasizing that Philip and his assistants were not Swedish subjects and were thus governed by a different set of laws than the Traders Guild.

The unwillingness to accept alien traders was nothing unique to the Trading Society in Karlskrona. The Burghers of Torneå showed the same tendency, but in Torneå the alien traders were Christians.³⁴ In 1669–1670, when Scania was incorporated into Sweden, the Board of Guilds in the cities of Scania raised complaints to the Commission of Scania. It does not matter which city is studied, there are the same complaints against unlawful intrusions into the businesses of the Guilds.³⁵ This is the perspective of Janrik Bromé when interpreting the actions of the Board of Guilds: "The traders as well as the craftsmen were united in their intense hunt for black market traders, soldiers and 'cheaters'. In the 1790's the newly settled Jews were subject to other traders' great displeasure."³⁶

The naval city of Karlskrona was no trading place. Leif Törnquist stresses the fact that the motif for founding Karlskrona was purely operational; there was no need of channelling either trade or communication.³⁷ Karlskrona was a pronounced city of consumption with small possibilities for traders to expand their businesses and this is why the Burghers of Karlskrona were even more protective. Furthermore, the Burghers of Karlskrona were already under great pressure from the 1,500 enlisted soldiers who did not need to belong to the Guild to practice crafts.³⁸ Due to this situation, the Board of Guilds in Karlskrona had developed a tradition of written complaints.³⁹ In the 1770's the traders of Karlskrona had lost their monopoly on deliveries to the Admiralty, but after the great fire of Karlskrona in 1790, when two thirds of the city burnt down, the monopoly was restored to ease reconstruction of the city.⁴⁰

The same arguments used to lodge complaints against the Jewish traders, can be seen in the letters from the Board of Guilds lodging complaints against other groups. Soldiers doing crafts was characterized as “excruciating” and after the city fire the Guilds wanted the soldiers banned from working as craftsmen.⁴¹ In November 1790 the Board of Guilds raised complaints against “the disorder amongst the farmers who prowl the streets offering their goods”.⁴² But for every letter addressed to the Board of Trade, trying to repeal the Karlskrona exception of the *1782 Regulation of Jews*, a letter in favour of the Jews was signed and sent by the highest ranking officers in the naval establishment, Admiral of the Fleet, Count Carl August Ehrensward, Admiral Count A. J. Wrangel and Admiral Count Fredrik Henrik af Chapman.⁴³

The Sailcloth Factory, a Local Economic Interaction

In March 1785, a business contract was signed by the Admiralty secretary, Christian Strömholm, a businessman, Sven Johan Wahlgren, and Fabian Philip. The three men were equal owners of the sailcloth factory that was to be set up at the mouth of the river in Lyckeby. This area was already an early modern industrial production site as the Swedish Royal Navy had established a Crown mill and water purification ponds, from where Karlskrona and the navy base was supplied with water. Philip was elected Head of the company and as such was in charge of the funding. He was also responsible for the establishment of the factory plant. Wahlgren was to supply the business with hemp and other necessary goods, while Strömholm was to support the others when needed.⁴⁴

The contract shows that Fabian Philip was not alone when starting the sailcloth factory. Members of the Admiralty, as well as the Board of Guilds, were interested in signing a contract and being co-owners with the Jew, whose presence in Karlskrona was questioned by the Burghers. Furthermore Philip signed the agreement with his legal entity *Fabian Philip & Co.*, which can have been caused by the prohibition for Jews owning property in the countryside of Sweden. Lyckeby is situated in the countryside, 10 kilometres to the North of Karlskrona.⁴⁵ But it seems that Fabian Philip did possess permission to own property in the countryside of Sweden and when Philip died in 1832, this permission was transferred to his five grandsons. This made it possible for the grandsons to inherit the extensive properties of their grandfather and to further expand them by turning to agriculture in the 1840's.⁴⁶ Jews were not generally allowed to possess land in the countryside of Sweden until 1860.⁴⁷

In 1787 a naval engineer, Magnus Rosensvärd, Head of the Mechanical Department of the Naval Dockyard, became the fourth owner of the sailcloth factory in Lyckeby. In his profession Rosensvärd headed the most technologically advanced industry in Sweden at the time and this spearhead technology was made accessible to the Jewish entrepreneur by Rosensvärd's participation in the sailcloth factory.⁴⁸ By 1792 the sailcloth factory housed 18 looms and engaged 300 women living in the city of Karlskrona and its surroundings. Attached to the factory were a dye and a rabble stamp to decompose the hemp into fibres. In the surroundings of the factory, loom cottages were built for the workers to work and live in. The sailcloth produced was considered to be of high quality.⁴⁹ In 1811 the numbers of looms had been increased to 40.⁵⁰ By 1828 the factory employed 100 workers and 400 of the city's poor were engaged in spinning. In contemporary figures it was a very large industrial establishment.⁵¹

After the reconstruction of the Swedish Royal Navy, Karlskrona became a dynamic maritime industrial and trading centre with a society that valued international commerce and knowledge. The local businesses, burghers as well as naval personnel, were willing to interact with Fabian Philip. Philip provided the money while the others offered business contacts and possible technical skills to the sailcloth factory.

Local Social Interaction

The most influential person in early modern Karlskrona was the Admiral of the Fleet. In 1782 the Admiral of the Fleet, Henrik af Trolle, legitimized the Jewish

presence in Karlskrona. But Trolle died in 1784 and was succeeded by Carl August Ehrensvärd. Even though the Trading Society raised new complaints against the Jews, Ehrensvärd continued the previous policy. This signalled that the Jews were in Karlskrona to stay. In the years 1785–1787 three persons from three different social categories in Karlskrona entered into trade agreements with Fabian Philip.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century Fabian Philip was, according to the local historian Sven-Öjvind Swahn, one of the wealthiest persons of Sweden. By 1806 Philip had the confidence to manifest his wealth and social position in the local community by buying a large property on the corner of the streets Drottninggatan and Ölandsgatan in downtown Karlskrona. The property consisted of 4,030 square metres and a two-story house of 412 square metres, and was situated in the area of the city where the Burghers had lived since the foundation of the city in 1680.⁵²

Five years later, in 1811, Fabian Philip took the next step on the path of social mobility and manifestation of social belonging, by buying the largest country manor in the village of Lyckeby. The purchase was made by the Rear Admiral Count Nils Elias Rosensvärd, his wife and heirs. Within force of *res judicata* the contract was transferred to Fabian Philip.⁵³ Count Nils Elias Rosensvärd's judicial involvement with Fabian Philip's purchase of *Afvelsgärde*, made it possible for Philip to circumvent the prohibition for Jews to own landed property. Therefore Rosensvärd's act should be interpreted as an act of social inclusion of the Jews into the social elite of Karlskrona. Nils Elias Rosensvärd was himself ennobled in 1809, and makes Rosensvärd an example of the transcendent social structure of Karlskrona.⁵⁴

Even though Jews were not allowed to own property in the Swedish countryside until 1860, exceptions from the rules were made and some 30 country manors were to be owned by Jews. But *Afvelsgärde* was the first landed property to be owned by Jews in Sweden.⁵⁵ Owning *Afvelsgärde*, Fabian Philip turned to agriculture and commenced a rational operation of the farming. Philip got a local reputation for being a skilled farmer.⁵⁶ The country manor was used in the summers while the city property housed the family during winters.⁵⁷ The purchase of a country manor in early modern Sweden was a way for parvenus to establish themselves in the social elite.⁵⁸ The integration of Fabian Philip into the local social elite of Karlskrona was accomplished according to the traditional pattern of social mobility in early modern Great Britain and Sweden. The late eighteenth century social elite of Sweden had a positive attitude towards cosmopolitanism, but meanwhile a new economic policy, based on agriculture, was adopted, which influenced the development of a new national identity.⁵⁹

In late eighteenth-century Karlskrona, buying a country manor was an upper class fashion. It was predominantly the noble officers who had the financial capabilities, but if the Burghers could afford it, they followed the trend.⁶⁰ In eighteenth-century Amsterdam and London, wealthy Jews integrated into the social elite by the purchase of country manors. The moneyed Jewish elite embraced the trend of buying landed estates and were met by respect from the Christian upper class. The case of Amsterdam and London is by Adam Sutcliffe interpreted as an example of the Port Jews phenomenon.⁶¹ The social mobility of Fabian Philip, first purchasing a large City House and then six years later establishing himself as owner of a country manor makes Karlskrona a parallel to the social integration of wealthy Jews in Amsterdam and London. In Karlskrona this process was supported by the local social elite of noble naval officers. The social mobility of Fabian Philip should not, however, be seen as an attempt to distance himself from his Jewish brethren. Philip was the founder of and continued to head the Jewish Parish in Karlskrona.

In 1815 Fabian Philip was elected as a working member of the Board of the Royal Blekinge Agricultural Society, which was founded in 1814. The Board consisted of the social and economic elite of Blekinge. Patrik Hall points out that the Agricultural Societies were fundamental to the regional life of associations. Furthermore, the Agricultural Societies were organized when agriculture had become more important to the state's financial policy and they acquired a position as the country's most important business.⁶² By 1819 Fabian Philip applied to become a Swedish subject. The Governor of Blekinge, the Mayor of Karlskrona and several civil servants from the local government certified the good behaviour of Fabian Philip.⁶³ Philip's application was approved by King Karl XIV Johan and Philip was granted the same rights as Swedish subjects in general.⁶⁴ In general, Jews were not made Swedish subjects until 1838 and then they were made Swedish subjects of Mosaic faith.

The CarlsKrona Reading Society

The social interactions between Jews and the majority society are revealed when investigating the membership of Jews in the CarlsKrona Reading Society. As time went on not only was Fabian Philip a member of this society but other Jews as well. The CarlsKrona Reading Society was founded in 1796 and merged with Carlskrona Circulating Library in 1803. It was founded by persons influenced by the Enlightenment and who wanted the public to have easier access to

literature. In 1803 the Society was constituted of 8 officers, 16 public servants and 11 priests and teachers. 35 out of 43 members were public employees, which reflected the social composition of early modern Karlskrona, dominated by the naval establishment.⁶⁵ Eleonora Ruben is the first Jew to be traced in the records of CarlsKrona Reading Society. She was a subscriber in 1811 but became a member of the Society in 1828–1829. Fabian Philip was a member in 1824 and his nephew Salomon Philip in 1825. The longest period of time for being a Jewish member was to be Rabbi Philip Lewin who was a member from 1822–1829. In 1835 he was elected deputy when the library was inventoried.⁶⁶

Fabian Philip and his relatives can have been subscribers before they became members of CarlsKrona Reading Society. Subscribers paid a lower fee, but had full access to the library. The society was constituted more like a social club and if you were not interested in club activities, subscription gave you access to reading. But subscription also seems to have been an introduction into the society. Unfortunately, as no register for subscribers has been saved, only the membership directory can be found.⁶⁷

In the 1820's the CarlsKrona Reading Society had four Jewish members. It was during this time the society reached its heyday with more than 100 members. In 1829 the society had 120 members, of which 47 were officers, 11 priests and teachers. Especially the membership of Rabbi Philip Lewin shows that the Jewish members were accepted. Perhaps the social clubbing did not suit Fabian and Salomon Philip? The short-term membership of Eleonora Ruben coincided with a turbulent period of her life. She was to be divorced from her husband in 1829–1830, an event that probably did not pass the local community unnoticed.⁶⁸

Jewish Philanthropy in Karlskrona

In 1794 a Blekinge fundraising for the benefit of equipping the Swedish Royal Navy was organized. Fabian Philip “in favour of the Jewish Nation” contributed 16 riksdaler 32 skilling. According to the Ruben family chronicle, Fabian Philip, his family and the rest of the parish were greatly respected for the contribution.⁶⁹ The donation was an act of philanthropy, but it can also be interpreted as an investment. When the Swedish Royal Navy was arming, sails were needed and sails were bought from the sailcloth factory in Lyckeby. But in this case Philip's act should be seen as a strategy of integration. In Great Britain Jews donated money

to reach greater acceptance.⁷⁰ Fredric Bedoir argues that Jews in Europe included the majority society in their beneficence as an act of emancipation.⁷¹

From the start of the industrial production Fabian Philip had offered work to the poor of Karlskrona. There was no organized relief for the poor in Karlskrona but in 1812 the Royal Karlskrona Admiralty Parish turned to Fabian Philip and asked if he could organize a Poor Relief, concentrating especially on the parish of the many poor. In 1814 Philip organized a Poor Relief just outside the main gate of the navy base. The first year 594 persons were registered as poor and all of them were engaged by Philip at the sailcloth factory. According to Swahn this was such a success that it became a pattern for how relief for the poor was organized in the rest of Sweden.⁷² In 1815 Karlskrona had 11,860 inhabitants. In percentage 594 persons was 5 percent of the total population of Karlskrona, which means that Fabian Philip engaged and supported financially 5 percent of Karlskrona's population in 1814.⁷³

Fabian Philip being a part of the Jewish proto-bourgeois stratum and equipped with a capitalistic rational behaviour, managed to match the demand of labour at the sailcloth factory to the surplus of labour in Karlskrona by organizing the Poor Relief and being a permanent member of the Board. As an act of gratitude for organizing the Poor Relief, the central government awarded Fabian Philip the medal *Illis quorum meruere labores* (For those whose labours have deserved it) in 1816. *Illis quorum* is a gold medal awarded for outstanding contributions to culture, science or society.⁷⁴

Concluding Discussion

The few contemporary domestic historians that have dealt with Karlskrona have not considered applying the naval city approach. Instead Karlskrona has been looked at for what it is today, a minor town in the countryside. As Karl Bergman puts it, Karlskrona was, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth Centuries, one of several cities in Sweden of second rank dependent on export.⁷⁵ Hugo Valentin focuses on the protests against the Jews from the Traders Associations and believes that they represent the discourse of Karlskrona. But this approach leads to incorrect conclusions.

The city of Karlskrona, being the one and only naval city of Sweden, was totally dominated by the naval presence. Instead of the burghers, the naval officers constituted the social order and it was the naval establishment, which supported the presence of Fabian Philip and the Jewish parish in Karlskrona.

On both a formal as well as a social level it was the senior officers in person who gave their support and made it possible for Fabian Philip to express his social identity. The goal of Fabian Philip was probably to become a Burgher of Karlskrona and to start a trading business. When this option was closed in 1782, Philip identified the production of sailcloth as a new field of commerce to engage in. Despite the protests raised against him, Philip wanted to stay in Karlskrona. Committing to the naval industrial complex of Karlskrona, Fabian Philip managed to engage Admiral of the Fleet, Henrik af Trolle, to argue in favour of the Jewish presence in Karlskrona. And it was af Trolle who persuaded the King to make an exception from the settlement restriction of the *1782 Regulation of Jews*.

It was the unique social composition and the early modern naval industrial production of Karlskrona that made it possible for Fabian Philip to act as a Jewish proto-bourgeois entrepreneur. The disadvantages that were raised against him by the *1782 Regulation of Jews* were turned by Fabian Philip into cyclic advantages for himself and the Jewish parish.⁷⁶ The commitment by Philip to the Poor Relief of Karlskrona was an expression of this. Fabian Philip was also engaged at an early stage in non-Jewish philanthropy when donating money to the armament of the fleet in 1794. But since this was also a social and economic investment, the commitment to the Poor Relief should not only be seen as an act of philanthropy. The sailcloth factory engaged 500–600 workers and was by this the largest civilian employer in Karlskrona. When arranging the Poor Relief and being a permanent member of the Board, Fabian Philip got total control of the surplus of labour available in Karlskrona. By this the Jewish proto-bourgeois entrepreneur Fabian Philip could get a perfect match between his need of labour to the accessible surplus of labour in Karlskrona. In 1814 all of the poor in Karlskrona were engaged and supported by the sailcloth factory.

Like in Portsmouth, it was the international contacts of the navy that was the prerequisite for the Jewish settlement in Karlskrona and the social integration of the Jewish parish. Karlskrona is probably not the only example of the Port Jews phenomenon in Sweden. Anna Brismarck and Pia Lundqvist, for example, are currently studying Gothenburg and applying the Port Jews model. The criteria listed by Lois C. Dubin highlights that it was the merchants who constituted the cosmopolitan environments, which integrated the Jews. But Karlskrona was not an early modern dynamic trading centre, it was a naval city social dominated by the naval officers. It was the naval production for war and the experiences of the naval officers that constituted the environment that make it possible to interpret early modern Karlskrona as being an example of the Port Jews phenomena:

1. The maintenance of the navy and the industrial production of the navy shipyard made Karlskrona a dynamic maritime centre. The naval establishment fostered the insights of maintaining international contacts for keeping the naval capacity.
2. The naval establishment appreciated the contribution of the Jewish presence.
3. It was the naval establishment, which supported the continued Jewish presence in Karlskrona. Mechanical Captain Magnus Ankarsvärd presented possible technical skills to the sailcloth factory.
4. The exception from the *Regulation of Jews* was the first step. Fabian Philip's further establishment and economic activity show that he and the Jewish group were granted further exceptions from the rules regulating the economic life of the Jewish group in Sweden. The purchase of the country manor Afvelsgärde and being a member of both the Board of the Poor Relief and Royal Blekinge Agricultural Society show that the Blekinge upper class society had integrated Fabian Philip. Rear Admiral Count Nils Elias Rosensvärd's involvement in circumnavigating the Regulation of Jews by helping Fabian Philip to manifest his social belonging shows that Philip was socially accepted in Karlskrona. In 1819 the social acceptance by the local society was legitimized by the government, making Philip a Swedish subject.
5. The contacts with the Jewish network in Hamburg were maintained. This is not shown in this article, but when Eleonora Philip, the daughter of Fabian Philip, married in 1811, she was married to Jerachmiel ben Moses Ruben of Hamburg. Contrary to the Jewish tradition, Jerachmiel Ruben emigrated and settled in Karlskrona. Eleonora was Fabian Philip's only child, and obviously Philip planned for a future in Karlskrona for his family and coming generations. The same year Philip bought Afvelsgärde.⁷⁷

When recognizing the naval dominance of Karlskrona and evaluating the actions of the naval establishment towards the Jewish immigrants, it is possible to argue that the early modern Karlskrona fulfills the criteria for and was an example of the Port Jews phenomenon. But the function of the merchants in the dynamic trading centre has to be replaced by the naval officers and the industrial naval production. In the case of Portsmouth Tony Kushner argues it is possible there, which is why it should be possible in the case of Karlskrona.

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Summary:

The Case of Fabian Philip, Karlskrona's First Jewish Entrepreneur: A Swedish Example of the Port Jews Concept?

When studying a local society dominated by naval officers and the extent to which they integrated the Jewish community in their midst, a new perspective on Swedish naval history is revealed. The Swedish Royal Navy has always been internationally orientated, but previous research has not taken this into account. Furthermore, not much research has been undertaken on the Swedish Royal Navy at all. As a metropolitan outpost, Karlskrona has generally been seen, by historians and contemporaries alike, as largely peripheral to the upheavals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Jews were not allowed to settle in Sweden until 1779, but in 1782 their settlement was permitted, though restricted to Stockholm, Gothenburg and Norrköping. The naval city of Karlskrona became an exception to the regulations. Previous research on the Jewish parish in Karlskrona was undertaken in the 1910s, and mistakenly concluded that it was the most unfriendly environment for Jews in early modern Sweden. This article seeks to reinterpret old sources and add newly found ones, which together engender a new perception of Jewish integration in Karlskrona. This is done by adopting the Port Jews concept and recognizing naval cities as internationally orientated production centres. In line with this, the article argues that Karlskrona, together with Gothenburg, should be interpreted as a Swedish example of the Port Jews concept.

Keywords: Port Jews, Jewish integration, Jewish life in Sweden, naval cities, naval history, Jewish proto-bourgeoisie.